

## Applied Research Institute – Jerusalem

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### Report on the Israeli Colonization Activities in the West Bank & the Gaza Strip

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#### September 1, 1998

- To create more facts on the ground before the final status negotiations, the Israeli authorities installed 13 electronic gates in the old sector of Hebron city surrounding the Ibrahimi Mosque; thus, molesting the worshippers and violating the sanctity of the sacred place.
- Israeli surveyors started surveying around 3,000 dunums of agricultural lands of the western villages of Bethlehem District to expand the Jewish settlements (settlements) of Beitar, Neve Daniel, and Efrat.

#### September 2, 1998

- Leaders of Jewish settlers (settlers) in the West Bank protested against plans initiated by the Defense Ministry to include building security fences around some 21 settlements (settlements) claiming that these fences will prevent future expansion of the existing settlements (settlements).

#### September 3, 1998

- The Israeli authorities started construction of additional housing units in "Mihola" settlement (settlement) which was constructed on Tubas Palestinian land in the northeastern part of the West Bank.
- The Palestinian daily, *Al-Quds* (Issue No. 10426) published in its edition an Israeli scheme intending to surpass the number of Jewish settlers (settlers) in the West Bank to 310,000 by the year 2020.

- For the second time, the Israeli military forces demolished the tents (sheltering 13 people) of Suleiman Sayayleh from the Jahalin Bedouins near the settlement (settlement) of Maale Adumim to the east of Jerusalem.

### **September 5, 1998**

- The Municipality of Jerusalem proceeded with its plans concerning the construction of Jewish neighborhoods in Ras Al-Amoud and Silwan near the walls of the Old City of Jerusalem. The housing projects will include 250 housing units.

### **September 6, 1998**

- In a report published in *Al-Quds* daily, LAW society emphasized the fact that Israeli authorities are keeping up the pace of ethnic cleansing campaigns against Palestinians; particularly, those living in "Area C" where Israel retains full control over land, security, people and natural resources. Thirty-three Palestinian houses were demolished in the West Bank last month for allegedly being built without a permit.
- Israeli activists from Gush Shalom (the Peace Bloc) helped the Palestinian family of Salim Shwamreh, a father of six, rebuild their house which was demolished by the Israeli forces for the third time in Anata, East Jerusalem for allegedly being built without a permit.
- In a report published in *Al-Quds* daily (Issue No.10429), the Law Center of Land Defense in Nablus announced that since the beginning of 1998, the Israeli government has constructed 3,500 housing units in the Jewish settlements (settlements) constructed on the West Bank land.

### **September 7, 1998**

- A new Israeli plan, No. 985/1, Route No. 61, threatens to confiscate thousands of dunums in Tulkarm District to facilitate a by-pass road connecting Jewish settlements (settlements) (Figure3).
- Forty Jewish settlers (settlers) in Tel Rumeida settlement (settlement) in Hebron forcefully attempted to occupy Hamzeh Shahin's house.

### **September 8, 1998**

- Settlers from "Eileh", built up on the account of Qaryut and Lubban Palestinian lands, constructed a Jewish cemetery in the southern part of the settlement (settlement) overlooking a by-pass road which connects Nablus and Ramallah Districts.
- Israeli bulldozers demolished a Palestinian house in El Khader village in Bethlehem District under the pretext of building without a permit. The house owned by Mahmoud 'Issa is located in "Area C" and consists of three rooms and a poultry farm measuring 200 square meters .

### **September 9, 1998**

- Israel has revived its colonizing attempts in the Bourge Luc Luc Society area, near Herod's Gate (Bab El Sahera) in the Old City of Jerusalem, by starting excavation there. This action met with a strict condemnation from Palestinians.
- Ten settlers (settlers) have received their weapons back since they were confiscated after the Hebron massacre (In February 1994, doctor Baruch Goldstein, a settler from the Hebron area, opened fire in the Ibrahimi Mosque at Hebron's Tomb of the Patriarchs, killing 29 Palestinians and wounding many others). The Israeli military leadership declared that they will return all the settlers (settlers)' weapons.
- Jewish settlers (settlers) from "Elon-Moreh" in Nablus uprooted approximately 250 olive trees owned by Muhamed and Ahmad Hamad, 2 km away from "Elon-Moreh" settlement (settlement).
- Israeli bulldozers demolished two houses owned by 'Omar and 'Aqil Sarhan in El Ubaidiya village in Bethlehem District for allegedly building without a permit.
- Israeli bulldozers started leveling a road near the Palestinian communities of Kafr El-Labad and Shufah on the confiscated lands of Tulkarm District.
- Israeli soldiers confiscated 76 sheep from shepherds in Kh. Beit Ta'mar in Bethlehem District for feeding their animals on lands considered a closed military area.

### **September 10, 1998**

- Olive trees belonging to Abdel Jawad Jaber in the Baq'a valley near Hebron were uprooted by Israeli soldiers.
- Irving Moscowitsh, the Jewish millionaire, offered US \$20 million to a Palestinian woman to sell her land and house for Jewish settlers (settlers), but she refused.

- The expansion of Beit El settlement (settlement), located north of Ramallah District, was commenced by Jewish building contractors.

### **September 11, 1998**

- A Palestinian family near Beit Ummar village, north of Hebron complained that the road located near their house was being widened in preparation for becoming an Israeli by-pass road. This threatens hundreds of Palestinian families whose homes are built within 150 meters off this road, first built several years ago (CPT).

### **September 12, 1998**

- A systematic campaign targeting the Palestinian institutions in East Jerusalem continues. Various Israeli services renew the call to close down the Orient House. This comes in accordance with the goal of emptying the city of its Palestinian inhabitants.
- Two Israeli companies are setting schemes to confiscate more Palestinian lands to facilitate a new road called the "Eastern ring" at the cost of approximately 1 billion Shekel. It will connect Abu Ghneim Mountain with Anata, and include 3 tunnels: Mount of Olives, Abu Dies, and Al Qattarat street. It will also include a bridge, 440 meters long, and 110 meters high, set up over Qadroun valley.

### **September 14, 1998**

- Since 1994, Gaza Strip and the West Bank were closed 35 times by Israel. Palestinians lose \$7 million per day as a result of closure (*Al-Hayyat Al-Jadeeda* daily).
- Radical Jewish settlers (settlers) from Itzhar settlement (settlement) attempted to attack the Palestinian village of O'rif near Nablus.
- In another incident, the Israeli authorities started bulldozing several roads in Al-Kiwan Mountain area in the Palestinian village of Kafr Qaddum to connect the Jewish neighborhoods of Kedumim settlement (settlement) with the top of the mountain. The bulldozers also uprooted tens of fruit trees especially olives.
- Jewish settlers (settlers) in Hebron escalated their attacks against Palesinian residents, particularly those living in Tel-Rumeida.
- According to the Israeli human rights group B'tselem, the number of Palesttinians killed since the Oslo Accords was put at 262, including 7 children under 12 years old and 58 killed by Jewish settlers (settlers).

## September 15, 1998

- The Palestinian farmers of Deir El Hatab village east of Nablus city have decided after seventeen years of inaction to resist colonist plans. They moved with bulldozers to block a by-pass road for Elon-Moreh settlement (settlement) which was constructed on confiscated lands of Deir El Hatab village, and started reclaiming their fields to plant more almond and olive trees.
- Jewish settlers (settlers) accompanied by Israeli forces built a wire fence around an Islamic shrine called "Al-'Izirat" in Awarta village near Nablus. The people of Awarta are concerned with Israeli plans to construct a religious school or a colonization plot there like Rachel's and Joseph Tombs in the West Bank.

## September 16, 1998

- Al-Masri, the minister of commerce and trade said, "The Palestinian National Authority (PNA) lost \$30 million in five days by Israel's closure of the Occupied Territories" (*Al-Hayyat Al-Jadeeda* daily).
- Israeli bulldozers, protected by Israeli police borders, uprooted olive trees and bulldozed more than 500 dunums of Deir Ballut village lands in Nablus District.
- The Israeli forces demolished three Palestinian houses at Baq'a valley and Farsh El Hawa area in Hebron District under the pretext of being built without a permit. The bulldozed houses are owned by Jabril Abdeen, Fadel Qawasmi, and Ata Jabber. The demolition came only 27 days after the razing of Jaber's previous home. Jaber's orchard and former home were located near a by-pass road built by Israeli forces, so Jewish settlers (settlers) living in nearby settlements (settlements) could reach their communities without passing through populated Palestinian areas.(AFP)
- According to *Haaretz* newspaper, an 82-year old Palestinian man (Ahmad Hamdan) from Silwan in Jerusalem was put in jail for a 1000 day sentence, after failing to pay a \$28,000 fine for building without a permit.

## September 17, 1998

- About 25 right-wing Israeli youth from Beitar settlement (settlement) brought a caravan filled with equipment overnight to Abu Ghneim Mountain in Arab East Jerusalem (the planned site of a Jewish settlement (settlement) "Har Homa") ,and erected a camp consisted of two large tents, but Israeli police closed it down immediately.
- Israel has announced plans for a major expansion of a Jewish settlement (settlement) in the north of the West Bank. More than 600 new housing units are to be constructed at Itzhar. This ten-fold expansion of the settlement (settlement) (considered one of the most radical of West Bank Jewish communities), will occur on 744 dunums from Burin, Madama, O'rif, A'sira El Qibliyah villages located south of the Palestinian-run city of Nablus. Israeli peace activists monitoring settlement construction, reported that half the apartments in Itzhar stand empty.
- The Israeli forces broke into the Palestinian Legislative Council member 'Abbas Zaki's house located in Sa'ir village in Hebron. They damaged his furniture and governmental car.

### **September 20, 1998**

- Four Israeli patrols broke into Askar town in "Area A" in Nablus District, and uprooted more than 120 fruit trees of olive, almond, and fig. The Jewish settlers (settlers), in their turn, planted these trees around Itzhar settlement (settlement) south of Nablus.

### **September 21, 1998**

- Israeli settlers uprooted trees and huge tracts of vineyards in the northeastern part of Hebron to expand "Kharsina" settlement (settlement). The confiscated area is approximately three dunums.

### **September 22, 1998**

- Jewish settlers (settlers) continue their activities in the Western part of Husan village in Bethlehem District. They bulldozed large areas of lands, and uprooted tens of trees so that the settlement (settlement) of Betar Illit may expand.
- The Israeli forces destroyed a number of stables and kiosks owned by Palestinians in the Jordan valley under the pretext of being set up in a closed military area.

### **September 23, 1998**

- The Israeli authorities dispatched notices to confiscate 4,800 dunums from Surif and Burin villages in Hebron and Nablus Districts. The Israeli high court turned down an appeal made by Palestinian citizens from Surif town near Hebron, against an Israeli decision issued in 1982 to confiscate 3,500 dunums of their land. Mr. Mahmoud Barade'yah, mayor of Surif said that the confiscated land is only 3 km away from the Green Line, which means that there are Israeli plans to confiscate more land that separate the confiscated land from 1967 border line.
- The Israeli government is planning to transfer Bethlehem-Jerusalem checkpoint to a permanent border cross point to tighten its control and isolate East Jerusalem from the rest of the West Bank. A number of Israeli surveyors commenced work at the area surrounding the military checkpoint in preparation for the confiscation of more land to set up installations similar to those at the border crossing points.

### **September 24, 1998**

- In preparation to expand a Jewish settlement (settlement), the Israeli authorities have started bulldozing large areas of lands near "Adam" settlement (settlement) constructed over the Palestinian lands of Jada' and Hizma south- east of Ramallah District.

### **September 25, 1998**

- The Israeli government is keeping up the pace of ethnic cleansing campaign of Palestinians in Wadi Qana in the northwestern part of the West Bank. Five Jewish settlements (settlements) (Yakir, Imanuel, Nofim, Karnei Shomron, and Ginot Shomron) were constructed on top of hills there. A long period of struggle has been witnessed between Palestinians and settlers (settlers) to determine the future of this area which is overcrowded of settlers (settlers) whose numbers exceed 160,000 in the West Bank.

### **September 26, 1998**

- Israeli bulldozers uprooted approximately 1,150 olive trees in the Palestinian villages of Bil'in and Jalbun. In Bil'in in Ramallah District, the Israeli bulldozers uprooted 400 olive trees from the lands owned by Mahmoud Samara and Isma'il Yassin, under the pretext they were planted on the by-pass road No. 45 which goes to Kiryat Sifer and Matityahu settlements (settlements). Two Israeli vans transferred the uprooted trees to nearby settlements (settlements) constructed on

confiscated lands. In Jalbun near Jenin District, Israeli soldiers uprooted 570 olive trees owned by the brothers Talal, Kamal, Jamal, Hasan and Hisham Abu El-Rub. The trees were 30 years old, and considered the main source of income for this family.

- The Israeli Committee against House Demolition is renewing its struggle. They will begin cleaning the site of the Fakia family house near the village of Qattanna, West Bank. It is located very near to the Green Line (pre-1967 border), just north of Kibbutz Maaleh Hahamisha. The house was demolished on August 11 th 1998, leaving 15 people without a place to live. The actual rebuilding will take place on October 3rd.

### **September 27, 1998**

- Israeli forces and a group of settlers (settlers) uprooted 150 olive trees from Kafr Qaddum village in Nablus District.

### **September 28, 1998**

- The Israeli authorities have commenced a geographical survey in El Bqi'a lands owned by the people of Tammun in Nablus District. They surveyed over 15,000 dunums. The people of Tammun are concerned with Israeli plans to seize these lands to construct new settlements (settlements) or expanding existing ones.

### **September 29, 1998**

- A new Israeli plan was unveiled threatening to confiscate thousands of dunums from Ya'bed lands in Jenin District to construct new settlements (settlements) and expanding existing ones.
- Israeli soldiers set fire to large areas of lands planted with olive trees in A'sira El Qibliyah.

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**\* This report is based on information published by Al-Quds daily ( Issue No. 10424-10453), Al-Ayyam daily, Al-Hayyat Al-Jadeeda daily, Haaretz daily, Agence France-Press (AFP), Christian Peacemaker Teams (CPT), and B'tselem ( Israeli human rights group).**