

# Over 200 Palestinians wounded in clashes with Jerusalem police as tensions boil over - Israel News - Haaretz.com

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## Over 200 Palestinians Wounded in Clashes With Jerusalem Police as Tensions Boil Over

Worshippers stayed at the Al-Aqsa Mosque compound after the final Friday prayer of Ramadan to protest planned evictions in Sheikh Jarrah, where police also clashed with protesters ■ 17 Israeli officers were wounded during the clashes



Palestinian protesters hurl stones during clashes with Israeli police at the Al-Aqsa mosque compound in Jerusalem, tonight. Credit: Ahmad GHARABLI / AFP

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At least 205 Palestinians and 17 police officers were wounded Friday as clashes erupted at Jerusalem's Al-Aqsa Mosque compound, in a serious escalation in tensions that have been building up in Jerusalem over the past weeks.

The Palestinian Red Crescent emergency service said some 205 people were wounded in clashes with police

there and elsewhere in Jerusalem, including 88 who were hospitalized. The Palestinian Red has also set up a field hospital on the Mosque's compound due to the large number of wounded protesters, most of them wounded in the face and eyes by rubber-coated bullets and shrapnel from stun grenades.

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Palestinian Red Crescent ambulances wait near Jerusalem's Lions' Gate to transport the injured during clashes between protesters and Israeli security officers, yesterday. Credit: EMMANUEL DUNAND - AFP  
The clashes were the latest in a deadly day that saw Israeli forces [shoot and kill two Palestinians](#) after three men opened fire on an Israeli base in the occupied West Bank. Israeli police were standing by as tens of thousands packed in the mosque on the final Friday of Ramadan and many stayed on to protest in support of [Palestinians facing eviction](#) from homes on land claimed by Jewish settlers.

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Some 70,000 worshippers attended the final Friday prayers of Ramadan at Al-Aqsa, the Islamic endowment that oversees the site said. Thousands protested afterwards, waving the green flags of the Islamic militant group Hamas and chanting pro-Hamas slogans before dispersing peacefully.

Tensions boiled over after the evening prayer, when hundreds of Palestinian worshippers began hurling stones and other objects at the Israeli forces, who responded with riot gear.

Israeli Police said in a statement overnight Friday that after the evening prayer disturbances have resumed as worshippers hurled stones at the forces. In response, police "forces have entered [the Temple Mount

compound] to restore order while using riot-dispersal measures," the police added. Moreover, during the clashes 17 police officers were wounded, half of them were evacuated to receive further medical attention in hospital.

Video footage shows worshippers throwing chairs, shoes and rocks toward the police and officers responding by opening fire.

Hamas leader Ismael Haniyeh has called on Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu not to "play with fire."

"This is a battle you can't win," he added.

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Israeli security forces deploy during clashes with Palestinian protesters at the Al-Aqsa mosque compound in Jerusalem, tonight. Credit: Ahmad GHARABLI / AFP

Ziyad al-Nakhalah, Secretary General of the Islamic Jihad movement, has warned Israel and said that it "should expect a response any moment now."

Joint List Lawmaker Sami Abu Shehadeh, who arrived at Temple Mount for Saturday's morning prayer, said that Prime Minister Netanyahu is responsible for the recent flare-up. "The Al-Aqsa Mosque is a red line that



even Netanyahu cannot cross," he added.

### Sheikh Jarrah protest

Meanwhile, in the neighborhood of Sheikh Jarrah, dozens partook in the weekly demonstration against the eviction plans, which over the past weeks attract more crowds and attention.

Police said they dispersed the crowd after some of the protesters started hurling stones. Two demonstrators were detained, and two were wounded by stun grenades.



Israeli security forces deploy next to the Dome of the Rock mosque amid clashes with Palestinian protesters at the al-Aqsa mosque compound in Jerusalem, yesterday. Credit: AHMAD GHARABLI - AFP

Several Israeli lawmakers, all from the Arab-majority Joint List, also attended the protest. One of them, Ofer Cassif, said he was shoved by officers, who broke his glasses. Last month, [Cassif was violently hit by police officers](#) at a similar protest in Sheikh Jarrah.

With health restrictions mostly lifted following Israel's swift COVID-19 vaccine campaign, worshippers packed tightly together as they knelt in prayer on the tree-lined hilltop plateau containing the Al-Aqsa Mosque, Islam's third-holiest site.

But tensions in the city that resurfaced over the past weeks, which Palestinian President Mahmoud Abbas [said Israel was responsible for](#), were front and center in the Friday sermon given by Sheikh Tayseer Abu Sunainah.

"Our people will remain steadfast and patient in their homes, in our blessed land," Abu Sunainah said of the multiple Palestinian families in East Jerusalem's [Sheikh Jarrah](#) who could be evicted under a long-running legal case.

Israel's Supreme Court will hold a hearing on the Sheikh Jarrah evictions on Monday.

Following prayers, thousands remained on the compound to [protest against the evictions](#), with many waving Palestinian flags and chanting a refrain common during Jerusalem protests: "With our soul and blood, we will redeem you, Aqsa".



Palestinian protesters rush away amid clashes with Israeli security forces at the Al-Aqsa mosque compound in Jerusalem, tonight. Credit: Ahmad GHARABLI / AFP

On Friday evening, President Abbas reiterated his claim Israel bears responsibility for the escalation in Jerusalem and in a televised speech called for an urgency United Nations Security Council meeting on the situation.

Leaders and representatives of other Palestinian groups, including Hamas and Islamic Jihad, warned Israel of a response to the latest flare-up.

### 'Playing with fire'







Police forces remove activists from the Sheikh Jarrah protest site in East Jerusalem, today. Credit: Ohad Zwigenberg

Sheikh Jarrah's residents are overwhelmingly Palestinian, but the neighborhood also contains a site revered by religious Jews as the tomb of an ancient high priest, Shimon Hatzaddik.

The spokesman for the United Nations High Commissioner for Human Rights said the evictions, "if ordered and implemented, would violate Israel's obligations under international law" on East Jerusalem territory it captured and occupied in the 1967 Middle East war.

"We call on Israel to immediately halt all forced evictions, including those in Sheikh Jarrah, and to cease any activity that would further contribute to a coercive environment and lead to a risk of forcible transfer," spokesman Rupert Colville said on Friday.





Worshippers chant slogans and wave Hamas flags during a protest against the likely evictions of Palestinian families from the homes, after the last Friday prayers of the Muslim holy month of Ramadan, Credit:

Mahmoud Illean,AP

Washington was "deeply concerned about the heightened tensions in Jerusalem," said U.S. State Department spokeswoman Jalina Porter.

"As we head into a sensitive period in the days ahead, it will be critical for all sides to ensure calm and act responsibly to deescalate tensions and avoid violent confrontation," Porter said.

The European Union, Kuwait and Jordan have expressed alarm at the potential evictions.

Jordanian Foreign Minister Ayman Safadi said Jordan had given the Palestinian Authority documents that he said showed the Sheikh Jarrah Palestinians were the "legitimate owners" of their homes.

Israel's "provocative steps in occupied Jerusalem and violation of Palestinian rights, including the rights of the people of Sheikh Jarrah in their homes, is playing with fire," Safadi said in a foreign ministry statement on Twitter.

Israel's Foreign Ministry said on Friday Palestinians were "presenting a real-estate dispute between private parties as a nationalist cause, in order to incite violence in Jerusalem." Palestinians rejected the allegation.

Israeli-Palestinian clashes have broken out nightly in Sheikh Jarrah ahead of Monday's court hearing.

*Reuters and the Associated Press contributed to this report.*

