

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

This report tells about the Israeli violations on the people in Abu Dis that continued during June. One important thing that happened this month was the building work at the checkpoints north and south of Abu Dis that appears to be turning them into international terminals.



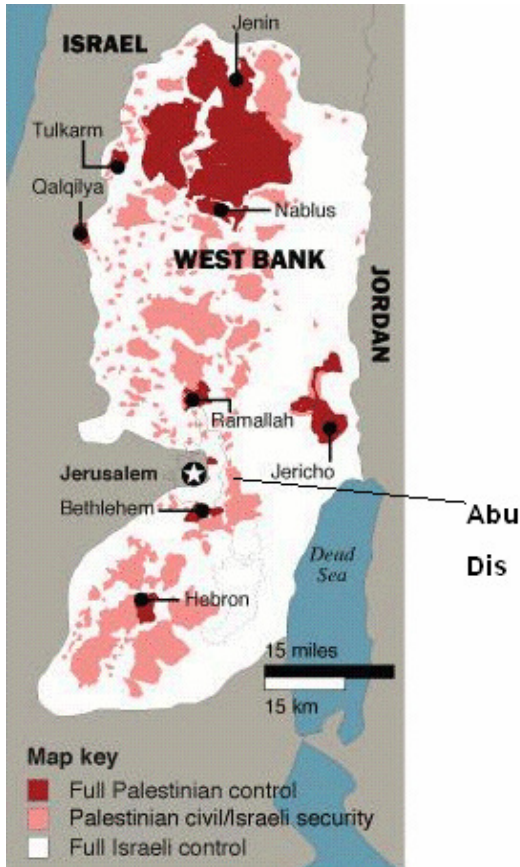
### **Confiscating land for Israeli settlements and the Separation Wall**

The Israeli authorities confiscated 5500 donums from the land of Beit Hanina, north-west of Jerusalem to continue building the Separation Wall. That decision, made at the end of May, was followed on the 2<sup>nd</sup> of June by a spoken announcement by the Israeli co-ordination officer. The people who owned the lands in Beit Hanina refused the decision – there was a demonstration - but the Israeli bulldozers started work on Monday 23<sup>rd</sup> June

to work on the agricultural lands in order to build a new sector of the Wall in that area.

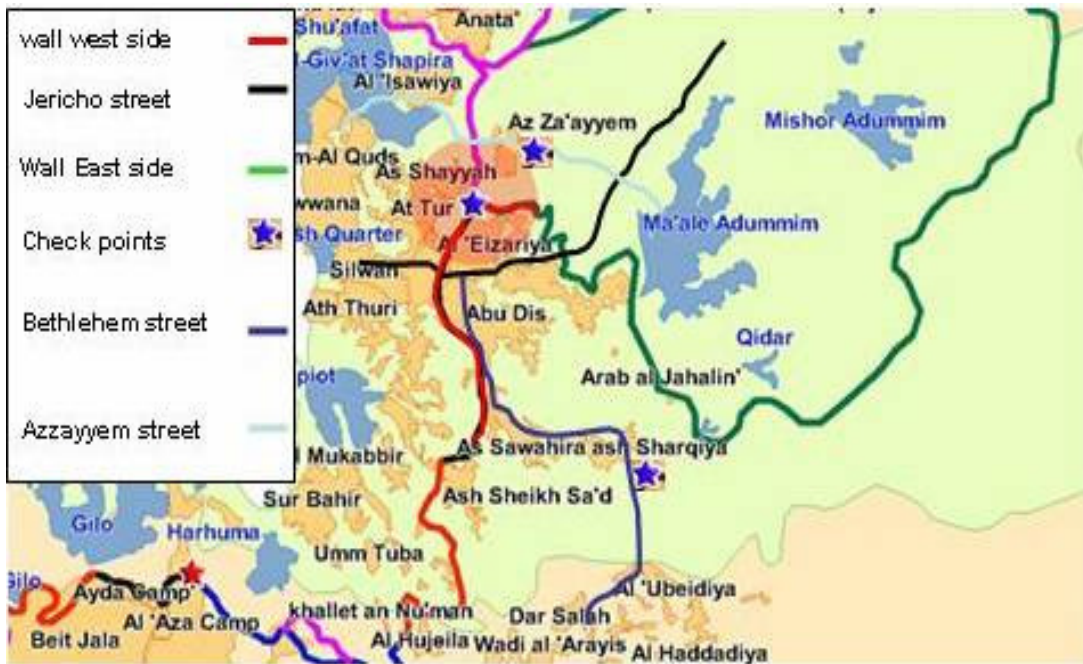
*There is more information about the settlements around Jerusalem in a useful UN report “The Humanitarian Impact on Palestinians of Israeli Settlements and Other Infrastructure in the West Bank” (July 2007)*

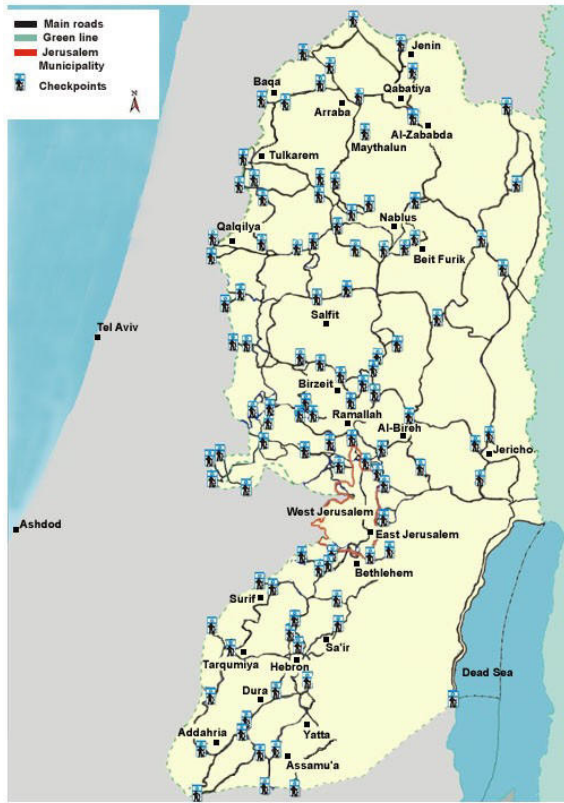
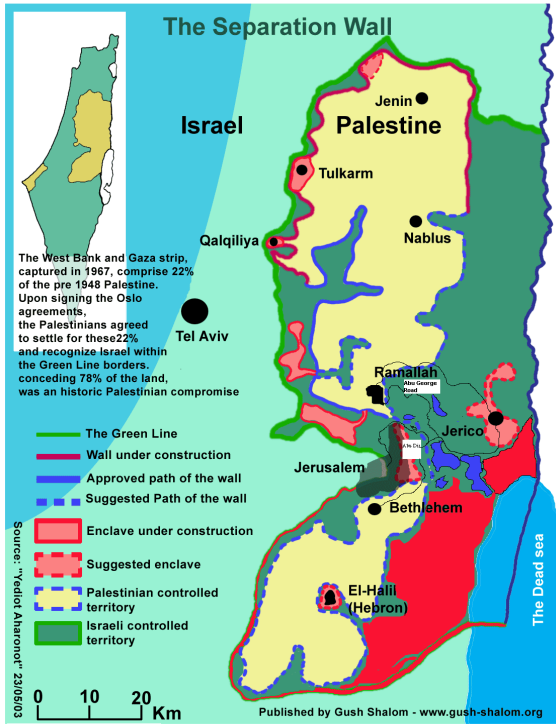
[http://www.ochaopt.org/?module=displaysection&section\\_id=1&format=html](http://www.ochaopt.org/?module=displaysection&section_id=1&format=html)



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 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.





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



- On Sunday 1<sup>st</sup> June, the Israeli army turned the city of Jerusalem into a military base. This is in connection with the day they call "Jerusalem Day." They made a siege inside the city and on the borders on the forty-first year after occupying the city.
- On Wednesday 4<sup>th</sup> June, Samira Halalka who is a member in the Palestinian parliament was stopped at the Container Checkpoint – her car was searched and the soldiers arrested Mohammed al-Qit, a journalist, who was travelling with the MP on her way to Ramallah.
- On Saturday 7<sup>th</sup> June, soldiers at the Container Checkpoint stopped a car carrying Al-Haya al-Jadeeda newspaper. They took all the copies of Saturday's paper for and all day the soldiers looked for copies of Al-Haya al-Jadeeda in private cars. The reason for this was that the front page had a photo of a soldier shooting at people during a demonstration in the village of al-Maasara.
- On Tuesday 10<sup>th</sup> June, Palestinian eye-witnesses said that Israeli soldiers at the Jabaa checkpoint on the way to Ramallah arrested a Palestinian girl who was travelling from Abu Dis to Ramallah. Nobody knows exactly who she is, but she was taken in a military jeep from the checkpoint to an unknown destination.
- On Thursday 12<sup>th</sup> June, Israeli bulldozers started to work on the checkpoints at both Container (south of Abu Dis) and Jabaa checkpoints (on the road to Ramallah). This work looks set to

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<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.

transform the already difficult road into another quasi-international frontier, such as the ones already in the Wall at Qalandya or Al-Zayem. The inhabitants of Abu Dis are asking what this is all about. It is clear that the Wall and these huge institutional checkpoints or "terminals" between Abu Dis and area and Jerusalem are part of an illegal landgrab that Israel hopes will make the annexation of East Jerusalem a "fact" and will create an international frontier at that point. But what is going on at Container? But why are they making what appears to be an international frontier between Abu Dis and its neighbours Bethlehem and Ramallah as well?

### **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 arrested one man during the last month.

- On Monday 30th June, the Israeli army and intelligence invaded the house of Fadl al-Mobayet early in the morning, searched the house and then arrested him. The family said that Fadl was taken to Awfar Jail and there is no charge against him. Fadl has been arrested many times during the first and second intifadas.

### **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 June

2008, there were 69 prisoners from Abu Dis in Israeli jails. Among them there were 20 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 Fadl al-Mobayet, who is mentioned above.

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>

- On Thursday 12<sup>th</sup> June, Hassan Sabri Badri (aged 18) was released after spending two years inside Israeli jail.
- On Sunday 15<sup>th</sup> June, an Israeli military court delayed the case of Mohammad Radi Khaleel Afaneh (sixteen years old) till next May. Mohammad was arrested at the beginning of last May, so this will be a year inside prison with no trial.

### **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.