

1997



Geopolitical Status of Bethlehem Governorate

2000



2001



2003



2005



2007



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Jabal (mountain) Abu Ghneim, which sits opposite the town of Beit Sahour, was classified until 1991 as a “green area” by the Israeli occupying state, when the Israeli government approved the expropriation of the land and re-zoned it to a building area. In March 1997, the Israeli government announced it would build 6,500 housing units to accommodate 30,000+ Jewish residents. The first building phase was for 3,500 units, 500 of which were financed by the Israeli government and private investors financed the rest. As a result, more than 60,000 pine trees were uprooted and an entire ecosystem was destroyed.

Lead-up

Between the current millennium and the one before it, Bethlehem city has witnessed unprecedented changes to its life, in terms of the ruling periods. It started out early in the 20th century when the city was under the rule of the Ottoman Empire until it went under the British Mandate, the Jordanian rule, the Israeli Occupation to the time when the Palestinian Authority took control on parts of what became known as the Bethlehem Governorate. Table 1 list the ruling periods over Bethlehem.

Table 1: Ruling periods over Bethlehem (1516-Present)	
Years	Controlled by
1516-1917	Ottoman Empire
1918-1948	British Mandate
1949-1967	Trans-Jordan and later on the Hashemite Kingdom of Jordan
1967-1995	The Israeli Occupation
1995-to date	The Palestinian Authority assumed partial control, but Israel continued to occupy the majority of the Governorate, (see table 3)

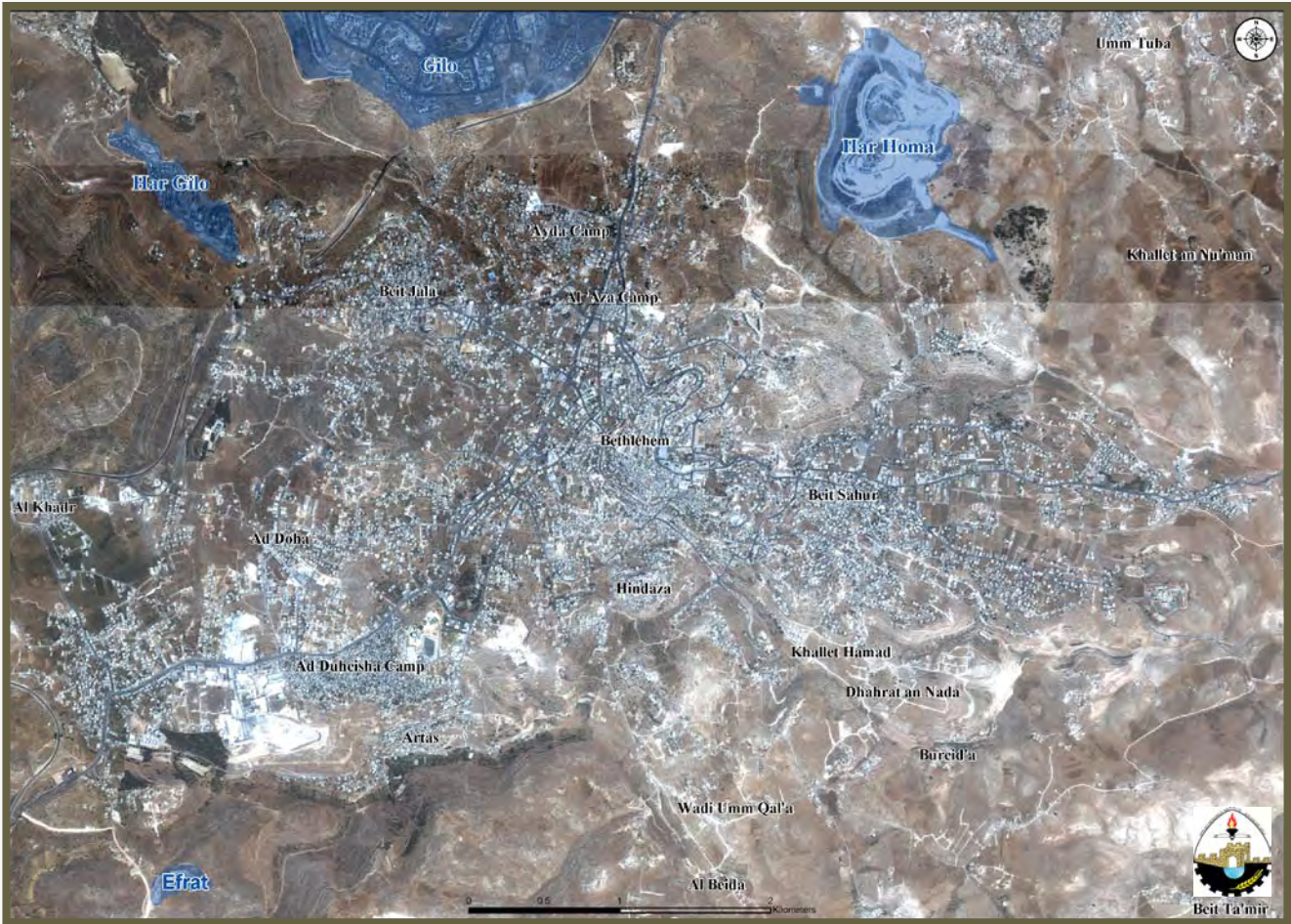
Bethlehem 1917



Bethlehem 1970



Bethlehem 2000



Bethlehem 2006



The Israeli Segregation Plan in the Occupied Palestinian Territory

An Overview

In June 2002, the Israeli Government launched its policy of unilateral segregation between Israel and the Occupied Palestinian Territory (OPT) by establishing a Segregation Zone along the western terrains of the occupied West Bank. The Israeli Segregation Zone covers substantial sizeable and significant land areas, rich with natural resources (water aquifers) as it runs along and through the western part of the West Bank from north to south, grabbing the most fertile agricultural lands, isolating Palestinian communities in enclaves, undermining the territorial contiguity between the Palestinian villages and cities, control-ling the natural resources, and encapsulating most of the illegal Israeli settlements. At this time, an explanation of the term “Segregation Wall” should be made obvious as it reflects two shapes of structures used by the Israeli Army to complete their territorial separation mission in the occupied Palestinian territory, it is either concrete partition of 8-12 meters in height or in the other case, and multi line fences are used. In both cases, the term Segregation Wall applies.

Based on the characteristic nature of the area, where the Segregation Wall runs, the type of the structure is determined as to say in areas where the Segregation Wall cuts through vast agriculture lands, the Segregation Wall is a fence, which is more devastating to the land as it takes an area of 40-100 meters in width to complete; where double layered fences, reinforced with barbed wires, trenches, military roads and footprint-detection tracks, as well as 4-5 meters high electrified metal fence, supplied with security surveillance cameras. In the other case, in areas with sizeable population and/or in-close perimeter with the Green Line, the Segregation Wall consists of 8-12 meters high concrete partitions appendages with military watch-towers lined-up 250 meters apart.

In parallel, Israel has de facto created an Eastern Segregation Zone along the eastern terrains of the occupied West Bank Territory, However, the Segregation Wall system does not apply their due to the physical characteristics of the area. Instead, a system of controlled access checkpoints was established along the Jordan Valley and the shores of the Dead Sea. This zone has a total area of 1555 Km², representing 27.5% of the West Bank, and in-cludes 43 Israeli settlements and 41 Palestinian localities.

On April 2004, the Israeli Prime Minister “Sharon” indicated that the eastern barrier will be maintained by blocking access to the Jordan Valley region, he added that “a wall is not likely to be erected in the near future, unless there are military necessities”. He also pointed out that “the Jordan valley area will remain under Israeli control even after reaching a settlement with the Palestinians as it is considered to be a strategic security zone”.

Today, the Israeli Army have control over the Eastern Segregation Zone through military controlled checkpoints along the 200 Km stretch from north to south. After the 1967 war, Israel classified of what is identified now as the Eastern Segregation Zone, some 925 Km² as ‘closed military area’ of which 299 Km² in the Bethlehem Governorate. Furthermore, Israel has illegally classified an additional 632 Km² of the Eastern Segregation Zone as ‘State Land’ which include the area of the settlements, the military bases, and some parts of the closed military areas.

In September 2004, the Israeli Army issued military orders, creating a buffer zone averaging 150-200 meters in width on the Palestinian side of the Segregation Zone where new Palestinian constructions are prohibited. As a result, an additional 252 Km² of the West Bank (4.4%) will become inaccessible to Palestinians. On February 20, 2005, the Israeli Government published a revised route of the Western Segregation plan, where the Wall ran for 683 Km in the West Bank. Only 138 Km (20.2% of the total length) ran on the Green Line (the 1949 Armistice Line). When completed, 576 Km² of Palestinian lands (10% of the total West Bank area) were set for isolation from the rest of the West Bank territory. It also enclosed 98 Israeli settlements, accommodating 83% of the Israeli settlers' population in the West Bank and 55 Palestinian localities.

On April 30, 2006, the Israeli Government released yet another revised route of the Western Segregation plan, where the Wall will run for 703 Km along the western Segregation Wall in the West Bank. However, changes and alterations by the Israeli Army continued on the ground and based on new military orders, the length of the Wall has increased by 3% (22 Km), (see table 2). The new revised route will run the Segregation Wall on 128 Km (18.2 % of the total length) of the Green Line (the 1949 Armistice Line). When completed, the Segregation Wall will isolate behind it some 555 Km² of Palestinian land (approximately 10% of the total West Bank area). It will continue to enclose 103 Israeli settlements, accommodating 408,000 (85%) of the Israeli settlers' total population in the West Bank (480,000); however, it increases the number of isolated Palestinian localities behind the Segregation Wall to 59. See map 1.

Table 2: Status of the Western Segregation Zone as of April 2006 (including adjustments)		
% of Total Wall Length		
50 %	363Km	Existing Sections
36 %	263 Km	Planned Sections
14 %	99 Km	Under Construction
100%	725 Km	Total Length
Source: ARIJ Database 2007		

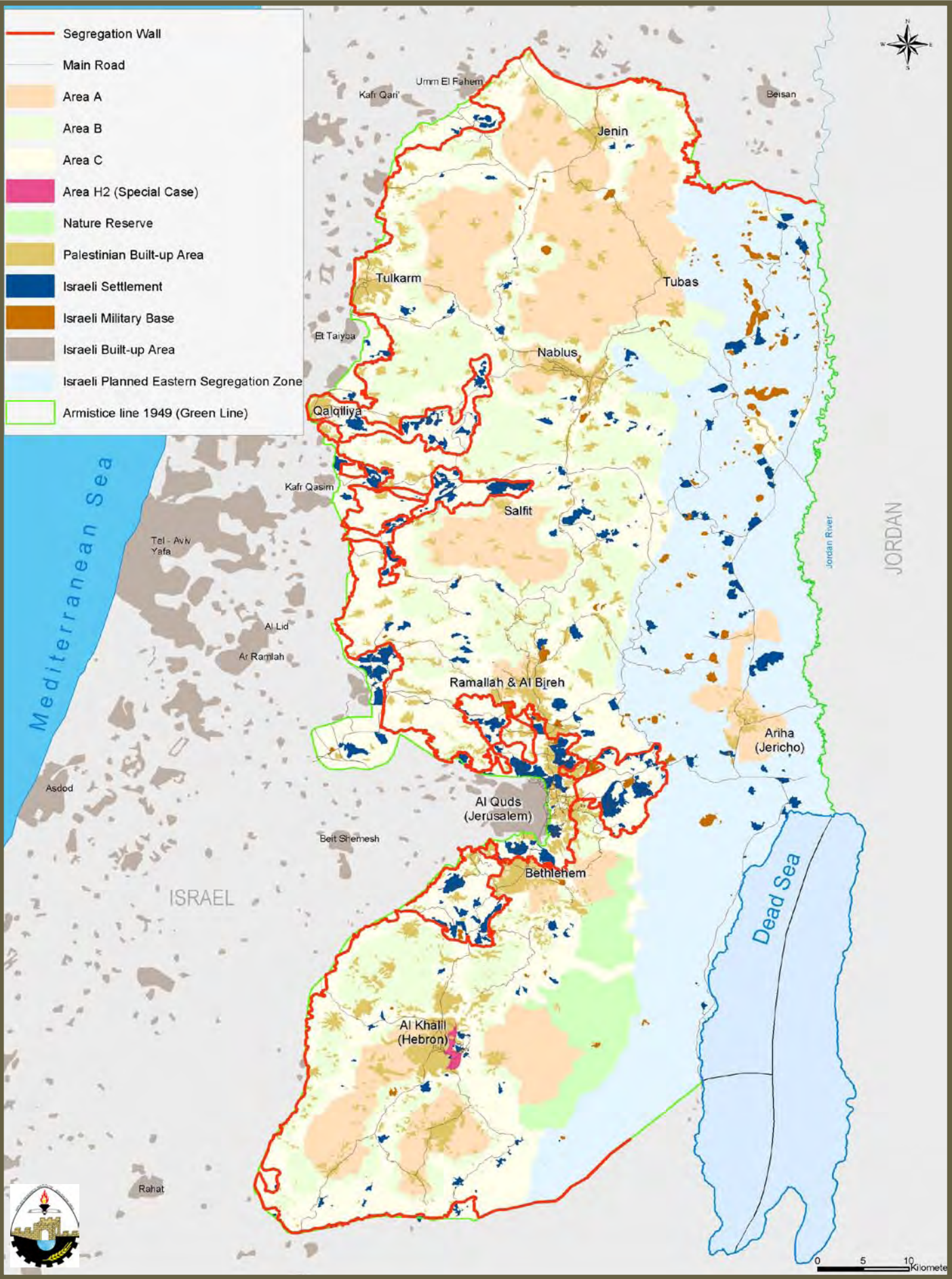
Palestinian Resources Isolated by the Segregation Plan

The Israeli Segregation Wall serves beyond the Israeli land grab ambitions, as it also targets the natural resources of the occupied Palestinian territory, which were taken into consideration in parallel to political considerations, while drawing the route of the Segregation Wall. The following lists the significant bulk of the natural resources to fall behind the Israeli Segregation Wall and out of Palestinians' control.

Agricultural Areas

Up to 189,001 dunums (189.1 Km²) of agricultural land are isolated within the Western Segregation Zone in addition to 863,879 dunums (863.9 Km²) within the Eastern Segregation Zone, both of which constitute 37.4% of the total agricultural areas of the West Bank.

Map 1: Status of the Israeli Segregation Wall as of April 2006



Forests

Up to 128,404 dunums (128.4 Km²) of forest land and areas with shrubs are included in the Western Segregation Zone and 110,274 dunums (110.3 Km²) in the Eastern Segregation Zone, both of which constitute 37.7% of the total forest area and area with shrubs in the West Bank.

Water

The Eastern Segregation Zone lies over the Eastern (Jordan Valley) aquifer with a safe yield of 172 MCM/year. The Western Segregation Zone lies over the northwestern and western aquifers with a combined safe yield of 507 MCM/year. The combined number of water wells utilized by the Palestinian population in the Segregation Zones is 134, with a combined average annual pumping rate of approximately 44 MCM.

The combined number of water springs isolated by the western Segregation Zones is 62 with a combined average annual discharge of approximately 31 MCM.

Up to 221 dunums (0.221 Km²) of inland water are isolated in the Western Segregation Zone and 685 dunums (0.685 Km²) in the Eastern Segregation Zone, both of which constitute 99% of the total inland-water area in the West Bank.

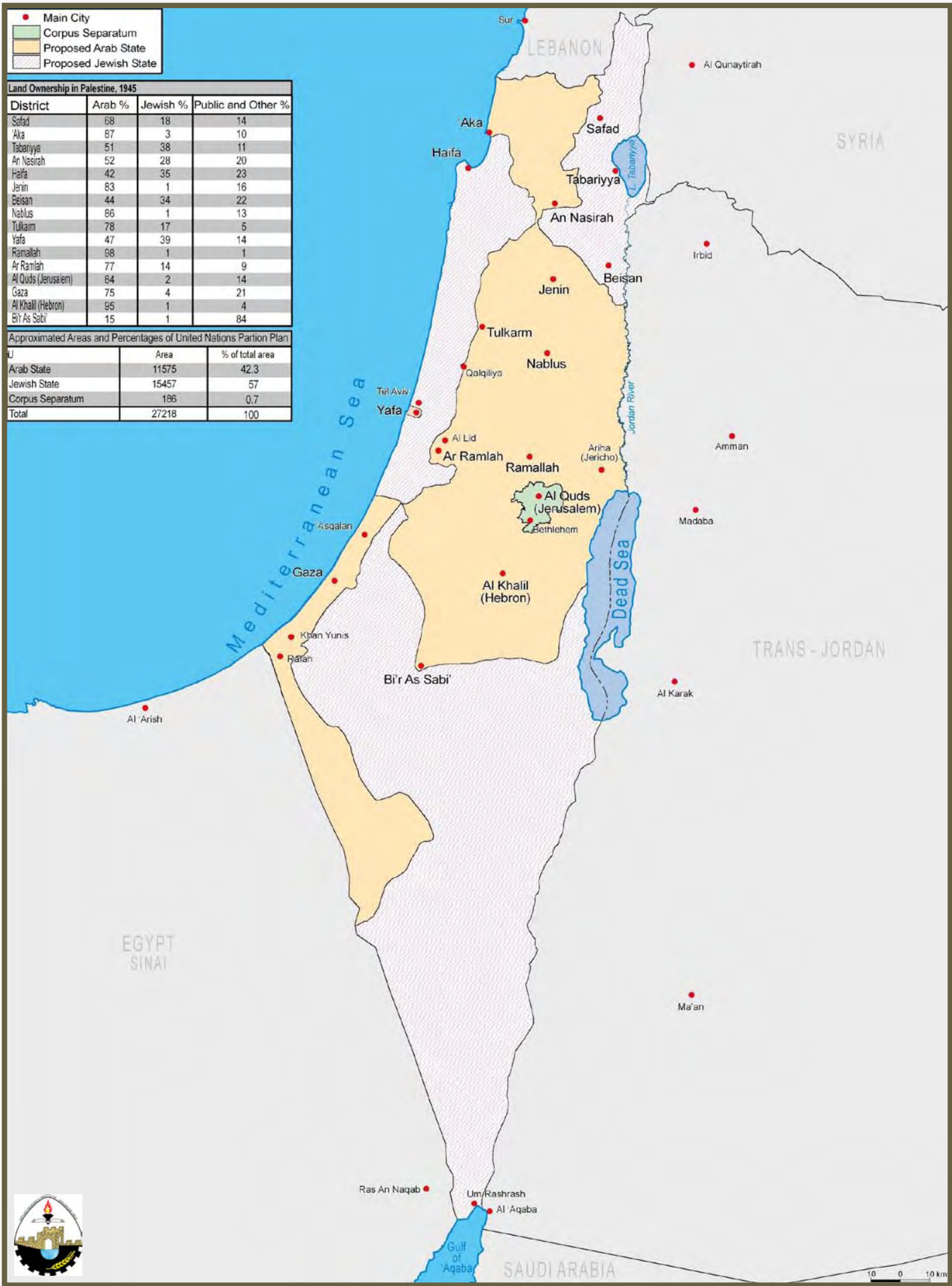
Bethlehem Governorate

Bethlehem Governorate lies in the southern part of the West Bank, some 9 Km south of Jerusalem. Bethlehem Governorate hosts the Church of nativity in Bethlehem city, the Shepherds Field in Beit Sahour, as well as a number of important religious sites that attract pilgrims from all over the world. Bethlehem along with neighboring Jerusalem became the focal point for pilgrimage to the Holy Land. This resulted in an organic twinning between the two cities (Bethlehem and Jerusalem) throughout the history and went beyond to emerge in cultural, economic, and social ties.

Historical Background of the Changing Boundaries of Bethlehem Governorate

Bethlehem, during the British Mandate and according to the administrative sub-governorates; was part of the Jerusalem Governorate. On November 1947, the United Nations General Assembly's Resolution No. 181, endorsed the partition of Mandate Palestine into two states, an Arab (Palestinian) State and a Jewish one, see map 2. Jews who owned only 6% of the land, were allocated 55.6% of the land even though they constituted 30% of the population while the Arabs where designated 43.7% of historic Palestine at the time the owned 94% of the land and formed 70% of the population. 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 on an area of 0.7% of historic Palestine.

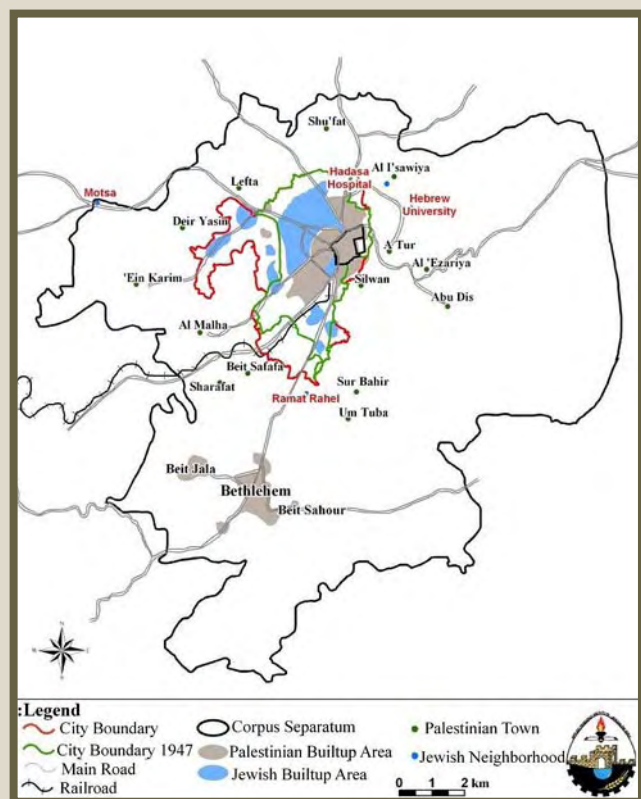
Map 2: The United Nations Partition Plan, 1947



The area of the Corpus Separatum as designated in the partition plan encompassed an area of 186 Km², which included lands south of Jerusalem, even beyond Bethlehem and to Shu'fat village in the north (see map 3). The Arabs at that time rejected the plan, as it ignored the rights of the majority of the Arab Palestinian inhabitants. However, when the British relinquished their Mandate over Palestine, the Jewish militias of immigrants launched a war against the Palestinian residents that ended with the militias' control of 78% of Mandate Palestine and the destruction of 418 Palestinian villages and driving nearly 800,000 Palestinians to Diaspora to become refugees in other parts of Palestinian and other countries as well. In the aftermath, Bethlehem was part of the West Bank and came under the Jordanian Administration until June 4, 1967.

On June 5, 1967, Israel launched what it claimed to be a "preventive" war that ended with them occupying the West Bank and the Gaza Strip, the Syrian Golan Heights, and the Egyptian Sinai Peninsula. Soon after the occupation; the Israeli Army redrew the administrative boundaries of the Palestinian Governorates in the West Bank and Gaza territory, taking out Jerusalem Governorate from the West Bank map and thus, the eastern part of Jerusalem came under the administration of the Israeli minister of interior, who in compliance with the interest of the occupying Israeli State; redefined the city's boundary from 6.5 Km² to 71 Km²; more than 10 times its original size to include lands from 28 surrounding towns and villages from Bethlehem and Ramallah Governorates. As a result Bethlehem Governorate lost 18048 dunums (18.048 Km²) of its lands; out of which, 6844 dunums belonged to the villages' boundaries of Bethlehem, Beit Jala and Beit Sahour cities.

Map 3: The Corpus Separatum under the UN Partition Plan of 1947.



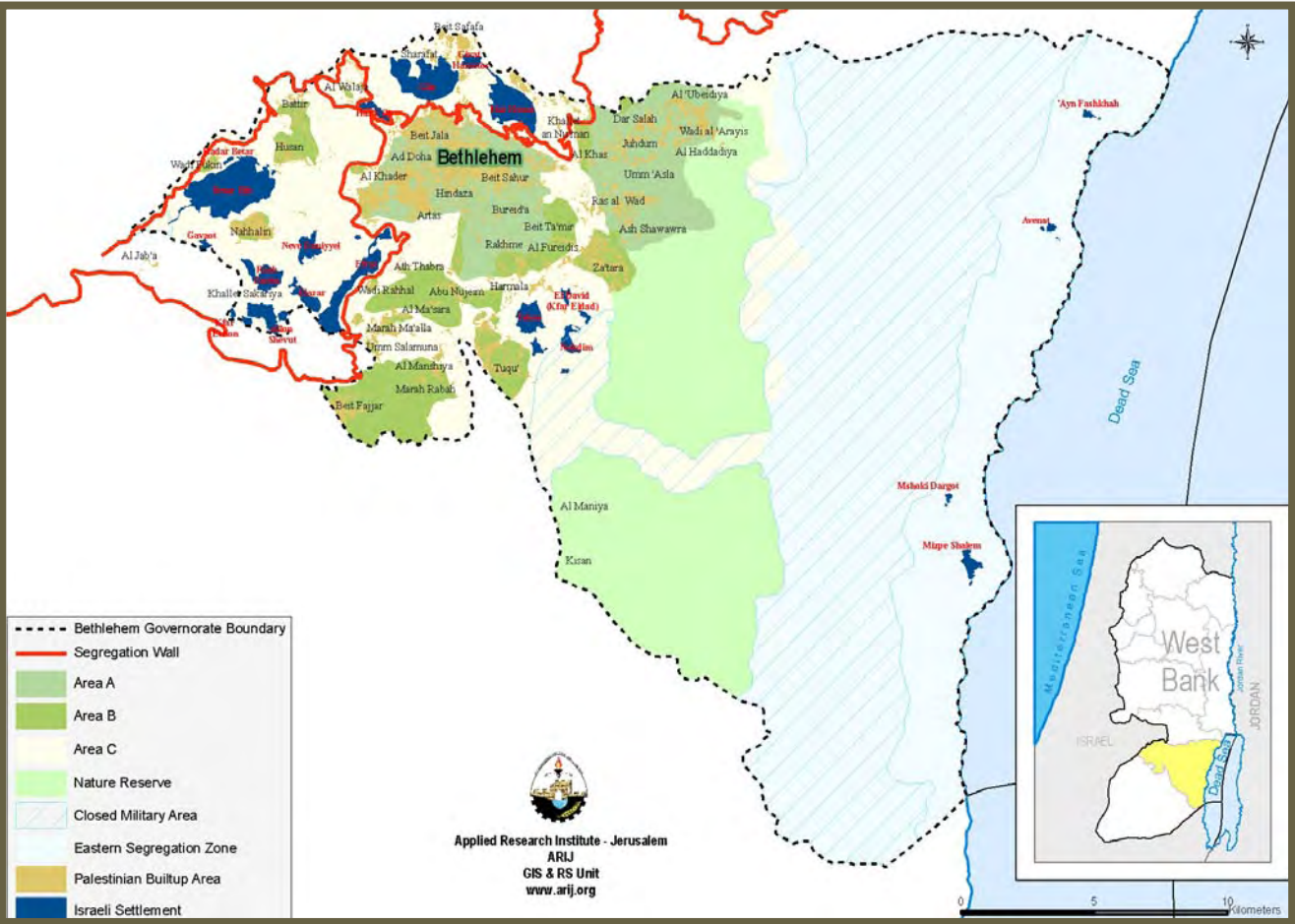
Upon the new Israeli demarcation of boundaries, Bethlehem Governorate's area covers just about 608 Km², with three main cities (Bethlehem, Beit Jala, and Beit Sahour) and 70 localities including 3 refugees' camps. Today, the Governorate is a home to more than 180,000 + Palestinian inhabitants (PCBS 2006).

Bethlehem Governorate under Oslo Accord

The Oslo II Interim Agreement signed in September 1995 between the Palestinian Liberation Organization (PLO) and Israel, concluded Israel withdrawal from areas of the West Bank, and that the Occupied Territory be classified into Areas "A," "B" and "C," designating varying levels of control (see table 3). This jagged distribution has scattered the Occupied Palestinian Territory and turned it into isolated cantons; physically separated from each other.

Table 3: The Geopolitical Divisions of Bethlehem Governorate				
Area	Area in Km ²	%	Population	%
Area A	47.64	7.8	98,821	54.9
Area B	33.85	5.5	59,178	32.9
Area C	423.98	69.7	22,119	12.2
Nature Reserves	102.40	17	-----	----
TOTAL	607.87	100	180,116	100
Areas Definition in Oslo II Interim Agreement of September 1995				
Area A	The Israeli army has pulled out fully and Palestinians hold all responsibilities for internal security and Public order.			
Area B	Palestinians have full control over the civil administration and Israel continues to have overriding responsibility for security.			
Area C	The Palestinians have responsibility for civil life such as economics, health, and education; while, Israel retains full control over security and administration related to the territory.			

Map 4: Geopolitical Distribution in Bethlehem Governorate



Military Orders: Israel’s Way to Evade International Law

Israel has always tried to escape its status as an occupier of the Palestinian territory by attempting to justify its existence as an administrative to the occupied territory. For this reason, Israel resorted to military orders to validate its belligerent acts, using its infamous “military purposes” pretext to violate the international humanitarian laws and the United Nations Security Council resolutions. Following the signing of the Oslo Accord in 1993, Israel has issued thousands of 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 carryout 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 listed in the following table 4.

Table 4: Israeli Military Orders in Bethlehem Governorate from 1993-2007	
Type of Military Order	No. of Military Orders
Evacuation notice for building without permit	37
Land seizure to install Cameras	1
Notice to Halt Construction	1
Order to demolish houses	77
Land seizure to expand Military bases	2
Land Seizure to install Military Towers	1
Land seizure for Military purposes	4
Land Seizure to build a Passage	6
Land seizure for Road Construction	5
Land seizure for Settlements Expansions	1
Areas Declared as “State Land”	27
Uprooting Trees	1
Land Seizure for Wall Construction	40
Land Seizure to install Wall Gates	1
Orders to confiscate Wells	11
Total	215
<i>Source: ARIJ’s Military Orders Database - 2007</i>	

Israeli Colonization Activities in Bethlehem Governorate

Settlements' related activities in Bethlehem Governorate

Israeli Settlements in the Palestinian Territory is one of the complicated topics of conflict between the Palestinians and Israelis, and a hindering issue to the peace process. Israel's activities are based on a systematic plan to construct and build more Israeli settlements as much as possible, in order to inflict facts on the "Palestinian" grounds' with an intention to break Palestinian geographical contiguity to make the odds of a Palestinian State in the future practically unattainable. Israeli settlement activities in Bethlehem commenced following the 1967 war when Israel captured the Palestinian territory. Kfar Etzion 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 20 Israeli settlements accommodating nearly 80,000 Israeli settlers infringed on the Palestinians' lands in Bethlehem Governorate. These settlements are built on a total area of 19,151 Dunums (19.1 Km²), which constitutes 3.1 % of the Governorate's area.

Israeli Settlements' Outposts

Furthermore, in the years between 1996 and 2005, the Israeli settlers in Bethlehem Governorate established 18 locations of came to known as Israeli settlements' outposts. This complied with outburst of the outposts' phenomena, where the Israeli settlers contrive to take control of hilltops in the occupied Palestinian territory mainly within 1-4 Kilometers from existing settlements. The consecutive Israeli Governments during that period of time; did not endorse the outposts phenomena; and did not provide financial support for them; rendering them to be illegal and unauthorized, it still simultaneously and indirectly provided them with infrastructural support through the Israeli Army, which also provide them with security blanket to carryout their attacks against Palestinian lands. The role and partnership of the Israeli Governments in the outposts phenomena, was best illustrious in 1998 in the words of the Israeli Agriculture Minister at that time and former Prime Minister Ariel Sharon; who encouraged the settlers to raid and take control of Palestinian grounds before "losing them to Palestinians in negotiations".

"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, Agency France Press, November 15, 1998

Tables (5 & 6) list the Israeli settlements with available information on each. Map 5 shows the distribution of Israeli settlements and outposts in Bethlehem Governorate.

Table 5: Israeli settlements in Bethlehem Governorate with related details					
No.	Settlement Name	Est. Date	Population 2005	Built-up Area 2005 (Dunums)	Master Plan Area (Dunums)
1	Gilo	1971	31500	2737	27869
2	Giv'at Hamatos	1991	1215	287	
3	Har Homa	1997	4250	2204	
4	Har Gilo	1972	410	413	
5	Gava'ot	1984	40	134	528
6	Rosh Zurim	1969	375	892	1507
7	Avenat	NA	40	153	153
8	Kfar Etzion	1967	115	182	3906
9	Allon Shevut	1971	3300	1003	
10	Elazar	1975	1300	542	542
11	Efrat	1979	7700	2190	7585
12	Hadar Betar	1978	30	57	5848
13	Betar Illit	1985	26850	4712	
14	Neve Daniyyel	1982	1600	583	585
15	Kfar Eldad	1999	210	217	426
16	Nokdim (El David)	1982	745	438	666
17	Tekoa	1977	1310	1070	1970
18	'Ayn Fashkhah	1969	30	97	97
19	Mshoki Dargot	1991	30	77	77
20	Mizpe Shalem	1971	180	438	970
Total			81230	19181	52729
Source: ARIJ Database 2007 – PEACENOW Database 2007					

Photo 1: An Overview of Har Homa Settlement (Abu Ghneim)

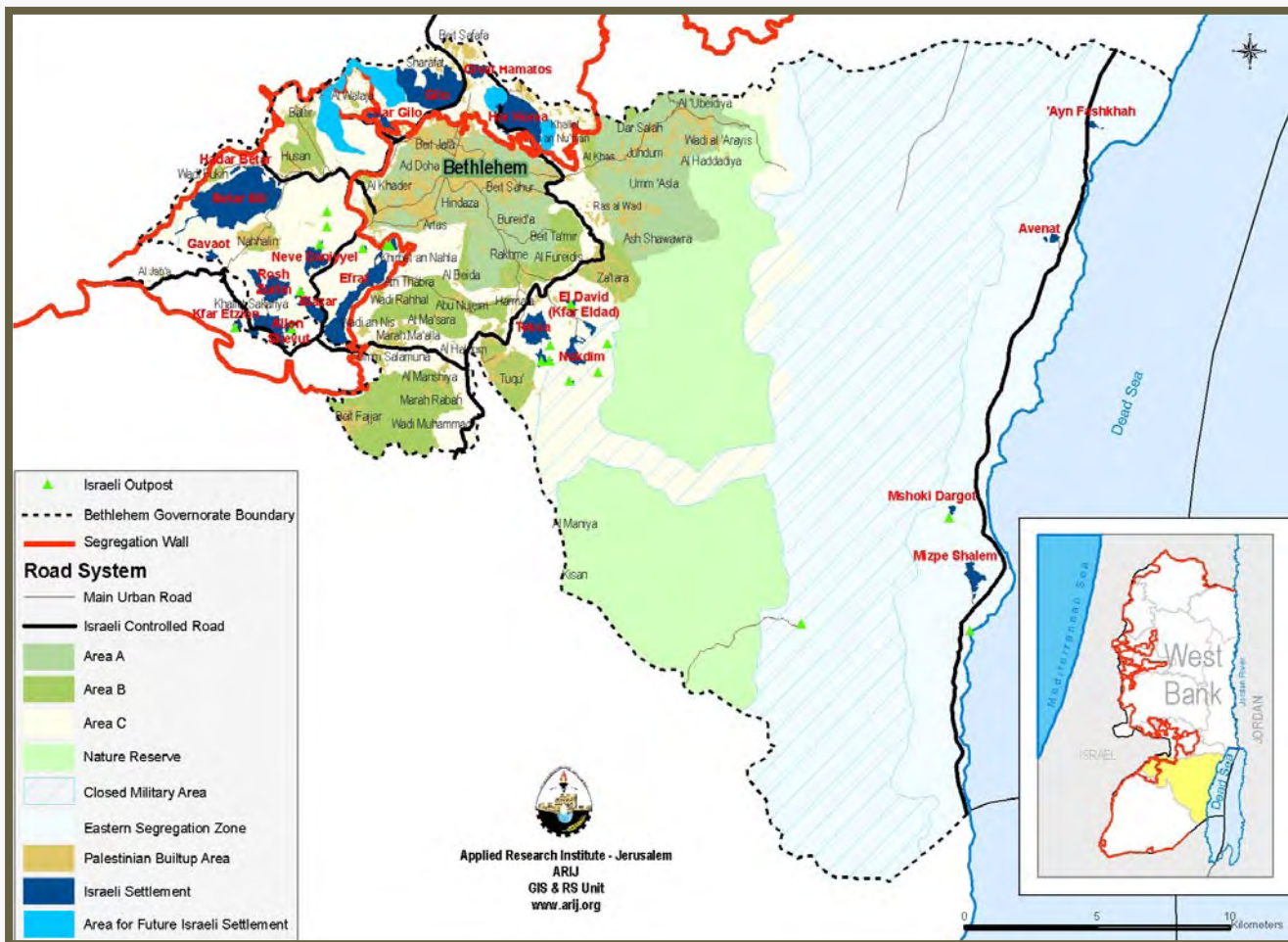


Table 6: Israeli Outposts in Bethlehem Governorate with the closest Mother settlement, Number of structures, and name

No.	Outpost Name	No. of Structures	Closest Mother Settlement
1	East Allon Shevut	30	Allon Shevut
2	Derech Ha'avot	22	Elazar
3	Giva't Hatamar	15	Efrat
4	Ma'ale Rehavam	18	Kfar Eldad
5	Tekoa B & C	10	Tekeo
6	Giva't Hadagan	19	Efrat
7	South Kfar Etzion	2	Kfar Etzion
8	Kfar Aldad Farm	12	Kfar Aldad
9	Neve Daniyyel North	2	Neve Daniyyel
10	Taqu' D	2	Taqu
11	North Neve Daniyyel	12	Neve Daniyyel
12	South east Tekoa	1	Tekoa
13	West Efrat	17	Efrat
14	North Neve Daniyyel	3	Neve Daniyyel
15	South Nokdim	20	Nokdim (El David)
16	South East Nokdim (construction)	2	Nokdim (El David)
17	South Mshoki Dargot	7	Mshoki Dargot
18	Near the Dead Sea	4	Mizpe Shalem

Source: ARIJ Database 2007

Map 5: Distribution of Israeli Settlements and Outposts in Bethlehem Governorate

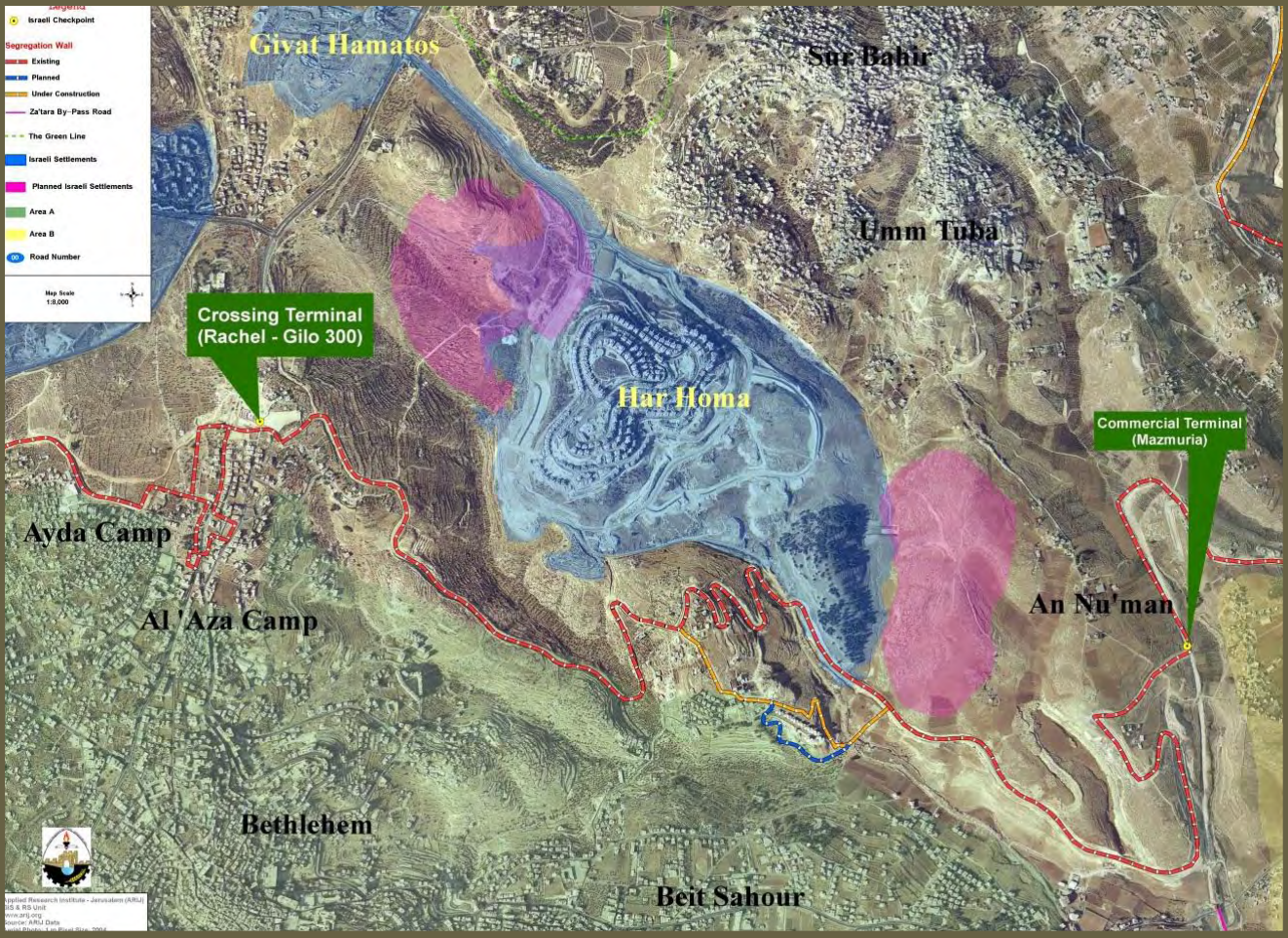


The New Israeli Settlements' Plans in Bethlehem Governorate

1) Two New Settlements near Har Homa (Abu Ghneim) Settlement

The Master plan set by the Israeli Jerusalem Municipality (Master plan Jerusalem 2000) indicates the presence of two new settlements within the vicinity of Har Homa settlement in Bethlehem Governorate, the first of which to be located southeast of existing Har Homa, and the other to its northwest. These new settlements will have an approximate area of 1080 dunums. The Master Plan also indicates that the residential area of existing Har Homa along with the two new additions will total to 1410 Dunums, which is a 350% increase to its current 400 dunums. All together, Har Homa and the new planned settlements will set on 2500 Dunums.

Map 6: Location of new settlements near Har Homa

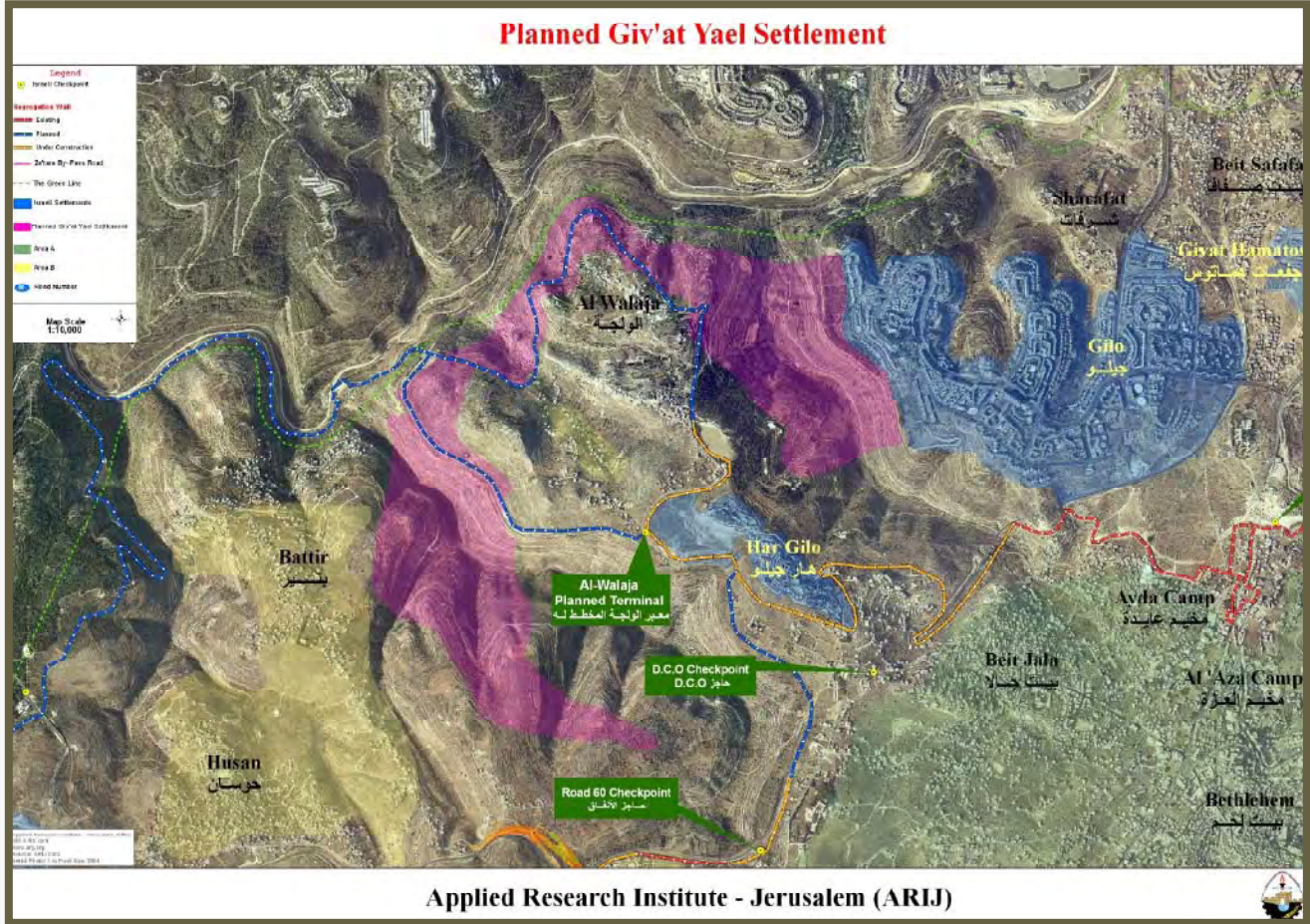


2) Giv'at Yael Settlement

In June 2004, a private initiative 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-Walajah 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.

Map 7: Location map of Planned Giv’at Ya’el settlement



3) Rachel’s Tomb Settlement

On April 2002, the Israeli Army initiated construction of the Segregation Wall at the northern entrance of Bethlehem city around Rachel Tomb. The lands surrounding the Tomb area were seized under security pretext to establish a parameter of 12 feet concrete partition Blocks around it. On February 3, 2005, the Israeli High Court rejected a petition submitted by 18 Palestinian families from Bethlehem and Beit Jala cities against the construction of a parallel bypass to the path of the Segregation Wall at Bethlehem’s northern entrance, extending all the way from

Rachel's (Gilo 300) Terminal to Rachel's Tomb. The road, according to Israeli sources, is to facilitate the movement of Religious Jewish groups to the Tomb. A week later, the Kever Rahel Fund commented on the Court's decision by, stating that it is the 'first step towards the establishment of a Jewish community around the Rachel's Tomb compound.' as quoted from the Jerusalem Post daily newspaper on February 11, 2005.

By August 2006, Israel had finally sealed off the Rachel's Tomb area from Bethlehem Governorate with a large iron gates rigged along the 30 feet concrete partition Blocks surrounding the tomb site.

Photo 2 & 3: Rachel's Tomb area before & after



The Israeli Bypass Roads in and around Bethlehem Governorate

The term "Bypass Roads" did not come into existence until the signing of the Declaration of Principles between the Israeli State and the Palestinian Liberation Organization (PLO) in September 1993. It indicated designated roads for the Israeli Army and settlers' population 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 negotiations with the Palestinians; including the establishment of a viable contiguous Palestinian State. Upon the Oslo Accord in 1995, which classified the

West Bank territory into three jurisdiction areas “A,” “B” and “C” the majority of the West Bank area came under Area “C” classification, which incidentally, holds all Israeli settlements. Consequently, the Israeli bypass roads that pierce through areas with “A” and “B” classification, only to establish physical obstruction between Palestinian controlled areas.

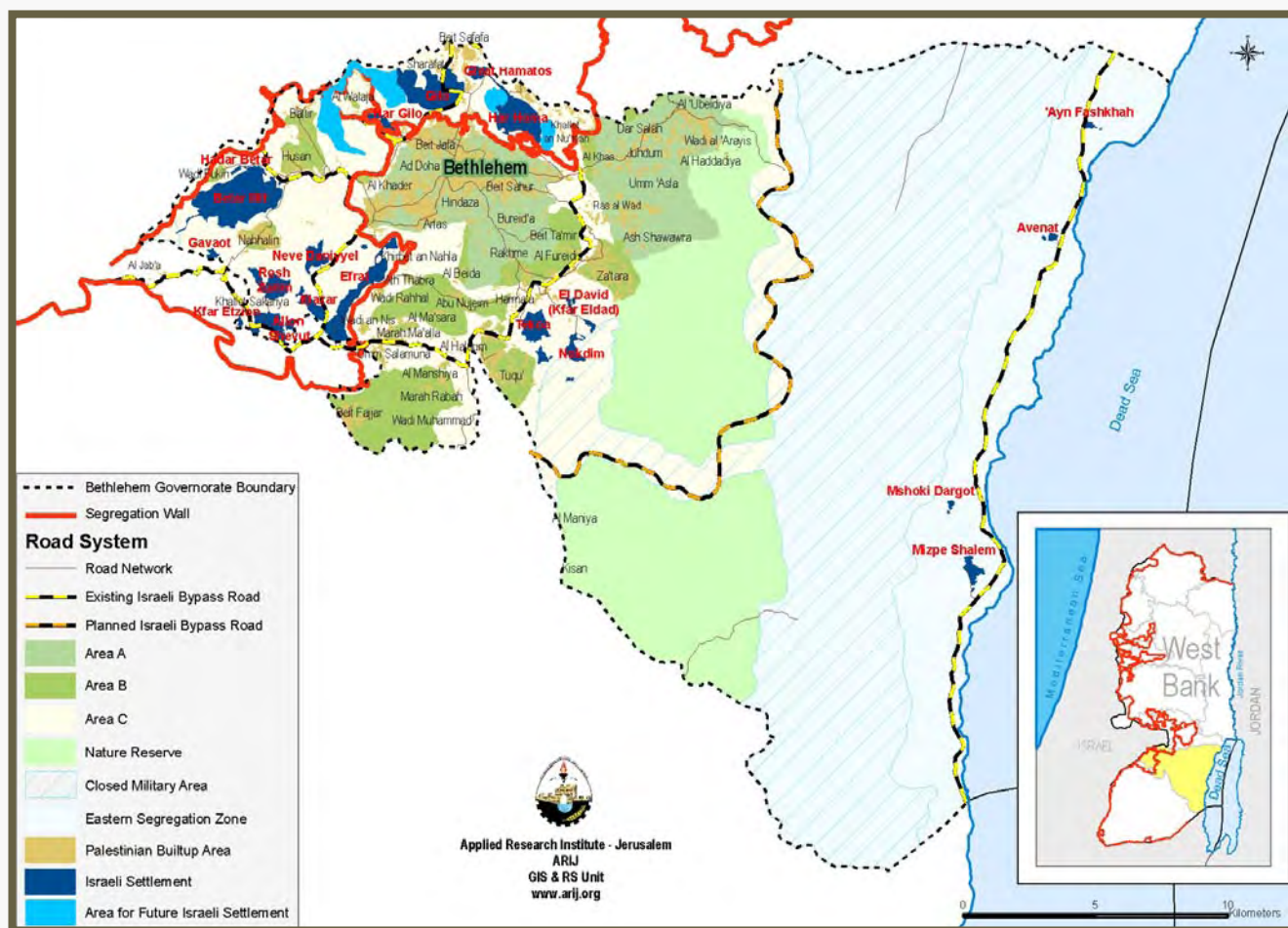
The Israelis built the bypass roads under the pretext of “security needs”; a term that presented the Israeli Army with legitimate excuse to expropriate Palestinian lands; a procedure that proved its efficiency before when the Israeli Army would expropriate Palestinian lands under the “security needs” 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, a settlement. 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 that the bypass roads built are of benefit to the local Palestinian population who will use these roads. 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 through security check conducted by the Israeli Army border patrols, which would take hours at times. However, following the 2000 Intifada, Palestinian accesses to virtually all bypass roads became outlawed for their use; 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 Palestinian are no longer allowed to travel on as “sterile” roads; meaning that these are Palestinian free roads.

In 1969, the Israeli Civil Administration issued Military Order 321, which gave the military the authority to confiscate land for public services. It is important to realize that in Israeli use of the terminology, “public” actually means “for Jews/ Israelis.” Thus, public works in the Palestinian territory (bypass roads being the most common) are necessary to serve the Jewish settlers’ in the occupied territory. Furthermore, the Israeli bypass roads had an important role to restrict the development of the Palestinian communities in the West Bank by creating de-facto obstructions to areas designated for development surrounding Palestinian communities.

In Bethlehem Governorate, the bypass roads system aims to cut off the Governorate from the rest of the West Bank, its also a mean to isolated inhabited rural areas from the main city centre, particularly the western rural areas from the Bethlehem urban centre. This fragmentation harshly segregates the hinterlands, the rural surrounding villages from Bethlehem economically, culturally and politically.

Today, the bypass roads system stretch on 79 Km length of Bethlehem Governorate’s lands, with an additional 30 Km to be constructed sometime before the end of 2008. The bypass roads are designated with a security buffer zone, which requires an additional confiscation of a 75-meter security buffer zone on each side of the road, causing an immense destruction to Bethlehem land. The Israeli Army controls the security buffer zones and access is severely restricted for Palestinians. Over all, the bypass road system occupies 16.5 Km² (2.8%) of Bethlehem Governorate total land area. Map 8 shows Israeli bypass roads in Bethlehem Governorate.

Map 8: Israeli Existing and Planned Bypass Roads in Bethlehem Governorate



The following summarize the status (existing & planned) Israeli bypass road system in Bethlehem Governorate:

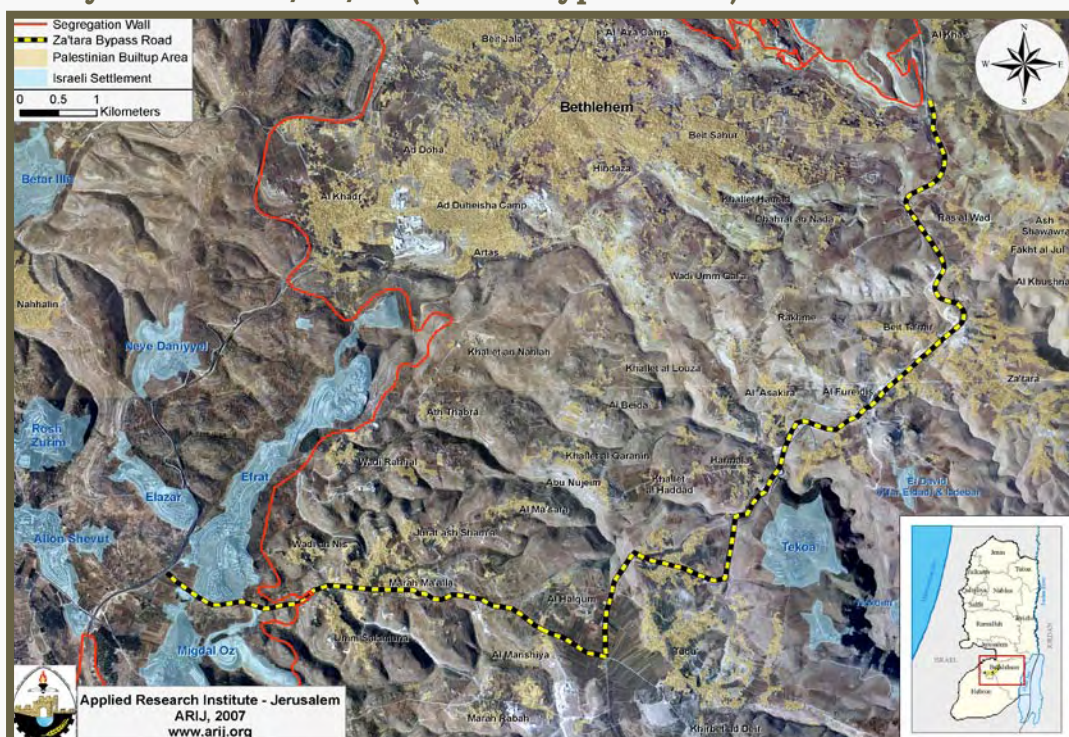
- **Bypass Road #375-(Existing):** Stretches almost half a kilometer (0.5 kilometers) from the northeast of Wadi Fukin, passes along Betar Illit and Hadar Betar settlements to finally intersect with bypass road #60 (the main north-south artery of the West Bank). Palestinian travel on this road require special permit, otherwise they are prohibited to use the road.
- **Bypass Road #356-(Existing):** This road services the eastern areas of Bethlehem and Hebron Governorates. It extends from the settlement of Har Homa north of Beit Sahour, passes through its lands towards the east until it reaches Tequa settlement in the southeast. It then continues to penetrate through the eastern lands of Hebron Governorate to connect with the Israeli settlements cluster located southeast of Hebron. Palestinian travel on this road require special permit. The road extends a length of 19 kilometers on the lands of Bethlehem Governorate.
- **Bypass Road #367-(Existing):** Extends from the Gush Etzion settlement Bloc, starting from Geva'ot settlement, continues to Kfar Etzion settlement and heads towards Beit 'Ayn and Migdal 'Oz settlements in the southwestern parts of Bethlehem. Palestinian travel on this road require special permit. The road extends a length of 2.5 kilometers on the lands of Bethlehem Governorate.

- **Bypass Road #60-Tunnel Road (Existing):** Palestinians may not actually drive a car on this bypass road, at least the part of it that leads to Israel. Today with the Segregation Wall is near complete around the Gush Etzion settlements Bloc, Palestinian will no longer be allowed to go on this road (the section that leads to Hebron Governorate) without a specially issued permit. This road connects the Gush Etzion Settlements to southwestern entrance of Jerusalem bypassing the two Palestinian cities, Bethlehem and Beit Jala, and the Israeli Gilo settlement. The road extends a length of 15.5 kilometers on the lands of Bethlehem Governorate.
- **Bypass Road #436-(Existing):** Starts at the northeastern part of Giv'at Ze'ev settlement and heads south towards Ramot Allon settlement in Jerusalem and continues to penetrate the lands of Al Walajeh village at its southern part to finally intersect with Bypass Road #60. The Road runs 4 kilometers inside Bethlehem Governorate.
- **Bypass Road #3157-Za'tara (Existing):** It runs from the settlement of Nokdim southeast of Bethlehem to Har Homa settlement at its northeast side. It runs on 6.5 kilometers across Bethlehem Governorate.

A new Type of Land Confiscation

In May 20, 2004, Ya'ier Blumintel; Chief of Israeli Infrastructure Division issued a special order (the first of its kind in the OPT), which grants expropriation rights for the benefit of the Israeli Army under military order number 5/02/04, which comply with the Israeli Land Law. The acquisition order is a part of a series of Israeli military orders issued between the years 1967-1969, Law #321 and is a compliment to military order 02/02/C, which grants the seizure of Palestinian land, southeast of Bethlehem under the pretext of "military purposes" to construct a new Israeli bypass road (Za'tara Bypass Road) that will connect the Israeli settlements located at the southeastern side of Bethlehem Governorate with Jerusalem and extends 8 Km in length (an area of more than 830 Dunums, including security buffer zone on the expense of the Palestinian agricultural lands in Beit Sahour, Bethlehem, Za'atra, Ras-El-Wad, Tekoa, Al-Shwawreh and Al-Fourdis villages.

Map 9: Military Order No. 5/02/04 (Za'tara Bypass Road)



The issued military order is the first of its kind, as it substitutes the temporary seizure order and replaces it with an Expropriation Order for the benefit of the Israeli Army. The Military Order clearly shows the 8 Km Za'tara bypass road that is intended to link the Israeli settlement Bloc "Toque" southeast of Bethlehem Governorate with the Israeli settlement Har-Homa (Jabal Abu Ghneim) northeast of Bethlehem. The distinctive-prejudice of the Israeli laws with regard to road utilization excludes the pretext of "public purposes" as:

- **It restricts the use of the road to the Israeli population and Army.**
- **Off limits to the Palestinian population, the original owners of the expropriated lands on which the road is being constructed.**
- **Eliminate the natural territorial expansion of the Bethlehem,**
- **Disconnect the eastern rural areas from the urban center of Bethlehem.**

Moreover, the bypass road will contribute to deepen the environmental degradation caused by the settlements and the bypass roads (approximately 1000 trees uprooted so far for the bypass road).

- Bypass Road #90-(Existing): runs along the far Eastern side of Bethlehem Governorate in parallel to the Dead Sea. It passes by Mitzpe Shalem, Mitzpe Deragot, Avenat, and 'Ayn Fashkhah settlements. The road extends a length of 31 kilometers in Bethlehem Governorate.

- Road #80-(Planned): Once constructed, it will undermine the Palestinian urban expansion at the eastern part of Bethlehem Governorate. The road, once completed will consolidate the segregation of more than one-half of the Governorate's area, which the Israeli Army classified as Closed Military area following the 1967 War. Road #80 will extend a length of 30 kilometers across lands belong to Bethlehem Governorate.

Operation Status of Israeli Bypass Roads

On December 15, 2005, Major General Ya'ir Naveh, the Commander of the Israeli Army in the West Bank issued a military order restricting the use of bypass roads to only "Israelis," and to determine the extent of Palestinians' use of the Israeli bypass roads to those with Israeli issued permits. However, the military order forbids Palestinians, including those with Israeli permits to enter Israel via bypass roads used by Israelis. The military order was distributed under the heading 'Order Regarding Closed Zones, (Judea and Samaria), (No. 34) 5727-1967'.

According to the Israeli military order, Palestinians holding permits (Issued by the Israeli Civil Administration) are prevented from entering Israel via the same roads (bypass roads) that Israelis use. Furthermore, the military order prohibits (to the point of incrimination) Israelis' (Jews and Arabs) to transport Palestinians via bypass roads, including those holding valid permits to enter Israel as access points for Palestinians to enter Israel or Jerusalem are designated through main crossing terminals (passages), which the Israeli Army identified and some of which are currently operational or under construction.

An addition to the military order issued by the Commander of the Israeli Army in the West Bank ((‘Order Regarding Closed Zones (Judea and Samaria), (No. 34) 5727-1967, to identify the designated crossings points for Palestinian to enter Israel, they are: Rachel (Gilo 300) in Bethlehem; Tarqumia Crossing in Hebron; Sha’ar Ephraim in Tulkarem; Shu’fat Refugee Camp Crossing in Jerusalem, Metar Crossing Border (South of Hebron Governorate, inside the Green Line), Hasidim Crossing Border in Jerusalem, ‘Atarot Crossing Border in Jerusalem, Maccabim Crossing Border (replacing Maccabim road Block, located on Jerusalem-Modi’in Highway), Iyal Crossing Border, Rihan Crossing Border in Jenin and Hagalboa’ Crossing Border in Nablus. The military order went into effect as of February 2006.

What Constitute Eligibility to use the Bypass Roads to Enter Israel

The Israeli Army had restricted the use of bypass roads to Israelis. According to the Israeli Army’s definition of what constitutes an “Israeli,” is a person whose is resident of Israel or holds an Israeli citizenship or has the right to immigrate to Israel, in accordance to the “Right to Return” law number 5710-1950, as applied in the Israeli State. However, some exceptions were made where [persons] with a valid permit issued by the Israeli civil administration and are allowed to enter Israel may use the bypass roads.’

The military order also included an exception to enter Israel for Palestinians, working with international organizations provided that they hold extended permits (permits for three months period or more), but restrict their entrance only via two bypass roads that will later on become exclusive for Israeli use.

Israeli Checkpoints (obstructions) in Bethlehem Governorate

Checkpoints have always been standard procedures of the Israeli Occupation Army since the 1967 occupation of 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 checkpoints to unprecedented levels next to restrictions imposed on the Palestinian populace attempting to cross these checkpoints. Furthermore, over the past few years, the behavior of the Israeli soldiers stationed at these checkpoints has taken a turn beyond the usual hassle treatment to more acts that fall within manners of vicious and sadistic behaviors. This is evident; 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 weather before they are allowed to cross a certain checkpoint. The fallouts of the Israeli soldiers’ acts at checkpoints comes with tormenting affect on the Palestinian society; causing social ties cutoff, economic separation between governorates, rise in the unemployment rate, 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 ambulances were not allowed to cross; causing patients death in many cases. Moreover, the Israeli Army imposes a time restriction with regard to movement on many checkpoints and so-called agricultural gates; and even though it is not clear that the Israeli Army authorize such actions; it is all the same, since similar and much more brutal actions went on with impunity.

Bethlehem Governorate was 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 among other: 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 six years to reach a record of 59 different forms of obstructions in the year 2005, and today it stands at 45. The following table 7 lists the number and various types of obstructions established by the Israeli Army to restrict and confine the movement of 180,000+ Palestinian residents of Bethlehem Governorate.

Table 7 lists various obstructions sorted according to their types in Bethlehem Governorate.

Israeli Checkpoints in Bethlehem Governorate	
Type of Checkpoint	No. of Checkpoints
Agricultural Gate	4
Checkpoint	10
Earth mound	9
Observation Tower	10
Road Block	5
Road Gate	6
Tunnel	9
Partial Checkpoint	2
Planned Tunnel	3
Total	58
ARIJ-GIS Database- 2007	

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.

Bethlehem Governorate and the Israeli Western Segregation Wall

The Segregation Wall has a serving purpose more than the Israeli claims to, the so-called “security” pretext. On the immediate level, it incorporates with the Israeli plan to segregate and take control of nearly 10% of the West Bank’s lands to be annexed to Israel once the Segregation Wall is officially declared as a political border, as implied by many Israeli officials, of which:

TIME: Will the lines in place at the end of it be the political borders of Israel?

Olmert: (*) At least for a period of time. They will be very very close to what may be the final borderlines.

(*)But the lines I want to draw are very close to the lines that I believe will become the political borders.

TIME, Sunday, Apr. 09, 2006

Israel is ready to annex sections of the West Bank and withdraw from others to establish “permanent” borders by 2010, the acting Prime Minister, Ehud Olmert, said yesterday.

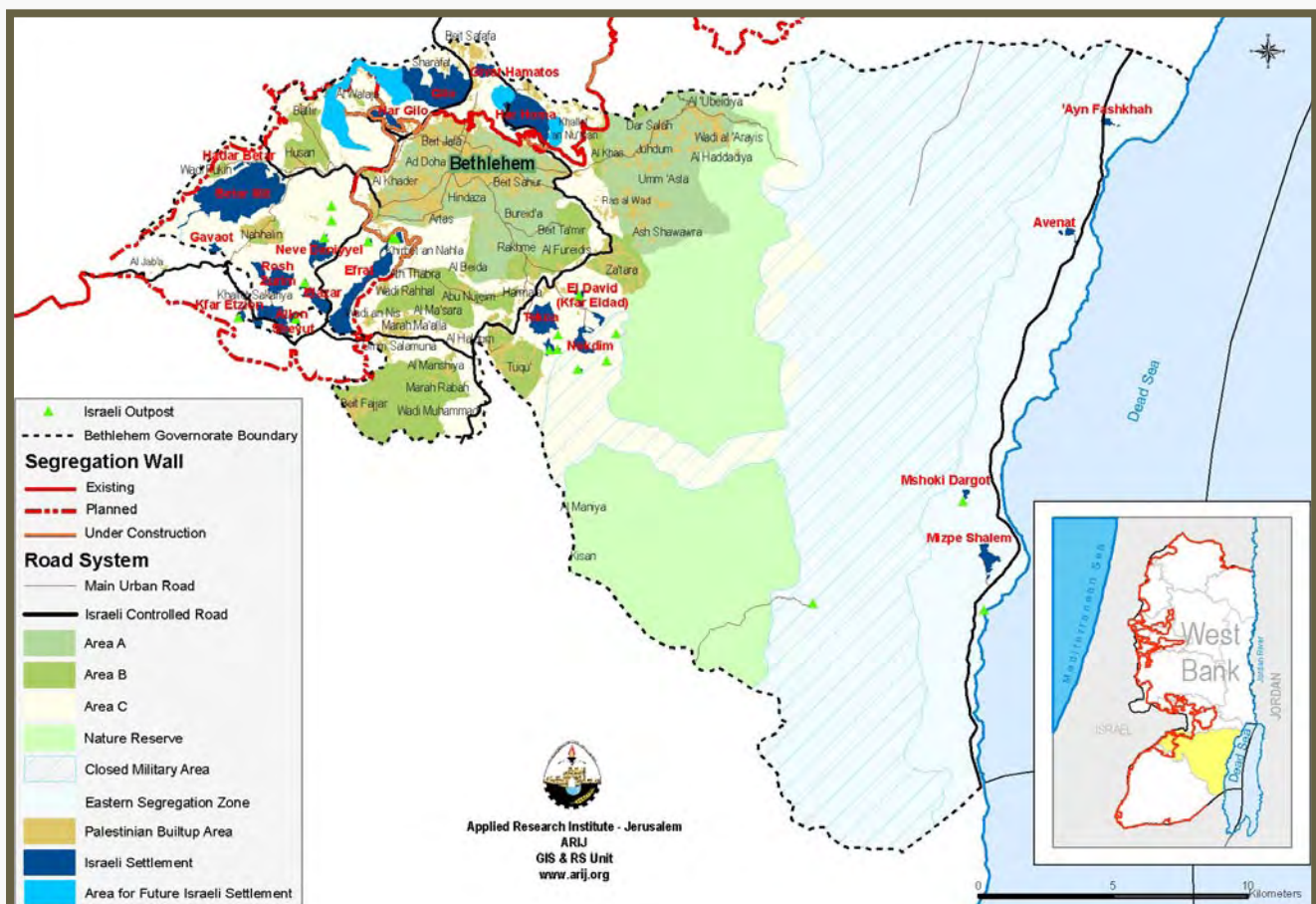
Giving a timetable for the first time, Mr. Olmert said he intended within four years to “get to Israel’s permanent borders, whereby we will completely separate from the majority of the Palestinian population and preserve a large and stable Jewish majority in Israel.”

Mr. Olmert added that the 450-mile separation barrier would become the border, sections of it being moved eastwards or westwards as necessary.

THE INDEPENDENT, 10 March 2006

In Bethlehem Governorate, the Segregation Wall is implemented on stages, where sections along the northern part of the Governorate, starting northeast of Beit Sahour to the northwestern parts of Beit Jala are almost completed while the parts along the western terrains of the Governorate are under-construction or planned to be constructed. In Bethlehem, 24 communities are directly affected by the construction of the Wall. The following map 10 shows the status of the Israeli Segregation Wall in Bethlehem Governorate.

Map 10: the work status of the Israeli Segregation Wall in Bethlehem Governorate.



In Bethlehem Governorate, the Segregation Wall extends across 53.5 kilometers starting at the eastern rural area north of Al-Khas village and runs south to reach Um Al-Qassies village; it then extends towards the west, bypasses the southern part of Abu Ghniem 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 include 8 Palestinian communities within the western Segregation Zone that will effectively become inaccessible to other Palestinians who aren't residents of these communities. The Palestinian communities stand to face isolation are (Battier, Hussan, Nahalin, Wadi Fukin, Al Jab'a, Khallet 'Afanah ('Afanah Hamlet), Khallet Beit Zakariyya (Beit Zakariyya Hamlet) and Khallet Al-Balluta (Al-Balluta Hamlet)), the population of which exceeding 20,000 Palestinians. Another Palestinian village stand to face total isolation but not included with the western rural area, is Al-Walajeh village (pop. 1695), which will be enclosed and sealed off by the Segregation Wall from all of its sides with a single but guarded and monitored exit to access Bethlehem. Table 8 details description of the Segregation Wall sections in Bethlehem Governorate:

Table 8: Status of the Israeli Segregation Wall in Bethlehem Governorate	
Wall Status	Length (Km)
Existing Sections	16.5 (Km)
Planned Sections	19 (Km)
Under Construction Sections	18 (Km)
Total Wall Length	53.5 (Km)
Of total Wall length runs on the Green Line = 3.2 (Km)	
Total land area to be used for Wall construction = 3210 Dunums	
Source: ARIJ-GIS Database 2007	

Sections of the Israeli Segregation Wall in Bethlehem Governorate

The First Section: it starts north of Al-Khas village, east of Beit Sahour, it moves south towards Um Al-Qassies and segregates Al-Nu' man village northwest of the Wall. The Wall continues westward, south of Abu Ghniem Mountain (Har Homa settlement) all the way to the northern entrance of Bethlehem city in and around the vicinity of what is known as Gilo 300 terminal. This section of the Segregation Wall in Bethlehem Governorate stretches for 13.7 kilometers. This section is not all completed except for the area south of Abu Ghniem (Har Homa Settlement) while it is still under-construction in Al-Khas and Al-Nu' man villages.

Photo 4: The First Section – East Beit Sahour



The Second Section: it already exists at the northern entrance of Bethlehem city and it extends from Gilo 300 terminal to enclave Rachel's Tomb and much of its surroundings. The Segregation Wall in this section stretches a length of 1.7 kilometers of the total length of the Wall in Bethlehem Governorate.

Photo 5: The Second Section – Rachel's Tomb Area



The Third Section: it extends from Gilo 300 terminal, runs along the northern part of ‘Ayda Camp, cut through Beit Jala’s northern lands, stretches west towards Gilo settlement. Then it continues until it reaches bypass road #60, better known as the tunnel road. This section of the Segregation Wall stretches a length of 3.5 kilometers, of which 2 Km are complete and remaining 1 Km is going under construction.

Photo 6: Crossing the Lands of ‘Ayda Camp



The Fourth Section: it extends from the northwestern parts of Beit Jala (from bypass road 60, the tunnel section) and runs west, south of Har Gilo towards Al-Walajeh village to place it in an isolated ghetto by sealing it off with a Wall from all sides. The route of the Segregation Wall continues southwest parallel to and along the 1949 Armistice Line (Green Line) passing through Wadi Fukin and heading towards the Western Rural area. This section extends for 9.1 Km.

Photo 7: The Fourth Section - the Tunnel Road



The Fifth Section: it extends from the northwestern parts of Beit Jala (from bypass road 60, the tunnel section) and runs along bypass road #60 to west of Artas village where it directs southeast to reach west of Khalayel Al-Louz. After that, it heads southwest towards Wadi Al-Nis and takes in all of Efrat settlement. The Israeli Army has already started implementing this section in December 2005. This section stretches for a length of 25.5 kilometers. This section of the Segregation Wall will entrap the western rural villages of Battier, Hussan, Nahalin, Wadi Fukin, Al Jab'a, Khallet 'Afanah ('Afanah Hamlet), Khallet Beit Zakariyya (Beit Zakariyya Hamlet) and Khallet Al-Balluta (Al-Balluta Hamlet), total built-up area 51335 Dunums (51.335 Km²). The segregated area includes the aforementioned Palestinian villages segregated in addition to the 12 Israeli settlements of the Gush Etzion settlements Bloc.

Photo 8 & Photo 9: The Segregation Wall along Road No. 60

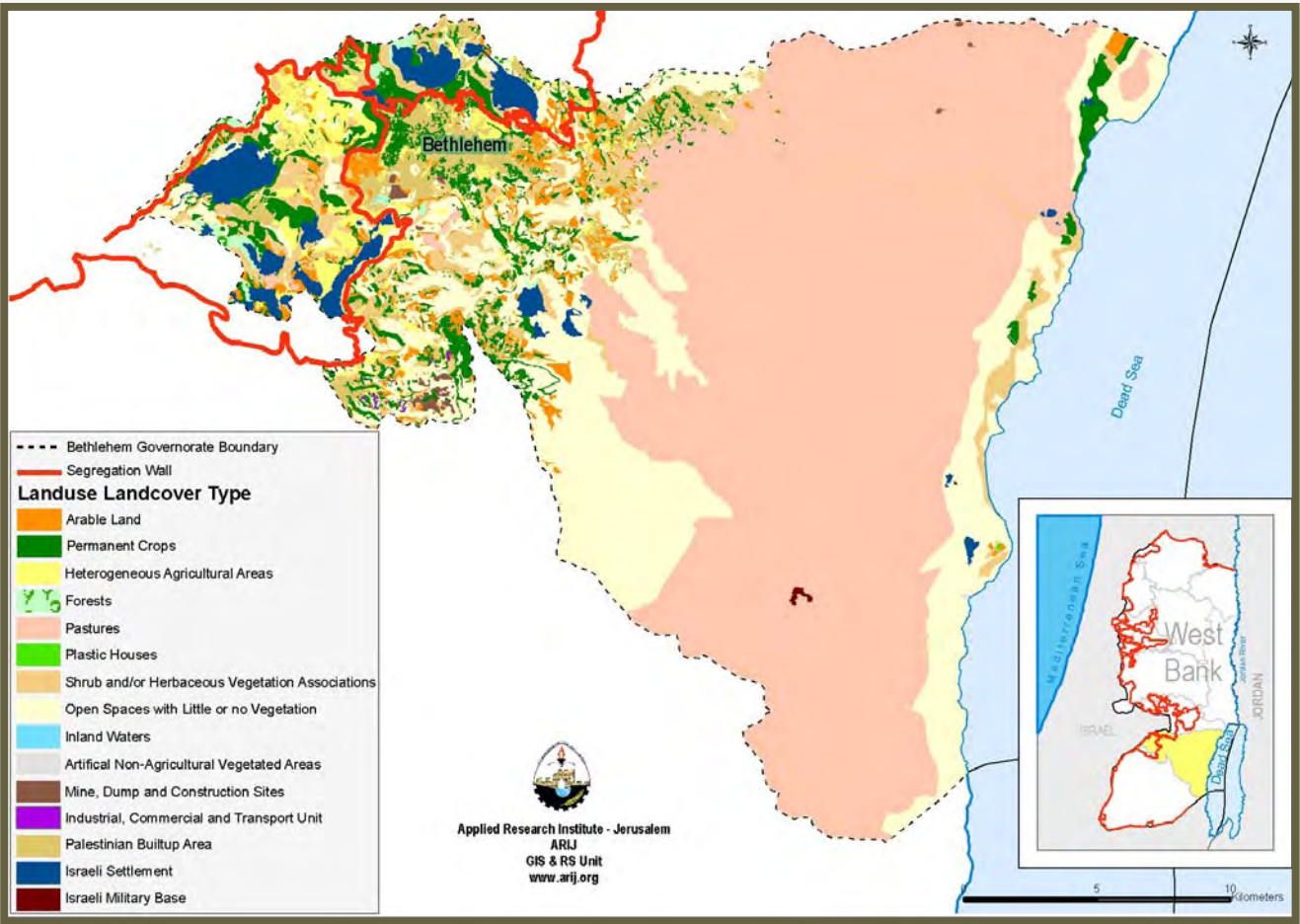


Upon Completion, the Israeli western Segregation Wall will isolate a total of 73226 dunums (73.2 Km²) of Bethlehem Governorate behind its path, which includes 14 Israeli settlements accommodating more than 78000 Israeli settlers. The Wall will also isolate behind its path 8 Palestinian communities, placing them in closed enclave.

The 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 299 Km², (49% 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, which utterly became inaccessible to Palestinian farmers, grazers and landowners. See map 11.

Map 11: Land Use/Land Cover of Bethlehem Governorate (including the Western & Eastern Segregation Zones and show the closed military area)



The Negative Impacts of the Segregation Wall on Bethlehem Governorate

The Israeli Segregation Wall will act as the final chapter and a 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 12% of Bethlehem Governorate’s lands within the Western Segregation Zone (between the Wall and the Green Line) and even much larger area; some 49% in the Eastern Segregation Zone. Table 9 classifies Bethlehem Governorate’s land use/land cover.



Table 9: Bethlehem Governorate Land Use Land Cover			
Item	Total Area (Dunums)	% of Bethlehem Governorate Total Area	Remarks
Agricultural Lands	66822	10.99	Mainly located within the eastern Segregation Zone and the Gush Etzion settlements Bloc
Forests and Shrubs	36154	5.95	Under Palestinian control but only accessible through Israeli controlled areas
Open Spaces	124616	20.50	Mainly located within area "C"
Palestinian built-up area	25807	4.25	85% of which is located within area "A"
Israeli settlements	52729	8.67	(including Master Plan areas)
Israeli Military Bases	283	0.05	Located within areas "B" & "C"
Segregation Wall	333	0.05	Land used to construct the Wall
Israeli Closed Military Areas	299424	49.26	Located within the Israeli Eastern Segregation Zone along the Dead sea Shores
Others	1684	0.28	Mines, Dumps& construction sites
Total Area	607858	100	
<i>Source: ARIJ GIS Database 2007 (1000 dunums = 1 Km²)</i>			

Beit Sahour continues to feel the Repercussions of the Israeli Segregation Wall

On January 28, 2007, the Israeli Occupation Army handed out 11 military notices to residents of the Orthodox Housing Complex project in Jabal Ad-Dik area (east of Beit Sahour); 6 of which to demolish existing residential houses and the other 5 to stop ongoing construction of residential buildings.

The reason for the demolition notices as stated in the Israeli Army's military orders served to the residents is that the ongoing construction is carried out in area "C" and without permits from the Israeli Governorate Coordination Office (DCO) of Beit-El in Ramallah. This happened despite the fact that the owners of the threatened houses have legal building permits issued from the municipality of Beit Sahour, being the official Licensing Authority for that area.

The Israeli orders of January 28, 2007 comes in sequels to previously issued Israeli orders (16 of them) by the Israeli Army over the past 10 years to residents of that same area using the same pretext repeatedly. See map 12.

Jabal Ad-Deik (Ad-Deik Mountain)

Jabal Al-Deik (Ad-Deik Mountain) neighborhood lies northeast of Beit Sahour city on a hill adjacent to the Palestinian Abu Ghniem Mountain; the Israeli Har Homa settlement. The neighborhood has been subject for constant harassments and abuse by the Israeli Army ever since the Israeli plan to constructions the Segregation Wall was revealed in 2002, According to the plan, the Segregation Wall is routed to run in close proximity to Palestinian housing project (The Orthodox Housing Complex Project) in that area. See map 12.

The Orthodox Housing Complex Project

This housing project was launched back in 1995, when the Greek Orthodox Patriarchate leased parts of its lands to residents and members of the Patriarchate in Beit Sahour, in order to help them battle the economic impediments forced on them by the Israeli occupation, including economic sanctions and on freedom of movement; by providing affordable housing units to help the limited income households in Beit Sahour community.

Map 12: Jabal Ad Deik and the Orthodox Housing Complex



Bethlehem Western Rural Area & the Gush Etzion Settlements Bloc

The western rural area in Bethlehem Governorate has been a steady target of the Israeli colonization ambitions in the occupied West Bank territory since 1967 as plans to undermine the Palestinian characteristic of this area have proven to be systematic manner of the Israeli occupation.

Kfar Etzion, south of Bethlehem is the first Israeli settlement established in the occupied West Bank territory (excluding Jerusalem), early with the outbreak of the Israeli settlements program in the occupied West Bank territory after the 1967 war. Later on, the settlement became the foundation point of what is known today as the Gush Etzion settlements Bloc” which is located some 20 kilometers south of Jerusalem and 10 kilometers southwest of Bethlehem governorate. Presently, Gush Etzion settlements Bloc includes 12 Jewish settlements built on confiscated Palestinian lands and spreads across the western rural area of Bethlehem governorate. However, Gush Etzion settlements Bloc is not entirely located within Bethlehem governorate, as the southern part of the Bloc extend within Hebron Governorate and that includes some of the settlements. Table 10 lists the Israeli settlements of Gush Etzion Bloc with related details.

Table 10: Israeli settlements of gush Etzion with related details				
Name	Governorate	Population	Master Plan Area/ in Dunums	Foundation Date
Alon Shevut	Bethlehem	3,300	3832	1970
Bat Ayin	Hebron	804		1989
Kfar Etzion	Bethlehem /Hebron	463		1967
Efrat	Bethlehem	7,700	4217	1980
Rosh Zurim	Bethlehem	375	1508	1969
Elazar	Bethlehem	1300	521	1975
Gev’ot	Bethlehem	40	529	1984
Hadar Betar	Bethlehem	30	5817	1978
Betar Illit	Bethlehem	26850		1990
Migdal Oz	Hebron	334	1413	1977
Neve Daniel	Bethlehem	1600	585	1982
Total		42796	18422	
* Area of settlement located within Gush Etzion Settlements Bloc				

The area occupied by the Israeli settlements within the Gush Etzion settlements Bloc makes 25.4% (19400 Dunums) of the latter total area (76428 Dunums), which is categorized according to Table 11.

Table 11: Gush Etzion Land Use/ Land Cover Analysis (areas in Dunums)					
Item	Total Area	Within Bethlehem	% of Total Area	Within Hebron	% of Total Area
Agricultural Land	26904	20997	78	5907	22
Nature Reserve Areas	14806	11148	75.3	3658	24.7
Open Spaces	12352	6662	54	5690	46
Palestinian Built-up Areas	2326	2258	97.1	68	2.9
Israeli Settlements Areas including Master plans	19400	15004	77.3	4396	22.7
Israeli Military Bases	572	00	00	572	100
Others	54	27	50	27	50
Bypass Roads (existing)	14	14	100	00	00
Total	76,428	56,110	73.5	20,318	26.5
<i>Source: ARIJ GIS Database - 2007</i>					

The Gush Etzion settlements Bloc is one of 6 Israeli settlements Blocs (Qiryat Arba, Gush Etzion, Ma’ale Adumim, Modi’in Illit, Giv’at Ze’ev & Ariel) located in the occupied West Bank that the Israeli consecutive Governments declared repeatedly emphasized their persistence to maintain under its jurisdiction under any arrangements with the Palestinians. This will certainly constitute a dilemma to the fulfillment of any foreseen peace process between the Palestinians and the Israelis.

Palestinian Communities Trapped Within the Segregation Wall & the Gush Etzion Bloc

The Gush Etzion settlements Bloc exist today on lands confiscated and seized by the Israeli Army under “security pretexts” and handed to Jewish settlers to establish the settlements. In the Western rural area, 9 Palestinian communities’ exist; they are Battier, Nahalin, Hussan, Wadi Fukin, and Jab’a, in addition to 3 populated Hamlets. Today, these Palestinian villages are facing a double jeopardy as they live consistently under the threat of the Israeli settlers, also because of the Israeli Segregation Wall that will cut these villages off from the main urban center in the governorate. Table 12 lists the targeted western rural villages of Bethlehem Governorate and lands confiscated over years of Israeli occupation.



Table 12, Palestinian Communities of Bethlehem Western Rural Area, within the Israeli Gush Etzion settlements Bloc				
Palestinian Villages' Names	Total Area (Dunums)	Of which confiscated for Israeli use (Dunums)	% of Total Area	Population (PCBS 2006)
Battier	7165	7013	98	4220
Hussan	7295	7295	100	5708
Nahalin, including Afana, Zakariyya & Al-Balluta Hamlets	17250	6617	38	6579
Wadi Fukin	4347	4346	100	1201
Al Jab'a	7120	5307	75	906
Al-Walajeh	7000	2945	42	1695
Total	50,177	33,523	67	20,309
<i>Source: ARIJ GIS Database - 2007</i>				

Moreover, the Israeli Army implanted obstructions within Gush Etzion settlements Bloc to restrict and control movement of Palestinians within the Bloc itself and towards the center of services in Bethlehem Governorate. These obstructions have immensely contributed to cut off people from their lands and have succeeded to drive some to change their residency. Table 13 shows the various types and number of Israeli obstructions within the Gush Etzion settlements Bloc.

Table 13: Various types of Israeli obstruction within the Gush Etzion settlements Bloc			
Obstruction type	Count	Bethlehem	Hebron
Partial Checkpoint	1	0	1
Checkpoint	5	4	1
Earth Mound	3	2	1
Observation Tower	3	3	0
Road Block	2	2	0
Road Gate	1	1	0
Tunnel	1	1	0
Planned Tunnel	2	1	1
Total	18	14	4
<i>Source: ARIJ GIS Database - 2007</i>			

The Israeli occupation practices have dramatically affected the agricultural sector, which represents the backbone of the Palestinian economy. In the case of Bethlehem Governorate, the western rural villages used to represent the Governorate's food-basket until the Israeli Army coarsely confiscated considerable parts of these villages, allegedly for military purposes.

Outposts within the Gush Etzion Bloc

What is an Outpost? It is a technique improvised by Israeli settlers and encouraged by Israeli government officials to grab more Palestinian land, hilltops in particular to establish a location for a new settlement, or to expand existing settlements and/ or to link settlements with one another. In Gush Etzion settlements Bloc, 8 Israeli outposts are identified as in table 14.

Table 14: Israeli outpost within the Gush Etzion Bloc	
Bat Ayin West	Between Bat Ayin and the Green Line
Bat Ayin East:	Between Bat Ayin and Kfar Etzion
Derech Ha'avot	Between Rosh Tzurim, El'azar and Neve Daniel
Givat Hadagan	Northeast of Efrata
Givat Hatamar	North of Efrata
Givat Hahish	East of Alon Shvut
Neve Daniel	North of Neve Daniel
Old Massu'ot Itzhak	Northeast of Bat Ayin

Trapped within the claws of the Israeli Segregation Wall

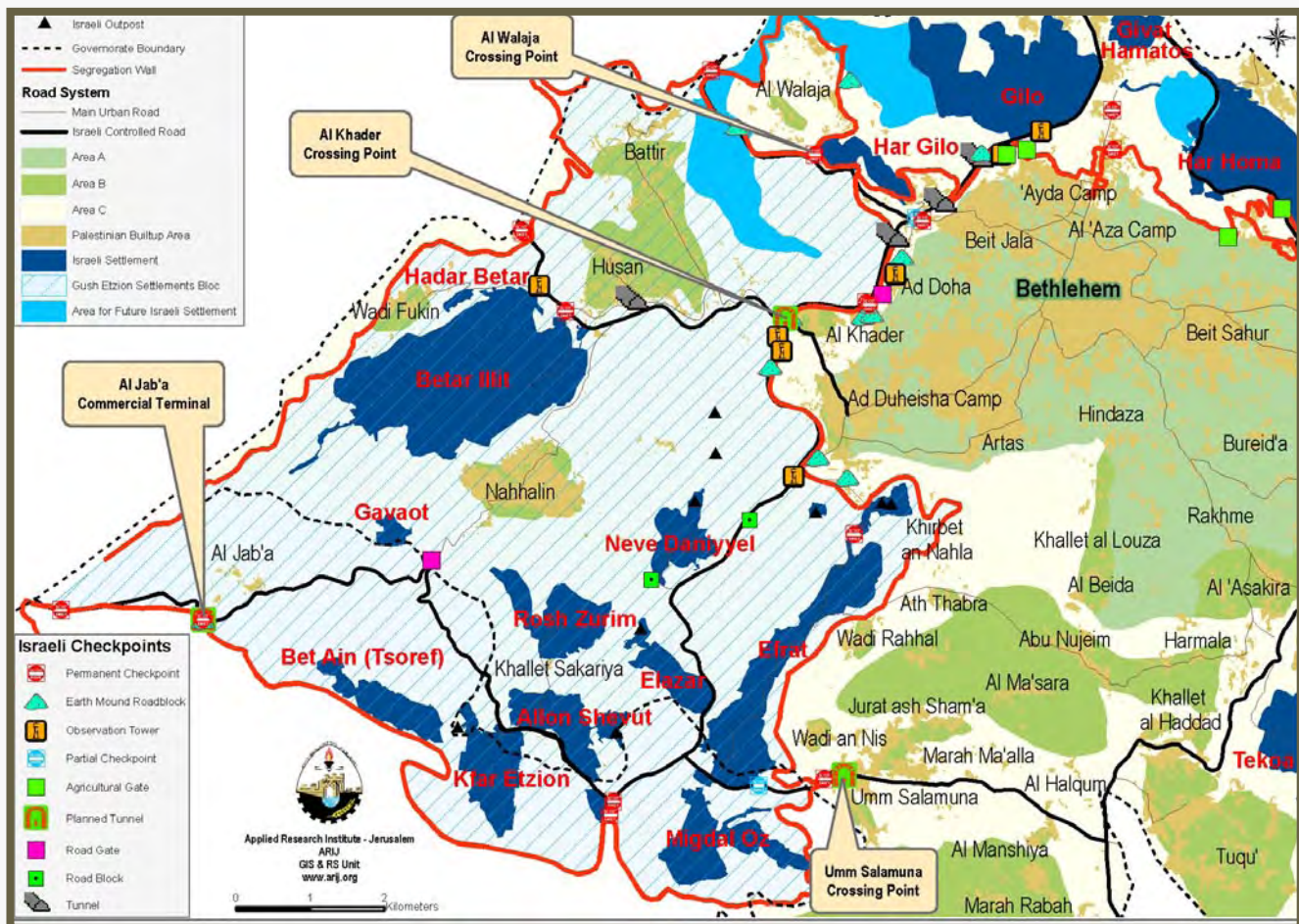
The Israeli Segregation Wall in Bethlehem Governorate is the pretext that Israel employs to consolidate years of colonization activities by permanently seizing the Gush Etzion settlements Bloc along with all the Palestinian lands within it. Two running sections of the Segregation Wall will encompass the Gush Etzion settlements Bloc and entrap the Palestinian communities. The first section of the Wall run along bypass road #60 and the other section will run along the green line. Accordingly, Israel will continue to restrict Palestinians' movement and hinder the ability to utilize the agricultural lands, which is why the Israeli Segregation Wall is routed in a manner to include much of the vast land located in the western rural area of Bethlehem Governorate.

Status of the Segregation Wall Encompassing Gush Etzion Settlements Bloc

The Israeli Segregation Wall runs across 53.5 Km in length in Bethlehem Governorate, of which 25.5 Km (47.7%) is designated to circle in the Gush Etzion settlements Bloc. Table 15 shows the status of the Segregation Wall at Gush Etzion settlements Bloc according to the geographical area. See map 12.

Table 15: Segregation Wall Status around Gush Etzion settlements Bloc			
Wall Status	Length (Km)	Running in Bethlehem	Running in Hebron
Existing Sections	1.1	1.1	00
Planned Sections	14	5.8	8.2
Under Construction Sections	10.4	10.4	00
Total Wall Length	25.5 (Km)	17.3	8.2
Of total Wall length runs on the green line = 3.2 (Km)			
Total land area used for Wall construction = 1531 (Dunums)			

Map 13: The Western Segregation Zone (the Gush Etzion Bloc.)



Major Impacts of the Segregation Wall

The bearings of the Segregation Wall on the Palestinian lands are clear violations to all international and humanitarian laws; more than that, its construction will have negative impacts on all aspects of Palestinians life. Following is a summary of some of those major impacts:

Impact on Agriculture

The Agricultural area in Bethlehem Governorate makes almost 51% (308,551 dunums) the Governorate's total area, of which 20,997 Dunums (6.9%) of the agricultural area will be isolated in the Western Segregation Zone. This is in addition to 241,729 Dunums (78%) within the Israeli declared "closed military area" in the Eastern Segregation Zone. This means that 85 % of the total agricultural area in Bethlehem Governorate will become inaccessible for Palestinian farmers. As a result, the residents of urban centers of Bethlehem Governorate will lose a substantial portion of their food security due to the Israeli imposed restrictions on land use. Furthermore, the residents of Bethlehem Governorate will feel the sharply reduced supply of agricultural products from other Governorates in the West Bank and the increase in market prices because of the Segregation Wall as the flow of agricultural products minimize to virtually nothing. Moreover, farmers and residents in the Governorate who work within the agriculture sector; will lose their

main source of income or it will be reduced radically to the point where it becomes unfeasible for them to continue work on their lands. This will ultimately affect the availability of nutritional resources for the residents of the Governorate at reasonable prices and might very well cause malnutrition diseases, as the income per-capita is already set at a limiting purchasing power and is constantly degrading.

Impact on Biodiversity

The impact of the Segregation Wall on biodiversity of Bethlehem Governorate is of great concern, especially that the Wall will eliminate a sizable portion of the agricultural lands in the Governorate. This will put residents of Bethlehem Governorate with the gravest of challenges to preserve the diminishing agricultural lands they have in the Governorate in relation to population growth and contraction of lands designated for developing the built-up areas in the Governorate. The restricted development areas available within the Governorate are limited as is, but insufficient to cope-with projected population growth, which will undoubtedly inflict extensive pressure on the natural and semi-natural resources.

{The anticipated Israeli Segregation Zone on both the western and eastern parts of the West Bank including Bethlehem Governorate could be one of the most threatening acts as it would likely to have significant repercussions for wildlife movement especially the movement of terrestrial fauna, by adding further to the fragmentation of ecosystems and habitats in both Israel and the West Bank and by cutting the natural ecological corridors, especially that the component of the Segregation Wall, from east to west, are several attached loops of barbed wires intended to create an obstacle and an electrical warning fence constitute a killing zone onto which access is forbidden}(Isaac J., 2003).

In addition to the threatening factors to the agricultural land, the Israeli Segregation Wall will threaten the Palestinian natural resources and biodiversity of different ecological zones in Bethlehem Governorate. The Segregation Wall is one of the most threatening acts that are likely to have significant repercussions on wildlife movement, by adding further to the fragmentation of ecosystems and habitats on both sides of the Wall, and by cutting the natural ecological corridors. Such pressure on the integrity of ecosystem and stability of natural resources increases the risk of losing the Palestinian biodiversity. Moreover, the Wall, which already disrupt the contiguity of the Palestinian landscape, and the natural water flow of the streams and springs, and would threaten the plant species that grow naturally in the area and also physically fragment the forests. Therefore, the Segregation Wall will certainly exacerbate the long-term trend of degradation of planted and natural forests in the area.

Furthermore, the Segregation Zone in Bethlehem Governorate will isolate and fragment the forested areas and other green areas, which make nearly 6% (36,154 Dunums) of the Governorate's total area. The forests are mainly concentrated within the isolated western and eastern Segregation Zones, which may have potential adverse impacts on securing the protection of contiguous areas of habitats and ecosystem management. Moreover, the loss of the different forest plantation will defiantly have significant impact on the Palestinian biodiversity. The Segregation Zone will also cause strip clearing of land including forest and other vegetation as it did with Abu Ghneim forest, where more than 60,000 pine trees were uprooted to build the Israeli Har Homa settlement and other areas declared by Israel as closed military zones.

Impact on Water Resources

The Segregation Wall has not only threatened the Palestinian lands but will also isolate and threaten Palestinian's natural resources, such as ground water wells and springs. Bethlehem Governorate is located above the Eastern and Western Basins of the West Bank Mountain Aquifer. The available renewable water resources in Bethlehem Governorate consist primarily of groundwater and surface water. However, and due to political arrangements, Palestinians have limited access to these resources, where as some of which stands to be lost inside the Segregated Zone. The annual total quantity of water-needed for Bethlehem Governorate is estimated at 9.3 MCM, while the quantity supplied is nearly 7.8 MCM, of which only 2.6 MCM is locally provided (PWA, 2005).

The Segregation Wall threatens Palestinian access to crucial supply areas, containing artesian wells and main water basins that provide Bethlehem Governorate with water, as the path of the Wall is designed to enfold the groundwater within Bethlehem Governorate. Most of the isolated Palestinian lands west of the Segregation Wall in Bethlehem Governorate fall in the Western Basin of the West Bank Aquifer system. This Basin contains more than 20 groundwater springs and wells, which supply the area with water for irrigation and other uses. Such act would add the risk of increasing the water shortage problem in Bethlehem Governorate. Additionally, such pressure on the groundwater resources would jeopardize the development of any possible future integrated management plan for shared water resources. The Wall in Bethlehem Governorate and in the other Governorates as well aims to provide Israel with almost total control to the most productive Aquifer Basins.

Impact on Social Life

The Israeli western Segregation Wall will effectively cut off several Palestinian communities from the Governorate's main urban centers. The Segregation Wall will indirectly affect many other communities, as they will lose considerable land area within the Segregation Zone. Palestinian residents in villages, Battier, Hussan, Nahalin, Wadi Fukin, and Al-Jab'a, in addition to the three Hamlets: Afaneh, Al-Balluta, and Beit Zakariyya will no longer be able to access the main urban centers in the Governorate at their will. The Segregation Wall will also entrap Al-Walajeh village in an isolated enclave, where the only access for the residents will be through an Israeli controlled exit at the eastern side of the village. Residents living in the Segregation Zone will lead a separate life than those in the rest of Bethlehem Governorate, as access to the Segregated Zone will be limited to the residents who live there and not to all the Palestinians. This pretty much puts the social life of these communities in isolation since no other Palestinians will be able to access the isolated zone. Any of the Palestinians who wish to access their friends and relatives living in the Segregated Zone will be required to obtain permits from the Israeli Occupation Authorities. This also applies to Palestinian communities (such as Beit Jala, Al Khader among others) who will be isolated from their agricultural lands, which lie on the opposite side of the Wall. In fact, such procedure might very much apply to residents of the Segregated Zone simply to access their homes. It became evident that the construction of the Segregation Wall will significantly compromise the sustainability of many Palestinian families in the Segregation Zone.

Moreover, the Segregation Wall imposes a systemic challenge to the local and national health care and educational services. The Wall makes it much more difficult for Palestinians to access hospitals, medical centers, schools, colleges, universities and other institutions in the main urban centers with access is controlled by the Israeli Army.

Impact on Economy

As much of the isolated Palestinian lands are of agricultural nature, Palestinian farmers in Bethlehem Governorate stand to lose considerably, because of the Israeli imposed access procedures to these isolated lands. Residents of the targeted communities will lose their main source of income; due to the Israeli restrictions on accessing their lands, as the Israeli occupation Army require all Palestinian farmers to obtain special permits to access their lands in the Segregation Zone through military controlled gates rigged along the Segregation Wall.

In order to obtain the access permits, Palestinian farmers must submit authenticated Israeli proof of land's ownership. Even so, the permits are issued for short period of time and mainly during the harvest seasons. The agricultural gates are operated during specific times determined by the Israeli Army, during which Palestinian farmers may enter or exit the Segregation Zone.

The Israeli Segregation Wall with the hindering procedures of the Israeli Army particularly to marketing and accessibility will result in severe losses and damages to the Palestinian agricultural sector and to the sustainability of Palestinian farmers. The consequences of these actions for the economy of Bethlehem Governorate have been devastating, whereby businesses were forced to close, and unemployment and poverty levels have increased to an unprecedented level.

Impact on Demography

The innumerable Israeli violations against the Palestinians and their land in Bethlehem Governorate have permanently destroyed the major source of income for most of them. Today, Palestinian families are facing the twin realities of economic ruin from the destruction of agricultural lands and the extreme over crowding of urban areas, due to the limited area available for urban expansion and growth of Palestinian communities. Israel's occupation policies in the West Bank have resulted in direct deterioration of the living conditions through the establishment of Israeli settlements, the construction of bypass roads, the military installations, and the Segregation Wall, in every way resulting in the suffocation and containment of the Governorate. The Israeli checkpoints also constitute a major restriction on the lives of Palestinians in Governorate. Furthermore, the Israelis have created roadblocks (earth mounds) of rubble and dirt along routes used by Palestinians to avoid the checkpoints. The results of these actions are near complete isolation of the Governorate from the rest of the Occupied West Bank's Governorates. On the ground, it is evident that the Israeli Segregation Wall is creating new demographic facts that will lead to voluntary migration among Palestinians, who will lose their lands and source of income.

Record of Israeli Violation in Bethlehem Governorate during the period 1994 – 2007

The Israeli Army aggression against the Palestinian population aims at breaking the ties between the people and their lands by breaking their will to endure their life on their lands. For that reason, Israel has always adopted a policy to elevate its aggression against the land, trees, and the people. During the period between 1994 and May 2007, Israel has caused serious devastation in Bethlehem Governorate, as it has done in every occupied Governorate in the West Bank and in the Gaza Strip. Table 16 lists these violations during the designated period.

Table 16: Israeli Violations in Bethlehem Governorate during the period of 1994 & May 2007			
Date	Land Confiscated (Dunum)	Uprooted Trees	Houses Demolished
Year 1994	3433	2486	0
Year 1995	200	0	0
Year 1996	300	0	0
Year 1997	13550	800	12
Year 1998	12504	3440	13
year 1999	843	530	3
Year 2000	3219	2990	2
Year 2001	3655	3360	4
Year 2002	1453	3550	150
Year 2003	5476	27183	29
Year 2004	9694	1576	52
Year 2005	3515	2864	13
Year 2006	1277	1515	21
May-07	150	200	3
Total	59269	50494	302
<i>Source: ARIJ Monthly Reports Database (1994-2007)</i>			

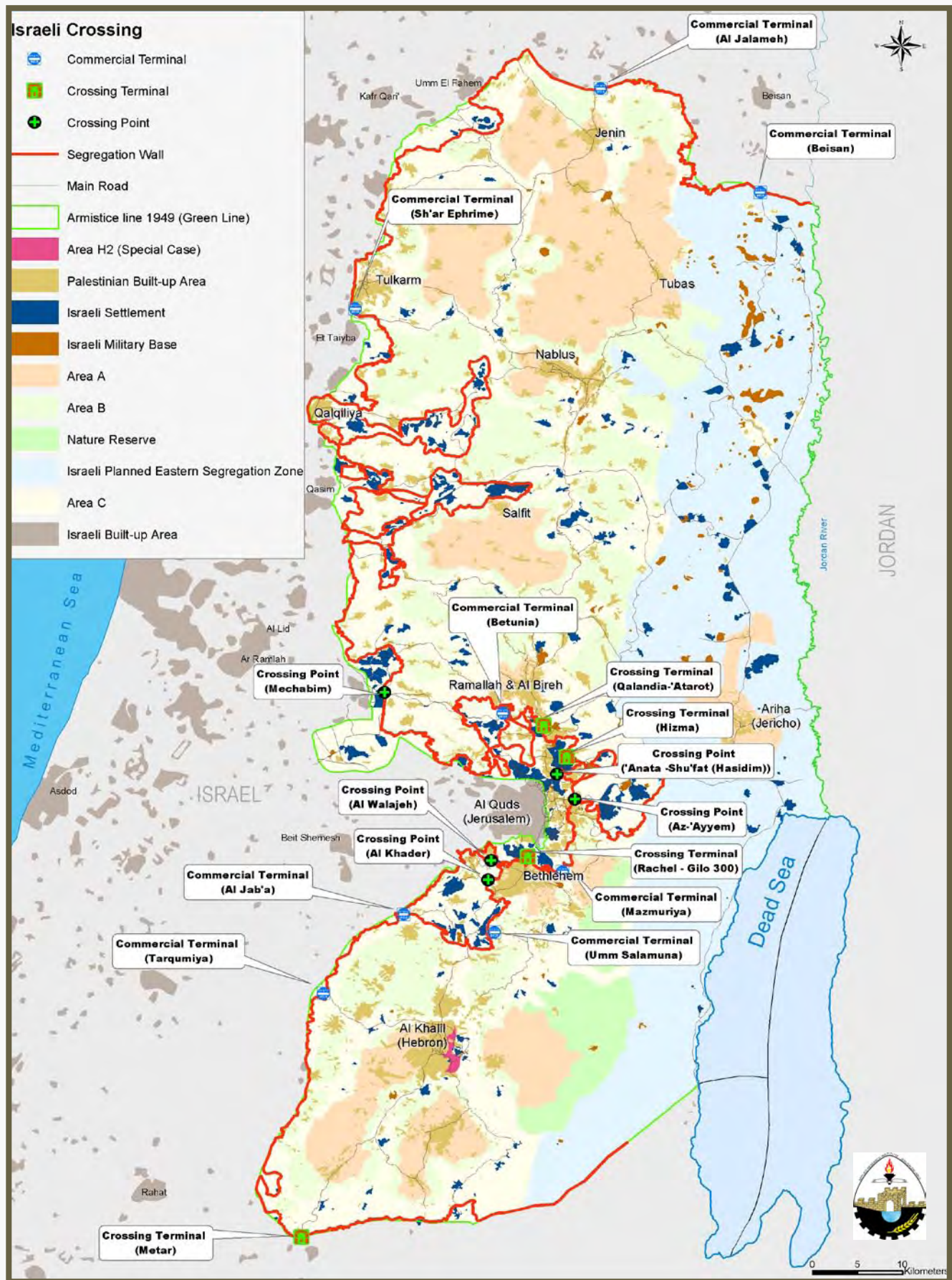
Terminals in Bethlehem Governorate

Overview

Israel has adopted a policy of physical domination over the occupied Palestinian territory with an aim to consolidate the separation process between Palestinian and Israeli controlled areas, thus; creating a series of terminals/ crossing points with the purpose to control the commercial and individuals flow (goods, merchants, workers, etc) from the OPT to Israel and vice-versa. In September 2005, Israel declared its plan to establish 10 terminals/ crossing points throughout the occupied West Bank territory. Terminals are designed for commercial functions, where cargos are moved “back to back,” where as the crossing points are designed to organize, and control individual flows into the Segregated Zone “Seam Zone” and to Israel. These terminals/ crossing points are Tarqumia (Hebron), Al-Jalameh (Jenin), Mazmuria (Bethlehem), Sha’ar Ephraim (Tulkarem) and Betunia in Ramallah. The other five terminals/ crossing points are Hasam Tzahub (Jordan Valley), Rachel (Gilo 300)

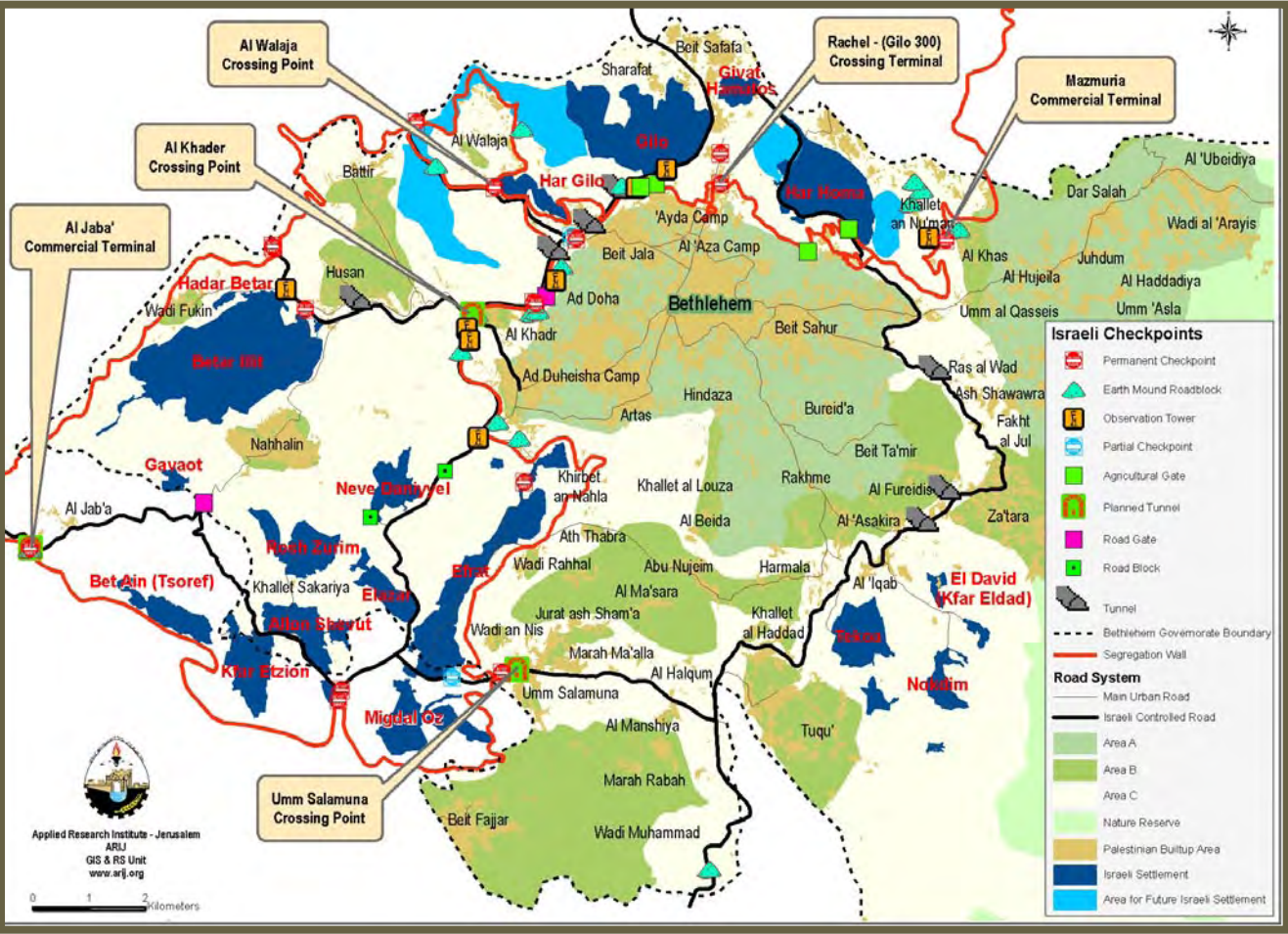
(Bethlehem), Anata-Shu'fat, Az-'Ayyem and Qalandiya-'Atarot (Jerusalem), all of which are already operating and control the movement of Palestinians throughout the occupied territory. However, Israeli military orders issued after September 2005 revealed that there are 17 terminals/ crossing points throughout the West Bank territory, the additional seven are Al-Jab'a (Bethlehem), Al-Khader (Bethlehem), Um Salamuna (Bethlehem), Al-Walajeh (Bethlehem), Metar (Hebron), Hizma (Jerusalem), and Mechabim (Ramallah). The function and status of the terminals/ crossing points in the occupied West Bank are as listed in Table 17: see map 14.

Table 17: Function and Status of the Terminals/ Crossing Points in the occupied West Bank Territory by September 2005			
Function	Status	Location	Name of Terminal/ Crossing Point
Commercial Terminal	Operational	Jenin	Al-Jalameh
Commercial Terminal	Operational	Hebron	Tarqumiya
Commercial Terminal	Under Construction	Tulkarem	Sha'ar Ephraim
Commercial Terminal	Under Construction	Bethlehem	Mazmuria
Commercial Terminal	Operational	Ramallah	Betunia
Commercial Terminal	Under Construction	Jordan Valley	(Hasam Tzahub)
Crossing Terminal	Operational	Bethlehem	Rachel-(Gilo 300)
Crossing Terminal	Operational	Ramallah	Qalandiya - Atarot
Crossing Point	Planned	Jerusalem	Anata - Shu'fat (Hasidim)
Crossing Point	Planned	Jerusalem	Az-Ayyem
Orders of the following Terminals/ Crossing Points issued after September 2005			
Commercial Terminal	Planned	Bethlehem	Al-Jab'a
Crossing Point	Operational	Ramallah	Mechabim
Crossing Point	Under Construction	Bethlehem	Al-Khader
Crossing Point	Under Construction	Bethlehem	Um Salamuna
Crossing Point	Planned	Bethlehem	Al-Walajeh
Crossing Terminal	Operational	Hebron	Metar
Crossing Terminal	Under Construction	Jerusalem	Hizma



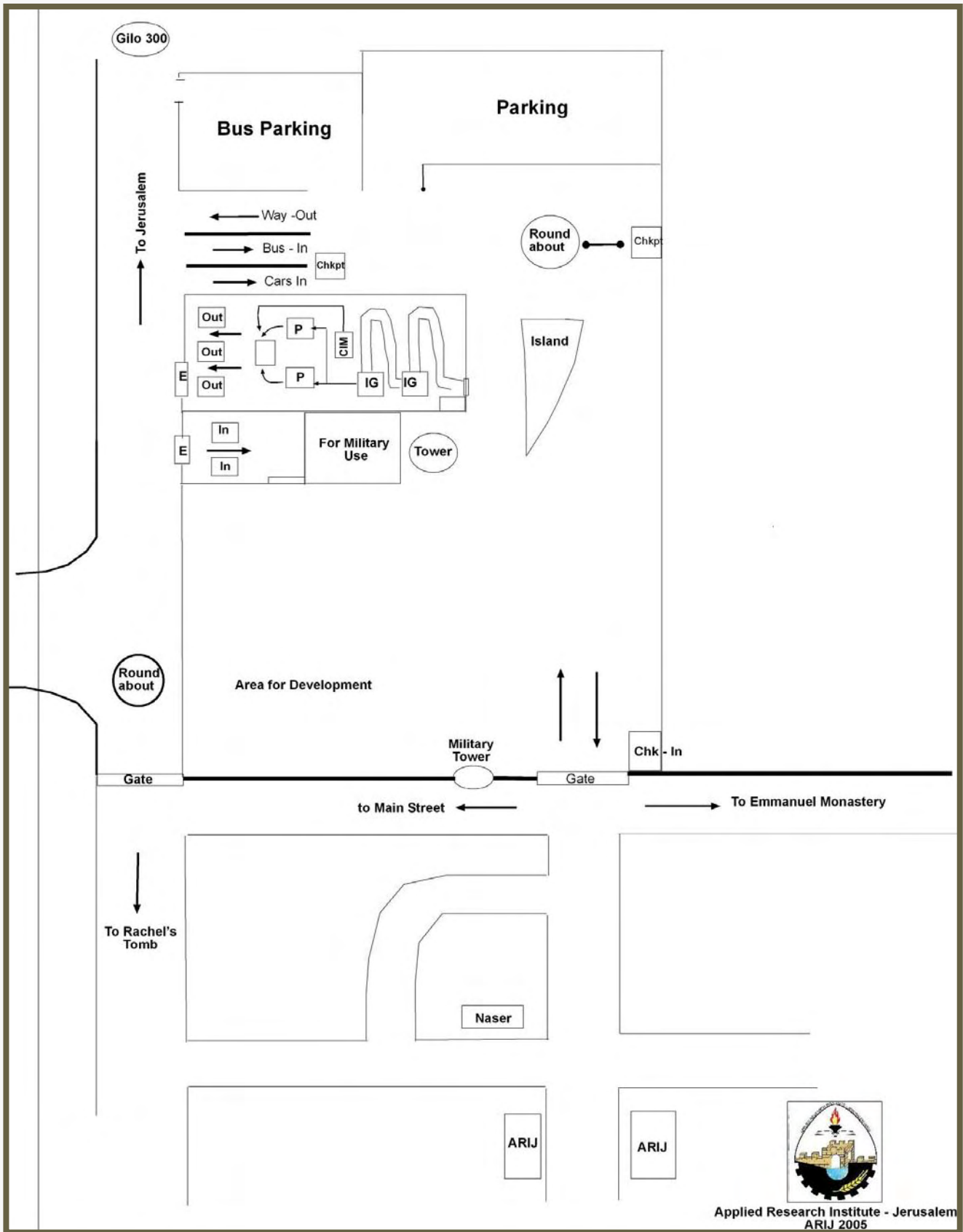
In Bethlehem Governorate, 2 commercial terminals and 4 crossing terminals exist, 3 of which under construction (Mazmura trade passage east of Beit Sahour town, Al-Khader passage west of Bethlehem city, Um Salamuna passage south of Bethlehem city), 2 of them are in the planning stage (Al-Walajeh Passage northwest of Bethlehem City, Al-Jab'a trade passage southwest of Jerusalem city) and Rachel (Gilo 300) at Bethlehem Northern Entrance of Bethlehem is already operational. See Map 15.

Map 15 of Israeli terminals in Bethlehem Governorate



- Rachel's Terminal (Gilo 300): at Bethlehem's northern part
 Function: A Crossing Terminal
 Status: Operational

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



- Mazmuria Terminal: at Bethlehem's eastern part
Function: A Commercial Terminal
Status: Under Construction

In September 2005, the Israeli Army declared a plan to establish commercial terminal on confiscated land from Al-Khas and An-Nu'man Villages located east of Bethlehem Governorate. The confiscation process was carried out in accordance to four Israeli military orders holding numbers (156-5-T), (154-5-T), (155-5-T) and (52-05); which 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 an additional part sections of roads designated to serve the trade passage, leading to Har Homa settlement and consequently, to Israel. See Mazmuria terminal diagram

- Al-Jab'a Terminal: at Bethlehem's southwestern part
Function: A Commercial Terminal
Status: Planned

On August 22, 2005, the Israeli Occupation Army 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 (#T/158/05), 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 come from lands located beyond the 1949 Armistice Line (Green Line), but originally belong to Al-Jab'a village.

- Al-Khader Terminal: at Bethlehem's western part
Function: A Crossing Terminal
Status: Under Construction

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 Governorate (Beit Jala, Battier, 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 Battier village lands, and Block (2) of Beit Jala's lands. The new Israeli military order constitutes a border point between Bethlehem western rural villages Battier, Hussan, Nahalin, and Wadi Fukin, in addition to the three Hamlets Afaneh, Al-Balluta, and Khallet Beit Zakariyya, all of which will be entrapped within the Segregation Zone and detached from the rest of Bethlehem Governorate.



- Al Walajeh Terminal: at Bethlehem's northwestern part
Function: A Crossing Terminal
Status: Planned

On February 19, 2006, the Israeli Occupation Army issued a new military order (#25/06/T) to confiscate 39.8 dunums from Al-Walajeh village (parcel Block 3) and Beit Jala city (parcel Block 2). The order identified the reason for the confiscation to "military purposes," which was later defined for the construction of a new Terminal in the area, (Har Gilo Terminal). The terminal aims to control movement of Al-Walajeh residents between their village and the center of services in Bethlehem Governorate and beyond. The military order in parallel to the Israeli Segregation Wall plan, which is set to encircle Al-Walajeh. Residents of the village will only have this terminal to move in and out of their village. The terminal being implemented at that area will be under the Israeli Army's control, which virtually makes the residents prisoners in their own village.

- Um Salamuna Terminal: at Bethlehem's southern part
Function: A Crossing Terminal
Status: Under Construction

This is the sixth terminal identified by the Israeli Army in Bethlehem Governorate. The Israeli Army issued on the September 5, 2006, military order number (69/06/T) to confiscate 152 Dunums of lands belong to residents from Al-Khader and Beit Fajjar in Bethlehem and Beit Ummar in Hebron in order to construct this terminal located south of Bethlehem Governorate, which also comes in coincidence with the construction work of the Segregation Wall in that area. See Umm Salamuna terminal Diagram



The International Legal Status of the Segregation Wall

In July 2004, the International Court of Justice (ICJ) passed an advisory opinion declaring that the Israeli Segregation Wall is illegal. The Court based its decision on international law, the Fourth Geneva Convention, the Hague Regulations, various human rights treaties, and United Nations Security Council resolutions.

- The ICJ believes that the Wall is an attempt to connect settlements and settlers to Israel, creating 'facts on the ground' and de-facto annexing Palestinian land, which will have a significant impact on future negotiations regarding borders. Israel is also bound to the Hague Convention of 1907, which it violates by confiscating land to construct the wall on.
- The Wall violates the Right to Self-Determination, the Law of Belligerent Occupation, and Human Rights Law.
- The wall results in the violation of human rights including the right to freedom of movement, access to holy places, to work, to health, to education, and to an adequate standard of living. The ICJ decision upholds the right to self-determination of the Palestinian people, which they are prevented from exercising by the wall's disruption of the territorial integrity and unity of the population. 'Self-defense' or 'state of necessity' cannot be used, as justification for violating this right and other international legal principles and therefore Israel must cease construction.
- The Court has reached the conclusion that the construction of the wall by Israel in the Occupied Palestinian Territory is contrary to international law and has stated the legal consequences that are to be drawn from that illegality.

From the ICJ ruling in July 9, 2004

The Israeli Segregation Wall violates virtually every existing humanitarian code, human rights and civilized laws; including the right to Self-Determination, the right to freedom of movement, the right to work, the right to medical treatment, the right to education, the right to an adequate standard of living and access to holy places, all of which emphasized in the ICJ 2004 ruling. The ICJ decision upholds the right to self-determination of the Palestinian people, which the Israelis deny them the right to exercise as the Segregation Wall disrupts the territorial integrity, unity, and contiguity. 'Self-Defense' or 'state of necessity' can not be used as justification for violating this right and other international legal principles and, therefore, Israel must cease construction and all other states must refrain from supporting Israel in building the Wall.

Moreover, the construction of the Segregation Wall is an explicit violation of all peace agreements signed between the Israelis and Palestinians, and a breach to the Oslo Interim Agreement of September 1995, which states:

"Neither side shall initiate or take any step that will change the status of the West Bank and the Gaza Strip pending the outcome of the permanent status negotiations"

(Article XXXI, clause 7)

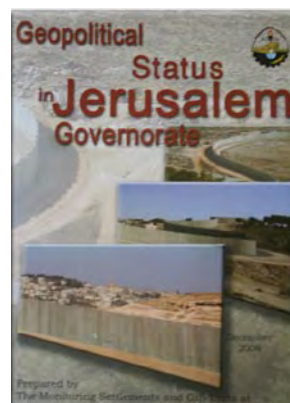
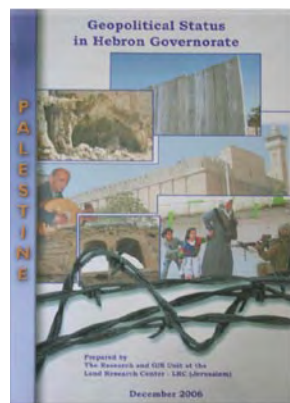
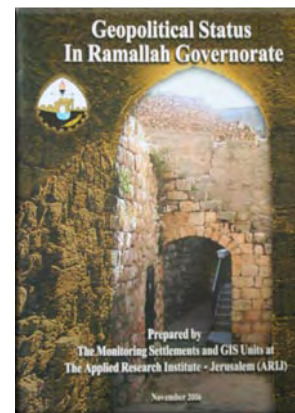
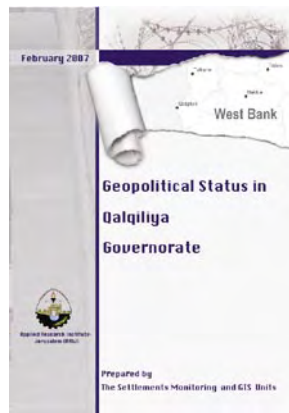
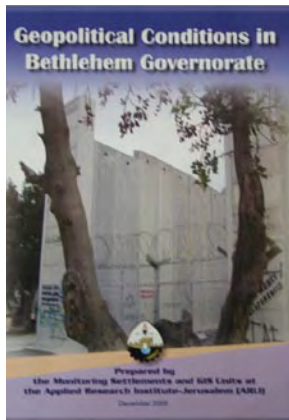
Conclusion

The Israeli unilateral colonial 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 the physical link it had with Jerusalem, but spiritually as well. Table 18 shows Bethlehem Governorate in the aftermath of the Israeli scheme.

Table 18, shows a look on what to become of Bethlehem Governorate under Israeli Unilateral activities to inflict facts on the ground.			
Bethlehem	Area 608 Km ²	100%	Remarks
Palestinian control	48	8	This include area “A” where Palestinians have comprehensive control& “B”
Palestinian Semi- control	30	5	This includes area “B” where Palestinians have administrative control. It also exclude 4Km ² located within the Segregated Zone
Nature Reserve Area	102	17	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
Israeli Segregation Zone	73	12	Palestinian land isolated behind the Israeli Segregation Wall in the north, south, and western sectors of Bethlehem Governorate. It include 4Km ² of area “B”
Israeli Declared Closed Military Area	299	49	The area is located at the eastern terrains of Bethlehem Governorate
Area “C”	56	9	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
Total	608	100	

The Applied Research Institute-Jerusalem (ARIJ) emphasizes the imperativeness that Israel complies with the international legitimacy, laws and resolutions of the United Nations; stresses the necessity to hold Israel accountable for its acts in the Occupied Palestinian Territory; calls for Israel's long time apathy of the international community's will to end and thus, Israel be made to conform with the United Nations' Resolutions 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,' Security Council Resolution 446 (1979), which determines 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'.





For more information please visit the following websites:

<http://www.arij.org> - <http://www.lrcj.org>

<http://www.poica.org>



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