A Palestinian family grows and needs additional space — possibly for a married son and his wife. They apply to the Israeli authorities for a building permit, but it is denied. Eventually, the family takes the risk and builds anyway. Israeli authorities learn of the construction and issue orders for the demolition. To avoid paying the bill of $30,000, the family may demolish its own house.

A Cry for Home offers stories, videos and fact sheets from MCC on Palestine and Israel. Everyone needs a home — where families are safe and secure, where their basic needs are met, where they can come and go freely, and where they can imagine a future. But that is not the reality for Palestinians — or even for some Israelis. To view other fact sheets and learn more, visit: mcc.org/cry-for-home.
Who is most at risk?

**Palestinian families** without building permits in Israeli controlled portions of the West Bank and East Jerusalem.

**Palestinian Bedouins** who were formerly nomadic pastoral people; today, they are sedentary, raising animals and growing grain for their livelihood.

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**46 Bedouin communities in the heart of the West Bank**

In early 2017, Khan al Ahmar, an entire Bedouin community of 140 on the outskirts of East Jerusalem, was threatened with demolition. The demolition order included a school serving 170 children from surrounding Bedouin communities. Israel was offering to relocate the community in an urban relocation area.4

**35 “unrecognized” Bedouin villages in the Naqab (Negev) desert** in southern Israel. Though technically not under occupation, these communities are at significant risk for demolition.

Al Araqib, an historic and “unrecognized” village in the Naqab, has been demolished by Israeli authorities and rebuilt by its residents more than 100 times since 2010.6

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Why does Israel demolish Palestinian homes?

- to make possible the expansion of settlements for Israeli Jews
- to intimidate Palestinians and stifle resistance

As an occupying power, Israel is obligated under international law and the Geneva Conventions:

- to protect the civilians under occupation
- to refrain from forcible transfer of population
- to respect private property

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To view other fact sheets and learn more, visit: mcc.org/cry-for-home

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REFERENCES

1 Israeli Committee Against Home Demolitions.
2 B’tselem: The Israeli Information Center for Human Rights in the Occupied Territories.
3 Between 2010 and 2014, less than two per cent of applications were approved. UN Office of the Coordinator of Humanitarian Affairs.
4 Save the Children.
5 UN Office of the Coordinator of Humanitarian Affairs.
6 IMEMC News.