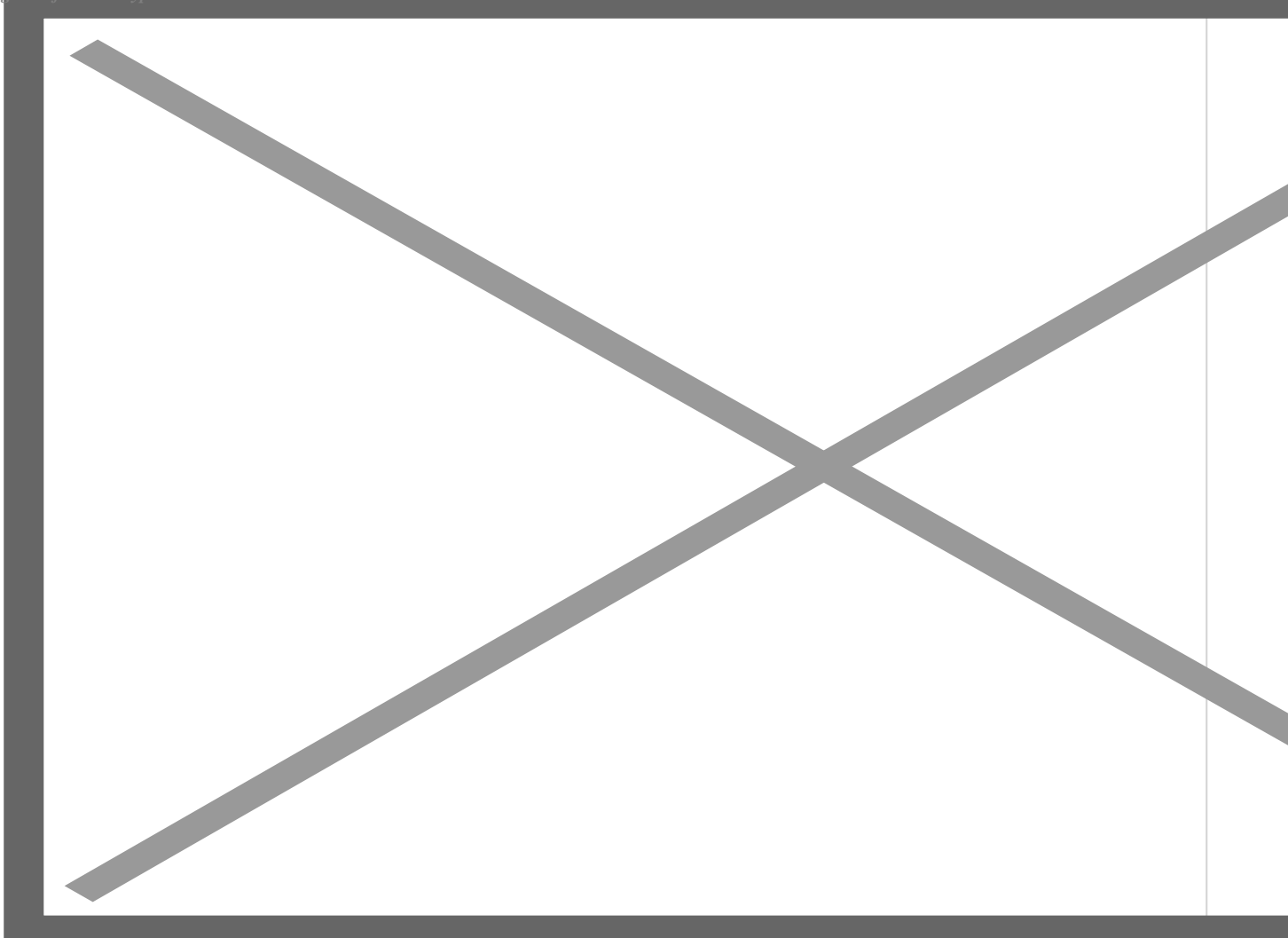


Israeli forces attack anti-settlement protesters in southern West Bank

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File photo of the Israeli regime's forces in the Tel Aviv-occupied West Bank

Ramallah, June 17 (RHC)-- Israeli forces have attacked anti-settlement Palestinian protesters in the southern part of the occupied West Bank. Clashes ensued after the forces attacked the protesters in the village of Beit 'Amra, which is located 12 kilometers (seven miles) southwest of the city of al-Khalil (Hebron), in the southern West Bank on Friday.

The troops targeted the demonstrators with rubber-coated steel bullets, teargas canisters, and sound grenades. Dozens of Palestinians suffered injuries, including suffocation, during the standoff.

The Israeli regime has built over 230 settlements since its 1967 occupation of the Palestinian territory of the West Bank, including East al-Quds. The settlements house more than 600,000 Israeli settlers.

Palestinians want the West Bank to serve as part of their future state, with East al-Quds as its capital.

In late February, United Nations Secretary-General Antonio Guterres called for an end to the regime's settlement activities, stressing the illegality of all structures built in the occupied Palestinian territories. "All settlement activity is illegal under international law. It must stop," Guterres said while addressing the UN Committee on the Exercise of the Inalienable Rights of the Palestinian People at the time.

Earlier in June, the foreign ministers of the Persian Gulf Cooperation Council (GCC) strongly condemned the regime's plans to build new settlements in the occupied Palestinian territories, urging international action to stop such schemes.

The ministers rejected the regime's efforts to annex the settlements or impose its sovereignty over them, saying such efforts were against the resolutions adopted by international organizations, most notably the United Nations Security Council Resolution 2334.

The resolution, which was adopted in December 2016, describes Israeli settlements in the occupied West Bank and al-Quds as "a flagrant violation under international law."

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