

# LA Jews for Peace Policy Statement

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## IDF Destroys Home of a Single Palestinian Mother in Act of Apartheid

Last week, Israel demolished Sanaa Shalabi's upper middle-class home (Gideon Levy called it a "mansion") in the affluent West Bank town of Turmus Ayya, near Ramallah. Sanaa Shalabi is the estranged wife of Palestinian-American Muntasir Shalabi who allegedly shot and killed an Israeli Jew near Ariel in the West Bank. She lived in the house with three of her children.

The IDF blew up the house as punishment for Muntasir Shalabi's crime. We note that extending punishment to innocent family members is considered collective punishment which is a war crime under Article 33 of the Fourth (1949) Geneva Convention. Demolishing Shalabi's home amounts to heartless and cruel punishment of innocent occupants — a mother and her three innocent children — leaving them homeless.

Destroying the family homes of Palestinians in the West Bank accused of killing Israeli Jews is standard IDF procedure that happens several times a year. It typically occurs *before* trial and conviction, as happened in this case.

Three facts about demolishing homes of accused murderers are of interest besides being collective punishment proscribed by the Geneva Conventions.

- Most important, demolishing a murderer's home never happens when the murderer is Jewish. For example, the homes of the convicted murderers of the Dawabsheh family and of Mohammed Abu Khdeir stand undamaged.
- Demolishing homes of accused murderers is a violation of Israeli law. Eran Ben-Ari, a legal advisor to a right-wing advocacy group for settlers and victims of terrorist attacks, said, "Demolishing the house is not a punishment according to the law. It's an act of deterrence,"<sup>1</sup>
- Collective punishment is a clear violation of Biblical Jewish law that proclaims you don't punish the son for the sins of the father. Ezekiel 18:20 reads: "The son shall not bear and be punished for the iniquity of the father, neither shall the father bear and be punished for the iniquity of the son." Similar statements occur in Exodus 20:5, Numbers 14:18, Deuteronomy 5:9, and other Biblical verses.
- Demolishing an accused murderer's family home is not an effective deterrent. It is simply an evil act of retribution and vengeance

**LA Jews for Peace** condemns Israel for demolishing the homes of Arabs accused of killing Jews for the reasons stated above. There is no clearer evidence of apartheid than the fact that Arabs are meted out vastly harsher punishments than Jews for equivalent crimes.

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<sup>1</sup> Washington Post, Aug. 19, 2020. [https://www.washingtonpost.com/world/middle\\_east/rare-israeli-ruling-against-practice-of-demolishing-homes-of-palestinians-accused-of-violence/2020/08/19/e1996e5e-defb-11ea-b4f1-25b762cddb4\\_story.html](https://www.washingtonpost.com/world/middle_east/rare-israeli-ruling-against-practice-of-demolishing-homes-of-palestinians-accused-of-violence/2020/08/19/e1996e5e-defb-11ea-b4f1-25b762cddb4_story.html)