



The Palestinian Center for Development and Media Freedoms (MADA)

When the Camera exposes the Rifle

Special report

Violations against photojournalists in the West Bank and Gaza Strip

This report is supported by the Open Society Foundation (OSF)

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MADA expresses appreciation for the photojournalists in Palestine, who have suffered and risked their lives; where some died while implementing their profession and others were severely injured. Yet, they kept conducting their duty as photojournalist with high professionalism, clearly shown since many of them annually win international and regional awards.

MADA reaffirms the urge to stop violations against the photojournalists and to hold the perpetrators accountable, especially those responsible for the killing of journalists.

When the Camera exposes the Rifle

The three photos of the drowned Syrian refugee kid Aylan Kurdi, the Palestinian kid Mohammad Al-Dorra (during the second Intifada) and the Vietnamese Napalm girl Phan Thị Kim Phúc, caused enormous influence, not only among millions of people but also on decision makers. Therefore, photojournalists are usually targeted by sides that are afraid to be exposed while committing violations or during wars. Especially that it is almost impossible to disapprove the credibility of photos taken on field.

The profession of photojournalists requires them to be on field during the events and clashes regardless of the dangerousness that might face them, and usually photojournalists are at the forefront of their colleagues; which makes them subjected to attacks and injuries.

The suffering of the photojournalists in Palestine while being physically assaulted is a clear example of the risks that led some journalist to pay the price whilst they implement their profession and how they are treated when their cameras exposes the perpetrators' rifle.

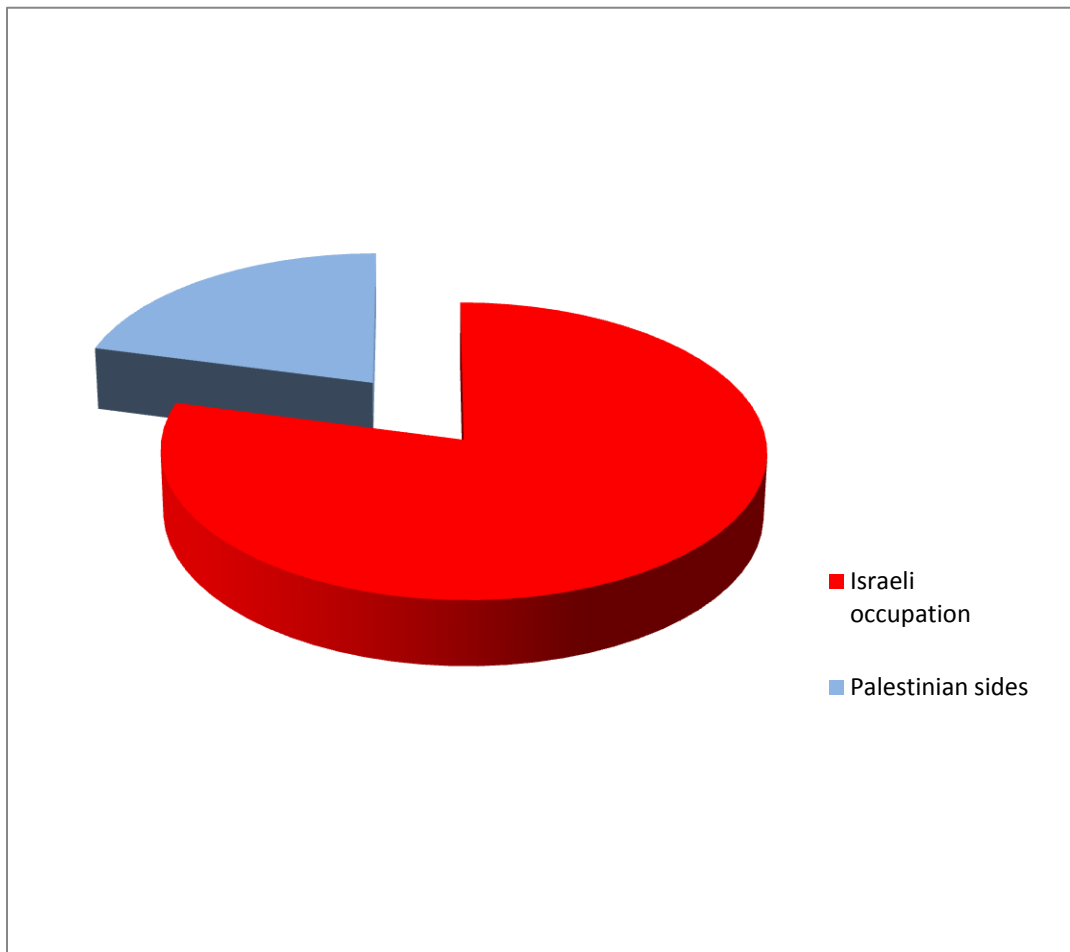
The number of violations against photojournalists in West Bank and Gaza Strip from the beginning of 2012 until the first half of 2015 reached 593. The Israeli occupation committed the large number and the most dangerous (469 violations); which equals 79% of all the violations, whereas the Palestinian sides committed 124 violations in both the West Bank and Gaza Strip.

Total violations committed against photojournalists during the last 4 years in the West Bank and Gaza by the perpetrator

Year Perpetrator	2012	2013	2014	First half of 2015	Total
Israeli occupation	85	113	216	55	469
Palestinian sides	20	30	46	28	124

The previous numbers show that the Israeli violations escalated by 154% (it increased from 85 violations in 2012 to 216 in 2014), whereas the violations committed by Palestinian sides increased by 130% (from 20 violations in 2012 to 46 in 2014). It should be pointed that the Palestinian violations number is low compared to the violations committed by the Israeli occupation.

Violations committed against photojournalists in West Bank and Gaza during the last 3 years by perpetrator



Israeli violations

The Israeli occupation committed the most serious violations against photojournalists (469 assaults in 3 and half years. Types of violations are: physical assaults, prevention from coverage, detention, summon & interrogation, seizing & destroying equipment, photos' deletion, targeting cars, killing, shelling houses, using them as human shields, raiding houses, prevention from travelling and imposing sanctions (e.g. shelling offices full of photographers, deletion and stop broadcasting).

Reuters' photographer Abdul Rahman Qousini (46 Y.O) was severely injured in the testicle while he was covering clashes in Ourif village in Nablus on 18/11/2014, he reported to MADA: “Two Israeli officers used journalists as human shields by hiding behind them during the clashes so that the Palestinians' stones would not hit them. At the same time the Borders' guards were trying to put us away from the place.”

It is noticeable that most of the Israeli violations are considered highly dangerous; where the number of physical assaults, arrests, killing and using journalists as human shields by the IOF reached 308 (65% of the total Israeli violations against photojournalists). The number of direct physical assaults reached 283 of the whole Israeli violations against photojournalists.

The Israeli violations on photojournalists in Gaza Strip were committed during the Israeli aggressions on the strip in the years of 2012 and 2014. There is no doubt that the bloodiest crime is the killing of 7 photojournalists during the period documented in this report.

The Israeli violations in Gaza Strip came in 5 dangerous types: killing, physical assaults, shelling houses, offices or cars with photographers inside.

37 violations out of 45 assaults committed by the IOF on photojournalist in Gaza, were killing and severe injuries; which shows the danger facing media freedoms in Gaza, especially that this number of violations was committed in few weeks during the aggressions in the years of 2012 and 2014.

Names of photojournalists who were killed by the IOF during the last three and a half years (they all were killed in Gaza Strip)

#	Name	Date of killing
1	Mahmoud Al Komi	20/11/2012
2	Hussam Salameh	20/11/2012
3	Khaled Riyad Hamad	20/7/2014
4	Rami Fathi Rayan	30/7/2014
5	Abdallah Nasir Fahjan	1/8/2014
6	Mahmoud Nour Dein Al-Deri	2/8/2014
7	Simone Camilli (Italian photographer)	13/8/2014

The status is not much different than in the West Bank.

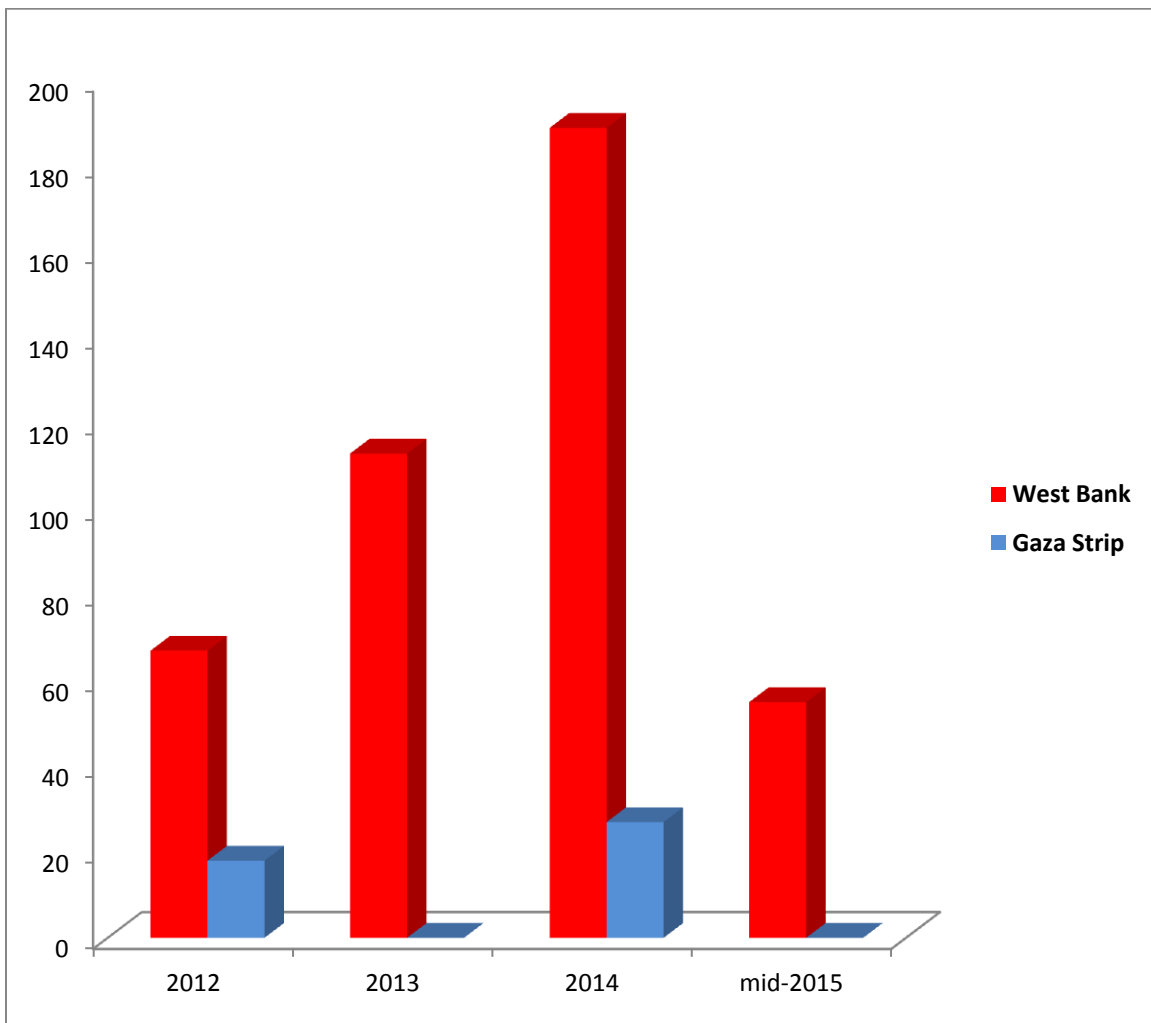
The largest number of violations monitored in this report, were committed in the West Bank. The reason for this is that Gaza Strip is kind of far away from daily clashes with the Israeli occupation (which requires media coverage); where the clashes in Gaza only happens during the Israeli aggressions on the Strip.

424 Israeli violations out of 469 were committed against photojournalists in the West Bank, whereas 45 violations were committed in Gaza.

Total Israeli violations against photojournalists by year and location

Year	West Bank	Gaza Strip	Total
2012	67	18	85
2013	113	0	113
2014	189	27	216
mid-2015	55	0	55
Total	424	45	469

Total Israeli violations against photojournalists by year and location

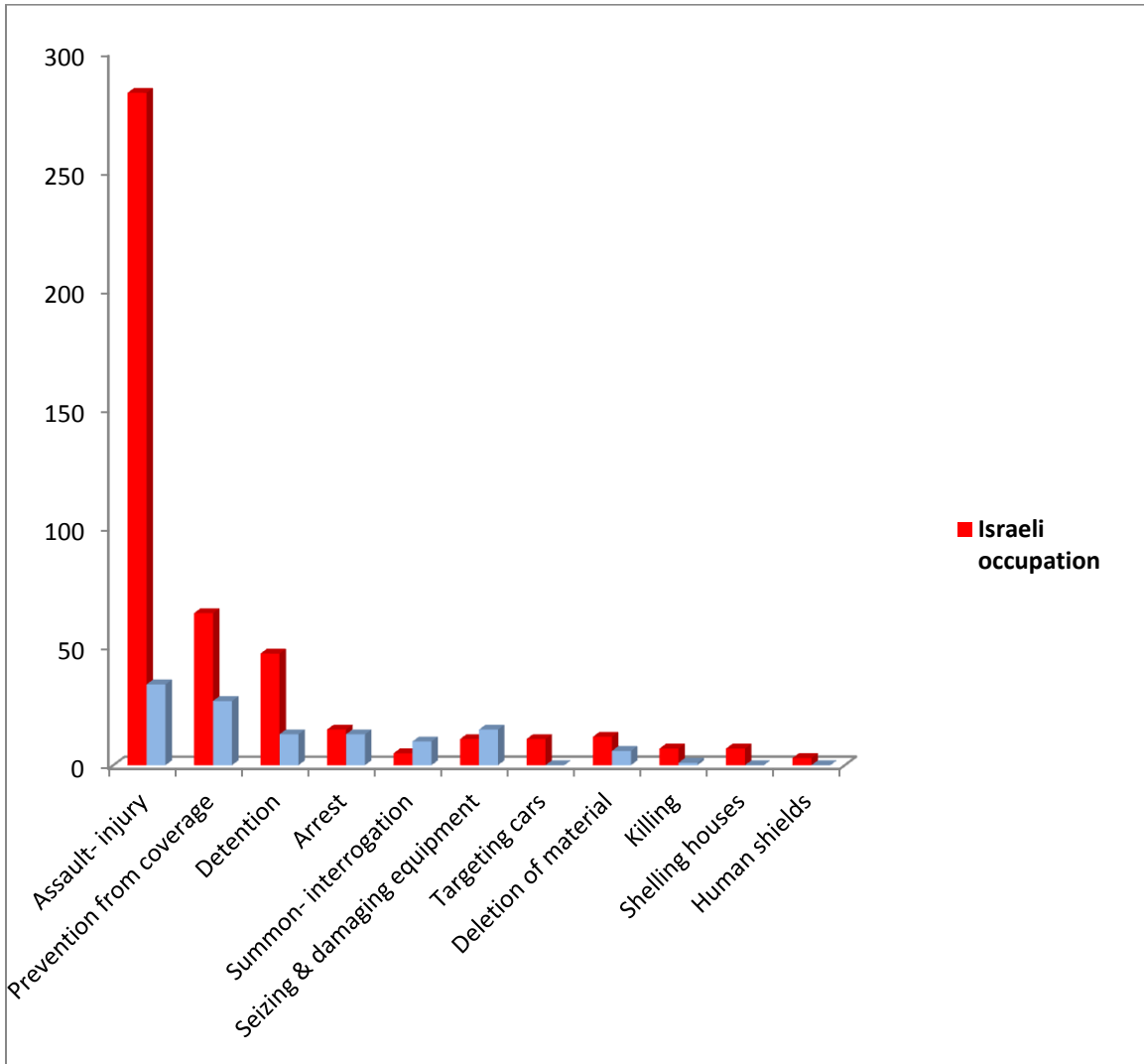


Israeli and Palestinian violations against photojournalists since 2012 until mid-2015 by type of violation

Type Perpetrator	Israeli occupation	Palestinian sides
Assault- injury	283	34
Prevention from coverage	64	27
Detention	47	13
Arrest	15	13
Summon- interrogation	5	10
Seizing & damaging equipment	11	15
Targeting cars	11	0
Deletion of material	12	6
Killing	7	1
Shelling houses	7	0
Human shields	3	0
Raiding houses	2	3
Prevention from travel	1	0
Threatening	0	1
Seizing broadcasting car- robbery	0	1
imposing sanctions	1	0
Total	469	124

The numbers show that the main reason the photojournalists are targeted (by the IOF) is that Israel wants to hide the reality and does not want the journalists to deliver their message to the world. This is clearly shown through preventing the photojournalists from covering the events and detaining them or deleting their material. The number of these types of violations (134) equals 1/3 of the total Israeli assaults.

A chart shows the 11 types of violations against photojournalists by perpetrator



Palestinian violations

The number of violations committed by Palestinian sides against photojournalists in West Bank and Gaza Strip monitored in this report is 124. 81 (65%) of these violations were committed in West Bank and 43 (35%) in Gaza Strip

The Palestinian violations increased by 130% during the last three years, even though this number is small compared to the number of Israeli violations.

The number of violations committed during the mid-2015 shows the continuous escalation of these assaults; where 28 violations were monitored during the first 6 months of 2015 which is

60% larger than the total Palestinian violations committed in 2014 and 93% larger than the total number of violation committed by Palestinian sides in 2013.

There are 11 different types of violations by Palestinian sided: physical assaults & injuries, prevention from coverage, detention, arrest, summon & interrogation seizing & destroying equipment, deletion of material, raiding houses, threats, seizing a broadcast vehicle (robbery), as well as the crime of killing Palestine Public TV cameraman in Gaza Kamal Abu Nahel (40 Y.O).

MADA has received a forensic medicine that shows Nahel being subjected to an assault that caused his death, even though some specialized sides in Gaza said that Nahel might have died as a result of disease issue.

Abu Nahel was killed in mysterious situation, and the specialized sides in Gaza froze the investigation on his death and considered that he died normally as a result of diseases he suffered from. Abu Nahel was found dead near his house in Al-Nasr neighborhood in Gaza on 14/4/2015.

On 18/4/2015, the report of the medical examiner showed that Abu Nahel had bruises on different parts of his body and 3 injuries by a sharp tool (in the skull, upper lip and bottom lip), the report also showed that Abu Nahel suffered cirrhosis of the liver.

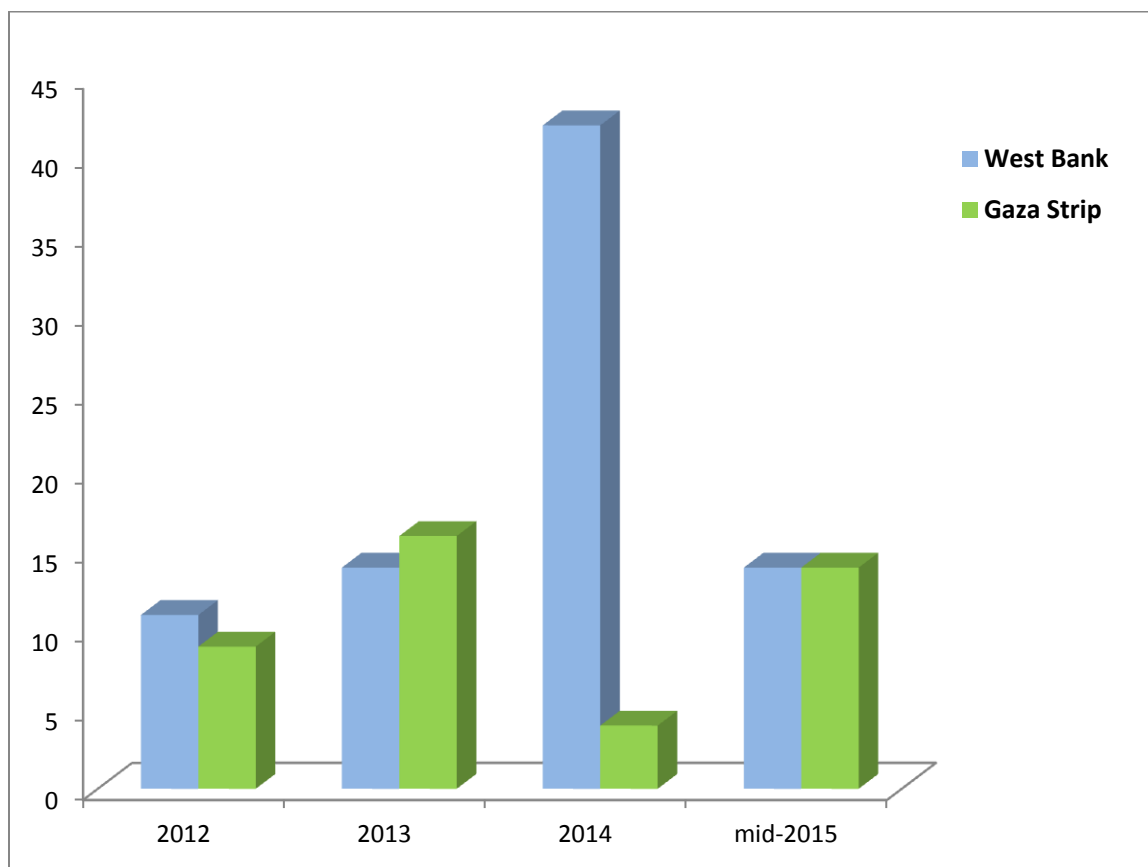
36 of the violations were committed in 4 types: detention, summon, interrogation and arrest; which equals 29% of the total Palestinian violations. 35 violations were physical assaults (including the killing of Abu Nahel) and it equals 28%, the number of prevention from coverage was 27 (22%) and the number of seizing and destroying equipment was 21 (17%) during the last three years and a half.

One of the main reasons of targeting photojournalists by the security forces in West Bank and Gaza Strip is that they do not want the journalists to cover demonstrations against political arrest

Total Palestinian violations against photojournalists by year and location

Year	West Bank	Gaza Strip	Total
2012	11	9	20
2013	14	16	30
2014	42	4	46
mid-2015	14	14	28
Total	81	43	124

Total Palestinian violations against photojournalists in West Bank and Gaza Strip from 2012 until mid-2015



Statistical tables showing the violations committed against photojournalists in the West Bank and Gaza Strip during the period from 2012 until mid-2015 Details

Palestinian violations against photojournalists during 2012

Type of violation	West Bank	Gaza Strip	Total
Assault- injury	4	2	6
Arrest	1	1	2
Detention	2	2	4
Summon & interrogation	1	1	2
Seizing equipment	1	1	2
Prevention from coverage	2	2	4
Total	11	9	20

Israeli violations against photojournalists in 2012

Type of violation	West Bank	Gaza Strip	Total
Assault- injury	43	14	57
Arrest	3	0	3
Detention	13	0	13
Destroying equipment	1	0	1
Prevention from coverage	7	0	7
Killing	0	2	2
Shelling houses	0	1	1
Targeting cars	0	1	1
Total	67	18	85

Palestinian violations against photojournalists in 2013

Type of violation	West Bank	Gaza Strip	Total
Assault- injury	0	2	2
Arrest	0	4	4
Detention	2	2	4
Summon & interrogation	0	3	3
Seizing equipment	2	1	3
Prevention from coverage	8	0	8
Material deletion	1	2	3
Threats	1	0	1
Raiding houses	0	1	1
Seizing a broadcasting vehicle- robbery	0	1	1
Total	14	16	30

Israeli violations during 2013

Type of violation	West Bank	Gaza Strip	Total
Assault- injury	73	0	73
Arrest	5	0	5
Detention	19	0	19
Prevention from covering	8	0	8
Targeting cars- destroying	4	0	4
Materia deletion	2	0	2
Destroying equipment	2	0	2
Total	113	0	113

Palestinian violations during 2014

Type of violation	West Bank	Gaza Strip	Total
Assault- injury	16+1 *	3	20
Arrest	3	0	3
Detention	2	0	2
Summon & interrogation	1	0	1
Seizing equipment	4	0	4
Prevention from coverage	10	0	10
Deletion of material	3	0	3
Raiding houses	1	0	1
Interrogation	1	0	1
Destroying equipment	0	1	1
Total	42	4	46

*The guards of Canada's Prime Minister

Israeli violations during 2014

Type of violations	West Bank	Gaza Strip	Total
Assault- injury	105	16	121
Arrest	6	0	6
Detention	14	0	14
Summon- interrogation	3	0	3
Seizing equipment	2	0	2
Prevention from coverage	32	0	32
Material deletion	10	0	10
Destroying & seizing equipment	6	0	6
Killing	0	5	5
Shelling houses	0	6	6
Targeting cars	6	0	6
Prevention from travel	1	0	1
Human shields	3	0	3
Raiding houses	1	0	1
Total	189	27	216

Palestinian violations during 1st half of 2015

Type of violation	West Bank	Gaza Strip	Total
Assault- injury	4	2	6
Arrest	3	1	4
Detention	2	1	3
Summon & interrogation	1	2	3
Seizing equipment	1	3	4
Prevention from coverage	2	3	5
Deletion of material	0	1	1
Raiding houses	0	1	1
Killing	1	0	1
Destroying equipment	14	14	28
Total	4	2	6

Israeli violations against photojournalists during the mid-2015 (no violations were monitored in Gaza)

Type of violation	West Bank
Assault- injury	32
Arrest	1
Detention	1
Summon & interrogation	1
Interrogation	1
Prevention from coverage	17
Raiding houses	1
Sanction	1
Total	55