

PALESTINE AT CHRISTMAS



B R O K E N H O M E S

Ten a week, every week, for 45 years!

“Since Israel’s 1967 occupation of the West Bank, including Jerusalem and Gaza, it is estimated that Israeli civil and military authorities have destroyed 24,000 Palestinian homes in the occupied Palestinian territories.”

SAVE THE CHILDREN ‘BROKEN HOMES’

Assessing the Impact of House Demolitions on Palestinian Children and Families’

Children who have had their homes demolished suffer from anxiety, depression, emotional withdrawal, psycho-somatic illnesses, delusions, attention deficit disorders and behavioural difficulties. Ninety-seven percent of mothers and fathers suffered from trauma-related symptoms after the demolition of their home.

The demolitions are illegal under international law

But this hasn’t stopped the bulldozers. Israeli settlers have already moved into parts of Silwan in an attempt to take over the town and evict Palestinian families who have lived there for generations.

Backing the settlers, the Israeli security forces have stepped up their programme of violence and intimidation against the Palestinian residents of Silwan. **Night raids, army checkpoints and violent harassment are a daily part of life for Palestinians in Silwan.**

waronwant.org/campaigns

icahd.org



The Israeli authorities have given control of much of the land in Silwan, East Jerusalem, to Elad, an Israeli settlement organisation. Elad want to expand their tourist centre in the midst of this bustling Palestinian neighbourhood. These new tourist developments would see the largest single demolition of Palestinian homes since 1967, the year that Israel occupied East Jerusalem and the West Bank. **Palestinian homes, businesses and schools would be replaced by gift shops, visitor centres and car parking for tourists.**



- **When Israel was founded in 1948 750,000 Palestinians became homeless refugees.**
- **1.5 million Palestinians today continue to live inside Israel. 78% of Israeli Palestinians live in poverty, 84% of Israeli Palestinian children live in poverty (The Association for Civil Rights in Israel. Haaretz, 20.5.12)**
- **The Israeli Prime Minister’s Office has adopted the Praver Plan to forcefully remove 30,000 Bedouin from their villages in the Negev (Haaretz, 28.3.12). The Negev is part of Israel, thus these Bedouin are Israeli citizens!**

SETTING FIRE TO THE OLIVE BRANCH



B'Tselem witness and AFP journalist

Armed settlers from the Jewish settlement of Yitzhar stand on a cliff overlooking the Palestinian village of Urif (Orif), south of Nablus in the northern West Bank, during confrontations following **the setting on fire of Palestinian owned fields of grain and olive trees** by settlers on May 26, 2012. Some settlers opened fire at Palestinian villagers, one of whom was gravely wounded and taken to hospital.



BARRIER TO SEPARATE MONASTERY AND CONVENT

Beit Jala, in Bethlehem, has a population of some 10,000 most of whom are Christians. The Cremisan convent and monastery date back over 120 years. **The route of the wall will separate the convent from the monastery!** Most of the convent's land will be on the other side of the barrier, the tortuous route of which, in the words of the Mayor, "has turned Bethlehem into an open prison."

Last Christmas the Archbishop of Westminster prayed for the community in "their legal battle to protect their land and homes from further expropriation by Israel," saying "Over 50 families face losing their land and their homes." The economic impact of the wall has caused many families to leave. The court is expected to pronounce by the end of the year. (The Universe & Huffington Post, 25.11.12; Guardian, 4.10.12)



The route of the wall through Bethlehem, keeping Rachel's Tomb and an Israeli military base within Israel



IDF soldier handing a demolition order to Sister Adrianna of the Cremisan monastery south of Jerusalem. Photo by Olivier Fitoussi
Israeli newspaper Haaretz, Jan.05, 2012

FOUR MESSAGES AT CHRISTMAS

Pastor Mitri Raheb of Bethlehem: "If Jesus were to be born this year, he would not be born in Bethlehem. He might have been born on the checkpoint like so many Palestinian children, who knows where? These are the realities of the Israeli occupation of the West Bank of Palestine."

Former Patriarch Michel Sabbah: "Today, this land is a place of war and death. The land is besieged, people are besieged. Both water and land have been confiscated from the owners."

Sabeel Ecumenical Centre, Jerusalem:

"We must envisage a different world where peace is built on justice."

Patron, Friends of Sabeel UK, Mary Grey, "Happy Christmas" – so easy to say, so hard to deliver in Palestine/Israel.

"Yet, the people of Bethlehem, with their 45,000 refugees, still embody the message of Christmas that peace is offered to all peoples of goodwill."

CHILDREN IN PRISON



In September 2012 Israel was holding 189 children in prison, 28 of them under 16 years old. B'Tselem.

www.btselem.org



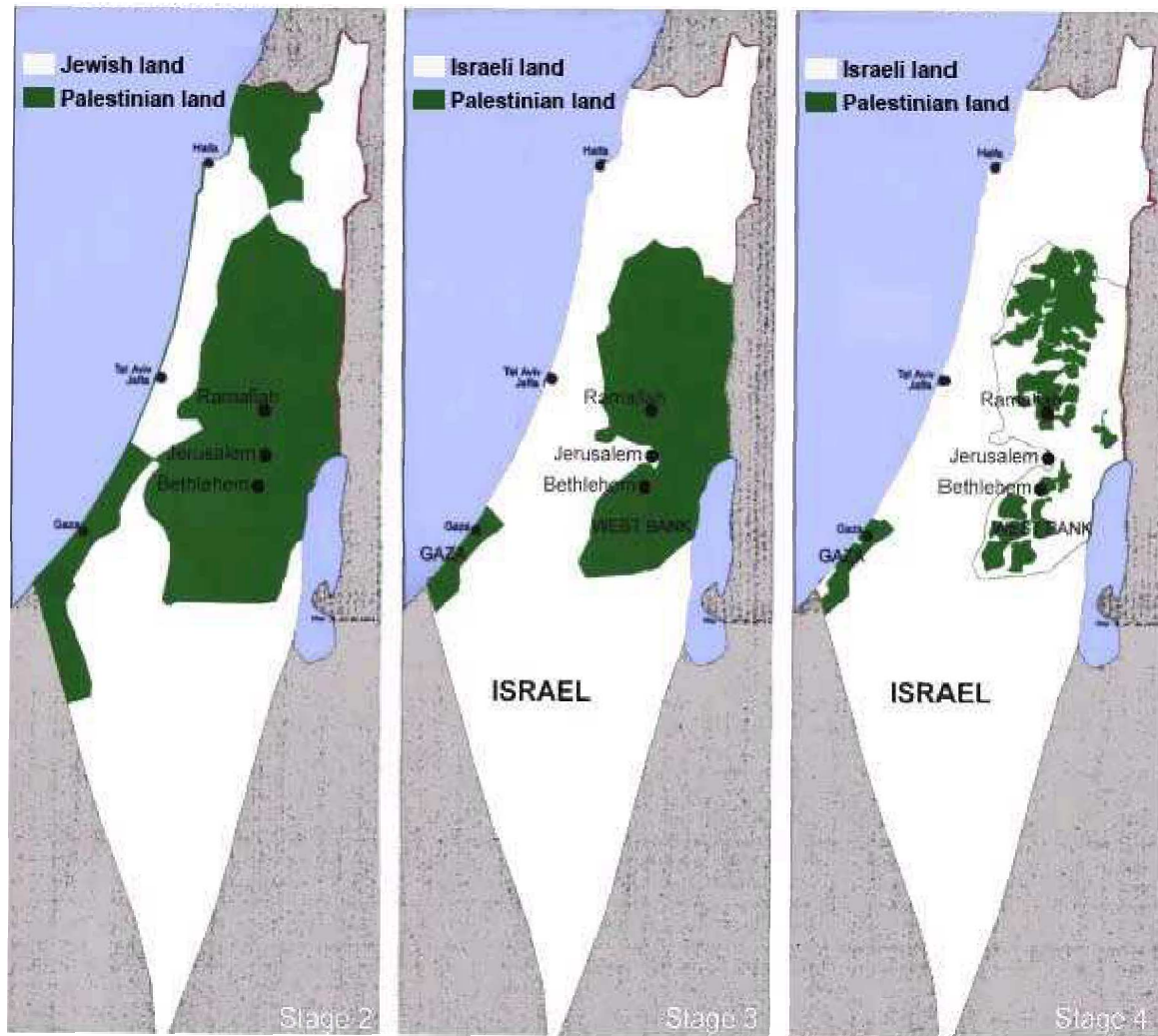
Attacks On The Rise

"Since 2007 the number and severity of attacks by settlers, in the form of arson attacks, offensive graffiti on mosques and churches, physical assault and, in some cases, murder. Human rights organizations say attacks rose by 315% between 2007 and 2011. Meanwhile, Palestinian violence against settlers significantly decreased."

www.eappi.org

The Ecumenical Accompaniment Programme in Palestine and Israel (EAPPI) is an initiative of the World Council of Churches under the Ecumenical Campaign to End the Illegal Occupation of Palestine, Supporting a Just Peace it brings internationals to the West Bank to provide protective presence to vulnerable communities, monitor and report human rights abuses **and support Palestinians and Israelis working together for peace.**

PALESTINIAN LAND 1947 - 2000



UN PARTITION 1949-1967 2000

SETTLER POPULATION IN PALESTINIAN TERRITORIES

NOW 1/2 million

Settlements are supported by substantial Israeli government subsidies and incentives (e.g. for housing, education, water, and transport). Israeli settlers also receive favourable access to transport linkages and to national and international markets. One Israeli economist has estimated that **the Government of Israel spends \$24,650 per settler each year** on various subsidies and grants to Israeli settlements across the OPT

Palestinians living in the Jordan Valley receive no subsidies from either the Palestinian Authority (PA) or the Israeli Government.

OXFAM: 'ON THE BRINK'

SOUTH HEBRON BEDOUIN BEING EVICTED

Eight villages are threatened with demolition, with the eviction of 1500 people, to make way for a military firing range. The population of these villages swells during the harvest season. This Bedouin cycle has existed for over 100 yrs and these people's livelihood will be destroyed.



“The Jordan Valley, located in the eastern part of the Occupied Palestinian Territory (OPT), makes up 30 per cent of the West Bank.

Requisitions and expropriations of Palestinian land by the Israeli authorities continue to destroy the livelihoods of Palestinians living in the area and, unless action is taken, the situation will only get worse.” **ON THE BRINK'** (P.2)

SOME OF THE 223 SETTLEMENTS ON THE OCCUPIED PALESTINIAN TERRITORIES



UNDER INTERNATIONAL LAW THESE SETTLEMENTS ARE ILLEGAL -

Article 49 of the Fourth Geneva Convention

WATER: BLEEDING DRY PALESTINIAN FARMING

Israelis [are] allocated four times more water from the shared mountain aquifers than Palestinians. This unequal access to water keeps Israeli settlement farms well irrigated and lush, while Palestinian farmers and communities are largely dependent on tankered water, which they have to pay for. Tankered water is up to five times more expensive than water from a regular supply, mainly due to transport costs. In addition, restrictions on granting permits mean that water cisterns used by Palestinian farmers to collect rainwater are frequently demolished by the Israeli authorities, further limiting their ability to grow crops.



Khalil Issa Ahmed Samamri by his demolished cistern (well/water storage). Two of the four cisterns demolished by the Israeli army in August 2012



“PALESTINE IS IN CRISIS”

“The situation in Israel and Palestine is not an intractable conflict between two equal sides. It is an Occupation by a powerful military... against an impoverished, stateless and displaced people.” War on Want supports the campaign of Boycott, Divestment and Sanctions and is campaigning for a UK arms embargo on Israel until Israel complies with international law.



THE GAZA BLOCKADE – A COLLECTIVE PUNISHMENT



“Israel maintains its military blockade of Gaza, imposed in 2007. The blockade prolongs the humanitarian crisis faced by Gaza’s 1.5 million residents, more than 70 per cent of whom are dependent on humanitarian aid.

“A near-complete ban on exports continues, stifling the economy, and severe restrictions on imports fuels shortages and high prices.” The blockade is preventing reconstruction and recovery of thousands of homes, schools, health centres, and sewage plants, many of which were damaged or destroyed during the [Israeli] military operation ‘Cast Lead’ in December 2008-January 2009. **The Israeli authorities hinder or prevent hundreds of patients from leaving Gaza to obtain medical treatment.**

‘[It is] a cruel and illegal blockade collectively punishing the entire civilian population – a breach of international law – which particularly affects children and the sick.’

“The wretched reality endured by 1.5 million people in Gaza should appal anybody with an ounce of humanity. Sick, traumatised and impoverished people are being collectively punished by a cruel, illegal policy imposed by the Israeli authorities.”

Kate Allen, Director Amnesty International UK (written before the recent Israeli military action)

AMNESTY INTERNATIONAL ‘Israel and the Occupied Territories.’

GAZA IN CRISIS

Israel's latest attack on Gaza has led to huge loss of life and suffering. Four years ago, following War on Want's campaign, the UK government revoked five arms licenses to Israel for weaponry used in the 2008 Cast Lead attack on Gaza, which had left over 1,400 Palestinian dead and thousands injured. Yet the British government continues its cooperation with Israel's military. The UK government must implement an immediate two-way arms embargo until Israel complies with international law. To tell the government to implement an arms embargo go to:

www.waronwant.org/palestine



JEWIS FOR JUSTICE FOR PALESTINIANS – Two Peoples – One Future

Rabbi Hillel: “That which is hateful to you, do not do to your neighbour. That is the whole of the Torah.” All killing is abhorrent, especially of civilians, Palestinian and Jew. But “the sword comes from the perversion or the delay of justice” (The Mishna). So those whose power controls justice hold responsibility for peace. Israel's military is the fourth most powerful in the world – so Peace with Justice is at its command.

RABBIS FOR HUMAN RIGHTS, ISRAEL

“As Jews, we are obligated to protest against every injustice enacted against any other person.”

‘[We] work with 30 Palestinian village farmers in the West Bank during the olive harvest... Approximately 3000 trees were destroyed between 2008-10... We replanted 2000 trees in 17 villages... In the village of Dir Amar, next to the Jewish settlements Neriya and Nahniel, Palestinian farmers discovered on 12th June, 2012 that 60 old olive trees had been damaged, many of them completely cut down.’



‘Demolition orders on the entire village of Susiya, [mean] “hundreds of Palestinian residents will be cast out into the burning desert sun for the fifth time in twenty five years.” ‘The village of Palestinian Susiya has existed for centuries...(with) documentary evidence dating back to 1830. (The Israeli Susiya settlement dates from 1983)’

“The destruction of fields and trees, the sabotage of wells and water tanks, the poisoning of pastures and water wells, the systematic harassment of shepherds, the setting fire to tents and attacking families in their houses in the dead of night – these are frequent scenes in the lives of the inhabitants of Susiya.

It should be noted that the police demonstrates an utter incompetence in enforcing the law on the settlers.”



<http://rhr.org.il/eng>

HOW TO HELP:

- Tell your MP & MEP to insist the Government takes firm action for Palestinian human rights.
- Go to: www.writetothem.com to email your MP/MEP
- Support the Palestinian call for boycott as a peaceful and powerful protest for Palestinian rights: see <http://jfjfp.com/?tag=bds>
- Sign Oxfam’s petition to end the Occupation – Google ‘oxfam gaza petition’; Google ‘Avvaz petition to recognize Palestine’.
- Sign War On Want’s arms embargo petition: www.waronwant.org/palestine
- Donate to international, Palestinian and Israeli organisations which provide humanitarian help or work for justice and peace:
- Medical Aid for Palestine: www.map.org.uk; Medecine Sans Frontiers: www.msf.org
- Oxfam www.oxfam.org.uk; War On Want: www.wow.org.uk; Save the Children: www.savethechildren.org.uk
- Christian Aid: www.christianaid.org.uk; Human Rights Watch: www.hrw.org; Amnesty International: www.amnesty.org
- Gaza Community Mental Health Programme: www.gcmh.org; Shalom-Salam Trust: www.bsst.org.uk/
- Bereaved Families Forum: <http://www.familiesforum.co.uk>; EAPPI (Ecumenical Accompaniment Program): www.eappi.org
- B’Tselem: <http://www.btselem.org/>, New Profile: <http://www.newprofile.org/english/>, Israeli Cttee. Against House Demolitions: www.icahd.org