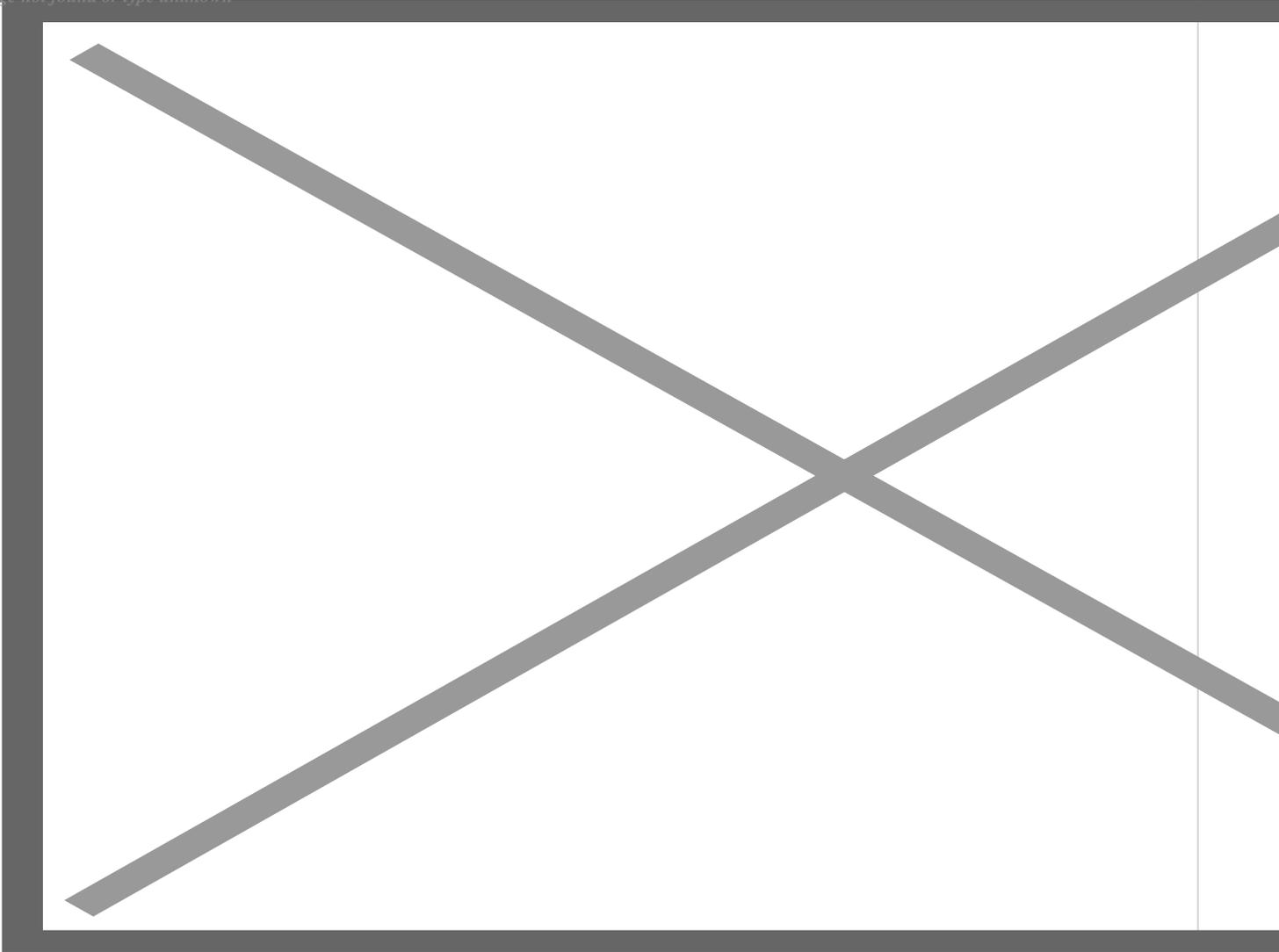


Israel to demolish more Palestinian schools and mosques

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The undated photo by Palestinian media shows a school in the occupied West Bank, subject to an Israeli demolition

Ramallah, January 18 (RHC)-- Palestinians in the occupied West Bank are simply being deprived of religious freedom and their children denied education as Israel keeps demolishing newly constructed mosques and schools.

Israeli soldiers stormed the Masafer Yatta area, which is part of the Bedouin community, and delivered ultimatums threatening to raze an elementary school and a mosque under construction, the Palestinian Information Center reported on Monday. Yousef al-Basaita, a head teacher said the demolitions left up to 50 kids without school.

Last December, the Israeli military notified local officials of its intent to raze the school. In another incident, Israeli forces stormed al-Maleh area in the northern Jordan Valley and photographed a school using a drone, seen as a prelude to demolishing the building.

Israeli authorities claim the structures that are demolished have been built without permits. They also sometimes order Palestinians to tear down their own homes or pay demolition costs to the municipality.

The United Nations has censured the regime for carrying out repeated demolition of Palestinian homes in the West Bank. The UN Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs (OCHA) has warned that there has been a sharp increase in the number of Palestinian houses being demolished given the current era of the coronavirus pandemic.

Many believe the controversial demolition measures adopted by Israel are aimed at expelling more Palestinians from the West Bank.

Israel was created in 1948 after a Western-backed military seizure of vast expanses of Arab territories. In 1967, it occupied the entire West Bank, including East al-Quds, following full-frontal military operations. Israel later annexed the territories. Upon annexation, it also began propping up settlements, which the international community deems illegal due to their construction on occupied land.

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