**Why Human Rights Watch Is Calling on Businesses to Pull Out of Israeli Settlements, Sarah Saadoun, Human Rights Watch**

Location

Columbia University Morningside Campus Jerome Greene Hall Room 105

Columbia University School of International and Public Affairs

<https://sipa.columbia.edu/experience-sipa/events/why-human-rights-watch-is-calling-on-businesses-to-pull-out-of-israeli-settlements-sarah-saadoun>

**Date**

March 09, 2016

12:10pm to 1:10pm

There are now more than half a million Israeli settlers living in the Israeli-occupied West Bank including East Jerusalem. Successive Israeli governments have facilitated this process, even though settlements are unlawful under international humanitarian law and are part and parcel of Israeli policies that dispossess, discriminate against, and abuse the human rights of Palestinians. But the system is not just propagated by the Israeli government; it also depends on the involvement of a multitude of businesses that operate in the settlements.

A new Human Rights Watch report, Occupation, Inc., examines the human rights impact of these businesses and calls on them to end their settlement-related activities. Using a series of case studies, it describes how such businesses facilitate and sustain unlawful settlements and thereby contribute to a system whose existence and expansion is contingent on the unlawful confiscation of Palestinian land and resources. It also describes how such businesses benefit from a two-tiered system of laws, rules, and services that Israel has imposed in the area of West Bank under its exclusive control that encourages the growth of settlements and the settlement economy while stymying Palestinian economic development.