

Adalah The Legal Center for Arab Minority Rights in Israel

عدالة المركز القانوني لحقوق الاقلية العربية في اسرائيل

עזאלה המרכז המשפטי לזכויות המיעוט הערבי בישראל



Adalah's Emergency Project to #Save_UmmalHiran
Full Project Proposal, Global Giving
<http://globalgiving.org/projects/save-umm-al-hiran>

Summary

On 5 May 2015, the Israeli Supreme Court approved the state's plan to evict hundreds of Palestinian residents, citizens of Israel, from the unrecognized Arab Bedouin village of Umm al-Hiran in the Naqab (Negev) desert. Why? So that the state can settle an Israeli Jewish community in their place.

The Israeli Supreme Court's decision follows more than a decade of legal struggle waged by Adalah and the villagers. As the main legal organization leading the struggle against the village's demolition both in the court and on the ground, we call for your urgent support to put a halt to the destruction of this Arab Bedouin village. The razing of the village will also mean erasing this community's history, livelihood and memories in this space, and on this land.

What is the problem?

The Israeli Supreme Court's decision to evict Umm al-Hiran's residents is a very troubling one. It legitimizes the razing of an Arab Palestinian village for no other reason but to make place for a Jewish one. It sets a very dangerous precedent that could mean demolitions and evictions of the 36 Arab Bedouin unrecognized villages of the Naqab, where over 70,000 Palestinian citizens of Israel live. And this could be done simply on the premise that Israeli Jewish citizens wish to settle in their place. The decision completely ignores the political, social and historical roots of the Arab Bedouin community.

The residents of Umm al-Hiran are indigenous Bedouin citizens who were moved to their present location by the state in 1956, after their original village of Khirbet Zubaleh was destroyed in 1948. For nearly 60 years, this village has been the place that they call home – where young people grew up, where youth imagined their futures, and where adults formed their memories.

Now with the impending eviction, it appears that the trauma of 1948 (the Nakba) may resurface once more. As leading human rights organizations and commentators have remarked, the plan is both racist and unjust. It refuses to see Arab Bedouin as human beings with deep ties to the land and to their homes.

If the state implements its plan, the demolitions and forcible evictions that will follow will be nothing short of traumatic. Hiba, a mother of seven from Atir-Umm al-Hiran, recalls the recent demolition of her home, "The police removed my children from our home when they were all still sleeping... they pulled my child and when I tried pulling him back, nine men and a woman beat me. I asked them, 'I have seven children, where will I put them?' They said, 'That's not our problem.' "

Well, it is *our* problem and we intend to solve it with your help.

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Here's how we're going to solve it

We are going to litigate, advocate, campaign and mobilize the public so that no home is demolished and no Umm al-Hiran resident is evicted.

As a community-based campaign, Adalah's legal and advocacy team has worked closely with the village of Umm al-Hiran to identify the following key ways to best support the community:

- **Litigation:** Although the Supreme Court's decision is very troubling, there is still more we can do. We will file a motion for a second hearing to the Supreme Court; we will continue litigation against the implementation of home demolition orders in Umm al-Hiran; and we will struggle for all forms of just compensation.
- **Media Outreach:** Adalah's media team will work closely with key media outlets and journalists (both mainstream and new-media sources) to ensure widespread coverage of the story of Umm al-Hiran in Hebrew, Arabic and English.
- **Field visits and study tours:** We will initiate and coordinate 12 field visits to Umm al-Hiran for diplomats, journalists, representatives of international human rights organizations and development agencies, and inter-faith groups, scholars, students and artists. These tours will provide a platform for villagers to address influential stakeholders and concerned activists, share their history, articulate their opposition to the displacement plan and call for recognition of their village.
- **Campaign on the web:** A strong online presence will ground the campaign, and create a public space to compile resources, maintain a calendar of upcoming events/activities, and share blogs, videos, newspaper articles, and photographs about the village. Adalah will create visual and shareable elements, such as fact-sheets, infographics, a short film and photos to encourage wide distribution of the material.
- **Campaign gear:** Adalah will integrate the campaign into the public sphere through the wide distribution of campaign gear, including t-shirts, posters, stickers, and banners adorned with the campaign logo.
- **Newspaper advertisement:** If resources permit, the campaign will feature a prominent advertisement in the leading Israeli daily, Ha'aretz, in both Hebrew and English. The ads will bring together civil society partners to call publicly on the Israeli government to halt its displacement plan in Umm al-Hiran and uphold the principle of equality.
- **Advocacy at the UN, in the EU Parliament, and in the US:** We are advocating for Umm al-Hiran before various levels of the EU through the human rights advocacy networks in which we actively participate. We will engage with the relevant UN Special Rapporteurs and human rights committees. And will advocate in the US - to the US State Department, to media outlets, and to grassroots groups - to ensure that this grave injustice is not carried out.

Although our fundraising campaign will run for 1 month, our efforts in the courts and on the ground will continue *until we ensure that all homes in Umm al-Hiran remain standing, and that all residents remain on the land!*

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How will our project have long-term impact and be sustainable?

We are aiming to set a very encouraging precedent. As a result of this campaign, we hope that the state will be much less able to destroy the Arab Bedouin community's homes, memories and history *even if* racist and discriminatory government decisions are passed. The long-term impact we seek is to bear positively for over 70,000 Palestinian Arab Bedouin living in unrecognized villages in the Naqab. As a legal organization, Adalah will use all legal means to ensure justice for the community. And because we sincerely believe in the power of the people to lead the change that they envision, we have been working hand in hand with the community for the past decade. This partnership ensures that Umm al-Hiran's future is led by its residents and is both 'from the people' and sustainable.

If you believe in human rights, dignity and equality for Arab Bedouin to live and thrive on their land, then support our campaign. Donate today to #Save_UmAlHiran.

Funding Information

We seek US\$ 30,000 to #Save_UmAlHiran.

Resources

Background Information Report with Legal Analysis: "[Nomads Against Their Will: The Example of Atir-Umm el-Hieran](#)"

Campaign Landing Page: <http://www.adalah.org/en/content/view/8550>

Newsletter: "[Can Israel demolish an Arab village to build a Jewish one?](#)" November 2013

Diaa Hadid, "[Village of Bedouins faces eviction as Israel envisions a village of Jews](#)", New York Times, 16 May 2015

Jonathan Cook, "[Israeli court says Arab village must make way for Jewish town](#)", Middle East Eye, 15 May 2015

Ha'aretz Editorial, "[Court-approved dispossession of Israeli Bedouin](#)", 13 May 2015

Amira Hass, "[Israeli colonialism, plain and simple](#)", 11 May 2015

Video: "[Umm al-Hieran Unrecognized Village v. Hiran Settlement](#)" by Adalah and the Negev Coexistence Forum

Photo gallery and testimonies: [The villagers of Umm el-Hieran](#)

Factsheet: [Myths and Misconceptions about the Arab Bedouin](#)

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