

The Jerusalem Legal Aid & Human Rights Center Annual Report 2024

"My homeland is not a suitcase, and I am not a traveler"

Mahmoud Darwish





مركز القدس للمساعدة القانونية وحقوق الإنسان
Jerusalem Legal Aid & Human Rights Center

Annual Report 2024

The Jerusalem Legal Aid and Human Rights Center (JLAC)

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Photo Credit: JLAC Staff

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Letter from the Chairman and General Director

A Difficult Year Leading to Even Greater Challenges

We bid farewell to 2024 amidst the ongoing crime of genocide that has further deteriorated in recent months. Contrary to the provisional measures demanded by the International Court of Justice, the Israeli authorities have intensified direct targeting of hospitals, medical teams, humanitarian aid workers, and protection committees attempting to curb the theft and looting of aid by organized gangs operating under the protection of areas controlled by the occupation forces. The targeting of displacement and shelter centers has become routine and recurring, including those operated by the United Nations Relief and Works Agency for Palestine Refugees (UNRWA), which the Israeli authorities have outlawed through new legislation banning its operations.

Health services severely deteriorated, the number of humanitarian aid trucks decreased, and the effects of severe hunger, malnutrition, and disease outbreaks became apparent. Fuel shortages led to the cessation of water desalination plants, wastewater treatment facilities, and garbage collection services, creating inhumane conditions of unprecedented severity. The Palestinian Central Bureau of Statistics reported a 6% decrease in Gaza's population for the first time in modern history, underscoring the magnitude of the humanitarian crisis.

In the West Bank, policies of forced displacement and annexation continued unabated. The year 2024 witnessed the demolition of 1,768 Palestinian structures, setting a new record that surpassed the

1,178 structures demolished in 2023. Notably, 28% of the demolished structures were in Areas A and B, an unprecedented proportion, driven by the extensive destruction in northern West Bank refugee camps.

Israeli settler terror escalated considerably, with organized militia crimes supported, armed, and escorted by the Israeli army. A total of 2,971 attacks have been recorded in 2024 resulting in the deaths of 11 Palestinians (23 since October 7th).

The expansion of military checkpoints further aggravated the impact on economic, educational, social, health, and public service sectors, contributing to unprecedented unemployment rates. The overall unemployment rate reached 51%—35% in the West Bank and 80% in Gaza. This economic contraction has expanded poverty and destitution not only in Gaza but also in the West Bank.

Adding to these challenges were threats of annexation, by Israeli ministers and politicians, and clear international complicity, particularly the U.S. role in facilitating and supporting the occupation's crimes through military, financial, and political support.

Economic pressures, the lack of political prospects, and rising social tensions have led to widespread frustration and despair. Deteriorating public services, reduced government spending, and a weakened judiciary have contributed to increased violent conflicts and incitement, creating an unprecedented state of polarization. This environment has also led

to internal human rights violations, restrictions on freedoms, and a rise in internal abuses of power.

Amid these pressures, violations, and threats of funding cuts—some of which have already materialized—JLAC continued to provide legal support while expanding its outreach efforts. The center conducted 61 field activities, involving over 1,200 participants, alongside 45 awareness sessions, benefiting thousands of citizens.

In JLAC's core legal work, the center provided various legal services to 9,816 Palestinian citizens, successfully delivering legal support in 5,169 new and ongoing cases amidst unprecedented complications in Israeli procedures (details on page 21). Housing and land rights cases accounted for more than 2,300 cases, in addition to thousands of legal consultations and services detailed in this report.

Complexities in dealing with Israeli planning and zoning committees resulted in the closure of avenues for hundreds of Palestinians, preventing them from continuing to file objections. For the first time, JLAC was forced to reject opening new cases and implement a prioritization system, which led to tensions with some community members who expressed their anger and frustration in ways that included threats to lawyers and staff. These challenges prompted JLAC to amend its operations manual, adjust legal follow-

up procedures, and reduce the number of cases it could take on.

In 2023, the center handled more cases than its capacity allowed—around 500 new cases related to residential and agricultural structures and cases of displacement and demolition in Jerusalem and Area C. A significant portion of these cases was carried over into 2024 due to the Civil Administration's shutdown during the last quarter of 2023. Additionally, 389 new cases were taken on in 2024. The center now faces two options: either expand its legal and field teams, which would require a 25% budget increase, or reduce services. It is worth noting that JLAC provided legal representation for 40% of all demolition orders issued in 2024, while the remaining cases were handled by private lawyers, other human rights organizations, or were left unrepresented.

Unfortunately, indicators suggest that 2025 will be even more challenging. JLAC must develop new legal strategies, place greater emphasis on civil peacebuilding and addressing internal violence and continue providing psychological support to its staff to help them cope with pressures, manage relations with the angry public, and protect themselves from burnout. These efforts were made possible through the support of one of JLAC's strategic partners.

Amin Inabi
Chairman of the Board of Directors

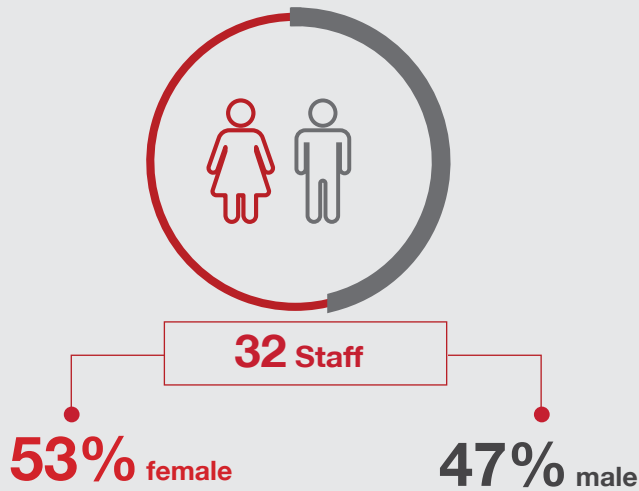
Issam Aruri
General Director



Photo Credit: JLAC Staff



Internal Overview



Office Branches

-
- The infographic shows a stylized grey building with four windows. To the left of the building are four red location pin icons, each followed by a white callout box containing the name of an office branch.
- Ramallah
 - Jerusalem
 - Nablus
 - Salfit

Who We Are / Internal Environment

Since its establishment in 1974 by the American Friends Service Committee (AFSC), the Jerusalem Legal Aid and Human Rights Center (JLAC) has remained at the forefront of efforts to safeguard the rights of Palestinians. Through pro bono legal aid, advocacy, and community empowerment, JLAC addresses critical human rights violations across the occupied Palestinian territory, including East Jerusalem and Area C. By holding duty bearers accountable, JLAC works tirelessly to protect the dignity, freedoms, and livelihoods of vulnerable communities.

Mission

Combating human rights violations regardless of the perpetrating authority through facilitating access to available legal systems, lobbying and advocacy, mobilizing social efforts, and ensuring high professionalism.

Vision

A free and independent Palestinian society founded on principles of justice, in which human dignity is valued and respected.

Gaza: A Test for Humanity and Justice

For over a year, Gaza has been at the epicenter of destruction and human suffering, with the situation deteriorating significantly after October 7, 2023. Under a crushing blockade since 2007, Gaza has long endured deprivation and isolation, but the genocidal war against Gaza brought unprecedented devastation. Entire neighborhoods were reduced to rubble, families erased, and critical infrastructure obliterated. Hospitals ceased functioning due to shortages of fuel and medical supplies, leaving the wounded untreated, while the education system collapsed, depriving a generation of their right to learn.

Over 85% of Palestinians in Gaza have been forcibly displaced, with more than 87% of homes destroyed or damaged. The blockade and relentless

bombardment have left Gaza's residents without shelter, clean water, or basic services, creating conditions of unimaginable hardship.

In response, JLAC expanded its efforts in Gaza to address the critical needs of detained individuals and missing persons. In 2024, JLAC, in partnership with the Independent Commission for Human Rights (ICHR), provided 877 legal services to address these critical needs. This included identifying the locations of 393 detainees, pursuing 255 cases where no information was available, and handling 204 cases with no responses from authorities.

JLAC and ICHR also secured the release of 15 detainees, confirmed the death of 1 individual, and conducted visits to 9 detained individuals.



Photo Credit: JLAC Staff

Promoting a Climate of Intimidation – Smotrich Plan

In 2024, Israel's far-right coalition, led by Prime Minister Netanyahu and spearheaded by Bezalel Smotrich, introduced a new phase of extremism in its policies toward Palestinians. Smotrich, in his dual role as Finance Minister and Minister within the Ministry of Defense, consolidated unprecedented control over Palestinian lives, particularly in the West Bank.

Smotrich's policies have centralized authority over civil and administrative affairs, entrusting settler-aligned officials with responsibilities such as construction, planning, and land confiscation. This strategic shift has fundamentally reshaped the mechanisms of occupation, intensifying the dispossession of Palestinians. Settlement construction has surged, while Palestinian homes and structures have faced record levels of demolition. Meanwhile, enforcement against illegal settler outposts has been negligible, further emboldening settler expansion.

These policies aim to destabilize Palestinian governance, force displacement, and impose conditions of coercion on Palestinian communities. By weaponizing administrative processes, Smotrich has accelerated the confiscation of Palestinian lands and created a climate of fear, emphasizing the Israeli government's agenda to dismantle Palestinian presence in the occupied territory.

Smotrich's broader vision forces Palestinians into three grim choices: submission to Jewish supremacy, forced transfer, or death. This systematic dehumanization seeks to erase Palestinian national identity and autonomy, reducing the occupied territory to a testing ground for policies of exclusion and oppression.

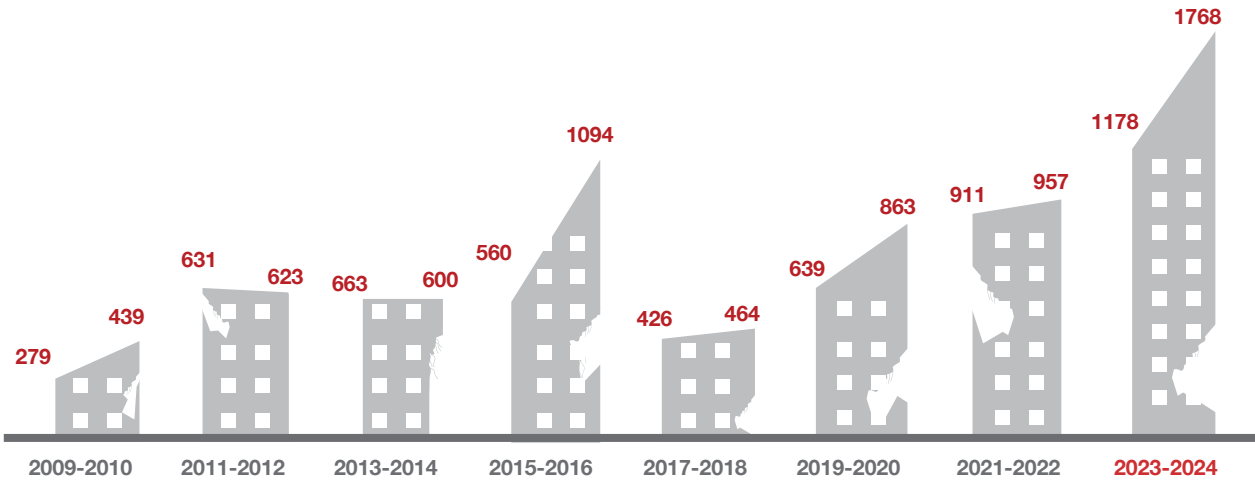


Photo Credit: JLAC Staff

Unprecedented Levels of House Demolitions and Forced Displacement

In 2024, the scale of demolitions of Palestinian structures shattered all previous records, marking an unprecedented year of destruction across the occupied West Bank, including East Jerusalem. Since October 7, 2023, Israel's policy of demolishing Palestinian structures in the West Bank has escalated accompanied by increased military incursions into Palestinian cities and villages. According to the United Nation's Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs (OCHA), in 2024 alone, 1,768 Palestinian structures were demolished—the highest number ever recorded in a single year. Of these demolitions, 60% occurred in Area C, 28% in Areas A and B, and 12% in East Jerusalem.

Demolished Structures Over the Years (WB & EJ)



The geographic expansion of demolitions in 2024, particularly into Areas A and B, marked a significant shift in Israeli tactics, signaling a disregard for agreements governing these zones. While demolitions in Area C have long been used to control and displace Palestinians under the pretext of administrative enforcement, increased military incursions since October 7 into Areas A and B have led to a sharp rise in demolitions justified under vague “security concerns.”

The impact has been overwhelming, with 4,256 Palestinians, including 1,731 children, displaced in 2024, according to OCHA. These figures exclude Bedouin families forced out by settlers’ terror. In addition to the demolitions, the Israeli occupation forces have also targeted essential infrastructure, including water tanks, agricultural equipment, and solar panels, creating unlivable conditions to pressure Palestinians to leave. Meanwhile, illegal settler structures remain largely untouched, reflecting a systemic strategy to expand settlements while dismantling Palestinian communities.

In response, JLAC intervened in 349 new demolition cases across the West Bank and East Jerusalem in 2024, in addition to 3,612 cases carried over from previous years. These efforts underscore JLAC’s commitment to defending Palestinian property rights amid the intensifying demolition crisis.



1,768

Structures Demolished



4,256

Persons Displaced



349

New Cases (Right to Housing)



3,961

Ongoing Cases (Right to Housing)



Photo Credit: Issam Rimawi

Land Confiscation and Settlement Expansion

The year 2024 witnessed an unprecedented escalation in Israeli settlement expansion and land confiscation across the occupied Palestinian territory, including the West Bank and East Jerusalem. Israel's policies, rooted in a systematic effort to consolidate control over Palestinian land, have taken on new dimensions, resulting in the rapid construction of settlements, the seizure of vast areas of Palestinian property, and the further entrenchment of settlement outposts.

Israeli authorities advanced plans for thousands of new housing units while continuing infrastructure projects to serve illegal settlements deep within the West Bank. According to the Colonization and Wall Resistance Commission, since the beginning of 2024, a total of 111 structural plans (including approved and initiated ones) for settlements in the West Bank have been reviewed. These plans account for the construction of 13,189 colonial units.

For example, in June 2024, the Israeli government formally legalized five settlement outposts—Givat Assaf, Adorayim, Sde Ephraim, Evyatar, and Heletz—turning previously unauthorized outposts into recognized settlements under Israeli laws. These outposts, often established on privately-owned Palestinian land, represent a deliberate and organized effort to assert control, imbedding a colonial reality that deprives Palestinians of access to their lands.

Land confiscation has intensified, with over 46,597 dunums of Palestinian land confiscated in the year 2024 under various pretexts, including “security measures,” “state land,” or “nature reserves.” These designations serve as a tool to displace Palestinians and restrict their presence, particularly in Area C and East Jerusalem, where settlement expansion is most pronounced. (More details on settlement expansion in East Jerusalem can be found on page 26).

These actions are not incidental but part of a systematic strategy to consolidate Israeli control while dismantling the social, economic, and territorial fabric of Palestinian life. The legalization of outposts, the proliferation of settlement construction, and the confiscation of Palestinian land all work in tandem to forcibly alter the realities on the ground, leaving Palestinians with fewer spaces to live, work, and exist.



111

Structural Plans



13,189

**Colonial Units
Constructed**



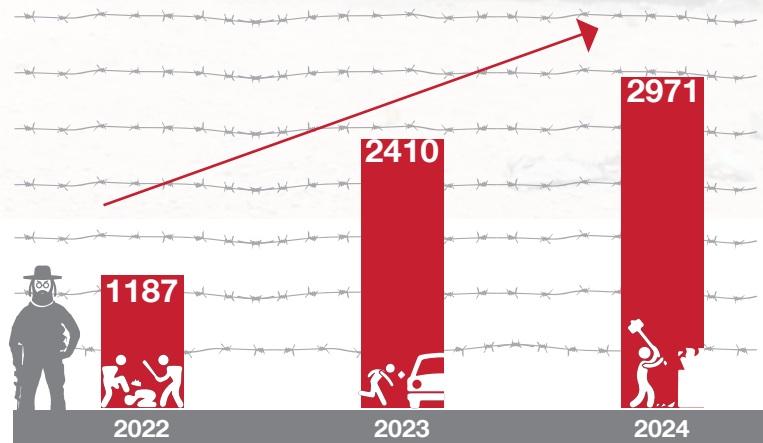
46,597

**Dunums
Confiscated**



Photo Credit: JLAC Staff

Settler Attacks Recorded



Settler Terror

Since October 7, 2023, the West Bank has witnessed a frightening escalation in settler terror against Palestinians, with attacks increasing significantly. The term “settler terror” is deliberately chosen to emphasize the systematic, organized, and politically backed nature of the acts committed by Israeli settlers against Palestinians. While many INGOs and local organizations opt for the term “settler violence,” we believe that this terminology does not fully capture the gravity, coordination, and intended impact of these actions. These acts of terror—ranging from physical assaults and the destruction of homes to the burning and looting of crops and uprooting of olive trees—have become a daily reality for Palestinians.

The terror occurs with the full backing of Israel’s far-right government, emboldened by figures like National Security Minister Itamar Ben Gvir, who has openly praised settlers involved in violent attacks, portraying them as “heroes” acting in self-defense. This rhetoric, in addition to the arming of the settlers, the government’s policies, and the visible absence of law enforcement, has created an environment of impunity. Settlers, protected and often supported by Israeli forces during their assaults, have become the forerunner of a broader effort to forcibly displace Palestinians and consolidate control over the land. Notably, 23 Palestinians have been killed by settlers since October 7 (11 of them in 2024), yet not a single perpetrator has been indicted.

The scale of this terror is overwhelming. In the year 2024 alone, approximately 2,971 settler attacks have been recorded (according to the Colonization & Wall Resistance Commission).

The olive harvest, a cornerstone of the Palestinian economy and cultural identity, has faced relentless targeting this season. Farmers encountered attacks and intimidation by settlers, often shielded by Israeli forces. Trees were uprooted, crops burned, and families violently driven from their lands, threatening a vital source of income and connection to the land.

This calculated strategy aims to suffocate Palestinian existence, particularly in rural areas vulnerable to settler expansion. Military restrictions, settler incursions, and deliberate destruction of olive trees—a symbol of Palestinian resilience—underscore efforts to erase Palestinian presence and sever their ties to the land.

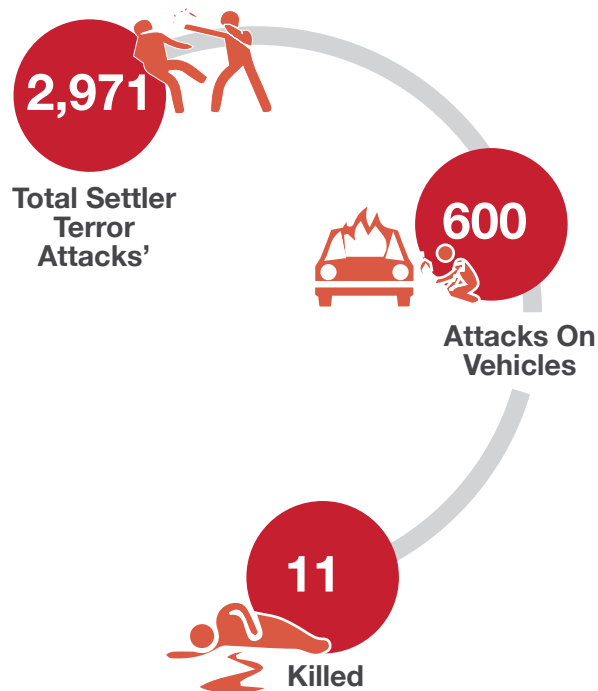




Photo Credit: Issam Rimawi

Movement Restrictions

In 2024, the freedom of movement for Palestinians in the West Bank, including East Jerusalem, faced immense challenges as Israel intensified its policies of control and isolation. According to OCHA, since October 7, 2023, 86 new obstructions to movement were added, bringing the total to 793 barriers that fragment the Palestinian territory.

These obstructions—ranging from permanent checkpoints and gates to roadblocks, trenches, and earth mounds—have turned Palestinian towns and villages into isolated enclaves, where day-to-day life is dictated by restrictions on access to essential services, livelihoods, and connections between cities and villages.

Access to agricultural land has also been severely restricted. Palestinians who rely on their lands isolated behind the annexation wall have faced even greater challenges this year, as agricultural gates, previously regulated for limited access, have been closed or rendered inaccessible. This disruption has had major effects on Palestinian farmers, particularly during the olive harvest season.

These movement restrictions are not isolated measures but part of a broader strategy to fragment Palestinian territory and dismantle its social and economic cohesion. By isolating communities and obstructing access to basic services, Israel's policies undermine any prospects for Palestinian statehood. In 2024, JLAC intervened in 158 cases to address the severe restrictions on Palestinian movement and permits. These cases included 92 related to driving permits, 38 concerning general permits, 15 involving agricultural gate closures, and 13 cases of travel permits. Through its work, JLAC seeks to challenge the structures of control that perpetuate the isolation and dispossession of Palestinians.





10300

Total Detainees



3428

Under Administrative
Detention



300

Children



58

Journalists



2000

Suffering from Health
Conditions

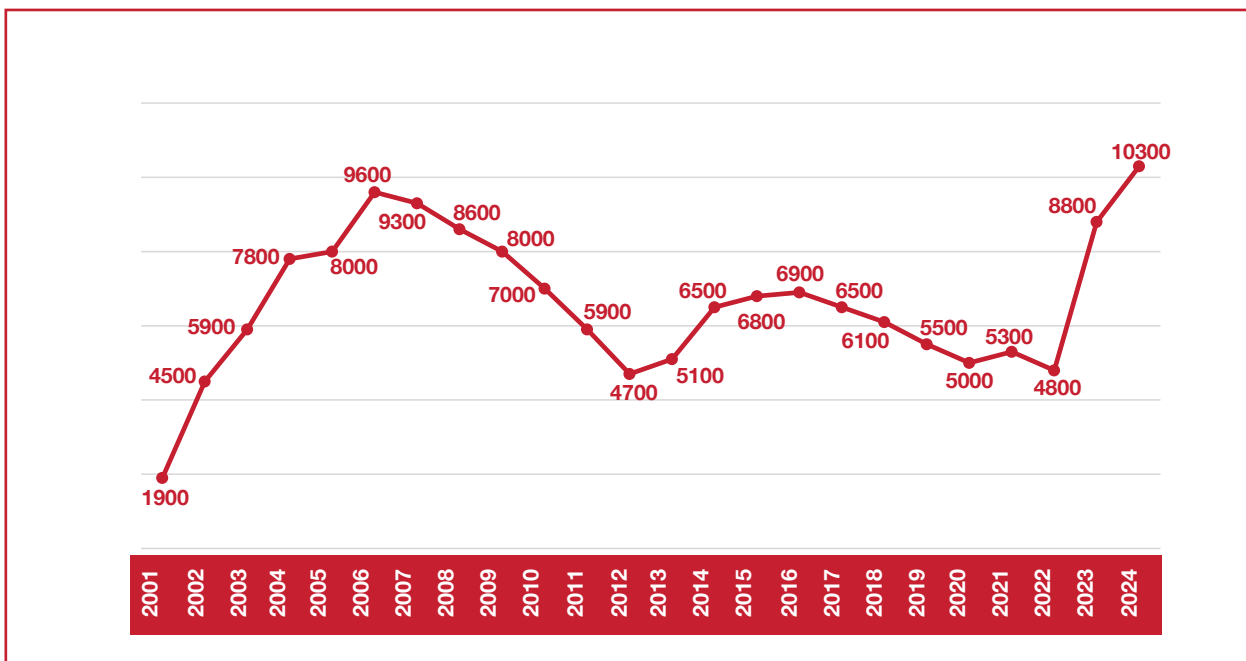


Detentions

In 2024, Israel escalated its campaign of mass arrests across the West Bank, targeting Palestinians in an unprecedented wave of detentions. The current overall number of Palestinian detainees has surged to over 10,300, marking the highest total since the First Intifada in 1988. Among those detained are over 300 children and 58 journalists, highlighting the indiscriminate nature of Israel's actions. It is important to note that these figures do not include the number of detainees from Gaza, as their exact number remains unknown.

Administrative detention has reached unprecedented levels, with 3,428 Palestinians held without charges or trials, a practice widely condemned for violating fundamental rights. Prison conditions have deteriorated further, with 2,000 detainees suffering from health complications amid widespread reports of medical negligence, physical and psychological abuse, and inadequate treatment. Recognizing the unprecedented nature of the situation, JLAC has stepped beyond its usual scope of work to address the critical needs of Palestinian detainees, particularly those from Gaza.

Number of Palestinian Detainees Over the Years

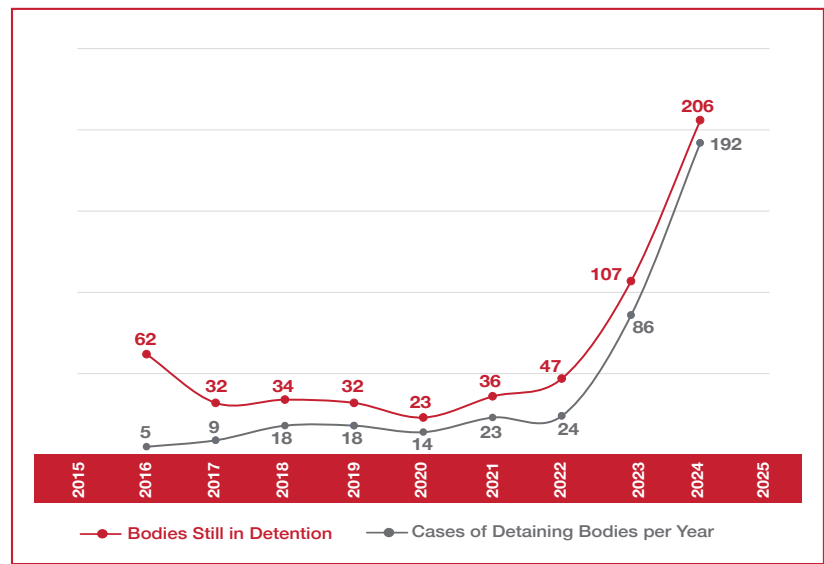


Campaign for Retrieving Remains

Israel's systematic policy of withholding the remains of Palestinian victims continued unabated in 2024, with the numbers only climbing. During 2024, the National Campaign documented the detention of 192 victims' bodies, of which JLAC undertook the legal follow-up for 96. Additionally, the campaign documented the return of 15 victims' bodies by Israeli authorities during the same year, bringing the total number of detained remains to 641, depriving grieving families of the ability to bury their loved ones with dignity.

This year's numbers do not yet account for the bodies in Gaza, where thousands of bodies remain untraceable due to the ongoing genocidal war. The absence of mechanisms to determine the precise number or locations of withheld remains in Gaza adds onto the pain of families who continue to live in uncertainty, unable to recover or mourn their loved ones.

Israel's practice of withholding bodies violates International Humanitarian Law and constitutes an intentional act of collective punishment, inflicting suffering on the families of victims. By denying the dead the dignity of burial, this policy seeks to strip Palestinians of their humanity even after death, weaponizing grief as a tool of control. Families remain in a state of suspended mourning, unable to perform the most basic and sacred rites, while being forced to endure the psychological torment of prolonged uncertainty.



Unprecedented Challenges in Addressing the Right to Housing

The challenges facing JLAC's work have doubled over the past three years, driven by military orders and administrative procedures imposed by the Israeli Civil Administration to severely restrict Palestinians' ability to improve their living conditions. These measures aim to implement expansion and annexation plans in Area C of the West Bank. Israel seeks to evacuate Palestinians in the area, restricting Palestinian construction through regulations that render obtaining a building permit an unattainable dream. Over the past two years, Israeli authorities have not issued a single building permit, not even for a fence to protect a Bedouin family from wild animals.

Following October 7, 2023, the situation became significantly worse, amplifying the challenges faced in addressing housing rights.

Based on the above, the key challenges JLAC faced in addressing housing rights cases in 2024 included:

1. JLAC took on a significantly higher number of cases than planned, driven by its commitment to supporting victims of Israeli violations despite limited resources and shrinking funding prospects.
2. A sharp rise in settler terror, forced Bedouin displacement, and increased demolitions has escalated the need for legal protection in affected communities.
3. The heightened effort required to prepare permit applications due to the prohibitive conditions imposed by the Civil Administration to approve their submission.
4. Reduced deadlines set by Civil Administration committees for submitting, amending, or advancing permit applications, further complicating legal follow-up efforts.
5. The imposition of high financial guarantees and fines on petitioners and their lawyers when filing cases in central or higher courts, increasing financial pressures on clients and doubling the burden on JLAC to maintain follow-ups.
6. Reopened cases that had been dormant for years under new procedures and conditions, forcing lawyers to restart the permit process and invest significant additional time and effort.
7. An increase in demolitions, shortened case timelines, and high fines, coupled with attempts by Civil Administration staff to mislead victims into blaming lawyers for delays, adding public pressure on JLAC's legal team.
8. Increasing interference by private lawyers seeking to exploit victims with unreasonable fees, falsely claiming to be the only solution for preventing demolitions.
9. Logistical challenges related to paying fees, guarantees, and fines at post offices in Jerusalem, as these services are unavailable in the West Bank or are only accessible in settlements. This forced JLAC staff to handle payments directly, further constrained by limits on cash transactions, wasting time and effort that could otherwise be spent on legal work.

These challenges forced JLAC to prioritize cases, as it could not meet the growing demand for legal support. This prioritization led to significant tensions with the public, including threats to lawyers and field staff, defamation campaigns, and formal complaints against the center.

As a result of these systemic policies, 50 structures were demolished out of the 1,529 cases JLAC handled during the. Approximately 100 clients could not complete their cases due to financial constraints and the inability to meet required guarantees.

Looking ahead, 2025 is expected to bring even greater challenges and pressures on JLAC and its staff. This reality requires the center to develop new legal strategies, place greater emphasis on civil peacebuilding, and continue offering psychological support to its team to manage stress and mitigate burnout. These efforts will be essential in navigating the increasing difficulties of the upcoming year.



Photo Credit: JLAC Staff

Legal Developments & International Accountability

The year 2024 marked significant milestones in the pursuit of justice and accountability for the Palestinian people through key international legal mechanisms.

The International Court of Justice (ICJ) made progress on the genocide case filed by South Africa under the 1948 Genocide Convention, with hearings continuing throughout 2024. The case highlights mass killings, forced displacement, and the dismantling of Palestinian society, particularly in Gaza post-October 2023. Fourteen states have since joined the case. While the ICJ has issued provisional measures, Israel's continued defiance underscores the need for decisive action.

In July, the ICJ issued an advisory opinion affirming the illegality of Israel's prolonged occupation, annexation of East Jerusalem, settlement expansion, and construction of the annexation wall. The court declared Israel's presence in the occupied Palestinian territory (oPt) illegal, calling for immediate withdrawal and urging states to ensure accountability by refraining from supporting Israel's unlawful actions.

At the International Criminal Court (ICC), 2024 saw significant advances as the Court rejected Israel's jurisdictional challenges, reaffirming its authority to investigate alleged crimes in Palestine. The ICC has focused on violations such as targeting civilians, destroying protected infrastructure, and forced displacement. Progress was made as the court issued arrest warrants against Israeli leaders, Prime Minister Netanyahu and former Defense Minister Yoav Gallant, for war crimes and crimes against humanity.

These developments represent critical steps in addressing impunity, despite Israel's non-cooperation and international political pressures. JLAC remains committed to advocating for justice and supporting efforts to hold perpetrators accountable.





Photo Credit: JLAC Staff

Situation Under the Palestinian Authority

In 2024, the Palestinian Authority (PA) faced significant challenges that have further undermined its legitimacy and effectiveness in the eyes of the Palestinian people. Reports of human rights violations by PA security forces have persisted.

Cases of arbitrary arrests and torture have been documented, raising serious concerns about the PA's commitment to upholding human rights.

In an attempt to reassert control, the PA launched a large-scale security operation within Jenin Refugee camp in December 2024, triggering fierce resistance from armed factions. The operation, which began with arrests of local militants, quickly turned violent, resulting in multiple casualties and further straining the already fragile relationship between the PA and the local population.

The situation intensified with the killing of a local commander, an event that aggravated political divisions and drew sharp criticism from Palestinian factions. For many, the events in Jenin symbolize the PA's heavy-handed security approach, often perceived as prioritizing political control at the expense of addressing the root causes of instability.

The PA's inability to protect Palestinians from settler terror and Israeli military raids has also been a significant source of frustration.

Palestinians continue to face terror attacks by settlers and incursions by the Israeli military, while the PA has largely failed to shield its people from these violations. Thus, being unable to navigate these challenges continue to undermine the PA's authority.

This has left the PA increasingly isolated, struggling to maintain its role as a governing body amidst growing disappointment and frustration among Palestinians. Corruption within the PA remains a critical issue.

Despite promises of reform, including a package announced by the new Prime Minister in April 2024 aimed at improving transparency and overhauling the justice system, tangible progress has been limited.

The PA's financial crisis has deepened, worsened by Israel's withholding of tax revenues and a reduction in international aid.

This fiscal strain has impaired the PA's ability to provide essential services, leading to unpaid salaries for public employees and deteriorating economic situation.

These developments emphasize the urgent need for comprehensive reforms within the PA to restore public trust and effectively advocate for Palestinian rights. Without addressing these systemic issues, the PA risks further marginalization and the erosion of its role as a representative body for the Palestinian people.

Settlement Expansion in Jerusalem



19

New Settlement Project



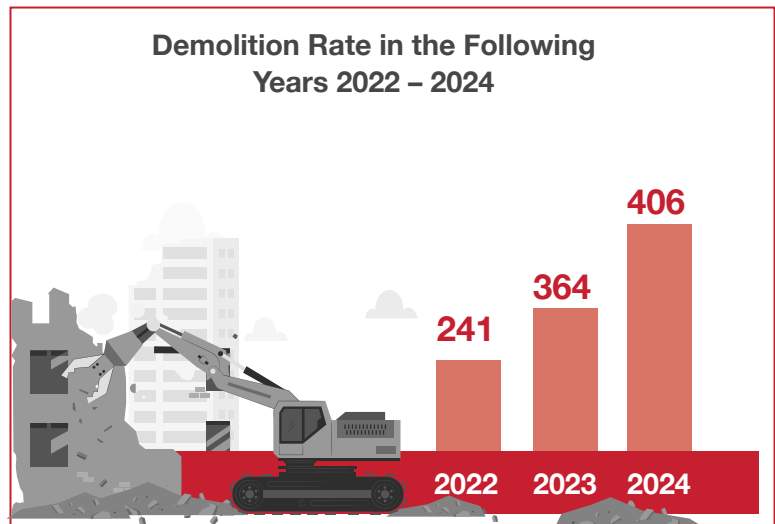
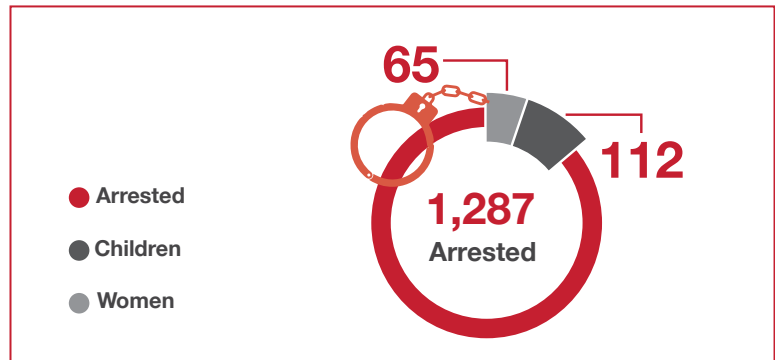
19,287

New Housing Units



100,000

Estimated Additional Settlers



The Situation in Jerusalem: the Escalation Continues

In 2024, the city of Jerusalem, like other cities within the occupied Palestinian territory, witnessed an unmatched escalation by the Israeli occupation in the scope of violations affecting all aspects of life. These included extrajudicial executions, punitive measures, home demolitions, forced displacement, identity revocations, arrests, the isolation of the city and denial of access, suppression of freedoms, settlement expansion, and increased surveillance on Palestinian schools in the city.

A total of 21 Palestinians were killed, including 11 children, and 211 were injured, with 1,287 arrested—112 of them children and 65 women.

The Israeli forces also demolished 406 structures in Jerusalem Governorate, including 151 homes, displacing 573 individuals, among them 278 children. Punitive demolitions accounted for three homes, leaving 12 people without shelter.

Regarding settlement expansion, 2024 is considered one of the most aggressive years in the acceleration of settlement projects in the city. JLAC documented 19 settlement project plans in Palestinian neighborhoods occupied in 1967, which were either deposited or approved between October 2023 and October 2024. This unprecedented expansion reflects a clear intention to solidify Israeli control over the occupied territory.

These 19 projects included the approval of 19,287 new housing units, potentially accommodating more than 100,000 new settlers. This would increase the number of settlers in East Jerusalem from 252,000 to over 350,000 in the coming years. Furthermore, 2,607 dunams of land were confiscated and allocated for settlement use, significantly altering the urban and demographic landscape of the area.

In response to the diverse needs of the Jerusalemite community, JLAC's branch in Jerusalem continued to provide various services to Jerusalemites. The number of direct beneficiaries of the center's services in 2024 reached 3,914 Jerusalemite citizens, which translates to 3,914 Jerusalemite families. As a result, the total number of indirect beneficiaries amounted to 19,570 individuals.



Community Outreach, Advocacy and International Engagement

In 2024, JLAC intensified its efforts to empower communities, raise awareness nationally and internationally, and enhance engagement on pressing human rights issues. JLAC organized 61 field activities, including 45 community awareness sessions across the West Bank and Jerusalem. These sessions addressed urgent topics such as demolition orders, settler terror, land confiscation, and economic and social rights in Jerusalem, equipping communities with the knowledge needed to confront systemic violations. Specialized training courses were also conducted, focusing on monitoring, documentation, and advocacy, to enhance community resilience and participation.

To bring greater international attention to Israeli violations, JLAC facilitated 14 diplomatic tours for foreign delegations, including parliamentarians, journalists, and representatives of political parties. These tours highlighted violations in neglected areas such as Silwan, Wadi Fukin, and the Jordan Valley, raising solidarity and engagement with the Palestinian cause. Additionally, seven youth tours were organized in areas severely impacted by Israeli policies, such as Beita, Yanun, and Susiya, to build awareness and understanding of the challenges on the ground.

On the international stage, JLAC undertook two major advocacy tours. In October 2024, JLAC's

General Director led an advocacy tour to Brussels and Bologna, presenting a paper on forced displacement at a Brussels conference, participating in European Parliament roundtables on civil society challenges, and delivering a key presentation in collaboration with the Palestinian Mission to the EU and We-World. Meetings with networks such as CIDSE and EuroMed emphasized the ICJ advisory opinion and the need for international opposition to Israel's occupation. In Italy, the General Director met with key political figures, including the leader of the Democratic Party, the main opposition party, advancing advocacy efforts across European platforms.

In December 2024, JLAC organized a five-day advocacy tour in Brussels under the EU-funded project "Protecting the Right to Development for Marginalized Communities and Supporting Human Rights Defenders" in partnership with We-World. This tour included JLAC staff, human rights defenders, and We-World colleagues, who engaged with European Parliament members, civil society organizations, political parties, and international networks such as EuroMed and Amnesty International. Participants shared personal experiences under occupation, highlighted violations of housing, education, and healthcare rights, and showcased JLAC's advocacy and resilience-building efforts.

Locally, JLAC facilitated five dialogue sessions on vital issues, including waste management in Salfit, tax policies, the right to development in Bethlehem, and movement restrictions at the Beit Iksa checkpoint. Two legal clinics in Jabal Mukaber and Shuafat provided direct support to residents facing urgent legal challenges. To bolster public awareness, JLAC produced seven podcasts, 13 radio spots, and seven fact sheets addressing key topics such as education in Jerusalem, demolition trends, and settler attacks. Additionally, 24 impactful photographs were captured in Jerusalem and shared across JLAC offices to amplify engagement and advocacy efforts.

Through these diverse and comprehensive initiatives, JLAC upheld its mission to protect Palestinian rights, support affected communities, and advocate for justice on both local and international fronts.



Photo Credit: JLAC Staff

A Year of Escalation: Unyielding Demand for Legal Interventions

In 2024, JLAC faced yet another record-breaking year of challenges, marked by a persistent escalation of violations targeting Palestinians' fundamental rights across the West Bank and East Jerusalem.

Despite the turbulent context, JLAC remained persistent in its mission to provide critical legal support and protection to Palestinians. Throughout 2024, JLAC took on 676 new cases, ranging from housing rights to land confiscations and demolitions, while continuing to address thousands of ongoing cases. This brought the total number of cases handled by JLAC in 2024—both new and accumulated—to an astounding 5,169.

With each year surpassing the last in both scope and intensity, JLAC's efforts in 2024 have reaffirmed its critical role as a lifeline for Palestinians facing the impact of Israeli violations.

JLAC in 2024



5169

Total Cases



676

New Cases



540

New cases in
Area C



Table of Cases in 2024

Case Type		Treated Cases		Closed			On-going	
		New	Accumulated	Positive	Negative	Other		
1	Public Interest	Public Interest (Israel)	31		15			16
			19	12	5	4	6	
		Public Interest (PA)	6		1			5
2	4	0	0	1				
2	Lands	Land Confiscations	115		0			115
			5	110	0	0	0	
		Property Transfers	41		0			41
0	41	0	0	0				
3	Confiscation of Equipment	75		42			33	
		50	25	35	3	4		
4	Settler Violence Documentation	62		0			62	
		0	62	0	0	0		
5	Demolition/ Displacement	House Demolition /WB	2220		57			2163
			173	2047	0	29	28	
		Punitive Demolition	3		0			3
			2	1	0	0	0	
		House Demolition /EJ	87		59			28
			17	70	56	3	0	
Agricultural/Commer- cial /Industrial Facilities	1136		91			1045		
	146	990	1	21	69			
Forced Displacement	515		3			512		
	11	504	0	0	3			
6	Jerusalem	Social Rights	319		42			277
			34	285	23	12	7	
		Economic Rights	33		16			17
			22	11	15	0	1	

Case Type			Treated Cases		Closed			On-going
			New	Accumulated	Positive	Negative	Other	
7	Movement	Permits	38		0			38
			0	38	0	0	0	
		Travel Ban	13		1			12
			3	10	0	0	1	
		Gates Closures	15		1			14
			15	0	0	0	1	
Driving licenses/EJ	92		73			19		
	63	29	63	4	6			
8	Retrieving Bodies Campaign	286		3			283	
		96	190	3	0	0		
9	Public Freedoms (PA)	54		10			44	
		2	52	3	4	3		
10	Arbitrary Detention (PA)	1		1			0	
		1	0	1	0	0		
11	Palestinian Family Reunification	3		0			3	
		0	3	0	0	0		
12	Misc.	Miscellaneous (Isreal)	17		9			8
			9	8	8	0	1	
		Miscellaneous (PA)	7		2			5
			6	1	2	0	0	
Legal Representation Total			5169		426			4743
			676	4493	215	80	131	
13	Legal Services	Prisoners/Missing Individuals in Gaza	887					5
		Jerusalem Legal Services	7		2			
			6	1	2	0	0	
Total Legal Services			3491					
14	Legal Consultations	WB - Israeli and Palestinian courts	1200					
		Jerusalem Legal Consultation	1227					
		Total Legal Consultations			2427			

Copy, Paste; Jerusalem District Court's Trend

In 2024, the Israeli Civil Administration significantly increased the rejection of building permit applications, surging negative responses to requests to freeze demolition orders in Area C. Despite these challenges, JLAC continued to employ legal mechanisms, filing appeals with objection committees and petitions to the Jerusalem District Court.

A new requirement imposed by the District Court in 2023 and 2024 demanded financial guarantees for precautionary orders, initially ranging from 5,000 to 7,000 NIS but rising to 15,000–20,000 NIS by 2024. In mid-October, JLAC received 13 rejections for building permit appeals, with clients given only 14 days to object. To manage the workload, JLAC prioritized cases based on urgency, focusing on inhabited homes, followed by homes under construction, and then agricultural structures or fences.

On October 22, JLAC filed nine petitions for precautionary orders to delay demolitions. However, the presiding judge issued nearly identical decisions for all nine, using a “copy-paste” approach, and demanded 15,000 NIS guarantees per petitioner—a total of 135,000 NIS (approximately 37,500 USD).

Key issues observed in these decisions included:

- The judge’s lack of time to properly review the petitions, as decisions were issued within hours despite each petition being at least 25 pages long.
- High financial guarantees, in addition to petition fees, imposing a severe financial burden on Palestinian petitioners and creating barriers to justice.

JLAC sees these measures as a deliberate strategy to deter Palestinians from pursuing legal remedies, undermining their access to justice. Nonetheless, JLAC remains unwavering in its mission to protect Palestinian rights amid mounting challenges and limited resources.





Photo Credit: JLAC Staff

Victories Against the Odds

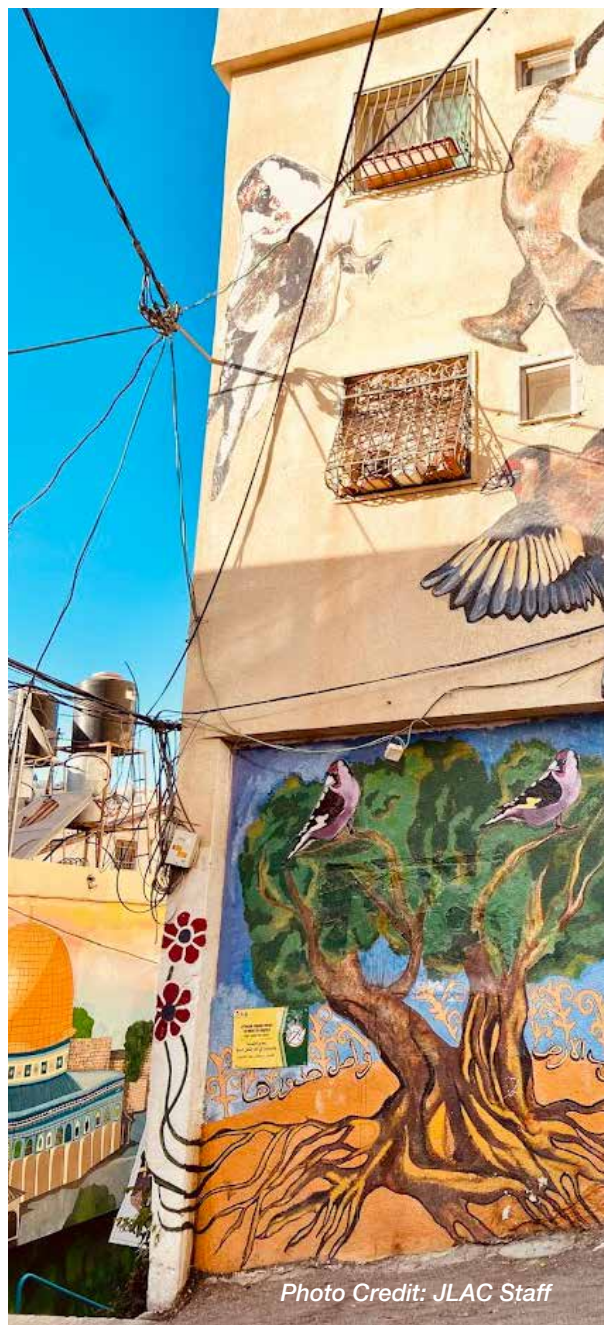
Despite the unprecedented challenges faced in 2024, JLAC's persistence in delivering legal aid to Palestinians stands as a success story in itself. The year saw increased barriers to justice, including tightened restrictions, heightened financial demands, and systemic attempts to undermine legal recourse. Yet JLAC remained resolute, continuing to provide vital support to those in need.

One case from 2024 exemplifies this persistence and commitment. On January 16, Israeli forces stormed the home of a Palestinian family and confiscated their car, providing no explanation other than directing the family to inquire at the court in Beit El. JLAC later learned that the car had been confiscated under the claim that it was purchased with money linked to a "terrorist organization," referencing the detention of the woman's husband in an Israeli prison.

JLAC's legal team immediately intervened, filing a formal complaint with Beit El and providing evidence that the car was purchased with the woman's personal funds. They emphasized her role as a teacher within the Ministry of Education and the critical need for the car to transport her children to school. Despite this, Beit El rejected the claim, but JLAC refused to back down. The team escalated the case to the District Court in Jerusalem.

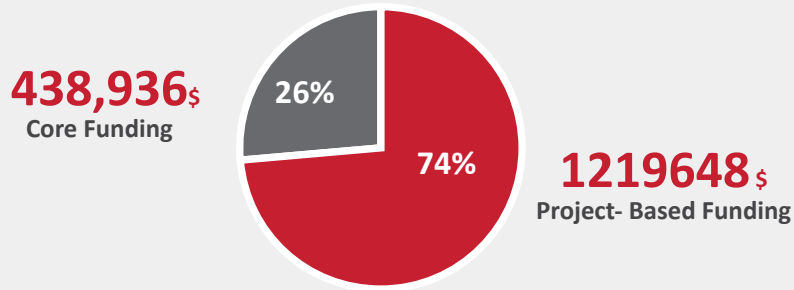
Through consistent legal pressure, JLAC achieved a resolution before a formal ruling was issued. On October 13, 2024, the car was returned to the family, restoring both their livelihood and a sense of justice.

This success story reflects JLAC's legal expertise and its unwavering commitment to standing with Palestinians. Each victory, no matter how small, reinforces JLAC's mission to uphold justice and defend the rights of those most vulnerable to systemic injustice.

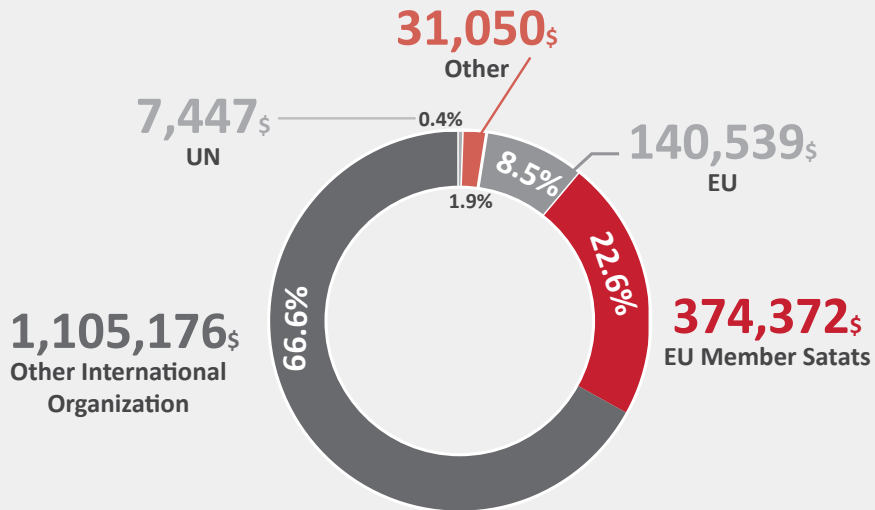


Financial Review

Funding Type
(Core vs. Project Based Funding)



Donor Types
(EU, EU Member States, other, other international Organization, UN)



Total Operational Budget **1,658,583**\$

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