



**The Mossawa Center:
The Advocacy Center for the Arab
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PRESS RELEASE

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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They talk about evacuation of illegal settlements but demolish buildings in the Arab Community

**The Israeli government continues to complicate the Middle East conflict with hostility
against the Arab citizens**

Wednesday July 22nd 2009 - Since the Israeli election in February 2009, political and security leaders, have in effect worked to complicate the Middle East conflict by exacerbating confrontations with the Arab community in Israel. Complications arise through discriminatory legislation, heightened discrimination in the allocation of the state budget and most recently, frequent home demolitions in Arab cities and villages.

The Saadi market in the city of Umm El fahem, which has already been demolished once, a month ago, was demolished once again by the state planning authorities who were accompanied by hundreds of police officers. 17 civilians have been arrested during the demolition and the leadership of the Arab community is about to discuss a response to this demolition.

For the past 10 years, the city of Umm El fahem has been a target for the extreme rightwing. Baroch Marzel, leader of the Jewish National Front, called to transfer the inhabitants of the city and demonstrated near the city while accompanied and protected by over 3000 state security personnel. During the October 2000 events, 3 civilians were killed in the city during the demonstrations and previously in 1997 police forces attacked the high school in the city during a state authorized building demolition injuring hundreds of Arab citizens.

The Mayor of the city, Shikh Khaled Hamdan, declared, "the state planning authorities are busy demolishing houses and buildings in the Arab community instead of supplying development

plans for the city. For the last twenty years we have been fighting for an industrial zone to be developed but the lack of funding and plans are preventing our basic right as a city to develop housing and industry. We will support the family demand to build again the market".

Tuesday, July 21, 2009, the Government of Israel demolished three homes in the Bedouin villages in the Negev. Two of the homes were in the unrecognized village of A-Sir. One belonging to a young couple that had married last Friday. The second home was demolished in the recognized village of Bir Hadaj; a home where Habib el-Hetersi, had asked permission from the Abu-Basma Regional Council to build his son a home to live in.

Hostile actions against the Arab community by the newly formed Israeli government have led to more than 6 proposed discriminatory bills introduced to the Knesset, and the approval of an increasingly discriminatory state budget. The activities of the governments' first six months in office is indicative of the coming 2-3 years, which is expected to see further home demolitions and confrontations with the Arab community.

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The Mossawa Center, the Advocacy Center for Arab Citizens in Israel, is a non-profit, non-governmental organization that works to promote equality for the Arab Palestinian citizens of Israel. Established in 1997, the Mossawa Center strives to improve the social, economic and political status of the Arab citizens of Israel, while preserving their national and cultural rights as Palestinians.