



# The Apartheid Wall

## — Israel's ghetto wall of shame

*'The "separation wall" is being built at a frantic pace. It does not separate Israel and the Palestinians.*

*It separates the Palestinian villages and their lands. It cuts whole Palestinian villages off from the West Bank. It penetrates deep into the Palestinian territories, in order to attach dozens of settlements to Israel. It surrounds the West Bank on all sides, cuts it into pieces and cuts it off from the world.'*

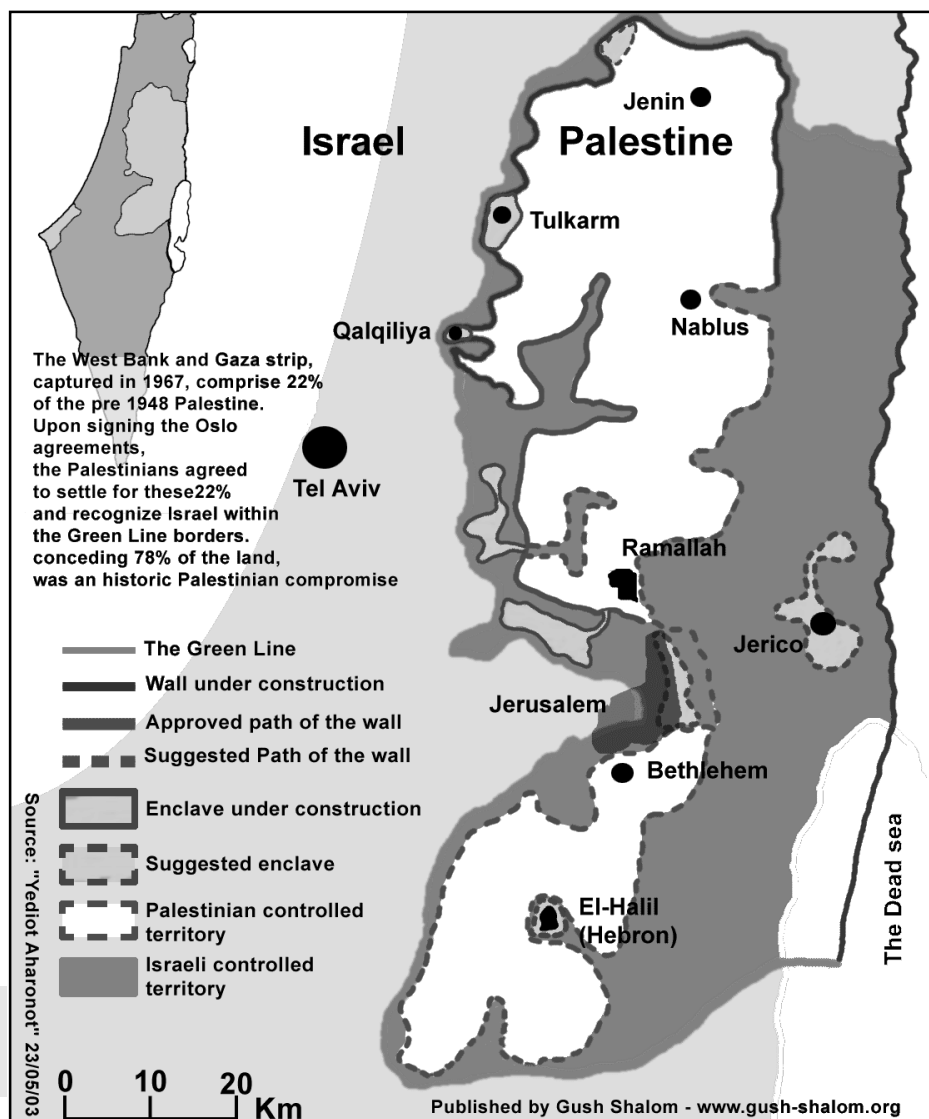
**Gush Shalom**

The 21st Century is witnessing the most blatant ghettoisation of a people since the Second World War as the Israeli government constructs its so-called 'security fence' around the Palestinians of the West Bank.

This Apartheid Wall is the latest offensive in Israel's continuous annexation of Palestinian lands, destruction of agriculture and property, and violation of human rights. It bites deep into the heartland of Occupied Palestine, stealing the most fertile lands of the West Bank, including the Jordan Valley.

The Wall is part of Israel's attempt to slowly ethnically cleanse the Occupied Territories.

Alongside Israel, the US and UK governments must be held responsible for this act of war. Despite Blair's promise, intended to drum up support for the attack on Iraq, of a 'viable Palestinian state', the British government has remained silent about the apartheid Wall which is now carving up the land designated for a future Palestinian state. Dismantling the Wall, along with the Israeli settler colonies, must be demanded by the whole international community.



The Apartheid Wall



*'Sharon continued to insist that the fence would not define the borders of a Palestinian state. But Palestinian fears were reinforced by the undeniable similarity between the proposed path of the barrier and Sharon's stated intention to confine the Palestinians to 42% of the Occupied Territories focused around three or four cantons.'*

**Chris McGreal,**  
*Guardian*  
3 September 2003

*Zeita village lost 90% of its land in 1948. Left with only 500 acres and a population of 3,000, the wall will steal more than 20% of this. Residents were given one week to appeal, at the same time the Israeli army imposed a 14-day curfew, closing off Tulkarm, the nearest town, where the appeal must be heard.*

## Why is there no map of the Wall?

*'Whatever the final boundaries of the barrier it will effectively place much of West Bank land out of bounds for Palestinians and constitute the greatest change in the landscape since 1967.'* (UNWRA July 2003)

There is no official published map of this Wall. From the projections, it is estimated that construction will reduce the West Bank by up to 50%. It may be as long as 1000km. There will remain only fragments of Palestinian territory, with the most fertile land and the water stolen by Israel.

The Yesha Council of Settlements, the body representing illegal Jewish settlers in the Occupied Territories, has already succeeded in influencing the route in the first phase to annex more illegal colonies to Israel and leave more than 100,000 Palestinians on the western side of the barrier alone.

However Palestinians have no effective recourse to appeal. Maps are dropped or posted on trees, the first indication that their land is to be confiscated. Village councils or local municipalities are rarely notified. Not a single appeal against these 'military requisition orders' has succeeded.

Construction on the Wall started in the northern West Bank in June 2002. This phase — from Zbuba in the north west corner of Jenin governorate, through the Tulkarm district, to Elkana settlement in the southern Qalqilya governorate — extends some 140 kilometres in length.

In May 2003, whilst international attention was focused on the war in Iraq, the Israeli government approved plans to extend the Wall to the eastern and southern areas — taking the wall 15km inside the West Bank from the Jordanian border, stealing the Jordan valley and the most fertile Palestinian land, and completely corralling almost all of the Palestinian people in half of the West Bank.

The Wall is currently being built through Palestinian areas of Jerusalem and cutting through Bethlehem in the south.

## Stranded — the human cost

The real separation is between the Palestinians and their lands, villages and towns. In the first, northern phase alone, nearly 70 towns, villages, hamlets and refugee camps — and over 250,000 Palestinians — will be affected.

Of these:

- 14,000 are trapped between the Wall and the Green Line. This area is a Closed Military Zone.

*The village of Ras Atiya (pop. 1,400) has lost 75% of its lands to the Wall, affecting some 220 families. The barrier passes just 10 metres from the local, 450 pupil school, built with Swiss funding. Dynamiting has damaged the outer wall and disrupted classes. Sixty pupils and most of the teachers are from outside the village and will be cut off by the Wall. UNWRA*



There is no guarantee of access to the West Bank. They are cut off entirely from their community, services, friends and families and have no rights in Israeli law.

- Another 20,000 east of the Wall are cut off from their lands, losing livelihoods, sustenance and heritage.
- Animals have no access to grazing land, olive oil production will cease, hundreds of buildings are demolished.
- Whole villages and hamlets near the Wall will disappear under the bulldozers.

Qalqilya, once a prosperous market town, with half the water resources in the West Bank, was an important agricultural resource which exported fruit and vegetables to Israel and the Gulf States. Now it is a ghetto almost totally surrounded by the wall. The only entrance and exit for the 42,000 residents is a bottle-neck. Gates, overlooked by a watchtower, control the flow in and out of the town — one person or vehicle at a time. The town can be transformed into a prison at the whim of any occupation soldier.

If the Israeli government succeeds in carrying out its plans for the Wall, every Palestinian inhabitant of the West Bank will be affected.



## The architecture of occupation

The Wall includes watchtowers at 300 metre intervals. Entry gates and agricultural crossings will be established but these will be policed by the Israeli army. Palestinians believe that pedestrians and vehicles will be charged for crossing. One planned crossing point was claimed to be at Qafin where the concrete Wall has cut the village off from 70% of its remaining olive trees. According to Qafin's mayor, despite there being a



gate on the original plans for the wall, no gate was built, and the villagers have no way of reaching their land and trees.

The actual barrier will be on average 70 metres wide, extending to 100 metres in some areas.

In the Northern and Western sections already built, the Israelis have devised a number of different obstacles and hurdles:

- an electronic 'smart fence' in the centre to warn of any attempt to cross
  - on the eastern side of this fence, a trench, ditch or other obstacle to act as a barrier against vehicles
  - another fence for delay purposes
  - a paved service road next to this delay fence.
- Outside the 'smart fence' are a number of paths:
- a trace path to disclose the footprints of anyone crossing
  - a two-lane patrol road
  - a road for armoured vehicles and another fence.

## Creating a desert, imprisoning a people

This latest Israeli atrocity is achieved by demolishing hundreds of Palestinian homes, thousands of acres of agricultural land including olive groves, citrus orchards, and water pipes and other property which is the economic life of the people.

## Water

The Wall will cause many Palestinian villages to lose their only source of water. The first phase of building has had a severe impact, destroying 35 kilometres of water pipes and demolishing dozens of greenhouses. Thirty wells are listed as lost in the Qalqilya and Tulkarm districts alone. The route of the wall bites deep into Palestinian land to ensure that Israel steals control of the aquifers in the West Bank. Movement restrictions have already led to an 80% increase in the cost of trucked water, an absolute necessity in summer. Israel already controls the entire water supply, rationing it to Palestinians and charging them for their own resources. Meanwhile illegal settler colonies use 80% of the West Bank's renewable water supplies.

## Israel's policy

Both the Labour and Likud parties support this Wall, claiming it is designed to physically separate the West Bank from Israel. However, it is obvious that separation is not the motive – if so, it would have followed the Green Line.

Some Israelis see the Wall as the last hope for a two state solution. Its construction reveals the kind of 'two state' solution which Israel envisages. According to David B. Green, writing in *Prospect* magazine (August 2003) some are fearful that outright annexation would incorporate into Israel 'nearly 2m. Palestinians (with another 1.2m. in

Gaza), which would quickly challenge the Jewish majority of the state.' He quotes Uzi Dayan, former head of Israel's national security, and avid supporter of the Wall: 'This (demography) means we have to separate from the Palestinians.'

The security that they seek will not be achieved by the tightening of the noose around the Palestinian people.

## Separation = Apartheid

The Israelis call this a 'security fence' and talk of 'separation'. By using the language of separation, Israel adopts the very language of South African apartheid.

Apartheid, a war crime, is defined in international law as 'a system of institutionalised racial segregation and discrimination for the purpose of establishing and maintaining domination by one racial group...over another and systematically oppressing them. The Wall is a monstrous and tangible manifestation of this, dividing people along racial lines by the creation of 'reserves' or ghettos, controlling movement with ID cards, curfews and closures.

## The 'Jerusalem Envelope'

Israel is determined that Jerusalem will never be the capital of a Palestinian state and the Wall helps them to achieve this. They intend the facts on the ground to be insurmountable. East Jerusalem is to be cut off from the West Bank.

Work started at Rafat to the north of Jerusalem on 22 August 2002. Around 15,000 Palestinians, holders of Israeli ID cards from Qalandia town, Qalandia refugee camp and Kufur Aqeb will be trapped between the Wall and Jerusalem municipality border. They will pay Israeli taxes without receiving services, while being cut off from the rest of the Palestinian community. Qalandia airport, already razed to the ground by Israel, will be annexed.

'Heavy Caterpillars and D-9s are feverishly moving huge masses of earth and stone, scarring roads across hilltops and open spaces... These road works are constructing the Jerusalem Security Envelope.... The fence will be between 165 and 231 feet wide and will include moats studded with metal obstacles to obstruct motor vehicles; patrol roads; dirt roads that will be dusted for footprints...the entire fence area will be considered a closed military zone with 'open fire' orders to be determined by the commanders in the field...The more Palestinians who are not residents of Jerusalem are included inside the envelope, the more we will have to build concentric series of fences and checkpoints within Jerusalem proper' (Etta Prince Gibson, *Jerusalem Post service*, December 2002)

## Rachel's Tomb — Bethlehem

Bethlehem's economy used to be based on tourism. The Wall being built around Rachel's Tomb to link it to the jurisdiction of the Jerusalem municipality will in the words of Mayor of Bethlehem, Hanna Nasser, transform the area 'into a ghetto'. The massive obstruction at the main entrance to Bethlehem will destroy tourism and strangle the economy of the town, dramatically increasing already high unemployment and poverty. On 6 March 2003 the Mayor issued an appeal to 'all people of goodwill in the world' to oppose the order issued by the Israeli occupying forces announcing the seizure of Palestinian land and property at Rachel's Tomb. He stated 'The wall will sever connections between Bethlehem and other Palestinian cities, in particular, Jerusalem.'

*Moayad Hussain, mayor of Baqa al-Sharqia, a village that will be left on the 'Israeli' side of the wall, points out: 'If the fence is for security, if the fence is to keep us out, then why aren't we on the other side? With every kilometer of fence Sharon builds we are sure there is only one answer. This is not about security, it's about land and resources'.*

*Guardian 3  
September 2003*



*When complete the Wall will be up to twice the height (8metres) of the Berlin Wall. Movement will be almost impossible and constantly monitored.*

**References**

The information in this factsheet was taken from: PENGON, the Palestinian Environmental NGOs Network: [www.pengon.org](http://www.pengon.org) UNRWA, the United Nations Relief and Works Agency for Palestinian refugees, *Report July 03*: [www.unrwa.org](http://www.unrwa.org) Land Research Centre: [www.ircj.org](http://www.ircj.org) Gush Shalom: [www.gush-shalom.org](http://www.gush-shalom.org)

**Footnotes**

1. *The Green Line*. This is the name given to the border (1948 armistice line) between Israel and the West Bank prior to the 1967 War when Israel illegally occupied the Palestinian Territories.

In 1993, at Oslo, the Palestinian leadership agreed to recognize the state of Israel based upon this Green Line on the understanding that all the remaining land in the Palestinian Occupied Territories would constitute the future independent Palestinian state. This major historical concession meant that Israel would have 78% of what was originally Palestine and the Palestinians would accept the remaining 22% — the West Bank, Gaza strip and East Jerusalem. It is this 22% which is systematically being stolen by the construction of illegal settler colonies and their connecting settler only roads. The Wall will consolidate and extend this theft.



**Who pays?**

The cost of construction is estimated at \$1 million per kilometre. In the year 2000, US taxpayers sent \$4 billion in aid to Israel — 75% of it for military aid. As a third of this money is a cash grant which cannot be traced once deposited in Israeli banks, it can illegally subsidise the settler colonies and projects such as the Wall.

Meanwhile Israeli construction companies benefit commercially from the construction. An estimated 250 bulldozers are engaged in the destruction to prepare the ground for the Wall. And Israeli workers have set up an illegal industry selling the uprooted Palestinian trees.

**Protests**

Palestinian protests are continuing, with the support of some Israelis and internationals, such as those in the village of Mes'ha in the Qalqilya district of the West Bank. No less than three groups of international activists are with the villagers: the ISM; the women of IWPS; and also the Ecumenical

Accompaniers sponsored by the World Council of Churches. They are often joined by Israeli supporters of Gush Shalom and other peace activists.

'Our land is our honour. We want to live in peace with Israel. Suicide bombings are not our way, but how can anybody expect us to live in peace when our land is stolen, our trees are uprooted, the last piece of bread is taken from the mouths of our children? Does the world accept this as justice?' cried Nabih Shalabi, representative of the directly affected villagers.

A young villager from Mes'ha declared 'You see on this side the route of the Wall and all the land which it will take away from us. And there, on the other side, you see the settlements Elkana and Etz Ephraim; they were also built on Mes'ha land. We have already lost many of the olive trees near the settlements. The army does not let us go there, and the settlers harvest our olives. The trees which are here in this hill, we did harvest this year, but when the Wall will be there, the settlers will have them all.'



# The Wall Must Fall!

**What can you do?**

- Support the International Day of Action on 9 November – contact PSC for details
- Contact the PSC for postcards, posters and campaign materials
- Express your views to the media
- Write to your MP and MEP to urge action
- Write to the Israeli embassy demanding an end to the occupation and for the dismantling of the wall
- Join the PSC

**Palestine Solidarity Campaign**

[www.palestinecampaign.org](http://www.palestinecampaign.org)  
 Box BM, PSA, London WC1N 3XX.  
 Phone: 020 7700 6192.  
 email: [info@palestinecampaign.org](mailto:info@palestinecampaign.org)