

AMNESTY INTERNATIONAL PRESS RELEASE

News Flash

AI Index: MDE 15/117/2002 (Public)
News Service No: 122
16 July 2002

Israel / Occupied Territories / Palestinian Authority: Amnesty International condemns attack on bus near West Bank settlement

Published

Amnesty International condemns the attack on a bus near the Israeli settlement of Emmanuel in the West Bank that killed at least seven people and wounded 19 others, including children.

"There is no justification for the targeting of civilians," Amnesty International said. "The fact that Israeli settlements in the Occupied Territories are illegal under international humanitarian law does not mean that settlers may be attacked. They are still civilians and civilians are not legitimate targets."

Apparently the bus was attacked by roadside bombs that detonated under the bus. The attackers then opened fire on the fleeing passengers. Two Palestinian armed groups -- Al-Aqsa Martyr Brigades and the Democratic Front for the Liberation of Palestine (DFLP) -- have claimed responsibility for the attack.

"Deliberately killing civilians violates fundamental principles of international law and we call on all Palestinian groups and individuals to cease such attacks immediately," the organization added.

Amnesty International has recently published a report on attacks against civilians unreservedly condemning these attacks, whatever reason the perpetrators give to their action. The report *Without distinction -- attacks on civilians by Palestinian armed groups* documents 128 attacks in which more than 350 civilians, most of them Israeli, have been killed since the beginning of the *Al-Aqsa intifada* in September 2000.

"Israel and the Palestinian Authority have a responsibility to bring to justice people within their jurisdiction who order, organise, assist or carry out attacks on civilians," Amnesty International said. "In doing so they must act strictly in accordance with international humanitarian law and human rights standards."

For more information please see: *Without distinction -- attacks on civilians by Palestinian armed groups* (MDE 02/003/2002), <http://web.amnesty.org/ai.nsf/Index/MDE020032002?OpenDocument&of=COUNTRIES\ISRAEL/OCCUPIED+TERRITORIES>

Public Document

For more information please call Amnesty International's press office in London, UK, on +44 20 7413 5566

Amnesty International, 1 Easton St., London WC1X 0DW. web: <http://news.amnesty.org>