


HUMAN RIGHTS



Gaza man assassinated and run over, baby shot in the head
Report, *Al Mezan*, 6 March 2008

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A mourner carries the body of Palestinian baby, Amira Khaled Abu 'Aser, during her funeral in Gaza City, 5 March 2008. (Wissam Nassar/[MaanImages](#))

Israeli Occupation Forces (IOF) escalated their aggression against the population of the Gaza Strip. Following its withdrawal from north Gaza on 4 March 2008, the IOF continued air strikes yesterday. IOF penetrated the Wadi al-Salqa village in the central Gaza Strip, assassinated one man, and killed an infant less than one month old. The number of the people killed by the IOF since 28 February 2008 has reached 120, including 72 civilians. Among the civilians were six women and thirty children.

According to Al Mezan's field investigations, at approximately 7:45pm on Tuesday 4 March 2008, five IOF military vehicles and four tanks penetrated one kilometer into eastern Wadi al-Salqa village. They surrounded the home of 40-year-old Yousef Sulaiman al-Smiri, which is located by the Kisufim Road north of the village. Incidentally, 35-year-old Khalid Abu 'Aser, his wife, 30-year-old Nadia, and their 20-day-old baby, Amira, were visiting al-Smiri's family.

After the IOF besieged al-Smiri's house, the IOF opened fire at it intensively under helicopter cover. It ordered the family, through loud speakers, to leave the house. The family and their guests left the house, except for Yousef al-Smiri who fled.

According to affidavits given to Al Mezan by witnesses, the family and the guests left the house as they were instructed by the IOF. The house's outside lights were on and the IOF kept its light on them the entire time. However,

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the soldiers continued shooting and, consequently, the mother Nadia Abu Aser was hit by a live bullet to her left arm. Her infant daughter, Amira, was injured by a live bullet to her head. Also, the shooting injured four other residents of the house.

After the IOF withdrew from the area at approximately 10:10pm that day, the injured were transferred to Shuhda'a al-Aqsa Hospital in Deir Balah town, where the death of the infant was announced. The mother was reported to have sustained moderate injury.

There is reason to believe that Yousef al-Smiri was murdered after being stopped. After he fled his house, his body was found at approximately 10:00am the next day (5 March). Believing that he escaped from the IOF, the neighbors found al-Smiri's lifeless body lying in an open area about 150 meters from his house. When the body was examined at the hospital, a live bullet was found in his chest, and his head was crushed.

The IOF arrested al-Smiri's son, 17-year-old Mu'aath, and Khalid Faraj Abu Asser. The two were released on the morning of 5 March.

An initial examination of al-Smiri's body showed that IOF killed him after he was injured and he was lying on the ground. His head was crushed as a military vehicle ran over it after he was shot. This is not the first reported incident where the IOF run over persons already injured and do not pose a threat. On 18 November 2001, the IOF committed a similar act against two naval force members: Medhat Abu Dalal and Muhammad Ibrahim.

Al Mezan Center for Human Rights condemns the IOF's continuing killings in the Gaza Strip. These acts constitute grave breaches of international humanitarian law. The Center is gravely disturbed by the fact that IOF continued to fire at civilians after ordering them to leave their house, which resulted in the deliberate killing of an infant and injuring of five other civilians.

Al Mezan demands that a serious investigation be conducted into the killings of al-Smiri and the infant without delay. The results of this investigation must be made public and those who perpetrated these crimes must be brought to justice.

Al Mezan is also highly concerned by IOF's frequent perpetration of war crimes against the civilian population of the Occupied Palestinian Territories, especially in the Gaza Strip, and under international silence. These conducts continue as Israeli official statements are inciting a "holocaust" (genocide) and the Israeli government is seriously considering wiping out residential areas. Al Mezan renews its appeal to the international community to uphold its moral and legal obligations to act urgently and effectively to stop the IOF's aggression and provide international protection for the civilian population.

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