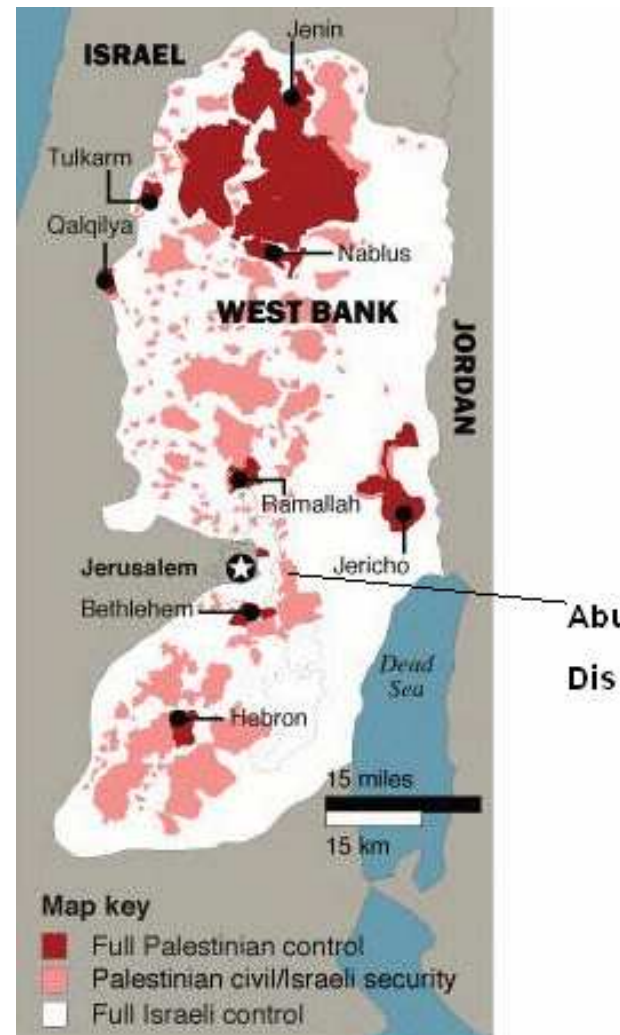


## Monthly report on Israeli violations in Abu Dis, April 2008

The Israeli violations on the people in Abu Dis continued during April. During this month in Abu Dis there were several invasions of houses and the Israeli army arrested a number of young people. There were collective punishments at the occupation checkpoints around East Jerusalem. This report tells what happened during this month.

### Building the Wall & confiscating land

- The settlers' society funded by the Jewish millionaire Muskovitch started to move Israeli families into the building that used to be the central police station for the West Bank, based in Ras Al Amoud in East Jerusalem. The police station was moved into its new building which was built near Maale Adumim as part of the E1 settlement project.
- The settlers' society applied to the Local Committee for Organising and Building to build another 110 building units in the same area. In this application, the society asked to create a new neighbourhood called Maale David which will join with Maale Zetin which was created by the same Jewish American businessman at the beginning of the nineties -Aravim Muskovitch.



*Palestinian control” – these red areas actually refer to Area A where the Palestinian police operate, but the Israeli army demonstrates its control by coming in regularly, whenever they want to.*

Maps adapted from Gush Shalom

*This map shows the limited area of Palestinian control in the West Bank. In fact, Gush Shalom is optimistic in labelling any of the areas “full*



*There is more information about the settlements around Jerusalem in a useful UN report “The Humanitarian Impact on Palestinians of Israeli Settlements and Other Infrastructure in the West Bank” (July 2007)*

[http://www.ochaopt.org/?module=displaysection&section\\_id=1&format=html](http://www.ochaopt.org/?module=displaysection&section_id=1&format=html)



*This map shows main fixed checkpoints – There are often temporary “flying” checkpoints*

### **Israeli violations at the checkpoints round Abu Dis**

Since the Israelis started to build the Separation Wall around Jerusalem they have worked to seal off Jerusalem very thoroughly from its suburb, and they have made special "terminals"<sup>1</sup> for people to go through to get into the city. For the towns on the east of Jerusalem, the Israeli authorities built a terminal in a place between the Mount of Olives and the town of Aizariyeh to allow people carrying West Bank passes and who have also got a permit, following very long and complicated procedures, specially now they use finger prints as well as permits. And at al-Zayem on the Jerusalem road leading to the settlement of Maale Adumim, they have put a checkpoint that can only be used by people with Jerusalem passes.

Since the first intifada, the area of Abu Dis has been treated by Israel in some ways similarly to East Jerusalem, and it has been controlled by the Israeli Border Police. Some local people used to think that the area might be linked with Jerusalem and even hoped so. In March 08 we reported that Israel appeared to have replaced the Border Police in this area with the military as in the rest of the West Bank. In fact in April, there were both Border Police and Israeli military in and around Abu Dis.

In this part of the report we will record the Israeli violations at the checkpoints in the Wall in the area round East Jerusalem.

<sup>1</sup> The Palestinians are now using the word “mua’bar” (translated into “terminal”) to describe the huge checkpoints, like international frontiers, that are the ways through the Wall.



*Pictures taken in Abu Dis showing Palestinians stopped in the streets at temporary checkpoints*

- .On Thursday 10<sup>th</sup> April Israeli forces held dozens of people at the Container checkpoint on the road through the Wad al-Nar valley which leads to Bethlehem People were forced to wait a long time while vehicles went through a very prolonged check which led to an extremely long rush hour. *(Note for people not in Abu Dis – long tailbacks and checks are everyday at the Container – this was exceptionally difficult)*
- On Sunday 20<sup>th</sup> April, the Israeli authority closed Qalandya military terminal (which is in the Separation Wall which Israel built to divide Jerusalem from its northern and eastern suburb on the Ramallah side). They closed the road in both directions from the afternoon onward, without giving any reason. *(Usually the Israeli authority closes this terminal on many occasions for example when they have ordinary training for their soldiers and sometimes when they have security alarms which stops workers from going to work and students from going to school and patients from going to the hospitals.)*
- On Monday 21<sup>st</sup> April the Israeli occupation authorities put a complete closure on Jerusalem, and stopped movement on the East Jerusalem roads and made the city like a military camp (full of soldiers). They increased the security procedures because of the Jewish festival (Passover). Dozens of Jews from all over the world gathered in Buraq Square (near the Wailing Wall) guarded by thousands of Israeli police and special units of Border Police inside the old city of Jerusalem and at the terminals and checkpoints around the city.

- This closure imposed by the Israeli Authorities in and around Jerusalem continued until the following Sunday.
- On Thursday 24<sup>th</sup> April, Israeli soldiers together with the intelligence officers stopped cars at Jabaa checkpoint and they gave passengers, mainly young men, orders to go to the military camp and meet the Israeli intelligence officer.
- Israeli police also made checkpoints near Maale Adumim and also at al-Khan al- Ahmar. They stopped Palestinian cars and gave fines to dozens of drivers on different excuses.

### **Israeli pass laws and the issue of Jerusalem citizenship**

Successive Israeli governments have worked to implement a recommendation made in 1973 by the Israeli Ministerial Committee for Jerusalem under the leadership of Golda Meir, to reduce the percentage of Palestinians in Jerusalem to under 22%. This has led to many different policies that have distorted the demography of Jerusalem. The most recent of these policies has been to put great pressure on Palestinians of Jerusalem, and led to many thousands of people having their Jerusalem IDs taken from them. Although five thousand families in Jerusalem have lost their IDs since 1973, the Palestinians still represent 35% of the population of Jerusalem city itself, because many Jerusalemites who had moved into the suburbs have moved back to live inside the city since the Wall was built. During just the year 2006, 1,363 Jerusalem residents lost their Jerusalem IDs (figures - Israeli Interior Ministry) This came after Israel had separated Jerusalem completely from its suburbs. Many people who have Jerusalem IDs, and many families who have mixed IDs live in these suburbs. Note that most people in Abu Dis have West Bank IDs but a minority have Jerusalem IDs.

### **Arresting and invading houses**

During this month the Israeli authorities continued the policy of invading houses and arresting people. Israeli soldiers together with the intelligence forces invaded houses during the night, searched and damaged things, and made several arrests during the last month.

- On Tuesday 22<sup>nd</sup> April at a late hour in the morning a big force of Israeli army invaded the Asrana office in Aizariya. The soldiers searched through the office and entered the houses of the brothers of the director of the centre, Mohannad Abu Rumi saying they were looking for weapons and upset the security of the household.
- On Wednesday 23rd April, the soldiers at the Container checkpoint arrested Mahmoud Hussain Bhjat, who is from Jabaliya in Gaza Strip, and is forty years old. He is married and has ten children. Mahmoud was returning to Hebron after visiting his father who is in hospital in Ramallah
- On Tuesday 29th April, an Israeli military force came into the town of Abu Dis and carried out a number of arrests of groups of young men. A large number of soldiers invaded and searched houses and carried out arrests.... Among the prisoners were Abd al-Kareem Younis Ayyad

Halabiyeh, Mohammd Jameel Eriqat, Aamer Hani Ateeya Areebeh, Malik Hassan Radi Eriqat, Mohammad Sami Awwad Shahadah, Mohammed Rajeeh Ayyad, Mohammad Alaan Shaqeer.

### **Prisoners' affairs**

During the long years of the Occupation, hundreds of people from Abu Dis have been arrested, usually for peaceful resistance against the Occupation, such as demonstrations, just as in the rest of Palestine. Among these there have been many young people under the age of eighteen. At the end of April 2008, there were 79 prisoners from Abu Dis in Israeli jails. Among them there were 19 children. In addition there are currently more than 70 student prisoners from Al Quds University Abu Dis campus.

The prisoners from Abu Dis include three people imprisoned with no trial (the Israelis call this administrative detention). One of these is Mohammed Al Sarahneh, a teacher from a local school.

Many of these people have suffered bad treatment, physical and psychological torture, forced confessions, denial of family visits. There is further information on Abu Dis prisoners at <http://www.camdenabudis.net/prisoners.html>

In April, lawyers from the Palestinian Prisoners' Ministry visited Kfar Atzion Jail, which is south of Bethlehem, based inside an Israeli military camp and issued a description of the prison. They described the prison as: two rooms of sixteen metres square and four rooms nine metres square; inside them there are two cells, one of them is two and a half metres square and one is one and a half metres square. They said that the prison was built by Israel as a centre for torturing Palestinian prisoners and life there was extremely hard. The centre was not suitable for human habitation, especially considering the number of prisoners who are held together in the rooms. Part of the suffering of the prisoners held there is a big shortage of food, and another is not being able to go out to the toilet without asking for a permit– there are no toilets inside. Every four prisoners shares one small pot of yoghurt, and every day the food is macaroni. The lawyers said that the management of the prison usually worked to slow and delay their visits, so the lawyer had to wait more than one hour before going in, and because of this the lawyer did not manage to meet all the prisoners on their schedule.

17<sup>th</sup> April is the Palestinian Prisoners' Day, and in Abu Dis at the Abu Jihad Prisoners' Museum there was a special event to remember this day.

- On Wednesday 16<sup>th</sup> April, the Israeli Authorities released Saif al-Din Khalil Abu Hilal after spending 14<sup>th</sup> months in Israeli prisons and paying 4000 shekels.
- On Sunday 27<sup>th</sup> April, the Israeli authorities release Abdullah Dawood Awwad and Ahmad Radi Eriqat after they had spent 5 months in Israeli jails and after they had paid 3000 shekels each. Note that Abdullah and Ahmed were arrested from their own shops in Abu Dis by Israeli

soldiers who entered the shops and beat them badly. CADFA was informed about this by several eye-witnesses who also sent photographs and these can be seen at <http://www.camdenabudis.net/docs/Report%20on%2011th%20Dec%2007.doc>



- 11<sup>th</sup> December 07, Abdullah being beaten by soldiers in the street in Abu Dis.

### **Abu Dis Boys' School**

Details of the attack by Israeli Border Police on boys inside Abu Dis Boys' School on 14<sup>th</sup> February and the follow-up to this are available on the CADFA website [www.camdenabudis.net](http://www.camdenabudis.net)

We haven't received any response or information from the Israeli side about reopening the investigation in the case since the Abu Dis School Head teacher asked for the enquiry to be reopened in the middle of last May.

### **Conclusions and recommendations**

There is helpful information on human rights and international humanitarian law at the following United Nations site:

<http://www.ochr.org/EN/ProfessionalInterest/Pages/InternationalLaw.aspx>

Some important agreements and decisions which the Israeli occupying power are violating in their treatment of the Palestinian people are:

#### **1. The Wall**

The International Court of Justice asked Israel to stop work on the Separation Wall in the Palestinian occupied territories including East Jerusalem and the area around it, to destroy all the bits that are already built and to delete all the laws and decisions which the Israeli government had made in creating it

(Hague decisions paragraph 133, 152 and 153 – Advisory Opinion of the ICJ, 9th July 2004)

## **2. Torture and the mistreatment of prisoners**

There are many international agreements against torture and mistreatment of prisoners. Article 7 of the International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights (1976) reads: No one shall be subjected to torture or to cruel, inhuman or degrading treatment or punishment.” The UN Convention against Torture was signed in 1984.

## **3. Confiscation of lands**

According to The Hague agreement signed in 1907 paragraph 152, occupation forces must not confiscate lands or properties from the people under occupation.

## **4. Equal treatment of people (note the unequal treatment of people through the permit system and pressure on people around Jerusalem)**

Israel is a signatory to the undertaking “ to respect and to ensure to all individuals within its territory and subject to its jurisdiction the rights recognized in the present Covenant, without distinction of any kind, such as race, colour, sex, language, religion, political or other opinion, national or social origin, property, birth or other status.” (International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights, article 2, paragraph 1, signed 1966, in effect from 1976)

## **5. Right to family life**

The same international agreement states that “No one shall be subjected to arbitrary or unlawful interference with his privacy, family, home or correspondence, nor to unlawful attacks on his honour and reputation... Everyone has the right to the protection of the law against such interference or attacks”

This month’s report shows that the people of Abu Dis are suffering regular violations of all of these agreements and decisions. We call on the international community and all the supporters of the rights of the Palestinians to make some pressure on Israel as an occupying force to stop the violations and to guarantee their human rights and their rights under international humanitarian law.