

URGENT ACTION

STOP DESTRUCTION OF PALESTINIAN FAMILY HOME

The Israeli authorities are preparing to demolish a Palestinian family's home in East Jerusalem, on the grounds that it was built without a permit.



Ahmad Ghoshe and his extended family have lived in the same house in Jerusalem's Old City for generations. More than 40 of his relatives live on the lower floors of the house, making it extremely overcrowded. In June 2006 he built a small apartment, of 50 square metres, on top of the house, for him to live in with his wife Haifa, his son Yusif and Yusuf's wife Lubna, and his son's three children, Anas (aged six), Adam (aged four) and Amir (aged three). Three months later, the Jerusalem Municipality issued an order for the demolition of the apartment. On 8 July 2009, after long court proceedings, the demolition order was scheduled to be carried out "imminently." Since 2007 the family have had to pay a monthly fine of

600 shekels (US\$200) because of the unauthorized building work. Only one of the family is in paid employment: he earns 4,000 shekels (US\$1,330) a month, with which he has to support the entire family.

Ahmad Ghoshe is partially sighted and suffers from severe asthma and other serious health problems. He and his family have nowhere to go if their home is demolished, and will be made destitute. One of his sons, Muhammad, lived nearby until 9 June, when his home was demolished.

PLEASE WRITE IMMEDIATELY in English or your own language:

- expressing concern that Ahmad Ghoshe and his family are in danger of having their house demolished, and calling on the mayor to immediately cancel the demolition order;
- calling on the mayor to cancel all other outstanding orders to demolish unlicensed houses in East Jerusalem;
- calling for a moratorium on demolitions of Palestinian homes in East Jerusalem until such time as planning and building laws are amended in a manner that complies with international standards against discrimination.

PLEASE SEND APPEALS BEFORE 28 AUGUST 2009 TO:

Nir Barkat
 Mayor of Jerusalem
 Jerusalem Municipality
 1 Safra Square
 Jerusalem 91007
 ISRAEL
Email: Lishka@jerusalem.muni.il
Fax: +972 2 629 6014
Salutation: Dear Mayor

Also send copies to diplomatic representatives accredited to your country.

Please check with your section office if sending appeals after the above date.

**AMNESTY
 INTERNATIONAL**



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ADDITIONAL INFORMATION

Since Israel occupied East Jerusalem and the rest of the West Bank in 1967, the Israeli authorities have pursued a policy of limiting new construction in the city's Palestinian neighbourhoods. The authorities frequently demolish Palestinian homes in East Jerusalem and elsewhere in the Occupied Palestinian Territories on the grounds that they have been built without a permit. Yet it is impossible for most Palestinians in East Jerusalem to obtain building permits. Scores of Palestinian families in the Old City and thousands more in the rest of East Jerusalem have demolition orders for their homes awaiting enforcement.

As a result of the housing shortage in the Palestinian sector of the city many families have little choice but to build or extend their homes without permits. If they move out of the city Palestinians residents of Jerusalem lose the right ever to return to the city.

While Palestinians homes are still being demolished because they were built without permits, illegal Israeli settlements continue to be built and expanded in East Jerusalem in violation of international law. Elsewhere in Jerusalem's Old City, Israelis have obtained building permits, and demolitions of homes of Israeli Jews built without permit are virtually unheard of.

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