

END ISRAELI OCCUPATION

PEACE FOR ALL

Lobby of Parliament
Wed 28 November 2007
2–6pm Westminster
London



Isolation

Our government must end the economic and political isolation of Gaza immediately. 1.5million Palestinians in Gaza are suffering a humanitarian disaster with 87% of Gazans living below the poverty line.

International law

Our government must insist that Israel complies with international law and ends its continuing expansion of settlements on occupied Palestinian land. There are currently 500,000 Israeli settlers in the West Bank and East Jerusalem.

Illegal wall

Our government must respect the International Court of Justice advisory opinion regarding the illegal wall in the West Bank and Jerusalem and hold Israel to account. The route of the Wall is effectively annexing 10 per cent of the West Bank to Israel, leaving 49,400 Palestinians stranded between the Green Line and the wall.

Democratic principles

Our government must recognise those elected democratically by the Palestinian people and help to reconcile the differences between Fatah and Hamas. All illegally held political prisoners by both sides, especially children, must be released. An end to 40 years of occupation and a just settlement is the only way to achieve peace for both Palestinians and Israelis

Help make the change! Join the lobby and speak to your MP.



This lobby is called by the following organisations on the occasion of the UN “International Day of Solidarity with the Palestinian people”:

The Enough Coalition - including Amicus; Amos Trust; Arab Labour Group; Arab Media Watch; Association of the Palestinian Community in the UK; Bakers', Food and Allied Workers' Union; Britain-Palestine All Party Parliamentary Group; Britain Palestine Twinning Network; British Committee for Universities of Palestine; British Muslim Initiative; Council for Arab-British Understanding; Communication Workers' Union; Christian Peacemaker Teams UK; Freedom Clothing Project; Friends of Al-Aqsa; Friends of Birzeit University; Friends

of the Earth; Friends of Sabeel UK; GMB; Green Party; General Union of Palestinian Students; Interpal; Iona Community; Israeli Committee Against House Demolitions — UK; Jewish Socialists' Group; Jews Against Zionism; Jews for Boycotting Israeli Goods; Jews for Justice for Palestinians; Liberal Democrat Friends of Palestine; Liberation; Medical Aid for Palestinians; Muslim Association of Britain; Muslim Council of Britain; Muslim Parliament of Great Britain; Muslim Public Affairs Committee; National Association of British Arabs; National Union of Mineworkers; 1990 Trust; NUS Black Students' Campaign; Open Bethlehem; Palestine Solidarity Campaign; Palestinian Forum in Britain; Palestinian Return Centre; Pax Christi; Public and Commercial Services Union; Qattan Foundation; Quaker Peace and Social Witness; Scottish Episcopal Church's Justice Peace and Creation Network; Scottish Friends of Palestine; Scottish Palestinian Forum; Stop the War Coalition; Trade Union Friends of Palestine; Transport and General Workers Union; Transport Salaried Staffs' Association; UNISON; War on Want; Welfare Association; Women's International League for Peace and Freedom UK Section; Zaytoun Ltd

TO ALL PARTICIPANTS:



All participants should register with the lobby organiser **in Room W4** (turn immediately to the left after entering through St Stephen's Entrance) **before** meeting with their MP or going to Central Lobby. Please aim to be there half an hour in advance of your meeting, to register and participate in the briefing.

Briefing materials and practical advice will be available.

Please return the feedback form after your meeting to Room W2 or post to Palestine Solidarity Campaign, Box BM PSA, London WC1N 3XX.

Inside the House of Commons

- Please note that there are no cloakrooms in the House of Commons where you can leave your bags or coats.
- **You must keep your belongings with you at all times. Unattended items may be taken away by Security personnel.**
- The House of Commons is a NO SMOKING zone.
- There are restrictions on eating and drinking in the House of Commons but the Jubilee Café, located behind Westminster Hall does have a range of drinks and snacks.
- Cameras cannot be used, except in Westminster Hall.
- Stewards will be located in key positions inside Parliament and outside by the queue.
- If any-one needs a first-aider, please contact a steward or member of the House of Commons staff

GENERAL ADVICE



WHY LOBBY?

This is a vital opportunity to meet face-to-face with your MP and put forward your constructive views on how the UK Government can help to alleviate the suffering of the Palestinian people and bring a lasting peace to both Israelis and Palestinians.

HOW TO LOBBY EFFECTIVELY

- *Be as constructive as possible.* MPs say to us that in the past constituents have used the lobbies as an arena to vent anger about what Israel is doing. You need to ask them what constructive things they can do (list below).
- *Always stay calm and composed.* Even if your MP says things that you do not agree with, do don't react aggressively and be polite and tolerant. Your point comes across more effectively if you build a calm, rational argument.
- *Know what you are going to say and research.* Always make sure that everything you say is factually correct and you can back it up. If you use statistics that are exaggerated or unsubstantiated than you will immediately lose the attention of your MP.
- *Be specific and concise.* Stick to one or two major points, focus and limit your comments.
- *Use appropriate personal stories* to highlight key issues if appropriate.

Request constructive action from your MP by:

- Raising a question to the House or to the departmental offices like the Foreign and Commonwealth Office, or through committees.
- *Signing the Early Day Motions or table a Parliamentary Question.* We will provide you with relevant EDMs for your MP to demonstrate their concern. They also make a good conversation starter.
- Joining the Britain-Palestine All Party Parliamentary Group if they are not already involved.

Follow up and feedback.

Please send a written thank you letter and follow up on commitments made by you and your MP and share with us the outcome and information of the meeting.

It is very important to complete the feedback form included in this pack and return it to Room W2 on the day, or post to **Palestine Solidarity Campaign, Box BM PSA, London WC1N 3XX** . We need know which MPs were met and what commitments they made.

BACKGROUND READING



Please read the following reports if you have time

The Situation in Gaza

Gaza Humanitarian Situation Report

United Nations Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs - 6th November

http://www.ochaopt.org/documents/Gaza_Sitrep_2007_11_05.pdf

1. Karni crossing, the main crossing for commercial goods, remains closed since 13 June. On 28 October, Israel announced the permanent closure of Sufa crossing. Kerem Shalom is now the only crossing open for the movement of goods into the Gaza Strip, and its limited capacity is likely to result in a further decrease in the import of goods and medicines into Gaza.

The continuing closure of Gaza's borders is leading to a continuing contraction of the local economy, with private sector losses now reaching \$60 million in the last four months.

2. Rafah crossing, the principle entry/exit point for 1.48 million Gazans from/to the rest of the world, remains closed. **Except for a limited number of medical cases, traders and aid workers, Gazans have been unable to leave for nearly five months.**

3. The amount of **goods entering Gaza has decreased by 71%** since before the Karni closure, from an average of 253 truckloads per day in April to an average of 74 in October. Prices of commodities in the Gaza Strip continue to rise due to the limited quantity of imports and the associated decrease in the availability of certain goods.

4. An escalation in IDF activity in the Gaza Strip in the month of October resulted in an increase of conflict-related Palestinian casualties (28 deaths and 70 injuries).

5. The availability of drugs at central drug stores in the Gaza Strip has decreased. The number of drug items with zero stocks has increased in October to 91 drug items compared to 61 items in September. In local Primary Health Care (PHC) clinics, **WHO has reported zero stocks of pediatric drugs, including antibiotics and Vitamin A and D supplements, and a shortage of chronic disease drugs.**

6. During the month of October, 27 Palestinian patients out of 789 who previously received a permit from Israeli authorities for treatment in Israel and/or the West Bank were denied access at the Erez crossing.

Physicians for Human Rights: Erez Crossing Closed to Patients

15 October 2007

<http://www.phr.org.il/phr/article.asp?articleid=487&catid=41&pcat=41&lang=ENG>

According to information received by Physicians for Human Rights-Israel (PHR-Israel), Israeli military authorities at Erez Crossing have closed the passage to all but the most "severe and urgent cases". At least 87 patients in need of care unavailable in Gaza have been denied passage.

Since the only passage into Egypt has been closed since the 9th of June, the long-term significance of this measure is that **most patients will have no access to appropriate medical care in the West Bank, Egypt, Jordan, Israel, or any other country.**

On the 18th of September, 19 patients who had previously received authorization to exit Gaza via Erez Crossing arrived at the passage, only to be turned back at the last minute. On the 19th of September 31 patients were denied exit, and only 6 others, suffering from leukemia, were permitted entry. 31 other cases previously submitted for consideration by PHR-Israel are also now on hold or officially denied entry.

The patients had been referred to medical centers in the West Bank, Jordan and Israel, and have the financial means (PA referrals) to cover the costs of treatment.



Physicians for Human Rights-Israel had witnessed a tightening of regulations, delays and an increase in appeals for aid from patients even before the 18th of September, ever since the June crisis in Gaza. Limitations were recorded especially, but not exclusively, with regard to cases that posed no threat to life but endangered limbs (e.g., orthopedics and ophthalmology cases).

Erez Crossing authorities have now informed the coordination mechanisms and human rights organizations that from now on only very urgent lifesaving cases will be permitted passage.

Following recent government decisions regarding collective measures against the civilian population in Gaza, such as cutting off electricity and fuel supplies, the State declared that all but the most basic humanitarian needs would be withheld.

The Humanitarian Impact on Palestinians of Israeli Settlements and Other Infrastructure in the West Bank

United Nations Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs - July 2007

http://www.ochaopt.org/documents/TheHumanitarianImpactOfIsraeliInfrastructureTheWestBank_full.pdf

This report examines the humanitarian impact on Palestinians from the ongoing construction of settlements in the West Bank and other Israeli infrastructure, such as the Barrier and the roads that accompany them.

Selected Key Points

On Settlement Growth:

- “Israeli settlement construction in the West Bank has taken place under every government since the beginning of Israel’s occupation following the 1967 Arab-Israeli War “
- “Despite the transfer of Israeli civilians into occupied Palestinian territory (oPt) being illegal under international law, the Israeli settler population in the West Bank settlements has continued to grow steadily by around **5.5% each year.**”
- “In 2007, approximately **450,000 settlers** live in the West Bank, including East Jerusalem, alongside 2.4 million Palestinians.”
- Since the beginning of the Oslo Accords period in 1993, which left the issue of settlements to final status negotiations, the total settler population has increased by 63% The settlement population growth rate far exceeds the growth rate inside Israel. Between 2003 and 2004, for example, the settler population expanded by 4.6% compared with 1.8% inside Israel

Impact on Palestinian Land

- “**More than 38%** of the West Bank now consists of settlements, outposts, military bases and closed military areas, Israeli declared nature reserves or other related infrastructure that are off-limits or tightly controlled to Palestinians.
- “The West Bank has been dissected into dozens of enclaves by the settlements and related infrastructure. This fragmentation has negatively affected social and economic life for the vast proportion of Palestinians.”
- “In 2007, approximately 57% of the total settler population in the West Bank lived within a 10 kilometre radius of the Old City of Jerusalem, many of them inside the Israeli declared Jerusalem municipal boundary. The encircling settlements have increasingly isolated East Jerusalem, home to approximately 250,000 Palestinians, from the rest of the West Bank (Most of the settlements deeper into the central West Bank are located on hilltops affording them a commanding presence over surrounding Palestinian communities.
- Other settlements, such as those in the Jordan Valley, have large areas of agricultural land under their control



Resources

- “Palestinians compete with Israeli settlers for West Bank resources, notably limited land and water, while their freedom of access and movement is denied.”
- “Israeli per capita water consumption is more than five times higher than that of West Bank Palestinians (350 litres per person per day in Israel compared to 60 litres per person per day in the West Bank, excluding East Jerusalem). West Bank Palestinian water consumption is 40 litres less than the minimum global standards set by the World Health Organization (WHO).”
- “Mekorot, the Israeli Water Company, which sells water to Palestinian towns and public bodies, supplies an estimated 54% of all water to Palestinians in the West Bank. However, during times of shortage, such as in the summer months, the company prioritises settlements over Palestinian communities, often leaving Palestinian communities with a shortfall. In summer months, in particular, residents of a number of cities in the West Bank, such as Hebron, Bethlehem and Jenin, face water restrictions.”

Settler Roads and Freedom of Movement

- Settlements depend on their connection to each other and to Israel; they cannot exist in isolation. A network of 1,661 kms of roads, on which Israeli vehicles must travel by IDF order, links settlements, military areas and other infrastructure in the West Bank with Israel. Some roads have been newly built, while others have resulted from upgrading pre-existing primary roads.
- Via these roads Israelis move freely between the West Bank settlements and Israel. Palestinian access on to this network is restricted by a **closure regime consisting of approximately 85 checkpoints, 460 roadblocks and a permit system for Palestinian vehicles**. The IDF states that the reason for the closure regime – which was mostly implemented in the course of the second Intifada – is to reduce attacks on Israelis by Palestinian militants by limiting their ability to move freely by vehicle. In practice, these measures have enforced the status of certain West Bank roads as almost exclusively for Israeli / settler use, thereby, creating a ‘sterile’ traffic flow for Israelis accessing settlements. The impact on Palestinian life has been profound.
- The key thoroughfares throughout the West Bank on which Palestinians have traditionally depended are closed or restricted, shutting routes traditionally used for trade, and normal movement to jobs, hospitals, schools, universities.
- The World Bank notes that “in economic terms, the restrictions arising from the closure have not only increased the transaction costs but have also led to a level of uncertainty and inefficiency which has made the conduct of business difficult and therefore has stymied the growth and investment which is necessary to fuel economic revival’.
- In July 2007, approximately **100 – 120 flying checkpoints** were observed each week. Long delays are regularly reported at flying checkpoints and their unpredictable nature makes Palestinian travel plans difficult.
- Since 2000, **transport costs have nearly doubled** mostly because of delays faced at checkpoints and the more circuitous routes that trucks are being forced to take to avoid roads primarily reserved for Israeli use
- **The roads have become corridors to link settlements to Israel. They have also fragmented the West Bank, into a series of enclaves, isolating Palestinian communities from each other.** Palestinians now mostly move from one enclave to another via a network of checkpoints, alternative roads or through tunnels or bridges under roads primarily reserved for settlers. This provides a measure of transport contiguity – in the sense that enclaves are linked – but not territorial contiguity because West Bank land is divided by Israeli roads and other infrastructure. Transport contiguity may satisfy short-term humanitarian needs but cannot ultimately lead to a sustainable economy. It also does not provide the basis for a two state solution.

Settlements and the Israeli Wall

- The construction of the Barrier since 2002 has further fragmented the West Bank and has reinforced the permanence of the settlements. The route of the Barrier is determined by the settlements. The Barrier cuts deep into the West Bank, looping around the settlements, stretching 22 kms to encircle Ariel settlement at its most intrusive point. Without the settlements, the Barrier could follow the Green Line with minimal disruption to Palestinian life. An agreement may yet be reached to reverse the current expansion of settlements and address their removal.



Obstacles to Peace

- An important milestone occurred in 2005 when the Government of Israel evacuated all of the approximately 8,000 settlers from the Gaza Strip, in addition to several hundred settlers from four small settlements in the northern West Bank.
- But these steps did not address the relentless progress of the settlement enterprise over the past 40 years throughout most of the West Bank.
- Unless the problems caused by the existence and expansion of settlements are addressed, the dismal humanitarian outlook for Palestinians will intensify.
- Moreover, the socio-economic and even the territorial basis for a sustainable long-term solution will also remain elusive. As former UN Secretary-General Kofi Annan stated in his final report to the Security Council on the Middle East, settlement expansion is **“the single biggest impediment to realizing a viable Palestinian state with territorial contiguity”** .

The Humanitarian Impact of the West Bank Barrier on Palestinian Communities – East Jerusalem

UN OCHA – June 2007

<http://www.ochaopt.org/documents/Jerusalem-30July2007.pdf>

The report's findings demonstrate how the Barrier has significantly affected Palestinian life:

- “Palestinians from the West Bank require permits to visit the six specialist hospitals inside Jerusalem. The time and difficulty this entails has resulted in an up to 50% drop in the number of patients visiting these hospitals.”
- “Entire families have been divided by the Barrier. Husbands and wives are separated from each other, their children and other relatives.”
- “Palestinian Muslims and Christians can no longer freely visit religious sites in Jerusalem. Permits are needed and are increasingly difficult to obtain.”
- “School and university students struggle each day through checkpoints to reach institutions that are located on the other side of the Barrier.”
- “Entire communities, such as the 15,000 people in the villages of the Bir Nabala enclave, are totally surrounded by the Barrier. Movement in and out is through a tunnel to Ramallah which passes under a motorway restricted for Israeli vehicles only.”
“The section of the Barrier within Jerusalem governate measures 168 kilometers (km) in length. Only five kilometers of its completed length runs along the Green Line. The remainder lies inside the West Bank”
- “May 2007: 408 km of the total 721km Barrier route has been completed (56.5%) while a further 10% is under construction.”
- “Approximately 25% of the 253,000 Palestinians living in East Jerusalem have been cut off from the city by the Barrier”
- “80% of all Israeli settlers living in the West Bank now reside to the west of the Barrier. The population of the settlements and the area they cover have both expanded rapidly in East Jerusalem. In 2004, the Israeli settler population in East Jerusalem was approximately 190,000 compared to 110,000 in 1987. The area covered by the settlements has more than doubled – from 890 to 2,170 hectares in 2005.”
- “Of the 33,000 students and 2,000 teachers in East Jerusalem schools, as many as 6,000 pupils and more than 650 teachers face difficulties reaching their schools. According to the Palestinian Ministry of Education and Higher Education (MoEHE), in 2005 17% of students faced delays in reaching their schools”
- “Economic decline of East Jerusalem: Since 1994, 280 shops have closed in East Jerusalem, 50 of which were in the Old City.”
- “Unemployment in Jerusalem was approximately 19.3% in the third quarter of 2006 compared to 8.3% in Israel”
- “Ar Ram: flourishing business area: 63 out of its 110 shops closed when the Barrier was constructed along the centre of the main Jerusalem”



The Humanitarian Monitor: Palestinian Prisoners

UN OCHA – Sept 2007

http://www.ochaopt.org/documents/HM_Sep07.pdf

- In September 2007, Israel released a total of 87 Palestinian prisoners as part of a goodwill gesture to President Mahmud Abbas. Most of the prisoners were affiliated with the Fatah faction aligned to President Abbas. More than 50% of those released would have finished their sentence in 2008-2009.
- Despite these releases, an average of 112 persons in 2007 are arrested weekly by the IDF in the West Bank. This compares to 2006, when the average weekly number of arrests was 101 persons. Arrests are closely allied to the number of search campaigns conducted by the IDF, which has also increased from an average of 109 per week in 2006 to 115 in 2007. (There is also a correlation between search and arrest campaigns and the numbers of fatalities that occur. In the West Bank in 2007, death as a result of search and arrest campaigns constituted the major cause of fatalities from Israeli-Palestinian conflict-related violence.)
- Currently, there are some 10,000 Palestinians held in Israeli jails, including 96 women. There are also 840 persons held in administrative detention, that is, they are held in detention without charge or trial through administrative rather than judicial procedures. Administrative detention orders are generally issued on the basis of secret evidence which is not disclosed to the detainees or their counsel. As such, they violate the rights to due process and a fair trial guaranteed by the International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights, to which the Government of Israel is party.
- Palestinians are amongst the most highly incarcerated population in the world. The effect of having so many held in prison has had a devastating impact on family and economic life, particularly because imprisonment in Israel makes it difficult to arrange family visits. According to Article 76 of the Fourth Geneva Convention, to which the Government of Israel is party, protected persons living under occupation should serve their sentences in the occupied territory.

Palestinian children detained in Israeli prisons and detention centres

- At any given point during 2007, there have been between 328 and 384 Palestinian children held in Israeli prisons and interrogation centers in the oPt and Israel. This figure includes between 10 and 14 children being held under administrative detention. Of the detained children in 2007, 52% were being held pending determination of their cases in Israeli Military Courts, 40% were serving sentences and the remaining 8% were being detained and interrogated.
- The large majority of children are held in custody in prisons and interrogation centres inside Israel, in violation of international humanitarian law. Some children share prison cells with adult prisoners and some are held in solitary confinement. All Palestinian children are interrogated in the absence of an independent adult family member or lawyer (as recommended by the UN Standard Minimum Rules for the Administration of Juvenile Justice). Palestinian child detainees are frequently subjected to forms of ill treatment and abuse, which in cases has amounted to torture, including physical assault, various forms of deprivation and threats of physical harm -- the ultimate aim of which is to incite fear and elicit a confession.
- Upon their release by the Israeli Prison Service, Palestinian children are not offered any form of rehabilitation service that would assist their reintegration back into the community and into school. The majority are transported to an Israeli checkpoint near the prison where they are held and left to contact their families and find their own way home.

Palestinian MPs imprisoned by Israel:

Inter-Parliamentary Union Committee on Middle East (4 May 2007): <http://www.ipu.org/press-e/bali8.htm>

'the Palestinian Parliament in Ramallah was prevented from functioning and expressed alarm "that some 40 of its members were in detention in Israel, including the Speaker [of the Palestinian Legislative Council], Mr. Dweik. Moreover, checkpoints preventing travel between Gaza and the West Bank meant that members from Gaza could only participate" in parliament's debates using videoconferencing.

(From www.parliament.uk) Kim Howells MP, British Foreign Minister said in October 2006: 'Those imprisoned are important parliamentarians, with whom we may not agree – we may be vociferously opposed to what they stand for – but who have nevertheless been elected by the Palestinian people and must be able to speak on their behalf.'

FEEDBACK FORM



YOUR NAME: _____

YOUR CONTACT DETAILS: _____

MPs NAME: _____

Party: _____ Constituency: _____

Does your MP support?

Ending the economic and political isolation of Gaza: Yes No Not sure
Comments:

Calling on Israel to comply with International Law: Yes No Not sure
Comments:

Respecting the International Court of Justice's advisory opinion on the Israeli wall
Yes No Not sure
Comments:

Recognising those elected democratically by the Palestinian people Yes No Not sure
Comments:

Calling for the release of all illegally held prisoners: Yes No Not sure
Comments:

Is your MP willing to:

- Sign an EDM? YES/ NO
- Table a Parliamentary Question? YES/ NO
- Take part in a Parliamentary delegation to the OPTs? YES/ NO
- Join the Britain-Palestine All Party Group? YES/ NO
- Write to the Foreign Secretary about your concerns? YES/ NO

Additional Comments: (e.g. Has your MP visited Israel and/or the OPTs before?)

Please complete this form legibly and return to Room W2 on the day or post to **Palestine Solidarity Campaign, Box BM PSA, London WC1N 3XX** .