

Additional Background Information on Tent of Nations

Tent of Nations is a peace project located on a farm owned for over 100 years by the Nassar family, located 6 miles southwest of Bethlehem in the occupied Palestinian territories. Situated in Area C under Israeli administrative and security control, the farm is located on a hilltop surrounded by Israeli settlements.^[1] In 2001, the Nassar family named their farm Tent of Nations, receiving visitors from around the world to foster a connection between the land and people. The farm is dedicated to sustainable agriculture and hosts programs for women and children from the area. In 2019, the number of international visitors was close to 10,000. Tent of Nations is supported by church and religious organizations in the U.S.A. and Europe, who host visits to the farm, help support Tent of Nations' educational and peacebuilding programs, and sponsor volunteers who live and work on the farm. Since 2001, Tent of Nations has been a place where "people from many different countries come together to learn, to share, and to build bridges of understanding and hope."

In 1991, the Israeli authorities declared the farm and surrounding area "state land." Since then, the Nassar family has been in the Israeli Military Court and, ultimately, the Israeli Supreme Court defending their land from the demolition of farm buildings, water cisterns, and tents and from outright confiscation. In 2006, the Israeli Supreme Court ruled that the Nassars could begin the re-registration process of their property required by Israel of landowners in Area C. Since then the process has been subject to continued delays on the part of Israel, requiring that the Nassars re-initiate the process multiple times. Finally, in 2019 the Nassars received confirmation that their application was complete. After two more years of additional delays, a meeting was held in February 2021 by the Israeli Registration Committee, the purpose of which was to determine and inform the family about next steps in the re-registration process. Despite repeated inquiries, the Nassars continue to await notification of the results of that meeting.

The extended delay in the land re-registration process continues to expose the Nassar's farm to severe risk. For example, in 2019, the Israeli authorities again issued an order for the family's eviction from a large plot of the land and the demolition of two cisterns. This order was issued despite a 2018 agreement to stay such orders until the land re-registration process is completed. The Nassars appealed the order to the Supreme Court. Recently, on May 21, 2021, unknown persons set the land on fire destroying over 1000 trees, including hundreds of olive trees. On June 9, 2021, allegedly to reach the neighboring property, Israeli military vehicles and bulldozer entered the Nassar's private property, creating a path of destruction and cutting down approximately 50 olive trees. The pace of settlement expansion, construction of roads restricted to settlers, and roadblocks and checkpoints has accelerated, increasing the farm's isolation and sense of imminent threat.

The delay in the land re-registration continues to expose the Nassar farm to the risk of destruction and confiscation. Settlement expansion and road construction have accelerated, isolating the Tent of Nations farm. Completion of the land re-registration constitutes Israeli authorities' recognition of the Nassars as the private owners of this land and ends their legal struggle.

A 3:16 minute-long video is available featuring Daoud and his wife, Jihan, making their presentation at The Carter Center's 2018 Human Rights Defenders Forum at The Carter Center in Atlanta. <http://forum.cartercenter.org/media/how-can-pain-and-frustration-be-channeled-positive-actions-middle-east>

^[1] The Nassar family owns plots of land located in Wadi Salem (Alkaff) Alkafr in Nahalin, Bethlehem district. The land was registered in 1924 and 1925 in the land registry office of Bethlehem, volume No. 1, pages 3 & 4 and also registered in 1958 in the financial deeds under Plot No. 17, 161, and 157 of block No. 4, altogether 427 Dunams.