

The International Community Must Bring an End to Israel's Illegal Occupation of Palestine

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Theme: [Crimes against Humanity](#), [Law and Justice](#), [Poverty & Social Inequality](#)

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Established 28 years ago by a group of prominent academics, attorneys, journalists, and Knesset members, B'Tselem, in Hebrew "in the image of," is an Israeli human rights organization which endeavors to document and educate the Israeli public and policymakers about human rights violations in the Occupied Territories, combat the phenomenon of denial prevalent among the Israeli public, and help create a human rights culture in Israel.

Independent and funded by contributions from foundations in Europe and North America, B'Tselem The Israeli Information Center for Human Rights in the Occupied Territories acts primarily to change Israeli policy in the Occupied Territories and ensure that its government, which rules the Occupied Territories, protects the human rights of residents there and complies with its obligations under international law.

Edu Montesanti speaks to Amit Gilutz, B'Tselem spokesman, on the Israeli occupation of Palestine.

"We welcome (UN) resolution 2334 [condemning the Israeli settlements, voted last December]", Amit says.

Below is the talk with B'Tselem spokesman.

Edu Montesanti: Would you please tell about *B'Tselem, The Israeli Information Center for Human Rights in the Occupied Territories*? How exactly does it work, and what have the organization got for justice and a solution towards the so long Israeli occupation of the Palestinian lands?

Amit Gilutz: [B'Tselem](#) □ *The Israel Information Center for Human Rights in the Occupied Territories*, was founded in 1989 by a group of journalists, academics, lawyers, and MK Members, during the height of the first Intifada, when there was need of accurate and verifiable information about events in the occupied territories.

Until this day we are primarily an information and research center; we document, analyze and publish violations of human rights occurring under the Israeli military occupation, now in its fiftieth year.

Our end goal is to close our offices, once the occupation □a grave and fundamental human right violation in and of itself□ends.

Edu Montesanti: How do you see the meeting between President Donald Trump and Prime-Minister Benjamin Netanyahu on February 15? “I’m looking at two-state and one-state” formulations, Mr. Trump said during a White House news conference with Mr. Netanyahu. “I like the one that both parties like. I’m very happy with the one that both parties like. I can live with either one”? Many say that President Trump has “killed” two-state solution in that speech...

Amit Gilutz: B’Tselem is not invested in a particular political formulation for ending the occupation, so long as it upholds the human rights and dignity of all people. We follow the developments and statements of the Trump administration and fear that the same trends we’ve been seeing will continue or escalate by an emboldened extreme right Israeli government.

2016 for example, saw a [record high number of home demolitions](#) in the West Bank and East Jerusalem, and from what we are seeing currently, 2017 is on the same path or worse, with [whole communities facing the risk of expulsion](#), to make room for Israeli settlements’ expansion.

Regardless of Trump however, the Israeli policy of settlement construction and expansion, while fragmenting Palestinian space into 165 enclaves that cannot thrive, and an ongoing occupation not designed to ever end, has been wholly consistent.

Edu Montesanti: What do you think of the United Nations Security Council Resolution 2334 voted on December 23 last year, condemning the Israeli settlements as a flagrant violation of international law and a major impediment to the achievement of a two-state solution?

Amit Gilutz: [We welcome resolution 2334](#) and hope it will be followed up by decisive action from the international community to bring an end to the occupation.

There’s a huge power disparity between Israel and the Palestinians, and lack of political will on part of Israel to change that brings not simply stagnation, but rather, the occupation becoming more and more entrenched as time goes by.

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