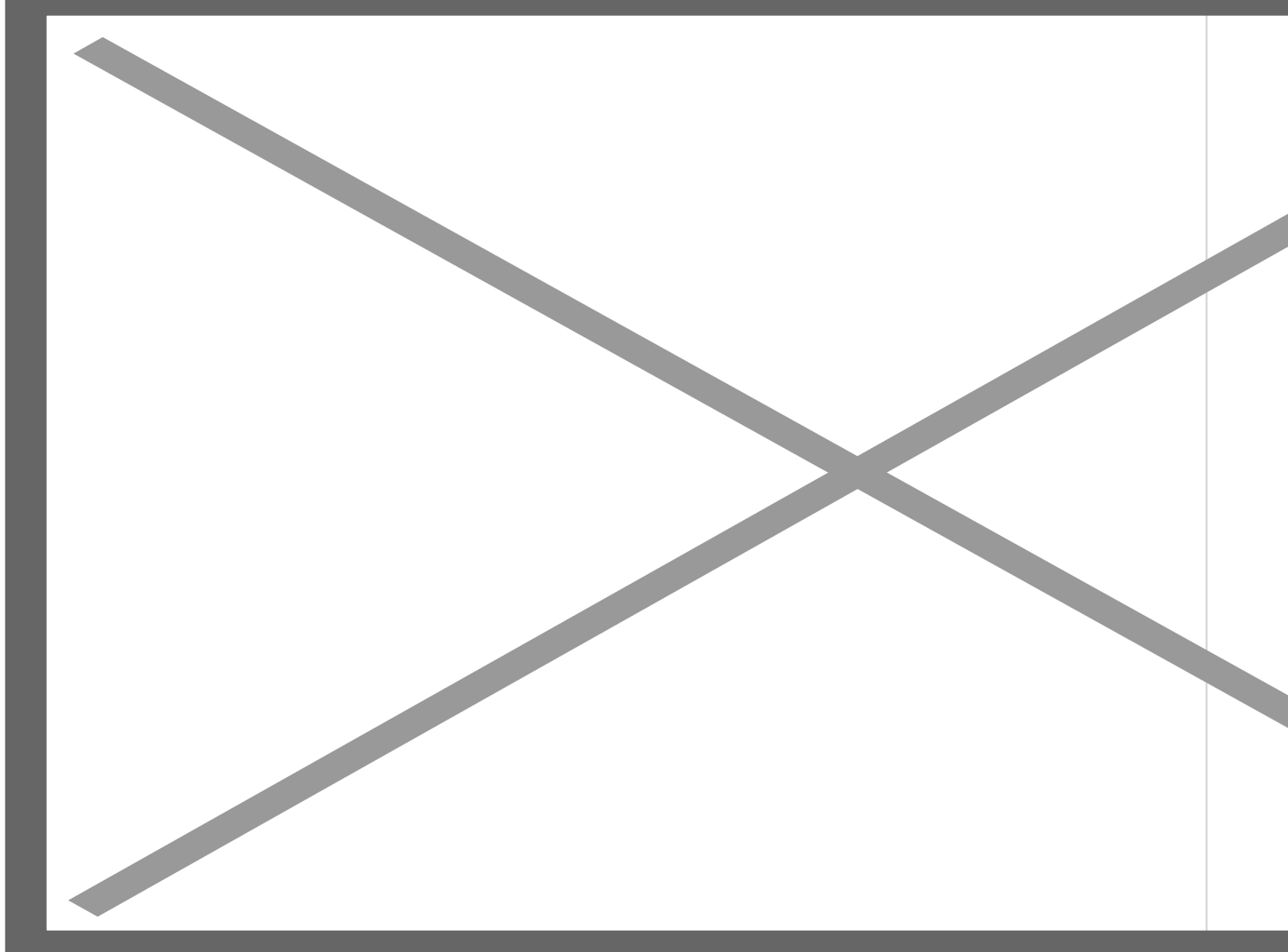


Israeli forces attack anti-settlement protesters in northwestern West Bank

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File photo of heavily-armed Israeli troops

Ramallah, July 1 (RHC)-- At least seven Palestinians have been wounded after Israeli forces attack a peaceful protest march held in the northwestern West Bank against Tel Aviv's ongoing illegal settlement activities across the occupied Palestinian territory.

The protest was held in the village of Kafr Qaddoum, east of the city of Qalqilya on Friday, the official Palestinian Wafa news agency reported, citing local sources. The casualties were caused after the troops started striking the protesters with rubber-coated steel bullets and teargas canisters, ignoring the peaceful nature of their march. "Dozens of others were treated at the scene from teargas suffocation," Wafa added.

Israel occupied the West Bank, including East al-Quds, in 1967 during a heavily-Western-backed war against regional Arab territories. Ever since, it has been dotting the territory with hundreds of illegal settlements that have come to house more than 700,000 Israeli settlers.

The Palestinian government has condemned the Israeli regime's plan to construct about 5,700 new illegal settler units in the occupied West Bank. This is while Palestinians want the West Bank to serve as part of a future independent state with East al-Quds as its capital.

All Israeli settlements are illegal under international law. The United Nations Security Council has condemned Israel's settlement activities through several resolutions.

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