Twitter Thread by Breaking the Silence

Breaking the Silence
@BtSIsrael

Last October, Israelis were rightly horrified to hear that ~400 acres of forest burned down as a direct result of an IDF training exercise carried out in a nature reserve,despite warnings.
Now look at what happened when the IDF insisted on training in a Palestinian village today:



This is Jinba, a village in Firing Zone 918. Large-scale artillery forces arrived there this AM w/ armored vehicles. In response to @acri_online who reminded them of the damage caused last time, the IDF promised to avoid damaging residents' property. But somehow, this happened:



And this is what some of the agricultural lands looked like this morning, after the heavy armored vehicles flattened them. The residents depend on this land for their livelihood. Several months of hard work can be destroyed in a matter of minutes. (Video: Guy Botavia)



Destroying agricultural fields isn't new. Here's what a Nahal Brig soldier saw in 2004-05: "There was wheat that overflowed beyond the fields, so the instruction [...] that the platoon commander got, or at least what he said to us, [was] to trample." https://t.co/CypEpEpj4s

Here's another picture from this morning, this time from fields belonging to residents of the neighboring Bir al-Eid:



And at a time when healthcare is more important than ever, here's what was happening right outside Jinba's clinic this morning: https://t.co/rrsBesr2Yp

> The Khirbet Jenbah medical clinic today. Keep safe and stay healthy everyone. https://t.co/0TamdGrp4u pic.twitter.com/wXGMC5s8RN
>
> — B'Tselem \u05d1\u05e6\u05dc\u05dd \u0628\u062a\u0633\u064a\u0644\u0645 (@btselem) February 3, 2021

Why did the IDF insist on training inside these Palestinian villages? Excellent question. According to the Hebron Hills Regional Council (representing the settlers of the area), it's not about training, but rather 'enhancing [our] governance'. https://t.co/qw0jetJUlS

> "It's one of the ways to enhance [our] governance and our grip on the open space, and to enforce law and order." This was the message the Hebron Hills Regional Council sent to the settlers it represents on the large-scale IDF training exercise taking place in the area today. pic.twitter.com/ju6cnkQzmp
>
> — Breaking the Silence (@BtSIsrael) February 2, 2021

The IDF hasn't trained in the area for 7 years. Perhaps training there suddenly became more urgent. Or perhaps it has something to do with the upcoming Supreme Court verdict that will determine if the Palestinians living in FZ918 are to be evicted. https://t.co/CCWhgRdrYn

> Israel has taken two unusally broad measures this week as part of its ongoing efforts to forcibly transfer Palestinian communities in order to take over their land. On 2 February 2021, Israel launched a large-scale military maneuver set to last two to three days in areas pic.twitter.com/ydgjH9Pxb1
>
> — B'Tselem \u05d1\u05e6\u05dc\u05dd \u0628\u062a\u0633\u064a\u0644\u0645 (@btselem) February 3, 2021

As far back as 1981, then-Defense Minister Ariel Sharon said in a Knesset committee meeting that Israel had a clear interest in declaring the area a firing zone so that the Palestinian population wouldn't "spread": https://t.co/yCEr4Wty43

3) 'IDF training' is just an excuse.
Fmr PM Ariel Sharon said it himself: "Additional training areas must be closed in [between] the bottom of the Hebron Hills and the Judean Desert\u2014in light of the phenomenon\u2014the spread of Arab villagers on the mountainside toward the desert. >>>

— Breaking the Silence (@BtSIsrael) October 19, 2020

Of course, this morning looked completely different for Jinba's residents than it did for their settler neighbors, some of whom were even given the opportunity to enter the artillery vehicles. They're not at risk of eviction any time soon. (Photo: Guy Botavia)



The exercise continues tomorrow, when more Palestinians will watch as their property is destroyed under the pretext of an exercise. The threat of eviction will still hover over them. And too few politicians will find the time to say a word.
Help us put this on the agenda. Share.

