

Truly ‘monstrous’ sanctions on Israel

written by David M. Weinberg | 12.06.2025

The straw man of “settler violence” was this week once again spit out by supposed “allies” of Israel in the West to justify the obnoxious imposition of sanctions against two right-wing Israeli cabinet ministers.

The sanctions are galling, and the accusation is false. The move effectively brands Israel a pariah state, even though it was wrapped in fussing-phony language about friendship for Israel.

And it does so based on systematic distortions and demonization. “Settler violence” is an ugly, fringe phenomenon falsely and purposefully puffed-up to ‘balance’ the crimes of Hamas.

The “settler violence” narrative is a well-funded juggernaut; no less than an international campaign to delegitimize the State of Israel and the IDF, to justify violence against Israeli soldiers and civilians, and to pave the way for a runaway Palestinian state.

This is proven by two new, important reports: *OCHA-oPT – The UN Organ Behind the “Settler Violence” Smear Campaign*, by Adv. Avraham Shalev of the Kohelet Policy Forum; and *False Flags and Real Agendas – The Making of a Modern Blood Libel: The ‘Settler Violence’ Narrative as a Weapon in the Battle to Delegitimize the Jewish Presence in Judea and Samaria and the State of Israel*, by Adv. Yona Admoni (Coblenz) and Moriah Michaeli of the Regavim Movement.

OCHA is the “Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs in the occupied Palestinian territory” – the “humanitarian” arm of the UN Secretariat, which coordinates the work of about 80 UN groups and NGOs operating in Judea & Samaria. Shalev definitively shows how is the font of all so-called “settler evil” statistics. He reveals how OCHA relies on organizations whose entire purpose is to destroy Israel and those clearly aligned with Palestinian terrorist organizations.

According to Shalev, OCHA’s grossly biased and fabricated reports even count many cases of Arab terror attacks on Jews, and left-wing anarchist attacks on

settlers, as “settler violence.” Yet OCHA is the “authoritative” source quoted by every foreign ministry in the world about Israel’s “monstrous” settler crimes. (Monstrous is the wild word disgustingly used this week by British Foreign Minister David Lammy.)

The Biden Administration’s State Department – which played a major role in revving-up the fallacious settler violence story line – relied on OCHA too.

Regavim’s deep dive into this issue (125 pages, including detailed statistical appendices) further shows how the so-called “settler violence” is a carefully planned and well-funded international campaign; a crusade to drive the notions that there is a “widespread” (– did somebody say “monstrous”?) phenomenon of violence by settlers in Judea and Samaria against Arab residents in the area (– not isolated instances of violence) and that the Israeli government is complicit in this. And to turn this into common knowledge, into “undisputed fact.”

Note: Neither report denies that there are Israelis who act violently toward Palestinians, and that these attacks are wrong, injurious, immoral, and destabilizing.

But the reports convincingly show that this is not a widespread phenomenon; and that there is a vast gap between the branding, focus, and preoccupation with marginal incidents of violence perpetrated by Jews against Arabs in comparison with the incidence, frequency, severity and prevalence of other incidents of violence (against Israelis!) in Judea and Samaria and in Israel as a whole. The reports also demonstrate that Israeli authorities indeed are addressing the problem (although I think that an even tougher Israeli hand is required.)

Regavim: “The fact that thousands of events, most entirely unrelated to violence, and many occurring outside of Judea and Samaria, are labeled ‘settler violence,’ is eerily parallel to Hamas’s murderous logic in claiming that residents of Kibbutz Be’eri and Kfar Aza are ‘settlers’ – or to the absurd declarations of the official Palestinian news agency, which reports on ‘settler roadblocks’ in Tel Aviv in protest of the Netanyahu-led right-wing government.”

“The absurdity deepens as Arab terror attacks are counted as ‘settler violence’ if they end with the terrorist being killed or injured. Even IDF interdiction of terrorists both during military operations and in thwarted terror attacks is labeled as settler violence. Fabricated events – which a basic check proves never

happened – as well as thousands of peaceful visits by Jews to the Temple Mount, or official government actions such as land declarations, settlement planning, or nature reserve designations – all are included in OCHA’s ‘databases’ as incidents of ‘settler violence’.”

Worse still, Regavim’s report also persuasively demonstrates how Palestinian Authority officials together with extreme left-wing Israeli and foreign organizations openly plan confrontations with IDF soldiers and Jewish residents in Judea & Samaria to provoke them into violent behavior – which is then filmed and edited (i.e., distorted) to fuel the “settler violence” narrative. Regavim also tracks the foreign money routes that fund this malicious effort.

Regavim criticizes the Israeli government for its failure to respond to the “settler violence” campaign. “Israel has neglected to offer a unified, official, and transparent database on the actual scope of ideologically motivated crimes both by Jews and by Arabs. With such data, alongside proportionate framing and factual context, it would have been easy to debunk the campaign at much earlier stages. The lack of official Israeli data has given tailwind to the campaign.”

I KNOW that Regavim is right in this regard because two years ago I conducted my own research into this issue, and struggled mightily to pry real statistics out of the Israeli security establishment.

I submitted a formal request for information to the Israel Security Agency (Shin Bet), which is the government arm responsible for tracking and countering violence in Judea and Samaria.

From the detailed and precise statistics I eventually received, it became crystal clear that there had not been a significant increase, no “surge,” in right-wing Israeli-Jewish violence against Palestinian Arabs in Judea and Samaria since the beginning of the current Gaza war compared to earlier periods.

I also learned that “violence” in this context means many different things, from verbal altercations and rock throwing (what the ISA calls “frictions” or “harassment”), to spray-painting of anti-Arab slogans and other undercover vandalism including agricultural vandalism (“price tag activities”), to firebombing of homes or mosques (which are classified as outright “terrorist strikes”).

I learned that the more serious type of incidents had dropped by 50% thanks to

Israeli enforcement actions. And that there is no evidence whatsoever of wild accusations (say, by B'Tselem or Yesh Din) that hundreds of Palestinians from many communities have been forced to abandon their homes due to fear of settler attacks. And that indeed many of the Palestinians listed by OCHA as victims of settler violence are in fact Palestinian terrorists killed by Israeli troops in necessary, defensive and offensive operations.

It is unfortunately true that altercations and aggressions by settlers in 2022 and 2024 rose over that in 2020, 2021, and 2023. Perhaps this is because Jewish residents of Judea and Samaria, in fact all citizens of Israel, had been subject to a wild wave of murderous Palestinian terrorist attacks ever since 2022.

In case officials in Washington, London, Ottawa, Canberra, Wellington, and Oslo have forgotten, here is a reminder. In 2022, there were more than 5,000 Palestinian terror attacks against Israeli Jews, including car-ramming, shooting, stabbing, and bombing of innocent men, women, and children. These attacks included over 500 Molotov cocktail attacks (firebombs), leading to the injury of more than 150 Israelis. There was a 210% rise in rock throwing incidents in 2021 over 2020, and a 156% rise in bomb throwing incidents in 2021 over 2020.

And in spring-summer 2023, Palestinian terrorists slaughtered close to 40 Israelis in and beyond the Green Line, with more than 3,640 recorded acts of Palestinian and Arab terror throughout Israel, including 2,118 cases of rock-throwing, 799 fire-bombings, 18 attempted stabbings, and six vehicular assaults.

Palestinian terrorism in central Israel was even worse in 2024 (although I don't have exact statistics), and this can be layered onto Hamas' truly horrific attacks in the Gaza envelope in late 2023, and the tens of thousands of rockets subsequently fired into Israel.

And yet, I don't recall hearing about sanctions levied by Washington, London, Ottawa, Canberra, Wellington, and Oslo against ministers in Palestinian governments or ministers in Arab governments supporting hostile Palestinian operations against Israel. Say, ministers in Qatar, Turkey, and Yemen.

So, is there Jewish violence in Judea and Samaria? Yes. We all have seen the dreadful videos of settlers in kipas and keffiyas setting fire to Palestinian cars or trees at night. This is unacceptable, and I hold no wellspring of sympathy for the hilltop wild boys involved. Israel must aggressively combat this lawlessness.

But has there been an enormous, out-of-control surge in settler violence recently? No.

And is there a culture of Jewish violence in settler communities? Also no.

In fact, attacks on Palestinian property and individuals committed by a few extremists at the fringes of an overwhelmingly peaceful community of half a million Israelis who live over the Green Line calculates to a level of violence that is *lower* than that done by Israelis against Israelis in greater Tel Aviv!

And without meaning to diminish the problematics of extremist Israeli attacks on Palestinians, violence by some settlers also pales in comparison to the “regular” 5,000 Palestinian boulder, bomb, and shooting attacks a year aimed at killing Israeli civilians.

And again, this super-pales in comparison to the 1,200 Israelis slaughtered by Hamas on Oct. 7 or the reign of terror inflicted on all Israelis by the thousands rockets and missiles fired by Hamas (and Hezbollah and the Houthis and Iran) into Israeli civilian population centers.

But what the heck. It is great performative political theater to sanction right-wing Israeli cabinet ministers. The conjuring-up of really bad Israelis – who, gulp, don’t support a helter-skelter rush to Palestinian statehood in addition to their other settlement “crimes” – seems to provide some Westerners (those who dislike Israel but still want to hide their antipathy) with some ersatz moral counterweight to their condemnations of Hamas violence.

Stop throwing pernicious pieties about “settler violence” in Israel’s face as it fights for its very life against genocidal Hamas and hegemonic Iran. At best, this is a red herring issue. At worst, it is an ugly attempt to discredit the righteousness of Israel’s war effort.

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