

Annual Activity Report 2020

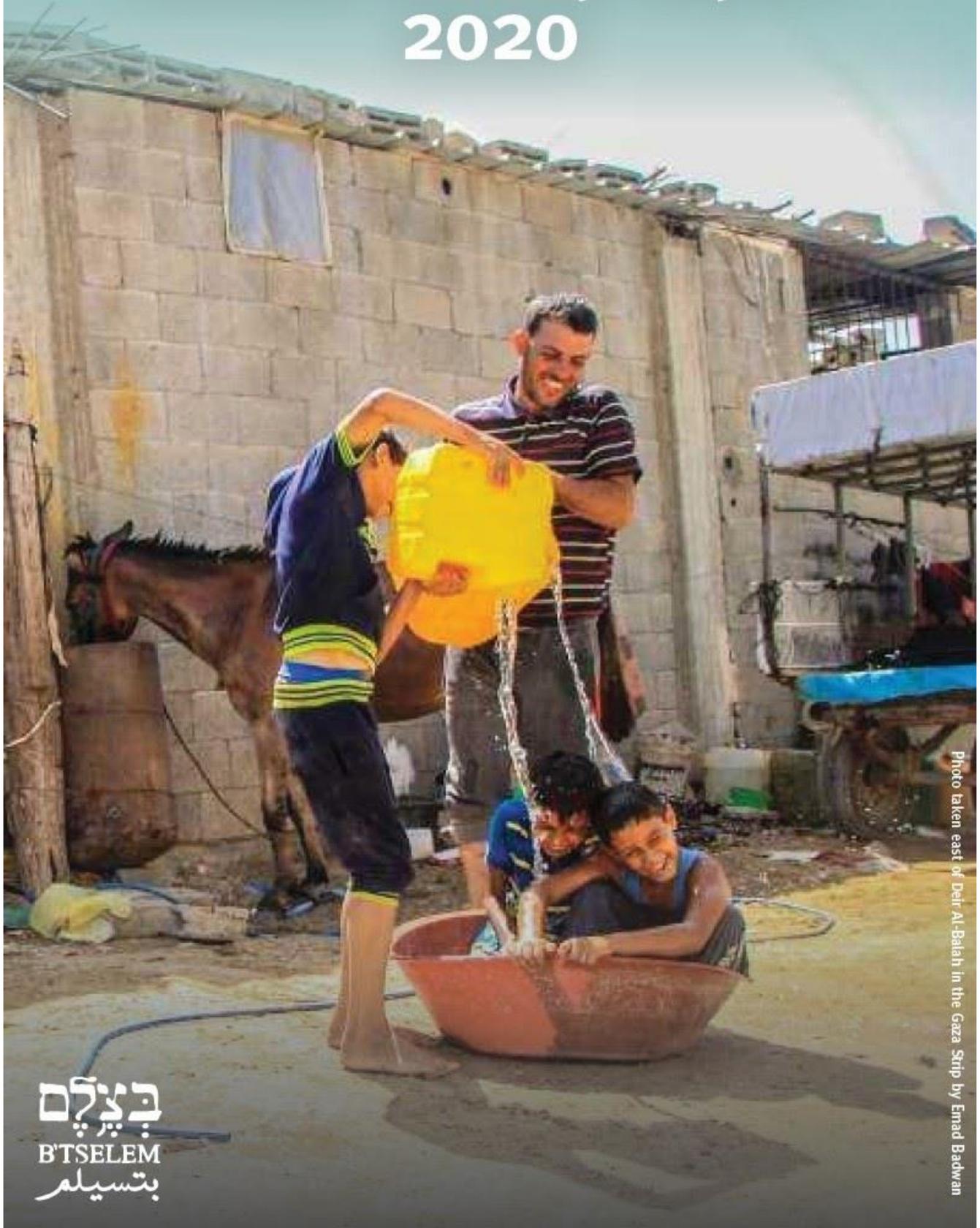


Photo taken east of Deir Al-Balah in the Gaza Strip by Emad Badwan

ב'תשל"ם
BTSELEM
بتسيلم

Table of Contents

Introduction	3
<i>De Facto</i> Annexation	4
Demolitions and Threats of Expulsion in the West Bank, including East Jerusalem	6
The Israeli Open-Fire Policy and the Absence of Accountability	8
Settler Violence Backed by the State	10
The Siege on the Gaza Strip	11
East Jerusalem	13
2020 IN SUMMARY	14



An Israeli soldier disperses a Jordan Valley protest, November 24, 2020.

Introduction



The aftermath of the demolition of the community of Khirbet Humsah, November 3, 2020. Photo by Sarit Michaeli.

2020 was a unique and challenging year that was defined by the COVID pandemic. When the first COVID cases were detected in the oPt, B'Tselem raised grave concerns about the prospect of COVID hitting the Gaza Strip, where the capacity to deal with the threat has been debilitated by the Israeli siege since 2007, and occupation since 1967. B'Tselem's Gaza field researcher, Olfat al-Kurd, warned of the catastrophic consequences of COVID hitting Gaza in op-eds in English and Hebrew. The Guardian quoted B'Tselem's statement that Israel turned Gaza into the "biggest open-air prison in the world," one that is uniquely unsuited to deal with the pandemic, and "Israel will not be able to deflect the blame if this nightmare scenario turns into a reality that it created and made no effort to prevent." Al-Jazeera reported B'Tselem's assertion that an outbreak in Gaza will be "a massive disaster resulting entirely from conditions created by the Israeli blockade." B'Tselem echoed these messages in a joint virtual briefing with Physicians for Human Rights – Israel, in which Gazan medical experts updated the international community on Gaza's capacity to cope with the coronavirus under the Israeli blockade. B'Tselem also signed a joint statement by 18 NGOs reiterating Israel's obligation to permit entry of medical supplies to the Gaza Strip.

As the virus spread through Israel and the occupied territories, B'Tselem reminded the public that Palestinians are at the mercy of Israel's government to protect them from the pandemic, a responsibility that Israel is shirking. Throughout the year, B'Tselem documented how Israel's conduct during the COVID crisis demonstrates blatant disregard for Palestinian lives. B'Tselem documented hundreds of arrests and raids in Palestinian homes, and an escalation of the campaign of police violence in the East Jerusalem neighbourhood of al-'Esawiyah. B'Tselem documented the intensification of settler violence as settlers exploited the movement restrictions imposed in March and April to curb the spread of COVID, to inflict violence on Palestinian communities with the backing of the state. B'Tselem also documented how Israel intensified home demolitions in the West Bank including East Jerusalem and continued its decades-long campaign to drive Palestinian herder communities out of Area C.

To overcome the challenges presented by the pandemic, B'Tselem modified its work to protect its staff, audiences, and communities from COVID. Despite significant difficulties, B'Tselem continued to publish current and credible documentation and analysis of Israeli policies in the occupied territories and advocate for international action to end the occupation. B'Tselem published 72 short research reports about the human impact of the Israeli occupation. B'Tselem published another 60 updates about attempts to expel Palestinian communities from Area C through demolitions, confiscations, and displacements for military training on its Facing Expulsion blog, and launched a new blog on settler violence backed by the state to

convey its scale and severity, and published 161 posts. B'Tselem published a comprehensive research report, [Violence and Dispossession in al-'Esawiyah](#), and two position papers, on the ICC, [Israeli Attorney General's memorandum](#), and on annexation, [The Annexation That Was and Still Is](#).

To enhance public understanding of the impact of Israeli policies, B'Tselem facilitated nine field visits for journalists around the West Bank and published 21 [press releases](#), which triggered dozens of citations in the international media, including [The Washington Post](#), [Guardian](#), [Independent](#), [BBC](#), [Telegraph](#), [Le Monde](#), [CNN](#), [NPR](#), [AP](#), [Democracy Now](#), [NBC](#), [CBS](#), [Al-Jazeera](#), [Vox](#), [Salon](#), and [Wire](#). B'Tselem was widely cited in the Israeli media in Hebrew, including [Haaretz](#), Channels [11](#), [12](#), [13](#), and [Walla](#), and in English, including [Haaretz](#), [Jerusalem Post](#), and [Times of Israel](#). B'Tselem staff authored 22 op-eds that were published in the media, including in Haaretz in [Hebrew](#) and [English](#), [YNet](#) and [Ynetnews](#), and [Channel 12](#). B'Tselem staff were quoted frequently by the Hebrew and English media, including a feature interview with B'Tselem's Executive Director in [Haaretz](#). B'Tselem's Arabic spokesperson gave approximately 100 interviews in the Arabic media, including [Palestine TV](#), [France 24](#), and [Al-Jazeera](#).

B'Tselem worked with 167 Palestinian volunteers in its [Video Camera Project](#), published 99 pieces of [video documentation](#) that they captured, and screened collections of video documentation from the West Bank and Gaza at the [Solidarity Festival](#). B'Tselem's documentary '[Of Land and Bread](#)' was screened to European audiences at film festivals in [Norway](#), [Croatia](#), [Finland](#), and [online](#).

B'Tselem staff shared information and analysis and advocated its positions with 1000+ members of the international community in approximately 100 meetings, briefings, webinars, field visits, and events for government officials, UN agencies, think tanks, faith groups, and international organizations from the European Union and 20 countries. B'Tselem met with approximately 500 international in meetings and briefings, led around 100 diplomats on field visits, and addressed 375 members of the international community in virtual briefings including on the [ICC](#) position paper, the [al-'Esawiyah](#) report, the [annexation position](#) paper, and on state-backed settler violence under COVID. B'Tselem's Executive Director also [addressed](#) the European Parliament Subcommittee on Human Rights.

This 2020 annual activity report describes B'Tselem's work on the core issues of the *de-facto* annexation of the West Bank, demolitions and threats of expulsion of Palestinian communities, Palestinians killed and wounded by Israeli fire with impunity, the Israeli siege on Gaza, settler violence backed by the state, and the Israeli policies in East Jerusalem.



The school in the Bedouin community of Ras a-Tin, east of Ramallah, threatened with demolition, October 26, 2020.

Photo by Assia Ladizhinskaya.

De Facto Annexation



The settlement of Beitar Illit was built above the Palestinian village of Nahalin, southwest of Bethlehem. Photo by Keren Manor.

In 2020, for the first time with the backing of the American government, Israel declared its intention to formally annex part of the West Bank, after years of quietly entrenching annexation on the ground. 2020 began with the release of the Trump “Peace to Prosperity” Plan and ended when the “Deal of the Century” was relegated to the dustbin of history upon Trump’s electoral defeat, and with it, Israel’s intention to formally legalize the *de facto* annexation. B’Tselem denounced the Trump plan as a blueprint for Apartheid, not peace, which “legitimizes, entrenches, and even expands the scope of Israel’s human rights abuses, perpetuated now for over 52 years,” and contributed analysis about the plan’s detrimental impact on Palestinian human rights to the public debate. B’Tselem commentary was cited in The Washington Post, BBC, Vox, Salon, Wire, Al-Jazeera, and Haaretz in English and Hebrew.

B’Tselem continued to document and report on Israel’s *de facto* annexation of the West Bank. Hagai El-Ad, B’Tselem’s Executive Director, wrote op-eds in Haaretz about the incompatibility of democracy and annexation and how Israel has already de facto annexed the West Bank with no diplomatic price. The Times of Israel and Jerusalem Post cited B’Tselem’s statement that “De facto annexation and the reality of Apartheid are not waiting for July 1: they have long since arrived”. The Middle East Eye reported on B’Tselem’s call to the international community to “take action against the reality already in place”.

The reality of annexation was described in B’Tselem’s October position paper, The Annexation that Was and Still Is. B’Tselem urged the international community to use its leverage to halt the ongoing *de facto* annexation and advance the end of the Israeli occupation. B’Tselem offered analysis in webinars on annexation by FMEP, IMEU/IVP, and IAI/ELIAMEP, which were viewed by 21 K people. B’Tselem’s Executive Director published op-eds about annexation in The American Prospect, Haaretz in Hebrew, English, and Arabic, 972 Magazine, and was interviewed in Haaretz. Vice published an interview with B’Tselem’s spokesperson, and B’Tselem was cited in a Guardian Podcast.

Demolitions and Threats of Expulsion in the West Bank, including East Jerusalem



Demolitions in Masafer Yatta, November 25, 2020. Photo taken from B'Tselem video footage by Nasser Nawaj'ah.

Throughout 2020, B'Tselem informed the media, the public, and the international community about the grave consequences of Israeli policies that seek to drive Palestinians out of Area C and East Jerusalem. B'Tselem documented attempts to expel communities through demolitions, confiscations, and displacements for military training in seven [short research reports](#), eight [press releases](#), 61 updates on our [Facing Expulsion](#) blog, 41 pieces of [video documentation](#), 20 Facebook posts, 33 tweets, and 11 newsletters. B'Tselem led field visits for the diplomatic community to communities threatened with expulsion in Silwan, Khan al-Ahmar, and Masafer Yatta.

The COVID pandemic did not deter Israel from intensifying [home demolitions](#) in the West Bank, including East Jerusalem. In July, B'Tselem informed the media of a [spike in demolitions](#) which left 151 Palestinians homeless, despite the danger of lacking shelter during a pandemic. B'Tselem demolition data was reported in Haaretz in [Hebrew](#) and [English](#), and [al-Monitor](#). [The Guardian](#) quoted B'Tselem's spokesperson Amit Gilutz, "For Israeli authorities, a world pandemic is no reason to stop demolishing Palestinian homes. Both in the *de facto* and *de jure* annexed West Bank and East Jerusalem, Israel left hundreds of people with no shelter during this unprecedented global health and financial time of emergency."

In January, B'Tselem published [data on demolition](#) trends in 2019. B'Tselem documented how Israel demolished a record number of homes in East Jerusalem, destroying 265 structures, also setting a record for homes demolished by their owners on Israel's orders. In the West Bank, Israel demolished 256 structures, including 106 housing units, more than it did in both 2017 and 2018. The data was shared on social media, was reported in the Israeli media, including [Times of Israel](#), [Local Call](#), and [News 1](#), in the [Independent](#), [al Jazeera](#), and [World News](#), and the media in [Spain](#), [Portugal](#), and [Turkey](#).

Throughout the year, B'Tselem published video documentation of East Jerusalem families forced to demolish their own homes, and homes and businesses demolished by the Jerusalem Municipality, including spates of demolitions in [August](#), [September](#), [October](#), and [November](#), reaching 30.1 K on Facebook and 53 K on Twitter. B'Tselem's Arabic spokesperson gave interviews about B'Tselem's work in East Jerusalem in [France 24](#), [An-Najah TV](#), and [Palestine TV](#).

When B'Tselem completed data collection for 2020, it [informed](#) the media that in 2020, more Palestinians lost their homes in the West Bank than any year since 2016, which saw the most demolitions since

B'Tselem began tracking demolitions in 2006. B'Tselem's data was reported in Haaretz in [English](#) and [Hebrew](#), [Ynet](#), [Al-Jazeera](#), [Middle East Monitor](#), [TRT](#), and [Swedish radio](#). B'Tselem's Arabic spokesperson Kareem Jubran gave several interviews about Israeli policy in the Arabic media, including [Palestine TV](#) and [Al-Araby TV](#).

B'Tselem engaged the diplomatic community and urged it to take action to prevent the expulsion of Palestinian communities. In October, B'Tselem and Breaking the Silence led a field visit to [Masafer Yatta](#) in the South Hebron Hills for diplomats representing 17 countries, ahead of a ruling expected in the coming months by Israel's High Court of Justice (HCJ) in the communities' [struggle since 2000](#) to remain on their land. The diplomats met with residents whose home Israel deemed [Firing Zone 918](#), in an attempt to drive them out. Following the visit, the EU Heads of Missions issued an [EU press release](#), calling on Israel not to demolish the communities. The Consulates of [Britain](#), [Spain](#), [Ireland](#), [France](#), and [Poland](#) publicized their participation in the tour on social media. The visit generated reports in the [Independent](#), [Telegraph](#), [Le Monde](#), [France 24](#), [Liberation](#), [Tagessanzeiger](#), [ARD](#) and [Jerusalem Post](#). An op-ed by B'Tselem field researcher Musa Abu Hashash appeared in [Hebrew](#) and [Arabic](#).

To re-engage the international efforts to keep the Bedouin community of [Khan al Ahmar](#) standing despite the High Court of Justice twice approving its demolition, B'Tselem led a field visit for 26 diplomats to the community, which experienced renewed threats following an HCJ petition by a settler association. The [UK](#) and [Ireland](#) tweeted about their visit, stating that demolishing the village would violate international law.

In October, B'Tselem launched a campaign to oppose the demolition of a school, funded by EU member states, the UK, and the EU, at the Bedouin community of [Ras a Tin](#). B'Tselem produced a video and infographics about threats to the school, distributed them on [Facebook](#) and [Twitter](#), and facilitated a media visit to the school, which generated media coverage in [Haaretz](#), [Times of Israel](#), [National News](#), and the [Japanese media](#). The video produced about the Ras al-Tin school was one of B'Tselem's most viewed videos of threatened communities, which reached 28.3 K on [Facebook](#) and had on 93 K impressions on [Twitter](#).

In November, B'Tselem informed the media that as part of Israel's efforts to take over more land, authorities [destroyed the homes](#) of 44 Palestinians and cut off entire communities from the water supply, which triggered reports in Haaretz in [Hebrew](#) and [English](#), and the [Japanese media](#). Israel Channel 11 broadcast a [TV news story](#) using B'Tselem field researcher Nasser Nawaj'ah's video documentation of demolitions in the South Hebron Hills.

On the day of the US presidential elections, the Israeli authorities perpetrated one of the largest demolitions in recent years, destroying the community of Khirbet Humsah in the Jordan Valley while attention was diverted, in an attempt to expel its residents from the area. B'Tselem alerted the media and international community to the demolition and its significance in a [press release](#), [video documentation](#), [newsletter](#), [social media](#), [photoblog](#), and [address](#) to the European Parliament Subcommittee on Human Rights, triggering publication of 25 media articles. B'Tselem documented and publicized repeated demolitions of Khirbet Humsah in the [Facing Expulsion](#) blog.

B'Tselem's analysis of the demolition was widely covered in the international media, including [BBC](#), [Guardian](#), [Independent](#), [CNN](#), [CNN](#), [AP](#), [Democracy Now](#), [NBC](#), [CBS](#), [NPR](#), and [Al-Jazeera](#) and the Israeli media, including [Haaretz](#), [i24](#), [Times of Israel](#), and [YNet](#). B'Tselem's Executive Director published op-eds in [Hebrew](#), [English](#), and [Arabic](#) in Haaretz and in [Al-Quds](#). B'Tselem also participated in a field visit by the EU and other Heads of Missions to the community. B'Tselem's Twitter reports on the community's demolition were re-tweeted by organizations like [Amnesty UK](#), [HRW](#), [ACLU](#), [MEI](#), and [NIF](#), in media including [BBC](#), [AJ+](#), [MSNBC](#), and [NBC](#), and the [French Representative Office](#). The video documentation of the demolition of Khirbet Humsah reached 48.6K on [Facebook](#) and had 356.5 K impressions on [Twitter](#), and was B'Tselem's most viewed video documentation of demolitions on Twitter in 2020.

In his November 16 [address to the European Parliament](#) Human Rights Subcommittee, B'Tselem Executive Director Hagai El-Ad called upon the international community to move from words to action and ensure that there are consequences for the Israeli policy that manifested itself in the demolition of Khirbet Humsah.

The Israeli Open-Fire Policy and the Absence of Accountability



A soldier aiming his weapon at the Abu 'Alia family while harvesting clover near Turmusaya, May 25, 2020. Photo courtesy of the family.

Throughout the year, B'Tselem published information and analysis about Palestinians killed or wounded by Israeli security forces, and the lack of accountability for Israeli policies in 21 [short research reports](#), eight pieces of [video documentation](#), 18 Facebook posts, 32 tweets, and eight newsletters. B'Tselem's investigations into the killings of five Palestinians, and severe injuries inflicted on residents of the Gaza Strip during the Great March of Return such as paralysis, loss of limbs and eyesight are described below.

In January 2021, B'Tselem published the complete [data](#) it collected on fatalities in 2020, according to which, Israeli security forces killed 27 Palestinians, seven of them minors, triggering the publication of articles in [Al-Jazeera](#) and [TRT](#). B'Tselem investigated the killings of 16 Palestinians by Israeli security forces in 2020. The killings of five, [Bader Nafle](#), [Zeid Qaysiyah](#), [Muhammad Matar](#), and [Nur Shqeir](#), were described in short research reports, while the killing of Iyad al-Halaq, a Palestinian Jerusalemite who was on the autistic spectrum, was discussed in a video production about [Palestinians killed by Israeli fire with impunity](#) which reached 29.6 K people on Facebook in [English](#), 44.5 K in [Hebrew](#), and 40.8 K on [Twitter](#). B'Tselem's commentary on the al-Haq case was cited in [Haaretz](#), [The Guardian](#), and [NPR](#).

B'Tselem's investigation into the [killing of Bader Nafle](#) during a demonstration in Qaffin against the Trump plan found that Nafleh posed no danger when he was killed. B'Tselem published video documentation of Nafle's killing, which was cited in [Haaretz's](#) report on Nafle's death. B'Tselem's investigation into the [killing of Zeid Qaysiyah](#) (17) by an Israeli sniper on the roof of his home in al-Fawar Refugee Camp determined that the teen was shot in the head while watching clashes from the roof of his home, though he posed no threat to anyone. B'Tselem's investigation was reported in [Haaretz](#) and cited by [J Street](#) and [LPHR](#). B'Tselem's investigation into the killing of [Ibrahim Abu Ya'qub](#) found that he, an uninvolved passer-by, was killed when soldiers shot at Palestinian teens suspected of throwing Molotov cocktails. B'Tselem's investigation was published in [Haaretz](#) in [English](#) and [Hebrew](#).

B'Tselem's investigation into the death of [Muhammad Matar](#) found that he was killed in an ambush before planting an explosive device by Israeli security forces who lay in wait. B'Tselem's investigation into the killing of [Nur Shqeir](#), who was shot from afar though he posed no threat, was cited by the [United Nations Security Council](#) and reported in [Haaretz](#), [Times of Israel](#), and [Israel Channel 13](#). Kareem Jubran,

B'Tselem's Arabic-language spokesperson, discussed the case on [Maan TV](#). B'Tselem's investigation into the killing of [Ali Abu Aliya](#), killed on his 15th birthday while watching clashes, was published in the [Guardian](#), [ABC](#), [Haaretz](#), and the [Jerusalem Post](#).

The media published B'Tselem's commentary on the sentence of 45 days of community service for an IDF soldier who killed a Gazan in [AP](#), [ABC](#) and [YNet](#), which quoted B'Tselem, "Enforcing a military occupation on millions of people for decades requires exorbitant violence and impunity for the soldiers who sustain it. Forty-five days of community service for killing a man is but the latest example of how the military law enforcement system is designed to protect perpetrators, not their victims."

B'Tselem also followed the Israeli MPIU investigation into the 2019 killing of [Ahmad Manasrah](#), which resulted in a conviction of the shooter by plea bargain for negligent homicide, and his sentence of three months of manual military labor. B'Tselem's analysis of the plea bargain was reported in the [Washington Post](#), [AP](#), [Yahoo](#), [Ynet](#), [Al-Jazeera](#), [Times of Israel](#), and the [Jerusalem Post](#). B'Tselem's spokesperson wrote op-eds on the case in [Hebrew](#) and [English](#), and B'Tselem's Arabic-language spokesperson discussed it on [Palestine TV](#).

B'Tselem documented the impact of the Israeli open-fire policy in Gaza. In January, B'Tselem published [Shoot and Abandon](#), which told the stories of six of the 155 amputees who lost limbs, and 27 protesters who were paralysed during the Great March of Return demonstrations by Israeli army snipers on the Gaza fence. B'Tselem's analysis of the Israeli open-fire policy in Gaza and its whitewashing of investigations informed a report in [The Independent](#), which quoted Research Director Att. Yael Stein. The [Facebook](#) post about these cases had the highest exposure of any post about Gaza reaching 24.7 K. In February, B'Tselem published [Turning a blind eye](#), testimonies collected by B'Tselem field researchers from three demonstrators who lost their vision in one eye after being hit by Israeli security forces gunfire. Also in February, B'Tselem published [video documentation](#) of a grotesque incident in which the IDF used a bulldozer to snatch the body of a Palestinian, while soldiers shot live ammunition at other Palestinians who tried to retrieve the body before the bulldozer desecrated it. The [video documentation](#) of the incident had the highest exposure of video documentation from Gaza both on [Facebook](#), reaching 50.8 K, and on [Twitter](#), with 36.9 K impressions.

2020 also saw the continuation of Israel's campaign to avoid accountability for its policies in the oPt by fighting against the International Criminal Court's (ICC) jurisdiction to investigate the situation in Palestine, following the ICC Prosecutor's decision to open an investigation into suspected war crimes in the West Bank (including East Jerusalem) and the Gaza Strip by Israel, Hamas and other Palestinian armed groups, and the ICC pre-trial chamber's ruling that it had jurisdiction to investigate the entire oPt, and that an [investigation will be launched](#).

In March, B'Tselem published a [position paper](#) that refuted the conclusion of Attorney General Dr. Avichai Mandelblit that the ICC has no jurisdiction to investigate suspected war crimes committed by Israel. B'Tselem's analysis was delivered in a [press release](#), [op-eds](#), online briefings, [webinars](#), [social media](#), and a [newsletter](#). About 50 members of the international community participated in B'Tselem's virtual presentation of the position paper. B'Tselem's Executive Director wrote several op-eds in [Haaretz](#), including about the [exploitation of the Holocaust](#) to deny Palestinians justice through the ICC and about the threat of an ICC investigation to [restrain Israel](#). El-Ad critiqued Germany's decision to oppose ICC jurisdiction in the oPt in an op-ed in [972 Magazine](#). El-Ad noted in an [FMEP webinar](#) that there is a coordinated Israeli-American campaign to threaten and undermine the ICC.

Settler Violence Backed by the State



Armed Israeli settler accompanied by soldiers threaten Palestinian farmers near a-Tawani, South Hebron Hills, April 18, 2020.
Still frame from a video shot by volunteer Basel-Al-Adrah.

B'Tselem's field researchers documented [248 incidents](#) of settler violence against Palestinians in the West Bank, including physical assaults, stone-throwing, and attacks against farmers. 72 of these incidents occurred in the presence of security forces, who did not intervene to stop the assaults. B'Tselem published documentation and analysis of state-backed settler violence in [10 short research reports](#), [161 settler violence blog posts](#), [26 pieces of video documentation](#), and seven newsletters. B'Tselem also published 43 Facebook posts about settler violence, including 16 pieces of video documentation, with an average reach of 8.5 K, and a total reach of 368.8K, and 69 Twitter posts, including 21 videos, with 23.5 K average impressions and 1.6 million total impressions.

B'Tselem published special projects with interactive maps and [video documentation](#) of the damage to Palestinian farmers during the [2019](#) and [2020](#) olive harvests. The interactive maps document settler assaults on harvesters, damage to trees and equipment, olive theft, and military prevention of harvest. The projects were shared in a [newsletter](#), [Facebook](#), and [Twitter](#).

B'Tselem launched a blog to document incidents of state-backed [settler violence](#) in the shadow of the COVID crisis and updated the blog with 161 incidents documented by its field researchers, including 80 with testimonies, 129 with pictures, and 26 with video documentation. The blog maps incidents of settler violence around the West Bank on an interactive map categorized by seven categories of assault. The medium of the blog was chosen to publicize dozens of incidents of settler violence rapidly and efficiently.

B'Tselem held a joint field visit for diplomats together with Israeli NGO Yesh-Din and led [online briefings](#) on settler violence with Breaking the Silence in [Hebrew](#) for the Israeli public and in [English](#) for the international community, also in cooperation with Yesh Din. 500 people attended these webinars, and they were viewed 17.6 K times on Facebook.

B'Tselem's documentation and analysis were prominent in the media, including in a [Haaretz](#) report which apparently prompted [50 Members of US Congress](#) to author a public letter calling on President Trump's ambassador to Israel, David Friedman, to denounce violence committed by Israeli settlers against Palestinian civilians in the West Bank.

[Haaretz](#) and the [Jerusalem Post](#) reported on B'Tselem's analysis that the surge in settler attacks on Palestinians "is part of Israel's strategy to encourage the dispossession of Palestinians from growing areas throughout the West Bank, which paves the state's way to take over more land and resources." [RFI](#) quoted B'Tselem, "The settlers enjoy almost total impunity, which is why violence is increasing." B'Tselem's Arabic spokesperson gave interviews about settler violence on Palestine Radio and [Palestine TV](#). B'Tselem social media coordinator published an op-ed in the [Sting](#) in [Hebrew](#) and [Arabic](#).

The video documentation of incidents of settler violence with the highest exposure was a Palestinian man's emotional reaction to the destruction of 300 of his olive trees, which reached 264.3 K on Facebook and got 718.9 K Twitter impressions. It was retweeted by Ahmad Tibi, Marc Lamont Hill, Yousef Munayyer, Ben White, Lara Friedman, and Irish Senator Frances Black.



Screenshot from video documentation of settler invasion of Susiya from June 12, shot by Nasser Nawaj'ah.

The Siege on the Gaza Strip



A Gazan family enjoys precious water, east of Deir Al-Balah in the Gaza Strip. Photo by Emad Badwan.

2020 saw no relief in Israel's policy of isolation and blockade, which has left the Gaza Strip, with nearly two million inhabitants, on the perpetual brink of a humanitarian crisis, and uniquely vulnerable to COVID. B'Tselem published information and analysis of the impact of Israeli policies in the Gaza Strip in a press release, 10 short research reports, five pieces of video documentation, an International Women's

Day project, a video production about the Sharaf Factory, and Thirsty, a photoblog on the impact of the water shortage on Gazans. B'Tselem published this information in 16 Facebook posts, including four pieces of video documentation, with an average reach of 14.25 K, and a total reach of 228.1K, and 26 Twitter posts, including 8 videos, with 15.9K average impressions and 414 K total impressions.

B'Tselem documented the impact of the Israeli siege on the supply of water and electricity in the Gaza Strip. In August, B'Tselem published a short research report on the scarcity of clean water in the Gaza Strip and shared the stories of five Gazans who struggle to obtain clean water for their family. It was accompanied by a photoblog, Thirsty, depicting how Gazan's deal with the water shortage, integrated with testimonies of Gazan residents. In October, B'Tselem reported on the cruel and deliberate Israeli policy limiting the electricity supply to the Gaza Strip. B'Tselem published testimonies from residents describing how their lives are impacted by an erratic and inadequate electricity supply. Older and disabled Gazan's explained how their mobility is restricted by the lack of electricity. B'Tselem stated that Israel cannot shirk its responsibility for creating this reality.

B'Tselem also documented the impact of the siege on Gazans' ability to earn a living. In September, it published testimonies by wives and mothers of Gazan fishermen and fishmongers describing their painful reality and uncertain future. B'Tselem also produced a video about the Sharaf Factory, which has been reduced to ruin under Israel's blockade, compounded by the COVID crises, and distributed on Facebook and Twitter. To mark International Women's Day, B'Tselem highlighted five stories of female entrepreneurship and ingenuity in Gaza in Overcoming the Odds, including women who earn their livelihoods through catering, drawing on glass, sheep farming, beekeeping, and farming. These stories, including two video productions, were also shared in the newsletter and on Facebook reaching 53.5 K and Twitter, reaching 19.5 K.

B'Tselem screened a collection of video documentation from the Gaza Strip for the Israeli public at the virtual Solidarity Festival, and provided a rare opportunity for conversation in Hebrew between B'Tselem field researcher Khaled al-'Azayzeh and dozens of Israeli viewers.



Gaza residents buy unregulated water from tankers, much of which is unfit for consumption. Photo by Emad Badwan.

East Jerusalem



Aerial view of al-'Esawiyah from 'Land Grab' produced for the release of the report, 'This is Jerusalem'

B'Tselem documented and published information and analysis about Israeli's policies of violence and dispossession in East Jerusalem, with a focus on the campaign of Israeli police violence in the neighbourhood of al-'Esawiyah. This included four [short research reports](#), one [comprehensive report](#), two [press releases](#), two [video productions](#), nine pieces of [video documentation](#), a social media campaign of eight Facebook posts, eight tweets, and four newsletters.

In May, ahead of Jerusalem Day, the Israeli holiday marking the annexation of East Jerusalem, B'Tselem published the comprehensive report, [This is Jerusalem: Violence and Dispossession in al-'Esawiyah](#). The report describes the Israeli takeover of 90% of al-Esawiyah land since 1967, its no-planning policy, which sentences thousands of families forced to build homes without permits to a life under constant threat of demolition or fines, and the violent police operation conducted in the neighbourhood in 2019-20. [The Independent](#), [Middle East Monitor](#) and [972 Magazine](#) published B'Tselem research on police raids al-Esawiyah undertaken in spite of the COVID lockdown.

The report was launched with a [press release](#), videos produced on [seizure of land](#) and [collective punishment](#), and a new map depicting [the Israeli takeover of al-'Esawiyah land](#), and distributed in a [newsletter](#) and [social media](#). B'Tselem launched 'This is Jerusalem' in a virtual briefing with three Palestinian representatives of the neighbourhood, attended by 90 members of the international community and media. B'Tselem also held a webinar for the Israeli public in which community leader Muhammad Abu-Hummous and Eyal Hareuveni, the report's author, presented its conclusions to an audience of 60. Hareuveni was interviewed for a magazine feature in [Zman Israel](#), and authored an op-ed for [Ha-Makom](#). B'Tselem Executive Director was interviewed in Al-Jazeera and B'Tselem Arabic spokesperson was interviewed on [Kan Radio](#). B'Tselem's analysis was published in Haaretz in [Hebrew](#) and in [English](#), [Local Call](#) and the [Jerusalem Post](#). The report was accompanied by a social media campaign that reached 600 K people, with 16 social media posts, including two videos, distributed on Facebook and Twitter. On Facebook, the campaign reached 211K people in Hebrew and 102K people in English. The Twitter campaign in Hebrew, English, and Arabic about the [arrests of minors](#), [police violence](#), [land confiscation](#), and [Jewish supremacy](#) had 288 K impressions.

To shed light on Israel's attempts to expel Palestinian communities from their homes to clear the way for Jewish settlers, B'Tselem led two in-person field visits to Silwan for 45 diplomats, jointly with Peace Now and Ir Amim. Ahead of one field visit, B'Tselem organized a virtual briefing on the legal basis for transferring Palestinians out of their homes with Peace Now and Ir Amim for 15 diplomats based in Israel and the West Bank.

2020 IN SUMMARY

B'Tselem published information and analysis of the impact of Israeli policies in the oPt

- B'Tselem field researchers collected 891 field reports and testimonies from Palestinians (579 men and 145 women), victims or witnesses of human rights violations.
- B'Tselem updated statistics on fatalities and home demolitions, based on field work, and published official figures on Palestinian detainees and prisoners in Israeli custody 12 times in 2020, and updated other statistics periodically.
- B'Tselem published 72 short research reports about the impact of Israeli policy in the oPt.
- B'Tselem launched a new blog on settler violence backed by the state and posted 161 updates.
- B'Tselem published 60 updates about attempts to expel Palestinian communities from Area C on its Facing Expulsion blog.
- B'Tselem published a comprehensive research report, Violence and Dispossession in al-'Esawiyah.
- B'Tselem published two position papers, one on the ICC, Israeli Attorney General's memorandum and the other on The Annexation That Was and Still Is.
- B'Tselem published 5 photo-blogs: Walls of Batan al-Hawa, Corona in Bethlehem, If You Build It, They Will Come, Thirsty and An Entire Community Demolished.
- To mark International Women's Day, B'Tselem published Overcoming the Odds which highlights stories of female entrepreneurship and ingenuity, including women who earn their livelihoods through catering, drawing on glass, sheep farming, beekeeping and farming.
- To mark International Workers Day, B'Tselem published testimonies of Palestinian workers harmed by the COVID crisis.
- B'Tselem added French and Spanish to its innovative interactive map, Conquer and Divide, developed with Forensic Architecture, illustrating Israel's fragmentation of the oPt since 1967.

B'Tselem documentation and analysis of Israeli policies in the oPt was cited in the media

- B'Tselem issued 21 press releases in Hebrew, Arabic and English to 2.1 K journalists, experts, policy makers, and diplomats.
- B'Tselem conducted 9 field visits for dozens of journalists, including to Hebron, Kafr Qadum, Silwan, The Jordan Valley, Khan al Ahmar and Masafer Yatta (Firing Zone 918).
- B'Tselem had dozens of citations in the international media, including The Washington Post, Guardian, BBC, Independent, CNN, Telegraph, Le Monde, Al-Jazeera, Democracy Now, NPR, AP, NBC, CBS, ABC, Vox, Salon, and The Wire. B'Tselem was also cited in media in additional languages like Spanish, French, German, Portuguese, Swedish, Japanese and Turkish.
- B'Tselem was widely cited in the Israeli media in Hebrew, including Haaretz, Channel 12, and Walla, and in English, including Haaretz, Jerusalem Post and the Times of Israel.
- B'Tselem frequently appeared in the Palestinian media, including Al-Quds newspaper.

- 22 op-eds by B'Tselem staff were published in the media, including in Haaretz in Hebrew and English, YNet and Ynetnews, Haaretz, Channels 11, 12, 13, Walla, Haaretz, and 972 magazine, the Times of Israel, Local Call, HaMakom, and HaOkets.
- B'Tselem staff were quoted dozens of times by Hebrew and English media, including a featured interview with B'Tselem Director in Haaretz, and quotes in NPR, Al-Jazeera, Vice, and podcasts on the Guardian and Inside and Out radio.
- '100 interviews were published in the Arabic media, including Palestine TV, France 24 Arabic and Al-Jazeera.
- The UN Special Rapporteur on the oPt cited B'Tselem in his report to the HRC, and the UN Special Committee to Investigate Israeli Practices cited B'Tselem in its report to the Secretary General.
- CIVICUS State of Civil Society Report used analysis by B'Tselem to determine that the civic space in Israel is obstructed and is repressed in the oPt.

B'Tselem advocated for international action to end the occupation

- B'Tselem staff shared information and analysis and advocated its positions with 1000+ members of the international community in approximately 100 meetings, briefings, webinars, field visits, and events. Among the audiences engaged were government officials, UN agencies, think tanks, faith groups and international organizations from the European Union and 20 countries. B'Tselem met with approximately 500 members of the international community, in meetings and briefings, and addressed 375 members of the international community in virtual briefings.
- B'Tselem's Executive Director addressed the European Parliament Subcommittee on Human Rights.
- B'Tselem led seven in person field visits and 2 virtual field visits for diplomats. The live field visits were to Silwan, the Jerusalem periphery, Turmusaya and Burin. Masafer Yatta, and Khan al Ahmar. The virtual field visits were to Khan al Ahmar and Turmusaya. 100 diplomats attended these field visits.
- B'Tselem organized four virtual briefings, including on the ICC position paper, the al-'Esawiyah report, the annexation position paper, and on state-backed settler violence under COVID. 260 members of the international community participated in these briefings.
- B'Tselem organized virtual briefings in cooperation with other organizations. These included a briefing on the Gaza health system under coronavirus and blockade, with Physicians for Human Rights Israel, attended by about 100 internationals, and a briefing on the legal basis for transferring Palestinians with Peace Now and Ir Amim, attended by 15 diplomats.
- B'Tselem held public webinars on settler violence in Hebrew and English together with Breaking the Silence and Yesh Din, attended by 500 members of the public, and viewed on Facebook by 17.6 K.
- B'Tselem offered analysis in webinars on the ICC by FMEP, and on annexation by IMEU/JVP, and IAI/ELIAMEP (2), which were viewed 21 K times.

- B'Tselem travelled to 4 cities in Europe and the US to meet with policymakers and civil society before the COVID pandemic broke out.

B'Tselem's website and social media informed more than a million people about Israeli policies in the oPt:

- Pages on B'Tselem's trilingual website were viewed 1.17 million times by 520 K users in 2020. 89.5% were new users.
- B'Tselem's largest website audiences were in Israel (24%), the USA (22%) Palestine (8%) the UK (8%) and France (3%),
- B'Tselem's social media network grew to 317,355 K followers, including 85,481K on Facebook in Hebrew, 116,337 K in English, 66.1 K on Twitter, 44.2K on YouTube, and 5,237 K on Instagram.
- B'Tselem's videos were viewed 1,905,987 times on its YouTube channel.
- B'Tselem posted 151 tweets on Twitter, with 1.8 million impressions to tweets in 2020.
- B'Tselem made 350 Facebook posts, which reached 5.4 million people (181 in Hebrew, reaching 2.8 million and 169 in English, reaching 2.6 million).
- B'Tselem's videos reached 2.5 million total, 883K in English and 1.65 million in Hebrew.
- The highest viewed videos on Facebook in English were 300 olive trees, which reached 262.7K, Body snatching, reaching 50.7 K, Israel demolished an entire village, which reached 47.4K.
- The highest viewed videos on Facebook in Hebrew were 300 Olive Trees, which reached 637.2K, This is Jerusalem reaching 47.4 K, Whitewash reaching 44.3 K,
- The most viewed Facebook posts in Hebrew were Dying Palestinian security risk, reaching 48.4K, Soldiers kill Ibrahim Abu Ya'qub which reached 38 K, and How was your June?, reaching 31.8 K.
- The most viewed Facebook posts in English were Not peace, but Apartheid, with 197 K reach, Israel confiscates tents for clinic, with 139.4.K reach, and Ras al-Tin school, which reached 78.5 K.

B'Tselem harnessed the power of video for the struggle for human rights, with the help of Palestinian volunteers who document their lives under occupation.

- B'Tselem worked with 167 Palestinian volunteers, 113 men and 54 women. 108 volunteers, 65 women and 43 men, participated in training sessions in 2020.
- B'Tselem catalogued and added 280 video titles to our video archive in 2020.
- B'Tselem published 99 videos, including 88 pieces of raw footage and 11 narrated videos.
- B'Tselem held 4 screenings of 'Of Land and Bread' in Norway, Croatia, Finland, and online at Visions du reel International Documentary Festival.