



UK Task Force

on issues relating to Arab citizens of Israel

**Briefing: “Price Tag” Attacks within Israel
7 September 2012**

Introduction

“Price tag” attacks, originally perpetrated by settlers against Palestinians and Israeli security forces in the West Bank to deter the Israeli government from introducing legislation to constrain settlement building, have spread into Israel proper in 2011 and 2012, targeting religious sites and civil society projects. The Israeli government has come out strongly against these attacks with Israeli Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu labelling them in December 2011 as “a stain on all of Israel”.

Attacks in Israel

“Price Tag” attacks began occurring within Israel from 11 March 2011 and have frequently targeted Arab communities and religious sites. However, there have also been attacks on the offices of Peace Now, an NGO which is opposed to settlements and supports a two-state solution, as well as Christian churches and monasteries which have been defaced with graffiti saying “Death to Christians,” “We will crucify you” and “price tag.”

The first attack on a Jewish-Arab coexistence project was on 7 February 2012, when one of the three Hand-in-Hand schools was targeted and “Death to Arabs” was painted on the walls. Hand in Hand schools constitute three of only 5 bilingual schools in Israel, which teach Jewish and Arab school children together in Hebrew and Arabic. The Knesset speaker, Reuven Rivlin, condemned this attack and paid tribute to the Hand in Hand Schools, saying: “you are working diligently for the future of Israeli society and for the victory of moderation and tolerance over hatred and fanaticism.”

The second attack on a Jewish-Arab coexistence project was against the peace village of Neve Shalom ~ Wahat al Salam on 8 June. Cars and buildings were vandalised and spray-painted with the slogans “death to Arabs” and “regards from Ulpana,” referring to the Israeli government’s decision on 6 June to uphold a High Court ruling to evacuate five homes in the Ulpana outpost that were illegally built on Palestinian-owned land. In response to the attacks, the Neve Shalom Secretary Gideon Suleimani told the Yediot Ahronoth newspaper that “we are trying to promote peace and coexistence, and what happened here was a political act aimed at shattering this (initiative).”

Other “price tag” attacks on Arab communities and religious sites from March 2011-September 2012 are as follows:

- The 122 year old Latrun Monastery, which is a five minute drive from the Neve Shalom ~ Wahat al Salam peace village, had its front door set on fire and was defaced with anti-Christian graffiti, in response to the evacuation of the Migron settlement on 4 September 2012. Rabbi Dov Lipman, an American-born Beit Shemesh activist, led the efforts to clean up the graffiti which read, "Jesus was a monkey", saying that it was important to send the message that "that's not who Jews are or who they ever were."
- A disused, but historically significant, mosque was attacked on 15 December 2011. The attackers attempted to set alight to the mosque but the fire failed to take hold. The outer walls were covered with slogans such as "Mohammed is a Pig", "a good Arab is an Arab in the grave" and the names of two settlements the government plans to evacuate.
- "Death to Arabs" and "Givat Asaf" (a West Bank outpost due to be demolished) were spray-painted onto gravestones at a Muslim cemetery in Jerusalem on 10 November 2011.
- A mosque in the northern town of Tuba-Zangariya was burnt down on 3 October 2011 and the words "price tag" and "revenge" were daubed on the walls. The interior was badly damaged and many holy books destroyed.
- Headstones at a Muslim and Christian cemetery were desecrated in Jaffa on 7 October 2011 where graves were spray-painted with slogans such as "death to Arabs" and "price tag."
- A restaurant in Jaffa was set on fire on 31 October 2011, with the words "price tag" and "Kahane was right" (in reference to Rabbi Meir Kahane who proposed the mass expulsion of Arabs from all of Israel) painted on the walls.
- Two cars belonging to Arabs were set alight in the city of Safed and the Zefat Academic College, that educates both Jewish and Arab students was vandalised with "Death to Arabs" and "Kahane was right" on 16 March 2011.