

# *Israel deploys sharpshooters for Palestinian Land Day protest*

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Gaza City, March 29 (RHC)-- As thousands of Palestinians, including entire families, get ready to put up five tent-cities along the Gaza border as part of a six-week protest demanding the recognition of Palestinian refugees' right to return, the Israeli occupation army has deployed over 100 sharpshooters to the border.

The protest is scheduled to begin Friday, which commemorates what Palestinians call Land Day, which marks the murder of six unarmed Arab-Palestinian citizens of Israel during demonstrations on March 30, 1976 in response to the Israeli government's announcement it was confiscating thousand of kilometers of land for "security" reasons and Jewish settlement building.

The protest action runs through May 15, when Palestinians commemorate 70 years since the Nakba or catastrophe, when over 700,000 Palestinians had to flee their homes, towns and cities after the creation of the state of Israel on May 14, 1948.

Nickolay Mladenov, the United Nations special coordinator for the Middle East peace process, called on all sides "to exercise restraint and take the necessary steps to avoid a violent escalation".

Citing security concerns, Israeli enforces a "no go" zone for Palestinians on land in Gaza adjacent to Israel's border fence. Palestinians in Gaza risk being shot when they access this zone, even if they are

not engaging in hostile behavior.

The right to return for the five million Palestinian refugees who live in the occupied territory and around the world is a central demand of the Palestinian people, and of the Boycott, Divestment and Sanctions (BDS) movement.

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