October 2000 Galilee Massacre: Israeli Police Kill 13 Palestinians

Between 1 and 8 October 2000 Israeli police and sniper units opened live fire on Palestinian citizens of Israel who had taken to the streets of the Galilee and the Triangle in solidarity with the Al-Aqsa Intifada in the West Bank and Gaza. Thirteen unarmed young men were killed and hundreds wounded, in what became known as the "October Uprising" or "Habbat al-Quds wal-Aqsa." [1] [2]

Most of those killed or seriously wounded were hit in the head, neck or chest, and no one has ever been prosecuted for their deaths. [1] It is one of the Zionist massacres against the Palestinian people.

Contents

1. The October 2000 massacre at a glance
2. The spark: from al-Aqsa to Muhammad al-Durra
3. The massacre: eight days of gunfire
4. The thirteen
5. The Or Commission: no justification for the shooting
6. Impunity
7. A memory kept alive
8. Frequently asked questions
9. Sources and references

The October 2000 massacre at a glance

Item	Details
Date	1–8 October 2000 [1] [2]
Place	Towns of the Galilee, the Triangle and Wadi Ara: Umm al-Fahm, Mu’awiya, Jatt, Nazareth, Arraba, Sakhnin, Kafr Manda, Kafr Kanna [2]
Perpetrator	Israeli police and sniper units, and armed Jewish civilians [1] [2]
Killed	13 unarmed young men aged 17 to 42: 12 Palestinian citizens of Israel and one from Gaza [1] [2]
Wounded	Hundreds, plus hundreds detained [1] [2]
Weapons	Live ammunition, rubber-coated steel bullets and tear gas [1]
Accountability	No police officer or commander has ever been prosecuted [1]

The spark: from al-Aqsa to Muhammad al-Durra

On 28 September 2000 Ariel Sharon, then leader of the Likud, forced his way into the al-Aqsa compound under police protection, in a provocative visit that sparked confrontations. The next day police snipers fired on worshippers at al-Aqsa, killing seven and wounding hundreds. Then the images of the killing of 12-year-old Muhammad al-Durra in Gaza on the evening of 30 September inflamed public anger. [2]

This anger built on long-standing grievances of Palestinians in Israel: discrimination in land and planning, poverty and unemployment. The High Follow-Up Committee for Arab Citizens, meeting in Kafr Manda on 30 September, called a general strike for the next day. [2]

The massacre: eight days of gunfire

Between 1 and 3 October protests spread to Nazareth, Sakhnin, Umm al-Fahm, Kafr Kanna, Tamra, Haifa and elsewhere. Police met them with tear gas, rubber-coated bullets and live fire; Prime Minister Ehud Barak reportedly told commanders to use “all means.” Police and armed Jewish civilians killed eleven unarmed young men in those three days. [2]

Police deployed sniper units to disperse the demonstrations, and most of those killed or seriously wounded were hit in the head, neck or chest. [1]

On 8 October Jewish residents of “Nazareth Illit” attacked Nazareth’s eastern neighbourhood; police turned their weapons on the Arab residents who came out to defend it, killing two and wounding dozens. [2]

The thirteen

Thirteen young men aged 17 to 42 were killed, most by live ammunition and some by rubber-coated bullets. [2] Twelve were Palestinian citizens of Israel, and the thirteenth was from the Gaza Strip. [1]

Name	Age	Town	Date killed
Muhammad Ahmad Jabareen	23	Umm al-Fahm	1 October
Ahmad Ibrahim Siyam	18	Mu’awiya	1 October
Rami Hatem Ghorra	23	Jatt al-Muthallath	1 October
Iyad Subhi Lawabneh	26	Nazareth	1 October
Alaa Khaled Nassar	18	Arraba	2 October
Aseel Hasan Asleh	17	Arraba	2 October
Imad Faraj Ghanayem	25	Sakhnin	2 October
Walid Abd al-Mun’im Abu Saleh	21	Sakhnin	2 October
Musleh Abu Jarad	19	Deir al-Balah (killed in the Umm al-Fahm area)	2 October
Ramez Abbas Bushnaq	24	Kafr Manda	3 October
Muhammad Ghaleb Khamaysi	19	Kafr Kanna	4 October
Wisam Hamdan Yazbek	25	Nazareth	8 October
Omar Muhammad Akkawi	42	Nazareth	8 October

Source: Interactive Encyclopedia of the Palestine Question. [2]

The Or Commission: no justification for the shooting

After families rejected a fact-finding committee with no real powers, an official commission of inquiry was formed under Justice Theodor Or, which published its report on 1 September 2003. [1] [2]

The commission found no justification for the gunfire that killed the thirteen, and that the use of snipers to disperse demonstrations was illegal and in breach of police regulations. [1] It criticized police hostility toward Arab citizens and a culture of covering up abuses, and recommended ending discrimination against them. [2]

Yet the commission did not hold Barak or Sharon directly responsible, nor did it identify those who fired. [2]

Impunity

In September 2005 the Police Investigation Department (“Mahash”) concluded there was insufficient evidence to indict any officer or commander for any of the thirteen killings. In January 2008 Attorney General Menachem Mazuz endorsed that decision and closed the files, even claiming that police had faced a direct threat to their lives, contrary to the Or Commission’s findings. [1]

Adalah holds that justice was not served and that no one responsible was held personally liable, and calls for the investigations to be reopened and transferred to an independent, neutral body. [1]

A memory kept alive

Palestinians in Israel commemorate the martyrs every year. On 3 October 2026, the 26th anniversary, marchers walked from Sakhnin to the martyrs’ memorial in Arraba and then visited their graves. [3]

Conclusion

In October 2000 Palestinian citizens of Israel took to the streets in solidarity with their people in the West Bank and Gaza, and the police of the state whose citizenship they hold met them with snipers and live fire, killing thirteen young men. Even after an official commission found no justification for the shooting, the files were closed and no one was ever tried.

Frequently asked questions about the October 2000 massacre

When did the October 2000 Galilee massacre take place?

Between 1 and 8 October 2000; five of the victims were killed on 2 October alone.

How many people were killed in the October 2000 Uprising?

Thirteen young men: 12 Palestinian citizens of Israel and one from the Gaza Strip, with hundreds wounded.

Where did the October 2000 massacre take place?

In towns of the Galilee, the Triangle and Wadi Ara, including Umm al-Fahm, Mu’awiya, Jatt, Nazareth, Arraba, Sakhnin, Kafr Manda and Kafr Kanna.

What did the Or Commission find?

It found no justification for the gunfire that killed the thirteen, and that the use of snipers was illegal.

Was anyone prosecuted for the killings?

No. The Police Investigation Department closed the files in 2005, and the Attorney General endorsed the decision in 2008.

Sources and references

Arabic-language sources are listed with translated titles.

1. “The October 2000 Killings (October Uprising),” Adalah – The Legal Center for Arab Minority Rights in Israel, 30 September 2020.
2. “The October 2000 Events in Israel: The Violent Repression of a Palestinian Solidarity Outburst,” Interactive Encyclopedia of the Palestine Question, Institute for Palestine Studies.
3. “Palestinians of 1948 Commemorate 13 Palestinians Killed by Israeli Police Fire in 2000,” Al-Quds Al-Arabi, 3 October 2026.