

*INTERNATIONAL WOMEN'S PEACE SERVICE*

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Date: 22 May 2014

## Colonist Land Grabs in Kufr ad-Dik

**Date of incidents:** 22 May 2014

**Place:** Kufr ad-Dik, Salfit district, occupied Palestine

**Witnesses:** Residents of Kufr ad-Dik, IWPS

*Note: IWPS withholds contact information as a courtesy to those involved. However, we will do our best to furnish you with the information you may require, upon request.*

### **Description of incidents:**

When Israeli bulldozers showed up in Kufr ad-Dik six months ago, the local Palestinian land owners took action to save their property. They talked to the colonist settlers driving the bulldozers, as well as the accompanying soldiers, and showed them documents proving the land was privately owned. The settlers and soldiers left, and the villagers hoped that this would be the end of the story.

Sadly, it was not.

This morning, the town awoke to find a bulldozer working on the same site as before. Settlers from the illegal colonies of Bruchin and Ale Zahav had moved construction equipment in overnight, and began to break rocks and bulldoze trees between 8 and 9 am. They were accompanied by staff from the DCO – the Israeli civil administration office in the West Bank. The settlers claimed they had permits allowing them to bulldoze the area, but refused to show their papers to officials from Kufr ad-Dik. As the morning turned into afternoon, more military jeeps showed up, even though the Palestinian land owners were not posing a threat to the settlers or DCO employees, who were themselves heavily armed.

The last vehicles to arrive were from the Israeli Border Police, who came armed with tear gas, rubber bullets and other ‘crowd control’ weapons, presumably expecting that confrontations between the villagers and the settlers would become violent. Despite this, the Palestinians maintained a strictly nonviolent presence.

Villagers believe that the settlers' intent is to build a road that will eventually open the area to settlement expansion, threatening not only Kufr ad-Dik, but also the surrounding communities of Bidya, Sarta and az-Zawiya.

“It’s always like this,” observed one man whose land is under threat. “first they will build a road, then a fence, then a military outpost. After this they will bring in caravans, and build houses. Soon no one will be able to farm here, and then we will not even be allowed to walk here.”

Like many from Kufr ad-Dik, he feels only tenuous hope that his land can be saved – this is the most recent of nearly a dozen land grabs that settlers have made on village land since the beginning of the occupation.

The day ended with a small but significant victory for the Palestinians: after several hours of negotiations, the settlers agreed to move their bulldozer off the land, closely followed by the majority of the soldiers. Unfortunately, since this is not the first attempt that they made to take this land, it is quite likely that they will return again, and this time sooner.

In the meantime, the village will continue to fight for its land in court, online, and by whatever other non-violent means necessary.





Find the report online with additional pictures: [Colonist Land Grabs in Kufr ad-Dik](#)

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