



Six-Month Report on Demolitions and Confiscations of EU funded structures in Area C September 2016 - February 2017

Summary

The unprecedented high rate of demolitions of Palestinian structures by the Israeli authorities in Area C and East Jerusalem continued during the reporting period (September 2016 - February 2017).

During the past six months, 117 structures (like homes, animal shelters, latrines, water networks, and agricultural and livelihood assets) funded by the EU or EU Member States for a value of 311,692 € were demolished or seized. This represents an increase of 28.5 per cent in financial loss compared to last reporting period. For ECHO, the financial losses incurred due to demolitions accounts for an average of 1 per cent of its budget for humanitarian aid for the West Bank over the last three years (2014-2016). This brings the total number of targeted structures in 2016 funded by EU or its member states to 182 increasing the total financial losses in 2016 to 557,378 € which represents an **exceptional upsurge**.

During the reporting period Israeli Authorities demolished or seized 440 Palestinian owned structures throughout the West Bank including East Jerusalem. This brings the total number of demolished or seized structures in 2016 to 1,094. Resulting in the displacement of 1,628 people including 772 children and adversely impacting a further 7,126 Palestinians.

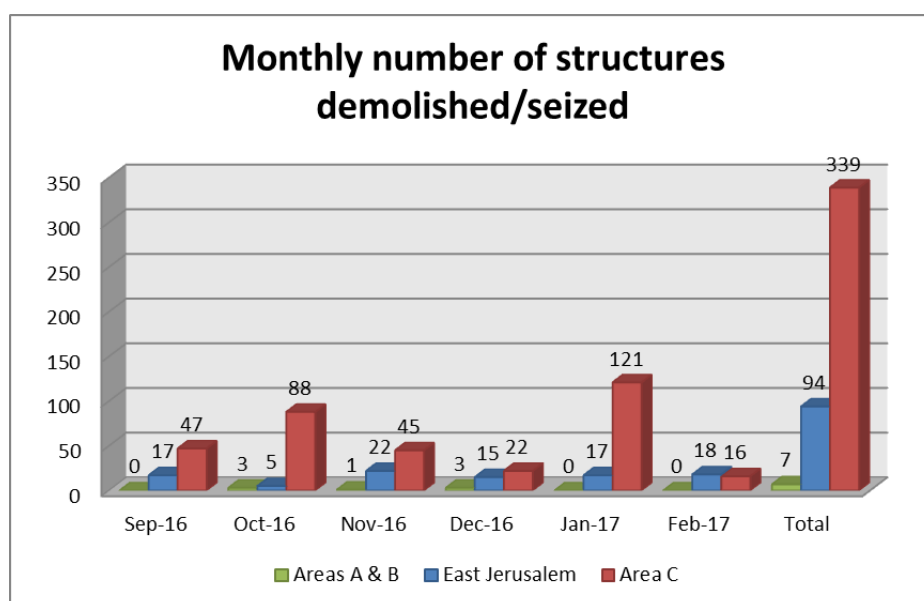
Of particular concern are developments related to Israeli plans for the relocation of Bedouins and herders in Area C, in particular Khan al-Ahmar (a Bedouin community located immediately east of E1 close to the Jerusalem-Ma'ale Adumin highway), Satah al Bahr (a Bedouin community located in Jericho), the case of Susiya (a herder community located in the Southern Hebron Hills), and the overall coercive environment in Area C that communities are facing. As an example, Khirbet Tana (a community located in the Nablus Governorate) has faced many waves of demolitions (the most recent in January 2017).

In the first two months of 2017 50 EU funded structures have been demolished, causing a financial loss of 110,000 €. Another 50 EU funded structures worth 500,000 € were placed under threat of demolition through the issuance of stop-work and demolition orders.

1. GENERAL DEMOLITION FIGURES

The number of demolitions recorded in Area C and East Jerusalem in 2016, 1094, exceeded all annual demolitions recorded since 2009. This trend is reflected in the number of demolitions documented during the reporting period (September 2016-February 2017). The Israeli authorities demolished 433 structures¹ during the reporting period; 94 in East Jerusalem and the remaining 339 in Area C in the occupied West Bank.² The increase in demolitions during January 2017 can be explained by two incidents, accounting for nearly half of the structures demolished this month in herding communities in Khirbet Tana and Al Jiftlik-Abu al'Ajaj. In addition, the Jerusalem municipality carried out a series of demolitions in Jabal al Mukabber as punitive measures following the ramming attack 8 January 2017.

In particular there have been a high number of structures demolished in East Jerusalem in recent months. A recent mapping by UNOCHA indicates that more than 800 Palestinians in East Jerusalem are at risk of eviction as a result of court cases pursued by Israeli courts, primarily by settler organizations.



The large majority of the demolitions in 2016 took place in the Southern Hebron Hills, the Jordan Valley, and in the E1 area³. The demolitions in 2016 resulted in the displacement of 1,628 people including 772 children and adversely impacting a further 7,126 Palestinians.

An estimated number of 12,500 Palestinian structures in Area C currently have outstanding demolition orders issued by the Israeli Civil Administration due to lack of required building permits.⁴ These pending demolition orders could be implemented at any moment.

¹ Structures cover shelters, water networks, latrines, schools, solar panels etc.

² These figures, provided by UNOCHA, include punitive demolitions, dismantlement and confiscation, evictions and (pre-emptive) self-demolitions as of 24 March 2017.

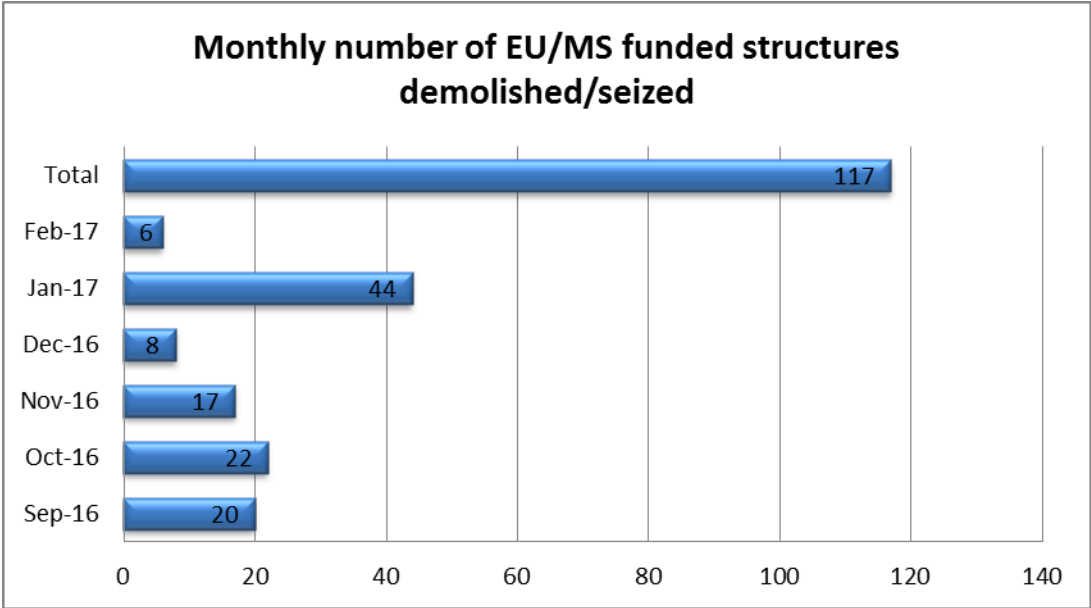
³ E1 refers to an Israeli plan from 2009 that sought to expand the Ma'ale Adumim settlement. The plan would, if implemented, effectively bisect what could become a contiguous Palestinian state.

⁴ Structures at risk of demolition are structures that have received demolition orders, stop-work orders, or eviction orders by the Israeli authorities.

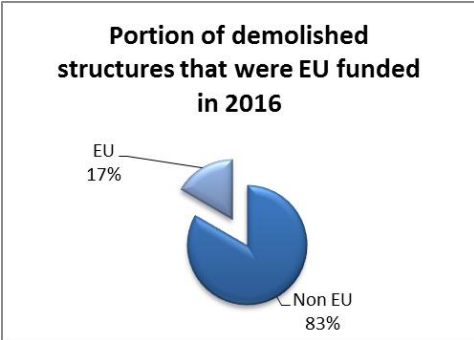
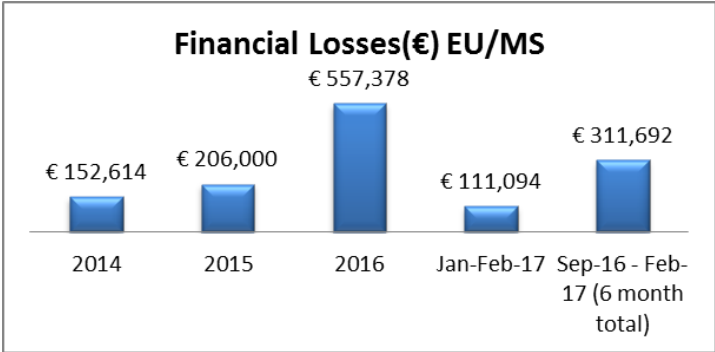
2. DEMOLITION OF EU-FUNDED STRUCTURES AND STRUCTURES FUNDED BY EU MEMBER STATES (EUMS)

During the reporting period, 117 structures funded by the EU or EUMS were destroyed. These numbers are nearly double compared to the previous reporting period. The increase was particularly dramatic in January, with 44 EU and EUMS structures demolished during one month.

77 per cent of the demolitions took place in Area C and the demolished structures included residential structures, school structures, latrines and animal shelters provided as humanitarian aid to vulnerable communities in Area C.



As a result of the increasing demolitions and confiscations by Israeli authorities of structures provided by EU or EU member states (MS), the financial losses have increased progressively. During the six-month reporting period, 117 structures for a value of 311,692 € have been demolished. This brings the total number of targeted structures in 2016 funded by EU or its member states to 182 increasing the total financial losses in 2016 to 557,378 €. In total 17 per cent of the structures demolished in 2016 were EU funded.



For ECHO, the financial losses incurred due to demolitions accounts for an average of 1 per cent of its budget for humanitarian aid for the West Bank over the last three years (2014-2016).

Between 2009 (when recording began) and 2016, 352 EU/EUMS funded structures worth about 1 million € have been demolished.

3. DEVELOPMENTS OF PARTICULAR CONCERN

Khan al Ahmar. Khan al Ahmar (Abu Helu) is one of 18 Bedouin communities inhabited by the Jahalin tribe in the Jerusalem periphery. The community's mixed elementary school (the 'Tire School') that serves 170 pupils received a demolition order a month after its opening and the Israeli state has confirmed its intent to demolish the school numerous times since. On 15 and 19 February 2017, Israeli officials distributed dozens of military 'stop work' and demolition orders threatening nearly every structure in the community (approximately 140 in total), thus exposing the community to the risk of mass demolition.

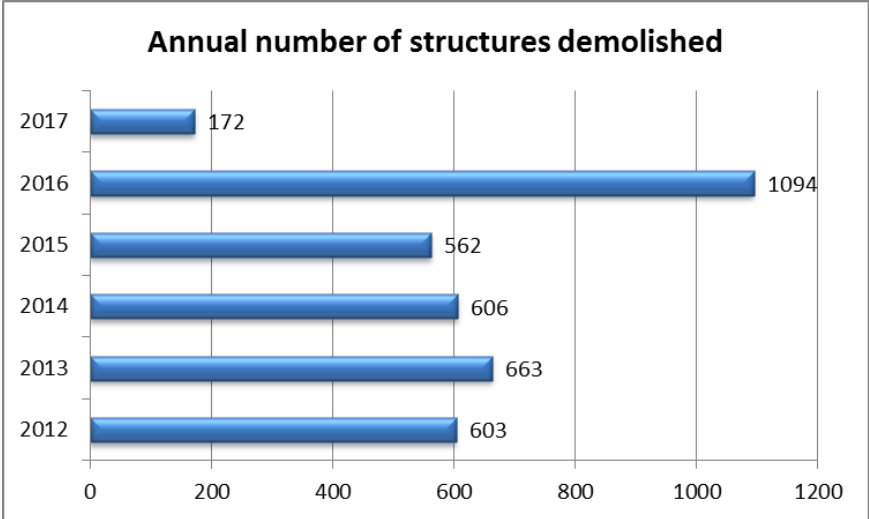
Susiya. The West Bank town of Susiya (South Hebron Hills, 340 inhabitants) has been facing threats of demolition since the late 1980s. The risk of imminent demolition of 40 per cent of the village remerged in August 2016 as dialogue between the village representatives and Israeli authorities ceased. The case is currently pending a response from the State of Israel at the Israeli Supreme Court as to whether a demolition will take place.

4. EU ACTION DURING THE REPORTING PERIOD

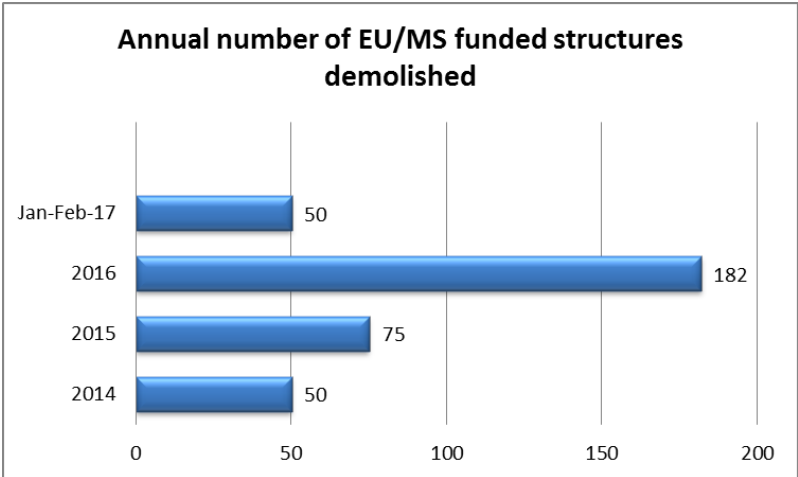
During the reporting period the EU Delegation to the West Bank and Gaza, together with the EU Delegation to Israel, met and raised matters of demolition with COGAT.

- On 24 October 2016 a diplomatic visit was made to Abu Nuwar, a community which is designated for relocation by the Israeli authorities.
- On 13 December 2016 a local Statement by EU Heads of Mission in Jerusalem and Ramallah on Israeli demolitions and confiscations of Palestinian structures in Area C was issued.
- On 22 February 2017 a cross party delegation of members of the European Parliament visited the Khan al-Ahmar and Sateh al-Bahr communities.
- On 22 February 2017 a local EU MS statement was issued on Israeli demolitions and confiscations of Palestinian structures in Area C was issued.
- On 28 February 2017 a visit to Khan al-Ahmar by EU Heads of Mission in Jerusalem and Ramallah was arranged.

ANNEX I: Overview: Demolitions in the West bank including East Jerusalem



ANNEX II: Overview: Annual demolitions of EU and EUMS funded structures in the West Bank, 2014-2017



All information disclosed is susceptible to change at any time depending on new available data.