

# **Applied Research Institute – Jerusalem (ARIJ)**



## **The Geopolitical Status of Bethlehem Governorate**

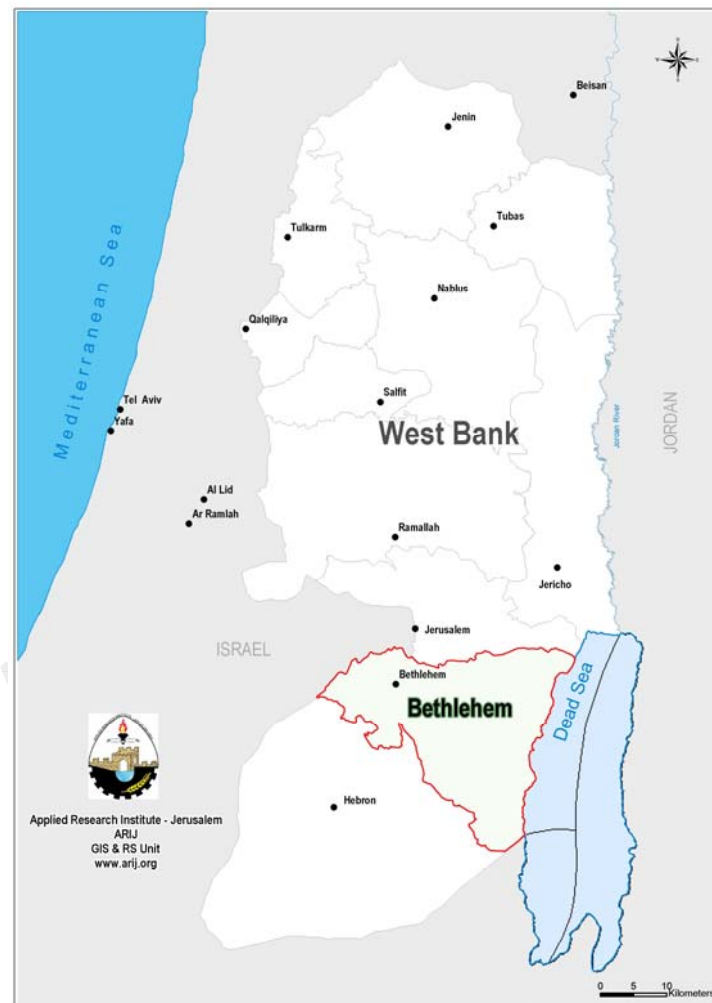
**December 2011**

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## Bethlehem Governorate

Bethlehem Governorate lies in the southern part of the West Bank south of Jerusalem. It has an area of 608 km<sup>2</sup> and is home to 225,567 Palestinian inhabitants (PCBS, 2010). It has been targeted by the Israeli occupation since 1967 when 18.1 Km<sup>2</sup> from its lands were unilaterally annexed by Israel to the illegally declared new municipal boundary of Jerusalem. However, since 1967, the owners of the “annexed areas” continued to access their land until the Segregation Wall plan came to existence.



## Historical Background of the Changing boundaries of Bethlehem Governorate

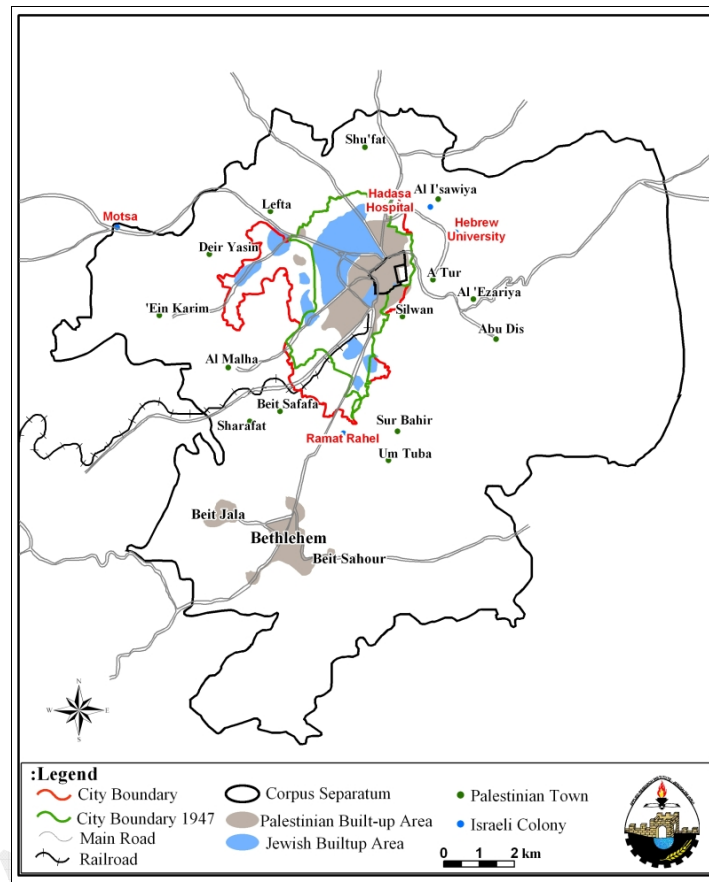
Bethlehem during the British Mandate and according to the administrative sub-districts was part of the Jerusalem Governorate. On November 1947, the United Nations General assembly Resolution No. 181, endorsed the partition of Mandate Palestine into two states, an Arab (Palestinian) state and a Jewish one, see map. Jews who owned only 6% of the land were allocated 56.47% of the land. Bethlehem and Jerusalem under this partition plan were to be within the Corpus Separatum area; that is a separate body run by an international administration.

The boundaries of this Corpus Separatum reached till beyond Bethlehem in the south and till Shu'fat in the north and had an area of 186 km<sup>2</sup>.



On the 5th of June 1967, Israel Occupied the West Bank and the Gaza Strip, the Syrian Golan Heights and the Egyptian Sinai Peninsula. Soon after the occupation, the Israeli government redrew the administrative boundaries of the Governorates, erasing Jerusalem Governorate from the map and expanding the Jerusalem municipal boundaries from 6.5 km<sup>2</sup> to 71 km<sup>2</sup>; increased it by 10.8 times than its original size to include lands from 28 surrounding towns and villages from Jerusalem, Bethlehem and Ramallah Governorates.

As a result Bethlehem Governorate lost 18048 dunums (18.048 square kilometers) of its lands; out of which, 6844 dunums belonged to the village boundary of Bethlehem, Beit Jala and Beit Sahour cities;



When the Palestinian National Authority came into power, it redrew the administrative boundaries of the West Bank Governorates. Upon the new alignment, Bethlehem Governorate covers 607.6 km<sup>2</sup>, with five main cities (Bethlehem, Beit Jala, Beit Sahour, Al Khader and Al Doha) and 70 localities including 3 refugees' camps. Today, the Governorate is a home to 225,567 Palestinian inhabitants today (PCBS 2010).

## Bethlehem Governorate under the Oslo Accord

The Oslo II Interim Agreement signed in September 1995 between the Palestinian Liberation Organization (PLO) and Israel, concluded Israel withdrawal from more areas of the West Bank and that occupied territory be divided into Areas "A", "B" and "C", which are designated as varying levels of control. Accordingly, the Israeli Army withdrew from lands classified as areas "A", and the Palestinian National Authority assumed complete control. This marked the first time that a Palestinian Government retained sovereignty over any Palestinian land. In area B, the Palestinians have full control over civil matters but Israel continues to have overriding responsibility for security. In area C, Israel retains full control over land, security, people and natural resources.

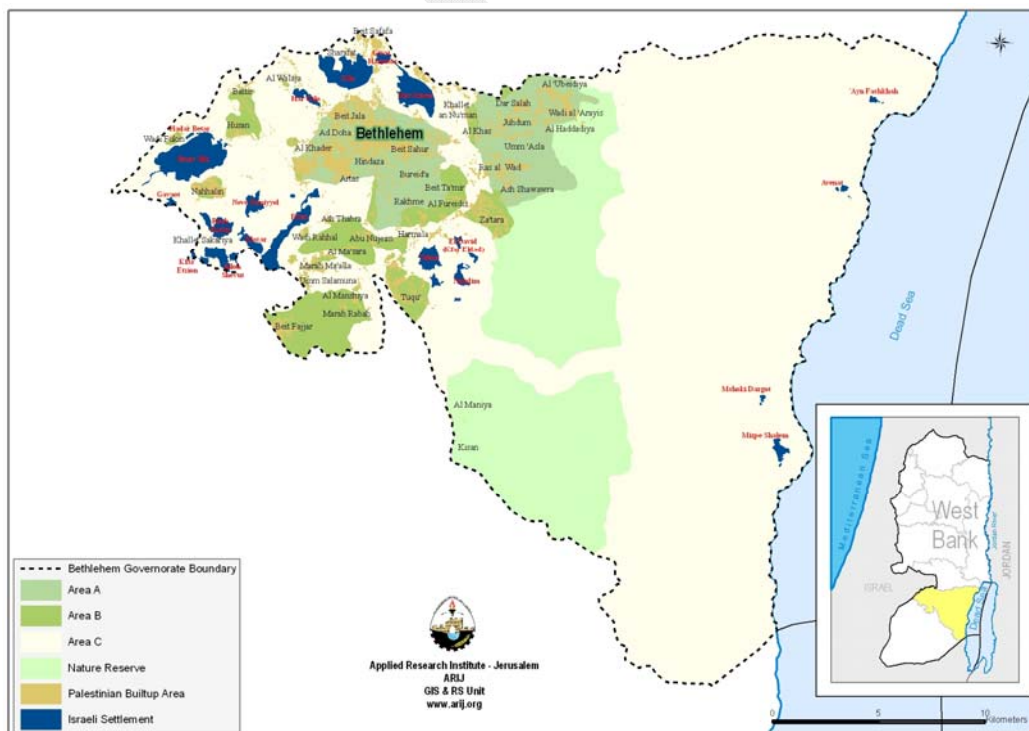
This jagged distribution of areas “A”, “B”, “C”, has scattered the Occupied Palestinian Territory and turned it into isolated cantons, which are physically separated from each other.

Under the signed Oslo Accord, Bethlehem Governorate was classified to areas “A”, “B” and “C” as a part of withdrawal process to be completed before the end of 1999 prior to the instigation of negotiation over the final status issues. Table 1 illustrates the areas distribution and existing population for each:

<b>Table 1: The Geopolitical Divisions of Bethlehem Governorate</b>				
<b>Area</b>	<b>Area in Km<sup>2</sup></b>	<b>%</b>	<b>Population</b>	<b>%</b>
<b>Area A</b>	47.64	7.8	123646	54.8
<b>Area B</b>	33.85	5.5	73954	32.8
<b>Area C</b>	423.98	69.7	24881	11
<b>Nature Reserves</b>	102.40	17	3086	1.4
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>607.87</b>	<b>100</b>	<b>225,567</b>	<b>100</b>

Source: ARIJ GIS Database - 2009

The table shows that almost 87.6% of the population inhabiting Bethlehem Governorate live in areas “A” and “B”, which’s total area; constitute 13.3 % (81.49 Km<sup>2</sup>) of the Governorate area, where the population density reaches 2425 persons per 1 Km<sup>2</sup>, while the remaining population live within area “C” which constitutes 69.7% (423.98 Km<sup>2</sup>), where the bulk of the Governorate’s agricultural lands and the open space and future development areas exist and where the Israeli Army still enjoy full control and administrative jurisdiction over the land.



## The Israeli settlements' Activities in Bethlehem Governorate

The Israeli settlement activities in Bethlehem commenced following the Israeli Occupation of the West Bank and Gaza Strip in 1967. Israel's settlements' activities seek to unilaterally and illegally create facts on the ground that will ultimately undermine the Palestinian presence and sustainability and create Israeli majority on the lands extending from the Jordan River to the Mediterranean Sea. The occupation, confiscation of Palestinian lands, uprooting of fruitful trees and the demolition of Palestinian houses has proceeded virtually without interruption. As from January 1994 and till October 2011, the Applied research institute - Jerusalem recorded the Israeli violations against Palestinian lands and properties in Bethlehem Governorate and found out that a total of 68576 Dunums (68.5 km<sup>2</sup>) of Palestinian lands were confiscated in Bethlehem Governorate for the various Israeli purposes. Moreover, a total of 59189 fruitful trees were either uprooted or razed and 188 Palestinian houses were demolished throughout this period. **Table 2 indicates the Israeli violations in Bethlehem Governorate.**

<b>Table 2: Israeli violations in Bethlehem Governorate during the years 1994 &amp; October 2011</b>			
<b>Date</b>	<b>Land Confiscated (Dunum)</b>	<b>Uprooted Trees</b>	<b>Houses Demolished</b>
<b>1994</b>	<b>3433</b>	<b>2486</b>	<b>0</b>
<b>1995</b>	<b>200</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>0</b>
<b>1996</b>	<b>300</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>0</b>
<b>1997</b>	<b>13550</b>	<b>800</b>	<b>12</b>
<b>1998</b>	<b>12504</b>	<b>3440</b>	<b>13</b>
<b>1999</b>	<b>843</b>	<b>530</b>	<b>3</b>
<b>2000</b>	<b>3219</b>	<b>2990</b>	<b>2</b>
<b>2001</b>	<b>3655</b>	<b>3360</b>	<b>3</b>
<b>2002</b>	<b>1453</b>	<b>3550</b>	<b>13</b>
<b>2003</b>	<b>5476</b>	<b>27183</b>	<b>30</b>
<b>2004</b>	<b>9694.2</b>	<b>1576</b>	<b>50</b>
<b>2005</b>	<b>3514.9</b>	<b>2864</b>	<b>13</b>
<b>2006</b>	<b>1277</b>	<b>1515</b>	<b>20</b>
<b>2007</b>	<b>3634</b>	<b>6120</b>	<b>6</b>
<b>2008</b>	<b>218.7</b>	<b>350</b>	<b>3</b>
<b>2009</b>	<b>2808</b>	<b>273</b>	<b>1</b>
<b>2010</b>	<b>215</b>	<b>1395</b>	<b>9</b>
<b>October 2011</b>	<b>2581</b>	<b>757</b>	<b>10</b>
<b>Total</b>	<b>68576</b>	<b>59189</b>	<b>188</b>

Source: ARIJ database 2011

## Israeli Settlements & Israeli Settlement outposts in Bethlehem Governorate

Kfar Etzion settlement was the first Israeli settlement established after the June 1967 war, followed by a propagation wave of Israeli settlements in the Governorate. Today, there are 19 Israeli settlements accommodating nearly 129000 Israeli settlers infringed on the Palestinians' lands in Bethlehem Governorate. These settlements are built on a total area of 18154 Dunums (18.154 Km<sup>2</sup>), which constitutes around 3 % of the Governorate's area. **See Table 3 of Israeli Settlements**

Israeli Settlement	Date of Establishment	Israeli Built-up Area (Dunum)	Population 2011
Geva'ot	1984	135	66
Gilo	1971	2737	44521
Hadar Betar	1978	58	74
Har Homa	1997	2204	22261
Har Gilo	1972	414	630
Betar 'Illit	1985	4685	39736
Efrat	1979	2180	9239
El'azar	1975	536	2045
Rosh Zurim	1969	893	618
Allon Shevut	1971	1003	3284
Neve Daniyyel	1982	584	2107
'Ayn Fashkhah	1969	97	0
Mshoki Dargot	1991	77	87
Mizpe Shalem	1980	439	223
Nokdim	1982	408	1456
El David (Kfar Eldad)	1999	222	285
Tekoa	1977	1070	1777
Avenat	1983	124	112
Giva't Ha-Matos	1991	288	0
Total		18154	128521

**Source: ARIJ GIS Unit - 2011**

Furthermore, in the years between 1996 and 2005, the Israeli settlers in Bethlehem Governorate established 14 locations, which came to known as settlements' outposts<sup>1</sup>. The Israeli outposts' phenomena started back in the year 1996 by Israeli settlers who contrive to take control of hilltops in the occupied Palestinian territory. The outposts are located mostly within 1-4 miles distant from an existing settlement. The Israeli government did not provide those settlers with direct financial support rendering them to be illegal and unauthorized but simultaneously providing infrastructural support

<sup>1</sup> settlements' outposts, is a technique improvised by Israeli officials in cooperation with the Israeli settlers; under which the latter seize hilltops and certain locations in close proximity to existing settlements in order to annex the location to the settlement –if it exist within the master plan area of the settlements - all of which under the direct protection of the Israeli Army.

through the Israeli Army who would also provide them with security blanket to carryout their attacks against Palestinian lands. The aim of the outpost established by Israeli settlers, in an indirect manner of collaboration with the Israeli government, was best described in 1998 by the Israeli Agriculture Minister at that time and former Prime Minister Ariel Sharon; to take as much Palestinian land as possible before *"losing them to Palestinians in negotiations"*. Table 4 lists the Israeli settlements' outposts that were established in Bethlehem Governorate.

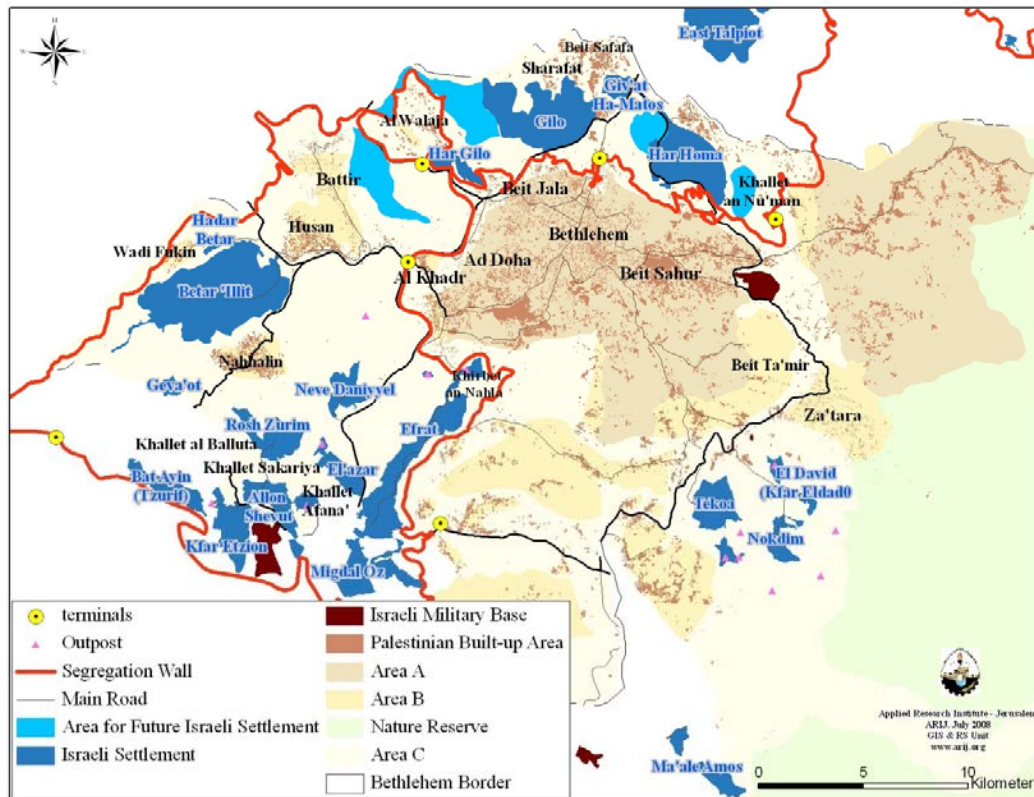
"Everybody has to move, run and grab as many hilltops as they can to enlarge the settlements because everything we take now will stay ours ...everything we don't grab will go to them."

Ariel Sharon addressing a meeting of militants from the extreme rightwing Tsomet party, Agence France Presse, November 15, 1998.

<b>Table 4: Israeli Settlements' Outposts in Bethlehem Governorate</b>			
	<b>Closest Mother Settlement</b>	<b>No. of Structures</b>	<b>Outpost Name</b>
1	Allon Shevut	40	Givat Hahish
2	El'azar	40	Derech Ha'avot
3	Efrat	41	Giva't Hatamar
4	El David (Kfar Eldad) & Izdeba	18	Ma'ale Rehavam
5	Tekoa	26	Tekoa B & C
6	Efrat	40	Giva't Hadagan
7	El David (Kfar Eldad) & Izdeba	25	Sde Bar (Educational Institute)
8	Tekoa	26	Taqu' D
9	Neve Danyiel	12	Neve Danyiel North
10	Tekoa	1	South east Tekoa
11	Tekoa	20	Tekoa D
12	Nokdim	0	South East Nokdim
13	Mshoki Dargot	7	South Mshoki Dargot
14	Kalya	3	South Kalya
	<b>Total</b>	<b>299</b>	

Source: ARIJ database 2011





## Projected Israeli Plans in Bethlehem Governorate

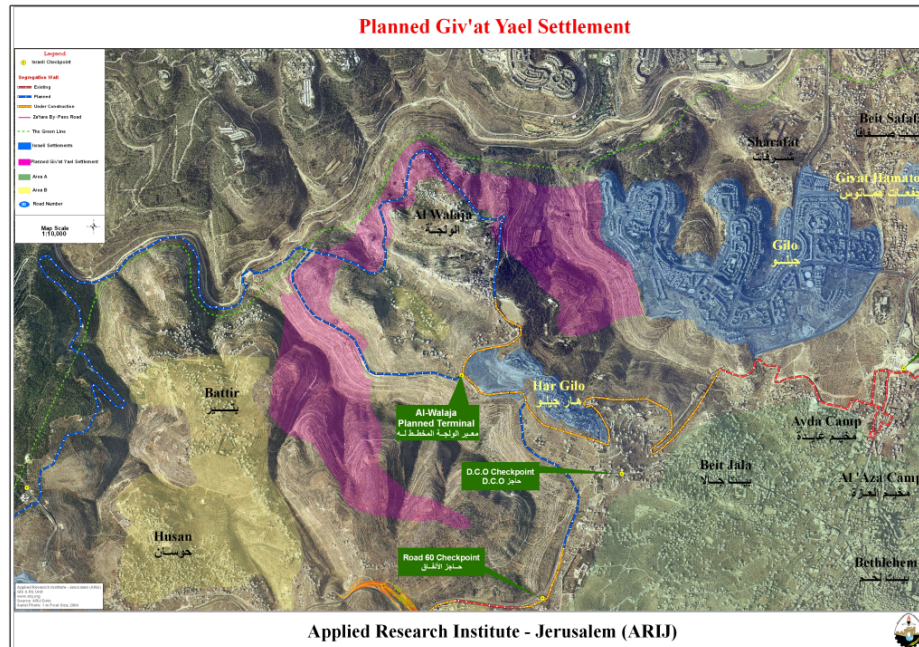
- **Two neighborhoods added to Har Homa settlement**

The Master Plan set by the Israeli municipality of Jerusalem (Master plan Jerusalem 2000) indicates the presence of two new neighborhoods added to Har Homa settlement located north of Bethlehem Governorate, one to its southeast and the other to its northwest. These new neighborhoods will have an approximate area of 1080 dunums. The Master Plan also indicates that the residential area of Har Homa is planned to inflate to 1410 dunums that is an increase by 350% than its current seize of 400 dunums. Har Homa and the additional neighborhoods are to set on an overall 2500 dunums of land.

- **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').



The new Israeli settlement to be; will hold the name of "Giv'at Yael" is set to include some 20,000 housing units and accommodates more than 55,000 Jewish settlers. This settlement will physically complete the ring of settlements that separate Jerusalem and encircle Bethlehem starting at Har Homa extending to Gilo and Har Gilo, linking with the planned Giv'at Yael and continuing to "Gush Etzion" bloc in the southwest.

- **Rachel's Tomb Settlement:-**

On February 3, 2005, the Israeli high court rejected a petition presented by 18 Palestinian families from Bethlehem and Beit Jala cities against the construction of a Bypass Road to be constructed parallel to the path of the Segregation Wall at Bethlehem's northern entrance, extending all the way from Gilo 300 Border Crossing to Rachel's Tomb Area. The road, according to Israeli sources, is going to facilitate the movement of Religious Jews coming from Jerusalem to the Tomb. A week later, the Kever Rahel Fund founder and director **Miriam Adani** said that the court's decision is the '*first step towards the establishment of a Jewish community around the Rachel's Tomb compound.*' as quoted from the **JPost** daily newspaper on February 11, 2005.

- **A New Israeli Town on Ush Ghurab Site:-**

On April 8, 2008, A group of Israeli right-wing activists (called 'Developing Har Shamuel Settlement' along with settlers of the Gush Etzion regional council) proclaimed their intentions to construct a new Israeli town on the remains of the

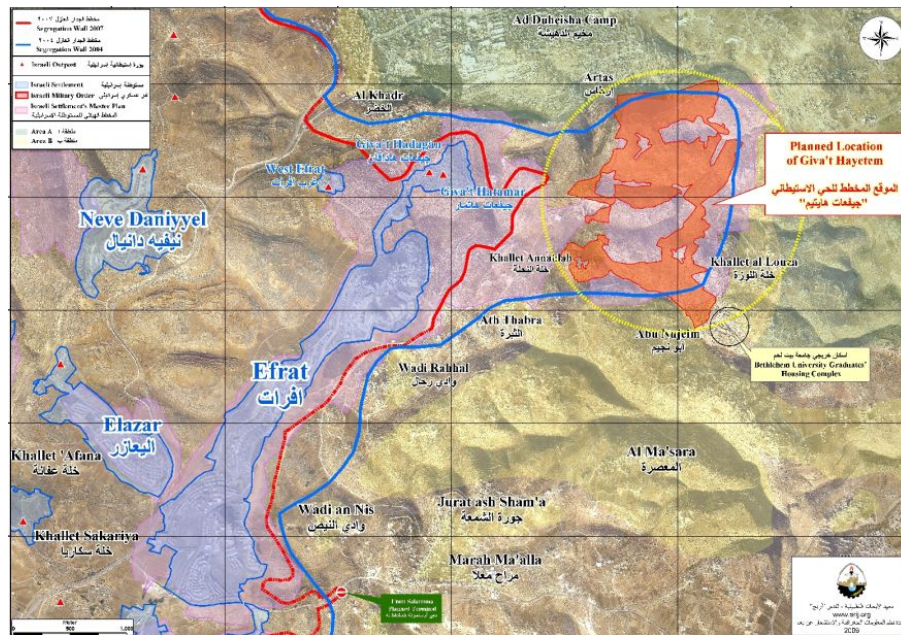
evacuated Israeli military base 'Ush Ghrab' or as the Israeli Army call it in Hebrew 'Shdema' located east of Beit Sahour city. The military base was evacuated by the Israeli Army on April 27, 2006 but the location remained within the Israeli Army's jurisdiction as it is located in area classified as 'C Area'.



- **An Additional Neighborhood northeast of Efrat Settlement – Giv'at Hayeitem Neighborhood: -**

The Israeli military court affiliated to the Israeli Civil Administration in Bethlehem Governorate rejected in mid February 2009 Eight of nine petitions filed by Palestinian citizens from Al Khader and Artas villages southwest of Bethlehem city against an Israeli Military Order issued back in 2004, which stated the seizure of 1700 dunums of Palestinian lands, and allegedly declared as 'State Land'. The Israeli rule confirming the seizure of the targeted land went to revive a plan at the same location to build an additional neighborhood for Efrat settlement, at the targeted land, which the settlement council of Efrat calls the “eighth hill” and the planned neighborhood name is 'Giv'at Hayetim.' The initial plans for the neighborhood is to construct 2500 housing units, and the project received preliminary approvals but it did not proceed any further as several other needed approvals needed to be secured;





- **An Additional Neighborhood north of Efrat Settlement – Giv'at Hadagan Neighborhood: -**

On December 11, 2011, the Israeli minister of Defense, Ehud Barak, has approved the establishment of a new and permanent neighborhood and a farm near the settlement of Efrat in the Gush Etzion settlement bloc, inside the planned route of the Israeli Segregation wall, which is set to engulf the western area of the Bethlehem Governorate and annex it to Israel.. The new neighborhood will constitute an effective expansion of the Gush Etzion settlement Bloc toward the north and north-east, on the lands of Al Khader village. The plan for the new settlement neighborhood calls for the building of 40 new units (homes) on Giv'at Hadagan outpost, to replace the mobile trailers already exist on the site.

## **Bethlehem Governorate and the Israeli Segregation Wall Plan**

In Bethlehem Governorate, the Segregation Wall extends across 75 kilometers starting at the eastern rural area north of Al-Khas village and runs south to reach Um Al-Qassis village; it then extends towards the west, bypasses the southern part of Abu Ghneim mountain north of Beit Sahour, before it continues northwest of Bethlehem and Beit Jala cities and westward to run along bypass road #60 south of Al-Khader village, it then runs southeast towards Wad Al-Nis to encompass Efrat settlement.

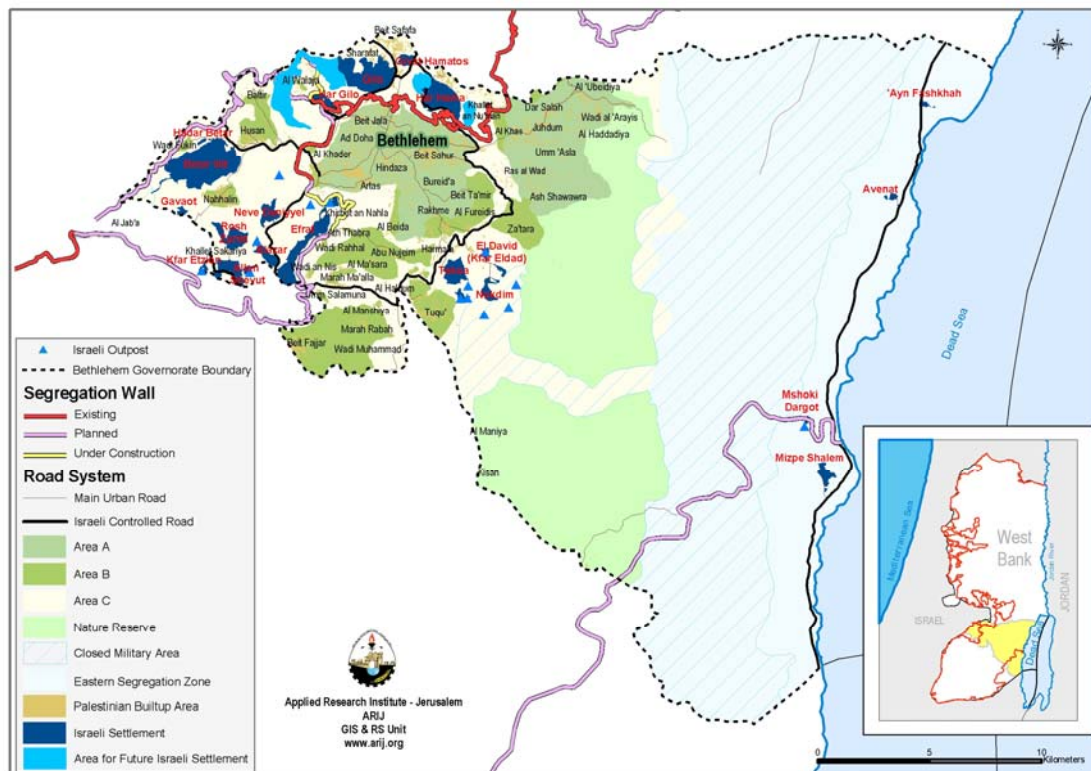
After which, the route of the Segregation Wall moves further south and southwest to isolate and Segregate the western rural area of Bethlehem Governorate along with what is known as the Gush Etzion settlements Bloc, which also includes 8 Palestinian communities (population exceeding 23,000 Palestinians) within the western Segregation Zone that will effectively become inaccessible to other Palestinians who are not residents of these communities.

Another Palestinian village stands to face total isolation but not included with the western rural area, is Al-Walajah village (Pop 2010: 2130), which will be enclosed and cut off by the Segregation Wall from all of its sides with a single but guarded and monitored exit to access Bethlehem.

In Bethlehem Governorate 159,793 dunums (159.8 km<sup>2</sup>) of lands will be segregated behind the Wall. Also, the Segregation Wall confines the western rural villages of Battir, Husan, Nahalin, Wadi Fukin, Al Jab'a, Khallet 'Afaneh, Khallet Beit Sakaria and Khallet Al Ballutah in a large canton, in addition to placing the village of Al Walajah in an isolated canton by sealing it off with a wall from three directions, east, west and north while sealing it off with a protection road from its southern direction, that will run along bypass road number 436, and will be protected from both sides with barbed wires and ditches. Table 5 details the Segregation Wall status in Bethlehem Governorate.

Table 5: Status of the Israeli Segregation Wall in Bethlehem Governorate	
Wall Status	Length (Km)
Existing Sections	30.5 (Km)
Planned Sections	39 (Km)
Under Construction Sections	5.5 (Km)
<b>Total Wall Length</b>	<b>75 (Km)</b>
<b>Of total Wall length runs on the Green Line = 3.2 (Km)</b>	

Source: ARIJ GIS Database - 2011



## The Israeli Eastern Segregation Zone in Bethlehem Governorate

The eastern part of Bethlehem Governorate lies within the West Bank's eastern Segregation Zone. This area extends from Bethlehem's eastern slopes to the western shores of the Dead Sea. This sparsely populated eastern section covers a total area of 286 Km<sup>2</sup>, (47% of the total Governorate area). The reason for this small population is that the vast majority of the land was declared closed military area/ or nature reserve area by the Israeli Government since 1967. Accordingly, the Israeli Army prohibited any kind of development to that area, utterly became inaccessible to Palestinians.



## Israeli Checkpoints (obstructions) in Bethlehem Governorate

Checkpoints have always been standard procedures of the Israeli Occupation Army in the West Bank and Gaza Strip territory. However, it was not until the Palestinian Intifada of September 2000 that the Israeli Army increased the number of operating checkpoint to unprecedented levels next to restrictions imposed on the Palestinian populace attempting to cross these checkpoints. Furthermore, over the past years, the behavior of the Israeli soldiers stationed at these checkpoints has taken a turn beyond the usual hassle treatment to more acts that falls within manners of vicious and sadistic behaviors; as many Palestinians of different segments of the Palestinian society; students, teachers, patients, medical staff and employees were subjected to various forms of Israeli cruelty, which involved beating, humiliation (striping of cloths and sitting on a dirt mud), held for hours under the burning sun or the cold whether before they are allowed to cross a certain checkpoint. The fallouts of the Israeli soldiers' acts at checkpoints had it tormenting affect on the Palestinian society; causing social ties cutoff, economic separation between districts, rise in the unemployment level, and disruption to daily life activities and internal emigration. In addition to that, medical services became dramatic as medical staff, doctors and patients were denied access through checkpoints; including medical emergencies and at many occasions patients were carried on wheel chairs or animals (donkeys) as even ambulances were not allowed to cross; causing patients death in many cases. Moreover, the Israeli soldiers at checkpoints impose a time restriction on the movement on many checkpoints; and even though it is not clear that the Israeli Army authorizes such actions; it is all the same, since similar and much more brutal actions went on with impunity.

**Bethlehem Governorate** is no different from any other Palestinian governorate. It is chained with all sorts of Israeli checkpoints or obstructions to indicate all forms used by the Israeli Army to restrict the Palestinian's movement, which include: cubical cement roadblocks, earth mounds, manned checkpoints and agricultural gates, tunnels, secondary roads iron gates, etc. Prior to the year 2000, Bethlehem Governorate had only 2 permanent checkpoints located at the outskirts of the Governorate, on the entry points to Jerusalem. The obstructions multiplied over the past 11 years to reach a record of 35 different forms of obstructions in the year 2011. Table 6 lists the number and various types of obstructions established by the Israeli Army to restrict and confine the movement of 225,000+ Palestinian residents of Bethlehem Governorate.

<b>Table 6:Israeli Checkpoints in Bethlehem Governorate</b>	
<b>Type of Checkpoint</b>	<b>No. of Checkpoints</b>
<b>Barrier Gate</b>	8
<b>Checkpoint</b>	6
<b>Earth mound</b>	3
<b>Observation Tower</b>	11
<b>Road Block</b>	1
<b>Road Gate</b>	4
<b>Partial Checkpoint</b>	2
<b>Total</b>	<b>35</b>

Source: ARIJ GIS Database - 2011



The consequences of these actions on the economy of Bethlehem have been devastating; businesses have been forced to close and unemployment has increased to unprecedented levels, particularly the tourism sector, which is a major source of livelihood for many of Bethlehem's residents, which stands literally paralyzed, thus affected the economic aspect, causing wide spread frustration.

### **The Israeli bypass roads in and around Bethlehem Governorate**

The term "Bypass Roads" did not come into use until the signing of Oslo agreement between the Israelis and Palestinians in 1993 to indicate designated roads for the Israeli Army and settlers use, to bypass Palestinian towns and communities in the context of the Israeli Army redeployment. From that point on, Israel intensified its efforts to increase the magnitude of the bypass roads in the occupied Palestinian territory as a part of its policy to coerce facts on the ground; ultimately affecting the outcome of negotiation with the Palestinians; including the establishment of a viable contiguous Palestinian State. The majority of the West Bank area is Area "C", which hold all Israeli settlements and consequently the Israeli bypass roads that pierce at many classified "A" and "B" areas establishing a physical obstruction between two controlled Palestinian areas.

Along with launching a vigorous settlements program following the Israeli occupation of the West Bank and Gaza, back in 1967, the consecutive governments of the state of Israel adopted a separation concept based on the creation of an Israeli controlled road grid system, which will work to facilitate the construction of Israeli settlements and the Israeli settlers movement between occupied territory settlements and Israel and eventually incorporate the Israeli created and controlled road grid system in the occupied territory with the road grid system in Israel. The Israelis built these roads under the pretext of "security needs"; a term that presented the Israeli Army with legitimate excuse to expropriate Palestinian lands; a procedure that proved its efficiency before when the Israeli Army would expropriate Palestinian lands under the "security needs" pretext to establish an Army base, which later on is turned to Israeli settlers control who would turn it on their part into a civilian inhabitant area. For Israel, that was the only available option or the only loop to bypass the international law, which considers, expropriating land for any purpose other than military use a "grave breach". Israel also argued the military role of the settlements and the bypass roads to its security, which allowed the Army to expropriate private Palestinian lands to build settlements and its roads; Israel also argued that the roads it is building will also benefit the local Palestinian population who would be allowed to travel on these roads. Furthermore, the Israeli built roads on confiscated Palestinian lands contributed immensely to stimulate the habitation of the Israeli settlements, which encouraged the Israeli settlers to take initiative and construct roads on their own, but would later on be endorsed and adopted by the Israeli Army to cast a shadow of legitimacy on these roads. In addition to its role in connecting settlements, the Israeli built roads worked to restrain the development of the Palestinian communities in the West Bank by creating de-facto obstructions to areas designated for development.

Prior to the outbreak of the September 2000 Intifada Palestinians had almost complete access to these bypass roads, except at time when the Israeli Army is on security alerts that Palestinians are no longer allowed to travel on the bypass roads or would have to undergo a through security check conducted by the Israeli Army border patrols, which would take hours at times.



However, following the 2000 Intifada, Palestinians' accesses to virtually all bypass roads became forbidden; unless they are in possession of a special permit issued by the Israeli civil administration. Later on, the Israeli Army would refer to bypass roads where Palestinians are no longer allowed to travel on as "sterile" roads; meaning that these are Palestinians' free roads.

Today, almost 65.5 Km fall under the bypass roads category in Bethlehem Governorate between constructed and planned, all come to comply with the Israeli settlements program and to facilitate movement of these settlements with each other and with Israel, beyond the 1949 Armistice Line (Green Line). Palestinians today are denied access to the bypass roads network and are blocked from them with cement blocks, trenches, earth-mounds, barbwires and iron gates; all under the pretext of military and/or security purposes. Followed, is a description of each Bypass road (existing and planned) in Bethlehem Governorate

**In addition, Israel plans to construct a 30 kilometers road (Bypass Road No. 80) in Bethlehem Governorate.** Once constructed, it will undermine the Palestinian urban expansion in the eastern part of the Bethlehem Governorate and will segregate more than one third of the Governorate's area.

The construction or designation of bypass roads requires the additional confiscation of a 75-meter buffer zone on each side of the road, which caused and still causes immense destruction to Bethlehem land. These zones are controlled by the Israeli military and access is severely restricted on Palestinians. Complementing the bypass roads, a complex system of military checkpoints and roadblocks are being erected at strategic points along the route. Together, they allow the Israelis to cut off and control all the Palestinian areas in the Bethlehem Governorate.

### **Israeli Terminals in Bethlehem Governorate**

In September 2005, Israel decided to establish 10 terminals and 23 crossing points throughout the occupied West Bank territory; five of these terminals are under construction and are designed for commercial functions where cargos are moved "back to back" on these terminals.

In Bethlehem Governorate, Israel planted 6 terminals on the outskirts; their main function is to control movement of residents and commercial activities to and from Israel. 2 commercial terminals and 4 crossing terminals exist, 2 of which are under construction (Al-Khader passage west of Bethlehem city and Um Salamuna passage south of Bethlehem city), 2 of them are in the planning stage (Al-Walajeh Passage northwest of Bethlehem City, Al-Jab'a trade passage southwest of Jerusalem city) and Rachel (Gilo 300) at Bethlehem Northern Entrance of Bethlehem and Mazmura trade passage in eastern Bethlehem are already operational. Below is detailed information of the terminals, their location, status and functions.

### **1. Rachel's Terminal (Gilo 300): A Border Passage at Bethlehem Northern Entrance- Status: Operational**

Constructions at Rachel's Terminal started early in year 2004. A number of caravans were added to the site in addition to well developed equipments, watch towers and security establishments, aiming at transforming the site into a huge terminal (crossing border) and totally separating Bethlehem from Jerusalem. On November 15, 2005, the Israeli authorities inaugurated terminal Gilo '300' in the northern entrance of Bethlehem Governorate.

### **2. Mazmura Terminal - A Trade Passage at Bethlehem Eastern Entrance- Status: operational**

In September 2005, the Israeli Army declared some land area in Al Khas and An Nu'man Villages located east of Bethlehem confiscated. The confiscation process was carried out when four Israeli military orders holding numbers (156-5-T), (154-5-T), (155-5-T) and (52-05); were handed out to residents of the two villages informing them that 43 Dunums of their lands will be confiscated to construct a trade passage and to an additional part sections of roads designated to serve the trade passage, which will lead toward Har Homa settlement and consequently to Israel. Furthermore, the Israeli Army plans to establish a military camp on 127 Dunums of land all belong to Palestinians from Beit Sahour city once the construction of the Segregation Wall is completed.

### **3. Al Jab'a Terminal- Status: Planning Phase**

On August 22, 2005, the Israeli Occupation forces handed out residents of Al Jab'a two military orders declaring the confiscation of 181 dunums for the construction of Al Jab'a Terminal. According to the first military order, which hold number (T/158/05), a total of 110 dunums of Al Jab'a lands and the nearby village of Surif were designated for confiscation to alter the existing checkpoint south of Al Jab'a to a trade passage. The terminal to be will snatch 43 Dunums from Al Jab'a village, 64 dunums from Surif, where as the remaining 3 Dunums comes from lands located inside the 1949 Armistice Line (Green Line), but originally belong to Al Jab'a village.

### **4. Al Khader Passage- Status: Under Construction Phase**

On November 21, 2005, the Israeli Army issued military order # 210/05/T to confiscate 85 Dunums (according to the order) from three Palestinian communities west of Bethlehem district, Beit Jala, battir and Al-Khader to construct a tunnel and a terminal for travelers between Bethlehem western rural area and Bethlehem governorate. The confiscated lands are located within Block (2) of Al Khader village lands and Blocks 12 and 13 of Battir village lands and Block 2 of Beit Jala city lands. The new Israeli military order constitutes a border point between Bethlehem western rural villages (Battir, Husan, Nahalin and Wadi Fukin, in addition to the three hamlets Afaneh, Al Balluta and Khamlet Beit Sakarya) - population exceeds 18000), which will be entrapped by the Segregation Wall and the rest of Bethlehem district.

The location of the tunnel is under the Israeli controlled bypass road # 60, whereas the area targeted by the military order extends along Al Khader village trail of bypass road # 60. The tunnel goes underneath bypass road # 60 to route Palestinian residents of western rural villages to Bethlehem's services center. However, Palestinian going in either direction in the tunnel will have to go through the terminal under the Israeli forces supervision, as for those who own lands beyond the Segregation Wall and must undergo the tunnel and cross the terminal; they are required to submit a proof of land ownership in order to pass through.

#### **5. Al Walajeh Passage : Al Walajeh Terminal (Har Gilo Terminal)- Status: in planning phase**

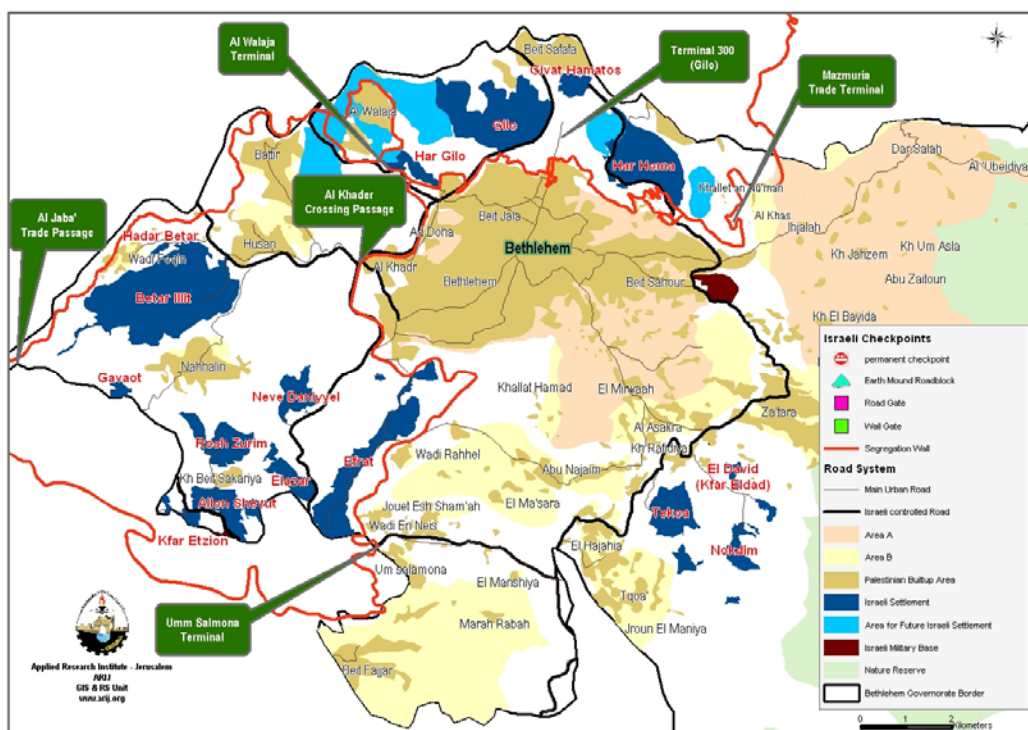
On February 19, 2006, the Israeli Occupation Forces issued a new military order number (25/06/T) to confiscate 39.8 dunums of lands from Al Walajeh Village and Beit Jala city, block 3 and block 2 respectively for military purposes, mainly for the construction of a new Terminal in the area, 'Har Gilo Terminal' which will tighten the access of Al Walajeh residents into and out of the village. The military order is a complementary to the Israeli Segregation Wall plan which is being implemented on lands of the village. See section of Al Walajeh Village.

#### **6. Um Salamuna Passage – Status: Under Construction Phase**

It is the sixth terminal identified by the Israeli Army in Bethlehem Governorate. The Israeli Army issued on the 5<sup>th</sup> of September 2006 military order number (69/06/T) that confiscates 152 dunums of lands of Al Khader and Beit Fajjar in Bethlehem and Beit Ummar in Hebron to construct a new terminal south of Bethlehem Governorate and to resume the construction of the segregation wall in that area.

<b>Table 7: The Israeli controlled Terminals in Bethlehem Governorate</b>			
<b>Terminal's Name</b>	<b>Function</b>	<b>Location</b>	<b>Status</b>
Umm Salamuna	Commercial	South of Bethlehem	Under Construction
Rachel-Gilo 300	Crossing	North of Bethlehem	Operational
Mazmura	Commercial	East of Bethlehem	Under Construction
Al Walajeh	Crossing	North of Bethlehem	Planned
Al Khader	Crossing	West of Bethlehem	Under Construction
Al Jab'a	Commercial	Southwest of Bethlehem	Planned

**Source: ARIJ GIS Database - 2009**



## Israeli Military Orders in Bethlehem Governorate

Israel continued to issue military orders to contemplate its plans to consolidate its control over the occupied territory starting from building and expanding settlements and bypass roads, confiscation lands, etc and ending up with the Segregation Wall. In Bethlehem Governorate, the Israeli Army issued hundreds of military orders to carry out its plans, many of which were not made available for public or to those of concern to this day and the ones that were available were recorded as available. Table 8 details the Israeli military orders that were issued and are available in Bethlehem Governorate:

Table 8: Israeli Military Orders in Bethlehem Governorate		
Type of Military Order	No. of Orders	
House Demolition	168	
Land Confiscation	State Land	58
	Segregation Wall	43
	Military Uses	28
Total		297

Source: ARIJ Military Orders Database - 2011

## To recap

The Israeli Segregation Wall acts as the final chapter and the sum up of the Israeli colonization activities during the past 4 decades of the Israeli occupation. It will leave Bethlehem Governorate in devastation and crippled with limited potential for development of the Governorate's built-up area or for any other purpose. Overall, the Israeli Segregation Wall will effectively exclude some 26.3% of Bethlehem Governorate's lands within the Western Segregation Zone (between the Wall and the Green Line) and even much larger area; some 47% within the Eastern Segregation Zone, which as stated earlier already declared by the Israeli Army as closed military area since 1967. Along with the nature reserve area; Bethlehem governorate stands to lose in total some 86.6% of its land area if the Israeli plans go through.

The Israeli unilateral settlement activities in the Bethlehem Governorate constitute a belligerent acts against the Palestinians population. The encroachment of the Israeli Segregation Wall on Bethlehem lands is a growing danger that threatens the development, the sustainability, and the very existence of the Palestinian people as in throughout the occupied Palestinian territory. It does not only deprive the Palestinians from their valuable agricultural and grazing lands; but it also puts physical barriers to their natural growth and disconnects them from each other.

Despite international denunciation, Israel is proceeding with its unilateral plans to build the Segregation Wall, isolating and confiscating large tracts of Bethlehem Governorate's lands. Eventually, Bethlehem will lose more than the physical link it has (or once had) with Jerusalem, but spiritually as well. Table 9 shows Bethlehem Governorate in the aftermath of the Israeli scheme.

<b>Table 9, shows a look on what to become of Bethlehem Governorate under Israeli Unilateral activities to inflict facts on the ground.</b>			
<b>Bethlehem</b>	<b>Area 608 Km<sup>2</sup></b>	<b>100%</b>	<b>Remarks</b>
Palestinian control	47.6	7.8	This includes area "A" where Palestinians have comprehensive control
Palestinian Semi- control	33.8	5.6	This includes area "B" where Palestinians have administrative control. It also exclude 4Km <sup>2</sup> located within the Segregated Zone
Nature Reserve Area	102.4	16.8	Under Sharm Esh Sheikh Memorandum (Phase Three of March 2000, the area was set to go under Palestinian control. However, Israel still maintain control on it to this day
Area Under Israeli Control which includes Area C, The Israeli Declared Closed Military Area and the Israeli Segregation Zones area.	424	69.8	Area under Israeli control located east of the Israeli Segregated Zone and the west of the Nature Reserve Area and the Closed Military Area. Most likely to be negotiated to turn over to Palestinian control at the time the negotiation between the Palestinians and Israeli side in resumed
<b>Total</b>	<b>607.8</b>	<b>100</b>	

Source: ARIJ GIS Database 2011