

# REPORT ON ISRAELI SETTLEMENT IN THE OCCUPIED TERRITORIES

A Bimonthly Publication of the Foundation for Middle East Peace

Volume 18 Number 6

November-December 2008

## TINKERING AT THE MARGINS OF ISRAELI RULE WILL NOT END OCCUPATION OR SETTLEMENT

By Geoffrey Aronson

“Israel’s continued settlement expansion and land confiscation in the West Bank makes physical separation of our two peoples increasingly impossible,” wrote Palestinian Authority chairman Mahmoud Abbas in the *Wall Street Journal* on September 19, 2008. “We are impatient for our freedom. Yet partial peace, as proposed again by my current [Israeli] interlocutors, is not the way forward. Partial freedom is a contradiction in terms. Either a Palestinian lives free or continues to live under the yoke of Israeli military occupation.

“We want our children to live with hope and the opportunity to realize their potential,” Abbas continued. “Yet our daily reality worsens. We are walled into shrinking pockets of land, reminiscent of the Bantustans of South Africa.”

Abbas, having despaired of an agreement with Israel, has reportedly turned his efforts to winning a letter of support from outgoing U.S. president George W. Bush for a “political solution based on the establishment of an independent Palestinian state within the June 4, 1967 borders.”

There was a time in the early decades of occupation and settlement when the

international community applauded Israel’s “benevolent occupation.” Israeli leaders rationalized settlement creation by explaining that settlements were making use of “empty” land and that the introduction of settlers did not compromise Palestinian life in any way but was in fact an engine of modernization and economic advancement. When, however, Palestinian children are forbidden by Israeli soldiers to ride their bikes to school because of the outrageous security prerogatives of Israeli settlers, where concrete and barbed wire mark roads whose use by Palestinians is prohibited, and when Palestinian farmers are required to harvest olives only in coordination with Israeli soldiers for fear of settler attacks, it is not surprising that even the pretense of harmonious coexistence under occupation was long ago dropped from Israel’s arsenal of excuses for maintaining the status quo.

What has not changed, however, is Israel’s continuing commitment to preserving the core elements of occupation that today *require* the imposition of expansive restrictions on Palestinian life that grow more onerous as the settler population expands, whatever the costs to Palestinians. A recent International Monetary Fund report on the effect of the Annapolis process\* notes that restrictions on Palestinian movement have *increased* in the past year, resulting in a *contraction in real GDP* in the first quarter of 2008. Despite extraordinary international effort, and the contribution of an unprecedented international

aid, including \$1.63 billion in direct budget support to the Palestinian Authority this year, the results achieved—more checkpoints, continuing economic stagnation, Gaza’s relentless push into penury, and the consolidation of Hamas’ rule there—are the *opposite* of the objectives established one year ago at Annapolis.

In an address to Quartet representatives on September 22, PA prime minister Salaam Fayyad took note of the failure of the central assumption guiding the international effort, namely, that Palestine’s economic rehabilitation can be achieved without reversing the essential elements of Israeli rule.

Expanding the settlements, which is a complete contradiction of the Israeli commitments in the framework of the road map and the Annapolis commitments, continues to limit the scope of the Palestinian economy and distances the political scope of a two state solution. This led to an increase in lack of expectations towards positive growth which has been generated among the investors. What has also aggravated the situation recently is that there was an increase in violence by the settlers against the Palestinians without any firm response on the part of the Israeli forces.

A recent World Bank report\*\* highlights the calamitous, multi-faceted effect on Palestinian economic life produced by Israel’s land, settlement, and

### Inside this Issue

Olmert’s Final Status Maps	4–5
Settlement Time Line	6
Construction Update	8

MARGINS, *continued on page 7*

## TO OUR READERS

As President-Elect Obama establishes policy priorities, he must decide when and how to engage in the Israeli-Palestinian conflict. There is wide agreement that our previous policies have failed, that a resolution of this conflict is critical to the future of both peoples, and that this problem is closely linked to other U.S. challenges in the region, including Iraq, Iran, Syria, Lebanon and terrorism.

Nevertheless, voices of caution will argue that the conflict is not "ripe" for resolution, and that failure would further weaken U.S. influence, demand excessive presidential attention, and provoke costly domestic opposition.

As for the "ripeness" argument, dysfunctional politics in Israel and Palestine have always stood in the way of peace. Strife in Israel between the settler and religious parties and pragmatic moderates, and in Palestine between Hamas and the Palestinian Authority, will only grow worse without a credible promise of peace that

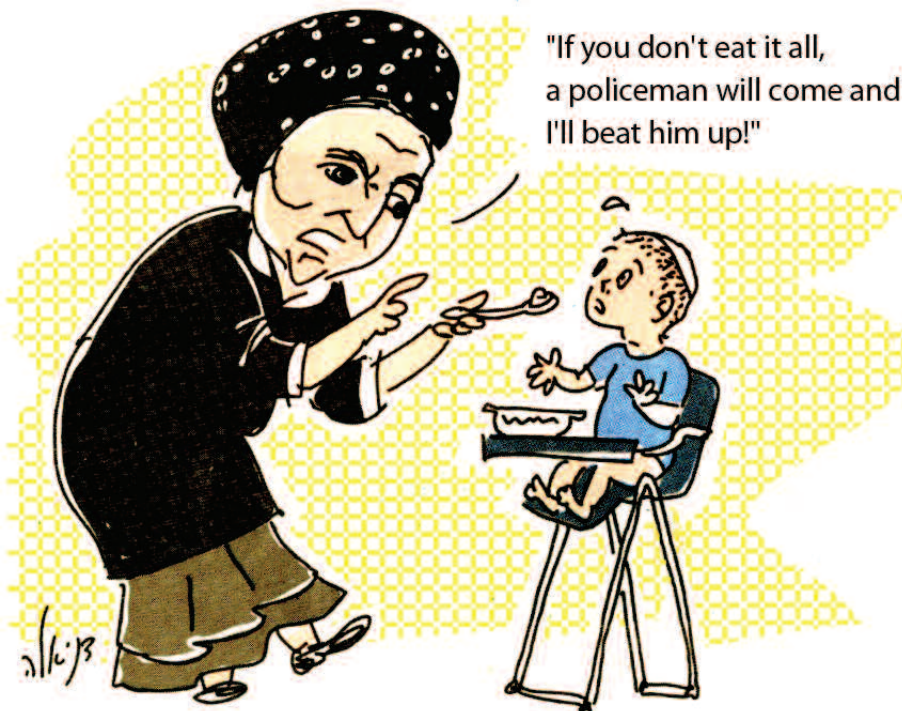
could overcome these divisions. Only a U.S. initiative that goes beyond "process" and focuses on a final status agreement could offer this hope.

The risk of failure should not discourage an early, bold U.S. initiative. The dangers of inaction for Israel and Palestine, whose futures are in doubt as the door to a two state peace is closing, and for U.S. national security, are much higher risks. And a strong presidential envoy and staff could handle the diplomatic and political process.

Finally, strong presidential leadership can prevail over domestic opposition. Polls show that Americans support a two state peace, oppose violence and settlements, and want stronger U.S. leadership. American Jews, Christians, and Arab and Muslim Americans care deeply about the Holy Land. They would welcome a strong, compassionate U.S. initiative to end the Israeli-Palestinian tragedy.

*Philip C. Wilcox, Jr.*

## BREAKFAST LESSONS AT A SETTLEMENT OUTPOST



דניאלה לונדון דקל | daniella@haaretz.co.il

Source: Ha'aretz, October 5, 2008.

## FOUNDATION FOR MIDDLE EAST PEACE

*Merle Thorpe, Jr.*  
Founder  
(1917–1994)

*Philip C. Wilcox, Jr.*  
President

*Geoffrey Aronson*  
Director, Research and  
Publications, Editor, *Report on  
Israeli Settlement in the Occupied  
Territories*

*Nitzan Goldberger*  
*Waseem Mardini*  
Editorial Assistants

*Sara Bobak*  
Intern

### TRUSTEES

*Landrum R. Bolling*  
*Calvin H. Cobb, Jr.*  
*James J. Cromwell*  
*Peter Gubser*  
*Stephen Hartwell*  
*Richard S.T. Marsh*  
*Richard W. Murphy*  
*Jean C. Newsom*  
*Gail Pressberg*  
*William B. Quandt*  
*Nicholas A. Veliotis*

The Foundation, a non-profit I.R.C. 501(c)(3) organization, supports peace and security for Israelis and Palestinians through mutual recognition and a negotiated division of historic Palestine. It publishes the bi-monthly *Report on Israeli Settlement in the Occupied Territories*.

Copyright © 2008

Sign up to receive the *Report* by e-mail, to be notified of events in Washington, D.C., and more. Visit us at [www.fmep.org](http://www.fmep.org).

### The Evacuation-Compensation Bill Is Back

On September 6, 2008, Prime Minister Ehud Olmert brought the issue of evacuation-compensation legislation before his cabinet. The plan, spearheaded by Deputy Prime Minister Haim Ramon, proposes to provide financial compensation to the 67,000 settlers—comprising approximately 12,000 families—who live on the eastern side of the separation barrier in exchange for their voluntarily evacuation, without reference to the conclusion of a final status agreement between Israelis and Palestinians. (See table page 5.)

The cost of the evacuation is estimated at \$700 million by the plan's proponents. The offer includes \$300,000 per family. In comparison, the compensation to 1,200 families evacuated in the 2005 disengagement from Gaza totaled \$1.6 billion. Some in the Finance Ministry estimate that the final price tag for the plan will be higher, with estimates as high as three times the amount of the 2005 Gaza disengagement.

A study ordered by the Prime Minister's Office determined that only 18 percent of settlers living east of the separation barrier would participate in the plan. According to the proposal, the state will buy and seal the homes of settlers who agree to relocation.

*Sources:* Akiva Eldar, "Ramon's Settler Evacuation-Compensation Bill Is Just Talk" *Ha'aretz*, September 5, 2008; Nadav Shragai, "Disengagement Authority: Government Spent NIS 6 Billion on Settler Evacuees" *Ha'aretz*, May 19, 2008; "Ramon Proposes: NIS 1.1 Million for West Bank Evacuees," *Yediot Aharonot*, September 14, 2008

---

### A Prize for Murder

"A prize of \$250,000 is promised to anyone who kills a member of Peace Now. The State of Israel has become our enemy. The time has come to establish a state ruled according to Jewish law in Judea and Samaria. The time for the Kingdom of Judea has come."

Leaflet signed by the State Army of Liberators, found at the site of an assassination attempt on Professor Ze'ev Sternhal, *Yediot Aharonot*, September 28, 2008

---

### Happy New Year

"In what has become something of a holiday tradition, pioneers and other families will start two new Jewish neighborhoods today in Judea/Samaria and will strengthen another.

"The sites chosen for the new neighborhoods are Reches [Hilltop] Sela—the western hilltop of Har Brachah, near Shechem—and Maalot [Steps] Halhoul, between Hebron/Kiryat Arba and Gush Etzion. A third site, Reches Migron—a hilltop just outside Migron, in Binyamin—will receive a strong boost of support, with marchers making their way to

the spot today. Some of them plan to remain and thus bolster the single family and several singles that have been living there for several months. Migron itself has 43 families, but its growth is being stunted by the government.

"Activists in the field said they do not see any attempts by the army to set up blockades or otherwise stop them. Several families are equipped with supplies and are planning to remain there for as long as possible. Weiss, the former mayor of Kedumim, told Arutz 7's Uzi Baruch, "The neighborhood of Shvut Ami, just a few kilometers away from Kedumim, began exactly in this way—as a holiday initiative—and it has now been standing for 13 months."

Arutz 7, October 19, 2008

---

### Closure Update

The United Nations Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs (OCHA) reports that from April 30–September 11, 2008, the Israeli government implemented limited measures to ease restrictions on Palestinian access and movement in the West Bank. Overall, there is still a lack of significant improvement for Palestinian access and movement within the West Bank and East Jerusalem.

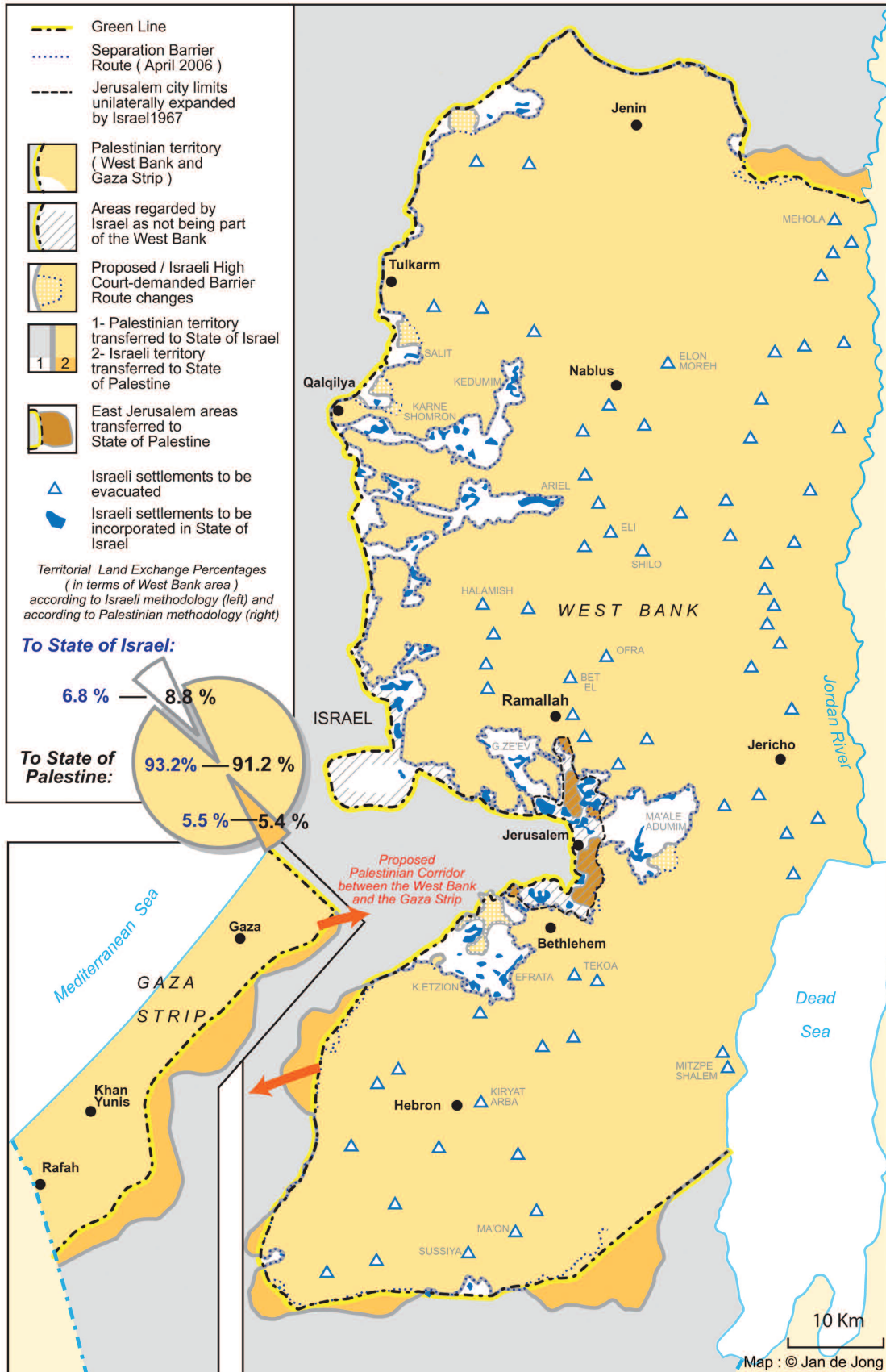
One hundred obstacles were removed, of which only 25 are considered significant and counted by OCHA. Israel eased restrictions on three main routes in the West Bank: Shavei Shomron checkpoint northwest of Nablus, as well as the al-Fahs and Ras al-Joura junctions at Hebron City. While these routes are open, the security infrastructure remains. IDF soldiers continue to man their posts, leaving the possibility that restrictions could be reinstated. Notwithstanding these three junctions, almost 75 percent of the main routes to the 18 most-populated Palestinian urban centers are blocked or restricted by an IDF checkpoint. Close to one-half of the secondary routes into these areas are also blocked or controlled by an IDF checkpoint.

As of September 11, OCHA reports a total of 630 closure obstacles, 93 of which are staffed military checkpoints. This total does not include 69 obstacles located in the Israeli-controlled section of Hebron City (H-2). This figure represents a net increase of 3 percent since April 2008. Northern and central areas had increases while the southern areas of the West Bank had a decrease in the number of obstacles.

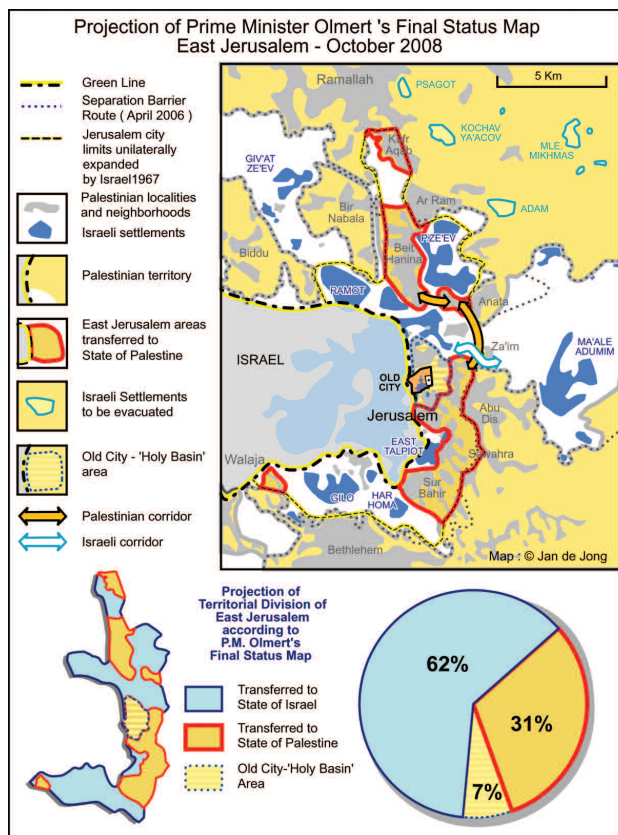
The report concludes that, "In reflecting on the policy implemented for the last eight years, one can note that what was once justified by the Israeli authorities as a short-term military response to violent confrontations and attacks on Israeli civilians, appears to be developing into a permanent system; a system which is fragmenting the West Bank territory and affecting the freedom of movement of the entire Palestinian population."

OCHA Closure Report, September 29, 2008

# Projection of Prime Minister Olmert 's Final Status Map - October 2008



## OLMERT'S FINAL STATUS MAP



The maps opposite are a projection of the final status map suggested by Prime Minister Ehud Olmert in various public statements, and amplified by Minister of Foreign Affairs of Spain Miguel Moratinos. During the Camp David-Taba talks (July 2000-January 2001), Israel identified territory southeast of the Gaza Strip (Halutza sands) as the sole compensatory land for Israel's annexation of West Bank territory. The "swapped" lands identified in the map projection reflect Olmert's description of the "swapped" territory as uninhabited, agricultural land in the Gaza, Hebron Hills, and Bet She'an regions. These swaps comprise Israeli territory equivalent to 5.5% (Israeli calculation)/5.4% (Palestinian calculation) of the West Bank; less than the 6.8%/8.8% of the West Bank Olmert wants to annex to Israel. Differences in calculations are a function of different methodologies. Israel, for example, does not include the Latrun region of annexed East Jerusalem in its West Bank calculations. According to Moratinos, lands offered by Israel are 70 sq.km. less than the West Bank territory it intends to annex.

The Jerusalem projection identifies Palestinian neighborhoods that Israeli officials have identified as part of an eventual agreement. The status of the "holy basin" area, which comprises 7 percent of East Jerusalem, remains unresolved.

## SETTLER POPULATION EAST OF THE BARRIER, SELECTED YEARS 1994-2007

	Population Growth								Population Growth						
	2007	2006	2005	2003	2000	1994	1994-2007 (%)		2007	2006	2005	2003	2000	1994	1994-2007 (%)
1 Adora	248	220	206	191	271	184	34.8	37 Mehola	357	251	362	327	306	268	33.2
2 Almog	854	192	159	141	167	102	737.3	38 Mekhora	112	114	120	125	113	135	-17.0
3 Argaman	170	166	166	169	164	165	3.0	39 Mevo Dotan	315	311	303	289	310	271	16.2
4 Asfar	263	257	258	232	361	299	-12.0	40 Migdalim	139	142	150	152	154	118	17.8
5 Ateret	438	406	373	349	302	230	90.4	41 Mizpe Shalem	171	169	180	193	210	200	-14.5
6 Avnei Hefez	1,328	1,247	1,127	964	785	214	520.6	42 Mizpe Yeriho	1,701	1,641	1,536	1,430	1,210	678	150.9
7 Bat Ayin	906	866	804	767	610	319	184.0	43 Na'aleh	710	655	623	556	137	149	376.5
8 Beqa'ot	175	177	156	145	144	180	-2.8	44 Nahal'el	335	278	264	248	244	214	56.5
9 Bet El	5,288	5,163	4,967	4,627	4,120	1,230	329.9	45 Negohot	182	172	150	134	N/A	N/A	N/A
10 Bet HaArava	102	87	83	54	55	26	292.3	46 Netiv haGedud	114	125	127	120	139	201	-43.3
11 Bracha	1,275	1,182	1,094	880	752	319	299.7	47 Nili	912	886	852	806	721	440	107.3
12 Dolev	1,154	1,100	1,034	973	880	471	145.0	48 Niran	56	52	49	52	56	67	-16.4
13 Eli	2,625	2,530	2,420	2,058	1,900	647	305.7	49 No'omi	128	129	130	123	121	122	4.9
14 Elon Moreh	1,322	1,314	1,212	1,097	1,060	1,120	18.0	50 Nokdim	828	782	729	646	611	316	162.0
15 Enav	569	571	538	473	500	345	64.9	51 Ofra	2,664	2,531	2,384	2,214	1,880	1,270	109.8
16 Giva Binyamin	3,574	3,183	2,436	1,801	1,020	361	890.0	52 Otni'el	763	752	747	698	560	230	231.7
17 Gilgal	148	162	164	162	180	169	-12.4	53 Peza'el	217	214	215	213	224	311	-30.2
18 Gittit	214	214	191	119	100	138	55.1	54 Pesagot	1,545	1,489	1,464	1,278	1,090	778	98.6
19 Hagai	545	477	452	388	406	224	143.3	55 Pnei Hever	396	392	375	376	304	98	304.1
20 Hallamish	956	975	941	915	922	874	9.4	56 Rimmonim	619	565	561	512	499	406	52.5
21 Hamra	119	132	132	131	147	168	-29.2	57 Ro'i	126	128	17	118	141	158	-20.3
22 Hermesh	201	202	212	229	279	142	41.5	58 Sadmot Mehola	542	536	516	507	399	258	110.1
23 Itamar	750	698	651	557	541	273	174.7	59 Shavei Shomron	650	631	606	604	573	606	7.3
24 Kalya	274	266	271	260	260	247	10.9	60 Shilo	2,171	2,068	1,945	1,810	1,580	915	137.3
25 Karmeit Zur	729	696	713	623	481	237	207.6	61 Shim'a	370	368	349	357	298	221	67.4
26 Karmel	378	357	330	321	246	231	63.6	62 Suseya	754	737	700	643	482	269	180.3
27 Kfar Tapuah	798	721	648	523	347	261	205.7	63 Talmon	2,350	2,135	1,964	1,618	1,250	439	435.3
28 Kiryat Arba'	7,039	6,958	6,819	6,605	6,380	5,120	37.5	64 Telem	192	167	152	127	97	80	140.0
29 Kokhav haShahar	1,619	1,530	1,449	1,367	1,150	805	101.1	65 Tene	658	650	532	563	561	347	89.6
30 Kokhav Ya'akov	5,627	5,268	4,919	3,819	1,640	663	748.7	66 Tekoa	1,455	1,343	1,243	1,116	980	776	87.5
31 Ma'ale Amos	326	344	340	299	336	388	-16.0	67 Tomer	290	282	281	298	308	290	0.0
32 Ma'ale Efraim	1,377	1,384	1,423	1,443	1,480	1,470	-6.3	68 Vered Yeriho	190	180	156	161	164	202	-5.9
33 Ma'ale Levona	559	556	545	497	445	301	85.7	69 Yafit	111	104	99	95	125	124	-10.5
34 Ma'ale Mikhmas	1,229	1,184	1,126	980	826	539	128.0	70 Yitav	187	175	156	136	114	78	139.7
35 Ma'on	381	370	347	327	283	158	141.1	71 Yizhar	743	673	590	440	329	200	271.5
36 Massu'a	136	142	136	145	148	210	-35.2	Totals	66,749	63,124	59,469	53,823	45,978	30,065	122.0

Sources: List of Localities: Their Population and Codes. Jerusalem: Central Bureau of Statistics, 1999-2007; "Israel in Number 2004" <http://www.cbs.gov.il/population/localities/localbycode2004.xls>; Israeli Central Bureau of Statistics, "Population in Localities, 1994, Demographic Characteristics, by Geographical Divisions (S.P.1026);" Settler Population Database, Foundation for Middle East Peace.

## SETTLEMENT TIME LINE

**July 6** Four settlers from Asfar beat and injure two Palestinian men from the village of Sa'ir, near Hebron, who were tending their sheep in the vicinity of the settlement. (OCHA)

B'tselem reports that the Israeli military recently severed routes to the Palestinian village of al-Nabi Samwil, population, 220, from the rest of the West Bank, isolating it almost completely. The village lies on the route between the Ramot and Givat Ze'ev settlements.

**July 10** *Yedioth Abaronot* reports that the Israeli Defense Ministry has lifted a freeze imposed on the construction of 25 factories near the settlement of Ariel, which would double the size of the Ariel West industrial zone.

The Regional Construction and Planning Board for Jerusalem approves the construction of 910 housing units in the East Jerusalem settlement of Har Homa and 900 housing units in the settlement of Pisgat Ze'ev. (Arutz 7, *Ha'aretz*)

Palestinians from the village of Bil'in submit a petition in a Montreal court against two Canadian firms for working on construction projects in the settlements of Matityahu-East and Modi'in Illit. (*Ma'ariv*)

**July 11** Palestinians fire on and injure an Israeli driving near the West Bank settlement of Yakir. IDF soldiers later shoot and kill one of the Palestinians allegedly involved. (Arutz 7)

**July 12** A settler from Yitzhar is arrested for launching a Qassam-like missile at Palestinians in the West Bank village of Burin. (Ma'an News)

**July 16** Israeli prime minister Ehud Olmert rejects a request by Housing Minister Ze'ev Boim to build 800 additional housing units in the West Bank settlement of Beitar Illit, instead agreeing to 286. (*Ha'aretz*)

Hundreds of settlers gather at the Yad Yair outpost in anticipation of the Israeli army's evacuation of the outpost. (*Ha'aretz*)

**July 20** *Ha'aretz* reports an Israeli High Court of Justice decision to uphold a ruling for the eviction of the al-Kurd family from a building in the Sheikh Jarrah neighborhood in East Jerusalem. The court ruled that the property is owned by religious Jews.

**July 21** Settlers from the Havat Gilad outpost attack three Palestinians working on their land near the village of Immatin. (OCHA)

**July 24** Settlers clash with Israeli soldiers at the Havat Gilad outpost. (*Yediot Abaronot*)

The Defense Ministry announces its intention to build 20 new housing units in Maskiyot, an abandoned military base in the Jordan Valley, for families evacuated from Gaza settlements in 2005. The plan had been shelved in 2006 after it provoked international condemnation. (*Yediot Abaronot*)

**July 27** *Ha'aretz* reports that the United States has filed a protest with Israel opposing the eviction of the al-Kurd family from their home in the East Jerusalem neighborhood of Sheikh Jarrah.

Settlers stab and injure two Palestinian workers in the industrial zone of the Mishor Adumim settlement. (OCHA)

Settlers from Yitzhar set fire to a Palestinian house in the village of Burin. (Ma'an News)

The U.K.-based Palestinian Solidarity Campaign calls on the British government to ban the import of products made in West Bank settlements. (Ma'an News)

**July 28** *Ha'aretz* reports that the Defense Ministry has agreed to dismantle a 2.4-kilometer stretch of the separation barrier north of Qalqilya, returning 2,600 dunams of agricultural land to Palestinian owners. The dismantled section will be replaced by 4.9 kilometers of fencing closer to the Green Line, at a cost of more than \$13.6 million.

A group of Israeli settlers from an outpost near Kafr Qaddum throw stones at Palestinian vehicles passing on Road 55. (OCHA)

**July 29** Israeli security forces blow up a Palestinian four-storey apartment building near East Jerusalem for being built without a permit. (Reuters)

**July 30** Israeli soldiers shoot and kill a Palestinian boy during a demonstration against the separation barrier in the West Bank village of Ni'lin. (OCHA)

Five settlers arrive at the Shuafat refugee camp with a mobile home, claiming to own a parcel of land. Israeli police order their evacuation. (Army Radio News)

**July 31** *The Marker* reports that of the 6,000 new Israeli home sales from January through June 2008, 2.2 percent, or 132, were in the West Bank.

**August 1** *Yediot Yerushalaim* reports the publication of tenders for 668 additional housing units in the East Jerusalem settlement of Pisgat Ze'ev.

**August 3** Settlers from Yitzhar throw stones at the car of a pregnant Palestinian woman and her 7-year-old daughter. (*Ha'aretz*)

Israel's High Court of Justice criticizes the government for not carrying out its commitments based on the court's 2007 ruling on the route of the separation barrier on land belonging to Palestinians from Bil'in. The government was originally given 45 days to propose a new route. (*Ha'aretz*)

*The Marker* reports that Israel's Housing and Construction Ministry plans to return \$9.2 million to four construction companies for a project adjacent to the West Bank settlement of Giv'at Ze'ev that was canceled because the second intifada discouraged prospective buyers.

**August 4** *Ha'aretz* reports the Jerusalem Municipality's refusal to execute a court order for the evacuation of settlers illegally squatting in a house in the Palestinian neighborhood of Silwan.

**August 6** The Israel Land Authority issues tenders for the construction of 130 housing units in the East Jerusalem settlement of Har Homa. (Ir Amim)

**August 11** The YESHA Council unanimously approves a compromise offer by the Defense Ministry to voluntarily abandon the Migron outpost in return for the establishment of a new settlement to be built near Jerusalem. The High Court of Justice had ordered the removal of the outpost, which will remain inhabited until the new settlement is constructed. (*Ma'ariv*)

**August 12** Forty settler activists try to take possession of a building near the Shuafat refugee camp in East Jerusalem. Jerusalem police remove them and arrest ten following a scuffle. (*Ma'ariv*)

**August 13** A settler from the outpost of Zayit Ra'anani ties a 17-year-old Palestinian boy to his all-terrain vehicle and drags him through an olive grove. (*Yediot Abaronot*)

## SETTLEMENT TIME LINE

**August 15** *Ha'aretz* reports a steep increase in violence by settlers against Palestinians and against Israeli security forces compared to attacks during the first half of 2008. There had been 429 incidents to date in 2008, compared with 587 in 2006 and 551 in 2007.

**August 19** Settlers from al-Rajabai House and Kiryat Arba

attack and injure two Palestinian women from the Wadi al-Hussein neighborhood of Hebron. (OCHA)

**August 24** In separate incidents, settlers attack and injure an 18-year-old Palestinian man and a 45-year-old Palestinian man in the Wadi al-Hussein neighborhood of Hebron. (OCHA)

MARGINS, continued from page 1

security policies, which resulted in a 150 percent increase in the West Bank settler population to almost 300,000 between 1989 and 2008 and a 400 per cent increase in the amount of land under its direct control. The report explains that Palestinians require “economic space”—in a word, land—for development and growth, without which they will be unable to prosper. “The increasingly entrenched and expanding impact of Israeli settlement activity on the Palestinian economy” must be addressed, it noted, “so that land administration policy foster[s] rather than constrain[s] growth and development and promote[s] the rational use of land resources in the entire West Bank.”

The crisis in Palestine created by Israel’s settlement and security strategy cannot be solved by piecemeal tinkering with the constituent elements of Israeli policy. Although reducing or even eliminating checkpoints, “freezing” settlements, restoring some sense of normality to Palestinian economic life, increasing the effectiveness of Palestinian security forces, or creating “metrics” for judging Israeli and Palestinian goodwill, are useful at the margins of Palestinian daily life, they fail to challenge the systemic nature of a hostile, military occupation intent upon preempting the exercise of Palestinian sovereignty and removing the levers of economic development from Palestinian control. As a recent newspaper advertisement by the Israeli anti-occupation organization Peace Bloc declares, the problem is not only the settlers: “The occupation is guilty in all of its spheres—the government, the army, the police, and the courts.”

### Follow Us Not Them

One year ago, U.S. secretary of state Condoleezza Rice exhorted Palestinians to “follow us, not them [ Hamas ].” Meanwhile the Hamas model for ending occupation maintains its attraction, and Hamas’ rule is exhibiting the very characteristics of sovereignty—including a cease-fire negotiated with Israel—that the PA can only dream about. As Israeli columnist Nahum Barnea observed, “We tend to think that



the residents of Gaza are unhappy: they suffer both from the oppressive Hamas regime, and from the siege that imprisons them in a small, suffocating enclave, and from IDF fire, in periods when there is no *tabdia* (cease-fire). A high ranking IDF officer reminded me this week that people there have a different perspective from here. ‘The West Bank lives under occupation,’ he said. ‘Gaza is independent. There are no roadblocks there. There are no settlers. There is the sea. The model for the admiration of every Palestinian child is the Hamas fighter, who fires Kassam rockets at Israel.’”

These Palestinian gains in Gaza are being won at high cost, but the achievements of the Gaza model may prove more substantial than those of the Annapolis process. As Prime Minister Salaam Fayyad warned during a November visit by Rice to Jenin, the centerpiece of the international effort to re-create an Israeli-Palestinian security and economic partnership, the U.S.-led effort is “not going to be sufficient to really get us to where we are going. What we are doing here is building towards statehood, toward ending the occupation and building towards statehood. If nothing else happens, or things do not happen on the other track to make it possible for us to realize that dream of getting to the point of being free, then that is not going to work. And it is going to increasingly be seen as an exercise in improving the quality of occupation. This is not what this exercise is about. This is about ending the occupation, not beautifying it.”

### Notes

\*\*\*“Macroeconomic and Fiscal Framework for the West Bank and Gaza: Second Review of Progress,” Staff Report for the Meeting of the Ad-Hoc Liaison Committee (Quartet), September 22, 2008.

\*\*\*\*“The Economic Effects of Restricted Access to Land in the West Bank,” The World Bank, September 2008.

## SETTLEMENT CONSTRUCTION UPDATE

Peace Now estimates that over 1,000 new buildings (2,600 housing units) are being constructed in West Bank settlements. One hundred twenty-five new structures have been added to so-called outpost settlements, including 30 permanent houses. Housing starts in the West Bank during the second quarter of 2008 increased by 42 percent from the same period last year. Seven percent of all new housing starts in Israel in 2008 are located in the West Bank (excluding East Jerusalem).

Construction continues in the settlements east of the barrier. At least 425 new buildings have been constructed there

this year, including:

Kiryat Arba—approximately 50 housing units  
Shilo—approximately 20 housing units  
Dolev—approximately 17 housing units  
Talmon (and its outpost)—around 30 housing units  
Yitzhar—approximately 14 housing units  
Eli—approximately 59 housing units  
Itamar—approximately 10 housing units  
Kochav Ha'Shachar—about 16 housing units  
Kfar Tapuah—approximately 12 housing units  
Nahaliel—approximately 10 housing units

For the past 30 years, I have considered the settlements a destructive phenomenon that raises a large question mark over Israel's future. In fact, the settlement enterprise is an ideological, political and social phenomenon that has succeeded in creating an original androgynous creation: Colonial Zionism . . . based on ethnic and religious inequality, which considers itself the exclusive emissary of Jewish history. The Divine promise and not the natural rights of human beings to freedom, independence and self-government is, in its eyes, the one and only source of legitimacy for the return of the Jews to the Land of Israel. According to this viewpoint, the land belongs not only to living Jews, but to all the past generations and those yet unborn; therefore, members of the present generation have no right to share possession of the land with members of another nation. . . .

[I]ts leaders and spokespersons show disdain for both the weak politicians and the basic tenets of democracy itself. They know how to exploit democratic institutions, but they ignore human rights and recognize only the rights of the Jews. Since the High Court of Justice decision on Elon Moreh in 1979, in which the court ruled that seizing private lands is illegal, they have been attacking this basic institution of Israeli democracy, the guardian of

individual rights.

. . . The situation in the territories in general and the lawless outposts in particular, along with the theft of private lands, is testimony to the bankruptcy of the state when faced with the daring of the settler and his determination not to retreat before ethical or legal obstacles. In that way the settlement movement is perforce creating daily violations of the law and a culture of violence: Ofra and Beit El may be quiet and pleasant places settled by idealists, but together with their satellite outposts—Amona, Beit Hagedud and Ofra Northeast, Beit El East and Hill 909—they have seized an area that, according to aerial photos and information conveyed to the Peace Now monitoring committee by government authorities, over 90 percent of which is composed of private Palestinian land [figures from October 2006]. . . .

I have already written in the past in this newspaper, and I repeat it today: If Israeli society is unable to muster the courage necessary to put an end to the settlements, the settlements will put an end to the state of the Jews and will turn it into a binational state.

Ze'ev Sternhal, who was lightly injured in an assassination attempt on September 26, 2008,  
*Ha'aretz*, October 17, 2008

Foundation for Middle East Peace  
1761 N Street, N.W.  
Washington, DC 20036  
Telephone: 202-835-3650  
Fax: 202-835-3651  
E-mail: [info@fmep.org](mailto:info@fmep.org)  
Internet: <http://www.fmep.org>

FIRST CLASS  
US POSTAGE  
**PAID**  
MERRIFIELD, VA  
PERMIT #2333

