

Reviewing the Palestinian Political Scene 2015

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Ethnic cleansing and uprooting of Palestinian olive trees



Challenging the status quo at Al-Aqsa Mosque



Gaza under siege

The players in shaping the map of the region and dictating what lies ahead in terms of politics, security, the economy, and Middle East stability are not limited to the regional powers. All of the players noted are influencing these factors, to different degrees and in different directions. Of course, they are not in harmony and are full of contradictions -- and prone to confrontation. The situation has reached the point at which the old Sykes-Picot map of 1916 is to be re-drawn in 2016.

The involvement of the United States has been marked by great disappointment, starting from the day of President Obama's election in November 2008. In his June 2009 speech at Cairo University, he promised a new relationship between the US and the Muslim world, and to "not turn our backs on the legitimate Palestinian aspiration for dignity, opportunity, and a state of their own." In addition, his receipt of the Nobel Peace Prize was unjustified given his empty words supporting peace, as he continued to pursue the same old policies in the Middle East in his second term 2012.

It is very obvious that in Russia, President Putin has been rising as the new Russian caesar, while managing his government through an arrangement with his Prime Minister, Dmitry Medvedev, to exchange seats in the future. They have enabled Russia to stand on its own feet in terms of its region (Ukraine) and international politics vis-à-vis EU and USA. However, both Washington and Moscow have maintained open coordination to protect their interests and influence in shaping global and regional maps.

In the region, two major players -- Iran and Turkey -- are no longer outsiders or closed in their thinking in their internal affairs. They have succeeded in forging their new entry into the Middle East capitals with three elements: security, the economy, and alliances. Turkey, uncomfortable with the new terminology 'the New Ottomans,' is very much involved with the two superpowers, Moscow and Washington, in their relationships with the capitals in the region. And direct influence into Arab capitals!

In addition, since 1952, Turkey has been a member of NATO, with its security portfolio, and has been knocking on the European door for membership since decades.

This year, they are on the borders of Syria and Iraq and close to the Saudis as well as the Iranians, but on strained terms with Egypt.

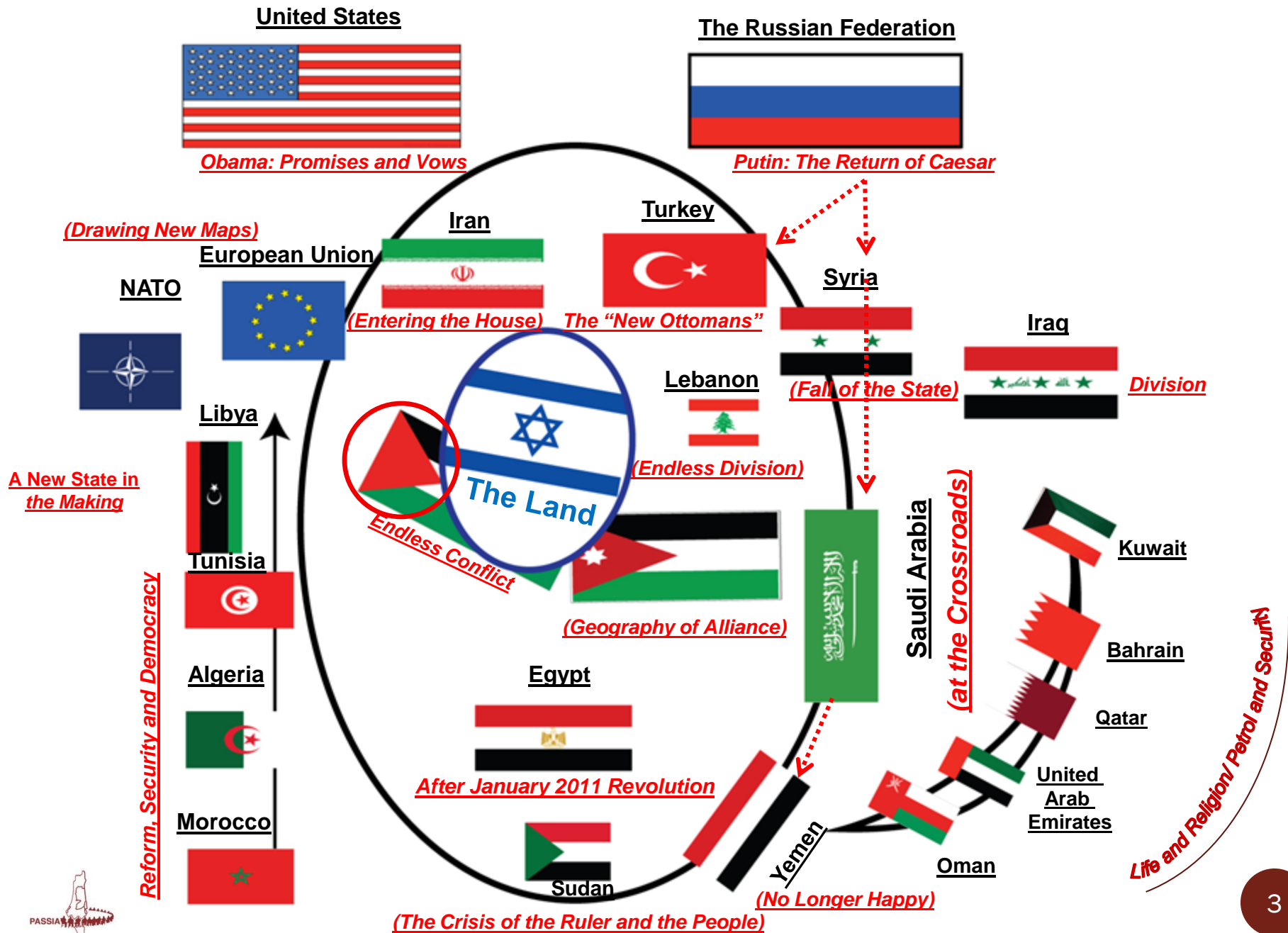
As for Iran, after several decades of international siege and boycott due to its development of nuclear weapons and in spite of Iran's return to the 'Arab House' through the Shia flag in Syria and Lebanon and challenging the Saudi doctrine of Islam, it finally succeeded in reaching an agreement with the USA and Europe to lift the siege. Iran is acknowledged as a major player in the Middle East, given their geopolitics, cultural, economic, and security muscles.

Turning to the rest of the region, Syria is facing collapse, as the conflict of the last five years has resulted in the deaths of more than 250,000 civilians, 11 million refugees, and the destruction of cities and towns. Syria's bloody dictator has managed to keep his gun and flag under Russian protection and Iranian military aid. Following the American invasion of 2003, Iraq is very much divided and is struggling for reforms to maintain the integrity of the land and sovereignty of the state. The Saudis, under the new King Salman bin Abdul Aziz Al Saud and the younger generation that he installed to govern, are at a crossroads between stability reforms or painful division. Following their launch of pre-emptive war against Iran on Yemeni territory, they are now looking for a way out of the mud of Yemen. Yemen is unfortunately no longer happy (as the saying 'Yemen Sa'ed' goes). It is facing massive destruction, in spite of the cry of the country's intellectuals, men and women, for restoring order and ending the rule of the dictator Ali Abdullah Saleh with his alliances with the Houthis.

In the Gulf, Kuwait, Bahrain, Qatar, the United Arab Emirates, and Oman are all standing in a queue behind the Saudis and under their umbrella, as they all depend on petrol and security.

Egypt and Sudan will continue to face the challenges of transforming the Nile River as well as a crisis of Political Islam and political leadership, especially after the January 2011 revolution in Egypt. The countries in the Maghreb are all under one umbrella of reform, security, and democracy. Tunisia is leading the way for the others, as it has managed to put political Islam and secular democracy in harmony. Libya is still in the process of making a new state, but it is guided by the security of NATO and the politics of the EU. Palestine and Israel are in endless conflict: land, water, security, Jerusalem, refugees and Israeli economies on the Occupied Palestinian Territories (OPT) while Jordan has been open for Alliances with all players and with no expectation!

Palestine in the Region



As the need for a distinct Palestinian organization to lead the struggle for Palestinian rights and independence became apparent, the first Arab summit in Cairo in 1963 called for its establishment, and the first Palestinian National Council (PNC) was formed one year later. It was at this first PNC meeting – attended by 422 members – on 28 May 1964 in Jerusalem that the PLO was founded to address the Palestinian national cause and achieve the liberation of all of historical Palestine.

The Palestinian National Authority (PNA or PA) is an interim administrative organization that governs parts of the West Bank and Gaza Strip. It was established in 1994, pursuant to the Oslo Accords between the PLO and the government of Israel, as a five-year transitional body.

The Oslo agreements divided the West Bank into three zones: Areas A, B and C:

1. In Area A (17.2% of the West Bank), the PA has sole jurisdiction and security control, but Israel still retains authority over movement into and out of these areas, and repeatedly makes use of this 'right' during incursions and arrest raids.
2. In Area B (23.8%), the PA has civil authority and responsibility for public order, while Israel maintains a security presence and 'overriding security responsibility'.
3. The remaining 59% of the West Bank, Area C, is under total Israeli occupation.

Final status negotiations between the two parties were to take place during that five-year period. However, the PA is still under occupation and has not accomplished the goal of independence and statehood, while Palestinians are still denied their right to self-determination under international law.

There has been considerable debate about the extent to which the Palestinian leadership is "a legitimate" and broad representative of the Palestinian people. The terms PLO and PA are often used interchangeably and confusion exists about the similarities in their structures and functions. While the two bodies are – at least in theory - significantly different, this confusion is justified since they are very much interrelated in practice.

So, which of the two bodies actually represents Palestinians? In a nutshell, the PA has "municipal authority" over the affairs of Palestinians in the Occupied Palestinian Territories (OPT), while the PLO takes broader decisions regarding Palestinians worldwide and the status of Palestine, but holds no legal authority over internal local governance. As the PLO is the signatory to the Oslo Accords and negotiated the establishment of the PA (created to implement those Accords), and both bodies are currently led by the same president, chairman, they are intrinsically linked. The PLO is per se superior to the PA, but the latter increasingly appears to be gaining in political significance at the PLO's expense. Among other things, it has assumed diplomatic functions in parallel with the PLO, a role for which it is not mandated. Matters are further complicated by the fact that both their respective legislative bodies are not functioning – the Palestinian Legislative Council (PLC) in the West Bank and Gaza has not met since 2007, and the Palestinian National Council has not convened since 1998.

Following the arrival of the PA, the West Bank and Gaza Strip were divided into 16 Governorates (11 in the WB: Jenin, Tubas, Tulkarem, Qalqilya, Salfit, Nablus, Ramallah, Jerusalem, Jericho, Bethlehem, Hebron; and 5 in the GS: Jabalia, Gaza City, Deir Al-Balah, Khan Younis and Rafah). Each of these is headed by a governor appointed by the President. The governorates are subordinate to the Ministry of Local Government and cooperate with the mayors and heads of village councils in their respective districts.

Jerusalem has been excluded since Oslo 1993 from any official relations with the PA and the PLO headquarters (Orient House) has been closed by Israeli military order since 2001!

There are five major internal players in the Palestinian political system: the PA, Fateh, Hamas, the PLO, and civil society. Despite the differences in their positions and needs, and their dependence on external funding, they are all without exception under military occupation and governed and controlled by various Israeli authorities.

The PA still depends on security coordination and licenses for carrying out any functions and development projects on the ground and maintaining its power and authority. Over the last ten years, the PLO reached a point at which it became clear that the negotiations with the Israeli government were not a promising venue for achieving Palestinian statehood. He never believed in armed struggle as a means to reach that end, so he has been floating between the Arab League, the UN, and the OIC. President Mahmoud Abbas has depended on the financial support from Europe and the US, which has led his Fateh political faction base to become followers that rely on their monthly salaries. As a result, there have been too many offices, projects, and slogans, and the PA has lost its credibility, its constituency, and sight of its mission.

As for Hamas faction, there are differences between the leadership in Doha, Qatar and on the ground in Gaza Strip, the sleeping horses in the West Bank, and the resistance figures behind Israeli prison bars about how to address the siege of Gaza.

The PLO has empty offices with old security guards (of 70 to 80 years old) while maintaining its hope in the negotiation process!

Civil society has been divided by an apartheid wall, colonization, and the isolation of Jerusalem through racist policies and laws. It is full of contradictions. On the one hand, there is poverty, unemployment, and refugee camps. On the other hand, Ramallah is full of banks, businesses, and five-star hotels, surrounded with refugee camps.

All five players are controlled by Israeli occupation policies and practices, which have been governing them for the last 48 years.

For the last nine years, the division between Fateh and Hamas since the election of 2006 has reflected not only three different age of the national movement, Fateh has enjoyed its authority while governing for the last ten years. It has reached a point at which it needs to go back to the PLO to reconstitute its legitimacy and leadership. President Abbas completed his homework in calling for a National Council meeting and for a new election of its Executive Committee, in order to declare that the Council is the parliament and the Committee is the executive branch of the government.

The PA's bid for statehood at the UN has aimed to internationalize the question of Palestine. President Abbas' plan was halted by internal differences among Fateh, leaving the door open to two options: to go back to the negotiating table or to continue advancing Palestinian claims in the international arena. It is worth mentioning that the convening of any meeting in the OPT depends on Israeli approval.

The Hamas leadership succeeded in convening the Shura Council for a ceasefire with Israel, in exchange for lifting the siege and building a seaport and an airport. Securing a waterway towards Cyprus for a floating port has been pending Israeli approval. Hamas has always called for ending the siege and the implementation of what has been promised in many international conferences about the reconstruction of infrastructure in Gaza.

Palestinian society, represented by independent personalities as well as major institutions, universities, chambers of commerce, and the public sector, brought to the surface the role of an interim framework for the PLO leadership in implementing the reconciliation agreement between Fateh and Hamas and conducting a PLC election under a new unity government. At the same time, it demanded the suspension of security coordination with Israel and the moving forward of BDS and prosecution at the ICC.

Jerusalem has always been on the agenda, given the advancement of Israel's judaization of the city through racist policies and practices but also their different missions and the different methods used to realize national aspirations as a major component.



(1964)

Elected by the National Council
Elected by the Executive Committee

Executive Committee

18 elected members of the
National Council

The Palestinian National Council (PNC)

First meeting 1964 (Jerusalem)
Last meeting 1996 (Gaza)
740 members appointed to the
Executive Committee through
bars, grassroots associations and
parties from home and abroad
1/3 of the members passed away
1/3 of the members are above 70

Saleem Al-Za'noun (Head of the Council)



President Mahmoud Abbas
President of the State of Palestine
1995-2015



(1993)

Directly elected by the people in
the West Bank, including
Jerusalem, and the Gaza Strip

Palestinian Government

Members appointed by the president,
including the Prime Minister

Palestinian Legislative Council (PLC)

First elections 1996 (Fateh won)
Second elections 2006 (Hamas
won)
132 members directly elected
from the West Bank, including
Jerusalem, and the Gaza Strip

Aziz Al-Dweik (Head of the Council)

(20) Years
without
a meeting

(10) Years
without
a meeting

The Palestinian Central Council (PCC)

First meeting 1973 (Decision of the Resistance)
Last meeting 2014 (Decision of ending the security coordination)

**Permanent Body (100 members)
Reference in the absence of
the National Council**



The Palestinian National Charter

First Amendment 1968 (Cairo)
Last Amendment 1996 (Gaza)

**The Draft Constitution of the State
of Palestine**

- 1) The Drafting committees 1996
- 2) 138 countries recognized the State of Palestine 2012



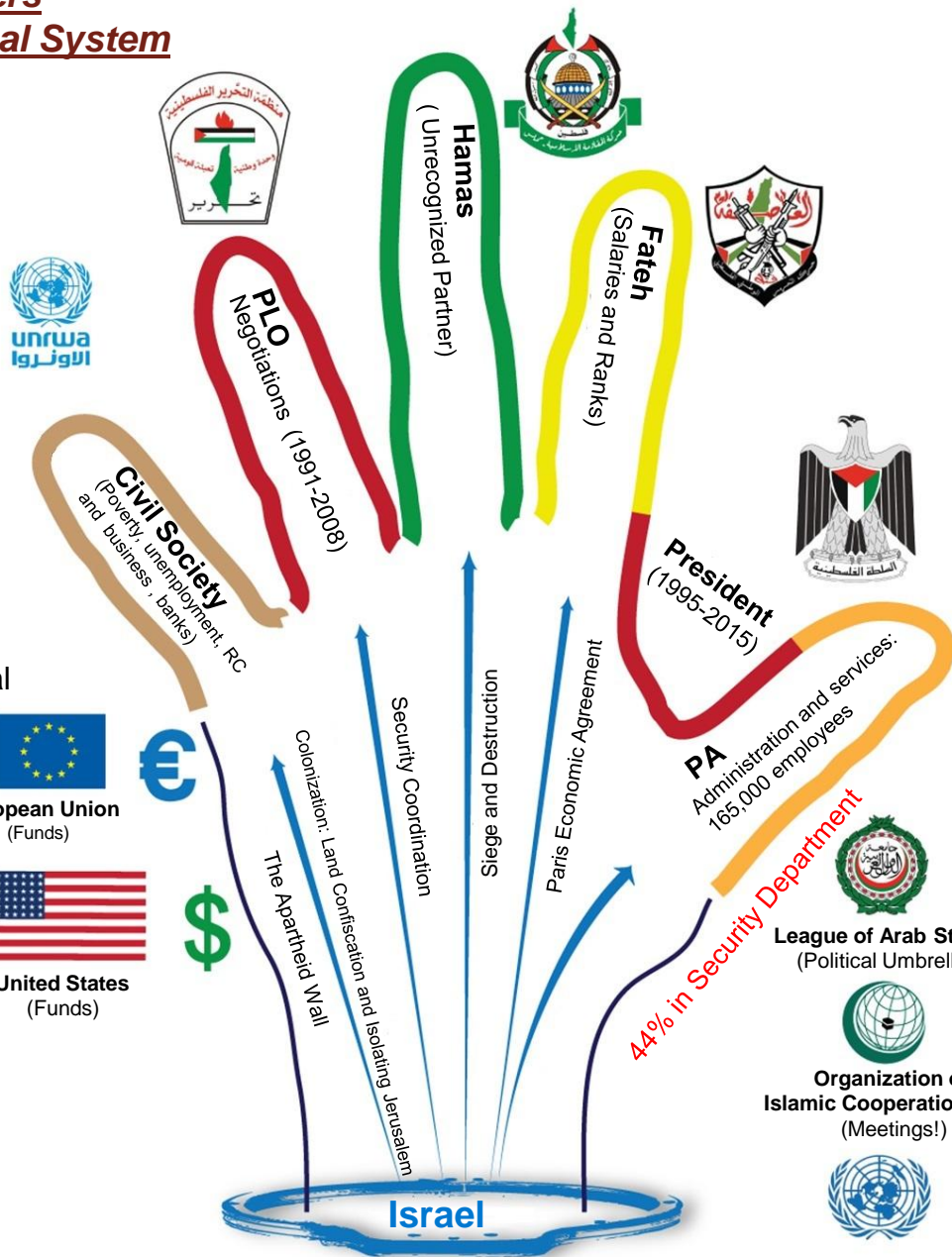
Five Major Internal Players in the Palestinian Political System

Jerusalem

From Religious and Historical Heritage To Israelization

West Bank

From: RC, H and Division
To: Business and Banks



Gaza Strip

From: RC, Tunnels and Division
To: Port and Airport

Diaspora

From: National Narrative and Nostalgia
To: Real Politics and Self Critics

After the Camp David Summit of mid-2000 failed to produce a final status agreement, partly due to continuing disagreement between the Israeli and Palestinian negotiators on the status of Jerusalem (see Map 59), US President Clinton outlined his position on the Jerusalem issue in his December 2000 'Parameters.' Clinton proposed an open and undivided city with assured freedom of access and worship for all, application of the principle of "what is Arab should be Palestinian" and "what is Jewish should be Israeli," and that sovereignty over the Haram Ash-Sharif/Temple Mount be treated symbolically. However, the subsequent January 2001 Taba talks also failed to bring about progress, and while the Clinton Parameters for Jerusalem were worked out into more detail during the 2007 Annapolis process with the introduction of an international custody scheme for Jerusalem's "holy basin," the failure of both sides to find a common definition of the "holy basin" meant that the issue of Jerusalem was still as far from a solution as ever (see Map 47). During the latest rounds of peace talks (2013/14) under supervision of US Secretary of State Kerry the issue of Jerusalem was discussed once again, but to no avail.

In July 2004, the International Court of Justice (ICJ) issued an advisory opinion to the UN General Assembly regarding the construction of the wall in the West Bank and East Jerusalem (see Map 39). It reiterated that East Jerusalem remains occupied territory, with the majority opinion of the court concluding that the route of the wall "gives expression, in loco, to the illegal measures taken by Israel with regard to Jerusalem and the settlements, as deplored by the Security Council," and therefore violates international law. Nevertheless, construction has since then continued unabated and as of 2014, the projected route for the barrier in the Jerusalem area measures some 168 km, of which only 3% lie on the Green Line.

On 13 September 2004, then mayor of Jerusalem Uri Lupolianski announced the United Jerusalem Town Planning Scheme, known as the Master Plan 2000, which treated the city as one urban unit under Israeli sovereignty (see Map 62). In line with the Plan's demographic aims and despite international condemnation, the Israeli settlement construction in East Jerusalem is ongoing, with a record high of over 2,500 new tenders approved during the Kerry peace process (see Map 49). East Jerusalem is dotted with settlement projects and the settler population continues to grow steadily: while there were a little over 170,000 settlers in 2000, by 2010, their number had increased by over 15% to almost 200,000. Recent estimates suggest that settlers in Jerusalem make up some 38% of the city's total Jewish population.

As of 2014, about 24,500 dunums of the total 70,500 dunums of East Jerusalem land have been confiscated for settlement construction, while only 9,180 dunums of it (or about 13%) have been zoned for Palestinian construction. Furthermore, Israel has been pursuing discriminatory policies that make it extremely difficult for Palestinians to acquire building permits due to high fees, long delays (up to ten years) and requirements for proving land ownership which are almost impossible to meet. Consequently, between 2005 and 2009 only 13% of Jerusalem housing units granted building permits were in Palestinian neighborhoods. This leaves Palestinians with two options: leaving the city or building without permission, the municipality and the Interior Ministry encourage the former by exercising a policy of housing demolition, targeting the unauthorized construction of Palestinians. As a result of this, over 500 Palestinian houses have been demolished since 2004, rendering more than 2,000 people homeless, including about 1,100 minors.

The inequality between Palestinian East Jerusalem housing and services and those provided the West and the Israeli settlements is stark and well documented. About 90% of the municipality's 4.7 billion budget in 2011 was allocated for West Jerusalem and settlements, only 10% was spent on Palestinian residents who make up over 36% of the city's population. Almost 90% of the city's sewage pipes, roads, and sidewalks are in West Jerusalem, as are about 1,000 public parks and 37 swimming pools – as opposed to only 45 parks and 3 pools in East Jerusalem. East Jerusalem has only two libraries and 33 sports facilities, while West Jerusalem has 26 and 564 respectively. Poverty is on the rise among East Jerusalem residents: it increased from 64% in 2006 to 79.5% in 2011 (and from 73% to over 85% for children). The comparative numbers for Israelis were - in 2010 - 30.8% of Jewish families and 45.1% of Jewish children. With building all but barred and services pointedly inadequate, Israel hopes to encourage migration out of the city. Its additional policy of Jerusalem ID card revocation is one of the methods through which it is able to render that departure permanent (see Map 56). As of 2014, 14,200 ID cards had been revoked from Palestinian residents since 1967 (if their dependent children are taken into account, the number of those stripped off their residency rights – and with it of social and health benefits – increases to over 86,000).

Other ongoing Israel policies include the expropriation of private Palestinian land and property, construction of the separation barrier, implementation of a closure regime, and development of a transportation system that ignores the planning interests of Palestinian residents. These measures involve further land confiscation, hamper Palestinian development, fragment and isolate Palestinian suburbs from each other as well as from the West Bank, and further weaken the possibility of East Jerusalem becoming the capital for the future Palestinian state.



April 2015

✓ The executive board of UNESCO adopted a resolution submitted by Jordan and Palestine that reaffirms the definition of Al Aqsa Mosque as the entire sacred complex surrounding it and that Bab Al-Magharbeh is an indivisible part of Al-Aqsa Mosque.

✓ UNESCO called on Israel to commit to international decisions related to the heritage of the Old City in Jerusalem and its walls, which has been on the World Heritage List since 1981 and on the World Heritage in Danger List since 1982.

✓ UNESCO also called on Israel to stop all actions impeding 19 projects implemented under the Hashemite rehabilitation projects of Al-Aqsa Mosque and to reopen the Bab Al-Rahma gate of the mosque.

✓ UNESCO urged Israel to end the forced entry of Jewish extremists and armed military personnel to Al Aqsa courtyards and their assaults on Jordanian Awqaf Department personnel in Al-Haram Al Sharif

✓ UNESCO called for stopping the transformation of various buildings and Islamic areas into synagogues, as well as the decisions to change the historical names of dozens of streets and archaeological sites to Jewish names.

Area: 900 Acres

Population: 39,865

316 Holy places located inside and outside the wall of the Old City
(Places of worship, religious schools, monasteries, residences, tombs, shelters)

25 Islamic mosques

65 Christian churches

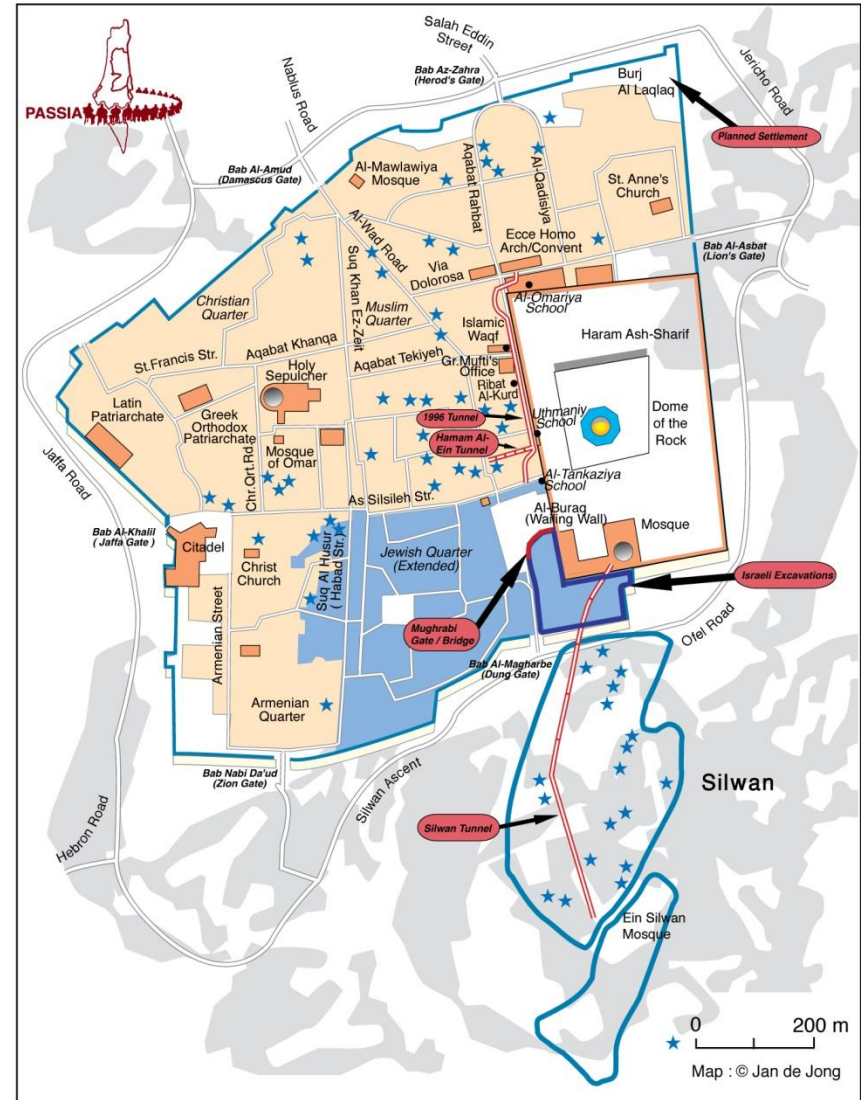
20 Jewish synagogues

500 closed security cameras
(monitoring places and protecting settlers)

2013: 3,329 Jewish residents
in the Old City

8% of the Old City population.

2014: around 1,000 Jewish settlers live in Christian and Islamic quarters



- Area expropriated for the reconstitution of an extended Jewish Quarter, 1968
- Properties taken over by Israeli settlers
- Major religious and public buildings
- Structurally damaged building
- Existing Israeli Tunnel
- Planned / Under Construction Israeli Tunnel



The historic role of the Hashemites in safeguarding and protecting the holy city of Jerusalem was established by Sharif Hussein bin Ali, who in 1922 contributed 24,000 Golden Lira to the restoration of the holy sites (especially Al-Qibli/Al-Aqsa Mosque) in Jerusalem. In March 1924 in Shunah, Jordan, under the pledge of Bay'at Ahl ul-Quds, an official Palestinian delegation expressed their full allegiance to Sharif Hussein as the only Muslim Khalifah who would protect, maintain and renovate the holy sites and the people of the sacred city. This custodianship over Jerusalem was consolidated following the 1948 War when the West Bank became part of Jordan. As the Bay'ah is still valid, the holy sites of Jerusalem remain under Hashemite custodianship until this day. The 1994 peace treaty between Israel and Jordan reiterated this by "respecting" Jordan's "special role" in the "Muslim holy shrines in Jerusalem" and giving it high priority in permanent status negotiations. Currently, Jordan decides on the Waqf's administration and Shari'a court judges in Jerusalem and the Palestinian Authority nominates and appoints the Mufti of Jerusalem. Between 1967-1987, Jordan contributed some US\$7.5 million to the preservation and restoration of Al-Aqsa Mosque and other holy sites in Jerusalem.

On 31 March 2013, King Abdullah II and Palestinian President Mahmoud Abbas signed an Agreement to Jointly Defend Al-Masjid Al-Aqsa that reemphasized the King's role as defender of the holy sites in Jerusalem, particularly the Haram Ash-Sharif, and recognized the role of Jordan as custodian of these sites. Any attempt to alter the 76 existing arrangements for worship or the regulation of visits to the compound therefore stirs confrontation with Jordan. Bilateral tensions reached a crisis point when Israel, following an assassination attempt on right-wing activist Yehuda Glick³⁶ in Jerusalem on 29 October 2014, ordered the complete closure of the Al-Aqsa compound for the third time since 1967. This move prompted King Abdullah to equate "extremist Zionism" to the extremist Islamic State (ISIS) group in his speech to the Jordanian parliament, while Palestinian President Mahmoud Abbas called Israel's move a "declaration of war".

However, although the Islamic Waqf authorities maintain nominal administrative control of the Al-Aqsa compound, Israel controls by military force access to its nine entry gates and can enter the compound at will.



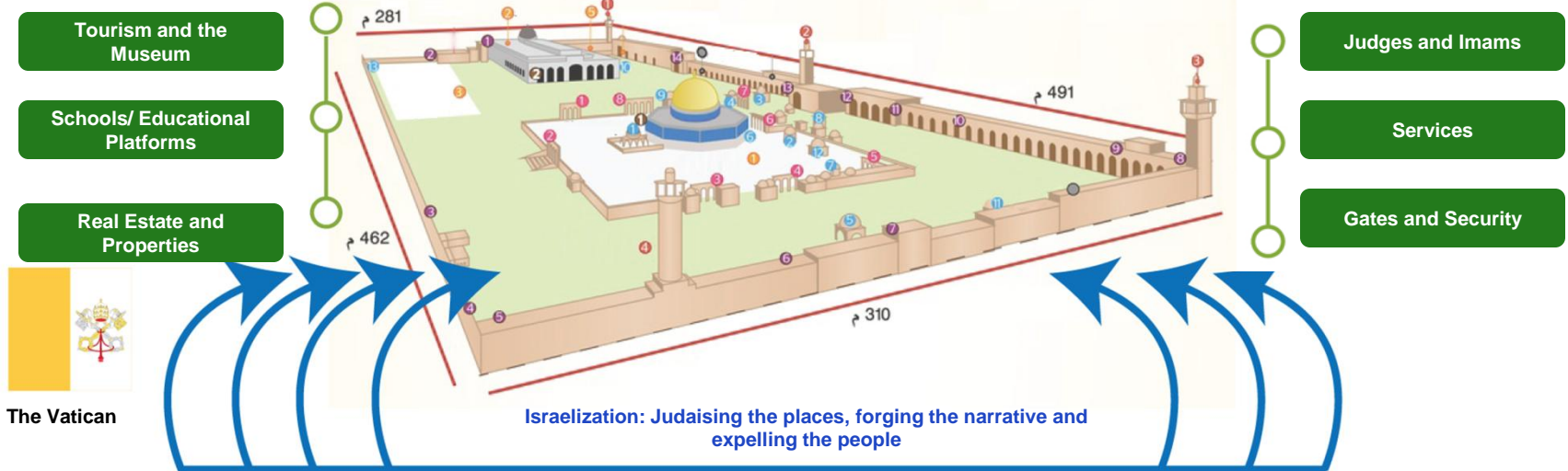
King Abdullah outside the Dome of the Rock (before renovation), 1948



President Abbas and King Abdallah signing the Agreement to Jointly Defend Al-Masjid Al-Aqsa, 2013



Custodianship over Holy Places



League of Arab States



Organization of Islamic Cooperation (OIC)



Ministry of Religion/ Regulations



Settlements Societies/ Religious Schools



Knesset Laws/ Israeli Courts



Parties and Organizations



Israeli Government
(The Policy of Israelization)



Ministry of Security/ Security Institutions
(Containment / Constraints/ Closure/ Detention)



Israeli Municipality of Jerusalem
(Planning/ Organizing/ Services)



The United Nations



European Union

Fifth

Palestinian Prisoners & Refugees

Total Political Prisoners:

6,700

- West Bank **3255**
- Gaza **365**
- Jerusalem **400**
- Palestinians inside Israel **100**
- Administrative **401**
- PLC Members **12**
- Women **25**
- Children (younger than 16 years) **164**
- Prisoners serving life sentences **495**
- Sentenced to more than 20 years **458**
- Served more than 20 years in prison **30**
- Served more than 25 years in prison **15**
- Detained before Oslo **30**

In the OPT, the fear of imprisonment is omnipresent. Everyday, there are new reports of Israeli arrest operations. The Palestinian Ministry of Detainees estimates that since 1967, Israel has detained and imprisoned some 800,000 Palestinians – one fifth of the Palestinian population living in the OPT.

Currently, there are 6,700 political prisoners in Israeli prisons, according to the Palestinian NGO Addameer. This includes 450 detainees held in administrative detention, 320 children, 41 women, and 5 Palestinian Legislative Council members.

According to Addameer, Israeli forces arrested 1,195 Palestinians in October 2015, including 177 children and 16 women.

Both the prisoner and refugee issues have yet to be grasped by US Secretary of State John Kerry, who has been advancing Kissinger's 1983 formula. This violates UN Security Council resolution 194 and international law, as well as brings despair to refugees and prisoners.

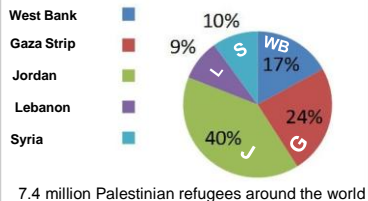
John Kerry's Scenario 2014

- "Returning" to the State of Palestine in the West Bank and Gaza Strip.
- Repatriation of refugees.
- Repatriation of refugees in a third country.
- The return of 80,000 Palestinian refugees to Israel.
- President Abbas asked to increase the number of returnees to 200,000.
- Land exchange (Giving the Negev to Settlers in exchange for giving up the demand to the Settlement Blocs and giving up the Right of Return).
- The issue of compensating Jewish immigrants from Arab countries was added.

Administrative Detention

Administrative Detention Administrative detention is a procedure that allows for detainees to be held without charge or trial. In most cases, prisoners are not informed of the alleged charges against them and detention is based on confidential materials not available to the detainee or their lawyer. Administrative detention was officially brought into effect in 1970 under Article 87 of Military Order 378 (and its various amendments), which authorizes a military commander to detain suspects on essentially the same basis and using the same procedure as under the 1945 British Defense (Emergency) Regulations, i.e., without bringing them before a judge.

Currently, administrative detention in the West Bank, excluding East Jerusalem, is carried out pursuant to the Order Regarding Administrative Detention No. 1591 (2007) that replaced Military Order 1226 (1988), which authorized military commanders to detain an individual for up to six months if there is "a reasonable basis for believing that the security of the region or public security" requires it. Detention orders are often renewed on or just before their expiration date - a process that can be continued indefinitely.



The Israeli-Palestinian Interim Agreement on the West Bank and the Gaza Strip (Oslo II), signed on 28 September 1995, created - as an interim, five-year measure - three distinct zones in the West Bank: Areas A, B, and C - each with different security and administrative arrangements:

- Area A: full Palestinian control; mainly urban areas (cities & towns, such as Hebron, Ramallah, Nablus, Tulkarem, and Qalqilya): PA police patrol the streets.
- Area B: Palestinian civil and Israeli security control; mainly villages on the outskirts of Area A cities.
- Area C: full Israeli military and civil control; includes settlements, roads, strategic areas, areas adjacent to Israel proper. Area C is home to 150,000 Palestinians in over 500 communities and to some 325,000 Israeli settlers in over 200 settlements and outposts. It holds 63% of the West Bank's most fertile and resource-rich lands and almost all of the Jordan Valley, which contains the largest (uninhabited) land reserves of the West Bank and much of its natural resources.

The Oslo Accords mainly aimed to gradually transfer Area B and Area C from Israeli to Palestinian control (Area A). However, since 1999, none of the land in Area C has been transferred to the PA, and the entire West Bank remains occupied territory with Areas A (17.2% of the West Bank) and B (23.8%) consisting of 227 non-contiguous enclaves, cut off from one another as well as from their land and other resources. Approximately 40% of Area C is privately owned Palestinian land on which illegal settlements have been built.

Israel retains full control over building and planning in Area C, leaving 70% of it (about 44% of the West Bank) classified as settlement areas, firing zones, or nature reserves and thus off limits to Palestinians. In the remaining 30% construction is heavily restricted, with less than 1% eligible for Palestinian development, of which a large portion is already built-up.

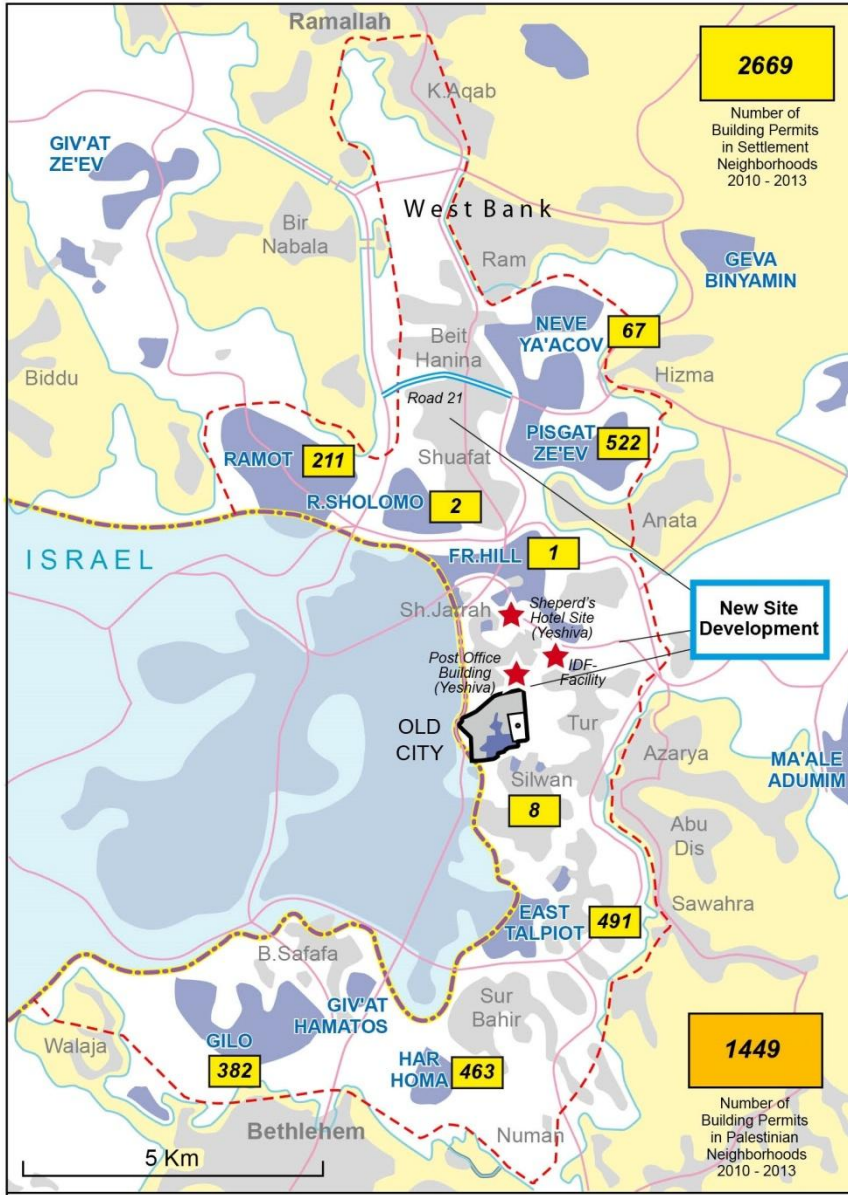
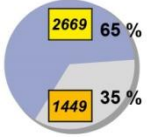
Israeli goals in Area C are clear cut: to drive out as many Palestinians as possible by making their lives so unbearable that they will seek a better livelihood in Areas A or B. On average, 500-600 Palestinian structures (shelters, water infrastructure, schools, clinics, storages and animal shacks) are destroyed annually in Area C, while the Israeli authorities are denying building permits for Palestinians. As a result any form of local socioeconomic development is severely hampered and thousands of Palestinians are at immediate risk of displacement.

With the exception of those located in East Jerusalem, all Israeli settlements are located in Area C; their actual municipal area comprises some 9.3% of the West Bank territory, but this figure grows to 40% if the settler road network and restrictions on Palestinian access to land are taken into consideration. The planned expansion area of the Area C settlements is nine times larger than their actual built-up area. In 2012, the settler population in Area C had more than tripled since Oslo, reaching 350,000 - more than double the Palestinian population of the area. Many of them live in remote areas and under substandard conditions with inadequate access to basic social services and assistance. However, Israel's policies in Area C also impact Palestinians from other areas who own land in Area C, or Area B residents who are encircled by Area C, and, more generally, the entire West Bank population which face territorial interruption and severe restrictions on access and development.

Many observers believe that Israel aims at an eventual annexation of Area C, with the remaining Palestinian population being possibly offered Israeli citizenship. The report of the government-appointed so-called Levy Committee, published in July 2012, recommended de facto annexation of more than half of the West Bank, concluding that Israel was neither an occupying power nor were the settlements illegal, and that outposts should be legalized. A recent poll conducted by Dialog, according to which a large majority of the Jewish public - 69% - objects to giving 2.5 million Palestinians the right to vote if Israel were to annex the West Bank, and 74% favor separate roads for Israelis and Palestinians in the West Bank. The survey indicates that a third to half of Jewish Israelis want to live in a state that practices formal, open discrimination against its Arab citizens. An even larger majority wants to live in an apartheid state if Israel annexes the territories.

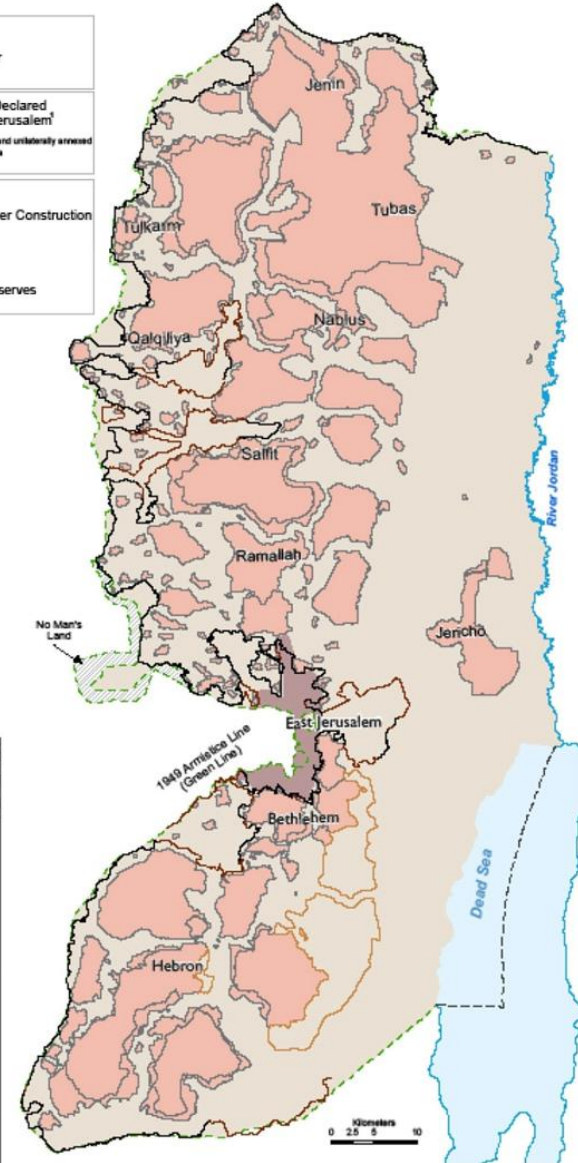
- Palestinian Localities
- Israeli Settlements
- ▬ Separation Barrier Trajectory
- - - Israeli Municipal Limit East Jerusalem
- Green Line
- Roadlink

Building Permits East Jerusalem : 2010 - 2013:
Israeli Settlement Neighborhoods /
Palestinian Neighborhoods



- Border**
- - - International Border
 - - - Green Line
 - Israeli Unilaterally Declared Municipal Area of Jerusalem
- Barrier**
- ▬ Constructed / Under Construction
 - ▬ Planned
 - Area (A), (B)
 - Area C & Nature Reserves

1. In 1967, Israel occupied the West Bank and unilaterally annexed to its territory 70.5 km of the occupied area



Map: © Jan de Jong

Israeli Wars After the Withdrawal of 2005

- **Cast Lead (*Battle of Al-Furqan*)**
December 2008 - January 2009
1,471 martyrs- 4,316 injured - Major destruction.
- **Pillar of Defense (*Hijara min Sijil*)**
14 - 21 November 2012
155 martyrs- hundred of injured people- Major destruction.
- **Protective Edge (*Al-Asf al-Maakoul*)**
8 July - 26 August 2014 (51 Days)
1900 martyrs- 9600 injured- Full destruction
(new catastrophe).
Egyptian ceasefire initiative.

The Strategy of the Israeli Army 2015

- Israel enemies: currently not neighboring countries.
- Israel enemies: ISIS, Hamas in Gaza Strip, Hezbollah in Lebanon.
- No mention of Iranian nuclear threat (security coordination and normalization with neighboring countries are open).
- Army Activities: large-scale aerial bombing/ targeting the north and Gaza Strip.

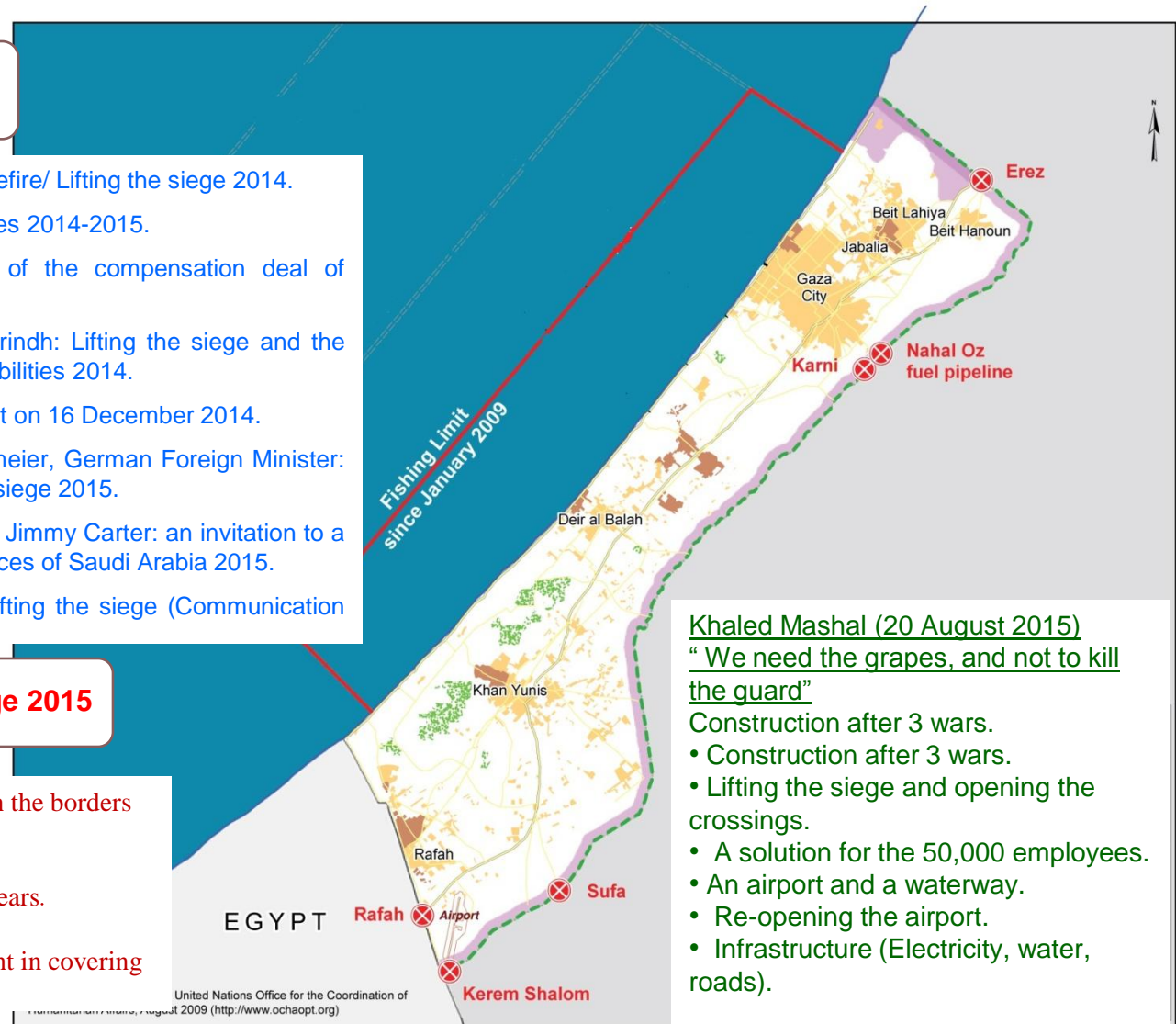


International Initiatives

- United Nations (Robert Serry): Ceasefire/ Lifting the siege 2014.
- Swiss Government: 50,000 employees 2014-2015.
- Turkey: Lifting the siege as part of the compensation deal of Marmara Ship 2014-2015.
- Norwegian Foreign Minister Borg Brindh: Lifting the siege and the construction are international responsibilities 2014.
- EU Court took Hamas off its terror list on 16 December 2014.
- The Initiative of Frank-Walter Steinmeier, German Foreign Minister: Ceasefire, negotiations and lifting the siege 2015.
- The initiative of former US President Jimmy Carter: an invitation to a reconciliation meeting under the auspices of Saudi Arabia 2015.
- Tony Blair: Ceasefire in return for lifting the siege (Communication with no agreement!) 2015.

The Ceasefire & Lifting the Siege 2015

- Hamas would stop building tunnels on the borders with Israel.
- Ending the firing of rockets.
- Agreeing to a ceasefire for at least 8 years.
- A waterway under full Israeli control.
- Regional and international involvement in covering the expenses of the waterway.



Khaled Mashal (20 August 2015)
"We need the grapes, and not to kill the guard"

- Construction after 3 wars.
- Construction after 3 wars.
 - Lifting the siege and opening the crossings.
 - A solution for the 50,000 employees.
 - An airport and a waterway.
 - Re-opening the airport.
 - Infrastructure (Electricity, water, roads).

Seventh

On Gaza Strip: (b) The Siege & Political Initiatives

Despite the improved security situation, the humanitarian and economic crisis in the Gaza Strip has continued to deepen, especially since July 2013, when Egypt's military overthrew the Muslim Brotherhood President Morsi in Cairo, and imposed the "toughest border restrictions on the Hamas-run Gaza Strip in years, sealing smuggling tunnels, blocking most passenger traffic and causing millions of dollars in economic losses." The tightening of the blockade by Egypt has led to a sharp increase in food prices as well as unemployment in the Gaza Strip, while the very limited operation of the Rafah border crossing has severely restricted the Gazans' access to health care in Egypt.

Furthermore, since the closing of the smuggling tunnels, which were used in part to bring Egyptian fuel into Gaza, there has been a chronic shortage of fuel in the Gaza Strip, causing its power plant to operate at about a third to a quarter of its capacity and even shutting down completely on a number of occasions. As a consequence of this fuel and electricity crisis in Gaza, the supply of running water has been very limited, with over 30% of Gazan households at times receiving water only once every four days for a mere 6 to 8 hours. In addition, water desalination units have been operating at below half of their capacity, a large number of medical machines have been out of order in hospitals, solid waste collection and management services are struggling to keep up with demand, and over 140,000 dunums of farmland used for food production are at risk of drought because the wells used to water the land require electricity to operate.

In addition, the Gazan economy continues to suffer from Israel's refusal to lift the blockade. While there was a slight increase in the number of truckloads entering Gaza from Israel in 2013 compared to 2012, the number of export trucks allowed into Israel declined significantly. As a result of the Israeli-imposed siege, living conditions in Gaza remain detrimental, and the future of the 1.8 million Gazans seems – in light of the ever worsening economic and humanitarian crisis – very bleak, with the number of food insecure households, amounting to 57% in 2012, expected to increase.



Political, Security and Economic Initiatives

Israeli Prime Minister, Benjamin Netanyahu

Herzliya Conference 2009

- Economic peace path.
- Israeli security- Reality of market/ isolating Gaza Strip.
- Economic prosperity.
- Joint projects: Agriculture/ industry/ tourism.
- Jordan can be an excellent partner.
- Canal Project (The Red Sea-The Dead Sea).

Secretary of State, John Kerry 2013

World Economic Forum in Jordan, May 2013

- Four billion US\$ investment in the Palestinian economy.
- Reducing the unemployment rate by about two-thirds.
- Promoting the development of the Palestinian economy in the eight key sectors.
- Raising salaries of Palestinians by 40%.
- Postponing the final-status issues (Jerusalem- refugees- settlements- borders- security- regional relations).
- A shared document signed by 200 Palestinian and Israeli businessmen at the World Economic Forum in Jordan in May 2013.

The concept of an “economic peace” goes back to the 1970s when Israeli Foreign Minister Shimon Peres supported the Benelux proposal for Palestine, Israel, and Jordan.

In the early 80s, it evolved into the idea of a shared economy. With Oslo in the 90s, the window was still open with regards to Jordan. The idea was to decentralize Jordan and establish five governorates there. The Paris Economic Agreement of 1994 between the PLO and Israel opened access between the OPT and Jordan through the opening of bridges over the Jordan River.

In the 2000s, Jordan proposed a socio-economic development plan which would link Jordan with the OPT. The reality on the ground was that the West Bank was cantonized into three cantons (Nablus, Ramallah, and Hebron), while 59% of the West Bank was held under Israeli military control. Headed by Benyamin Netanyahu, the Israeli government reshaped the Palestinian economy during the Herzliya Conference of 2009. This was reflected in John Kerry’s remarks at the World Economic Forum. 200 businessmen from Palestine, Israel, and Jordan later developed a shared plan to move the idea of an ‘economic peace’ forward.

The Settlers Rise to Power in Israel

For the first time since the establishment of Israel in 1948, the right wing settlers rise to power in the Israeli society and are represented in 29 members out of 120 in the Israeli Knesset, and 12 Ministers in the government. Netanyahu agrees on and supports the agenda of the right wing parties and groups as well as the settlers (colonizers) in the OPT. He managed to create a space separating Palestinians and Israelis, in his last eight years in office. This space of separation was materialized in the apartheid wall, as well as in the apartheid system governing the Palestinians in the OPT. This space has been governed by the agenda of the settlers in Occupied Jerusalem as well as the rest of the West Bank. It reflects their culture of hate, killing in cold blood, burning churches and mosques, uprooting trees, and creeping colonization.

Netanyahu reinforced this power with various “legal tools” for the implementation of their agenda. It is worth mentioning at a glance that Jewish extremists deeds at Al-Aqsa Mosque Compound, i.e. placing signs at the gates of Al-Aqsa mosque indicating that they are the gates of the “Temple”, show the Israeli attempts to change the face, the history and the name of the Jerusalem’s features.

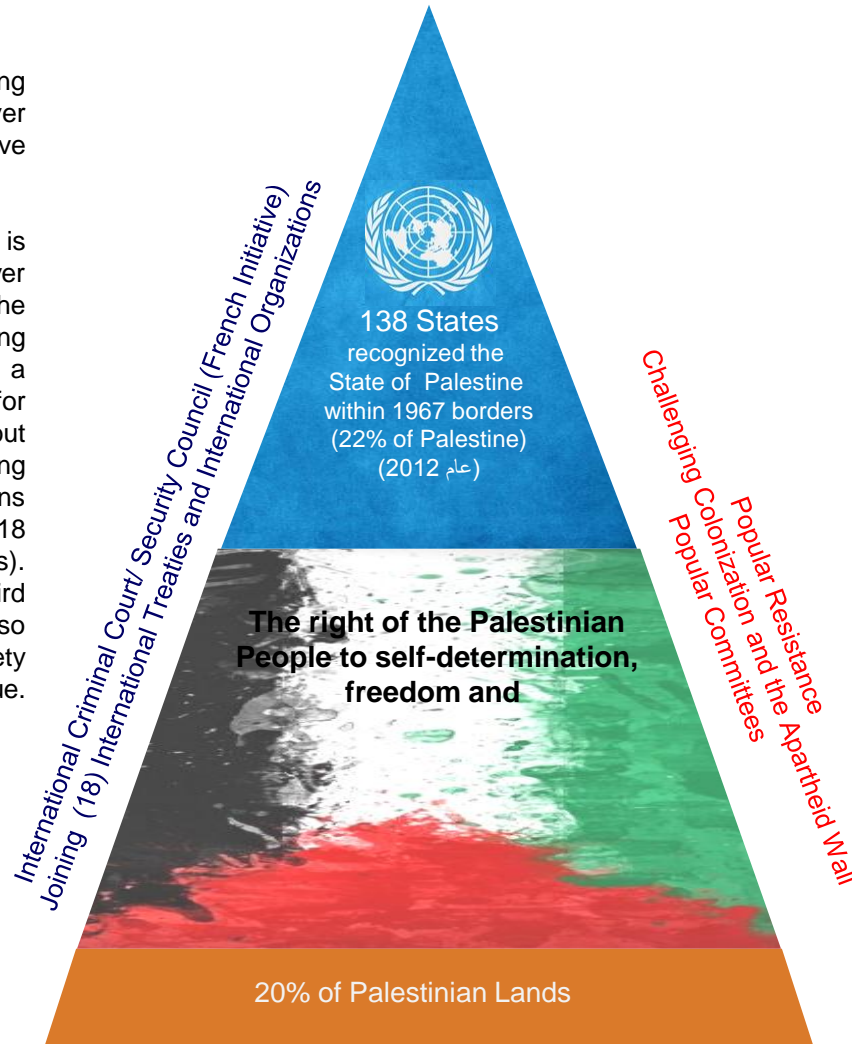
Closing the gates of Al-Aqsa as well as banning Palestinian worshippers from entering it, and facilitating the performance for religious rituals by Jewish extremists is an attack on the Islamic holy site, as well as an attack on the Muslim worshippers performing their five times day prayers, as well as an attempt to expel the people from their holy place. It is too wrong to fall in the trap of the Zionist vocabulary and to repeat their slogans or claims “to share or divide the Holy site”. It is a clear attack on Al-Haram Al-Shareef and on the Muslim worshippers.



| Israel 6 million Jews + 1.6 million Arabs | 2.6 Millions Palestinians | 650,000 Settlers |
|--|---|---|
| Citizenship | The law of 'restricting family reunification' prohibits Israeli citizens from having a family life in Israel in the case of marrying Palestinian citizens of the occupied territories, or nationals of enemy states. | <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. The Israeli citizens enjoy full rights. 2. The 'right of return' for every Jew to the State of Israel and granting automatic citizenship and settlement wherever he wants. |
| Use of Land | <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. The apartheid wall – 708 km. 2. Division of land between (a), (b), (c) and (d) zones with full security control. 3. Building and planning constraints according to Israeli policies only. 4. Isolating 1,800,000 Palestinians in the Gaza Strip. | <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. The confiscation of land and declaring it as "State land", and distributing it exclusively to settlements. 2. Forging land and property documents. |
| Water | <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Constant shortages in the water supply. 2. Restrictions and permits for water network maintenance and well drilling. 3. The confiscation of groundwater and the Dead Sea (40% within 1967 borders). | <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Enjoying all the rights and allowances as citizens of the state. 2. Special allowances for agriculture and well drilling. 3. Full control over the natural resources (salt and potassium). |
| Freedom | <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Israeli military law prohibits protesting and demonstrating, and the British Mandate Emergency laws are applied in arrests. 2. The constraints imposed by Israeli military law on the validities of the national authority. 3. A restricted and conditioned democratic system. | <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. The right to demonstrate and protest is granted by Israeli law. 2. The full right of participation (nomination and voting) in the national elections for the Israeli Knesset. 3. Recognizing the settlements' council as the ruling administration for the settlers. |
| Freedom of Movement | <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Personal permits for entering and leaving the West Bank. 2. More than 600 checkpoints, and emergency and permanent military inspection points. 3. Prohibiting traveling on the settlers' special roads. | <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Freedom of movement from and to the occupied territories. 2. Private detours. 3. Restrictions on entering area A. 4. Modern infrastructure. |
| Judiciary and Courts | <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Israeli military laws. 2. Israeli military courts and administrative detention. 3. Infringing on rights and the principle of public courts. 4. Residents in "Judea and Samaria" 5. Minors are arrested and being interrogated despite their age and are held fully responsible for their acts. | <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. The laws of the Sate of Israel. 2. In front of civil courts. 3. The right of defense. 4. Citizens in the state. 5. Minors under the age of 12 are not criminally responsible, cannot be arrested or interrogated. |

In 2012, Palestine succeeded in gaining recognition as a non-member observer state at the UN. 138 states have recognized the State of Palestine.

The Palestinian national agenda is made up of three layers. The first layer includes: pursuing accountability at the International Criminal Court; ensuring that the Security Council adopts a resolution which sets out a timetable for ending the occupation, with or without the French initiative; and joining international treaties and organizations (the PA has already joined 18 international treaties and organizations). The second layer is BDS, and the third is popular resistance. The PA is also seeking an annual \$100 million safety net from the Arab League.



BDS/ November 2007 Conference
Ending Security Coordination
Liberalization of Palestinian Economies/ Divestment and Sanctions



Arabic Umbrella
Safety net for 100 million US\$



United Nations
Security Council Draft Resolution

Setting a time limit to end the Israeli occupation with a view to the establishment of an independent Palestinian State with Jerusalem as its capital within the borders of the 4th of June, 1967.

As of the beginning of October 2015, historic Palestine especially Jerusalem has been witnessing a new movement led by Palestinian youth: a “youth uprising” against settlers and the Israeli military forces in an individual, unplanned and spontaneous manner. It reflects the anger and frustration of Palestinian society after four decades of Israeli policies and practices of dehumanization, occupation, Israelization and Judaization.

The “youth uprising” brought a new vision and mission to the concept of Palestinian steadfastness and resistance:

- Survival and resistance against attempts to expel Palestinians from their land, homes, mosques, churches, and places of worship and work, as well as the demolition of their homes, the isolation of their neighborhoods and the arresting and torturing of their children.
- Survival and resistance against the distortion of their national narrative and their historical culture, the desecration of their Islamic holy places as well as the closure of their national institutions.
- Survival and resistance against Israeli attacks on Al-Aqsa Mosque (Al-Haram Al-Sharif) and the closure of its main gates and banning the majority of people from praying at Al-Aqsa.
- Survival and resistance against the siege of Jerusalem and the banning of people from entering the holy city.
- Survival and resistance to protect their national identity as embodied in Al-Haram Al-Sharif as their national religious symbol.
- Survival and resistance with self-confidence, courage and accepting the consequences of their actions against Israelis with a smile!
- Survival and resistance of the youth with no affiliation with or loyalty to any party, faction, political address, claimed leadership or representatives!



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Examples of the Palestinian Youth Uprising

- The generation after Oslo who are between 12 and 20 years old stands up against the Israeli military forces and armed settlers. This generation might not know the details of the Palestinian historical narrative of the Nakba (catastrophe) of 1948, the June war of 1967, the first “white Intifada” of 1987 or the endless negotiation process of Oslo in 1993.
- However, this generation memorizes and recites the national poems of Ibrahim Touqan: **“My homeland, my homeland, the youth will not get tired, their goal is your independence, or they die... we will not be slaves to our enemies, we do not want, an eternal humiliation, nor a miserable life ... but we will bring back, our great glory.”**
- This generation was prevented from entering Al-Aqsa Mosque and its open courtyard. They have prayed in the streets of Jerusalem and watched armed settlers break into Al-Haram Al-Sharif under the guard of occupation forces on a daily basis during the past year and until today.
- This generation listened in astonishment to the allegations and “legends” of the Torah by Jewish fundamentalists. They witnessed images and models of the projects of building a “temple” in place of Al-Aqsa Mosque.
- This generation lost their space today and refuses to lose it tomorrow! The generation between 20 and 35 years old are concerned about the problems of their family, the closure and isolation of their neighborhoods and the arrest of the children of their neighbors.



Kindly supported by the Friedrich
Ebert Stiftung (FES), Jerusalem

Examples of the Palestinian Youth Uprising

- This generation initiated a social cultural campaign “Zidni” empower me with education, which was introduced in a human chain surrounding the old city of Jerusalem carrying books, reading and reciting poems of Mahmoud Darwish: **“O those who pass between fleeting words, it is time for you to be gone, live wherever you like, but do not live among us.”**
- A Palestinian martyr, Baha Eleyan, wrote on his Facebook page before he was killed: **“I ask the factions not to claim my martyrdom, I died for this land and not for any of them”. “If they wish to demolish my house, let them... The stone is not more valuable than the human soul.”**
- This generation threw stones, burned tires, attacked Israelis with knives, and were shot by live and rubber bullets.
- This generation formed civil society committees for defending Palestinian neighborhoods.
- This generation has danced in the streets of Ramallah to the melodies of Greek Zorba (pride and confidence), and raised the flag of Algeria (the country of one million martyrs) in their marches.
- This generation formed social cultural clubs and posted their frustration and anger on social media.
- This generation has drawn paintings and written national poems on Palestinian resistance over the past four decades.
- This generation asks not to be named as a number that is counted today (108 killed as of December) and forgotten tomorrow.

- This generation is challenged with the daily reality: no job, no travel, no marriage or no “license” to build their own houses. They searched for creative ideas that would allow them to build their future.
- This generation came up with the idea of building the Bab Al-Shams (the Door of the Sun) Village between Ramallah and Nablus in late 2014 and similar ideas in the Jordan Valley as well which all were demolished by the Israelis.
- This generation memorized the poems of Abu Al-Qasim Al-Shabbi from Tunisia: **“Whoever fears reaching the mountains will live forever in the valleys.”**
- This generation leads their own way without waiting for any leadership or guidance or representatives and struggles for their rights, dignity, and human values.



The Fall of Illusions: The Fall of Masks and the Revealing of Truth**The Fall of Illusions on the National Front:**

- 1) Ending the “sacred security” coordination with Israel.
- 2) Achieving national reconciliation and unity, and boycotting Israel (BDS).
- 3) Conducting general elections for the presidency, the legislative and national councils.
- 4) Re-activating the PLO charter, mission and political bodies.
- 5) Prosecuting Israeli leaders for war crimes and crimes against humanity.

The Fall of Illusions on the Political Front:

- 1) Establishing the Palestinian State in the West Bank and the Gaza Strip, with Jerusalem as its capital.
- 2) Sharing Jerusalem as an open, joint or international city and withdrawing from Palestinian neighborhoods.
- 3) Ending the siege, reconstructing Gaza and building an airport and a seaport.
- 4) Ending the settlement activities and the confiscation of land and properties.
- 5) Releasing Palestinian prisoners and detainees and implementing the signed agreements.

The Fall of Illusions on the Arab Front:

- 1) Implementing the decisions of the Arab League as a supporter of Palestinians on financial and political issues.
- 2) Re-establishing the brotherly relations with Egypt and reopening the Rafah Border Crossing.
- 3) Institutionalizing Jordanian-Palestinian relations on Jerusalem, as well as the Islamic Waqf Council.
- 4) Removing all unjust regulations over the residency, work, education, and movement of Palestinian refugees in Arab countries.
- 5) Ending the political and security Arab-Israeli normalization.

The Fall of Illusions on the Israeli Front:

- 1) Ending the illusions of “changing the historical status-quo” or sharing Al-Aqsa Mosque (Al-Haram Al-Sharif) with Israel.
- 2) Ending the illusion of citizenship in the State of Israel for Arab citizens.
- 3) Ending the illusion of the “status-quo” as being inevitable.
- 4) Ending the illusion of the American-Israeli economic solution to the conflict.
- 5) Ending the illusion of Israeli normalization with the region.

❖ To conclude, should we, Palestinians inside historical Palestine and in the Diaspora, call for, demand and work towards a new vision in Palestine on the basis of “bi-nationality” and continue challenging the Zionist movement in our homeland after more than 100 years of endless conflict?

❖ Should we search for a formula to maintain our rights on our land and holy places, especially Al-Aqsa Mosque (Al-Haram Al-Sharif), after all of this?

❖ Is there anyone who would share with me “ringing the bell” with the Palestinian youth uprising as well as with the embodiment of our aspiration, the PLO towards a new vision?