

**September 2012**

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**The deterioration of the Palestine Situation  
September 2011- September 2012**

After 45 years of Israeli occupation, the daily reality in the Occupied Palestinian Territory including East Jerusalem (OPT), continues to deteriorate to the point where the two-state solution is almost inconceivable. The statistics below bear witness to the fact that Israel has no interest in meaningful negotiations. A non-violent and diplomatic way to protect Palestinian inalienable rights and to save the prospects of justice and peace is for Palestine to apply for membership in the most multilateral organization in the world, the United Nations.

Ahead of President Abbas' speech in the UN General Assembly, we have collected some of the key figures regarding Israeli occupation and colonization policies within the Occupied Palestinian Territory between the last UNGA General Debate and today. The status quo is clearly untenable.

**Between the 2011 and 2012 speeches of President Mahmoud Abbas to the U.N. ...**

- ...the Israeli settler population living in the Occupied Palestinian Territory, including East Jerusalem (OPT), grew by over 20,000 settlers. There are over half a million settlers living in the OPT today.
- ... Israel planned, in different stages (tendering, approvals), at least 11,096 housing units and hotel rooms for settlements in and around Occupied East Jerusalem. The new housing units, if approved, would house around 44,000 new Israeli settlers.
- ...991 separate incidents of terrorist acts by Israeli settlers living illegally in the OPT were recorded, including shootings, physical assaults, arson attacks, murder of livestock, and the destruction of property and vehicles. At least 60 of these attacks were against Christian and Muslim religious institutions.
- ...Israeli forces demolished approximately 510 Palestinian structures in Area C, displacing close to 770 Palestinians.

**In 2011...**

- ...following the Quartet Statement of September 23:
  - November 17: the Israeli authorities published tenders for 2,190 housing units in settlements in four different locations in the West Bank. Out of the new tenders, 40 are in Ma'ale Adumim, 277 in Ariel and 277 in Efrat.
  - November 27: the Israeli Ministry of Defense approved settlement construction plans for 238 housing units in Shilo settlement north east of Ramallah (aiming to separate Nablus from Ramallah).
  - December 12: the Israeli Ministry of Defense approved the establishment of a new, permanent settlement near Efrat in the Bethlehem area (aiming to separate Bethlehem from Hebron).
- ...the UN reported that a record number of Palestinians were displaced as a result of home demolitions in 2011. More than 1,000 Palestinians in the OPT (including East

Jerusalem) lost their homes, double the number from the previous year and the highest number since 2005.

- ...560 Palestinian-owned structures, including 200 residential structures and 46 rainwater collection cisterns and pools, were demolished by the Israeli authorities. (ICHAD)
- ...the Israeli authorities demolished over 200 Palestinian-owned structures in the Jordan Valley and Dead Sea area, displacing around 430 people and affecting the livelihoods of another 1,200 Palestinians. (OCHA)
- ...Israel demolished 46 Palestinian rainwater-harvesting cisterns, preventing Palestinians from even collecting rainwater, and 25 Palestinian wells primarily used for agricultural and residential use. The situation did not change during 2012.
- ... During the olive harvest, about 42% of applications submitted for permits to access Palestinian orchards in the areas behind the illegal wall were rejected. (OCHA)

### **The situation today:**

- Since 2007, incidents of settler attacks against Palestinians have risen by an alarming 315%.
- The UN reports that more than 250,000 Palestinians remain at risk of settler violence, 76,000 of whom are deemed to be at high risk.
- Over the past four decades, the residency of 14,084 Palestinians has been revoked, directly impacting more than 20% of Palestinian families in occupied East Jerusalem. These residents are no longer permitted to live or work in their city. Of all the revocations that have been carried out from 1967 until today, about half have occurred since 2006.
- The Israeli “Mayor” of the so-called “Jerusalem municipality” has proposed depriving Palestinian Jerusalemites east of the illegal wall of their Jerusalem IDs. If successful, this proposal would affect an estimated 80,000 of 361,000 Palestinians and would be the largest act of deportation and de-population of the City since the beginning of the occupation.
- The Israeli military has destroyed over 3,300 Palestinian homes in occupied East Jerusalem since 1967.
- Because of Israeli restrictions, at least 160,000 Palestinians in occupied East Jerusalem have no suitable or legal connection to water networks.
- Israel continues to restrict Palestinians’ basic right to worship freely. This includes barring most Palestinians from accessing the Al Aqsa Mosque Compound and allowing only West Bank residents above 40 years of age to enter East Jerusalem and access the compound. 77.4% of Palestinians in the OPT are under the age of 30.
- At Easter, Israel’s policies against Jerusalem are also prominent: While Christians from all over the world take part in Easter ceremonies in occupied East Jerusalem, indigenous many Palestinian Christians are prevented from worshipping in Jerusalem. Those who are granted access are forced to apply through a discriminatory permit regime, followed by humiliation at checkpoints on their way to worship.
- Over 60% of the West Bank is considered Area C, where Israel retains extensive control, including over security, planning and zoning.

- Water consumption dips to 20 liters/capita/day (l/c/d) in communities without water infrastructure, one fifth of the World Health Organization's recommendation.
- Communities depending on tankered water pay up to 400% more for every liter than those connected to the water network.
- The Jordan Valley makes up 28.5% of the West Bank and is home to almost 60,000 Palestinians. There are 37 Israeli settlements in the area, with a population of 9,500 settlers in contravention of international law. 94% of the land is effectively off limits to Palestinians.
- The Israeli settlers living in the Jordan valley consume the equivalent of one-third of the entire amount of water made available to all 2.5 million Palestinians living in the West Bank. (B'Tselem)
- Approximately 18% of the West Bank has been designated as a closed military zone for training, or "firing zone"; this is roughly the same amount of the West Bank under full Palestinian authority.
- The planned expansion area of the around 135 Israeli settlements in the OPT is 9 times larger than their built-up area. (B'Tselem)
- Over 3,000 demolition orders are outstanding throughout the OPT, including 18 targeting schools.
- In 2010, the estimated total cost of occupation to the Palestinian economy was \$6.9 billion, a staggering 84.9% of GDP.
- 70% of Palestinians are refugees most of whom have been waiting 64 years for the recognition and implementation of their rights.
- There is ongoing construction in ALL settlements within the Occupied Palestinian Territory.

Israel's actions make it patently clear that there is currently no prospect for meaningful negotiations. If the international community truly wants to resolve this conflict then the culture of impunity granted to Israel must come to an end. The Palestinian application to the United Nations is an effort to legitimize Palestine in the international arena and is a way to salvage the two-state solution. Self-determination is our sovereign right; international recognition is the legal and moral responsibility of the international community. All those who endorse the two-state solution along the 1967 borders, and wish to see a meaningful and peaceful resolution to this conflict, should vote in favour of admitting Palestine at the United Nations.