

# Factors Shaping the Upcoming Scene of the Israeli-Palestinian Negotiations and Conflict

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## Introduction

The international community, by and large, except the United States, still adopts the two state solution as the end game of the Israeli-Palestinian conflict. Israel is defying the international community by pursuing its consistent strategy of settlement expansion in order to undermine the two state solution. The USA appointed itself the sole broker of peace, marginalizing the roles of others, chiefly the European Union, Russia, and the United Nations. The Trump Administration does not take into consideration the undermining nature of the settlement enterprise to the peace process, and has now been accused by the international community of supporting rather than condemning the creation of illegal Israeli settlements with the appointment of David Friedman as the US ambassador to Israel along with other high-ranking US officials in Israel's coffers.

Not long after his appointment, President Trump overturned a long-standing commitment to the two state solution, most distinctly through his decision to move the US embassy from Tel Aviv to Jerusalem which he announced on December 6, 2017, and recently made into a reality with the opening of the embassy on May 14<sup>th</sup>, 2018. On the same day as the US embassy inauguration, 66 Palestinians were killed and more than 2,700 wounded at the Gaza border as Palestinians continued their Great March of Return that began on March 30, 2018. This unprecedented, unilateral decision not only jeopardized the hopes of US involvement resulting in a viable peace agreement engaging both sides, but defied the global classification of Jerusalem as an international zone.

Amidst the ongoing contention building within their own borders, Israel is exploiting the turmoil in the Middle East and the blind support of the USA to accelerate its unilateral actions in Palestine in their attempt to define the endgame of the conflict. Israel has so far succeeded in convincing Trump to pull out of the Iranian nuclear deal, and both countries are forming rapprochement to the Arab states to fight Iran. The Israeli public in general has been indoctrinated: this territory is not occupied, but rather it's disputed. They claim attachments to

historic Judea and Samaria and a “united” Jerusalem as the capital of Israel, all the while leaving no space for the existence of a Palestinian partner in this envisioned future. The Palestinian cause has now been relegated on the world agenda, and Palestinians continue to suffer at the hands of President Trump’s international ventures regarding Iran, Korea, and others as a consequence.

### Trump’s “Ultimate Deal”

Following President Trump’s recognition of Jerusalem as the undisputed capital of Israel, despite the US losing its position as an honest broker of peace, the administration still insists that they will propose the “Ultimate Deal” to solve decade’s worth of conflict. This plan may eventually appear as follows:

- A Palestinian state with limited sovereignty on 50% of the West Bank
- Israel to retain overall security over most of the West Bank and border control
- The Jordan Valley will remain under Israeli sovereignty and military control
- Arab localities in East Jerusalem will be joined to the Palestinian state (except the Old City which will become part of Israeli Jerusalem)
- Abu Deis to become the capital of Palestine
- Gaza will be merged in the Palestinian state (provided that Hamas agrees to demilitarize, or something similar if Hamas is cooperative.)
- An international structure will be established to deal with the Palestinian refugees
- Recognition of Israel as the homeland of the Jewish people, and Palestine as the home of the Palestinian people
- Jordan and Palestine to join Israel over the historic sites in Jerusalem.

The new deal would also include additional plans for the people of Gaza. Currently, Gaza’s population of 1.9 million is being pressured beyond human scales, and falling to manipulation, bargaining, and compromise. The mainstream media in the US is presenting a manipulated view of Gaza in order to bypass accountability for the gross human rights violations occurring in this small area of land, as not even the most basic of needs are being met. The “Deal of the

Century” has made Gaza into a bargaining chip: Gaza’s rights to food, housing, movement, medical treatment, political rights, etc. will only be on the table if they are able to compromise with American and Israeli interests. The incentives that have been offered by the US and “others” to the people of Gaza for this deal include:

- An artificial island (commercial and industrial)
- An open access border point with Egypt
- A complete makeover of internal infrastructure
- Activation of industrial zones along with the building of new ones
- Financial incentives

Such a deal appears to be growing far more unlikely with the rapid regression of relations between the US and Palestinian leadership within the last six months. At the end of November 2017, the PLO mission office in Washington D.C. was effectively shut down. The Palestinian Foreign Minister stated that there would be a freeze in diplomacy between Palestinian leadership and the US as a retaliatory measure due to the unwarranted sanctions enacted against them. Continuing into the more recent future, the US ambassador to the UN, Nicky Haley, has shown her lack of willingness to come to a compromise with Palestinians at every turn. In May 2018, Kuwait submitted a resolution to the UNSC condemning the use of lethal force on protestors in Gaza, calling for an investigation and immediate plan of action for the protection of Palestinians. The US used their veto power to strike down the resolution, instead proposing a revised version, effectively gutting the original proposal of all language that had placed blame for the violence upon the state of Israel, instead altering it to use Hamas as a scapegoat. The US revisions resulted in a humiliating blow as only one member country, the US itself, voted in favor of the resolution, while 11 countries abstained and 4 voted against.

On May 15, 2018, Haley walked out of a UN Security Council meeting as Riyad Mansour, permanent observer of Palestine to the UN, began his speech addressing the violence being perpetrated against protestors in Gaza one day after the US embassy move to Jerusalem. While the US administration tirelessly claims to be in support of a peaceful resolution on both sides, such an act of disrespect during a critical time in the region may suggest otherwise.

The PA has accused this ultimate deal of undermining Palestinians and plotting with Israel to destroy the PA. Additionally, there have been allegations that recent proposals between Israel and Saudi Arabia were initially drafted by the US. The veil of mystery surrounding the deal combined with Trump's erratic history of domestic and international policy has left the world wondering whether or not such a deal will take form in the future.

### Need to Know Profiles



It is clear that President Trump relies heavily on his cabinet members and even simply the opinions of those who show him loyalty when making policy decisions. With the US so heavily invested in the Israel-Palestine conflict, it is crucial to have an understanding of those influencing policy behind the scenes at the White House. Key players in Trump's ultimate deal include:

- David Friedman – the US ambassador to Israel
- Jared Kushner -- Trump's son-in-law responsible for creating peace in the Middle East
- Jason Greenblatt -- Trump's envoy to the Middle East

- John Bolton – National Security Advisor

## David Friedman

Friedman is a donor to Ateret Cohanim, an Israeli far-right group known most distinctly for their aggressive push to settle Jews in and around sensitive locations throughout East Jerusalem such as Al-Aqsa. Friedman is also the former president of American Friends of Bet El Institutions, an organization raising millions of dollars each year for the continuation of settlement construction in the Occupied Palestinian Territories (oPt.) Ambassadors are a key influence when it comes to the flow of information received by policy makers in Washington concerning global issues; therefore, an appointee with personal investments in Israeli expansion onto Palestinian lands such as Friedman make him a blatant conflict of interest and a dangerous interference in the peace negotiations.

## Jason Greenblatt

Greenblatt is an Orthodox Jew educated at Marsha Stern Talmudical Academy for his secondary studies prior to beginning college at Yeshiva University, another Jewish institution. His Jewish education does not pose a problem due to the conflict being a struggle for Palestinian national liberation and legitimacy rather than a dispute based upon religion. The problem occurs when this specific religious education also instills a sense of Zionist ideology in its students as part of its key values. For example, taken from the most recent version available of the Marsha Stern Talmudical Academy handbook (2017/2018), part of the section entitled “Statement of Philosophy” reads as follows:

“Moreover, we expect each student to identify wholeheartedly with the destiny of our fellow Jews throughout the world and to exhibit loyalty to *Eretz Yisrael*, recognizing it as the spiritual homeland of the Jewish people.”<sup>1</sup>

***“Settlement activity is not an obstacle for peace.”***

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<sup>1</sup> *The Marsha Stern Talmudical Academy Student Handbook* 5778. 2017.

## Jared Kushner

Kushner has been openly criticized from the impetus of his appointment as senior advisor to the president, first on claims of nepotism, and then added to the fact that his previous occupation was that of a real-estate agent with a complete lack of government, policy, and diplomatic experience. With this dynamic already raising doubts about his capabilities to pull off the peace deal of the century, Kushner's numerous multi-million dollar investments tied to Israel along with being an Orthodox Jew himself might lead one to believe that such a person in charge of offering the Palestinians a fair deal would be unlikely with his own personal investments on the line. Kushner's Israeli business dealings include:

- 4 loans (and possibly more) from Bank Hapoalim (an Israeli bank under investigation)
- \$200 million in real-estate deals with the prominent Israeli Steinmetz family
- \$30 million investment from Menora Mivtachim (one of Israel's largest financial institutions)
- An \$18,000 donation from the Kushner Companies Charitable Foundation in April 2018 to the American Friends of Bet El Yeshiva Center (hardline illegal Israeli settlement.) Additionally, Kushner's parents are both listed on the founding board of trustees for the center.<sup>2</sup>

## John Bolton

Trump's National Security Advisor, John Bolton, has been described in the media as "unhinged" and "aggressive." His history of combative if not hostile stances on how to interact with Arab nations in regards to diplomacy precedes him. Bolton has been called a "cheerleader" for the war in Iraq, and has long advocated for increased military intervention in Iran. Bolton also has a well-known history of anti-Muslim public commentary spanning back over a decade. Bolton has time and time again shown his support for Islamophobic organizations in the US, many of which put forth hate speech that demonize the Islamic religion and its millions of worshipers around

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<sup>2</sup> Elliott, Justin. "Jared Kushner By Day: Mideast Peace. Kushner Companies By Night: Donating to a West Bank Settlement." *ProPublica*, 6 Dec. 2017.

the globe. With Muslims comprising approximately 80-85% of the West Bank population<sup>3</sup>, it is easy to see why someone possessing Bolton's ideologies may not be capable of influencing a fair and just resolution in this region of the world. Adding insult to injury in the case of Israel-Palestine specifically, Bolton was recently a keynote speaker at the American Friends of Bet El Yeshiva Center Annual Dinner in 2017, in turn reflecting his support for the expansion of this controversial and illegal Israeli settlement.

With numerous of the US top advisors responsible for brokering the "Ultimate Deal" being men with either spiritual, ideological, or even financial ties to the state of Israel, it is difficult to ascertain whether or not an honest peace deal will be possible in the hands of such individuals. With little to no foreign policy or governmental experience for half of them on top of the mounting connections to the Israeli settlement enterprise, the odds of permanently defusing this seventy-year-old conflict without bias is slim to none under the current US Administration.

## **The Case of Jerusalem**

### **"No Man's Land"**

In 1947, UN General Assembly Resolution 181 established that Jerusalem would be under UN sovereignty as an international zone or *corpus separatum*, but the Israelis rejected this decision in 1948. From the establishment of the state of Israel in 1948, the UN was afforded control of the area in Jerusalem surrounding the UNTO compound which was captured by Israel in 1967 before eventually resuming UN control. Partitioned between Israel and Jordan in 1949, the Armistice Line (or "Green Line") outlines the boundaries of East and West Jerusalem. An area of land was left unclaimed by neither Israel nor Jordan with the original partition lines that came to be known as a "no man's land." At the time, the UN was charged with responsibility for this space in order to prevent contact between East and West Jerusalem. For many years, this no man's land was left to deteriorate in squalor as conflict ensued. In 1967, Israel unilaterally redrew the map to expand the Western portion of Jerusalem that was already under Israeli control. After annexing the entirety of East Jerusalem in the 1967 War, Israel claimed to have

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<sup>3</sup> CIA World Factbook. June 2018.

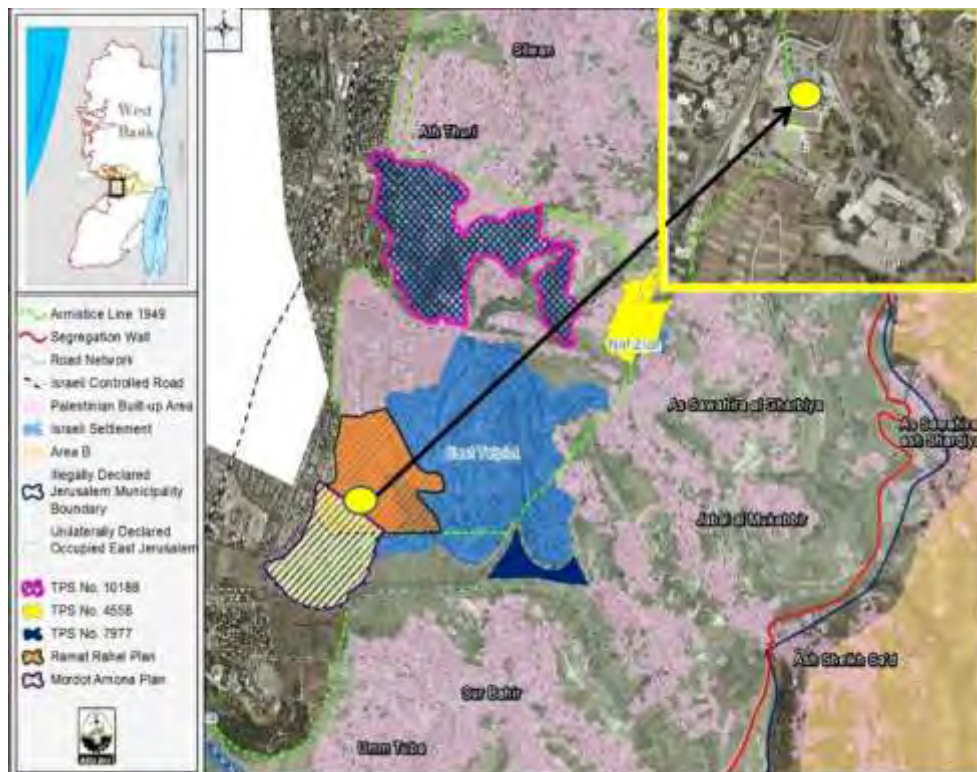


established a “united” Jerusalem. Palestinians and the international community have rejected Israel’s assertion that the city is a part of Israel although it is under Israeli control.

Palestinians residing in East Jerusalem are not granted the same citizenship rights as Israelis; they are given permanent residence cards like that of a foreigner seeking citizenship and can have this status revoked at any time if they fail to prove their residency to the state.

## Present Day Situation

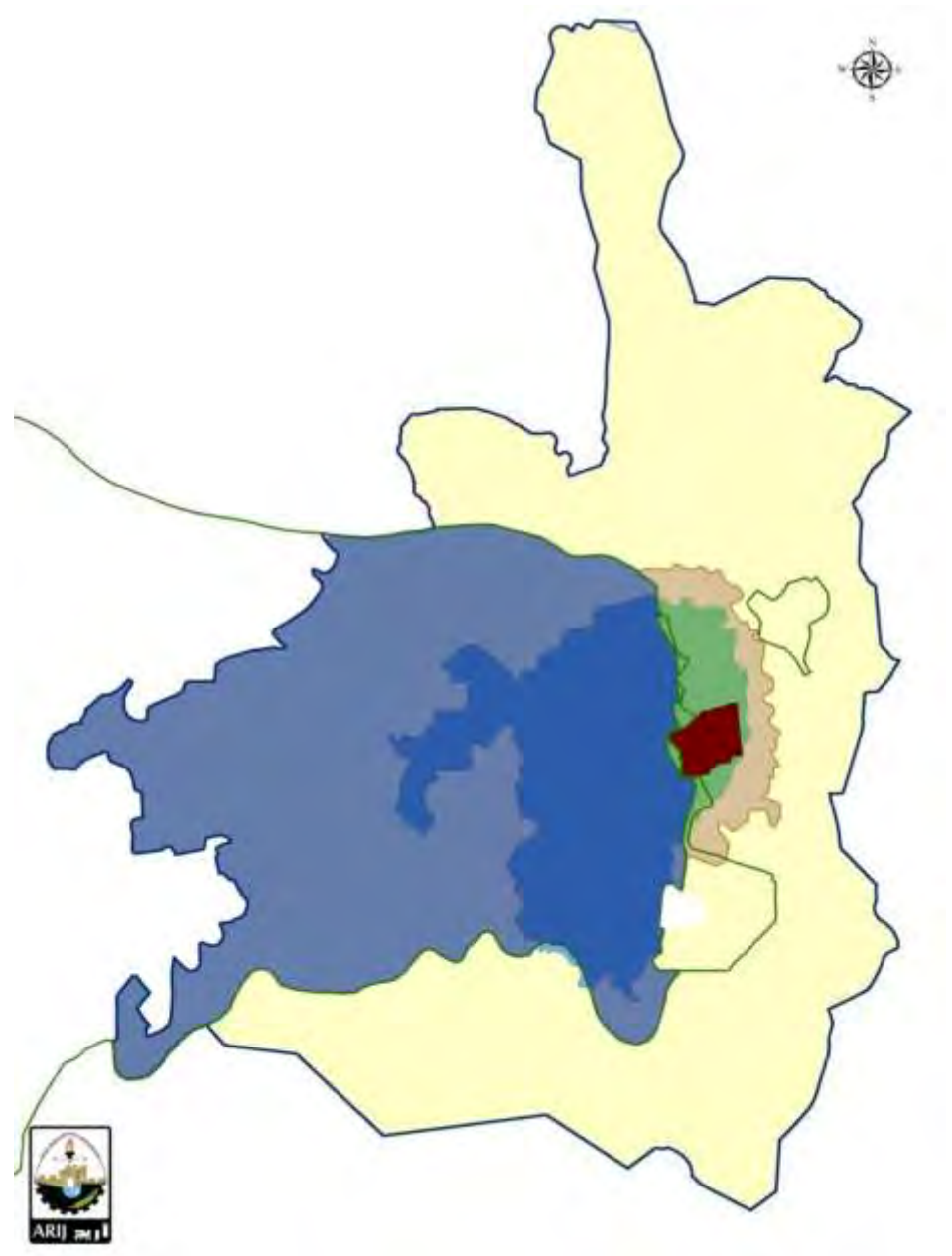
On May 14<sup>th</sup>, 2018, the US inaugurated their new embassy, moving it from Tel Aviv to Jerusalem, becoming the first country in the world to sidestep Palestinians and formally recognize Jerusalem as the capital of Israel. A map of its current location within the city is shown below:



Though it is not known as to whether the exact placement of the new US embassy within the city was meant to send a purposeful message, it is clear that the embassy’s locale, as shown on the map below, is situated almost entirely in East Jerusalem with only a small fraction in West Jerusalem.

## Jerusalem Land Expansion

Two of the initial waves of conflict (1948 and 1967) have resulted in redrawing the boundaries between East and West Jerusalem as shown below:



**Jerusalem City  
Boundary 1947:**

**19,420 dunums**

**Armistice Line 1949  
(Green Line)**

**1949 East Jerusalem:**

**3,825 dunums**

**East Jerusalem Pre-  
1967:**

**6,000 dunums**

**Annexed East  
Jerusalem:**

**72,770 dunums**

**West Jerusalem:**

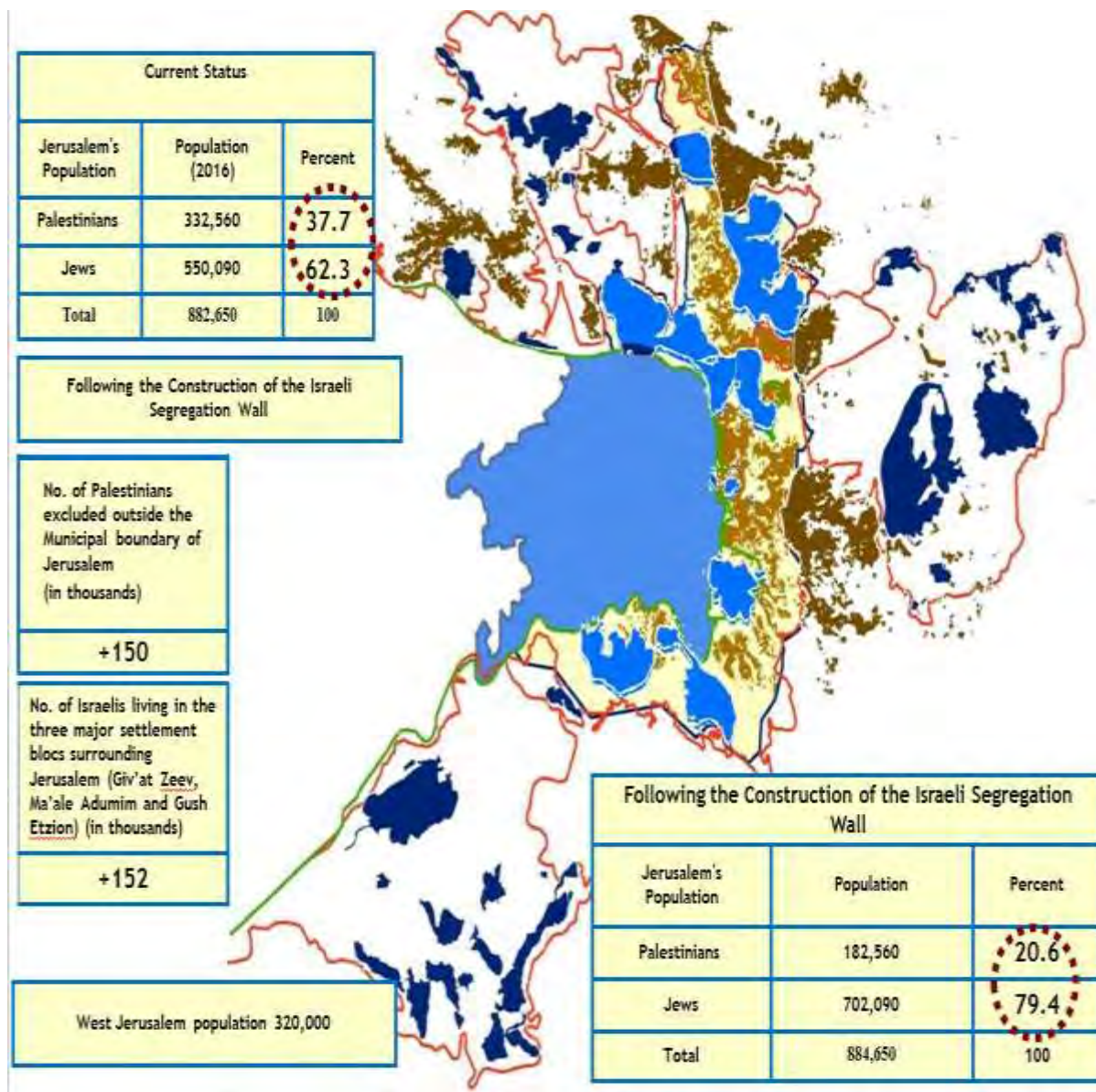
**15,595 dunums**

**Expansion of West  
Jerusalem:**

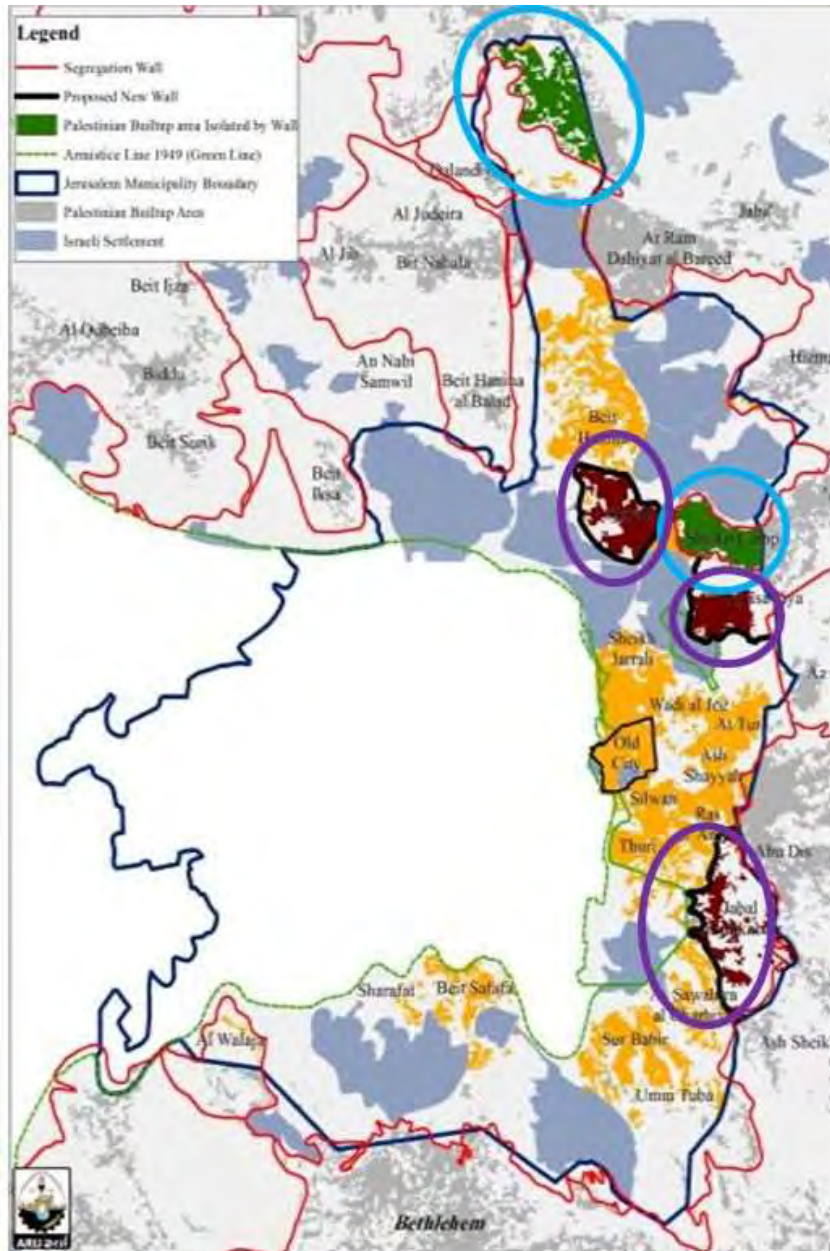
**52,804 dunums**

**Israel's Unilateral  
Declared Municipal  
Boundary of Jerusalem,  
1967:**

The current population status of Jerusalem is 37% Palestinian to 62% Israeli. This ratio is bound to have a drastic shift in the future with the construction of the new wall setting 150,000 Palestinians outside the Jerusalem municipal boundaries. Additionally, the annexation of the Ma'ale Adumim, Gush Etzion, and Giva't Ze'ev blocs will increase the Israeli population, leaving future projections of the Jerusalem population ratio at 20% Palestinian to 79% Israeli.







***Kafr 'Aqab and Shu'fat  
Camp***

Approx. **75,000** inhabitants

## Population Density

**34,000 people/km<sup>2</sup>**

***Jabal Al Mukaber, 'Isawiya,  
and Shu'fat***

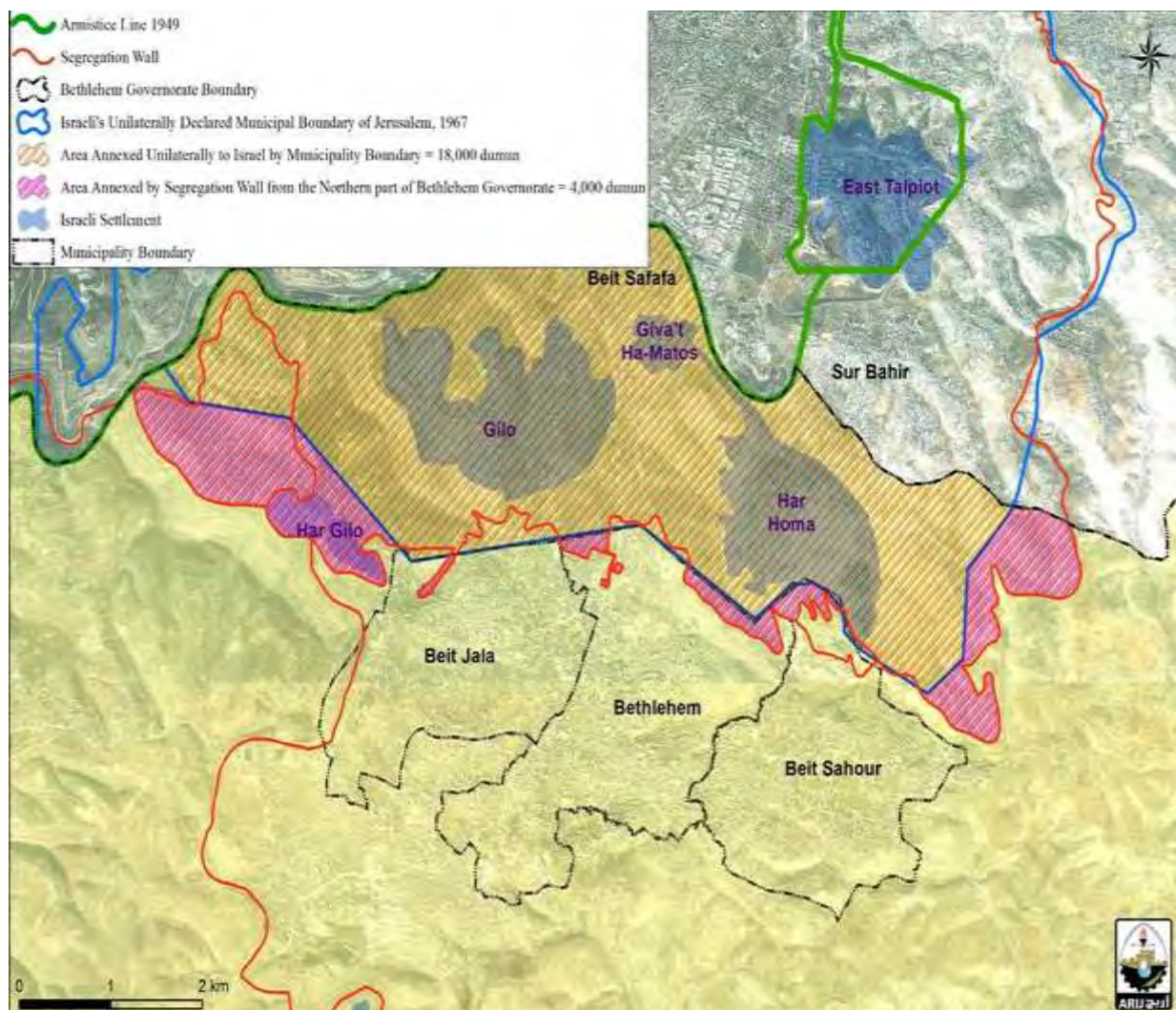
Approx. **73,000** inhabitants

### Population Density

**29,200 people/km<sup>2</sup>**

It has been proposed with Trump's "Deal of the Century" to move the communities of Kafr 'Aqab and Shu'fat Camp outside of

With West Jerusalem and East Jerusalem set at 15,000 and 6,000 dunums respectively pre-1967, both areas witnessed massive expansions after Israel occupied the West Bank and Gaza Strip. With the increase of West Jerusalem to 52,000 dunums and East Jerusalem to 72,000 dunums, the encroachment of three major settlements surrounding the area began, much at the expense of the Palestinian population. Below is an image displaying the three settlements that are slowly creating a major divide between the cities of Jerusalem and Bethlehem:

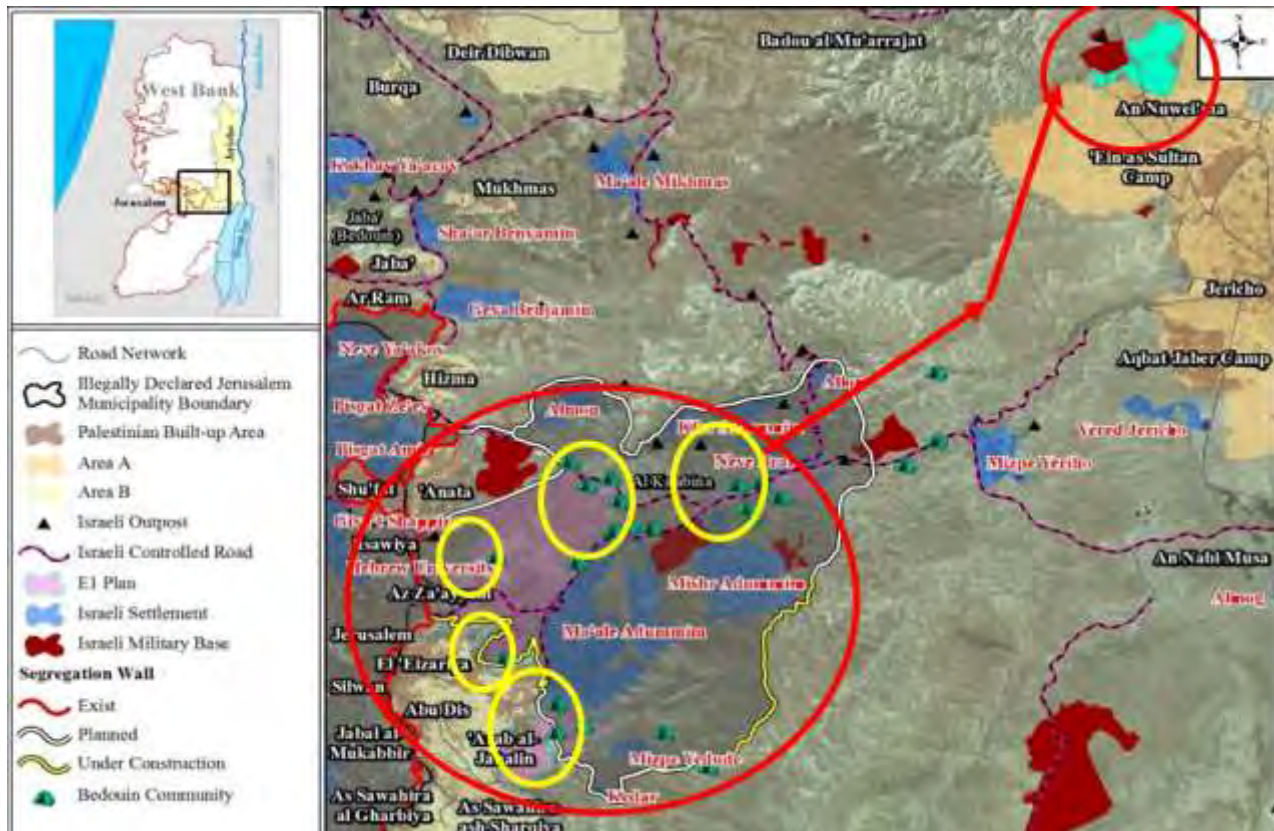


These settlements inside the Jerusalem boundary (Har Homa, Giva't Ha-Matos, and Gilo) are primarily affecting the communities of Sur Bahir, Beit Safafa, and the Bethlehem area. Later on, post-1967, with the construction of the wall, the additional land in between the settlements was annexed and added to the area already occupied in 1967.

The building of the wall also affected areas of Bethlehem (Beit Jala, Bethlehem, and Beit Sahour cities), and they were later added to the already-occupied area. Palestinians do not have access to the areas that were isolated by the wall [shaded pink zone.] With the red line on the map above representing the separation wall, there is significant territory now trapped between it and the 1967 borders. A formal military order issued in 2014 announced that these areas isolated by the wall would become "absentee lands." The Israeli government is also able to announce an area as absentee if a Palestinian doesn't make use of their land within a certain period of time, sometimes without choice as areas have become restricted to them.

One of the many methods the Israeli occupational force is using to create these absentee lands is through the expulsion of Bedouins from within the Ma'ale Adumim settlement bloc. The Israeli Civil Administration (ICA) targets the Bedouin communities including Arab Abu Al-Nawar, Arab Al-Jahalin, Arab Abu Al-Helo, Arab Abu-Falah, Al Ka'abneh, Jabal Al Baba, and many other totaling approximately 3,500 people East of the occupied Jerusalem city. These communities are threatened with evacuation orders under the pretext that they live on what Israel has come to classify as "State Land." The Israeli plot is simple: eviction, displacement, relocation. The ICA plans to evict, displace, and then relocate the Bedouin communities from their natural environment in this area to Ramat Nuweima as shown below:





The forced re-location plan of the Bedouin communities near the Ma'ale Adumim settlement bloc to An Nuweima in Jericho Governorate.

**Total area =  $2042\text{km}^2$**   
(40% of the total West Bank area)

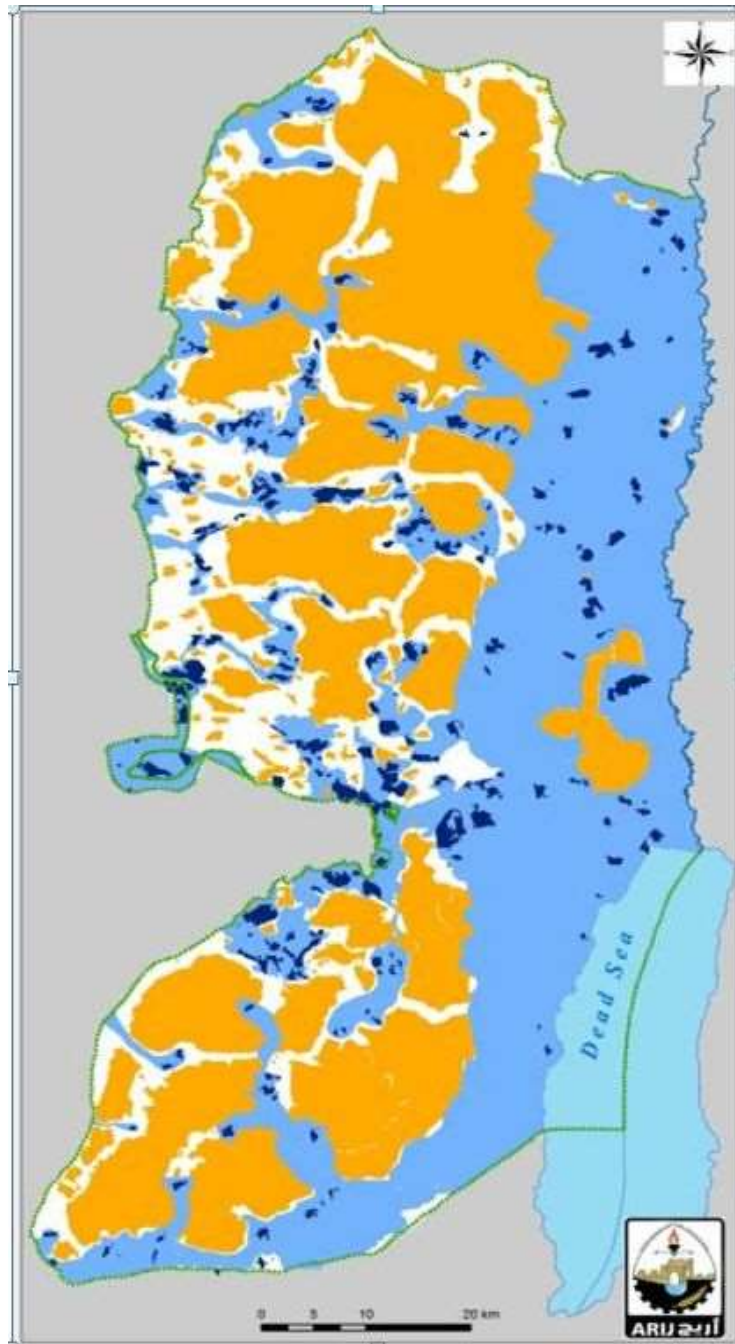
**Total population =**  
 **$2,397,155$**  (86% of total West Bank population)

**Total area of settlements**  
**=  $198\text{km}^2$**   
(3.5% of total West Bank area)

**Total area of Settlement blocs:  $2,794\text{km}^2$**  (49% of total West Bank area)

**Total Settlers in the West Bank =  $816,193$**

**Population density of the settlement blocs =  $292$**

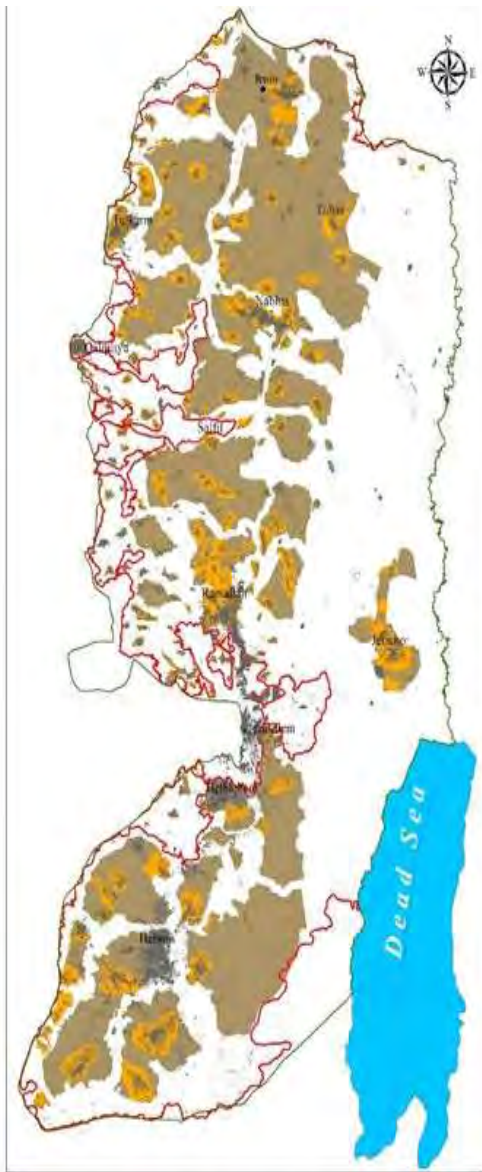


Dark blue = Israeli settlement

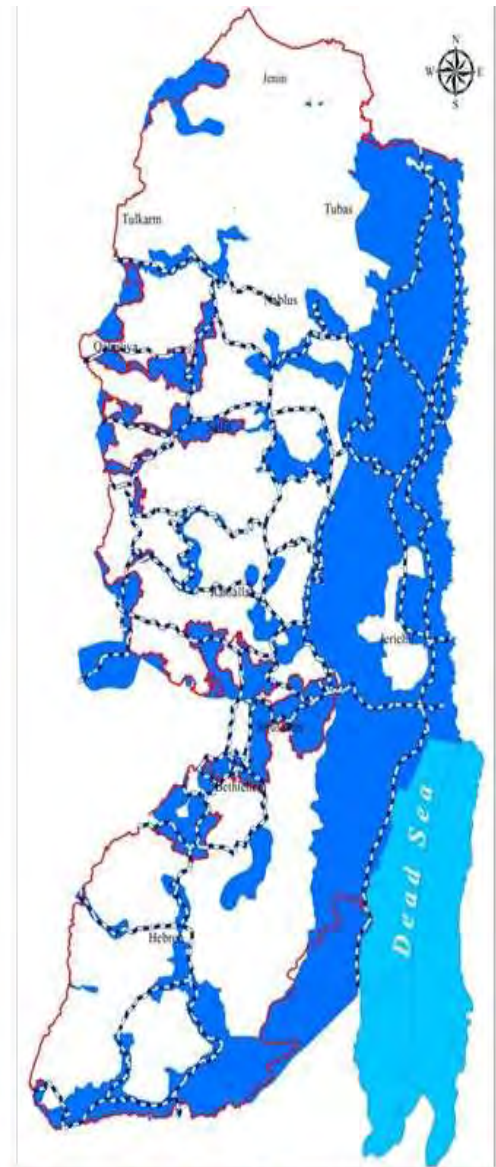
light blue = settlement Blocs

White = Area C    Orange = Areas A & B



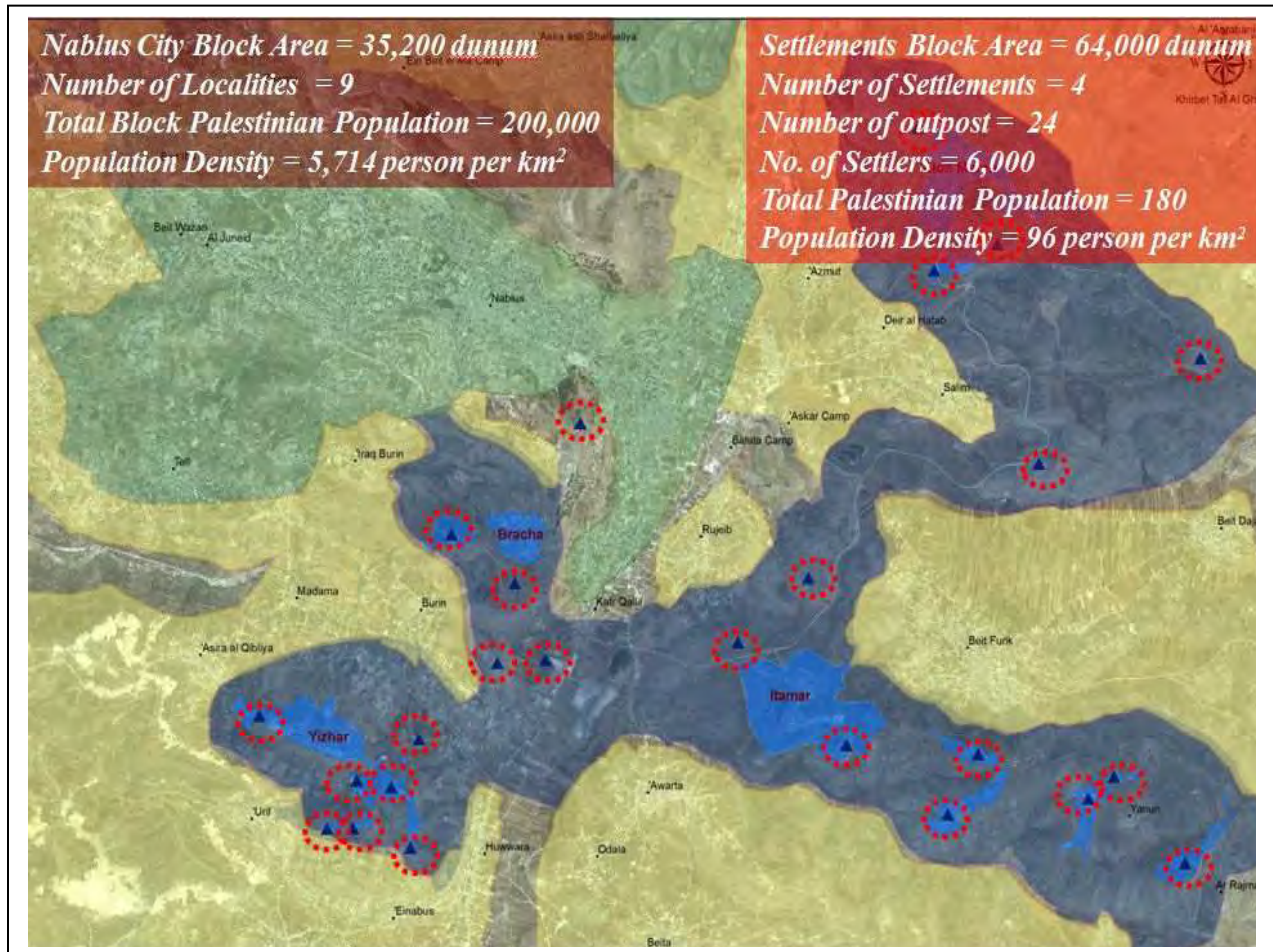


*Areas A&B = 39 % of the West Bank  
Population Density = 1,334 p\km<sup>2</sup>*



*Settlement Blocks = 45 % of the West Bank  
Population Density = 312 p\km<sup>2</sup>*

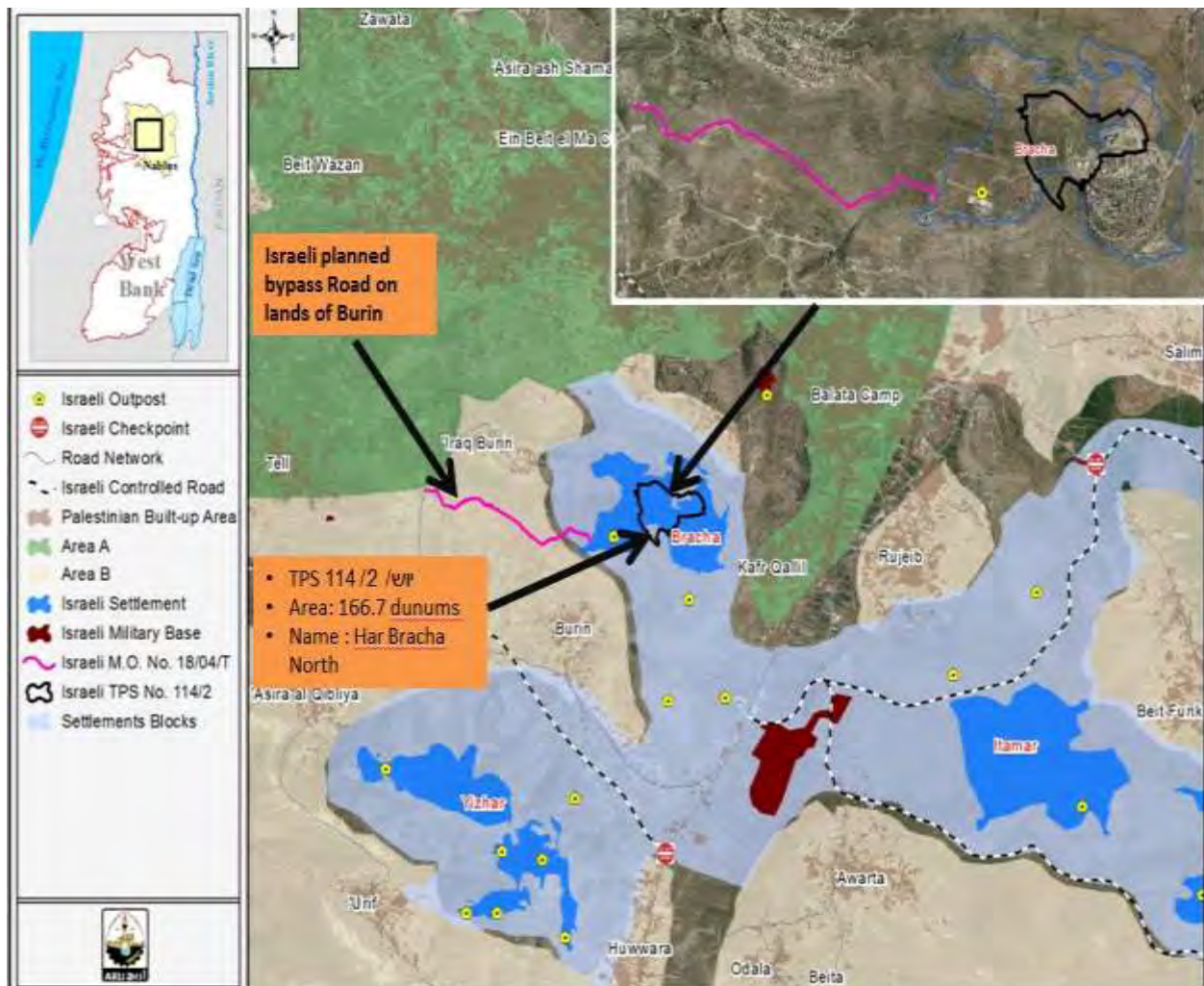
Areas A and B are quickly running out of room for Palestinians to accommodate for a natural population growth rate. With Palestinian lands being grabbed for Israeli use and requested permits for home expansion seldom approved, Palestinians in the Areas A and B have a population density of around 1,334 people/km<sup>2</sup>. This worsening situation can better be put into perspective with recent statistics from the city of Nablus below:



Created by ARIJ in 2015 using GIS, the above graphic reveals one of the ways in which the Israeli occupation is suffocating Palestinian communities. Without the ability to expand internally or externally, the city of Nablus now has a population density of 5,714 people/km<sup>2</sup>. This is even more compact than the population density of the Gaza Strip in 2016 which was estimated to be



at 5,154 people/km<sup>2</sup>.<sup>4</sup> In contrast, the settlement blocks in the near vicinity have nearly twice the land area (64,000 dunums to 35,200 dunums), with a drastically lower population (6,000 settlers compared to 200,000 Palestinian residents of Nablus), making the population density of Nablus almost sixty times more dense than that of the settlement. This sets the population density of the Israeli settlement at a mere 96 people/km<sup>2</sup>, which is on average the same population density per mile squared as that of the United States. With no room for expansion and housing costs on the rise, voluntary transfer and displacement has become a possible reality for many Palestinians in the near future.



<sup>4</sup> "Summary of Demographic Indicators in the Palestine by Region." PCBS, 2016, [www.pcbs.gov.ps/Portals/\\_Rainbow/Documents/DEMO-2016-EEE.htm](http://www.pcbs.gov.ps/Portals/_Rainbow/Documents/DEMO-2016-EEE.htm).

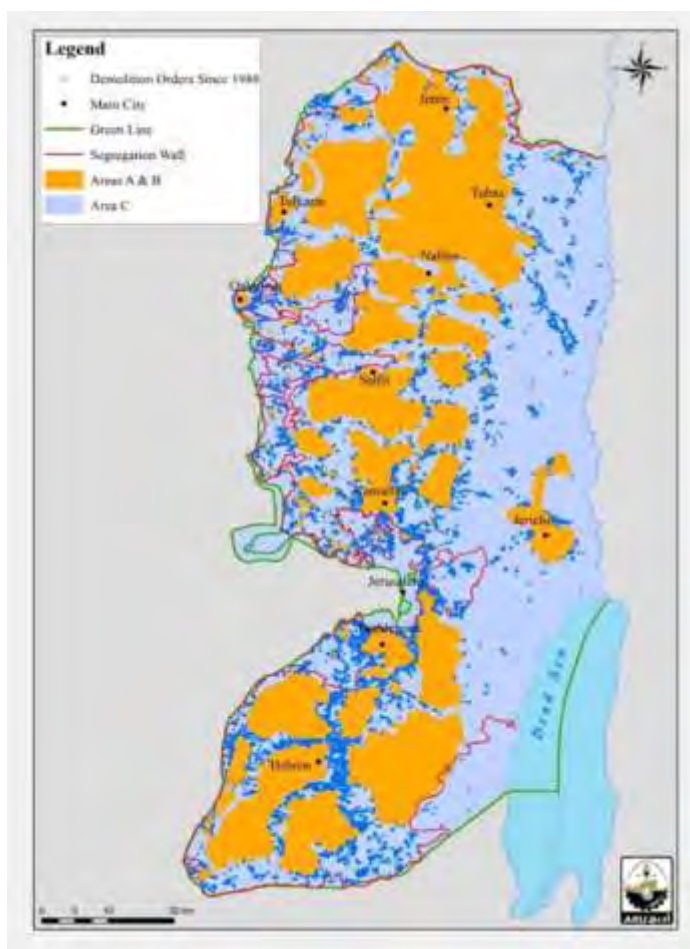
By means of military order, Israel announced their plan to further exacerbate the situation in Nablus through the expansion of the Har Bracha settlement in February 2018. An additional 800 housing units planned for construction along with a bypass road linked to Har Bracha is scheduled to be constructed in Area B territory.

### **Ethnic Displacement in Area C**

A much more direct way of clearing Palestinians from their lands is via forced displacement and home demolitions. Below are the number of Palestinian homes and structures in the oPt (excluding East Jerusalem) that have been targeted by Israeli issued military orders from 1988 to 2017. UNHCHR reported in March 2018 that settlement planning has accelerated, with plans for almost 10,000 housing units advanced for construction in Area C and East Jerusalem, meanwhile thousands of structures are still pending demolition.<sup>5</sup>

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<sup>5</sup> United Nations High Commissioner for Human Rights, *Israeli Settlements in the Occupied Palestinian Territory, Including East Jerusalem, and the Occupied Syrian Golan*. Human Rights Council, 6 Mar. 2018.



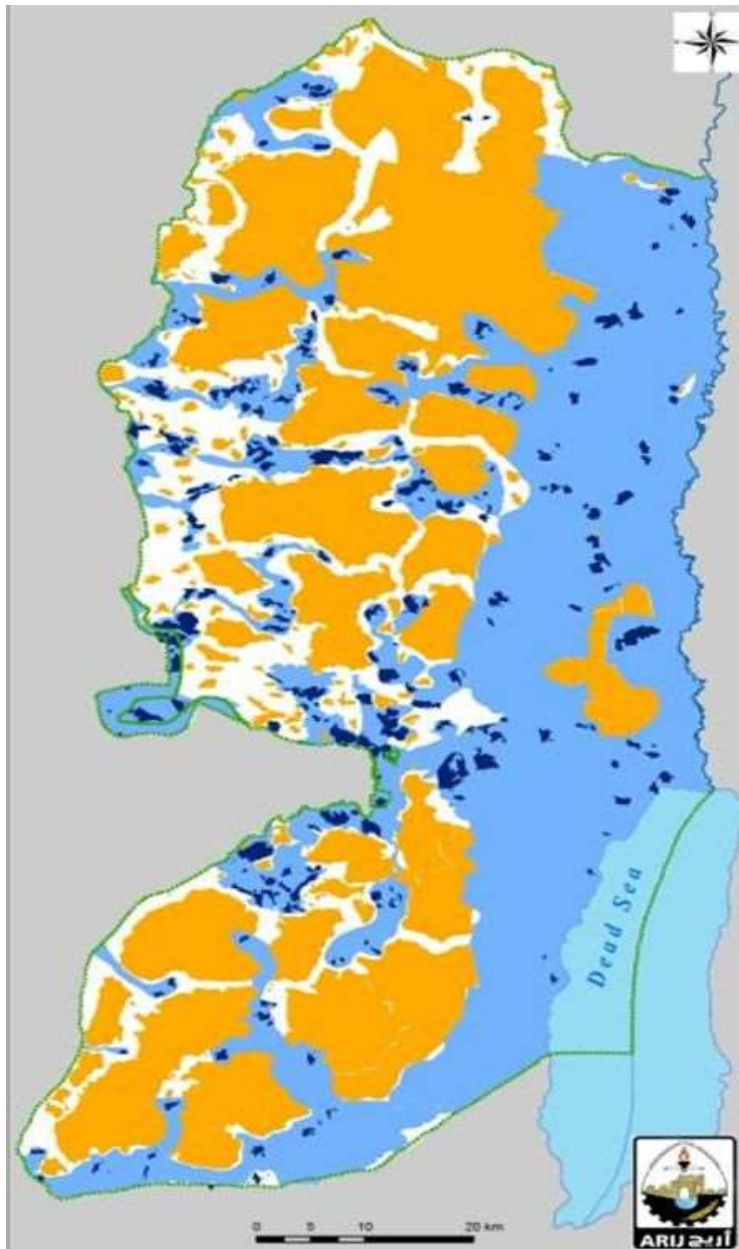
Governorate	No. of Orders
Bethlehem	1636
Hebron	5130
Jenin	835
Jericho	1234
Jerusalem	2828
Nablus	937
Qalqiliya	759
Ramallah	1769
Salfit	722
Tubas	563
Tulkarm	378
<b>Total</b>	<b>16791</b>

Area	No. of Demotion Orders
Area A	92
Area B	720
Area C	15979
<b>Total</b>	<b>16791</b>

Though not as frequent due to Areas A and B being either partially or completely under PA control, another 812 demolition orders have been filed in these areas.

## Israeli Settlement Expansion

The Israeli settler population has tripled since 1992. With the aide of the rapidly expanding settlement enterprise, Israel is working on a land grab comprising 75% of Area C (greater than 45% of the entirety of the West Bank.)



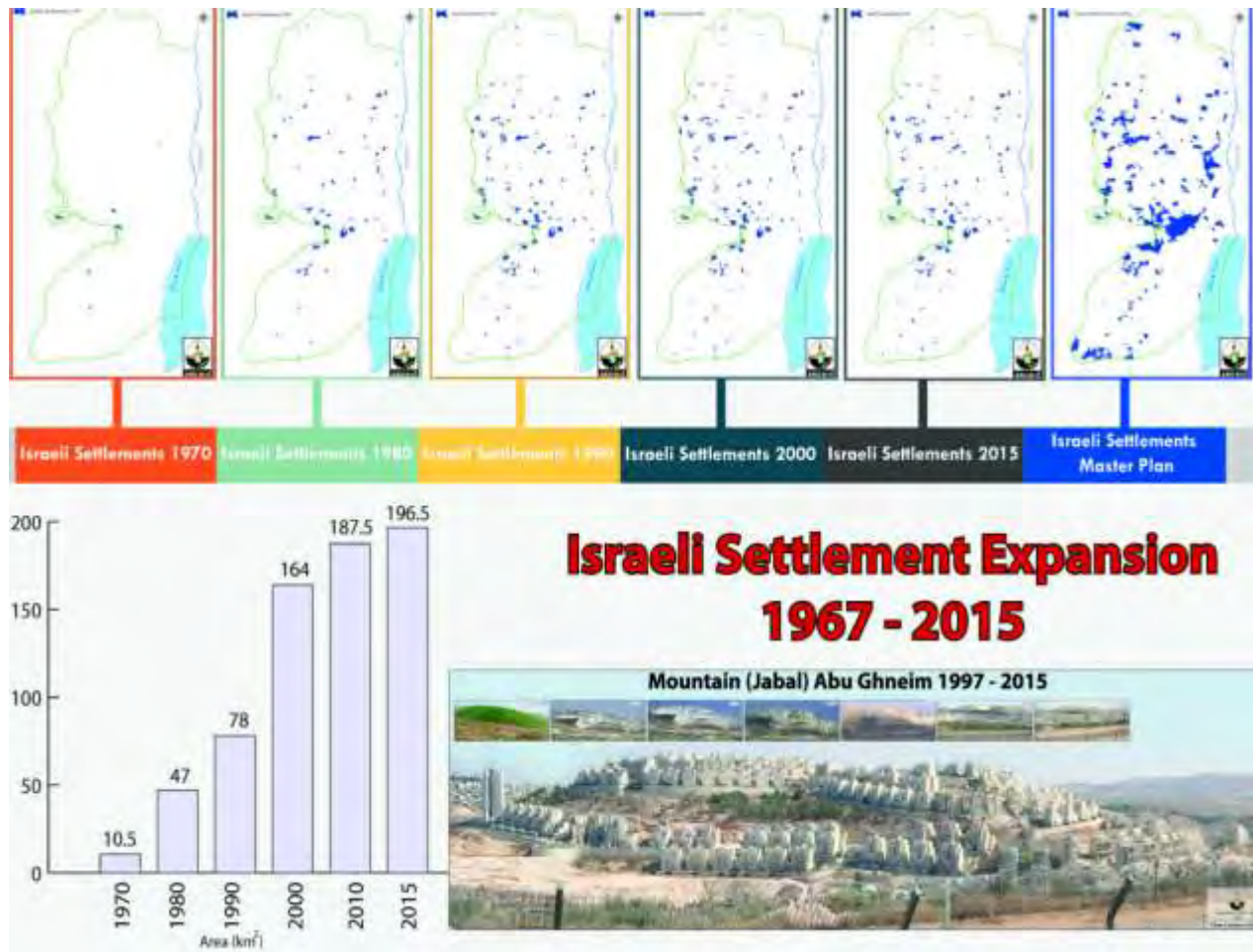
*Areas A & B: Orange Color*

*Area C: White Color*

*Dark Blue: Israeli Settlement*

*Light Blue : Settlement Blocs*

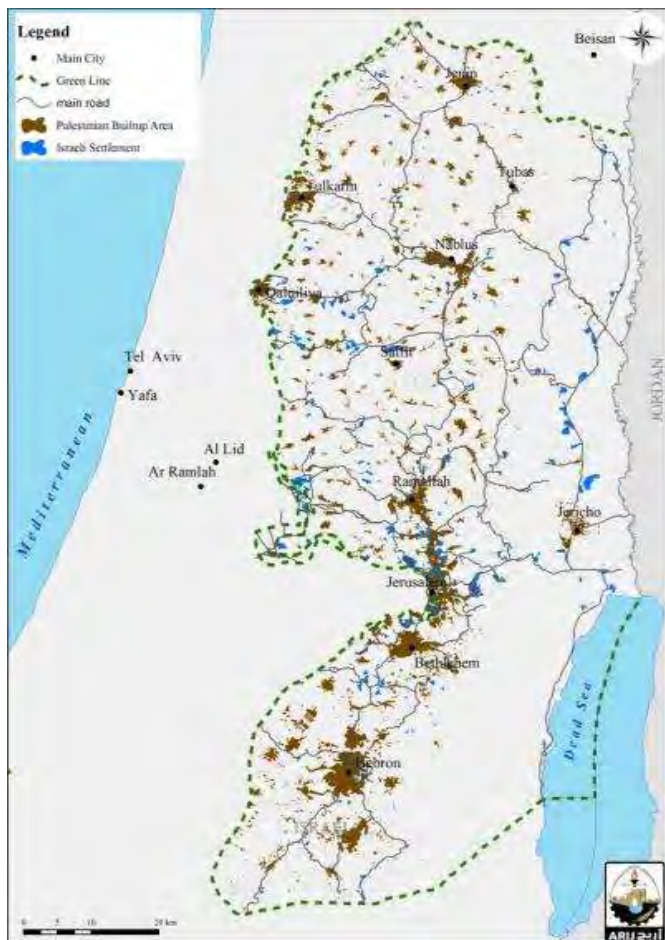




### Israeli Settlers population tripled since 1992

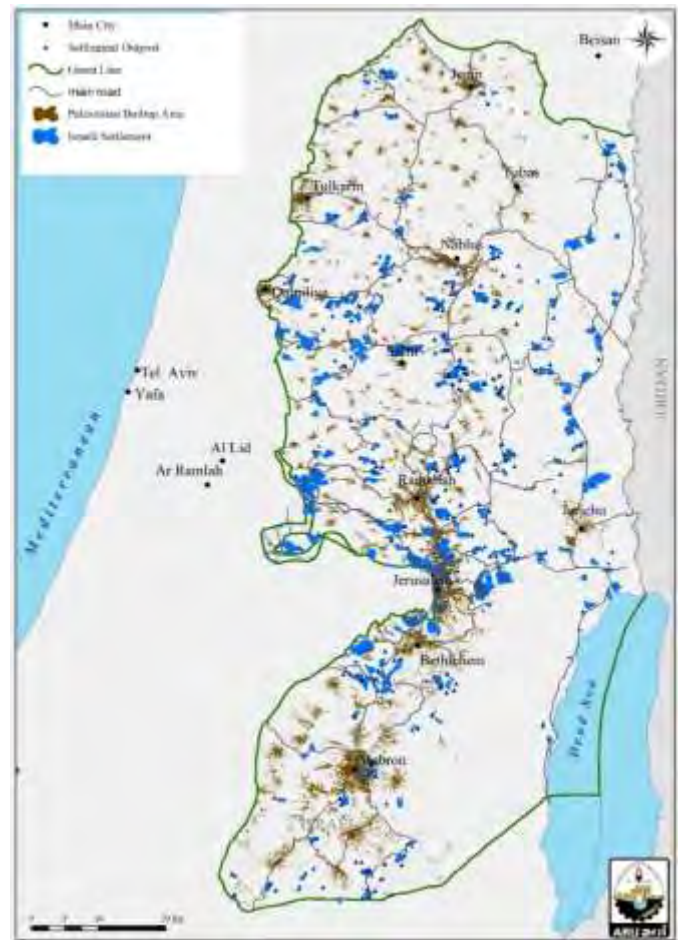
The calculated approach Israel took to settlement expansion has set its most recent growth rate at 4.38%, a rate much higher than could be achieved naturally, this meaning that a majority of settler growth is due to migration. Although 4.38% is high, this is a slight decline in recent years, with some theorizing that it may be due to the recent rise in American Jews in the Democratic Party opposing Israeli treatment of Palestinians. Projections beginning from 1997 show that with a natural birthrate (2.0%), the settler population would reach approximately 437,783 people by 2020. Conversely, with the growth rate of 4.38%, it is estimated that the settler population will reach 937,091 by the year 2020.

This growth rate statistic was produced by Israeli Knesset member, Yaakov “Ketzaleh” Katz. Katz also revealed in his 2016 report that as of December 31, 2015, there were more than 766,000 Israeli settlers residing in the West Bank, including East Jerusalem, at 406,301 and 360,000 settlers respectively. Israel has now accelerated construction of 3,893 sites within 159 Israeli settlement projects. Settlement expansion has drastically increased between May 2015 and May 2017 from 1,035,850 square meters of built-up area expansion to 6,840.000 meters. Satellite imaging analysis at ARIJ has found that there are currently 198 Israeli settlements in addition to 232 outposts. A visual of the settlement expansions across the West Bank from 1992 to 2017 is shown below:



**Israeli Settlements Area = 77 sqkm**  
**The number of Settlers = 248,000**  
**Settlement Outpost = 0**

**1992**

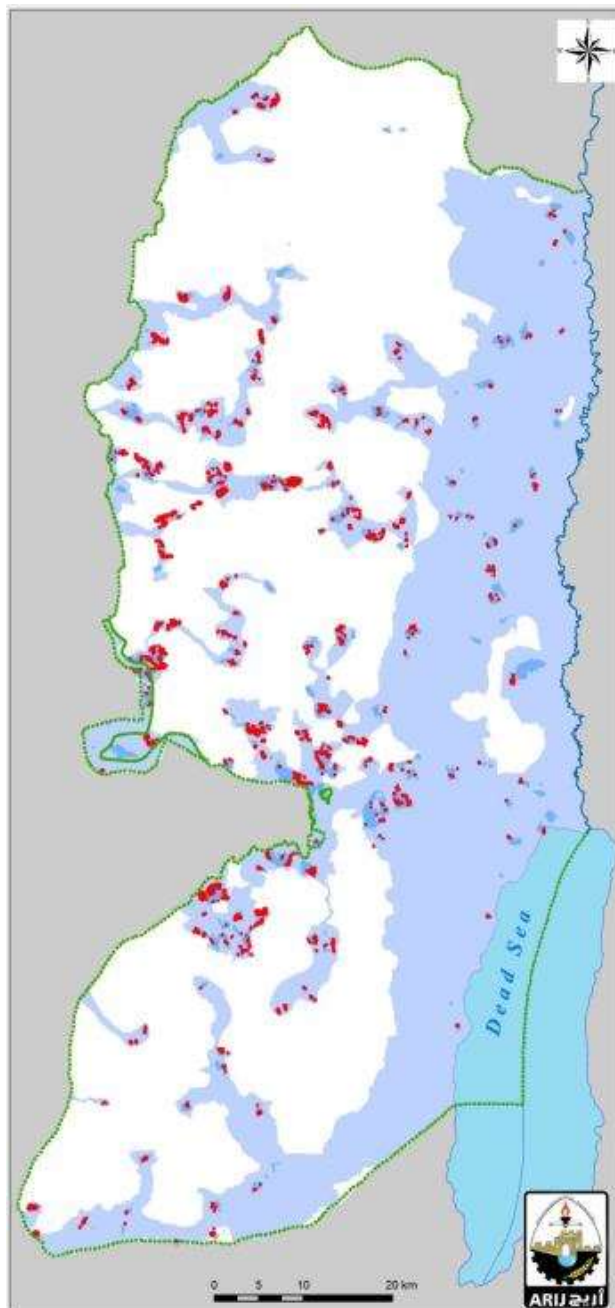


**Israeli Settlements Area = 198.2 sq km**  
**The number of Settlers = 816,192**  
**Settlement Outpost = 220**

**2017**



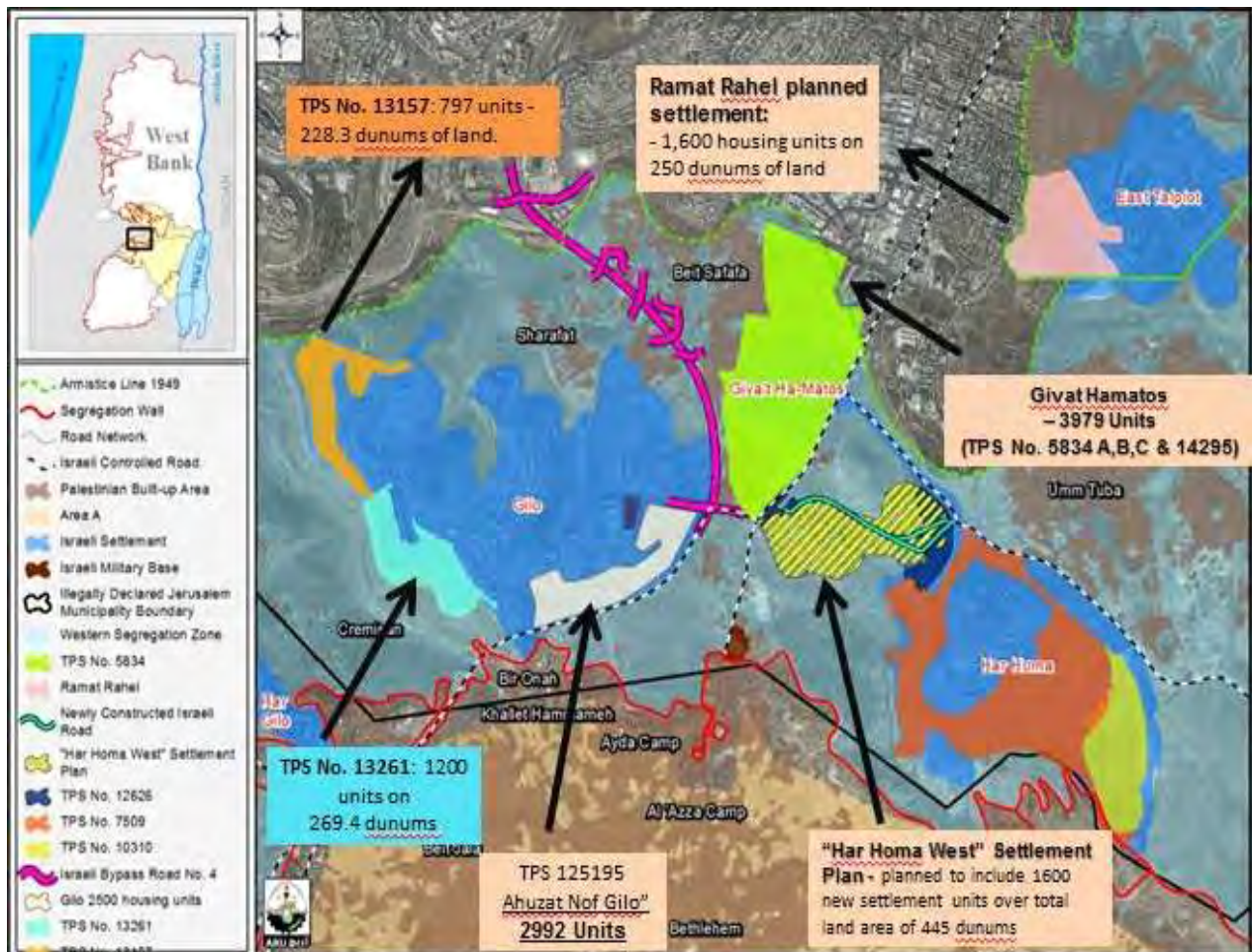
On December 20, 2017, Israel announced their plan for three new settlements in the Jordan Valley along with the construction of 14 new neighborhoods within existing settlements. Below is data documenting the expansion of settlements per governorate from 2015 to 2017:



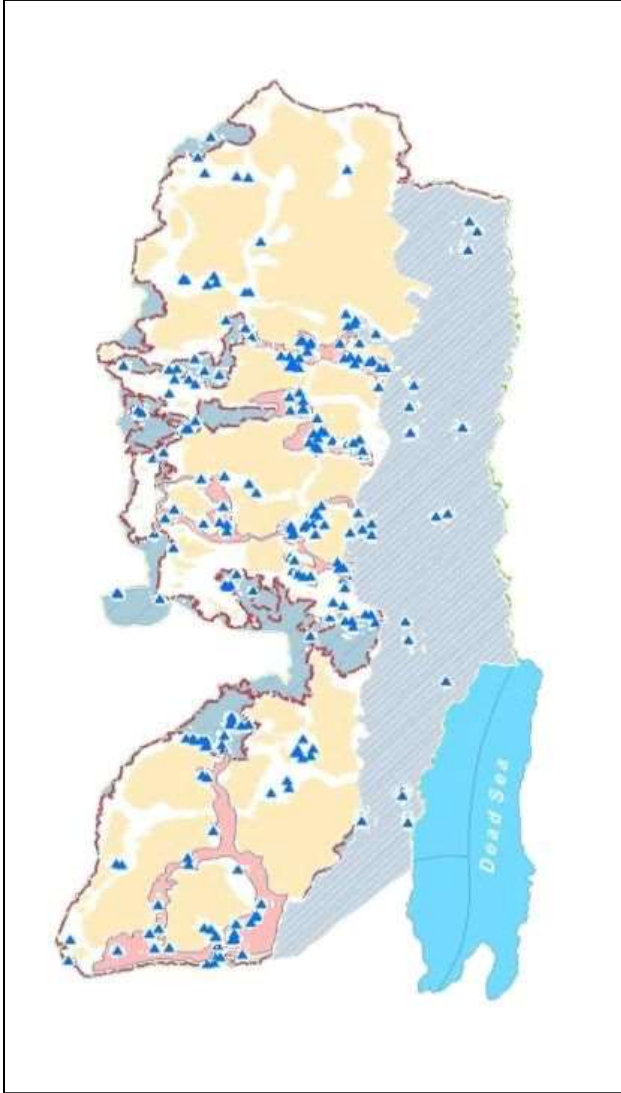
<i><b>Governorate</b></i>	<i><b>Expansion (dunums)</b></i>	<i><b>% of total Expansion</b></i>
Hebron	609	9%
<b>Bethlehem</b>	<b>1,340</b>	<b>20%</b>
<b>Jerusalem</b>	<b>1,156</b>	<b>17%</b>
Jericho	147	2%
Ramallah	921	14%
Salfit	1,034	15%
Nablus	440	6%
Tubas	20	0%
Qalqiliya	537	8%
Tulkarm	330	5%
Jenin	288	4%
<b>Total Expansion Area</b>	<b>6,822</b>	<b>100.0%</b>

With the worst of the settlement expansions occurring in Jerusalem and Bethlehem (17% and 20%), these prominent cities are incurring one-third of recent settlement expansion projects.

Shortly after Israel's announcement, on December 25, 2017, the Israeli Minister of Housing and Construction, Yoav Galant, made an additional announcement about plans to build *one million* new settlement units in the occupied West Bank over the next twenty years. This goal would include 20-30% of these units being built in "Greater Jerusalem" and West Jerusalem projects. Settlements in these areas currently include Ma'aleh Adumim in East Jerusalem, Gush Etzion in the South, Givat Ze'ev in the Northwest, and Anut in the North.



## Settler Outposts



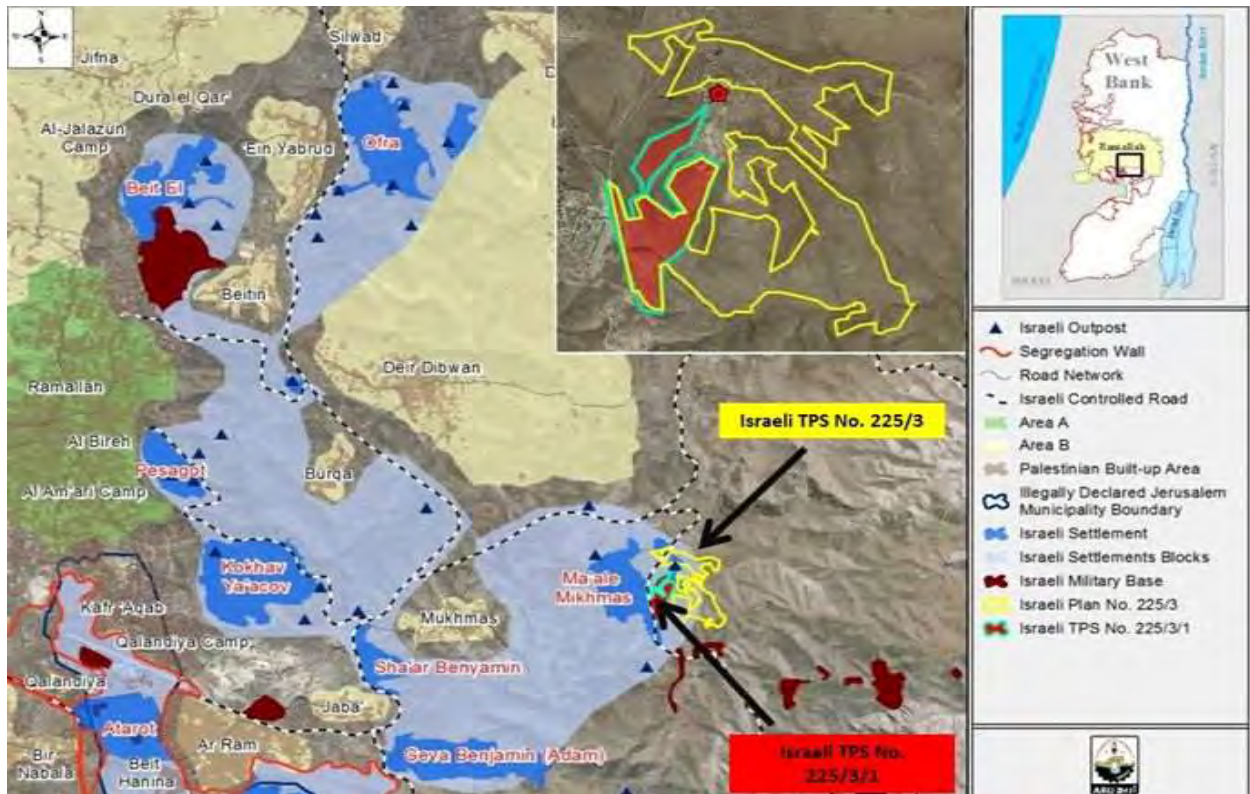
Settler outposts are distinctively different, and potentially even more detrimental than Israeli settlements. Outposts are illegal, just as the settlements, but the outpost technique involves capturing land on Palestinian hilltops or areas within a close perimeter to existing settlements. Much like the Homestead Act of the mid-1800's in the US, settlers can stake their claim to a hilltop by setting up mobile caravans and simply declaring the site as a new settlement or neighborhood of the adjacent settlement. Before he was Prime Minister, Ariel Sharon addressed a meeting of militants from the extreme rightwing Tsomet party on November 15, 1998 saying, "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."<sup>6</sup>

Within the West Bank, there are 60 "Western" outposts, 32 "Eastern" outposts, 96 "Corridor" outposts, and 44 miscellaneous outposts. The state of Israel has aided in the establishment of 14 new outposts in the oPt since 2011. This is in addition to the already existing outposts numbering greater than 200 between 2001 and 2011. These new outposts were built on what

<sup>6</sup> Agence France Presse. 15 Nov. 1998.

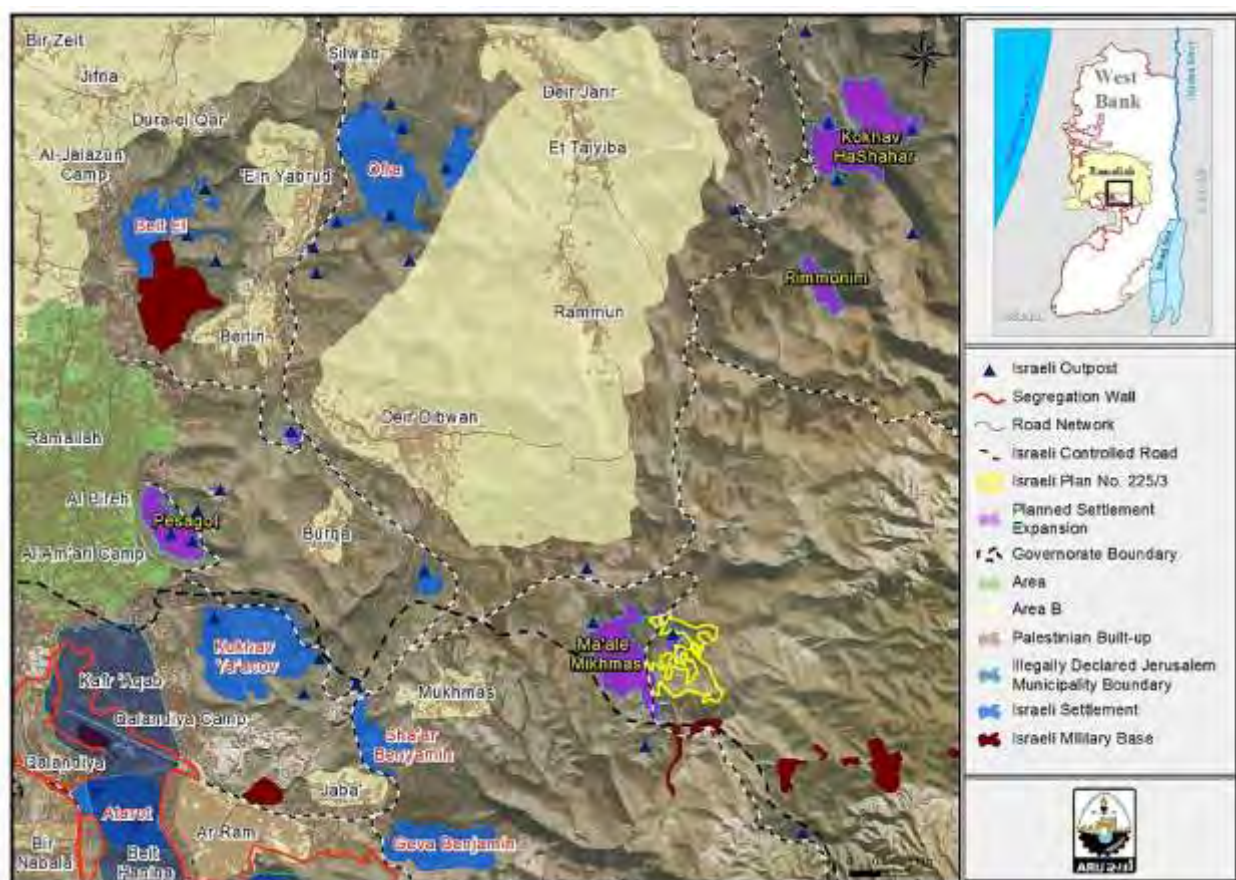


Israel calls “government land”, not privately-owned Palestinian land. Below is the proposed area plan of the Ma’ale Mikhmas settlement:



Not stopping here, another plan have already been released for even further expansions that are set to be completed between 2030 and 2040. The plan, holds number 225/3 and states the appropriation of 749 dunums of Palestinian land to the east of Ma’ale Mikhmas for settlement building over the next 25 years, in addition to expanding the settlements of Remmunim, Pesagot and Kochav Hashahar where hundreds of housing units will be built in each of the aforementioned settlements by the year 2040, which will severely harm the geographical contiguity of the Palestinian communities in the area and will deny Palestinians their right to use the only available land left for them to expand and develop in the future, as shown below:

## Factors Shaping the Upcoming Scene of the Israeli-Palestinian Negotiations and Conflict

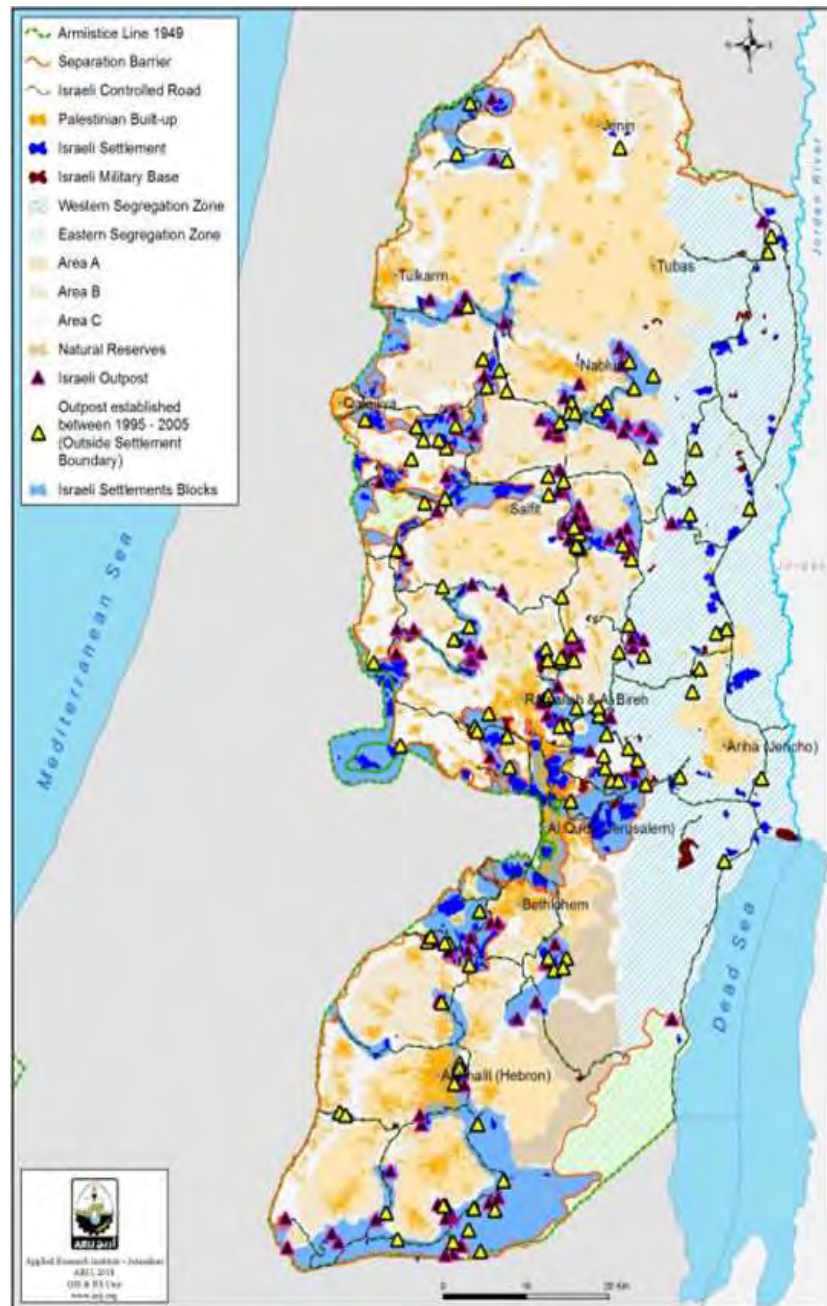


Details of Plan No. 225/3						
No.	Settlement Name	No. of Units by 2030	No. of Units by 2040	Land Reserve (Dunums)	TPS No.	Area (Dunums)
1	Ma'ale Mikhmas	494	886	524	225, 225/1/1	1274
2	Mitzpe Danny	106	189	225	---	---
3	Rimmunim	386	692	---	224/1	2969
4	Kochav Hashahar	761	1363	---	223/1	2466
5	Pesagot	470	843	---	222	316
	Total	2217	3973	749	---	7025



*In January of 2018, a plan was revealed that would **legalize 70 outposts** in the West Bank.*

*The Israeli Ministry has already established a ministerial team of approximately five or six people in the last six months who have been charged with the duty of identifying which outposts can be legalized. They have done this by establishing a ranking system based on how difficult such legislation would be to pass for any given settlement with the **goal of turning existing settlements into legal neighborhoods and communities.***



## 2018 Settler Violence

Settler violence is a serious and pervasive problem facing many Palestinians, especially those living in areas that border settlements or in area H2. So far in 2018 alone, there have been approximately 300 settler attacks against Palestinians and their properties in the occupied West Bank between January and May, including the near-continuous raids of Al Aqsa. The Land Research Center (LRC) recorded 727 acts of settler violence in 2016, a 24% increase from the previous year.<sup>7</sup> “Settler violence” is a broad term covering illegal and destructive acts such as raiding, damaging, or torching homes, physical assault, damage to property or crops by means of sewage, chemicals, fire, or physical damage, vandalism, damaging vehicles, road closures, seizure of land, and murder. These crimes have included:

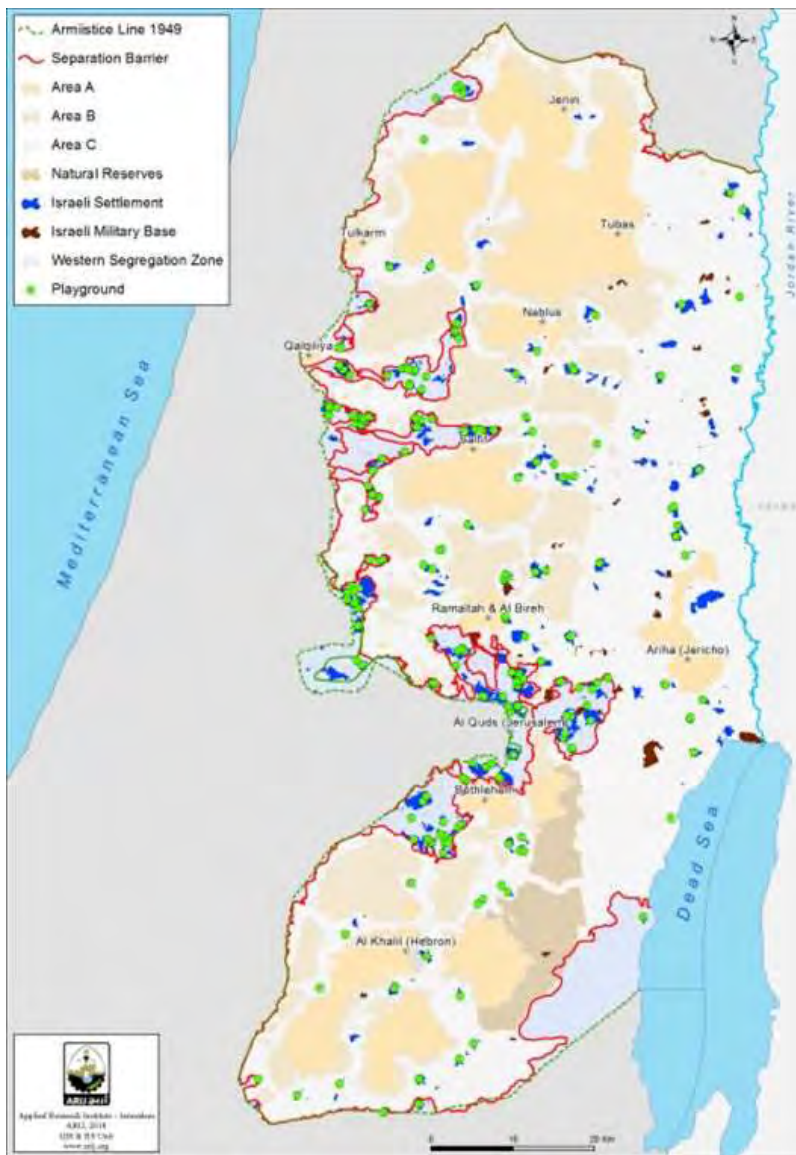
- 17 Jan 2018: Beit Iksa - slashed the tires of several Palestinian vehicles and spray painted “racist slogans.”
- 18 Feb 2018: Hebron – assault of a Palestinian bus driver near Kiryat Arba settlement.
- 19 Mar 2018: Turmusayya - Adi Ad settlers attacked 10 Palestinian farmers and forced them off their land.
- 25 Mar 2018: Tuwani - settlers of Ma’on settlement attacked a Palestinian farmer and left him severely injured.
- 31 Mar 2018: Beit Ummer - settlers of Kfar Etzion pumped wastewater into 40 dunums of grape vines.
- 4 Apr 2018: Far’ata - settlers of Havat Gil’ad wrote racist graffiti on the walls of two homes and three cars, slashing the tires of five others.
- 13 Apr 2018: Aqraba - settlers poured flammable materials at the entrance to Sheikh Sa’adeh Mosque and spray-painted racist graffiti on the walls.
- 20 Apr 2018: Nahalin - settlers of Bat Ayin assaulted five Palestinians and hurled stones at their vehicle, forcing them to flee the vehicle.
- 21 Apr 2018: Burqa - settlers of Migron punctured the tires of 40 Palestinian vehicles and sprayed racist, anti-Arab graffiti on cars and the walls of homes.
- 25 Apr 2018: Deir Ammar - settlers of Beit El slashed the tires of some 15 vehicles and spray-painted the phrases “Let us take care of them”, and “We’ll take our fate into our own hands.”
- 25 Apr 2018: Jalud – settlers of Shilo spray-painted graffiti slogans on various Palestinian homes, and the tires of four cars were punctured.

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<sup>7</sup> [http://lrcj.org/pdf/web/viewer.html?file=Violation\\_Report\\_2016\\_Eng.pdf](http://lrcj.org/pdf/web/viewer.html?file=Violation_Report_2016_Eng.pdf)

- 29 Apr 2018: Turmusayya - settlers spray-painted racist slogans in Hebrew on the walls of Palestinian homes in Turmusayya village, and slashed the tires of three other Palestinian cars.
- 14 May 2018: Shu'fat - Israeli settler group, "Price Tag", vandalized more than 28 Palestinian-owned cars and spray-painted racist slogans in Hebrew on the walls of Palestinian homes.

## Israeli Settlement Amenities



*Israeli settlements and outposts **are granted certain types of inherent privileges** at the time of their formation by the Israeli government that many Palestinian areas are not, such as access to roads, electricity, and water. Provided resources later expand from the basics to include more recreational and municipal amenities such as schools, parks,*

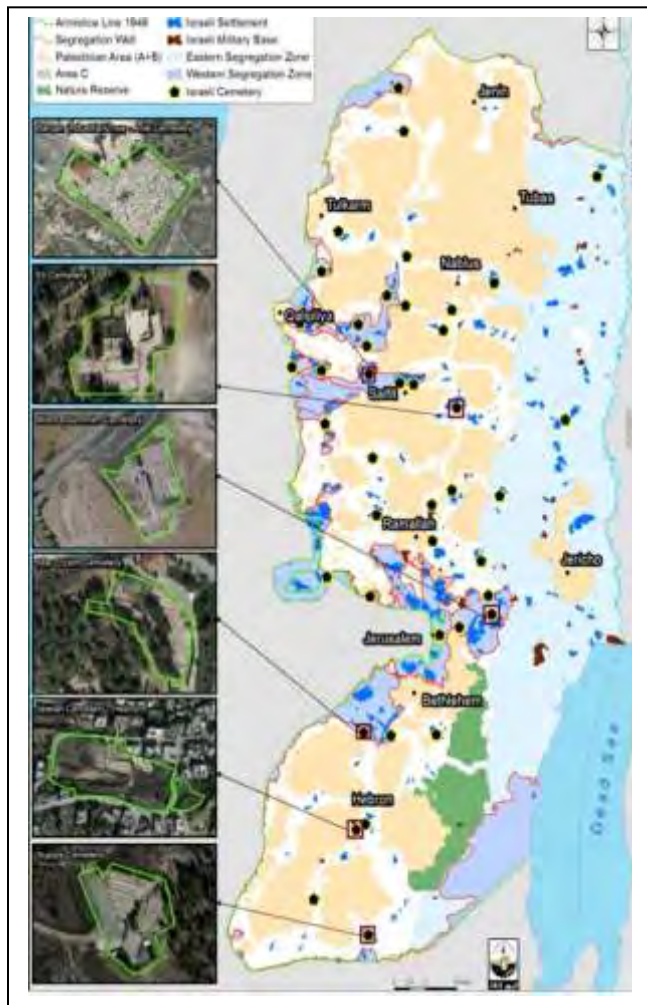
*The map shows current public buildings in Israeli settlements across the West Bank. These include:*

- **314 Religious Buildings**
- **124 Public Parks**
- **196 Schools**
- **302 Playgrounds**



## Factors Shaping the Upcoming Scene of the Israeli-Palestinian Negotiations and Conflict

In addition to this, Israelis have constructed 42 cemeteries throughout the occupied West Bank, along with community pools within many of the settlements:



Nokidim pools 9 for 1800



Menora pools 22 for 3400



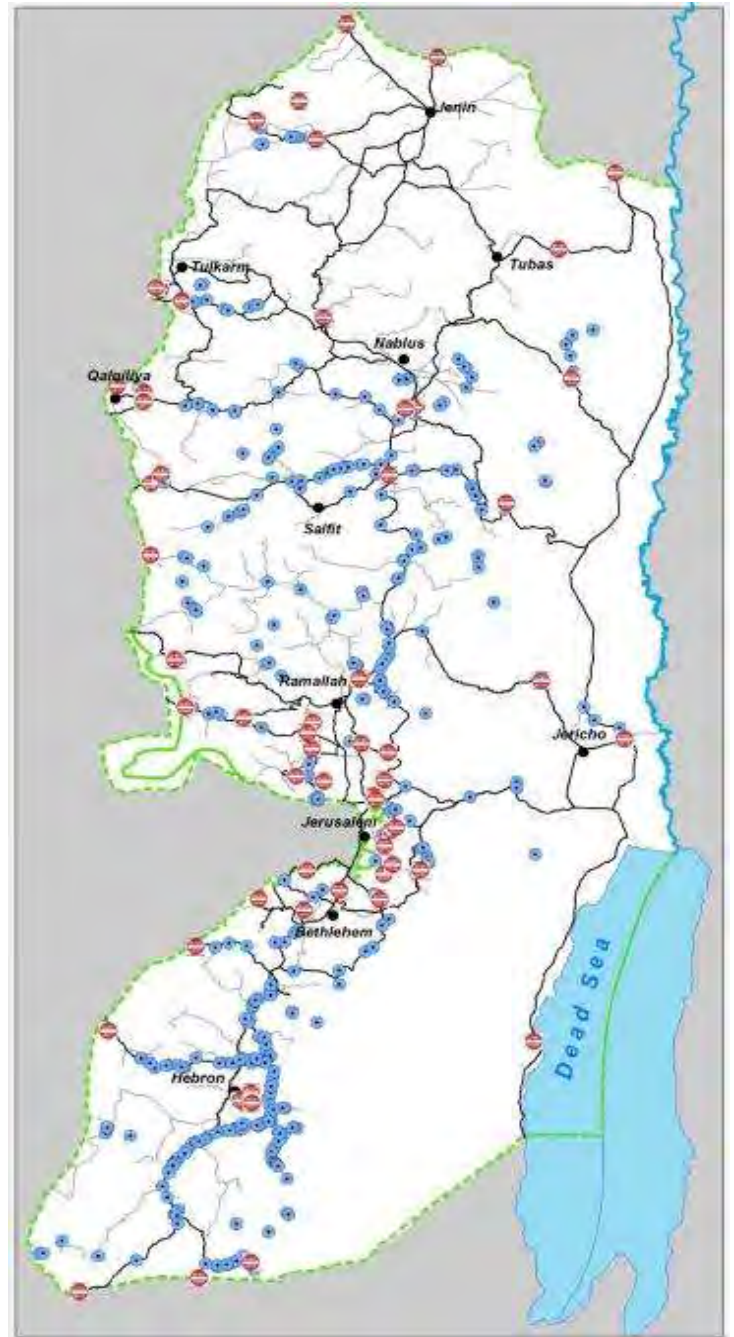
## Mobility Restrictions

Israel has placed severe mobility restrictions on Palestinians. Restricted mobility in the oPt can take many forms:

- Checkpoints
- Roadblocks
- Permits necessary to access certain cities (which may arbitrarily be denied)
- Israeli-only roads and transportation systems
- Lack of access to Ben Gurion airport
- Air, land, and sea blockades on Gaza
- And, of course, the separation wall among other tactics

Standing as the most immediate, physical impediment to mobility, there are currently 84 main Israeli checkpoints throughout the West Bank in addition to 402 barriers taking various forms such as roadblocks, road gates, or earth mounds. In addition to the loss of time and inconvenience Palestinians must forego in the face of these restrictions, some on a daily basis, more malicious consequences to take into consideration include economic loss, as well as psychological and social harm.

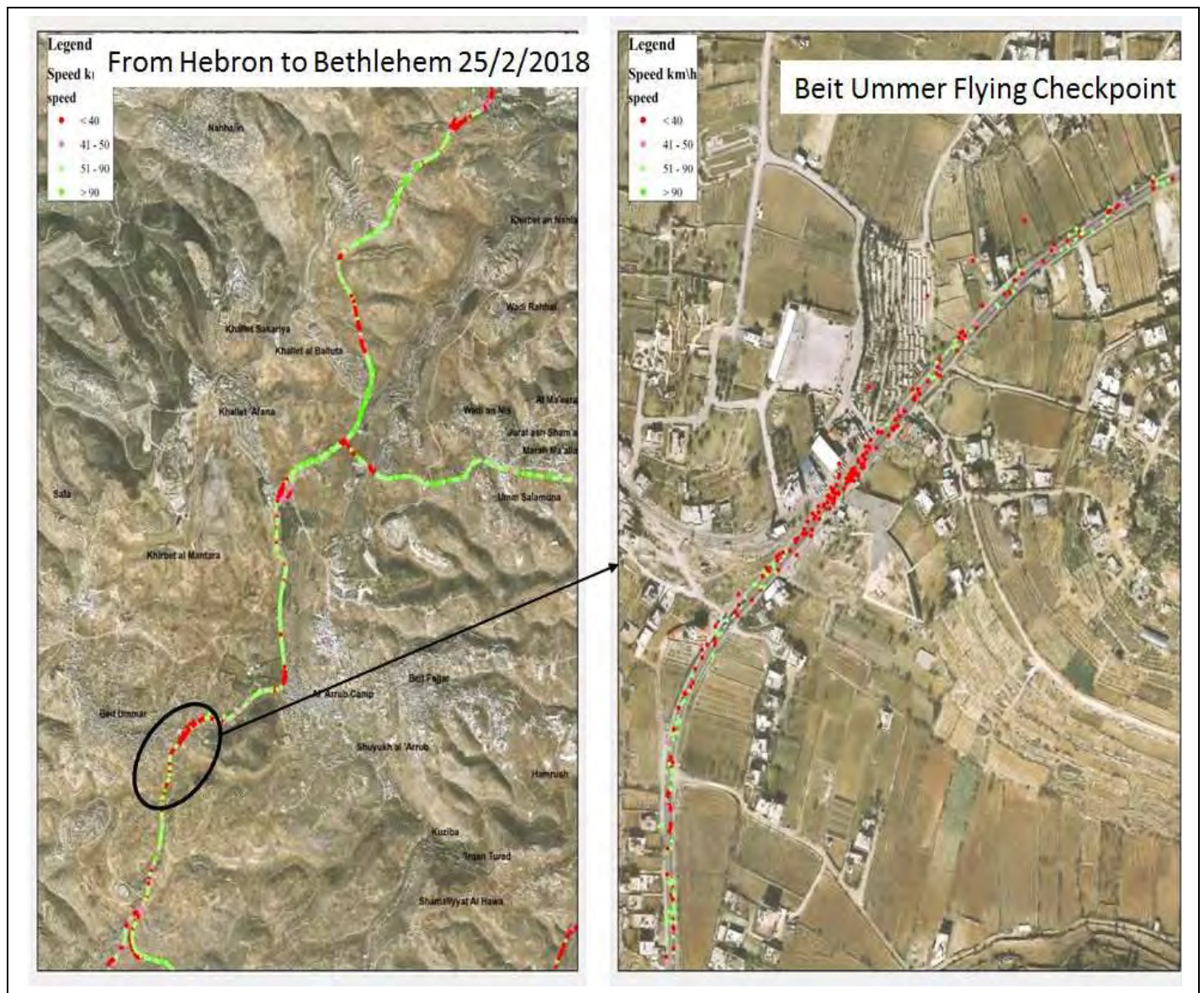
Economic loss can accumulate through various means, such as the time that could be spent working or being productive that is instead spent waiting at checkpoints, or the additional costs of gas and car maintenance when being forced to take much longer routes to get to a destination when only capable of using roads accessible to Palestinians.





The psychological toll, particularly amongst the youth population of Palestinians, is also a consequence of Israeli-enforced mobility restrictions. With many children afraid of the ultimate authority of the Israeli soldiers, some choose to take longer routes to get to their destination, such as to school, rather than facing harassment and fear. This is in addition to the dehumanizing nature of the checkpoints and searches themselves.

The delays from these restrictions can cause mass traffic congestion at the checkpoints and surrounding roads as shown below:







Container Checkpoint Monday 19/2/2018



Container Checkpoint Friday 23/2/2018



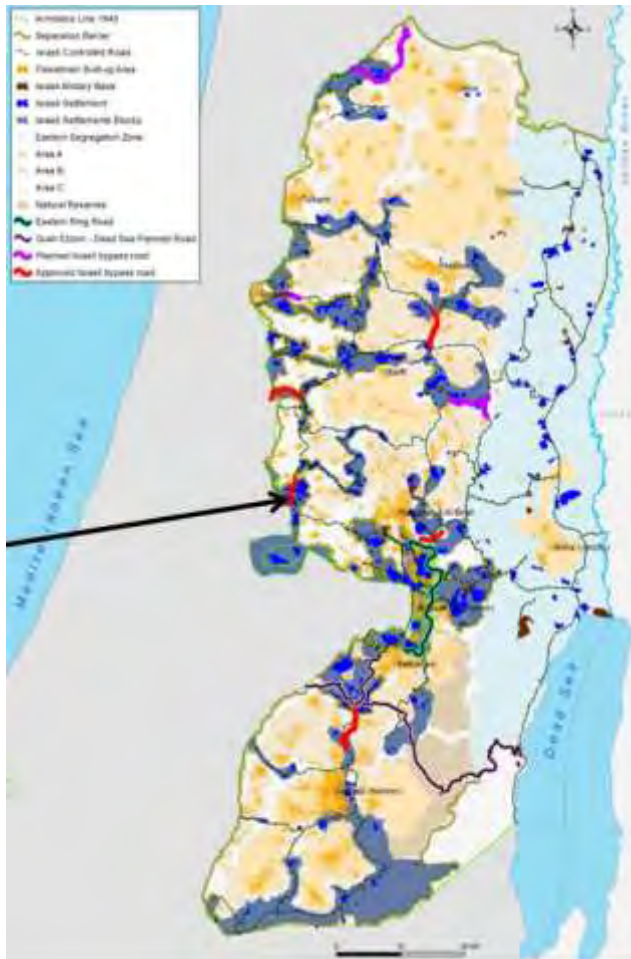
Qalandiya Checkpoint Friday 23/2/2018



Qalandiya Checkpoint Monday 19/2/2018

## Israeli Bypass Roads and Road Networks in the oPt

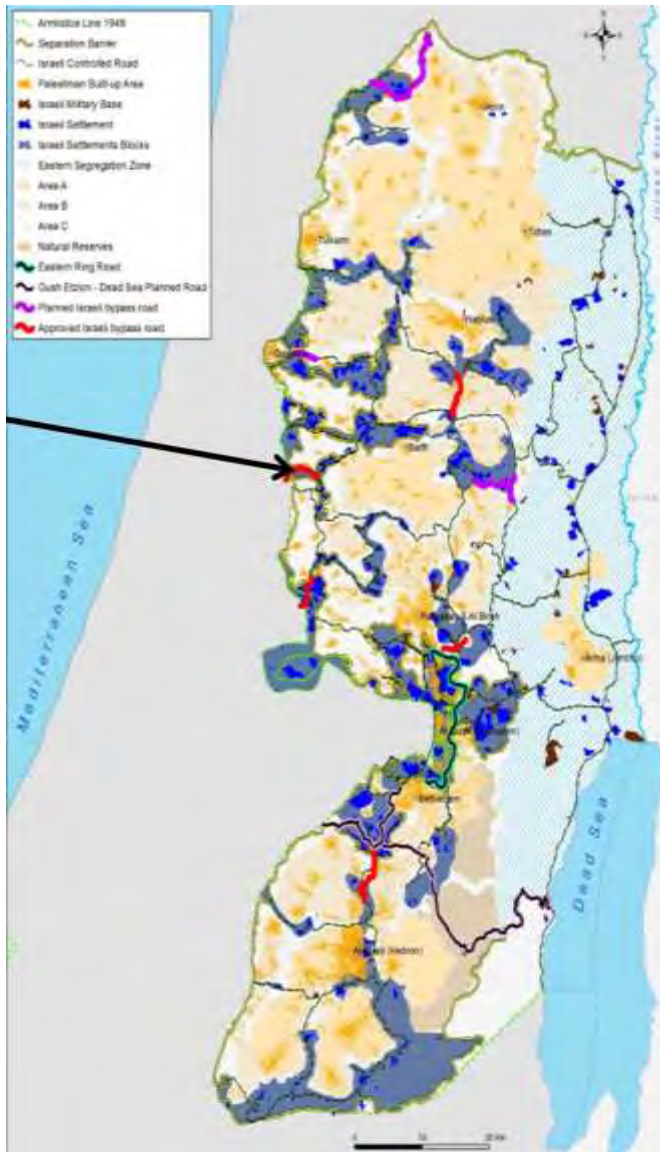
One of the methods used by the Israeli occupation in order to effectively and unilaterally annex territory, creating further mobility restrictions, is through the construction of bypass roads, road networks, and alternative forms of transportation that are inaccessible to Palestinians. On October 25, 2017, Israeli Prime Minister Netanyahu approved a budget of 800 million shekels for the promotion of a plan to construct new bypass roads throughout the West Bank which will be placed into effect in the upcoming budget year. Phase 1 will begin with the Israeli Ministry of Transportation's five-year plan to pave and expand additional existing roads throughout the West Bank, beginning with Salfit Road.



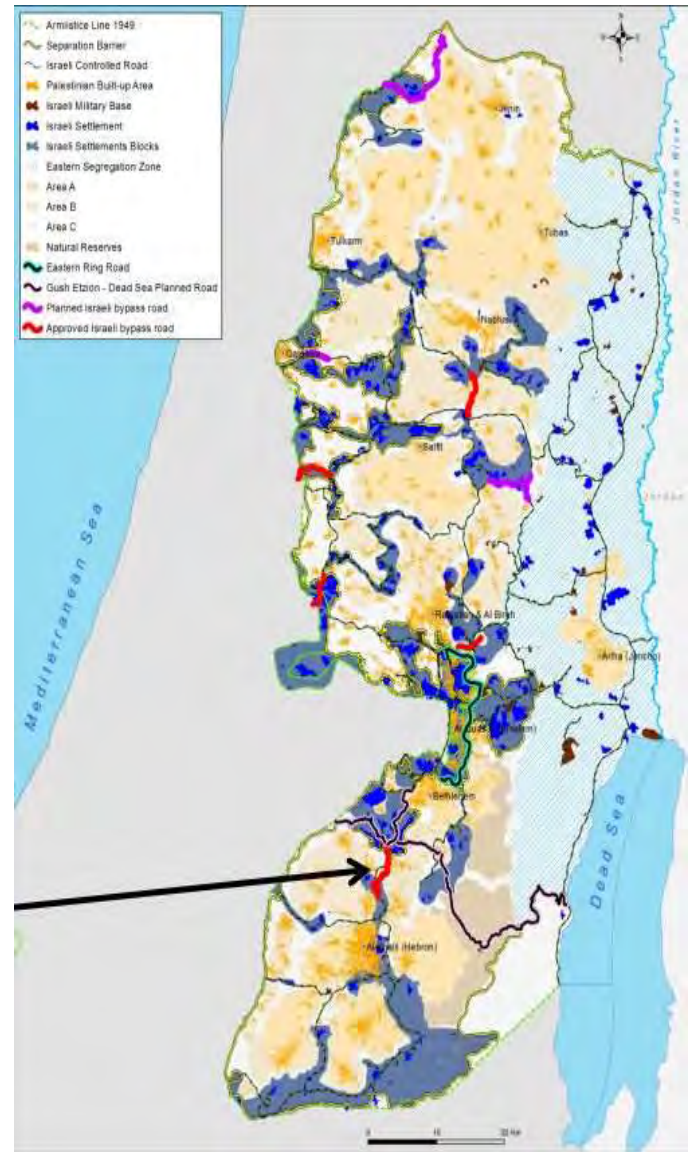
*Plan to double Road #446  
between Modi'in Illit and  
Shilat on approximately  
3.5km, 150 dunums*



## Factors Shaping the Upcoming Scene of the Israeli-Palestinian Negotiations and Conflict

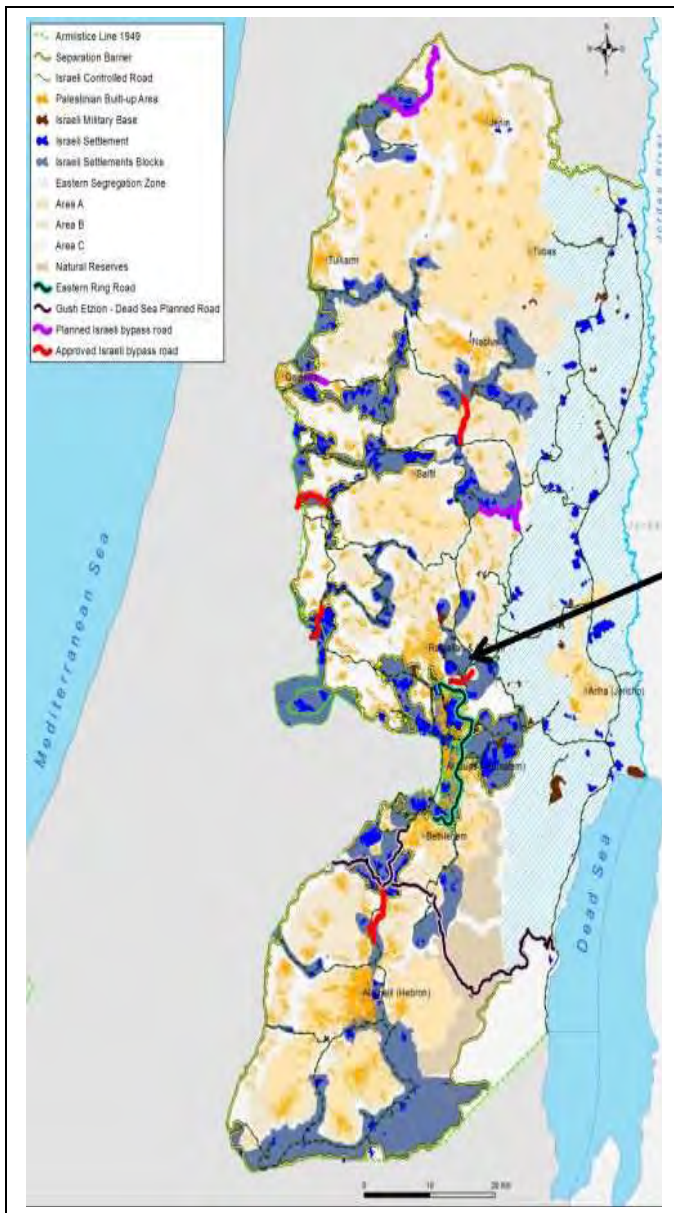


*Al-Aroub Bypass Road: Will run between Gush Etzion Junction and Carmei Zur settlement on the lands of Beit Umar and Halhul – 6.5km, 1,123 dunams*

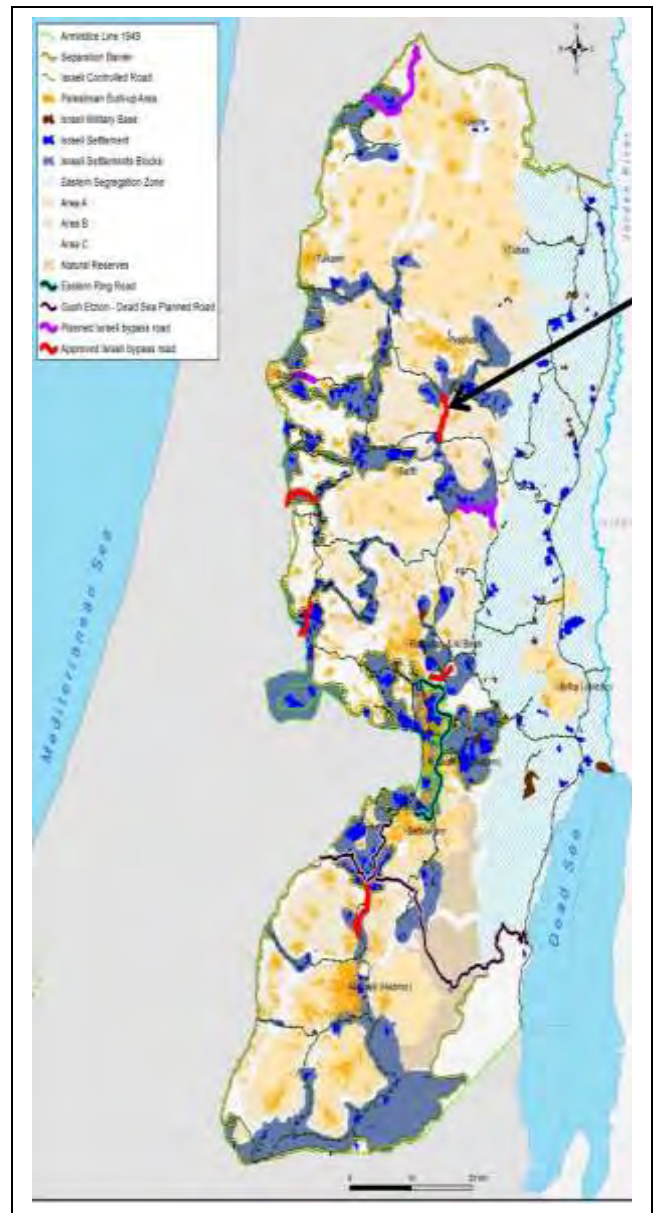


*Lubban Al-Gharbiya Bypass: 5.3km, approximately 270 dunums. The road is meant to create a highway between the settlement of Beit Arye and Israel Proper as well as connect settlements West of Ramallah with Israel Proper.*

## Factors Shaping the Upcoming Scene of the Israeli-Palestinian Negotiations and Conflict



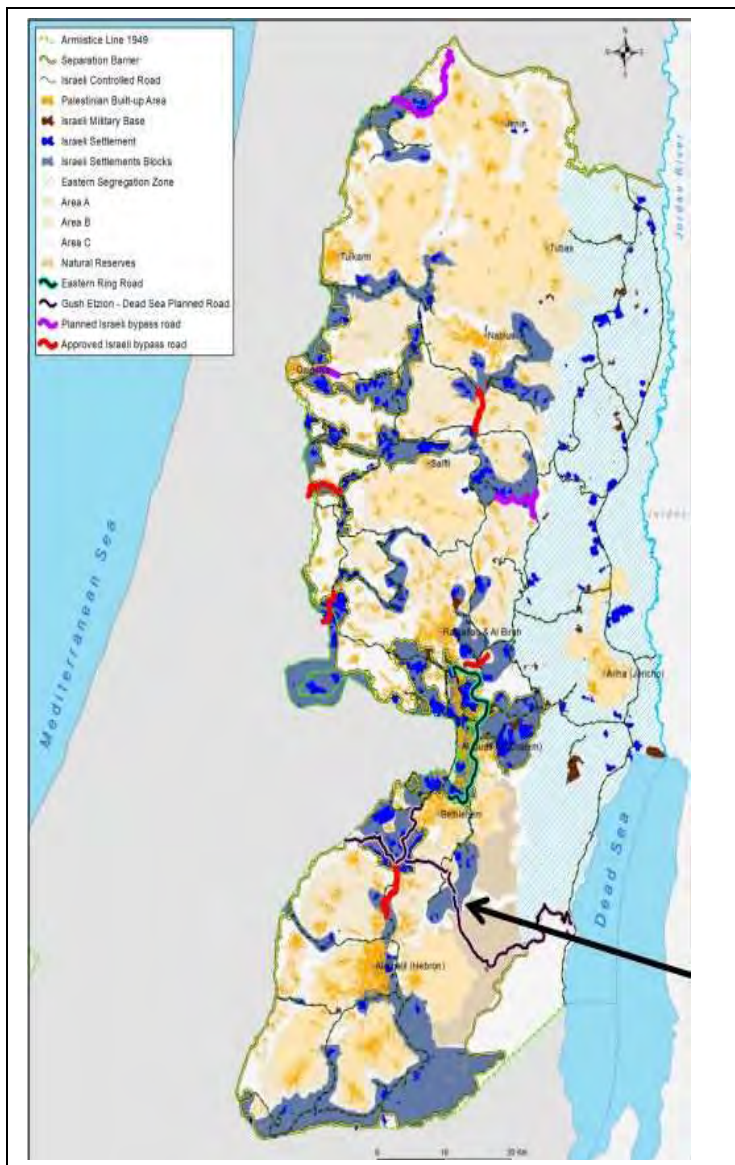
*Qalandiya Underpass: A road that is meant to bypass the Qalandiya checkpoint and connect the settlements East of Ramallah to the center of Israel without having to pass through the traffic of Jerusalem.*



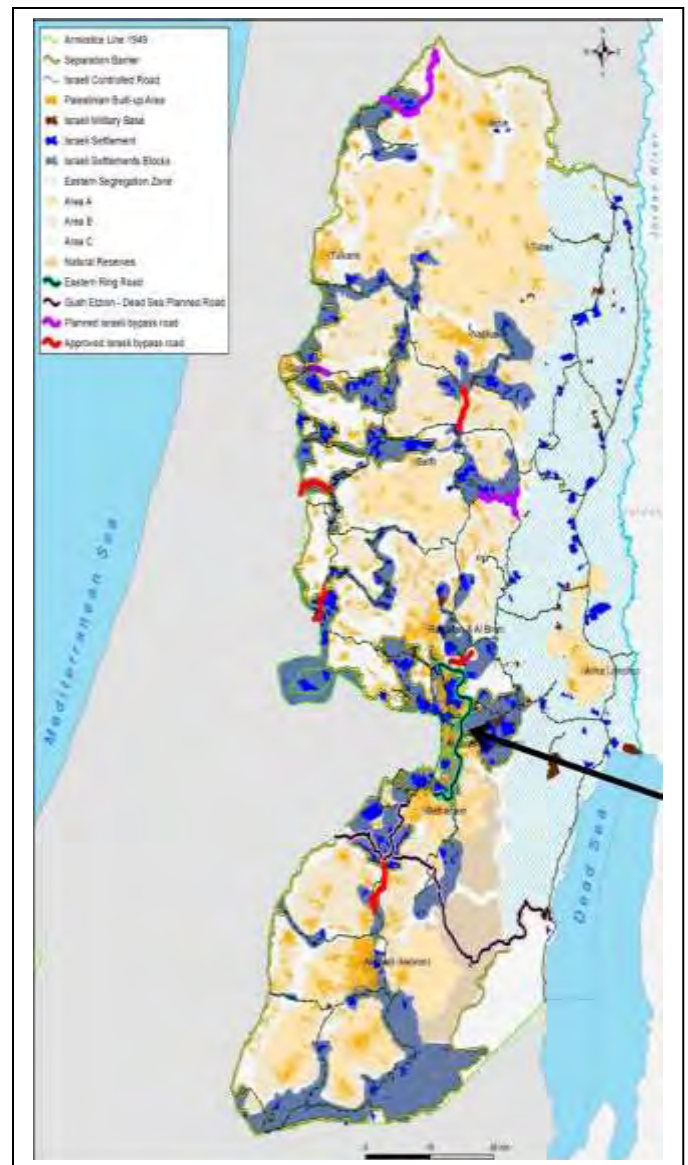
*Hawara Bypass Road: Will run between Tapuah Junction (Za'atra Junction) and Yizhar Junction – 5.7km, 1,191 dunams*



## Factors Shaping the Upcoming Scene of the Israeli-Palestinian Negotiations and Conflict



*Planned road that will run from the Gush Etzion (one of the three Greater Jerusalem settlements) to the Dead Sea*



*July 2017 Israel approved the Eastern Ring Road that serves as a transportation link for the settlements in East Jerusalem and the future Greater Jerusalem plan.*



*In March 2018, Israel commenced the first phase of a railway project in the oPt connecting “Ariel” settlement with Israeli settlements inside the Green Line.*

*Phase 1 of 3: Scheduled to be completed by 2025 at a cost of NIS 3 million across 2,000 dunums of land.*

*This railway will cross through the lands of Al-Zawia, Masha, Badia, Saratah, Kafr-Deek, and Brugin villages*



## Legalizing the Illegal

Although the international community does not recognize Israeli settlements as legal under the statutes of international law, Israel has been passing new laws in an attempt to create loopholes to legalize their criminal activities.

### The Land Regulation Law

On February 6, 2017, the Israeli Knesset voted to approve the Land Regulation Law which allows the state to confiscate private Palestinian lands in the West Bank for the purposes of settlement construction. This law also grants the Israeli custodian of “absentee properties” to reclassify the land as they see fit, including all State Land in the oPt (which constitutes 42 %.)

### The Jewish State Bill

May 10, 2017

#### Basic principles of the Bill

- The State of Israel is the national home of the Jewish people, in which they realize their aspiration to self-determination in accordance with their cultural and historical heritage.
- The right to exercise national self-determination in the State of Israel is unique to the Jewish people.
- The provisions of this Basic Law or any other legislation shall be interpreted in light of what is determined in this paragraph.

#### Purpose

The purpose of this Basic Law is to defend the character of Israel as the nation-state of the Jewish people, in order to anchor in Israel’s Basic Laws the State of Israel’s values as a Jewish and democratic state, in the spirit of the Declaration of Independence of the State of Israel.

#### Language

- The state’s language is Hebrew.
- The Arabic language has a special status, and its speakers have the right to language-accessible state services in their native language, as will be determined by the law.

## **Return**

Every Jew has the right to immigrate to the land [of Israel] and acquire citizenship of the State of Israel in accordance with the law.

## **Preserving heritage**

- Every citizen of Israel, regardless of their religion or nationality, has the right to actively preserve their culture, heritage, language and identity.
- The State may allow a community, including followers of a single religion or members of a single nationality, to establish a separate communal settlement.

## **The “United Jerusalem” Bill**

On January 2<sup>nd</sup>, 2018, the Israeli Knesset approved the second and third reading of the so-called “United Jerusalem” Bill. 64 MKs voted in favor of the bill and 51 voted against while one abstained. New policy states that, “A majority of 80 Knesset members will be required to change the status of Jerusalem or for any transfer of territories from the capital within the framework of a future diplomatic agreement.” It is important to note that, previously, a majority of only 61 MKs were required.

## **Bill Affecting West Bank Land Disputes**

On February 25, 2018, a key legislative committee advanced a bill that aims to strip the High Court of Justice of its jurisdiction to hear cases regarding land disputes in the West Bank. Instead, this proposal would require Palestinians who claim ownership of land that has been seized and built on by Israeli settlers to first petition the Jerusalem District Court before being able to advance their case.

## **Revoking Permanent Residency Status of East Jerusalem Palestinians**

On March 7, 2018, the Israeli Knesset passed a law allowing the Interior Minister to revoke the permanent residency status of Palestinians living in East Jerusalem who “engage in terror” or other “anti-Israel activities”, and any other permanent residents involved in such acts. Under this law, the state can deport anyone whose residency status is withdrawn.

## The Greater Jerusalem Bill

The Israeli Knesset passed the Annexation law that aimed to realize the Israeli claim of “Greater Jerusalem”, which include the annexation of the three settlements’ blocs surrounding Jerusalem: Giva’t Ze’ev northwest of Jerusalem, Ma’ale Adumim East of Jerusalem, and Gush Etzion Southwest of Jerusalem.

## Concluding Remarks

- In order for a viable peace process to take place, the brokerage of peace may no longer be left solely in the hands of the United States, but must include other outside parties who do not seek to gain from losses to the Palestinians.
- The continuation of settlement expansion and legalization of outposts is effectively killing the prospects of a peace deal, all the while breaking international law.
- Settlement expansion will continue without a reason to discontinue (i.e. sanctions.)
- Palestinians are being removed from their lands dunum by dunum with full Israeli jurisdiction in Area C (61% of the West Bank), under the protection of laws passed to annex further territory.
- Palestinian East Jerusalemites are in danger of eventually being expelled from Jerusalem by means of home demolitions, revocation of permanent residence cards, and redrawing the municipal boundaries to exclude areas with a high population density of Palestinians.
- Settler violence will only cease when the courts take reported cases seriously under one legal process (not separated for the Jewish population), and police are held accountable when failing to ensure a proper investigation takes place.