

Palestine: 50 Years of Occupation

The ARIJ Report

By [PNN](#)

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When the Palestinian engaged the peace process in 1993, they anticipated the emergence of their Palestinian State within five years time on the 22% of Palestine's land occupied by Israel on June 5, 1967 with East Jerusalem as its capital. It was way off the 43% designated to the Palestinians in the United Nations' proposed partition plan in 1947.

However, during the interim period which was to last 5 years and lead to the establishment of the Palestinian State; the Israelis turned the Palestinian land and communities into disconnected cantons ravaged by the frequent collective punishment of closures, house demolitions (25,000+), uprooting of trees (689,000+) and land confiscations (741,000+ dunums {286 square miles} 13%+ of the West Bank total area), which brought the numbers since 1967 to 48,000+ houses, 2.5+ million trees and 2400 square km {927 square miles} 42%+ of the West Bank total area) respectively.

Furthermore, during the long dragged peace process Israel managed to manipulate the geography of the West Bank and force realities on the ground to hinder and ultimately end the peace process. To realize its objective; Israeli managed to multiply the settlements' areas in the West Bank territory (including occupied East Jerusalem) by 185%; from 78 square km {30 square miles} in 1990 to 196.5 square km {76 square miles} in 2015 (respectively 1.2% – 3.5% of the West Bank area); and simultaneously triple the number of Israeli settlers for the same period from 240,000 to more than 763,000 in 2016; an increase by 218%.

Moreover, the Palestinian natural resources are also being exploited and manipulated by Israel; of which is the water that Israel used to as a tool to push the Palestinian farmers off their lands through systematic and calculated scarce distribution of water. In that sense; the average water supply per capita for Palestinians in the West Bank is 76 liter per day, at the same time it soars of to an average of 369 liter per day for illegal Israeli settlers.

The impact of Israeli impediments forced on the Palestinian economy in terms of direct losses or missed opportunities in 2015 exceeded 9.5 billion U.S dollars. Ultimately; the Israeli occupation of the West Bank remains the main obstacle to any Palestinian economic growth; as losses continue to accumulate by preventing Palestinians from accessing their natural resources, control of the border, hampering internal and external trade, destroying infrastructure and frustrates development attempts in area classified as "C" (61% of the West Bank total area).

A viable, contiguous Palestinian State remains a challenging concept, as Israel spared no

efforts to undermine the peace process altogether and the “two state solution” with its persistence to continue with its land seizure policy, house demolition strategy, matrix of control on movement and sustaining dependent Palestinian economy, which ultimately eradicated the essence of the entire peace process and just restructured and repositioned the presence of the Israeli Army in the Occupied Palestinian Territory.

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