

## Occupied Jerusalem ... Between Past, Present and Future

2017 is coming to end. For the Palestinian people. 2017 marks 100 years since the Belfour declaration, 70 years since the partition plan, 50 years since the occupation, 30 years since the onset of the popular Intifada and 25 years since the inauguration of the Madrid conference for peace in the Middle East. It also marks the beginning of Trump's rule with its worldwide ramifications by and large and his ill-fated recognition of Jerusalem as the capital of Israel. By this decision, Trump has overturned the longstanding international commitment to a two-state solution with Jerusalem as the capital of both states or West Jerusalem as the capital of Israel and East Jerusalem as the capital of Palestine.

On June 28, 1967, the Israeli government illegally and unilaterally annexed Jerusalem to the Israeli state and declared 'Unified Jerusalem' as the eternal capital of Israel. When the Israeli government illegally redrew the municipal boundary of the West Bank, it annexed sparsely populated parts of other Palestinian governorates to Jerusalem, and excluded the highly populated Palestinian neighborhoods. From this point onwards, Israel embarked on a campaign to manipulate the demographic and geographical realities of the city in order to emphasize its claim and sovereignty over Jerusalem. To achieve this goal, consecutive Israeli governments improvised several laws to increase the number of Jews, and reduce the number of Palestinians, living in the city, to expunge its Arabic culture and history, and evacuate the city of its Palestinian inhabitants. Soon after the occupation of the city in 1967, the Israeli government illegally redrew occupied East Jerusalem municipal boundary, increasing its area from 6.5 Km<sup>2</sup> to 71 Km<sup>2</sup> to include areas from 28 surrounding Palestinian villages. Accordingly, the area of the new and illegally defined boundary of occupied East Jerusalem was classified as in the following table:

<i>Table-1: Classification of East Jerusalem Land</i>	<i>%</i>	<i>Area in Dunums</i>
Directly expropriated lands for Jewish settlements	35%	24,000
Indirectly expropriated lands: allocated as Green Lands	22%	15,480
Without planning	30%	21,350
Planned lands for Palestinians	13%	9,180
<b>Total</b>	<b>100%</b>	<b>70,010</b>

Throughout the years of occupation, Israel colonization project in the West Bank went uninterrupted with particular focus on Jerusalem and its surrounding areas. Israeli practices against Palestinian Jerusalemites manifested throughout the years following the occupation of the city and included; redefining the city's boundary to include more Israelis and less Palestinians, confiscating lands, building and expanding illegal Israeli settlements, constructing bypass roads, restricting Palestinian development of built-up areas, demolishing Palestinian houses, razing lands, isolating the city from the rest of the West Bank, and finally, constructing the Segregation Wall.

During the past decade, the Israeli authorities stepped up their belligerent and aggressive occupation related activities in and against Jerusalem, destroying Palestinian agricultural land, confiscating lands, demolishing Palestinian houses, expanding settlements, establishing outposts, commanding restrictions on Palestinians' freedom of movement and the most recently the under-construction Segregation Wall.

Consecutive Israeli governments worked persistently to tip the demographic balance of the city to their favor; giving unconditional support to Israeli settlers and Israeli housing organizations to build and expand their existence in the city. Israel has used various methods to achieve its goal. These include; physically isolating East Jerusalem from the rest of the West Bank, adopting a discriminating policy with regard to land confiscations, planning neighborhoods, building permits, houses demolition policies and social benefits, revoking residency rights of Palestinians who stay abroad or just live outside the city's boundary for more than seven years, or who are unable to prove that their center of life is in Jerusalem.

Jerusalem has undergone intense Israeli colonization practices aimed at encapsulating the city with a belt of settlements that grow towards each other, forming physical barricade that isolates the city from the rest of the West Bank.

### **Greater Jerusalem**

Greater Jerusalem' gained currency as a concept during the late 1970s/early 1980s, when the Israeli government expanded the area of settlement construction outside the Israeli defined Jerusalem municipal boundary in order to create settlement continuity around Jerusalem to cut the territorial continuity of East Jerusalem with the rest of the West Bank. This was to increase the Jewish population around Jerusalem and impose Jewish demographic supremacy that would strengthen the Israeli hold on Jerusalem. The new settlements were concentrated in three main blocs: the Giv'at Ze'ev bloc in northern Jerusalem, Ma'ale Adumim in eastern Jerusalem and Gush Etzion southwest of Jerusalem.

## **Jerusalem and the Segregation Plan**

One of the most controversial areas being targeted by the Israeli Segregation Wall in the occupied West Bank territory is East Jerusalem, the part of the city, which the Palestinians recognize as the capital of their future state. Israel is upholding its illegal claim on this part of the occupied city in accordance with the claim that Jerusalem is the “unified” and "sovereign" Israeli capital. As part of this belief, they have gone forward with plans to selectively enwrap areas considered significant to fulfill the Israeli vision in the occupied city with 143 Km Segregation Wall set to enfold much of Jerusalem governorate and separate it from the West Bank territory when completed.

Upon completion, the Israeli Segregation Wall in East Jerusalem would confine future development of Palestinian localities to marginal proportions, while including major settlements blocs (Ma’ale Adumim, Giv’at Ze’ev and Har Adar settlement northwest of Jerusalem) within the Segregation Wall, along with wide ranges of open space and nature reserves that are likely in the future to change their status to become areas reserved for future settlement development projects. Eventually, the consequences of the Israeli Segregation Wall will impact upon the entire occupied city, some places harder than others. The most affected areas are the Palestinian localities listed in the following table.

<b>Palestinian Communities affected by the Segregation Wall in East Jerusalem</b>		
<b>No.</b>	<b>Palestinian Locality</b>	<b>Population</b>
1	Kharayib Umm al Lahim	433
2	Qalandiya Camp	10,531
3	Kafr 'Aqab	12,096
4	Mikhmas	2,182
5	Rafat	2,468
6	Ar Ram & Dahiyat al Bareed	29,738
7	Jaba'	3,763
8	Beit Duqqu	1,860
9	Beit 'Anan	4,955

10	Beit Ijza	779
11	Biddu	7,399
12	Al Qubeiba	2,404
13	Hizma	7,084
14	Qatanna	8,710
15	Beit Surik	4,436
16	Beit Iksa	1,823
17	Al 'Eizariya	20,215
18	Abu Dis	14,072
19	Ash Sheikh Sa'd	2,796
20	As Sawahira ash Sharqiya	6,054
21	Jaba' (Tajammu' Badawi)	NA
	<b>Total</b>	<b>143,798</b>

The Segregation Wall in Jerusalem Governorate starts from Beit 'Annan village, northwest of Jerusalem, where it then embraces Har Adar settlement and continues north to encompass the Giv'at Ze'ev settlements bloc slicing between Palestinian communities, after which, the Segregation Wall resumes eastwards to encompass the Ma'ale Adumim settlement bloc. It then stretches toward the south cutting dissecting several Palestinian communities until it reaches the northern part of Bethlehem Governorate.

In Jerusalem Governorate, the Segregation Wall ('Jerusalem Envelope') will isolate 151,974 dunums (151.974 Km<sup>2</sup>) of Palestinian lands behind its path (west of the Wall), which makes up 43% of Jerusalem Governorate's area.

Around 147,264 Palestinians (56.5% of Palestinian Jerusalemites) will be segregated by the Wall and thus be cut off from the rest of the West Bank.

Consequently, the movement of Palestinians from, or to, this isolated part of Jerusalem will be completely controlled by the Israeli occupation, and Jerusalem, which is the principle service provider and religious center, will be inaccessible to more than 3.5 million Palestinians living in the West Bank and the Gaza Strip.

Entrance to the isolated agricultural lands will be restricted to those who are able to prove landownership authenticated by the Israeli civil administration, which means that only the owners who have their names listed in the ownership deeds (usually the eldest in the family) will receive permits.

Furthermore, issuance of permits by the Israeli civil administration will be on a seasonal basis, hence, the owners will find it hard to manage the cultivated lands on their own especially seeing as the permits do not include additional labor and/ or equipment. The following table shows the land use/ land coverage of areas isolated behind the Segregation Wall in Jerusalem Governorate.

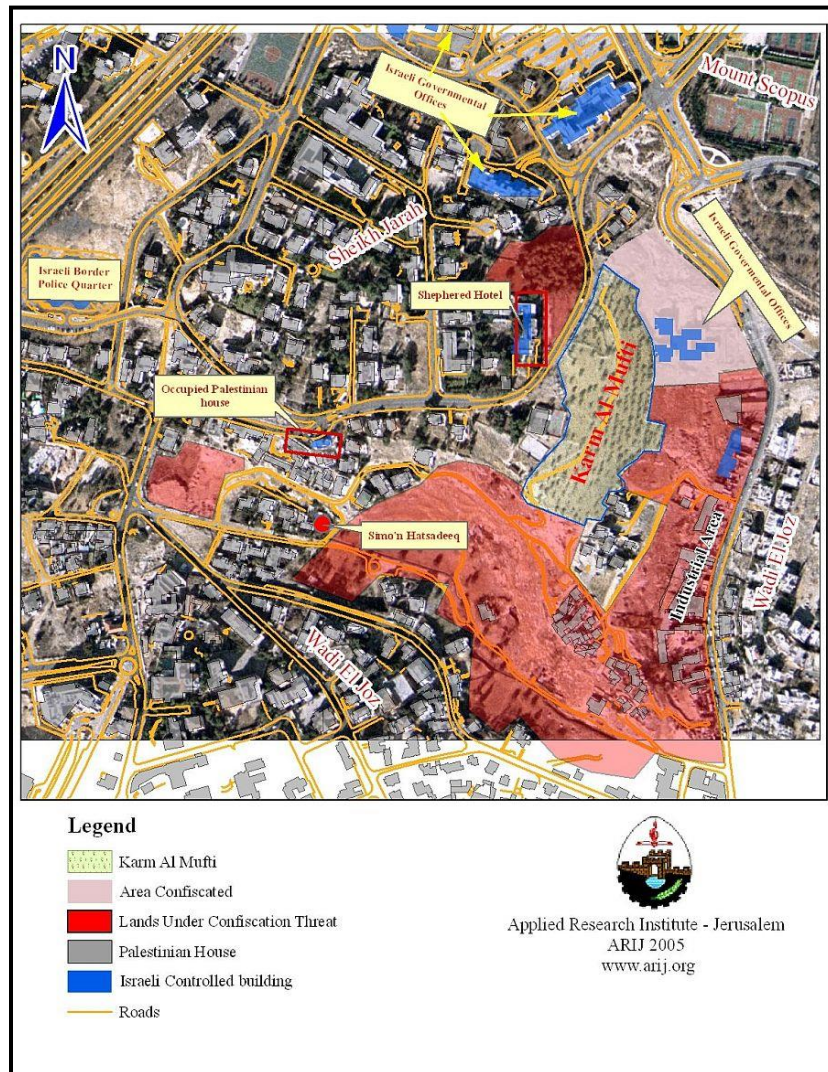
<b>Classification of Land use/ land cover area isolated behind the Segregation Wall in Jerusalem Governorate</b>	
<b>Land Type</b>	<b>Area In Dunums</b>
Agricultural Lands	21,464
Forests	4,753
Open Space	44,618
Palestinian Built-Up Area	22,013
Israeli controlled Areas (settlements& others)	24,044
Other	35,082
<b>Total</b>	<b>151,974</b>

### **Israel’s Future Development Plans**

Israeli Development plans in Jerusalem did not decrease at any point since the beginning of the Israeli-Palestinian “Peace” process. In fact, Israel has increased the number of Israeli settlers in occupied East Jerusalem by almost 100% since the peace process was launched back in 1993. To this day, Israel continues to violate Palestinian rights to develop their own communities, and relentlessly continue to drive them out of the city only to make room for more new Israeli-Jewish residents to win the demographic battle of the city. The following are the Israeli development plans in occupied East Jerusalem, which are taking place on lands confiscated from Palestinians.

## Settlement in Karm Al Mufti in Al Sheikh Jarrah

In 2005, the planning committee at the Israeli Jerusalem municipality authorized the demolition of Shepherd Hotel located in Karem Al-Mufti in the Palestinian neighborhood of Al Sheikh Jarrah. In addition to the demolition order, there are plans to build a Jewish complex



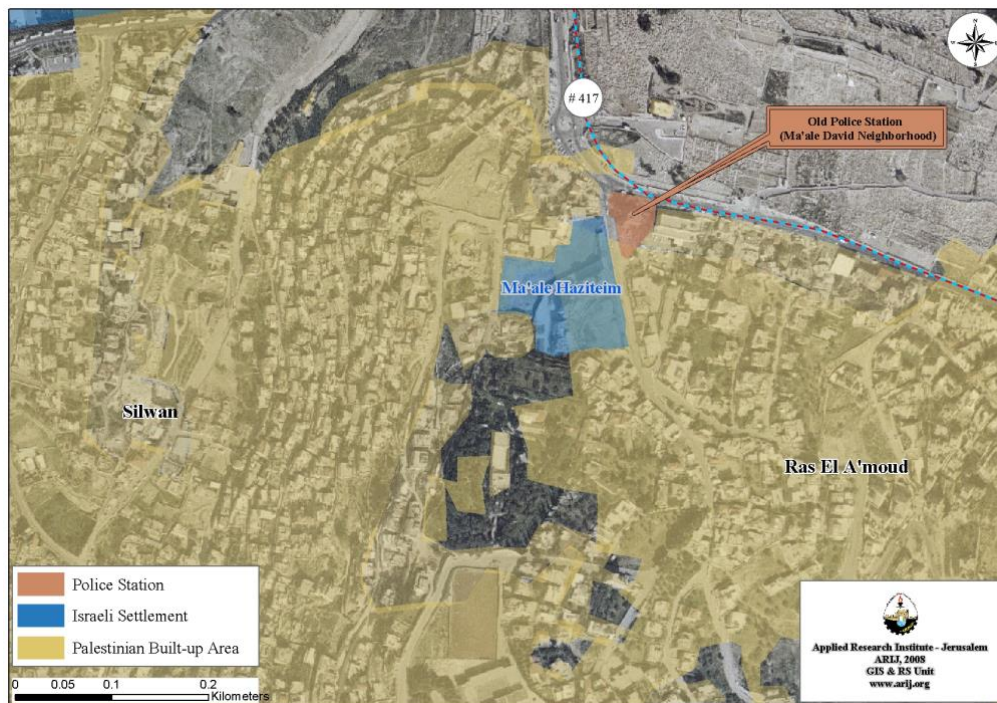
Settlement in Karm Al Mufti in Al Sheikh Jarrah

## Ma'ale Hazeitim Neighborhood in Ras Al 'Amoud

Two Israeli land societies operating under the names Chabad and Fahlin, were able to maneuver land registration decrees from the British mandate time to take control of 14.5 dunums of land belonging to residents of Ras Al 'Amoud. Ownership of the land in question was transferred to private enterprises to develop Israeli complexes in the Palestinian neighborhood of Ras al

Amoud. The construction started in 1998 and by the year 2003, the Israeli settlers had completed the 133 housing units and continue to construct the rest of the facilities planned, which consisted of a commercial center, a Synagogue, a kindergarten and a clinic. Prior to initiating the construction of the Israeli neighborhood in 1998, the Israeli municipality of Jerusalem refused to endorse the Palestinian neighborhood master plan for Ras Al 'Amoud, claiming that this suburb had land that belongs to the Jewish people. The Israeli Municipality stipulated that residents of Ras Al 'Amoud must agree to a Jewish complex within the neighborhood master plan in order to approve it; however, the Jewish complex was eventually forced on the Palestinian neighborhood.

Moreover, when the approval was finally issued, the inhabitants discovered that it did not allow Arabs to build on more than 55-65% of the land area with a maximum of two floors for each building. On the other hand, the Municipality allowed the Jews to build on 115% of the land area with a maximum of seven floors.



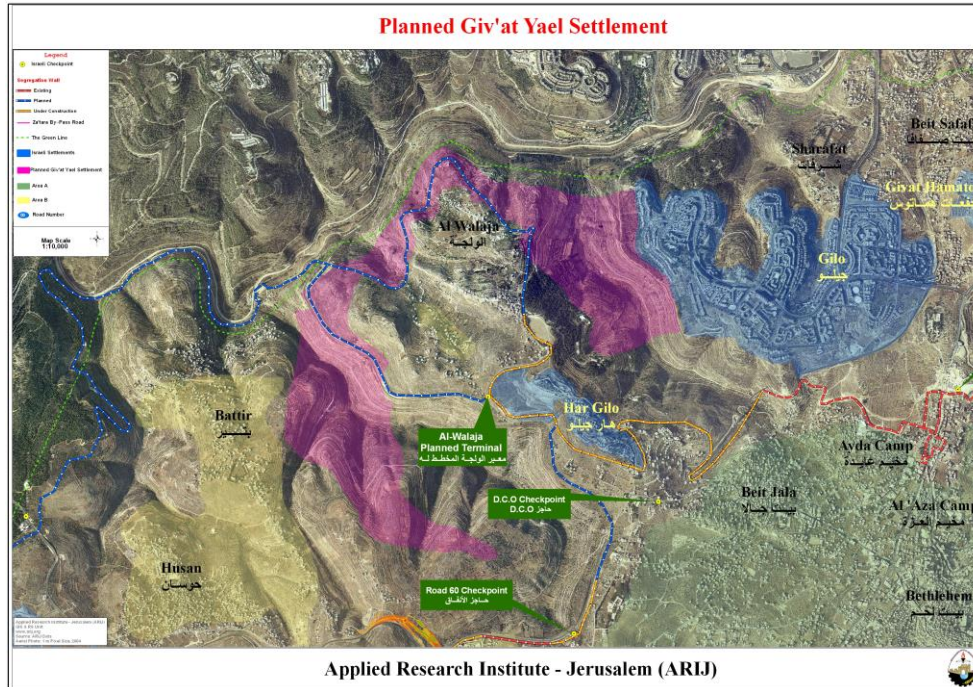
## **Ir David Settlement in Silwan**

The colonization wave in Silwan has escalated since 1991 when Jewish settlers seized more than 40 Palestinian houses by force in an area known as Wadi Hilwa. The Israeli government and Israeli housing organizations, have already labeled part of Silwan as the 'City of David' (Ir David in Hebrew), and they constructed signs that lead to 'Ir David' without any mention of Silwan, despite the fact that this neighborhood is mostly owned and inhabited by Palestinians. Wadi Hilweh neighborhood in Silwan; labeled 'Ir David', was targeted because of its proximity to what the Israelis call 'the western walling wall' in the Old City. Plan for 'Ir David' settlement also include commercial and tourist centers in the area. Furthermore, Israel plans to form a territorial link between the Jewish quarter and the induced settlements in what is called 'the Holy Basin area,' which includes Al Sheikh Jarrah, Wadi El Joz, Al Tur (Mount of Olives), Ras Al Amoud, Jabal El Mukabir and Silwan. Moreover, in May 2005, the Israeli municipality of Jerusalem has slated a whole neighborhood in Silwan called Al Bustan neighborhood for demolition. More than 88 houses in Al Bustan are subject to demolish by the Israeli Municipality in Jerusalem; these houses are home to more than 1,000 Palestinian residents. In the event that the demolition orders are fulfilled, it would be the largest demolition act since the demolition of Al Magharbe neighborhood inside the Old City in 1967. A National park called 'the King's Valley' is set to replace Al Bustan residential neighborhood.

## **Giv'at Yael Settlement**

In June 2004, private initiatives made by the Israeli Municipality of Jerusalem (status unrecognized) to illegally build a new Israeli settlement on 2000 Dunums (According to Israeli sources) of agricultural lands that belong to Al-Walajeh, Battier and Beit Jala residents west of Bethlehem Governorate. However, the total land area threatened to be confiscated to construct this settlement project is 4111 dunums; out of which, 1766 dunums are located within Jerusalem illegal boundaries and 2345 dunums from Beit Jala, Battier and Al-Walajeh lands. The new initiative intends to create an Israeli settlements chain between Jerusalem and Gush Etzion settlements Bloc (southwest of Bethlehem Governorate) as a part of the "Jerusalem Envelope" plan to encompass as much land as possible and to increase the number of Jews within Jerusalem illegal boundaries to create facts on the ground to alter the demographic status of the city and influence the outcome of future negotiations regarding Jerusalem as stated by Jerusalem Deputy Mayor Yehoshua Polak ('We want as many Jews as possible in Jerusalem to influence the demographic situation').





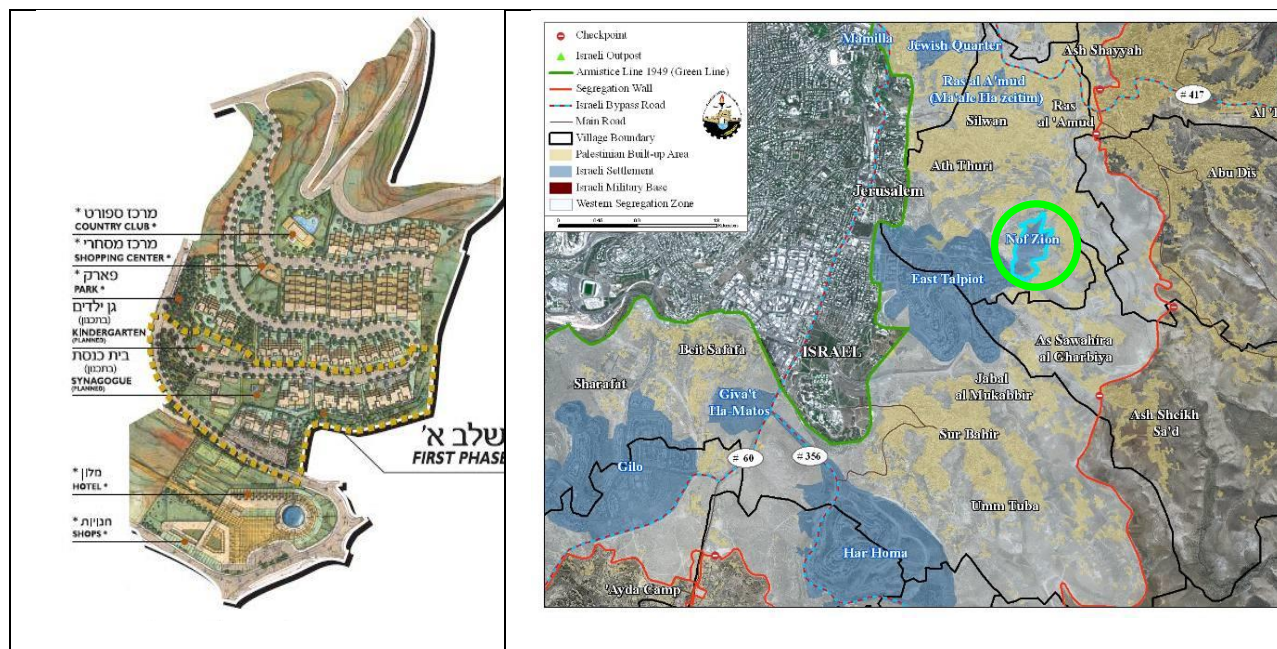
### **New Settlement in Bab Al Sahira- the Old City**

In July 2005, the planning and zoning committee in the Israeli municipality of Jerusalem approved the construction of 30 new housing units and a synagogue with a golden dome in the Muslim quarter inside the Old City near Bab Al-Sahira gate, also known as Herod's gate.

### **Nof Zion Settlement in Jabal Al Mukabir**

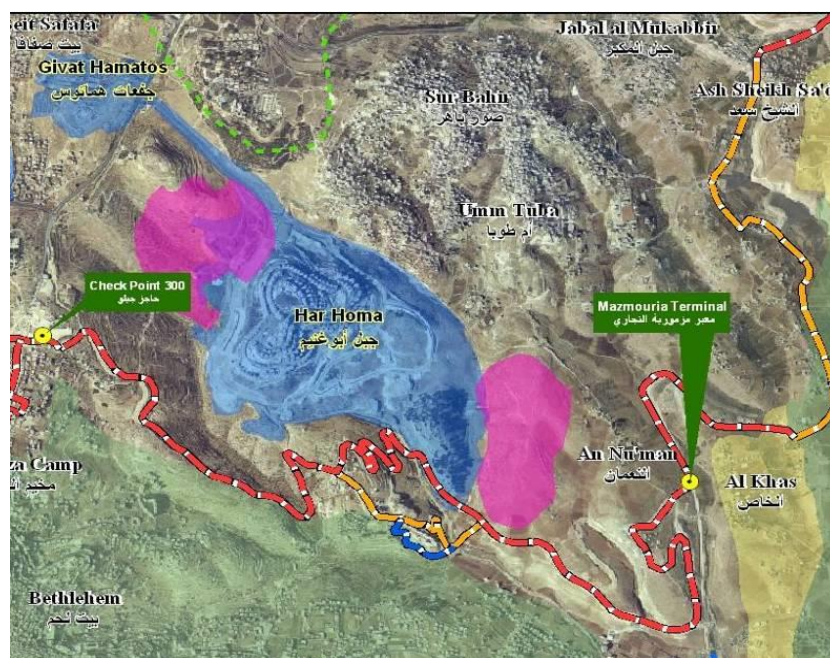
In year 2005; the Israeli local committee for planning and building approved a plan to construct a settlement called Nof Zion. The plan encompasses an area of 48 dunums and includes the construction of 100 housing units, a hotel (with 150 rooms), a kindergarten, shopping center, sport club, park and a synagogue. Construction of this settlement started in early 2006 on the lands of Jabal Al Mukabir on a hill overlooking the Old City of Jerusalem.

In April 2012, the Israeli government decided to expand the illegal Nof Zion settlement outpost in Jabal Al-Mukabber, by approving the construction of additional 217 new housing units. The project falls under a plan, known as Project 8815; 100 units were built in the first stage of the project (plan number 4558), while the second phase will lead to the construction of 217 new units.



## Two Settlements near Har Homa

The Master plan set by the Israeli Jerusalem municipality (Master plan Jerusalem 2000) indicates schemes for two new settlements in the vicinity of existing Har Homa settlement, the first sits to its southeast while the second is to its northwest. These two new settlements will have an approximate area of 1080 dunums (530 dunums of which belong to An Nu'man Village in Bethlehem Governorate). The Master plan also indicates that the residential area of Har Homa (Mountain Abu Ghneim) is planned to expand to an area of 1410 dunums; that is an increase to 28% of its original size today, which is 400 dunums. Har Homa and the new settlements will eventually comprise some 2500 dunums of land. The two planned settlements will have some 6000 housing units; enough to accommodate some 24000 Israeli settlers.



## **Kidmat Zion in Abu Dis**

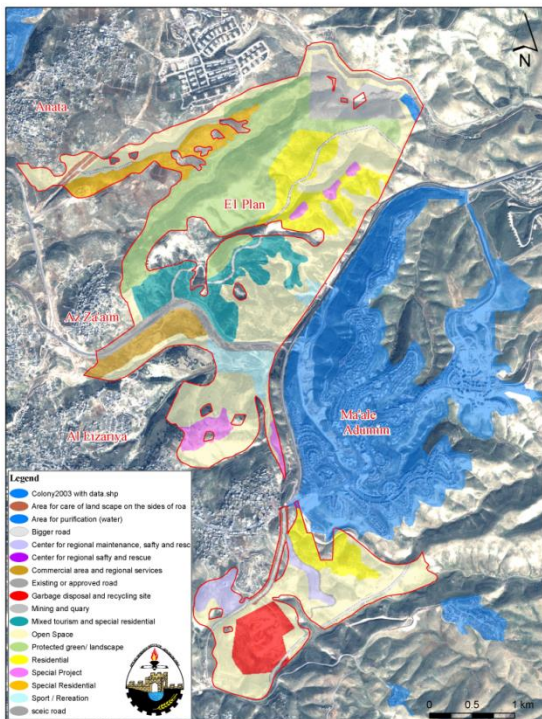
In May 2000, a plan for establishing a new settlement called Kidmat Zion on Abu Dis lands was approved by the Israeli Jerusalem municipality. The settlement will include 200 housing units on an area of 64 dunums. It will also have a kindergarten, school and a synagogue. Israeli settlers already inhabit two new houses in the location.

On April 3, 2012: Jerusalem Mayor Nir Barkat announced about his intention to promote the establishment of a new Jewish settlement in Abu Dis - East Jerusalem. About 200 new homes are being planned for the new neighborhood, known as Kidmat Zion



## The E1 Plan - A Step toward a Dead End

The 12,500 Dunums {E1} plan, aim to hamper Palestinian localities from expanding the built-up areas of their towns and villages and instead increase the Jewish presence in the area through the {E1} pending 3900 new housing units, but more importantly to create corporal links between Ma'ale Adumim settlement blocs and Israeli settlements in Jerusalem (Pisgat Ze'ev, Pisgat Omer, Neve Ya'acov, and the French Hill). Furthermore, the new addition {E1} to Ma'ale Adumim bloc will constitute a physical barrier that will cut off Jerusalem from the West Bank and break the geographical contiguity of the West Bank into two separate entities; one to the north of Jerusalem and the other is to the south.



In June 2004, the Israeli PM Sharon and his Defense Minister Mofaz approved a declaration proclaiming hundreds of Dunums as “State Lands” in the area designated for {E1} plan. The Palestinian Authority demanded the Quartet and the US in particular rebuff the Israeli plan.

The mutation of confiscated Palestinian land to fulfill the Israeli {E1} vision plan may not see the light of day until mid-2007 according to Israeli officials, however, the fine prints of the plan is complete and on stand-by status for final approval, which falls not far behind the completion of the Segregation Wall around Jerusalem.

## Conclusion

Despite international denunciation, Israel is proceeding with its unilateral plans to build the Segregation Wall, isolating and confiscating large tracts of Palestinian lands in Jerusalem. In the event that Israel completes its construction of the Segregation Wall around East Jerusalem, the Palestinian communities in Jerusalem Governorate will be completely surrounded by a complex of Walls, settlements and roads that will eliminate any future possibility for the Palestinian communities to expand, thus jeopardizing sustainable development. The international community has an obligation to ensure that Israel complies with international legitimacy, laws and resolutions of the United Nations including: Security Council Resolution 452 (1979) which calls upon ‘the Government and people of Israel to cease, on an urgent basis, the establishment, construction and planning of settlements in the Arab territories occupied since 1967, including Jerusalem,’ and to abide by Security Council Resolution 446 (1979) which ‘[d]etermines that the policy and practices of Israel in establishing settlements in the Palestinian and other Arab territories occupied since 1967 have no legal validity and constitute a serious obstruction to achieving a comprehensive, just and lasting peace in the Middle East’.

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