



THE DANGEROUS ROAD TO EDUCATION

Palestinian students suffer under settler violence and military negligence

2009

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Palestinian Students Suffer Under Settler Violence
And Military Negligence

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Christian Peacemaker Teams and **Operation Dove** have maintained
an international presence in At-Tuwani and South Hebron Hills since 2004.



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1 INTRODUCTION

Salah is a 12-year-old Palestinian boy who likes to play football and eat chicken maqlubeh, a traditional dish of rice and meat. He lives in the village of Tuba, located about 15 kilometers southeast of Hebron, and attends school in At-Tuwani, a village about 2.5 kilometers west of his home. With other children of Tuba, as well as the village of Maghayir Al-Abeed, Salah walks to school. The children typically take the shortest route: the main Palestinian road that connects their villages with At-Tuwani and is encroached by the Israeli settlement of Ma'on on one side and the Israeli outpost of Havat Ma'on (also known as Hill 833) on the other.¹ Because of ongoing Israeli settler violence against the school children, the Israeli military escorts the children on the section of the road that passes between the settlement and the outpost on their way to and from school.

This escort began in November 2004 – the same year Salah started attending school – because settlers routinely attacked the schoolchildren. Salah was part of a group attacked in September of that year, when about a dozen masked settlers ambushed five children and two accompanying internationals on the road to school. One settler hit Salah's sister, Myriam, on the head with a stick. The children ran back



Children, escorted by Israeli army, arriving in At-Tuwani for school.

¹ According to the Fourth Geneva Convention, the Hague Regulations, the International Court of Justice, and numerous United Nations resolutions, all Israeli settlements and outposts in the Occupied Palestinian Territories are illegal. Most settlement outposts, including Havat Ma'on (Hill 833), are considered illegal under Israeli law. In 2006 the Israeli government released a list of West Bank outposts slated for evacuation; Havat Ma'on was at the top of the list. More than four years later, no action has been taken to implement the evacuation.

to Tuba, and the settlers beat the two internationals, who were injured and needed hospitalization.² This attack was one of the incidents that precipitated the implementation of the Israeli military escort, which has now continued for six years.³ Salah has never experienced going to school without the threat of

potential attack or the necessity of relying on a military escort to accompany him and his schoolmates.

Notwithstanding the Israeli military escort, settlers from the settlement of Ma'on and outpost of Havat Ma'on continue to impede the children's journey to school and to use violence against the children. Since the beginning of the escort, internationals have documented over 100 cases of aggressive threats and attacks on the children.⁴ During the 2009-10 school year, internationals documented 12 cases of settlers threatening the children: chasing them, throwing stones, driving at them, honking or shouting; sometimes armed with rocks, slingshots or automatic rifles. On at least 6 other occasions, settlers were present on or near the road as the children waited for the escort or walked to or from school.

The Israeli soldiers executing the escort at times failed to protect the children and frequently arrived late, causing the children to wait, sometimes for hours,

before and after school. In addition, the soldiers regularly failed to provide a complete escort of the children, almost always leaving the children to walk unescorted beside settlement buildings, in an area where settlers have attacked them. Chapter 2 of this report further details settler aggression and military escort negligence during the 2009-10 school year.

Chapter 3 examines data gathered from the past six years, highlighting trends in how the military escort is functioning. Since the escort began, settlers' violence towards the children has diminished, but the military escort has not eliminated violent attacks or threats. Furthermore, data from the last four years reveal that negligence of the escort is increasing. Children are waiting more hours for the military escort to arrive and so are missing more hours of school. The percentage of times that soldiers are not walking



During the 2009-10 school year soldiers walked with children during only 18% of their trips, thus contravening their mandate.

² This and other incidents are included in the Amnesty International release, "Israeli settlers wage campaign of intimidation on Palestinians and internationals alike," 25 October 2004, available at <http://www.amnesty.org/en/library/asset/MDE15/099/2004/en/c551ba4b-d56a-11dd-bb24-1fb85fe8fa05/mde150992004en.html>

³ In November 2004, the Israeli District Coordinating Office (DCO), a branch of the Israeli military that administers civilian affairs, issued a verbal order for a daily escort of the school children. The Israeli Knesset Committee for Children's Rights later confirmed this order. See Amira Hass' article "IDF calls off escort of Palestinian schoolchildren in Hebron," Haaretz, 19 October 2005, at <http://www.haaretz.com/news/idf-calls-off-escort-of-palestinian-schoolchildren-in-hebron-1.172097>.

⁴ For previous years' school reports by Christian Peacemaker Teams (CPT) and Operation Dove (OD) see the 2005-06 report at: http://www.cpt.org/files/CPT_OD_2005_2006_school_patrol_report.pdf; the 2006-08 report, "A Dangerous Journey" at <http://www.cpt.org/files/Palestine-School-Accompaniment-Report-2006-2008-Dangerous-Journey.pdf> or http://www.operazionecolomba.com/docs/school_patrol_report_2006-2008-dangerous_journey.pdf; and the 2008-09 report, "The Closed Road to Education" at http://www.operationdove.org/docs/SHH-School-Accompaniment_Report_2008-09-Closed_Road.pdf or http://www.cpt.org/files/palestine/SHH-School-Accompaniment_Report_2008-09-Closed_Road.pdf.

with the children and are not completing the escort also continues to rise.

Despite the failures of the military escort, without it many of the children would not attend school. Alternative routes to the school can take up to two hours by foot through a rocky, steep landscape. Settlers attack the children and their relatives also on these longer paths.⁵ Hence a perilous situation continues: each day Salah, Myriam and their schoolmates must choose whether to walk to school and potentially face violence on their journey.

The challenges faced by the children of Tuba and Maghayir Al-Abeed on their daily journey to school are only one example of the challenges that confront Palestinian children trying to access their right to education. Chapter 4 describes the difficulties endured by the teachers and students of the primary school in Al-Fakheit, a village located 1.5 kilometers north of the Green Line. This school opened in September 2009 to serve the families living in the southernmost part of Massafer Yatta. But the school and those attending it have suffered throughout the year from a lack of needed infrastructure and from military harassment on the way to and from school. Chapter 4 also briefly describes two other situations in the Hebron district in which behaviors of the Israeli military and Israeli settlers hinder Palestinian children's right to education.

Finally, the remaining chapters of this report place these stories within the larger framework of Palestinian dispossession and occupation in the region of Massafer Yatta. The cases of settler aggression that the school children suffer are one example of a broader wave of settler violence directed toward Palestinians living in the South Hebron hills. The barriers the school children face trying to access their right to education are symptomatic of Palestinians' struggle to remain on their land and to claim their rights to security, mobility and basic resources.

⁵ A notable instance of such violence occurred on 17 November 2009, when five adult settlers harassed a Palestinian family with three young children. See release "Israeli settlers threaten Palestinian family, beat and rob CP'ers," 18 November 2009, <http://www.cpt.org/cptnet/2009/11/18/tuwani-israeli-settlers-threaten-palestinian-family-beat-and-rob-cpters>

2 DETAILS OF THE 2009-10 SCHOOL YEAR

(1 September 2009 through 10 June 2010)

During the 2009-10 school year, an average of 18 children, ages 6-14, from Tuba and Maghayir Al-Abeed went to and from school each day with the military escort (minimum 7 children, maximum 22).⁶ In 94% of the children's trips to and from school, they were escorted by the military (331 out of 354 cases).⁷

The children's usual route to school takes 20-30 minutes to walk after gathering at the western edge of Tuba. (For a map of the area and of the routes the children walk to school, please see Appendix 1). From the gathering point in Tuba, the children walk approximately ten minutes to the eastern end of a pair of chicken barns built by Ma'on settlers in 2006 on top of the Palestinian road that runs between Tuba and At-Tuwani. This location by the barns should be the point where the military escort meets the children — and it is where the children often must wait for the escort to arrive. However, since 2008, the jeep and soldiers habitually have met the children at the western end of the chicken barns or, increasingly, at a junction in the road on the hill above the barns. This means that, in addition to their waiting time near the barns, the children also have an unescorted five-minute walk past the barns, in an area where settlers may be present and have attacked or frightened the children several times.⁸

After meeting the escort, the children walk accompanied for about ten minutes as the road passes between Ma'on settlement on the right and Havat Ma'on outpost on the left. At the point where Palestinian land is still cultivated by Palestinians (rather than being claimed and cultivated by settlers), the escort leaves the children, who then walk through the village of At-Tuwani to school. In the afternoon, the children and escort follow the same route in reverse. Internationals observe the escort daily from both the Tuba side and the At-Tuwani side in order to monitor how it is proceeding, to gather data and document any irregularities, and to intervene in case of problems. In 12 cases during the 2009-10 school year, the Israeli military either did not arrive for the escort or arrived so late that the children had already taken an alternative route. Without the escort, the children do not feel safe enough to walk their usual, most direct route. Instead they take trails at least twice as long, which circle around the southern edge of Havat Ma'on outpost and run through hills and rocky terrain. Along these paths, the children are still vulnerable to settler attack.

⁶ This is a significant increase from the 2008-09 school year, when the daily average of children attending school was 12 (minimum 3 children, maximum 19).

⁷ This report uses information gathered during the school year by Christian Peacemaker Teams (CPT) and Operation Dove (OD). For the 2009-10 school year, which included 177 days of school, a total of 354 cases were recorded. A case is defined as a situation where Tuba and Maghayir Al-Abeed children walked from their villages to the At-Tuwani primary school or from the school to their villages. These include school days when the Israeli military failed to provide an escort.

⁸ The presence of the barns makes it more difficult for the children and the escort to see each other, while also making it more difficult for all of them to spot settlers in the area, whether the settlers are simply present on their own business or whether they are present to ambush the children, as has happened.

Table 1: **Escort presence and absence**

| | Morning | Afternoon | Total | Total % |
|--|----------------|------------------|--------------|----------------|
| Escort present | 164 | 160 | 324 | 92% |
| No escort | 5 | 2 | 7 | 2% |
| Missing data but escort present | 2 | 5 | 7 | 2% |
| Missing data altogether | 5 | 6 | 11 | 3% |
| Children didn't wait - walked alone | 1 | 4 | 5 | 1% |
| Total | 177 | 177 | 354 | 100% |

2.1 Settler Aggression

During 2009-10 internationals documented 12 cases of settler aggression directed against the children during the journey to or from school. These 12 cases include a variety of actions from the settlers: shouting, chasing or driving at the children; blocking the children's path; and approaching the children masked and/or openly armed with rocks, slingshots or automatic weapons. In one case, a settler hurled rocks at the children with a slingshot. While the level of violence in these 12 cases seems to vary, in every instance one or more settlers intentionally directed threatening actions toward the children.



Israeli masked settlers from Havat Ma'on illegal outpost attacking Palestinians in At-Tuwani village, on June 12, 2010

In addition, in at least 6 other cases, settlers were present on or next to the path of the schoolchildren during the escort. These cases are not included in the count of instances of settler aggression, since they reveal no evidence of intended threat or violence. However, given the ongoing history of settlers' attacks and violence toward the school children, the mere presence of settlers along the route to school is enough to raise anxiety and alarm in the children, especially when and where the soldiers choose not to walk with the children.

The 12 cases of settler aggression span the 2009-10 school year and are briefly detailed in the following paragraphs.

The first incidence of settler aggression occurred the morning of **7 September 2009**, one week after the opening day of school. As the children passed the settlement chicken barns, on their way to meet the escort, settlers shouted at and approached the children. The Ma'on settlement security agent came out and instructed the children to keep walking.

On the morning of **27 October 2009**, the escort never arrived. The children waited 45 minutes and then accompanied by internationals, started to walk to school on a longer path, which circles south of the outpost. However four adult settlers on foot — one masked and holding a slingshot — and other settlers in a pickup truck blocked the path of the children and internationals. Frightened, the children ran back to Tuba and did not attend school that day.⁹

On **30 December 2009**, the escort again delayed in arriving in the morning. The children had been waiting half an hour near the settlement chicken barns when a man emerged from a house in Havat Ma'on outpost. As the children moved away from him and toward Tuba, the settler charged them, hurling stones with a slingshot. The children ran home. When the soldiers arrived at 9:00 a.m. — an hour and a half late — the children walked to school on the usual route.¹⁰

The following afternoon, **31 December 2009**, the children had to wait about 40 minutes for the escort to arrive. As they waited, a woman drove from the outpost to the area where the children were. She shouted at the children, made a call with her mobile phone, and a few minutes later, the Ma'on settlement security agent arrived, accompanied by another settler. These two men chased the children, who ran back toward At-Tuwani until the escort arrived.

A settler again chased the children on **10 January 2010**. This morning, an army jeep twice came to the junction above the settlement barns, a point about 300 meters from where the children wait near the chicken barns, and drove away immediately, without giving the children time to walk to meet the jeep. At 8:10 a.m., the children began to walk the longer route south of the outpost, accompanied by internationals. A car drove from the Havat Ma'on outpost along a road intercepting the children's route. An adult male settler got out of the car, covered his head with a shawl, and moved toward the children, who were frightened and ran back to Tuba. Internationals immediately called the Israeli police. Finally around 9 a.m., two Israeli soldiers arrived at the settlement chicken barns, along with Israeli police and the Ma'on settlement security agent. The soldiers walked with the children partway along the usual route, then departed with the security agent as the children ran the rest of the way to At-Tuwani.¹¹

In the morning of **9 February 2010**, three of the schoolgirls were walking slightly behind the rest of the group. They reported that a settler drove up behind them and yelled at them. Meanwhile, they said, the soldiers did not wait for them but only shouted for them to run to catch up with the jeep. They arrived in At-Tuwani out of breath and upset.

On **22 February 2010**, the children waited an hour for the escort to arrive after school had finished. As the children waited, two settlers approached on a farm tractor. The two men, one masked, drove to the

⁹ See release "Israeli military negligence again exposes young Palestinian children to threat of attack from Israeli settlers," 27 October 2009, <http://groups.yahoo.com/group/cpthebron/message/1270> and the report on Sky news at: <http://snipurl.com/skinews.22november2009> or http://cpt.org/index.php?q=gallery&g2_itemId=5707.

¹⁰ See release "Israeli settler violence against children permitted by Israeli army negligence," 30 December 2009, <http://groups.yahoo.com/group/cpthebron/message/1292> and video: http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=wuTijYQ_TdA

¹¹ See release "Israeli Settler Blocks Schoolchildren's Path after Israeli Soldiers Fail to Escort Children to School," 11 January 2009, <http://groups.yahoo.com/group/cpthebron/message/1303>.

children's usual waiting point and tried to make a barricade with boulders across the road that the children walk. Tired of waiting, the children decided to return home by a longer path around the settlement and outpost, but when they were on that path, three settlers emerged from Havat Ma'on and chased the children, who ran away. Israeli military jeeps appeared ahead of the children, and the soldiers detained the children for an additional hour, refusing to provide the children safe passage around the settlement. Only when the soldiers had left could the children walk home unaccompanied, arriving three hours after the end of school.¹²

During the afternoon escort of **24 February 2010**, internationals waiting in Tuba observed a settler near the settlement chicken barns, where the children must pass on their way home. Although the internationals called to request that the soldiers escort the children all the way alongside the barns, the escort arrived late and stopped well short of the barns. Three settlers close to the road yelled at the children.

Similarly, on the afternoon of **9 March 2010**, internationals again observed settlers in the area of the settlement chicken barns. One settler, armed with an automatic weapon, approached the children after the army jeep had stopped at the junction above the barns and the children were continuing to walk unescorted. The soldiers did not get out of the jeep, but they opened a door and honked the horn. The settler turned back, and the children ran toward the waiting internationals.

Later that month, on the morning of **25 March 2010**, the soldiers escorted the children only partway to At-Tuwani, then drove away, leaving the children to walk alone past two settlers. These settlers picked up stones, and the children, fearful from past experiences of getting stoned, ran down the road toward At-Tuwani.¹³

During the morning escort on **15 April 2010**, a settler drove his car into the midst of the children, who had to jump out of the way to avoid being hit. Passengers in the car then yelled at the children and at internationals who were nearby videotaping the scene, while the soldiers performing the escort remained in their jeep.¹⁴

On the morning of **2 May 2010**, the military escort failed to arrive. After waiting an hour the children began to walk the longer path to school. A masked settler on horseback rode from the outpost toward the children as they walked and stopped about 50 meters away from them. The children continued to school, arriving more than an hour and a half late.¹⁵

¹² See release "Israeli settlers intimidate Palestinian school children after Israeli military neglects escort," 22 February 2010, <http://groups.yahoo.com/group/cpthebron/message/1324> or <http://www.operationdove.org/?p=433>

¹³ See release "Israeli army subjects Palestinian school children to verbal abuse and fails to safely escort them to and from school," 27 March 2010, <http://groups.yahoo.com/group/cpthebron/message/1335> or <http://www.operationdove.org/?p=437>

¹⁴ See CPT At-Tuwani Update, April 2010, <http://groups.yahoo.com/group/cpthebron/message/1352>

¹⁵ See release "Israeli Army inefficiency endangers Palestinian schoolchildren of Tuba and Maghayir Al-Abeed," 3 May 2010, <http://www.operationdove.org/?p=317>

2.2 Military escort negligence

The above cases of settler aggression also reveal significant Israeli military negligence in performing the escort. Many times the aggression occurred when the escort was late and the children had to wait or walk alone in risky areas. Sometimes the aggression happened when the children had to walk unaccompanied past the settlement chicken barns. Other times, the aggression took place during the escort, while soldiers refused to walk with the children on the road or to get out of the jeep when problems occurred.

Not one case of settler aggression coincides with soldiers performing the escort as it should be — on time, walking with the children, and completing the escort to the eastern end of the chicken barns, near the village of Tuba.¹⁶

During the 2009-10 school year, internationals documented many cases of violations, incompetence and soldier aggression during the military escort of the school children. These cases fall into three categories:

1. not performing the escort fully — that is, soldiers not conducting the escort through all the dangerous areas and/or refusing to walk with the children during the escort;
2. not arriving on time for the escort; and
3. harassing the children.

In addition, internationals have also observed several occurrences of apparent miscommunication within the Israeli military regarding the logistics of the escort. Because the army unit stationed in the area

changes every few months and there is frequent turnover in the personnel performing the escort, soldiers often seem not to know where to go to meet the children or when they should arrive.

On 27 October 2009, for example, when the escort failed to arrive and children missed a day of school, soldiers later claimed they were new to the area and so did not know where to meet the children for the escort.¹⁷ The morning of 10 January 2010, internationals watched the army jeep twice come to the junction above



During the 2009-10 school year, children waited more than 53 hours for military escort after school.

¹⁶Details of the escort are communicated between the At-Tuwani mayor and the Palestinian DCL, who passes those details on to the Israeli DCO and thus on to the Israeli military. Agreed upon details include: that the escort should meet the children by 7.30 a.m. at the eastern end of the settlement's chicken barns, then meet the children again by 1 p.m. in At-Tuwani where the escort leaves the children in the morning, and that two soldiers should walk with the children during the escort.

¹⁷ See footnote no. 4.

the settlement chicken barns and drive away immediately; the soldiers did not appear to realize where the children habitually wait for the escort and that, if the jeep will not come to the children, the children at least need some minutes to walk toward the jeep once it arrives.¹⁸

2.2.1 Military escort violations: Refusal to complete the escort, refusal to walk

In contravention of the protective mandate of the escort, the Israeli military failed to fully complete the escort in 94% of the cases (320 of 342 recorded cases¹⁹).

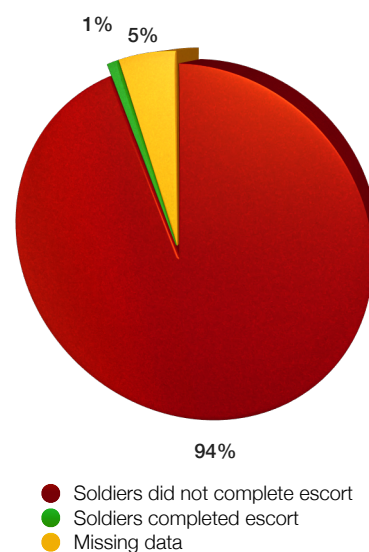
In most of these 320 cases, the escort stopped at a road junction uphill from the west end of the Ma'on chicken barns near the Havat Ma'on outpost. This junction is approximately 300 meters from the east end of the newest Ma'on chicken barns (built in 2006), which is the agreed-upon meeting point to start or conclude the military escort. In 2008 settlers erected an automatic gate near the junction.²⁰ When the military escort stops at the junction or the gate, the children are left to walk unaccompanied 300 meters along the chicken barns. During the 2009-10 school year, 4 of the 12 cases of settler aggression happened in this area; the previous school year, nearly all the settler violence and harassment toward the children occurred here.

The hilly terrain and the barns impede the children's ability to see approaching settlers. Moreover, because the military escort does not come to the agreed-upon meeting area in the mornings, sometimes a few children walk by the barns to scout for the military jeep, which is not readily visible from where the children wait. As noted above, every time a child walks unaccompanied in this area, the risk of violence is high.

On multiple occasions, internationals monitoring the escort have explicitly asked the soldiers to accompany the children past the

gate to the far end of the chicken barns. On 6 April 2009, an Israeli military officer told internationals that the Israeli District Coordinating Office (DCO), a branch of the Israeli military that administers civilian affairs, decided the escort cannot go beyond the settler gate because **the gate itself prevents the jeep from passing** and soldiers on foot must stay within a short distance of the jeep.²¹

Graph 1: **Military negligence**
Refusal to complete escort
Soldiers do not accompany the children along the whole route



¹⁸ See footnote no. 6.

¹⁹ The 2009-10 school year includes 354 cases of the children's daily journeys to and from school, but in 12 cases the Israeli military either did not arrive for the escort or arrived so late that the children had already taken an alternative route. Therefore, the data in this sub-section is calculated based on the remaining 342 cases.

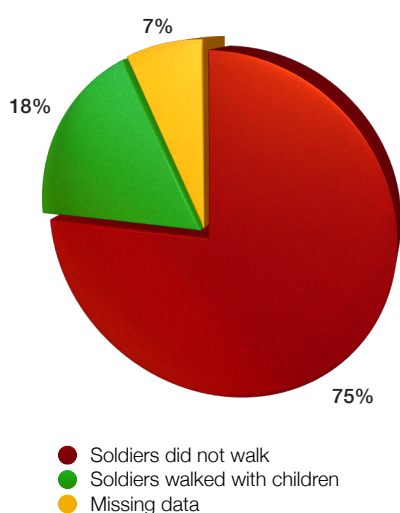
²⁰ Internationals observing from Tuba have witnessed times when the gate was open and the jeep still stopped at the junction. They have also watched military jeeps drive from Ma'on settlement toward Tuba on a road that passes along the north side of the chicken barns and thus avoids the gate.

²¹ Record of this conversation exists in CPT Log and on video, 6 April 2009.

However, on at least two occasions in the spring of 2009, internationals witnessed military jeeps passing through the gate. In these instances, the military harassed and arrested older siblings of the Tuba children as the siblings were grazing sheep in their fields. Again in May 2010, internationals witnessed

Graph 2: **Military negligence**
Refusal to walk

Soldiers stay in the jeep throughout the escort



military jeeps driving by the chicken barns and into the village of Tuba.²² On these two occasions, the soldiers allegedly were searching for a stolen goat, and they ransacked two homes in the village. Thus it is clear that when the Israeli military deems it necessary, jeeps and soldiers can access the far end of the settlement chicken barns and beyond.

Also in contravention of the agreement between the Israeli DCO and the At-Tuwani mayor, **Israeli soldiers did not walk with the children during the escort in 75% of the cases (256 of 342 recorded cases).**

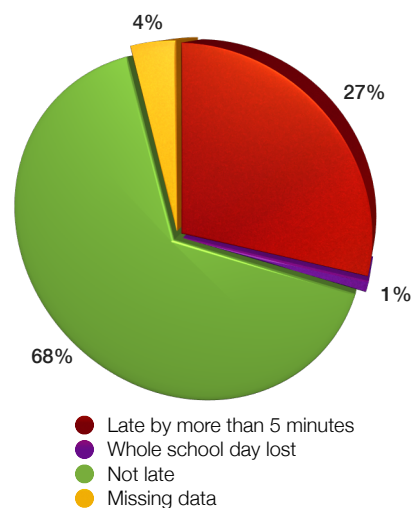
This is important because soldiers are physically much closer to the children when the soldiers walk than when they ride in the jeep, and so are immediately present should problems occur. Internationals have consistently observed that

the escorting soldiers who ride in the jeep almost never exit the jeep, even when settlers are present, threatening or attacking the children.

2.2.2 Military escort tardiness: Children are late for school; children wait for military escort home

On 27% of the mornings (48 of 177 recorded cases), the children were late to school by more than 5 minutes due to escort tardiness. Once the children missed an entire day of school because the escort failed to arrive and the children's attempt to walk unescorted to school was foiled by settlers blocking their path.

Graph 3: **Military negligence**
Children missing school due to military tardiness

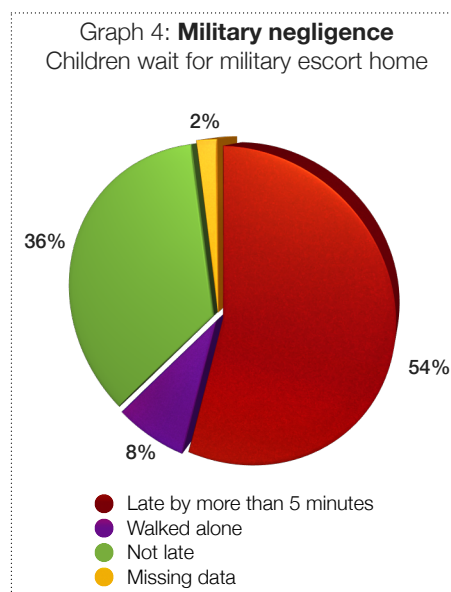


Throughout the school year, the children lost a total of 1,607 minutes of classes (almost 27 hours) because of late or missing military escorts. This figure takes into consideration only the children's lateness at school, not their total time waiting for the escort to arrive. The military escort sometimes arrives early, so the children may wait for the morning escort from 7 a.m. onward, and thus their total time spent waiting is actually greater than indicated in the chart.

²² See CPT At-Tuwani Update, March 2010, <http://groups.yahoo.com/group/cpthebron/message/1337>

On 54% of their school days (96 of 177 recorded cases), the children had to wait more than 5 minutes after school for the military escort. In the afternoons, the children waited a total of 3,182 minutes (53 hours).

When children were ready to go to school or home, but soldiers were late, the internationals made calls to the military office responsible for dispatching the military escort, alerting the dispatcher that the children were waiting and requesting that the escort come. Internationals made phone calls in 20% of the morning cases and 53% of the afternoon cases. During most cases, they called more than once because the escort vehicle did not appear within a reasonable time from the first call. In total internationals made 288 phone calls.²³



2.2.3 Soldier harassment of children during escort

Throughout the school year, internationals documented **11 cases when soldiers harassed the children by honking the jeep's horn or yelling at the children.** Twice the soldiers used their loudspeaker to shout at the children, and three times they forced the children to run.

One of the times when soldiers shouted at the children to run occurred on 9 February 2010. On this morning a settler approached three schoolgirls who were walking slightly behind the rest of the group and began to yell at them. The soldiers did not intervene to protect the children, nor did they slow down the jeep to wait; the soldiers only shouted at the girls to hurry and catch up.

Another occasion occurred on 24 March 2010, following the children's 43-minute wait after school for the escort to arrive. When the jeep finally came, soldiers yelled at the children to hurry up the road. The children rushed to gather their belongings and one girl left her sweater behind. When an international present at the scene urged the soldiers to be patient, one soldier replied, "We have missions to do... and this [the escort] is a bonus."²⁴

Similarly, on 31 March 2010, the children had to wait an hour and 16 minutes after school. When the jeep finally arrived, the soldiers revved the engine, refusing to get out of the jeep or slow down for the children. During the escort, they used their loudspeaker several times, shouting at the children to run.

²³ These are phone calls by members of CPT and Operation Dove. Members of Israeli human rights organizations made additional calls.

²⁴ See footnote no. 8.

2.3 The year in summary

The charts on pages 15-16 visually represent the 2009-10 school year, showing the accumulated minutes of escort delay and the occasions of settler aggression.

There is an obvious connection between military escort negligence and settler aggression toward the children. Escort delays, which require the children to wait in or nearby areas that settlers have claimed or which force the children to walk alone, make the children more vulnerable to violent attacks or threats



Children reaching the military escort at the road junction.

from settlers. The children are also more vulnerable when the soldiers cut the escort short or refuse to walk with the children.

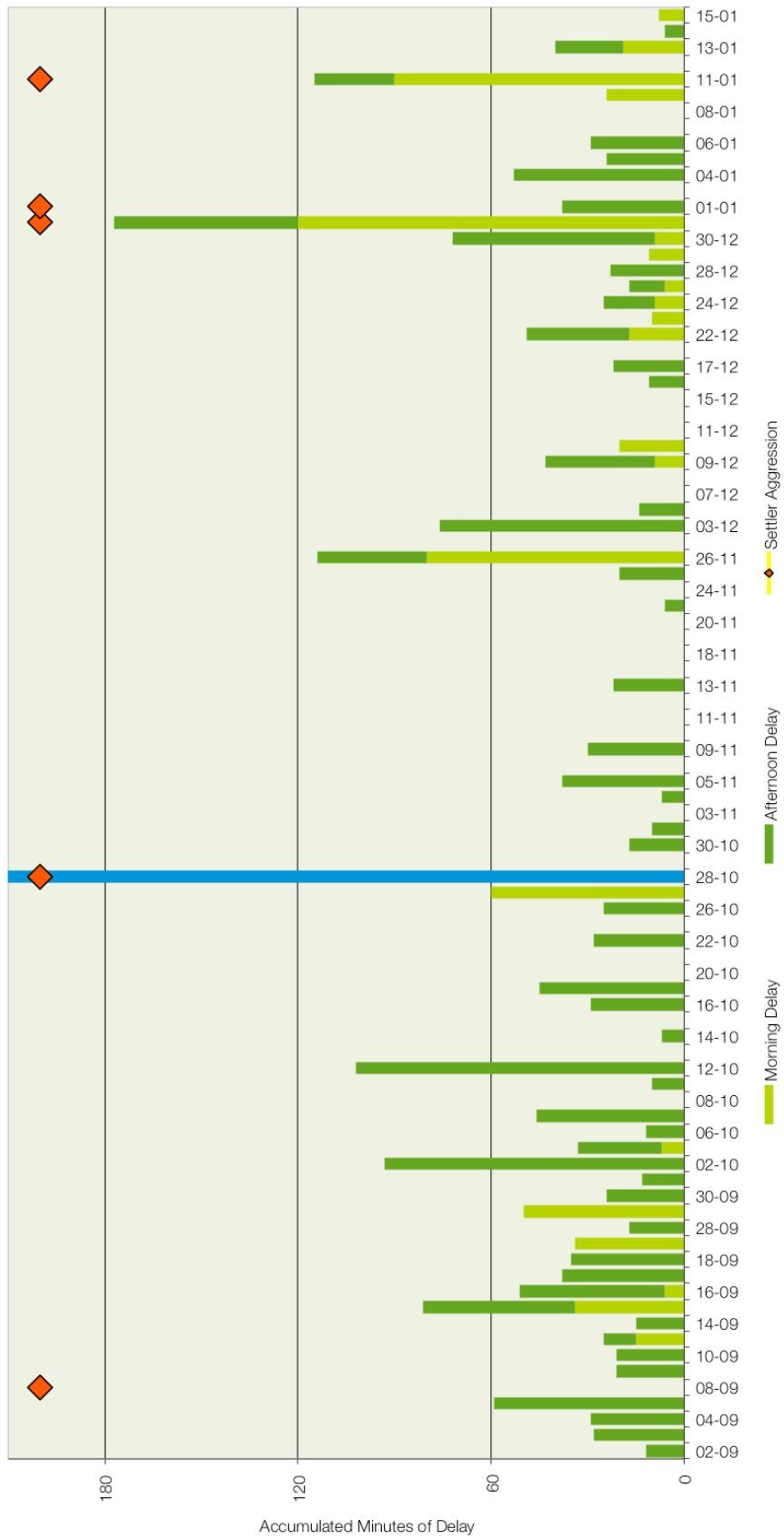
More deeply, negligence in how the soldiers perform the escort sends a clear message that the safety of these children is not important to the Israeli military, which is the *de facto* civil authority in the area.²⁵ This message is especially pronounced when settlers threaten

the children during the escort and the escorting soldiers do not intervene or leave the jeep to walk with the children. Even if the soldiers do offer some response, such as honking the jeep's horn or getting out from the jeep, they have never yet detained any person threatening or attacking the children — thus communicating that those who threaten or ambush the children are free to act with impunity.

Furthermore, the multiple cases of military escort negligence, on top of some cases of soldiers' harassment and settlers' acts of aggression toward the children, create a dangerous and unpredictable environment for the children every day they attend school. Each school day, the children can never be sure when (or if) they will reach school, when they will arrive home, and what threats or attacks they may endure along the way. Such an environment of uncertainty and constant potential threat has a negative impact on the children's ability to learn.

²⁵ At-Tuwani, Tuba and Maghayir Al-Abeed (as well as Al-Fakheit and other villages mentioned in this report) are all located in Area C where, per the Oslo Accords of 1993, the Israeli army exercises full military and civil control.

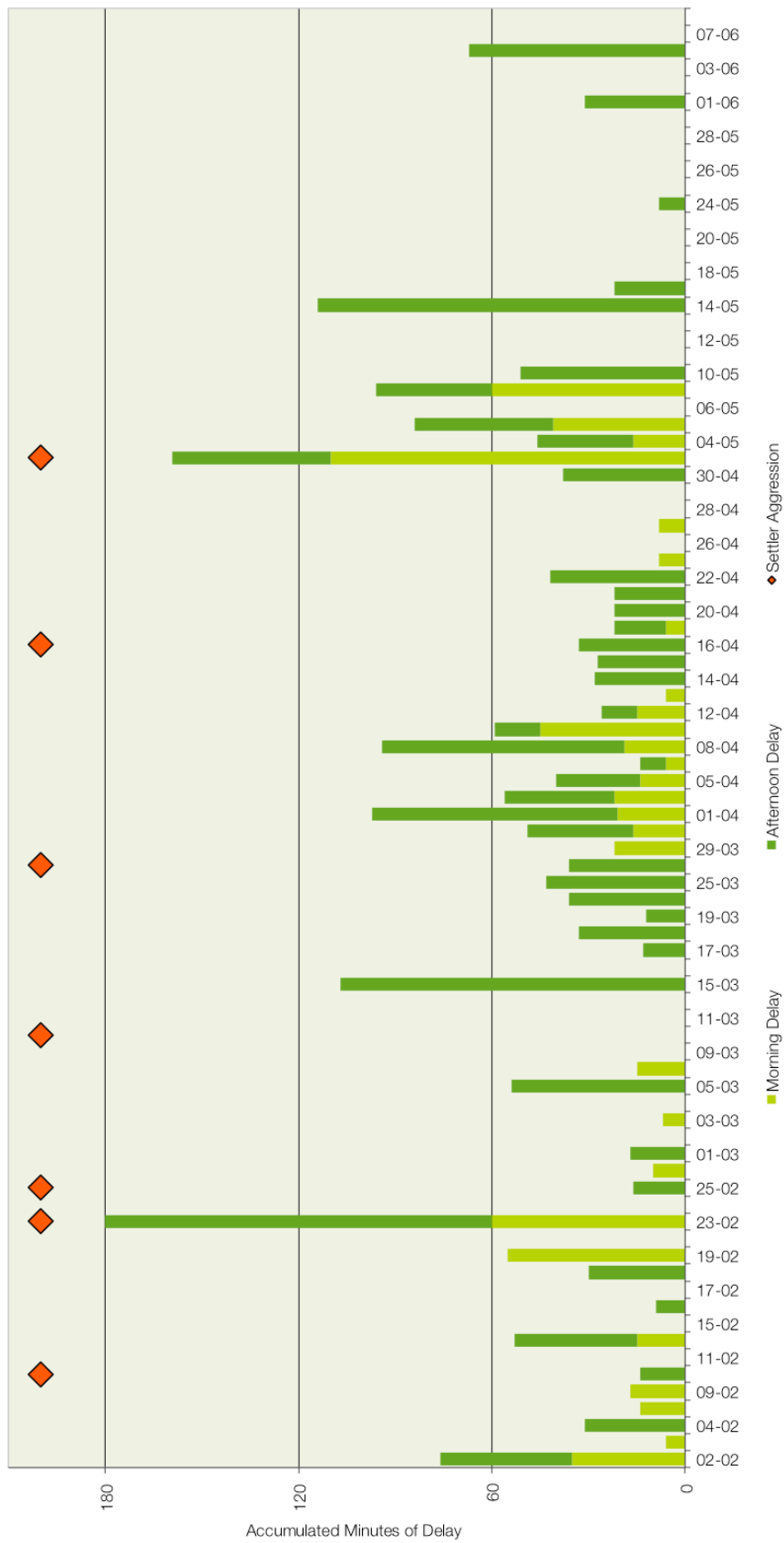
Graph 5: First Semester of the 2009-2010 School Year



Notes to the chart

Tuesday 27 October children were not able to attend school because the escort never arrived and settlers blocked the path as the children were attempting to walk an alternative longer way. The chart includes all delays, including the ones smaller than 5 minutes.

Graph 6: Second Semester of the 2009-2010 School Year



Notes to the chart

The chart includes all delays, including the ones smaller than 5 minutes.

3 **TRENDS FROM 2004 TO 2010: ONGOING SETTLER AGGRESSION, INCREASING MILITARY ESCORT NEGLIGENCE**

“The kids used to get very scared when they would pass by the settlers; even with the presence of the soldiers, they still have that fear.”

– Parent of Myriam and Salah

Settlers' violence towards the children is less now than it was before the escort began, and more children are able to attend school more days. According to one parent in Tuba: *“There are now 20 children walking to school whereas at the beginning, there were only 4.... The kids used to get very scared when they would pass by the settlers; even with the presence of the soldiers, they still have that fear.... [But] our feeling about the situation is much, much better since the escort began.”*

Despite these improvements, the escort has not effectively eliminated violent attacks or threats toward the children. Furthermore, the data gathered during the last four years points to increasing negligence in how the escort is performed. Such negligence creates a serious loss for the children, as they miss more hours of lessons and lose more time waiting for the escort to arrive. Furthermore, the less frequently the soldiers walk with the children or complete the full escort, the more vulnerable the children become to violent threats and attacks. Military negligence in performing the escort thus jeopardizes the benefits gained from having the escort at all.

3.1 **Total aggression against the children 2004-2010**

The following table tallies documented cases of aggression²⁶ toward the children during the six years the Israeli military escort has been in place. Children like Salah and Myriam, who have attended school all six of these years, have experienced over 100 instances of threats, harassment and violent attacks.

²⁶ Most of the cases are incidents of settler aggression. The numbers include four cases of soldier aggression, when soldiers threw stones, hit children or pushed them to the ground, but not instances when the soldiers forced the children to run. One case could include more than one type of violence by settlers and/or soldiers.

Table 2: **Settler aggression against the children**²⁷

| School Year | Number of days of school | Cases of aggression |
|--------------|--------------------------|---------------------|
| 2004-05 | n/a | 14 |
| 2005-06 | 204 | 40 |
| 2006-07 | 124 | 12 |
| 2007-08 | 165 | 16 |
| 2008-09 | 173 | 10 |
| 2009-10 | 177 | 12 |
| Total | - | 104 |

Since 2004, internationals have documented a total of 104 cases of aggression toward the children, or an average of 17 cases per year — about one act of aggression toward the children every two weeks of school. Cases of threats and attacks are typically spread through the entire school year. For example, in the 2009-10 school year there was at least one case of settler aggression in almost every month of school. Therefore, the threat of potential harassment and attack is an everyday reality for the children as they walk to and from school.

3.2 **Escort negligence 2006-10: Lack of punctuality, refusal to walk with children, refusal to complete the escort**

Examining the data from the past four years reveals significant negligence in how the Israeli military performs the escort. One of the notable ways is the escort's lack of punctuality.

Since the 2006-07 school year, escort tardiness has caused the children to arrive late to school,²⁸ on average, 28% of the mornings²⁹ — more than one out of every four mornings. During the last four school years, the children have missed an accumulated total of 4,837 minutes of classes (nearly 81 hours). This means that escort tardiness has caused the children to lose more than three weeks of school since 2006.

²⁷ During the 2004-05 school year, internationals collected data exclusively regarding settler violence. No other statistical data is available for that year. The other years' school reports are archived and available on the internet; for web addresses, see footnote no. 4.

²⁸ Delays of five minutes or less are not included in the calculation of tardiness. The delays that have been counted may vary between six minutes and more than two hours.

²⁹ The average percentage is calculated as a weighted arithmetic mean by the number of school days in each year.

Table 3: **Escort tardiness in the morning**

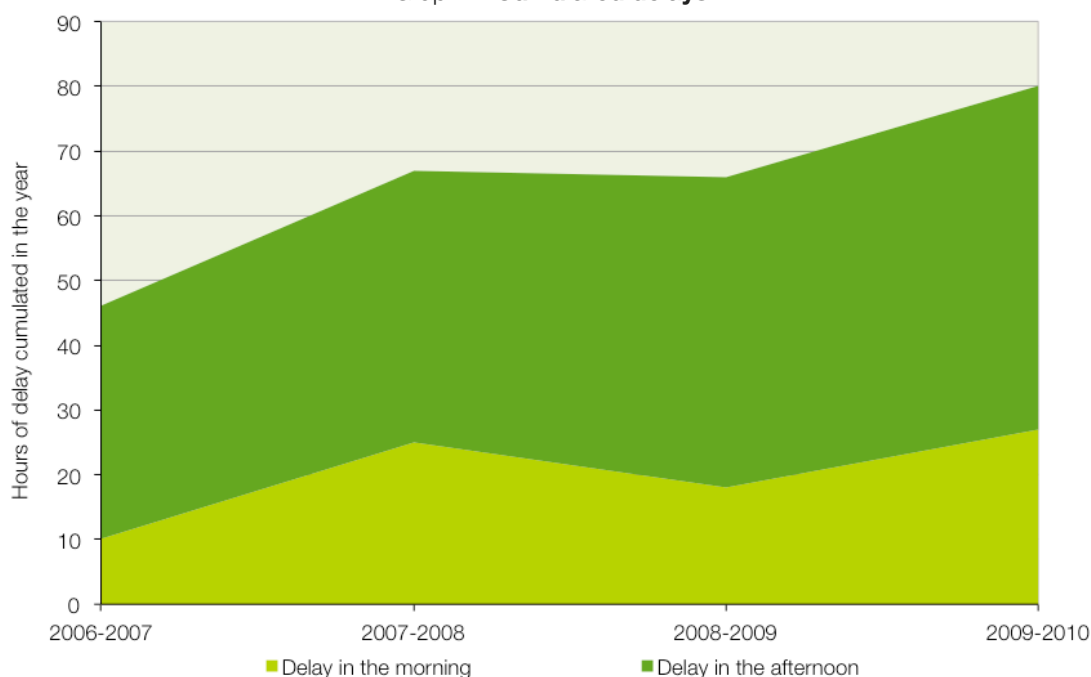
| School Year | Accumulated time of missed classes | % of days children late to school by more than 5 minutes |
|--------------|------------------------------------|--|
| 2006-07 | 628 minutes (~10.5 hours) | 11% |
| 2007-08 | 1,519 minutes (~25.5 hours) | 39% |
| 2008-09 | 1,083 minutes (~18 hours) | 31% |
| 2009-10 | 1,607 minutes (~27 hours) | 28% |
| Total | 4,837 minutes (~81 hours) | 28% |

During these four years, escort tardiness has been even more severe in the afternoon. On average, during 50% of the days³⁰ the escort has arrived late — one of every two days. The children have spent an accumulated total of 10,764 minutes (about 179 hours) in after-school waiting.

Table 4: **Escort tardiness after school**

| School year | Accumulated time of after-school waiting | % of days escort late arriving after school by more than 5 minutes |
|--------------|--|--|
| 2006-07 | 2,172 minutes (~36 hours) | 30% |
| 2007-08 | 2,516 minutes (~42 hours) | 46% |
| 2008-09 | 2,894 minutes (~48 hours) | 64% |
| 2009-10 | 3,182 minutes (~53 hours) | 54% |
| Total | 10,764 minutes (~179 hours) | 50% |

The escort's lack of punctuality is not only a consistent problem; it is also a growing trend. The graph below illustrates how children are missing more hours of class time and waiting more hours after school.

Graph 7: **Cumulated delays**

³⁰ The average percentage is calculated as a weighted arithmetic mean by the number of school days in each year.

Focusing on the last two years, data show that from 2008-09 to 2009-10 the percentages of escort tardiness decreased. However, the children still spent more hours waiting during 2009-10. The number of hours of class time the children missed rose by 50% (18 hours in 2008-09 and 27 hours in 2009-10). The children's afternoon waiting time also increased (48 hours in 2008-09 and 53 hours in 2009-10). Therefore, although the escort was late fewer times in 2009-10, the delays were much more severe.

Besides the huge waste of time such waiting implies, these escort delays add discomfort to the children's journey to and from school, since the children must wait in all kinds of weather. Even more seriously, there is the pressing danger for the children as they wait in areas close to Ma'on settlement and Havat Ma'on outpost.

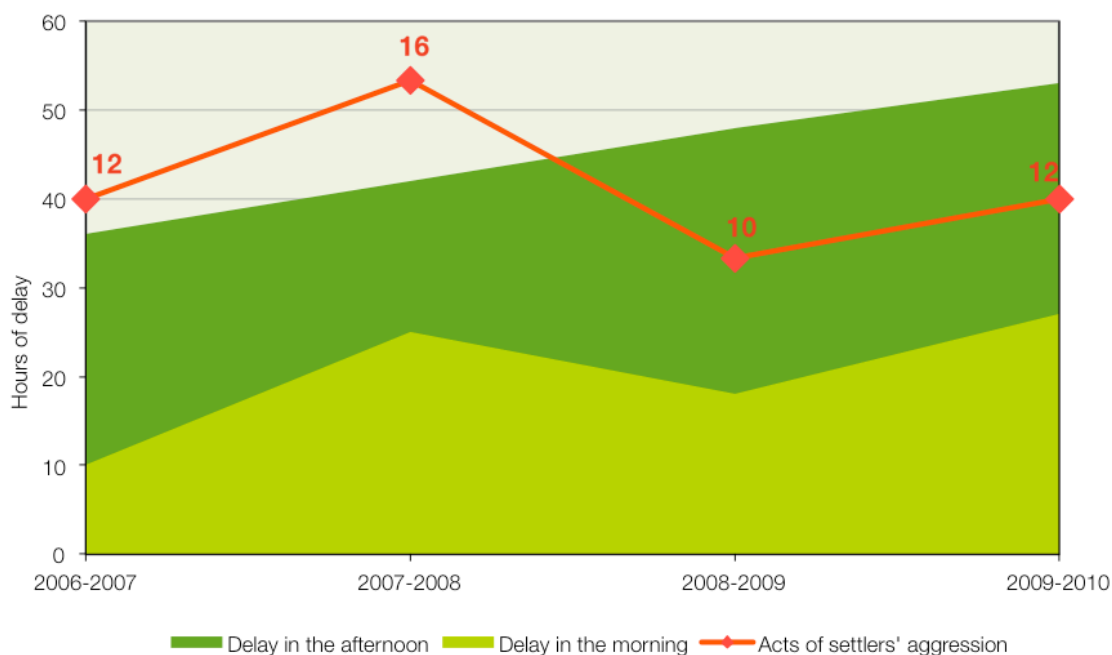
Another sign of escort negligence is the soldiers' refusal to walk with the children. The following table shows, for each of the last four years, the percentage of journeys to or from school in which the soldiers did not walk with the children.

Table 5: **Soldiers not walking with the children**³¹

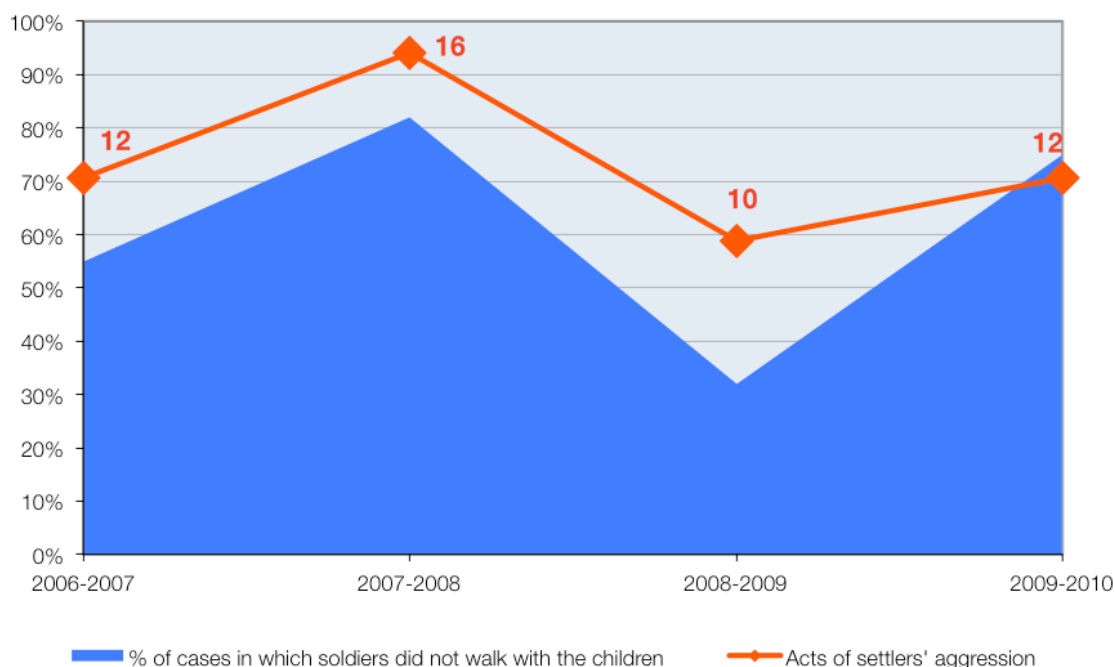
| School year | % of journeys in which the soldiers did not walk with the children |
|--------------------|---|
| 2006-07 | 55% |
| 2007-08 | 82% |
| 2008-09 | 32% |
| 2009-10 | 75% |
| Average | 61% |

Chapter 2 concluded with a brief discussion of connections between military escort negligence and settler aggression. Such connections stand out even more sharply when we look at the data from the previous four years. The following graph maps 2006-10 trends in escort tardiness (morning and afternoon) and in settler aggression toward the children. These trends follow the same path: the years which show a peak (or a valley) in escort tardiness also show a peak (or a valley) in settler violence.

³¹ The average percentage is calculated as a weighted arithmetic mean by the number of school days in each year.

Graph 8: **Settler's aggression and military escort tardiness**

Similarly, the following graph — mapping 2006-10 trends in soldiers' refusal to walk with the children and in settler aggression — shows the same paths of peaks and valleys.

Graph 9: **Settlers' aggression and soldiers' negligence in walking with children**

Finally, data about soldiers not completing the escort show that this remains an ongoing and increasing problem. During 2008-09, soldiers did not complete the escort in 85% of the observed cases. During 2009-10, soldiers did not complete the escort in at least 94% of the cases; in fact, internationals observed soldiers completing the escort only three times throughout this year.

As already noted, such military negligence in performing the escort not only increases the children's vulnerability to attacks and threats, but it also foments the uncertain and unsafe atmosphere which clouds the children's journeys to and from school. Both the settlers' aggressions and the military's negligence violate the children's right to education.³² And this situation endured by the children of Tuba and Maghayir al-Abeed is only one example of the challenges faced by many Palestinian children trying to access their right to education.

³² For further discussion of the children's rights and violations of those rights, please see Appendix 2.

4 AL-FAKHEIT AND OTHER SCHOOLS IN THE HEBRON DISTRICT

This chapter focuses mainly on the primary school in Al-Fakheit, a village located 1.5 kilometers north of the Green Line and 3 kilometers south of Tuba. The school opened in September 2009 to serve the families of the southernmost part of Massafer Yatta. Throughout the 2009-10 school year, the students and teachers suffered from a continuous lack of basic infrastructure, as well as from continual Israeli military harassment on their routes between the school and their home villages nearby. Al-Fakheit and the other villages from which the students come are all



One of the school's classroom tents

enclosed in a demarcated zone known as "Firing Area 918," established by Israeli military in the 1970s. Firing Area 918 extends on about 30 square kilometers and includes 12 Palestinian villages not recognized by the Israeli military. According to the census taken in 2004, about 1,000 persons now live in these villages.³³



A classroom

Within a few weeks of the school's opening, internationals from CPT and Operation Dove in At-Tuwani began to accompany the teachers and students and continued to do so throughout the year. For the school in Al-Fakheit, challenges arise from interference caused by the Israeli military's policing maneuvers on jeep tracks near the Green Line and throughout Firing Area 918. There are no Israeli settlements or outposts in Firing Area 918, nor within significant proximity to Al-Fakheit, so settler violence does not play a role in this school's challenges, as it

does for At-Tuwani's school. Due to this distinction, and to internationals' intermittent capacity to attend and witness incidents affecting this area, the quantitative data we collected from the 2009-2010 school year cannot offer an adequate picture of the harm to residents. Instead this chapter gives written and photographed documentation of incidents that happened when internationals were present.

³³ See Appendix 1 for a map of the region, including Firing Area 918. For a more detailed account, see: *Means of Expulsion: Violence, Harassment and Lawlessness against Palestinians in the Southern Hebron Hills*, B'Tselem, July 2005. p.9, http://www.btselem.org/Download/200507_South_Mount_Hebron_Eng.pdf

4.1 Population Served

About 50 children in the primary grades daily attend Al-Fakheit School, from approximately 9:00 am to 1:00 pm. Some students live in the village, but most come from villages one to three kilometers away: Halaweh, Mirkez, Jinba, At-Tabban, Al-Majaz and Maghayir Al-Abeed. The children walk or, when possible, receive rides by car or tractor. The school's teachers, employed by the Palestinian Ministry of Education, daily travel from their homes in At-Tuwani and Yatta. Because of the rough roads and tracks the teachers must use, their journey takes over an hour each way.



Israeli military bulldozer digging up Palestinian road near Jinba

The region's only alternative to Al-Fakheit School, for primary education, is the school in At-Tuwani, much too far for most children to walk. Prior to Al-Fakheit School's opening, many children in these remote villages were unable to complete primary education. Others relocated to Yatta, the nearest city.³⁴ Thus, Al-Fakheit School's founding serves to:

- Make families more likely to continue living permanently in the Massafer Yatta area year-round, instead of the seasonal dislocation that is common to areas less sheltered from extreme weather. In the long term, such seasonal dislocation forces some shepherds to sell off their herds – as five families have done recently – and become urban poor.³⁵
- Relieve the strain on families who otherwise send the children (with their mothers) to Yatta throughout the school-week, while fathers remain in the Massafer Yatta area.
- Increase the number of children who might follow their primary education with secondary. The children are more likely to have stronger academic standing when they are spared the excess fatigue of attending a primary school far away.

4.2 Threats to School and Students

Al-Fakheit School's two main challenges are its infrastructure and the security of its students and teachers. While construction is effectively forbidden in most of Area C of the West Bank, in Firing Area 918 and all along Israel's Separation Barrier, this is heavily enforced, with demolitions repeatedly documented.³⁶

³⁴ B'Tselem, *Means of Expulsion*, p.9

³⁵ See Operation Dove interview with Al-Fakheit School headmaster "Al-Fakheit School: Right to education in the Southern Hebron Hills," December 2009, at: <http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=lgCQ778-Ovs>

³⁶ B'Tselem, *Means of Expulsion*, p.36

Faced with this challenge, the school's founders tried to strike a balance between an effective learning environment and an environment not so imminently subject to demolition. They erected four steel-frame tents, each big enough to seat about 20 children. Although the tents are inadequate shelter during the wet, cold months of December through February, the school successfully remained open with steady attendance throughout the 2009-10 school year.

Throughout Firing Area 918 and Massafer Yatta, the Israeli military also imposes an effective ban on Palestinian vehicle movement, both on- and off-road. On roads and tracks connecting the above-mentioned villages, the frequency and severity of this military enforcement has caused some children to miss days of school, according to residents' testimony.

In the 2009-10 school year, internationals logged 46 daily trips to Al-Fakheit. During 10 of the 46 trips, the Palestinian vehicle carrying students and teachers encountered one or more Israeli military units on the road. Internationals observed the following behaviors from the soldiers:

- Soldiers drove around the vehicle and did not otherwise interfere.
- Soldiers driving a humvee showed intimidating or startling behavior, such as tailgating the vehicle, flashing lights, honking and loudly revving the engine.
- Soldiers intercepted the vehicle and ordered the driver to turn around.
- Children and teachers were forced to leave the vehicle and walk the remainder of the journey.
- Soldiers detained the driver while checking his ID, then allowed the group to continue.
- Soldiers stopped and searched the vehicle and the students' and teachers' personal belongings.
- Soldiers made children and teachers walk home, then confiscated and destroyed the vehicle.³⁷

Other interference with Palestinian traffic

Imneizil and A-Seefer

Imneizil is a Palestinian village located 2 kilometers north of the Green Line and about 7.5 kilometers southwest of At-Tuwani. Between Imneizil and the Green Line sits the Israeli settlement of Beit Yatir, or Mezadot Yehuda. In this area, the Israeli-built separation barrier bites into the West Bank to circle around Beit Yatir and create contiguity between this settlement and Israel. Also included on the "Israeli" side of the barrier is A-Seefer, a small Palestinian village of about 100 residents, who now must pass through barrier checkpoints to reach families, schools, workplaces, and essential services on the "Palestinian" side of the barrier. In February 2009, the Israeli military declared this region between the Green Line and the separation barrier a "Seam Zone."^A The Israeli administration requires that, starting at age 16, Palestinians residing in this Seam Zone must have permanent resident permits from Israel to continue to live in their homes. Palestinians living elsewhere, including relatives or service providers, must obtain "visitor" permits to access this community. Approximately 18 Palestinian children from A-Seefer daily cross the Beit Yatir checkpoint to attend school in Imneizil and elsewhere. Since the checkpoint has been handed over to the "Crossings and Passages Authority" and thus manned by a private security company, the children report having more difficulty in crossing. According to the UNRWA March update sent to UNICEF, "... children are made to wait for no apparent reason following their bag checks and body searches. They report that they can see the bags waiting for collection after they have been through the metal detector, but that security guards often tell them to wait for long periods (30 minutes)."^B On 28 April 2010, on their way to and from school, these children were delayed a total of 90 minutes at the checkpoint "when the Israeli private security personnel demanded that the children show their birth certificates, which most of the children did not have."^C Such difficulties in traveling between their homes and schools hinder the children's right to education by creating unpredictable delays and an unnecessary atmosphere of anxiety. Increasing the unpredictability and anxiety, the Israeli Civil administration has issued demolition orders on the school building in Imneizil.^D

^A See the OCHA Special Focus West Bank Movement and Access, June 2010, page 19, at http://www.ochaopt.org/documents/ocha_opt_movement_access_2010_06_16_english.pdf

^B Information provided by the Israel/OPT Working Group on Children Affected by Armed Conflict.

^C See "The Humanitarian Monitor" April 2010 edition by OCHA, page 12. Report available online: http://www.ochaopt.org/documents/ocha_opt_the_humanitarian_monitor_2010_04_english.pdf

^D Information provided by the Israel/OPT Working Group on Children Affected by Armed Conflict.

³⁷ This is not an isolated incident of soldiers confiscating and vandalizing Palestine vehicles in the South Hebron hills. In October 2009 B'Tselem documented eight Palestinian-owned vehicles that had been vandalized, apparently by Israeli soldiers. Following B'Tselem's demands for an investigation, the Military Police Investigation Unit opened an investigation and the IDF announced that two suspected officers had been suspended. See the B'Tselem release "Following B'Tselem's intervention, army opens investigation into vandalism in southern Hebron hills and suspends suspected officers," 15 October 2009, http://www.btselem.org/english/Beating_and_Abuse/20091015_Soldiers_vandalize_cars_in_the_Southern_Hebron_Hills.asp

4.3 Recorded instances of military or other harassment

Palestinian roads in the area are badly damaged and barely passable in numerous places after years of the Israeli military using heavy machinery to dig trenches or move boulders to form barricades, as well as actively forbidding residents to make repairs. In August 2009, internationals observed an Israeli

Other interference with Palestinian traffic

Al-Bweireh

On the outskirts of Hebron, Al-Bweireh is a Palestinian community where 56 families live, comprising about 560 people. In 2000, Israeli military and settlers from the nearby Israeli settlement of Givat Ha Harsina placed an iron gate across the main road leading into Al-Bweireh. They also positioned a boulder on the same road, about 25 meters beyond the barrier gate, and an earth mound 100 meters beyond the boulder. Since then, residents of Al-Bweireh can use the road only on foot, donkey or motorbikes. To access the area with any other vehicles, they must take a 7-kilometer detour on bumpy roads.

On their way to and from school, children from the community walk the main road and must pass the settlement, as well as a makeshift outpost located about forty meters behind a Palestinian home in Al-Bweireh. For years, settlers have harassed the children by cursing, chasing them, throwing stones at them and stealing their bicycles. The situation worsened in the spring of 2009, after settlers moved more consistently into the outpost. Since November 2009, at the request of residents from Al-Bweireh, members of CPT have accompanied the children of the village on their way home from school.

On 16 December 2009, two settlers from Givat Ha Harsina attacked seven-year-old Amar Zatar while he, a brother and a cousin were walking home from school. The two settlers threw stones at the three boys and, along with a dog, chased them. In his panic to get away, Amar tripped and fell on his face. His 12-year-old brother ran back, scooped him up and raced to the safety of the closest house in Al-Bweireh. Several weeks before, a settler on horseback had attempted to snatch Amar's sister, Shahad al-Za'atari. Their mother told CPT that Amar is so afraid to walk home by himself that everyday he walks to the high school his brother attends and sits with him in class for 90 minutes until his brother's class is dismissed.⁴ This is one incident illustrating the harassment and fears the children of Al-Bweireh must face as they attempt to exercise their right to education.

⁴ See CPT release "Settlers attack schoolchildren in al-Bweireh neighborhood," 23 December 2009, <http://www.cpt.org/cptnet/2009/12/23/al-khalilhebron-settlers-attack-schoolchildren-al-bweireh-neighborhood>

military bulldozer digging up the main road leading north from Jinba³⁸ and creating three earth mounds on the road. However, Palestinians along with Israeli and international activists reopened the road during a direct action on 26 September.³⁹ The road remained passable for most of the 2009-10 school year and was used for student transport.

Internationals' first visit to Al-Fakheit in 2009 was on 18 October. They were shown a tractor in the village that had served as the primary student transport to nearby villages since the school's opening. The tractor had been in disuse for several days, since the driver found it with tires slashed and ignition wires cut.

On 20 December 2009, an international accompanied the driver of the school transport vehicle on his way to pick up children and teachers after school. She witnessed soldiers in a humvee stop the driver, confiscate his ID, search his truck and the personal belongings in it, and order the driver to follow them to a remote field. Without their usual ride home, the teachers and students had to walk an hour through the hills. The Palestinian driver and international accompanier waited over an hour as soldiers demanded the truck's registration and ignition key, examined the engine for serial numbers, took photos of the truck and made phone calls. The soldiers claimed that, because the vehicle's registration was invalid, they had to confiscate the truck. "In Israel we have rules," one soldier told the international.⁴⁰ The truck was never recovered but was found with wires cut, a smashed dashboard and a vandalized engine.

³⁸ See release "Israeli military blocks access to health and water services for hundreds of Palestinians," 5 August 2009, <http://groups.yahoo.com/group/cpthebron/message/1243> or <http://www.operationdove.org/?p=413>

³⁹ See release "Activists successfully accompany water convoy through the South Hebron Hills," 29 September 2009, <http://groups.yahoo.com/group/cpthebron/message/1263>

⁴⁰ See release "Israeli army forces children and teachers to walk an hour from school after confiscating truck," 21 December 2009, <http://groups.yahoo.com/group/cpthebron/message/1288> or <http://www.operationdove.org/?p=222>

After the loss of this truck, other vehicles were sometimes available for school transport, but these possibilities were limited by financial constraints and mechanical troubles. When no vehicle was available, teachers and students walked.

The situations described in this chapter illustrate how the harassment suffered by the children who walk from Tuba and Maghayir Al-Abeed to school in At-Tuwani is not an exceptional or isolated trouble. Throughout area C, Palestinian children trying to go to school find their way obstructed by the Israeli occupation, either under the menace of harassment and attacks carried on by extremist settlers or under the subtler but equally impeding cords of military policy and bureaucracy.

Such military and civil occupation affects not only children's right to education. The following chapters demonstrate how settlers' violence, military pressure and bureaucratic constraints of the Israeli Civil Administration effectively hinder Palestinians' pursuit of human rights and decent living standards.



On 2 January, 2010, the confiscated truck was found wrecked.

5 THE MAIN ROAD FROM TUBA TO AT-TUWANI

“All that we want is for the road to open, so we can go back to walking the route that we used to walk. The path that we now use to get to the city [of Yatta] is 12 kilometers, whereas we used to walk 6 kilometers to get to the city. We don't want any trouble; we just want the road to be opened.”

— a Tuba resident

According to the initial agreement between the Israeli DCO and the mayor of At-Tuwani, the children of Tuba and Maghayir al-Abeed and the military escort must use the *shortest route* to reach the school in At-Tuwani (about 2.5 km).

The shortest route is the road that passes between the land where the Israeli settlement of Ma'on now sits and Tel Abu Jundiya (the hill, sometimes called Hill 833, where the outpost of Havat Ma'on now is). This road is the *main road, a public road, and the only viable road* between Tuba and At-Tuwani.⁴¹ For decades Palestinians used this road to travel to At-Tuwani and the nearby city of Yatta, the main economic hub for the region and the location of critical services such as hospitals, secondary schools, and public administration offices. This main road is a vital passageway for those traveling by foot or by donkey, as well as tractors and cars transporting goods and people between Yatta and the villages of eastern Massafer Yatta.⁴²

In 1982, the settlement of Ma'on was built on one side of the main road, and in 2001, the outpost of Havat Ma'on was built on the other side of the road. In the late 1990s, Palestinians using the main road (and other land nearby) increasingly came under attack from violent settlers. Israeli authorities failed to intervene and stop settler violence against Palestinians. Settler violence eventually became so intense that it deterred Palestinians from using the main road and accessing their lands in this area. By 2003,

⁴¹ Several different Palestinian families own the land of the road itself. However, the Israeli Land Administration (a department of the DCO) identifies parts of the road as included in the administrative borders of the municipality of Ma'on, some as Israeli state land (but not inside Ma'on municipality boundaries), and other parts as private Palestinian land.

⁴² The main road forks off onto another road around Hill 833. This part of the road, along the southern edge of Hill 833, is used by settlers only. Settler and military violence also prevents Palestinians from using this portion of the road.

Palestinians stopped using the main road completely. Meanwhile, settlers from Ma'on fenced off private Palestinian lands by the road and currently cultivate fruit orchards, vegetable fields and greenhouses on these lands. Thus, settlers use physical violence, land expropriation and illegal development as tactics to increase their land claims.



Ma'on settlement expansion, November 2010

The use of the main road by settlers is legally problematic.⁴³ Despite this fact, settlers continue to control the road and develop the surrounding areas. The following are the most recent illegal settler developments on and along the main road:

- Summer 2005: Settlers erected a padlocked gate on the section of the road nearest to At-Tuwani. Following this, the military escort often did not pass through the gate. At times soldiers did not know the padlock combination and refused to ask the settlers for the combination. Eventually the padlock was removed and the gate now stands open.
- 2005/2006: Settlers constructed two large chicken barns on the northeastern edge of Tel Abu Jundiya, in close proximity to the previously existing chicken barns, just south of the main road. Since then the children have waited for the military escort at the eastern end (nearest to Tuba) of these barns.
- 2008: Settlers surrounded the newest chicken barns with a wire fence and automatic gate, which impede vehicular traffic on the road to Tuba. Soldiers then refused to pass through the gate or to walk with the children around the fence to escort them to the eastern end of these barns (and thus, to the escort's completion).
- 11 June 2009: Settlers added five new caravans near Ma'on on a slope north of the road.
- Fall 2009: Settlers laid the foundations for 12 buildings on a hill near these caravans, in close proximity to the road.
- October 2009: An Israeli civilian crew surveyed a hilltop area between the Ma'on chicken barns and the village of Tuba, accompanied by Israeli military and Ma'on settlement security. Local Palestinians expressed their concern about possible construction of additional chicken barns on that hill.⁴⁴
- March 2010: Settlers began to build houses on 6 of the new foundations, completing the houses by June 2010.

⁴³ Interview with Al-Haq, August 2009: "Settlements are illegal under international law. Article 49 of the Geneva Convention prohibits the transfer by the Occupying Power of its civilians from its territory to the territory it occupies. Article 64 requires the Occupying Power 'to maintain the orderly government of the territory.' Clearly, Israeli actions in East Jerusalem and the West Bank are in breach of the Fourth Geneva Convention and customary humanitarian law as set out in the 4th Hague Convention, which the High Contracting Parties thereto reiterated were applicable to the Occupied Palestinian Territories as of December 2001. Therefore the use of the road by settlers is illegal (since their presence in the area is illegal)."

⁴⁴ For more detailed and comprehensive information on settlement expansion see the Peace Now web site at <http://www.peacenow.org.il/site/en/peace.asp?pi=51>

The long-term survival of communities like Tuba and Maghayir al Abeed depends upon land access and access to the main road. Alternative routes by foot or donkey are at least twice as long as the main road. Tractors and other vehicles are forced to take routes up to ten times longer. These distances further exacerbate the rising cost of transporting essential supplies such as water,⁴⁵ in addition to restricting access to education, health care and other services. The forced closure of the main road also prevents the village of Tuba from connecting to the electric grid from Yatta⁴⁶ and the water pipeline (a project slated for future development by the Yatta Municipality).

As one resident of Tuba told internationals in July 2010, *“All that we want is for the road to open so we can go back to walking the route that we used to walk. The path that we now walk to get to the city is 12 kilometers, whereas we used to walk 6 kilometers to get to the city. We don’t want any trouble; we just want the road to be opened.”*

⁴⁵ In 2009 local residents reported that the cost of transporting water was four times greater because they must take the longer roads.

⁴⁶ Since 12 August 2010, the community of At Tuwani is connected to the Palestinian electricity grid. It took almost ten years of nonviolent struggle and the involvement of several international and Israeli human rights associations to gain the permit to build the lines through the three kilometers that separate At-Tuwani from the village of Karmel, which has been connected to the Palestinian electricity grid since 2000.

6 THE LARGER PICTURE: PALESTINIAN DISPOSSESSION IN THE SOUTH HEBRON HILLS

“(...) military forces came and expelled the residents by force. The army sealed the caves used as residences, destroyed water cisterns, scattered the flocks of sheep and goats, and confiscated tents and other property primarily mattresses, blankets, and food. A total of some 700 people were evicted.”

— 2005 B'Tselem report

The seizure of the road and surrounding lands is one piece of a larger picture of violent dispossession and forced eviction of Palestinians in the region of At-Tuwani and Massafer Yatta, the community to which Tuba, Maghayir Al-Abeed and Al-Fakheit belong.

To view this picture clearly requires seeing Ma'on settlement as one in a string of Israeli settlements and outposts that stretch across the Southern Hebron Hills. During the 1980s, four Israeli settlements were established, followed by four settlement outposts.⁴⁷ These eight sites together form a line that runs several kilometers into the Occupied West Bank and divides the rural communities of Massafer Yatta from the city of Yatta and the rest of the West Bank.

Moreover, these settlements and outposts host some of the more radical and violent settlers. As Idith Zertal and Akiva Eldar note in *Lords of the Land*, by the late '90s, “*Havat Ma'on in the Hebron Hills ... emerg[ed] as a bastion of the extremists.*”⁴⁸ The Massafer Yatta communities are thus isolated and exposed to land expropriation and settler violence,⁴⁹ while Israeli settlers continue to expand their settlements, taking privately-owned Palestinian land for buildings and cultivation. Such settlement

⁴⁷ From north-east to south-west the settlements are: Karmel, Ma'on, Suseya and Mezadot Yehuda (or Beit Yatir). The outposts are known as Havat Ma'on (or Hill 833), Avigayil, Mitzpe Yair (or Magen David) and Nof Neshet (or Lucifer Farm). See maps in Appendix 1.

⁴⁸ Idith Zertal and Akiva Eldar, *Lords of the Land: The War Over Israel's Settlements in the Occupied Territories, 1967-2007*, New York: Nation Books, 2005, p. 175.

⁴⁹ For a detailed report about settlers' violence and its consequences, see the UN/OCHA special report, “*Israeli Settler Violence and the Evacuation of Outposts*,” November 2009. Available on line at: http://www.ochaopt.org/documents/ocha_opt_settler_violence_fact_sheet_2009_11_15_english.pdf In one of the most recent and fierce attacks, about 30 Israeli settlers armed with slingshots and sticks invaded At-Tuwani, attacking the most exposed house of the village. See release, “*Israeli masked settlers attack At-Tuwani Palestinian village*,” 12 June 2010, <http://www.operationdove.org/?p=346>

development, as well as the closure of the Tuwani-Tuba road, favors Israeli annexation of the South Hebron Hills.

Israeli authorities have also pursued their own plans to depopulate Massafer Yatta and annex the land through the creation of a military training area. As noted in chapter 4, the Israeli military has declared Massafer Yatta a closed military area and refers to it as “Firing Area 918.” This expanse of about 30 square kilometers encloses 12 Palestinian villages including Tuba, Maghayir al-Abeed and Al-Fakheit.

The 2005 B'Tselem report, *“Means of Expulsion: Violence, Harassment and Lawlessness against Palestinians in the Southern Hebron Hills,”* describes the eviction that resulted from this military closure:

In October and November 1999, most of the cave residents received eviction orders on grounds of 'illegal stay in a closed military area.' On 16 November 1999, military forces came and expelled the residents by force. The army sealed the caves used as residences, destroyed water cisterns, scattered the flocks of sheep and goats, and confiscated tents and other property, primarily mattresses, blankets, and food. A total of some 700 people were evicted.⁵⁰

The evicted families filed petitions contesting the expulsion and in March 2000, the High Court of Israel issued an order permitting the residents to return to their homes and requiring all parties to preserve the status quo at the time prior to the expulsion. However, because the Ministry of Defense continues to seek the expulsion of the people from their villages, the case is still pending in the Israeli High Court.

The Israeli military's practices of expulsion, eviction, and confiscation have smothered Palestinians' ability to live and move as they need. While the eviction focused on the southern part of Firing Area 918, other intense military activities are ongoing throughout the South Hebron Hills.

During the 2009-10 school year, internationals observed military harassment of Palestinian shepherds and families in At-Tuwani, Tuba and the surrounding areas. The

documented incidents include: military chasing flocks and shepherds, including some of the children escorted between Tuba and At-Tuwani; military detaining children who were shepherding⁵¹ or harvesting



Settler's car interfering with the military escort on the main road between Tuba and At-Tuwani

⁵⁰ For a more thorough account of military abuses, land confiscation, expulsions and complicity with settlers, see the whole of the B'Tselem report, *Means of Expulsion: Violence, Harassment and Lawlessness against Palestinians in the Southern Hebron Hills*, 2005. Available on line at: http://www.btselem.org/Download/200507_South_Mount_Hebron_Eng.pdf

⁵¹ See release “CPT video highlights ongoing soldier-settler collaboration to abuse Palestinian shepherds,” 2 March 2010, <http://groups.yahoo.com/group/cpthebron/message/1326> and video at <http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=kLukok2ovqA>

herbs;⁵² military arresting young men who had been grazing flocks⁵³ and beating one of them while he was under arrest.⁵⁴ Several times military personnel entered the villages of Tuba and At-Tuwani, at times displaying excessive force, using tears gas and sound grenades without apparent reason.⁵⁵ Israeli Special Police Forces ransacked two houses in Tuba.⁵⁶ During many of these incidents, settlers were also present at the scene; in some cases, internationals and Palestinians witnessed settlers calling military personnel to come.

There is a contradiction between the Israeli military accompanying the children of Tuba and Maghayir Al-Abeed to and from school in order to protect them from settler violence, while representatives of that same military impede other children on their way to the school in Al-Fakheit a few kilometers to the south. There is also a contradiction between the Israeli military accompanying the children to protect them from settler violence, while representatives of that same military actively collaborate with settlers to prevent Palestinians of At-Tuwani, Tuba and Maghayir al-Abeed from accessing pastures, water and other resources on Palestinian land.

These contradictions embedded in the Israeli military presence may explain the poor performance of the military escort in terms of punctuality and efficacious prevention of settler violence. All of this results in perilous journeys to and from school for the children of Massafer Yatta villages, and in the ongoing violation of their rights to education and security.

⁵² See release "Three children detained while gathering herbs," 6 March 2010, <http://groups.yahoo.com/group/cpthebron/message/1329> or <http://www.operationdove.org/?p=319> and video at http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=SqlI_xVHjFQ

⁵³ See releases "Israeli soldiers attack and injure Palestinian shepherds; arrest Musab Raba'i," 7 January 2010, <http://groups.yahoo.com/group/cpthebron/message/1299> or <http://www.operationdove.org/?p=266> and video at <http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=-u6TF-Dzw8w> and "Israeli soldiers arrest Palestinian shepherd, assault Palestinian youth," 23 February 2010, <http://groups.yahoo.com/group/cpthebron/message/1323> or <http://www.operationdove.org/?p=440>

⁵⁴ See release "Shepherd tortured for five hours by Israeli soldiers and police," 10 January 2010, <http://groups.yahoo.com/group/cpthebron/message/1301>

⁵⁵ See release "Israeli settlers invade At-Tuwani village, enter Palestinian homes, and throw stones at Palestinians; Israeli military attacks Palestinian and throw tear gas," 26 January 2010, <http://groups.yahoo.com/group/cpthebron/message/1312> or <http://www.operationdove.org/?p=268>

⁵⁶ See release "Israeli soldiers ransack Palestinian homes and damage belongings in Tuba village," 31 March 2010, <http://groups.yahoo.com/group/cpthebron/message/1336> and video at <http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=ozoPsKyEZ4c>

7 CONCLUSION

“We want the settlers to move away from us and move off of our land. That's the only solution. I am confident that the settlers leaving will greatly improve our quality of life.”

— Parents of schoolchildren from Tuba

For six years Myriam and Salah have attended school accompanied most days by a military escort. Every day Salah wakes up, not knowing whether he and his schoolmates will have to wait for the soldiers, or how long, or whether the escort will show up at all. Every day Myriam walks towards the settlement with the uncertainty that she



Children's demo in At-Tuwani, December 2010

may make it to school without harassment – or masked settlers may be waiting near the trees to attack her and her friends.

For six years internationals have witnessed, documented and reported settlers harassing and attacking the children. Sometimes the attacks happen when the escort hasn't come;

sometimes they happen in the presence of the Israeli military. Internationals have also documented the increasing negligence of the escort: its lack of punctuality, the frequent refusal by the soldiers to walk with the children and to escort them throughout all the dangerous parts of their trail. Despite such documentation of escort failures, as well as some media attention on the situation, the Israeli military so far has failed to provide a reliable, punctual and effective escort for the children.

In the last six school years, the children from Tuba and Maghayir Al-Abeed have been victims of violence on at least 104 occasions, and not one perpetrator has yet appeared in court or been convicted.⁵⁷ The children suffer from nightmares about violent attacks and often express fears for their safety. The violence continues without accountability, and the sum effect of settler attacks and military complacency and negligence is distressing for the children and their families.

⁵⁷ A court hearing about one attack was scheduled for summer 2010 but postponed indefinitely. Source: August 2010 interview with the parents of the children targeted in that attack.

Meanwhile, about 3 kilometers south, teachers and students have persistent difficulty in safely and reliably reaching the school in Al-Fakheit. Although this area is well inside the Green Line and inhabited and worked by Palestinian civilians, the Israeli military carries out heavy policing and unpredictable harassment, impeding Palestinians' mobility, access to basic resources and long-term stability in the region. Children and teachers further suffer from the school's lack of needed infrastructures.

The experiences of the children attending school in At-Tuwani and in Al-Fakheit contrast sharply with the conveniences enjoyed by school children from the nearby Israeli settlements of Karmel and Ma'on. The children of these settlements travel by bus to an elementary school in Suseya settlement; the transport for this five-minute journey is organized by the Southern Hebron Hills Regional Council.⁵⁸ Not only are these settler children able to travel quickly and safely to school, but they also enjoy a quality learning environment and the freedom of mobility needed for field trips and other such learning opportunities.

In the South Hebron hills, children with Israeli citizenship have very different educational access from their Palestinian peers who live under occupation. This difference underlines how the Israeli government uses two distinct standards for administering the territory under their control, making what should be rights for all residents into privileges granted only to a few.

For the children of Tuba and Maghayir al-Abeed, even if the escort were working in the most efficient way – punctual, complete, effectively deterring attacks and harassment by settlers – it would not address the root problem of the violence against the school children that makes it unsafe for them to walk to school by themselves. The presence of an escort at all indicates a persistent dangerous situation. By implementing the military escort, the Israeli government has offered a band-aid solution that avoids addressing the real problem: armed and dangerous adults with a history of threatening and attacking school children⁵⁹ are free to live and act in the area.



Children's demo in At-Tuwani, December 2010

⁵⁸ See the Amana settlement movement website pages for Karmel and Ma'on: http://www.amana.co.il/Index.asp?ArticleID=257&CategoryID=100_and <http://www.amana.co.il/Index.asp?ArticleID=357&CategoryID=100>

⁵⁹ Beside the attacks on the school children reported in this and previous reports, a resident of Havat Ma'on was arrested and charged with plotting and undertaking a bomb attack on a Palestinian school in the A-Tor neighborhood in Jerusalem. For details of the bomb plot see Haaretz article "Two settlers caught planting bomb near East J'lem hospital," by Jonathan Lis and Amit Ben-Aroya, 10 May 2002, <http://www.haaretz.com/news/two-settlers-caught-planting-bomb-near-east-j-lem-hospital-1.45466>. Samantha M. Shapiro discusses the bomb plot and its connection to ideology held by a current Havat Ma'on resident in her New York Times article "The Unsettlers," 16 February 2003, <http://www.nytimes.com/2003/02/16/magazine/the-unsettlers.html?pagewanted=all>

“There are so many aspects that are really wrong regarding the escort and the way they get to school. There are children that don't get education because of that. ... They suffer a lot, the children suffer a lot. Some soldiers deal with them one way and some another way. The whole situation is quite a mess. But the problem is that the settlements are there to begin with,” indicated a spokesperson from the Peace Now Settlement Watch Team. *“Get the settlements out of there. When there will be an agreed situation between Israel and Palestine, these settlements will be evacuated. ... We understand all the inhumane things that happen in South Hebron Hills, which is a really hard place for the Palestinians. I go there a lot and in many cases, it is heart breaking.”*⁶⁰

As illustrated in chapters 4, 5 and 6, the reality of the Israeli military occupation in the South Hebron Hills entails Palestinians being denied their basic human rights, such as the right to move freely; the right to receive an education; the right to not be subjected to arbitrary arrest or to cruel, inhuman or degrading treatment; the right to a standard of living adequate for one's health and well-being. While much needs to happen for this situation to change, one concrete step forward would be for the Israeli military to stop impeding the movement of Palestinians in areas well within the Green Line. Checkpoints and policing maneuvers should be restricted to the border and should not interfere with the daily life of children, teachers and local residents.

Another meaningful and long overdue step towards reducing violence would be for the Israeli government to follow through on its once stated intention to evacuate and dismantle the outpost of Havat Ma'on.⁶¹ As long as the outpost remains, the children and their families remain under threat of attack. Allowing violent people to continue to live in an illegal residence, perpetrating crimes against children, is intolerable.

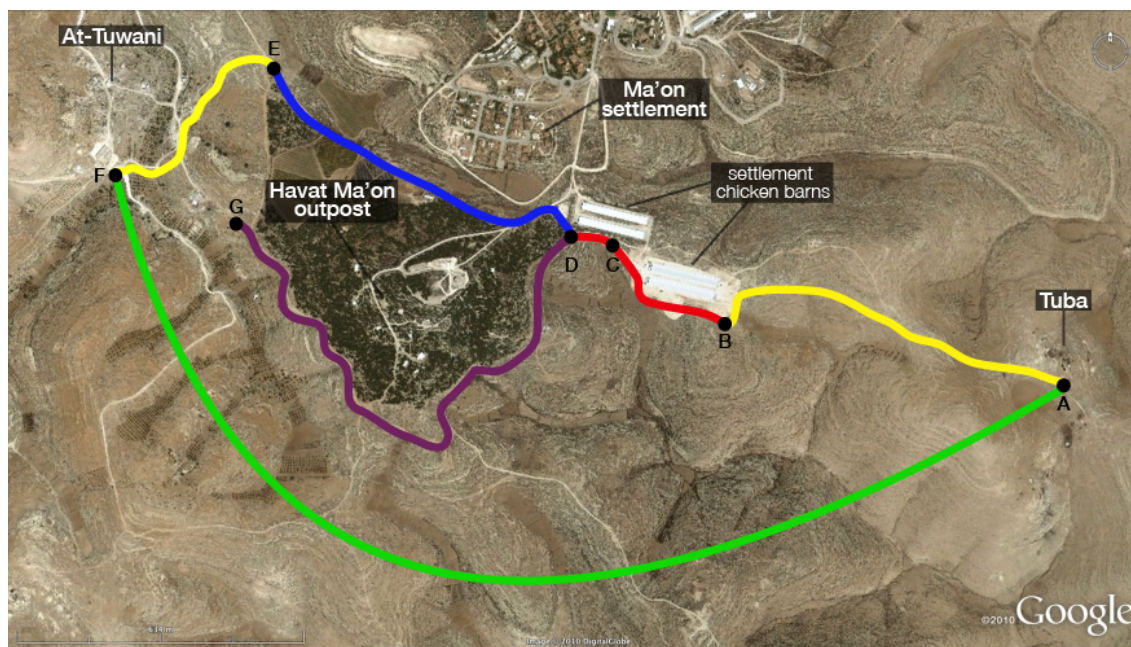
As the parents of Myriam and Salah have said, *“We want peace. We want all people to see the way that we have to live.... We want good for both sides. And God willing our problem will be resolved. We want the settlers to move away from us and move off of our land. That's the only solution. I am confident that the settlers leaving will greatly improve our quality of life.”*

⁶⁰ Interview with Peace Now Settlement Watch Team, August 2009

⁶¹ In 2006 the Israeli government released a list of West Bank outposts slated for evacuation: Havat Ma'on was at the top of the list. More than four years later, no action has been taken to implement the evacuation. See Haaretz article *“Police preparing to evacuate illegal outposts next month,”* by Jonathan Lis, 22 May 2006, <http://www.haaretz.com/news/police-preparing-to-evacuate-illegal-outposts-next-month-1.191052>

APPENDIX 1 MAPS

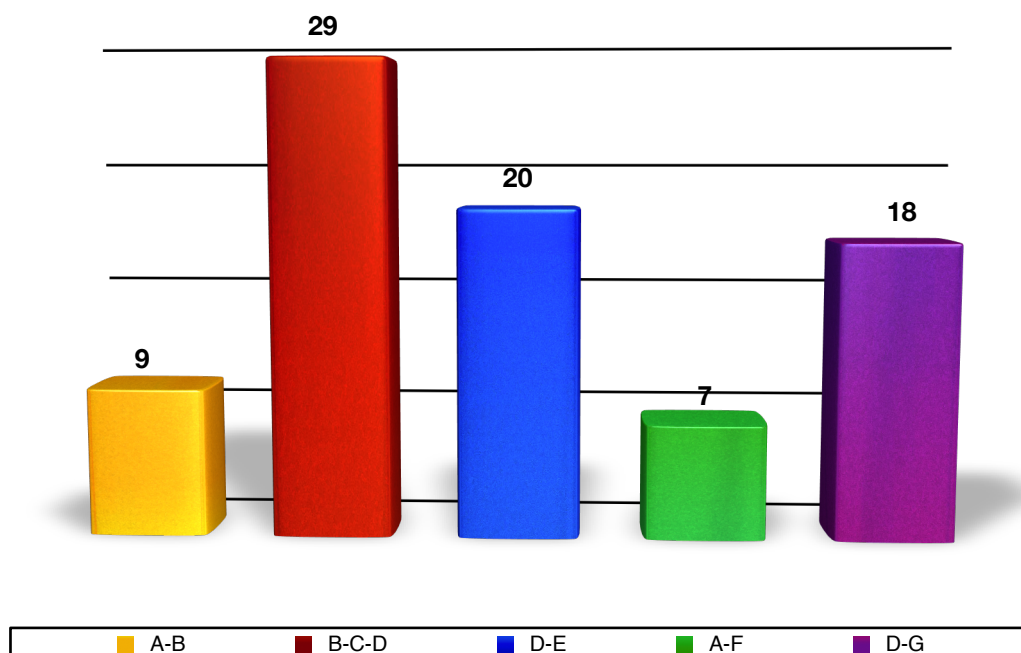
Map 1: The road between Tuba and At-Tuwani. Children's route to school and places of attack



- A** Place where children from Tuba wait for the children from Maghayir al-Abeed
- B** Place where children generally wait for the military escort in the morning (east end of newer chicken barns) and agreed upon place to start and conclude the military escort
- C** Automatic gate erected by settlers in 2008
- D** Junction where military escort often stops (either to wait for the children in the morning, or to end the escort after school)
- E** Settler gate (built in 2006, now left open) where the military escort leaves the children in the morning and meets the children in the afternoon
- F** School in At-Tuwani

- A-B** Section where children walk unescorted
- B-C-D** Section where children have been walking unescorted because of military escort noncompliance
- D-E** Section where military escort accompanies the children
- A-F** Longer, alternative trails children take when there is no military escort
- D-G** Escort route used during the 2004-05 and part of 2005-06 school years
- A-E** Main road from Tuba to At-Tuwani

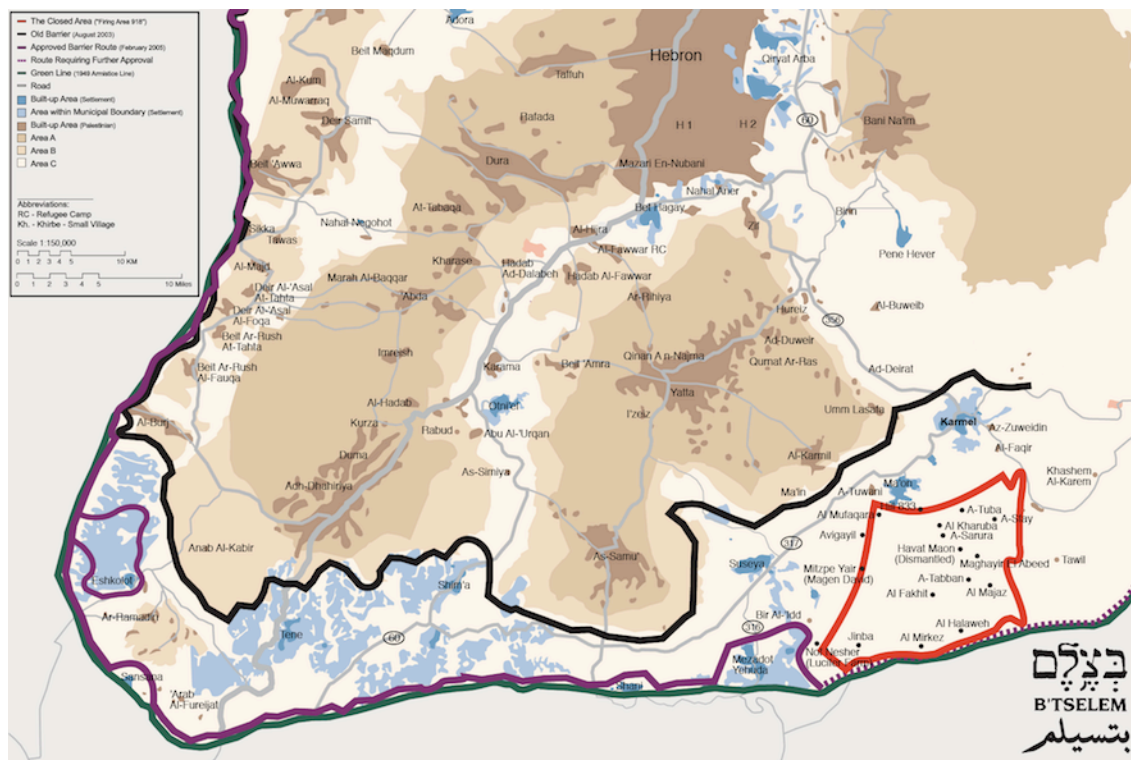
Graph 10: Incidents of settler aggression on each section of the children's route



The chart above shows in which sections of the road the settlers have attacked, harassed or threatened the children on their way to and from school during the last 6 years. The chart does not include 22 of the 104 cases because the exact locations of those instances of violence are not known. The chart also does not show settler attacks on the children outside of their school journey, for example, when the children have been out shepherding.

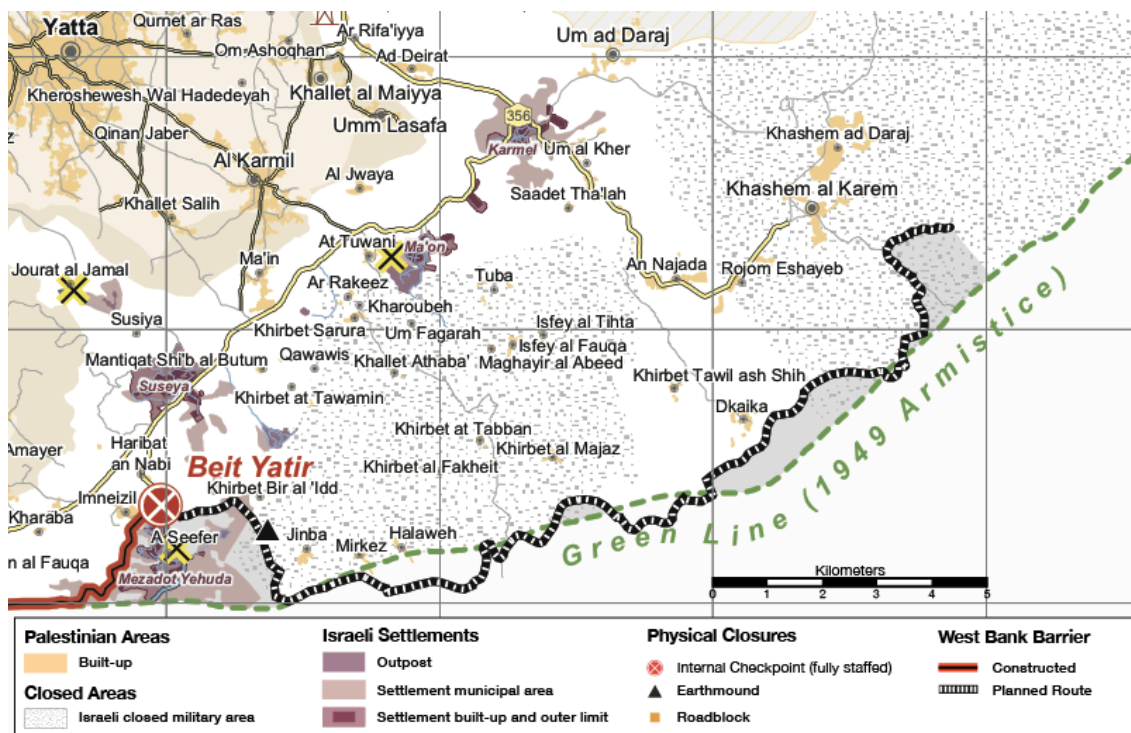
- A-B** Section where children walk unescorted
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- A-F** Longer, alternative trails children take when there is no military escort
- D-G** Escort route used during the 2004-05 and part of 2005-06 school years

Map 2: The Southern West Bank with Firing Zone 918



The red line indicates "Firing Area 918." Map courtesy of B'Tselem, available online at: http://www.btselem.org/Download/Southern_Hebron_Hills_Map_Eng.pdf

Map 3: The South Hebron Hills



The area of At-Tuwani and Massafer Yatta; excerpt from the "West Bank: Access and closure map – June 2010," courtesy of OCHA. The whole map is available on line at: http://www.ochaopt.org/documents/ocha_opt_wb_closure_map_june_2010_web.pdf

APPENDIX 2 RIGHTS OF THE CHILDREN

The school children of the South Hebron hills are routinely denied basic rights. The circumstances of their journeys to and from school are a flagrant violation of international law.

Al-Haq, a Palestinian human rights group, comments on the conditions endured by the children from Tuba and Maghayir Al-Abeed: *"In this instance, there is a clear violation of the right to education, which is both a human right in itself and an indispensable means of realizing other human rights. In this particular case, there is an omission by the Israeli occupying power: to maintain law and order [by taking effective measures to prevent the attacks on children]; and effectively prosecute those responsible for the settler violence. This omission contravenes the convention as it creates a barrier to accessing education effectively and therefore becomes discriminatory. Moreover, the constant threat of violence invokes the prohibition against torture, which includes cruel and degrading treatment."*⁶² *The constant presence of a threat and/or violence by the settlers causes such a severe hardship on the children [and] amounts to cruel and degrading treatment."*⁶³

The *Convention on the Rights of the Child* (CRC),⁶⁴ ratified by Israel in 1991, specifies children's rights. In 2002, the UN Committee on the Rights of the Child (UNCRC) affirmed *"the responsibility of the State party for the implementation of the Convention in the occupied Palestinian territories."*⁶⁵ The following excerpts from that convention indicate violations of the rights of the children attending primary school in At-Tuwani and Al-Fakheit.

From Article 2:

1. *States Parties shall respect and ensure the rights set forth in the present Convention to each child within their jurisdiction without discrimination of any kind, irrespective of the child's or his or her parent's or legal guardian's race, colour, sex, language, religion, political or other opinion, national, ethnic or social origin, property, disability, birth or other status.*

From Article 19:

1. *States Parties shall take all appropriate legislative, administrative, social and educational measures to protect the child from all forms of physical or mental violence, injury or abuse...*

From Article 28:

1. *States Parties recognize the right of the child to education, and...in particular:*
 - (a) *Make primary education compulsory and available free to all;*

⁶² Article 5 of the Universal Declaration of Human Rights states *"No one shall be subjected to torture or to cruel, inhuman or degrading treatment or punishment."*

⁶³ Interview with Al-Haq, August 2009

⁶⁴ The entire text of the CRC is available at: <http://www2.ohchr.org/english/law/crc.htm>

⁶⁵ Concluding observations: Israel, CRC/C/15/Add.195, 9 October 2002 available at: <http://tb.ohchr.org/default.aspx?Symbol=CRC/C/15/Add.195>. This document was a response to the initial report on Israel, Periodic reports of States parties due in 1993: Israel, CRC/C/8/Add.44, 27 February 2002 available at: <http://tb.ohchr.org/default.aspx?Symbol=CRC/C/8/Add.44>. In 2004, the International Court of Justice of Hague (ICJ) affirmed the applicability of the CRC in the Occupied Palestinian Territories in *Legal Consequences of the Construction of a Wall in the Occupied Palestinian Territory: Advisory Opinion*, 9 July 2004, available at <http://www.icj-cij.org/docket/index.php?pr=71&code=mwp&p1=3&p2=4&p3=6&case=131&k=5a>.

(e) *Take measures to encourage regular attendance at schools and the reduction of drop-out rates.*

From Article 38:

4. *In accordance with their obligations under international humanitarian law to protect the civilian population in armed conflicts, States Parties shall take all feasible measures to ensure protection and care of children who are affected by an armed conflict.*

Save the Children UK, an NGO that works for children rights in over 50 countries, has compiled a review of the situation of children's rights in the Occupied Palestinian Territories.⁶⁶ The following excerpts from the 2009 review reflect on some of the circumstances described in the present report and situate them in the larger picture of the children rights' violations in the occupied Palestinian territories (oPt).

Right to education

*In Area C of the West Bank, strict Israeli controls on building and development meant that in 2009 thousands of Palestinian children studied in cramped, makeshift classrooms or caravans where basics such as electricity, functioning toilets, and safe drinking water were lacking.*⁶⁷

Settler violence

*Palestinian children are at risk of settler violence in their homes, schools and communities as the number of incidents rise year after year.... Of the 1,112 Palestinian children injured during 2009, at least 37 were injured by Israeli settlers. In 2008, one Palestinian child was killed and 42 injured as a result of settler violence. In both years, the majority of incidents took place in [the] Hebron [Governorate] (61%)...*⁶⁸

For up-to-date information on the rights of Palestinian children affected by armed conflict in the occupied Palestinian territory, see the UNICEF oPt monthly update⁶⁹ and *The Child Rights Monitor*, a bi-monthly report produced by Defence for Children International-Palestine (DCI/PS) and Save the Children UK (SCUK).⁷⁰

⁶⁶ For the entire text of the review see: Save the Children UK, *Child Rights in the Occupied Palestinian Territory 2009 Review*, available at http://www.savethechildren.org.uk/en/docs/Child_Rights_Review_09.pdf.

⁶⁷ Ibid, pg 3

⁶⁸ Ibid, pg 7

⁶⁹ Available at http://www.unicef.org/oPt/media_5621.html.

⁷⁰ Available at <http://www.childrightsmonitor.org>.