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## مجموعة الرقابة الفلسطينية



### PALESTINIAN MONITORING GROUP

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## TREND ANALYSIS

### ISRAELI SEPARATION WALL ACTIVITY SINCE UNITED NATIONS GENERAL ASSEMBLY RESOLUTION ES-10/13 OF 21 OCTOBER 2003

#### Background

On 21 October 2003, the United Nations General Assembly passed by 144 to 4 votes Resolution ES-10/13, entitled "Illegal Israeli Actions in Occupied East Jerusalem and the Rest of the Occupied Palestinian Territory". According to operative paragraph 1, the General Assembly

*Demands* that Israel stop and reverse the construction of the wall in the Occupied Palestinian Territory, including in and around East Jerusalem, which is in departure of the Armistice Line of 1949 and is in contradiction to relevant provisions of international law.

Since the date of the Resolution, Israel has neither stopped nor reversed the construction of the separation wall. Instead, physical construction has continued particularly in the Governorates of Qalqilya (around Baqa Sharqiya) and Jerusalem (around Sur Bahir, Abu Dis, Al 'Eizariya and Al Sawahira—where by 9 November the separation wall had reached a height of 3 meters). Furthermore, separation wall activity has continued in a number of other forms, including land confiscations, demolition orders, and the implementation of a recently established permit system in a Closed Zone between the separation wall and the Green Line.

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## Summary of Trends

Israeli land confiscations since 21 October 2003 correspond to the second phase of construction of the separation wall, approved by the Israeli Cabinet on 1 October 2003.

Earlier land confiscation in the Governorate of Bethlehem was enforced for the purposes of continuing construction of the Jerusalem separation wall section that is surrounding Bethlehem.

Land has been confiscated in the Governorate of Ramallah/El Bireh for the extension of the separation wall southwards and for the creation of an enclosed enclave around villages west of the municipalities of Ramallah and El Bireh.

Land has been confiscated for the purposes of construction of the eastern separation wall in the Governorates of Jenin and Jericho. These land confiscations indicate that the separation wall will extend southwards from the completed sections of the first phase, continuing the encirclement of areas to be enclosed within the West Bank. The land confiscations also indicate that the separation wall will extend eastwards to the Jordan River sealing the northern West Bank.

Israeli demolition orders issued since 21 October similarly correspond to the second phase of construction of the separation wall, approved by the Israeli Cabinet on 1 October. In particular, demolition orders issued in the Governorate of Jenin further indicate that the route of the eastern separation wall will extend southwards from the completed sections of the first phase.

Implementation of the Israeli permit system in the Closed Zone—between the separation wall and the Green Line—introduced in October 2003, has continued since 21 October. There is inconsistent application of the system throughout the Closed Zone. In many villages to date approximately five per cent of residents have not received permits, while the number is higher in other places, ranging from fifteen to seventy-five per cent. A number of farmers are reducing or giving up cultivating crops due to lack of access. In some cases, villagers have objected to the permit system and refused to accept permits issued, resulting in harsh punitive closure measures. Both the denial of permits and the required acceptance of permits are features of controlling the Palestinian presence in the Closed Zone.

The permits are issued for periods of only one, three or six months, requiring perpetual renewal and enabling Israeli authorities to isolate and contain Palestinian communities. For the most part, permanent residency permits in the Closed Zone have not been issued for longer than six months.

Most significantly, possession of a permanent residency or access permit does not assure in any way an individual's freedom of movement into and out of the Closed Zone. Gates along the separation wall are closed most of the time, or open only for short fifteen minute periods and at the discretion of soldiers. Furthermore, two critical checkpoints near the Green Line have been moved 1.5 and 2 kilometers further into the West Bank, rerouting the movement patterns of villagers.

Between the issuance and renewal requirements of permits, and the closures of gates and checkpoints, Israeli authorities are able to manage the ebb and flow of Palestinian life in and around the Closed Zone.

## **A. SEPARATION WALL LAND CONFISCATION**

### **1. City of Bethlehem (Governorate of Bethlehem)**

On 30 October, Israeli authorities enforced an earlier confiscation of 4000 *dunums* (1000 acres) of land north of Bethlehem city for purposes of constructing the separation wall. A land-owner received notice of the confiscation and was informed that any structures he had built on the property were illegal. In a letter dated 19 June 2002 (No. 531), the State of Israel Lands Authority, Custodian of Absentee and Government Property, had declared the land "abandoned property" and available for confiscation for the Jerusalem envelop barrier.

According to the second phase of construction of the separation wall, approved by the Israeli Cabinet on 1 October 2003, Bethlehem will be surrounded by the separation wall to the north (phase 1 section completed), west and south.

### **2. Villages of Rantis, Shuqba, Qibya and Budrus (Governorate of Ramallah/El Bireh)**

On 2 November, Israeli authorities issued "Land Confiscation Order No. 03/69/C" (with attached map) confiscating 862 *dunums* (215.5 acres) of land in the villages of Rantis, Shuqba, Qibya and Budrus, west of Ramallah. The stretch of land confiscated is 5280 meters in length and between 68 and 490 meters in width. Israeli authorities announced they would present the order to local villagers on 4 November.

According to the second phase of construction of the separation wall, approved by the Israeli Cabinet on 1 October, the villages of Rantis, Shuqba, Qibya and Budrus will be enclosed within a double wall, forming an isolated enclave.

### **3. Villages of Al Mughayyir and Raba, the Town of Tubas (Governorate of Jenin), and the Village of Bardala (Governorate of Jericho)**

On 4 November, Israeli authorities issued "Land Confiscation Order No. 03/81/C" (with attached map) confiscating 424 *dunums* (106 acres) of land in the northern Jordan Valley.

On the same day, the Israeli military accompanied some of the landowners and showed them which pieces of land will be confiscated for the construction of the separation wall and which areas will be located behind it.

According to the second phase of construction of the separation wall, approved by the Israeli Cabinet on 1 October, as well as evident from current construction activity, Bardala will be separated from Al Mughayyir, Raba and Tubas by this northern section of the eastern separation wall.

### **4. Villages of Bardala and 'Ein al Beida (Governorate of Jericho)**

On 4 November, Israeli authorities gave notice of land confiscation to farmers and land owners in Bardala and 'Ein al Beida for the confiscation of thousands of *dunums* of land parallel to the Green

Line. The area to be confiscated is fertile agricultural land with many greenhouses on it. The confiscation threatens hundreds of farmers and their families who will lose their only source of income.

In the weeks preceding the notice of confiscation, the Israeli army erected many 'flying' checkpoints in the area, preventing residents from moving, reaching their farmland or traveling on Route 90 that leads to Jericho. Additionally, residents had to obtain permits from the Israeli DCO to cross the checkpoints. On 1 October, Israeli forces removed the electricity poles on the farmland cutting the electricity used for agricultural purposes. On 6 October, Israeli soldiers entered 'Ein al Beida, imposed a curfew and conducted a census of the village residents and listed their properties.

According to the second phase of construction of the separation wall, approved by the Israeli Cabinet on 1 October, the separation wall will extend inside the West Bank parallel to the Green Line between the eastern separation wall and the Jordan River. Consequently, Bardala and 'Ein al Beida will be surrounded by the eastern separation wall to the west, the separation wall parallel to the Green Line to the north, and the Jordan River to the east.

## **B. SEPARATION WALL DEMOLITION ORDERS**

### **5. Village of Al 'Aqaba (Governorate of Jenin)**

On 22 October, Israeli authorities issued 12 demolition orders for 7 houses, 1 kindergarten (with 60 four to six year-old children registered), the only mosque in Al 'Aqaba, and the village electricity generator room, all for construction of the eastern separation wall. The demolitions will leave 40 villagers (including 27 children) homeless. The generator, provided by Canadian funding, is the only source of electricity for the whole village of 200 residents. Appeals to date have been denied by Israeli Civil Administration at Bet El.

Consistent with the second phase of construction approved by the Israeli Cabinet on 1 October, the separation wall is to be built at the entrance to the village between Al 'Aqaba and the village of Tayasir. The village relies on water deliveries by trucks, which will be prevented access by the blockage. Al 'Aqaba will be the only village in the area outside the eastern separation wall, cutting it off from the remainder of the villages behind the wall in the Governorate of Jenin.

## **C. SEPARATION WALL "CLOSED ZONE" PERMIT SYSTEM**

This section updates the Palestinian Monitoring Group Trend Analysis, *Separation Wall "Closed Zone": Implementation of Permit System, October 2003* of 30 October 2003.

### **6. Village of Ras Tira (Governorate of Qalqilya)**

Permits for Permanent Residence in the Closed Zone: Approximately 20 (of 400) residents of Ras Tira still have not been granted permanent residency permits. Those without residency permits are unable to leave the Closed Zone and visit the neighboring villages of Ras 'Atiya and Habla or the city of Qalqilya.

Movement of Checkpoint: Since 5 November, the Jarjouliya checkpoint has been moved approximately 1.5 kilometers deeper into the West Bank to the location where the separation wall will cut through the Route 55 by-pass road. Residents of Ras Tira traveling to Qalqilya or any other West Bank village east of the separation wall must pass through this checkpoint, and those without permits are not permitted to cross it. Those without permits are also forbidden from crossing the Ras 'Atiya gate to the nearby villages of Habla and Ras 'Atiya, where approximately 8000 Palestinians live and where most of Ras Tira's basic services, including doctors, schools and shops, are located. Consequently, residents without permits are imprisoned in their own village. More than one family has complained that they have been unable to take a sick child to a doctor in Habla.

## **7. Village of Dab'a (Governorate of Qalqilya)**

Permits for Permanent Residence in the Closed Zone: On 10 November, the last 13 (of 250) residents of Dab'a were granted residency permits.

An earlier list of a number of applicants who had not received permits was forwarded to the Israeli DCO. Many of these applicants, instead of being granted permanent residency permits, were issued only access permits.

Permits to Access the Closed Zone: Until 9 November, 11 teachers (5 from Qalqilya and 6 from neighboring villages) had not been granted permits to enter the Closed Zone to teach. On 10 November, 8 of the teachers were granted permits, while 3 from neighboring villages still had not received permits.

Since the movement of the Jarjouliya checkpoint on 5 November, villagers without permits cannot reach Qalqilya or pass through the Ras 'Atiya gate. They are confined to the Closed Zone.

Permits for Vehicles in the Closed Zone: Only 5 out of the 11 cars in Dab'a have been granted permits.

Closure of Gates: The opening times of the gates along the separation wall are changed at the whim of Israeli soldiers who do so without informing local villagers or heads of the village councils. During the week of 2 to 8 November, the afternoon openings changed from 6:15-6:30 pm to 5:00-5:15 pm without consulting villagers. Villagers complain that often the soldiers close the gates after five or ten minutes, not allowing enough time for all those waiting to cross.

On the evening of 5 November, one Dab'a villager was forced to sleep at the Ras 'Atiya gate because he did not have a residency permit and was prevented from returning home. When the Head of the Village Council tried to intervene on his behalf by pleading with the Israeli soldiers, they threatened to arrest him. The villager was only allowed back into Dab'a the following morning.

The experience of villagers at the Ras 'Atiya gate has been that at times when foreign nationals are present, Israeli soldiers keep the gate open for the required period or even longer. Consequently,

some feel that the presence of international monitors at gates along the separation wall might alter the behavior of the soldiers.

Rising Local Tension: The level of tension within local communities has risen significantly in the past few weeks of implementation of the Closed Zone military orders. There have been heated disagreements in the village between those with and those without permits. This level of frustration will likely increase as those without permits continue to be unable to reach their places of work or harvest their crops on the other side of the separation wall.

### **8. Village of Jayyus (Governorate of Qalqilya)**

Permits to Access the Closed Zone: Over 50 farmers (of 3000 residents) still have not been granted permits to access their greenhouses and land located west of the separation wall. 25 per cent of the permits issued have been granted to children, the elderly, individuals living abroad or the already deceased. In one case, a 43 year-old farmer was denied a permit, but his father and uncle who had been dead for six years received permits. All permits have been issued for only 3 months.

During the week of 2 to 8 November, the Israeli army conducted several "round-ups" of Jayyus farmers without permits, and forcibly removed them from their fields and sent them back to the village.

### **9. Village of Khirbet Jabara (Governorate of Tulkarem)**

Permits for Permanent Residence in the Closed Zone: On principle, rejecting the system altogether, the majority of villagers have refused to accept permanent residency permits that have been issued (all but approximately 20 to 40 out of 310). In the second week of November, however, after punitive denial of movement, 30 individuals have succumbed and accepted permanent residency permits.

Villagers do not see any benefits to the notion of permits. Rather, they say that the permit system and procedures are only intended to make people's lives difficult. Under the permit system, a 12 year-old boy or girl, for instance, will have to go to the Israeli DCO in order to renew their permits once they expire. Villagers are questioning whether the permits will actually be renewed.

Many of the farmers are no longer confident that they can harvest their crops or market their products. About 30 to 40 farmers with land east of the separation wall have either stopped or significantly reduced their farming activities, on open land, in greenhouses as well as raising chickens. Maintaining greenhouses is costly and if the farmers cannot trade their produce then keeping them is no longer worth the expense. It is also expensive to repair greenhouses (villagers spent some 30,000 NIS for the plastic for the greenhouses). Early in October, one farmer repaired his greenhouse—located within 500 meters east of the separation wall—only to have it destroyed the same month by the Israeli army when a flare landed on it and burnt the plastic.

Closure of Gate: Still to date, only students (and since November some farmers) are permitted to cross the one eastern gate. Ever since the construction of the separation wall approximately one year ago, the Israeli army has placed a cement block in front of the gate, so no vehicles, including buses

and cars can enter or exit through it. The school bus, which used to come from the village of Ar Ras, is not able to reach the village to pick up the students of Khirbet Jabara. Instead, children have to get to the gate by themselves, on foot or by car, wait for the Israeli soldiers to open it, and then walk approximately 500 meters to catch the bus from Ar Ras. On 9 November, children got wet having to walk and wait in the rain for the soldiers to open the gate. On 10 November, in particularly heavy rain on a cold day, children were kept at the gate from 12:00 noon until 1:45 pm waiting for the soldiers to open it.

On 7 and 8 November, the Israeli army opened the gates from 7:00 am until 2:00 pm, in the villagers' opinion because of the media attention they have been receiving, including a visit by BBC. By 9 November, the Israeli army reverted to keeping the gate closed and opening it at 7:00 am for only fifteen minutes and again at 1:45 pm for a few minutes for the students to cross.

Closure of Checkpoint: The main checkpoint for entry to and exit from the village is located at the intersection of the by-pass road and the road that connects Khirbet Jabara to Tulkarem. Before 7 November, Israeli soldiers were preventing residents from leaving the village without permits. However, thereafter, the army reverted to the previous system in place, by which villagers could only pass the checkpoint if their name and identification number were listed at the checkpoint. On 8 November, villagers were able to pass through on foot, but farmers were not permitted to bring their produce or poultry through the checkpoint.

#### **10. Village of Baqa Sharqiya (Governorate of Tulkarem)**

Permits to Access the Closed Zone: Palestinians possessing permits to visit Israel were not allowed to pass through the Baqa Sharqiya gates into the Closed Zone. They were told by the Israeli soldiers that they must obtain Closed Zone permits.

#### **11. City of Qalqilya (Governorate of Qalqilya)**

Permits to Access the Closed Zone: Only a quarter of Qalqilya's land-owning farmers needing to cross the gates to access their fields—350 out of 1300—have been granted permits. (These figures do not account for the thousands of laborers who need access to this area of the Closed Zone to work on the land located within it.) Of the permits issued, approximately 20 per cent have been granted to Palestinians who are either dead or living abroad.

Closure of Gates: The agricultural gate in the northern area of the city has been closed since 4 October, and has never re-opened. Because of the closure of this gate last month, Jallal Zeid, one of the largest poultry farmers in the West Bank, lost his stock of 8000 chickens as he was unable to reach them to give them water and food. He had previously lost 7000 chickens due to the extended closure between the 19 and 27 of August.

#### **12. Village of 'Azzun 'Atma (Governorate of Qalqilya)**

Population: 1500

Location: 'Azzun 'Atma will be entirely enclosed within an enclave by the separation wall on three sides. It will be completely separated and isolated from the neighboring villages of Beit Amin and Sannirya. All three villages are closely linked. Many families from each of the villages are related to one another. Farmers own greenhouses and children attend schools in the neighboring villages. 'Azzun 'Atma yields the highest export per *dunum* (1/4 acre) in the West Bank.

Permits for Permanent Residence in the Closed Zone: No permanent residency permits have been granted as yet.

Permits to Access the Closed Zone: No access permits have been granted as yet. At present, 'Azzun 'Atma farmers are unable to reach approximately 15 per cent of the village greenhouses that are located in neighboring villages on the other side of the separation wall. In the nearby village of Beit Amin, 150 villagers received permits to reach their land in 'Azzun 'Atma.

Closure of Gates: Presently there is a gate at the entrance to the village that is opened three times a day. On the morning of 8 November, more than one hundred villagers assembled at the gate and managed to keep it open for over 3 hours and then again for 3 hours that same afternoon.

Movement of Checkpoint: On 8 November, the checkpoint located near the village on the adjacent by-pass road was moved approximately another 2 kilometers further into the West Bank, just east of the village of Mas Ha. Residents of Sannirya, Beit Amin as well as 'Azzun 'Atma will have to enter and exit their villages through this checkpoint at specific times, and on condition that they hold permits.