



2017 Annual Report

2017 had the dubious distinction of marking the 50th anniversary of Israel's occupation of the West Bank, including East Jerusalem, and the Gaza Strip. After half a century, during which Israel's policies have created profound changes that indicate long-term intentions, it is clear that this reality cannot be viewed as temporary. In 2017, B'Tselem continued to document and publicize human rights violations, while exposing the injustice, violence and dispossession at the very core of the occupation regime, challenging its legitimacy in Israel and abroad, and helping to expedite its end.

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2017 in Numbers

B'Tselem collected and published credible, current information on human rights violations in the Occupied Palestinian Territories (oPt), informing public and policy discourse.

- B'Tselem field researchers collected **1,459** field reports, including **292** reports and **1,167** testimonies from victims and witnesses of human rights violations (860 from men and 307 from women), and vetted and cataloged them in our digital, searchable database.
- B'Tselem data coordinators analyzed and cross-checked information, and published **144 short research updates** on incidents of human rights violations, as well as analysis of phenomenon and trends.
- B'Tselem data coordinators filed 15 **Freedom of Information requests**: 7 to the Israel Prison Service (IPS), 6 to the I.D.F. Spokesperson, 1 to the Ministry of Environmental Protection and 1 to the Israeli Civil Administration.
- B'Tselem's data coordinators compiled **statistics** on [fatalities](#) and [demolitions](#), and published statistics on [detainees and prisoners](#) collected from the Israel Prison Services and military.
- B'Tselem published **3** in-depth research reports: [Getting Off Scot-Free: Israel's Refusal to Compensate Palestinians for Damages Caused by Its Security Forces](#), [Unprotected: Detention of Palestinian Teenagers in East Jerusalem](#) and [Made in Israel: Exploiting Palestinian Land for Treatment of Israeli Waste](#).

B'Tselem continued to harness the power of video for the struggle for human rights, with the support of 160 Palestinian volunteers, documenting their lives under occupation.

- B'Tselem's video department conducted **17** group workshops and discussions and **33** one-on-one trainings for video volunteers, with at least 110 volunteers. 49% of training sessions included women.
- B'Tselem's video volunteers and field researchers sent in **335** camera memory cards from the West Bank, each containing documentation of 1-5 events.
- B'Tselem's video department published **72** videos of raw footage and [short productions](#) from the West Bank and the [Gaza Strip](#) on digital platforms.
- The videos most viewed in 2017 were [Soldiers drag 8-year-old from home to home looking for stone-throwers, Hebron](#), [Life under occupation in Hebron: Soldiers harass teachers and school children](#), and [Extrajudicial killing in broad daylight, Hebron](#).
- The short film "[The Boy from H2](#)" was screened in 10 festivals and several special events, including the [Berlin Festival](#), [Palm Springs International Shortfest](#), [Melbourne International Film Festival \(MIFF\)](#) and the [Duhok](#) festival in Iraqi Kurdistan.
- Two video blogs by women volunteers from the Jordan Valley, [A Dream that Will Never Come True](#) and [A Weekend Visit Home](#), were screened in the Solidarity Film Festival in Tel Aviv.

B'Tselem's materials triggered wide media coverage, respected domestically and internationally as a central source of information for media correspondents.

- B'Tselem issued **38** [press releases](#) in Hebrew, Arabic and English to 2,200 journalists.
- B'Tselem's spokesperson provided ongoing assistance in preparing stories on human rights topics, including **100** + individual briefings and answers to queries from journalists.
- B'Tselem staff were interviewed on TV, radio and newspapers at on at least **50** occasions.
- B'Tselem was referenced **hundreds** of times in the Israeli, Palestinian and international media, including references in mainstream publications such as *the New York Times*, *the Guardian*, *the BBC*, *the Washington Post*, *the Wall Street Journal*, and all major Israeli and Palestinian news outlets, as well as in radio and TV stations and agencies such as *the Associated Press*.
- **17** op-eds by B'Tselem staff were published in Israeli and foreign media. Many of the op-eds were also translated and published in English and Arabic, and in a few cases, in Flemish, German and Swedish.

B'Tselem's social media reach is wider than ever, reaching millions in Israel and internationally, triggering discourse on human right, and serving as grassroots outreach.

- B'Tselem's social media network grew by **14%** in 2017. **246 K+** people are subscribed to B'Tselem's social media platforms, with **30 K +** joining in 2017. This includes **86 K+** on the [Hebrew Facebook page](#), over **109,500** on the [English Facebook page](#), **40,200** on [Twitter](#), over **9,200** on [YouTube](#), and **740** on B'Tselem's new [Instagram](#) account.
- B'Tselem posted **252** updates on its Hebrew FB page and **209** updates on its English FB page, including videos, links and photos. On average, each post in B'Tselem's [Hebrew FB](#) reached **26,172** people, and each post on the [English FB](#) reached nearly **46,666** people.
- B'Tselem's videos were viewed **2,786,643** times on Facebook (FB) in addition to **155,700 views** on Twitter and **1,682,914** on B'Tselem's YouTube channel, one of Israel's most popular non-profit channels.
- B'Tselem tweeted **1,050** times on its [Twitter page](#), which gained a cumulative nearly **8,300,000** impressions. Twitter grew by **25%** when **8,200** people became followers in 2017, bringing the total **40,200+**. The most popular tweet was [Israeli border police trying to arrest 3 Palestinian children](#), gaining **180k** impressions
- In 2017, B'Tselem launched its new [website](#), which was updated with current information and analysis and was rebuilt to seamlessly integrate different media, enhance video display, and improve visual appeal.
- B'Tselem's website pages in Hebrew, Arabic and English, were viewed **1,013,444** times during **501,019** sessions (of them, 72.47% by first time visitors) by **368,420** visitors. Of these, **29.4%** were from Israel, **18.1%** from North America, **8.3%** from the Palestinian territories, and **15.5%** from Europe.
- B'Tselem's public outreach department issued digital newsletters in Hebrew and English to a distribution list of **30,000** people, with **5,000** new subscribers in 2017, with an open rate averaging **19%**.

B'Tselem leveraged its leading position to advocate with a clear voice with hundreds of influential internationals in Israel, the oPt and abroad for action against the occupation.

- B'Tselem staff shared information and advocated our positions in **160** meetings, briefings, roundtables, panels, and events for the international community, counting diplomats, government officials, UN agencies, clergy and international organizations.
- B'Tselem held a briefing on [Getting Off Scot Free](#) for the international community and journalists, a press conference for journalists on the report [Made in Israel: Exploiting Palestinian Land for Treatment of Israeli Waste](#), and a briefing to 35 diplomats and representatives of international organizations, including UN agencies, on the report [Unprotected: Detention of Palestinian Teenagers in East Jerusalem](#).
- B'Tselem held **23** field visits to the West Bank including East Jerusalem, with diplomats, visiting government officials and international groups.
- B'Tselem staff visited **14** cities on advocacy missions, including **3** visits to Brussels, meeting policymakers and the international public in dozens of meetings and events.
- B'Tselem participated in 25 + events in Israel and around the world commemorating the occupation's 50th anniversary.

On June 5, 2017, we marked fifty years since Israel first occupied the West Bank (including East Jerusalem) and the Gaza Strip. A third, even fourth, generation of Palestinians and Israelis have been born into this reality, and it is the only one they have ever known. It is a reality in which entire generations of Palestinians have never lived free; and entire generations of Israelis don't know what it's like not to be occupiers. It is a reality in which Israel controls over 13 million people between the Mediterranean Sea and the Jordan River, yet only eight million of them determine the future of the area. It is a reality that makes it impossible to call Israel a democracy.

This bleak picture is what B'Tselem is fighting against. We are working to secure a different future altogether, a future based on human rights, democracy, liberty and equality. There are various political scenarios that could accomplish this goal. While it is not B'Tselem's place to say which scenario is best, one thing is certain: continued occupation is not an option.

How has the occupation reached the 50-year mark?

Perhaps because we convinced ourselves that it's all temporary. But Israel's governments actions suggest that they've never considered the occupation temporary. For years and years, Israeli policy used the land and its resources as its own, dispossessing and disregarding almost all the needs of the Palestinian population.

Perhaps it's because the occupation doesn't really affect us in our day-to-day lives as Israeli citizens. We created a military law enforcement system that ensures that none of those responsible for the continued occupation or its inherent human rights violations will be held accountable. We've amended the law so that we almost never have to pay out damages to any Palestinian harmed by our actions. We also get a legal stamp of approval, including from the Supreme Court, greenlighting everything that happens under occupation: the land grab, roadblocks, home demolitions, a ten-year blockade on the Gaza Strip, to name but a few.

Or perhaps it's because none of this stand in the way of continued widespread international economic, cultural, moral, diplomatic support for Israel. The international context also plays a role in us not having to bear any costs for the occupation.

The occupation must end. This reality – wherein we control millions of people, whose lives are subject to our wants and needs – is entirely unjustifiable and unacceptable, not even by citing security considerations which now ring hollow. A continuation of the situation wrongly called the “status quo” ensures a continued downward spiral into an inherently violent, unjust and hopeless reality.

The present reality is not the same as that of a generation or two ago, or of fifty years ago. This is why we at B'Tselem have modified our approach to the struggle for human rights. In our view, reporting the truth combined with international action that resonates locally are what might change the present reality. This is the objective we are committed to and are working towards. Otherwise, the violence of the past half century - both organized and spontaneous - might be just a preview of much more to come.

The effort to achieve a different future here is not only a pressing moral task, lives depend on it. Working together we trust that we will yet see the realization of a different future, one based on liberty, equality and human rights.

Marking the 50th year of the Occupation

B'Tselem marked the 50th year of the occupation with a conference in Israel's *Knesset*, a photography exhibition for the Israeli public, events in Israel and abroad, a social media campaign, and media work to invigorate public discourse on the occupation and the need to end it as an essential requirement for any human rights-based future.

Photography Exhibit

In November, B'Tselem invited the public to the photography exhibition [“50 Years: Fifty Portraits of Palestinians Born in 1967”](#), which presented 50 portraits of women and men from the West Bank, including East Jerusalem, and the Gaza Strip, who have lived their entire lives under occupation. The portraits were shot by leading Israeli and Palestinian photographers and artists, and was accompanied by a catalogue.

The exhibition launch was accompanied by an advertising campaign in print, interactive and on social media like [Facebook](#) and [Twitter](#). The opening event attracted over 400 people, and thousands visited it during the month it was presented. The exhibition received wide coverage in the media, with reports appearing in [Ha'aretz](#), [i24 News](#) and [The Jerusalem Post](#), among others. B'Tselem arranged for all the Palestinian portrait subjects and photographers to attend the exhibition's opening, but Israel [denied permits](#) for 22 people. B'Tselem held a series of events surrounding the exhibition, including a Gallery Talk, which brought together people from the art and culture world to discuss the intersection of arts and politics.

In December, The European Union Delegation to Israel held an [International Human Rights Day](#) event at the photography exhibit, with 16 ambassadors to Israel from EU countries, including Emanuele Giaufret, the head of the EU Delegation, participating, and several making remarks expressing commitment to human rights. The EU Human Rights Day event was widely reported, after the Israeli Foreign Ministry spokesman Emanuel Nahshon, referred to it as [“Spitting in Israel’s face”](#). Debates appeared on television, including channels 10, 20 and [i24](#), radio stations (*Kan – Reshet Bet*, Army radio – Galatz,) and [Haaretz](#) newspaper among others.

Knesset Conference

Together with Members of Knesset Ayman Odeh, Dov Khenin, Ksenia Svetlova, and Michal Rosin, B'Tselem helped organize a conference on the impact of the occupation, ahead of its 50th anniversary. The February 15 conference, entitled, ‘Not in a Democracy: 50 Years of Occupation’, was addressed by B'Tselem director Hagai El-Ad and numerous representatives of civil society. B'Tselem’s video [Just Another Day](#) was screened. Press coverage included the [Jerusalem Post](#), in which El-Ad is quoted.

Social Media Campaign

To mark the occupation's 50th anniversary, B'Tselem organized a [campaign](#) calling on the public to send a letter to Israeli Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu, telling him that democracy means not controlling another people. The letter noted, ‘For fifty years, Israel has controlled another people, denying them liberty and the right to self-determination. This makes Israel non-democratic, as the very essence of democracy is the rule of the people – not the rule of one people over another. Thirteen million individuals live between the Mediterranean Sea and the Jordan River, but only eight million of them are permitted to participate in determining their fate or influencing decisions that affect their future’.

On June 4, B'Tselem opened the occupation's 50th year with a series of videos summarizing data about the occupation. The videos were distributed through our social media platforms, with 240K followers. The videos opened with the message – ‘49 Years, 11 months, 30 days and 10 hours of Occupation have passed. Tomorrow we will sadly mark 50 years of the Israeli occupation of the Palestinian people’. The videos focused on [settlements](#) and [land](#) - with the message that using a variety of measures, Israel has taken over more than 90,000 hectares of Palestinian lands, [home demolitions](#) - with the message that using bureaucratic excuses and often violating International Humanitarian Law, Israel demolished Palestinian homes in the West Bank, including East Jerusalem, [Freedom of Movement](#) - with the message that for 50 years Palestinians' freedom of movement has been restricted or denied by Israel, [Operation Protective Edge](#), noting that over 500 children and teenagers were killed in the



operation, and [significant events](#) in the history of the occupation, highlighting the *Intifada* in 1987 and the Oslo agreements in 1993.

Events Around the World

Throughout 2017, B'Tselem Executive Director Hagai El-Ad and other staff members traveled to destinations around the world to participate in events to mark 50 years since Israel's occupied the Palestinian territories.

In April, the New Israel Fund UK and *Yachad* organized an evening in London reflecting on the 50th anniversary of the occupation with El-Ad and others. The event noted that, now in its 50th year, the occupation has eroded Israel's moral fiber, and throws an increasingly long shadow on the country's international standing. The visit was followed by an [interview with El-Ad](#) in the Jewish Chronicle.



El-Ad at the Danish parliament, Copenhagen, June 9

On June 1, El-Ad met with Danish Minister of Foreign Affairs Anders Samuelsen in Copenhagen and Danish Foreign Ministry officials and parliamentarians. Later that day, El-Ad and Shawan Jabarin, the general director of Palestinian human rights NGO Al-Haq, met with the young leadership of two political parties and the staff of DanChurchAid. That evening, both spoke at the '50 Years of Occupation' event hosted by leading Danish newspaper Politiken, moderated by Middle East correspondent Anders Jerichow. Nearly 150 people attended the event. On June 2, in Brussels, El-Ad spoke to representatives of EU member states to the European Union, in a meeting of the Political and Security Committee (PSC), the body tasked with monitoring the implementation of EU foreign and security policy.

On June 2, in Brussels, El-Ad spoke to representatives of EU member states to the European Union, in a meeting of the Political and Security Committee (PSC), the body tasked with monitoring the implementation of EU foreign and security policy. He then spoke at a press conference in Brussels organized by EuroMed Rights entitled "Israel & OPT: 50 years of Occupation, 50 years of Impunity". [Videos](#) of daily life of Palestinians under occupation were screened. You can watch his address [here](#).

El-Ad argued that "the oppression of one people by another is violence, is organised state violence enacted by Israel every day for every second of the last 50 years." He stated that Israel "still somehow remains a democracy in the eyes of the world," stating that "Europe bears unique responsibility for the security of Israelis, but it cannot be the justification for the oppression of Palestinians. In fact, [this] is the basis for our insecurity". He stressed that "taking a position against the occupation is not anti-Israeli, taking a position against the occupation is for the future of Palestinians, is for the future of Israelis, it is for justice."

On June 6, El-Ad participated in an event at the [BOZAR](#) Center in Brussels, together with B'Tselem researcher Adam Aloni, who spoke alongside Issa Amro of Youth Against Settlements. Aloni also spoke at events at [the Vooruit](#), and [at Elcker-Ik](#) in the Belgian cities of Ghent and Antwerp. El-Ad later participated in meetings of the MaMa and COHOM Middle East foreign policy groups hosted by the Malta delegation, the holder of the presidency of the council of the European Union at the time, as well as in meetings with European Union officials. On June 7, El-Ad spoke at an event at the Swedish parliament to an audience of dozens of parliamentarians, activists, and journalists.

El-Ad addressed an event in the Danish parliament on June 9, organized by 4 political parties. In his remarks, El-Ad said: "For every moment of the last fifty years, we have all lived - and too many of us have died - in violence. It permeates the air in the occupied territories - for the oppression of one people by another is, by definition, violence. It can take the form of a bureaucrat denying a permit, or a soldier squeezing a trigger. Either way, every single day, it is violence - and it must end.... The non-violent path to ending the occupation at the present time is international

action against it. Without international action, the violence will go on unabated, and so will the oppression, the injustice and the fear. Upholding human rights and fundamental freedoms is a human responsibility anywhere and at any time.” You can [read](#) his remarks.

On June 29, El-Ad participated in the United Nations Forum to Mark Fifty Years of Occupation organized by the UN's Committee on the Exercise of the Inalienable Rights of the Palestinian People at the UN headquarters in New York. B'Tselem's participation was reported in YNet in [English](#) and [Hebrew](#).



El-Ad at the UNHCHR event in Geneva

In November, El-Ad addressed [Accountability at 50 Years: Pursuing Justice in the Occupied Palestinian Territory](#), organized by the Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Human Rights and The Graduate Institute in Geneva.

Media Surrounding the 50th Anniversary

In February, Ha'aretz published a major interview with El-Ad in [English](#) and [Hebrew](#). El-Ad then published a series of op-eds in the months leading up to the occupation's 50th anniversary questioning Israel's democratic character. On March 30, the *Jerusalem Post* published the op-ed, [‘The Only Democracy...Right’](#), describing the legal scaffolding built to construct an undemocratic reality in Israel. In April, El-Ad published an op-ed in *Ha'aretz* asking, [If the World Ignores Its Own Decisions, Why Shouldn't Israel?](#) Global Research Canada published an [interview](#) with B'Tselem spokesman Amit Gilutz about B'Tselem's hope that UN resolution 2334 will be implemented. B'Tselem's staff and board members published op-eds highlighting the consequences of 50 years of occupation, in [Ha'aretz](#), and [+972](#). On May 31, [Le Monde](#) published a profile and interview with El-Ad and the directors of Peace Now and Breaking the Silence, as NGO's called a 'fifth column'. [Asaf Harel](#), an Israeli TV host, acknowledged B'Tselem's key role in reflecting the truths of occupation to Israeli society and rejected the comparison between 'extreme left and extreme right.'

Reports Published in 2017

Getting Off Scot-Free

In March, B'Tselem published [Getting Off Scot-Free: Israel's Refusal to Compensate Palestinians for Damages Caused by Its Security Forces](#). The report revealed how Israel's legal system effectively bars compensation to Palestinians, which creates a nearly blanket exemption from its obligation under international law to pay compensation to Palestinians harmed by its security forces. B'Tselem traces the development of this policy, and illustrates how it has led to a 95% drop in the number of claims for damages Palestinians filed in recent years. Israel's policy reflects how little value it places on the lives, health and property of Palestinians living under its control.



Through these actions, Israel has negated the price to be paid for harm to Palestinians while maintaining the facade of a functioning justice system. Data concerning compensation suits filed against the state by Palestinians from the West Bank and Gaza show a decline of more than 80% in sums paid between 2012 and 2016 compared to the early 2000's. Concurrently, Palestinians stopped filing new claims with the courts almost entirely.

B'Tselem produced three videos telling the stories of [Ata Sabah](#), [Bahaa Islim](#) and [Basmah Mansur](#), Palestinians who were wounded by security forces, but did not receive compensation from Israel for their debilitating injuries. To

launch the report, B'Tselem held a diplomatic briefing and press conference attended by diplomats and journalists. The report garnered media coverage in Israel, in [Walla](#) (Hebrew), [the Jerusalem Post](#), [972](#), [Haaretz](#) and [IBA](#). Report author, Att. Yael Stein, was interviewed in [Al Jazeera](#) after the network published [an update](#) on the report, and coverage appeared in the international media in [Spanish](#), [Turkish](#) and [French](#). B'Tselem published Facebook posts in [Hebrew](#) and [English](#), informing the public on the policies exposed in the report, that reached 10K viewers each.

Made in Israel: Exploiting Palestinian Land for Treatment of Israeli Waste

In 2017, B'Tselem revealed another systematic violation of International Law by Israel. In the report, [Made in Israel: Exploiting Palestinian Land for Treatment of Israeli Waste](#), published in December, B'Tselem described how a significant portion of Israel's waste treatment system is located outside its sovereign borders, in the West Bank.

As explained in the report, Israel abuses its status as an occupying power to implement less stringent environmental regulations for industrial zones in settlements, making it more profitable for Israeli companies to build and operate waste treatment facilities in the West Bank than inside Israel, and even offers tax breaks and government subsidies. The lax regulatory standards increase potential environmental and health hazards for West Bank residents. These findings and analysis are new, and little has been written about this before.



B'Tselem launched the report in a press conference, following which, its findings were reported in the Israeli media in [The Jerusalem Post](#), [+972 Magazine](#), [Ha'aretz](#) and [Ynet](#). The report's author Adam Aloni was [interviewed on London and Kirshenbaum](#), Israeli Channel 10's leading news discussion program. Internationally, the report was covered by [Al Jazeera](#) and [Global Research Canada](#). Following the publication, British MPs [submitted a Parliamentary motion](#) to the British Parliament [urging the Israeli authorities to end its practice of treating Israeli waste in the occupied West Bank](#). The report was shared on [Twitter](#), and a Facebook post on the [diversion of waste to the West Bank](#) reached 33 K viewers.

Unprotected: Detention of Palestinian Teenagers in East Jerusalem



This year, B'Tselem collaborated with Israeli NGO Hamoked to research and write the report [Unprotected: Detention of Palestinian Teenagers in East Jerusalem](#). The report reveals common practices, such as how Palestinian teenagers from East Jerusalem are pulled out of bed in the middle of the night, unnecessarily handcuffed and then made to spend a long time waiting for their interrogation to begin. Only then, when they are tired and broken, are they taken in for lengthy

interrogation sessions. The questioning begins without giving the detainees the opportunity to speak to a lawyer or their parents, and without them understanding that they have the right to remain silent. They are then held in a detention facility for days and weeks under harsh conditions, even once the interrogation has ended. In some cases, all this is accompanied by threats, verbal and physical abuse – before or during the interrogation.

In October, B'Tselem [stated](#) that this conduct exposes Israel's policy which aims to allow authorities to continue this maltreatment of Palestinian minors while shrouding it in a cloak of legality, that conceals an extensive, systematic and well-documented abuse of the fundamental human rights of hundreds of minors, every year, for decades. [Facebook posts](#) were published in [Hebrew](#) and in English in [October](#), [November](#) and [December](#), reaching between 7,000 and 10,000 viewers each post, alongside Twitter messages in [October](#) and [November](#). The findings were reported in Israel by [Channel 10](#), [Ha'aretz](#), [Channel 20](#), [The Jerusalem post](#) and [The Social TV](#) website, and in Palestinian and Arab media such as the [Palestine Chronicle](#) and [Al Jazeera](#), who also broadcasted an [Insider Story report](#) and a [news item](#).

Fatalities

In 2017, B'Tselem documented the killing of 66 Palestinians by Israel's security forces. B'Tselem researched and published the circumstances in which each person was killed, and their names, age and residency. Of them, 38 were killed in the West Bank, 22 in the Gaza Strip and 6 in Israel. Among the fatalities, there was one woman and 13 minors (11 in the West Bank and 2 in the Gaza Strip). Israeli security forces also killed one foreign national. In addition, 3 Palestinians were killed by Israeli citizens and 3 by an unknown Israeli party. In 2017, Palestinians killed 7 Israeli security forces personnel and 7 Israeli civilians - 5 men and 2 women, two of whom were killed in Israel, and 5 in the West Bank.

Based on experience, it is unlikely that anyone will be held accountable for the deaths of Palestinians by security forces in circumstances that did not justify use of lethal means. Investigations into Palestinian fatalities are rarely opened, and in the cases that are investigated, the blame is cast upon low-ranking individual soldiers who acted in "unusual" circumstances, while the officers and politicians are exempt from legal scrutiny. But hundreds of instances of Palestinian fatalities cannot be considered unusual, rather they suggest a pattern. The responsibility for these deaths lies with the senior levels of government and military command, which approve the open-fire policy that causes them, as well as the subsequent whitewashing. This reality is a direct result of the discourse deliberately adopted by politicians in Israel who stated repeatedly that any Palestinian who attacks Israelis – regardless of the actual threat imposed – should be killed as a matter of policy. The fact that Israeli security forces have time and again killed Palestinians who posed no danger reveals a chilling disparity between the formal legal prohibition on such conduct, and reality. The explicit support of the authorities and the tacit consent of the legal system's top officials – including the Attorney General and the Military Advocate General – have created a normative situation in which soldiers and police officers routinely play judge and executioner.

Trigger-Happy Responses to Clashes, Stone-throwing Incidents, Demonstrations or Evading Arrest

B'Tselem triggered media attention after determining that the killing of [Qusai Hassan Muhammad al-'Amur](#) during a protest in Tuqu' was unjustified. The exposure of yet another example of Israeli impunity, was reported by [Ha'aretz](#) and Gideon Levy, in his [Twilight Zone](#). In May, B'Tselem reported [the death by a sniper of Saba Nidal Shehadeh 'Obeid](#) after throwing stones in the direction of soldiers and as he was moving away and posed no danger.

In summer 2017, the Israeli security forces disregard for the lives of Palestinian residents of Jerusalem resulted in [three fatalities, as well as dozens of injuries](#), and another killed by an unknown Israeli party, during the clashes and demonstrations over the installation of metal detectors at the entrances to the Haram ash-Sharif/Temple Mount. In August, B'Tselem also covered the [killing of two Palestinian youths in Jenin refugee camp](#) during a clash, and published the incident on [Twitter](#), and the [lethal shooting of a minor](#) who was protesting near the perimeter fence in the Gaza Strip. In October, we reported the killing of [a resident of a-Duheisheh](#) refugee camp as he was attempting to escape arrest. The report was mentioned in Twitter posts on [26](#) and [29](#) Oct.

In December, US President Donald Trump [announced US recognition of Jerusalem](#) as the capital of Israel with no reference to Palestinian rights in East Jerusalem which Israel unilaterally and unlawfully annexed in 1967. The announcement was followed by protests and demonstrations. In the Gaza Strip, the demonstrators protested against Trump's declaration near the Gaza perimeter fence that separate the Strip from Israel. B'Tselem informed the media that [Israeli soldiers shot and killed 8 unarmed Palestinian demonstrators](#) in the Gaza Strip, who were participating in protests near the Gaza perimeter fence without posing mortal danger.

A Shoot-to-Kill Approach in Cases Defined as Assault

B'Tselem reported on two female assailants who were killed though they posed no significant threat to security forces. In May, B'Tselem reported on the death of [Fatimah Hjeiji](#), a 16-year-old girl who brandished a knife at them, but did not pose a real danger. In March, we reported [the killing of Siham Nimer](#) in Jerusalem, who brandished a pair of scissors at Border Police officers who were standing on the other side of a metal police barrier, and they shot and killed her.

B'Tselem also reported on a case in which [a soldier fired at a passing car in the West Bank](#), claiming a suspected car attack with no supporting evidence, injuring the driver Muhammad Musa and his sister, Latifah. Israeli personnel did not offer first aid, stopped treatment by Palestinian paramedics and carelessly transferred the driver to an ambulance that took him to an Israeli hospital, where he died. B'Tselem's investigation found that the shooting was unjustified. The military police are reportedly investigating, but experience shows it will likely end without anyone being held responsible.

Security Forces Violence Against Palestinians

In 2017, B'Tselem documented numerous incidents of security forces violence that resulted in injury. In March, B'Tselem published video [documentation](#) and three testimonies of an incident where [Border Police assaulted women and girls in Sa'ir](#). B'Tselem later documented the case of a [13 year old](#) taken by soldiers from home and abandoned. In May, B'Tselem reported on the [violent assault and forcible removal of two Palestinian teens](#) from a street in Hebron during a settler march. In June, B'Tselem reported the [double assault, detention and abuse of Tamer Tamimi](#). Also in June, we reported the detention and beating of [Baraa Kan'an](#), who was beaten, humiliated, told he'd be killed, then abandoned on the road late at night. The report on the torture and unlawful treatment of Kan'an was published on B'Tselem's Facebook page, where it was seen by nearly 35,000 people.

In July, B'Tselem documented [the shooting of a 13-year-old in Jayus](#). Later in July, B'Tselem documented [the injury of a six-year-old and a toddler](#) by tear gas inhalation and the shooting and a beating of Palestinian teen [in the head by a sponge round](#). In August, B'Tselem covered [the police assault on a father and son](#) in Silwan, which was followed by their arrest. In December, we reported on a soldier [injuring a sixteen-year-old](#) in the head during a settler march.

The Gaza Strip – A Decade of Siege

Although Israel declared an end to its military administration in Gaza, it continues to control critical aspects of life there. Israel controls all border crossings by land, apart from Rafah, as well as Gaza's sea and air space. Israel uses this control to monitor and regulate almost all movement of people and goods in and out of Gaza according to Israeli interests, as part of the 11 years long siege it has imposed on the Gaza Strip. Consequently, Israel's policies have catastrophic ramifications in all aspects of life, which B'Tselem continued to monitor and document in 2017.

Electricity Supply

During 2017, almost 2 million residents in Gaza continued to suffer from electricity shortages caused by the siege and exacerbated by the row between the Palestinian Authority and Hamas, Gaza's de-facto government. In January, B'Tselem [affirmed](#) Israel's responsibility for the Gaza electricity crisis, an obligation that the Israeli government consistently attempts to obscure, which reached on Facebook posts in [English](#) and [Hebrew](#) 30k and 22k people, respectively. The following month B'Tselem published [testimonies](#) of five Gazans caring for families in the Gazan winter without proper heat and lighting.

To draw attention to the humanitarian crisis that the siege has created through its impact on electricity supply and consequently, water supply, B'Tselem ran a social media campaign on Facebook and Twitter with [a short video](#) depicting Israel's reduction of electricity to the Gaza Strip. The campaign included five [Facebook posts](#), reaching 210 K people in English and Hebrew, that presented testimonies from several women describing the daily difficulties of power shortages. One Facebook post described life in Gaza without electricity in the harsh Gazan summer, from the eyes of [Iman Hassan](#), a 34-year-old mother of six, reaching 20k people. Other posts brought more testimonies



of mothers - a [resident of al-Bureij](#) refugee camp, [two](#) residents of a [Nuseirat refugee camp](#), and a [resident of al-Maghazi refugee camp](#). B'Tselem's photographs were used in a [Times of Israel](#) article on an increase in illness due to polluted drinking water.

When the humanitarian crisis in Gaza intensified, B'Tselem [clarified](#) that the Palestinian Authority's (PA) withholding of payment for Gaza's electricity consumption, does not allow Israel, as the agent actively controlling Gaza's connection to the outside world, to shirk its responsibility for the fate of Gazans.

Medical Treatment

Israel's siege over the Gaza Strip severely impacts the medical system by depriving it of medical supplies and equipment, the ability of medical staff to train abroad, a regular electricity supply not supplied by generators. Medical services offered in the Gaza Strip fail to meet the needs of the population, requiring patients to apply for permits from Israel to travel to hospitals in the West Bank. Often, Israel prevent patients from leaving the Gaza strip, even when critically ill, with devastating implications. In February, B'Tselem brought the plight of women cancer patients to public attention by producing a [video](#) about the challenges women with cancer face in Gaza. On March 16, to highlight Israel's policy of restricting Gazans' access to medical treatment, B'Tselem published the testimony of a Gaza mother, [Amal Shear](#), about her 17-year-old son's death in January, after Israel refused him entry for heart surgery. Her story was shared in a Facebook post in [English](#) and [Hebrew](#), which reached a total of 33k people. In December, B'Tselem published [several testimonies of critically ill residents](#) of Gaza unable to leave the strip for life-saving medical treatment.

Restrictions on Farming and Fishing

Over the years, Israel has gradually narrowed the fishing zone off the Gaza shoreline. In 2017, B'Tselem reported on the impact of the 11-years long siege on Gaza's [fishing sector](#), presenting an analysis of four key reasons for the industry's destruction as well as testimonies of three Gaza fishermen. In June, B'Tselem reported on the killing of a 25-year old Gaza [fisherman](#), who was shot from an Israeli navy vessel while he was in the authorized fishing zone, and posed no danger. B'Tselem published his death in a Facebook post in English that reached 73 K people. The case was also reported by the [Jewish Telegraphic Agency \(JTA\)](#).

Other restrictions imposed by Israel interfere with farming inside the Gaza Strip. Vast areas on the Gazan side of the perimeter fence are treated by Israel as "buffer zone" that the IDF forbade Palestinians to enter, and that farmers who enter the zone risk being shot. In March, B'Tselem documented the destruction of Gaza farmland after the Israeli [military sprayed herbicides along the Gaza border](#), distributed a narrated [video](#) showing the damage inflicted by the herbicide, and published testimonies from three farmers.

These actions against fishermen and farmers, among many other limitations, further reduce employment in Gaza. To inform the public on the unemployment crisis in the Gaza Strip, B'Tselem published [testimonies of recent graduates](#) unable to enter the job market.

Separating Families

Severe restrictions on movement between Gaza and the West Bank impacts family members' ability to see each other. B'Tselem reported on Israel's policy of [separating Gaza families](#) from their relatives in the West Bank, providing data and analysis as well as testimonies from six Palestinian women. B'Tselem reported in July on the situation of a [mother of nine living in Gaza, completely cut off from her family in the West Bank](#).

Gaza Executions

On May 25, B'Tselem [condemned](#) the Hamas government's execution of three people following a pseudo-trial that failed to meet international standards. This followed the [April 6](#) execution of three additional people suspected of collaborating with Israel. Executions – whether they follow a real trial, a show trial or no trial at all – are always abhorrent. A regime that takes lives as a punitive or deterrent measure is committing an immoral act that constitutes an intolerable violation of human rights. B'Tselem's condemnation was reported in the [New York Times](#) and [Newsweek](#).

Prisoners and Detainees

B'Tselem collected and analyzed data on prisoners and detainees. [The data was published](#) on B'Tselem's website and distributed to UN agencies, NGOs, and activists. Our analysis, which is based on monthly updates B'Tselem obtains from the Israeli authorities, shows that at the end of 2017 there were close to 6,000 Palestinian security detainees and prisoners being held in Israel Prison Service (IPS) facilities, including over 300 Palestinians from the Gaza Strip. More than 700 others, some from the Gaza Strip, were in IPS prisons for being in Israel illegally. The IPS classifies Palestinian prisoners and detainees as criminal offenders. In addition, in 2017, some 150 to 250 Palestinians were held for short periods of time in facilities run by the military. A few dozen other Palestinians (precise figures were not given to B'Tselem despite attempts to obtain them) were held in IDF facilities for short periods. B'Tselem experienced difficulties obtaining some of the data, due to a change of staff at the IPS, but was eventually able to obtain and publish the complete data.

Hunger Strike

Over a thousand Palestinian prisoners and detainees launched a hunger strike in April. B'Tselem published two statements on the matter: [Israel must meet Palestinian prisoners' demands for improved conditions](#) and [Israel is ignoring its obligations and the medical condition of the hunger strikers is deteriorating](#). B'Tselem stressed that incarceration of thousands of Palestinians - most of them without a fair trial, and some without any trial at all – and the draconian restrictions they face, form an integral part of the occupation regime. B'Tselem also responded on the intention expressed by Israeli politicians to force-feed prisoners, and stressed that forcefully feeding a person is a dangerous measure that is considered a form of torture. Finally, B'Tselem stressed that holding Palestinians from the West Bank and Gaza in prisons inside Israel is a violation of international law.

Minor detainees

B'Tselem reported on several cases of arrests and detention of Palestinian minors in East Jerusalem, including [the assault and interrogation of a 15-year-old girl by Border Police officers](#), the [arrest of two teen brothers and assault of their mother](#) in the a-Sheikh Jarrah neighborhood, the police [raid in al-'Esawiyah](#) resulting in the arrest of 51 Palestinians, including 26 teenagers, the [arrest of two teenagers in Silwan amidst clashes](#) between police and residents, and the testimony of a [Palestinian teen under house arrest](#) for over a year.

In November, B'Tselem published [a video depicting Israeli soldiers arresting 18 youths in Hebron](#), most of them minors, after youths threw stones at soldiers. B'Tselem's publication gained 36,629 views and was widely cited, after former England footballer and current BBC presenter Gary Linker shared the video on twitter with his 6.8 million followers, [criticizing the Israeli soldiers' behavior](#) towards the Palestinian children. Linker's message triggered debate in England, with references to B'Tselem's documentation in the [Independent](#), the [Sun](#), [Arab News](#), the [Daily Star](#) and the [Daily Mail](#). The debate was accompanied by a discussion on the treatment of Palestinian minors by Israel. Israeli media [Ynet](#), [Walla](#) and [the Sports channel](#) cited B'Tselem's documentation in their reports on the debate that erupted overseas.

The arrest of minors in Hebron, as well as incidents such as the [arrest of 16 years old 'Ahed Tamimi](#) in Nabi Saleh near Ramallah in December after slapping an army officer stationed next to her house, and B'Tselem's advocacy work regarding arrests of Palestinian minors, have raised concerns outside Israel, reflected in a [motion raised in the House of Commons](#), asking to bring to attention child detainees in Israel.

Communities Facing Demolitions and Displacement in Area C

Scores of farming-shepherding communities, home to thousands of Palestinians, dot the landscape of Area C, which comprises some 60% of the West Bank. For decades, the Israeli authorities have made their living conditions intolerable in an attempt to force residents to leave, ostensibly of their own free will. Today, five Palestinian communities face threats of [expulsion of their entire communities](#). Should the Israeli government succeed in expelling them without consequences, it will set a precedent for the continued displacement of communities in Area C.

Communities Under Imminent Threat of Transfer

Under International Humanitarian Law, which Israel is obliged to respect in all its actions in the West Bank, all Palestinian residents of the West Bank are considered “protected persons”, who may not be forcibly transferred or deported. Forcible transfer is a grave breach of the Fourth Geneva Convention and constitutes a war crime, even if done not by direct force.

In 2017, B’Tselem continued to monitor five communities under threat of transfer: [Susiya](#) in the South Hebron Hills, [Khan al-Ahmar](#) near the Kfar Adumim settlement, [Jabal al-Baba](#), west of Ma’ale Adumim, and [Umm al-Jamal](#) and [Ein al-Hilweh](#) in the Jordan Valley. These five communities were all fighting the demolition orders in the Israeli High Court of Justice, even though experience shows that the High Court is unlikely to intervene to protect the Palestinians petitioners, thus enabling the state to continue with its plans – with the approval of the court. Indeed, on May 24, 2018, the High Court [ruled](#) that the state may demolish the homes of the Khan al-Ahmar community, and relocate the residents. This ruling removes the last obstacle in Israel’s way, lifting the impediment which had thus far served to defer the transfer of the Khan al-Ahmar community, a war crime under international law. The other communities continue their court battles.

Three of the communities, Umm al-Jamal, Ein al-Hilweh and Jabal al-Baba, were declared 'demarcated areas' in November. Defining areas as ‘demarcated’ is a new mechanism the state has found, that it hopes will accelerate the expulsion of residents by circumventing lengthy proceedings such as mapping and the issuing of separate demolition orders for each structure. The use of this mechanism demonstrates [that Israel is so confident in its ability to expel entire villages without incurring judicial or international criticism that it is no longer bothering to create even the illusion of legal proceedings](#).

On September 4, B’Tselem sent [a letter to Israel’s prime minister, the Defense Minister, the Chief of Staff and the head of the Civil Administration](#), cautioning that demolition of the Palestinian communities of Susiya and Khan al-Ahmar would constitute a war crime for which they would bear personal liability. B’Tselem stressed that “forcible transfer is one of the offenses that come under the purview of the International Criminal Court. All persons responsible for the commission of a forcible transfer bear personal liability for the results.” The letter was followed by [a press release](#), stating that expulsion of the two Palestinian communities is an unlawful action that would constitute forcible transfer of protected persons in occupied territory..

In 2017, B’Tselem published 7 [press releases](#) alerting the press to unprecedented threats; accompanied journalists to communities facing demolition and expulsion; and connected them with Palestinians impacted by threats to their communities. B’Tselem brought the violation of rights of Palestinian communities in Area C to the attention of diplomats and decision-makers from Europe, the UK, north and south America, and Australia, through dozens of delegations, briefings, meetings and field visits. In February, B’Tselem published [video documentation](#) on the authorities’ intention to demolish the entire Bedouin community of Khan al-Ahmar, and informed the diplomatic community of the legal case waged by community's legal counsel, Att. Shlomo Lecker. Media reports citing B’Tselem were published in the [Wall Street Journal](#) and [The Times of Israel](#).



Resident of Jabal al-Baba near the ruins of his home. 'Amer 'Aruri, B'Tselem, 16 October 2017

B'Tselem's director and advocacy officer also participated in advocacy trips to several European capitals in which IHL violations in Area C were discussed with decision makers in these countries and in the EU. B'Tselem called on decision-makers to take concrete action to end the occupation, as the only way to truly end Israel's systematic violation of International Humanitarian Law. In October, B'Tselem organized a field visit on the topic of settlement encroachment and Palestinian enclosure in Southeast Jerusalem and Bethlehem for the diplomatic community, including a visit to Givat Hamatos, Jub a-Dib, and the [um-Raqba](#) area. B'Tselem's South Hebron Hills field researcher Nasser Nawaj'ah went on an advocacy tour in the United States in November to bring the plight of the Susiya community to public attention. He spoke at two regional J Street U workshops in Baltimore and Los Angeles. Nawaj'ah also spoke at public events at Oberlin College (Ohio) and Brandeis University (Massachusetts). Nawaj'ah had several meetings with Democratic senators on Capitol Hill, as well as at the State Dept.

An Increasingly Coercive Environment

The Israeli demolition policy focuses on three major areas: The Ma'ale Adumim area, the Jordan Valley and the South Hebron Hills. In 2017, B'Tselem collected 225 pieces of first-hand documentation, including 44 testimonies and 181 field reports which described how Israel demolished 98 homes, leaving 363 people homeless, including 201 minors. To inform the public on the increasingly coercive environment, B'Tselem added 25 updates to the [Facing Expulsion](#) blog on our website, in addition to 38 Facebook posts in [English](#) and a similar number in [Hebrew](#), 58 [Twitter](#) posts and 10 videos on [B'Tselem's YouTube channel](#). Some of the actions documented and reported by B'Tselem in 2017 are:

The Ma'ale Adumim area: On January 2, [Civil Administration \(CA\) forces came to two communities located north of the Ma'ale Adumim settlement](#), Wadi Esneisel and Bir al-Maskub, where they demolished 10 homes and an animal pen, leaving 78 people homeless including 52 minors. On January 30, B'Tselem reported on demolitions in [Badu al-Baba](#), and on April 25, B'Tselem reported that the CA demolished a home in Badu al-Baba for [the second time that year](#). On 21 August, CA personnel, accompanied by fifty soldiers, Police and Border Police officers arrived at Jabal al-Baba, where they confiscated a pre-fab that served as a kindergarten as well as the equipment inside.

The Jordan Valley: On January 23, B'Tselem documented demolitions in [Khirbet 'Ein Karzaliyah](#), as occur every winter. In February, B'Tselem reported on the [demolition of a trailer](#), the home of an elderly woman – a trailer donated by a humanitarian aid organization – near Khan al-Ahmar in the Jordan Valley. A water pipe and water infrastructure were also demolished, leaving Palestinian farmers without water. Following a field visit with B'Tselem's, a feature on the water issue was published in [Lifegate](#). Two weeks later, B'Tselem published video documentation of a [demolition of a vegetable stand in Furush Beit Dajan](#) in the Jordan Valley. In March, B'Tselem documented CA orders to 10 families to [evacuate their homes for a night](#), in a-Ras al-Ahmar, which was reported in the [Jerusalem Post](#). A month later, the residents of nearby [Khirbet a-Ras al-Ahmar were asked to evacuate for a night](#). On 14 September, B'Tselem warned the media that [Israel moved to advance forcible transfer of Khan al-Ahmar](#). B'Tselem noted with concern that the Civil Administration is prepared to move forward with the forcible transfer of the entire community, and that doing so would constitute a war crime under the Fourth Geneva Convention.

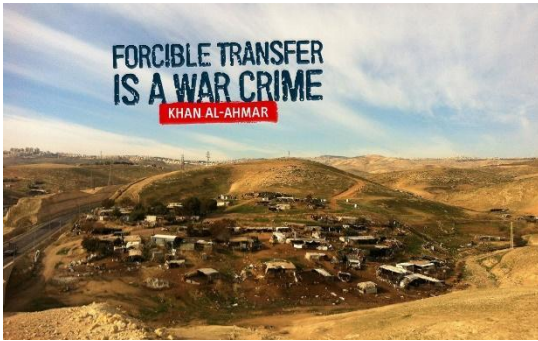
South Hebron Hills: In January and February, [Israel's authorities demolished seven water](#) cisterns used by farmers and shepherds near the Palestinian village of Tuqu', Bethlehem District, and another cistern in the South Hebron Hills community of Khashm a-Daraj. In June, the CA confiscated solar panels installed in Jub a-Dib by Israeli-Palestinian nonprofit Comet-ME and financed by the Dutch government, after Israel consistently shirked its obligation to connect the village to the electric grid. On July 18 B'Tselem reported on the confiscation of solar panels supplying all electricity supply in [Jub a-Dib, located in the Bethlehem region](#). On August 23, B'Tselem informed the media that [Israel demolished school serving 80 children in Jub a-Dib](#) on eve of new school year.

Demolition Data

In 2017, B'Tselem published data on demolitions from 2006-2017. During those years, Israel demolished in the West Bank at least 1,317 Palestinian residential units and 473 non-residential structures (excluding East Jerusalem), causing 5,956 people to lose their homes, among them at least 3,010 minors. The homes of at least 970 people,

including 461 minors, were demolished twice or more. B'Tselem's data was reported in the media, including a special Hebrew feature on February in the print and digital editions of Israel's second most read newspaper, [Yediot Ahronot](#). B'Tselem's field research director, Kareem Jubran, was [interviewed](#) by the Palestinian Broadcast Company.

Demolitions in East Jerusalem



B'Tselem continued to monitor home demolitions in East Jerusalem, providing media with data and analysis, contextualizing the policy as part of long term attempts to remove Palestinians from the city. In 2017, Israeli authorities demolished 52 housing in East Jerusalem. Nine others were demolished by their owners in order to avoid being charged by the municipality for the cost of the demolition, and municipal fines. All told, combining demolition by the authorities and self-demolitions, rendered homeless 155 people, including 86 minors.

In February, B'Tselem published [data](#) which were collected and analyzed on demolitions in East Jerusalem in 2016. B'Tselem's data appeared in the media, including [two](#) in [the Jerusalem Post](#), the [Media Line](#), [Ynet](#), and [Local Call](#). In August 16, B'Tselem reported on [demolitions in four Palestinian neighborhoods](#) of East-Jerusalem. The demolitions are part of policy designed to achieve a demographic and geographic reality that would frustrate any future attempt to question Israeli self-declared sovereignty in East Jerusalem.

Batan al-Hawa - A Threatened Existence

B'Tselem continued to expose the reality in the Batan al-Hawa neighborhood in Silwan, and the ongoing work by settler groups, assisted by the Israeli authorities, to remove 80 Palestinian families from their homes in order to house Israeli settlers instead. The settlement in Batan al-Hawa is part and parcel of the efforts made by the Israeli authorities and settler associations to increase Jewish presence in Jerusalem's Old City Basin: in the Old City's Muslim Quarter and the Palestinian neighborhoods that surround it. In May, B'Tselem launched a video project that presented three videos describing the challenges facing the Palestinian residents: [Batan al-Hawa in Silwan: The next target for "Judaization" in East Jerusalem](#); [Um Nasser of Batan al-Hawa Fights to Keep Her Home](#) and [Zuheir a-Rajabi won't bow to settlers' takeover of Batan al-Hawa](#). B'Tselem facilitated field visits that included meetings with local residents for international and Israeli audiences. Israel's premier daily, *Yedioth Ahronot*, published [a Hebrew report](#) by columnist Yigal Sarna on his visit in the neighborhood, facilitated by B'Tselem. [Hussam Abed](#), B'Tselem's field researcher, and [Amit Gilutz](#), B'Tselem's spokesperson, published English op-eds on the subject.



Settlements

From 1967 to the end of 2016, more than 200 Israeli settlements were established in the West Bank and are now inhabited by nearly 600,000 Israeli citizens. The settlements occupy almost 10% of the West Bank, and, through their regional councils, cover 40% of its land, taken over from Palestinians. But the destructive impact of the settlements on the human rights of Palestinians extends far beyond the thousands of hectares that Israel appropriated from Palestinians. Restrictions on Palestinian movement only have been imposed based on the location of settlements, through roadblocks, checkpoints, and the winding route of the Separation Barrier. These restrictions prevent Palestinians from leading a normal life and deny them access to much of their farmland, both within and outside settlements. Harassment by settlers and soldiers has become frequent and violent, travel between villages and towns only a few miles apart became a lengthy voyage.

In 2017, B'Tselem continued to document actions by the Israeli occupation authorities intended to consolidate and expand its settlement project, including the uprooting of olive trees, fruit orchards and the destruction of Palestinian farmers' crops in [Wadi Qana](#), the [Jordan Valley](#) and ['Azzun](#). B'Tselem published the unlawful seizure and destruction of Palestinian livelihood in the Jordan Valley on their Hebrew and English Facebook pages, reaching nearly 72 K and 73 K people respectively.

Expel and Exploit

B'Tselem brought the findings of our December 2016 report [Expel and Exploit](#) to life in an early 2017 field visit for the diplomatic community to the Nablus region. Twenty diplomats visited the communities, met with residents to hear about the impact of the Alon Moreh settlement on their access to land, water and movement, and attempted to access areas that residents themselves are barred from reaching, before being prevented from doing so by the army. B'Tselem's analysis was cited in the [Washington Post](#), [Le Monde](#), and again [Washington Post](#) citation in the in March.

The Regulation Bill

In response to the Knesset's vote approving the "Regulation Bill", a law which retroactively legalizes settler takeover of privately owned Palestinian land, B'Tselem asserts that this proves yet again Israel's lack of intent to end its control over the Palestinians or its theft of their land. B'Tselem explained that while enshrining the dispossession in law is a new development, in practice, it is another facet of the massive land grab carried out openly for decades. B'Tselem [noted](#) that the new "construction policy" adopted by the prime means, in fact, the continued oppression of Palestinians, settlement expansion, and breach of international law, since it enables the state to go on building as it pleases, whether in or outside of settlement boundaries.

B'Tselem's analysis was widely publicized in the media, including [the Washington Post](#), an [op-ed](#) by Hagai El-Ad published jointly in This Week in Palestine and [Times of Israel](#) and participation in a prime-time Israeli [Channel 10](#) news panel. In the English press, B'Tselem's commentary was published in a [Jerusalem Report](#) op-ed by Sarit Michaeli, B'Tselem's advocacy officer. [The Washington Post](#) cited B'Tselem two days in a row in its reporting on Netanyahu's planned settlement expansion, and B'Tselem's spokesperson was quoted in [ABC Australia](#) and [the Times of Israel](#), which also noted B'Tselem's statement that the timing of the bill "weeks after UN Security Resolution 2334 was a slap in the face of the international community".

Settler Violence

Violence by settlers toward Palestinians has become part of daily life under occupation in the West Bank, resulting in damage to property and land as well as injuries to life and limb. Israeli authorities routinely shirk its responsibility to protect Palestinians in the West Bank from this conduct. In almost all cases investigations are not opened and in the rare cases they were, they have not resulted in any action against the perpetrators. In some cases, Palestinians who filed complaints were detained themselves. Israeli security forces not only allow settlers to harm Palestinians and their property as a matter of course – they often provide the perpetrators escort and back-up.

In 2017, B'Tselem reported on several cases of settler violence and harassment directed against Palestinians. B'Tselem also reported on [settlers torching cars and spraying graffiti](#) in Um Safa, and on incidents of settler's throwing stones, [seriously injuring a Palestinian](#) in October and hitting a [five-year-old girl in the head](#) in November.

In April, B'Tselem published video [documentation](#) and testimonies about [settler violence](#) at the Burin school. B'Tselem's advocacy officer, Sarit Michaeli, experienced first-hand settler violence that she [documented](#) when she, Rabbi Arik Ascherman, and other Israeli activists were attacked with stones and baseball bats near Al-Auja. Her video documentation, published by B'Tselem, was widely distributed by the media, including in a [TV interview](#) on [London and Kirshenbaum](#), [the Jerusalem Post](#), [Times of Israel](#) and [Walla](#). In June, B'Tselem documented a [settler attack on Huwarah homes, wounding three, including 68-yr-old woman tending sheep near home](#), publishing testimonies from 4 family members who were injured in the attack. A [Facebook post](#) on this incident was viewed nearly 95,000 times.

Daily Life Under Occupation

In 2017, B'Tselem continued to bring to light the routine aspects of Palestinian life under occupation - arrests and detentions, incursions into homes, collective punishment of entire communities for the acts of individuals, and restrictions of movement - that may not get the attention they deserve. B'Tselem documented numerous incidents of Palestinian life under occupation and brought them to public attention.

In February, B'Tselem launched a digital project called [The Invisible Walls of Occupation](#). The project allows viewers to wander through the Palestinian [village](#) of Burqah, meet its inhabitants, and hear them describe their lives and the impact of the occupation via a series of 5 videos: [the farmer](#), [pre-school](#), [the village elder](#), [the clinic](#) and [the girls school](#). The project, co-produced with Canadian digital studio [Folklore](#), is based on the [B'Tselem report](#) of the same name. The interactive platform, specially developed for the project, creates a



[The Invisible Walls of Occupation](#) digital project

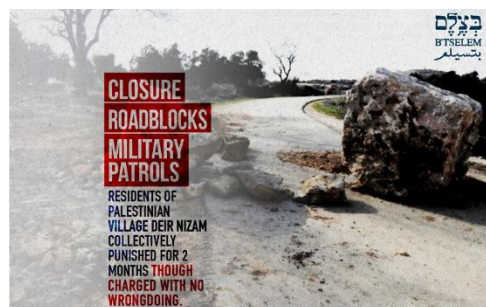
world that is a cross between a video game and a documentary film. On 27 May, [The Invisible Walls of Occupation](#) won the Best Interactive Experience Award at the [T.O. WebFest 2017](#). The project was reported on by the [Wire](#).

Another dominant aspect of the daily life under occupation we reported on, are actions affecting entire communities, by restricting movement or invading communities during raids: in February and April, B'Tselem documented and published testimonies on night raids of Palestinian homes in [Kafr Qadum](#) to deter protests against blocking the road to the village and in the [Nablus area](#). In April, B'Tselem documented [raids](#) on two print shops in Tulkarm. In May, B'Tselem published [research](#) on travel restrictions facing Palestinians seeking to travel abroad. B'Tselem created two Facebook [posts](#) on the issue in both English and Hebrew, including a testimony by a Palestinian who was denied an exit visa because he refused to collaborate with the Israeli security forces, which reached 86 K people. In July, B'Tselem documented the [police raid in al-Makassed hospital](#) in East Jerusalem. In September, B'Tselem reported on the [acute water crisis unfolding in Nablus](#). In October, B'Tselem reported on the [40-day closure of the road connecting Kafr a-Dik to the highway](#).

In December, B'Tselem launched a new project that presented [updates of the occupation routine and its daily effects](#) on the population, under the hashtag #Occupation365. The #Occupation365 campaign includes a monthly report on Facebook summarizing the violations reported in that period. The [December report](#) shows that Israel arrested at least 237 Palestinians, including 61 minors; raided at least 123 towns and villages and at least 104 homes; and set up at least 155 flying checkpoints.

Collective Punishment

B'Tselem also documented extensive collective punishment measures imposed by the Israeli authorities against entire Palestinian communities because of the involvement of a handful of their residents in attacks against Israelis. B'Tselem researched and published the cases of 6 villages, [Jabal al-Mukabber](#), [Deir Nizam](#), ['Azzun](#), [Silwad](#), [Deir Abu Mash'al](#), [Kobar](#) and [Beit Surik](#), in which the military imposed severe restrictions on thousands of people, when one or several of its residents killed Israelis, or were suspected of committing arson against an Israeli settlement. On 8 January, [a resident of Jabal al-Mukabber carried out a vehicle-ramming attack](#) killing four Israeli soldiers, whereupon Israeli authorities issued demolition orders on 40 homes belonging to the extended family. On January 27, B'Tselem reported the mere suspicion that residents of [Deir Nizam](#) committed arson resulted in two months of severe movement restrictions as well as incursions of military forces and arrest of



minors after a fire in the settlement of Halamish had destroyed homes and woodland. On 6 April a resident of Silwad carried out a [car-ramming attack](#) killing a soldier and wounding another, and was arrested at the scene, however Israeli security forces blocked for about two months off roads used by the town's 10,000 residents. On 16 June, three residents of Deir Abu Mash'al [killed a Border Police Officer in East Jerusalem and wounded four](#) before being killed by security forces, an attack that was followed by the confiscation of some 50 vehicles from residents for ostensibly lacking licenses and revoking work permits of 50 members of the assailants' extended families. This conduct is part of Israel's collective punishment policy in the West Bank, whereby actions of individuals of even mere suspicions against individuals, are deemed sufficient justification for trampling the rights of entire communities and groups.

Hebron

Israel established settlements in and around the Old City of Hebron. The authorities impose a regime based on the "separation principle", the result of which is legal and physical segregation between the Israeli settlers and the Palestinian majority. This segregation dates to 1997, when Hebron was divided into H1, where most Palestinian residents live (approx. 115,000 at the time), and H2, where 500 settlers and 35,000 Palestinians lived. H1 was formally handed over to the Palestinian Authority while in H2 Israel retained full control excluding Palestinian civil administration affairs. Hebron's Old City was designated as part of H2. For years, Palestinians living in H2 and particularly in the old city, suffer from restrictions and harassment by the Israeli security forces and the settlers, resulting entirely from Israel's decision to allow settlers to live there. The policies and practices of the Israeli authorities drive Palestinians out of Hebron's city center.

Movement restriction remains a central issue for Palestinian residents of Hebron's old city. B'Tselem reported on the [extension of the military fence](#) reinforcing segregation in neighborhoods surrounding the Tomb of Patriarchs, and on the [hassle of a family moving house through checkpoints](#), resulting in arrest. In September, B'Tselem documented the [forcible closure](#) of the door of a Palestinian home. In August, B'Tselem published video documentation of settlers [verbally abusing](#) and [physical assaulting](#) Palestinians, with the tacit consent of Israeli security forces.

Harassment by security forces continued in 2017. In December, B'Tselem reported the [routine harassment of teachers and children coming out of their school and chasing them](#). B'Tselem also documented an incident in which [Israeli security forces entered 2 homes in Hebron area, strip searched family members - including children - and wreak havoc](#). In December, the [settlers' celebration of Hannukah](#) near the recently extended military fence, curtailing the Palestinian residents' movement in the city.

B'Tselem continued to document violent arrests of Palestinians in Hebron, including minors. In one severe case, on 19 March, eight-year-old [Sufian Abu Hitah](#) was seized by a group of 15 soldiers, and two dragged him to the al-Harika neighborhood, where they demanded that he identify children who had allegedly thrown stones and a Molotov cocktail at the Kiryat Arba settlement earlier. B'Tselem published the report along with the video of the incident on our Facebook page, where it was viewed by more than 269 K people. The footage was shown extensively on Israeli and international media, including [Haaretz](#), [YNet](#), and the [Independent](#).

B'Tselem's field researchers continue to encounter obstacles in their work documenting human rights violations in Hebron. On June 19, when B'Tselem field researchers Manal al-Ja'bri and Musa Abu Hashhash were [detained](#) in Hebron while documenting movement restrictions imposed by the military. Al-Ja'bri was questioned and held in police custody in the settlement of Kiryat Arba until late that night. The police demanded a cash bail for her release. Abu Hashhash was held at the checkpoint for 40 minutes and released.

The Boy From H2

A documentary by B'Tselem film archivist, Helen Yanovsky, [The Boy from H2](#), created in collaboration with B'Tselem's field researchers and [camera project](#) volunteers in Hebron, and produced by B'Tselem's video department, premiered at the 67th Berlinale in February and was screened the [Vienna Shorts Festival](#) in June.

The documentary follows 12-year-old Muhammad Burqan, who lives in Area H2 of Hebron, the section of the city under full Israeli control. Soldiers routinely detain children on suspicion of stone-throwing. Muhammad, who has

nine siblings, is one of those children. His life revolves around his crowded home and the street, where he must deal with the constant presence of Israeli security forces and settlers. The premiere at the Berlinale was attended by Muhammad Burqan, Helen Yanovsky, and B'Tselem's Hebron field researchers, Musa Abu Hashhash and Manal al-Jabari.

The screening was widely reported in the media, including interviews with Helen Yanovsky in [Walla](#), [Mako](#), [YNet](#), and [Haaretz](#), as well as [I24](#). Arabic media coverage included a TV interview with Kareem Jubran, B'Tselem's field research director, and [an interview](#) with Muhammad Burkan, the film's protagonist, Musa Abu Hashhash, and Helen Yanovsky, in Sky News Arabic.

Media on Video Project in Hebron

The impact of the video project in documenting the violations Palestinians in Hebron experience under occupation was highlighted in the media by a several in-depth articles about volunteers living in the city, including a [Washington Post](#) feature about how 'Emad abu-Shamsiya', the B'Tselem volunteer who captured the shooting of Abdul Fattah al-Sharif, and his family, use video to document the grim reality surrounding them; a [Haaretz](#) feature on how cameras are changing the fight against the Israeli occupation, an article in [Open Democracy](#), and a [documentary](#) broadcast in Finland on Emad abu-Shamsiya, and the filming of the Hebron shooting, which includes an interview with El-Ad, and abu-Shamsiya, and footage from B'Tselem's video archives.

Dialogue with the Israeli Public

B'Tselem engages in dialogue with the Israeli public through frequent appearances and commentary in the media, media debate with Israeli decision-makers, op-eds published in the Israeli press, Hebrew social media channels in Hebrew, publications on our website, and meetings. All of B'Tselem's publications including our website are written originally in Hebrew, then published in English and Arabic. Our social media channels in Hebrew, in particular the Facebook page and the YouTube channel, are among the most active Israeli civil-society channels. In 2017, B'Tselem published 252 updates on its Hebrew FB page and 209 updates on its English FB page. On average, each post in B'Tselem's Hebrew FB reached 26,172 people, with some reaching 2 million.

B'Tselem engaged in dialogue with the Israeli public through social media. Some of the interactions are described below: The Palestinian experience of life under occupation was brought to the Israeli and international public with the arrest of Madama resident [Ahmad Ziyada](#), a B'Tselem video volunteer who was detained for six days, and whose brother, Mahmoud Ziyada, was shot in the knee, with full backing by the military and the courts, after insisting on his right to be present on his villages' land. Following the publication of Ziyada's video of the incident in a Hebrew Facebook [post](#), which reached 157k post views, 50k video views, and 2.9 million people, with 382k video views, from B'Tselem's [English](#) page, and an article by Haaretz' Amira Hass, IDF spokesman [responded](#) and [accused B'Tselem](#) of provoking incidents in order to film them. B'Tselem publicly retorted that Palestinians do not "show up with a camera". They live on their land.

On 15 May, we published [a post](#) on an incident in which [Fatimah Hjeiji, 16](#), approached a metal barrier near East Jerusalem and brandished a knife at 5 Israeli police officers wearing protective gear, who fatally shot at least 10 bullets at her without attempting to disarm her; the message reached 413k viewers (the post was also published on B'Tselem's FB page in [English](#)). On June 11, [our post](#) telling the story of a [68-year-old Palestinian woman who was assaulted by Israeli settlers](#) until she lost consciousness, reached 157k individuals and also appeared in [English](#). On December 17, we published [a post](#) showing a video of [an Israeli soldier hitting a Palestinian youth on the head with a rifle](#) during a settler march, reaching 409k viewers (the post also appeared on the [English FB page](#)).

B'Tselem also participated in public events around in Israel. On January 2, B'Tselem's director Hagai El-Ad delivered [remarks](#) at the memorial event marking a year since the untimely passing of one of B'Tselem's founders, Yossi Sarid.



A screenshot from Ahmad Ziyada's documentation of the confrontation and assault

Sarid gave B'Tselem its name from the Book of Genesis, alluding to the universal nature of human rights. Some 350 Israelis attended the event, which was reported by [Haaretz](#). In April, B'Tselem spokesperson Amit Gilutz spoke alongside Meretz Chairwoman Zehava Galon at an [event in Jerusalem](#) ahead of the occupation's 50th anniversary. On 6 May, the Solidarity Festival screened the video diaries of Khadijeh Bsharat and Nivin Bsharat - [A Dream that Will Never Come True](#) and [A Weekend Visit Home](#) - two Palestinian women from the Jordan Valley who documented their lives in the shadow of expulsion. The Israeli public got a rare opportunity to engage with the women during a Q&A discussion. B'Tselem marked a decade of the camera distribution project with a screening of "The Best of the Worst", a compilation of powerful video footage captured by Palestinian volunteers, at the Solidarity Festival at the Tel Aviv Cinematheque on May 9. On June 15, Hagai El-Ad, [spoke](#) on a panel at the [Haaretz Conference for Peace](#) in which directors of Israeli civil society organizations discussed the emerging reality of a single state containing two peoples, and the prospect of unilateral Israeli annexation of the West Bank. The event was attended by 550 Israeli journalists and citizens and covered in the media. B'Tselem also met with students in pre-military academies.

Attacks on B'Tselem and the Shrinking Space for Civil Society

During 2017, Israel's government and its prime minister continued their assault against Israeli human rights and anti-occupation NGOs. We responded proudly and unapologetically, while explaining the occupation is the root cause of these anti-democratic initiatives. B'Tselem, the Israeli NGO most identified with the struggle against the occupation, together with Breaking the Silence, bore the brunt of this attack, which reached its height in Prime Minister Netanyahu's announcement of a "no-contact" policy, whereby any visiting dignitaries who meet with Israeli anti-occupation NGOs will not be able to meet with the PM.

B'Tselem contributed to the debate on several bills and laws that intend to obstruct human rights work that the government debated. B'Tselem's commentary on Amendment 27 to the Entry Into Israel Law, passed by the *Knesset* in March, contributed to debate when it was reported in the press. The law prohibits the entry into Israel of any foreigner who makes a 'public call for boycotting Israel' or 'any area under its control' – a reference to the Israeli settlements. Comments from B'Tselem's director Hagai El-Ad on the law, who stated, "We think that border control should not be used as thought control," was covered by the [Financial Times](#), [the Daily Mail](#), [Deutsche Welle](#), and [Ha'aretz](#). [Maan](#) reported El-Ad's comment that "Israel controls not only who enters Israel, but also who enters Palestine". El-Ad wrote op-eds in the [Jerusalem Post](#) and in [Mako](#). Kareem Jubran, B'Tselem's field research director, was interviewed in [i24](#) in Arabic. The Jewish Forward noted in its article, [Israel Criminalizes Thought By Banning BDS Supporters In Orwellian Twist](#) that Likud MK's seek to revoke El-Ad's citizenship.

In February, Israel refused to allow Omar Shakir, Human Rights Watch's (HRW) new Israel/Palestine country director, to enter the country. B'Tselem expressed grave concern along with a group of Israeli organisations, declaring in a letter in [Haaretz](#) that we stand in solidarity, and that "Neither closing Israel's borders to human rights organizations and activists nor other measures by the Israeli government against organizations that criticize the occupation will deter us from continuing to report human rights violations in the territories controlled by Israel.

Attempts to silence the messenger will not suppress our message". Following an international outcry, Shakir was admitted to Israel and eventually given a work visa, albeit a temporary one. The incident was reported in the [New York Times](#) with a comment from B'Tselem spokesperson, and comments were quoted from B'Tselem's public outreach director in [Le Monde](#) and [Al-Monitor](#).

In March, Michael Lynk, the UN Special Rapporteur on the Situation of Human Rights in the Palestinian territories occupied since 1967 - expressed concerns about the shrinking space for civil society in his [report](#) to the Human Rights Council in Geneva. The report cited B'Tselem numerous times and noted that 'Israeli human rights defenders that work on...the Occupied Palestinian Territory are also experiencing an increasingly virulent



Belgium's Prime Minister Charles Michel speaking with B'Tselem and Breaking the Silence on February 9

environment. A moment that exemplifies this turning of the screw was in October 2016, when Hagai El-Ad, the Director-General of B'Tselem (together with Lara Friedman, the Director of Policy and Government Relations for Americans for Peace Now) delivered a presentation to the United Nations Security Council in New York...

In June, B'Tselem, together with 18 Israeli NGO's, expressed solidarity with Breaking the Silence following the police questioning of the organization's spokesperson in a [statement](#) that also ran as an ad in Israeli daily *Haaretz*.

In February, Prime Minister Netanyahu [ordered the Foreign Ministry](#) to reprimand the Belgian ambassador in Israel after Belgium's Prime Minister Charles Michel met with B'Tselem and Breaking the Silence. The incident was covered by *Reuters*, two [articles](#) in *Ha'aretz*, *New Europe*, *Jerusalem Post*. The Hebrew press included *YNet*, *Walla*, *Haaretz*, *Maariv*, two [articles](#) on *Channel 10* news, *Channel 2 News*.

In April, Netanyahu [canceled his meeting](#) with German Foreign Minister Sigmar Gabriel when Gabriel refused Netanyahu's demand that he not meet with Breaking the Silence and B'Tselem. In response, on 25 April, B'Tselem [noted](#) that 'firm resolve by international community is imperative to ending the occupation... As Israelis, we cannot allow the 50-year-old occupation and its attendant human rights violations to carry on... as long as it does not meet the minimum conditions of democracy, Israel cannot enjoy the privileges that go with being a card-carrying member of the club of democratic countries. There must be a price to pay for continued military control of another people while thumbing one's nose at basic moral values and international law.' B'Tselem also responded with the statement, [What is Netanyahu afraid of? Reality and facts](#), distributed by newsletter and social media.

The episode garnered huge media attention which, ironically, provided B'Tselem and Breaking the Silence with opportunities to explain how the Israeli government smear campaigns against civil society groups intend to perpetuate the occupation. These include an [article](#) and [an op-ed](#) in the *New York Times*, articles in *The Guardian*, *US News*, *Fox News*, *Haaretz*, *the Times of Israel*, and *YNet*. 16 Israeli civil society organizations wrote to German Ambassador Dr. Clemens von Goetze, expressing their appreciation for German Foreign Minister's willingness to hear a spectrum of perspectives in Israeli society, and that by holding the meeting as planned, the Foreign Minister demonstrated Germany's commitment to supporting human rights and freedom of speech as essential values.

International Advocacy

B'Tselem advocated for respect for human rights, Israeli compliance with international law and an end to the occupation with hundreds of influential people in Israel, the oPt and abroad. B'Tselem staff advocated our positions in over 160 meetings, briefings, roundtables, and events for the international community, with diplomats, foreign government officials, UN agencies, church groups and international organizations. B'Tselem held a briefing on our research reports [Getting Off Scot Free](#) for the international community and journalists, [Unprotected: Detention of Palestinian Teenagers in East Jerusalem](#). B'Tselem also held 23 field visits to the West Bank, including East Jerusalem, with diplomats, government officials and international groups. B'Tselem staff went on advocacy missions to 14 cities abroad, reaching out to policymakers and the international public in dozens of meetings and events.

On April 25, B'Tselem published a [press release](#) stating the importance of the international community to ending the occupation. B'Tselem stated that "firm determination and resolve by the international community is essential to making it clear to Prime Minister Netanyahu that his actions on the other side of the Green Line, i.e., beyond Israel's sovereign borders, quite simply cross the line".

On June 5, 2017, we marked fifty years since June 1967, when Israel first occupied the West Bank including East Jerusalem and the Gaza Strip. B'Tselem advocacy team brought our messages to American audiences ahead of the occupation's half century mark. B'Tselem participated in the J Street Conference, "Defending our Values, Fighting for our future" in Washington DC in February. Hagai El-Ad spoke panel 'Fighting for Israeli Democracy and Human Rights in the Age of Trump'. In May, B'Tselem's director came together with 70 peacemakers and community leaders from 31 countries for the Carter Center's Human Rights Defenders Forum to discuss strategies for protecting human rights in the wake of rising authoritarianism. "[Freedom from Fear: Securing Rights in Challenging Times](#)" shone a spotlight on obstacles human rights defenders face as governments clamp down on public debate.

In his June 20 [address](#) to the UN Security Council, on the Occupation's 50th anniversary, on behalf of the Elders, Lakhdar Brahimi, Former Algerian Foreign Minister, said, "I wish to put on record today The Elders' appreciation and admiration of the work of the peace movement in Israel, its brave human rights defenders such as B'Tselem, Breaking the Silence and the Israeli Committee Against House Demolitions, and outstanding writers such as Gideon Levy and Uri Avnery". The Elders [tweeted](#) this statement and [broadcast](#) the address live on its Facebook page.

On November 27, El-Ad [spoke](#) at an event entitled "[France Must Act](#)" at the French Senate organized by the Institut de Recherche et d'Études Méditerranée Moyen-Orient (iReMMO). The event emphasized the need for France, as a permanent member of the United Nations Security Council, to intervene in the developments in the Occupied Territories. El-Ad highlighted Israel's attempts to portray itself as a member of the club of democratic nations while maintaining a regime of oppression for over 50 years.

Support from the Art World

In April, acclaimed Chinese artist and activist Ai Weiwei announced that he is donating proceeds from sales of a limited edition of his work [Study of Perspective: The White House](#), in collaboration with The Skateroom, to B'Tselem. Ai Weiwei commented "My favourite word is 'act'. I am partnering with the Skateroom for that very reason. During the filming of Human Flow, my documentary on the global refugee condition, I had the opportunity to speak with individuals from both B'Tselem and the Bridging People's Association in Turkey. What these two organizations do is very valuable to society, both in fighting against injustice and in helping those that are unfortunate." His donation was reported in [Ha'aretz](#), [Architectural Digest](#), and [FAD](#).

In June, Israeli author David Grossman and translator Jessica Cohen jointly accepted the Man Booker International Prize at a ceremony in London. Mr. Grossman is a member of B'Tselem's public council. Ms. Cohen said: "It's not easy to tell unflattering and uncomfortable truths, and it's certainly not easy to hear them. But it is essential, not only in literature but in real life, and I hope that organizations like B'Tselem continue to do so." Jessica Cohen donated half of her share of the prize money to B'Tselem, as reported in the [Economist](#), [Jewish Forward](#), [The Times of Israel](#), [the Jewish Chronicle](#), [Newburgh Gazette](#), [Dawn](#), [ffnews](#), [Jewish Telegraphic Agency](#), and [World Israel News](#). [124](#) also published an interview with Jessica Cohen.