

LIVING PALESTINIAN

**ISRAEL PROJECT
UNCOVERED**

September 2016

 @nadplo
#LivingPalestinian



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DISAPPEARING PALESTINE

Pre - **1948**

1947

UN Partition Plan

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100%
Historic Palestine

44%
Historic Palestine

1967

Borderlines Endorsed by the PLO in 1988



22%

Historic Palestine

2016

Israeli Unilateralism



12%

Historic Palestine

INTRODUCTION

Have you ever wondered how Palestinians live under occupation? Or whether there is an airport in Palestine? Can you imagine life with illegal settlers next door?

Living Palestinian is a compilation of accounts that illustrate how the Israeli Occupation affects the daily lives of Palestinians. In the following pages, you will find activities that people experience all over the world, from starting a family, to building for tomorrow, to connecting online. However, in Palestine, almost every action is controlled by the Occupation.

By illustrating the effect of Israeli policies on the lives of Palestinians, we hope to convey the sense of urgency to end the Occupation. The international community has a central role to play, and together, we must envision a future in which Israelis and Palestinians live side by side, as equals, not as occupier and occupied.

Before starting your journey through this guide, it may be helpful to understand a few basic concepts.

Where is Palestine?

Historic Palestine refers to a geographic area between the Jordan River and the Mediterranean Sea that, prior to 1948, was called Palestine. United Nations General Assembly Resolution 181 (II) partitioned Historic Palestine into two states: Palestine and Israel.

Today, the occupied State of Palestine sits on just 22 percent of Historic Palestine, including the West Bank, Gaza, and with East Jerusalem as its capital. The *1949 Armistice Demarcation Line* is the internationally recognized border between Israel and the occupied State of Palestine. In this document, the term Palestine will be used interchangeably with the *occupied State of Palestine*.

Who are the Palestinians?

Before 1948, Palestinian Jews, Christians, and Muslims lived side-by-side in Historic Palestine, under the rule of the British Mandate. As a result of the *Nakba* (the Catastrophe) of 1948, Zionist militias destroyed or depopulated 432 Palestinian villages and forcibly displaced more than 800,000 Palestinians from their land, initiating the Palestinian exile. This amounted to approximately 80 percent

of the total Palestinian population of what is now known as Israel,¹ in addition to the displacement of over 300,000 more Palestinians in 1967 and the destruction of 100 additional Palestinian villages. Today, there are more than 12 million Palestinians around the world, including 2.9 million in the West Bank, 1.9 million in Gaza, and another 1.5 million in Israel.²

Are all Palestinians treated equally?

Israel has direct control over the lives of nearly 6.5 million Palestinians, both in Israel and the occupied State of Palestine. Each Palestinian is assigned an identification number issued by Israeli Ministry of Interior that affords them varying rights, depending on whether they live in the West Bank, Gaza, East Jerusalem, or Israel.

1 Zochrot (al-Nakba)

2 Palestinian Central Bureau of Statistics (PCBS), On the 68th Anniversary of the Palestinian Nakba, May 2016



LONGING FOR HOME

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The creation of the State of Israel in 1948 resulted in one of the world's largest refugee populations in modern history and displaced more than 800,000 Palestinians. During the 1967 war, another 200,000 Palestinians became refugees, some of them for a second time.

The original Palestinian refugees and their descendants are estimated to number more than 7.7 million.³ These refugees are denied the right to visit their families, property, and ancestral homeland. This is despite the fact that they possess land, homes, and titles to property in Historic Palestine. Meanwhile, the Israeli Law of Return allows any Jew, irrespective of direct lineage, to emigrate and live in either Israel or Palestine (by residing in illegal settlements).

Do refugees have the right to return?

Yes. In response to the mass expulsion and displacement of Palestine's refugees in 1948, the United Nations General Assembly passed Resolution 194, which states:

"[Palestinian] refugees wishing to return to their homes and live at peace with their neighbors should be permitted to do so at the earliest practicable date."

However, Israel continually disregards international law and UN resolutions, and have not allowed Palestinian refugees to return to their homes.

What happened to their homes?

In total, more than 500 Palestinian villages and towns were destroyed or resettled in an attempt to erase any evidence of a non-Jewish history, thereby changing the historical narrative of the land. Many destroyed Palestinian villages were rebuilt as Israeli towns and given Hebrew names. Today, historic streets, neighborhoods, and religious sites have been renamed to reflect a Zionist narrative.

³ PLO-NAD, Info-Graphic: Recognize the Nakba, 2013

Munther in Aida Refugee Camp

Munther lives in the Aida Refugee Camp. His grandparents were forced to leave their hometown of Deiraban. Munther explains how the right to return was passed down from his grandfather, to his father, and now to him.



Where are you from?

I am from the town of Deiraban, which is south of Jerusalem.

When did your family leave Deiraban?

About six months after the Nakba, on October 18, 1948, my grandfather was forced to leave for the safety of his family. He took only a few belongings with him, including the key to his home and deeds to his land. I still have the key and deeds he carried on that day.

My grandparents knew a family in Beit Sahour who initially took them in, but they could stay for only so long. They have been in this refugee camp ever since.

Can you describe what it was like growing up in a refugee camp?

The refugees here are from 27 different towns from across Historic Palestine. Some families were previously among the aristocracy, while others were farmers. What makes life here unique is that despite the poverty and lack of space, there is a strong sense of community. Each person here carries with them a deep-rooted hope that they will soon return to their hometown. My grandfather was always convinced that he would return. He passed this down to my father, who then passed it down to me.

What does the key at the entrance to the camp symbolize?

For the 60th anniversary of the commemoration of the Nakba [in 2008], we wanted to send a message to the world that we have lived 60 years in exile as refugees. So we came together and decided to make the largest key in the world. We placed this key at the entrance of the camp, and today, this has become a symbol for the right to return of all refugees. Although the key is just a piece of steel, it has brought tears to the eyes of many people.



STARTING A FAMILY

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Israel controls where Palestinians can live, travel, and work, which they determine by the type of identification card Palestinians are forced to carry. Palestinians either carry an ID card from the West Bank, Gaza, Jerusalem, or Israeli citizenship, depending on their location when Israel occupied the West Bank and Gaza in 1967.

The *Citizenship and Entry into Israel Law* prevents Palestinians with different citizenship or residency statuses from marrying and living together. For the past 15 years, Israel has frozen family reunification as part of a policy to force Palestinians to seek alternative residency. This policy enables Israel to maintain demographic control and often forces Palestinian families out of the country altogether.

Palestinians living in East Jerusalem only have the legal status of permanent residents and must abide by unreasonable residency requirements that do not apply to Israeli citizens. Israel can arbitrarily strip Palestinian from East Jerusalem of their residency at any time if they do not meet these requirements. Since 1967, more than 14,000 Palestinians from Jerusalem have had their permanent resident identification cards revoked, which has been deemed the “silent deportation” or “silent transfer”.⁴

What is the goal of residency requirements in Jerusalem?

Israel’s explicit and unapologetic aim with these East Jerusalem policies is the preservation of a Jewish demographic majority in Jerusalem. The *Jerusalem Master Plan 2020*, also known as the *70:30 Plan*, aims to reduce and maintain the Palestinian population to a 30 percent minority and expand and maintain a 70 percent Jewish majority in Jerusalem.

How can families live together?

Some Palestinians with Jerusalem IDs choose to live in neighborhoods such as Kufr Aqab, which Israel has declared under its Jerusalem municipal boundary (in violation of international law), but accessible from the West Bank. This means that married couples from the West Bank and Jerusalem can live together without risk of having their residency revoked.

4 BADIL, Working Paper, Forced Population Transfer: The Case of Palestine, 2014



Zainab in Kufr Aqab

Zainab⁵ is from Jerusalem and her husband, Fadi, is from the West Bank. She tells us how they sought a more comfortable life together, and as a result, her Jerusalem ID is at risk of being revoked.



Where do you live?

I grew up in the Wadi al-Joz neighborhood in Jerusalem. When Fadi and I got married, we moved to Kufr Aqab because he couldn't live in Jerusalem, but I wanted to keep my residency ID. After a few months, we found life [in Kufr Aqab] unbearable, so we decided to move to a neighborhood just 10 minutes away, which is considered outside of Jerusalem boundaries, as defined by Israel. Life here is safer, cleaner, and more affordable, but it is not considered to be in Jerusalem.

How was life in Kufr Aqab?

We thought that living in Kufr Aqab would be the solution for our situation. But the lifestyle was really unbearable. Not only is the rent expensive, but there are shootings at night, which scare the children.⁶ It is not safe and we were not happy living there.

Why did you risk leaving Jerusalem?

Life needs to go on. It felt as though we were suffocating. It felt as though Israel wanted us to get divorced. But we are very happy together. We are a family. And life must go on despite the Occupation.

My Jerusalem ID is under investigation since I was not living in the Jerusalem municipality. This means that I no longer receive national insurance. If my Jerusalem ID is revoked, I will have to ask the Israeli military for permission to enter Jerusalem and I will no longer be considered a Jerusalemite.

⁵ The individual's name has been changed for the sake of privacy.

⁶ Note: The inability of Palestinian law enforcement forces to exercise jurisdiction over Kufr Aqab, and Israel's disregard for its duty as the occupying power to provide basic services and to protect the civilian population, Kufr Aqab suffers from an absence of basic law and order.



BUILDING FOR TOMORROW

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In 1995, as part of the Peace Process, the West Bank was divided into three temporary zones (Area A, B, and C) with varying levels of Israeli occupying forces control. One of these zones, Area C, covers over 60 percent of the West Bank and the Israeli occupying forces controls all aspects of daily life. This division was intended to be in place over a temporary 5-year period until a final status agreement was reached. Twenty-three years later, and with no end to the Occupation, these classifications continue to be imposed.

Israel restricts Palestinians from building on land in Area C. If a Palestinian owns land classified as Area C, they are not permitted to build homes, schools, or businesses without a permit from Israeli occupying authorities. The process of applying for a building permit is ambiguous, costly, and rarely successful. Only 1.5 percent of permit applications were approved between 2010 and 2014. Therefore, many Palestinian families choose to build on their land without a building permit, even though it means their home may be destroyed by Israel. More than 14,000 demolition orders have been issued against Palestinians, targeting already vulnerable Palestinian households.⁷

Are home demolitions legal?

Article 53 of the Fourth Geneva Convention states:

“Any destruction by the Occupying Power of real or personal property belonging individually or collectively to private persons...is prohibited[.]”

Can settlers build in Area C?

Notwithstanding restrictions on building permits for Palestinians, Israeli settlers are almost always granted building permits despite their illegal status.

⁷ UNOCHA, In the Spotlight, Demolition Orders in Area C of the West Bank, 2015



Alia in Nabi Samwel

Alia is an elementary school teacher in the village of Nabi Samwel. The village dates back to 800 B.C. and sits on the tallest mountain in Jerusalem, and is accessible only through an Israeli checkpoint. As a result of the construction of the Annexation Wall, Israel isolated the village from its surroundings. The local school has been unable to expand because Israel refused to issue a building permit. She tells us how the school thrives despite this.



How long have you been teaching in Nabi Samwel?

I have been teaching here for two years now. Every morning, I drive through an Israeli checkpoint to get to work. The trip should take me 15 minutes, but with the traffic at the checkpoint, it easily takes me an hour. Despite this, I really enjoy teaching the students here. The majority of families are farmers and the students live a very simple lifestyle.

Can you tell us about the school?

The school started in one room and four grade levels were taught here. There was no playground or courtyard. The principal worked very hard to make it feel more like a school. They were eventually able to add some grass and a playground. It took many years for us to add the two additional classrooms.

Had the school applied for a building permit?

We had previously applied for a building permit for the expansion but were unsuccessful. These trailer classrooms were donated through a Jordanian initiative. Thanks to them we now have three separate classes.

Every action we take in the school requires a permit. We received a permit saying that we could put a patch of grass in a specific area. When we relocated the patch of grass, it required another approval. And each approval has a cost.

Why are there so few students?

The town is mostly filled with older people. Newlywed families are unable to build a home here, which forces them to live elsewhere. To repair something in your home even requires a permit, which is almost never granted. Many families are leaving due to the lack of living space and other difficulties. It is very important for the children to have a school here. I consider my work here as a teacher a form of resistance.



HARVESTING THE FIELD

Agriculture is one of the main sectors where you will see the economic effects of the Occupation. In 1994, the agriculture sector contributed 13.3 percent of GDP. As a result of restrictions, by 2014, this figure declined to 3.9 percent.⁸

A significant cause of these losses is the Annexation Wall, which Israel began constructing in 2002. This concrete structure reaches eight-meters high in some areas, giving the effect of an open-air prison and annexing 10 percent of the West Bank.⁹

As a result of the Annexation Wall, many farmers have lost access to their privately-owned land and are required to have a special permit to farm the land. While Israel sometimes installs agricultural gates

⁸ PCBS, Value Added by Economic Activity and Region for the Years 1994-2014 at Current Prices
⁹ B'TSELEM, January 2011



along the Annexation Wall, farmers have to travel long distances, often on unpaved land, to access these gates, and entry can still be denied by Israelis. Moreover, Israel has outright confiscated land along the route of the Annexation Wall and uprooted many ancient olive trees to pave the way for its construction.

Is the Annexation Wall legal?

In 2004, the International Court of Justice stated that the Annexation Wall is a violation of international humanitarian law and must be dismantled immediately.

Is the Wall built on the internationally recognized border?

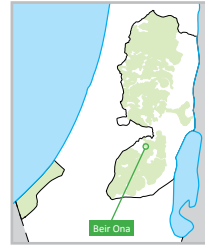
No. Israel strategically located the route to create a de facto border, annexing natural resources and entrenching illegal settlements. Approximately 85 percent of the route is inside the West Bank, not along the 1949 Armistice Line (Green Line).¹⁰

¹⁰ UNOCHA, July 2012



Abu Nicolas in Beir Ona

Abu Nicolas (Issa) lives in the town of Beit Jala, west of Bethlehem. His family's land falls right along the path of the Annexation Wall. He tells us how the olive trees, which have been on his family's land for generations, were uprooted to pave the way for the Annexation Wall.



Can you tell us about your land?

For generations, my family has harvested land in the town of Beir Ona. The olive trees on this land were not planted by my grandparents, nor their grandparents, but were hundreds and hundreds of years old.

Growing up, the annual olive harvest was a joyous time. During this season you would see the entire community out in the field, as if it was a wedding — with everyone celebrating. We had some of the largest trees in the region, and there was one that took me and my brothers two entire days to harvest. The land offered us a source of income, but it was also the focal point of our lives.

When were you informed that your land was going to be confiscated?

In 2003, an Israeli military order was left on our land. It said that our land was being confiscated to pave way for the route of the Apartheid Wall.

What type of action did you take to try and appeal?

The community here in Beit Jala has been organizing peaceful protests for years, which include children, the elderly, and the Church community. I would bring my children to these demonstrations so that they would know that they have the rights to this land. Despite the peaceful nature of our protests, we were often met with tear gas. We also tried to appeal through the legal courts.

Were you successful in protesting the confiscation of your land?

Unfortunately, we were not successful. On August 17, 2015 at 7:15 am, bulldozers arrived to uproot the trees on our land. This is a timestamp that is forever imprinted in my memory. That morning, we watched generations be uprooted from our land. And there was nothing that we were able to do.

Our land was stolen in the 21st century. The crime was documented on camera. And yet, the world was unable to do anything.



ACCESSING WATER

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Israel currently exploits over 90 percent of all transboundary water resources for exclusive Israeli use, and allocates less than 10 percent for Palestinian use. As a result, each Palestinian receives an average of less than 73 liters per capita per day for domestic purposes, versus 183 liters per capita per day for an average Israeli.¹¹ .

Water is a central component to human life and the equitable and reasonable allocation of water is required for a successful two-state solution. The UN Committee on Economic, Social and Cultural Rights (UNESCO) has noted:

“The human right to water is indispensable for leading a life in human dignity. It is a prerequisite for the realization of other human rights.”

Do Israelis and Palestinians share water?

Israel has complete control over water resources and deprives Palestinians of access to an equitable and reasonable share of transboundary shared water, in violation of international law.

Do Palestinians receive enough water?

The Palestinian water allocation has not changed since 1967. Any water network project, including drilling, requires multiple Israeli permits which take years to obtain, if they are obtained at all. As a result, many communities are forced to purchase water from the Israeli company, Mekorot, at high commercial prices.

11 B'TSELEM, Water Crisis, Discriminatory Water Supply, 2014

Abu Saqer in al- Hadidiya

Abu Saqer lives in a town called al-Hadidiya, in the Jordan Valley. He explains how he is forced to purchase water for consumption, despite the abundance of natural water sources in the area.



Can you describe life in al-Hadidiya?

al-Hadidiya is an ancient Palestinian town here in the Jordan Valley. We are mostly animal herders. Today, we are in the middle of what Israel calls a “military zone.” Israel uses this title as an excuse to destroy homes, prevent us from building anything, including a school in the community, and from accessing the natural water nearby.

What happens to the natural water in the area?

There is an abundance of natural water here. There are multiple water wells in this area, but Israel sealed them shut and we are not allowed to access them. Instead, the Israeli settlements nearby are able to access the water from these wells that are on our ground. The water pipes move below our home. We can hear it flowing, but we are unable to drink it.

How does your family acquire water?

Families here are forced to purchase water, which costs 27 NIS (USD 7) per cubic meter. A private company comes about once per week and fills the tanks.

There is no running water because Israel does not allow us to build a direct pipeline.

Are there days when there is no water available?

If the water finishes early, then my family has to wait until the next delivery of water. This is especially difficult for the animals. We cannot just call the water company to deliver water. There have to be enough families that need to purchase water because otherwise it will not be worth it for them to make trip out here. Even though there are abundant water wells near our home, we cannot access them and must instead wait for the water to be delivered from a private company.



WALKING IN YOUR NEIGHBORHOOD

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LIVING PALESTINIAN, ISRAEL PROJECT UNCOVERED



There are more than 600,000 Israeli settlers in the West Bank in violation of international law. Israel's illegal settlement regime, including the Annexation Wall, expropriates approximately 46 percent of the West Bank.

As a result of the illegal settlement activity across the West Bank, Palestinians are at constant risk of settler violence. More than 11,000 settler attacks against Palestinian have been reported since 2004, including the arson attack in 2015 that killed the Dawabsheh family while asleep in their home.

Settler-related violence is rampant in Hebron, where the presence of a few hundred Israeli settlers dominates the lives of 40,000 Palestinians.¹² Life in the Old City of Hebron is segregated, with "Jewish only" roads and areas, which are off-limits to Palestinians. As a result, 40 percent of the original residents have abandoned their homes and many businesses have shut down operations in the once bustling center of economic activity.

Are settlements legal?

The 2004 ICJ Advisory Opinion stated that Israel's Annexation Wall and its associated regime of settlements, infrastructure, and Israeli-only roads constitute grave violations of international law and Israel's obligations as an occupying power.

Moreover, the illegality of all Israeli settlement activities is firmly established and has been repeatedly reaffirmed and embodied in various UN resolutions, including UN Security Council Resolutions 252, 267, 271, 446, 452, 465, 471, 478, 672 and 904, among others.

Does the Israeli government support settlers?

Since 1967, successive Israeli governments have constructed, funded, subsidized, and supported the expansion of Israeli settlements in Palestine, particularly in East Jerusalem. This includes the facilitation and even encouragement of transferring Israeli citizens to occupied Palestine and tax exemptions for settlers.

Has Israel stopped building settlements in the West Bank?

Despite pressures from the international community to cease all settlement construction and expansion, Israel continues to approve illegal settlement expansion.

12 UNOCHA, November 2013

Zleikha on Shuhada Street

Zleikha is a kindergarten teacher living on Shuhada Street in the Old City of Hebron. She tells us about her childhood in Hebron and the constant harassment from settlers in her neighborhood.



How is the Hebron of today different from that of your childhood?

I have vivid memories of growing up next door to the Ibrahimi Mosque, which my family was given the honor to protect. We would spend our days racing along the steps and sitting in its shade.

Today, I live surrounded by Israeli violence. I cannot take a single step in my own neighborhood without someone asking me where I am going. Between the checkpoints, settlers, and Israeli soldiers, you cannot enjoy the beauty of the Old City anymore. I always say we signed a “piece” deal, not a peace deal, which merely divided our land.

What is life like for children growing up in Hebron?

Life in Hebron today involves a constant state of fear. We opened a kindergarten in my building because the children were not safe walking to school. We try very hard to make the kindergarten a happy place where the children can feel safe, which is rare here.

How does the segregation of the Old City affect your daily activities?

The Israeli military welded my front door shut because it is on a settler-only road. If I were allowed to access this road, it would have taken me just three minutes to meet you here. Instead it took me 25 minutes. I placed a sign beside my sealed front-door that says ‘Apartheid Road’ so that those using this road see the injustice. The Israeli settlers do not like being forced to see this while they pass my home.

Can you tell us about your “neighbors”?

My neighborhood is filled with settlers, and despite the fact that my family has lived here for over 500 years, it is clear that they do not want me to live here.

One day I left the window open by mistake and I came back to my home completely vandalized. Now I have wire fencing covering my windows and balcony. I live under constant threat and there is no one to protect me from this harassment. But despite this, I will continue to live in my home as long as I have the strength and ability to do so.



FINDING SAFETY

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LIVING PALESTINIAN, ISRAEL PROJECT UNCOVERED



Israel has been acting to forcibly transfer and expel 46 Bedouin communities in order to expand its major settlements in the center of the West Bank under plans such as the “E1” Settlement Plan. Many of the communities under threat are refugees who were expelled from their villages and homes in 1948.

Located in Area C, only half of these communities have been connected to the public water network, while none have been connected to the public electricity grid. Building permits are typically refused by the Israeli Civil Administration and the vast majority of homes are subject to pending demolition orders. In addition, the Annexation Wall and expanding settlements block access to crucial grazing land. There is constant harassment and violence from settlers and the Israeli occupying forces. The cumulative result is a desperate living environment accompanied by the ever-present threat of removal.

Why is the “E1” Settlement Plan dangerous?

The danger of the “E1” settlement plan rests on the fact that it fragments the land of Palestine and consolidates linkages among Israeli settlements and between them and Israel proper. The “E1” settlement plan obstructs territorial contiguity between the north and south of the West Bank, in addition to facilitating the forcible transfer of Palestinian communities. It will deprive Jerusalem of the last remaining territory to accommodate the natural population and economic growth of the future capital of the State of Palestine.

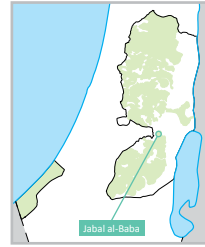
How does this plan affect Palestinian communities?

For the purpose of expanding its settler-colonial enterprise and emptying Jerusalem of its indigenous population, the Israeli government has stepped up its systematic onslaught against Palestinian Bedouin communities. Israel has been severely targeting these vulnerable communities in an effort to forcibly transfer and expel them a second time.



Yusra and Atallah in Jabal al-Baba

Yusra and Atallah live with their five children in Jabal al-Baba. They tell us what it is like raising a family under the threat of forcible transfer and the role of the international community in resisting a second Nakba.



Can you tell us about the Bedouin communities in Palestine?

Our livelihood is based on raising animals. The lifestyle of Bedouin communities is already difficult, but the Occupation makes it even more difficult. The community here used to have over 3,000 livestock. Today, there are less than 400.

What are the Israeli policies that affect your life?

There are many. For starters, as we sit here, there is a chance a military jeep will pull up. They have been coming almost weekly.

When the soldiers arrive in the middle of the night, it scares the children. Our family received a home demolition order, and my youngest son frequently asks when they are coming to destroy our home. I cannot lie to him and tell him everything will be okay, because he sees what is happening to our community.

What is the role of the Vatican here?

There is a piece of land on this mountain that belongs to the Vatican, which is why this area is known as Jabal al-Baba (The Pope's Mountain). The Catholic Church has allowed us to conduct various community activities here. We built a medical clinic and a small hostel for visitors. We are able to build here without the threat of Israel destroying it because of the Vatican's influence. If we were to build on another piece of land here, it would be destroyed.

Having the support of the Vatican and international community is very important. When solidarity activists come and stay with us here, they play a critical role in documenting what is happening on the ground. We had a group of internationals visiting when the Israelis came and destroyed five homes in May.

Does your family fear being forcibly transferred?

My family has already fled Bir al-Saba in 1948 and relocated here. While we like to think that we will remain forever, if one day the Israelis come with trucks and force everyone out, there is nothing we will be able to do in the face of such force.

That is why we are working hard to make sure that it does not come to that point. We are trying to draw the attention of the world to the community here and the risk that we face. I was born on this land and there is a strong force connecting me to each stone and each tree on this land.



SPEAKING UP

Palestinians continue their struggle for independence through civic engagement and nonviolent resistance. There are regular demonstrations in towns such as Bilin and Nabi Saleh, where Palestinian, Israeli and international activists come together to protest Israel's illegal activities.

Because of the breadth of Israel's definition of "security," Palestinians can be arrested and imprisoned for virtually any form of public activity, whether or not they actually present a "security threat". The practical implication of these broadly-defined offenses is the criminalization of many aspects of Palestinian civic life including, but not limited to, freedom of assembly.

Palestinians in the West Bank and Gaza are tried in military court and can be held under "Administrative Detention" for indefinite periods of time without being informed of the reason of their detention. While detainees may appeal their detention, neither they nor their attorneys are provided access to the State's evidence, making it very difficult for them to refute allegations against them. Faced with a partial legal system, many political prisoners have resorted to hunger strikes in order to raise international awareness to Israel's unjust and discriminatory policies.



Is non-violent resistance legal under Israeli military law?

For instance, Israeli Military Order 101 states that it is

“forbidden to conduct a protest march or meeting (grouping of ten or more where the subject concerns or is related to politics) without permission from the Military Commander.”

It goes on to broadly define incitement as

“any person who attempts, orally or in another manner, to influence public opinion in the region in a manner that is liable to harm public safety or public order.”

Such definitions are so broad that it virtually means that any Palestinian who engages in nonviolent form of protest could be arrested and detained and convicted for public disorder and incitement. Since October 2015, Adameer has recorded more than 200 cases of arrest including children on the basis of incitement. These arrests were largely based on Facebook posts.

Can Palestinians be held without trial?

Administrative Detention allows the Israeli occupying forces to hold detainees indefinitely based on “undisclosed information” without charging them for a crime or allowing them to stand trial. Under Israeli law, Administrative Detention orders may last up to six months at a time, and are renewed automatically.

The practice of administrative detention as exercised by Israel is illegal under international law. Israel uses administrative detention as “a quick and efficient alternative to criminal trial”, circumventing international procedural protections for the accused. Detainees are not informed of the reason for their detention. While detainees may appeal their detention, neither they nor their attorneys are allowed to access the State’s evidence, making it very difficult for them to refute the allegations against them.

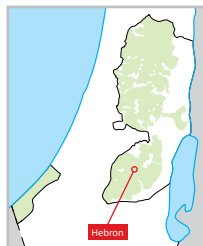
Are children also arrested?

Between 500 and 700 Palestinian children are arrested by Israeli occupying forces annually, some as young as 12 and 13 years old. As of April 2016, 414 children remain in Israeli prisons.¹³ Almost all child detainees have reported some form of torture or mistreatment, whether physical (beatings or being placed in painful positions) or psychological (abuse, threats or intimidation).

¹³ Defense for Children International (DCI) –Palestine, Children in Israeli Detention, 2016.

Issa in Hebron

Issa has been organizing non-violent resistance to the Occupation since he was in college and was arrested over 100 times. He explains how the Israeli legal system hinders peaceful resistance, and how he continues to organize despite this.



What was your first experience organizing against the Occupation?

In 2002, Israel closed our university in Hebron with a military order. Together with some classmates, we organized protests to reopen the school. Six months later, we were back in class.

What kind of activities are you involved with today?

The latest campaign I am working on is called 'Youth Against Settlements' which is a nonviolent direct action group that seeks to end the building and expanding of illegal Israeli settlements through popular struggle and civil resistance.

We organize a number of activities here in Hebron, such as protecting evacuated homes that are at risk of being taken over by settlers. There was a home that was evacuated and we turned it into a kindergarten. We also protect families. If a family is threatened in the middle of the night, they contact us and we are able to immediately mobilize members of the community.

Under what charges were you recently arrested?

I likely have one of the largest Israeli military arrest files in the West Bank. I have been arrested over 100 times. The arrests were on charges such as organizing protests, attending protests, incitement, and entering closed military zones.

Nothing is permitted to combat the Occupation, even if it is peaceful. Military Order 101 bans all civic activity against the Occupation. And as a Palestinian, I am tried in a military court while the Israeli settlers living in my neighborhood are tried in a civilian court.

Is nonviolent resistance effective?

Of course – Palestinians are calling for freedom, equality and justice. The ability to share our story is critical. In 2006, we distributed cameras to families to document Israeli human rights offenses. At first, many families were scared to accept the camera in fear of the consequences. However, these cameras have been able to capture the human rights offenses happening here in Hebron and we have shared our footage with sources such as the AP and Reuters.

Israel pretends to have a just legal system, but its legal system is, in fact, racist. It aims to protect the occupying power, and under this law, I am guilty until proven innocent.

Issa is currently scheduled for his next court date on September 25, 2016, with 18 charges that include three counts of "organizing an illegal demonstration."



CONNECTING ONLINE



Attack in Hebron

in Herod's Gate 0.52 km N of the Old City / Jerusalem

in Dar Salim 5.85 km E of Bethlehem

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LIVING PALESTINIAN, ISRAEL PROJECT UNCOVERED

Sign in

Mass Media Watch

- 1948 The first Israeli military operation in the West Bank, Al-Nabi Saleh, near the Jordanian border.
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In a time when technology is revolutionizing economies around the world, Israel prevents the use of 3G and 4G data services on Palestinian networks due to “security concerns.” Although 3G was introduced in Israel in 2006, Palestinians are still restricted to sluggish 2G technology, which was developed in the early 1990s for limited web browsing.

These Israeli restrictions contradict the Oslo Agreement which states,

“Israel recognizes that the Palestinian side has the right to build and operate separate and independent communication systems and infrastructures.”

Despite this agreement, the Palestinian people do not have access to an independent telecommunications network. The World Bank estimates that restrictions on the mobile sector have resulted in more than \$1 billion in losses in just the past three years.¹⁴

Beyond the direct losses to the telecommunications sector, the lack of high-speed data services in occupied Palestine restricts the development of the technology sector and prevents startups from developing applications that could make life a little bit easier.

Is access to communication a right?

In 2011, the Broadband Commission for Digital Development, International Telecommunication Union (ITU) and UNESCO issued a statement affirming that communication is a right and urged countries to make access to broadband infrastructure a top policy priority.¹⁵

Does Google Maps work in Palestine?

Without high-speed data, you can only access Google Maps when connected to Wi-Fi, not while driving in your car.

¹⁴ World Bank, Telecommunication Sector Note: Missed Opportunity for Economic Development, 2016

¹⁵ Broadband Commission for Digital Development, Statement, Geneva, October 25, 2011

Laila and Hussain in Ramallah

Laila and Hussain are the co-founders of the startup RedCrow, a startup that uses open source data to provide risk mitigation solutions across the Middle East. They tell us how restrictions in the telecom sector have affected their startup, and how the tech scene is overcoming such challenges.



How did the idea for RedCrow first begin?

Hussain has a background in security studies, and I (Laila) have a background in social media and marketing. We had talked for a while about creating a system that could automatically monitor security alerts coming from social media and other open sources to offer a risk mitigation solution to organizations. In August 2014, we decided to build RedCrow.

What makes the system unique?

RedCrow is unique in that it combines technology with local expertise. We monitor both English and Arabic content to hear what people are saying. Our real time text alerts tell people what is happening where, and how to avoid it. We are starting in Palestine, but the plan is to expand to other volatile countries across the Middle East.

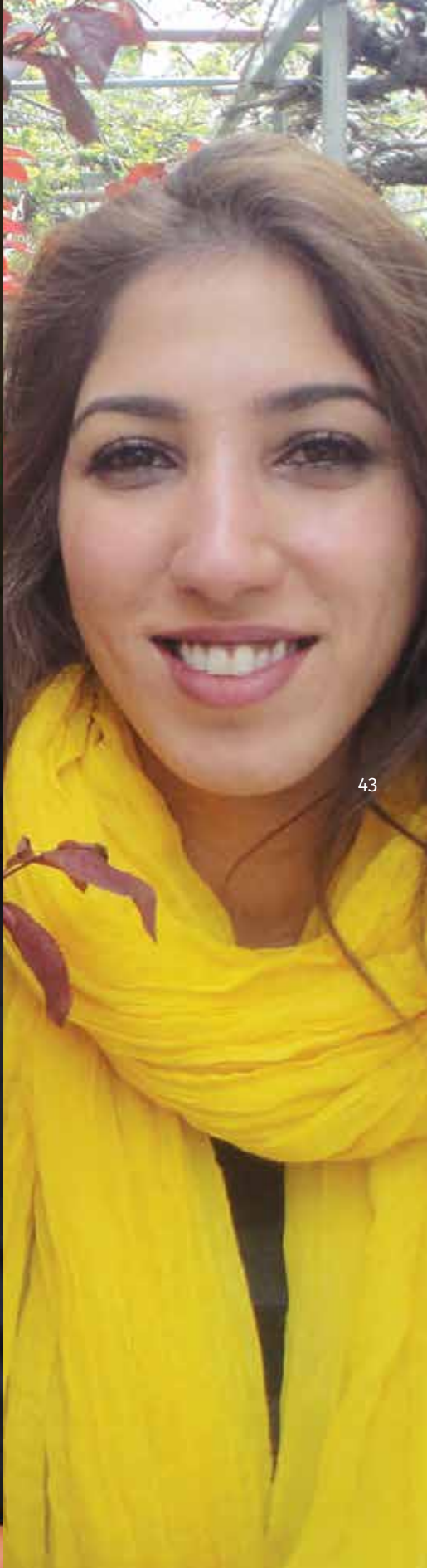
Social media has created a fundamental change when it comes to information. Rather than needing to confirm an event from a single source, we now have overwhelming amounts of information that needs to be processed.

How does the lack of high speed data (3G/4G) affect your product?

It affects how our clients can use the product. As long as there is a Wi-Fi connection, which is what Palestinians overwhelmingly rely upon, the app works fine. When there isn't Wi-Fi, it switches to SMS texts to deliver the real time alerts. As we expand to other countries, we don't anticipate facing this problem.

Can technology overcome barriers to the Occupation?

The Palestinian tech scene is becoming more competitive, but we still face obstacles that are the result of living under Occupation. For example, you don't have the ability to interact with different communities and access certain resources. Despite this, you see some great talent emerging. Developers specifically have been able to use open source to advance their work and compete globally. There is a young generation of entrepreneurs that are working hard to build that one success story that comes from Palestine.



SURVIVING LOSS

Children in Gaza under the age of 10 only know a life under siege. Home to 1.9 million Palestinians, of which over 70 percent are refugees forcibly displaced by Israel in 1948, Gaza is an integral part of the occupied State of Palestine. Israel, the occupying power, has imposed a full blockade on Gaza and subjected the civilian population to 9 years of extreme hardship and devastation. The spatial distribution of Palestinians in Gaza amounts to 5,070 Palestinians per square kilometer¹⁶, making Gaza one of the most densely populated areas in the world, and as a direct result of the Israeli blockade, Gaza has effectively become the largest open-air prison in the world.

Moreover, although Gaza encompasses an area of approximately 365 square kilometers, Israeli-imposed “buffer zones” have reduced the spatial accessibility. According to the World Bank, this has further restricted the 1.8 million Palestinians in Gaza to 160 square kilometers.¹⁷

16 Palestinian Central Bureau of Statistics (PCBS), On the 68th Anniversary of the Palestinian Nakba, May 2016

17 World Bank, Economic monitoring report to the ad hoc liaison committee, 2015

Israeli restrictions on the movement of people, goods, severe restrictions on fishermen in violation of signed agreements, coupled with three violent and bloody Israeli military assaults in 8 years has devastated Gaza, and is directly responsible for killing almost 4,000 Palestinians and the wounding of tens of thousands.

The Israeli siege is an act of collective punishment and has currently been in place since 2007. Israel's restrictions on Palestinian access and movement into and out of Gaza date back to 1991. It has prevented people from rebuilding after the devastating Israeli military aggression of 2008, 2012 and 2014.

Today, Gaza faces a dire economic crisis. Unemployment is at 43 percent, reaching 60 percent among youth – the highest in the world¹⁸. At least one-third of Gaza's farmland are wholly or partially inaccessible due to the Israeli siege. Coupled with Israeli arbitrary limits of Palestinian fishing access to three or less nautical miles from the shore, food insecurity has increased significantly. Imports and exports are severely restricted as part of Israel's "economic warfare" policy. As a result, 90 percent of Gaza's factories are closed or working at minimum capacity.

Civil infrastructure in Gaza is on the verge of total collapse. Today, approximately 90 to 95 percent of drinking water in Gaza is unfit for consumption, while there are electricity cuts of 8 to 12 hours a day.¹⁹ A United Nations study has warned that, if the siege continues, Gaza will be uninhabitable by 2020.

Did Israel withdraw from Gaza?

While Israel evacuated the settlers living in Gaza in 2005, it retained control over Gaza's sea and air space, as well as the land crossing with Israel. It also redeployed its ground troops along Gaza's borders. This has resulted in the continued Israeli control over Gaza and its population.

Is the blockade legal?

The *UN Fact Finding Mission on the Gaza Conflict* ("Goldstone Report") concluded that Israel's blockade over Gaza is executed for political reasons and "constitutes collective punishment of the civilian population of the Gaza Strip." Collective punishment is prohibited under international law.

Can people travel to Gaza?

Access in and out of Gaza is restricted to just three crossing points. The Karem Abu Salem (Kerem Shalom) and Beit Hanoun (Erez) crossings are under Israeli control, and the Rafah Crossing is controlled by Egypt. The Rafah Crossing is frequently closed, and Palestinians in Gaza require a permit from Israel to leave or enter through Erez. Requests for these permits are regularly denied. Similarly, people who are not residents of Gaza require a permit to enter. These permits are given in only rare circumstances.

18 World Bank, Press Release, May 21, 2015.

19 B'TSELEM, Over 90% of Water in Gaza Strip Unfit for Drinking, 2014

Musa in Gaza

Musa and his family live in the neighborhood of Shujaiyya. Their home was destroyed in the 2014 Israeli military aggression on Gaza. He tells us about how life in Gaza is getting more difficult by the day and his longing to return to the days before the Israeli-imposed siege.



What do you do for a living?

I used to work as a contractor, but am currently unemployed. I had a small factory before the Israeli siege on Gaza, but you can no longer find materials, so we were forced to shut down. Currently, we depend on assistance and handouts.

Can you tell us about Israel's military aggression in 2014?

Before 2014, we had already lived through two Israeli military aggressions. But this was the most difficult attack for our family, by far. We not only lost our home, but also the lives of loved ones.

When we were told to evacuate our home, we were unable to bring any belongings with us. We took shelter in a nearby school. I had expected some damage to our home—maybe a broken window or two. But I was not prepared to see our home completely destroyed. There was a six-meter hole and all the homes in our neighborhood were completely destroyed—you didn't know which home was yours.

We didn't have any charges against our family. The Israeli warplanes did not discriminate. Everyone was targeted.

How were you able to rebuild your home?

For a period after the attack, we were temporarily staying in a school. There were 20 to 30 families to a room. It took a while for us to secure the raw material and building permits needed. I started rebuilding my home on April 1, 2015 and it took exactly one year for us to finish.

Since moving into our new home, it feels like life is starting to return to normal. And I pray that everyone else will be able to rebuild their homes and can start their lives anew.

What is your hope for Gaza?

I hope for one thing, it is for peace and that the attacks end so that no one knows what it feels like to lose their home. Before Israel's attack, I had never taken a handout. Now we depend on charity since there is no other source of income.



TRAVELING ABROAD

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LIVING PALESTINIAN, ISRAEL PROJECT UNCOVERED



Palestinian borders are administered by the State of Israel, which control the complete movement of people and goods in and out of Palestine. There is an additional crossing with Egypt, which is currently closed and only opens on rare occasions.

For those carrying travel documents from the West Bank or Gaza the most difficult barrier to travel is the time consuming and burdensome departure and entry procedures imposed by Israel, which often include restrictions on entering/exiting the country and detention. The King Hussein Bridge (Allenby) is the main point of entry/exit for Palestinians (except for the Rafah crossing in Gaza – when open) and the trip involves being transported by bus between the Jordanian, Israeli, and Palestinian terminals, security screenings, as well as waiting in line for several hours to show your travel documents at each. Palestinians are required to go through these procedures whenever entering or leaving, which can take up to a full day.

International visitors are often aggressively interrogated for many hours, or in some cases, denied entry altogether, despite the fact that their governments share strong diplomatic ties and visa arrangements with Israel (e.g. United States and European Union). While most of those affected are either of Palestinian or Arab origin, or solidarity advocates, any visitor can be denied entry without being given a clear reason.

Does Palestine have an airport?

Palestinians from the West Bank and Gaza are not permitted by Israel to use Ben Gurion Airport (Tel Aviv). Instead, to enter Palestine, they must first fly into either Jordan or Egypt, and then cross into Palestine via the land crossings. This is despite the fact that prior to the Occupation, two Palestinian airports existed in the West Bank and Gaza, and were subsequently shut down and destroyed, respectively, by Israel.

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Is the crossing with Jordan open 24 hours?

Hours of the border crossings are determined by Israel. The crossing is generally open from 07:30 to 21:30 from Sunday through Thursday and 07:30 to 13:00 from Friday through Saturday. During peak travel seasons, the terminals have limited capacity to accommodate the number of travelers, and administrative procedures can take an entire day, with travelers sometimes sent back or some, with nowhere to go back to, are forced to sleep at the border.

Are travelers denied entry on the basis of ethnic origin?

International visitors are sometimes denied entry upon arrival or banned from entering the country for periods of up to 10 years at a time. This is a common experience for those of Palestinian origin and has been protested by the United States. In August of 2015, the United States Department of State spokesperson, John Kirby stated,

“[T]he US Government remains concerned at the unequal treatment that Palestinian-Americans and other Arab-Americans receive at Israel’s borders.”

Christina in the Homeland

Christina²⁰ was born in Latin America and moved to the West Bank eight years ago. She recounts her travel experiences to Palestine and efforts to apply for a Palestinian identification card.



When did you first travel to Palestine?

My first trip to Palestine was at the age of 14. Although I was born in Latin America, my parents kept us connected to our land through summer trips to visit family. We have olive trees that have been in our family for generations and my parents wanted us to know that this was our home.

My grandparents left Palestine in 1950 due to the economic hardship after the Nakba. They started a new life in Latin America, but always believed they would return. Then one day, when my grandfather went to the local Israeli embassy to ask about visiting, he was asked to sign document in Hebrew. He couldn't read Hebrew, but signed it, thinking it was for his visa application. Without knowing, he had actually relinquished his residency rights.

As a Palestinian living in Palestine, what is your status?

I have applied for a permanent residency in the West Bank. However, Israel no longer issues these identity cards for political reasons. I am from the occupied West Bank, which should be under Palestinian rule. I am not from areas that are now in the state of Israel. I should be able to get my ID from the Palestinian government.

Since I don't have a Palestinian ID, I continue to live here on my foreign passport. This means that I rely on short-term visas from Israel to enter. Visas are usually issued for a 3-month period, but sometimes my visa is issued for only 1 month.

Have you ever been denied entry?

Yes. In 2008, I was denied entry at Ben Gurion Airport near Tel Aviv. I was flying back from visiting my family to experience Easter in Palestine for the first time. At the airport, instead of receiving a visa, I was denied entry. Before being put on a flight back to Europe, I was interrogated for hours, like a criminal. My passport was taken and not returned until I arrived in Madrid. There, I was held in a facility and detained in the airport, but eventually allowed to fly to Jordan. Since then, I always fly to Jordan and cross at King Hussein Bridge. I feel a constant panic that I will be denied entry one day. And there is nothing that I would be able to do about it.

20 * This individual's name has been changed for the sake of privacy.



A WAY FORWARD

Since 1988, the Palestine Liberation Organization (PLO) has recognized the State of Israel and proclaimed the independence of the State of Palestine on the portion of land occupied by Israel in 1967, constituting only 22 percent of Historic Palestine. With the goal of a two-state solution, the PLO went on to sign the Declaration of Principles and Interim Agreements (Oslo Accords) in 1993. This historic agreement resolved to phase out Israeli occupation over five years during which time the parties committed to reaching a final status agreement that would end the Occupation and establish the Palestinian state.

Twenty-three years later, the prospects for peace seem further away than ever. Despite the grim reality, despair is not an option for Palestinians. The pursuit of inalienable national rights for self-determination and independence remains their steadfast goal. Palestinians carry an international vision for peace that calls for:

- Two states living side by side in peace and within secure and mutually recognized borders
- Respect for international law and relevant UN resolutions
- Ending the Israeli Occupation that began in 1967 of the West Bank, including Gaza and East Jerusalem
- A just and agreed-on solution to the plight of refugees based on UN Resolution 194

The breakdown in negotiations has come down to the three main areas:

	<i>Palestinian position calls for...</i>	<i>Israeli position objects that...</i>
Borders	...the 1967 borders and a territorial link connecting the West Bank and Gaza.	...a Palestinian state based on these lines would leave Israel vulnerable to attacks.
Jerusalem	...East Jerusalem as the capital with guaranteed access to the religious sites for everyone to worship freely.	...East Jerusalem was officially annexed after 1967, and as Judaism's holiest city, it must remain unified.
Refugees	...a just solution based on the right to return and reparations for all refugees.	...the right of return would threaten the Jewish nature of Israel's demography.

Similar to previous conflicts in history, negotiations will be challenging, but not impossible. A just and peaceful solution will require strong leaders that are capable of making tough decisions.







CALL TO ACTION

A bilateral process between a powerful occupying power and a people under occupation has proven to be a failed formula. For this reason, the Palestinian people have turned to the international community.

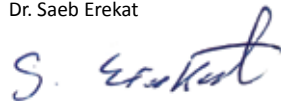
The international community has a critical role to play to ensure that Israel upholds basic tenants of international law and is held accountable for its actions. Recognition of the State of Palestine by the UN General Assembly on November 29, 2012 (Resolution 67/19) was a positive step in this direction. It not only reaffirmed the right of the Palestinian people to self-determination in a state of their own, but also provided hope to the Palestinian people at a moment where the lack of international will and Israel's culture of impunity were slowly ending the hope for a just and lasting peace.

The French Initiative is another glimmer of hope. The international conference is an opportunity to create a negotiating environment in which power is equalized, where international law and human rights prevail. It is a long overdue commitment by the international community to compel Israel to accept its responsibility as the occupying force and recognize that the way forward is to implement the two-state solution before it's too late.

We envision a future where two sovereign and democratic states can live side by side in cooperation, peace and security – two states that will provide equal rights for all their citizens without discrimination. Palestinians seek to continue advancing toward independence through non-violent means, and solidarity activists around the world are central to such movements.

Next year marks 50 years of the Israeli Occupation in the West Bank and Gaza, as Palestine marks 70 years since the Nakba soon after. Next year will also mark 100 years since the Balfour Declaration – the promise which sealed the fate of Palestinians worldwide from one colonial power to another – and ushered in an era of belligerent military occupation. Let this year be the last anniversary of the Occupation and the first celebration of a future where peace reigns in the Holy Land.

Dr. Saeb Erekat



Head of Negotiations Affairs Department
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