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Israeli Troops Beat Palestinian Minister to Death at Ramallah Protest

By Jason Ditz

December 10, 2014

55-year-old Palestinian Authority cabinet minister Ziad Abu Ein was killed today during a protest march in Ramallah, when Israeli troops arrived on the scene and beat him to death.

Abu Ein was choked and beaten with rifle butts during the crackdown and reportedly suffered a stroke on the scene. He was rushed to a nearby Palestinian hospital but died shortly thereafter.

Though the entire killing was not caught on tape, video of the early moments of the crackdown on the protest were shown by Sky News, which included an Israeli soldier putting his hands around Abu Ein's throat.

The protesters were complaining about the expansion of Israeli settlements on Palestinian land, and was carried out entirely on Palestinian territory in the occupied West Bank, with a march to farmland illegally seized by settlers to plant olive trees. Israeli officials defended the crackdown as simply using standard riot dispersal methods.

The European Union and United Nations are both demanding an independent investigation into the killing, though the Israeli government insisted that the only probe will be an internal one by the Israeli military.

The killing is being called an assassination by some Palestinian officials, though it seems more to be business as usual for the occupation forces, who kill Palestinians at protests with alarming regularity. The death is fueling calls from PA officials to end security cooperation with the Israeli military.