

# REPORT ON ISRAELI SETTLEMENT IN THE OCCUPIED TERRITORIES

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## FORTRESS JERUSALEM ENDANGERS PALESTINIANS

One decade after the beginning of the Oslo process raised the prospect of Palestinian sovereignty in East Jerusalem, the government of Israeli prime minister Ariel Sharon is implementing a program that aims at undermining not merely the option of a sovereign Palestinian political presence in the city, but also its historical role as the hub of Palestinian civic and economic existence. The creation of a "Fortress Jerusalem" is symbolized not only by burgeoning communities of Israeli settlements, but most starkly by the construction of physical barriers of walls, fences, barbed wire, and trenches that threaten to encircle the city in the north, east, and south.

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This new policy marks a crossroads in the extraordinary conceptual transformation that underlies Israel's contemporary approach to East Jerusalem. Israel once viewed its presence in East Jerusalem with confidence and enthusiasm. Fortress Jerusalem, in contrast, envisages a permanent confrontation with and subordination of Palestinian East Jerusalemites that promises a battlefield vision of the future. Despite its vaunted security function, the barriers now being constructed will fail as a security measure and will cause endemic Palestinian poverty, bloodshed, and resistance.

The original architects of Israel's occupation of East Jerusalem shared Sharon's objective—unchallenged Israeli rule over the city and its inhabitants—but they had a far different vision of the way to manage Palestinian opposition. Immediately after Israel's June 1967 conquest of the West Bank, Defense Minister Moshe Dayan fashioned a policy for East Jerusalem based upon Israeli annexation and expansion; extensive Jewish settlement; open borders with Israel as well as the city's West Bank hinterland, including unhindered trade and transport; and the creation of a preferred status for East Jerusalem's residents and institutions, symbolized by blue identity cards that distinguish them from West Bank residents.

Palestinians in East Jerusalem have always been viewed by Israel as a problem to be managed and a threat to be defused, if not eliminated. For more than two decades after 1967, a succession of Israeli leaders was confident that

this objective could be achieved by promotion of Palestinian economic growth and integration. Israel advertised this benign approach to counter criticism of its permanent occupation.

The failure of Israel's massive settlement policy to increase its demographic domination in the city prompted a dramatic change in this conventional wisdom. Despite decades of intensive settlement that brought almost 200,000 Israelis to settle in East Jerusalem, the percentage of Palestinians in the city rose from 25.8 percent in 1967 to 32.6 percent in 2000.

Security considerations reinforced the trend favoring division and separation. The policy decision to restrict movement from the West Bank to East Jerusalem, inaugurated in 1991 at the time of the first Gulf War, was not strictly implemented until the bus bombings in Israel that followed the killing of Palestinians at Hebron's Ibrahimi mosque in early 1994.

Ironically, the dynamic of division and separation, and as a consequence East Jerusalem's economic decline, was heightened by the Oslo process, notwithstanding wide support among Palestinians and Israelis that Jerusalem's future was best served by its preservation as an open city. Diplomacy raised the option of the political separation of Palestinians in East Jerusalem, and the Jerusalem municipality withdrew services to Palestinian neighborhoods even as continuing settlement increased East

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## TO OUR READERS

President Bush's road map is leading nowhere, Israelis and Palestinians are still dying, and Sharon is still building settlements and barriers. But two unofficial Israeli-Palestinian peace initiatives offer renewed hope. One is the "Geneva Accord," a fifty page virtual peace agreement that builds upon negotiations that ended in January 2001. The other is "The Peoples' Voice," an abbreviated outline for peace promoted by Palestinian activist Sari Nusseibeh, and Ami Ayalon, ex chief of Israeli domestic security. (See [www.fmep.org](http://www.fmep.org) for texts.)

These initiatives challenge the myths that "peace is impossible" and that "there is no partner." They show that prominent people on both sides can agree on solutions for the toughest issues: security, borders, settlements, refugees, and Jerusalem and accept major compromises. For example, both provide that Palestinian refugees could

not return to Israel without Israel's consent, and that most settlements would be evacuated. In contrast to the Oslo Accords and the road map, these plans define in practical terms what peace would mean. Moreover, previous polls show that silent majorities on both sides would support similar solutions.

The political challenge is to transform these silent majorities into vocal majorities that could persuade their leaders to accept these initiatives. Sharon, predictably, has reacted with outrage. Arafat has been positive, but his government is in disarray. Unfortunately, the Bush Administration, which could transform the current stalemate by endorsing these programs, has been silent or dismissive. We are missing an important opportunity.



### New Military Order Consolidates Israeli Control of Land West of the Separation Barrier

Israel has issued a military order—Israel Defense Forces Order Concerning Security Directives (Judea and Samaria) (#378), 1970 Declaration Concerning Closing of Area Number s/2/03 (seam area) (Judea and Samaria)—effective October 2, 2003. The order declares all West Bank land west of the separation barrier—the "seam area"—a "closed zone." The zone to date represents approximately two percent of the occupied West Bank and is home to approximately fourteen thousand Palestinians. Several thousand additional Palestinians own land in this area.

The order states, "No person will enter the [closed zone] and no one will remain there" (Section 3a). Every Palestinian resident of the closed zone older than 12 must obtain a permit to remain in their villages, reside in their homes, and farm their land.

Passage through one of 47 gates into the closed zone by other Palestinians, including those who do not reside in the zone but whose agricultural lands are within it, requires a permit issued by Israel's Civilian Administration.

Unimpeded access to the closed zone will only be granted to Israelis, including settlers. "Israelis" are defined as Israeli citizens, Israeli residents, or anyone allowed to emigrate to Israel in accordance with the Law of Return. The order suggests an Israeli intent to limit access to this area by Palestinians and to force the relocation of resident Palestinians who do not meet criteria established by Israel.

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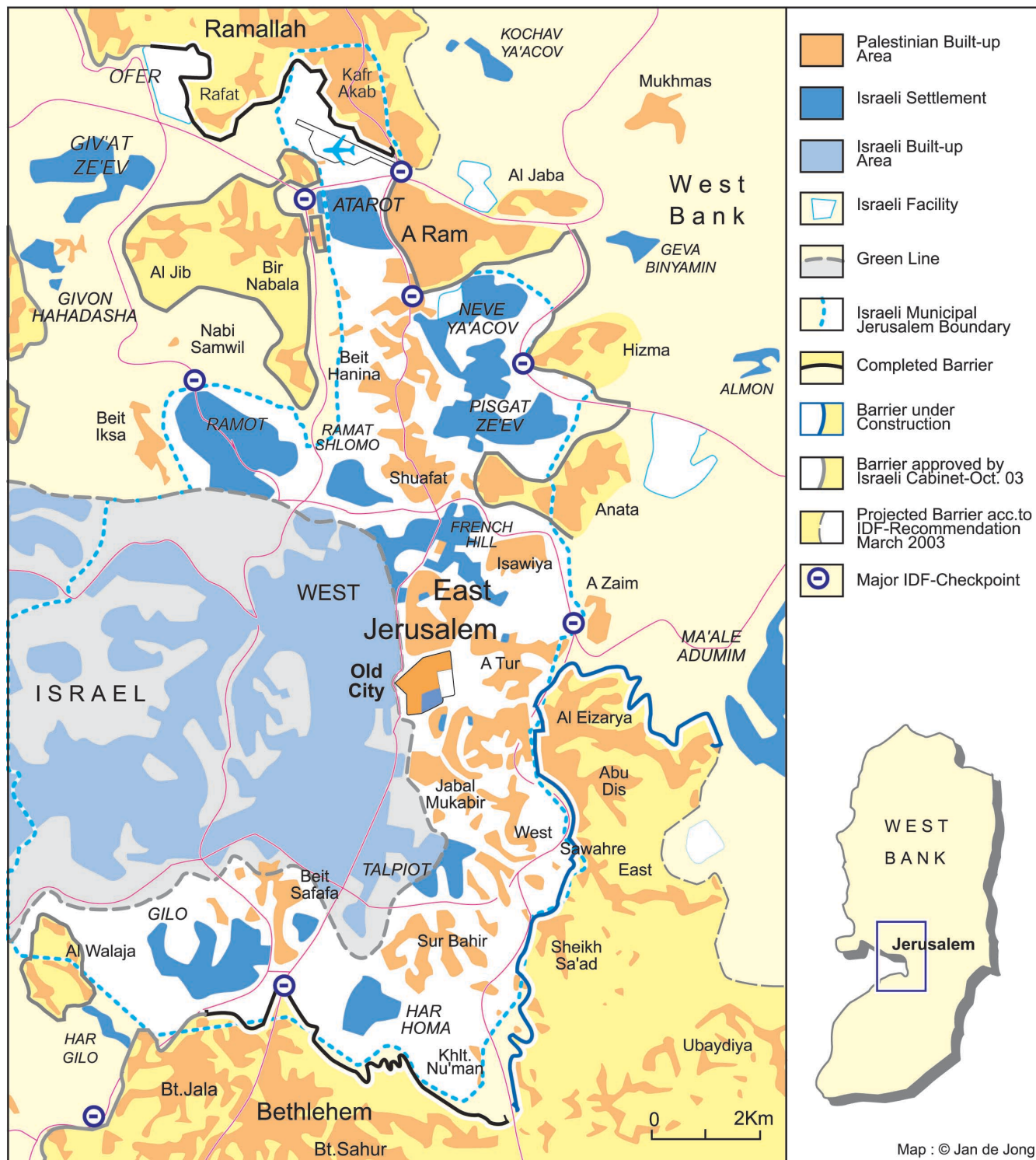
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# Fortress Jerusalem - November 2003





## SETTLEMENT TIME LINE

**July 1** The Israel Defense Forces (IDF) allows a group of 100 Jews to pray at Joseph's Tomb in Nablus. (*Arutz 7*)

**July 2** The IDF issues an order prohibiting construction by Palestinians in the Old City of Hebron. (*Hear Palestine*)

The IDF raids several Palestinian homes in the village of Beit Furik and warns residents against approaching the settlement of Itamar, including the settlement perimeter, or working on land around the settlement. (*Hear Palestine*)

The Israeli High Court permits settlers to continue construction activities at Tel Rumeideh, in Hebron. (*Hear Palestine*)

*Ha'aretz* reports the wounding of four Israelis by rockets fired at the Gaza settlements of Kfar Darom and Neve Dekalim from the town of Dayr al-Balah. Palestinian prime minister Mahmoud Abbas condemns the attacks as well as the June 30 shooting of a Bulgarian construction worker, calling the incidents "acts of terror."

**July 3** The Department of Immigration and Absorption reports that 1.65 million immigrants arrived in Israel between January 1989 and April 2003. Of these, 58,000 settled in East and West Jerusalem and comprise 7.8 percent of the city's population. Ariel has the fourth highest percentage of immigrants, or 41.8 percent. (*Yediot Aharonot*)

**July 9** The IDF and settlers force dozens of Palestinian farmers off of their land south of Hebron after marking off more than 450 dunums for possible confiscation. (*Hear Palestine*)

Settlers from Yitzhar, near Nablus, attack Palestinian homes in the village of Burin, stealing sheep and throwing stones at homes. (*Hear Palestine*)

**July 10** The IDF confiscates 424 dunums from the villages of Allar, Nazlat Issa, Qaffin, and Zeita, in the Tulkarem area, for the separation wall. (*al-Ayyam*)

**July 14** The Israel Lands Administration issues a tender for the sale of 15 building plots at Har Adar, northwest of Jerusalem. Eligible purchasers must have been residents of the settlement since May 2000 and older than 18. The "build your own house" program allows purchasers to lease land for an initial term of 98 years with an option for

renewal for a similar period. The minimum purchase price is \$18,500 per plot.

**July 15** The mayor of Rafah, in the Gaza Strip, declares that since the beginning of the al-Aqsa intifada 238 residents have been killed, including 46 under the age of 12, and 2,350 have been wounded. In addition, 950 dwellings have been demolished and 2,636 damaged by shells, 2,080 dunums of agricultural land have been bulldozed, and 16,000 residents have been unemployed as a result of closures. (*Hear Palestine*)

The Knesset, in a 26 to 8 vote taken during debate on the road map, declares that "Judea, Samaria, and the Gaza District are not 'conquered territories,' not from a historical standpoint, nor according to international law, and not according to political agreements which Israel has signed."

**July 17** *Hear Palestine* reports settlers confiscating land adjacent to the settlement of Kiryat Arba, in Hebron, with the aim of annexing it to the settlement by placing caravans and tents on the land.

**July 18** Israel is reported permitting Christians and religious Jews to visit the Temple Mount (Haram al-Sharif) from time to time. (*Ha'aretz*)

**July 22** In the West Bank, the IDF seizes 14 dunums of land near the Hebron settlement of Givat Haharsina, and settlers cut a new road to the Green Line from the settlement of Negohot, west of Hebron. (*Ha'aretz*)

*Yediot Aharonot* reports that the Jewish National Fund (JNF) and the Israeli Tourism Ministry have invested more than \$200,000 to build a promenade between the settlement of Beit El and the outpost of Givat Artis although the outpost is listed for evacuation. The director of the Beit El council says that the settlement intends to expand eastward and connect with the Ofra settlement, making the Givat Artis outpost the first step in that process.

Israeli interior minister Avraham Poraz of Shinui is quoted as saying he would use his budgetary discretion to "dry up the settlements" and instead spend funds on housing in the Galilee. (*Ma'ariv*)

**July 24** Israel's Interior Ministry reveals that the number of settlers in the West Bank and Gaza has risen by 5,415 since the begin-

ning of 2003, with Betar Illit growing the fastest. Labor MK Ophir Pines-Paz says the director of the Prime Minister's Office had informed him that there are 91 illegal settlement "outposts," of which only 11 have been dismantled. (*Ha'aretz*)

**July 25** Israeli defense minister Shaul Mofaz says that he would be willing to evacuate settlements for "true peace." Rejecting the idea that the settlement enterprise is irreversible, Mofaz states, "Israel is a democratic country, and if there is a government decision to uproot, that's what will happen." (*Arutz 7*)

*Kol Ha'ir* reports that construction of the "Jerusalem envelope" will result in the transfer of "wide areas" of the West Bank from the IDF and West Bank police to the Jerusalem police. One area is located between Ramot and the Ofer military camp in the north and includes the settlements of Givat Ze'ev, Har Adar, and the areas of Nebi Samuel, Anata, and Issawiya. To the south past checkpoint 300, the area covers Bet Sahur, including the villages of Wallaja and Betir and the Tunnels Road. Inclusion of Ma'ale Adumim was considered, but rejected "in order not to waken the anger of the United States."

**July 27** The right-wing Moledet Party submits a draft law to the Knesset authorizing a referendum on the expulsion of more than 200,000 Palestinians living in East Jerusalem. The left-wing Meretz Party asks the Knesset to reject the draft law, terming it a call for ethnic cleansing. (*al-Quds*)

**July 28** *Ha'aretz* reports that about 1,000 soldiers man 25 key West Bank checkpoints every day. In addition, another 4,000 troops staff surprise checkpoints. Most of these roadblocks are located between Palestinian towns and villages, not areas between Israel and the occupied territories.

An 11-year-old Israeli girl is lightly wounded by gunfire while traveling in a car with her parents near the settlement of Yitzhar, west of Nablus. (*Jerusalem Post*)

**July 31** A tender is issued for 22 housing units in the settlement of Neve Dekalim. The Prime Minister's Office dismisses accusations that the tender violates the road map because the new homes will be built within the bounds of an existing settlement. (*Ha'aretz*)

## SETTLEMENT TIME LINE

The Defense Ministry announces completion of the first section of the separation barrier, 123 km in length from Salim to Elkana, and 17.8 km of the "Jerusalem envelope." Regarding the former, 7,800 West Bank Palestinians reside west of the principal barrier. The IDF reports that 63,000 olive trees were uprooted in the course of construction. (*Yediot Aharonot*)

**August 1** Netzah Mashiah, director of the Israeli Seamline Project Administration, says that 85 percent of the land taken for building the separation barrier's first stage was expropriated from Palestinians; 15 percent was taken from Israeli communities. Approximately 147 km of the project in the northern West Bank and around the Jerusalem area are complete. (*Yediot Aharonot*)

*Kol Ha'Ir* reports that the Har Homa local council has used its authority to authorize a 10 percent increase in the number of dwelling units to be built at two sites. Its action permits the construction of 34 units in locations where 30 had been planned.

**August 3** Israeli finance minister Binyamin Netanyahu reinstates tax benefits for 60 settlements, including most of those in Gaza. (Israel Radio)

**August 4** Dror Etkes, director of Peace Now's Settlement Watch, reports that while 22 outposts have been evacuated, others have been built, holding outpost numbers steady. "We have the same amount of outposts, but now they have more houses, electricity, roads, more of everything that makes an outpost," says Etkes.

Residents of the Beit El settlement begin to dismantle the outpost of Tel Haim as part of an agreement with the IDF permitting the transfer of the mobile homes from the site to the nearby outpost settlement at Givat Artis.

Peace Now reports that the Israeli government has issued tenders for 687 settlement housing units since the start of 2003, including 502 units in Ma'ale Adumim, 51 units in Efrat, 30 units in Har Adar, and 28 units in Elkana.

**August 5** *Ma'ariv* reports that "Jews from the United States have recently begun to assist in the financing [at \$52 per meter] of security fences around Israeli settlements, in return for placing their name on a section of the fence." The program was initiated by the Fund for Karnei Shomron, a settlement

near Nablus, which advertised the idea in a Jewish newspaper in New York. Three kilometers of the settlement's 16 km perimeter have been financed in this fashion.

Sixty new immigrants from France arrive at their new homes in the settlements of Bet El, Eli, Kochav Ya'acov, and Ofra. (*Yediot Aharonot*)

**August 9** Israeli prime minister Ariel Sharon authorizes the paving of three new settlement roads at a cost of more than \$35 million: the Yabed bypass road, a road between Keidar and Ma'ale Adumim, and one between Nili and Ofarim. (*Ma'ariv*)

Israeli agriculture minister Yisrael Katz announces that the Finance Ministry will offer a \$25 subsidy for every cow that is imported by Israelis living in the occupied territories, the Negev, and the Galilee. The ministry intends that the cows will graze in state-owned fields and open spaces, preventing Palestinians and Bedouin from using the land. (*Yediot Aharonot*)

**August 10** The Israeli company purchasing the local Burger King franchise commits not to open stores in the occupied territories, including East Jerusalem, and promises to close the existing restaurant in Ma'ale Adumim. (*Yediot Aharonot*)

**August 11** Israeli government grants and loans from \$5,700 to \$11,400 become available for residential purchases in selected locations, including settlements.

**August 12** A pair of suicide bombers kill two Israelis and wound at least a dozen others in attacks at a supermarket in the Rosh Ha'ayin shopping mall, east of Petach Tikva, and at a bus stop at the entrance to the West Bank settlement of Ariel. (Israel Line)

**August 14** Tenders are issued for the construction of 72 dwelling units in Har Homa and 48 units in Pisgat Ze'ev.

Ground is broken on the agricultural settlement of Bar Milcha, in the Halutza region along the Israel-Egypt border. *Ha'aretz* reports that the settlement is part of a government plan "to prevent a future exchange of territory with the Palestinian Authority."

**August 17** The IDF begins construction of two permanent, squad-sized fortified posts in the Hebron neighborhoods of Abu Sneina and Harat al-Sheikh (Juneidi Hill), which overlook the homes of settlers in the center

of Hebron and are designated by the 1998 Hebron agreement to be under Palestinian control. This is the first time since the Oslo process began that the IDF has constructed permanent bases in an area that the accords designate as Area A, under Palestinian control. About 10 dunums have been expropriated in Abu Sneina for the construction in addition to 40 dunums on Juneidi Hill. (*Ha'aretz*)

**August 19** According to B'tselem, Israeli civilians have killed 32 Palestinians in the preceding three years of the al-Aqsa intifada. In addition, 328 Israeli civilians have been killed by Palestinians inside Israel, and 190 more in the West Bank and Gaza.

*Ha'aretz* reports that Israel has issued land expropriation orders for the "Jerusalem envelope" fence, which will put more than 50,000 Palestinians from the West Bank on the "Israeli side" of the barrier, while leaving thousands of Arab residents of the capital cut off from relatives, schools, and jobs. Most of the expropriation orders are for land inside the West Bank, and a few are for land in the part of Jerusalem annexed by Israel.

**August 20** Israel and the United States sign a loan guarantee agreement enabling Israel to raise \$9 billion in U.S.-guaranteed bonds over the following three years.

Jerusalem police reopen the Temple Mount to non-Muslim visitors, apparently with Waqf approval resulting from pressure by East Jerusalem businessmen who need the tourist trade. Waqf officials then back away from the agreement after it is announced that the site has opened. During a two-hour opening, more than 150 tourists, including foreigners and Israelis, visit, but do not enter the al-Aqsa mosque or the Dome of the Rock. (*Mideast Mirror*)

**August 22** For the fourth time in a year and a half, the IDF divides Gaza into three parts, reinstalling two checkpoints along a main route to prevent Palestinians from traveling freely between Rafah and central and northern Gaza. Salah al-Din Street, which was opened in July as part of the road map, is closed, as road near Netzarim. (Arutz 7)

In Abu Dis, Israel begins extending the Jerusalem section of the separation barrier. (*Hear Palestine*)

TIME LINE, continued on page 6

Jerusalem's isolation from its West Bank hinterland.

The readiness of Prime Minister Ehud Barak to "divide" Jerusalem, physically and in terms of sovereign control, reversed a policy proclaiming exclusive Israeli rule over "united Jerusalem." Barak repudiated this central tenet of Israel's occupation policy because he wanted to lock in territorial gains in East Jerusalem settlements acknowledged by the Clinton parameters—"what is Palestinian is Palestinian and what is Jewish is Israeli"—and because he recognized that continuing settlement in East Jerusalem would not reverse Israel's losing demographic battle, an increasingly salient issue in domestic Israeli political opinion.

Today Prime Minister Sharon is attempting to establish a new paradigm to succeed Dayan's integrationist policies and to foreclose Barak's concept of divided sovereignty. Sharon is determined to destroy the Oslo framework and its potential for Israeli withdrawal and Palestinian sovereignty as a basis for negotiation and the resolution of the Jerusalem issue. On a political level, the permanent closure of the Orient House and the absence of a successor to the leadership provided by the late Faisal Husseini leaves the city's Palestinians without a recognized political leadership or institutional base at anything beyond the local level. Fortress Jerusalem, in concert with settlement expansion in Ras al-Amud and Abu Dis, will close the option of a Palestinian corridor to the mosques on the Haram al-Sharif from the presumptive Palestinian capital in Abu Dis—part of the expanded East Jerusalem capital for Palestine mooted during the Oslo process. On the practical level, the policies now being implemented strike at the heart of the city's ability to function for Palestinians in its historical role as an economic and commercial crossroad and as a political, religious, and cultural center.

In territorial terms, Fortress Jerusalem is meant to complete the geostrategic isolation of Palestinian areas within the city from those on its West Bank periphery. East Jerusalem settlement communities, such as Gilo and Har Homa in the south, and Neve Ya'akov and Pisgat Ze'ev in the north and east, also serve this purpose. Settlements, however, are porous.

Their existence does not preclude the transport, civic, and employment linkages with the Palestinian periphery that a continuous security barrier promises.

Fortress Jerusalem marks Israel's rejection of the notion that Palestinian economic prosperity is a vital element of coexistence. It also ignores the extraordinary cost of the new policy to both Israelis and Palestinians. The Palestinian city emerging from this vision will be a series of disjointed communities disrupted by expanding Israeli settlement and linked, if at all, by an aging road network interrupted by checkpoint bottlenecks. Palestinian East Jerusalem is largely sandwiched between Israeli West Jerusalem, to which access can be unreliable and complicated, and its Arab hinterland in the West Bank, which is blocked by a physical barrier.

It is impossible to construct a model for prosperity for a city divided from itself and under siege. Impoverishment and eventual depopulation of the Palestinian sector and a continuing flight of capital and talent from West Jerusalem are far more likely consequences.

The unstated assumption driving Sharon's plan for Fortress Jerusalem is the shrinking of the Arab city in size and aspirations to enable its domination by Israel. East Jerusalem has languished as a consequence of closures during the last decade. Its West Bank market has been denied to it, a feature of the Oslo years that is now made permanent. Israelis long ago stopped patronizing or visiting the Arab sector, and tourists, once the entire city's lifeblood, have all but abandoned it. Despite its evident attractions, they will be slow to return to a city under permanent siege. Fortress Jerusalem will contain less than 250,000 Palestinians, a tiny market for a city Palestinians expect to embody their political as well as economic aspirations.

If there is a strategic rationale for Fortress Jerusalem, it would appear to be the expectation that Arab Jerusalem, no matter how grand its past or expectations for its future, will wither in the face of the terrible reality in concrete and barbed wire that is being constructed. The Sharon government intends to leave this legacy to the Arabs of Jerusalem. It may well discover to its dismay that it is bequeathing a similar testament to Israelis as well. ♦

## SETTLEMENT TIME LINE

### TIME LINE, continued from page 5

**August 25** The IDF imposes a full closure on the Gaza Strip. Palestinians fire at least 12 mortar shells at Gaza settlements, including Netzarim and Rafiach Yam. No one is hurt, but for the first time Palestinians fire from the sea at IDF outposts in the Katif bloc. (Arutz 7)

**August 28** Arutz 7 reports that since the end of the short-lived cease-fire between Israel and Palestinian groups nine days prior,

24 Qassam rockets have been fired at Gaza settlements.

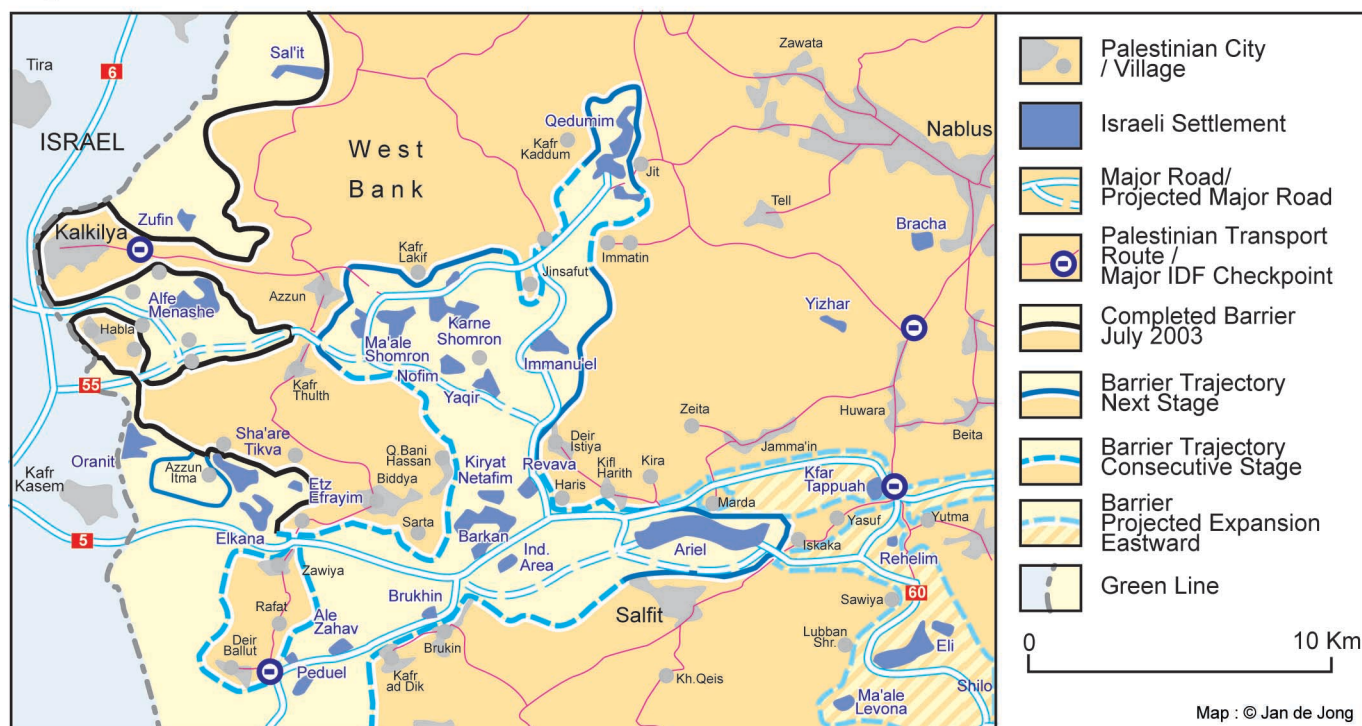
**August 29** A settler from Homesh is shot and killed, and his wife is injured, on the Alon Road northeast of Ramallah, near the West Bank settlement of Kochav Hashachar. (*Mideast Mirror*)

**August 31** Mitzpeh Yishai is dedicated as a new "neighborhood" in the settlement of Kedumim. Thirty houses are already occupied, another 70 are under construction, and

another 400 are planned. Almost 3,000 settlers live in Kedumim, which has 170 housing units under construction. At the ceremony, Israeli housing minister Effie Eitam says, "We have to annihilate the enemy and not leave a shred of it intact. And we have to do it mercilessly." Approximately 80 Peace Now activists protested at the dedication. (Arutz 7)



## Separation Barrier - Ariel Settlement Bloc, November 2003



## Population in East Jerusalem, 2000

Israeli Settlement Locales	Population	Area (dunums)	Palestinian Locales	Population	Area (dunums)
Giv'at Ha-Mivtar	2,912	588	Kafr' Aqab	10,451	2,441
Ma'alot Dafna, Kiryat Arye	3,645	380	Atarot	20,620	3,327
Ramat Eshkol	2,917	397	Bet Hanina		5,294
Sanhedriyya Ha-Murhevet	5,018	378	Shu'afat	28,977	4,277
Ramat Shlomo	11,348	1,126	Isawiyya	9,966	2,394
Har Ha-Hozvim		653	At-Tur	19,012	1,745
Ramat Allon	37,934	4,979	As-Sawana		851
Neve Ya'akov	20,288	1,759	Wadi Al-Joz	6,740	347
Pisgat Ze'ev	36,469	5,467	Sheikh Jarrah	2,597	711
Giv'at Shapira	8,193	2,018	Bab Az-Zahara	4,759	427
East Talpiot	12,845	1,195	Eastern City	1,680	396
Gilo	27,637	2,859	Ir David, Brekhat Ha-Shiloah	4,067	506
Giv'at Ha-Matos	763	310	Abu Tur	12,987	658
Har Homa		2,523	Hirbat Bet Sahur		1,078
Old City-Jewish Quarter	2,279	122	Silwan	9,187	537
Total	172,248	24,754	Har Ha-Mashhit	11,922	568
			Ras Al-'Amud		694
			Jabal Mukabar	12,859	2,949
			Arab As-Sawahra		2,342
			Sur Bahar	10,677	5,333
			Bet Safafa	5,463	1,577
			Sharafat, Az-Suhur	936	8,939
			Total	172,900	47,391

Source: Statistical Yearbook of Jerusalem No. 19 - 2001.

## SNAPSHOTS OF SETTLEMENT EXPANSION

### Tenders for Settlement Housing, January-October, 2003

Publication Date		Settlement	Number of Units
January	9	Ma'ale Adumim	30
February	20	Efrat	51
March	17	Ariel	24*
March	20	Elkana	28
May	22	Ma'ale Adumim	502
July	14	Har Adar	15
July	14	Har Adar	15
July	31	Neve Dekalim	22
September	4	Efrat	102
September	25	Efrat	2
September	25	Ma'ale Adumim	28
September	29	Ma'ale Adumim	6
October	2	Beitar Illit	530
October	2	Ma'ale Adumim	11
October	2	Ariel	24
October	23	Karnei Shomron	143
October	23	Givat Ze'ev	186
TOTAL			1,713

\*Withdrawn

The settler population in the West Bank (excluding East Jerusalem) and Gaza Strip grew by 5.7 percent in 2002, increasing to 220,100 from the 2001 figure of 208,200. Israel's overall growth was only 1.9 percent. When added to the 180,000 Israelis residing in East Jerusalem, the settler population now comprises almost 8 percent of Israel's Jewish population of 5.1 million.

According to Israel's Central Bureau of Statistics (CBS), births accounted for 3.1 percent of the 5.7 percent growth among settlers. The remaining 2.6 percent of the growth resulted from the "migration" of new settlers. The CBS reports that 14,000 Israelis moved to settlements, and 10,600 moved out of them in 2002. According to Interior Ministry numbers released in July, an additional 5,415 Israelis

had moved to the settlements since the beginning of 2003.

The CBS reports that 3,648 homes are under construction in West Bank and Gaza settlements, comprising more than 15 percent of the 23,000 under active construction in Israel and the settlements. During 2003, the Sharon government has marketed land for the construction of 1,713 dwelling units (see table). Additional homes are being built privately and in East Jerusalem. Yet, between January and June 2003, only 58 apartments were sold in the settlements (excluding East Jerusalem), barely one-third the 164 apartments sold during the same period in 2002. The decrease in sales is attributed to Israel's economic slowdown and the increased security concerns associated with the al-Aqsa intifada.

**Years have passed and Israel has become ever more mired in Judea, Samaria, and Gaza. By now we are so mired that we are no longer capable of lifting our heads and understanding the reality in which we are living. For years, successive governments deceived the public by leading it to believe that holding onto Judea, Samaria, and Gaza is a security necessity, that the territories are a national asset, and that any concession in them will be detrimental to security. Yitzhak Rabin decided to snap us out of this illusionary dream. Rabin was hardly a member of Peace Now, but he understood what the terrorist organizations also understand and what, unfortunately, the government of Ariel Sharon has yet to understand: that the continued confrontation with the Palestinians and the continued Israeli control of Judea, Samaria, and Gaza means the liquidation of Zionism and the end of the Jewish state. He understood that control of Judea, Samaria, and Gaza is not an asset but a burden that is putting our continued survival at risk.**

**Amram Mitzna, former head of Israel's Labor Party, *Ha'aretz*, August 31, 2003**

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