

URGENT ACTION

LET ZANUTA RESIDENTS RETURN TO THEIR VILLAGE

The Palestinian community of Zanuta in the South Hebron Hills of the occupied West Bank, which consists of 250 people, including 100 children, has been forcibly displaced since October 2023, as a result of state-backed settler violence. The Israeli police and military have repeatedly and deliberately failed to facilitate the residents' safe return or protect them from settler violence, violating their obligations under international law as well as two Israeli Supreme Court rulings. Israeli authorities must, without further delay, ensure the rapid and safe return of Palestinians from Zanuta to their community, protect them from further settler violence, allow them to rebuild their homes and community infrastructures. The Israeli authorities must rapidly remove the illegal settler outposts established on the lands of Zanuta.

TAKE ACTION: WRITE AN APPEAL IN YOUR OWN WORDS OR USE THIS MODEL LETTER

IDF Chief of General Staff
Lieutenant General Eyal Zamir
Yitzhak Rabin Military Base
HaKiryat, 27 Kaplan Street
Tel Aviv 6473424, Israel

Emails: cogat.pnz@gmail.com ; mapazahal@gmail.com

Lieutenant General Zamir,

I am writing to demand the immediate return of the forcibly displaced residents of Zanuta to their village in the South Hebron Hills of the occupied West Bank, as per your obligations under both international law and the orders of Israel's Supreme Court.

Between 27 October and 1 November 2023, the entire community of Zanuta, home to 250 Palestinians, including 100 children, were forced to pack up their belongings and flee the village where their ancestors had lived since the 19th century, as a result of recurrent violent raids and attacks by Israeli settlers from a nearby illegal outpost. Nearly three years on, the community remains displaced and fragmented and unable to return to its homes, despite numerous attempts to go home.

On 29 July 2024, the Israeli Supreme Court ordered the Israeli police and the military to facilitate the safe return of Zanuta's residents and protect them from settler violence. On 3 February 2025, the Court reaffirmed this obligation, ordering the same authorities to facilitate the community's return, remove trespassers, and allow residents to rebuild structures that were destroyed since their displacement.

Two years from the first Supreme Court ruling, Israeli authorities are yet to enforce these orders, and the village of Zanuta risks permanent erasure.

As an occupying power, Israel has the obligations to protect the lives and livelihoods of the Palestinians in the Occupied Palestinian Territory (OPT), including those of Zanuta, and to prevent settler violence and investigate and prosecute those responsible for offences against them. The presence of Israeli settlers in the occupied West Bank, including East Jerusalem, is illegal under international law and as such Israeli settlements and outposts, which are also illegal under Israeli law, must be removed.

I therefore urge you to act swiftly to immediately ensure the safe return of the Palestinians of Zanuta to their lands, protect them from any form of violence by settlers, provide effective remedy and reparations for the harm caused by settlers, and the Israeli authorities' failure to prevent attacks by settlers and to secure residents' return to their homes, as ordered by the Supreme Court. I call on you to ensure that Palestinians from Zanuta are, allowed to rebuild their homes, livelihoods, and community infrastructure, including the village's elementary school, and that the illegal outposts established in its proximity, including Meitarim Farm are urgently dismantled.

Yours sincerely,

ADDITIONAL INFORMATION

Zanuta is one of 121 predominantly Bedouin and herding Palestinian communities in the occupied West Bank that have faced full or partial displacement due to violence by settlers and access restrictions between January 2023 and July 2026, [according](#) to UN OCHA. It is also one of 46 communities completely displaced in that same period.

Between 27 October and 1 November 2023, all residents of Zanuta packed up their belongings and fled the village after a recurrent violent raid by settlers from a nearby outpost called Meitarim Farm, which significantly escalated after 7 October 2023.

Before their expulsion, Zanuta was home to some 250 Palestinians, including around 100 children, who had been living in the village since the 19th century and subsisted on shepherding, dairy production and agriculture. Their unique way of life, entirely dependent on the land, had already been denied security and stability for decades under Israel's system of apartheid and state-backed settler violence. In addition to demolition orders issued against the village's homes since 2011, their daily suffering intensified with the establishment of settler outposts surrounding the village from 2021 onward, most notably the Meitarim Farm outpost. This marked the beginning of a prolonged and steadily intensifying wave of settler attacks against Palestinians in Zanuta. The severity of these attacks and the leading role of Yinon Levi - the founder of Meitarim Farm - led the United Kingdom and the United States to impose sanctions on him, including an asset freeze and travel ban, as well as sanctions targeting the Meitarim Farm outpost. These sanctions have proven wholly inadequate to deter these attacks, which have instead escalated.

Following 7 October 2023, the frequency and severity of the attacks by Levi and other settlers escalated dramatically, with incidents occurring almost daily. Residents described settlers setting fire to their properties, such as tents and classrooms in Zanuta's school, breaking into their homes, beating their children with rifles and deliberately pumping sewage onto their farmland, and how their calls for help to the police remained unanswered. By 1 November 2023, the entire community had left out of fear for their safety and sought refuge in the near village of Al-Dhahiriya where most of the community is still residing despite numerous attempts to return to Zanuta.

The Israeli Supreme Court ruled in favour of the Palestinians of Zanuta twice, in 2024 and 2025, reaffirming their right to return to their village/lands and requiring the Israeli police and military to coordinate for their return and to protect them during this process. However, these authorities have deliberately failed to implement the court rulings. The residents of Zanuta made numerous attempts to return to their village, both individually and in groups, but were always met by violence by settlers, with the support of the army.

The case of Zanuta illustrates the policy of ethnic cleansing pursued by the current Israeli government, as concluded by Amnesty International in its recent [report](#) on Israel's forcible displacement of herding and Bedouin communities in Area C of the occupied West Bank.

As we mark two years of the International Court of Justice's Advisory Opinion, which found Israeli military presence in the Palestinian territory, its annexation and its discriminatory regime to be in violations of international law and ordered Israel to end its unlawful occupation and dismantle illegal settlements, the efforts of the Palestinians of Zanuta to return to their village must be supported. At the same time, the many other Palestinian communities that have been displaced or remain at imminent risk of displacement—must not be forgotten, they need all our support and campaigning. Palestinians shall not be erased.

PREFERRED LANGUAGE TO ADDRESS TARGET: [English/Hebrew]

You can also write in your own language.

PLEASE TAKE ACTION AS SOON AS POSSIBLE UNTIL: [21 January 2027]

Please check with the Amnesty office in your country if you wish to send appeals after the deadline.

NAME AND PREFERRED PRONOUN: [Enter Name] (preferred pronouns)

LINK TO PREVIOUS UA: [If previous UA exist, enter the link here]