

3. General debate.
4. Processes and causes of desertification.
5. Plan of action to combat desertification.
6. Credentials of representatives to the Conference: report of the Credentials Committee.
7. Adoption of the report of the Conference.

31/109. Habitat: United Nations Conference on Human Settlements

The General Assembly,

Recalling its resolutions 3001 (XXVII) of 15 December 1972, 3128 (XXVIII) of 13 December 1973, 3325 (XXIX) of 16 December 1974 and 3438 (XXX) of 9 December 1975 on the preparations for Habitat: United Nations Conference on Human Settlements,

Considering that solutions to human settlements problems around the world are urgently required,

Bearing in mind the Declaration and the Programme of Action on the Establishment of a New International Economic Order¹⁵ and the Charter of Economic Rights and Duties of States¹⁶ and the importance of the International Development Strategy for the Second United Nations Development Decade of improving human settlements around the world as a major component in improving the quality of life,

Noting that Habitat: United Nations Conference on Human Settlements was held at Vancouver from 31 May to 11 June 1976:

(a) To stimulate innovation, serve as a means for the exchange of experience and ensure the widest possible dissemination of new ideas and technologies in the field of human settlements,

(b) To formulate and make recommendations for an international programme in this field which will assist Governments,

(c) To stimulate interest in developing appropriate financial systems and institutions for human settlements among those making financial resources available and those in a position to use such resources, considering that the most appropriate and effective action for dealing with human settlements problems is action at the national level, but that such action will require assistance and co-operation between and among all States,

1. Expresses its appreciation and thanks to the Government of Canada for the excellent organization, facilities and generous hospitality provided for Habitat: United Nations Conference on Human Settlements;

2. Expresses appreciation to the Governing Council of the United Nations Environment Programme for the guidance as well as the generous support it provided for the Conference;

3. Takes note of the report of the Conference, including the Vancouver Declaration on Human Settlements, 1976,¹⁷ the recommendations for national ac-

tion¹⁸ and the resolutions for international co-operation,¹⁹

4. Commends the Secretary-General of the Conference on the successful preparation and organization of the Conference;

5. Urges the Governments of all Member States to consider, on a priority basis, the recommendations for national action contained in the report and to take those recommendations into account when reviewing their existing policies and strategies in the field of human settlements;

6. Calls upon the regional commissions and urges all other international organizations within and outside the United Nations system to take intensified and sustained action in support of national efforts, including exchanges of information and assistance, at the request of Governments, in the formulation, design, implementation and evaluation of projects to improve human settlements;

7. Requests the Secretary-General to convene regional meetings, as appropriate, within the framework of the regional commissions, to establish guidelines for the co-ordination, within each region, of action to be taken in order to deal with human settlements and to report to the General Assembly on the results of their deliberations no later than at the thirty-second session;

8. Takes note of the notes by the Secretary-General transmitting reports on the regional meetings already held within the Economic Commission for Latin America and the Economic Commission for Europe.²⁰

*101st plenary meeting
16 December 1976*

31/110. Living conditions of the Palestinian people

The General Assembly,

Recalling the Vancouver Declaration on Human Settlements, 1976,²¹ and the recommendations for national action²² adopted by Habitat: United Nations Conference on Human Settlements, held at Vancouver from 31 May to 11 June 1976,

Recalling also resolution 3 of the Conference²³ on living conditions of the Palestinians in occupied territories, and Economic and Social Council resolution 2026 (LXI) of 4 August 1976,

Recalling further the recommendation adopted at the Regional Preparatory Conference for Asia and the Pacific, held at Teheran from 14 to 19 June 1975,

1. Requests the Secretary-General, in collaboration with the relevant United Nations organs and specialized agencies, to prepare and submit to the General Assembly at its thirty-second session a report on the living conditions of the Palestinian people in the occupied territories;

¹⁸ *Ibid.*, chap. II.

¹⁹ *Ibid.*, chap. III.

²⁰ A/C.2/31/5, A/C.2/31/9.

²¹ *Report of Habitat: United Nations Conference on Human Settlements* (United Nations publication, Sales No. E.76.IV.7 and corrigendum), chap. I.

²² *Ibid.*, chap. II.

²³ *Ibid.*, chap. III.

¹⁵ Resolutions 3201 (S-VI) and 3202 (S-VI); see also resolution 3362 (S-VII) entitled "Development and international economic co-operation".

¹⁶ Resolution 3281 (XXIX).

¹⁷ *Report of Habitat: United Nations Conference on Human Settlements* (United Nations publication, Sales No. E.76.IV.7 and corrigendum), chap. I.

2. *Requests* the Secretary-General, in preparing the above-mentioned report, to consult and co-operate with the Palestine Liberation Organization, the representative of the Palestinian people;

3. *Urges* all States to co-operate with the Secretary-General in this matter.

*101st plenary session
16 December 1976*

31/111. Report of the Governing Council of the United Nations Environment Programme

The General Assembly,

Having considered the report of the Governing Council of the United Nations Environment Programme on the work of its fourth session,²⁴ and the statement of the Executive Director introducing the report,²⁵

Recalling its resolution 2997 (XXVII) of 15 December 1972,

Recalling also the Declaration and the Programme of Action on the Establishment of a New International Economic Order²⁶ as well as the Charter of Economic Rights and Duties of States,²⁷ which laid down the foundations of the new international economic order,

Recalling further Economic and Social Council resolution 2013 (LXI) of 3 August 1976 relating to the report of the Governing Council of the United Nations Environment Programme on its fourth session,

Reaffirming that there can be no sustained development or meaningful growth without a clear commitment at the same time to preserving the environment and promoting the rational use of natural resources, with an eye to the needs of future generations,

1. *Takes note with satisfaction* of the report of the Governing Council of the United Nations Environment Programme on the work of its fourth session;

2. *Endorses* paragraph 3 of Economic and Social Council resolution 2013 (LXI) inviting attention to decision 55 (IV) of 13 April 1976 of the Governing Council,²⁸ concerning the active participation of the United Nations Environment Programme in the preparations for the United Nations Water Conference;

3. *Reaffirms* the belief expressed by the Governing Council in section III, paragraphs 1 and 2, of its decision 47 (IV) of 14 April 1976²⁸ that the environment should be a major consideration in international discussions on development;

4. *Notes with satisfaction* the report of the Executive Director on the status of the Fund of the United Nations Environment Programme²⁹ and urges Governments to extend their continuing financial support to the Fund;

5. *Notes* the report of the Secretary-General transmitting the interim report of the Executive Director

²⁴ *Official Records of the General Assembly, Thirty-first Session, Supplement No. 25 (A/31/25).*

²⁵ *Ibid.*, *Thirty-first Session, Second Committee*, 19th meeting, paras. 1-20.

²⁶ Resolutions 3201 (S-VI) and 3202 (S-VI).

²⁷ Resolution 3281 (XXIX).

²⁸ See *Official Records of the General Assembly, Thirty-first Session, Supplement No. 25 (A/31/25)*, annex I.

²⁹ UNEP/GC.57 and Corr.1.

on the study of the problem of the material remnants of war, particularly mines, and their effect on the environment³⁰ and requests the Governing Council to ensure its completion, taking into account the views expressed in the course of the consideration of this matter;

6. *Notes* the report of the Secretary-General on international conventions and protocols in the field of the environment³¹ and reiterates the concern expressed in General Assembly resolution 3436 (XXX) of 9 December 1975 that existing international conventions and protocols in the field of the environment have not yet received the wide acceptance and application they deserve.

*101st plenary meeting
16 December 1976*

31/112. Institutional arrangements for international environmental co-operation

The General Assembly,

Recalling its resolution 2997 (XXVII) of 15 December 1972, particularly section IV thereof, in which it decided to review as appropriate, at the thirty-first session, the institutional arrangements for international environmental co-operation,

Taking note of decision 78 (IV) of 14 April 1976 of the Governing Council of the United Nations Environment Programme,³²

Recalling that in its resolution 3362 (S-VII) of 16 September 1975 it established the *Ad Hoc* Committee on the Restructuring of the Economic and Social Sectors of the United Nations System,

1. *Endorses* the view of the Governing Council of the United Nations Environment Programme that the institutional arrangements for international environmental co-operation, as stipulated in General Assembly resolution 2997 (XXVII), namely, the Governing Council of the United Nations Environment Programme, the environment secretariat, the Fund of the United Nations Environment Programme and the Environment Co-ordination Board, appear adequate and sound;

2. *Endorses also* the view expressed by the Governing Council in its decision 78 B (IV) that, in any decision about the restructuring of the economic and social sectors of the United Nations system, the following elements relating to the place of environmental considerations within the system should be observed, strengthened and given institutional visibility:

The United Nations system should maintain, within a clearly identified institutional arrangement focused on the essential catalytic and co-ordinating role in the field of the environment, the capacity:

(a) To take responsibility for environmental issues of a global nature;

(b) To provide guidance and leadership in international environmental affairs;

(c) To offer suitable forums and facilities for treaty-making in the field of the environment at the global and regional levels;

³⁰ A/31/210.

³¹ A/31/211.

³² See *Official Records of the General Assembly, Thirty-first Session, Supplement No. 25 (A/31/25)*, annex I.

32/169. Implementation of the recommendations of the United Nations Conference on Desertification with respect to financial and technical assistance to the least developed among the developing countries

The General Assembly,

Taking note of the resolutions adopted by the United Nations Conference on Desertification, held at Nairobi from 29 August to 9 September 1977,¹⁰¹

Recognizing that desertification constitutes a worldwide economic and social problem,

Reaffirming the cardinal principle of the permanent sovereignty of States over their natural resources,

Bearing in mind resolution 2 of 9 September 1977 adopted by the United Nations Conference on Desertification, in which the Conference recognized that the least developed among the developing countries with limited resources at their disposal were in need of immediate financial and technical assistance from the United Nations, the specialized agencies and other organizations within the United Nations system,

Taking note of resolution 98 (IV) of 31 May 1976 of the United Nations Conference on Trade and Development,¹⁰²

1. *Recommends* the speedy implementation of recommendation 28 of the United Nations Conference on Desertification with respect to financial and technical assistance to the least developed countries;¹⁰³

2. *Urges* the United Nations and its Member States, the specialized agencies and international and regional financial institutions to ensure the implementation of the recommendations of the United Nations Conference on Desertification in favour of those countries by extending additional international and bilateral assistance;

3. *Requests* the Secretary-General to report to the General Assembly at its thirty-third session on the implementation of the present resolution.

*107th plenary meeting
19 December 1977*

32/170. Measures to be taken for the benefit of the Sudano-Sahelian region

The General Assembly,

Considering the Plan of Action to Combat Desertification and the relevant resolutions and recommendations adopted by the United Nations Conference on Desertification, held at Nairobi from 29 August to 9 September 1977,¹⁰⁴

Bearing in mind the resolutions and recommendations of the United Nations concerning the drought in the Sahel and the implementation of the medium-term and long-term programme for the recovery and rehabilitation of the region,

Aware of the particular seriousness of desertification in the Sudano-Sahelian region and of the recurrent critical situations resulting from it, which hamper the economic and social development of the region and have particularly adverse effects on the way of life of the population,

Noting, in particular, the harmful effects of the particularly low level of rainfall in the region,

1. *Stresses* the need for the immediate implementation in the Sudano-Sahelian region of the Plan of Action to Combat Desertification and of the relevant resolutions adopted by the United Nations Conference on Desertification;

2. *Invites* the Governing Council of the United Nations Environment Programme to consider at its sixth session, on the basis of a report by the Executive Director of the Programme which will take account of the role and activities of the competent existing organs in the region, measures to improve institutional arrangements in the Sudano-Sahelian region, including the establishment of a subregional office of the Programme for the purpose of supporting efforts undertaken at the national and regional levels by the countries concerned to combat desertification and of encouraging and co-ordinating, in co-operation with competent existing organs, assistance from developed countries, multilateral financial institutions, intergovernmental organizations and non-governmental donors;

3. *Further invites* the Governing Council to include in its agenda, when it considers the implementation of the Plan of Action to Combat Desertification, an item concerning measures and modes of action for implementing projects and programmes to combat desertification in the Sudano-Sahelian region.

*107th plenary meeting
19 December 1977*

32/171. Living conditions of the Palestinian people

The General Assembly,

Recalling the Vancouver Declaration on Human Settlements, 1976,¹⁰⁵ and the relevant recommendations for national action¹⁰⁶ adopted by Habitat: United Nations Conference on Human Settlements, held at Vancouver from 31 May to 11 June 1976,

Recalling also resolution 3 on the living conditions of the Palestinians in occupied territories, as contained in the recommendations of the Conference for international co-operation,¹⁰⁷ and Economic and Social Council resolution 2100 (LXIII) of 3 August 1977,

Recalling General Assembly resolution 31/110 of 16 December 1976,

1. *Takes note* of the report of the Secretary-General on the living conditions of the Palestinian people in the occupied territories¹⁰⁸ and expresses the view that there is need for further analysis in order to meet fully the objectives of General Assembly resolution 31/110;

2. *Requests* therefore the Secretary-General, in collaboration with the relevant United Nations organs and

¹⁰¹ See A/CONF.74/36, chap. II.

¹⁰² See *Proceedings of the United Nations Conference on Trade and Development, Fourth Session*, vol. I, *Report and Annexes* (United Nations publication, Sales No. E.76.II.D.10 and corrigendum), part one, sect. A.

¹⁰³ See A/CONF.74/36, chap. I.

¹⁰⁴ *Ibid.*, chaps. I and II.

¹⁰⁵ *Report of Habitat: United Nations Conference on Human Settlements* (United Nations publication, Sales No. E.76.IV.7 and corrigendum), chap. I.

¹⁰⁶ *Ibid.*, chap. II.

¹⁰⁷ *Ibid.*, chap. III.

¹⁰⁸ A/32/228.

specialized agencies, particularly the United Nations Relief and Works Agency for Palestine Refugees in the Near East and the Economic Commission for Western Asia, to prepare and submit to the General Assembly at its thirty-third session a comprehensive and analytical report on the social and economic impact of the Israeli occupation on the living conditions of the Palestinian people in the occupied territories;

3. *Requests* the Secretary-General, in preparing the above-mentioned report, to consult and co-operate with the Palestine Liberation Organization, the representative of the Palestinian people;

4. *Urges* all States to co-operate with the Secretary-General in the preparation of the report.

*107th plenary meeting
19 December 1977*

32/172. United Nations Conference on Desertification

The General Assembly,

Recalling its resolutions 3201 (S-VI) and 3202 (S-VI) of 1 May 1974 containing the Declaration and the Programme of Action on the Establishment of a New International Economic Order, 3281 (XXIX) of 12 December 1974 containing the Charter of Economic Rights and Duties of States and 3362 (S-VII) of 16 September 1975 on development and International economic co-operation,

Recalling further its resolution 3337 (XXIX) of 17 December 1974, in which it decided to convene the United Nations Conference on Desertification,

Taking note of the report of the Secretary-General on the results of the Conference,¹⁰⁹

1. *Approves* the report of the United Nations Conference on Desertification, held at Nairobi from 29 August to 9 September 1977;¹¹⁰

2. *Expresses its gratitude* to the Government and people of Kenya for acting as host to the Conference;

3. *Expresses its appreciation* to the Secretary-General of the Conference for its efficient preparation and organization;

4. *Calls upon* all Governments to consider, on a priority basis, the recommendations for national action contained in section IV of the Plan of Action to Combat Desertification¹¹¹ and, where necessary, the desirability of establishing a national authority to co-ordinate, consolidate and implement national anti-desertification action programmes;

5. *Recommends* that subregional co-operation be initiated or intensified, as considered necessary, among countries affected by desertification, with the required assistance from the United Nations Environment Programme and other organizations concerned, with a view to formulating specific joint programmes and requests for development assistance for implementation of the Plan of Action;

6. *Requests* the regional commissions to undertake intensified and sustained action in support of national efforts to combat desertification, to assist Governments,

at their request, in the implementation of the Plan of Action to Combat Desertification and to convene as appropriate, in co-operation with interested Governments and regional organizations, intergovernmental regional meetings, technical workshops and seminars to consider the immediate implementation of the recommendations contained in section V of the Plan of Action;

7. *Requests* the organs, organizations and other bodies of the United Nations system to support international action to combat desertification within the context of the Plan of Action;

8. *Decides* to entrust the Governing Council and the Executive Director of the United Nations Environment Programme, as well as the Environment Co-ordination Board, with the responsibility of following up and co-ordinating the implementation of the Plan of Action, in accordance with recommendation 27 thereof,¹¹² and requests the Governing Council to report, through the Economic and Social Council, to the General Assembly at its thirty-third session and every two years thereafter;

9. *Calls upon* all countries, in particular developed countries, as well as multilateral financial institutions and non-governmental donors, to provide and increase their assistance to countries suffering from desertification, especially for the financing of their subregional and regional programmes and projects within appropriate consortium arrangements, such as those pertaining to the Sahel green belt, and urges developing countries to give due priority to desertification problems in their development assistance requests;

10. *Authorizes* the Executive Director to convene immediately a consultative group, which would meet as and when required, comprising representatives from the organizations referred to in paragraph 7 above, such other organizations as might be required, donor countries, multilateral financial agencies as well as developing countries having a substantial interest in combating desertification, to assist in mobilizing resources for the activities undertaken within the framework of implementing the Plan of Action;

11. *Endorses* in principle the creation of a special account within the United Nations for implementing the Plan of Action;

12. *Requests* the Secretary-General to prepare and submit a study on the establishment and operation of such an account to the General Assembly at its thirty-third session, through the Governing Council and the Economic and Social Council;

13. *Invites* the Governing Council to have prepared, by a small group of high-level specialists in the international financing of projects and programmes, a study of additional measures and means of financing for the implementation of the Plan of Action, and to submit a final report on the subject of additional measures of financing to the General Assembly at its thirty-third session, through the Economic and Social Council;

14. *Requests* the Secretary-General to approach Member States and competent organizations and bodies within the United Nations system, as well as the scientific institutions concerned outside the system, for further research, development and refinement of the data pertaining to desertification, in order to close any

¹⁰⁹ A/32/257 and Corr.1.

¹¹⁰ A/CONF.74/36.

¹¹¹ *Ibid.*, chap. I.

¹¹² *Ibid.*, chap. I, sect. VII.

Nations University and requests the Secretary-General of the United Nations and the Director-General of the United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization, in consultation with the Rector and the Council of the University, to study ways and means of promoting the awareness and understanding of the programmes and activities of the University with a view to establishing a more stable financial situation and thereby strengthening the University, and to report to the General Assembly at its thirty-fourth session;

5. *Urges* the Secretary-General of the United Nations and the Director-General of the United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization as well as the Rector of the United Nations University to continue to intensify their efforts to obtain financial support for the University from all possible sources;

6. *Appeals* to all Member States to take cognizance of the achievements of the United Nations University, particularly in relation to the developing countries, during its first three years and to make substantial contributions to the Endowment Fund and/or to specific programmes of the University so that its work can go forward successfully.

*87th plenary meeting
18 December 1978*

33/109. Proposal for the establishment of a University for Peace

The General Assembly,

Noting that the President of the Republic of Costa Rica has submitted for the consideration of the General Assembly at its thirty-third session a proposal for the establishment of a University for Peace, as a specialized international institute for post-graduate studies related to peace, within the system of the United Nations University, and has offered it to the international community through the United Nations,⁵⁴

Bearing in mind that the Government of Costa Rica has not only offered preliminary plans and designs for the proposed University for Peace and the headquarters and land for the campus of that institution but has also made every effort to finance it outside the United Nations and the United Nations University so that it will not constitute a financial burden for either the Organization or the Member States,

Considering that both its resolution 2951 (XXVII) of 11 December 1972, by which it established the United Nations University, and the Charter of the United Nations University, adopted in resolution 3081 (XXVIII) of 6 December 1973, provided expressly for the establishment of a decentralized system of affiliated institutions, integrated into the world university community, devoted to action-oriented research into the pressing global problems of human survival, development and welfare that are the concern of the United Nations and its agencies, and to the post-graduate training of young scholars and research workers for the benefit of the world community,

1. *Takes note with appreciation* of the proposal submitted by the President of the Republic of Costa Rica for the establishment of a University for Peace

⁵⁴ *Official Records of the General Assembly, Thirty-third Session, Plenary Meetings*, 11th meeting, paras. 106-122.

within the system of the United Nations University and of his offer to the world community;

2. *Requests* the Secretary-General to transmit the text of that proposal to Member States, the United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization and the Rector and Council of the United Nations University and to any other agencies he may deem appropriate, so that they may communicate their views on it to him;

3. *Further requests* the Secretary-General to bring those views to the attention of all Member States and interested specialized agencies and to submit a report on the matter, through the Economic and Social Council, to the General Assembly at its thirty-fourth session.

*87th plenary meeting
18 December 1978*

33/110. Living conditions of the Palestinian people

The General Assembly,

Recalling the Vancouver Declaration on Human Settlements, 1976,⁵⁵ and the relevant recommendations for national action⁵⁶ adopted by Habitat: United Nations Conference on Human Settlements,

Recalling also resolution 3, entitled "Living conditions of the Palestinians in occupied territories", contained in the recommendations for international co-operation adopted by the Conference,⁵⁷ and Economic and Social Council resolutions 2026 (LXI) of 4 August 1976 and 2100 (LXIII) of 3 August 1977,

Recalling General Assembly resolutions 31/110 of 16 December 1976 and 32/171 of 19 December 1977,

1. *Takes note* of the report of the Secretary-General on the living conditions of the Palestinian people in the occupied Arab territories⁵⁸ and notes that it has not been possible to prepare the full report called for in General Assembly resolution 32/171 in time for submission to the Assembly at its thirty-third session;

2. *Requests*, therefore, the Secretary-General, in collaboration with the relevant United Nations organs and specialized agencies, particularly the United Nations Relief and Works Agency for Palestine Refugees in the Near East, the Economic Commission for Western Asia and the Special Committee to Investigate Israeli Practices Affecting the Human Rights of the Population of the Occupied Territories, to prepare and submit to the General Assembly at its thirty-fourth session a comprehensive and analytical report on the social and economic impact of the Israeli occupation on the living conditions of the Palestinian people in the occupied Arab territories;

3. *Also requests* the Secretary-General, in preparing the above-mentioned report, to consult and co-operate with the Palestine Liberation Organization, the representative of the Palestinian people;

⁵⁵ *Report of Habitat: United Nations Conference on Human Settlements, Vancouver, 31 May-11 June 1976* (United Nations publication, Sales No. E.76.IV.7 and corrigendum), chap. I.

⁵⁶ *Ibid.*, chap. II.

⁵⁷ *Ibid.*, chap. III.

⁵⁸ A/33/354.

4. *Urges* all States to co-operate with the Secretary-General in the preparation of the report.

*87th plenary meeting
18 December 1978*

33/111. International co-operation in the field of human settlements

The General Assembly,

Recalling its resolutions 3201 (S-VI) and 3202 (S-VI) of 1 May 1974 containing the Declaration and the Programme of Action on the Establishment of a New International Economic Order, 3281 (XXIX) of 12 December 1974 containing the Charter of Economic Rights and Duties of States and 3362 (S-VII) of 16 September 1975 on development and international economic co-operation,

Recalling also its resolutions 32/162 and 32/173 of 19 December 1977, 2718 (XXV) of 15 December 1970, 3001 (XXVII) of 15 December 1972 and 3327 (XXIX) of 16 December 1974,

Having considered the report of the Commission on Human Settlements on its first session,⁵⁹ the report of the Secretary-General on specific measures to meet the need for a decent living environment for the most vulnerable groups of society,⁶⁰ the report of the Economic and Social Council on its organizational session for 1978 and its first and second regular sessions of 1978⁶¹ and Council resolution 1978/66 of 4 August 1978,

Noting with regret that the transfer of posts and resources to the United Nations Centre for Human Settlements (Habitat) as described in General Assembly resolution 32/162 has not yet been implemented,

Welcoming the appointment of the Executive Director of the Centre,

Noting with satisfaction the statement of the Executive Director,⁶² in which he set out his approach to initiating urgently needed action in the field of human settlements,

1. *Requests* the Secretary-General to ensure the immediate transfer to the United Nations Centre for Human Settlements (Habitat) of:

(a) The posts and resources described in section III, paragraph 3, of General Assembly resolution 32/162;

(b) The mandate and responsibility for all those field projects and operational activities relating to human settlements previously undertaken by the Secretariat units referred to in section III, paragraph 3, of resolution 32/162;

2. *Urges* the Executive Director of the Centre:

(a) To integrate and consolidate expeditiously all activities of the new Centre, including the establishment of an appropriate organizational structure;

(b) To continue urgently his discussions with the executive secretaries of the regional commissions, as

proposed in paragraph 31 of the report of the Commission on Human Settlements,⁶³ in order to provide a basis for the identification of posts and resources to be assigned to the regions, as set out in section III, paragraph 8, and section IV, paragraph 6, of resolution 32/162, and to report thereon to the Commission at its second session;

(c) To contact various institutions, organizations and countries with a view to mobilizing voluntary financial contributions to the Centre, including the United Nations Habitat and Human Settlements Foundation, and increasing the activities of the Centre;

3. *Calls upon* all States to co-operate with the Executive Director in implementing the programme for the current biennium, including related operational activities, and particularly calls upon the developed countries to increase their voluntary contributions for human settlements activities, especially for those activities directed towards fulfilling the objectives of the United Nations Habitat and Human Settlements Foundation, as now incorporated into the Centre, with a view to achieving the \$50 million target for the years 1978-1981;

4. *Requests* the Commission on Human Settlements at its second session, to be held at Nairobi in March and April 1979, to examine, on the basis of the integrated programme of work of the Centre, the total resources available to the Centre in order to enable it to fulfil its mandate set out in General Assembly resolution 32/162, and to submit a comprehensive report to the Assembly at its thirty-fourth session through the Economic and Social Council at its second regular session of 1979;

5. *Further requests* the Commission on Human Settlements at its second session to examine the resources available to the United Nations Habitat and Human Settlements Foundation, as now incorporated into the Centre, in the light of pledges for 1979 made at the 1978 United Nations Pledging Conference for Development Activities on 7 November 1978 and of contributions made subsequently and, on the basis of proposals to be submitted by the Executive Director, to submit recommendations to the General Assembly for consideration at its thirty-fourth session.

*87th plenary meeting
18 December 1978*

33/122. World Tourism Organization

The General Assembly,

Recalling its resolution 32/157 of 19 December 1977 concerning the World Tourism Organization,

Noting with satisfaction the interim report prepared by the World Tourism Organization and circulated under a note by the Secretary-General⁶³ in response to paragraph 1 of that resolution,

Further noting the work accomplished by the World Tourism Organization since its establishment in the light of its central role in the field of tourism and the further steps which it proposes to take in this regard, especially the operational activities for the promotion of tourism, in particular for the benefit of developing countries,

⁵⁹ *Official Records of the General Assembly, Thirty-third Session, Supplement No. 8 (A/33/8).*

⁶⁰ E/1978/91 and Add.1.

⁶¹ *Official Records of the General Assembly, Thirty-third Session, Supplement No. 3 (A/33/3), chap. IV, sect. I.*

⁶² *Ibid.*, *Thirty-third Session, Second Committee, 24th meeting, paras. 24-40.*

⁶³ E/1978/98.

34/112. United Nations University

The General Assembly,

Recalling its resolutions 2951 (XXVII) of 11 December 1972, 3081 (XXVIII) of 6 December 1973, 3313 (XXIX) of 14 December 1974, 3439 (XXX) of 9 December 1975, 31/117 and 31/118 of 16 December 1976, 32/54 of 8 December 1977 and 33/108 of 18 December 1978,

Having considered the report of the Council of the United Nations University on the work of the University⁵⁹ and the note by the Secretary-General, by which he and the Director-General of the United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization transmitted the report on fund-raising efforts for the University,⁶⁰

Noting decision 5.2.4 of 11 October 1979 adopted by the Executive Board of the United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization at its one hundred and eighth session, in which the Board, *inter alia*, noted with satisfaction the expansion of the activities of the United Nations University in general and the development of interprogramme projects in particular, emphasized the need for strengthening further co-operation with the agencies of the United Nations system, particularly the United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization, with a view to avoiding duplication and assuring complementarity between the respective activities, encouraged the University to enhance its distinctiveness through developing specific approaches for the implementation of its programme, affirmed its conviction that the growing activities of the University required and deserved greater financial support than it had so far received and reiterated its appeal to Member States to contribute generously to the University Endowment Fund and, additionally or alternatively, to make special contributions for research and training activities,

1. *Notes with satisfaction* that the research and advanced training activities of the United Nations University have made substantial progress and achieved increasing distinctiveness in the three priority areas—world hunger, human and social development and use and management of natural resources—and also in the development of interprogramme projects;

2. *Welcomes* the active participation of the United Nations University in the United Nations Conference on Science and Technology for Development and encourages the University to continue to intensify its efforts to concern itself with major activities taking place in the United Nations system and thereby further develop its co-operative and co-ordinated relationships with relevant agencies and bodies of the system;

3. *Recognizes* that the major activities of the United Nations University are especially concerned with the problems and institutions in developing countries and supports the University's endeavours to ensure broader geographical coverage in its activities;

4. *Notes* that, while gratifying progress in fund-raising has been made during the past year, the results have not yet proved sufficient to support the programmes of the United Nations University at an adequate level;

5. *Notes with satisfaction* that the report transmitted by the Secretary-General of the United Nations and the Director-General of the United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization⁶⁰ on the question of

ways and means of promoting the awareness and understanding of the programmes and activities of the United Nations University, with a view to establishing a more stable financial situation, provides promising suggestions for overcoming difficulties confronting the University in this area which require careful study;

6. *Invites* the Council of the United Nations University to consider the valuable suggestions and recommendations contained in the above-mentioned report and to submit its findings and, if any, opinions to the General Assembly at its thirty-fifth session for its further consideration;

7. *Urges* the Secretary-General of the United Nations and the Director-General of the United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization, as well as the Rector of the United Nations University, to increase their efforts to obtain financial support for the University from all possible sources;

8. *Appeals* to all Member States to take cognizance of the achievements of the United Nations University in the important areas of its three programmes and to make substantial contributions to the University Endowment Fund and/or to specific programmes of the University, so that its work can continue to make steady progress.

*104th plenary meeting
14 December 1979*

34/113. Living conditions of the Palestinian people

The General Assembly,

Recalling the Vancouver Declaration on Human Settlements, 1976,⁶¹ and the relevant recommendations for national action⁶² adopted by Habitat: United Nations Conference on Human Settlements,

Recalling also resolution 3, entitled "Living conditions of the Palestinians in occupied territories", contained in the recommendations for international co-operation adopted by the Conference,⁶³ and Economic and Social Council resolutions 2026 (LXI) of 4 August 1976 and 2100 (LXIII) of 3 August 1977,

Recalling its resolutions 31/110 of 16 December 1976, 32/171 of 19 December 1977 and 33/110 of 18 December 1978,

1. *Takes note* of the report of the Secretary-General on the living conditions of the Palestinian people in the occupied Arab territories⁶⁴ and notes that, although it contains many relevant facts, it has not been sufficiently analytical;

2. *Requests*, therefore, the Secretary-General, in collaboration with the relevant United Nations organs and specialized agencies, particularly the United Nations Relief and Works Agency for Palestine Refugees in the Near East, the Economic Commission for Western Asia and the Special Committee to Investigate Israeli Practices Affecting the Human Rights of the Population of the Occupied Territories, to prepare and submit to the General Assembly at its thirty-fifth session a comprehensive and analytical report on the social and economic impact of the Israeli occupation on the living conditions of the Palestinian people in the occupied Arab territories;

⁵⁹ *Official Records of the General Assembly, Thirty-fourth Session, Supplement No. 31 (A/34/31 and Corr.1).*

⁶⁰ A/34/654.

⁶¹ *Report of Habitat: United Nations Conference on Human Settlements, Vancouver, 31 May-11 June 1976* (United Nations publication, Sales No. E.76.IV.7 and corrigendum), chap. I.

⁶² *Ibid.*, chap. II.

⁶³ *Ibid.*, chap. III.

⁶⁴ A/34/536 and Corr.1.

3. *Also requests* the Secretary-General, in preparing the above-mentioned report, to consult and co-operate with the Palestine Liberation Organization, the representative of the Palestinian people;

4. *Urges* all States to co-operate with the Secretary-General in the preparation of the report.

*104th plenary meeting
14 December 1979*

34/114. Global report on human settlements and periodic reports on international co-operation and assistance on human settlements

The General Assembly,

Recalling its resolution 2598 (XXIV) of 16 December 1969, in which it directed the Secretary-General to prepare a comprehensive housing survey every five years,

Recalling Economic and Social Council resolution 976 G (XXXVI) of 1 August 1963, in which the Council requested the Secretary-General to prepare, with the co-operation of the specialized agencies, regional commissions, international financial institutions and governmental agencies, a biennial report on the level and kind of official assistance and international aid given to developing countries in the field of housing, building and planning,

1. *Decides* that the quinquennial housing survey called for by the General Assembly in its resolution 2598 (XXIV) should become the "Global report on human settlements" and should be issued every five years, according to the objectives, format and contents set out in paragraphs 10 to 20 of the report of the Executive Director of the United Nations Centre for Human Settlements (Habitat);⁶⁵

2. *Requests* the Executive Director of the United Nations Centre for Human Settlements to undertake the preparation of a biennial report in 1982, beginning with an interim report in 1981, on the following subjects:

(a) Financial and other assistance provided to and among developing countries for human settlements, and the human settlements activities of the United Nations system, according to the objectives, format and contents set out in sections II and III of the report of the Executive Director,⁶⁶ as modified by the Commission on Human Settlements;⁶⁶

(b) Activities and collaboration between the Centre and non-governmental organizations;

(c) Human settlements activities of intergovernmental organizations outside the United Nations system and co-operation between them and the Centre;

3. *Urges* all Member States to provide the necessary information for the preparation of the above-mentioned reports;

4. *Calls upon* the Secretariat, particularly the Department of International Economic and Social Affairs and the Department of Technical Co-operation for Development, the regional commissions, the specialized agencies and all other relevant bodies of the United Nations system to provide the necessary information for the preparation of the above-mentioned reports and to collaborate with the Centre in their preparation;

5. *Invites* organizations working in the field of human settlements, including intergovernmental organi-

zations outside the United Nations system and non-governmental organizations, to collaborate with the United Nations Centre for Human Settlements in the preparation of those reports;

6. *Requests* the Executive Director of the United Nations Centre for Human Settlements, in consultation with the relevant bodies of the United Nations system, to explore the establishment of efficient mechanisms for regular and systematic reporting and consultations for the above-mentioned reports.

*104th plenary meeting
14 December 1979*

34/115. United Nations Audio-Visual Information Centre on Human Settlements (Vision Habitat)

The General Assembly,

Recalling its resolution 31/115 of 16 December 1976, by which it established the United Nations Audio-Visual Information Centre on Human Settlements,

Recalling further its resolution 32/162 of 19 December 1977, by which it established the United Nations Centre for Human Settlements (Habitat), entrusted it with responsibility for promoting the further and continued use of audio-visual material relating to human settlements and decided that the Director of the United Nations Audio-Visual Information Centre on Human Settlements (Vision Habitat) should report to the Executive Director of the United Nations Centre for Human Settlements,

Recognizing that the effective dissemination of information, including the use of audio-visual techniques and materials, will help accelerate the process of development through the effective and rapid dissemination among policy-makers, experts and the public in all countries of information on the need for new awareness and on new approaches, methods and techniques for improving human settlements, especially their social, economic and environmental aspects, as well as through their increasing use for project-monitoring, education, training and public information,

Noting that the agreement between the Government of Canada and the United Nations on the operations of the United Nations Audio-Visual Information Centre on Human Settlements expires on 31 March 1980,

Convinced that the programme developed by the United Nations Audio-Visual Information Centre on Human Settlements should be continued,

Noting that the audio-visual activities have been fully integrated into the work programme of the United Nations Centre for Human Settlements,

1. *Recommends* that the Executive Director of the United Nations Centre for Human Settlements (Habitat) should take the necessary steps to establish a unified information service within the Centre to comprise a suitable range of information and communications skills and capabilities, including an audio-visual component at an appropriate level;

2. *Decides* that, upon the termination or expiration of the agreement referred to above, the functions and transferable assets of the United Nations Audio-Visual Information Centre on Human Settlements (Vision Habitat) should be transferred to the United Nations Centre for Human Settlements;

3. *Requests* the Secretary-General to consult with the Government of Canada on the appropriate formal

⁶⁵ HS/C/2/8.

⁶⁶ See *Official Records of the General Assembly, Thirty-fourth Session, Supplement No. 8 (A/34/8)*, paras. 89-95.

11. *Strongly appeals* to all contributing Governments to make every effort to pledge, in 1980, substantial increases in their contributions for 1981 and to those Governments that have not yet contributed to the Fund of the United Nations Environment Programme to pledge to do so in 1980, in order that the agreed target for the period 1978-1981 may be reached;

12. *Invites* Governments to consider proposals whereby additional contributions to the Fund of the United Nations Environment Programme would be used for measures dealing with serious environmental problems in developing countries, taking into account the relevant provisions of General Assembly resolution 34/188 of 18 December 1979, and requests the Governing Council of the Programme to report thereon to the Economic and Social Council at its second regular session of 1981;

13. *Decides* to convene, in 1982, a session of a special character of the Governing Council of the United Nations Environment Programme, open to all States, to commemorate the tenth anniversary of the United Nations Conference on the Human Environment, held at Stockholm from 5 to 16 June 1972, at the same place and immediately prior to the tenth regular session of the Governing Council, and invites Governments to be represented at that session at a high political level;

14. *Decides* that at the session of a special character the Governing Council of the United Nations Environment Programme should review the major achievements in the implementation of the Action Plan for the Human Environment, adopted at Stockholm,¹³³ and make recommendations with respect to the major environmental trends to be addressed by the Programme over the forthcoming ten years;

15. *Invites* the Executive Director of the United Nations Environment Programme to proceed, in consultation with Governments, with the preparation of the above-mentioned session and to present to the Governing Council, at its ninth session, a comprehensive report on all matters relevant to the organization, agenda and financial implications of the session, including proposals as to the dates and venue of the two sessions.

*83rd plenary meeting
5 December 1980*

35/75. Living conditions of the Palestinian people

The General Assembly,

Recalling the Vancouver Declaration on Human Settlements, 1976,¹³⁴ and the relevant recommendations for national action¹³⁵ adopted by Habitat: United Nations Conference on Human Settlements,

Recalling also resolution 3, entitled "Living conditions of the Palestinians in the occupied territories", contained in the recommendations for international co-operation adopted by Habitat: United Nations Conference on Human Settlements¹³⁶ and Economic and Social Council resolutions 2026 (LXI) of 4 August 1976 and 2100 (LXIII) of 3 August 1977,

¹³³ See *Report of the United Nations Conference on the Human Environment, Stockholm, 5-16 June 1972* (United Nations publication, Sales No. E.73.II.A.14 and corrigendum), chap. II.

¹³⁴ See *Report of Habitat: United Nations Conference on Human Settlements, Vancouver, 31 May-11 June 1976* (United Nations publication, Sales No. E.76.IV.7 and corrigendum) chap. I.

¹³⁵ *Ibid.*, chap. II.

¹³⁶ *Ibid.*, chap. III.

Recalling further its resolutions 31/110 of 16 December 1976, 32/171 of 19 December 1977, 33/110 of 18 December 1978 and 34/113 of 14 December 1979,

1. *Takes note with satisfaction* of the report of the Secretary-General on the living conditions of the Palestinian people in the occupied Arab territories;¹³⁷

2. *Deplores* the refusal of the Government of Israel to allow the Group of Experts on the Social and Economic Impact of the Israeli Occupation on the Living Conditions of the Palestinian People in the Occupied Arab Territories¹³⁸ to visit the Palestinian and other Arab territories occupied by Israel;

3. *Condemns* Israeli policy resulting in the deterioration of the living conditions of the Palestinian people in the occupied territories;

4. *Calls upon* all States to co-operate with United Nations agencies, organizations and organs and local Palestinian authorities to alleviate the tragic living conditions of the Palestinian people caused by the Israeli occupation;

5. *Requests* the Secretary-General to submit a comprehensive and analytical report to the General Assembly at its thirty-sixth session, through the Economic and Social Council, on the progress made in the implementation of the present resolution.

*83rd plenary meeting
5 December 1980*

35/76. Strengthening of human settlements activities

The General Assembly,

Recalling its resolution 34/116 of 14 December 1979 on the strengthening of human settlements activities,

Recalling also Economic and Social Council resolutions 1224 (XLII) of 6 June 1967 and 1670 (LII) of 1 June 1972 concerning the improvement and upgrading of living and environmental conditions in the squatter settlements and slums of urban and rural areas,

Recognizing that one of the most urgent needs in developing countries is to upgrade the living and working conditions of low-income and disadvantaged groups in both rural and urban areas,

Reaffirming that adequate shelter and services are a basic human right, as proclaimed in the Vancouver Declaration on Human Settlements, 1976,¹³⁹ and that, in striving to uphold this right, priority must be given to the needs of the poor, the homeless and the most vulnerable groups of society,

Noting with concern that, in the years that have elapsed since the convening of Habitat: United Nations Conference on Human Settlements, the conditions of human settlements in developing countries have, by and large, worsened, particularly in the urban areas, where the growth of slums and squatter settlements has continued unabated, in the midst of poverty, squalor, overcrowding and human degradation,

Noting also that an increasing number of Governments are committed to upgrading low-income urban settlements and to improving the quality of life in rural

¹³⁷ A/35/533 and Corr.1.

¹³⁸ For the report of the Group of Experts, see A/35/533 and Corr.1, annex I.

¹³⁹ See *Report of Habitat: United Nations Conference on Human Settlements, Vancouver, 31 May-11 June 1976* (United Nations publication, Sales No. E.76.IV.7 and corrigendum), chap. I.

Taking note of Economic and Social Council resolution 1981/69 C of 24 July 1981 on renewable sources of energy for human settlements.

Taking note, in this connection, of the *Report of the United Nations Conference on New and Renewable Sources of Energy*,²² held at Nairobi from 10 to 21 August 1981,

1. *Welcomes* the contributions made by the United Nations Centre for Human Settlements (Habitat) to the preparations for and success of the United Nations Conference on New and Renewable Sources of Energy;

2. *Requests* the Executive Director of the United Nations Centre for Human Settlements to take the appropriate steps for the implementation of those recommendations of the United Nations Conference on New and Renewable Sources of Energy which are within the mandate of the Centre.

84th plenary meeting
4 December 1981

C

MOBILIZATION OF FINANCIAL RESOURCES FOR THE UNITED NATIONS CENTRE FOR HUMAN SETTLEMENTS (HABITAT)

The General Assembly,

Recalling its resolution 35/77 D of 5 December 1980, in which it urgently appealed to all States and appropriate financial institutions to make or to increase their voluntary contributions to the United Nations Habitat and Human Settlements Foundation in support of the activities of the United Nations Centre for Human Settlements (Habitat),

Noting the continued need for financial resources for the full implementation of the projected activities of the Centre under the work programme for the biennium 1982-1983 and the draft medium-term plan for the period 1984-1989 approved by the Commission on Human Settlements at its fourth session,²³

Taking note of Economic and Social Council resolution 1981/69 A of 24 July 1981, in particular paragraphs 4 and 5 thereof which refer to the need for adequate financing for the projected activities of the Centre,

Expressing its appreciation to those Governments that have so far made financial contributions to the activities of the Centre,

Reiterates its urgent appeal to Member States to contribute and, if possible, to increase their contributions to the United Nations Habitat and Human Settlements Foundation in support of the activities of the United Nations Centre for Human Settlements (Habitat) and appeals to those that have not yet contributed, particularly developed countries and other countries in a position to do so, also to make voluntary contributions.

84th plenary meeting
4 December 1981

36/73. Living conditions of the Palestinian people

The General Assembly,

Recalling the Vancouver Declaration on Human Settlements, 1976,²⁴ and the relevant recommendations for na-

tional action²⁵ adopted by Habitat: United Nations Conference on Human Settlements,

Recalling also resolution 3, entitled "Living conditions of the Palestinians in occupied territories", contained in the recommendations for international co-operation adopted by Habitat: United Nations Conference on Human Settlements,²⁶ and Economic and Social Council resolutions 2026 (LXI) of 4 August 1976 and 2100 (LXIII) of 3 August 1977,

Recalling further its resolutions 3236 (XXIX) and 3237 (XXIX) of 22 November 1974, 31/110 of 16 December 1976, 32/171 of 19 December 1977, 33/110 of 18 December 1978, 34/113 of 14 December 1979 and 35/75 of 5 December 1980,

1. *Takes note* of the report of the Secretary-General on the living conditions of the Palestinian people;²⁷

2. *Denounces* Israel for refusing to allow the Group of Experts on the Social and Economic Impact of the Israeli Occupation on the Living Conditions of the Palestinian People in the Occupied Arab Territories²⁸ to visit the Palestinian territories occupied by Israel;

3. *Condemns* Israel for the deteriorating living conditions of the Palestinian people in the occupied Palestinian territories;

4. *Affirms* that the elimination of the Israeli occupation is a prerequisite for the social and economic development of the Palestinian people in the occupied Palestinian territories;

5. *Recognizes* the need for a comprehensive report on the deterioration of the social and economic conditions of the Palestinian people in the occupied Palestinian territories;

6. *Requests* the Secretary-General to prepare a comprehensive and analytical report on the deteriorating living conditions of the Palestinian people in the occupied Palestinian territories and to submit it to the General Assembly at its thirty-seventh session, through the Economic and Social Council;

7. *Also requests* the Secretary-General, in preparing the above-mentioned report, to consult and co-operate with the Palestine Liberation Organization, the representative of the Palestinian people.

84th plenary meeting
4 December 1981

36/74. Comprehensive outline of a world survey on the role of women in development

The General Assembly,

Recalling its resolutions 3201 (S-VI) and 3202 (S-VI) of 1 May 1974, containing the Declaration and the Programme of Action on the Establishment of a New International Economic Order, 3281 (XXIX) of 12 December 1974, containing the Charter of Economic Rights and Duties of States, and 3362 (S-VII) of 16 September 1975 on development and international economic co-operation,

Recalling also its resolution 35/56 of 5 December 1980, the annex to which contains the International Development Strategy for the Third United Nations Development Decade,

Recalling further the provisions concerning the participation of women in development contained in the documents adopted at the World Conference of the United Nations

²² United Nations publication, Sales No. E.81.1.24.

²³ *Official Records of the General Assembly, Thirty-sixth Session, Supplement No. 8 (A/36/8)*, annex I, decisions 4/17 and 4/18.

²⁴ *Report of Habitat: United Nations Conference on Human Settlements, Vancouver, 31 May-11 June 1976* (United Nations publication, Sales No. E.76.IV.7 and corrigendum), chap. I.

²⁵ *Ibid.*, chap. II.

²⁶ *Ibid.*, chap. III.

²⁷ A/36/260 and Add.1-3.

²⁸ For the report of the Group of Experts, see A/35/533 and Corr.1, annex I.

5. *Endorses*, in principle, the programme for the Year contained in the report of the Secretary-General,¹⁷² on the understanding that the criteria for financing and organizing international years set forth in the annex to Economic and Social Council resolution 1980/67 will be complied with and that the programme of measures and activities to be undertaken prior to and during the Year will be adjusted in accordance with the availability of voluntary contributions;

6. *Designates* the Commission on Human Settlements, in the framework of its regular sessions, to act as the United Nations intergovernmental body responsible for organizing the Year, and the United Nations Centre for Human Settlements (Habitat) as the secretariat for the Year and as the lead agency for co-ordinating the relevant programmes and activities of other organizations and agencies concerned;

7. *Recommends* that the Commission on Human Settlements should review annually the objectives, strategies and criteria for the Year, as well as the guidelines referred to in paragraph 1 of Commission resolution 5/14;

8. *Invites* all Governments, organs, organizations and bodies of the United Nations system, as well as other intergovernmental bodies and non-governmental organizations concerned, including interested national institutions, to collaborate in support of the work of the Commission on Human Settlements and to make special efforts through existing and new programmes during the period 1983-1987 to help achieve the objectives and goals for the Year;

9. *Appeals* to all Governments, especially those of developed countries and others in a position to do so, to extend generous financial and other appropriate support to the programme for the Year;

10. *Also appeals* to international financial institutions and intergovernmental bodies and non-governmental organizations to extend generous financial and other appropriate support to the programme for the Year;

11. *Recommends* that provision should be made in the agenda for each session of the Commission on Human Settlements, up to the year 1987, for such donors to indicate the nature and extent of the support which they propose to give to the programme for the Year;

12. *Requests* the Secretary-General to submit to the General Assembly at its thirty-eighth session, through the Economic and Social Council, a report on the implementation of the approved programme of measures and activities to be undertaken prior to and during the Year;

13. *Decides* to include in the provisional agenda of its thirty-eighth session an item entitled "International Year of Shelter for the Homeless".

*113th plenary meeting
20 December 1982*

37/222. Living conditions of the Palestinian people in the occupied Palestinian territories

The General Assembly,

Recalling the Vancouver Declaration on Human Settlements, 1976,¹⁷⁷ and the relevant recommendations for national action¹⁷⁸ adopted by Habitat: United Nations Conference on Human Settlements,

Recalling also resolution 3, entitled "Living conditions of the Palestinians in occupied territories", contained in the

recommendations for international co-operation adopted by Habitat: United Nations Conference on Human Settlements,¹⁷⁹

Recalling further its resolution 36/73 of 4 December 1981,

1. *Takes note* of the report of the Secretary-General on the living conditions of the Palestinian people in the occupied Palestinian territories;¹⁸⁰

2. *Takes note* of the statement made by the observer of the Palestine Liberation Organization;¹⁸¹

3. *Expresses its alarm* at the deterioration in the living conditions of the Palestinian people in the Palestinian territories occupied since 1967 as a result of the Israeli occupation;

4. *Affirms* that the Israeli occupation is contradictory to the basic requirements for the social and economic development of the Palestinian people in the occupied West Bank and Gaza Strip;

5. *Affirms also* that the exercise by the Palestinian people of their right to self-determination is a prerequisite for their social and economic development in the Palestinian territories occupied since 1967;

6. *Calls upon* the Israeli occupation authorities to give United Nations bodies and experts access to the Palestinian territories occupied since 1967;

7. *Recognizes* the need for a comprehensive report on the social and economic conditions of the Palestinian people in the Palestinian territories occupied since 1967;

8. *Requests* the Secretary-General to prepare and submit to the General Assembly at its thirty-eighth session, through the Economic and Social Council, a comprehensive report on the living conditions of the Palestinian people in the occupied Palestinian territories.

*113th plenary meeting
20 December 1982*

37/223. Human settlements

A

REPORT OF THE COMMISSION ON HUMAN SETTLEMENTS

The General Assembly,

Recalling its resolutions 3201 (S-VI) and 3202 (S-VI) of 1 May 1974, containing the Declaration and the Programme of Action on the Establishment of a New International Economic Order, 3281 (XXIX) of 12 December 1974, containing the Charter of Economic Rights and Duties of States, and 3362 (S-VII) of 16 September 1975 on development and international economic co-operation,

Recalling also its resolutions 32/162 of 19 December 1977 on institutional arrangements for international co-operation in the field of human settlements and 34/116 of 14 December 1979 on the strengthening of human settlements activities,

Recalling further the principles and aims contained in the Vancouver Declaration on Human Settlements, 1976,¹⁷⁷ and the other recommendations of Habitat: United Nations Conference on Human Settlements,¹⁷⁸ as well as those contained in resolution 4/1, entitled "Manila Communiqué on a Human Settlements Movement", adopted on 6 May 1981 by the Commission on Human Settlements,¹⁸²

¹⁷⁹ *Ibid.*, chap. III.

¹⁸⁰ A/37/238.

¹⁸¹ *Official Records of the General Assembly. Thirty-seventh Session, Second Committee, 31st meeting, para. 86.*

¹⁸² *Ibid.*, *Thirty-sixth Session, Supplement No. 3 (A/36/8), annex I, sect. A.*

¹⁷⁷ *Report of Habitat: United Nations Conference on Human Settlements, Vancouver, 31 May-11 June 1976* (United Nations publication, Sales No. E.76.IV.7 and corrigendum), chap. I.

¹⁷⁸ *Ibid.*, chap. II.

work of its eleventh session and the decisions contained therein;⁸³

2. *Welcomes* section II of Governing Council decision 11/1 of 24 May 1983, in which it decided, *inter alia*, that the topic to be considered in the 1984 report on the state of the environment would be "The environment in the dialogue between and among developed and developing countries";

3. *Takes note* of sections V and VI of Governing Council decision 11/1, which relate to the convening of an international conference on world industry and environmental management and a parliamentary conference on the environment;

4. *Takes note with appreciation* of Governing Council decision 11/2 of 23 May 1983 on the periodicity and duration of Governing Council sessions and endorses the decision that there shall be no session of the Governing Council in 1986, on an experimental basis, and that in 1987 the Governing Council shall decide finally on either of the two options for the periodicity of its sessions in the light of the experience gained in the previous years;

5. *Also takes note* of Governing Council decision 11/5 of 23 May 1983 on the impacts of *apartheid* on the environment, directed at promoting public awareness of the plight of the victims of *apartheid*;

6. *Welcomes* part one of Governing Council decision 11/7 of 24 May 1983, by which the Council, while setting priorities for its implementation, approved the programme budget for the first biennium of the system-wide medium-term environment programme, 1984-1985, as an overall framework for activities of the United Nations Environment Programme during that period, and invites Governments participating in relevant governing bodies of specialized agencies and other organizations of the United Nations system to endeavour to take the provisions of the system-wide medium-term environment programme fully into account in their consideration of related issues, so as to achieve the full implementation of the system-wide programme;

7. *Welcomes* the importance attached by the Governing Council to regional approaches and programmes in the field of international environment co-operation, as reflected in its decisions 11/7, 11/8 and 11/9 of 24 May 1983;

8. *Welcomes* section VIII of Governing Council decision 11/1, in which the Council decided to devote two days, during its twelfth session, to a detailed assessment of the implementation of the Plan of Action to Combat Desertification,⁸⁴ which will include a thorough analysis of the state of implementation of the principal components of the Plan, the lessons learned and the priorities for future action;

9. *Decides* to expand the mandate of the Consultative Group for Desertification Control to include information exchange on anti-desertification policies and programmes of its participants, in addition to its basic mandate as set out in General Assembly resolution 32/172 of 19 December 1977;

10. *Welcomes* the progress made in the implementation of the Montevideo Programme for the Development and Periodic Review of Environmental Law⁸⁵ and appeals to Governments to participate actively in the Pro-

gramme and provide adequate financial resources or facilities in order to achieve its full and timely implementation;

11. *Reaffirms* the need for strengthening the coordinating role of the United Nations Environment Programme and the need for additional resources to assist developing countries in dealing with serious environmental problems, and urges the Executive Director of the Programme, in consultation with Governments and international organizations concerned, to accelerate and intensify his efforts in this field;

12. *Urges* the Executive Director of the United Nations Environment Programme to facilitate the provision of expert assistance to and among developing countries, at their request, in the preparation, monitoring and evaluation of priority environmental programmes and projects, including the application of environmental impact assessment, and in promoting and increasing the exchange of information and experience with respect to the integration of environmental considerations into development activities;

13. *Expresses its appreciation* to Governments that have contributed to the Fund of the United Nations Environment Programme, particularly to those that have done so for the first time in 1982 and 1983 and those that have increased their contributions for those years, and also to those countries which have changed their yearly payment procedures in order to make their contributions available as early as possible;

14. *Notes with deep concern*, however, the very meagre pledges to the Fund so far received from Governments and strongly appeals to all Governments to pledge their contributions as soon as possible for 1984, and where possible for 1985, preferably before the end of 1983.

102nd plenary meeting
19 December 1983

38/166. Living conditions of the Palestinian people in the occupied Palestinian territories

The General Assembly,

Recalling the Vancouver Declaration on Human Settlements, 1976,⁸⁶ and the relevant recommendations for national action⁸⁷ adopted by Habitat: United Nations Conference on Human Settlements,

Recalling also resolution 3, entitled "Living conditions of the Palestinians in occupied territories", contained in the recommendations for international co-operation adopted by Habitat: United Nations Conference on Human Settlements,⁸⁸

Recalling further its resolution 37/222 of 20 December 1982,

Taking note of resolution 6/2 adopted by the Commission on Human Settlements on 4 May 1983,⁸⁹

Gravely alarmed by the continuation of the Israeli settlement policies, which have been declared null and void and a major obstacle to peace,

1. *Takes note* of the report of the Secretary-General on the living conditions of the Palestinian people in the occupied Palestinian territories;⁹⁰

⁸³ *Official Records of the General Assembly, Thirty-eighth Session, Supplement No. 25 (A/38/25)*, annex.

⁸⁴ *Report of the United Nations Conference on Desertification, Nairobi, 29 August-9 September 1977 (A/CONF.74/36)*, chap. I.

⁸⁵ UNEP/GC.10/5/Add.2 and Corr.1 and 2, annex, chap. II.

⁸⁶ *Report of Habitat: United Nations Conference on Human Settlements, Vancouver, 31 May-11 June 1976* (United Nations publication, Sales No. E.76.IV.7 and corrigendum), chap. I.

⁸⁷ *Ibid.*, chap. II.

⁸⁸ *Ibid.*, chap. III.

⁸⁹ See *Official Records of the General Assembly, Thirty-eighth Session, Supplement No. 8 (A/38/8)*, annex I.

⁹⁰ A/38/278-E/1983/77.

2. *Takes note also* of the statement made on 1 November 1983 by the observer of the Palestine Liberation Organization;⁹¹

3. *Rejects* the Israeli plans and actions intended to change the demographic composition of the occupied Palestinian territories, particularly the increase and expansion of the Israeli settlements, and other plans and actions creating conditions leading to the displacement and exodus of Palestinians from the occupied Palestinian territories;

4. *Expresses its alarm* at the deterioration in the living conditions of the Palestinian people in the Palestinian territories occupied since 1967 as a result of the Israeli occupation;

5. *Affirms* that the Israeli occupation is contradictory to the basic requirements for the social and economic development of the Palestinian people in the occupied West Bank and the Gaza Strip;

6. *Calls upon* the Israeli occupation authorities to give United Nations experts access to the occupied Palestinian territories;

7. *Recognizes* the need for a comprehensive report on the impact of the Israeli settlements on the living conditions of the Palestinian people in the occupied Palestinian territories;

8. *Requests* the Secretary-General to prepare and submit to the General Assembly at its thirty-ninth session, through the Economic and Social Council, a comprehensive report on the current and future impact of the Israeli settlements on the living conditions of the Palestinian people in the occupied Palestinian territories, including a comparison between the living conditions of the latter and those of the residents of the Israeli settlements.

*102nd plenary meeting
19 December 1983*

38/167. Human settlements

A

REPORT OF THE COMMISSION ON HUMAN SETTLEMENTS

The General Assembly,

Recalling its resolutions 3201 (S-VI) and 3202 (S-VI) of 1 May 1974, containing the Declaration and the Programme of Action on the Establishment of a New International Economic Order, 3281 (XXIX) of 12 December 1974, containing the Charter of Economic Rights and Duties of States, and 3362 (S-VII) of 16 September 1975 on development and international economic co-operation,

Recalling also its resolutions 32/162 of 19 December 1977 on institutional arrangements for international co-operation in the field of human settlements and 34/116 of 14 December 1979 on the strengthening of human settlements activities,

Taking note of Economic and Social Council decision 1983/169 of 25 July 1983 on international co-operation in the field of human settlements,

Having considered the report of the Commission on Human Settlements on the work of its sixth session,⁹²

1. *Takes note* of the report of the Commission on Human Settlements;

2. *Commends* the Commission on Human Settlements on the effective manner in which it continues to discharge its mandate in assisting Governments to address the serious problems of human settlements development, as reflected in the various substantive recommendations adopted by it;

3. *Reaffirms its conviction* that human settlements activities can play a leading role in stimulating national economic and social development and in the enhancement of the quality of life of the poor and the disadvantaged, particularly in the developing countries;

4. *Expresses its appreciation* to those Governments and to others that have so far provided financial support for the international effort to promote human settlements development through the activities of the United Nations Centre for Human Settlements (Habitat);

5. *Appeals once again* to Member States, particularly the developed countries and others in a position to do so, to make voluntary contributions, if they have not yet done so, or, as appropriate, to increase their voluntary contributions to the United Nations Habitat and Human Settlements Foundation in support of the activities of the Centre.

*102nd plenary meeting
19 December 1983*

B

CO-ORDINATION OF HUMAN SETTLEMENTS PROGRAMMES WITHIN THE UNITED NATIONS SYSTEM

The General Assembly,

Recalling its resolution 35/77 C of 5 December 1980, in which it invited the Secretary-General to arrange, in consultation with the members of the Administrative Committee on Co-ordination, for the United Nations Centre for Human Settlements (Habitat) to participate in all aspects of the work of that Committee and its subsidiary machinery,

Recalling also its resolution 37/223 C of 20 December 1982, in which it requested the Secretary-General to accelerate his efforts in arranging for such participation and to report thereon to the General Assembly at its thirty-eighth session,

Having considered the report of the Secretary-General⁹³ summarizing decision 1983/18 of 27 October 1983 of the Administrative Committee on Co-ordination on the matter, as well as the oral explanation given by the representative of the Secretary-General,

Aware that the decision of the Administrative Committee on Co-ordination does not completely meet the requirement of General Assembly resolutions 35/77 C and 37/223 C,

Takes note of the report of the Secretary-General summarizing decision 1983/18 of the Administrative Committee on Co-ordination and requests him to report to the General Assembly at its thirty-ninth session on the implementation of its resolutions on the question.

*102nd plenary meeting
19 December 1983*

⁹¹ *Official Records of the General Assembly, Thirty-eighth Session, Second Committee, 24th meeting, paras. 1-5.*

⁹² *Ibid., Thirty-eighth Session, Supplement No. 8 (A/38/8).*

⁹³ A/38/548.

(a) The inclusion of reference to the United Republic of Tanzania in the terms of reference of the United Nations Sudano-Sahelian Office in order to enable that country to receive assistance in the implementation of programmes for combating desertification;

(b) The expansion of the scope of the work of the United Nations Sudano-Sahelian Office so as to enable it to assist the States members of the Southern African Development Co-ordination Conference in implementing the recommendations of the United Nations Environment Programme on combating desertification and drought, in the same way as the Office is currently assisting the States members of the Permanent Inter-State Committee on Drought Control in the Sahel;

10. Urges all Governments to increase their assistance, *inter alia*, by financing regional and subregional programmes, through appropriate channels, including the Special Account created under General Assembly resolution 32/172 of 19 December 1977, to countries suffering from desertification;

11. Endorses the decision of the Governing Council in paragraph 28 of its decision 12/10³² that a further overall assessment of progress in the implementation of the Plan of Action to Combat Desertification should be carried out in 1992.

103rd plenary meeting
17 December 1984

B

IMPLEMENTATION IN THE SUDANO-SAHELIAN REGION OF THE PLAN OF ACTION TO COMBAT DESERTIFICATION

The General Assembly.

Recalling its resolutions 36/190 of 17 December 1981, 37/216 of 20 December 1982 and 38/164 of 19 December 1983,

Taking note of decision 12/10 of 28 May 1984 of the Governing Council of the United Nations Environment Programme³² on desertification,

Taking note of Economic and Social Council resolutions 1984/65 of 26 July 1984 on the implementation in the Sudano-Sahelian region of the Plan of Action to Combat Desertification and 1984/72 of 27 July 1984 on the environment and development in Africa,

Taking note also of the inclusion of Ghana and Togo in the list of countries to be covered by the United Nations Sudano-Sahelian Office under the Plan of Action to Combat Desertification,²⁸

Having considered the report of the Governing Council of the United Nations Environment Programme on the implementation in the Sudano-Sahelian region of the Plan of Action to Combat Desertification,³³

Bearing in mind the special review undertaken by the Governing Council of the progress made in implementing the Plan of Action, based, *inter alia*, on the general assessment by the Executive Director of progress in the implementation of the Plan of Action during the period 1978-1984,³⁰ and on the document on the assessment of desertification in the Sudano-Sahelian region,³⁴

Aware that the prime responsibility in the struggle against desertification and the effects of drought rests upon

the countries concerned, and noting the efforts of those countries to combat desertification and drought,

1. Takes note of the report of the Governing Council of the United Nations Environment Programme on the implementation in the Sudano-Sahelian region of the Plan of Action to Combat Desertification;

2. Notes with concern:

(a) That the persistent drought in the Sahel has intensified and spread into other parts of Africa, assuming the catastrophic proportions of a generalized drought;

(b) That the inadequacy of financial resources continues to place a serious constraint on the fight against desertification;

(c) That struggle against desertification requires financial and human resources beyond the means of the affected countries;

3. Expresses its appreciation of the progress made towards overcoming these obstacles by the United Nations Sudano-Sahelian Office, on behalf of the United Nations Environment Programme, as part of a joint action by the United Nations Environment Programme and the United Nations Development Programme to assist the Governments of the region in combating desertification;

4. Expresses its appreciation also for the efficient and co-ordinated manner in which the Executive Director of the United Nations Environment Programme and the Administrator of the United Nations Development Programme have continued to develop this joint action through the United Nations Sudano-Sahelian Office;

5. Requests the Governing Council of the United Nations Environment Programme and the Governing Council of the United Nations Development Programme to continue to provide and increase their support to the United Nations Sudano-Sahelian Office in order to enable it to respond fully to the urgent needs of the countries of the Sudano-Sahelian region;

6. Expresses its gratitude to the Governments, United Nations bodies, intergovernmental organizations and other organizations which have contributed to the implementation in the Sudano-Sahelian region of the Plan of Action to Combat Desertification;

7. Emphasizes the need to redouble the efforts in order to implement in the Sudano-Sahelian region the Plan of Action to Combat Desertification and urges all Governments to respond favourably to the requests submitted by the Governments of the countries of the Sudano-Sahelian region for assistance in combating desertification;

8. Requests the Governing Council of the United Nations Environment Programme to make the necessary arrangements at each session for submitting a report to the General Assembly, through the Economic and Social Council, on the implementation in the Sudano-Sahelian region of the Plan of Action to Combat Desertification.

103rd plenary meeting
17 December 1984

39/169. Living conditions of the Palestinian people in the occupied Palestinian territories

The General Assembly.

Recalling the Vancouver Declaration on Human Settlements, 1976,³⁵ and the relevant recommendations for

³³ A/39/433, annex II.

³⁴ UNEP/GC.12/INF.3 and Corr.1.

³⁵ Report of Habitat: United Nations Conference on Human Settlements, Vancouver, 31 May-11 June 1976 (United Nations publication, Sales No. E.76.IV.7 and corrigendum), chap. I.

national action³⁶ adopted by Habitat: United Nations Conference on Human Settlements.

Recalling also its resolution 38/166 of 19 December 1983,

Gravely alarmed by the continuation of the Israeli settlement policies, which have been declared null and void and a major obstacle to peace,

Recognizing the need to investigate ways and means of arresting the deterioration in the economy of the occupied Palestinian territories,

1. *Takes note with concern* of the report of the Secretary-General on the living conditions of the Palestinian people in the occupied Palestinian territories;³⁷

2. *Takes note also* of the statement made on 29 October 1984 by the Observer of the Palestine Liberation Organization;³⁸

3. *Rejects* the Israeli plans and actions intended to change the demographic composition of the occupied Palestinian territories, particularly the increase and expansion of the Israeli settlements, and other plans and actions creating conditions leading to the displacement and exodus of Palestinians from the occupied Palestinian territories;

4. *Expresses its alarm* at the deterioration, as a result of the Israeli occupation, in the living conditions of the Palestinian people in the Palestinian territories occupied since 1967;

5. *Affirms* that the Israeli occupation is contradictory to the basic requirements for the social and economic development of the Palestinian people in the occupied Palestinian territories;

6. *Requests* the Secretary-General:

(a) To organize, in 1985, a seminar on remedies for the deterioration of the economic and social conditions of the Palestinian people in the occupied Palestinian territories;

(b) To make the necessary preparations for the seminar providing for the participation of the Palestine Liberation Organization;

(c) To invite experts to present papers to the seminar;

(d) To invite also relevant intergovernmental and non-governmental organizations;

(e) To report to the General Assembly at its fortieth session, through the Economic and Social Council, on the seminar.

*103rd plenary meeting
17 December 1984*

39/170. Human settlements

A

REPORT OF THE COMMISSION ON HUMAN SETTLEMENTS

The General Assembly,

Recalling its resolutions 3201 (S-VI) and 3202 (S-VI) of 1 May 1974, containing the Declaration and the Programme of Action on the Establishment of a New International Economic Order, 3281 (XXIX) of 12 December 1974, containing the Charter of Economic Rights and Duties of States, and 3362 (S-VII) of 16 September 1975 on development and international economic co-operation,

Recalling also its resolutions 32/162 of 19 December 1977 on institutional arrangements for international co-operation in the field of human settlements and 34/116 of 14 December 1979 on the strengthening of human settlements activities,

Seriously concerned at the continued low level of voluntary contributions being made available to the United Nations Centre for Human Settlements (Habitat) in support of the human settlements activities of the United Nations.

Taking note of Economic and Social Council resolution 1984/57 A of 26 July 1984 on international co-operation in the field of human settlements,

Having considered the report of the Commission on Human Settlements on the work of its seventh session,³⁹

1. *Takes note* of the report of the Commission on Human Settlements on the work of its seventh session and the resolutions contained therein;

2. *Expresses its appreciation* to those Governments and others which have made voluntary contributions to the United Nations Habitat and Human Settlements Foundation in support of the work of the United Nations Centre for Human Settlements (Habitat) and commends in particular those which have done so on a regular basis;

3. *Renews its appeal* to all Governments, particularly those of the developed countries, to begin making regular voluntary contributions to the United Nations Habitat and Human Settlements Foundation of the Centre, if they have not already done so, and, if they have, to consider increasing the amount of their contributions.

*103rd plenary meeting
17 December 1984*

B

CO-ORDINATION OF HUMAN SETTLEMENTS PROGRAMMES WITHIN THE UNITED NATIONS SYSTEM

The General Assembly,

Reaffirming its resolution 35/77 C of 5 December 1980, in which it invited the Secretary-General to arrange, in consultation with the members of the Administrative Committee on Co-ordination, for the United Nations Centre for Human Settlements (Habitat) to participate in all aspects of the work of that Committee and its subsidiary machinery,

Recalling its resolution 37/223 C of 20 December 1982, in which it requested the Secretary-General to accelerate his efforts in arranging for such participation and to report thereon to the General Assembly at its thirty-eighth session,

Recalling also its resolution 38/167 B of 19 December 1983 in which it took note of the report of the Secretary-General⁴⁰ summarizing decision 1983/18 of 27 October 1983 of the Administrative Committee on Co-ordination, which decision it noted did not completely meet the requirement of its earlier resolutions 35/77 C and 37/223 C, and requested the Secretary-General to report to the General Assembly at its thirty-ninth session on the implementation of its resolutions on the question,

³⁶ *Ibid.*, chap. II.

³⁷ A/39/233-E/1984/79.

³⁸ *Official Records of the General Assembly, Thirty-ninth Session, Second Committee, 26th meeting, paras. 51-55.*

³⁹ *Ibid.*, Thirty-ninth Session, Supplement No. 8 (A/39/8).

⁴⁰ A/38/548.

10. *Calls upon* the Executive Director of the United Nations Environment Programme to co-ordinate further the activities of the Programme with those of other organizations of the United Nations system, to co-operate appropriately with the organizers of the international initiatives on the future of the forests, and to report thereon to the Governing Council;

11. *Reaffirms* the need to strengthen the co-ordinating role of the United Nations Environment Programme and the need for additional resources to assist developing countries in dealing with serious environmental problems, and urges the Executive Director of the Programme, in consultation with Governments and the international organizations concerned, to accelerate and intensify his efforts in that field;

12. *Expresses its appreciation* to the Governments that continue to contribute to the Fund of the United Nations Environment Programme, particularly those that have increased their contributions, and urges those Governments that have not yet paid their pledged contributions to the Fund for 1985 or made pledges for 1986 to do so in the near future.

*119th plenary meeting
17 December 1985*

40/201. Living conditions of the Palestinian people in the occupied Palestinian territories

The General Assembly,

Recalling the Vancouver Declaration on Human Settlements, 1976,⁹¹ and the relevant recommendations for national action⁹² adopted by Habitat: United Nations Conference on Human Settlements,

Recalling also its resolution 39/169 of 17 December 1984,

Taking note of Commission on Human Settlements resolution 8/3 of 10 May 1985,⁸⁸

Gravely alarmed by the continuation of the Israeli settlement policies, which have been declared null and void and a major obstacle to peace,

Recognizing the need to identify priority development projects needed for improving the living conditions of the Palestinian people in the occupied Palestinian territories,

1. *Takes note with concern* of the report of the Secretary-General on the living conditions of the Palestinian people in the occupied Palestinian territories;⁹³

2. *Takes note also* of the statement made on 25 October 1985 by the observer of the Palestine Liberation Organization;⁹⁴

3. *Rejects* the Israeli plans and actions intended to change the demographic composition of the occupied Palestinian territories, particularly the increase and expansion of the Israeli settlements, and other plans and actions creating conditions leading to the displacement and exodus of Palestinians from the occupied Palestinian territories;

4. *Expresses its alarm* at the deterioration, as a result of the Israeli occupation, in the living conditions of the Palestinian people in the Palestinian territories occupied since 1967;

5. *Affirms* that the Israeli occupation is contradictory to the basic requirements for the social and economic

development of the Palestinian people in the occupied Palestinian territories;

6. *Requests* the Secretary-General:

(a) To organize, by April 1987, a seminar on priority development projects needed for improving the living conditions of the Palestinian people in the occupied Palestinian territories, including a comprehensive general housing programme, as recommended in resolution 8/3 of the Commission on Human Settlements;

(b) To make the necessary preparations for the seminar, providing for the participation of the Palestine Liberation Organization;

(c) To invite experts to present papers to the seminar;

(d) To invite also relevant intergovernmental and non-governmental organizations;

(e) To report to the General Assembly at its forty-first session, through the Economic and Social Council, on the preparations for the seminar;

(f) To report to the General Assembly at its forty-second session, through the Economic and Social Council, on the seminar.

*119th plenary meeting
17 December 1985*

40/202. Human settlements

A

REPORT OF THE COMMISSION ON HUMAN SETTLEMENTS

The General Assembly,

Recalling its resolutions 3201 (S-VI) and 3202 (S-VI) of 1 May 1974, containing the Declaration and the Programme of Action on the Establishment of a New International Economic Order, 3281 (XXIX) of 12 December 1974, containing the Charter of Economic Rights and Duties of States, and 3362 (S-VII) of 16 September 1975 on development and international economic co-operation,

Recalling also its resolutions 32/162 of 19 December 1977 on institutional arrangements for international co-operation in the field of human settlements and 34/116 of 14 December 1979 on the strengthening of human settlements activities,

Conscious of the very substantial gap between the resources available through voluntary contributions to the United Nations Centre for Human Settlements (Habitat) and the needs of developing countries requesting assistance from the Centre,

Having considered the report of the Commission on Human Settlements on the work of its eighth session,⁹⁵

1. *Takes note* of the report of the Commission on Human Settlements on the work of its eighth session;

2. *Takes note with appreciation* of the progress which the Commission and its secretariat, the United Nations Centre for Human Settlements (Habitat), have continued to make in providing guidance and assistance to Governments in their efforts to provide adequate shelter and services to their people, particularly the poor and disadvantaged;

3. *Calls upon* all Governments to accord the requisite priority in their development and development assistance

⁹¹ Report of Habitat: United Nations Conference on Human Settlements, Vancouver, 31 May-11 June 1976 (United Nations publication, Sales No. E.76.IV.7 and corrigendum), chap. I.

⁹² *Ibid.*, chap. II.

⁹³ A/40/373-E/1985/99

⁹⁴ Official Records of the General Assembly, Fortieth Session, Second Committee, 17th meeting, paras. 93-99

⁹⁵ *Ibid.*, Fortieth Session, Supplement No. 8 (A/40/8 and Corr.1).

3. *Notes also* the efforts that the United Nations Sudano-Sahelian Office has made in the face of these obstacles to assist, on behalf of the United Nations Environment Programme, the Governments of the countries of the region in combating desertification, under a joint venture between the United Nations Environment Programme and the United Nations Development Programme;

4. *Commends* the Executive Director of the United Nations Environment Programme and the Administrator of the United Nations Development Programme for the sustained and co-ordinated manner in which they have continued to develop the joint venture through the United Nations Sudano-Sahelian Office;

5. *Recommends* to the Governing Council of the United Nations Environment Programme and the Governing Council of the United Nations Development Programme that they continue, increase and intensify their efforts to mobilize resources for the United Nations Sudano-Sahelian Office in order to make it more capable of responding adequately to the pressing needs of the countries of the Sudano-Sahelian and adjacent regions;

6. *Expresses its gratitude* to all Governments, and all organizations and foundations that have contributed to the implementation in the Sudano-Sahelian region of the Plan of Action to Combat Desertification;

7. *Draws the attention* of the international community to the pressing need to increase the efforts to implement the Plan of Action in the Sudano-Sahelian region and urges it to contribute to the implementation through appropriate means, including the United Nations Trust Fund for Sudano-Sahelian Activities, and to respond favourably to requests for assistance from the Governments of the countries of the region that are most affected;

8. *Requests* the Governing Council of the United Nations Environment Programme to report to the General Assembly at its forty-fourth session, through the Economic and Social Council, on the progress made in the implementation in the Sudano-Sahelian region of the Plan of Action.

96th plenary meeting
11 December 1987

C

FINANCING AND OTHER MEASURES IN SUPPORT OF THE PLAN OF ACTION TO COMBAT DESERTIFICATION

The General Assembly,

Recalling its resolution 40/198 of 17 December 1985,

1. *Takes note* of the report of the Secretary-General on the implementation and financing of the Plan of Action to Combat Desertification;⁶⁵

2. *Urges* Governments as well as organs, organizations and programmes of the United Nations system, other multilateral development-assistance institutions, non-governmental organizations and private foundations to take the necessary decisions to mobilize the funds required before the desertification process destroys more arable lands and it becomes too late to stop the process;

3. *Urges* relevant research institutions, as appropriate, in co-operation with the United Nations Environment Programme, to give maximum priority to work in the field of desertification;

4. *Takes note* of the fact that the Governing Council of the United Nations Environment Programme, in its decision 14/15 D of 18 June 1987,⁴⁶ requested the Executive

Director of the Programme to discuss with Governments the feasibility of adopting a new and realistic approach that would encourage them and international financing institutions to contribute directly or indirectly to the Special Account to finance the implementation of the Plan of Action to Combat Desertification;

5. *Requests* the Executive Director of the United Nations Environment Programme to examine, in the context of the evaluation called for in Governing Council decision 14/15 C of 18 June 1987,⁴⁶ ways and means of enhancing the efficiency of the Consultative Group for Desertification Control in pursuance of its mandate as contained in the pertinent resolutions of the General Assembly;

6. *Requests* the Secretary-General to keep under review actions at the national and regional levels as well as the issues pertaining to the financing of the Plan of Action to Combat Desertification and to consult further with interested Governments on the proposals contained in his report.⁶⁵

96th plenary meeting
11 December 1987

D

REPORT OF THE SECRETARY-GENERAL CONCERNING THE PLAN OF ACTION TO COMBAT DESERTIFICATION

The General Assembly

Requests the Secretary-General to report to it at its forty-fourth session, through the Economic and Social Council, on the implementation of resolutions A, B and C above.

96th plenary meeting
11 December 1987

42/190. Living conditions of the Palestinian people in the occupied Palestinian territories

The General Assembly,

Recalling the Vancouver Declaration on Human Settlements, 1976,⁷⁰ and the relevant recommendations for national action⁷¹ adopted by Habitat: United Nations Conference on Human Settlements,

Recalling also its resolution 40/201 of 17 December 1985,

Gravely alarmed by the continuation of the Israeli settlement policies, which have been declared null and void and a major obstacle to peace,

1. *Takes note with appreciation* of the report of the Secretary-General on the living conditions of the Palestinian people in the occupied Palestinian territories;⁷²

2. *Takes note also* of the statement made on 27 October 1987 by the observer of the Palestine Liberation Organization;⁷³

3. *Rejects* the Israeli plans and actions intended to change the demographic composition of the occupied Palestinian territories, particularly the increase and ex-

⁷⁰Report of Habitat: United Nations Conference on Human Settlements, Vancouver, 31 May-11 June 1976 (United Nations publication, Sales No. E.76.IV.7 and corrigendum), chap. I.

⁷¹Ibid., chap. II.

⁷²A/42/183-E/1987/53.

⁷³See Official Records of the General Assembly, Forty-second Session, Second Committee, 25th meeting, and corrigendum.

pansion of the Israeli settlements, and other plans and actions creating conditions leading to the displacement and exodus of Palestinians from the occupied Palestinian territories;

4. *Expresses its alarm* at the deterioration, as a result of the Israeli occupation, in the living conditions of the Palestinian people in the Palestinian territories occupied since 1967;

5. *Affirms* that the Israeli occupation is contradictory to the basic requirements for the social and economic development of the Palestinian people in the occupied Palestinian territories;

6. *Requests* the Secretary-General to prepare an in-depth study on future needs in the field of infrastructure for the Palestinian people in the Palestinian territories occupied since 1967;

7. *Also requests* the Secretary-General to report to the General Assembly at its forty-fourth session, through the Economic and Social Council, on the progress made in the implementation of the present resolution.

96th plenary meeting
11 December 1987

42/191. Global Strategy for Shelter to the Year 2000

The General Assembly,

Bearing in mind the Vancouver Declaration on Human Settlements, 1976⁷⁰ and the recommendations for national action⁷¹ adopted at Habitat: United Nations Conference on Human Settlements,

Recalling its resolution 35/56 of 5 December 1980, the annex to which contains the International Development Strategy for the Third United Nations Development Decade, in which, *inter alia*, the importance of the provision of basic shelter and infrastructure was stressed,

Recalling also its resolution 41/190 of 8 December 1986 on the International Year of Shelter for the Homeless,

Taking note of the reports of the Executive Director of the United Nations Centre for Human Settlements (Habitat) entitled "Shelter and services for the poor—a call to action"⁷⁴ and "A new agenda for human settlements",⁷⁵ as well as the comments made by Governments at the tenth (commemorative) session of the Commission on Human Settlements,

Recognizing that adequate and secure shelter is a basic human right and is vital for the fulfilment of human aspirations,

Recognizing further that a squalid residential environment is a constant threat to health and to life itself and thereby constitutes a drain on human resources, a nation's most valuable asset,

Noting that this lamentable situation can adversely affect the social and political stability of countries,

Deeply concerned about the present alarming situation, in which, despite the efforts of Governments at the national and local levels and of international organizations, more than one billion people find themselves either completely without shelter or living in homes unfit for human habitation, and that, owing to prevailing demographic trends, these already formidable problems will escalate in the coming years unless concerted, determined measures are taken immediately,

Fully aware of the multidimensional nature of the shelter problem, which has its main roots in poverty and, in many countries, is aggravated by the scarcity of resources, inadequate institutional capacities and the lack of a legal and financial framework for alleviating the problem,

Realizing that the problem manifests itself in slums and shanty towns, with inadequate social and technical services, and in a general deterioration of the living environment in rural settlements,

Conscious of the vital role of the self-help efforts of the poor to house themselves and the multiplier effects of shelter development, based on the full mobilization of local resources, and their importance to the economic development of a country, and the lost opportunities for development represented by the neglected shelter sector,

Convinced that the continuous, co-ordinated and widely based efforts of all relevant agencies, bodies, organizations and individuals, when guided by an appropriate strategy, will reverse the alarming trends and produce clear and visible improvements in the shelter and neighbourhoods of the poor and disadvantaged by the year 2000,

Encouraged by action already taken in many countries to prepare national shelter strategies and launch other measures that will promote achievement of the goal of shelter for all,

1. *Decides* that there shall be a Global Strategy for Shelter to the Year 2000, including a plan of action for its implementation, monitoring and evaluation;

2. *Further decides* that the objective of the Strategy should be to stimulate measures that will facilitate adequate shelter for all by the year 2000;

3. *Requests* the Executive Director of the United Nations Centre for Human Settlements (Habitat) to prepare a proposal for a Global Strategy for Shelter to the Year 2000 and its implementation, including its financial implications, for consideration by the Commission on Human Settlements at its eleventh session;

4. *Requests* the Commission on Human Settlements to formulate a Global Strategy for Shelter to the Year 2000, to be drawn up within existing resources, for submission, through the Economic and Social Council, to the General Assembly at its forty-third session;

5. *Urges* all Governments to commit themselves to the objectives of the Global Strategy for Shelter to the Year 2000 by adopting and implementing shelter strategies in accordance with the guidelines contained in section I of the annex to the present resolution, which will permit the mobilization of all forces and resources in the country for the attainment of the objectives of the Strategy, and to renew this commitment annually by, *inter alia*, announcing on World Habitat Day the concrete actions to be taken and targets to be achieved during each successive year;

6. *Requests* all United Nations bodies and agencies and the international community at large to support the formulation and implementation of the Global Strategy along the lines defined in section II of the annex to the present resolution.

96th plenary meeting
11 December 1987

⁷⁴ HS/C/10/3.

⁷⁵ HS/C/10/2 and Corr.1 and 4.

Drought and Development and the Permanent Inter-State Committee on Drought Control in the Sahel;

(b) To continue to support the Ministerial Conference for a joint policy to combat desertification in the countries of the Permanent Inter-State Committee on Drought Control in the Sahel and the Economic Community of West African States, in the Maghreb countries, in Egypt and in the Sudan (COMIDES) and, in this context, to co-operate with the Southern African Development Co-ordination Conference and with the Arab Maghreb Union.

83rd plenary meeting
19 December 1989

44/173. Global Strategy for Shelter to the Year 2000

The General Assembly,

Recalling its resolution 43/181 of 20 December 1988, in which it designated the Commission on Human Settlements as the United Nations intergovernmental body responsible for co-ordinating, evaluating and monitoring the Global Strategy for Shelter to the Year 2000,¹³ the core of which consists of integrated national shelter strategies.

Also recalling its request, contained in paragraph 7 of resolution 43/181, that the Commission on Human Settlements, as the body designated to co-ordinate implementation of the Global Strategy, report biennially to the General Assembly on progress made in its implementation.

Recognizing that the Global Strategy is the most ambitious programme that the international community has so far adopted in the human settlements sector and, as such, requires the concerted efforts of all Member States, United Nations bodies and donor agencies, as well as the entire attention of the United Nations Centre for Human Settlements (Habitat),

Convinced that, while integrating the most effective and efficient policy tools in all action areas, national shelter strategies can be crucial instruments of enablement leading to the full mobilization of all types of resources on a sustainable basis and thereby facilitating adequate shelter for all by the year 2000,

Paying special attention to the need to ensure equal access to available resources by all population groups, while recognizing the critical role that women should play in the implementation of the Global Strategy, as well as the need to remove obstacles that some population groups, such as households headed by women, may face in this respect.

Concerned about the economic constraints many countries face in their development efforts, but at the same time encouraged by the positive impact which enabling shelter strategies have on economic development,

Emphasizing that the objective of facilitating shelter for all can be promoted by a national strategy which is recognized and supported at the highest possible political level, adjusted to the macro-economic need of consolidating the national resource base and minimizing the import content, based on nationally and individually affordable standards, flexible in terms of the diversity of shelter priorities and specific in terms of institutional arrangements for partnership between various sectors of implementation,

Having considered the first report of the Commission on Human Settlements on the implementation of the Global Strategy for Shelter to the Year 2000,¹⁴

¹³ Official Records of the General Assembly, Forty-third Session, Supplement No. 8, addendum (A/43/8/Add.1).

¹⁴ Ibid., Forty-fourth Session, Supplement No. 8, addendum (A/44/8/Add.1).

Noting with satisfaction the support given to the Plan of Action of the Global Strategy by donor Governments and international bodies and agencies in assisting Governments in the formulation of their national shelter strategies,

Cognizant of the importance of sustaining and expanding national and international support to this crucial phase of the Plan of Action,

Noting that, when considering future voluntary contributions to the United Nations Habitat and Human Settlements Foundation, donors will be influenced by the degree of emphasis of the work programme of the United Nations Centre for Human Settlements (Habitat) on the Global Strategy and by the priorities within the Global Strategy reflected in that programme,

1. Commends Governments which are reviewing, revising and consolidating their national shelter strategies, as well as implementing them with great determination, and urges all other Governments to do the same;

2. Recommends that all Governments gradually set in place the monitoring system to be proposed by the Executive Director of the United Nations Centre for Human Settlements (Habitat), following the guidelines to be prepared by the Executive Director;

3. Invites Governments to make voluntary contributions whenever possible to the United Nations Habitat and Human Settlements Foundation, in cash or in kind, in order to facilitate the implementation of the Global Strategy for Shelter to the Year 2000;

4. Urges the organizations of the United Nations system, particularly the United Nations Development Programme, and other multilateral and bilateral agencies to provide financial and other support to the implementation of the Plan of Action of the Global Strategy.

83rd plenary meeting
19 December 1989

44/174. Living conditions of the Palestinian people in the occupied Palestinian territory

The General Assembly,

Recalling the Vancouver Declaration on Human Settlements, 1976,¹⁵ and the relevant recommendations for national action¹⁶ adopted by Habitat: United Nations Conference on Human Settlements,

Recalling also its resolution 42/190 of 11 December 1987,

Taking into account the *intifadah* of the Palestinian people against the Israeli occupation, including its economic and social policies and practices,

Gravely alarmed by the continuation of the Israeli settlement policies in the Palestinian territory occupied by Israel since 1967, including Jerusalem, which have been declared null and void and a major obstacle to peace,

Taking into account the need of the secretariat of the United Nations Conference on Trade and Development for extra funds to prepare the comprehensive study on the economy of the occupied Palestinian territory requested by the Trade and Development Board in its resolution 239 (XXIII) of 9 October 1981,¹⁷

¹⁵ Report of Habitat: United Nations Conference on Human Settlements, Vancouver, 31 May-11 June 1976 (United Nations publication, Sales No. E.76.IV.7 and corrigendum), chap. I.

¹⁶ Ibid., chap. II.

¹⁷ See Official Records of the General Assembly, Thirty-sixth Session, Supplement No. 15 and corrigendum (A/36/15 and Corr.1), part three, annex I.

1. *Takes note* of the study annexed to the note by the Secretary-General concerning the infrastructure needs of the Palestinian people;¹⁸

2. *Calls* for the immediate cessation of the Israeli practices against the Palestinian people, particularly in the economic and social fields;

3. *Expresses its alarm* at the deterioration, as a result of the Israeli occupation, in the living conditions of the Palestinian people in the Palestinian territory, including Jerusalem, occupied since 1967;

4. *Affirms* that the Israeli occupation is contradictory to the basic requirements for the social and economic development of the Palestinian people in the occupied Palestinian territory;

5. *Rejects* the Israeli plans and actions intended to change the demographic composition of the occupied Palestinian territory, in particular the increase and expansion of the Israeli settlements;

6. *Requests* the Secretary-General to make available to the secretariat of the United Nations Conference on Trade and Development from the United Nations regular budget the extra funds needed to prepare the comprehensive study on the economy of the occupied Palestinian territory;

7. *Also requests* the Secretary-General to report to the General Assembly at its forty-sixth session, through the Economic and Social Council, on the progress made in the implementation of the present resolution.

83rd plenary meeting
19 December 1989

44/175. United Nations Institute for Training and Research

The General Assembly,

Recalling its resolutions 41/172 of 5 December 1986, 42/197 of 11 December 1987 and 43/201 of 20 December 1988,

Having considered the report of the Secretary-General¹⁹ and taking into account the statements made by the representative of the Secretary-General and by the Executive Director of the United Nations Institute for Training and Research,²⁰

Recognizing the continuing importance and relevance of the mandate of the Institute, particularly in the field of training,

Recognizing also the need for Governments to contribute or increase their voluntary contributions, as appropriate, to the Institute,

Noting with concern the continuing lack of a sufficiently broad base of donor countries supporting the Institute,

Deeply concerned that the sale of the headquarters building of the Institute, which would enable a reserve fund for the Institute to be established, has not yet been completed,

Noting with concern that the 1989 United Nations Pledging Conference for Development Activities did not provide the General Fund of the United Nations Institute for Training and Research with the level of resources required

for it to maintain a minimum training programme and institutional structure,

1. *Takes note* of the report of the Secretary-General;¹⁹

2. *Reaffirms* the continuing validity and relevance of the mandate of the United Nations Institute for Training and Research, as contained in the amended statute;²¹

3. *Commends* the Secretary-General for the measures taken to implement the provisions of resolution 43/201 and encourages him to take further steps in that direction;

4. *Takes note* of the criteria and qualifications to apply to full-time senior fellows of the Institute and of the amendment to the statute of the Institute regarding full-time senior fellows, fellows, consultants, correspondents and advisory bodies, contained in the annexes to the report of the Secretary-General;

5. *Reiterates* its request that the budgetary proposals of the Institute for 1990, as well as those for subsequent years, be submitted to the Advisory Committee on Administrative and Budgetary Questions for review and comment prior to approval by the Board of Trustees of the Institute;

6. *Authorizes* the Institute to enter into appropriate arrangements with the Administrator of the United Nations Development Programme to execute projects funded by the Programme falling within the functions of the Institute, taking into account all relevant factors, including the comments of the Board of Auditors concerning the status of the Institute as an executing agency of the United Nations Development Programme;²²

7. *Urges* the Secretary-General to proceed rapidly with the sale of the headquarters building of the Institute, as approved in resolutions 42/197 and 43/201;

8. *Reiterates* its approval of the recommendation of the Secretary-General that the Institute should, after the sale of the building, repay the amounts currently owed to the United Nations and use the balance to establish a reserve fund for the Institute;

9. *Agrees* with the Secretary-General that the purpose of the reserve fund to be established by the Institute is to provide greater stability, predictability and reliability in the financing of the Institute, and notes that the fund is not intended to be a substitute for voluntary contributions from Governments, either to the General Fund of the Institute or to the special projects;

10. *Requests* the Secretary-General to submit to the Board of Trustees of the Institute at its forthcoming session a complete report on his efforts to sell the headquarters building of the Institute and the land on which it is situated;

11. *Urges* all States that have not yet contributed to the General Fund of the Institute to do so and calls upon all contributing States to increase their contributions to the Institute so as to enable it to continue to fulfil its mandate and to implement fully and successfully the provisions of the present resolution and other relevant resolutions;

12. *Appeals* to all States to provide appropriate special-purpose grants to enable the Institute to implement the training and research programmes that cannot be financed from its General Fund, and calls upon appropriate inter-governmental and non-governmental organizations to contribute to the Institute;

¹⁸ A/44/534.

¹⁹ A/44/611.

²⁰ See *Official Records of the General Assembly, Forty-fourth Session, Second Committee, 25th meeting, and corrigendum.*

²¹ See A/43/697/Add.1

²² See *Official Records of the General Assembly, Forty-fourth Session, Supplement No. 5D (A/44/5/Add.4), paras. 25 and 26.*

46/162. Living conditions of the Palestinian people in the occupied Palestinian territory

The General Assembly,

Recalling the Vancouver Declaration on Human Settlements, 1976,⁴³ and the relevant recommendations for national action adopted by Habitat: United Nations Conference on Human Settlements,⁴⁴

Recalling also its resolution 44/174 of 19 December 1989,

Taking into account the *intifadah* of the Palestinian people against the Israeli occupation, including Israeli economic and social policies and practices,

Gravely alarmed by the continuation of the Israeli settlement policies in the Palestinian territory occupied by Israel since 1967, including Jerusalem, which have been declared illegal and a major obstacle to peace,

1. *Takes note* of the report annexed to the note by the Secretary-General;⁴⁵
2. *Calls* for the immediate cessation of the Israeli practices against the Palestinian people, particularly in the economic and social fields;
3. *Expresses its alarm* at the deterioration, as a result of the Israeli occupation, in the living conditions of the Palestinian people in the Palestinian territory, including Jerusalem, occupied since 1967;
4. *Affirms* that the Israeli occupation is contradictory to the basic requirements for the social and economic development of the Palestinian people in the occupied Palestinian territory;
5. *Rejects* the Israeli plans and actions intended to change the demographic composition of the occupied Palestinian territory, in particular the increase and expansion of the Israeli settlements;
6. *Requests* the Secretary-General to consider ways and means of improving the living conditions of the Palestinian people in the occupied Palestinian territory and, pending the exercise of their right to self-determination, to plan for concerted economic and social actions by the United Nations system;
7. *Also requests* the Secretary-General to report to the General Assembly at its forty-eighth session, through the Economic and Social Council, on the progress made in the implementation of the present resolution.

*78th plenary meeting
19 December 1991*

46/163. Global Strategy for Shelter to the Year 2000

The General Assembly,

Recalling its resolution 43/181 of 20 December 1988, in which it designated the Commission on Human Settlements as the intergovernmental body for coordinating, evaluating and monitoring the Global Strategy for Shelter to the Year 2000,⁴⁶

Recalling also its resolution 44/173 of 19 December 1989, in which it considered the first report of the Commission on Human Settlements on the implementation of the Global Strategy for Shelter to the Year 2000,⁴⁷ submitted pursuant to paragraph 7 of resolution 43/181,

Recognizing that the Global Strategy for Shelter to the Year 2000 provides a framework for Governments to facilitate adequate shelter for all and that, through shelter and services, the Global Strategy also addresses the issues of alleviation of poverty, improvement of health, participation of women, improvement of the living environment of people and promotion of sustainable development,

Emphasizing that the operational focus for promoting the objective of facilitating shelter for all is action at the national level within the framework of national shelter strategies which are integrated with macroeconomic policies for optimum utilization of natural and human resources and are based on standards that are nationally appropriate and socially acceptable,

Emphasizing also that the adoption of enabling shelter strategies can mobilize resources on a sustainable basis and facilitate access to available resources by all population groups,

Noting that such mobilization of national resources through enabling shelter strategies could partially alleviate economic constraints that affect many countries,

Having considered the second report of the Commission on Human Settlements on the implementation of the Global Strategy for Shelter to the Year 2000,⁴⁸

Noting with satisfaction that a number of Governments have initiated or reformulated national shelter strategies, based on the principle of enabling all actors in the shelter sector, and that many other Governments have initiated action on particular components of a national shelter strategy,

Noting also with satisfaction the support given to the implementation of the Global Strategy by donor Governments, international bodies and intergovernmental and non-governmental organizations,

Cognizant of the importance of maintaining the momentum already generated at the national and international levels for the implementation of the Global Strategy,

1. *Commends* Governments which are revising, consolidating, formulating or implementing their national shelter strategies based on the enabling principles of the Global Strategy for Shelter to the Year 2000;
2. *Urges* those Governments which have not already initiated action towards formulation of a national shelter strategy based on the enabling principles, or have taken only tentative steps so far, to increase their efforts, using the Guidelines for National Action contained in the Global Strategy, involving governmental, private sector and non-governmental actors in the shelter sector, assuring the participation of men and women and paying special attention to gender issues, in the formulation, implementation and monitoring of national shelter strategies in order to achieve the objective of facilitating shelter for all by the year 2000;
3. *Recommends* that all Governments adopt a cost-effective system for monitoring progress of national shelter strategies and also adopt, as far as is feasible, guidelines prepared by the Executive Director of the United Nations Centre for Human Settlements (Habitat);
4. *Also urges* Governments to integrate fully the environmental dimension in the formulation and implementation of national shelter strategies, following, for example, the synopsis of environmental checkpoints contained in the report of the Executive Director on the significance of human settlements and the Global Strategy for Shelter to the Year 2000 to the concept of sustainable development;⁴⁹



UNITED NATIONS
GENERAL
ASSEMBLY



Distr.
GENERAL

A/32/228
4 October 1977
ENGLISH
ORIGINAL: ARABIC/ENGLISH/
FRENCH

Thirty-second session
Agenda item 62

UNITED NATIONS ENVIRONMENT PROGRAMME

Living conditions of the Palestinian people in the occupied territories

Report of the Secretary-General

1. The present report is submitted pursuant to resolution 31/110 of 16 December 1976, in which the General Assembly requested the Secretary-General, in collaboration with the relevant United Nations organs and specialized agencies, to prepare and submit to the Assembly at its thirty-second session a report on the living conditions of the Palestinian people in the occupied territories. It further requested the Secretary-General, in preparing the report, to consult and co-operate with the Palestine Liberation Organization, the representative of the Palestinian people.
2. At the 45th meeting of the Second Committee, on 17 November 1976, when the draft resolution on the living conditions of the Palestinian people in the occupied territories was scheduled to be voted on, the Committee was informed that, if the Secretary-General were requested to prepare a report on the living conditions of the Palestinian people in the occupied territories, the task would be entrusted to the Department of Economic and Social Affairs. The Second Committee was further informed that while the task would present certain difficulties every effort would be made to prepare and submit the report if it were requested. Since the Secretariat had no independent source of information about the occupied territories, it would have to look to the Governments and organizations concerned to provide the necessary information to enable it to submit a report to the General Assembly at its next session (see A/C.2/31/SR.45).
3. In accordance with the statement made by the Secretary-General's representative at the Second Committee referred to above, a note verbale was sent on 16 May 1977 to the Permanent Missions to the United Nations of Egypt, Israel, Jordan and the Syrian Arab Republic, as well as to the permanent observer of the Palestine Liberation Organization, drawing attention to the resolution and requesting such information as might be made available on the subject-matter of the report requested

by the General Assembly. This was followed by a second note verbale dated 21 July 1977 which requested that the necessary information be submitted by 15 August 1977.

4. Pertinent information for the report was requested from the International Labour Organisation, Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations, United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization, World Health Organization, Economic Commission for Western Asia, United Nations Relief and Works Agency for Palestine Refugees in the Near East and from the Chairman of the Special Committee to Investigate Israeli Practices Affecting Human Rights of the Population of the Occupied Territories.

5. On 19 August 1977, the Permanent Representative of Egypt transmitted a report prepared by the Egyptian authorities. This report is reproduced in its entirety in annex I.A.

6. The Permanent Representative of Israel to the United Nations in a note verbale dated 16 August 1977 addressed to the Secretary-General stated that the position of Israel on the subject-matter of the resolution in question was made clear by the delegate of Israel in the Second Committee on 17 November 1976, and was reflected in document A/C.2/31/SR.45, the relevant paragraphs of which (paras. 54 to 61) were attached. These paragraphs are reproduced in annex I.B.

7. The Permanent Mission of Jordan to the United Nations, in a note verbale dated 10 August 1977, submitted a report which dealt primarily with the situation in the occupied parts of Jerusalem and requested that, in view of the various references to the Security Council resolution on the subject, the report be circulated as a document of the Security Council (S/12378). Further, the note verbale indicated that the Government of Jordan would, in due course, transmit further reports covering the situation of the rest of the occupied West Bank and the living conditions of the Palestinian refugees, in addition to those of the indigenous inhabitants. These additional reports had not been received at the time of writing this report.

8. The Permanent Mission of the Syrian Arab Republic transmitted the report prepared by the competent authorities of the Republic with a note verbale dated 25 July 1977. Subsequently, in a note verbale dated 23 August 1977, the Permanent Mission requested, upon instructions from its Government, that this study be circulated as an official document of the General Assembly under items 30, 31 and 62 (A/32/189).

9. The Palestine Liberation Organization has, to date, made no information available directly to the Secretary-General. However, the statement of the FAO includes a note verbale from the Political Department of PLO to the Director-General of FAO informing him of the hardships experienced by the Palestinians within the occupied territories. This note verbale is included as part of annex II.B.

10. The Chairman of the Special Committee to Investigate Israeli Practices Affecting the Human Rights of the Population of the Occupied Territories referred in his reply to the report submitted by the Special Committee to the General Assembly at its

thirty-first session (A/31/218), and drew attention in particular to sections IV and VI which contained information on the situation of civilians in the territories occupied by Israel. Since this report is available as a document of the General Assembly, it is not reproduced.

11. The ILO drew attention to a report on the situation of workers in the territories occupied by Israel, which was included in the report of the Director-General on the activities of the ILO in 1976, presented to the International Labour Conference at its sixty-third session (1977). 1/ Relevant sections have been excerpted therefrom and constitute annex II.A of this report.

12. A formal statement from the Director-General of FAO is included in full in annex II.B.

13. UNESCO stated that it did not have any recent information collected directly from the occupied territories. An expert mission to collect information on education and cultural life in the occupied territories is being planned and the findings will be made available in due course. UNESCO did submit, however, a copy of the report of the Director-General on the implementation of resolution 13.1, adopted by the General Conference at its eighteenth session, concerning the educational and cultural institutions in occupied Arab territories (document 19C/73, and its annex 99 EX/50). Pertinent excerpts from these documents are included in annex II C.

14. WHO stated that the Thirtieth World Health Assembly, which took place at Geneva in May 1977, had on its agenda the question of "Health assistance to refugees and displaced persons in the Middle East", for which the background documentation included the progress report of the Sub-Committee of Experts set up by the Director-General to study the health conditions of the inhabitants of the occupied territories in the Middle East (document A.30/36) and, as an annex to that document, the abbreviated annual report of the Director of Health of UNRWA for the year 1976 (document A.30/WP/1). Selected paragraphs from the latter document have been excerpted on the basis of their pertinence to the matter at hand and are transcribed in annex II.D.

15. UNICEF stated that, as it did not have projects specifically dealing with the Palestinian people in the occupied territories, it was unable to provide information relevant to the subject.

16. The statement received from UNRWA is reproduced in annex II.E.

17. The statement received from the Executive Secretary of ECWA is included in full in annex II.F.

1/ ISBN 92-2-101724-9, pp. 47 to 59.

ANNEX I

Replies received from Member States

- A. Note verbale dated 19 August 1977 from the Permanent Representative of Egypt to the United Nations addressed to the Secretary-General containing information on living conditions of the Palestinian people in the occupied territories

/Original: Arabic/

I. Situation of the Arabs in the occupied territories

1. Ramallah prison is overfilled with citizens from the West Bank who were arrested by the Israeli authorities on charges of resisting the occupation. These authorities persist in their oppressive policy towards Arab detainees, which led those jailed in Al Khalil (Hebron) Prison to threaten to go on a hunger-strike to the death. The head of Al Khalil Municipality has appealed to the Israeli Military Governor to take measures to improve the conditions of those prisoners, and even expressed willingness to provide them with food and clothing at the expense of the Municipality.
2. The occupation authorities barred the delegations of Nablus and Ramallah from visiting the Arab Gulf States, thus raising obstacles to the idea of fraternity between the towns of the occupied territories and other Arab towns. Those authorities further banned the head of Ramallah Municipality from going to the United States, where he was due to attend the annual congress organized by the emigrants from that town, lest their colonial methods should be exposed. The occupation authorities further refused to allow the head of Nablus Municipality to travel to Rome to attend a meeting of heads of democratic municipalities.
3. The Israeli authorities levy heavy taxes on consumer goods in the occupied territories, causing a flight of Arab capital to Jordan, which in turn has contributed to a further deterioration of economic conditions.
4. Unemployment increases among the Arabs because of the Israeli designs to force Arabs to leave the occupied territories. In this respect, the occupation authorities pensioned off a large number of teachers in the West Bank. The number of citizens who left the West Bank during last year is estimated at 15,000, most of them youths who were forced to emigrate by various Israeli pressures. The population has actually declined to 681,000, compared to 854,000 before the 1967 aggression.
5. The Military Governor of the West Bank banned the establishment of any projects there under the pretext of examining their sources of financing and ascertaining that such projects were not funded by the Palestine Liberation Organization. This measure has resulted in a freezing of funds supplied by some Arab Gulf States to support the West Bank municipal councils.

/...

6. Israeli authorities impose exorbitant custom duties on Arab citizens when they go to visit their relatives in the occupied territories during the summer holidays. This action is meant to enrich the Israeli treasury, on the one hand, and to make life harder for Arab citizens, on the other.

7. The occupation authorities have prevented the residents of the Al Maareh area in Sinai from going near water wells. As a result, rates for fresh water soared and living conditions became even more difficult, which forced the population to leave the area.

II. Israeli settlements in the occupied territories

1. In the field of settlement operations, the occupation authorities continue to expropriate large areas of Arab land, particularly in the Tulkrum and Jenin areas, prior to the establishment of settlements on that land. The victory of the Likud bloc has encouraged pro-settlement groups, especially the Gosh Emonim, to proceed with the establishment of settlements on Arab land. The above-mentioned group plans the establishment of 10 settlements in the West Bank over the next few months. The same group is about to set up a settlement on the Jerusalem Road. Work is under way to set up two other settlements, one on the hills of Nablus and the other in the Abul Forneh area in Nablus.

2. The Ministerial Committee for Settlement Affairs has allocated 30 million Israeli pounds for the implementation of a new project that envisages the establishment of 110 new settlements in the Rafah area over the next 10 years.

3. The Israeli Minister of Agriculture, Ariel Sharon, announced that a team of experts from Likud had elaborated a programme for the creation of five new Israeli towns in the West Bank to accommodate 150,000 persons. The programme envisages linking these towns with Jerusalem and Tel Aviv via a network of highways. The programme further calls for the establishment of 43 industrial and agricultural settlements in the West Bank.

4. Teddy Kolek, the Mayor of occupied Jerusalem, has announced that Israel will never give up Jerusalem, whatever the solutions to be reached, nor will Jerusalem be divided again under any circumstances.

5. The Israeli Minister of State, Israel Galilee, announced that the number of settlements established since the 1967 war totalled 100, at a cost of 4 million Israeli pounds. He added that the United States had not exercised any pressure on Israel in this respect, and that the Israeli Government's decisions were not dependent upon the position of the United States.

6. The Israeli Minister of Defence, Ezra Weizmann, visited Kiryat settlement near Al Khalil and urged Israeli settlers to exert efforts to turn their settlement into a large city.

7. Rabbi Meir Kahane of Israel (a fanatical rabbi) demanded that the Israeli

Government should implement Menahim Begin's promises of considering the West Bank a liberated Israeli land, and allow the establishment of settlements there. He declared his intention to set up a settlement within the borders of Nablus.

8. The Israeli authorities proceeded to survey the land in the vicinity of Beit Amer village in Al Khalil, in preparation for the establishment of a number of settlements in that region.

9. The region of Khan Al Ahmer in the West Bank is being transformed into an industrial region. Industrial establishments are being set up, among which is a plant for sophisticated military industries that will begin production during the next few months. Moreover, 5,000 residential units are to be set up in the above-mentioned region to accommodate Jewish settlers.

10. The Israeli authorities are planning to set up a number of banks in the region of Khan Al Ahmer near the bridges connecting the West Bank and the East Bank, so that citizens would not be allowed to bring in any foreign currency and would have to change whatever currencies they might have into Israeli currency at the branches of those banks situated in the area of residence of all arrivals in the occupied territories.

B. Note verbale dated 16 August 1977 from the Permanent Representative of Israel to the United Nations addressed to the Secretary-General

/Original: English/

1. The Permanent Representative of Israel to the United Nations stated that "That resolution /General Assembly resolution 31/110 of 16 December 1976/, which was based on resolution 3 adopted at Habitat: United Nations Conference on Human Settlements on 11 June 1976, completely prejudices the issue, and leaves no room for an objective report". The Permanent Representative of Israel further stated that "The position of Israel on the subject-matter of the resolution in question was made clear by the delegate of Israel in the Second Committee on 17 November 1976 and is reflected in document A/C.2/31/SR.45, the relevant paragraphs of which (paras. 54 to 61) are attached."

2. These paragraphs are herewith quoted verbatim:

"54. Mr. ELIASHIV (Israel) said that the initiators of draft resolution A/C.3/31/L.13 had singled out a so-called economic issue which could not be divorced from the complex Middle East problem as a whole. Moreover, the questions referred to in the draft resolution were being dealt with by other United Nations bodies.

"55. The first preambular paragraph of the draft resolution recalled resolution 3 of the Vancouver Conference, which referred to a so-called 'fact', namely, that 'the Palestinian people have been forced to abandon their

/...

indigenous homeland'. That baseless and false assertion was politically motivated and aimed at attributing to Israel exclusive responsibility for all the consequences of the continuous aggression committed by Arab States against Israel since 1948. Israel had not created the Palestinian problem. The Palestinian tragedy was a direct result of the aggression launched by the Arab States in 1948. To refer to the Israeli presence in the occupied areas since 1967 while ignoring the fact that Israel had arrived there in the course of a war of Arab making was to pervert fundamental truth. The continuation of that occupation was a direct consequence of the refusal of the Arab States to enter into negotiations with Israel to establish a firm and just peace in the area. Israel's Declaration of Independence had contained an appeal for friendship addressed to the Arab people in Israel and the neighbouring Arab States. In response, the Arab States had proclaimed war against Israel, and their armies had crossed the borders in an attempt to crush it at birth. At that time, the Arab population of Israel had been urged and incited by the Arab leadership to leave their homes and seek temporary shelter in neighbouring Arab countries. Several hundreds of thousands of Palestine Arabs had heeded those orders. In that connexion, he read out quotations from articles which had appeared in Lebanese, Jordanian and Egyptian publications and which demonstrated that those facts had been recognized and admitted by Arabs and others. The Jewish authorities on the other hand, had launched appeals to Arab residents in Israel in an attempt to prevent that flight.

"56. In view of those historical facts, the attempts of Arab spokesmen to blame others for the creation of the problem and their professed interest in the well-being of the refugees rang hollow, when those people could have become independent and self-sufficient many years ago but for the calculated opposition of the Arab States to any constructive approach. As a consequence of Arab aggression, a massive exchange of population had taken place in the Middle East. A practically equal number of Jews from the Arab countries of the Middle East and North Africa had come to Israel, the vast majority of them forced out of their former homes in a state of destitution. Israel had welcomed its refugees and made them an integral and vigorous part of the nation. The Arab States had left their brethren in camps so as to use them as a political weapon against Israel. Jordan had paid the price for that inhuman and short-sighted policy in September 1970, when a Palestinian Arab uprising had been suppressed in a massacre which had cost thousands of lives and destroyed thousands of human habitations. Lebanon was also paying the price in the fratricidal struggle in which that entire nation was engaged.

"57. While that terrible human tragedy was going on in Lebanon, the majority of the Palestinian Arabs in the administered areas were living in conditions of widening contact with the Israeli population on a basis of mutual human respect and dignity which, though still clouded by a lack of political definition, offered the prospect of a peaceful future. His country was fully conscious of the problem of the Palestinian Arabs and did not require persuasion or preaching on the need to solve it peacefully and honourably. Such a solution could only be achieved in the context of a genuine peace settlement in the Middle East, which his country would make every effort to

achieve. Fanciful allegations and distorted reports would not deter Israel from pursuing its positive policy of economic and social progress in the administered areas, maintaining the laws in force in the territories and conducting its administration in accordance with the relevant rules of international conventions until a just and durable peace was achieved. Objective observers, including hundreds of thousands of visitors from the Arab States, affirmed the success of that policy. There had been a real growth of an average of 18 per cent per annum in the GNP in both territories, and per capita income had increased by 80 per cent in the West Bank and by 120 per cent in Gaza in eight years. The unemployment rate had dropped from 10 per cent in the West Bank and almost 30 per cent in the Gaza Strip in 1967 to zero by June 1976. Educational facilities within the free education system in the West Bank and Gaza had been increased by 46 per cent. Over 1 billion Israeli pounds had been spent on the rehabilitation of refugees in Gaza. Construction plans to provide housing for tens of thousands of families would continue, and the area of construction in the West Bank and Gaza had expanded from 880,000 square feet in 1968 to 6.9 million square feet in 1974. The administration had spared and would spare no effort to improve the structure of the camps, instal water and electricity, prepare playgrounds, pave sidewalks and provide sewage works and other facilities. One thousand housing units were being constructed every year in both territories, and 70 million Israeli pounds had been earmarked for new schemes to provide community services such as schools, shopping centres and clinics.

"58. Israel's concern for the well-being of the Palestinian Arabs in the territories had been impugned and ridiculed by certain Arab Governments. It would appear that those Governments would rather see stagnation and misery prevail and would seek a restoration of the situation prior to 1967, when during 19 years of oppression and persecution the inhabitants of Gaza had been kept in deplorable living conditions by the Egyptian military authorities.

"59. Operative paragraph 2 of the draft resolution requested the Secretary-General, in preparing the report, to consult and co-operate with the so-called 'Palestine Liberation Organization'. That request made a mockery of the United Nations Charter, since PLO was a notorious organization which made no secret of its avowed objectives of destroying Israel, a State Member of the United Nations, and depriving its people of their independence, sovereignty and self-determination. Article 19 of the PLO Covenant openly declared that the existence of the State of Israel was null and void, article 20 denied any historical links between the Jewish people and the Holy Land, and article 21 rejected any form of solution for the problem, apart in effect from the destruction of Israel. Any report produced with the co-operation of the so-called PLO would contain false assertions, such as the 'big lie', already contained in resolution 3 of the Vancouver Conference, that 'the cultural habitat has been wilfully destroyed'. Israel would not co-operate in such a vicious propaganda exercise.

"60. His delegation strongly rejected the resolutions enumerated in the preambular paragraphs of the draft resolution. Furthermore, it wished to place

/...

on record its firm objection to any kind of co-operation and consultation with PLO, a terror organization which pretended to speak for the Palestinians and which had brought misery, murder and assassination to the Middle East, including the terrifying human tragedy in Lebanon.

"61. Draft resolution A/C.2/31/L.13 was of a political, propagandistic nature extraneous to the Committee. It singled out an issue which could not be divorced from the complex Middle East problem. Furthermore, it ignored the responsibility of the Arab States, which could not escape the consequences of their own aggression against Israel. It was biased and one-sided. It was based on false assertions and distorted quasi-historical allegations, and it ignored the plight of Jewish communities in Arab countries. His delegation rejected it completely, hoped that those delegations which had refused to support resolution 3 in Vancouver would also reject the present resolution, and called on other delegations to do so."

- C. Note verbale dated 10 August 1977 from the Permanent Mission of Jordan to the United Nations addressed to the Secretary-General

/Original: English/

/The reply of Jordan was issued on 10 August 1977 under the symbol S/12378./

- D. Note verbale dated 23 August 1977 from the Permanent Mission of the Syrian Arab Republic to the United Nations addressed to the Secretary-General

/Original: Arabic/English/

/The reply of the Syrian Arab Republic was issued on 25 August 1977 under the symbol A/32/189./

ANNEX II

Replies received from specialized agencies and other organs
of the United Nations system

A. Reply submitted by the International Labour Organisation

[Original: English]

The ILO drew attention to the Director-General's report on the activities of the ILO in 1976, which was presented to the International Labour Conference at its sixty-third session (1977). a/ This report included a progress report on the study of the situation of workers in the territories occupied by Israel. The following statements are taken from this progress report, as reproduced in the report of the Director-General on the activities of the ILO in 1976:

REPORT SUBMITTED BY THE DIRECTOR-GENERAL TO THE
199TH SESSION OF THE GOVERNING BODY

PROGRESS REPORT ON THE STUDY ON THE SITUATION OF
WORKERS OF THE TERRITORIES OCCUPIED BY ISRAEL

I. Opportunities for employment and vocational training

Employment

3. The aims and effects of official economic and social policy, particularly employment policy, as analysed in some of the studies, 1/ may be summarised as follows: because of an acute shortage of labour in Israel after the 1967 war the authorities suddenly reversed their earlier policy of refusing Arab workers from the occupied territories admission to Israel; recruitment was officially organised through a system of labour exchanges in the territories and was facilitated by the existence of a reserve of poor and unemployed workers; there resulted a migratory movement from the occupied territories to Israel, the number of Arab workers employed in Israel having risen from just over 10,000 in 1969 to nearly 70,000 or about 21.5 per cent

1/ "Rapport sur la situation des travailleurs arabes dans les territoires de la Palestine occupée", in Dossier Palestine 1, Geneva (undated), pp. 63-75; "Conditions of work for Arabs under the yoke of Israeli occupation", Beirut (undated); and note on condition of Arab workers in the territories occupied after 1967, communicated to the Director-General by the Palestine Trade Union Federation (8 February 1976).

a/ "Activities of the ILO 1976". Report of the Director-General to the International Labour Conference, 1977 (Part 2), ILO, Geneva, 1977 (ISBN 92-2-101724-9).

of the total labour force of the territories in 1974. ... The studies here quoted take the view that the fall in unemployment and the rise in purchasing power in the occupied territories have been due not to the development of the local economy but to the employment of Arab workers in Israel. Government policy, it is claimed, is having adverse consequences such as the breakdown of the occupational structure and of small-scale agriculture in the territories, the appearance on the employment market of women and of young people who have given up school, and a drain on the human resources required by the economy of the territories, which are suffering from a labour shortage. The drain on manpower is said to be accompanied by other measures such as the displacement of population, the establishment of Israeli agricultural settlements in the occupied territories and the appropriation of land, which aggravate the situation of the local population. 1/

4. As for employment itself, and in practice, some sources 2/ maintain that Arab workers in the occupied territories suffer from discrimination in access to employment and occupation. Since they do not have free choice of employment they are being channelled by the labour exchanges into particular branches and types of work. ... According to the same sources Arab workers in Israel have little security in their employment, which is dependent on the needs of the Israeli economy and on political decisions. In the event of collective mass dismissal, it is said, they stand little chance of finding new jobs in the territories, where the economy is so structured as to be unable to absorb much more labour. 3/

5. Other sources of information give a different account of the

1/ In a communication of 8 February 1976 the Palestine Trade Union Federation mentioned, among other things, the 1971 report of the special United Nations committee set up to investigate Israeli practices affecting the human rights of the population of the occupied territories, and pointed out that that committee had not been admitted to Israel and the occupied territories. A study by the General Federation of Jordan Trade Unions (Damascus, 1973), which is appended to the above-mentioned communication, also gives information on the subject.

2/ For example, the extract from Mr. Nasr's statement at the Governing Body's 195th Session (GB.196/20/2, Appendix III); the note of 5 October 1975 addressed by the Arab Labour Office to the Director-General, and the above-mentioned note communicated (8 February 1976) by the Palestine Trade Union Federation.

3/ In its note of 8 February 1976 the Palestine Trade Union Federation refers to the current difficulties of the Israeli economy (particularly in the building industry) and the threat they pose mainly to the employment of Arab workers. It considers that the mass repatriation of unemployed Arabs will cause an economic crisis in the territories, where half the national revenue comes from earnings from employment in Israel.

objectives and practical application of employment policy. 1/ According to those sources the major principles underlying that policy are the maintenance of full employment in the occupied territories and ensuring that workers from those territories in Israel enjoy the same conditions as do Israeli workers, while maintaining the integrity of the labour force in the territories. Substantial changes are alleged to have occurred since June 1967 in the volume and structure of employment.

...

7. The growth of employment opportunities in Israel, it is said, has made a great impact on the traditional distribution of labour by branch of activity. According to the statistics supplied on the distribution of the working population by branch of activity in the territories, half the workers are engaged in agriculture, and 6 per cent in the building industry, as against 20 and 50 per cent respectively in Israel. As regards access to skilled employment, it is stated that Arab workers in general have no difficulty, demand having exceeded supply for some years. In January 1975 over half the Arab workers in the building industry were skilled or semi-skilled.

...

Vocational education and training

9. Some information is available on secondary vocational education in the territories. There is information, revealing different trends, on rates of increases in the number of pupils on the West and East banks of the Jordan between 1965-66 and 1972-73. 2/ It is also alleged that secondary commercial education is disappearing on the West bank. 3/ It is also reported that there has been a general increase in the number of pupils, teachers and schools on the West bank since the 1967 war, and in particular the organisation of courses of basic vocational education and pre-vocational training and a course

1/ The information given below is drawn mainly from notes addressed to the Director-General by the Ministry of Labour of Israel (19 June 1975) and by the Histadrut (20 May 1975) and from a study entitled "Labourers from the administered territories working in Israel" (Tel Aviv, May 1975) by the Ministry of Labour, the Executive Committee of the Histadrut and the Industrialists Federation in Israel. Use has also been made of the periodic reports of the Ministry of Defence on the territories ("Four years of military administration", 1967-71; and "The administered territories", 1971-72 and 1972-73) and a study by the Bank of Israel entitled "Economic growth in the administered areas, 1968-1973" (Jerusalem, 1975).

2/ Information supplied by the Government of Jordan to UNESCO and reproduced in paragraph 68 of the "Report of the Director-General on the situation of the national education and the cultural life of peoples in the occupied Arab territories" (UNESCO, Paris, 1974). ...

3/ Report of the Director-General of UNESCO, op. cit., para. 91.

in commercial education which in 1971 was followed by 1,800 pupils in Judea and Samaria. 1/ Vocational training schools are reported to have been established in 1973 and others to be planned. 2/

10. Differing opinions are given of the aims and the system of vocational training in the occupied territories. According to certain studies the establishment of apprenticeship centres in the territories is just one of a series of measures designed to "exploit cheap Arab labour for the benefit of the Israeli economy". 3/ In support of that charge attention is drawn to the kinds of training provided, the channelling of pupils and trainees into certain industries or trades, such as building, which, it is said, are precisely those in which there is a serious shortage of labour in Israel. Discrimination against Arabs in access to employment 4/ in Israel, it is said, is leading to a decline in their levels of skill or hampering their acquisition of job skills and experience. 5/

11. According to the authorities' own explanation of the principles underlying manpower policy in the territories, vocational training is one of its basic aims and major aspects. 6/ The information received refers to the establishment since 1968 of 20 vocational training centres in Judea and Samaria (where there were only three before 1967) and seven in the Gaza strip and Sinai (where there was only one before 1967). The centres provide training for 18 trades and between 1968 and 1975 produced a number of graduates 7/ which, it is said, accounts for about 15 per cent of the total labour force in the territories. Special programmes and efforts are reported to have been devoted to the training of young people and women, and since 1971 certificates have been issued to building workers entitling them to the lowest grade on the skilled worker scale in Israel. Apart from traditional vocational training

1/ Ibid., para. 69; Ministry of Defence of Israel: "Four years of military administration", 1967-71, op. cit., pp. 101-102; and "The administered territories", 1971-72, op. cit., pp. 138-139, and 1972-73, p. 178.

2/ See "Labourers from the administered territories working in Israel", op. cit.

3/ "Rapport sur la situation des travailleurs arabes dans les territoires de la Palestine occupée", op. cit., p. 71.

4/ See para. 4 above.

5/ Mr. Nasr's statement at the Governing Body's 195th Session, and note of 5 October 1975 addressed by the Arab Labour Office to the Director-General.

6/ Note of 19 June 1975 from the Ministry of Labour to the Director-General; see also "Labourers from the administered territories working in Israel", op. cit.

7/ That is: 18,582 graduates, 45 per cent of them in the building trades, 24 per cent in industrial occupations and 20 per cent in tailoring and embroidery: "Labourers from the administered territories working in Israel", op. cit., Appendix A, table 4.

programmes, other forms of activity are mentioned, such as the supply of advice, technical assistance and services to Arab farmers in the territories. 1/ ...

Remarks

12. The information supplied by different sources on employment and vocational training concurs in some respects. In some cases, however, it is difficult to interpret or calls for clarification.

13. In short, there seems to be a need for further analysis of several problems, which in the main relate to: (a) the organisation of recruitment and free choice of employment; (b) the extent of equality of opportunity and treatment in regard to vocational guidance and training, access to employment and occupation, promotion and security in employment, and (c) more generally, policy regarding the use and development of the human resources of the occupied territories.

II. Wages, social benefits and working conditions

Situation of workers from the occupied territories employed in Israel

14. According to information from Israeli government and trade union sources, the general principle of equality in regard to wages, social benefits and working conditions for Israeli workers and Arab workers from the occupied territories in Israel has been officially proclaimed. 4/ In particular, the principle of equal pay for equal work is stated to apply not only to the gross wages paid by the employer but also to the net wages actually received by the worker. For this there are two reasons: a desire to prevent adverse effects on the employment of Israelis and a desire to protect Arab workers from exploitation. The application of the principle is closely supervised by the Israeli trade union movement. 5/ The study mentioned above on economic growth in the administered territories also refers to the difficulty of evaluating data on average wage levels in determining whether the principle is applied. 6/

1/ See the reports of the Ministry of Defence: "Four years of military administration", 1967-71, op. cit., pp. 40, 165-6; "The administered territories", 1971-72, op. cit., pp. 60 and 240.

...

4/ For example, note of 19 June 1975 from the Ministry of Labour to the Director-General; and a statement of 13 December 1972 by Mr. Moshe Dayan, former Minister of Defence, and a decision of February 1973 of the Central Committee of the Histadrut, cited in "Labourers from the administered territories working in Israel", op. cit.

5/ More particularly, the special team set up by the Histadrut in co-operation with the Employment Service mainly to guide and instruct Arab workers coming to Israel (see para. 34 below).

6/ Arie Bregman: "Economic growth in the administered areas", Bank of Israel, op. cit., p. 27.

/...

15. According to other sources of information actual wage rates are much lower for Arab workers than for Israelis. 1/ It is alleged, in particular, that wages are paid through the authorities, who make deductions variously assessed at 33 to 40 per cent. These deductions, it is said, are paid into a special fund 2/ and are contributions to the social security system and also to the war effort. 3/ However, the Arab worker allegedly does not receive all the benefits enjoyed by the Israeli worker in return for the same deductions legally made from his wages ... on the grounds that he is not a member of the Histadrut. 4/ ...

...

17. Several sources of information also refer to the residence rights and transport and housing conditions of nationals of the occupied territories who work in Israel. According to those sources 5/ Israeli regulations forbid workers from the territories to reside in Israel. Instead they must make a long arduous journey every day which adds to the duration of the working day. The cost of transport, borne by the worker himself, may amount to a quarter of his wages. Some Arab labourers, for example, from Gaza, are compelled by the distance from home to workplace and by transport conditions to live in Israel in conditions of hardship, sometimes in rest camps run by the employers.

...

19. According to certain sources of information, differences in treatment may be found in Israeli undertakings. They relate, for example, to systematic assignment of Arab workers to night shifts or even discrimination in the use of plant facilities.

1/ Note of the Arab Labour Office of 5 October 1975.

2/ According to some sources the sums deducted from wages are paid into a fund in the name of the State of Israel and between 1968 and 1974 totalled 1,090 million Israeli pounds (US \$260 million at 1973 prices) ("Conditions of work for Arabs under the yoke of Israeli occupation", op. cit.).

3/ Mr. Nasr's statement at the Governing Body's 195th Session.

4/ See, for example, the note of the Arab Labour Office of 5 October 1975, "Rapport sur la situation des travailleurs arabes dans la Palestine occupée", op. cit., and the note of 8 February 1976 communicated by the Palestine Trade Union Federation.

5/ For example, the note addressed on 5 October 1975 to the Director-General by the Arab Labour Office; "Rapport sur la situation des travailleurs arabes dans la Palestine occupée", op. cit.; memorandum of the Israeli League for Human and Civil Rights, mentioned in that report; the note of 8 February 1976 communicated by the Palestine Trade Union Federation, which refers in particular to information in Israeli newspapers; Mr. Nasr's statement at the Governing Body's 195th Session.

/...

Reference is also made to the dangers facing workers who lodge complaints about their working conditions. 1/ According to other sources only a very low percentage of Arab workers from the territories (2 per cent) is assigned to shift work, plant facilities are available to all workers without discriminations, and working conditions in any given undertaking are determined by collective agreement applicable to all workers without distinction. 2/

Situation of workers in the occupied territories

20. It has been said that "there is a great disparity between the wages which the Arab worker of the occupied territories receives in those territories and the wages he can earn in Israel". 3/ Available statistics show that the disparity diminished between 1969 and 1973 but remains wide. The Arab worker's daily wage was on the average 80 per cent higher in Israel than in the territories in 1969 and still 50 per cent higher in 1973. 4/ Even though there has been a large increase in nominal wages in the territories, certain sources of information point out that in real wages there has not. Any increase in the cost of living in Israel has a direct effect in the territories, where the substantial increase in prices between 1969 and 1974 hit the poorer workers particularly hard. 5/ Other sources of information indicate a rapid rise - even more rapid than in Israel - in prices in the territories, but at the same time an average yearly rate of increase in real wages higher than that recorded in Israel for Arab workers from the territories. 6/

21. Little information is available on the matter of social benefits and allowances enjoyed by workers in the territories.

22. As regards working conditions in the administered territories,

1/ Note of 8 February 1976 of the Palestine Trade Union Federation and statement by Mr. Nasr at the Governing Body's 195th Session.

2/ Ministry of Labour in Israel, note of 19 June 1975 to the Director-General.

3/ "Rapport sur la situation des travailleurs arabes dans les territoires de la Palestine occupée", op. cit., p. 67.

4/ The Bank of Israel study on economic growth in the administered territories, table III.6, p. 37. Figures relate to net wages.

5/ "Conditions of work for Arabs under the yoke of Israeli occupation", op. cit., pp. 14-15.

6/ See the Bank of Israel study on economic growth in the administered territories, p. 13 and table III.6, p. 37.

according to information received 1/ the competent authorities are enforcing Jordanian labour law on the West bank (for example in regard to occupational safety, work disputes, hours of work, leave and so on) and Egyptian labour law in the Gaza strip. According to the same sources of information officials in the competent ministry are co-operating closely with some 400 local employees. In Judea and Samaria Arab officials continue to perform the functions prescribed under Jordanian law in regard to the supervision of working conditions.

Remarks

23. Initial study of remuneration and working conditions reveals certain points requiring further clarification and examination. In the main the problems relate to:

- (a) the application in practice of the principle of equal remuneration for Israeli workers and workers from the territories employed in Israel, remuneration being understood to include social benefits and various allowances and forms of compensation;
- (b) the trend of official policy in regard to residence rights, housing and the cost and conditions of transport for Arab workers employed in Israel;
- (c) the supervisory and other measures taken to ensure that Arab workers do not suffer forms of discrimination in certain undertakings in regard to working conditions; and
- (d) trends in wages in relation to the cost of living, in other working conditions and in social benefits in the occupied territories themselves.

III. Trade union rights

...

Trade union rights in the occupied territories

25. According to certain sources of information the right to organise is not respected in the occupied territories, where trade unions and occupational associations are subject to pressure and repression of various kinds. 2/ Items of information concerning, among other things, the arrest

1/ Note of 19 June 1975 from the Israeli Ministry of Labour to the Director-General; note by the Histadrut of 18 May 1975 addressed to the Director-General; and "Labourers from the administered territories working in Israel", op. cit.

2/ Note of 8 February 1976 of the Palestine Trade Union Federation. Mr. Nasr's statement at the Governing Body's 195th Session, Mr. Nasr's letter of 6 March 1975 to the Director-General and note from the Arab Labour Office of 5 October 1975.

and expulsion of trade union leaders and members have been submitted to the Governing Body or addressed to the Director-General.

...

29. The Israeli Government has stated 1/ that no trade unionist is penalised or punished because of his trade union activities. ... According to an Israeli source the emergency regulations of 1945 are still in force on the West Bank since they have never been repealed by Jordan. 2/

30. In examining similar complaints submitted to it concerning the exile or arrest of members or leaders of trade unions in the territories occupied by Israel, the Committee on Freedom of Association found that the complainants had not exercised their right to submit more detailed information concerning the relationship between the above-mentioned measures and trade union activities, and the Committee was unable to carry out a more detailed examination of the complaints. 3/

...

Trade union rights of workers of the occupied territories employed in Israel

32. The salient features of trade union organisation in Israel are the unity in fact achieved by the Histadrut and the scope of its activities, which extends largely beyond the scope of trade union protection in the strict sense and includes social protection as well. 4/

33. According to some sources of information, workers of the occupied territories neither enjoy nor exercise trade union rights. Thus it has been stated that "the workers, when they come from the occupied territories to work in the other territories, are denied the protection of the Arab labour union in their home country because they are working in factories in the other part. And of course they are not protected by the trade unions in the other part because they are residents of the occupied territories." 5/ The right to join or to form a trade union is allegedly not granted to Arab workers from the

1/ Note of 19 June 1975 to the Director-General.

2/ Meir Shamgar, Attorney-General of Israel: "The observance of international law in the administered territories", in Israel Yearbook on Human Rights, Vol. 1, 1971, pp. 262 ff.

3/ See the 114th, 122nd and 147th Reports of the Committee on Freedom of Association: Official Bulletin, Supplement, Vol. LIII, 1970, No. 2, paras. 124-141; Vol. LIV, 1971, No. 2, paras. 55-83; and GB.194/11/27, paras. 91-98.

4/ See "Social security in Israel", Histadrut, Tel Aviv, 1973, especially pp. 3, 45 and 46.

5/ Mr. Nasr's statement at the Governing Body's 195th Session.

occupied territories who are employed in Israel. 1/ It is alleged that the Israeli authorities are trying to secure Histadrut membership for Arab workers, but that such membership does not protect them against discrimination. 2/

34. According to other sources Arab workers from the administered territories who are employed in Israel enjoy freedom of association and the right to organise. They may join the Histadrut, "though understandably /they/ are under pressure not to join ...". 3/ Their eligibility for membership in the provident funds affiliated with the Histadrut is expressly provided for by a decision of February 1973 of the Central Committee. 4/ Express instructions have been given to all labour councils and workers' committees to ensure equality of treatment with regard to assistance and protection. At the level of production units the workers' interests are represented without discrimination and collective agreements are applicable to all workers without distinction. 5/ It is also reported that the Histadrut has taken special measures for the information and education of such workers. 6/ Finally, the Histadrut points out that building workers in Israel fare comparatively well because of the strength of the unions in that industry and that many Arab workers have benefited as a result since about half of them, as has been said, are employed in building in Israel.

Remarks

35. As regards trade union rights, a more detailed examination on the

1/ Report on "Conditions of work for Arabs under the yoke of Israeli occupation", op. cit., p. 13. In its note of 8 February 1976 the Palestine Trade Union Federation states that at the end of 1971 the Israeli authorities considered the question of admitting Arab workers from the occupied territories to membership of the Histadrut, but that the temporary nature of Arab employment has so far prevented the taking of any decision.

2/ In the above-mentioned study by the General Federation of Jordan Trade Unions (Damascus).

3/ Statement by the General Secretary of the Histadrut in 1973, quoted in the study "Labourers from the administered territories working in Israel". op. cit. In its conclusions the study states that 8,000 workers from the administered territories who are employed in Israel have become members of the Histadrut. The study gives a similar figure for the east side of Jerusalem. (See note to para. 31.)

4/ This decision also relates to equality of remuneration and working conditions, referred to in the previous chapter.

5/ According to the reply by the Ministry of Labour to Mr. Nasr's allegations (note of 19 June 1975 to the Director-General).

6/ See the second footnote to para. 14, which refers to the establishment, in co-operation with the employment service, of a special team with mainly educational functions.

basis of further information appears to be necessary, in particular on the following points:

- (a) the precise reasons underlying any repressive measures taken with regard to leaders or members of trade unions in the occupied territories and any connection which those reasons may have with the lawful exercise of trade union freedoms and rights;
- (b) the conditions for the formation and operation of trade unions in the occupied territories both in law and in practice and their scope for action and collective bargaining;
- (c) the extent to which workers from the occupied territories who are employed in Israel enjoy equality of treatment in regard to freedom of association, the right to organise and benefits provided for under collective bargaining.

Geneva, 17 February 1976.

B. Statement by the Director-General of the Food and
Agricultural Organization of the United Nations

/Original: English/

The following statement dated 4 August 1977 was received in the form of a letter to the Under-Secretary-General for Economic and Social Affairs:

"In your letter dated 16 May 1977, you drew my attention to General Assembly resolution 31/110 of 16 December 1976 concerning living conditions of the Palestinian people in the occupied territories and invited me to supply you, by 1 July, with any information that might be useful in the compilation of the report which the General Assembly had asked the Secretary-General to prepare.

"In my letter of 15 June 1977 I informed you that we were not yet in a position to provide very detailed information on the living conditions of the Palestinian people in the occupied territories. However, in view of the general subject-matter and the fact that the second preambular paragraph of the General Assembly resolution also referred to the Economic and Social Council resolution 2026 (LXI) on the assistance to the Palestinian people, I considered it appropriate that the report of the Secretary-General, in response to the above-mentioned General Assembly resolution, could also reflect the action I had taken regarding the assistance to the Palestinian people.

"Accordingly, I informed you of the process of consultation which I had with both the Executive Secretary of the Economic Commission for Western Asia and the Chairman, Palestine National Fund, Palestine Liberation Organization, on action that FAO might take to assist the Palestinian people.

"I had also informed you of the emergency food aid from the World Food Programme resources which I had sanctioned for Palestinian refugees in the Lebanon and those under the care of UNRWA. I do not wish to repeat the details of this action as they have already been reported in full in the Secretary-General's report to the sixty-third session of the Economic and Social Council (E/6005).

"Since writing that letter, I received a note verbale from Farouk Kaddumi, President of the Political Department of the Palestine Liberation Organization informing me of the hardships being experienced by the Palestinians within the Israeli occupied territories whose livelihood depends mainly on agriculture. As this note verbale was relevant to the Secretary-General's report, I quoted it in full in my cable to him of 15 July 1977, in the original Italian language in which it was couched together with an unofficial English translation for facility of reference. I reproduce hereunder the unofficial English translation.

'The PLO (Political Department) presents its compliments to the Food and

/...

Agriculture Organization of the United Nations (FAO) and wishes to inform that Organization that the Israeli occupation authorities have persisted, ever since the time of their occupation of Palestine, in varied and continuing attempts to force the sons of our Palestinian people to abandon their lands, either by the use of force or by the promulgation of unjust laws.

'Besides these inhuman and aggressive practices of the Israeli occupation authorities, which have been occurring for many years without interruption, these same authorities have now tightened the circle around the sons of our people by confiscating thousands of dunums of fertile lands owned by Palestinian citizens and by aggression against the sources of water, as has recently occurred at the aqueduct of Ein Samia, which serves more than 80 towns and villages in the regions of Ramallah and Bireh, so that the inhabitants of those areas have been deprived of water.

'Furthermore, the Israeli occupation authorities, persisting in their policy of land confiscation, have promulgated, through the Military Governor of the Gaza region, Ordinance No. 498 on the use of water resources, which compels the owners of wells, excavated by Palestinian farmers at their own expense and on their own land, to use only part of the water of such wells, thereby limiting the area of land which can benefit from these waters, leaving the remainder impossible to cultivate.

'These acts committed by the Israeli occupation authorities, are considered by us as flagrant acts of oppression against our people in the occupied territories, aimed at compelling the sons of our people to abandon their own lands, in order to requisition them afterwards through repressive laws based on the right of might.

'In registering these facts with FAO, we hope this organization will intervene in order to put an end to such criminal acts against our people and our motherland.

'PLO avails itself of this opportunity to present to FAO its best salutations and compliments. (signed) Farouk KADDUMI, President of the Political Department of the Palestine Liberation Organization.'

"In the same cable I had suggested to the Secretary-General that as he had already asked the Governments of Egypt, Israel, Jordan and the Syrian Arab Republic as well as the Palestine Liberation Organization to supply information relevant to his report, he might wish to take this note verbale also into account in compiling his report. I had also assured him that he could count on my full support in whatever action he wished to take to respond adequately to the objectives of the General Assembly resolution."

C. Reply submitted by the United Nations Educational,
Scientific and Cultural Organization

/Original: French/English/

1. The reply submitted by UNESCO states that pursuant to resolution 13.1 adopted at the eighteenth session of the General Conference of UNESCO, the Director-General submitted to the Executive Board at its ninety-ninth session a report on the implementation of this resolution concerning educational and cultural institutions in the occupied Arab territories. 1/ Subsequently, the Executive Board in its resolution 9.2 invited the Director-General to report to the General Conference at its nineteenth session on the implementation of the resolution.
2. In his report to the nineteenth session of the General Conference (October 1976), the Director-General outlined the steps he had taken to implement 18C/resolution 13.1 concerning access to national education and culture by the population of the occupied Arab territories. 2/
3. The reply further states that in the period between the eighteenth session of the General Conference and the opening of the ninety-ninth session of the Executive Board, in order to ascertain directly the situation with regard to education and culture in the occupied Arab territories, the Director-General made a number of unsuccessful approaches to the Israeli authorities, 3/ the Israeli Government being unable to extend to UNESCO the requisite facilities.
4. In the period between the ninety-ninth session of the Executive Board and the nineteenth session of the General Conference (29 May to 25 October 1976), the Director-General continued his efforts to obtain the necessary facilities from the Israeli Government in order to implement 18C/resolution 13.1. 4/
5. Shortly before the announcement of the nineteenth session of the General Conference, the Director-General received a communication informing him of the Israeli Government's "agreement in principle" for the sending of a mission to gather information on the state of education and culture in the "territories administered by Israel", and stating further that all the necessary facilities would be extended to the representatives of the Director-General to enable them to perform their tasks. It was, however, not possible for the mission to take place until early in 1977.

1/ 99 EX/50.

2/ 19C/73.

3/ 99 EX/50, paras. 12, 14, 23, 24, 25, 27, 28 and 29.

4/ 19C/73, paras. 16-25.

6. In view of the absence of a report reflecting an on-the-spot assessment of the functioning of educational and cultural institutions in the occupied territories, the report to the Executive Board, 5/ which forms annex I of the Director-General's report to the General Conference 6/ is confined to the communications addressed to him directly by the Governments of Egypt, Jordan, Israel and the Syrian Arab Republic, and by the Palestinian Liberation Organization (PLO), the League of Arab States and the Arab Educational, Cultural and Scientific Organisation (ALECSO), as well as by some Governments of Arab States concerned about the situation of historical and religious monuments in the occupied territories. Below are extracts from this document (99 EX/50) which reports information on Sinai and the Gaza Strip communicated by the Egyptian Government; on the situation on the West Bank of the Jordan communicated by Jordan, Israel, PLO and ALECSO; and on the Golan Heights communicated by the Syrian Arab Republic, as well as the comments on the occupied territories as a whole which Egypt, PLO and ALECSO addressed in letters and reports to the Director-General:

"A. Information concerning Sinai and the Gaza Strip

"37. The Egyptian Government has sent the Director-General a list of the educational and cultural institutions situated in the occupied territories of Sinai and the Gaza Strip (primary schools, preparatory schools, secondary schools, a religious education institute, an agricultural training institute, vocational training centres, a teacher-training college, cinemas, public and private libraries, sports clubs, clubs for young people, magazines).

"38. With regard to the operation of the institutions and activities mentioned in the foregoing paragraph, the Egyptian Government listed a number of difficulties stemming from the fact of the occupation and preventing these institutions from carrying out their work fully. The facts brought to the Director-General's attention are the following:

"39. In the schools situated in the Gaza Strip and not controlled by UNRWA/UNESCO, pupils do not have the necessary textbooks because the Israeli authorities do not allow textbooks printed in Egypt to be imported for these schools. Students must therefore make do with summaries and notes prepared for them by the teachers, though these summaries and notes are in most cases insufficient.

5/ 99 EX/50.

6/ 19C/73.

"40. The schools in the Gaza Strip are to a large extent short of teachers. Before the occupation there was an average of one teacher for every 35 pupils; since 1971-1972 this has fallen to one teacher for every 47 pupils. Educational personnel who had been able to specialize in higher educational establishments in Egypt and who have returned to Gaza are prevented by the occupation authorities from practising their profession.

"41. Most of the teachers in the Gaza schools have received insufficient teacher training, especially those at the secondary level where the qualified staff are supplemented by, among others, student teachers from the intermediate teacher-training centre in Ramallah. Some schools have even taken on as teachers civil servants who have had no teacher training whatever.

"42. To this must be added the fact that since the buildings destroyed in 1967 have not been rebuilt, the Gaza sector is suffering from a shortage of schools and, in the schools that do exist, a shortage of classrooms. Before the occupation the average for the year 1966-1967 was 48 pupils per classroom; since 1971-1972 it has been 55 pupils per classroom.

"43. The only three cultural centres in the sector, which were in the towns of Gaza, Khan Yunis and Rafah, have been closed. Those three centres, each of which possessed a large library, attracted large numbers of inhabitants in the sector and served as cultural meeting places.

"44. The one commercial college at secondary level that existed in the Gaza sector has likewise been closed on the pretext that it constituted a threat to public security.

"B. Information regarding the West Bank of the Jordan

"...

"47. The Jordanian Government stated that a radio-broadcasting station used to operate under its control in Arabic at Ramallah. Since the occupation of the territory that station has formed part of the Israeli broadcasting network.

"48. While pointing out that in the present circumstances it is impossible for the Jordanian Government to obtain accurate figures and information regarding the situation and functioning of educational and cultural institutions in the occupied territories, and that in its view Unesco was in a better position to carry out such investigation work, the Jordanian Government informed the Director-General of the following:

"49. The occupation authorities have demolished several school buildings in the territories situated on the West Bank of the Jordan, including two schools at Imwas, two schools at Yalu and two schools at Beit Nuba, all within the district of Ramallah.

/...

"50. Two schools have been closed by the occupation authorities: the Institute of Business Administration at Beit-Hanina and the "Al Aqsa" girls school. As a pretext for the demolition of the latter, the occupation authorities alleged the cracks that were visible in the walls of the school. The Jordanian Government points out that the fissures in question were caused by the excavation work carried out by the occupation authorities in the vicinity of the school.

"51. A number of pupils and teachers have been interned by the occupation authorities in the territories of the West Bank or sent away from those territories.

"52. As regards the report which ALECSO has sent to the Director-General containing the conclusions of a group of experts on education in the occupied Arab territories, the following facts have been brought to the attention of Unesco:

"53. In the West Bank territory the occupation authorities have made changes in the curricula and textbooks - which used to be the same as were used in Jordan - which have altered their nature.

"54. On the pretext that most of the textbooks being used contained chapters or paragraphs that might generate hatred towards Israel in the minds of Arab pupils, these textbooks have either been banned and replaced in most cases by 'notes' and 'summaries' which are quite often poorly printed, or else modified after whole chapters or paragraphs were deleted or rewritten, particularly in textbooks of history, geography, literature and religious instruction. Many textbooks - including some which were used in the UNRWA/Unesco schools - have however been retained after a committee of international experts appointed by Unesco found that nothing in them was of such a nature as to jeopardize the spirit of international understanding. (1)

"55. The changes and alterations made in curricula and textbooks in the occupied territories of the West Bank of the Jordan tend, according to the ALECSO report, to:

- (a) create a new generation of Palestinians in whose minds the religious and national heritage will no longer exist;
- (b) weaken the links that young Palestinians have with their native land through the elimination of all reference to their past in books on sociology, the Arabic language and Islamic religion;

(1) This question was included in the agenda of eight sessions of the Executive Board between 1967 and 1971. It gave rise to a number of decisions on the part of the Board: 77/EX/Decision 6.8; 78 EX/Decision 7.4; 82 EX/Decision 4.2.5; 83 EX/Decision 4.2.3; 84 EX/Decision 4.2.1; 85 EX/Decision 4.1.2; 87 EX/Decision 4.2.4; 88 EX/Decision 4.1.1.

- (c) weaken the spirit of resistance to the occupation, by deleting from all the textbooks poems and even expressions of a national or patriotic character;
- (d) weaken links with Jordan and everything related to Arab and Islamic unity:
 - (i) by doing away with the emblem of the Hashemite Kingdom of Jordan and the name of the Ministry of Education of that country which appeared on textbook covers, and
 - (ii) by eliminating references to the Jihad, the life of the prophet and the sacred character of the holy places.

"56. For each of the facts adduced in the report (2) the ALECSO experts have given relevant references to legislative texts, administrative decisions and book titles, and have quoted the paragraphs that have been criticized in the school textbooks.

"57. As regards the Al-Ibrahimi Mosque (Hebron), the Secretary-General of the League of Arab States considers that Israel's decision to divide the buildings of the Mosque between the Moslem and Jewish communities constitutes a violation of the Charter of the United Nations and the Geneva Conventions and a rejection of the resolutions of the United Nations General Assembly and the Unesco General Conference, and a serious affront to Moslem sensitivity and to the sacred character of these places of prayer.

"C. Jerusalem

"58. According to the ALECSO report and the communication from the Jordanian Government, the Arab educational institutions situated in the city of Jerusalem, which prior to the occupation followed the curricula in use in the Hashemite Kingdom of Jordan, have been purely and simply brought under the general education system of the State of Israel. That system is governed by Act No. 5713 of 1953, which stipulates, according to the analysis made of it by the authors of the report, that one of the aims of public education is "to base education on the values of Jewish culture".

"59. Far from fostering the access of Arab pupils to their national culture and education, as the resolution of the Unesco General Conference prescribes, the fact of imposing Israeli curricula on Arab pupils constitutes, in the view of the ALECSO experts, a serious threat to their cultural identity, because these curricula tend to:

(2) The ALECSO report as well as the communications received by the Director-General are at the disposal of the Executive Board.

(a) make the Arab pupils believe that Palestine was a Jewish land from remote times, persuade them to accept the expansionist intentions of the State of Israel and make them admit that such expansion is natural;

(b) constitute an affront to Arab dignity, sociologically and economically, and make their underdevelopment obvious;

(c) make Arab pupils feel that the Jewish race is superior in all respects so that they lose confidence in themselves and their people;

(d) describe Arab history as a catalogue of conquest and piracy perpetuated against the countries where the Arabs settled;

(e) inculcate and develop in the pupils the feeling of belonging to a religious denomination;

(f) deprive Arab pupils of scientific and technological culture, especially at the levels of secondary and higher education; and

(g) strip Arab pupils of the values and traditions of Arab and Islamic culture so as to undermine their feeling of belonging to the Arab nation.

"60. The ALECSO committee of experts also points out that all Arab pupils studying in schools situated in Jerusalem are obliged to do twice as much school work since, on the one hand, they must follow the official Israeli curriculum and sit for the end-of-course State examinations while, on the other, they are impelled to prepare privately for the West Bank examinations which will enable them later to enter Arab universities. This double burden is for the Arab pupils, in ALECSO's words, a cultural and educational torture which is not to be found anywhere else.

"61. With regard to the historic monuments of Jerusalem which represent an essential feature in the spiritual and cultural life of the Moslem community, the Government of Kuwait, in a communication dated 8 March 1976, expressed concern about the serious threat which it considers the excavation work undertaken by the occupation authorities is causing to a number of historic buildings of great importance, especially those housing the Arab Orphanage and the Al-Othmanya School (which constitutes the central part of the western wall of Al-Haram Ash Sharif and which is situated in the immediate vicinity of two incomparable components of that unique group, namely the Gate of Al-Kattanine and the Minaret of Quaitabay).

"62. The Government of Kuwait also reports that the Israeli authorities intend to build a new road running beside the old ramparts of Jerusalem. According to the plan which has been drawn up, this would entail the desecration of two ancient Moslem cemeteries (Bab Al-Rahma and Yusfiah).

"63. As regards the Technical High School of Jerusalem, the Jordanian

Government, in a communication dated 9 March 1976, sent a statement to the Director-General, together with photographs and a report of an Israeli expert, on the damage done to the school, which is, in the Government's view, the most important specialized Arab establishment in the city, as a result of work (excavations using dynamite and earthworks) undertaken by the Israeli authorities in the immediate vicinity of the school, where a road and an industrial complex are being built.

"64. In addition to the large and dangerous cracks in the walls of the building, the Jordanian Government has drawn the Director-General's attention to a number of facts which, in the Government's view, constitute pressures brought by the occupation authorities on the students and teaching staff of the school as part of their policy of encouraging the Arab inhabitants to leave the country. Thus the occupation authorities have refused to allow the opening of the hotel management section of the school, for which equipment and material have been available since 1967, and they have also closed the main road leading to the school.

"D. Golan Heights

"65. In a letter dated 18 March 1976, the Permanent Delegate of Syria to Unesco complained, on behalf of his Government, that the occupation authorities will not let the Syrian students in the territory of the Golan Heights continue their studies in Syrian universities as Arab students in the other sectors of the occupied Arab territories have been allowed to do.

"66. In calling the Director-General's attention to this prohibition and to various difficulties met with by Syrian students in the Golan Heights - such as the destruction of houses and the lack of educational and scientific facilities - the Syrian Government hoped that Unesco would intervene with the Israeli Government to put an end to this serious situation.

"E. Remarks concerning the occupied territories as a whole

"67. In concluding its report, the ALECSO committee of experts expresses the view that the policy followed by the occupation authorities with regard to the education of young Palestinians is contrary to the Universal Declaration of Human Rights, especially Article 26 which states in paragraph 3 that 'Parents have a prior right to choose the kind of education that shall be given to their children'.

"68. The PLO, for its part, has called the Director-General's attention to facts which it considers infringements of the Palestinians' rights to a national education. It has referred in particular to the decision of the Israeli Government to forbid Palestinians between the ages of 16 to 35 from leaving the occupied territories unless they agree to spend a period of at least six months outside those territories.

"69. Since this measure affects, among those belonging to the age group in question, the many Palestinian students enrolled with Arab universities (in which they are following correspondence courses) who leave the occupied territories every year for short periods in order to sit examinations in those universities, the PLO considers that such a measure in reality constitutes pressure which the occupation authorities are bringing to bear on the students so that they will leave the country.

"70. In the same communication, the PLO informed the Director-General that the occupation authorities are taking pupils from schools of general education and forcing them to enrol in special centres for manual work. This practice is apparently increasing and the PLO considers that it is meant to lower the cultural level of the peoples in the occupied territories in order to make them a reserve of manpower for Israeli industry."

D. Reply submitted by the World Health Organization

/Original: English/

The reply of WHO was submitted in the form of extracts from the annual report of the Director of Health of UNRWA for the year 1976, which was submitted as a document to the Thirtieth World Health Assembly. 1/ The relevant paragraphs are quoted verbatim:

"...

"14. The long civil war in Lebanon claimed many victims, Palestine refugees as well as Lebanese. Precise figures are not yet available. Many were killed, many more injured. There was also widespread displacement of refugee families, who either had been living in camps (about 50 per cent) or who had been living in towns and villages. Several camps have been partially or totally destroyed and the number of displaced refugees is estimated at 30,000. Emergency assistance in the form of mattresses, blankets, clothing, shoes, kitchen kits, food, commodities, skim milk and soap has been distributed where needed and to the extent that funds, including generous contributions from voluntary agencies, permitted. Many of the Agency's installations have been damaged or destroyed. School buildings had to be repaired and many desks, benches, textbooks and scholastic supplies replaced. This task is not yet completed. Apart from schools, other UNRWA installations must be repaired, including the Agency's central warehouse in Beirut, which was hit by rockets and seriously damaged by fire. Many of the general supplies stored there were lost and have to be replaced. The Agency is unable, in present circumstances, to estimate precisely the cost of repairs and replacement.

"CURATIVE MEDICAL SERVICES

"...

"Outpatient medical care

"16. These services were made available in 131 health centres and health points (98 UNRWA, 17 government and 16 voluntary agencies). Two new diabetes and dermatology clinics were established during the year in addition to the existing ones. Attendances for medical consultation continued almost at the same rate, except in Lebanon. In Beirut, the majority of the refugees residing in Dbayeh, Dikwaneh and Jisr el-Basha camps fled to the western sector of the city where they shared accommodation with relatives and friends or occupied deserted apartments and unfinished buildings. An emergency service was established to provide them with basic medical care services.

"...

1/ Health assistance to refugees and displaced persons in the Middle East (A30/WP/1), 27 April 1977.

/...

"Outpatient dental care

"18. This consists of consultations, dental X-rays, tooth extraction and simple fillings, gum treatment and minor oral surgery. More emphasis was given to the preventive aspects of dental health and hygiene among school children and pregnant women. During the year a new dental clinic was established in New Amman Camp, east Jordan, increasing the number of dental clinics providing this service to the refugees to 21. Dental care was also improved by the provision of an additional dental unit in Jaramana Camp in Syria.

"...

"Mental health

"23. The demand for outpatient and inpatient services for mental illness continued to increase. Consequently, the Agency is giving more thought and attention to the preventive aspects of mental health.

"...

"PREVENTIVE MEDICAL SERVICES

"Epidemiology and control of communicable diseases

"...

"28. Early in July there was an outbreak of cholera in Syria, which started in the north-east district of Hasaka and soon spread to other localities. Prompt control measures were taken by the UNRWA Field Health Department in coordination with the national health authorities, particularly in refugee camps. These included chlorination of water sources, suspension of distribution of reconstituted milk and of serving fresh fruits and vegetables in the supplementary feeding centres, mass vaccination of the population at risk, and promulgation of health guidance on food and personal hygiene in Agency schools, health centres and other installations. These control measures proved effective: only two cases were reported among the refugee population in spite of the widespread nature of the epidemic, and both cases were cured. The other Fields were immediately put on the alert and the necessary precautionary measures were taken. Cholera was transmitted, however, to Jordan and later to the occupied territories of the West Bank and Gaza Strip where 19, 4 and 14 cases respectively occurred among the refugees, though no fatality was reported. The situation in Lebanon remained obscure due to lack of communications, both internally and externally, as a result of the civil war. It was, however, possible to vaccinate the refugee camp population in the Tripoli area through the help of the International Committee of the Red Cross and to apply strict sanitary measures in these camps. No confirmed case was reported.

/...

"29. Compared with 1975 there was little change in the incidence of diarrhoeal diseases and dysentery in the area of operations as a whole. Typhoid and paratyphoid were further reduced from 64 cases in 1975 to 53 cases in 1976, of which 47 were reported from Syria. The incidence of infectious hepatitis, on the other hand, showed a remarkable increase in all Fields, from 596 to 1097 cases following the general trend in the area. Poliomyelitis has surprisingly reached moderate epidemic proportions in Gaza, similar to those of 1974, despite the primary and booster doses of oral polio vaccine given routinely to children below three years of age attending the Agency's child health clinics. Fifty-five cases were reported, mainly in July and August, as against only six cases in 1975. The epidemic subsided towards the end of the year. The efficacy of the vaccine and the level of protection are being investigated in an attempt to find an explanation for the outbreak. There was a substantial drop in the incidence of measles, from 2840 to 1447 which could be attributed to a more extensive immunization coverage of the children at risk. Communicable eye diseases, mainly in the form of acute conjunctivitis occurring particularly during summer months, have continued to show a modest downward trend which could, in part, be accredited to improvement of sanitary facilities in camps and health education centred on personal hygiene.

"30. Influenza showed an upward trend, mainly observed early in 1976 but resuming again late in the year, with Gaza and Syria principally accounting for the increase. While no indigenous cases of malaria were reported during the year, only two imported ones were discovered in Gaza. Newly detected cases of respiratory tuberculosis dropped from 175 last year to 141 this year. Reporting from Lebanon Field may be considered as incomplete.

"...

"Maternal and child health services

"...

"33. In the prenatal clinics, 29 006 women were registered for maternal care, which included regular health supervision and the issue of extra rations, milk and iron-folate tablets through pregnancy and the nursing period. For the 29 397 deliveries, care was provided in the homes mainly by the Agency-supervised dayahs (for 61 per cent), in UNRWA maternity centres (mainly in Gaza) by UNRWA nursing staff and in hospital for women with difficulties or increased risk. In all, five maternal deaths were reported, i.e. 0.02 per 1000 live births, while the reported still-birth rate was 10.2 per 1000 total births.

"34. A total of 85 618 children 0-3 years of age have benefited from the services provided at the 79 child health clinics.

"...

/...

"ENVIRONMENTAL HEALTH SERVICES

"43. The programme is concerned mainly with the provision of potable water supplies, sanitary disposal of solid and liquid wastes, storm water drainage and control of insect and rodent vectors of disease. A total of 651 736 refugees and displaced persons living in 63 refugee camps benefited from the programme, which has been maintained at a satisfactory level in most of the camps. However, due to prolonged civil warfare in Lebanon, the services were adversely affected. Furthermore, in the West Bank, the sanitation services continued to suffer from difficulties encountered in the recruitment of sanitation labourers. Ad hoc arrangements had to be made to prevent any serious health hazards. Due to the serious financial situation faced by the Agency throughout the year, support of the self-help camp improvement scheme had to be reduced considerably. The programme was barely maintained through a subsidy of approximately \$ 25 000 against a total requirement initially estimated at \$ 171 000. Nevertheless, with the cooperation of local authorities and the sustained participation of refugee camp communities, a number of improvements were carried out as detailed in the following paragraphs.

"44. Schemes for providing private water connexions to refugee shelters have been progressing very satisfactorily. Through a self-help programme, three camps in the West Bank have been provided with private water connexions and two camps in Gaza are to benefit from a similar programme very shortly. Municipal water supply schemes for two camps in the West Bank and three camps in Gaza are progressing steadily. The Government of Jordan has overcome the chronic water shortage of Suf camp with a newly drilled well and the Syrian Government (General Authority for Palestine Arab Refugees) is planning to drill an additional well to complete the private water connexion scheme at Khan Eshieh camp. Three camps in Lebanon and two in Syria continue to experience water shortages, but augmentation schemes for the two camps in Syria are in progress.

"45. Replacement of public latrines with private ones continued to progress satisfactorily and currently about 94 per cent of the refugee population in camps have been provided with private latrine facilities.

"46. In Syria, on completion of the construction of lateral sewers in three camps, about 75 per cent of the camp inhabitants are now served by sewerage systems. The Agency is planning to extend the sewerage facility at Dera'a camp to cover the additional shelters recently constructed by the refugees.

"47. The ongoing self-help scheme for the construction of surface drains and pavement of pathways benefited 15 camps in the West Bank, two camps in Gaza, one camp each in Jordan and Syria and a few camps in Lebanon. The scheme solves waste-water disposal problems, facilitates refuse collection, provides better access to refugee shelters and camp installations and helps in the abatement of dust and mud. Consequently it continues to be very popular

with the refugees. Efforts are being made to provide adequate support from the Agency in the form of building materials.

"48. With the provision of a scooter cart at Neirab camp for the transport of refuse, only three camps in Syria are left with mule carts; a tipper-truck is under procurement for improving the efficiency of the refuse collection services. Further improvement of garbage collection and disposal services is envisaged by the provision very shortly of additional vehicles in the Lebanon and West Bank Fields to meet the workload.

"NUTRITION AND SUPPLEMENTARY FEEDING SERVICES

"49. The Department of Health attaches great importance to the supervision, protection and promotion of the nutritional status of the refugees. These functions are entrusted to the Nutrition and Supplementary Feeding Division. The services provided by this Division are directed particularly towards the most vulnerable groups among the refugees, namely infants, pre-school and elementary school children, pregnant and lactating women, non-hospitalized tuberculosis patients and medically recommended hardship cases. The services comprise the distribution of (a) milk, (b) midday hot meals, (c) extra dry rations and (d) vitamins. The emergency feeding programme established after the 1967 hostilities for the benefit of the displaced refugees and others affected by the conflict and its aftermath, was also maintained during 1976, but with minor changes (for details of the programme see Appendix 2).

"...

E. Reply submitted by the United Nations Relief and Works Agency for Palestine Refugees in the Near East

/Original: English/

1. UNRWA provides essential services to Palestine refugees in the Near East, including the occupied territories of the West Bank and the Gaza Strip. The primary task, the determination of the needs of the Palestine refugee population in the area of operations and the implementation of programmes to meet them in the fields of education, health and relief, is a continuous process. This is reflected in the Commissioner-General's annual report to the General Assembly. ^{a/} The report gives an account of the services rendered by the Agency and also forecasts in the Agency's budget the requirements to help ensure adequate living conditions for the refugees - albeit at a minimum level.
2. The 648,627 registered Palestine refugees in the occupied territories, like the other 1,057,859 living in Lebanon, the Syrian Arab Republic and East Jordan, benefit from UNRWA education, health and relief services. UNESCO and WHO respectively provide technical expertise and professional guidance for the education and training programmes and the health services (including, among others, supplementary feeding and sanitation) which are aimed at maintaining a standard at least equivalent to that established by the Arab host Governments for the indigenous population. Relief services include distribution of basic dry rations to about one half of the registered refugee population (about 324,000 in the occupied territories), limited assistance in the provision of shelter (about 272,000 registered refugees live in camps in the occupied territories), and welfare services on a small scale to hardship cases (about 14,500 in the occupied territories).
3. In 1977, UNRWA expenditure is estimated at \$134 million, approximately \$42 million of which will be spent for the occupied territories. In 1978, merely to maintain services at their present level, the Agency estimates its requirements at \$148 million, of which approximately \$46 million is for the occupied territories. These estimates take into account extrapolations of population figures which have a direct effect on education requirements and also - though not as direct - on health, relief and support services. Whether all the programmes can be executed to the full extent will depend on the receipt of sufficient voluntary contributions for the purpose. As at 30 June 1977, the shortfall of contributions against the budget for 1977 is estimated at \$16.4 million.

F. Statement submitted by the Economic Commission for Western Asia

Information obtained by ECWA indicates the following trends in these living conditions:

^{a/} Official Records of the General Assembly, Thirty-second Session, Supplement No. 13 (A/32/13).

1. Land ownership and use

Large amounts of land have been reserved by the occupation authorities for various purposes, including military uses. The owners of these lands are denied access to them. Agricultural development of the occupied territories has been adversely affected. a/

2. Population movement and migration

At the beginning of the period of occupation, about 25 per cent of the population of the occupied territories left these territories. Only a small fraction of these people have returned. Controls on movement in and out of the occupied territories are strict, especially for certain groups of Palestinians. There is continued migration for economic reasons, to the rapidly developing Arab countries and to the developed countries. In addition, there has been a large number of forcible deportations, often of community leaders. b/

3. Changes in settlement patterns

During and immediately following the 1967 war, a number of villages were totally or partially destroyed. Some of these have been rebuilt, while others have not.

An important development is the establishment of new non-Palestinian settlements in the occupied territories. In a number of cases, the establishment of these settlements has been officially approved by the occupation authorities. These new settlements, in some instances, have military and strategic significance. Their establishment tends to change the character of the occupied territories. c/

4. Housing

Two trends in the housing field may be noted. One is the deliberate destruction of houses by the occupation authorities as an act of punishment. The number of houses destroyed is large.

A second trend is the construction of new housing projects reserved for non-Palestinian individuals. This has taken place especially in the area around Jerusalem. d/

a/ Middle East International, London, May 1975, p. 22. See also Israeli Official Gazette No. 2064, 28 June 1967, pp. 2690-2691 regarding various laws on confiscation of land.

b/ United Nations General Assembly and Security Council debates for June to December 1967. Note also various reports of the United Nations Special Committee Investigating Israeli Practices Affecting Human Rights in Occupied Territories, 1969-1976, Geneva.

c/ Reports of Special Committee, op. cit.

d/ Ibid. In addition note U.S. House of Representatives Committee on Foreign Affairs. Problems of Protecting Civilians Under International Law in the Middle East Conflict, 4 April 1974, p. 36, Governmental Printing Office, Hearings.

5. Urban change

The legal status of east Jerusalem has been changed by the Government of Israel, separating this area from the "West Bank" sector of Jordan.

East Jerusalem has great religious and cultural significance, as well as being an important urban centre in the West Bank. Clearing of buildings from parts of east Jerusalem has resulted in large-scale urban change. At the same time, the construction of high-rise apartment houses has altered the environment and the character of the city.

Several of the refugee camps have also been affected by the clearing of large numbers of buildings. UNRWA reports that inadequate provision was made for the resettlement of families displaced by the process of urban clearance. e/

e/ Israeli Official Gazette, op.cit.

UNITED NATIONS
GENERAL
ASSEMBLY

DIVISION
OF
GENERAL ASSEMBLY AFFAIRS



Distr.
GENERAL

A/33/354
2 November 1978

ORIGINAL: ENGLISH

Thirty-third session
Agenda item 68

HUMAN SETTLEMENTS

Living conditions of the Palestinian people
in the occupied territories

Report of the Secretary-General

1. In its resolution 32/171 of 19 December 1977, the General Assembly requested the Secretary-General, in collaboration with the relevant United Nations organs and specialized agencies, particularly the United Nations Relief and Works Agency for Palestine Refugees in the Near East (UNRWA) and the Economic Commission for Western Asia (ECWA), to prepare and submit to the Assembly at its thirty-third session a comprehensive and analytical report on the social and economic impact of the Israeli occupation on the living conditions of the Palestinian people in the occupied territories. It further requested the Secretary-General in preparing the report to consult and co-operate with the Palestine Liberation Organization, the representative of the Palestinian people.
2. The resolution followed and expanded the scope of General Assembly resolution 31/110 of 16 December 1976, on the same subject. Pursuant to resolution 31/110, the Secretary-General submitted a report (A/32/228) to the Assembly at its thirty-second session. It may be recalled that the representative of the Secretary-General explained that, because the Secretary-General had no independent sources of information, the report consisted of replies and pertinent excerpts from documentary material submitted by the countries concerned as well as the relevant United Nations organs and specialized agencies in response to the Secretary-General's request for information on the subject-matter of the report.
3. The General Assembly at its thirty-second session, after considering the report submitted by the Secretary-General, expressed the view that there was need for further analysis in order to meet fully the objectives of resolution 31/110.
4. In view of the broad scope of the report now requested by the General Assembly, and recognizing the difficult constraints of time and place under which the report would have to be prepared, the Secretary-General decided to submit a report based on an impartial expert analysis of the social and economic impact.
5. In order to discharge the task requested of him in the resolution and to ensure

a balanced expert view, the Secretary-General planned to utilize the services of a team of three consultants, comprising a physical planner, an economist and a sociologist. It was envisaged that the consultants, accompanied by an official of UNRWA or ECWA, would visit the countries concerned, including particularly the territories occupied by Israel as a result of the hostilities of June 1967, in order to provide a first-hand account of the social and economic impact.

6. The Secretary-General also decided to request the Government of Israel and the Governments of Egypt, Jordan and the Syrian Arab Republic, as well as the Palestine Liberation Organization to make available such information as they might have and to co-operate in providing and obtaining other information as needed. Available written material would have to be supplemented through personal interviews and other direct inquiries in the field. In that connexion, the Secretary-General intended that the consultants should also visit the headquarters of the Palestine Liberation Organization, UNRWA and ECWA in Beirut.

7. At an early stage, the Secretariat undertook the selection of candidates in each of the three fields of expertise, paying particular attention, in view of the nature of the assignment and the time available to complete it, to the professional competence and relevant experience of the candidates under consideration. Three candidates suitable for the task and available to undertake the assignment at that time were tentatively selected.

8. The Secretary-General sent a note verbale dated 9 May 1978 to the Permanent Representative of Israel, drawing attention to the resolution and requesting such information as might be available on the subject-matter of the report requested by the General Assembly. The note requested that the information be provided by 30 June 1978. In informing the Permanent Representative of Israel of his intention to send to the occupied territories a mission comprising the consultants accompanied by an official of UNRWA or ECWA, the Secretary-General requested that the Israeli authorities extend to the mission the necessary assistance and co-operation. In particular, the Permanent Representative of Israel was informed that the proposed visit by the consultants to the occupied territories was of special importance for the performance of their tasks. A reply was requested by 31 May 1978.

9. The Permanent Representative of Israel, in a note verbale dated 31 May 1978, expressed concern regarding the tenor of the resolution. However, he stated that his Government would be ready to supply the Secretary-General with information germane to the matter. Subsequently, certain materials were transmitted to the Secretariat by the Permanent Mission of Israel. The note verbale from the Permanent Representative made no reference to the Secretary-General's request that the consultants, accompanied by an official of UNRWA or ECWA, be given free access to, and freedom of movement in, the occupied territories in connexion with the preparation of the report.

10. The Secretary-General reiterated his request in a note verbale dated 27 July 1978. In a reply dated 18 August 1978, the Permanent Mission of Israel noted that the reports and impressions of many visitors to the territories

administered by Israel since 1967, including, inter alia, economists, sociologists and health and labour experts, fully illustrated the improvement in living conditions of the Palestinians in those territories, and it therefore deemed the sending of a mission of experts unnecessary.

11. In a note to the Permanent Mission of Israel dated 11 September 1978, the Secretary-General stated that he considered the visit to the occupied territories essential if he were to be able to submit an independent and objective report to the General Assembly based on a first-hand account of the social and economic impact. In that connexion, the Secretary-General expressed the hope that the Government of Israel might extend to the consultants the necessary co-operation and facilities to gather the relevant information in the occupied territories.

12. On 9 May 1978, the Secretary-General also addressed notes verbales to the Permanent Representatives of Egypt, Jordan and the Syrian Arab Republic, drawing attention to the resolution and requesting such information as might be made available on the subject-matter of the report requested by the General Assembly. The note requested that the information be provided by 30 June 1978. The Secretary-General also informed the Permanent Representatives of the three countries of his intention to send a mission, comprising the three consultants accompanied by an official of UNRWA or ECWA, to their countries, with the request that the necessary assistance and co-operation be extended to the consultants. The Governments were requested to reply by 31 May 1978.

13. In a note verbale dated 26 May 1978, the Permanent Representative of the Syrian Arab Republic stated that his Government welcomed the team of consultants for the preparation of the report and that the competent authorities in the Syrian Arab Republic would extend to the consultants all possible assistance and co-operation.

14. The Permanent Representative of Egypt, in a note verbale dated 30 May 1978, stated that the Egyptian authorities welcomed a visit by the consultants, accompanied by an official of UNRWA or ECWA, in regard to the preparation of the report of the Secretary-General.

15. The Permanent Representative of Jordan, in a note verbale dated 17 July 1978, informed the Secretary-General of his Government's readiness to provide all possible assistance and co-operation to the proposed team of experts. He further informed the Secretary-General that a committee was being formed, consisting of representatives of the Central Bank of Jordan, the National Council for Planning, the Royal Society for Scientific Research and the Executive Office for the Affairs of the Occupied Territories, to prepare a report on the conditions of the refugees.

16. No reference was made in the replies of Egypt, Jordan and the Syrian Arab Republic to the request for information relevant to the subject-matter of the report.

17. Also on 9 May 1978, the Secretary-General sent a note verbale to the Permanent Observer of the Palestine Liberation Organization, drawing attention to the resolution and requesting such information as might be available on the subject-matter of the report requested by the General Assembly.

18. The Secretary-General, in a note verbale dated 5 September 1978, again drew the attention of the Permanent Observer of the Palestine Liberation Organization to the resolution and reiterated his request for information germane to the subject-matter of the report. No reply to the Secretary-General's note verbale of 9 May 1978 to the Permanent Observer of the Palestine Liberation Organization has been received as of the date of this interim report.

19. Meanwhile, after consultation with the Executive Secretary of ECWA and the Special Representative of the Secretary-General in Beirut, it was decided that in view of the situation prevailing in Beirut the mission should not proceed to the area at this time.

20. In the light of the circumstances referred to above, it has not been possible, despite every effort to do so, to prepare the full report called for by resolution 32/171 in time for submission to the General Assembly at its thirty-third session. The Secretary-General hopes that a full report on the social and economic impact of the Israeli occupation on the living conditions of the Palestinian people in the occupied territories will be prepared and submitted to the Assembly at its thirty-fourth session.



UNITED NATIONS

GENERAL
ASSEMBLY



Distr.
GENERAL

A/34/536 *feon. 1*
25 October 1979
ENGLISH
ORIGINAL: ARABIC/ENGLISH

Thirty-fourth session
Agenda item 65

HUMAN SETTLEMENTS

Living conditions of the Palestinian people
in the occupied territories

Report of the Secretary-General

1. In its resolution 33/110 of 18 December 1978, the General Assembly requested the Secretary-General, in collaboration with the relevant United Nations organs and specialized agencies, particularly the United Nations Relief and Works Agency for Palestine Refugees in the Near East (UNRWA), the Economic Commission for Western Asia (ECWA), and the Special Committee to Investigate Israeli Practices Affecting the Human Rights of the Population of the Occupied Territories, to prepare and submit to the Assembly at its thirty-fourth session a comprehensive and analytical report on the social and economic impact of the Israeli occupation on the living conditions of the Palestinian people in the occupied Arab territories. It further requested the Secretary-General, in preparing the report, to consult and co-operate with the Palestine Liberation Organization, the representative of the Palestinian people.
2. The resolution covered basically the same scope as General Assembly resolutions 31/110 of 16 December 1976 and 32/171 of 19 December 1977 on the same subject. Pursuant to General Assembly resolution 31/110, the Secretary-General submitted a report (A/32/228) to the General Assembly at its thirty-second session and pursuant to Assembly resolution 32/171 the Secretary-General submitted another report (A/33/354) to the thirty-third session.
3. In this regard, it may be recalled that at the thirty-second session of the General Assembly, while introducing the earlier report, the representative of the Secretary-General had explained that, because the Secretary-General had no independent source of information, the report had, of necessity, to consist of replies and pertinent excerpts for documentary material submitted by the Governments

of Egypt, Israel, Jordan 1/ and the Syrian Arab Republic 2/ as well as the relevant United Nations organs and specialized agencies in response to the Secretary-General's request for information on the subject-matter of the report.

4. In his report of 2 November 1978 (A/33/354), the Secretary-General indicated that, in view of the broad scope of the report requested by the General Assembly and the difficult constraints of time and place under which the report would have to be prepared, he intended to utilize the services of three consultants - a physical planner, an economist, and a sociologist - who would undertake an impartial expert analysis of the social and economic impact of the Israeli occupation on the living conditions of the Palestinian people in the occupied territories. However, in response to the Secretary-General's requests that the consultants be given free access to the occupied territories, the Permanent Mission of Israel stated that the reports and impressions of many visitors to the territories administered by Israel since 1967, including economists, sociologists and health and labour experts, fully illustrated the improvement of the living conditions of Palestinians in those territories. Consequently, the Israeli Government deemed the sending of a mission of experts unnecessary.

5. The secretariat of the United Nations Centre for Human Settlements (Habitat) has continued its efforts to dispatch the mission of experts to the area. However, the information it has obtained as at October 1979 clearly indicated that the position of the Government of Israel on this matter has not changed. In these circumstances, the Secretary-General considered that dispatching to the area an expert mission which would have no access to the occupied territories themselves would serve little purpose and was unlikely to facilitate the preparation of the comprehensive and analytical report requested by the General Assembly in its resolution 33/110. The Secretary-General will continue his efforts to dispatch a mission of experts as soon as circumstances permit.

6. Meanwhile, with reference to General Assembly resolution 33/110, the Governing Council of the United Nations Environment Programme (UNEP), by its decision 7/2 of 13 May 1979, requested the Executive Director of UNEP to ensure an adequate assessment of the environmental conditions of the Palestinian people. After consulting with the Secretary-General, the Executive Director of UNEP requested the Governments of Egypt, Israel, Jordan and the Syrian Arab Republic, as well as the Palestine Liberation Organization, to provide him with relevant information on this subject. A report based on an analysis of information provided in response to this request by the Governments of Egypt, Jordan and the Syrian Arab Republic as well as the Palestine Liberation Organization is presented as annex I. In preparing this report, information was also obtained for ECWA, UNRWA and the UNDP offices in Jordan and the Syrian Arab Republic. The report covers major aspects of the social and economic impact of the Israeli occupation on the living conditions of the Palestinian people in the occupied Arab territories.

1/ Circulated as a document of the Security Council (S/12378).

2/ Circulated as a document of the General Assembly under items 30, 31 and 62 (A/32/189).

7. In accordance with the provisions of General Assembly resolution 33/110, the Secretary-General also undertook to consult and co-operate with the Palestine Liberation Organization. In response to his request, PLO, on 1 August 1979, submitted to the Secretariat a report which is reproduced in annex II.

Annex I

Environmental conditions of the Palestinian people

Report of the Executive Director of the United
 Nations Environment Programme

CONTENTS

	<u>Paragraphs</u>	<u>Page</u>
I. INTRODUCTION	1 - 2	3
II. POPULATION AND SHELTER	3 - 31	3
A. Density of population in relation to housing units	3 - 23	3
1. Population	3 - 7	3
2. Movement of population	8 - 12	4
3. Demolition of settlements and construction of new settlements in the Gaza Strip	13 - 17	5
4. East Jerusalem: changes in housing and settlement policy	18 - 20	5
5. Palestinian refugee settlements and camps	21 - 23	6
B. Building industry and housing construction	24	6
C. Electricity	25 - 28	7
D. Impact of Israeli settlement	29 - 31	7
III. HUMAN HEALTH	32 - 41	8
A. Medical personnel and facilities	32 - 36	8
B. Infant mortality and malnutrition	37 - 39	9
C. Water-borne diseases	40	9
D. Environmental health services	41	9
IV. NATURAL RESOURCES	42 - 53	10
A. Water	42 - 47	10
1. Water resources	42 - 46	10
2. Water for refugee camps	47	10

/...

CONTENTS (continued)

	<u>Paragraphs</u>	<u>Page</u>
B. Land	48 - 53	11
1. Land occupation pattern	48	11
2. Desertification	49 - 53	11
V. WORKING ENVIRONMENT	54 - 55	12
A. Labour conditions	54	12
B. Depeasantization of the Palestinian people	55	13
VI. CONDITIONS OF SCHOOL BUILDINGS	56	13

1. INTRODUCTION

1. The General Assembly in its resolution 33/110 of 18 December 1978 called upon the Secretary-General to prepare and submit to the Assembly at its thirty-fourth session a comprehensive and analytical report on the social and economic impact of the Israeli occupation on the living conditions of the Palestinian people in the occupied Arab territories. On 13 May 1979, by its decision 7/2 on the environmental conditions of the Palestinian people, the Governing Council of the United Nations Environment Programme (UNEP) recalled the above General Assembly resolution and requested the Executive Director of UNEP to ensure an adequate assessment of the environmental conditions of the Palestinian people in its implementation.

2. In order to implement the Governing Council decision and after consultation with the Secretary-General, the Executive Director requested the Governments of Egypt, Israel, Jordan and the Syrian Arab Republic, as well as the Palestine Liberation Organization (PLO), to provide him with relevant information on the environmental conditions of the Palestinian people. The present report is based on an analysis of information provided in response to that request by the Governments of Egypt, Jordan and the Syrian Arab Republic and by PLO, as well as information available to ECWA, UNRWA and the UNDP offices in Jordan and the Syrian Arab Republic. The numbers in parentheses in the following paragraphs refer to the sources of information, which are listed at the end of the annex.

II. POPULATION AND SHELTER

A. Density of population in relation to housing units

1. Population

3. The population of the West Bank, including East Jerusalem, was estimated in 1975 at about 725,000, of whom 290,000 were refugees registered with UNRWA. Situated on the West Bank of the Jordan River, the area is rich in historical and archaeological sites. Its 4,820 km² have traditionally been a centre for agriculture and tourism. (12)

4. In 1974 the Gaza Strip had a population of 492,000, of whom 327,500 had refugees status with UNRWA and 164,500 were non-refugees. The area of the Gaza Strip is about 345 km², giving it one of the highest population densities in the world (1,500 per km²). The refugees in the Gaza Strip who live in the eight camps built by UNRWA constitute 36 per cent of the total Palestinian refugees registered with UNRWA. (18)

5. Housing activity by the Palestinians in the West Bank decreased after 1967, construction being only one tenth of what it had been in 1966. The marked increase in building which has taken place since 1974 is still not sufficient to meet the housing needs of the Palestinians of the West Bank and Gaza. (9)

6. Lower population density (150/km²) and better physical environment have produced better housing conditions in the West Bank than those in the Gaza Strip. In general, housing conditions are reported to be better in the urban areas than in the rural areas. (1)

7. Of the Palestinian dwelling houses in the West Bank 20 per cent have only one room and 30 per cent two rooms, while the average family size is seven members. 22,000 families of 6 to 11 persons live in one-room dwellings and 40,000 families of the same size in two-room dwelling houses, with average occupancy of 3.2 persons per room. It has been estimated that "at least 200,000 people are urgently in need of rehousing in the occupied territories, which means that a minimum of 25,000 new dwelling houses is required" (8 persons per dwelling house). (12)

2. Movement of population (12), (5), (4)

8. In 1948, an estimated 750,000 Palestinians were permanently displaced from their homes. During and following the 1967 war, approximately 240,000 Palestinians fled from the West Bank and Gaza. Some were refugees from UNRWA camps, while others were fleeing for the first time. Of this number approximately 40,000 were permitted to return.

9. Prior to 1967, the population of the West Bank and Gaza had experienced prosperity and growth in various sectors. This was reflected in the construction of housing and schools and the development of towns and municipalities. (12) The various municipalities in the West Bank have retained, in their building and architecture, much of their historic traditions, while at the same time taking full advantage of modern facilities. In the past, there was therefore considerable urban immigration.

10. However, under occupation, the growth process has been slowed down by the destruction of houses as a result of military occupation and by the lack of construction of new accommodations for the Palestinian inhabitants.

11. Since 1967, a number of villages have been destroyed, and others partially destroyed. Villages totally destroyed during and following the 1967 war include: Yalu, Beit Nuba, Amwas, Al-Buy, Beit Awa, Beit Marsam, and Jiftliq. Shops, hospitals, businesses and offices have been demolished as well, depriving the inhabitants of their means of subsistence.

12. No provisions for new housing are readily available. Therefore, the inhabitants are without shelter and means of livelihood, having been deprived of their homes and land. Out of frustration, they leave the occupied territories to seek refuge in nearby States. (6)

3. Demolition of settlements and construction of new settlements in the Gaza Strip (15), (10), (12), (18)

13. In 1970, recommendations were made by the Israelis suggesting that the refugee features of the UNRWA camps be changed to lead to the integration of the refugees into urban life. Economic incentives were to be offered and new houses were to be constructed. The plan called for the abolishment of refugee camps in the Gaza Strip and the West Bank.

14. In 1971, large-scale demolition of refugee camp housing in the Gaza Strip took place. About 3,500 homes occupied by about 24,000 people were destroyed, without provision for alternative housing. UNRWA repeatedly called for the rectification of the situation, but by July 1973 reported that of 942 families interviewed, 706 were still inadequately housed following the demolition of their homes. By April 1973, demolition of houses for new roads had begun in Rafah and Khan Younis, and recent reports indicate that the Rafah settlement is being redeveloped.

15. New apartment houses were constructed in the occupied territories to house Jewish immigrants. These immigrants were also permitted to live in the homes of Arabs, who were not permitted to return. Under Israeli law, new Israeli apartment buildings are not available to non-Jews. The new dwellings are generally located in the Arab sector of Jerusalem.

16. Following the war in 1967, the Israelis developed a settlement policy which deeply affected the occupied areas. The first phase was the establishment of agricultural "nahal" settlements with military features in the West Bank, on the Jordan River, on the Golan Heights and in the Gaza Strip. The second stage was the building of industrialized centres of which one, between Jerusalem and Jericho, is involving a substantial amount of planning and investment.

17. Of the new settlements established since 1967, the majority are in the territories occupied in the 1967 war: 23 in the West Bank and 7 in the Gaza Strip. New plans for additional settlements are periodically announced. The result of the demolition and settlement policy is, inter alia, to weaken attachments to homes and to the cultural heritage, often forcing the homeless to emigrate.

4. East Jerusalem: changes in housing and settlement policy (4), (12)

18. According to United Nations resolutions, the status of Jerusalem remains legally unchanged. However, the "Law and Administrative Ordinance: Proclamation of Enlargement of the Municipal Area of Jerusalem", of 28 June 1967, designated an area inhabited by 100,000 Arabs to be under Israeli rule. Within the last 12 years, an estimated 20-30,000 Arabs have departed from the Old City.

19. The clearing of 82 metres along the Wailing Wall entailed the demolition of many dwellings around the Haram Al Sherif, 31 buildings, and the four Arab quarters

surrounding the area - which was estimated to be 20 per cent of all the Arab property in the Old City. The 200 homes destroyed round the Wailing Wall were replaced by a new Israeli plaza, and the Palestine Archaeological Museum was expropriated and its relics confiscated.

20. Approximately 1,200 hectares of land in East Jerusalem were confiscated and expropriated under the "Land Acquisition for Public Purposes Act". In this process, four square kilometres near East Jerusalem which included 1,048 apartments, 427 stores and a factory, were expropriated. Many new high-rise apartments were constructed and became the subject of much controversy, both internationally and within the occupied territories and Israel itself, involving the aesthetic effect on the landscape of historic Jerusalem and the subsequent displacement of people.

5. Palestinian refugee settlements and camps

21. Following the first Palestinian war, in 1947-1948, the country's Arab population was divided into four main groups. Less than half of the Arab population remained in their original homes: about 160,000 in Israel, some 350,000 under Jordanian administration on the West Bank, and about 70,000-100,000 under Egyptian administration in the Gaza Strip, in addition to about 750,000 refugees dispersed in the above areas and in Lebanon, the Syrian Arab Republic and Transjordan. (3)

22. By 1975 almost half of the 3,000,000 Palestinians scattered through the Middle East were registered as refugees with UNRWA. Over a third of the refugees (459,000) were officially registered in UNRWA established camps. Those registered in camps constituted nearly 60 and 25 per cent of the total population in Gaza and the West Bank respectively. These figures excluded refugees who did not receive UNRWA shelter in camps, but were recipients of other United Nations services. Actual camp population exceeded the official registration by about 10 per cent due to the presence of unregistered refugee dependants. In addition to a total of 53 "established" camps in East Jordan, the West Bank, Gaza, the Syrian Arab Republic and Lebanon, over 140,000 Arabs lived in 6 Jordanian and 4 Syrian "emergency" camps organized after the 1967 war. About 99,000 inhabitants of the "emergency" camps were UNRWA refugees. The balance were other persons displaced as a result of the 1967 war. (3)

23. The main housing problems faced in the UNRWA camps are: (a) over-crowding of housing units: in a number of cases families share the same unit; (b) inability to expand housing units vertically or horizontally; (c) aging of the present units; and (d) poor communication networks and sanitary infrastructure. (13), (15)

B. Building industry and housing construction

24. Building materials, with the exception of quarry stone, are in short supply and must be imported from outside the region at very high cost. This is particularly true of steel rods, metal frames and cement. A cement factory is

still in the planning stage. The establishment of a large and increasing number of Israeli settlements has placed additional constraints on building activity in the West Bank and the Gaza Strip. Employment of construction workers within Israel itself has oriented the labour force away from development in their own territories. Furthermore, the destruction of an estimated 19,000 houses in the West Bank and Gaza since 1967 has aggravated an already critical problem. Housing problems are accentuated by the land confiscation and expropriation policy and the Absentee Property Law of the occupying authorities. (12)

C. Electricity

25. Prior to the 1967 war, there were 11 separate electricity-generating concerns in the West Bank. These were either commercial companies, like the Jerusalem Governorate Electricity Company, municipal companies like Nablus or some co-operatives in the larger villages. Total generating capacity was about 21.5 MW. (13)

26. Following the war, Israel tried for several reasons, to tie the electricity grid in the West Bank to that of Israel, particularly for cities where electric grids were damaged by the war. Some cities responded and connected their supply to the Israeli grid, while others did not. Those relying on their own generating capacities, at least in part, include Jerusalem and Nablus. Among those localities connected to the Israeli grid are Hebron, Tulkarm and Qalqielyeh. Similarly, some villages close to the armistice line of 1948 were connected, like Azzoun and Deir-al-Ghsoun.

27. The Jerusalem Governorate Electricity Company is subject to Israeli laws, and is buying electricity from the Israeli Company to supply the requirements of Israeli settlements. The Israeli authorities have asked the Company to sell electricity at fixed low prices. Israeli authorities estimate that the generating capacity of the Jerusalem Company will decline from 20 MW in 1976 to 14 MW in 1980, while needed capacity will rise from 30 MW to 54 MW. Currently, the Company supplies electricity to about 75 villages and camps in the West Bank in addition to cities like Bethlehem, Ramallah, Birch and Jericho, nine Israeli army camps, and 12 Israeli settlements or residential quarters. (13)

28. The Nablus electricity, however, is still supplied by the municipality, using two generating units installed in 1977. The following villages in the Nablus Governorate are also supplied from Nablus: Deir Sharaf, Rameen, Beit Leed, Zeita, al-Badan and Tel. (13)

D. Impact of Israeli settlement

29. Of a total area of 550,000 hectares on the West Bank of the Jordan, Israel has taken possession of about 150,000 hectares comprising about 27.3 per cent of the area of the West Bank. (10) The new settlements occupy about 35,000 hectares (about 6.3 per cent of the West Bank area) most of which is agricultural land.

There were 68 settlements up to the end of 1978, housing more than 90,000 persons, divided as follows: 11 settlements around Jerusalem, 12 around Ramallah and Biera, 12 in Hebron and Bethlehem, 14 around Nablus and 19 in the Jordan Valley. Israel has been concentrating housing around the Jerusalem area, a fact evidenced by the 76,000 people who live in these settlements. (2)

30. Israel is still carrying out its settlement-building policies. Six more are planned to be built soon. As this continues, it necessarily means that Arab land will be emptied in favour of the Israeli population rather than its Arab owners.

31. In 1967, the infrastructure (roads, sewerage, etc., including electricity) in the West Bank and Gaza Strip was better than that of most countries in the region. Very little has been done since either to improve or to maintain the existing level. The pattern of military road development and restrictions on electricity and water expansion have impeded building construction projects. Few existing sewerage systems have been expanded, resulting in stoppage, blockage and overflows. (13)

III. HUMAN HEALTH

A. Medical personnel and facilities (11)

32. Specialists in paediatrics, pathology, laboratory technologies and radiology are either in short supply or non-existent. The chances for West Bank physicians to acquire scholarships in any of the sorely needed specialities are virtually nil. (11)

33. Nursing and paramedical services are no better off in terms of quantity or quality. There is a great shortage in laboratory and X-ray technicians, physiotherapists, blood bank technicians and pharmacists. (11)

34. The health infrastructure has not developed in recent years. On the contrary, due to a reorganization of hospital services and redistribution of responsibilities, the number of public hospitals decreased from 11 operating, and 3 on the verge of operation, in 1967, to 8 operational plus a mental hospital and a tuberculosis hospital in 1975. The total number of beds also decreased from 1,023 in 1968 to 943 in 1975, thus lowering the rate of beds per 1,000 population from 1.5 in 1968 to 1.3 in 1975. Admissions increased from 23,593 in 1968 to 36,360 in 1975. (15)

35. In the West Bank, most of the Palestinian Red Crescent activities operated before 1967 have been drastically curtailed. There are still units, mainly out-patient services, in some 4 or 5 towns: in Gaza Red Crescent operates a clinic and a small surgical hospital.

36. Preventive activities and elementary sanitation are somewhat neglected. Preventive and curative activities are not integrated in a comprehensive health service; health education of the public is almost non-existent, and the community does not feel concerned as it is not involved. (11), (13)

B. Infant mortality and malnutrition

37. The Medical Association of the West Bank reports that infant mortality increased from 70.9 per thousand in 1973 to 73.8 per thousand in 1974 and to 80.3 in 1975 in the particular area studied, in which some 2,500 births a year took place (the total number of births a year in the West Bank is approximately 30,500). The same study quotes Israeli statistics to the effect that over-all infant mortality increased from 37 per thousand in 1974 to 39.5 per thousand in 1975. Infant mortality rate for the Arab population in the West Bank fluctuated around an average of 40.0 per thousand from 1966 to 1975; the figure decreased from 41.8 per cent in 1966 to 39.5 per cent in 1975, but with a high of 44.3 per cent in 1967 and a low of 37.0 per cent in 1974.

38. In spite of their great discrepancy, these figures agree, at least, that infant mortality has not decreased significantly over the 10-year period 1966-1975, and may have increased since 1973. Moreover, neonatal mortality (death of infants up to the age of 30 days) as well as the number of still-births have increased.

39. Protein malnutrition is relatively frequent during the weaning period, together with gastro-intestinal infections. Iron deficiency anemia is reported in approximately 25 per cent of children under 3 years of age.

C. Water-borne diseases (11)

40. In the West Bank and Gaza, as well as in host countries, diarrhoeal diseases are by far the major causes of morbidity and mortality, especially among infants and young children. Specific information on other water-borne diseases is not available.

D. Environmental health services

41. UNRWA environmental health services for the Palestinian people (refugees) comprise mainly provision of potable water supplies, sanitary disposal of solid and liquid wastes, storm water drainage and control of insect and rodent vectors of disease. A total of 653,649 refugees and displaced persons living in 63 refugee camps benefitted from the services, which were maintained at a satisfactory level in most of the camps. During the year 1977, the annual cost of the services provided by the Agency worked out at \$5.60 per beneficiary. The inflationary trend and other factors are likely to increase the cost in coming years. (16)

IV. NATURAL RESOURCES

A. Water

1. Water resources

42. Water availability (from both underground and surface resources) and its use are of crucial importance to West Bank agriculture. Although promising possibilities seem to exist (e.g., building of small dams or other run-off storage facilities in various catchment areas) (2), available information shows that not a single irrigation project has been planned or implemented in the West Bank since 1967.
43. Drilling of new wells for the development of underground water resources has been practically prohibited since June 1967. The flow from existing wells has been reduced and put under strict control. There are claims that there is also depletion and decreasing water levels in a number of Arab wells. Since occupation, a total of 12 wells have dried up (12). During the year 1977/1978, a total of 331 wells were in operation: 314 "Arab" wells produced 33 million m³ of water.
44. This pattern of water resources use is explained by the Military Government in terms of underground water conservation policy. However, hydrological surveys have shown that a sizable part of Israel's water supply originates in the West Bank (through run-off, seepage and underground water). The West Bank reportedly has an annual water surplus of at least 600 million m³, while in 1979 Israel will experience a deficit of 265 million m³, which may reach nearly 500 million m³ in 1985. (7), (13)
45. The situation of underground water in the Gaza Strip is equally disturbing. Water discharge has been going at an excessive rate, resulting in a declining water table and increasing salinity. Competition of neighbouring Israeli wells for water is also keen. (5)
46. The importance of better use of available water resources is often indicated by referring to the fact that until 1978, only 8,100 hectares were under irrigation in the West Bank (4 per cent of the area under cultivation) and 9,000 hectares in the Gaza Strip (45 per cent of the land under cultivation). Dry lands are supported by a rainfall of 400-600 mm, much of which is wasted in run-off water, drained mostly to Israel. Despite the critical importance of water, little seems to have been done to conserve rainfall water through such projects as terraces, earth dams, and pools. (2)
- ##### 2. Water for refugee camps
47. Schemes for providing private water supply to refugee shelters continued to progress satisfactorily at two camps in the West Bank, six camps in the Gaza Strip, one camp in Lebanon and two camps in east Jordan. Currently 46 per cent of camp inhabitants are served by private water supply and the rest continue to draw water

from public stand-pipes. A water augmentation scheme for Jaramana camp in the Syrian Arab Republic is nearing completion. The Amman Water and Sewerage Authority is executing a scheme to provide private water supply together with sewerage systems at two camps located in Amman city. The Government of the Syrian Arab Republic has provided an additional well, pumping station and elevated water reservoir to meet the growing needs of refugees at Khan Eshieh camp where all shelters have been provided with private water supply. (16)

B. Land

1. Land occupation pattern

48. The following table gives an indication of land occupation patterns in the West Bank.

Land resources in the West Bank

Land use	Area (hectares)
West Bank total	550,000
Confiscated land	148,866
Total settlements	34,748

- Ratio of confiscated land to total area of West Bank 27.1%
- Ratio of settlements area to West Bank 6.3%
 (2), (5), (3), (13)

2. Desertification

49. The main causes of desertification are overgrazing, clearing of vegetation for agriculture, burning, faulty irrigation systems, expansion of agriculture on shallow soil and steep slopes, lack of anti-erosion measures, etc. These have led to degradation of the vegetation cover, loss of soil fertility and productivity, and several other forms of desertification. The situation is described in the following paragraphs.

1. Dry-land trees

50. Orchards on hilly slopes of the West Bank are receiving a much inferior level of husbandry than vegetables and farm orchards under irrigation. As a

result of accumulated negligence, the status of figs, almonds, grapes and even of olives is deteriorating. About 40 per cent of all West Bank olive trees are 100-150 years old and need rejuvenation. Olive trees also need to be protected by law against destruction by invading flocks of sheep and goats. Better fertilization and more effective pest control are necessary measures. (2) Forestry contributed less than 1 per cent of the agricultural income in 1974-1975.

2. Irrigation techniques (2)

51. Experience gained over the past three years has clearly demonstrated the superiority of drip irrigation to former practices. Among several other advantages, drip irrigation saves over 50 per cent on water use and 90 per cent on labour in comparison with traditional methods of irrigation. There are now 730 hectares under drip irrigation in the West Bank and 900 hectares in the Gaza Strip, at an estimated cost of \$300 per hectare. (2)

3. Salinization

52. Alkaline soils occur mainly in the Jericho area, due to slow drainage of highly saline soils (pH 8.5-9).

4. Pastures

53. There are vast areas on the West Bank hills which are fit for pastures. Effective programmes of pasture development require first of all restoration of public ownership of the land. Much of this land, which has traditionally been natural grazing land, is now zoned out for military or settlement purposes. It is reported that 5,000 hectares could be turned into good grazing land. (2)

V. WORKING ENVIRONMENT

A. Labour conditions

54. West Bank workers, numbering some 60,000, form about 5 per cent of the Israeli labour force. (13) It is claimed that Arab labourers employed in Israel are paid less for the same job than their Israeli counterparts. (2) Approximately 40 per cent of the Palestinians' wages go to the Israeli treasury: while the same is true of the Israeli labourer, the latter nevertheless receives more social benefits, pensions, health insurance and unemployment benefits. (6) Often travel to and from Israel entails four to six hours of travel daily, thus adding to the length of the working day. Those who do not wish to travel often sleep in makeshift shelters within Israel, or in their place of work, the cellars of buildings under construction, kitchens of restaurants, orchards or other agricultural areas. (4) The relatively higher wages in Israel and high rate of unemployment in the Gaza Strip have been used to attract workers away from the

Strip with a view to reducing population density. Professional doctors, engineers, professors and other qualified persons are reported to be unable to find work in the occupied territories. They frequently leave the area out of economic necessity, thus draining the occupied territories of qualified persons needed to supply necessary services. From 1974 on, unemployment steadily increased as a result of a decrease in capital investment within Israel. (4)

B. Depeasantization of the Palestinian people (3)

55. The most salient change among the Palestinians, one that is leading to the over-all restratification of the Palestinian population because the refugees constitute half their number, has been their depeasantization. This term is used to indicate that the refugees lose their skills and capacities as agriculturists or peasants without becoming integrated into the urban centres which their camps adjoin or acquiring new non-farming occupational skills. With the loss of substantial agricultural holdings and the displacement of other peasants who have no land from their rural communities, there has been a major shift away from agriculture. (2)

VI. CONDITIONS OF SCHOOL BUILDINGS

56. Available reports show that schools in the occupied territories are in very old buildings, most of which are about to fall down. Some classrooms are described as being like rat-holes, and many do not have access to fresh air or natural light. It is reported that only one and a half schools were built during 10 years of occupation (from 1967 to 1977). (17)

References

1. Arab League Institute of Arab Studies. The Palestinians in the Arab States, Cairo. 1978. (Arabic). Provided by Syrian Arab Republic.
2. Awartani, H. Al-Rajah National University. Nablus. West Bank. "Agriculture in the West Bank and Gaza Strip, Problems and Prospects". Provided by PLO.
3. Don Partez (Professor of Political Science at the State University of New York at Binghamton). "Palestinian Social Stratification". Provided by PLO.
4. ECWA. Social Development and Human Settlement Division. Paper on social conditions in the occupied Arab territories of the West Bank and Gaza. Beirut. May 1977.
5. Executive Office for the Occupied Territories Affairs. Amman, Jordan. Provided by Jordan.
6. Effect of Israel Authorities Legislation on Housing. Provided by PLO. 1979.
7. The Hashemite Kingdom of Jordan Central Water Authority. West Bank Hydrology, 1963-1965. London. Rafe and Raffety, Consulting Engineers, December 1965. p. 15. Provided by Jordan.
8. Jamil Hilal "The Palestinians of the West Bank and Gaza Strip". Provided by PLO.
9. Journal of Palestinian Studies, Beirut, Lebanon. Vol. VII No. 1, 1977, pp. 26-47. Provided by PLO.
10. Mahdi abd-El-Hadi "The Israeli Settlements in Jerusalem and the West Bank, 1967-1977". Arab Thought Forum, Jerusalem, May 1978, pp. 61-91; Ann Lesch "Israeli Settlements in the Occupied Territories". Provided by PLO.
11. The Medical Association of the West Bank. Report on Medical Institutions and Staff, 1978. Provided by PLO and Jordan.
12. Nidal Sabri. Housing Problems in the West Bank. (Official PLO ideas for Human Settlements) Samed, special issue No. 11-12, December 1978 (Arabic). Provided by PLO.
13. Royal Jordanian Scientific Society "The Significance of some West Bank Resources to Israel". Amman, February 1979 (English). Provided by Jordan.
14. Statistical data for Arab Population in Occupied Territories and Israel. (Syria - Office of the Palestinian Refugees, Damascus). Provided by Syria.

15. UNDP (Report of the Inter-Agency Task Force April 1979 on Assistance to Palestinian People to the Inter-Agency Meeting). (General Assembly resolution 33/147). Provided by ECWA.
16. UNRWA Annual Report of the Director of Health of UNRWA for the year 1979. Document A/31/WP/1. Provided by UNRWA.
17. West Bank Education in Government Schools 1967-1977. F. S. Masru Birseit University Publication. July 1977. Provided by PLO.

Annex II

/Original: Arabic/

Report by Mr. Najib Al-Ahmad, Member of the Jordanian Parliament
for the occupied West Bank and a senior official of the Political
Department of the Palestine Liberation Organization a/

Right from the start of the third Israeli invasion, on 5 June 1967, of the Palestinian Arab land not yet under Israeli occupation - what was known as the West Bank and the Gaza Strip - there began a campaign of expelling the Arab population, destroying their homes, seizing their lands, establishing Israeli housing projects, factories, public and private establishments, training centres for the army, military posts, security zones and Israeli settlements and the transferring of Jewish immigrants to them from all parts of the world, within the framework of the well-known and openly declared Israeli plan to drive the Palestinian Arabs from their country in order to Judaize it and to allow Zionist immigrants to take over the property and homes of the 4 million Palestinians, after they have been driven from their homeland and dispersed throughout the world.

I. THE RAMALLAH AREA

At the outset of the Israeli forces' occupation of the West Bank and the Gaza Strip in June 1967, three Arab villages to the west of the town of Ramallah, namely, Amwas, Yalu and Beit Nuba, were blown up and destroyed, although these villages were Arab and the lands had long been handed down by inheritance from father to son. These three villages had a total population of 5,050, covered an area of 41,650 dunums and contained 1,328 houses, four Islamic mosques, six schools, a large library and valuable antiquities. They were totally destroyed and their population was dispersed and expelled. Then they took over the lands of Latrun, comprising 2,000 dunums, and on the ruins of these Arab villages they established six Israeli settlements: Kfar Ruth, Shayelet, Moudilim, Qaryat Mikabin, Ba'ir Tel and Mevo Horon. In 1976, the Israeli authorities approved a project for the unification of these settlements, so that they would constitute one large Israeli city, and for a broad paved highway connecting them with the cities of Jerusalem and Tel Aviv and with the settlements along the Palestinian littoral. A network of highways was to run off from this main highway, connecting it with nine other Israeli settlements which the Israelis had also established on Arab lands in the Ramallah district after the 1967 war and linking those settlements with Jerusalem. The settlements in question were Rafet, Our, Giv'on, Shiloh, Beit Horon, Ramot, Kochav Hashahar, Beit Rael and Neve Zuf. The main highway then passed through the settlement of Atarot, which the Israelis established

a/ The representative of the Palestine Liberation Organization submitted a map with this report. For technical reasons this map could not be reproduced but is available for consultation.

after 1967 near Jerusalem airport, and extended as far as Jerusalem. The purpose of this project, as the competent Israeli official stated, was to relieve the pressure of the population density in the Tel Aviv area and on the coast, to provide a better place for Israeli immigrants to settle in, instead of Tel Aviv and Jerusalem, to alleviate the density of traffic between Tel Aviv and the coast, on the one hand, and Jerusalem on the other and to establish a concentration of Israeli population in the hills overlooking the Palestinian littoral in order to provide a better line of defence.

The total area of the Arab lands in the Ramallah area seized by the Israeli authorities was 74,750 dunums, on which they established 15 Israeli settlements, as well as army posts and training zones, entry to which was prohibited.

II. THE JERUSALEM AREA

In the part of Jerusalem which was not under Israeli occupation prior to June 1967, after its occupation and during the period 7 to 11 June 1967, the Israelis blew up 135 Arab homes in Old Jerusalem within the wall, expelled their owners and the Arab inhabitants, who numbered 650, and blew up two Islamic mosques and an Arab plastics factory.

On 27 June 1967, the Israeli Knesset decided, under article 11 (b) of the Israeli Law and Administration Ordinance of 1948 to annex the Arab sector of Jerusalem occupied in 1967 to the Israeli sector occupied in 1948. At the same time, the Arab area surrounding Jerusalem, comprising the municipality of Jerusalem and containing Jerusalem airport and the villages of Sur Bahir, Beit Safafa, Tur, Issawiya, Anata, Ram and Sha'fat and with a population of 1,000 Arabs, was also annexed. In 1968, the Israeli authorities, acting under the Law of Acquisition of Land for the Public Interest, promulgated under the British mandate in 1943, seized an area of 126 dunums in Old Jerusalem containing four Arab quarters: 1. The Magharba quarter; 2. The Silsila Gate quarter; 3. The Sharaf quarter; 4. The Suq al-Husur quarter. In these quarters, Arabs owned 595 pieces of real estate, including 1,048 apartments, 427 commercial warehouses, 5 Islamic mosques, 4 schools and 2 Islamic chapels. These quarters were inhabited by 6,000 Arabs. On 30 August 1970, issue No. 1,656 of the Israeli Official Gazette contained a decree for the appropriation of an area of 11,680 dunums of Arab land in the Jerusalem area, under the 1943 British Law of Acquisition of Land for the Public Interest. This may be broken down as follows:

1. 4,840 dunums of the lands of the villages of Beit Hanina and Nabi Samwil to the north of Jerusalem;
2. 2,700 dunums of the lands of the village of Beit Safafa to the south of Jerusalem;
3. 2,240 dunums of the lands of the villages of Sur Bahir and Jabal al-Mukabber to the south of Jerusalem;

4. 1,200 dunums of the lands of the village of Qalandiya near Jerusalem airport;
 5. 470 dunums of the lands of the village of Ram to the north of Jerusalem;
 6. 120 dunums within the limits of the Arab municipality of Jerusalem;
 7. 100 dunums in the vicinity of the wall of Jerusalem;
- Total: 11,680 dunums.

On these lands the Israeli authorities constructed more than 4,000 housing units and established industrial zones near Jerusalem airport and transferred to them factories and workshops, including Central Hashbirha, Faraj, E'odat, Motsdi, Papruskalim, Hatsrakhim, Eshrabaton, Dimox and Haf'atal.

They also took over the Ma'man Allah cemetery in Jerusalem and set up a commercial centre and a garage on the site. They then proceeded to build 13 tourist hotels, with a total of 4,165 rooms, on the lands which they had seized from the Arabs in Jerusalem. The Israelis then took over an area of 600 dunums of Arab land in Ash-Sheikh Jarah and the surrounding areas and built a whole large quarter to which they gave the name Eshkol quarter and which blocked the glorious historic views of Jerusalem.

In 1975, the Israeli authorities began constructing a wall of vast residential apartment blocks around both parts of the city of Jerusalem and around the adjoining areas, and, as the Israelis themselves have said, these buildings are being constructed as vast strong defence fortresses.

The total amount of Arab lands seized by the Israelis in the Jerusalem area is 112,297 dunums, which may be broken down as follows:

1. The Magharba quarter	126 dunums
2. Land of Jabal al-Mukabber	540 dunums
3. Lands within the municipal limits	1,316 dunums
4. Lands of Ash-Sheikh Jarrah and Scopus	3,870 dunums
5. Lands in the Beit Hanina area	12,470 dunums
6. Lands in the Qalandiya area	1,200 dunums
7. Lands to the east of Sha'fat	1,700 dunums
8. Land on Mount Scopus	450 dunums
9. Lands of Nabi Samwil	4,840 dunums
10. Lands of Beit Safafa	2,700 dunums
11. Lands of the village of Ram	1,800 dunums
12. Lands of Khan Al-Ahmar	3,000 dunums
13. Lands of Arata	5,000 dunums
14. Lands of Abu Dis	2,000 dunums
15. Lands of As-Sammar	200 dunums
16. Lands in the area to the east of Al-Izriya up to Khan Al-Ahmar	70,000 dunums
17. Lands of Salwan	1,000 dunums
18. Lands in the Sir area	60 dunums
	<hr/>
Total:	112,297 dunums
	<hr/>

The Israelis built the following settlements on these lands:

- | | |
|--------------------|------------------|
| 1. Neve Ya'acov | 2. Atarot |
| 3. Sanhedria | 4. Metzpeh |
| 5. Ma'ale Adomim | 6. Talpiot |
| 7. Ramot | 8. Ma'alat Defna |
| 9. Ma'ale Adomim B | |

In addition, a number of residential quarters were built on the boundaries of the municipality of Jerusalem. These include the following:

- | | |
|-----------------------------|--|
| 1. The Anatot quarter | 2. The Hebrew University residential quarter |
| 3. The Ma'man Alla quarter | 4. The Maskubia quarter |
| 5. The Tel el-Faras quarter | 6. The Al-Masani' quarter |

In May 1979, a new Israeli organization, the Zionist Construction Group, announced the establishment of a new settlement called Modi'in.

III. THE ARIHA AREA

In the Ariha area, which is generally recognized as coming under the administration of the City of Jerusalem, the Israeli's took over 43,000 dunums of Arab land. The breakdown is as follows:

1. The Ain At-Turaba area to the west of the Dead Sea	10,000 dunums
2. The Kalia area to the south of Ariha	18,000 dunums
3. Lands of Al-Awja Al-Fawqa	4,000 dunums
4. Lands of Al-Awja At-Tahta	5,000 dunums
5. Lands to the south of Jiftlik	2,000 dunums
6. Lands in the Central Jordan Valley	4,000 dunums
Total:	<u>43,000 dunums</u>

The Israelis blew up all the houses in Al-Filat between the town of Ariha and the Jordan River and established seven Israeli settlements in the Ariha area, namely:

- | | |
|------------------|------------------|
| 1. Mitzpe Shalem | 2. Almog (Kalia) |
| 3. Na'aran | 4. Kadesh Bartig |
| 5. Yitav | 6. Magshimim |
| 7. Netiv Hagdud | |

IV. THE BETHLEHEM DISTRICT

The Israelis took over 85,000 dunums of Arab land in the Bethlehem area. The breakdown is as follows:

1.	Lands of Al-Firdaws	4,000 dunums
2.	Lands of Qumran	1,000 dunums
3.	Lands of Beit Fajjar	1,500 dunums
4.	Lands of Tabat Al-Walr	500 dunums
5.	Lands of Ad-Dahisha	500 dunums
6.	Lands of Beib Jala	5,000 dunums
7.	Lands of Jabal Ar-Ras	505 dunums
8.	Lands of At-Talamara	72,000 dunums

Total: 85,000 dunums

They established there military firing and training zones and two settlements, Gilo and Hamuzit.

V. THE HEBRON DISTRICT

The Israelis took over 55,650 dunums of Arab land in Hebron. The breakdown is as follows:

1.	Lands to the east of the town of Hebron	25,750 dunums
2.	Lands to the north of Hebron	3,000 dunums
3.	Lands of Khilla Jalis	50 dunums
4.	Lands of the village of Beit Amr	6,050 dunums
5.	Lands of the village of Ad-Dahira	200 dunums
6.	Lands of the village of As-Samu'	50 dunums
7.	Lands of Tarkumiya	500 dunums
8.	Lands to the south of Asyun	7,800 dunums
9.	Lands adjoining the town of Sharqa	6,000 dunums
10.	Lands of the village of Aksariya	3,000 dunums
11.	Lands of the village of Surif	1,000 dunums
12.	Lands of Dora	200 dunums
13.	Lands of Al-Majnuna	1,500 dunums
14.	Lands of Sa'ir and Al-Mukhabba	300 dunums
15.	Lands within the boundaries of the municipality	250 dunums
	Total:	<u>55,650 dunums</u>

They built there the town of Qiryat Arba, adjacent to and strategically dominating the town of Hebron, and nine other settlements, namely:

- | | |
|----------------|----------------|
| 1. Yattir | 2. Bedulam |
| 3. Takosh | 4. Kfar Etzion |
| 5. Elezar | 6. Alon Shvot |
| 7. Rosh Tzurim | 8. Efrat |
| 9. Migdal Oz | |

They then annexed 1,000 dunums more to the town of Qiryat Arba and built new residential and industrial extensions there, and they occupied the Dabawiya area in the town of Hebron and set about building a new Jewish residential quarter there.

/...

VI. THE NABLUS DISTRICT

The Israelis took over 65,800 dunums of Arab land in the Nablus district. The breakdown is as follows:

1.	Lands of Northern Asira	3,000 dunums
2.	Lands of Kafr Qaddum	5,500 dunums
3.	Lands of Talluza in the locality of Ka'b Ash-Shanaro	300 dunums
4.	Lands of the village of Al-Mughayyir	5,000 dunums
5.	Lands of the village of Deir Sharaf	3,000 dunums
6.	Lands of the village of Mesha	5,000 dunums
7.	Lands of the villages of Bardala and Ain el-Beida in the Tubas area	7,000 dunums
8.	Land of Fasayil	4,000 dunums
9.	Land in the Damya Bridge area	6,000 dunums
10.	Lands of the village of Beit Dajan	6,500 dunums
11.	Lands of the village of Agraba	7,000 dunums
12.	Lands of Al-Buqaiya	3,000 dunums
13.	Lands of the village of Duma	3,500 dunums
14.	Lands in the Jarzim area	3,000 dunums
15.	Lands of the village of Tel Haris	1,000 dunums
16.	Lands of the village of Yasuf	2,000 dunums
17.	Lands of the village of Sabastiya	1,000 dunums

Total: 65,800 dunums

In the Nablus district they established 24 settlements, two of which have not yet been given their final names. The others are as follows:

/...

- | | |
|-------------------|------------------|
| 1. Mehola | 12. Hamra |
| 2. Ro'I | 13. Batoah |
| 3. Bega'ot | 14. Haris |
| 4. Argaman | 15. Vadeem |
| 5. Massuah | 16. Elon Moreh A |
| 6. Phatza'El | 17. Shomron |
| 7. Tomer | 18. Gilgal |
| 8. Mevo Shiloh | 19. New Massuah |
| 9. Ramonim | 20. Mekhora |
| 10. Ma'al Ephraim | 21. Ariel |
| 11. Gitit | 22. Elon Moreh B |

The Israelis are now trying to consolidate a settlement which they established on Mount Jurzim, which strategically dominates the town of Nablus, and to turn it into a town called Shekam, just as previously, in 1948, they established on the hills overlooking the Arab town of Nazareth, the town of Nasira Elet and near the Arab town of Acre, the town of New Akko, which formed a kind of belt around the Arab town. Similarly, in 1968, they set up the town of Qiryat Arba on the hills overlooking the town of Hebron.

VII. THE TULKARM DISTRICT

In 1948, the Israelis took over more than 90 per cent of the level lands of Tulkarm, which were fertile and planted with lemon and orange trees, and left the inhabitants of the Tulkarm area, who numbered over 150,000, with only the hilly regions and 10 per cent of the level lands. Even so, the Israelis considered the existence of the town and district of Tulkarm as a thorn in their side and something to be got rid of, and, in the 1967 war, even though there were no military forces fighting the Israeli army in Tulkarm or in Qalqiliya, which were situated on the armistice line, it was a part of the Israeli major objective to occupy these two towns and the surrounding Arab villages and to expel their inhabitants. Accordingly, the forces of the Israeli army, as they advanced, blew up and destroyed the houses there. At the same time, over 200 large trucks came, preceded by Israeli army officers in jeeps carrying loud-speakers calling on the inhabitants to save their lives and get in the trucks to be taken to the bridges across the Jordan River and, in the words of these officers to "go to King Hussein in east Jordan". Some departed and some stayed, and the end result was that the Israelis blew up more than 600 Arab houses.

They subsequently took over an area of 1,000 dunums belonging to the Khaduri Agricultural College and established there a factory for the packing of citrus fruits. They then took over 100 dunums in the town of Qalqiliya and established a military centre there and 3,000 dunums in the Qalqiliya area, where they established the settlement of Qarnay-Shomron. They also took over 5,000 dunums in the Jabla area and established there the settlement of Sal'it a colonization centre on an area of 150 dunums in the Nur Shams area to the east of the town of Tulkarm. In 1979, they established the settlement of Qarnay-Shomron to the south of Tulkarm.

They built five Israeli settlements in the Jenin area. These are as follows:

1. Mei'ami A
2. Mei'ami B
3. Terselah
4. Malki Shua
5. Dotan

They then established a settlement centre in the Harish area to the east of the village of Jaba', as well as many zones to which the landowners and inhabitants were forbidden entry. The total area of the Arab lands on the West Bank taken over by the Israelis is more than 1 million dunums.

VIII. THE GAZA STRIP

Although the total land area of the Gaza Strip is no more than 354,000 dunums, only 65 per cent of which is cultivable, and it contains three towns, 15 villages and a refugee camp and has an Arab population of 450,000, the Israelis nevertheless took over 3,000 dunums and established seven Israeli settlements on that land. These settlements are as follows:

- | | |
|---------------|------------------|
| 1. Katif A | 5. Netzarim |
| 2. Katif B | 6. Netzer Hazani |
| 3. Morag | 7. Azoor |
| 4. Kfar Darom | |

The Israelis also took over 115,000 dunums and barred access to them. Also, after blowing up 185 houses in the Gaza Strip, the Israelis established a plant for the packing and waxing of citrus fruit, the Israeli Karli Plant, three banks, the Leumi Bank of Israel, the Discount Bank and the Hapo'elem Bank, and a number of military centres.

In its budget for 1979, the Israeli Government earmarked a half a billion Israeli pounds for the establishment of more Israeli settlements on Arab land on the West Bank, under the supervision of Ariel Sharon, and it was decided to establish 20 Israeli settlements on the West Bank in 1980. The Co-Chairman of the Settlement Department of the Jewish Agency announced that no Israeli official could even think of removing the Jewish settlers from the West Bank and the Gaza Strip. He said further that measures were being taken for the immigration of 58,000 Jewish families from abroad to Palestine and that they would be accommodated in the 45 settlements which it had been decided were to be built during the next five years. In preparation for taking over more Arab territory in the lowlands, the Israelis have dug deep wide ditches, large enough for a car to pass through, between orange and banana plantations on the pretext of security and had prevented the owners of the plantations from irrigating their lands. This will, unquestionably, mean that the plants will wither and die for lack of irrigation, and the Israelis will then take over the lands in order to establish new settlements. In early May 1979, Hamdi Khalaf, Basil Al-Husseini and Al-Haj Khalid Al-Hadmi, acting on behalf of owners of plantations covering an area of 5,000 dunums in the lowlands, submitted a complaint to the Israeli Military Governor and asked permission for them to irrigate their lands, even by pipelines if necessary. The Military Governor has so far not responded to this request. The Israeli authorities have prevented the Arab citizens from digging artesian wells on their lands without a permit, which is very difficult to obtain here. The owners of existing wells are forced, by order of the Military Governor, to install water meters and are allowed to irrigate their plantations only with the amount of their water specified by the Israeli agricultural officer and at specific times. Naturally, the amount allowed is not sufficient to irrigate the plantations properly, and results are therefore inadequate both quantitatively and qualitatively. The owners are suffering great losses. In order to force them to leave their land so that they can take it over, the Israelis often resort to various fraudulent means, including forgery. The Israeli Supreme Court, by its decision on the Israeli Government's confiscation of Arab lands in the village of Bettine in Ramallah on the pretext of security, gave the Israeli Government the legal right to confiscate land if the purpose was security. The Israeli authorities find it very easy to plead reasons of security, and they often confiscate land and claim that the confiscation is for reasons of security, but the land is not returned to its owner, who is offered some compensation for it if he concurs. The Israeli occupation authorities use numerous means to gain control of Arab lands and then establish settlements there, on the well-known Jewish principle of "absentee property", which means the expulsion of the inhabitants and seizure of the land.

Arabs on the West Bank and in the Gaza Strip are not allowed to plant trees on their land unless they have a permit, and such a permit is hard to obtain. The purpose of this is to remove the landowner's confidence and hope that he will remain on his land and plant it with trees that will bear fruit after a number of years, in order to facilitate their seizure of it. They even prevent Arabs from planting even a single tree to replace the tree or trees which have died on their land.

There have been numerous instances of the Israelis causing damage or destruction to Arab water pumps on Arab farms in order to ruin the trees or other crops through lack of irrigation.

The Israeli Government claims that it is establishing the settlements or some of them on land which does not belong to the Arab citizens living in the country. They argue that those lands were the property of the predecessor State and that Israel, as the successor State, automatically owns this land and, by virtue of its ownership, has a right to dispose of this land as it wishes.

I do not want to embark here on a refutation of this argument and demonstrate the legal invalidity of the right which the Israeli Government's claim, but, as a Palestinian Arab landowner and farmer, I shall attempt to dispel some of the deliberate vagueness and obscurity surrounding this issue.

Palestine, like some of the other Arab countries, was formerly ruled by the Turkish State in the name of the Islamic Caliphate. Turkish rule lasted from 1517 to 1917. Under Turkish rule, a landowner was the person who disposed of and cultivated the land, resided, lived and died there and passed it on by inheritance from father to son. The landowner paid the Turkish Government as a land tax 10 per cent of the produce of the land. This tax was known as the tithe.

In 1858, the Turkish Government promulgated the tapu (land registration) law under which all land was to be registered in the name of its owner with the new Department of tapu. The Turkish Government began voluntary registration in Palestine about 1870. The Turkish Government was in decline, and there was no trust between it and the Arab citizens, so that all the lands were not properly registered. The Turkish Government registered with the Department of tapu all the previously unregistered lands whose owners registered them in their names and continued to dispose of them as their property and to pay tithes to the State. With the end of Turkish rule and the beginning of British occupation in the thirties, the British mandate authorities in Palestine began an operation to survey and classify the land of Palestine and to register it in the owner's name, together with demarcation of the boundaries and specification of the area to the last dunum, in preparation for the registration of lands in the owners' names with the Department of Land Registration (tapu). Since this was a project of tremendous proportions and required a great deal of time, the British mandate authorities proceeded to register the land tax in the name of the owner as registered in the land tax records issued by the Survey Department in 1935. This remained the situation up to the end of the British mandate in 1948, while the process of registering the land with the Department of Land Registration proceeded slowly and was never completed.

The registration of land in the name of the Government did definitely not mean that the Government actually owned the land. It was merely a formal measure pending the completion of the legal procedures for registration. No Government utilized as its property any piece of land that was utilized and being cultivated by a farmer. The land registered in the name of the State was intended for the public benefit, such as forests, land, wells, rivers and land donated as waqf by individuals to schools and mosques.

The survey was carried out in many villages, and in some of them parts of the land were registered with the Department of Land Registration. When the British mandate ended, the other villages had still not been surveyed, owing to the complicated nature of such matters because of such factors as division by inheritance and objections before the courts.

I shall show you some documents which substantiate this statement and prove the falsehood of this claim of the Israeli Government, as well as its legal invalidity. They concerned the ownership of the land of an Arab village, my own native village where my property is and from the fruits of whose soil I and my forebears lived for tens of thousands of years, before the birth of the Jewish religion.

In 1948, the Israeli forces occupied 90 per cent of the land of our village of Rommana, which was outside the portion allocated to Israel and the United Nations resolution of 1947 on the partition of Palestine, and in 1967 the Israeli authorities took over the rest of Palestine, including this village.

After the 1967 occupation, the Israelis made an attempt to disguise their aggressionist nature and made an offer of peace to the Arab citizens who were left under their rule after 1967.

In the settlement of Givat Oz, which was built on the lands of our village, the Israeli official in charge proposed to some of the Arab leaders of the area friendly and peaceful coexistence between Arabs and Jews. Before he had gone very far with this proposal, I asked him to tell us about himself. He replied that he had been born in Bulgaria and had immigrated to Palestine in 1952. Then I asked him about the establishment of this settlement, and he replied that the settlement had been established in 1952 and that he had come to live there in 1954. Then I asked him who had planted the olive tree whose branches shaded his house, and he blushed in embarrassment when he was unable to answer. I told him:

"I planted this tree with my own hands. This land is my land. This settlement was built on my land, and you come to us from Bulgaria to usurp our land and drive us from it and then you ask for peace."

At this point he replied angrily:

"You Arabs have got to understand that the wheel of history turns as time passes. The wheel has turned now, and we are coming to Palestine from Bulgaria and the other European States and from the Arab States, such as Egypt, Iraq, Morocco, Syria and Yemen. All you have to do is to turn with this wheel and go to Iraq, Syria or any Arab country you like. They are not far away from us, and then there would be coexistence in friendship, security and peace between the Arab people and the Jewish people. That would be real peace."

I then replied:

"is this peace or destruction, dispersal and aggression."

Then all withdrew from the settlement.

Only a few days later I was in an Israeli prison on trumped-up security charges. I spent 13 months in prison, and then they sent me away from my village, where I myself had seen these immigrants establishing two settlements and exploiting the fruits of the land.

Then Moshe Dayan, currently the Minister for Foreign Affairs of Israel, said in a speech which he gave in 1948 at the Tekhnion Institute in Haifa:

"Politically there is no more Palestine. It existed before 1948, but now it does not exist and we are here in Israel."

Joshua Hoben Forat said:

"The primary fact is that there can be no zionism without settlement and no Jewish State without the expulsion of the Arabs and the confiscation and fencing off of the land."

Again, Menachem Begin denies in principle the very existence of the Palestinian Arab people, when he states that these people are now inhabitants in the sense of having administrative self-rule under Israeli sovereignty in Judea and Samaria. That is merely a preparatory step for their expulsion from the land in order to attain Israeli's openly declared goals.

Prisons and prisoners

Statistics compiled since the Israeli occupation in 1967 and up to the beginning of 1979 indicate that the average number of Arab prisoners and detainees incarcerated by the Israeli occupation authorities has on no occasion dropped below 4,000 persons. This figure has sometimes been as high as 5,000 or 6,000 on the occasion of Arab demonstrations against the occupation or of Palestinian guerrilla operations in certain parts of the country. These prisoners are incarcerated under inhuman and extremely unhealthy conditions in approximately 50 prisons dispersed throughout the country. Some of these detention centres are set aside for hideous torture while others are intended for prisoners serving life terms, sentences of 5-15 years or terms of less than 5 years while others are camps established by the Israelis in the southern desert for prisoners sentenced to hard labour.

These Arab victims are subjected by the Israeli authorities to the most atrocious kinds of torture and intimidation such as:

1. Painful beating on the body with sticks and hard instruments.
2. Beating and damaging the genital organs of both men and women and injecting them with hot pepper.

3. Hanging prisoners upside down by their feet. This type of torture is known as "the nightmare".
4. Applying electric shocks to the bodies of detainees.
5. Pulling out nails with pincers.
6. Breaking teeth.
7. Filling the mouth with salt.
8. Unleashing trained police dogs to bite prisoners.
9. Attempting to force detainees to practise pederasty with their colleagues in detention. If they refuse or are unable to do this, they are forced to beat their colleagues violently with sticks.
10. Bringing the wife, sister or mother of the prisoner to the detention centre and threatening to abuse them sexually if the prisoner does not make the required concession.
11. Tying the prisoner's hands behind his back, blindfolding him and placing him in a cell for a number of days during which he is burnt with cigarette stubs on various parts of his body.

In many cases, detainees and convicted persons have been afflicted with chronic illnesses, blindness, paralysis or deafness. In some cases the bones of their hands or feet have been broken and in others, the victims have been left unconscious and finally died. Detainees and convicted persons in these prisons are kept in disgustingly overcrowded conditions in cells 150 centimetres long, 80 centimetres wide and 2 metres high. There are now 400-500 prisoners in the Maskubiya Prison in Jerusalem which was originally intended to accommodate 150-250 detainees. Between 600-700 prisoners are crowded into the Nablus prison which was intended to accommodate 200 persons and cell block No. 6 of this prison, which was intended for 20 prisoners, is now crowded with 110 prisoners. The Ramle Central Prison, which was intended to hold 500 prisoners, now contains 2,000-2,500 prisoners. The Kfar Yona Prison, intended to hold 75 prisoners, now contains 200-250 prisoners. The Ashkelon Prison, intended to hold 300 prisoners, is now crowded with 500-700 prisoners. The Shatta Prison, intended to hold 150 prisoners, now contains 400-500 prisoners and the temperature in the region in which this prison is located (the Beisan Valley) reaches 40° C in the summer. The Beer-Sheba Prison, which was built by the Israelis after the year 1967 to accommodate 500 prisoners, is now crowded with 700-1,000 prisoners.

The same is true of the prisons at Damoun, Nabi Salih, Maasiyahu, Jalama, Tell Mond, Neve Tirza, Hebron, Ramallah, Jenin, Tulkarm, Bethlehem, Jericho, Acre, Zikhrom Ya'aqov, Hadera, Jaffa, Tel Aviv, Khan Yunis, Rosh Beit, Al Bassa, Safed, Afula, Nazareth, Shaimesh, Nahalal, Nahariya, Majdu, Karkur and the camps at Umm Kilab, Amer and Al Buyuk.

The method in which administrative detainees are held in custody indicates a lack of any legal, procedural or human element of restraint in Israel where the inhabitants can be arrested in their homes or places of work or even on the street without having committed any crime. They are then subjected to the most hideous forms of torture and thrown into Israeli prison cells for months and even years without being indicted or brought to trial on any charge. In some cases, people have even been deported from the country.

Such deportation of the inhabitants is a device used by Israel for the purpose of removing the owners of land, which can then be expropriated. The educated elite, consisting of persons such as physicians, engineers and skilled technicians, is also being expelled in order to sabotage the Arab economy on the West Bank and the Gaza Strip whose inhabitants would, consequently, be obliged to emigrate in order to earn a living. The Arab inhabitants living under this tyrannical occupation are forced to sell their land and emigrate for fear that they may be expelled and lose their land without compensation.

Over 2,000 of the Arab population were expelled from the occupied territories between 1967-1979.

There are no limits to Israel's violation of every international law and convention and of the principles of social justice and human conduct. Even houses of worship and holy places have not escaped their evil attacks. On the eve of Easter Sunday, 25 April 1970, Israeli police officers occupied the Orthodox Coptic Patriarchate and its churches in the Coptic Monastery.

In October of 1970, the Israelis attempted, through the medium of the Himafuta Company, to fraudulently seize the French Convent of Notre Dame in Jerusalem from the French Catholic Monastic Order in New York through the American Zionist Samuel Conran, which forced His Holiness the Pope to personally intervene and delegate Archbishop Hanna Kaldani to make representations on his behalf to the courts in Jerusalem in order to protect the convent from Zionist treachery and spoilation.

The Israeli occupation authorities also seized building land belonging to the Greek Orthodox Patriarchate in the neighbourhood of the King David Hotel in Jerusalem.

On 24 March 1971 some Israeli youths pretending to be tourists entered the Church of the Holy Sepulchre in which they smashed the oil lamps and candles placed on the Holy Sepulchre which they trampled under foot. The monks in the church, who had also been attacked, were able to capture one of the intruders whom they handed over to the Israeli police. The latter subsequently announced that he was an American Jew and no more was said about this crime.

The Israeli police are occupying the Magharba Gate which provides access through the wall to the Noble Sanctuary (al Haram Al Sharif) in Jerusalem and have been maintaining a permanent police checkpoint at this Gate since 1967.

Young Israelis of both sexes have on several occasions entered the court of the Holy Al-Aqsa Mosque in Jerusalem where they have danced, sung, chanted, indulged in wild and indecent behaviour and attacked Muslim worshippers. They have behaved in a similar manner in the Noble Sanctuary of Abraham in the town of Hebron, the greater part of which was taken over by the Israelis and converted into a Jewish synagogue.

On 21 August 1969, a black day in human history, the Israeli authorities set fire to the Holy Al-Aqsa Mosque and attempted to prevent the Arab population and the Arab municipal fire engines, which had hurried to the scene, from carrying out their duty of extinguishing the fire in the mosque. This attempted obstruction was, however, thwarted by the Arab population. Christian clergymen rushed past the Israeli police forces into the Al-Aqsa Mosque crying and shouting "the houses of God are being burnt" and Muslims and Christians alike followed their example and rushed forward to extinguish the Israeli fire which was consuming the dome of the Holy Al-Aqsa Mosque. Israel claimed that the fire had been caused by an electrical short circuit but reports by Arab engineers clearly showed that the fire had been set by criminal hands. This compelled the Israeli Government to claim that a 28-year-old Australian called Dennis Michael William Mohan, who had entered Israel four months before the date of the fire, had actually committed the crime, had been arrested and would be put on trial. Shortly after, Israel announced that he had been released on grounds of insanity.

The Palestine Archaeological Museum in Jerusalem was seized on the first day of the Israeli occupation of the city in 1967 and, in violation of articles 17 and 18 of The Hague Convention, the rarest and most valuable items in this museum, including the Dead Sea scrolls and the Lachish letters were transferred by the Israeli authorities to their own museums. These authorities also seized the Temple scroll from Mr. Kando's house in Bethlehem.

The archaeological excavations are no less serious than other Israeli aggressive actions. Since 1968 and in spite of the successive resolutions adopted by international bodies, the Israeli authorities have been continuing their excavations on the pretext of searching for traces of Solomon's Temple. These excavations were begun in 1967 under the houses of the Arab population, under mosques and schools and under the Noble Sanctuary. Beneath this sanctuary the Israeli authorities dug a long and deep tunnel in which they placed a copy of the Torah and established a Jewish synagogue. In a ceremony marking the inauguration of this synagogue, the Chief Rabbi made a speech in which he declared that, "Today we celebrate the inauguration of the synagogue which we have temporarily established under the Sanctuary. Tomorrow we will celebrate the destruction of this sanctuary, the establishment of our greater synagogue and the reconstruction of our temple on its site, which is our land, and none of these Arab aliens will remain in our country."

As a result of the excavations, cracks appeared in the walls of many residential houses, mosques, Islamic chapels and schools on which the Israeli police placed signs forbidding the passage of pedestrians and ordering the evacuation of the inmates on the pretext of protecting them from the danger of

the collapse of these structures. Shortly thereafter, Israeli engineers prepared reports justifying the need to demolish these crumbling establishments in order to ensure the safety of the population. Following their demolition, Israeli residential buildings were constructed to house Israeli immigrants and the dispossessed Arabs were driven away to join the long procession of their homeless, tormented brothers in search of justice.

The total number of Arab residential houses blown up by the Israelis during the period 1967-1979 amounts to 2,875, distributed as follows:

Number of houses

350	District of Jerusalem, Bethlehem and Jericho
1,175	District of Ramallah
405	District of Hebron
115	District of Nablus
530	District of Tulkarm
50	District of Jenin
<u>250</u>	District of Gaza
2,875	Total

Even education has not escaped from their malevolence since they have changed the educational curricula which was being followed before their occupation in order to make the teaching syllabuses more consistent with their aims and desires. They have forbidden the teaching of the Koranic verses urging holy war in defence of religion and the homeland. Despite all the modern advances made in the field of health care throughout the world, in this respect the situation in the West Bank and Gaza Strip is deteriorating and the total lack of health care might almost be preferable to the present deplorable facilities.

At a seminar held in New York in 1978, Professor Israel Shahak, Professor of Chemistry at the Hebrew University in Israel and Chairman of the Human Rights Committee, made the following comments on the treatment by the Israeli Government of the Arab population suffering under its occupation:

1. An Arab citizen does not have the right to join a kibbutz and a young Israeli woman was expelled from such a settlement since she wanted to marry an Arab.
2. Thousands of Arabs work inside Israel in Israeli factories, projects and other institutions which desperately need this source of manpower. However, the Israeli authorities forbid these workers to spend the night in Israel and, therefore, they must travel to the West Bank and Gaza Strip in the evening, returning the

following morning. Many of the workers are unable to make this trip twice a day and are thus compelled to sleep in Israel. In the evening, the police forces can be seen driving those people to the police stations where they are all beaten by police officers wielding sticks. Many Israeli citizens living close to police stations have thus been obliged to complain to the Chief of Police that they are unable to sleep at night due to the screams of Arab workers being tortured and beaten in the police stations.

3. In March 1978 the Israeli police arrested 200 Arab students in schools in Ramallah and Al Bireh from whence they were herded into a police station. Professor Shahak said that, when he happened to pass by the police station and observed this distressing scene, an Israeli police officer approached him and said "This is the rough way we treat those who do not like us", to which the professor replied "No, this is the rough way you treat those that you do not like".

The professor could hardly believe that this incident had taken place in Israel and on the West Bank in the year 1978 and not in Tzarist Russia in 1884 when the Jews were being subjected to torture merely because they were Jews. However, Arab students were being subjected to torture here merely because they were Arabs. A society which tolerates such acts will meet a worse fate than the Palestinians are presently enduring at the hands of the Israelis.

These are the true facts of our situation and this is what we are enduring as a result of the destruction, pillage, robbery and murder brought about by the sinister designs of the Israelis and their crimes against our people. They are launching criminal attacks upon us with the most modern products of the American military machine, including destructive weapons which have been forbidden by international law. Menahem Begin, their Prime Minister, is not ashamed to announce that he will track down, pursue and kill the Palestinian people wherever they are and wherever he can in the name of the Palestine Liberation Organization.

Our people now number four million persons of which the overwhelming majority are highly educated and only want to return to their homeland and live as free men in the same way as the other peoples of the free world. We are a hard working, constructive and not destructive, people and have helped to develop this and other regions. We should not be deprived of the right to self-determination and to a free, independent and sovereign life in our homeland.

In submitting this factual information for your consideration, we call upon the international community, through you, to shoulder its responsibilities by promptly halting the Zionist invasion, pillage and exploitation of our land and putting an end to their occupation of Palestinian and Arab lands. In so doing, we will be serving the cause of peace based on justice in the Middle East and in the world as a whole.

Thanking you,

(Signed) Najib AL-AHMAD
Political Department of the
Palestine Liberation Organization

27 May 1979

/...

APPENDIX

Israeli settlements on the West Bank in the period 1967-May 1979

No.	Name of settlement	Location	Area (in dunums)	Date of establishment	Type and affiliation
1	Mehola	On the land of Bardala	7 000	1967	Agricultural moshav containing installations belonging to Hapo'el Hamizrahi
2	Almog (kalia)	On the northern shore of the Dead Sea	18 000	1967	Agricultural Kibbutz belonging to the Union of Kibbutz Movements Agriculture and Fishing
3	Kfar Etzion	Between Bethlehem and Hebron	1 000	1967	Agricultural kibbutz belonging to the religious kibbutzim
4	Argaman	Near the Damya Bridge in the Central Jordan Valley	5 000	1968	Agricultural moshav belonging to Herut
5	Phatza'El	Fazayil area in the Central Jordan Valley	4 000	1968	Agricultural moshav belonging to the Moshav Movement
6	Qiryat-Arba	Near the town of Hebron	1 000	1968	Industrial belonging to Hapo'el Hamizrahi
7	Rosh Tzurim	Between Bethlehem and Hebron	2 000	1969	Agricultural kibbutz belonging to the religious kibbutzim
8	Mevo Horon	On the lands of Beit Nuba	10 000	1969	Agricultural kibbutz belonging to Agudath Israel
9	Yitav	On the lands of Al-Awja north of Jericho	2 700	1970	Agricultural kibbutz belonging to the Union of Kibbutz Movements
10	Gilgal	Central Jordan Valley north of Jericho	3 300	1970	Agricultural and Fishing kibbutz belonging to the Union of Kibbutz Movements

/...

No.	Name of settlement	Location	Area (in dunums)	Date of establishment	Type and affiliation
11	Mitzpe Shalem	Between Kalia and Ain Hadi	200	1970	Agricultural kibbutz belonging to the Union of Kibbutz Movements
12	Massvah	The Jiftlik Bridge in the Central Jordan Valley	5 000	1970	Agricultural and fishing moshav belonging to the Workers of Zion
13	Atrot	On the lands of Qalandiya north of Jerusalem	10 000	1970	Industrial
14	Hamra	On the lands of Beit Dajan east of Nablus	5 000	1971	Agricultural and poultry raising moshav belonging to the Agricultural Union
15	Alon Shvot	Between Bethlehem and Hebron	1 000	1971	Municipal service centre and religious school belonging to Hapo'el Hamizrahi
16	Mekhora	On the lands of Beit Dajan east of Nablus	1 500	1971	Agricultural moshav belonging to the Agricultural Union
17	Ma'al Ephraim	On the lands of the village of Aqraba east of Nablus	2 000	1971	Regional centre belonging to the Moshav Movement
18	Bega'ot	On the lands of the village of Al-Buqaiya east of Nablus	2 000	1972	Agricultural moshav belonging to the Agricultural Union
19	Gitit	On the lands of Aqraba east of Nablus	5 000	1972	Agricultural moshav belonging to the Agricultural Union Herut
20	Neve Ya'acov	Near Beit Hanina	4 000	1973	Industrial
21	Talpiot	South-east of Jerusalem	10 000	1973	Residential

No.	Name of settlement	Location	Area (in dunums)	Date of establishment	Type and affiliation
22	Gilo	Between Jerusalem and Beit Jala	4 000	1973	Residential
23	Ramot	On the lands of Nabi Samwil north of Jerusalem	10 000	1973	Residential
24	Ma'alouf Defna	East of Jerusalem	270	1973	Residential
25	Sanhedria	North-east of Jerusalem	500	1973	Residential
26	Ro'I	Central Jordan Valley south of Mehola	800	1974	Agricultural nahal
27	Ma'ale Adomim	Between Jerusalem and Jericho	70 000	1974	Large industrial belonging to the Emunim bloc
28	Elazar	Between Hebron and Bethlehem	1 000	1975	Industrial moshav belonging to Hapo'el Hamizrahi
29	Takoah	Between Hebron and Bethlehem	3 000	1975	Agricultural kibbutz belonging to Hapo'el Hamizrahi
30	Ofra	North-east of Ramallah	350	1975	Agricultural belonging to the Emonim bloc
31	Kochav Hashahar	On the lands of Deir Jatir and Kafr Malik/Ramallah	4 000	1975	
32	Magshimim	Near Almog on the Dead Sea	5 000	1976	Agricultural kibbutz belonging to the Union of Kibbutz Movements
33	Netiv Hagdud	Central Jordan Valley	3 000	1976	Agricultural moshav belonging to the Moshav Movement

No.	Name of settlement	Location	Area (in dunums)	Date of establishment	Type and affiliation
34	Mevo Shiloh	On the lands of the village of Duma/Nablus	500	1976	Settlement centre
35	Elon Moreh (Qaddum)	On the lands of Kafr Qaddum/Nablus	500	1976	Settlement centre belonging to the Emonim bloc
36	Maliki Shua	On the lands of Faqou'a/Jenin	1 000	1976	Settlement centre belonging to Hapo'el Hamizrahi
37	Mei'ami (A) Reyhan	On the lands of Umm Reyhan/Ya'bad	5 000	1977	Agricultural kibbutz belonging to the national kibbutzim
38	Mei'ami (B) Reyhan	On the lands of Umm Reyhan/Ya'bad	3 000	1977	Moshav belonging to the Workers of Zion
39	Migdal Oz	Between Hebron and Bethlehem	1 500	1977	Moshav belonging to Hapo'el Hamizrahi
40	Yattir	South of Hebron	100	1977	Settlement centre belonging to the Emonim bloc
41	Kfar Ruth	On the lands of Latrun	5 000	1977	Moshav belonging to the agricultural Moshav Movement
42	Ba'ir Tel	On the lands of Latrun and Imwas	5 500	1977	Moshav belonging to the Moshav Movement
43	Shayelet	On the lands of Latrun, Imwas and Yalu	8 000	1977	Moshav belonging to the Workers of Zion Movement
44	Fadeem	On the lands of Mes'ha west of Nablus	1 000	1977	Belonging to the Emonim bloc
45	Ramonim	North of Jericho	300	1977	Moshav belonging to the Workers of Zion

No.	Name of settlement	Location	Area (in dunums)	Date of establishment	Type and affiliation
46	Shomron	On the lands of Deir Sharaf/Nablus	500	1977	Settlement centre belonging to Gosh Emonim
47	Efrat	North of Hebron Etzion bloc	1 000	1977	Agricultural
48	Hamuzit	South of Bethlehem	1 000	1977	Settlement centre
49	Kadesh Badtigh	Central Jordan Valley north of Jericho	2 000	1977	Agricultural moshav
50	Moudi'im	On the lands of Yalu and Imwas	10 000	1977	To convert them into a town with neighbouring settlements
51	Qaryat Mikabin	On the lands of Yalu and Imwas	5 000	1977	Agricultural
52	Rafet	On the lands of the village of Rafat/Ramallah	10 000	1977	Agricultural
53	Na'aran	Central Jordan Valley	1 000	1970	Agricultural
54	Ariel	On the lands of Salfit and Sikaka/ Nablus		1979	
55	Bedulam	On the lands of Beit Umar/Hebron	1 000	1977	Agricultural
56	Our	On the lands of the village of Our/Ramallah	2 000	1977	Agricultural
57	Tomer	North of Jericho	1 000	1977	Agricultural moshav belonging to the Moshav Movement
58	Sal'it	Between Tulkarm and Qalgiliya	2 000	1978	Agricultural belonging to Herut

No.	Name of settlement	Location	Area (in dunums)	Date of establishment	Type and affiliation
59	Shiloh	West of Ramallah	1 500	1978	Agricultural belonging to Emonim bloc
60	Batoah	On the lands of Yasuf south of Nablus	1 000	1978	Settlement centre
61	Terseleh	North of Sailat Dhahr	500	1978	Settlement centre belonging to Gosh Emonim
62	Ghires	On the lands of the village of Haris/ Nablus	300	1978	Settlements centre belonging to Gosh Emonim
63	Beit Horon	On the lands of Our Al-Favqa/ Ramallah	500	1978	Settlement centre belonging to Gosh Emonim
64	Giv'on	On the lands of El-Jib/Ramallah	300	1978	Settlement centre belonging to Gosh Emonim
65	Qarnay-Shamron (A)	East of Qalqiliya	200	1978	Settlement centre belonging to Gosh Emonim
66	Mitzpeh	West of Jericho	2 000	1978	Industrial belonging to Gosh Emonim
67	Beit Rael	On the lands of the village of Bettin/Ramallah	500	1978	Settlement centre belonging to Gosh Emonim
68	Neve Zuf	On the lands of Nabi Saleh	500	1978	Settlement centre belonging to Gosh Emonim
69	Dotan	On the lands of Qibatiya/Jenin	500	1978	Settlement centre
70	New Massvah	Central Jordan Valley	1 000	1978	Agricultural
71	Ma'ale Adomim (B)	Al Khan Al Ahmar		1979	

No.	Name of settlement	Location	Area (in dunums)	Date of establishment	Type and affiliation
72	Elon Moreh (B)	On the lands of Hawwara and Al Rahib/Nablus		1979	
73	Qarnay- Shomron (B)	Between Qalqiliya and Tulkarm		1979	

ISRAELI SETTLEMENTS IN THE GAZA STRIP FROM 1967 TO MAY 1979

No.	Name	Location	Area in dunums	Date of establishment	Type and affiliation
1	Kfar Darom	Near Deir El Balah	400	1967	Agricultural nahal belonging to Hapo'el Hamizrahi
2	Azoor	Near Beit Hanun	800	1969	Industrial Union of Kibbutz Movements
3	Netzer Hazani	Near Deir El Balah	300	1970	Agricultural moshav. Moshav Movement
4	Netzarim	District of Nuseitat between Gaza and Deir El Balah	700	1972	Agricultural. Belonging to the religious kibbutzim.
5	Morag	District of Umm Kilab between Rafah and Khan Yunis	200	1972	Agricultural. Belonging to the Union of Kibbutz Movements.
6	Katif A	Between Rafah and Khan Yunis	400	1977	Agricultural. Belonging to Hapo'el Hamizrahi
7	Katif B	Between Rafah and Khan Yunis	150	1978	Agricultural. Belonging to Hapo'el Hamizrahi

RESIDENTIAL QUARTERS ESTABLISHED BY THE ISRAELIS ON ARAB LANDS IN JERUSALEM
AFTER 1967

NAME	AREA IN DUNUMS	DATE OF ESTABLISHMENT
Eshkol Quarter	600	1969
Jewish Quarter	126	1969
French Hill	1 500	1969
Hebrew University and Hadassah	200	1977
Gilo Quarter	300	1977
The Citadel Quarters	12 000	1975

List of the names of owners and the area of Palestinian Arab lands taken over by the Israeli authorities in the village of Majdal Beni Fadal in the district of Nablus on the West Bank for the establishment of an Israeli settlement consisting of 320 residential units containing around 1,000 residential rooms and appurtenances.

No.	Name	Area in dunums
1	Asaad Salim Mansour	50
2	Salim Ahmad Salim	20
3	Salama Ahmad Salim	15
4	Abdul Aziz Muhammad Yussuf	20
5	Abdul Fattah Hussein	20
6	Muhammad Hamid Hamdan	35
7	Ridha Muhammad Abd Khateeb	50
8	Ahmad Al Haj Asaad Khateeb	30
9	Salih Musa Yahya	35
10	Fakhri Abdul Hameed Abdul Majeed	20 (Hameed)
11	Mustafa Auda Ismail	15
12	Ismail Auda Ismail	15
13	Ibrahim Auda Ismail	17
14	Mustafa Abdul Haleem Mustafa	40 (Haleem)
15	Ahmad Abdul Haleem	20
16	Muhammad Abdul Hameed Yussuf	30
17	Sulaiman Abdul Hameed Yussuf	25
18	Abdullah Abdul Haleem Mustafa	20
19	Abdul Majeed Abdul Hameed	15
20	Mashhoor Muhammad Abu Muslih	25
21	Mustafa Ahmad Abu Muslih	20
22	Salih Abdul Rahman Abu Muslih	10
23	Abdul Rahman Muhammad Abu Muslih	5
24	Muhammad Ahmad Hussein	15
25	Shawkat Abdul Rahman Al Jabr	12
26	Salih Ahmad Salih	10
27	Mahmoud Ahmad Salih	25
28	Qasim Muhammad Qasim	15

/...

No.	Name	Area in dunums
29	Muhammad Qasim Jawhar	10
30	Nawfal Muhammad Nawfal	15
31	Hussein Zahir Khalifa	10
32	Abdul Rahman Muhammad Khudheir	30
33	Hussein Muhammad Khudheir	20
34	Muhammad Khudheir Muhammad	15
35	Faiz Hasan Muhammad	20
36	Muhammad Hamdan Muhammad	15
37	Ibrahim Abdul Rahman Shahadeh	20
38	Sulaiman Asmar Rizk	18
39	Sulaiman Asmar Rizk	20
40	Mustafa Ahmad Samtin	15
41	Ahmad Mahmoud Saadeh	10
42	Ismail Abdul Aziz Mahmoud	15
43	Hussein Hifzi	10
44	Abdul Rahman Abdul Rahman	20
45	Yussuf Salim Saadud	15
46	Muhammad Salim Saadud	15
47	Muhammad Salih Rabbah	10
48	Abdullah Eid Muhsin	20
49	Muheisin Salman	25
50	Abdu Muhsin Ubaid	15
51	Salih Muhammad Muhsin	20
52	Sulaiman Muhammad Muhsin	25
53	Muhammad Yussuf Salaous	50
54	Zaal Yussuf Salaous	10
55	Mustafa Musa Salous	15
56	Hasan Yunus Hasan	10
57	Sulaiman Muhammad Hammad	12
58	Yussuf Saadeh Yussuf	10

1,164 dunums

/...

The total area of the lands taken over by the Israeli authorities for the establishment of a settlement comprising 320 residential units consisting of three rooms (cement, with appurtenances). This land belongs to the inhabitants of the village of Majdal Beni Fadal in the district of Nablus. These agricultural lands, situated near Fasayel and known as the area of Ruweiha and Masateeh, are registered in the names of their owners in the cadastral survey.



UNITED NATIONS
GENERAL
ASSEMBLY



Distr.
GENERAL

A/34/536/Corr.1
7 November 1979
ENGLISH, FRENCH, RUSSIAN
AND SPANISH ONLY

Thirty-fourth session
Agenda item 65

HUMAN SETTLEMENTS

Living conditions of the Palestinian people
in the occupied territories

Report of the Secretary-General

Corrigendum

Annex II, page 2, section II, second paragraph, line 6

For 1,000 Arabs read 100,000 Arabs



UNITED NATIONS
GENERAL
ASSEMBLY



Distr.
GENERAL

A/35/533+ Corr.1
17 October 1980

ORIGINAL: ENGLISH

Thirty-fifth session
Agenda item 61 (e)

DEVELOPMENT AND INTERNATIONAL ECONOMIC CO-OPERATION

Living conditions of the Palestinian people
in the occupied Arab territories

Report of the Secretary-General

1. In its resolution 34/113 of 14 December 1979, the General Assembly requested the Secretary-General, in collaboration with the relevant United Nations organs and specialized agencies, particularly the United Nations Relief and Works Agency for Palestine Refugees in the Near East (UNRWA), the Economic Commission for Western Asia (ECWA) and the Special Committee to Investigate Israeli Practices Affecting the Human Rights of the Population of the Occupied Territories, to prepare and submit to the Assembly at its thirty-fifth session a comprehensive and analytical report on the social and economic impact of the Israeli occupation on the living conditions of the Palestinian people in the occupied Arab territories.
2. The resolution had basically the same scope as General Assembly resolutions 31/110 of 16 December 1976, 32/171 of 19 December 1977 and 33/110 of 18 December 1978 on the same subject. Pursuant to resolution 31/110, the Secretary-General submitted a report (A/32/228) to the Assembly at its thirty-second session; pursuant to resolution 32/171, he submitted a second report (A/33/354) to the Assembly at its thirty-third session; and pursuant to resolution 33/110, he submitted a further report (A/34/536 and Corr.1) to the Assembly at its thirty-fourth session.
3. In submitting the above reports, the representatives of the Secretary-General explained that, because the Secretary-General had no independent sources of information, the reports had, of necessity, to consist of replies and pertinent excerpts from documentary material submitted by the Governments of Egypt, Israel, Jordan and the Syrian Arab Republic, as well as by the Palestine Liberation Organization and the relevant United Nations organs and specialized agencies, in response to the Secretary-General's request for information on the subject-matter of the report.
4. At the thirty-fourth session, after considering the Secretary-General's report

(A/34/536 and Corr.1), the General Assembly in paragraph 1 of its resolution 34/113 expressed the view that although the report contained many relevant facts, it was not sufficiently analytical. Accordingly, in paragraph 2 of the same resolution, the Assembly requested the Secretary-General, inter alia, to prepare and submit to the Assembly at its thirty-fifth session the comprehensive and analytical report on the social and economic impact of living conditions of the Palestinian people referred to in paragraph 1 above. All States were urged to co-operate with the Secretary-General in the preparation of the report.

5. So as to enable the Secretary-General to prepare and submit to the thirty-fifth session of the General Assembly the required "comprehensive and analytical report", and in an effort to ensure a balanced and objective expert view, the Secretary-General used the services of three experts. Their names and a description of their backgrounds are given in annex II below.

6. The experts were to prepare the report on the basis of material available from the United Nations and its subsidiary bodies and from the specialized agencies, and other published and unpublished literature pertaining to the subject. They were also to gather information through visits to Egypt, Jordan and the Syrian Arab Republic and the occupied territories and through discussions with government officials and others, as well as with representatives of the Palestine Liberation Organization.

7. As permission to visit the occupied territories had not been granted by the Government of Israel, the experts, in preparing their report, had to rely on secondary sources of information, particularly the reports of missions of the International Labour Organisation (ILO), the United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization (UNESCO) and the World Health Organization (WHO) that had visited the territories, reports published by the Palestine Liberation Organization, a report furnished by the Government of Israel and, as suggested by that Government in its note verbale dated 18 March 1980, "... information published by journalists, scholars, scientists, clergymen and tourists who have visited the territories". Relevant information was also received from the Governments of Egypt, Jordan and the Syrian Arab Republic.

8. The question of the living conditions of the Palestinian people has been a matter of concern in many intergovernmental bodies and subsidiary organs of the United Nations, for example, the Committee on the Exercise of the Inalienable Rights of the Palestinian People, the Commission on Human Rights, the Special Committee to Investigate Israeli Practices Affecting the Human Rights of the Population of the Occupied Territories and the Security Council, to mention some. Because of the considerable volume of material available in the United Nations, as well as other published material in books, periodicals, journals and the press, it was agreed that one expert would remain in New York to carry out the extensive research required and the other two experts would go on mission to gather information from United Nations organs and the specialized agencies in Europe and the Middle East and would visit Egypt, Jordan, the Syrian Arab Republic and the headquarters and units of the Palestinian Liberation Organization at Damascus and Beirut.

9. The two experts left on mission early in April 1980. They visited the headquarters of UNESCO in Paris and of the ILO and WHO at Geneva. In Egypt, Jordan and the Syrian Arab Republic, they held discussions with senior government officials dealing with matters related to the occupied territories, with Palestinian refugees living in those countries, with persons deported from the occupied territories and with residents of the occupied territories visiting those countries, as well as with recent visitors to the occupied territories. They also held discussions with United Nations officials stationed in those countries. The experts visited various academic and research institutions in the three countries in order to collect from them and from government sources as much data and published material as possible pertaining to conditions in the occupied territories and in the three countries visited.

10. In Lebanon, the experts visited and had extensive discussions with officials from ECWA, UNRWA and UNESCO, as well as with several departments and leaders of the Palestine Liberation Organization and the Institute of Palestine Studies. On the way back, they visited UNRWA headquarters at Vienna, and at Geneva they held extensive discussions with the office of the Special Committee to Investigate Israeli Practices Affecting the Human Rights of the Population of the Occupied Territories.

11. The two experts returned to United Nations Headquarters in mid-May 1980 to draft the report with the expert who had remained in New York. The principal documents consulted are listed in annex III below.

12. The report prepared by the experts is reproduced as annex I below.

ANNEX I

Report of the Group of Experts on the Social and Economic Impact
 of the Israeli Occupation on the Living Conditions of the
 Palestinian People in the Occupied Arab Territories

CONTENTS

	<u>Paragraphs</u>	<u>Page</u>
I. INTRODUCTION	1 - 3	3
II. BRIEF SUMMARY OF FINDINGS	4 - 67	4
A. Demographic characteristics	15	6
B. Political and administrative framework	16 - 21	7
C. Economic framework	22 - 37	9
D. Agriculture and industry in the context of human settlements growth and development	38 - 45	14
E. Macro-economic indicators	46 - 47	16
F. The social framework	48 - 51	17
G. Employment, income and consumption	52 - 67	18
III. THE HUMAN SETTLEMENT SYSTEM IN THE OCCUPIED TERRITORIES	68 - 119	24
A. The pattern of human settlements	68 - 72	24
B. Housing and infrastructure	73 - 81	25
C. Impact of Jewish settlements	82 - 89	27
D. Health services	90 - 103	29
E. Educational services	104 - 115	33
F. Social welfare services	116 - 119	36

Appendices

I. Balance of trade in the occupied territories	38
II. Extraordinary budgets of towns in the West Bank and the Gaza Strip	39
III. Water consumption in Israel	40
IV. Agricultural production in the West Bank	41
V. Buildings completed and begun during the period 1973-1977	43

/...

CONTENTS (continued)

	<u>Page</u>
VI. Resources and income, West Bank	44
VII. Workers from the occupied territories employed in the territories and in Israel, by occupation, 1972 and 1978	45
VIII. Average daily wage of workers	46
IX. Consumer price index	48
X. Housing statistics	49

I. INTRODUCTION

1. The previous report, submitted to the General Assembly at its thirty-fourth session (A/34/536 and Corr.1), contained information on population and housing, health, natural resources - land and water, employment and conditions of school buildings. During the consideration of that report in the Second Committee, observations were made on various points, including the need for more details on the living conditions of the people in the occupied territories and further analysis of those conditions.

2. The experts have interpreted the request to the Secretary-General in resolution 34/113 for a comprehensive and analytical report to mean the consideration of a broader range of conditions in the occupied territories, which determine the quality of life of the Arab population in the towns and villages of the occupied territories. Section II of this report, summarizing the findings of the Group of Experts therefore relates to some of these conditions, particularly the pattern of trade and investment, which often determines the road and communications networks among the settlements and the economic, social and physical infrastructure that binds them together. Land and water are important determinants of the location of human settlements, while the agricultural and industrial activities often provide the stimulus for the growth and development of human settlements and hierarchical interconnexions among them. The composition of the population, its social characteristics and employment pattern, provide the dynamics of improved living conditions in terms of consumption of goods and services and satisfaction of human needs in the context of human settlements. Section III of the report examines in more detail the human settlements system in the occupied territories, including conditions of housing and infrastructure, impact of the new Jewish settlements, and health, educational and social welfare services in the framework of human settlements.

3. Following the June 1967 war, Israel occupied the following territories: the West Bank of the River Jordan, including East Jerusalem; the Gaza Strip; the Sinai; and the Golan Heights. Most of the literature and economic and social data available refer to the Gaza Strip and Northern Sinai, and the West Bank excluding East Jerusalem. 1/ Consequently, this report is largely confined to the above two areas. The data given in the appendices are not complete, because they do not include East Jerusalem.

1/ Wherever the West Bank is referred to in the report, it excludes East Jerusalem. Regarding Northern Sinai see foot-note 3/.

II. BRIEF SUMMARY OF FINDINGS

4. In the broad context of the recommendations for national action contained in the report of Habitat: United Nations Conference on Human Settlements, held at Vancouver in 1976, 2/ it would appear that:

(a) There is no human settlements policy that has been adopted for the occupied territories to ensure a rational distribution of the Palestinian people based on social and economic considerations; rather, any policy that does exist for settlements in the territories is confined to the new Jewish settlements that are being established;

(b) The absence of a policy for the development of human settlements in the occupied territories is a consequence of the lack of an over-all economic and social development policy and planning for the occupied territories, which could ensure an equitable allocation of conventional resources to the improvement of human settlements;

(c) The insecurity that pervades the issue of land ownership and tenure, both private and communal, has been a deterrent to the improvement of the environment of human settlements in the occupied territories, in particular, the rural settlements which in the West Bank provide shelter for approximately 70 per cent of the population.

5. As will be seen from the examination of human settlement in the occupied territories in section III below, 3/ very little planning, if any at all, has been devoted to the resettlement of the refugees in the West Bank, who constitute 46 per cent of the population. No public housing seems to have been initiated commensurate with the magnitude of the need. In the Gaza Strip and Northern Sinai, 3/ the occupying authorities have a policy for resettlement of the refugees, yet only a fraction of those refugees have been provided with housing units. There is little documented information on assistance to people in housing, except in the Gaza Strip, where plots prepared for building are made available to refugees, with cash grants for families to build their own homes. Few, however, have made use of this facility. 4/ No such information is available for the West Bank to indicate assistance to individuals or housing co-operatives or other non-governmental

2/ Report of Habitat: United Nations Conference on Human Settlements, Vancouver, 31 May to 11 June 1976, (United Nations publication, Sales No. E.76.IV.7 and Corrigenum), chap. II.

3/ For want of data for all the occupied territories, the coverage of this report is limited to the Gaza Strip, Northern Sinai and the West Bank excluding East Jerusalem, for which alone documented data are available. For the purposes of this report, Northern Sinai refers to the occupied territories as of 1978 and extends from El-Arish in the west to the Gaza Strip in the east, and from the Mediterranean in the north to Ras Muhammad in the south. It may be noted that since 25 May 1979 the occupied part of Sinai extends from a line east of El-Arish to the Gaza Strip.

4/ See Official Records of the General Assembly, Thirty-fourth Session, Supplement No. 13 (A/34/13), paras. 119-125.

agencies; nor is information readily available on funds from outside sources which are channelled into housing or the improvement of community facilities.

6. As regards housing in general, both in the Gaza Strip and the West Bank there is much overcrowding in the dwelling units, to a much higher degree than what is regarded as an acceptable level of accomodation. This condition of overcrowding seems to be worse in the rural areas and refugee camps than in the towns.

7. As mentioned in the previous report, in 1967 the infrastructure (roads, sewerage, electricity etc.) in the occupied territories was better than that of most countries in the region (A/34/536 and Corr.1, para. 31). Over the years, the occupied territories have witnessed a deterioration of this infrastructure, as very little has been done either to improve or maintain it. Instead, new networks have been established to serve and strengthen the military, economic and security links with Israel, often to the detriment of the existing Arab settlements. The development of the physical environment and infrastructure of the occupied territories to meet the needs of the new Jewish settlements has diverted resources - physical, natural and financial - from improving the environment of the settlements populated by the Palestinian people.

8. The appropriation by the occupying power of over a quarter of the land, both in the West Bank and in the Gaza Strip, has meant that less of this resource is available for use by the Palestinian people for their housing and agricultural needs. Similarly, the diversion of water for the needs of the new Jewish settlements has adversely affected the traditional habitat of the Palestinian people. The destruction of houses for military and security reasons and the lack of water resources for consumption and production purposes have forced many people to abandon their original land and homes, move into overcrowded conditions of existing settlements and seek a living as unskilled labour in the occupied territories or in Israel. A consequence of this enforced movement has been that the abandoned land is appropriated by the occupying authority under an existing law relating to absentee proprietorship.

9. As regards services, it would appear that environmental health services have not improved commensurate with population increase. A consequence has been that gastro-intestinal diseases have become a major cause of morbidity and mortality. The incidence of these diseases has also been increasing in the Arab rural settlements, no doubt owing to inadequate potable water and sewerage systems.

10. According to the report of the WHO mission which visited the territories from 7 to 21 April 1980, 5/ while immunization programmes appear to have satisfactory

5/ World Health Organization, "Health conditions of the Arab population in the occupied Arab territories, including Palestine: report of the Special Committee of Experts Appointed to Study the Health Conditions of the Inhabitants of the Occupied Territories" (A33/21).

coverage, certain preventive measures in the field of maternal and child health, decided upon following the visit of a WHO specialist, did not seem to be reflected at the level of the various units. Preventive activities and health checks for school children and workers remain weak and in many instances are non-existent. Health education and public information on health problems do not appear to be well developed.

11. Health activities are based on short-term planning without an adequate data base for determining the utilization of services, the attitudes of physicians or of the population or for analysing felt needs in relation to the needs as determined by the doctors. The level of participation of the community in the public health field is very limited and in some places non-existent.

12. As will be seen from the paragraphs dealing with health in section III below, there is a significant variance in the data available from different sources with regard to health services in the occupied territories. The WHO mission found inadequacies, particularly in X-ray and other diagnostic services; there had been no significant change in the number of hospitals and beds since 1967. As regards medical care, the ratio of population to physicians is considerably higher than in the neighbouring countries.

13. As regards educational services, one significant development has been the establishment of three universities in the West Bank and one in the Gaza Strip, which are private institutions. The experts on mission were told by officials and representatives of the Palestine Liberation Organization that they existed and functioned not because of any assistance given by the occupying power but in spite of discouragement and harassment. There had been an increase in the number of other educational institutions both in the West Bank and the Gaza Strip, and enrolment had also increased significantly. However, the political climate and actions of the occupying authorities have not been conducive to providing a learning environment free from a sense of insecurity among both teachers and students.

14. In the delivery of social welfare services, the occupying authorities have made them more accessible to the recipients by increasing the number of welfare bureaux and social workers. The number of recipients of services, particularly financial assistance, has decreased considerably, partly because of the high level of employment existing in the occupied territories and partly because of the rehabilitative services introduced by the occupying authorities with financial resources made available by international organizations. A number of local welfare organizations are also involved in delivering services, although it is not clear what the relationship is between them and the administering authority, or what professional and financial support, if any, they get from the authorities.

A. Demographic characteristics

15. At the end of 1977, the population of the West Bank was 681,200 with a natural increase of 20.5 per 1,000, an actual increase of 10.3 per 1,000 and a

/...

net migration rate of -10.2 per 1,000. ^{6/} Of this population, 317,614 were registered as refugees with UNRWA, 82,464 of them living in 20 camps, leaving 598,736 inhabitants (some of whom were unregistered refugees) living in the towns and villages of the West Bank. ^{7/} The population of the Gaza Strip and Northern Sinai was 441,300, with a natural increase of 15.3 per 1,000, an actual increase of 12.3 per 1,000 and a net migration of -3.0 per 1,000 in 1977. ^{8/} Of these, 363,000 were registered as refugees with UNRWA, 202,941 of them living in eight camps. ^{8/} The breakdown of the population by age groups was as follows:

<u>Population at the</u> <u>end of 1977</u>	<u>West Bank</u>		<u>Gaza Strip and</u> <u>Northern Sinai</u>	
	<u>Number</u>	<u>Percentage</u>	<u>Number</u>	<u>Percentage</u>
0-14 years	316 000	46.4	209 100	47.5
14-29	183 400	26.9	123 100	27.8
30-44	77 800	11.4	50 300	11.4
45-49	60 500	8.9	37 700	8.5
60 +	43 300	6.4	21 100	4.8
	<u>681 000</u>	<u>100.0</u>	<u>441 300</u>	<u>100.0</u>

As will be seen from the above, almost half the population was less than 14 years old, a fact which has a bearing on the health and educational services.

B. Political and administrative framework

16. As occupied territories, the West Bank and the Gaza Strip are subjected to the political will of the occupying authorities without any mechanisms for the people of the territories to influence basic policy decisions. The territories are governed under a military administration. Over-all policy is determined by the Israeli Prime Minister and the Cabinet. In practice, however, the Ministry of Defence plays the most important role in making and executing policy affecting the occupied territories.

17. These occupied areas are divided into districts, each headed by a military governor who is responsible to the military commander. The military governor is assisted by personnel recruited from the various government ministries, including health, education, agriculture, labour, trade and tourism, social welfare and

^{6/} Palestine Liberation Organization, Central Bureau of Statistics, Palestinian Statistical Abstract, 1979 (Damascus, 1979), p. 35.

^{7/} Official Records of the General Assembly, Thirty-fourth Session, Supplement No. 13 (A/34/13), annex I, table 4.

^{8/} Statistical Abstracts of Israel, 1978 (Jerusalem, Central Bureau of Statistics, 1978), p. 766.

justice, and he also has advisers from both the police and foreign affairs ministries. The budget for the occupied territories is controlled by the military governors.

18. The municipalities in the territories are responsible for local affairs except police functions. They are subject to the over-all authority of the military on matters which affect Israeli national security and public peace, although instances are not lacking where approval of the military has to be obtained beforehand for land use and investments, even when the funding has been assured by outside sources. The second municipal elections since the occupation - the first being in 1972 - were held in 22 of the 24 West Bank towns; in the other two the number of candidates was equal to the number of seats available. Supporters of the Palestine Liberation Organization won sweeping victories in the elections. The majority of the candidates belonged to the two main groups; the National Front, which supports the Palestine Liberation Organization, and the United Front, which is more traditional. Of those elected, 148 were elected for the first time and only 48 had been re-elected. Completely new councils were elected in Nablus, Hebron, Jericho, Beit Jala and Beit Sahour, where the National Front gained control of previously conservative councils. The pro-Palestine Liberation Organization mayors and councillors of Ramalla, Al-Beira and Tulkarm were re-elected with increased majorities.

19. The West Bank elections had been conducted under the terms of a 1955 Jordanian law specifying that municipal elections should be held every four years. Under the Jordanian law, there was no direct balloting for the post of mayor, and the Interior Minister selected the mayor after the municipal elections. After the 1972 elections in the West Bank, the Israeli Military Governor permitted the councils to nominate their mayors. A similar procedure was followed in the 1976 elections. The former Jordanian law was amended to permit women to vote and to stand for office for the first time. 9/

20. The military authorities had informed candidates to the municipal elections that political propaganda could not be resorted to in election campaigns. In El Bireh, the central printing house was reported to have been closed down by the military for having printed campaign leaflets. In Bethlehem, the holding of an election meeting in a public place was banned by the authorities. 10/

21. On 30 April 1976, Ha'aretz reported an article by Y. Litani, who enumerated several instances of interference by Israeli authorities, such as pressure for some candidates to run in the elections, attempts to persuade some mayors to accept an agreed list of candidates and the expulsion of some candidates standing for election.

9/ Arab Report and Record, 1-5 April 1976, p. 239.

10/ Ha'aretz, 6 April 1976.

C. Economic framework

22. Following their occupation in June 1967, the Gaza Strip and the West Bank were drawn progressively into a state of interdependency with the Israeli economy, which has important implications for their long-term growth and development. From a position where there were absolutely no trade or financial connexions prior to June 1967, these territories found themselves by 1977 exporting 61 per cent of their products to Israel and importing 91.1 per cent of their requirements. The change in the composition in foreign trade can be seen from appendix I below. In relative terms, the exports to Jordan fell from 43.2 per cent of the value of all exports in 1968 to 33.5 of the value of exports in 1977, while at the same time the exports to Israel rose from 44 per cent of the value of all exports in 1968 to 61.1 per cent in 1977. A similar change can be discerned in the case of imports. In relative terms, imports from Jordan decreased from 7.3 per cent of the value of total imports in 1968 to an insignificant 0.9 per cent in 1977, while the value of imports from Israel increased during the same period from 76.8 per cent to 91.1 per cent of the value of imports.

23. It should be noted that the exports to Israel included those for re-export. According to information obtained from some Gaza businessmen interviewed by the experts in Cairo and confirmed by representatives of the Palestine Liberation Organization, direct exports of products overseas from the occupied territories are not allowed by the occupying authorities and all such exports have to be channelled through Israeli trade organizations.

24. Israel's domination of the import trade is clearly indicated by the data. Most, if not all, of the imports are Israeli manufactured goods, which have found a rising demand in the occupied territories because of growth in incomes - both local as well as through the labour employed in Israel - and remittances from abroad. With the exception of imports from Jordan, all overseas imports to the occupied territories have to come through the Israeli market. Imports from Jordan have registered a relative decline because of the application of Israeli import tariffs to goods from that country. Considering that the occupied territories are the second largest trading partner with Israel, next to the United States of America, the near monopolistic role that Israel industrial products have in the markets of the occupied territories, the lack of any serious competition from locally manufactured products and the steady source of relatively cheap semi-skilled and unskilled labour for economic activities in Israel, there is every reason to believe that the maintenance of these trading links with the occupied territories is extremely important for the Israeli economy.

25. This point was repeatedly stressed to the experts on mission by the officials of the Arab Governments and the representatives of the Palestine Liberation Organization. In their opinion, the current trading pattern is an inhibiting factor in the growth and development of the occupied territories. The production of these territories, as well as the physical and economic infrastructure necessary for such production, are geared towards the needs and requirements of the Israeli economy. The inhabitants of the occupied territories are denied the opportunity to establish overseas markets for their products and to meet their

/...

import requirements directly from overseas sources. Furthermore, they are unable to compete in world markets under their own identity. The present conditions militate against the development of an indigenous industrial base which will serve the needs of the local economy, as well as export needs, and to provide employment to those who are now compelled to seek employment in Israel and other countries - a large resource of manpower which cannot be used for the development of the occupied countries themselves. The occupied territories are seen as providing a captive market for Israeli goods and services.

26. The experts were informed by officials of the Palestine Liberation Organization that the occupied territories lacked the financial infrastructure to mobilize savings and provide funds for investment in productive enterprises and for capital formation. The branches of Israeli banks that had replaced the Jordanian and foreign banks in the West Bank after the June 1967 war did not command the same measure of confidence of the savers and investors in the occupied territories. Credit obtained from the banks, which is rather limited and high-cost, is usually for operating expenses. Little is used for capital investment, which is usually financed from the current earnings of enterprises or from remittances from abroad. Most of the investment is private, particularly in dwellings, some of which are constructed by individuals and others by housing co-operatives, which sometimes receive funds from Arab sources abroad. Funds from neighbouring Arab countries are also made available through various unofficial channels, the most recent case being the support given for the establishment of a cement factory in the West Bank. These funds are administered by the municipalities. However, various delays and difficulties are encountered in realizing these investments, not the least of which is approval from the administering authorities. Sometimes this approval is withheld and the projects cannot be carried out. One instance in which such approval was withheld was reported to the mission by the Mayor of Halhul, who stated that he was refused permission to build a market after a site had been obtained and all architectural and engineering designs completed and funds obligated from abroad. The current situation and uncertainties about the future exert a strong influence on private and public investment decisions.

27. The municipalities continue to make public investments in the form of municipal establishments, roads, markets and other constructions. As shown in appendix II below, these investments amounted to £I 223,436,000 in 1978-1979. They were financed from loans from the administration and from the financial resources of the local inhabitants.

28. Information on public investments is however not readily available in the absence of the capital budgets for the occupied territories.

1. Land

29. The total land area of the occupied territories is given as approximately 5,939,000 dunums, of which 5,572,000 are in the West Bank and 367,000 in the Gaza Strip. Of this, an area of 2,840,000 dunums had been under cultivation in 1967, 11/

11/ Statistical Abstract of Israel, 1969 (Jerusalem, Central Bureau of Statistics, 1969), p. 640.

but this had declined to 2,140,000 dunums by 1974, or 75 per cent of the land cultivated in 1967. ^{12/} The reasons for this decline are not discussed in the Israeli publications available to the mission but in its discussions with officials of the Palestine Liberation Organization and officials of the Governments of neighbouring Arab countries the experts were told that the decline was due to three main factors. First, large areas had been declared "closed" areas and put out of production for security reasons. Secondly, large areas of land had been appropriated by the occupying power for the establishment of new Jewish settlements. Thirdly, many farmers had been compelled to abandon their land because of difficulties and impediments, which all but made it impossible for them to continue to cultivate the land. Accurate figures are hard to come by, as these have not been made public and, furthermore, the interpretation of the legal status of some lands is still in dispute. However, it is estimated that by September 1979 the occupying authorities had taken possession of approximately 1.5 million dunums in the West Bank and Gaza Strip, equivalent to approximately 25 per cent of the total area (A/34/631, para. 105).

30. The impact of Israeli occupation on the question of land in the occupied territories and its role in meeting the economic and social needs of the people have five important implications: (a) a sense of insecurity in the possession of the land; (b) a lack of motivation to make long-term investments in the land, arising out of the sense of insecurity; (c) fragmentation of holdings because of the increase of population and decrease in the quantum of land available for cultivation, as well as for shelter, due to appropriation by the occupying power; (d) unfair competition from Israeli subsidized agricultural products, compelling many Palestinians to abandon farming; and (e) the restrictions placed by the authorities on the exploitation of water resources for irrigation by Palestinian Arabs.

31. The mission found that the sense of insecurity stemmed from the various laws and regulations applied by the occupying authorities for requisitioning land, the most important of which were: the Ottoman Empire laws of 1858, governing State land which had been sanctioned by the Mandatory Power but returned to miri status by the Jordanian authorities; article 125 of the Emergency Ordinances of 1945, enacted by the Mandatory Power, which enabled the authority to consider some areas "closed" for security reasons; the Israeli Absentee Proprietors Law of 1950, and compulsory purchase. Because land can be taken away from the owners under any one of the above laws or the regulations framed under them, there has been no motivation for investment to improve either productivity or shelter, or the infrastructure of settlements.

2. Water

32. The question of water both for agricultural and domestic purposes is the most difficult to resolve, inasmuch as Israel and the occupied territories

^{12/} Agriculture in the West Bank (Ramallah, Department of Agriculture, 1974), cited in H. M. Awartami, West Bank Agriculture: A New Outlook (Nablus, 1978), p. 9.

constitute a single natural and geological region for water collection and flows. The question is compounded by the fact that the Palestinians are not involved in the decisions affecting the use of water in the territories.

33. The region has only two, rather scarce, permanent sources of water: (a) the Jordan river and its tributary system, which can provide for about 1,500,000 dunums of irrigated land; and (b) the subterranean aquifer, which at present is providing 100 million cubic metres annually to the West Bank and 500 million cubic metres annually to Israel. In the coastal plains the over-exploited aquifer provides the Gaza Strip agriculture with 100 million cubic metres. 13/

34. Tahal, Water Planning for Israel Ltd. gives the following as the quantity of water which can become available for Israel:

	<u>Millions of cubic metres</u> <u>per annum</u>
Jordan Water	450
Return flows, Jordan Basin	50
Springs in the eastern watershed	150
Springs in the western watershed (including the Yarkon Springs)	350
Ground water	450
Flood flows	100
Return flow from irrigation	100
Re-use of domestic and industrial water	150
Total	<u>1,800</u>
For domestic and industrial use	<u>300</u>
Available for irrigation	1,500

Source: Tahal, "The master plan for Israel development of irrigation" (Tel Aviv, 1956), p. 4.

35. The latest data on water consumption in Israel are given in appendix III below. Two important considerations arise from that data. First, since 1969, Israel has been using more than 83 per cent of its proved renewable water reserves. The average of use from that year to 1977 is 89 per cent, with a variability of less than 5 per cent, which indicates a fairly stable level. This, together with the

13/ Vivian Bull, The West Bank, Is It Viable? (Lexington, Massachusetts, Lexington Books, 1975).

high variability of rains in the region, which can reach 23 per cent or more, shows that the balance of water in the region is very precarious and may have reached a critical point.

36. Secondly, since 1969, Israel's total consumption of water in domestic and industrial uses exceeded the 300 million cubic metres allotted in the master plan, a situation that can only become worse with time, in so far as use increases with the increase in population. This is borne out by a statement in the Encyclopaedia Judaica, as follows: "Between 1949 and 1968 the utilization of proven water resources rose from 17 per cent, mainly from local ground water, to almost 90 per cent (including the utilization of the Yarkon and Jordan rivers)."

37. The following table gives some indication of the enormous difference between water consumption levels in Israel and the West Bank:

Appraisal of Water Consumption in the West Bank and Israel
 (Millions of cubic metres)

	<u>West Bank</u>	<u>Israel</u>
Agriculture	90	1 325
Industry (combined with house consumption)		95
House consumption	10	300
	<hr/>	<hr/>
Total	100	1 720
General rate of consumption per individual	142	537
Rate of home consumption per individual	13	86

Sources: For Israel, KIDMA: Israel Journal of Development, No. 10 (1977); for the West Bank, Palestine National Fund, "Water resources and policies in the West Bank" (n.d.), p. 4.

It will be noted from the above table that the Israeli consumption of water for agricultural purposes alone is more than 13 times the total consumption in the West Bank and for domestic purposes and industry it is almost 40 times that of the West Bank. The mission was told that the Israeli authorities had taken a number of steps to ensure that the consumption of water by the Palestinians was kept at those low levels, while the consumption by Israeli settlements and agriculture was allowed to rise. The following are examples of actions taken to restrict water use by the Palestinians in the occupied territories:

The installation of meters at well-heads to limit the amount of water that can be drawn and the imposition of fines for exceeding the limits imposed;

The non-issuance of permits to Palestinians for digging new wells for agricultural purposes in the occupied territories while several new wells have been dug to provide new Jewish settlements and farms with water;

The digging of deep wells by the Israelis near functioning Arab wells and the use of powerful pumping equipment, resulting in a severe reduction of the water discharge from the old Arab wells or, in some cases, a complete drying up of these wells.

D. Agriculture and industry in the context of human settlements growth and development

38. Agriculture was and continues to be the main productive sector in the economy of the occupied territories. Although employment in this sector has been falling since 1970, it still employed, in 1977, 43,157 out of a total of 141,500 employed in the territories, or 30.5 per cent. ^{14/} According to an Israeli Government report, agriculture in the occupied territories was in a backward state prior to the 1967 war. ^{15/} Immediately after the occupation, the authorities introduced a range of technological innovations to raise output and increase productivity, and incomes in this sector. Considerations behind these actions included the expansion of markets for Israeli agro-industrial production inputs and the development of products which were complementary to, rather than competitive with, agricultural products produced in Israel. The product mix was also changed to encourage the production of crops for import substitution, as well as for producing inputs for Israeli processing plants, which then exported the finished product. The Israeli Government report acknowledges that the effect of these changes has been to link agriculture in the occupied territories more closely to the Israeli economy. ^{16/} Officials of the Palestine Liberation Organization and residents of the occupied territories interviewed in Egypt and Jordan point out that, in seeking to forge a close link between agriculture in the occupied territories and the Israeli economy, the Israelis have taken actions to discourage the production of certain traditional crops when these would compete with similar products from Israel. Examples of such actions include restrictions placed on the use of water for irrigation purposes by farmers producing competing agricultural products and the dumping of lower priced products on the markets of the occupied territories, thus compelling the inhabitants of the latter to sell their produce below cost. As a result of these and similar actions, many farmers have had to abandon their traditional means of livelihood and put themselves out as hired labour in Israel. Thus, the transformation of agriculture that has taken place essentially serves the interests of the Israeli economy and has not contributed to the over-all development of the occupied territories. It is also the view of those interviewed that the prospects for real agricultural development to serve the interests of the inhabitants of the occupied territories are hampered by the absence of any long-term development plan and particularly one for the agricultural sector.

39. Industry in the occupied territories can be described as relatively

^{14/} Statistical Abstract of Israel, 1978 (Jerusalem, Central Bureau of Statistics, 1978), p. 788.

^{15/} State of Israel, Ministry of Defence, A Twelve-Year Survey, 1967-1979 (Jerusalem, 1980), p. 6.

^{16/} Ibid., p. 7.

undeveloped. Its composition and contribution to the national product have not changed much since before the June 1967 war. In 1968 it employed 19,700 persons, or 15.4 per cent of those employed, while in January-September 1979, it employed 22,800, or 16.1 per cent of those employed. ^{17/} Its contribution to the national product has remained at around 7 per cent. Its activities are largely confined to craft work in low-productivity, labour-intensive operations, except for beverages and tobacco manufacture. Manufacturing plants are small and employ 10 persons on the average, and most of the work is performed manually. There are only seven enterprises employing 100 or more persons, all in the West Bank and none in the Gaza Strip. All these "large" firms had been established before 1967.

40. In the West Bank, the main industrial branch in terms of revenue earned in 1977 was food, beverages and tobacco, followed by textiles and clothes, rubber, plastics and chemical products. There has been an expansion of production in textiles, plastics and rubber, furniture and building materials, mainly owing to a system of subcontracting by Israeli firms.

41. In the Gaza Strip, the establishment of an industrial zone at the Erez Checkpoint near Gaza has been a significant development. Most of the plants are owned by Israelis, and they produce mainly metal goods, textiles, and wood and rubber products. The zone provides employment for a sizeable number of Gaza Strip residents.

42. Apart from the local demand, industry in these territories is geared to Israeli demand, and this has been selective. The major items produced or processed for the Israeli market are: clothing (subcontracts), wood products, wicker and other types of furniture, woven textiles (carpets), plastic goods and building materials.

43. The lack of appropriate natural resources or a traditional branch or skills in manufacturing in these territories points to the need for an agricultural oriented industry, both as an input provider and raw material processor. However, the potential for even such industrial development in the occupied territories is clearly limited because of the more efficient and technologically advanced industrial production system of Israel, which has a near monopolistic advantage in the markets of the occupied territories. ^{18/}

44. Construction activity is generally an index of capital formation. Unfortunately, not much information is available on this sector in the published

^{17/} For the 1979 figures, see Report of the Director-General, International Labour Conference, sixty-sixth session (Geneva, International Labour Office, 1980), appendix III, table 6; see also Statistical Abstract of Israel, 1969 (Jerusalem, Central Bureau of Statistics, 1969), p. 638.

^{18/} For further information on the industrial sector, see Arie Bregman, Economic Growth in the Administered Areas, 1968-1973 (Jerusalem, Bank of Israel, Research Department, 1974), pp. 62-67, and Brian van Arkadie, Benefits and Burdens: A Report on the West Bank and Gaza Strip Economies since 1967 (New York, N.Y., Carnegie Endowment for International Peace, 1977).

material concerning the occupied territories. The data available pertain only to building, both in the annual statistical abstracts and the report furnished by the Government of Israel. The data are given in appendix V below. It would appear that most of the building construction has occurred in the private sector both in the West Bank and the Gaza Strip, much of it in residential building. There has been a negligible amount of public residential building in the West Bank, while the data for the Gaza Strip would reflect the housing that was being constructed for the refugees.

45. Another indicator of capital formation is the investment made by the municipalities in improving the infrastructure and community facilities. The data available are given in appendix II below. The figures for 1978/79 show a considerable increase over those for 1976/77. This is an outcome of a policy of the Arab League to promote "twinning" of cities in the Gulf and other Arab States and those in the occupied territories. Beginning in late 1976, the mayors, sometimes along with delegations, from Ramallah, Hebron, Nablus, Bethlehem, Gaza and Qalqiliya, among others, visited the neighbouring Arab States to secure resources to improve community facilities in their towns. Negotiations for such grants and loans are subject to prior approval of the occupying authorities in respect of the specific projects for which funds are sought and close supervision in the utilization of such funds.

E. Macro-economic indicators

46. According to the Israeli Government report, 19/ the gross national product in the occupied territories increased at an average annual rate of about 13 per cent in real terms since the occupation, while gross national product per capita increased at an average annual rate of 11 per cent in real terms during the same period. While over-all private consumption increased at an average annual rate of 9 per cent in real terms, private consumption per capita increased at an average annual rate of 7 per cent.

47. The mission was unable to obtain evidence of the existence of any over-all development plans to provide direction for systematic economic development and social progress in the occupied territories. The Economic Development Plan for Israel, 1971-1975, specifically states that the framework for the plan refers to the State of Israel within its pre-June 1967 frontiers, with the addition of East Jerusalem. Thus, the rest of the occupied territories was excluded from the plan for this period. Development planning for subsequent periods was also conducted on the same basis. The absence of any development plan for the rest of the occupied territories is an impediment to an orderly and rational development of the areas to serve the interests first and foremost of the people of those areas.

19/ State of Israel, Ministry of Defence, op. cit., p. 3.

F. The social framework

48. The present Palestinian society in the West Bank and Gaza Strip is composed of those living in refugee camps (285,405), those registered as refugees but living in the towns and villages in the territories (395, 209) and the original inhabitants (441,886), some of whom have been displaced for various reasons from their original lands, homes and communities. 20/

49. Over the years, including the period after June 1967, many Palestinians of working age, mostly technically and professionally qualified persons, have emigrated at an average of 20,000 persons per year, 21/ in search of gainful employment in the neighbouring Arab states and beyond, because of the lack of jobs in the local areas, as well as in Israel, commensurate with their education and training. Some have also been deported and others have fled for political and other reasons. They have not been able to return because of various restrictions imposed by the occupying power. Young people in search of higher education have also left, more so among the male youth. A situation has therefore arisen in the occupied territories in which there is a considerable number of Palestinian households without a male head, a situation with grave consequences for family life and social stability.

50. A further disrupting element in the social milieu of the West Bank and the Gaza Strip has been the establishment of Jewish settlements in strategic locations in the territories. The imposition of military rule and the presence of an alien culture and religion, compounded by resentment at occupation, has created an atmosphere of tension which affects not only the social relations between the Palestinians and the Jewish settlers but sometimes also among Palestinians themselves - the traditional élite and the new emerging leadership, the old and the youth, those working in the territories and those who have accepted employment in Israel.

51. Most of the refugees had come from a rural background and were unaccustomed to the crowded and pseudo-urban living conditions of the camps. They had been uprooted from their socio-cultural habitat, dispossessed of the only resource they knew to exploit - land - and their skills in farming were useless in the camp setting. They had become the bottom layer of the social structure, doing unskilled work whenever available, often seasonally. The refugees in the towns and villages were likewise farm labourers or unskilled workers in commerce and industry, often competing with the long-time residents for the few available jobs and sometimes being resented. The original residents in the towns and villages were the most stable group in the society, yet living with a sense of insecurity as to their legal and social rights.

20/ Totals computed from figures in para. 15 above.

21/ Report of the Director-General, International Labour Conference, sixty-sixth session (Geneva, International Labour Office, 1980), appendix III, para. 84.

G. Employment, income and consumption

52. According to the data available, 22/ in 1968, unemployment was 10.8 per cent in the West Bank and 16.9 per cent in the Gaza Strip, giving an overall unemployment rate of 13.8 per cent for the occupied territories. By 1977, the rate was down to 1.2 per cent in the West Bank and 0.1 per cent in the Gaza Strip, giving an overall rate of 0.6 per cent. The mission was informed by representatives of the Palestine Liberation Organization that the principal reason for this lowering of the rate of unemployment was withdrawal from the labour force of many who would otherwise be economically active and emigration from the territories of able-bodied young men who, if they had remained in the territories, would have swelled the ranks of the unemployed.

53. There were, as of September 1979, 643,600 persons of working age, comprising 309,600 men and 334,000 women. Of these, 218,100 were in the labour force, comprising 188,400 men and 29,700 women. The participation rate in the labour force was 60.9 per cent for men and 8.9 per cent for women. This represents some 34.0 per cent of the working age population, and the overall participation rate is, therefore, very low, with a considerable disequilibrium between the sexes. Female participation rates are generally low in the region, but the rate for the occupied territories is lower than the rates in the other countries. These low rates of participation in economic activity are mainly attributable to the large proportion of young people in the population, the relative imbalance between men and women of working age as a result of emigration and traditional social factors influencing female participation in the labour force. As a general rule, a fairly low participation rate indicates that a large number of adults of working age are absent from the labour market and, consequently, that the per capita income is correspondingly lower. In the case of the Gaza Strip and the West Bank (excluding East Jerusalem), only a third of the population was providing the goods and services needed by the rest.

54. Of the employed labour force, those employed in the Gaza Strip and West Bank numbered 141,600, while those working in Israel numbered 75,100 or 34.7 per cent. Between 1978 and 1979, those employed in these two territories fell from 144,200 to 141,600 - a reduction of 2,600, and those employed in Israel rose from 69,700 to 75,100, an increase of 5,400 or 7.7 per cent.

55. The labour force in the two territories during this period increased by 2,300 persons, while the number of those employed fell by 2,600. It would appear, therefore, that 4,900 persons were seeking or were in need of employment during the period. Considering that the number of persons from these territories employed in Israel during the same period increased by 5,400, it can be assumed that those persons entering the labour market and seeking employment, as well

as another 500 already employed, found employment in Israel because of the attraction of higher wages or the lack of growth in the territories. 23/

56. The trend in the distribution of employment by place of work is as follows: 24/

	<u>1970</u>		<u>1973</u>		<u>1977</u>		<u>1979</u>	
	<u>Number</u> (thou- sands)	<u>Per-</u> <u>centage</u>	<u>Number</u> (thou- sands)	<u>Per-</u> <u>centage</u>	<u>Number</u> (thou- sands)	<u>Per-</u> <u>centage</u>	<u>Number</u> (thou- sands)	<u>Per-</u> <u>centage</u>
Palestinians working in:								
Gaza Strip and West Bank	152.7	88.1	133.4	68.5	141.5	69.2	141.5	65.4
Israel	20.6	11.9	61.3	31.5	62.9	30.8	75.1	34.6

It would appear that employment in the two territories dropped to a low in 1973, rose by 6 per cent in 1977 and remained practically the same in 1979. At the same time, employment of Palestinians in Israel had risen by 197.5 per cent by 1973, registering a further rise of 2.6 per cent by 1977 and another rise of 19.4 per cent by 1979. This would seem to indicate a lack of growth in employment in the occupied territories that appears to stem from the economic policies pursued by the occupying power.

23/ The figures in paragraphs 53-55 have been computed from Report of the Director-General, International Labour Conference, sixty-sixth session (Geneva, International Labour Office, 1980), appendix III, table 1.

24/ Statistical Abstract of Israel, 1978 ..., p. 783 and Report of the Director-General, International Labour Conference, sixty-sixth session (Geneva, International Labour Office, 1980), appendix III, table 1.

57. In so far as the various economic branches are concerned, the trend has been as follows: 25/

	<u>1970</u>		<u>1973</u>		<u>1977</u>		<u>1979</u>	
	<u>Israel</u>	<u>Occu- pied Terri- tories</u>	<u>Israel</u>	<u>Occu- pied Terri- tories</u>	<u>Israel</u>	<u>Occu- pied Terri- tories</u>	<u>Israel</u>	<u>Occu- pied Terri- tories</u>
<u>Percentages</u>								
Agriculture	24.4	38.7	19.3	31.3	16.2	30.5	15.4	28.7
Industry	11.6	13.8	18.1	15.1	21.3	14.2	22.4	16.1
Construction	54.3	8.4	51.7	6.4	45.3	9.1	45.8	10.1
Other <u>a/</u>	9.7		10.9	47.2	17.2	46.2	16.4	45.2

a/ Including commerce, restaurants, hotels, transport, storage, and public and community services.

Employment in agriculture has been falling both in the two territories and in Israel. In industry, it has been rising in Israel while in the two territories it had risen in 1973 but fallen slightly in 1977 to rise again in 1979. In construction, employment has been falling in Israel, with a slight rise in 1979, while in the two territories it had fallen in 1973 but risen in 1977 and 1979. It will be noted that the economic branch which showed greatest expansion between 1970 and 1973 was services included in the "other" category. By 1979, this branch employed almost half of the workers in the two territories, while about one in every six Palestinians working in Israel was employed in this branch. Representatives of the Palestine Liberation Organization and officials of Arab Governments consulted by the mission point out that the disproportionate size of employment in this category is due to the fact that the Palestinians are employed in menial and low-paying jobs formerly being performed by Israelis, while the Israelis move on to higher-paying jobs.

58. In view of the fact that the annual Statistical Abstract of Israel gives data on employment in Israel of non-Jews from within the country as well as of persons from the occupied territories, some interesting observations can be made on the trend of such employment. For instance, in the agricultural sector, while the total of employees dropped in absolute terms by 1,700 persons between 1970 and 1977, the number of non-Jewish employees rose by 3,400 persons. In relative terms, the proportion of non-Jews increased from 42.5 per cent of the total employees in 1970

25/ Statistical Abstract of Israel, 1978 ..., p. 783 and Report of the Director-General, International Labour Conference, sixty-sixth session (Geneva, International Labour Office, 1980), appendix III, tables 4 and 6.

to 56.4 per cent in 1977. Of these proportions, non-Jews from Israel fell from 62.4 per cent in 1970 to 38.9 per cent in 1977, while those from the occupied territories increased from 37.6 per cent to 61.1 per cent.

59. In industry, while the total of employees increased in absolute terms by 47,000 persons between 1970 and 1977, the number of non-Jewish employees increased by 16,400. In relative terms, the proportion of non-Jews increased from 7.8 per cent in 1970 to 12.5 per cent in 1977. Of these proportions, the number of non-Jews from Israel decreased from 86.2 per cent in 1970 to 60.4 per cent in 1977, while those from the occupied territories increased from 13.0 per cent to 39.6 per cent during the same period.

60. In construction, while the total employed increased in absolute terms by 23,300 during the period 1970-1977, the number of non-Jews employed increased by 25,900. In relative terms, the proportion of non-Jews increased from 31.8 per cent in 1970 to 47.9 per cent in 1977. Of these proportions, the number of non-Jews from Israel decreased from 61.9 per cent in 1970 to 48.0 per cent in 1977, while those from the occupied territories increased from 38.1 per cent to 52.0 per cent. 26/

61. The trend would appear to indicate that in the movement of labour in Israel, as Jewish and non-Jewish employees in Israel move upwards and outwards in the employment structure, the workers from the occupied territories move in to fill the places at the bottom of the structure as semi-skilled and unskilled labour. The educational and vocational training patterns in the occupied territories reinforce this view, and would seem to confirm that Palestinians from the occupied territories are employed mainly on the lower rungs of the occupational ladder.

62. The occupational categories of the employed persons among the Palestinian population are given in appendix VII below. In 1978, agricultural workers and skilled and unskilled workers in industry, mining, building and transport formed the bulk of the employed (72.0 per cent). This proportion has not changed much since 1972 (71.3 per cent). Scientific, professional and administrative workers formed 10.6 per cent, a decrease from 11.7 per cent in 1972. The relative paucity of jobs requiring this kind of expertise, as indicated by the trend, is no doubt one of the principal causes of emigration of professionally qualified persons. The experts were told by officials of the neighbouring countries and representatives of the Palestine Liberation Organization that the principal reasons for the lack of employment opportunities for scientific, professional and administrative personnel in the occupied territories were:

(a) The lack of expansion of the public services and the virtual freeze in the employment of certain categories of professional workers in the public sector, such as teachers and nurses;

26/ The figures have been computed from Statistical Abstract of Israel ..., 1973 to 1978.

(b) The relatively low salaries paid to professional workers such as medical personnel compared with their counterparts in the Israeli public service;

(c) The difficulties faced by some professionals in acquiring the equipment necessary for their work;

(d) The heavy burden of Israeli taxation on individual professionals working on their own account.

63. As for incomes, the report furnished by the Government of Israel mentions that the incomes of self-employed farmers grew at an average annual rate of some 20.0 per cent in the West Bank and 15.0 per cent in the Gaza Strip, with similar income growth rates for agricultural employees. This increase in income was, according to the report, mainly due to structural changes introduced, increased utilization of higher quality production inputs and the closer ties established between the economies of the occupied territories and Israel. 27/

64. The trend in wage rates of those working in the Gaza Strip and West Bank and those in Israel, both in current and real terms, can be seen from appendix VI below.

65. The level of wages paid to the workers from the two territories working within the territories and in Israel has risen significantly in current terms over the past 10 years. The average, daily wage per worker rose from 7.9 Israel pounds in 1970 to 68.0 Israel pounds in 1977 in the West Bank, while in the Gaza Strip and Northern Sinai the average daily wage per worker rose from 6.5 Israel pounds in 1970 to 65.6 Israel pounds in 1977. 28/ When the incomes are deflated by the index of consumer prices, the rise in the level of incomes does not appear as great as it does at first sight. A revision of the data to take account of inflation would indicate that for the West Bank the average real daily wage of employees working there rose from 7.31 Israel pounds in 1970 to 11.84 Israel pounds in 1977, giving an average annual increase of under 7 per cent at 1968 prices. The increase in real wages for employees from the West Bank working in Israel was very insignificant. The average daily wage for this category increased in real terms (at 1968 prices) from 10.9 Israel pounds in 1970 to only 12.5 Israel pounds in 1977, an average annual increase in real wages of 2 per cent. Thus, the real wages of employees from the West Bank workers in Israel remained virtually the same over the eight-year period.

66. During the early years of the occupation, there was a great difference in the level of wages paid to workers in the occupied territories and that paid to those working in Israel. This gap has now narrowed considerably. While in 1970 wages paid in the two territories were slightly more than half the wages paid in Israel,

27/ State of Israel, Ministry of Defence, op.cit., p. 6.

28/ Statistical Abstract of Israel, 1978 ..., pp. 376 and 789.

by 1978 the former constituted about 60-90 per cent of the latter according to sector. 29/ There also seems to be some convergence between average Israeli wages and average wages paid to workers from the occupied territories. In 1970 the average wages paid to workers from the occupied territories working in Israel constituted 59.0 per cent of the average wages paid to Israelis. By 1977, the proportion had increased to 73.0 per cent. 30/ This achievement is counterbalanced by the high rate of inflation in Israel, which is transmitted to the occupied territories because of the close relationship between the two economies. The movement of the consumer price index from 1970 to 1979 is given in appendix IX below.

67. Increased incomes from employment have partly contributed to higher levels of consumption. In the West Bank, between 1968 and 1978, the value of agricultural goods consumed rose, at current prices, from £I 123 million to £3,038 million, that of industrial goods from £I 133 million to £3,187 million and that of services from £I 99 million to £I 2,021 million. In the Gaza Strip, during the same period, the value of agricultural products increased from £I 47 million to £I 985 million, that of industrial goods from £I 57 million to £I 1,652 million and that of services from £I 41 million to £I 881 million. 31/ The number of households possessing durable goods had also risen considerably particularly in the case of electrical and gas stoves for heating and ranges for cooking, refrigerators, sewing machines, television sets, telephones and motor vehicles. 32/ Much of the increase in consumption can also be attributed to the substantial remittances from abroad, which in the Gaza Strip had increased from £I 2 million in 1968 to £I 864 million in 1977 and in the West Bank from £I 17 million in 1968 to £I 1,572 million in 1977. 33/ Again, officials of the Palestine Liberation Organization question the base data on the possession of durable goods. They believe that the proportions owning durable goods before the occupation were much higher than those given in the Israeli statistics.

29/ Supplement to the Report of the Director-General, International Labour Conference, sixty-sixth session, (Geneva, International Labour Office, 1979), p. 26.

30/ Statistical Abstract of Israel, 1978 ..., pp. 376 and 789.

31/ Statistical Abstract of Israel, 1978 ..., p. 771.

32/ State of Israel, Department of Defence, op.cit., p. 31.

33/ Statistical Abstract of Israel, 1978 ..., pp. 768 and 769.

III. THE HUMAN SETTLEMENT SYSTEM IN THE OCCUPIED TERRITORIES

A. The pattern of human settlements

68. The West Bank comprises a total area of 4,820 kilometres (A/34/536 and Corr.1, annex I, paras. 3 and 4) and had a population of 681,200 at the end of 1977, 34/ giving a population density of approximately 141 persons per square kilometre. Around 30 per cent of the population live in urban areas; the rest of the population, namely 70 per cent, live in villages with populations of from 50 to 5,000 persons each.

69. The Gaza Strip and Northern Sinai comprise an area of 345 square kilometres (A/34/536 and Corr.1, annex I, paras. 3 and 4) with a population of 441,300 at the end of 1977, 34/ giving a population density of 1,279 persons per square kilometre, one of the highest in the world. About 80 per cent of the population live in urban areas and refugee camps and the other 20 per cent in small rural settlements. The principal towns in this territory are Gaza and Rafah.

70. A significant feature of human settlements in these two territories is the fact that a large proportion of the population live in refugee camps, a situation brought about by the war of 1948 and aggravated by the 1967 hostilities and other factors arising from the occupation. In the West Bank, the number of refugees registered with UNRWA was 317,614 as of June 1979. 35/ Of these, 82,464 were actually living in 20 camps. The number of registered refugees constituted approximately 46 per cent of the population of the West Bank at the end of 1978, and since many refugees are not registered with UNRWA, the proportion of refugees in the total population of the West Bank is likely to be much higher. Those living in camps constituted about 12 per cent of the population.

71. In the Gaza Strip, there were 363,006 refugees registered with UNRWA as of June 1979. Of these, 202,941 were actually living in eight camps. 35/ Thus, 80 per cent of the population of the Gaza Strip were refugees and 45 per cent of the population were actually living in refugee camps. The size of the refugee situation in Gaza is such that it comprises almost the whole of the population, if the figure given for registered refugees is augmented by the undetermined number of unregistered refugees.

72. In addition to the indigenous population of these two territories and the Golan Heights, new Jewish settlements are being established in the territories by the occupying Power or with its support and by July 1979 79 of these new settlements had been established in the West Bank, 18 in the Gaza Strip and Northern Sinai and 29 in the Golan Heights (S/13450/Add.1, annex III).

34/ Statistical Abstract of Israel, 1978 ..., p. 765.

35/ Official Records of the General Assembly, Thirty-fourth Session, Supplement No. 13 (A/34/13), annex I, table 4.

B. Housing and infrastructure

73. The large number of refugees in the occupied territories poses a serious problem in the field of housing. Apart from the fact that the influx of refugees into these areas has put considerable pressure on existing accommodation, the demolition of many refugee camp units by the occupying authority has exacerbated the situation. In 1971, about 3,000 refugee shelters had been demolished in the Gaza Strip. The occupying authority undertook to resettle the displaced families and others numbering 30,500. As of 31 December 1978, 2,892 units had been completed and 1,260 were under construction; 26,418 families were yet to be resettled. ^{36/} In the absence of a visit to the territory, no comments can be made on the quality of housing provided by the authorities in the Gaza Strip. However, the figures given in the Statistical Abstracts of Israel indicate that the average size of the dwelling units built by the authorities is much smaller than the average size of units in Israel or of those built by the private sector in the Gaza Strip. Approximately 19,000 houses had been destroyed by the occupying authority since the beginning of the occupation (A/34/536 and Corr.1, annex I, para. 24) and this has aggravated the housing problem in the occupied territories.

74. In the West Bank, despite a considerable movement of people to the towns, no programme of public housing seems to have been formulated and implemented. Housing construction appears to be solely in the hands of the private sector. No programme of public assistance to facilitate the production of houses appears to be in operation. The private sector has produced a creditable amount of housing, especially since 1975, but this is far below the requirements of the population.

75. Some indication of the pressure of population on housing can be derived from tables 1-6 in appendix X below. In the Gaza Strip and Sinai, the proportion of families living in housing units of two rooms or less fell from 68.6 per cent in 1972 to 53.4 per cent in 1974. It fell further to 51.6 per cent in 1977. While this may be regarded as some improvement in the situation in the Gaza Strip and Sinai as a whole, in the refugee camps of that territory the proportion rose from 52.9 per cent in 1972 to 53.8 per cent in 1977.

76. In the West Bank, the proportion of families living in housing units of two rooms or less fell from 73.9 per cent in 1972 to 64.4 per cent in 1974 and to 61.4 per cent in 1977. In the rural areas of the West Bank, the proportion of families living in such dwelling units fell from 69 per cent in 1974 to 66.5 per cent in 1977, while in the towns it fell slightly from 46.9 per cent to 45.8 per cent during the same period.

77. Although the figures show some improvement between 1972 and 1977, the degree of congestion suggested by the 1977 figures can only be described as severe. The two rooms per housing unit which has been taken as a cut-off point represents a very low standard of accommodation. The median Arab family in the two territories

^{36/} State of Israel, Ministry of Defence, op.cit., appendix 18.

...

consists of seven persons. That number of persons living in two rooms gives a person/room ratio of 3.5, which is much higher than the ratio for what may be regarded as an acceptable level of accommodation. In the West Bank, about two thirds of all families were living at this level or lower, while in the Gaza Strip and Sinai, more than half the families were living in such conditions in 1977. The situation contrasts with that prevailing among Jewish families in Israel. Less than 30 per cent of Jewish families, with a typical family size of just over half that of Arab families, lived in dwelling units of two rooms or less. The picture of overcrowding which can be inferred from the large proportion of Palestinian Arab families living in dwelling units of two rooms or less, is reinforced by an examination of the data in table 7 in appendix X below, which gives the proportions of families living at various room densities.

78. While some improvements have taken place between 1972 and 1977, the level of overcrowding revealed by the figures is still very high. In 1977, the lowest median room density was 2.7, obtained from the towns of the West Bank and the Gaza Strip. In the Gaza Strip, the median room density for the territory as a whole was 2.9, while it was 2.7 in the towns and 2.9 in the refugee camps. The situation was similar in the West Bank, where in 1977 the median room density was 2.7 for the towns and 3.2 for the rural areas.

79. If a person/room ratio of 2.5 is regarded as acceptable, with any ratio higher than that constituting overcrowding, and if it is assumed that half the families in the range 2.0 to 2.9 are living above this standard and the other half below it, then about 60 per cent of the families in the Gaza Strip and 63 per cent of families in the West Bank were living in conditions of overcrowding with many living in conditions of very serious overcrowding during 1977.

80. The figures on house size and room densities reveal that the situation is worse in rural areas or refugee camps than in the towns. In the Gaza Strip and Sinai, the overcrowding is worse in the refugee camps than in the towns, while in the West Bank the towns are better off than the rural areas. It would appear that the rural areas and the refugee camps act as the major areas for the absorption of populations displaced by war or by psychological or physical pressure resulting from the occupation. The statistics that are available do not permit an evaluation of the situation in individual settlements that would make it possible to assess the direct impact of such actions as demolition of houses and forced relocation of large population groups, such as the Bedouins. It is, however, safe to conclude that there is a connexion between the higher levels of congestion in the refugee camps and the rural areas and the various actions taken by the administering authorities leading to a displacement of families and communities.

81. As mentioned earlier, the private sector in the occupied territories has been the most active in house construction. However, the fact that most building materials, with the exception of quarry stone, are in short supply and have to be imported either from Israel or from abroad at a high cost makes it difficult for the private sector to produce as much housing as it would like. The shortage of building materials is particularly acute in the case of cement, steel rods and

metal frames. ^{37/} Furthermore, the establishment of an increasing number of Jewish settlements in the occupied territories has reduced the supply and increased the prices of building materials for house construction in the occupied territories.

C. Impact of Jewish settlements

82. The question of Jewish settlements in the occupied territories has engaged the attention of many United Nations organs and agencies. In the course of the discussions with officials of Arab Governments and the Palestine Liberation Organization, it was impressed on the mission that the problems posed by the existence and expansion of those settlements were central to any consideration of the present situation in the occupied territories. The problem has many dimensions, but the following analysis of the impact of Jewish settlements is limited to some of the effects these settlements are having on the living conditions of the Palestinian people in the occupied territories and is based on discussions with representatives of the Palestine Liberation Organization and the Governments of neighbouring Arab countries, as well as on written and unpublished sources.

83. Since 1967, some 133 new Jewish settlements have been constructed or are in the process of being constructed in the occupied territories. These settlements are located between and among existing Arab settlements, sometimes, as in East Jerusalem, surrounding them and cutting them off from direct contact with other Arab settlements. This tends to weaken and disrupt traditional ties and relationships between the Arab settlements so affected.

84. In pursuance of the policy of settlement creation, the inhabitants of the occupied territories, especially those living in the West Bank and Jerusalem, are subjected to continuous pressure to emigrate to make room for new Jewish settlers. With respect to the Golan Heights, the Syrian authorities stated that 134,000 inhabitants had been expelled, leaving only 8,000 or about 6 per cent of the original population living in the area. This, added to the imposition of Israeli law and the Israeli educational system on the territory, would indicate an attempt at annexation of the area, 29 Jewish settlements having been established there to date.

85. The policy of settlement creation is causing drastic and irreversible changes in the demographic and spatial configuration of the territories, in violation of the rights, feelings and sensibilities of the original inhabitants.

86. A very noticeable effect of the Jewish settlement movement on the living conditions of the Palestinian people living in the occupied territories is the

^{37/} Cited from the report of the Interagency Task Force on Assistance to the Palestinian People, submitted to the Interagency Meeting on the Implementation of General Assembly Resolution 33/147, held at Geneva from 30 April to 1 May 1979.

contribution it makes to the generation of an over-all feeling of insecurity among them. This feeling of insecurity arises largely from certain actions of the occupying Power, which are basic to the process of settlement creation. Some of these actions are:

(a) The continuing expropriation and confiscation not only of privately owned land but also of miri land, to which individuals and families, and sometimes communities, have definite rights handed down from generation to generation: it is estimated that about 27 per cent of the West Bank and the whole of the Golan Heights have been seized by the Israeli authorities for settlement creation or for other purposes; 38/

(b) The demolition of Arab homes for various reasons, followed by the creation or expansion of Jewish settlements, as in East Jerusalem and in Kiryat Arba;

(c) The destruction of Arab farms, either through defoliation or through the destruction of tree crops by bulldozing, compelling the Arab owners to leave the land and thereby rendering it liable to confiscation and alienation to Jewish settlers under the Absentee Property Law of 1950 or orders made under the Defence (Emergency) Regulations of 1948. Some of the land thus alienated has been used to establish or expand Jewish settlements; on other lands, Jewish groups have been permitted to settle on their own. This alienation of property owned by the Arab population and the settlement of Jewish groups on it are deeply resented by the people, who feel insecure and helpless because they have no control over the processes leading to the transfer of their land. 39/

87. The proliferation of Jewish settlements in the occupied territories has also led to encroachment on the water resources of existing Arab settlements, depriving them of a considerable proportion of their traditional water supplies, not only for agricultural use but also for domestic uses. A case in point is the town of Ramallah, which is experiencing serious water shortages as the new Jewish settlements and military camps around it draw water from its traditional sources. Ramallah's water supplies had been cut off by the occupying authority at one point in order to force the town to connect its water supplies to the Israeli water system. 40/ When the water shortage becomes very severe, the Arab population is sometimes compelled to leave the settlement, thus starting a process which usually ends in the loss of the land.

38/ Special Unit on Palestinian Rights, Bulletin No. 2 (February, 1980), p. 17.

39/ Examples of these actions are given in the report of the Secretary-General on living conditions of the Palestinian people in the occupied territories (A/34/536 and Corr.1), annex II, and the report of the Special Committee to Investigate Israeli Practices Affecting the Human Rights of the Population of the Occupied Territories (A/34/631), paras. 79-105.

40/ Arab Report and Record, 1-31 October 1977, p. 887 (interview given by the Mayor of Ramallah, Mr. Karim Khalaf).

88. The proximity of some of the Jewish settlements to Arab settlements has been a source of friction, often resulting in violent confrontation between the Arab inhabitants and the Jewish settlers, for example, between those in Hebron and Kiryat Arba. The steps taken by the authorities to maintain law and order, such as frequent day and night curfew and security checks, seriously affect the living conditions, because production suffers, religious obligations cannot be discharged and social and cultural contacts are disrupted.

89. One result of the existence of the Jewish settlements in the occupied territories is the fact that the settlements are almost always provided with basic infrastructure, such as piped water, electricity and road and communication networks, and Arab villages close to these settlements or through which certain facilities pass can be provided with these amenities or facilities. However, such moves by the occupying authority to connect Arab villages to the Israeli electricity grid and water system are generally viewed by the leadership of the occupied territories as steps towards annexation. 41/

D. Health services

90. Within the context of human settlements in the occupied territories, the impact of the occupation on the health conditions of the Palestinian people can be examined in terms of the quality of environmental health services available to the people and the availability and delivery of preventive and curative health services to the communities.

91. Reference has already been made to the fact that sewerage facilities in the territories are generally inadequate to cope with increasing demand and that the availability of potable water is far from satisfactory because of the restrictive water practices of the occupying authority. The result, according to UNRWA reports, is that gastro-intestinal diseases are on the increase and constitute a major cause of morbidity and mortality, particularly during the summer months. Information on other aspects of environmental health care, such as the control of disease vectors, and on the extent and quality of preventive services are not readily available. Data are, however, available that make some assessment of curative services possible.

92. There has been no significant change in the number of hospitals in the occupied territories since 1974. 42/ According to the West Bank Medical Association, there has been no change between 1967 and 1974. The information in the Israeli Government report that new hospitals and medical centres have been established in the territories would seem to be a reference to the operational sections and departments that have been added to existing institutions. 43/

41/ For information on the water situation, see Arab Report and Record, 1-15 September 1977, p. 762; for information on the electricity situation, ibid., 1-15 August 1977, p. 668.

42/ Statistical Abstract of Israel, 1978..., p. 808.

43/ Ibid., p. 11.

93. With regard to hospital beds, the Israeli Government report states that the number increased from 1,351 to 1,374 between 1968 and 1978 in the West Bank and from 947 to 1,070 in the Gaza Strip. ^{44/} This means that the number of beds per 1,000 population was 2.6 in the Gaza Strip and 2.3 in the West Bank in 1968, while in 1978 the corresponding figures, according to the population data in the Israeli Government report, were 2.0 for the West Bank and 2.4 for the Gaza Strip. ^{45/} These figures represent a decline but compare somewhat favourably with conditions in neighbouring countries, with the exception of Lebanon, where the ratio was 3.7 in 1977. However, there seem to be glaring discrepancies in the figures available. For instance, a report presented to the World Health Assembly at its thirty-second session by the Israeli Ministry of Health ^{46/} puts the bed-population ratio for Gaza in 1978 at 3.5 beds per 1,000 population, a ratio that is far higher than that calculated on the basis of figures on the number of hospital beds and the population of the territory for 1978. The report does not give any figures for the West Bank. However, the figures presented to the WHO mission that visited the occupied territories in April 1980 give the number of beds in Gaza Strip as 707 at that date. This gives a bed-population ratio, using the population figure of 450,200, of only 1.6 per 1,000 population.

94. The population per physician in the West Bank is estimated at 4,319 in 1976. ^{47/} The ratio for the same year was 2,358 in the Syrian Arab Republic, 980 in Lebanon and 2,332 in Jordan. As a measure of the availability of health care, the West Bank appears to be well below the standards operating in the neighbouring countries. However, it fares better than these countries with respect to other health personnel. For example, the ratio of qualified nurses to 1,000 population was 0.33 in 1976 in the West Bank, while in the neighbouring countries the ratio was less than 0.3 in 1978, except in Lebanon, where it was 0.68.

95. Infant mortality is reported by the Israeli Ministry of Health to be 27.4 per 1,000 in the West Bank in 1977. ^{46/} This figure contrasts with that given in a report by the West Bank Medical Association and made available to the mission by the Palestine Liberation Organization, which indicated an over-all rise in infant mortality from 30.7 per cent in 1974 to 38.1 in 1975. The mission also obtained directly from UNRWA headquarters at Vienna the figures on infant mortality in the West Bank, derived from studies made by the agency in a number of camps over the past 20 years. According to these studies, infant mortality, defined as deaths

^{44/} Ibid., p. 42.

^{45/} Ibid., p. 17.

^{46/} World Health Organization, "Health conditions of the Arab population in the Occupied Arab territories, including Palestine" (A32/INF.Doc.1), annex.

^{47/} Based on figures from the report on health services in the West Bank, Jordan 1977, presented in Palestine Liberation Organization, Central Bureau of Statistics, Palestinian Statistical Abstract, 1979 (Damascus, 1979), p. 64.

of infants below one year of age per 1,000 live births, declined from 157 in 1960 to 46 in 1979. 48/

96. One indication that the inhabitants of the occupied territories may be living under stressful conditions is the fact that the psychiatric hospital in the territories, located at Bethlehem, with the largest number of beds in the West Bank, is the only hospital with an occupancy rate of more than 100 per cent. 49/ In 1979, 5,186 cases were recorded there, including 614 new cases but excluding cases of depression, which, if added, would increase the number of new cases to 1,100. 49/ According to the director of the hospital, for every 1,000 patients seen at the hospital, one would expect about 800 neurotics, 100 epileptics and 100 schizophrenics, manic depressives etc. 50/

97. The WHO mission which visited the territories in April 1980 found that, in general, the health facilities in the occupied territories were not always adequate. The inadequacy was especially acute in the field of X-ray and other diagnostic equipment. In Ramallah hospital, regarded as the best equipped in the territories, the mission found that such basic facilities as equipment for certain kinds of blood tests and biochemical analysis were lacking. Patients from this hospital were referred for such tests to Israeli hospitals, thus placing a burden on the hospital's limited budget. In some cases, for example, in Nablus and Hebron hospitals, the maintenance of physical plant and equipment was poor.

98. The WHO mission also noted great differences in the provision of health services in the occupied territories compared with Israel. Israeli hospitals had more up-to-date equipment, and the quality of health care provided was much higher.

99. The differences in health care provision in the occupied territories and in Israel can perhaps best be appreciated through a comparison between resources available to a middle-of-the-line Israeli hospital and the resources available to all the West Bank government hospitals in 1975. The Israeli hospital selected for the comparison is the Shaare'Sadek hospital.

48/ Information received by telex from UNRWA headquarters on 14 May 1980.

49/ World Health Organization, "Health conditions of the Arab population in the occupied Arab territories, including Palestine: report of the Special Committee of Experts Appointed to Study the Health Conditions of the Inhabitants of the Occupied Territories" (A33/21), p. 8.

50/ Ibid., p. 10.

	<u>Shaare'Sadek hospital</u>	<u>All Government hospitals in the West Bank</u>
Beds	280	973 (941)
Employees	788	629
Physicians	101	76
Nursing staff	269	265
Paramedical staff	133	61
Non-medical staff	275	227
Employees per bed	2.81	0.6 (0.67)
Nurses per bed	1.09	0.28
Total admissions	14,678	49,762 (52,699)
1977 budget	£I 105 million	£I 38 million

Note: Figures in parentheses are official figures or are computed from official figures obtained from Statistical Abstract of Israel, 1978.

100. The above information, which was supplied by the West Bank Medical Association, reveals a great variation in the level of resources available to all the West Bank government hospitals and one Israeli hospital. According to the Israeli Ministry of Health report referred to earlier, the budget for health services in the West Bank for 1978 was £I 132 million, which represented a 50 per cent increase over 1977. ^{51/} This would mean that the budget for 1977 was £I 88 million. Although this figure is much higher than the one given by the West Bank Medical Association, it is still below the budget which the Association says was allocated to the Shaare'Sadek hospital.

101. The inadequacy of diagnostic facilities and specialists in the occupied territories often necessitates the referral of patients to Israeli hospitals for diagnosis and treatment. This procedure, according to the Palestine Liberation Organization officials, constitutes a major constraint to the improvement of health services in the territories, because most of the fees levied by the Israeli hospitals for such diagnosis and treatment of West Bank patients are charged to the West Bank medical budget, and to that extent fewer resources are available for the improvement of health facilities and medical services in the West Bank.

102. The question of paying hospital fees is one which places a financial burden on some of the inhabitants. Free medical service was according to the PLO officials provided in the West Bank prior to 1967; now, the people have to pay for these services. The authorities have introduced a health insurance scheme, which has been in operation since February 1978. According to the Israeli Government report, about 500,000 inhabitants of the two territories have joined the scheme as at January 1980. ^{52/} This is somewhat less than half the total population in those

^{51/} Ibid., p. 3.

^{52/} State of Israel, Ministry of Defence, op. cit., p. 12.

territories. For the many who have not joined, either because they have an imperfect understanding of the scheme or because they lack a regular source of income, the cost of hospital treatment and care is high in relation to individual incomes and the mission was told that many of the uninsured found it difficult to obtain the free medical care they had been accustomed to before the occupation.

103. While health care facilities seem to be evenly distributed in a regional sense, the unavailability of adequate diagnostic facilities and specialist services in many of the institutions militates against the provision of adequate health care within a reasonable distance from the homes of the patients.

E. Educational services

104. The level and types of education available to a community are relevant to the living conditions of the people because of the crucial role education plays in the life of the individual in terms of his capacity to earn and thereby improve his standard of living, to keep himself informed and to enjoy the accumulated knowledge and experience of mankind.

105. The system of education is much the same throughout the occupied territories. It starts with kindergarten for children below the age of six, followed by the elementary or primary school for children who are normally between the ages of six and twelve, who then proceed to the preparatory school for three years. The primary and preparatory schools form the compulsory cycle of education and are followed by secondary, vocational and teacher training institutions and institutions of higher learning.

106. The educational institutions are managed by the occupying authority, by private bodies or by UNRWA. In general, the schools follow the Jordanian curriculum of education in the West Bank and the Egyptian curriculum in the Gaza Strip. However, many books used by the systems have been banned and sections excised from others by order of the occupying authority. There are also restrictions on the import from other Arab countries of books which are the primary sources for literature in Arabic. Duties are charged on the imports of such books and equipment.

107. In the West Bank, the number of educational institutions increased from 821 in 1967/68 to 1,000 in 1976/77, an increase of 21.8 per cent. Similarly, the number of institutions in the Gaza Strip increased from 166 in 1967/68 to 270 in 1976/77, an increase of 38.5 per cent. ^{53/} During the same period, the number of educational institutions grew by 33 per cent in the Syrian Arab Republic, by 32.5 per cent in Egypt and by 78.6 per cent in Jordan. ^{54/} The West Bank is thus behind the others in the growth of educational institutions.

^{53/} Statistical Abstract of Israel, 1978 ..., p. 807.

^{54/} Calculated from figures given in 1968-1977 statistical Abstract of the region of the Economic Commission for Western Asia, third issue, (Beirut, 1980).

108. Enrolment rates have increased significantly since 1967. A comparison of these rates with those of neighbouring countries shows, however, that the growth in enrolment in the two territories has not kept pace with the rate of growth of enrolment in neighbouring countries during the decade ending in 1977. This is shown in appendix X, table I, below. In terms of over-all growth, the West Bank and the Gaza Strip were marginally ahead of Egypt only among the neighbouring countries.

109. While growth in enrolment rates is one measure of access to education, another measure is the enrolment ratio, which relates the enrolment by various age groups to the population in those age groups. The statistics that are available do not permit direct application of this measure. The situation can, however, be examined indirectly. In a study of education in the West Bank, it was found that enrolment figures in the first grade, that is, the first year of primary school to the total population had decreased from 3.2 per cent in 1968/69 to 2.7 per cent in 1974/75. ^{55/} In a population with a high rate of natural increase due largely to high fertility, the fall in the proportion of children in the first year of school in relation to the total population suggests that proportionately fewer children are entering the school system despite the growth in numbers, thus indicating a potential lowering of the literacy level of the population.

110. One measure of the time and attention which a pupil receives from his or her teacher is the pupil/teacher ratio. Comparative figures for this measure for the West Bank ^{56/} and Jordan ^{57/} are given below:

	<u>West Bank</u>	<u>Jordan</u>
1968/69	28.0	35.1
1969/70	27.6	33.1
1970/71	26.9	32.7
1971/72	26.2	32.0
1977/78	27.6	27.6

It appears from the above figures that, for most of the period 1968/69 to 1977/78, the West Bank fared better than Jordan and that, theoretically, school children in the West Bank should be better off than their counterparts in Jordan. However, it should be noted that the situation in the West Bank has shown little improvement since 1968, while that of Jordan has improved remarkably.

^{55/} Fathiya Said Nasru, Education in the West Bank Government Schools, 1968/69 to 1976/77 (Bir Zeit University, 1977), p. 70.

^{56/} K. Mahshi and R. Rihan, Education in the West Bank, (Bir Zeit University, 1979), p. 15.

^{57/} The Hashemite Kingdom of Jordan, Statistical Educational Yearbook 1977-78 (Amman, Ministry of Education, Directorate of Educational Planning, 1979), p. 63.

111. Although UNRWA and the occupying authorities have set up a number of vocational training programmes, there are few corresponding job opportunities for those trained in the various skills. According to the ILO mission report of 1979, approximately 35,000 trainees received diplomas in various subjects between 1968 and 1977 from the various vocational training institutions. ^{58/} However, according to the mission, in one centre only 20 per cent of those receiving diplomas were able to obtain jobs in the occupied territories after graduation. It was pointed out in the report, however, that the Israeli authorities had indicated to the mission that about 40 per cent of all graduates from the vocational training centres found jobs in the occupied territories, while 50 per cent found jobs in Israel. The report also gives the impression that the level of training in these vocational training institutions is not very high, the trainees generally being prepared for semi-skilled occupations in the Israeli economy.

112. With regard to higher education, there are three universities in the West Bank and one in the Gaza Strip, where there had been none before the occupation. These universities have been created and are run through the initiative of the local Palestinians themselves, with some financial assistance from Palestinians living abroad. These universities receive no financial assistance from the occupying authorities and they exist and function in spite of discouragement and harassment by the authorities. One of the restrictions placed on the work of the universities is the requirement that the selection of students and the recruitment of staff are subject to approval by the military governor. The universities also experience great difficulty in obtaining Arabic books and journals. The financial problems are exacerbated by the taxes levied on books and equipment. The experts were told by a group of educators from the West Bank that, while Israeli educational institutions were subject to the same taxes, the amounts paid by them were refunded to them by the Government in the form of grants; no grants were made to the universities of the West Bank and the Gaza Strip.

113. In discussions with educators from the West Bank, it was repeatedly pointed out to the experts that the climate of occupation was not conducive to the creation of suitable conditions for the educational process. In the first place, because the economy was under the control of an occupying power and political power was exercised by the army, the normal educational and manpower planning process to meet national goals could not be undertaken. There were no national plans, for which manpower requirements could be identified, leading to the formulation of appropriate educational and training strategies to meet the anticipated requirements of the economy and society.

114. Secondly, although the occupying authorities had not interfered directly with the general system of education prevailing in the West Bank and Gaza Strip before the occupation, the experts were told that the banning of certain books and exclusion of passages from some others, which were considered important by the teachers, created a certain feeling of frustration and uneasiness, because the teachers found it difficult to help their students to appreciate certain aspects of their culture and history.

^{58/} Report of the Director-General, International Labour Conference, Sixty-sixth session (Geneva, International Labour Office, 1980), appendix III, para. 78.

115. It would appear that the occupying authorities, through their actions, have created and sustained a feeling of insecurity among teachers and students in all educational institutions. The experts were told of constant harassment of students and staff. These harassments took the form of frequent arrests, beatings, administrative detentions and closure of schools. Sometimes teachers and students were transferred to remote rural areas. Practical training for student teachers in the schools of the West Bank and the Gaza Strip was often disallowed. Those actions were justified by the occupying authorities on grounds of security and maintenance of law and order. However, they created conditions which were quite detrimental to the delivery of educational services.

F. Social welfare services 59/

116. Since the occupation, the occupying authority has made efforts to reorganize the social welfare system in the occupied territories. The authorities had also organized in-service training for the Arab social workers to enable them to orient their thinking and functioning to new approaches to social casework, group work and community organization. These actions have made the services more accessible to the recipients and have helped to improve their quality.

117. Rehabilitative services have been introduced to enable individuals and families to be self-supporting through productive small-scale enterprises, for which loans are made available through funds established by the Swedish Organization for Individual Relief, CARE and the Catholic Relief Services. Summer camps have been organized for children from needy families and from institutions, and special vocational rehabilitation centres, as distinct from normal centres, have also been established.

118. There appear to be a considerable number of local welfare organizations (135 in the West Bank and 7 in the Gaza Strip) providing such services as community centre activities, homes for the aged, kindergartens, institutions for the deaf and the mute, sewing courses and day-care centres for babies. These activities at the local level are financed by Arab women's organizations, the Red Crescent, religious and charitable organizations, village organizations and branches of international charitable organizations.

119. The budget for social welfare services has been increased from £I 5.8 million in 1967 to £I 131.6 million in 1978/79. 60/ How this budget is disbursed among the administrative, institutional and direct services is impossible to determine in the absence of relevant data. There is also no information available on what services the occupying authority is providing directly and what proportion of the

59/ For further information, see Joan Hooper, "Social work in Israel administered territories", KIDMA: Israel Journal of Development, No. 4 (January-April 1979).

60/ State of Israel, Ministry of Defence, op. cit., appendix 27.

budget is given as grants to the many voluntary organizations active in this field. There is not data available on the range and kind of services provided, the number of institutions and a profile of the people who are benefiting from the various services provided. The only information available is that the number of persons receiving some form of welfare assistance in 1976 was 32,000 and that in 1978/79 the number of families receiving financial assistance was 8,412 (1,311 in the West Bank, 7,021 in the Gaza Strip and 80 in the Golan Heights). 60/

Appendix I

Balance of trade in the occupied territories

Table 1. Occupied territories' balance of trade
 (Millions of Israel pounds, current prices)

Trading partner	West Bank			Gaza Strip			Total		
	1968	1973	1977	1968	1973	1977	1968	1973	1977
<u>Exports</u>									
Overseas	1	2	10.8	15	57	130.2	16	59	141
Jordan	49	66	462.7	5	19	422.0	54	85	884.7
Israel	<u>47</u>	<u>175</u>	<u>777.4</u>	<u>8</u>	<u>106</u>	<u>835.5</u>	<u>55</u>	<u>281</u>	<u>1 612.9</u>
Total	97	243	1 250.9	28	182	1 387.7	125	425	2 638.6
<u>Imports</u>									
Overseas	20	42	235	19	31	176.4	39	73	411.4
Jordan	17	16	48.7	1	1	.1	18	17	48.8
Israel	<u>139</u>	<u>484</u>	<u>2 459.1</u>	<u>50</u>	<u>319</u>	<u>2 261.8</u>	<u>189</u>	<u>803</u>	<u>4 720.9</u>
Total	176	542	2 742.8	70	351	2 438.3	246	893	5 181.1
<u>Import surplus</u>									
Overseas	19	40	224.2	4	-26	46.2	23	14	270.4
Jordan	-32	-50	-414	-4	-18	-421.9	-36	-68	-835.9
Israel	<u>92</u>	<u>309</u>	<u>1 681.7</u>	<u>42</u>	<u>213</u>	<u>1 426.3</u>	<u>134</u>	<u>522</u>	<u>3 108</u>
Total	79	299	1 491.9	42	169	1 050.6	121	468	2 542.5

Source: Statistical Abstract of Israel, 1978 (Jerusalem, Central Bureau of Statistics, 1978), p. 773 and Arie Bregman, Economic Growth in the Administered Areas, 1968-1973 (Jerusalem, Bank of Israel Research Department 1974), p. 84.

Table 2. Occupied territories' balance of trade, by commodities
 (Millions of Israel pounds)

Commodity	1968	1973	1977
<u>Exports</u>			
Agricultural produce	60	167	1 124.1
Industrial goods	<u>65</u>	<u>258</u>	<u>1 514.5</u>
Total	125	425	2 638.6
<u>Imports</u>			
Agricultural produce	87	165	933
Industrial goods	<u>159</u>	<u>728</u>	<u>4 248.1</u>
Total	246	893	5 181.1
<u>Import surplus</u>			
Agricultural produce	27	-2	-191.1
Industrial goods	<u>94</u>	<u>170</u>	<u>2 733.6</u>
Total	121	168	2 542.5

/...

Appendix II

Extraordinary budgets of towns in the West Bank and the Gaza Strip
 (Thousands of Israel pounds)

	1970/71	1976/77	1978/79
<u>West Bank</u>			
<u>Extraordinary budget expenditure</u>	<u>2 983,</u>	<u>22 993</u>	<u>128 431</u>
Roads and other construction	1 394	12 347	46 767
Establishments	682	6 967	26 474
Markets	755	1 380	13 844
Other	172	2 299	41 346
<u>Income</u>	<u>1 660</u>	<u>12 038</u>	<u>162 850</u>
Loans from administration and factors outside the region	1 047	8 121	153 275
Grants from administration	467	2 315	5 581
Local participation and other	146	1 602	3 994
<u>Gaza Strip</u>			
<u>Extraordinary expenditure</u>	<u>357</u>	<u>23 730</u>	<u>95 005</u>
Roads	112	5 132	18 112
Establishments	220	15 935	49 193
Other	25	2 663	27 700
<u>Income</u>	<u>331</u>	<u>24 739</u>	<u>99 123</u>
Loans from administration and factors outside the region	61	3 813	45 893
Grants from administration	225	8 302	26 832
Local participation and other	45	12 624	26 398

Source: Statistical Abstract of Israel, 1972 and 1973, and State of Israel, Ministry of Defence, A Twelve-Year Survey, 1967-1979 (Jerusalem, 1980).

Appendix III

Water consumption in Israel
 (Millions of cubic metres)

Year	Total	Domestic	Industrial	Population (thousands)	Per capita domestic and industrial water (litres per day)
1958	1 274	196	46	2 000	332
1960	1 338	197	54	2 117	325
1965	1 329	199	55	2 563	272
1969	1 537	231	70	2 884	286
1970	1 564	240	75	2 974	290
1971	1 659	254	86	3 069	304
1972	1 565	268	87	3 173	307
1974	1 565	288	97	3 377	312
1975	1 596	295	94	3 455	310
1976	1 728	306	95	3 533	311
1977	1 670	308	91	3 613	303
Average (1969-1977)	1 610			Average (1969-1977)	303

Source: Statistical Abstract of Israel, 1973 and 1978

Appendix IV

Agricultural production in the West Bank

Table 1. Structure of gross agricultural production in the West Bank, 1969 and 1976

(Percentage)

Commodity/ Commodity Group	Weight at 1968 prices		Current prices	
	1969	1976	1969	1976
Field crops	11.9	6.8	11.9	7.7
Vegetables	12.7	19.9	13.0	17.6
Melons	2.1	0.3	2.6	0.2
Olives	22.6	14.5	19.3	19.5
Citrus fruit	7.0	10.7	7.7	9.4
Other fruits	11.8	14.2	12.8	14.5
Total crops	68.1	66.4	67.3	69.0
Meat	19.0	22.7	18.1	20.5
Milk	10.9	8.9	10.0	8.7
Eggs	2.0	2.0	2.6	1.2
Total livestock products	31.9	33.6	31.3	30.6
Forestry and new fruit plantations	<u>a/</u>	<u>a/</u>	1.4	0.4
Total	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0

Source: Economic Commission for Western Asia, Agriculture and Development, No. 2 (1979), p. 37.

a/ Not included in the total.

Table 2. Crop and livestock production in the West Bank, 1965-1976
 (Thousands of tons)

Commodity group	1965	1966	1968	1969	1970	1971	1972	1973	1974	1975	1976	Exponential rate of growth 1968-1976 (percentage)
Field crops	151.6	73.9	23.5	42.0	29.5	46.5	55.3	43.3	63.9	38.3	34.9	4.7
Vegetables and potatoes	138.8	138.3	60.0	65.0	87.0	85.4	103.1	93.4	138.5	139.9	147.3	12.2
Melons and pumpkins	125.4	31.8	36.0	20.5	12.7	14.0	8.0	3.3	4.2	3.6	4.5	-24.9
Olives	37.4	32.8	28.0	53.5	15.0	30.0	70.0	21.0	110.0	10.0	50.0	1.5
Citrus	31.3	31.5	30.0	33.0	35.2	38.0	47.6	58.6	61.5	63.8	74.1	12.6
Other fruit	150.5	131.9	47.9	44.1	45.8	50.0	56.5	61.8	71.0	78.1	76.6	8.1
Meat	...	...	10.3	12.9	15.3	15.7	18.7	20.2	22.0	21.4	22.4	9.8
Milk	...	...	30.3	34.9	37.1	38.2	43.8	44.3	44.7	46.0	41.5	4.4
Eggs (millions)	...	...	25.0	...	...	28.0	30.0	38.0	38.0	38.0	38.0	6.3

Source: B. Abu Hweej, Agricultural Atlas of Jordan (Amman, 1973), p. 240; and Statistical Abstract of Israel, various issues 1970-1977.

Appendix V

Buildings completed and begun during the period 1973-1977

(Square metres)

West Bank

Total building:	Public building completed	51 400
	Public building begun	53 700
	Private building completed	2 306 400
	Private building begun	2 783 400
Residential building:	Public building completed	1 700
	Public building begun	700
	Private building completed	1 923 500
	Private building begun	2 295 700

Gaza Strip

Total building:	Public building completed	93 500
	Public building begun	105 400
	Private building completed	700 500
	Private building begun	971 200
Residential building:	Public building completed	81 000
	Public building begun	83 200
	Private building completed	612 400
	Private building begun	842 700

Source: Statistical Abstract of Israel, 1978, p. 798.

Appendix VI

Resources and income, West Bank

Year	Gross national product, 1968 (millions of Israel pounds) (1)	Consumer price index (2)	Gross national product, per capita in 1968 prices (Israel pounds) (3)	Private consumption per capita, 1968 prices (Israel pounds) (4)	Average daily wage Current prices (Israel pounds) (5)	Average daily wage work in Israel Current prices (Israel pounds) (6)	Average daily wage for (6)(5)-(8) percentage (7)	(8)	(9)
1968	345	100.0	595	612					
1969	417	104.0	701	727	7.9	7.31	11.8	10.9	49.1
1970	471	108.4	773	780	10.3	8.18	13.5	10.7	30.8
1971	556	125.9	898	808	13.7	9.25	17.0	11.5	24.3
1972	743	146.1	1 193	999	17.9	9.95	21.8	12.1	21.6
1973	705	179.9	1 102	1 005	25.3	9.86	28.7	11.2	13.6
1974	893	256.5	1 358	1 060	39.6	10.78	44.6	12.1	12.2
1975	883	367.4	1 326	1 121	50.0	11.85	53.5	12.7	7.2
1976	1 015	422.1	1 508	1 214	68.0	11.84	72.0	12.5	5.6
1977	1 004	574.2	1 472	1 207					

Parameters for an exponential curve fitting $(Y = ae^{\frac{bx}{c}})$

R^2	0.94	0.93	0.93
a	347.6	585.4	632.0
b	0.12	0.109	0.072
c	1.1263	1.1108	0.0744

Source: Statistical Abstract of Israel, 1973 and 1978.

Notes: Global and per capita gross national product, and private consumption in real terms (1968 prices). Average wages, local and for workers in Israel, at current prices and in real terms, deflated by the consumer price index.

Appendix VII

Workers from the occupied territories employed in the territories
 and in Israel, by occupation, 1972 and 1978

	1972		1978	
	Thousands	Percentage	Thousands	Percentage
TOTAL	188.8	100	211.9	100
University-trained and technical workers	14.9	7.9	16.1	7.6
Managerial, clerical and related workers	7.1	3.8	6.4	3.0
Sales workers	19.8	10.5	21.4	10.1
Service workers	12.5	6.6	15.2	7.2
Agricultural workers	56.6	30.0	53.7	25.3
Skilled workers in industry, mining, building and transport, and other skilled workers	43.5	23.1	56.6	26.7
Other workers in industry, transport and building and unskilled workers	34.3	18.2	42.4	20.0

Source: Report of the Director General, International Labour Conference, sixty-sixth session (Geneva, International Labour Office, 1980), appendix III, table 3.

Appendix VIII

Average daily wage of workers

Table 1. Average daily wage per employee working in the occupied territories

Sector	1970	1974 (Israel pounds)	1977
<u>West Bank</u>			
Agriculture	5.8	21.9	56.0
Industry	6.6	23.0	60.0
Construction	10.3	30.8	79.1
Commerce, restaurants and hotels	5.6	19.8	59.8
Transport, storage, communication	7.8	23.9	61.9
Public and community services	8.7	23.9	71.4
Other	5.5	18.8	55.3
<u>Gaza Strip</u>			
Agriculture	5.8	23.0	53.9
Industry	5.3	27.2	61.1
Construction	7.0	32.9	73.2
Commerce, restaurants and hotels	3.7	24.4	64.5
Transport, storage, communication	6.2	25.5	62.1
Public and community services	7.7	26.9	73.2
Other	3.9	25.4	53.0

Source: Statistical Abstract of Israel, 1978, p. 789.

Table 2. Average daily wage per employee of the occupied territories working in Israel

Sector	1970	1974 (Israel pounds)	1977
<u>From the West Bank</u>			
Agriculture	9.0	22.7	55.0
Industry	10.9	27.2	69.7
Construction	13.0	31.5	79.7
Other	10.5	24.4	68.0
<u>From the Gaza Strip</u>			
Agriculture	10.7	24.8	58.2
Industry	11.6	31.2	68.5
Construction	12.5	33.8	74.9
Other	11.9	30.9	71.5

Appendix IX

Consumer price index
(1968/69 = 100)

Territory	1970	1971	1972	1973	1974	1975	1976	1977	1978	1979
West Bank	108.4	125.9	148.1	179.9	256.5	367.4	422.1	574.2	863.8	1 447.6
Gaza Strip	105.1	128.1	155.1	190.3	294.3	452.7	512.5	685.8	979.6	1 688.6

Note: Derived from Statistical Abstract of Israel, 1973 and 1978. The base had been changed to 100 on January 1976. The above figures for 1976 onwards have been obtained by grafting the percentage increase during the period 1976-1979 to the index number in 1975 on base 1968/69 = 100.

Appendix X

Housing statistics

Table 1. Families by size of dwelling, 1972
 (Percentage of families)

Number of rooms per dwelling	West Bank	Gaza and Sinai	Both territories
4 +	9.4	11.9	10.4
3	16.7	19.6	17.7
2	37.2	43.8	39.6
1	36.7	24.8	32.3

Source: Statistical Abstract of Israel, 1973, p. 707.

Table 2. Families by size of dwelling, Gaza and Sinai, 1974
 (Percentage of families)

Number of rooms per dwelling	Refugee camps	Towns	Total
4 +	20.9	29.2	24.4
3	26.2	23.1	24.6
2	34.5	34.5	35.5
1	18.4	15.4	17.9

Source: Statistical Abstract of Israel, 1975, p. 696.

Table 3. Families by size of dwelling, Gaza and Sinai, 1977
 (Percentage of families)

Number of rooms per dwelling	Refugee camps	Towns	Total
4 +	19.9	27.5	23.3
3	26.3	25.0	25.1
2	33.2	33.8	34.3
1	20.6	13.7	17.3

Source: Statistical Abstract of Israel, 1978, p. 779.

/...

Table 4. Families by size of dwelling, West Bank, 1974

Number of rooms per dwelling	Villages	Towns	Total
4 +	13.1	28.3	15.8
3	18.5	25.8	20.4
2	40.9	29.3	38.7
1	28.1	17.6	25.7

Source: Statistical Abstract of Israel, 1975, p. 699.

Table 5. Families by size of dwelling, West Bank, 1977

Number of rooms per dwelling	Villages	Towns	Total
4 +	12.0	26.9	15.7
3	21.5	27.3	22.9
2	43.1	28.4	39.7
1	23.4	17.4	21.7

Source: Statistical Abstract of Israel, 1978, p. 779.

Table 6. Families by size of dwelling, Israel, 1977

Number of rooms per dwelling	Jews	Non-Jews
4 +	19.8	17.3
3	51.3	35.8
2	24.7	34.5
1	4.2	12.4

Source: Statistical Abstract of Israel, 1978, p. 315.

Table 7. Housing density, Gaza and West Bank, 1972-1977
 (Percentage of houses)

Persons per room	Refugee camps/villages		Towns		Total		
	1972	1974	1974	1977	1972	1974	1977
	<u>Refugee camps</u>						
	<u>Gaza</u>						
Less than 1	3.3	2.7	4.2	5.9	3.0	3.7	4.2
1.0 - 1.9	21.9	20.2	21.3	23.9	21.0	19.4	21.3
2.0 - 2.9	28.4	27.7	28.9	27.7	26.3	28.5	28.9
3.0 - 3.9	22.1	23.7	22.2	20.8	22.3	22.5	22.2
4 +	24.3	25.9	23.4	21.7	27.4	26.0	23.4
Median	2.9	3.0	2.9	2.7	3.0	3.0	2.9
	<u>West Bank</u>						
	<u>Villages</u>						
Less than 1	3.0	4.0	3.6	6.1	3.7	4.6	4.2
1.0 - 1.9	15.7	17.2	17.9	27.1	18.2	18.8	30.0
2.0 - 2.9	21.3	23.6	25.0	25.6	22.3	34.3	25.1
3.0 - 3.9	17.1	19.8	21.7	16.8	17.2	20.1	20.4
4 +	42.9	25.4	31.8	24.4	38.6	32.2	30.3
Median	3.6	3.0	3.2	2.7	3.3	3.0	3.0

Source: Statistical Abstract of Israel, 1973, p. 707; 1975, p. 696; 1978, p. 729.

ANNEX II

Members of the Team of Experts

Dr. P. Austin Tetteh (Ghana)
Professor, Department of Planning
University of Science and Technology
Kumasi, Ghana

Dr. Bernardo E. Batiz (Mexico)
Chief of Technical Services
Dirección General De Planificación,
Departamento Del Distrito Federal
Universidad Anahuac
Mexico, D.F., Mexico

Dr. Dudley Madawela (Sri Lanka)
Formerly Co-ordinator of Units
Social Development Branch
Centre for Social Development and
Humanitarian Affairs
Department of International Economic and
Social Affairs
United Nations, New York

ANNEX III

List of documents and publications consulted

A. General Assembly

Thirty-second session, 1977 - documents submitted in respect of the following agenda items:

- Item 30 - Question of Palestine: report of the Committee on the Exercise of the Inalienable Rights of the Palestinian People
- Item 50 - United Nations Relief and Works Agency for Palestine Refugees in the Near East
- Item 57 - Report of the Special Committee to Investigate Israeli Practices Affecting the Human Rights of the Population of the Occupied Territories
- Item 62 - United Nations Environment Programme, particularly document A/32/228

Thirty-third session, 1978 - documents submitted in respect of the following agenda items:

- Item 31 - Question of Palestine: report of the Committee on the Exercise of the Inalienable Rights of the Palestinian People
- Item 54 - United Nations Relief and Works Agency for Palestine Refugees in the Near East
- Item 55 - Report of the Special Committee to Investigate Israeli Practices Affecting the Human Rights of the Population of the Occupied Territories
- Item 68 - United Nations Environment Programme, particularly document A/33/354

Thirty-fourth session, 1979 - documents submitted in respect of the following agenda items:

- Item 24 - Question of Palestine: report of the Committee on the Exercise of the Inalienable Rights of the Palestinian People
- Item 50 - United Nations Relief and Works Agency for Palestine Refugees in the Near East
- Item 51 - Report of the Special Committee to Investigate Israeli Practices Affecting the Human Rights of the Population of the Occupied Territories
- Item 65 - Human settlements, verbatim records and document A/34/536 and Corr.1

B. Security Council

Reports of the Security Council Commission Established under Resolution 446 (1979) (S/13450 and Add.1 and S/13679)

C. Reports and publications from United Nations organs and units

United Nations Relief and Works Agency for
Palestine Refugees in the Near East

Report of the Commissioner-General of the United Nations Relief and Works Agency for Palestine Refugees in the Near East, 1 July 1977-30 June 1978:
Official Records of the General Assembly, Thirty-third Session, Supplement No. 13
(A/33/13)

Report of the Commissioner-General of the United Nations Relief and Works Agency for Palestine Refugees in the Near East, 1 July 1978-30 June 1979,
Official Records of the General Assembly, Thirty-fourth Session, Supplement No. 13
(A/34/13)

"United Nations Relief and Works Agency for Palestine Refugees in the Near East, Definitions and statistics", 30 June 1979

United Nations Relief and Works Agency for Palestine Refugees in the Near East-
United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization, Department of
Education, Statistical Yearbook, 1976-1977

United Nations Relief and Works Agency for Palestine Refugees in the Near East,
Annual Report of the Director of Health, 1977 and 1978

Economic Commission for Western Asia

"Demographic situation of the Palestinian people" (8 May 1979)

"Survey of economic and social developments in the ECWA region, 1970-1978
(E/ECWA/80)

"Survey of economic and social developments in the ECWA region, 1980
(April 1980)

"Special measures of assistance to the Palestinian woman"
(E/ECWA/SDHS/CONF.4/5/Rev.2)

"Social and economic conditions of Palestinian woman inside and outside the
occupied territories (E/ECWA/SDHS/CONF.4/6/Rev.1)

Statistical Abstract of the Region of ECWA, third issue (Beirut, 1980)

"Social programmes and data for the ECWA region" (February 1980)

"Demographic and related socio-economic data sheets for countries of ECWA",
No. 2 (Beirut, January 1978)

Committee on the Exercise of the Inalienable Rights of the
Palestinian People

The Right of Return of the Palestinian People (United Nations publication,
Sales No. E.78.I.21)

The Right of Self-Determination of the Palestinian People (United Nations
publication, Sales No. E.78.I.22 and corrigendum)

The Origins and Evolution of the Palestinian Problem, part 1, 1917-1947
(United Nations publication, Sales No. E.78.I.19)

"Acquisition of land in Palestine" (1979)

Dag Hammarskjöld Library

Palestine Question: A Select Bibliography (1976)

Commission on Human Rights

Report on the thirty-fifth session, 12 February-16 March 1979: Official
Records of the Economic and Social Council, Supplement No. 3 (E/1979/36)

Report on the thirty-sixth session, 4 February-14 March 1980: Official
Records of the Economic and Social Council, Supplement No. 3 (E/1980/13)

United Nations Development Programme

"Implementation of General Assembly resolution 33/147 on assistance to the
Palestinian people" (DP/410)

Report of the Inter-Agency Task Force on Assistance to the Palestinian People
to the Interagency Meeting, 20 April 1979

Special Committee to Investigate Israeli Practices Affecting
the Human Rights of the Population of the Occupied
Territories

Summaries of reports appearing in the press in Israel and the occupied Territories (monthly issues from 1975 to 1979)

Selected records of testimony taken by the Special Committee at different times while in the region

United Nations Centre for Human Settlements (Habitat)

Report of Habitat: United Nations Conference on Human Settlements, Vancouver, 31 May-11 June 1976 (United Nations publication, Sales No. E.76.IV.7 and corrigendum)

Report of the Regional Preparatory Conference for Asia and the Pacific, Teheran, 14-19 June 1975 (A/CONF.70/RPC/10)

Habitat: United Nations Conference on Human Settlements, "Global review of human settlements" (A/CONF.70/A/1)

World Housing Survey, 1974 (United Nations publication, Sales No. E.75.IV.8)

D. Reports and publications from the specialized agencies

International Labour Organisation

Supplement to the Report of the Director-General, International Labour Conference, sixty-fifth session (Geneva, International Labour Office, 1979), annex.

Report of the Director-General, International Labour Conference, sixty-sixth session (Geneva, International Labour Office, 1980), appendix III.

United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization

"Implementation of 18 C/resolution 13.1 and 19 C/resolution 15.1 concerning educational and cultural institutions in the occupied Arab territories: report of the Director-General on the mission he sent to the Arab territories occupied by Israel to collect on-the-spot information on the educational and cultural situation" (104 EX/52)

"Implementation of resolutions 18 C/13.1, 19 C/15.1 and 20 C/15.1 concerning educational and cultural institutions in the occupied territories: report of the Director-General" (108 EX/12)

World Health Organization

"Health conditions of the Arab population in the occupied Arab territories, including Palestine: report of the Special Committee of Experts Appointed to Study the Health Conditions of the Inhabitants of the Occupied Territories" (A33/21)

"Health assistance to refugees, displaced persons and the Arab population of the occupied Arab territories in the Middle East" (A32/WP/4)

"Collaboration with the United Nations system: health assistance to refugees, displaced persons and the Arab population of the occupied Arab territories in the Middle East" (A32/26)

"Health conditions of the Arab population in the occupied Arab territories, including Palestine" (A33/WP/1)

E. Reports and publications of Governments

Egypt

Official statement of the Government of Egypt, entitled "Negative social and economic effects of the Israeli occupation on the living conditions of the Palestinian Arab people in the occupied territories"

Statistical Yearbook of the Arab Republic of Egypt (Central Agency for Public Mobilization and Statistics, July 1979)

Israel

State of Israel, Ministry of Defence, A Twelve-Year Survey, 1967-1979 (Jerusalem, 1980)

Central Bureau of Statistics, Statistical Abstract of Israel

Central Bureau of Statistics, Administered Territories Statistics Quarterly

The Development of the Administered Territories 1967-1979 (November 1979)

Jordan

Rouhi Al-Khatib, The Judaization of Jerusalem (Amman, Al-Tawfiq Press, 1979)

Central Bank of Jordan, Department of Research and Studies, Monthly Statistical Bulletin, vol. 15, No. 12 (December 1979)

Ministry of Development and Reconstruction, Information and Statistical Bulletin, 1979 (in Arabic)

Department of Statistics, Statistical Yearbook, 1978, No. 29

Ministry of Education, Yearbook of Educational Statistics for the Scholastic Year 1965/1966

_____, Yearbook of Educational Statistics for 1967/1968

_____, The Statistical Yearbook for the Year, 1972/1973

_____, The Statistical Educational Yearbook, 1977/1978

Hashemite Kingdom of Jordan, report submitted to the Security Council Commission Established in Accordance with Security Council Resolution 446 (1979), "Israeli settlements in the occupied West Bank, including Arab Jerusalem since 1967" (May 1979)

Royal Scientific Society, Amman, Jordan, Economic Department:

The Five-Year Plan: Projects and Investments, 1976-1980 (October 1977)

The Significance of Some West Bank Resources to Israel (February 1979)

Numerical Index for Population and Vital Statistics (March 1979)

Numerical Index for Health Services (March 1979)

Numerical Index for Education (March 1979)

Numerical Index for Agriculture (July 1979)

Composition of Visible Imports: An Industrial Development Potential (April 1979)

Numerical Index for Tourism (January 1979)

Numerical Index for Transport and Communications (July 1979)

Numerical Index for Electricity (August 1979)

Syrian Arab Republic

Central Bureau of Statistics, Statistical Abstract, 1979, No. 405, January 1980

Ministry of Social Affairs and Labour, Statistics Division:

The Annual Statistical Bulletin, 1977 (December 1978)

Ibid., 1976 (October 1977)

Ibid., 1975 (November 1976)

Ibid., 1974 (October 1975)

F. Miscellaneous books and publications

Brian van Arkadie, Benefits and Burdens: A Report on the West Bank and Gaza Strip Economies since 1967 (New York, N.Y., Carnegie Endowment for International Peace, 1977)

Arie Bregman, Economic Growth in the Administered Areas, 1968-1973 (Jerusalem, Bank of Israel, Research Department, 1974)

Bank of Israel, Research Department, The Economy of the Administered Areas, 1972 (Jerusalem, 1974)

West Bank of the Jordan, Gaza Strip and Northern Sinai, Golan Heights: Data from full enumeration, Publication 1 of the Census of Population 1967 (Jerusalem, Central Bureau of Statistics, 1967)

State of Israel, Ministry of Finance, Economic Planning Authority, Economic Plans, 1971-75 and 1974-78

Mordechai Nisan, Israel and the Territories: A Study in Control, 1967-1977 (Ramat Gan, Turtledove Publishing, 1978)

Edward W. Said, The Question of Palestine (New York, N.Y., Times Books, 1979)

Statistical Abstract of Israel, various years (Jerusalem, Central Bureau of Statistics)

Vivian A. Bull, The West Bank - Is It Viable? (Lexington, Massachusetts, Lexington Books, 1975)

G. Publications of research institutions

Cairo Demographic Centre

Demographic Aspects of Manpower in Arab Countries (Cairo, 1972)

Urbanization and Migration in some Arab and African Countries (Cairo, 1973)

Institute for Palestine Studies, Beirut, Lebanon

Journal of Palestine Studies, issues from Autumn 1971 to Winter 1980

Birzeit University, Documentation and Research Office

Fathiya Said Nasru, Education in the West Bank Government Schools (July 1977)

K. Mahshi and R. Riham, Education in the West Bank

Palestine Liberation Organization

Central Bureau of Statistics, Palestinian Statistical Abstract, 1979, No. 1
National report of Palestine (undated and unpublished)

The Economic and Social Aftermath of the Israeli Occupation upon the Living Conditions of the Palestinian People (in Arabic)

Israeli Settlements on the West Bank and Confiscation of Land (in Arabic)

Zionist Violations of Human Rights in the Occupied Territories (undated)

Zionist Settlement Movement (undated)

"The Zionist policy of settlement in the occupied territories" (undated and unpublished)

"Palestinian children under Israeli occupation" (undated and unpublished)

Various reports issued by the Occupied Homeland Affairs Office, Beirut, Lebanon, on such matters as the Jerusalem Electricity Company, educational activities in the occupied territories, water resources, Israeli settlements, the struggle of the Palestinian working class etc.

The Committee for the Defence of Palestinian Human Rights under Israeli Occupation, Beirut, Lebanon: various statements issued regarding student unrest, conditions of Arab labourers in the occupied territories, education, condition of teachers, settlements

Central Bureau of Statistics, Agricultural Statistical Bulletin for the West Bank and Gaza Strip, 1979, vol. 1.

Palestine National Fund, "Water resources and policies in the West Bank" (mimeographed)

Arab Report and Record

Bi-monthly issues, 1976, 1977, and 1978 and Arab Report, 1979.

H. Other publications consulted

Rouhi Al-Khatib, The Judaization of Jerusalem, (Amman, Al-Tawfiq Press, 1979)

Encyclopedia Judaica

H. H. Awartami, West Bank Agriculture: A New Outlook (Nablus, 1978)



UNITED NATIONS
GENERAL
ASSEMBLY



Distr.
GENERAL

A/35/533/Corr.1
28 October 1980

ENGLISH AND
SPANISH ONLY

Thirty-fifth session
Agenda item 61 (1)

DEVELOPMENT AND INTERNATIONAL ECONOMIC CO-OPERATION

Living conditions of the Palestinian people
in the occupied Arab territories

Report of the Secretary-General

Corrigendum

Page 1, second line

The item should read Agenda item 61 (1)



UNITED NATIONS
GENERAL
ASSEMBLY



Distr.
GENERAL

A/36/260
29 May 1981

ORIGINAL: ENGLISH

Thirty-sixth session
Item 69 (k) of the preliminary list*

DEVELOPMENT AND INTERNATIONAL ECONOMIC CO-OPERATION:
HUMAN SETTLEMENTS

Living conditions of the Palestinian people

Report of the Secretary-General

1. In its resolution 34/113 of 14 December 1979, the General Assembly requested the Secretary-General, in collaboration with the relevant United Nations organs and specialized agencies, particularly the United Nations Relief and Works Agency for Palestine Refugees in the Near East, the Economic Commission for Western Asia and the Special Committee to Investigate Israeli Practices Affecting the Human Rights of the Population of the Occupied Territories, to prepare and submit to the Assembly at its thirty-fifth session a comprehensive and analytical report on the social and economic impact of the Israeli occupation on the living conditions of the Palestinian people in the occupied Arab territories.
2. At its thirty-fifth session, after considering the Secretary-General's report (A/35/533 and Corr.1), which had been submitted pursuant to the above-mentioned resolution, the General Assembly, in paragraph 1 of its resolution 35/75 of 5 December 1980 noted with satisfaction the report of the Secretary-General on the living conditions of the Palestinian people in the occupied Arab territories and, in paragraph 4, called upon all States to co-operate with United Nations agencies, organizations and organs and local Palestinian authorities to alleviate the tragic living conditions of the Palestinian people caused by the Israeli occupation. Furthermore, the Assembly, in paragraph 5, requested the Secretary-General to submit a comprehensive and analytical report to the Assembly at its thirty-sixth session, through the Economic and Social Council, on the progress made in the implementation of the resolution.
3. So as to enable the Secretary-General to prepare and submit the required report to the General Assembly at its thirty-sixth session, the Executive Director of the United Nations Centre for Human Settlements (UNCHS) addressed a note verbale

* A/36/50

on 5 February 1981 to the Permanent Representative of Israel to UNCHS at Nairobi drawing the attention of his Government to the above-mentioned resolution. The note requested him to inform the Executive Director of the action taken or contemplated by the Government of Israel in response to resolution 35/75. The attention of the Permanent Representative was also drawn to the report of the Secretary-General (A/35/533 and Corr.1), which, in its annex, referred to several aspects of the living conditions of the Palestinian people, including the various factors determining or influencing the quality of life of the Arab population in the towns and villages within the occupied territories.

4. In a note verbale dated 13 February 1981, the Permanent Representative of Israel to UNCHS informed the Executive Director that the note of 5 February had been received and conveyed to the relevant authorities in Israel and that, as soon as a reply had been received, it would be communicated to him.

5. In May 1981, the Executive Director addressed notes verbales to all States, specifically drawing their attention to paragraph 4 of General Assembly resolution 35/75 and requesting that he be informed of the action taken or contemplated by them in response to the resolution. In his note, the Executive Director indicated that the intention was to submit the required report to the Assembly at its thirty-sixth session through the Economic and Social Council.

6. As the report, which will be issued as an addendum to the present document, will be prepared on the basis of the replies from Governments, it is hoped that those replies will be received at an early enough date to enable the Secretary-General to prepare and submit the report to the General Assembly at its thirty-sixth session through the Economic and Social Council.



General Assembly

Distr.
GENERAL

A/37/238
15 June 1982

ORIGINAL: ENGLISH

Thirty-seventh session
Item 71 (j) of the preliminary list*

DEVELOPMENT AND INTERNATIONAL ECONOMIC CO-OPERATION: HUMAN SETTLEMENTS

Living conditions of the Palestinian people
in the occupied Palestinian territories

Report of the Secretary-General

1. In its resolution 34/113 of 14 December 1979, the General Assembly requested the Secretary-General, in collaboration with the relevant United Nations organs and specialized agencies, particularly the United Nations Relief and Works Agency for Palestine Refugees in the Near East (UNRWA), the Economic Commission for Western Asia (ECWA) and the Special Committee to Investigate Israeli Practices Affecting the Human Rights of the Population of the Occupied Territories, to prepare and submit to the General Assembly at its thirty-fifth session a comprehensive and analytical report on the social and economic impact of the Israeli occupation on the living conditions of the Palestinian people in the occupied Arab territories.
2. At its thirty-fifth session, after considering the Secretary-General's report (A/35/533 and Corr. 1), which had been submitted pursuant to the above-mentioned resolution, the General Assembly, in paragraph 1 of resolution 35/75 of 5 December 1980 took note with satisfaction of the report of the Secretary-General on the living conditions of the Palestinian people in the occupied Arab territories and, in paragraph 4 of the same resolution, called upon all States to co-operate with United Nations agencies, organizations and organs and local Palestinian authorities to alleviate the tragic living conditions of the Palestinian people caused by the Israeli occupation. Furthermore, in paragraph 5 of the resolution, the Assembly requested the Secretary-General to submit a comprehensive and analytical report to it at its thirty-sixth session, through the Economic and Social Council, on the progress made in the implementation of the resolution.

* A/37/50/Rev.1.

3. At its thirty-sixth session, after considering the Secretary-General's report (A/36/260 and Add. 1-3) which had been submitted pursuant to its resolution 35/75, the Assembly, in paragraph 1 of resolution 36/73 of 4 December 1981, took note of the report of the Secretary-General on the living conditions of the Palestinian people and, in paragraph 6 of the same resolution, requested the Secretary-General "to prepare a comprehensive and analytical report on the deteriorating living conditions of the Palestinian people in the occupied Palestinian territories and to submit it to the General Assembly at its thirty-seventh session, through the Economic and Social Council". In paragraph 7 of the resolution, the Assembly also requested the Secretary-General, in preparing the report, "to consult and co-operate with the Palestine Liberation Organization, the representative of the Palestinian people".

4. So as to enable the Secretary-General to prepare and submit the required report to the General Assembly at its thirty-seventh session, and in an effort to ensure a balanced and objective expert view, the Secretary-General used the services of two experts (see annex II below).

5. The experts were to prepare the report on the basis of material available from the United Nations and its subsidiary bodies and from the specialized agencies, and other published and unpublished literature pertaining to the subject. They were also to gather information through visits to Egypt, Jordan, Lebanon, the Syrian Republic and the occupied territories and through discussions with government officials and others, as well as with representatives of the Palestine Liberation Organization.

6. Since permission to visit the occupied Palestinian territories was not granted by the Government of Israel, the experts, in preparing their report, had to rely on secondary sources of information, including the reports of a mission of the International Labour Organisation (ILO) and another of the World Health Organization (WHO), which had visited the occupied territories in 1981.

7. The question of the living conditions of the Palestinian people has been a matter of concern in many intergovernmental bodies and subsidiary organs of the United Nations, for example, the Committee on the Exercise of the Inalienable Rights of the Palestinian People, the Commission on Human Rights, the Special Committee to Investigate Israeli Practices Affecting the Human Rights of the Population of the Occupied Territories and the Security Council. Because of the considerable volume of material available in the United Nations, as well as other published material in books, periodicals, journals and the press, it was agreed that one expert would remain at United Nations Headquarters to carry out the extensive research required and the other expert would go on mission to gather information from the relevant United Nations programmes and the specialized agencies in Europe and the Middle East and would also visit Egypt, Jordan, the Syrian Arab Republic and the offices of the Palestine Liberation Organization in Beirut and Damascus.

8. Accordingly, while one of the experts remained at the United Nations Headquarters, the other was on mission from 8 February to 19 March 1982, visiting Egypt, Jordan and the Syrian Arab Republic, where he held discussions with senior government officials dealing with matters related to the occupied Palestinian

territories, with Palestinian refugees living in those countries and with residents of the occupied territories visiting those countries, as well as with recent visitors to the occupied territories. He held further discussions with United Nations officials stationed in those countries. Discussions were also held with, and information gathered from, the representatives of the Palestine Liberation Organization (PLO) in Beirut and Damascus. Information was also collected from various academic research institutions in the neighbouring Arab countries.

9. The expert also visited the headquarters of, and gathered relevant information and data from, ECWA, the United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization (UNESCO), WHO, ILO and UNRWA. Various United Nations reports dealing with conditions in the occupied Palestinian territories were also reviewed, particularly those of the Special Committee to Investigate Israeli Practices Affecting the Human Rights of the Population of the Occupied Territories, the Security Council Commission established under resolution 446 (1979) and the Committee on the Exercise of the Inalienable Rights of the Palestinian People. The experts reviewed material received from the Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations (FAO), the United Nations Conference on Trade and Development (UNCTAD), the United Nations Environment Programme (UNEP) and the United Nations Children's Fund (UNICEF).

10. The report prepared by the experts is reproduced in annex I below.

ANNEX I

Report of the Group of Experts on the Living
 Conditions of the Palestinian People in the
 Occupied Palestinian Territories

CONTENTS

<u>Chapter</u>	<u>Paragraphs</u>	<u>Page</u>
I. INTRODUCTION	1 - 5	2
II. SUMMARY	6 - 14	2
III. PHYSICAL INFRASTRUCTURE, LAND AND WATER	15 - 38	4
A. Land and settlements	15 - 18	4
B. Water	19 - 26	6
C. Physical infrastructure	27 - 29	9
D. Population and housing	30 - 38	11
IV. ECONOMIC FACTORS	39 - 65	18
A. Employment	39 - 51	18
B. Income	52 - 57	22
C. Consumption	58 - 61	25
D. Savings	62 - 63	27
E. Investment	64	29
F. Inflation	65	29
V. SOCIAL AND CULTURAL FACTORS	66 - 90	30
A. Social and cultural environment	66 - 72	30
B. Health	73 - 81	32
C. Education	82 - 90	34

Appendices

I. Land recently appropriated by the occupying Power	39
II. Consumer price index (1968/69 = 100)	40

1. INTRODUCTION

1. In resolution 36/73, the General Assembly requested the Secretary-General to prepare and submit to it at its thirty-seventh session, through the Economic and Social Council, a comprehensive and analytical report on the deteriorating living conditions of the Palestinian people living in the occupied Palestinian territories. A previous report of the Secretary-General, submitted to the Assembly at its thirty-fifth session, in response to resolution 34/113, dealt with the living conditions of the Palestinian people in the occupied Arab territories (A/35/533 and Corr.1).

2. Accordingly, in the present report, the living conditions of the Palestinian people in the West Bank of the River Jordan, including East Jerusalem, and the Gaza Strip are examined with a view to determining the extent and scope of deterioration in the social and economic conditions of the people over the period of occupation.

3. Although data are readily available in officially published documents in respect of the West Bank and the Gaza Strip, they are less readily available and are less reliable for East Jerusalem. The analyses in the report are therefore mainly related to conditions in the West Bank and the Gaza Strip, with some information, gathered from secondary sources, on conditions in East Jerusalem as regards the social and cultural factors.

4. In the absence of a visit to the occupied Palestinian territories, it was not possible for the expert to observe and record information and data at first hand. However, an ILO mission and a WHO mission visited the occupied territories as recently as 1981, and relevant information contained in the reports of those missions has been taken into account in the analysis of employment conditions and the health services prevailing in the territories. Information was also obtained by the expert who was on mission in February and March 1982, visiting the neighbouring Arab countries and United Nations institutions, offices and programmes in the Middle East and Europe.

5. The present report examines three broad areas affecting the social and economic conditions in the occupied Palestinian territories. Section III deals with the physical and infrastructural factors, including housing and community facilities; section IV deals with the economic factors; and section V the social and cultural factors, as well as health and educational aspects.

II. SUMMARY OF FINDINGS

6. Employment in the occupied Palestinian territories has been declining since the occupation. As the economy of the occupied territories has not generated the jobs required to absorb the increase in the labour force, growing numbers of unskilled workers have sought employment in Israel - 34.9 per cent of the total employed in 1979 - while skilled and professionally qualified persons have been emigrating to neighbouring Arab States and beyond. The absence from home of migrant workers and the long daily commuting of those working in Israel, have

adversely affected family and community life in the territories. Structural changes in the production and distribution sectors consequent on the integration of the economy with that of Israel have contributed to the decline in employment opportunities.

7. In spite of the decline in employment in the occupied territories themselves, the incomes of the people in the territories have risen, in both current and real terms. This is due to increased employment in Israel, structural changes in production, a rise in wages in the area and a significant increase in remittances from abroad. The increase in incomes has led to increased consumption and savings which rose at a relatively fast rate during the period 1968-1973, with a slowing down in the period 1973-1979. The decline in the growth rate of consumption and in the proportion of savings was the effect of accelerated inflation during the period 1973-1979.

8. In the absence of an appropriate institutional structure to mobilize and invest savings, the people in the occupied territories have found their purchasing power eroding owing to inflation. Due to lack of incentives to save, there has been a tendency to hoard gold, Jordan dinars and other hard currencies, and most of the investment has been made in improving private dwellings. There are few opportunities to invest in income-producing activities because of the existing economic structure and the pattern of production and distribution in the industrial, agricultural and trade sectors. This has an adverse effect on the development of a viable economy to serve the long-term economic and social needs of the Palestinian people living in the occupied territories.

9. Policies adopted by the occupying Power regarding land and water usage in the territories are adversely affecting the living conditions of the Palestinian communities. The continued appropriation of parcels of cultivable land, often for the use of existing Israeli settlements or proposed ones, has created a sense of insecurity and frustration among the Palestinian people. The restrictions on the use of water by the local people and its increasing diversion for use by the new settlements have adversely affected the agricultural activities of the Palestinian communities.

10. Apart from the above-mentioned economic impact, the social and cultural life of the Palestinian people has also been affected by the various constraints and restrictive actions of the occupying Power, which have been intensified in recent years. For instance, collective punishment, incarceration without trial, deportation, and restrictions on freedom of movement, association and expression, are means by which the development of national consciousness and cultural identity among the Palestinian people living in the territories is restricted. A serious factor which is affecting peaceful living conditions is the continuing friction between the local Palestinian communities, on the one hand, and the Israeli authorities and settlers, on the other. Following the dismissal of the elected Mayors of El Bireh, Nablus and Ramallah in March 1982, clashes broke out in the West Bank, East Jerusalem and the Gaza Strip, leading to injury and loss of life.

11. As far as health is concerned, although certain improvements have been made in the curative and preventive systems of health care, they have not kept pace with

the increase in population and the need for specialist services and care within the hospital system in the occupied Palestinian territories. Shortages of medical personnel, nursing staff and technicians are widespread. Diagnostic equipment and services are often lacking in the principal hospitals, and referrals continue to be made increasingly to Israeli hospitals for specialist diagnosis and care. There have been no significant changes over the past two years in the health services as regards the establishment of health units or strengthening of medical staff. About half the population of the territories (the West Bank in particular) who have not joined the health insurance schemes are worse off than before in obtaining health care and needed medical services.

12. With respect to education, the number of classes, teachers and students in the territories has increased since 1968. However, the enrolment ratios for the West Bank are lagging behind those of the Gaza Strip and neighbouring Arab countries. The frequent closing down of schools and harassment of students have created an atmosphere of anxiety and apprehension which hinders the normal educational development of the students. The application of Military Order No. 854 to the universities has operated to deprive them of academic freedom.

13. As far as housing is concerned, the increase in housing stock since the occupation has not kept pace with the rate of dilapidation. Even though there have been marginal improvements in room densities, the state of overcrowding in the occupied territories remains severe.

14. The high rate of migration from the occupied territories, especially since 1975, has been attributed to lack of employment opportunities and the atmosphere of tension and uncertainty resulting from the continuing occupation. For those reasons and because of the prospect of better employment opportunities in the Gulf States, migratory flows from the territories have accelerated. Since migration generally involves young males of working age, the territories are being deprived of their most valuable human resource.

III. PHYSICAL INFRASTRUCTURE, LAND AND WATER

A. Land and settlements

15. Land and water resources continue to be of the greatest concern to the Palestinians since they are critical factors in a determination of the living conditions of the people. The total land area of the occupied Palestinian territories has been given as approximately 5,939,000 dunums, of which 5,572,000 dunums are in the West Bank and 367,000 in the Gaza Strip. By September 1979, 1,500,000 dunums or approximately 25 per cent of the total land area had reportedly been expropriated by the Israeli authorities (see A/34/631, para. 105). In the case of the West Bank, the land expropriated had increased from 27 per cent in 1979 to 34 per cent, or some 1,862,000 dunums, by

March 1981. a/ Of the land expropriated in the West Bank, 11 per cent was reported to have been utilized for the building of new Israeli settlements. A total of 123 such settlements had reportedly been built in the occupied Palestinian territories by the middle of 1981: 10 in East Jerusalem, 103 in the West Bank and 10 in the Gaza Strip. b/

16. The process of expropriation, in association with other factors, has led to a decline in the amount of land used for agriculture and, to some extent, in agricultural output of certain commodities traditionally produced in the occupied territories. As mentioned in the report submitted to the General Assembly at its thirty-fifth session (see A/35/533, annex I, para. 28), the total land area under cultivation declined from 2,840,000 dunums in 1967 to 2,140,000 dunums in 1974 (i.e., 75 per cent of the land cultivated in 1967). With the further expropriation of land since then, it is reasonable to suppose that the amount of land cultivated by the Palestinians is smaller today than it was in 1974.

17. That expropriation of land is widespread and is continuing, adversely affecting the lives and livelihood of the Palestinian farming population, is supported by the information presented to the Special Committee to Investigate Israeli Practices Affecting the Human Rights of the Population of the Occupied Territories and set forth in its report to the General Assembly at its thirty-sixth session (A/36/579, paras. 102-118). Most of the land has been seized or expropriated for the expansion of new Israeli settlements. The effect of these measures on Palestinian farmers and communities has been a heightened sense of insecurity and a reluctance to make any long-term investments to improve the land.

18. In addition to the direct expropriation of land under existing emergency laws and Israeli regulations, the expert on mission was informed by Arab sources that, in certain municipalities, the authorities have recently started inserting a clause in building permits to the effect that while the applicant has permission to build a house on the land, the land on which the house stands does not belong to him. There is reason to believe that this applies mainly to urban land, especially when the authorities believe that the land comes under the category of absentee owner's property.

a/ Arab Labour Organization, Arab Labour Office, Israeli Settlements and their effect on the conditions of Arab Workers in Palestine and other occupied Arab territories (March 1981).

b/ The Hashemite Kingdom of Jordan, Ministry of Occupied Territories Affairs, A Brief Survey of the Living Conditions of the Palestinian People in the Occupied Territories (Amman, February 1982).

B. Water

19. From the point of view of the Palestinians, the situation with regard to water has worsened. The problem appears intractable in the prevailing circumstances which do not permit of the adoption of strategies for the development and utilization of water resources for the benefit of the Palestinians.

20. As the occupying Power, Israel is the sole authority for the conservation, control and use of the water resources in the occupied territories. This question is complicated by the fact that both Israel and the West Bank share many sources of water and that some of the sources, particularly the underground aquifers straddle the border between the West Bank and Israel. Due to the stratification of the hills dividing Israel and the West Bank and the slope of the strata, much of the rain falling on the hills percolates downwards and eastwards, issuing as springs in the West Bank or adding to the aquifers. Some of the aquifers are superimposed on each other, so that exploitation of the lower aquifers by deep drilling can cause shortages or drying up of the upper aquifers. c/

21. The main sources of water in the occupied territories are wells and springs. Water from these sources is used for agricultural and domestic purposes. Since occupation in 1967, the use of only two wells for agricultural purposes has been permitted. In the urban areas of Nablus, Kalkiliya, Tul-karam and Kaffir the use of a few wells is permitted. In addition to the ban placed on the digging of new wells, a restriction has been placed on the amount of water that can be drawn from existing wells, often at the level that was established at the time of occupation, and meters have been fitted to all wells to ensure that the limits placed are not exceeded. Legal sanctions including fines are imposed on the owners of wells if the amount of water drawn exceeds the limits.

22. The restrictions placed on the utilization of water for agricultural use have, according to Palestinian sources, prevented the expansion of agricultural enterprises and, in some cases, have led to the virtual destruction of farms, particularly small farms which are predominant in the West Bank, because there is insufficient water to keep crops alive. Data on agricultural output indicate that after the initial surge resulting from the introduction of new techniques by the Israeli authorities, output of many agricultural products declined or remained at the same level after 1975-1976. d/

c/ See "Review of the economic conditions of the Palestinian people in the occupied Arab territories" (TD/B/870), para. 55.

d/ See "Permanent sovereignty over national resources in the occupied Arab territories: report of the Secretary-General" (A/36/648), annex, appendix IV, and the report of the Minister of Health of Israel, presented to the World Health Assembly at its thirty-fourth session (A34/INF.DOC/1), annex.

23. Table 1 below illustrates water usage in the West Bank between 1967 and 1979:

Table 1. Water consumption in the West Bank
 (Millions of cubic metres)

<u>Year</u>	<u>Domestic use from springs</u>	<u>Domestic use from wells</u>	<u>Domestic use from Mekorot Company a/</u>	<u>Agricultural use from wells</u>	<u>Agricultural use from springs</u>
1967/68	2.0	3.4	-	30.8	37.0
1977/78	2.6	9.0	0.4	30.5	37.0
1978/79	2.2	10.3	2.1	30.0	37.0

Source: Report of the Minister of Health of Israel, presented to the World Health Assembly at its thirty-fourth session (A34/INF.DOC/1), annex.

a/ The Israeli Water Company.

It will be observed that the data presented by the Minister of Health of Israel supports the claim by the Palestinians that the use of water for agricultural purposes has been restricted to pre-1967 levels. The Israeli authorities state that this has become necessary because of the need to exploit the water resources in a rational manner by ensuring that, in the development of farms, consideration is given to such factors as the availability of water in the area and to the maintenance of the balance between water resources and their exploitation in order to prevent over-exploitation and salinization. As regards permission for the digging of new wells, the Israeli authorities state that between 1967 and 1979, 30 applications out of 80 were approved for permits to prospect, but not a single new well was sunk during the period, owing to the high cost involved (see A/36/260/Add.1, para. 26). There is no indication, however, that any policy exists to assist the Palestinian people to meet the high costs through loans, grants or any other form of financial assistance. On the contrary, as the expert was informed, many restrictions seem to be placed on the receipt of funds from abroad for development projects, including the improvement of the water supply.

24. In general, the Palestinian population perceives the Israeli authorities as permitting the Israelis far greater use of water for agricultural, domestic and industrial purposes than they do the Palestinians in the occupied territories.

Available data point to the fact that water consumption in Israel is much higher than it is in the West Bank, as table 2 below illustrates.

Table 2. Water consumption in the West Bank and Israel, 1977
(Millions of cubic metres)

	<u>West Bank</u>	<u>Israel</u>
Agriculture	90	1,325
Industry	-	95
Households	<u>10 a/</u>	<u>300</u>
Total	100	1,720

Source: KIDMA: Israel Journal of Development, No. 10 (1977).

a/ Including consumption by industry.

Although there is undoubtedly a need to conserve water through controls on its utilization, the fact that the general rate of water consumption per capita in Israel is almost four times that in the West Bank (A/35/533, para. 37) provides justification for the view that the water policies of the occupying authorities deny to Palestinians the use of water resources at the same level as is permitted to Israeli citizens. In the circumstances, the limits placed on the consumption of water by Palestinians in the West Bank constitute a constraint on the agricultural and industrial development of the occupied territories.

25. The difference in the usage of water in the occupied territories and Israel is substantial. Additionally, there are clear indications that the new Israeli settlements in the occupied territories are receiving preferential treatment. Some of the water policies introduced in the West Bank appear to be directly related to the exploitation of water resources for the benefit of the new settlements. For instance, the Israeli Water Company (Mekorot) received permission to drill 30 wells to serve the new settlements established in the occupied territories. The wells are normally drilled into the deep aquifers, thus affecting the upper aquifers which are the normal source of supply for the Palestinian communities. Details of the output from these wells are not available, but for the period 1976-1977, the volume of pumping from the artesian wells alone in the territories was officially given as follows:

Table 3. Volume of pumping from artesian wells, 1976-1977
 (Thousands of cubic metres)

	<u>Number of wells</u>	<u>Quantity of water</u>	<u>Percentage of total</u>
Jordan valley and eastern foothills	119	12,700.2	26.9
Western foothills and coastal region	181	20,378.0	43.1
	300	33,078.0	70.0
Israeli wells	17	14,144.8	30.0
	317	47,223.0	100.0

Source: Yearly report on output of wells in West Bank, Water Administration, Leadership of West Bank, June 1978 (see also TD/B/870, table 17).

26. Instances have been cited by residents of the occupied territories whereby as alternatives to permission for sinking wells, the applicants have been offered the option of purchasing water from newly established settlements or hooking up to the water grids that are being set up to supply the settlements. The affected Palestinian communities have vigorously resisted these options as affronts to their sovereignty over their own natural resources and, as a result, the economic activities of a number of Palestinian families have been reduced to near subsistence level.

C. Physical infrastructure

27. The level, quality and quantity of physical infrastructure facilities in the occupied territories have remained low. Major road networks have been constructed by the Israeli authorities or are in the process of construction. However, these highways have largely been constructed to serve Israeli settlements and the strategic purposes of the occupying authorities. Access roads to about 25 per cent of all villages in the West Bank and the Gaza Strip are lacking. This fact, by itself, if related to the situation in other developing countries, does not appear to be a major deficiency. It can only be regarded as such in the context of the large sums of money made available by the authorities for providing infrastructure facilities, including roads and drains, to Israeli settlements. In many of the villages of the occupied territories, even those with access to the main highways, a reasonable internal street system is lacking, and many houses in these villages lack vehicular access.

28. In a study prepared for ECWA, it has been observed that modern sewage systems are completely lacking in the villages while they are relatively undeveloped in the cities. Modern water supply and reticulation systems are unavailable for about 75 per cent of the villages of the West Bank, electricity supply is inadequate and, in the case of 72 per cent of the West Bank villages, non-existent. e/

29. Table 4 below, compiled from data collected by the Secretary of the World Council of Churches, shows the degree to which the rural areas of the occupied territories lack certain basic infrastructural facilities.

Table 4. Distribution of village infrastructure by type and district in the West Bank and the Gaza Strip

<u>District</u>	<u>Number of villages</u>	<u>Villages without electricity</u>		<u>Villages without a water system</u>		<u>Villages with a poor connection to a highway</u>	
		<u>Number</u>	<u>Percentage</u>	<u>Number</u>	<u>Percentage</u>	<u>Number</u>	<u>Percentage</u>
Jerusalem	32	15	46.8	21	65.6	9	28.0
Ramallah	70	43	61.4	38	54.3	6	8.6
Bethlehem	32	27	84.4	22	68.8	21	65.6
Hebron	60	39	65.0	40	66.6	19	31.6
Nablus	124	106	85.5	114	91.9	37	29.8
Tulkarem	46	32	69.6	23	50.0	7	15.2
Jenin	64	50	78.1	53	82.8	16	25.0
Total							
West Bank	429	312	72.7	321	74.8	115	26.8
Gaza	21	5	23.8	4	19.0	4	19.0
Grand total	450	317	70.4	325	72.2	119	26.4

Source: Bakir Abu-Kishk, "Human settlements: problems and social dimensions in the West Bank and Gaza Strip" (ECWA, March 1981), p. 14.

e/ Bakir Abu-Kishk, "Human settlements: problems and social dimensions in the West Bank and Gaza Strip", (ECWA, March 1981), p. 13.

D. Population and housing

30. The population of the occupied territories has increased considerably since 1967 owing to high fertility and relatively low mortality. In the West Bank, the population had increased from 581,700 in 1968 to 699,600 by the end of 1979. The population in the Gaza Strip increased from 355,900 in 1968 to 432,600 in 1979.

31. Although the territories have registered sizable increases in population, the Palestinians state that those increases would have been higher had there not been substantial emigration from the territories owing to the lack of suitable job opportunities and deteriorating conditions with respect to personal security. There is considerable evidence to support the contention that there has been significant migration from the occupied territories since 1967 (see table 5 below).

Table 5. Population changes in the occupied territories

	A. <u>West Bank</u>			
	(1) Natural increase (thousands)	(2) Actual increase (thousands)	(3) Annual Rate of increase (percentage)	(4) = (2)-(1) Difference (thousands)
1967	3.0	-10.2	-1.7	-13.2
1968	11.7	-4.0	-0.7	-15.7
1969	12.3	13.5	2.3	1.2
1970	13.7	8.7	1.5	-5.0
1972	16.8	11.7	1.9	-5.1
1974	18.1	15.4	2.4	-2.7
1975	18.6	3.5	0.5	-15.1
1976	20.3	5.8	0.9	-14.5
1977	20.5	10.3	1.5	-10.2
1978	18.6	9.2	1.4	-9.4
1979	20.9	9.2	1.3	-11.7
	B. <u>Gaza Strip and North Sinai</u>			
1967	3.3	-8.8	-2.3	11.1
1968	7.4	-25.0	-6.6	32.4
1969	9.2	6.3	1.8	2.9
1970	8.8	5.5	1.5	3.3
1972	11.5	7.6	2.0	3.9
1974	13.2	11.3	2.8	1.9
1975	13.8	10.0	2.4	3.8
1976	14.8	10.5	2.5	4.3
1977	15.3	12.3	2.9	3.0
1978	14.1	8.9	2.0	5.2
1979	16.1	12.4	2.9	3.7

Source: Statistical Abstract of Israel, 1980 (Jerusalem, Central Bureau of Statistics, 1980), p. 677, table XXVII/I.

32. In table 5, the amount of natural increase and the amount of actual increase for most of the years between 1967 and 1979 are compared. The difference for each year may be taken as an estimate of migration for that year. In column (3), the annual rate of actual increase is much lower than the rate for the region and is much lower than the average annual rate of population increase for such neighbouring countries as Jordan (3.6 per cent) and the Syrian Arab Republic (3.3 per cent). f/

33. It will be observed from the table that in the case of the West Bank, emigration from the territory involved an average of less than 5,000 persons a year between 1970 and 1974. From 1975, the volume of emigration increased considerably, involving an average of more than 12,000 persons a year. In the Gaza Strip, the volume of emigration has been fairly steady, involving about 3,500 persons annually. The selective nature of emigration, involving mainly males in the working age groups may be deduced from table 6 below.

Table 6. Population of the West Bank and the Gaza Strip
by age group and sex, 1979
(Thousands)

<u>Age group</u>	<u>Females</u>	<u>Males</u>	<u>Total</u>
0 - 14	134.7	270.7	516.4
15 - 29	157.9	169.1	327.0
30 - 44	80.0	54.1	134.1
45 - 64	64.0	52.3	116.3
65 and over	19.7	19.3	39.0
Total	567.3	565.5	1,132.8

Source: Report of the Minister of Health of Israel, presented to the World Health Assembly at its thirty-fourth session (A34/INF.DOC/1), annex, tables II and XXIV.

The table shows low male-female sex ratios for the age groups 30-44 and 45-64, indicating a preponderance of females which can be attributed to the out-migration of males from these age groups. Thus the incidence of migration, as may be expected, seems to fall heavily on males in the working-age groups. Another indication of the incidence of migration can be obtained from changes in the age

f/ Central Agency for Public Mobilization and Statistics, Statistical Year Book, (Arab Republic of Egypt, July 1980).

structure of the population during the period. In the West Bank, the proportion of the population in the age group 30-44 fell from 13.6 per cent in 1968 to 11.7 per cent in 1979; while in the Gaza Strip, the proportion of the population in that age group fell from 13.7 per cent in 1968 to 12.0 per cent in 1979.

34. Although the population of the occupied territories has increased considerably since 1967 no institutional arrangements have been created at the official level to ensure adequate provision of housing for the increase in population to alleviate the prevalent overcrowding, or to ensure replacements for demolished or dilapidated housing. In the West Bank there are no public housing schemes, or any publicly supported financial institutions for the development of housing. In the Gaza Strip a number of housing units have been built by the authorities in public housing projects which "are primarily for rehabilitation of refugees and government employees". g/ Four thousand housing units have been completed for these purposes since 1967, and 1,500 new rooms have been added to existing shelters. h/

35. In spite of the efforts of individuals, self-help and co-operative societies in housing construction, the number of housing units produced since the occupation does not appear to be anywhere near the number required. The extent to which new housing construction has failed to meet the needs of an increasing population living in dwellings with a high dilapidation rate is demonstrated in table 7 below. It can be observed from the figures that in the West Bank there was a decline in housing units of 7.1 per cent between 1967 and 1977 while in the Gaza Strip and North Sinai the decline was 1.3 per cent during the same period.

g/ Report of the Minister of Health of Israel, presented to the World Health Assembly at its thirty-fourth session (A34/INF/DOC/1), p. 15, table IX.

h/ Ibid.

Table 7. The aggregate supply of housing units in East Jerusalem, the West Bank and the Gaza Strip, 1967-1978

Year	East Jerusalem					West Bank					Gaza Strip					
	Number of units at beginning of year	Units built during year a/	Dilapidated units	Total at end of year	Number of units at beginning of year b/	Units built during year	Dilapidated units	Total at end of year	Number of units at beginning of year c/	Units built during year	Dilapidated units	Total at end of year	Number of units at beginning of year	Units built during year	Dilapidated units	Total at end of year
1967	12 589	172	125	12 636	120 632	445	6 327	114 840	66 843	7	2 291	64 559	66 843	7	2 291	200 064
1968	12 636	149	269	12 516	114 840	673	5 779	109 754	64 559	33	1 777	62 815	64 559	33	1 777	192 035
1969	12 516	275	150	12 641	109 754	791	2 327	108 218	62 813	83	932	61 966	62 813	83	932	185 085
1970	12 641	290	151	12 780	108 218	842	3 560	105 500	61 966	100	266	61 800	61 966	100	266	182 825
1971	12 780	458	133	13 105	105 500	1 486	1 586	105 400	61 800	391	291	61 900	61 800	391	291	180 080
1972	13 105	695	136	13 664	105 400	2 256	2 789	104 867	61 900	816	861	61 855	61 900	816	861	180 405
1973	3 664	770	346	14 088	104 867	2 466	2 799	104 534	61 855	1 015	808	62 062	61 855	1 015	808	180 386
1974	14 088	830	652	14 266	104 534	3 320	2 838	105 016	62 062	1 090	1 258	61 894	62 062	1 090	1 258	180 684
1975	14 266	1 039	863	14 442	105 016	4 156	3 900	105 272	61 894	958	1 400	61 452	61 894	958	1 400	181 176
1976	14 442	1 218	1 033	14 627	105 272	4 773	4 108	105 937	61 452	2 198	1 956	62 694	61 452	2 198	1 956	181 666
1977	14 627	1 124	912	14 839	105 937	4 498	3 763	106 672	62 694	1 373	311	63 756	62 694	1 373	311	183 258
1978	14 839	1 145	536	15 448	106 632	4 581	...	...	63 756	1 559	...	...	63 756	1 559	...	185 267

Source: Bakir Abu-Kishk "Human Settlements: problems and social dimensions in the West Bank and Gaza Strip (ECWA, March 1981) p.11.

a/ Based on the assumption that house construction in East Jerusalem forms about one third of that in the West Bank, being the proportion observed for 1967-1969.

b/ Based on official statistics of the average size of a housing unit, which was 4.9 persons in 1967 and increased to 6.7 persons in 1978. The number of housing units was obtained by dividing population by this average.

c/ Based on official statistics of the average size of a housing unit, which was 5.8 persons in 1967 and increased to 6.9 persons in 1978. The number of housing units was obtained by dividing population by this average.

36. Tables 8 and 9 below give the percentage distribution of families according to room density at different points of time during the occupation.

Table 8. Distribution of families according to room density in East Jerusalem, the West Bank and the Gaza Strip, 1967, 1971, 1975

(Percentage)

Persons per room	East Jerusalem			West Bank			Gaza Strip		
	1967	1971	1975	1967	1971	1975	1967	1971	1975
1	9.5	9.7	9.9	3.3	3.5	3.7	2.1	2.6	3.6
1 - 1.99	27.5	28.0	28.0	19.1	19.7	20.3	19.0	19.6	21.2
2 - 2.99	20.9	21.9	23.0	21.1	22.4	23.5	26.5	27.3	28.0
3 or more	42.1	40.4	38.6	56.4	54.4	52.5	52.4	50.5	47.2

Source: Bakir Abu-Kishk, "Human settlements: problems and social dimensions in the West Bank and Gaza Strip". (ECWA, March 1981) table 4.

Table 9. Distribution of families by number of persons per room in the West Bank and the Gaza Strip, 1979

(Percentage)

Persons per room	Gaza and North Sinai			West Bank		
	Refugee camps	Towns	Total	Villages	Towns	Total
Total	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0
Less than 1	(3.5)	(4.6)	4.3	4.4	(6.5)	4.7
1.0	8.9	(5.7)	7.4	8.0	8.5	8.1
1.1 - 1.9	14.7	16.8	15.4	11.4	18.1	13.0
2.0 - 2.9	31.2	30.3	30.4	25.9	26.2	25.7
3.0 - 3.9	20.8	19.8	20.4	20.8	17.3	20.4
4.0 - 4.9	12.0	12.2	12.3	13.3	10.9	13.0
5.0 - 5.9	(5.8)	(5.3)	5.5	8.1	(5.21)	7.5
6 and over	(3.1)	(5.3)	4.3	8.1	(7.3)	7.6
Average number per household	6.5	7.4	7.0	6.8	6.7	6.8
Median housing density	2.7	2.8	2.8	3.0	2.6	2.9

Source: Statistical Abstract of Israel, 1980 ..., p.688.

Note: Figures in parenthesis are based on estimates or have a high relative sampling error.

In all the occupied territories, including East Jerusalem, there was a decline of 8.4 per cent in the housing stock between 1967 and 1977. It is not surprising that room densities are as high as revealed in tables 8 and 9. There have been some marginal improvements in housing density since 1967, but the over-all state of overcrowding persists. If three or more persons to a room is regarded as overcrowding, then more than half the families of the occupied territories are living in such conditions.

37. Apart from the shortage of housing units relative to the population, the provision of basic facilities within housing units also seems to be inadequate. Table 10 below gives the distribution of selected basic home facilities in 1967 and 1974. While there has been some improvement in the situation since 1974, the most recent data on this subject is that provided by the Minister of Health of Israel in his report to the the World Health Assembly at its thirty-fourth session (WHO document A34/INF.DOC/1, annex). According to that report, in the West Bank the proportion of homes with electricity increased from 48 per cent in 1975 to 74.2 per cent in 1978, while in the Gaza Strip it increased from 36.7 per cent in 1975 to 75.0 per cent during the period 1977-1978 falling to 58 per cent in 1979. No reason is given in the report for the decline between 1978 and 1979. No similar information is given in the report about the possession of bathrooms or toilets after 1974, although information is given with regard to such goods as refrigerators, television sets, radios and electrical or gas cooking ranges, the possession of which has grown between 1975 and 1979. It may be assumed that the situation with regard to toilets, bathrooms and kitchens has not improved significantly since 1974.

Table 10. Selected basic housing facilities
 in the occupied territories

(Percentage of families having the facility indicated)

<u>Facility</u>	<u>West Bank</u>		<u>Gaza Strip</u>	
	<u>1967</u>	<u>1974</u>	<u>1967</u>	<u>1974</u>
<u>Toilet</u>				
None	14.4	21.1	29.0	21.0
<u>Kitchen</u>				
None	54.0	35.9	43.7	17.6
Shared	2.3	2.9	4.7	14.0
<u>Water</u>				
Well	27.8	33.0	27.9	30.0
Tap in courtyard	9.9	17.1	27.3	6.15
Tap in dwelling	N.A.	23.5	N.A.	13.9
<u>Electricity</u>				
None	76.1	52.5	61.1	64.3
<u>Bathroom</u>				
None	82.3	76.3	79.7	81.7

Source: For 1967 figures, see Bakir Abu-Kishk, "Human settlements: problems and social dimensions in the West Bank and Gaza Strip" (ECWA, March 1981), and for 1974 figures, see Statistical Abstract of Israel, 1975 ... p. 697.

38. From information provided by Governments of Arab States and the PLO, it seems that the official housing policy in the West Bank and, to a lesser extent, in the Gaza Strip, is not merely one of "benign neglect" but, in many instances, one of positive obstruction of efforts of individuals to build houses. Building permits are difficult to obtain and, in some cases, applications have been pending for as long as two years. It is stated that Palestinians, in desperation, have resorted to building houses without the required permit and that these houses are demolished by the authorities as unauthorized. Such demolition, which does nothing to alleviate the acute housing shortage, has been carried out in addition to the punitive demolition of 1,259 houses carried out by the end of 1980. Furthermore, difficulties are placed in the way of charitable and self-help organizations which utilize funds from abroad for development projects, including housing projects. For example, according to reports compiled from the Israeli press as at 12 October 1981 by the Special Committee to Investigate Israeli Practices Affecting the Human Rights of the Population of the Occupied Territories, several West Bank

towns and societies were facing problems owing to the ban imposed by the military authorities on funds coming from abroad. This led to the freezing of several development projects. In addition, the military administration was reported to have issued an order prohibiting the expansion or construction of buildings in refugee camps. Thus it appears that the minimal housing construction in the West Bank since the occupation has taken place in spite of several difficulties encountered from the authorities and, according to one source, has been possible largely through remittances from Palestinians living abroad which, in 1980, amounted to \$US 200 million. i/

IV. ECONOMIC FACTORS

A. Employment

39. Data from various sources indicate that employment in the West Bank and the Gaza Strip has declined during the period of occupation, in spite of an increase in the population as a whole - from 966,600 in 1967 to 1,132,300 in 1979 - and in the working-age population - from 491,200 in 1967 to 643,600 in 1979. In 1969, the number of people working in the occupied territories was 151,000. By 1974 the number had declined to 141,700 and by 1979 to 138,000. j/

40. The decline in the number of employed persons can be attributed partly to the emigration of a considerable number from the occupied territories, estimated at an annual average of 20,000. k/ There is no doubt that "pull" factors in the form of well-paid jobs in the Gulf region play some part in the migratory process. However, it was impressed on the expert by several Arab governmental representatives, PLO officials and residents of the territories who met the expert, that the emigration is a direct result of the unsatisfactory living conditions in the territories, in addition to the lack of employment opportunities for educated and skilled people in the economy of the territories, particularly recently qualified young people. The expert was also informed that there were practically no job opportunities in the professional, management and technical fields and many engineers, doctors, architects and similarly qualified persons were often impelled to accept jobs much below their level of competence and experience.

i/ Ministry of Occupied Territories, Hashemite Kingdom of Jordan, Daily Living Conditions of the Palestinian People in the Occupied Territories (Amman, Jordan, February 1982).

j/ Arie Bregman, Economic Growth in the Administered Areas, 1969-1973 (Jerusalem, Bank of Israel, Research Department, 1975) and Statistical Abstract of Israel, 1980 ...

k/ Report of the Director-General, International Labour Conference, sixty-sixth session (Geneva, International Labour Office, 1980), appendix III, para. 84.

41. Another reason for the decline in employment is that, because of the competition of products from Israel and the new Israeli settlements established in the territories, which have unrestricted entry into the markets of the occupied territories, indigenous producers have found it uneconomical to pursue their traditional income-producing activities particularly in agriculture and, as an alternative, have had to seek wage employment primarily in Israel. This became possible with the opening up of the Israeli unskilled labour market to workers from the occupied territories mainly in construction, industry (processing) and agriculture (seasonal and migrant).

42. The sharpest decline in employment was in agriculture, from 64,000 in 1969 (42 per cent of the employed) to 38,600 in 1979 (28 per cent of the employed). This has been attributed by the occupying authorities to the structural changes and the new technology that were introduced immediately after the occupation. It would appear that the changes were directed towards eliminating those crops which posed a threat to production in Israel - melons and pumpkins in particular. Imports substitution crops were promoted and new ones introduced for which there was a demand for export to and for processing in Israel. The new technology and equipment, including loans from the military administration to purchase them, have been made available primarily for such crops, while the production of traditional crops has been largely overlooked. As a result, those farmers who were engaged in producing traditional crops on small holdings of up to 20 dunums or were farming marginally productive land experienced a severe decline in their earnings and have had to abandon farming which not only met their food needs and provided cash incomes, but was also a way of life for both the family and the community.

43. It is not uncommon for these farmers to seek employment in Israel, leaving the family farm to be tended by the female members, children and the elderly. In other instances, they have had to seek employment in nearby Israeli settlements, such employment enabling them to avoid to a great extent the restrictions that accompany employment in Israel itself, for example, recruitment through the labour bureaux or "in an organized fashion". Available data indicate that in 1969, 64,000 persons were employed in agriculture in the occupied territories, while 2,000 Palestinians were employed in the agricultural sector in Israel. l/ By 1974, the figures were 47,700 in the occupied territories and 13,100 in Israel. m/ By 1979, the figures had declined to 38,600 in the occupied territories and 10,900 in Israel. n/

44. In industry, there was some growth in employment in the occupied territories, from 19,000 persons in 1969 to 23,100 persons in 1979, while employment in Israeli

l/ Arie Bregman, op. cit., p. 32.

m/ Statistical Abstract of Israel, 1975 (Jerusalem, Central Bureau of Statistics, 1975), p.707.

n/ Statistical Abstract of Israel, 1980 ..., p. 696.

industry of people from the occupied territories increased from 2,000 in 1969 to 16,900 in 1979. o/ The growth in employment in this sector can be attributed partly to the growth in incomes in the occupied territories resulting from increasing employment in Israel, but largely to the jobbing orders executed for Israeli firms in such manufacturing sub-sectors as wood and wood products, paper and paper products, metal fabrication, textiles and garment manufacture.

45. In construction, the number of persons employed in 1969 was 13,000, which fell to 8,800 in 1974. From 1975 the number rose, reaching 13,900 by 1979. Two contributory factors to this increase would appear to be the significant increase in private remittances from abroad which were generally invested in improvements to private housing and the assistance that, despite restrictions, was flowing from Arab countries into public projects.

46. In the clerical, sales and service sectors, taking the West Bank and the Gaza Strip together, the number of persons employed increased by 1,000 between 1974 and 1979, from 40,400 to 41,400 (from 19.0 per cent to 19.4 per cent of the total number of persons employed in both the occupied territories and Israel. p/ It is not possible to determine from the published data whether this increase occurred in the territories or in Israel. The expert on mission was informed that there had been a significant decrease in tourist services. Apart from tourists from Arab countries, the tourist trade in general has been organized and serviced by Israeli firms. According to Arab sources, small-scale commercial, industrial and service enterprises, which provide many job opportunities in the clerical, sales and service sectors, are hindered from expanding because of high taxation, bureaucratic regulations, interminable delays in licensing and unfair competition from Israeli establishments which are subsidized by the Government. One example cited was that of bakeries: most of the bakeries operated by Palestinians have been compelled to close down because of unfair competition from the government-subsidized Israeli bakeries.

47. Employment has been falling, in both absolute and proportionate terms, in the professional, academic and administrative categories, as is evident from table 11 below.

o/ Ibid.

p/ Statistical Abstract of Israel, 1975 ... and Statistical Abstract of Israel, 1980 ...

Table 11. Employment in the professional, academic and administrative categories

Year	Gaza Strip		West Bank	
	Number employed (thousands)	Percentage of total employed	Number employed (thousands)	Percentage of total employed
1974	5.8	8.0	11.8	8.6
1979	5.2	6.6	11.0	8.3

Source: Statistical Abstract of Israel, 1975 ... and Statistical Abstract of Israel, 1980 ...

48. The employment situation in the occupied territories obviously constitutes a push factor for the people in the areas to seek employment in Israel. This, however, has proved to be a mixed blessing. Although such employment has helped to eliminate unemployment and has provided an income for the worker and his family, it entails many hardships and insecurities. The worker is debarred from residing in Israel. He has to commute daily from his home in the territories to his place of work, which often takes two to four hours. He is subjected to inspection at various checkpoints, and has to leave Israeli territory at the end of his day of work. If he is found remaining there after his hours of work, he can be subjected to various penalties and loss of employment. The Palestinian's wages are lower than those paid to his counterparts in the Israeli labour force; yet he is subject to the same taxes and deductions. It was mentioned to the expert mission that inspections at the checkpoints and other controls in connexion with commuting to and from work have become more strict in recent years.

49. In spite of those hardships, the number of Palestinians working in Israel has increased over the years of occupation, from 12,000 in 1969 to 74,100 in 1979, or from 7.4 per cent of the total employed in 1969 to 34.9 per cent in 1979. ^{q/} These figures refer to workers who are engaged through official channels. In addition, there are a considerable number of persons who seek employment on their own or are engaged through unauthorized agents or contractors. It is extremely difficult to assess this number which, according to various sources, including officials of the

^{q/} Arie Bregman, op. cit., p. 32, and Statistical Abstract of Israel, 1980 ..., p. 696.

PLO and knowledgeable persons in the territories, would amount to more than a quarter of those recorded as recruited through the official bureaux. In addition, there is the growing number of Palestinians who, on their own behalf, are seeking employment in the newly established settlements, a number not easy to quantify. The working conditions of these "illegally" engaged workers are said to be much worse than those of workers engaged through official channels.

50. Most of the Palestinians working in Israel are employed at the lower levels of the employment structure in jobs which are poorly paid, being manual and unskilled work. The largest number are employed in construction: 11,000 in 1970, rising to 34,000 in 1979 - almost half the number of Palestinians employed in Israel. The number working in agriculture almost doubled during the period, while in the category of "other" employment, the number increased six times as much and in industry almost seven times. Table 12 below illustrates the pattern.

Table 12. Palestinians from the West Bank and the Gaza Strip employed in Israel

<u>Year</u>	<u>Construction</u>	<u>Industry</u>	<u>Agriculture</u>	<u>Other</u>	<u>Total</u>
1970	11.21	2.40	5.0	1.99	20.6
1974	35.99	12.07	13.1	7.54	68.7
1979	34.17	16.93	11.0	12.0	74.1

Source: Statistical Abstract of Israel, 1980 ...

51. The workers employed in Israel have no job security. They are engaged on short-term work permits, and the continuity of their jobs largely depends on fluctuations in the Israeli economy. They are the first to be laid off in times of recession and the last to be engaged in times of economic recovery. They are not entitled to unemployment benefits. It was mentioned to the mission that very often skilled workers seek unskilled jobs, because of the lack of suitable opportunities commensurate with their skills either in the occupied territories or in Israel.

B. Income

52. Incomes of the people in the occupied territories have risen significantly since 1967. This can be attributed to employment in Israel and the reorientation of production in the occupied territories to meet the requirements of the Israeli economy with emphasis on agricultural commodities which have a demand for export and for industrial processing in Israel. Wages in the occupied territories have also risen relative to wages paid in Israel for comparable occupations in agriculture, industry and services. A considerable increase in private remittances from Palestinians working in Jordan, the neighbouring Arab States and other countries has contributed significantly to the incomes in the occupied

territories. Although incomes in current terms have shown gains since 1967, they have to be discounted in terms of the accelerating inflationary trends in the Israeli economy, which have a direct impact on income, consumption and savings, as is evident from the analyses that follow.

53. Earnings through employment in Israel constituted 5.8 per cent of the gross national product (GNP) of the territories in 1969, at factor prices. By 1974, the proportion had increased to 30 per cent and by 1979 to 34.5 per cent. Representing more than a third of GNP, these earnings, together with the considerable private remittances from abroad, have had a multiplier effect in the construction, manufacturing and service sectors of the occupied territories. Income from employment in Israel is, of course, dependent on the level of activity in the Israeli economy itself, particularly in those sectors which employ the majority of workers from the occupied territories. Fears have been expressed that in the event of a recession or a change of existing policy, a fall-off in the number of Palestinians employed in Israel could have severe repercussions on the economy of the occupied territories. However, according to the information conveyed by the Israeli authorities to the ILO mission in March 1981, this did not seem to have occurred to any significant extent, although at that time the economy of Israel was going through a period of economic recession, galloping inflation and rising unemployment. r/

54. In the production sectors, agriculture is predominant in the economy of the occupied territories. Income originating in agriculture amounted to £I 149.9 million in 1967/68 (at current prices). It rose to £I 996.8 million in 1973/74 and to £I 6,191.3 million in 1978/79. s/ When viewing this increase, one has to take into account variations in the output of crops due to weather and rainfall, which are important factors in the West Bank where much of the cultivation is on unirrigated land. Variations in price based on supply and demand and changes in the value of the Israeli pound due to inflation and devaluation are other variables that have to be taken into account. Fluctuations in output and value are most evident in the olive crop (almost exclusively in the West Bank), as illustrated by table 13, below:

r/ Report of the Director-General, International Labour Conference, sixty-seventh session (Geneva, International Labour Office, 1981), appendix III, para. 18.

s/ Statistical Abstract of Israel, 1975 ... and Statistical Abstract of Israel, 1980 ...

Table 13: Output and value of olives

<u>Year</u>	<u>Output</u> (thousands of tons)	<u>Value</u> (millions of Israeli pounds)	<u>Value per ton</u> (Israeli pounds)
1967/68	28	19.6	700
1973/74	110	308.0	2,800
1976/77	17	136.0	8,000
1977/78	85	1,275.0	15,000
1978/79	21	1,056.8	50,323

Source: Statistical Abstract of Israel, 1975 ... and Statistical Abstract of Israel, 1980 ...

55. There are many obstacles in the way of enlarging the agricultural base with a view to increasing output and income. As mentioned earlier in the present report, the progressive loss of cultivable land through seizure and appropriation by the occupying authorities, the restrictions on the use of water by Palestinian rural communities, together with the virtual prohibition of sinking new wells, and the competition from similar crops produced by Israeli farmers and enterprises both in Israel itself and in the new settlements in the occupied territories on a more cost-efficient basis have all combined to limit the potentialities of the local farmers to increase their output and incomes. Furthermore, the rising cost of purchased inputs, the increasing wages for hired labour and accelerating inflation are eroding the purchasing power of the income earned by Palestinian farmers.

56. The average daily wage in the West Bank rose from £I 7.9 in 1970 to £I 25.3 in 1974 and £I 181.7 in 1979. In the Gaza Strip, it rose from £I 6.5 in 1970 and £I 27.2 in 1974 and to £I 199.2 in 1979. t/ These rises in current terms have to be viewed in relation to the consumer price index for those years (see table 14 below and appendix II).

Table 14. Consumer price index (1968/69 = 100)

	<u>1970</u>	<u>1974</u>	<u>1979</u>
West Bank	108.4	256.5	1,618.8
Gaza Strip	105.1	294.3	1,824.7

t/ Ibid.

A revision of the data to take account of inflation would indicate that for the West Bank, the average daily wage of employees rose from £I 7.3 in 1970 to £I 9.9 in 1974 and to £I 11.2 in 1979, at 1968/69 prices. In the Gaza Strip, it rose from £I 6.1 in 1970 to £I 9.2 in 1974 and to £I 10.9, also at 1968/69 prices. It would appear, therefore, that in the period 1970-1974 wages, in real terms, rose in the West Bank by 35 per cent and in the period 1974-1979, by 13 per cent. In the Gaza Strip, they rose by 50 per cent in the period 1970-1974 and by 18.4 per cent in the period 1974-1979, in real terms.

57. Private transfers from abroad, that is, from Palestinians working in Jordan, the neighbouring Arab States and other countries, rose significantly during the period under review. These transfers amounted to £I 108 million in 1968, rising to £I 160 million in 1973 and to £I 2,036 million in 1979. The very sharp increase between 1973 and 1979 reflects partly the large number of Palestinians who had sought employment abroad and partly the progressive devaluation of the Israeli pound and the resulting fall in its value vis-à-vis foreign currencies.

C. Consumption

58. Levels of consumption expenditure, savings and investment are indicative of the standard of living of the people. However, the macro-indicators which are normally used do not reveal the real distribution of consumption, savings or investment among the various social groups and geographical locations. Nevertheless, they give a fair idea of the trend in these factors contributing to standards of living.

59. The growth of incomes among the people in the occupied Palestinian territories, through rising wages in the territories themselves, employment in Israel and private remittances from abroad, has, no doubt, contributed to the higher levels that are observable in consumption. Table 15 below illustrates the trend.

Table 15. Private consumption expenditure
 (Millions of Israeli pounds)

	<u>1968</u>	<u>1973</u>	<u>1979</u>
<u>At current prices</u>			
Gaza Strip	142	547	6,907
West Bank	359	1,145	18,148
<u>At 1968 prices</u>			
Gaza Strip	142	294	405
West Bank	359	631	937

Source: See source note to table 14.

60. It will be observed that, at 1968 prices, in the first period, 1968-1973, consumption expenditure in the Gaza Strip increased by 107 per cent or an annual average of 21.4 per cent, while in the second period, 1973-1979, it rose at a slower rate, namely, 37.7 per cent or an annual average of 7.5 per cent. Comparable figures for the West Bank are, for the first period, 75.7 per cent or an annual average of 15.1 per cent and, for the second period, 48.5 per cent or an annual average of 9.7 per cent. The slower growth in consumption in the second period is, no doubt, primarily due to the escalation of prices of both agricultural and industrial goods, as well as in the price of services as a result of accelerating inflation during the period.

61. The proportions of the domestic private consumption expenditure spent on agricultural goods, industrial goods and services over the period of occupation are shown in table 16 below:

Table 16. Domestic private consumption expenditure
 (including net consumption by non-residents)

	Percentage		
	<u>1968</u>	<u>1973</u>	<u>1979</u>
Agricultural goods	33.7	33.5	32.8
Industrial goods	38.6	43.9	43.0
Services	<u>27.7</u>	<u>22.6</u>	<u>24.2</u>
	100.0	100.0	100.0

Source: See source note to table 14.

The data indicate that there was no significant change in the consumption pattern over the period; there was a slight downward trend in the consumption of agricultural goods. Consumption of industrial goods increased by about 5 per cent in the period 1968-1973, but fell during the period 1973-1979. Consumption of services decreased in the first period by about 5 per cent and increased in the second period by 1.6 per cent. Higher consumption of industrial goods, particularly household and personal durable goods, is indicative of a rising standard of living. Available data bear this out in respect of the occupied territories where the largest increase occurred in the purchase of gas and electric stoves and ranges for cooking, electric refrigerators, television sets and tape recorders. u/

D. Savings

62. Savings constitute the difference between private disposable income from all sources and private consumption. Relevant data are shown in table 17 below.

Table 17. Rate of consumption and saving

	<u>West Bank and Gaza Strip</u>		
	<u>1968</u>	<u>1973</u>	<u>1979</u>
Gross disposable private income from all sources (millions of Israeli pounds)	567	2,157	31,191
Private consumption (millions of Israeli pounds)	501	1,692	25,055
Rate of consumption (percentage)	88.4	78.4	80.3
Rate of saving (percentage)	11.6	21.6	19.7
	<u>100.0</u>	<u>100.0</u>	<u>100.0</u>

Source: See source note to table 14.

The data indicate that the rate of savings almost doubled between 1968 and 1973, but fell off close to two percentage points between 1973 and 1979. Nevertheless,

u/ Ibid.

/...

it would appear that by 1979 the people in the occupied territories were saving a higher proportion of their disposable private income than in 1968. When viewing this increased rate of saving over the period of occupation, it should be borne in mind that private transfers from abroad, namely, remittances from Palestinians working in Jordan, the neighbouring Arab countries and beyond, increased significantly during this period. It would be reasonable to conclude that during the period 1968-1973, more was being saved from the incomes accruing to the people in the occupied territories, while in the period 1973-1979, less was being saved in spite of the significant increase in remittances from abroad. The erosion of purchasing power of the Israeli pound and a disincentive to save because of rapid inflation could be cited as contributory causes of this situation.

63. There is more speculation than fact as to what is being done with savings. Owing to uncertainties about the political future of the territories and the absence of a commercial banking system to mobilize savings and invest in income-producing enterprises, there has been a tendency to hoard. Savings in gold or Jordan dinars which are legal tender in the West Bank, are much more stable than the Israeli pound and are convertible into other currencies. Those who do have their savings in Israeli pounds have witnessed a progressive loss in their value over the past few years because of the high rate of inflation and periodic devaluation of the Israeli pound relative to the Jordan dinar and other hard currencies. For instance, the exchange rate between the Israeli pound and the Jordan dinar for the years 1971 to 1978 is shown in table 18 below.

Table 18. Exchange rate between the Israeli pound and the Jordan dinar, 1971-1978

<u>Year</u>	<u>Number of Israeli pounds in one Jordan dinar a/</u>	<u>Annual devaluation of the Israeli pound (percentage)</u>
1971	10.5	
1972	12.6	19.7
1973	13.4	6.6
1974	17.2	28.0
1975	20.5	19.8
1976	29.1	41.9
1977	32.0	9.8
1978	54.8	71.3

a/ Based on quarterly averages, recorded by the Karsou Exchange Office, Nablus (see TD/B/870, table 35).

A consequence of this situation is that in the absence of opportunities to invest savings and earn a return, the Palestinian people have found that their savings have dwindled in purchasing power over the years.

E. Investment

64. The lack of a commercial banking system has inhibited investments by the people of the occupied territories in productive enterprises. There is a reluctance on their part to obtain investment funds from the Israeli bank branches that have been established in the territories. Loans granted by these banks are subject to the approval of the Military Government, and they are usually given for operational activities, mainly for agricultural projects promoted by the Israeli authorities, and to manufacturing establishments which undertake subcontracts for Israeli firms. Agricultural and manufacturing enterprises producing for the local market rely mostly on profits and remittances from abroad for their operating and investment needs. Even here, there is some reluctance to expand production and improve quality because of the keen competition from similar items produced by Israeli firms and marketed without restrictions in the West Bank and the Gaza Strip. More recently, local producers have had to compete with products from the new Israeli settlements which enjoy the same privileges as firms in Israel. Consequently, many small producers and entrepreneurs in the occupied territories have ceased from investing in their enterprises. Some of them have had to abandon their traditional sources of earning a livelihood, their conditions of living have deteriorated and they have had to seek employment which gives them less income than otherwise.

F. Inflation

65. The impact of inflation on the living conditions of the people in the occupied territories has been referred to above in connexion with consumption, savings and investments. The close economic links that have been established between the occupied territories and Israel have made the former highly susceptible to fluctuations in the Israeli economy, particularly its inflationary trends. In the first period of occupation up to 1973, inflation in the West Bank and the Gaza Strip, taken as a whole, was in the neighbourhood of 20 per cent annually. In 1974 and 1975, it accelerated to around 49 per cent annually, dropping to an average of 22 per cent in 1976 when there was a recession in Israel. In 1977, the rate of inflation increased to 37 per cent; in 1978 to 46.6 per cent; and in 1979 to 70.3 per cent (see appendix II below). Available data indicate that the rate of inflation in the occupied territories rose faster than it did in Israel, so that the living conditions in the territories were more adversely affected. Those who, because of their circumstances, had to have their resources in Israeli currency which was progressively losing its purchasing power, have been affected more adversely than those who were in a position to have their resources in Jordan dinars, both currencies being legal tender in the West Bank. Lack of detailed income data for various social groups in the occupied territories makes it difficult to identify those who were affected most seriously. It would be reasonable to assume, however, that persons already employed in the territories at the time of occupation and persons who had to seek alternative employment within the territories as a result of the changing economic and occupational structures would have been affected the most because of the lag in increase in wages and the higher inflationary rate in the territories relative to that in Israel.

V. SOCIAL AND CULTURAL FACTORS

A. Social and cultural environment

66. The living conditions of the people in the occupied territories have been profoundly affected by the constraints and restrictions imposed by the occupying Power as regards their social activities, outlook, aspirations and cultural development. Instances of actions detrimental to the growth and development of a national identity among the Palestinians in the territories have been documented and reported to various bodies of the United Nations system. v/ An attempt is made in the present report to marshal some of these instances succinctly with a view to focusing attention on their impact on the social and cultural life of the people in the occupied territories.

67. First and foremost should be mentioned the deep sense of insecurity that has spread throughout the Palestinian population in the territories. The Defense (Emergency) Regulations, 1945, under which they live, and the regulations imposed by the military administration have tended to deprive the people of their rights to land, water and other resources and facilities which could be preserved and developed for their own advancement. As mentioned earlier, more than one quarter of the land, public and privately owned, has been taken over by the occupying Power, and water resources have been tapped for the benefit of the new Israeli settlements in the territories, often at the expense of the requirements of existing Palestinian villages. Destruction of dwellings has taken place under the emergency laws. Collective punishment has been imposed on towns and villages in the wake of public demonstrations and acts of violence. Imprisonment and incarceration without trial have taken place and deportation has been resorted to for political and other reasons. Restrictions have been placed on freedom of association and expressions of non-violent protest, such as closing of trading establishments, displaying the colours of the flag adopted by the Palestinians and gatherings for religious purposes. All these actions have had a negative effect on the spirit of the Palestinians in the territories as far as development and progress are concerned.

68. The incidence of such restrictive actions seemed to increase after the municipal elections of 1976, when representatives, including mayors, from the National Front which supports the PLO came to the forefront of municipal politics,

v/ See, for example, reports of the Special Committee to Investigate Israeli Practices Affecting the Human Rights of the Population of the Occupied Territories; reports of the Security Council Commission established under resolution 446 (1979); reports to the governing bodies of UNESCO, the ILO and WHO; reports of the Secretary-General submitted to the General Assembly on such subjects as living conditions of the Palestinian people in the occupied Arab territories, permanent sovereignty over national resources in the occupied Arab territories and the situation in the Middle East.

the highest form of representative government in the occupied territories. That these actions continue and with much more frequency and intensity is evident from the information gathered and documented in the most recent report of the Special Committee to Investigate Israeli Practices Affecting the Human Rights of the Population of the Occupied Territories (A/36/579). In 1980 and 1981, actions taken for "national security" reasons, included evacuation of families from their homes in East Jerusalem, Beit Iksa and Nabi-Samwil and the demolition and sealing of houses and commercial premises in the districts of Jenin, Nablus, the Gaza Strip, Ramallah, Hebron and other towns. Hundreds of citrus trees along the Deir El Balah road were uprooted, causing an annual loss of 400 tons of produce. The Jericho municipality was forbidden to implement any town project without the approval of the Military Government. Curfews were imposed on various towns, villages and refugee camps, sometimes extending into days following individual acts of violence. More recently, in March 1982, the dismissal of the elected Mayors of Al Bineh, Nablus and Ramallah gave rise to widespread clashes between the Palestinian people and the Israeli authorities resulting in some cases in loss of life.

69. Instances of restrictions to freedom of movement also appear to have increased in recent years. There were many occasions when mayors and notables were refused permission to cross the borders to Jordan and to Egypt or to travel beyond. Gaza residents were refused permission to cross the Allenby Bridge into Jordan as from 19 November 1980 for an undetermined period. Restricting individuals to their towns of residence or their homes was common. The Military Government of the West Bank issued some 33 orders in a brief period restricting mayors, municipal councilors and other public figures to their towns of residence (A/36/579, para. 278). In one instance, a group of 28 schoolgirls from Helhul were ordered to remain at military headquarters along with their parents from 8.30 a.m. to 2 p.m. daily for a period of one month. Restrictions of movement were imposed on a number of editors of Arab newspapers in the occupied territories and the movement of a Jenin religious leader was restricted for a period of six months.

70. The increasing number of Israeli settlements in the West Bank and the Gaza Strip is posing a real threat to peaceful conditions of living for the Palestinian people in the territories. Apart from the economic consequences in so far as the production of these settlements competes with indigenous agriculture and industry, the close proximity of some of the settlements to Palestinian villages and towns has given rise to friction between the settlers and the local people. In some cases, Palestinian farmers have been prevented from cultivating their fields on the grounds that the land belongs to a nearby settlement. Houses belonging to local people have been occupied illegally. Land belonging to Palestinian farmers has been seized by settlers from nearby settlements. There is widespread belief among the Palestinians that these incidents are often overlooked by the occupying authorities, condoned in some instances and supported in others.

71. There is evidence which has been reported in newspapers and documented by the PLO, and which was also conveyed to the expert on mission by residents of the occupied territories visiting neighbouring Arab countries, that social and religious activities are being progressively curtailed as a deterrent to political

or "subversive" activities which undermine "national security". Restrictions on the activities of social clubs and organizations include scrutiny and approval of those elected to their governing bodies or directorships. Clubs are asked to elect new officers acceptable to the authorities; otherwise they are closed. Banning the formation of new clubs and associations for cultural and social purposes is common. Library associations, theatre clubs and literary magazines are often subject to control. Scripts of plays have to be approved by the administrative authorities and journals of folklore are subject to censorship. It was also mentioned that religious sermons on Fridays have often to be presented beforehand to the authorities for approval. Development of a cultural consciousness among the Palestinians living in the territories has been adversely affected by the banning of the distribution of a number of books recently published in Egypt, Jordan and Lebanon.

72. Social and cultural conditions have deteriorated sharply for the Arab population of East Jerusalem. They are subject to Israeli law, jurisdiction and administration, including taxes and language requirements. Social, cultural and sports activities among the Arab residents are being actively discouraged. The Jordanian educational system which prevailed before 1967 has been replaced by the Israeli system. The circulation of certain Arabic books has been prohibited as has the entry of certain books and publications dealing with Arab culture and history. Censorship of the Arab press is much more strict than that of the Israeli press, particularly because of the wide circulation of the Arab daily newspapers published in East Jerusalem in other parts of the occupied territories.

B. Health

73. In a report to the General Assembly at its thirty-sixth session (see A/36/260/Add.1), the Government of Israel stated that, as from 1967, the administration undertook a wide-ranging programme of improvements to the health services in the occupied territories. The programme included the introduction of advanced medical technology and expertise provided by Israeli medical teams; expansion of existing training facilities for local Arab teams; the establishment of new hospitals, medical centres, nursing schools and paramedical schools; the introduction of new equipment; expansion of immunization programmes, the establishment of school health services; the installation of running water and the establishment of mother and child health care centres. According to the report, health insurance schemes were also introduced, a compulsory scheme for administrative workers and occupied territory residents working in Israel, and a voluntary scheme for all other residents. Around 600,000 residents, about half the population of the occupied territories, are reported to have joined the schemes.

74. In the absence of a visit to the occupied territories, it is difficult to assess the impact of these measures on the living conditions of the people in the territories. As regards hospitals, available data w/ indicate that since 1974 the

w/ Statistical Abstract of Israel, 1980 ...

number of hospitals in the Gaza Strip has been reduced from seven (six of which are governmental) to six, the reduction being in respect of one of the governmental hospitals. In the West Bank, the number of hospitals has been increased from 16 (eight of them governmental) to 17, the additional hospital being a governmental one. There was an overall reduction in the number of hospital beds in the governmental hospitals in the Gaza Strip and a negligible increase in the West Bank between 1974 and 1979, in spite of an increase in population in the territories and in the number of hospitalized patients.

75. As regards equipment, in a report made available to the experts x/ mention is made of widespread shortages of modern equipment at the principal hospitals in the West Bank. These shortages include monitoring equipment in intensive-care units, incubators for babies born prematurely, X-ray equipment, advanced laboratory equipment for diagnosis, and operating and sterilization equipment.

76. As regards specialist services, the head of the West Bank Medical Association, in a report entitled "Medical services in the occupied West Bank", y/ has asserted that there are deficiencies in such medical fields as paediatrics, pathology and radiology. Shortages are experienced among nurses and paramedical personnel. The lack of an adequate supply of X-ray technicians, physiotherapists, blood-bank technicians and pharmacists was deeply affecting the efficient delivery of health services.

77. The inadequacy of services in the main hospitals in the West Bank has compelled local physicians to refer an increasing number of Arab patients to hospitals in Israel. In such cases, the patient is charged one third of the cost and the remaining two thirds is charged to the West Bank budget for health services. These charges for West Bank patient care in Israeli hospitals, which is on the increase, are mentioned as one of the obstacles to the improvement and development of the health services in the West Bank.

78. The worst off among the population in the occupied territories in terms of health care are those who have not joined the health insurance schemes - about half the population - because they are not qualified to join the compulsory scheme or because of an imperfect understanding of the scheme or because they lack a regular source of income. They find the costs of medical care too high in relation to their resources and many of them find it difficult to obtain the kind of free medical treatment they were accustomed to before the occupation.

79. Some of the shortcomings in the health system mentioned above were observed and commented on by the Special Committee of Experts of the World Health

x/ "The deficiency of medical instruments in West Bank hospitals", report by the Committee for the Defense of Palestinian Human Rights under Israeli Occupation, Lebanon, 1979 (mimeo).

y/ Reproduced by the Committee for the Defense of Palestinian Human Rights under Israeli Occupation, Lebanon, 29 March 1979 (mimeo).

Organization which visited the occupied territories in April 1981. ^{z/} Particular mention has been made of the shortage of essential equipment and technicians in the laboratories which were being established in the health districts under a recent policy of decentralization of these services. The hospitals in the territories were experiencing shortages of physicians and nurses who, because of poor work conditions and pay, were leaving the territories in search of employment in the neighbouring Arab countries. Another reason for physicians leaving was given as the lack of opportunities for post-graduate training which for budgetary reasons was not being made available to them. Shortages of drugs were widespread. All these shortcomings add to the feeling of frustration in the occupied territories on matters pertaining to health care.

80. According to the WHO Special Committee, some improvements had been made in the infrastructure for the delivery of health services and in the supply of equipment. Yet, much more had to be done in order to serve the needs of the growing population. Medical care in the occupied territories was still dependent on Israeli facilities for a number of specialist services. According to the Committee, there had been no significant changes during the past two years in the health services with regard to the establishment of health units or strengthening of medical staff. The system of centralization in planning for health services was not conducive to community participation in the public health effort and left the local medical authorities very little room for initiative. The health budget did not allow for desirable developments in the health services. Extrabudgetary resources from non-governmental and philanthropic institutions and associations or the community were often refused by the Israeli authorities.

81. The Committee observed that services provided through the maternal and child health centres were adequately organized, and the immunization programme was pursued in all the territories. Developments were also observed in environmental sanitation, particularly through the construction of sewage treatment plants and in the supply of drinking water which, in general, was good and had been extended to cover a larger proportion of the residents through individual connexions.

C. Education

82. Education is an important element in the living conditions of a people since it not only provides the opportunity and mechanism for self-improvement but also makes possible upward occupational mobility, an increase in a person's ability to earn and the enhancement of his standard of living. In dealing with education as a component of living conditions, it is not enough to consider the existence, levels and distribution of educational institutions; the individual's access to the type of education relevant to his needs and the over-all conditions under which education is provided should also be considered.

^{z/} See WHO, "Report of the Special Committee of Experts appointed to study the health conditions of the inhabitants of the occupied territories" (A34/17).

83. The system of education is basically the same in all the occupied territories. It starts with kindergarten for children under the age of six, followed by elementary or primary school for children between the ages of six and 12, who then proceed to preparatory school, normally for three years. The primary and preparatory schools form the compulsory cycle of education and are followed by secondary, vocational and teacher training institutions and institutions of higher learning.

84. The educational institutions are managed by the government, private bodies or UNRWA. As far as practicable, the schools follow the Jordanian curriculum in the West Bank and the Egyptian curriculum in the Gaza Strip. However, books used by the schools are subject to Israeli censorship. Some books have been banned by the authorities and others have been reprinted, the sections considered offensive by the Israeli authorities being eliminated.

85. There has been a considerable increase in educational institutions in the territories since 1967. In the West Bank and the Gaza Strip the number of educational institutions increased from 1,091 in 1967/68 to 1,366 in 1979/80 and, according to an Israeli official report, the number of classrooms increased by 80 per cent, from 6,187 in 1967/68 to 11,187 in 1979/80, while the average number of pupils in a class remained stable at around 36 (see A/36/260/Add.1, p. 18, para. 72). However, from 1967 to 1977 enrolment rates in the West Bank and the Gaza Strip were somewhat behind those of neighbouring countries. Data are not available for evaluation of the situation since 1977, but from indirect data on enrolment of refugee pupils one can infer that while the situation has improved in the Gaza Strip, the situation in the West Bank does not appear to have kept pace with that in the neighbouring territories.

86. The enrolment ratio which relates the enrolment in each age group to the population in that age group is a good measure of the extent to which persons who are eligible for education are attending school. The proportions in the first year of the compulsory cycle give a good indication of the enrolment ratio generally because the higher the enrolment ratio of first-year entrants into the educational system, the higher the enrolment ratio for succeeding years at all ages. Although direct information on the enrolment ratio in the occupied territories is not available, such information has been compiled by UNRWA with respect to refugee students in all the areas in which UNRWA operates. If it is assumed that educational trends among the refugee population reflects the trends in the host countries then the information given in table 19 below can be regarded as reflecting the trends in enrolment ratios in the various countries and territories. The table shows the enrolment ratios at age six for refugee children in the Gaza Strip, the West Bank, Jordan, Lebanon and the Syrian Arab Republic. It will be observed that these ratios are very high for boys and, in the case of Gaza and the Syrian Arab Republic, almost all the six-year-olds are in school. The West Bank has the lowest enrolment ratio at year six. Furthermore, this ratio declined between 1977/78 and 1979/80. In 1980/81 it picked up to a high of 66.8 per cent which is only about two thirds of the ratios for the Gaza Strip and the Syrian Arab Republic. The enrolment ratios for girls are compared with those of other developing countries. But the ratio for the West Bank is much less than that for

the other countries and the Gaza Strip. Furthermore, the low ratio appears to be stable with a noticeable decline between 1979/80 and 1980/81. The West Bank, which has the lowest enrolment ratios in 1977/78, is the only one of the four neighbouring countries and territories with declining enrolment ratios. The decline in the ratios in Lebanon since 1979/80 may be attributed to the unstable political and military situation in that country. In all four countries and territories the population of school children who are girls rose from about one quarter in the 1950s to almost half in 1980/81. This achievement seems to be common to all the countries and territories in the region and may be a reflection of a greater awareness of the importance of education in society.

Table 19. First-year primary school enrolment ratios for refugee children in selected countries, 1977/78 to 1980/81

<u>Year</u>	<u>Gaza</u>	<u>West Bank</u>	<u>Syrian Arab Republic</u>	<u>Jordan</u>	<u>Lebanon</u>
			<u>Boys</u>		
1977/78	98.3	64.3	97.3	66.7	94.1
1978/79	95.7	63.7	98.5	76.2	93.6
1979/80	99.2	63.0	99.6	80.0	82.4
1980/81	99.4	60.8	99.5	82.8	76.7
			<u>Girls</u>		
1977/78	96.3	60.2	96.4	60.7	93.3
1978/79	94.0	60.2	98.9	70.0	96.1
1979/80	94.9	60.5	98.4	82.9	81.8
1980/81	98.2	58.9	95.6	84.0	71.2

Source: UNRWA, Statistical Year Book, 1977/78, 1978/79, 1979/80 and 1980/81 editions.

87. From information supplied to the ILO mission which visited Israel and the occupied territories in March 1981, it appears that considerable efforts are being made by the authorities to provide opportunities for vocational training. The 26 vocational training centres (18 on the West Bank and eight in Gaza) have

provided training for over 40,000 people. aa/ According to the mission, the role of the training centres, which had been to provide unemployed adults with basic training principally with a view to employment in the construction sector in Israel, had changed in 1972 and at present, "programmes are mainly directed at young people who do not wish to continue their academic education at secondary level and concentrate on the acquisition of manufacturing skills". bb/ In general, it appears the vocational training centres provide training mainly for semi-skilled jobs in industry and construction. Information received from Arab sources emphasizes the point that the training which is given is largely geared towards meeting the needs of the Israeli economy. Most of those who complete the training programmes therefore find jobs in Israel or else migrate to the Arab Gulf countries. In a visit to two training centres in 1981, the ILO mission found that only a small percentage of persons completing these courses (between 5 per cent and 20 per cent) managed or attempted to find employment locally. The mission concluded that besides the potential long-term benefits from acquisition of skills in jobs outside the occupied territories," the training system, as at present organized, does not serve the real development needs of the occupied territories because it is not based on a planned match of manpower needs and resources". cc/

88. With regard to higher education, there are three universities in the West Bank and an Institute of Islamic Religious Studies in Gaza. They are supported by private foundations and individuals and receive practically no assistance from the Government. They cater for Arab students not only from the occupied territories but also from Israel itself. The universities have long been experiencing numerous problems with the administering authorities. These persistent problems, however, seem to have intensified within the past few years, especially with respect to Bir-Zeit University. The main reason for this appears to be Israeli Military Order 854 of 8th July 1980, "an order concerning the law of Education and Culture No. (16) of 1964 - Amendment (Judea and Samaria) No. (854) of 1960". This order placed all the educational institutions, including the universities in the occupied territories, under the absolute control of the military authorities. By this order all institutions of higher education, whether in existence at the date of the order or not, have to obtain a permit from the Military Governor in order to operate and all teachers have to be cleared by the Military Governor and his office before they can obtain employment in the University or continue in such employment. In addition, all foreign students, including students from the Gaza Strip, have to obtain permits to enable them to attend the universities.

89. The harassment of students is not confined to the institutions of higher learning. Many secondary schools seem to be subjected to similar harassment. In

aa/ Report of the Director-General, International Labour Conference, sixty-seventh session (International Labour Office, Geneva, 1981), p. 31.

bb/ Ibid.

cc/ Ibid.

1980/81, 12 schools were shut down by the military authorities for various periods and three of these, Prince Hassan Secondary School at Bir Zeit, Abu Diss Science College and Ossana Bin Munkiz School at Hebron were shut down permanently.

90. While progress has been achieved in the numbers of schools, classes and teachers, as well as in enrolment, the frequent closure of schools and universities, the continual harassment of staff and students and the restrictions on the academic freedom of the universities have created an atmosphere of fear, uncertainty and helplessness, uncondusive to the proper and effective conduct of teaching and learning.

Appendix I

Land recently appropriated by the occupying Power

<u>Location</u>	<u>Date</u>	<u>Amount of land confiscated</u> <u>(dunums)</u>
Deir El Hatab	August 1980	400
Deir-Jarir	August 1980	(land expropriated)
Ramun	August 1980	850
Mardah	September 1980	50
Qatana	November 1980	2,500
Beit Sahur	October 1980	50
Ketel Haris	December 1980	(land confiscated)
Si'ir	December 1980	1,000
Silwad	December 1980	60
Ein Yabaad	December 1980	45
Tarqumiya	February 1981	7,000
Betunia, Ajaiby, Ajadira, Rafat	February 1981	1,500
Jenin	February 1981	(land confiscated)
Salfit	February 1981	6,000
Tubas	February 1981	8,000
Abu Dis	February 1981	11,000 (declared "state land" before acquisition)

Source: "Report of the Special Committee to Investigate Israeli Practices Affecting the Human Rights of the Population of the Occupied Territories" (A/36/579), paras. 102-118.

Appendix 11

Consumer price index (1968/69 = 100)

<u>Territory</u>	<u>1970</u>	<u>1971</u>	<u>1972</u>	<u>1973</u>	<u>1974</u>	<u>1975</u>	<u>1976</u>	<u>1977</u>	<u>1978</u>	<u>1979</u>
West Bank	108.4	125.9	148.1	179.9	256.5	367.4	470.5	640.0	962.7	1 618.8
Gaza Strip	105.1	128.1	155.1	190.3	294.3	452.7	533.8	741.1	1 058.6	1 824.1
Israel	106.1	118.8	134.1	160.9	224.8	313.1	411.2	553.5	833.5	1 486.1

Source: Compiled from Statistical Abstract of Israel, 1975 ... and document TD/B/870, table 11.

ANNEX II

Members of the Team of Experts

Dr. P. Austin Tetteh (Ghana)
Professor, Department of Planning
University of Science and Technology
Kumasi, Ghana

Dr. Dudley Madawela (Sri Lanka)
Formerly Co-ordinator of Units
Social Development Branch
Centre for Social Development and Humanitarian Affairs
Department of International Economic and Social Affairs
United Nations, New York



General Assembly
Economic and Social Council

Distr.
GENERAL
A/38/278
E/1983/77
22 June 1983

ORIGINAL: ENGLISH

GENERAL ASSEMBLY
Thirty-eighth session
Item 78 (h) of the preliminary list*
DEVELOPMENT AND INTERNATIONAL ECONOMIC
CO-OPERATION: HUMAN SETTLEMENTS

ECONOMIC AND SOCIAL COUNCIL
Second regular session of 1983
Item 15 of the provisional
agenda**
INTERNATIONAL CO-OPERATION IN
THE FIELD OF HUMAN
SETTLEMENTS

Living conditions of the Palestinian people in the occupied
Palestinian territories

Report of the Secretary-General

1. In its resolution 34/113 of 14 December 1979, the General Assembly requested the Secretary-General, in collaboration with the relevant United Nations organs and specialized agencies, particularly the United Nations Relief and Works Agency for Palestine Refugees in the Near East (UNRWA), the Economic Commission for Western Asia (ECWA) and the Special Committee to Investigate Israeli Practices Affecting the Human Rights of the Population of the Occupied Territories, to prepare and submit to the Assembly at its thirty-fifth session a comprehensive and analytical report on the social and economic impact of the Israeli occupation on the living conditions of the Palestinian people in the occupied Arab territories.
2. At its thirty-fifth session, after considering the Secretary-General's report (A/35/533 and Corr.1), which had been submitted pursuant to the above-mentioned resolution, the General Assembly, in paragraph 1 of resolution 35/75 of 5 December 1980, took note with satisfaction of the report of the Secretary-General on the living conditions of the Palestinian people in the occupied Arab territories and, in paragraph 4 of the same resolution, called upon all States to co-operate with United Nations agencies, organizations and organs and local Palestinian

* A/38/50/Rev.1.

** E/1983/100.

authorities to alleviate the tragic living conditions of the Palestinian people caused by the Israeli occupation. Furthermore, in paragraph 5 of the resolution, the Assembly requested the Secretary-General to submit a comprehensive and analytical report to it at its thirty-sixth session, through the Economic and Social Council, on the progress made in the implementation of the resolution.

3. At its thirty-sixth session, after considering the Secretary-General's report (A/36/260 and Add.1-3), which had been submitted pursuant to its resolution 35/75, the General Assembly, in paragraph 1 of resolution 36/73 of 4 December 1981, took note of the report of the Secretary-General on the living conditions of the Palestinian people and, in paragraph 6 of the same resolution, requested the Secretary-General "to prepare a comprehensive and analytical report on the deteriorating living conditions of the Palestinian people in the occupied Palestinian territories and to submit it to the General Assembly at its thirty-seventh session through the Economic and Social Council".

4. At its thirty-seventh session, after considering the Secretary-General's report (A/37/238), which had been submitted pursuant to its resolution 36/73, the Assembly, in paragraph 1 of resolution 37/222 of 20 December 1982, took note of the report of the Secretary-General on the living conditions of the Palestinian people in the occupied Palestinian territories and, in paragraph 8 of the same resolution, requested the Secretary-General "to prepare and submit to the General Assembly at its thirty-eighth session, through the Economic and Social Council, a comprehensive report on the living conditions of the Palestinian people in the occupied Palestinian territories".

5. So as to enable the Secretary-General to prepare and submit the required report to the General Assembly at its thirty-eighth session, and in an effort to ensure a balanced and objective expert view, the Secretary-General used the services of a team of three experts: Mr. Dudley Madawela, formerly Co-ordinator of Units, Social Development Branch, Centre for Social Development and Humanitarian Affairs, Department of International Economic and Social Affairs, United Nations, New York; Mr. Harald Kristiansen, Senior Research Officer, Norwegian Building Research Institute, Oslo, Norway; and Mr. Edward Balassanian, architect, urban designer and city planner, New York.

6. The experts were to prepare the report on the basis of material available from the United Nations and its subsidiary bodies and from the specialized agencies, and other published and unpublished literature pertaining to the subject. They were also to gather information through visits to Egypt, Jordan, Lebanon, the Syrian Arab Republic and the occupied territories and through discussions with government officials and others, as well as with representatives of the Palestine Liberation Organization.

7. Since permission to visit the occupied Palestinian territories was not granted by the Government of Israel, the experts, in preparing their report, had to rely on secondary sources of information. Accordingly, from 11 February to 24 March 1983, the experts visited and had discussions with the relevant government officials of Egypt, Jordan, Lebanon and the Syrian Arab Republic. Further discussions were held

with United Nations officials stationed in those countries. Discussions were also held with the relevant officials of the Palestine Liberation Organization in Damascus and Amman. Meetings were also held with five professors, who had been expelled from the universities in the West Bank in October 1982, the former Mayor of Halhul, the former Mayor of East Jerusalem, the head of the PLO Palestinian Fund, and with Palestinians now living outside the occupied territories, who had information on conditions within the territories either through recent visits there or from relatives living there. The experts also visited the King Hussein Bridge in order to obtain a first-hand view of conditions and procedures for crossing the Bridge and interviewed at random some of those crossing into Jordan.

8. The experts also visited the headquarters of, and gathered relevant information and data from ECWA, UNCTAD, UNIDO, UNRWA, the ILO, UNESCO, and WHO. Various United Nations reports dealing with conditions in the occupied Palestinian territories were also reviewed, particularly those of the Special Committee to Investigate Israeli Practices Affecting the Human Rights of the Population of the Occupied Territories, the Security Council Commission established under resolution 446 (1979), of 22 March 1979, on the situation in the occupied Arab territories and the Committee on the Exercise of the Inalienable Rights of the Palestinian People. A substantial amount of relevant material and information was gathered from those sources, which supplemented other information and data available in published documents of various other organizations of the United Nations system that were made available to the experts and material published in books, periodicals and the popular press, as indicated in the various footnotes contained in the report prepared by the experts.

9. The report prepared by the team of experts is reproduced in the annex below.

ANNEX

Report of the Team of Experts on the living conditions of the Palestinian
people in the occupied Palestinian Territories

<u>Chapter</u>	<u>Paragraphs</u>	<u>Page</u>
I. INTRODUCTION	1 - 5	6
II. SUMMARY OF FINDINGS	6 - 19	7
III. PHYSICAL FACTORS: HOUSING, INFRASTRUCTURE, LAND AND SETTLEMENTS, AND WATER	20 - 43	9
A. Housing	20 - 27	9
B. Infrastructure	28 - 32	12
C. Land and settlements	33 - 38	13
D. Water	39 - 43	15
IV. ECONOMIC FACTORS	44 - 97	18
A. Economic framework	44 - 48	18
B. Population and employment	49 - 53	19
C. Income	54	19
D. Aggregate income, gross domestic product and gross national product	55 - 59	20
E. Disposable private income and wage-income	60 - 66	21
F. Capital formation	67 - 68	24
G. Consumption and savings	69 - 72	25
H. Taxation	73 - 77	27
I. Monetary situation	78 - 81	29
J. Sectoral structure of the economy	82	30
K. Sectoral structure of employment	83 - 84	31
L. Agriculture	85 - 90	32
M. Industry	91 - 96	36

/...

ANNEX (continued)

<u>Chapter</u>	<u>Paragraphs</u>	<u>Page</u>
N. Other sectors	97	37
V. SOCIAL AND CULTURAL FACTORS	98 - 134	38
A. Social and cultural conditions	98 - 111	38
B. Education	112 - 124	41
C. Health	125 - 134	44

APPENDICES

I. Houses demolished, 1967-1981	51
II. Population growth in the West Bank (excluding East Jerusalem) and the Gaza Strip, 1979-1981	52
III. Employed persons by economic branch in the occupied territories and in Israel	53
IV. Employed persons of the occupied territories by selected economic branch and place of work	54
V. Education in the occupied Palestinian territories	55
VI. Consumer price index, West Bank and Gaza Strip	56
VII. Wage-income by sectors and location of employment, 1981	57

I. INTRODUCTION

1. The present report has been prepared in pursuance of General Assembly resolution 37/222, in which the Assembly requested the Secretary-General to prepare and submit to it at its thirty-eighth session, through the Economic and Social Council, a comprehensive report on the living conditions of the Palestinian people in the occupied Palestinian territories. It is a follow-up to the comprehensive and analytical report submitted to the Assembly at its thirty-seventh session (A/37/238), pursuant to its resolution 36/73 of 4 December 1981 on the "living conditions of the Palestinian people in the occupied Palestinian territories".
2. Considering that the occupied Palestinian territories comprise the West Bank of the River Jordan, including East Jerusalem, and the Gaza Strip, the experts have endeavoured to collect available data pertaining to the two territories. However, data in respect of East Jerusalem have been difficult to collect, because of the practice of the Israeli authorities of including them in the overall data for Israel. Consequently, information on East Jerusalem contained in the present report has been drawn from indirect secondary sources, including the Palestine Liberation Organization, the former mayor of East Jerusalem and the mayor of Halhul, and other West Bank residents knowledgeable about the situation in East Jerusalem. The bulk of the analysis in the report is mainly concerned with conditions in the West Bank and the Gaza Strip.
3. In the absence of a visit to the occupied territories, it was not possible for the experts on mission to gather first-hand information on conditions there, particularly on such aspects as the condition of housing and public facilities, the state of the agricultural and industrial sectors, the practical aspects of education and the utilization of health-care services. However, much relevant information and data were gathered during the visit to the neighbouring Arab countries and United Nations institutions, offices and programmes in the Middle East and at Vienna, Geneva, Paris and New York.
4. The present report analyses the changes that have occurred in those areas which have affected the living conditions of the Palestinian people in the occupied Palestinian territories. Chapter II gives a brief summary of findings. Chapter III deals with physical factors, namely, housing and physical infrastructure, land and water and chapter IV examines selected economic factors which affect living conditions. Chapter V deals with social and cultural factors recapitulating, in the process, information and findings pertinent to the issue under consideration contained in other reports submitted to bodies of the United Nations system, particularly the report of the Special Committee to Investigate Israeli Practices Affecting the Human Rights of the Population of the Occupied Territories to the General Assembly at its thirty-seventh session (A/37/485), the report of the Director-General of the International Labour Organisation to the International Labour Conference at its sixty-eighth session in 1982, and the report of the WHO Special Committee of Experts appointed to study the health conditions of the inhabitants of the occupied territories submitted to the World Health Assembly at its thirty-fifth session in 1982. a/

5. In the preparation of the present report, the experts relied as much as possible on published sources, which were supplemented by interviews with people knowledgeable about the situation in the occupied territories. Conclusions in the summary of findings (chapter II) are documented and substantiated in the main body of the report.

II. SUMMARY OF FINDINGS

6. The shortages of basic facilities in the occupied territories are quite evident from the data available. The number of new dwelling units built since 1968 is not adequate to alleviate the deterioration and dilapidation of existing housing or to meet the housing needs of the population.

7. Measures reported by the occupying authorities with regard to the provision of infrastructural facilities are not commensurate with the growing needs of the Palestinian communities in the occupied territories. There is a tendency to segregate services provided to Israeli settlements and Palestinian towns and villages in certain sectors, such as postal services, telecommunications, agriculture and industry. There is pressure on the Palestinian communities to obtain other services, such as water and electricity, from a common network serving the Israeli settlements as well as Israel.

8. There is continual expropriation of land by the occupying authorities, and Israeli settlers have taken possession of blocks of private land adjacent to the settlements.

9. These expropriations have reduced the land available to the Palestinian residents to earn a living and improve their living conditions. The increase in the establishment of Israeli settlements and their location on the periphery of Arab towns and villages have become an obstacle to the growth and expansion of the latter.

10. The economy of the occupied territories, as measured by the real rate of gross domestic and gross national products, has improved. However, it continues to be handicapped by lack of long-term planning and programming designed to generate development for the benefit of the indigenous population. The trend so far has been towards further integration of the economy with that of Israel, thus exposing it to the high rate of inflation characteristic of the Israeli economy.

11. The disposable private income and the GNP per capita have increased in real terms, although the distribution of the income is not known. Private consumption as a percentage of gross disposable private income has risen, and the percentage of savings has declined. As there are restrictions affecting investment opportunities, disposable income is channelled into the consumption and purchase of durable goods.

12. Capital formation has been low compared to that occurring in Israel and Jordan. Conditions existing in the productive sectors, combined with the unsettled socio-economic and political situation attributed to the occupation, has made capital investment risky for the local Arab residents. The only type of investment of any significance has been in improvements to existing private housing and, to a lesser extent in new houses.

13. The level of taxation is proving a burden to the Arab population, particularly in the application of certain elements of the Israeli tax system which are not in consonance with the underdeveloped nature of the economy of the occupied territories.
14. Local employment has been falling in the agricultural and industrial sectors and rising in all other sectors, led by the construction industry. More workers from the territories are commuting to Israel for employment, where their conditions of employment have not shown any appreciable improvement from past years. That almost two thirds of the actively engaged labour force is in one way or another working in and for the Israeli economy is a deterrent to initiating employment opportunities within the territories that would serve indigenous economic interests.
15. Agriculture in the occupied territories continues to be hindered by loss of land through continuing expropriation by the occupying authorities, lack of capital for improving production methods and shrinkage in markets. The agricultural sub-sectors which are expanding are the growing of vegetables and melons, the former finding a principal market in Israel. Melons are exported chiefly to Jordan. Further growth in those two sub-sectors will depend on the availability of irrigable land and increased allocation of water resources for agriculture, which at present is severely restricted.
16. The structure of industry has not shown any significant change over the years of occupation. It is dominated by small enterprises and a high proportion of those establishments are in sub-sectors which execute orders for Israeli enterprises, particularly textiles and clothing, leather, wood and metal products. The industrial sector is handicapped by lack of capital for improvements in buildings and equipment, difficulties in importing new technology, export restrictions and competition from Israeli products.
17. Social and cultural conditions of the Palestinians living in the occupied territories have continued to deteriorate. The traditional family pattern is breaking down owing to pressures caused by incomes which are inadequate to meet escalating costs-of-living due to high inflation. The daily living activities of the Arab residents have been disrupted by frequent curfews, the ever-present possibility of confrontation with Israeli settlers in the occupied territories and restrictions in movement, association and expression. Culturally, they are deprived of many books and periodicals in the Arabic language. There have been a number of instances when actions by the Israeli settlers have interfered with their freedom of worship in such places as the Tomb of the Patriarchs in Hebron and the Al-Aqsa Mosque in Jerusalem.
18. In education, although facilities at the school level have been keeping pace with increased enrolment, the content of education does not seem to be progressing along the lines that curricula are being developed in Jordan and Egypt. Many books, particularly in literature and the social sciences, are revised for or barred from use in the educational system in the occupied territories, which follows the Jordanian system in the West Bank and the Egyptian system in the Gaza Strip. The universities in the West Bank have had many setbacks during the past few years, including the dismissal and deportation of professors and new

regulations affecting financial support from abroad. The closing of the universities in the wake of demonstrations and the frequent arrest and interrogation of students suspected of participating in them, together with the inability to obtain books and periodicals needed for research, have interfered with the quality of education provided by the universities.

19. As regards health, the availability of hospital beds has not kept pace with the growth in population or the number of people seeking hospital care. Reporting of health data does not follow a uniform pattern for the occupied territories. New services have continued to be introduced in the hospitals in keeping with the policy of decentralizing specialist services to the district hospitals. Other measures and services related to environmental health, immunization and maternal and child care are being provided by an adequate network of clinics and health centres. The efficiency of the health care system continues to be hampered by limitations in equipment, qualified staff and distribution of drugs. Some of these shortcomings have been remedied to some extent through inputs from international organizations and local voluntary associations as well as the Red Crescent Society.

III. PHYSICAL FACTORS: HOUSING, INFRASTRUCTURE, LAND AND SETTLEMENTS, AND WATER

A. Housing

20. There has been no significant change in the housing conditions within the occupied territories since the last report of the Secretary-General, submitted to the General Assembly at its thirty-seventh session (A/37/238, annex I, paras. 34 to 38). The main findings of that report are summarized below:

- (a) Supply of new housing disproportionate to population growth;
- (b) A lack of institutional means of providing housing to the poor;
- (c) A decline of housing stock;
- (d) Overcrowded housing;
- (e) A shortage of basic utilities and sanitary facilities in houses;
- (f) Bureaucratic obstacles in transfer of funds for housing from abroad.

21. With respect to basic housing facilities, table 10 of the report of the Secretary-General (A/37/238, annex, p. 17) can be updated as follows:

Table 1. Selected basic housing facilities in the occupied territories
 (Percentage of families having the facility indicated)

Facility	West Bank			Gaza Strip		
	<u>1967</u>	<u>1974</u>	<u>1981</u>	<u>1967</u>	<u>1974</u>	<u>1981</u>
<u>Toilet</u>						
None	14.4	21.2	14.7	29.0	21.0	2.2
<u>Kitchen</u>						
None	24.0	35.9	25.5	43.7	17.5	3.6
Shared	2.3	3.1	1.3	4.7	14.1	16.3
<u>Water</u>						
Tap in courtyard	9.9	17.0	20.4	27.3	61.5	44
Tap in dwelling	NA.	23.5	44.9	NA.	13.9	51.4
<u>Electricity</u>						
None	76.1	54.2	18.4	81.1	65.5	11.5
<u>Bathroom</u>						
None	82.3	76.3	49.3	79.7	81.7	38.8

Source: For 1967 figures, see Bakir Abu-Kishk, "Human settlements: problems and social dimensions in the West Bank and Gaza Strip" (ECWA, March 1981), p. 7, and for 1974 and 1981 figures, see Statistical Abstract of Israel, 1982 (Jerusalem, Central Bureau of Statistics, 1982), pp. 746 and 747.

22. Table XXVII/31 of the Statistical Abstract of Israel 1982, entitled "Area of buildings, by initiating sector and purpose", shows no activity by the public sector in residential construction since 1978 in the Gaza Strip and, since 1968, in the West Bank. However, according to the report prepared by the Office of H.R.H. the Crown Prince of the Hashemite Kingdom of Jordan "...the Israeli Government has heavily subsidized settlement housing, which makes apartments there at least two thirds cheaper than their equivalent in Tel Aviv and Jerusalem". b/

23. Total residential construction, by initiating sector, is as follows:

Table 2. Residential buildings completed, by initiating sector, 1967-1981
 (In thousands of square metres)

	<u>West Bank</u>	<u>Gaza and northern Sinai</u>
Private	3,318.2	1,256.8
Public	36.1	52.7
Total	3,354.3	1,309.5

Source: Statistical Abstract of Israel, 1982 ..., p. 766.

24. The table below compares the increase in the number of households with the increase in dwelling units:

Table 3. Comparison of the increase in the number of households with the increase in the number of dwelling units, 1967-1981

	<u>West Bank</u>	<u>Gaza Strip</u>
Population increase, 1967-1981	125,600	95,700
Average family size, 1981	6.9	6.6
Number of families increased, 1967-1981	18,203	14,500
Total residential construction, 1967-1981	3,354,300m ²	1,309,500m ²
Average size of dwelling units, 1979-1981	116.5m ²	132m ²
Number of dwelling units increased, 1967-1981	28,792	9,920

Source: Statistical Abstract of Israel, 1982 (Jerusalem, Central Bureau of Statistics, 1982), table XXVII/1, p. 733; table XXVII/14, p. 744; and table XXVII/32, p. 767; and table 2 of the present report.

25. It will be observed that construction activities in the category of residential buildings in the Gaza Strip is 4,580 units short of satisfying even the need of population growth. In the West Bank, after satisfying population growth, construction over the past 14 years has only contributed a total of 10,589 units (less than 800 units per year) to decrease residential density and/or to upgrade

the housing standard. To illustrate further the insignificance of the present level of construction activities in alleviating the problem of substandard housing, it should be mentioned that by one estimate the current housing stock of the occupied territories is about 200,000 units, of which 70 per cent (140,000 units) is substandard and must be replaced. c/

26. While there are few dwelling units in the refugee camps that may be considered adequate, housing structures have been improved by refugee residents in the following successive steps:

- (a) Wood frame and corrugated sheet-metal walls and roof;
- (b) Cement-block walls and corrugated sheet-metal roof;
- (c) Cement-block walls and reinforced-concrete roof;
- (d) Second floor addition.

27. In the Gaza Strip, the occupying authorities have only replaced those houses which have been demolished because of the construction of security roads through refugee camps (a total of about 1,000 units). According to Palestinian sources, however, Israeli authorities have developed plans for several housing complexes outside and adjacent to the camps where they have subdivided the land into small residential parcels and offered them to the Palestinians under the following conditions:

- (a) Recipient must be a refugee-camp dweller;
- (b) He must vacate his camp residence;
- (c) The camp dwelling has to be demolished and never reconstructed;
- (d) Recipient has to pay the price of the new parcel; however, he receives a 99-year lease and not an ownership title.

Punitive demolition of housing by Israeli authorities has further reduced the number of dwelling units. The number of houses demolished from 1967 to 1981 is given in appendix I below.

B. Infrastructure

28. Although progress has been reported in the provision of infrastructural services to the residents of the occupied territories in the supply of electric power, telecommunications and public transport, d/ the reported progress is in no measure commensurate with the needs of the residents of the area.

29. According to the report of the Government of Israel, electric power consumed in the West Bank was six times greater in 1981 than in 1968, and the increase was even higher in the Gaza Strip. However, according to the same report, 3 per cent of urban households and 27 per cent of rural households in the West Bank, and 11 per cent of the households in the Gaza Strip were still without electricity. e/

30. According to a report by Meron Benvenisti, former Deputy Mayor of Jerusalem, Israeli authorities in the process of locating and designing Jewish settlements in the West Bank, make sure "that the location of the settlements in fact restricts the physical expansion of adjacent Arab villages and farms as well as controls the high ground for security purposes". Moreover, one of the principles of designing road networks in the occupied territories is that "areas of Arab population should be circumvented, i. e. , avoided". f/

31. According to the same source, Israeli planning and infrastructure is based on the concept of complete spatial separation between Jewish and Arab areas, and so far the following sections have already been either completely, or partially, separated:

Postal services	(separated)
Telecommunications	(separated)
Water	(partially separated)
Roads	(partially separated)
Electricity	(partially separated)
Industry	(separated, including differential tax and incentive systems)
Agricultural marketing	(separated)
School busing	(separated)
Vehicle licensing	(separated) g/

32. The report prepared by the Office of H. R. H. the Crown Prince of the Hashemite Kingdom of Jordan points to a highly disproportionate investment policy by the Government of Israel for Jewish and Palestinian localities of the occupied territories. h/

C. Land and settlements

33. Agricultural land and water resources in the West Bank and the Gaza Strip provide the major sources of livelihood, and therefore are of deep concern to the

Palestinian people in the occupied territories. As mentioned in the previous report of the Secretary-General (A/37/238, annex I, para. 15), by September 1979 25 per cent of the total land area of the West Bank (1,500,000 dunums, equivalent to 1,500 km²) had been expropriated by the Israeli authorities. Of the expropriated land, 11 per cent was reported to have been allocated to a total of 123 Israeli settlements. Since then the amount of expropriated land has risen to 44 per cent of the total land (2,452,975 dunums, equivalent to 2,453 km²), and by February 1983 the number of Israeli settlements in occupied territories had risen to 139. i/

34. Distribution of cultivatable land in the occupied territories and type of their cultivation is as follows:

Table 4. Land resources of the occupied territories and distribution in each region, 1980

(In thousands of dunums)

	<u>Total land a/</u>	<u>Total cultivatable</u>	<u>Under irrigation</u>	<u>Under dry farming</u>
West Bank	5,755	1,853	87.5	1,765.5
Gaza Strip	369	193	102	91
Total	6,124	2,040	189.5	1,856.5

Source: P. G. Sadler and B. Abu-Kishk, "Options for development: Palestine, Part I" (unpublished), pp. 30 and 31.

Note: 1 dunum = 1,000 m² = 0.25 acre (approx.)

a/ These figures include grazing land, forests and idle land. The gazing land was estimated as 1.85 million dunums.

35. The practices of expropriation and confiscation of land by Israeli authorities, combined with their practices with regard to the use of water resources (see below), have resulted in a significant decline in the agricultural activities of Palestinians in the occupied territories. Various sources differ on the estimate of the total cultivated land appropriated for Jewish settlements. However, there seems to be a consensus that, since 1967, the decline of the amount of land cultivated by Arab citizens has been very significant. j/

36. Categories used by the Israeli authorities for expropriation of land in the occupied territories up to 1979 have been listed and discussed by the former Deputy Mayor of Jerusalem in a report presented to the American Enterprise Institute. Those categories have been classified as follows. k/

/...

- (a) "Absentee" property in respect of which the Israeli authorities act as custodian;
- (b) "Registered State Domain": the occupying authority (Israel) replaces the previous Government, Jordan or the Jordanian King;
- (c) "Land requisitioned for military purposes": land remains under private ownership. The Military Government pays for the use of the land. According to Benvenisti, many settlements have been built on these lands;
- (d) Lands closed for military purposes;
- (e) "Jewish lands": lands owned by Jews prior to 1948 and administered by the Jordanian custodian of enemy property;
- (f) Lands purchased by Jewish bodies (organizations);
- (g) Lands expropriated for public purposes.

37. Since 1970, Israeli authorities have adopted a new policy based on the old Turkish Land Code, whereby any vacant land, such as mountains, rocky places, stony fields and grazing grounds, under certain circumstances can be considered mawat (dead) land, and anyone who is in need of such land can, with the permission of the official, cultivate it on the condition that the ultimate ownership shall belong to the Sultan, to whom the Government of Israel considers itself to be a successor. l/ In 1968, the Military Government had already "temporarily halted" all title settlement procedures (Military Order No. 291). At that time only one third of the occupied territories were "settled" by definition and entered into the Land Registry. According to Raja Shehadeh, m/ Israeli authorities by means of the above-mentioned two instruments (the Turkish Law and Military Order No. 291) can virtually expropriate any piece of property they wish.

38. The report of the Special Committee to Investigate Israeli Practices Affecting the Human Rights of the Population of the Occupied Territories submitted to the General Assembly at its thirty-seventh session contains several references pointing to a distinct and comprehensive policy adopted by the Government of Israel for changing the ethnic, religious and racial composition of the population of the occupied territories to such an extent that, for all practical purposes, the Palestinians find themselves standing on much weaker and unstable ground in any future dispute and claim over territorial sovereignty (A/37/485, chap. IV, sect. 4). The evidence presented is mostly direct quotations from statements by high-ranking Israeli officials reported by either Israeli or international news media and agencies. n/

D. Water

39. A report prepared by the Government of Israel, a shortened version of which was submitted to the General Assembly at its thirty-seventh session (A/37/347 and Corr.1, annex), contains information on improvements in exploitation and distribution of water resources in "Judea-Samaria and the Gaza District". o/

40. Under the heading "Waterworks", the following activities were mentioned:

- (a) Three large wells were dug near Herodion, which increased the supply of water from 150 cubic metres per hour in 1970 to 700 cubic metres per hour;
- (b) The Ramallah region received 70 per cent of its water needs from the Israeli system;
- (c) Two new wells supplied five times more water to Jenin compared with 1970;
- (d) In Nablus, a 200 cubic metre-per-hour well substantially alleviated the water shortage;
- (e) Two new east-west pipelines in "Samaria" (West Bank) were laid to supply water to dozens of villages. The connection to initial villages was planned for the current year;
- (f) A 30 kilometre pipeline was being laid in the western Hebron Hill region (southern West Bank) to supply water to 10 villages. p/

41. With regard to water, the Palestinians object to the policies and practices of the occupying authorities related to the development of water resources by Palestinians and its distribution. These objections can be classified in the following groups:

- (a) Legal obstacles and problems of ownership of water resources;
- (b) Inequitable treatment of Jewish and Palestinian residents of the area with respect to water distribution and usage.

42. Examples and evidence in support of the above objections are as follows:

- (a) Legal obstacles. Jordanian Law No. 31 on supervision of water, promulgated in 1953, required the approval of the manager of the Department of Irrigation and Water for any irrigation scheme. This was amended by Israeli Military Order No. 158, which provides that installations for drilling subterranean water (wells etc.) require a licence from the Area Commander. The licence has to be obtained for setting up, assembling or possessing and/or operating a water installation. This has brought existing water operations within the jurisdiction of the Area Commander, who could, at his discretion, approve or disapprove water usage from existing installations. The Area Commander may refuse to grant a licence without showing cause and may decide to cancel any licence or to amend it or to make it conditional. g/ A method similar to that discussed above with regard to land ownership and transactions has been adopted for water rights, according to Raja Shehadeh, who concludes as follows:

"The Custodian has claimed the wells and shares in water rights owned by non-residents. A prohibition similar to that for transactions in land is placed over the water rights making it illegal to transfer them without prior permission." r/

(b) Inequitable treatment. On the grounds of conserving water resources, which are indeed extremely crucial for the region in general and the West Bank and Gaza Strip in particular, Israeli authorities have devised various restrictive regulations and practices, such as licensing, metering etc. However, there are scores of instances cited by Palestinians which point to the discriminatory application of those regulations in favour of Jewish settlements and to the detriment of Palestinians. For example, permission was refused to complete a well-digging project in the Saljet area of Nablus, and later Israeli authorities themselves completed it, but pumped the water to the Jewish settlement of Alqana. s/ Since 1967, Israeli authorities have thwarted a number of attempts by the Ramallah Water Board to create an autonomous water-supply system sufficient to meet the area's needs. At the time of the occupation, the Government of Jordan was nearing completion of a project to increase the water supply to Ramallah by digging new wells 12 miles to the west of Shibteen. With the occupation, the Israeli authorities ordered the termination of that project. In the meantime, the Israeli settlement of Kfar Shuba has received permission to bore new wells for its own use. t/

43. According to Meron Benvenisti,

"The impact of Israeli settlements on West Bank water is a function of the amount of land irrigated by the settlers and not of the actual number of settlers. Indeed the settlements today are 2-3 per cent of the West Bank population and use 20 per cent of the total water consumption of the area. Yet 96 per cent of this amount is for irrigation." u/

Other statistics obtained from Israeli sources indicate that in 1977-1978 there were 314 Arab-owned artesian wells in the West Bank which discharged 33 million cubic metres of water, whereas 17 wells drilled by the Israeli Water Company to serve Israeli settlements discharged 14.1 million cubic metres of water. In other words, 17 Israeli wells discharged 30 per cent of the total water, whereas bureaucratic measures and economic factors prevented Palestinians from boring and utilizing similar wells. v/ As was stated in the previous report of the Secretary-General, only 30 out of 80 applications by Palestinians for permission to dig wells were approved (A/37/238, annex, para. 23). However, because of the high cost involved, amounting to a quarter of a million dollars per bore, w/ not even a single well was dug. There is no evidence that economic assistance programmes to enable Palestinians to overcome those extremely high costs have been devised by the occupying authorities. At the same time, there are various prohibitive measures restricting the transfer of funds from abroad for development purposes, including water development projects. Meanwhile, Israeli authorities are approving and financing water-development projects for the Jewish settlements in the occupied territories.

IV. ECONOMIC FACTORS

A. Economic framework

44. A study of economic structure of the occupied territories necessitates some understanding of the environment in which the economic activities are taking place. The main feature of this environment is the systematic effort of the occupying authorities to integrate the economy of the West Bank and the Gaza Strip with that of Israel through such measures as monetary and taxation policies, employment, production in agriculture and industry and trade practices. The policies adopted and implemented by Israel have resulted in a high level of economic dependency of the occupied territories on the Israeli economy, including its inflationary trends, thus preventing the generation of conditions which, in the long run, could benefit the indigenous population.

45. The lack of economic planning and programming is another feature of the economic life of the occupied territories. This has especially had an adverse effect on the development of an economic infrastructure that could sustain a process of self-generating growth in the territories. In a self-perpetuating manner, the paucity of opportunities for higher education and training in technical fields and in agriculture has become a constraint to future planning, programming and implementation capabilities.

46. Moreover, the Palestinians have no control over the monetary and fiscal policies of the territories. They have no decision-making power on public expenditures and, therefore, are unable to influence the decisions or to monitor economic trends. This applies even to the local authorities whose budgets have to be approved by the occupying authorities.

47. In addition to the general characteristics of the economy of the occupied territories, some technical problems make a meaningful analysis of this economy more difficult, among which are the following:

(a) Inaccessibility to the civilian budget for the West Bank and the Gaza Strip, which is subsumed in the budget for the Military Administration and considered classified and not available for public scrutiny;

(b) Non-availability of data on economic activities in East Jerusalem;

(c) Non-availability of any data and information, besides the revenues and expenditures, on the economic role of the municipalities, the highest form of self-government in the occupied territories;

(d) Unreliability of data and estimates used from Statistical Abstract of Israel, 1982, the introductory note of which speaks of caution in this regard.

48. Under the circumstances described above, the best that can be attempted is to examine selected elements of the economy of the occupied territories, excluding East Jerusalem, and observe their behaviour over a span chosen for the present report as a follow-up to the previous reports in order to determine the degree of change that has occurred.

B. Population and employment

49. The population of the occupied Palestinian territories continues to rise, although at a lower rate than in previous years. In the West Bank (excluding East Jerusalem), it rose from 699,600 at the end of 1979 to 707,300 at the end of 1981. In the Gaza Strip, it rose from 431,500 at the end of 1979 to 451,600 at the end of 1981. The actual increases have been less than in previous years. In the West Bank, the actual increase in 1980 was 3,500 (natural increase: 20,600) and in 1981, 4,200 (natural increase: 20,000). In the Gaza Strip, the actual increase in 1980 was 10,500 (natural increase: 15,600) and, in 1981, 9,600 (natural increase: 15,000) (see appendix II below).

50. The difference between natural increase and actual increase is an indication of the level of emigration. Thus, in the West Bank, emigration amounted to 17,100 persons in 1980 and 15,800 in 1981. In the Gaza Strip, it amounted to 5,100 persons in 1980 and 5,400 in 1981. Those levels are much higher than in previous years, particularly in the case of the West Bank (see appendix II below and A/37/238, table 5).

51. According to the report of the Director-General of the International Labour Organization to the International Labour Conference at its sixty-eighth session in 1982, a significant characteristic of employment in the occupied Palestinian territories is that about one third of the labour force works in Israel. x/

52. Those Arab workers from the occupied territories employed in Israel continue to be disadvantaged in many ways with respect to their conditions of work in comparison with similar categories of Israeli workers. Employment is subject to a work permit, which has been extended up to six months for jobs in the industrial sector, which benefits only about 18 per cent of the employed persons in Israel. There seem to be special problems in extending this privilege to those working in construction and agriculture (66 per cent of those employed) because of the seasonal or temporary nature of the work.

53. With regard to the trade union movement in the occupied territories, the ILO mission which visited the territories in November/December 1981 made the observation that on the whole, the "movement does not seem to be very developed and its capacity to defend the workers' interest is still limited." y/ Only three trade unions were registered in the West Bank during 1981/82.

C. Income

54. There are generally two sources of private income for the people of the occupied territories: (a) income generated from economic activities of people living in these territories; and (b) income generated outside the territories by those Palestinians living and working abroad and remitting their incomes to their families back home. Both types of income are reflected in the national accounting for the territories. On the basis of available data, the following analysis to a degree of disaggregation feasible, are made on: gross domestic and gross national product, disposable private income and wage-income and income generation by various economic sectors.

D. Aggregate income, gross domestic product and gross national product

55. Data for the gross domestic product (GDP) and the gross national product (GNP) and their percentage changes over years 1975-1981 are shown in table 5 below:

Table 5. Gross domestic product and gross national product
 (In millions of Israeli shekels at 1968 prices)

		<u>1968</u>	<u>1975</u>	<u>1976</u>	<u>1977</u>	<u>1978</u>	<u>1979</u>	<u>1980</u>	<u>1981</u>	<u>Aver-</u> <u>age b/</u>
Gaza Strip:	GDP	13.1	22.9	25.8 (12.7) a/	27.2 (5.4)	27.3 (0.4)	30.7 (12.5)	29.7 (-3.3)	30.5 (2.7)	(4.9)
	GNP	13.1	34.0	38.4 (12.9)	40.4 (5.2)	42.3 (4.7)	47.1 (11.3)	46.4 (-1.5)	48.5 (4.5)	(6.1)
West Bank:	GDP	33.3	65.6	77.4 (18.0)	74.8 (-3.4)	89.2 (19.3)	83.7 (-6.2)	106.6 (27.4)	98.9 (-7.2)	(7.1)
	GNP	34.4	88.3	101.5 (14.9)	99.8 (-1.7)	116.5 (16.7)	113.2 (-2.8)	135.6 (19.8)	127.6 (-5.9)	(6.3)

Source: Statistical Abstract of Israel, 1982.

a/ All figures in parenthesis show percentage change over previous year.

b/ Average annual growth rate 1975-1981.

56. The percentage annual changes in gross national product per capita for both territories follow the same fluctuation as was observed for the GDP and the GNP. The average annual growth rates of the GNP per capita for the Gaza Strip and the West Bank over the period 1975-1981, are 4.7 and 5.1 per cent, respectively.

57. On the average, both territories have enjoyed a reasonable rate of growth, well above the population growth rate, over the six-year period from 1975 to 1981. The GDP and GNP of the Gaza Strip grew at average annual rates of 4.9 and 6.1 per cent respectively, and those of the West Bank rose at 7.1 and 6.3 per cent.

58. The Gross National Product per capita at 1978 prices and the percentage annual changes for 1975-1981 are shown in Table 6 below:

Table 6. Gross national product per capita
 (At 1968 prices)

	<u>1968</u>	<u>1975</u>	<u>1976</u>	<u>1977</u>	<u>1978</u>	<u>1979</u>	<u>1980</u>	<u>1981</u>
Gaza Strip	36.4	81.9	90.2 (10.1) a/	92.5 (2.5)	94.3 (1.9)	107.2 (13.7)	105.8 (-1.3)	108.0 (2.1)
West Bank	59.5	132.6	150.9 (13.8)	146.5 (-2.9)	167.7 (14.5)	160.8 (-4.1)	191.2 (18.9)	178.4 (-6.7)

Source: Statistical Abstract of Israel, 1982.

a/ All figures in parentheses show percentage change over previous year.

59. The percentage annual changes in gross national product per capita for both territories follow the same fluctuation as was observed for the GDP and GNP. The average annual growth rates of the GNP per capita for the Gaza Strip and the West Bank over the period 1975-1981 are 4.7 and 5.1 per cent, respectively.

E. Disposable private income and wage-income

60. Data on gross disposable private income from domestic sources, transfers to private persons from abroad, gross disposable private income from all sources and the rates of their variations over the three-year period from 1979 to 1981 are shown in the table 7 below:

Table 7. Disposable private income for the Gaza Strip
 and the West Bank

(In millions of Israeli shekels at 1968 prices)

	<u>Gaza</u>			<u>West Bank</u>		
	<u>1979</u>	<u>1980</u>	<u>1981</u>	<u>1979</u>	<u>1980</u>	<u>1981</u>
Gross national product (At factor prices)	46.2	44.4 (-3.9) <u>a/</u>	47.0 (5.9)	108.6	131.6 (21.2)	125.0 (-5.0)
Transfers from Government and local authorities	0.5	0.5 (0.0)	0.6 (20.0)	0.8	0.9 (12.5)	1.0 (11.1)
Less income tax and transfers to the Government.	2.7	2.5 (-7.4)	2.7 (8.0)	4.3	4.4 (2.3)	4.9 (11.4)
Gross disposable private income from domestic sources	43.5	42.4 (-2.5)	44.9 (5.9)	105.2	128.1 (21.8)	121.1 (-5.5)
Transfers to private persons from abroad	3.1	4.7 (51.6)	5.1 (8.5)	7.4	6.8 (-8.1)	7.0 (2.9)
Gross disposable private income from all sources	46.6	47.1 (1.1)	50.0 (6.2)	112.6	134.9 (19.8)	128.0 (-5.1)

Source: Derived from Statistical Abstract of Israel, 1982.

a/ All figures in parentheses show percentage change over the previous year.

61. The gross disposable private income from all sources and from domestic sources has increased over the three-year period. The transfers to private persons from abroad have fluctuated in an inverse relation to the increase or decline of the gross disposable private income from domestic sources.

62. Wages constitute a high proportion of the aggregate income in the occupied territories. They include wages earned by workers in the territories as well as by those employed in Israel - about 35 per cent of the actively engaged labour force. Daily wage rates for workers in the territories and those employed in Israel, in 1981, are given below:

Table 8. Daily wages of employees working in the territories and in Israel by selected economic sector, 1981

(In Israeli shekels)

Branch	In Gaza Strip	In West Bank	In Israel
Agriculture	75.7	70.6	76.7
Mining and manufacture	85.0	89.2	99.4
Construction	112.9	122.0	120.4
Commerce, restaurants and hotels	86.1	92.1)	103.5 <u>a/</u>
Transport, storage and communications	100.3	92.3)	
Public and community services	126.7	108.4)	
Other	74.9	80.8)	

Source: Statistical Abstract of Israel, 1982.

a/ An average for the four sectors, as the published data do not give figures separately.

63. An approximation of income through wages can be computed by relating these rates to the numbers employed in the various sectors in the territories and in Israel (see appendix VII below) and assuming a work-year of 240 days in the case of Israel and 300 days in the territories. z/

64. The total wage income based on this computation (see appendix IV below) in the occupied territories approximated IS 5.8 billion in 1981, or 35.4 per cent of the combined gross national product (at factor prices) of the West Bank and the Gaza Strip. Of this, almost IS 2 billion or 33.7 per cent was contributed through wages earned by the workers from occupied territories working in Israel. The significance of this phenomenon is that if, for one reason or another, employment in Israel ceases to exist, the economy of the occupied territories will be seriously affected.

65. The data concerning the sectoral composition of national income are not available. The only sector for which some data exist is agriculture. A summary of the income generated in this sector is shown in table 9 below:

/...

Table 9. Output, purchased inputs and income originating
 in agriculture

(In millions of Israeli shekels at current prices)

	<u>Gaza</u>			<u>West Bank</u>		
	1978/79 <u>a/</u>	1979/80	1980/81	1978/79	1979/80	1980/81
Output-Grand Total	192.3 (100.0) <u>b/</u>	392.7 (100.0)	953.3 (100.0)	536.7 (100.0)	1,716.4 (100.0)	3,107.2 (100.0)
Purchased inputs	52.2 (27.1)	120.6 (30.7)	290.4 (30.5)	95.7 (17.8)	226.8 (13.2)	611.0 (19.7)
Income originating in agriculture	140.1 (72.9)	272.1 (69.3)	662.9 (69.5)	441.0 (82.2)	1,489.6 (86.8)	2,496.2 (80.3)

Source: Derived from Statistical Abstract of Israel, 1982.

a/ All figures in parentheses show percentage of Output-Grand Total in each year.

b/ Agricultural Year: 1 October-30 September.

66. The income originating in agriculture constitutes 72.9 per cent of the total output of this sector for Gaza and 82.2 per cent for the West Bank in 1978/79, and has decreased for both territories over the three-year period, ending up at 69.5 and 80.3 per cent in 1980/81 for the two territories, respectively.

F. Capital formation

67. Gross domestic capital formation in Israel, Jordan, the Gaza Strip and the West Bank as percentages of gross national product for the years 1968 and 1975 through 1981 is shown in table 10 below:

Table 10. Gross domestic capital formation as percentages of gross national product

	<u>1968</u>	<u>1975</u>	<u>1976</u>	<u>1977</u>	<u>1978</u>	<u>1979</u>	<u>1980</u>	<u>1981</u>
Israel <u>a/</u>	23.6	32.7	28.1	25.0	27.9	28.2	24.7	NA
Jordan <u>a/</u>	16.2	25.7	27.7	31.6	31.6	33.5	32.6	NA
Gaza Strip <u>b/</u>	8.4	19.7	21.4	20.5	20.8	20.8	18.8	19.6
West Bank <u>b/</u>	7.3	18.2	20.4	20.7	24.8	23.1	29.4	19.9

a/ Derived from International Financial Statistics, International Monetary Fund, 1982.

b/ Derived from Statistical Abstract of Israel, 1982.

68. Although the rate of capital formation in the occupied territories is high relative to those of many developing countries, nevertheless it is low in relation to the rates for Jordan and Israel. The contribution of Government to the development budget in capital investment is minimal. In 1980, the Government's input in the development budget amounted only to IS 50 million, or 11 per cent of the total. aa/ Capital formation has occurred in the housing sector through investment of private savings.

G. Consumption and savings

69. Private consumption expenditure in the West Bank and the Gaza Strip, as shown in table 11, has risen, at current prices, from IS 2,395.5 million in 1979 to IS 6,012.7 million in 1980 and to IS 13,903.5 million in 1981. In terms of 1968 prices, the percentage increases have been 3.8 per cent in 1980 and 4.9 per cent in 1981 for the Gaza Strip and the West Bank combined.

Table 11. Private consumption expenditure
 (In millions of Israeli shekels)

	1979	1980	1981
<u>At current prices</u>			
Gaza Strip	694.3	1 716.3	4 052.4
West Bank	<u>1 701.2</u>	<u>4 296.4</u>	<u>9 851.1</u>
Total	2 395.5	6 012.7	13 903.5
<u>At 1968 prices</u>			
Gaza Strip	38.7	<u>39.0</u>	<u>40.5</u>
Percentage change		(0.7)	(3.8)
West Bank	92.7	97.4	102.6
Percentage change		<u>(5.1)</u>	<u>(5.3)</u>
Total	131.4	136.4	143.1
Percentage change		(3.8)	(4.9)

Source: Statistical Abstract of Israel, 1982.

70. The pattern of consumption expenditure for the Gaza Strip and the West Bank are shown in table 12 below:

Table 12. Domestic private consumption expenditure in agricultural and industrial goods, and services as percentage of total for the Gaza Strip and the West Bank

	Gaza			West Bank		
	<u>1979</u>	<u>1980</u>	<u>1981</u>	<u>1979</u>	<u>1980</u>	<u>1981</u>
Agricultural goods	24.3	23.0	26.8	27.2	35.3	35.4
Industrial goods	50.0	48.2	42.7	37.5	37.8	34.9
Services	25.7	28.8	30.5	25.3	26.9	29.7
Total	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0

Source: Derived from Statistical Abstract of Israel, 1982.

71. Domestic private consumption expenditure on agricultural and industrial goods has decreased for both territories, while the same type of expenditure on services has increased over the three-year period 1979-1981.

72. As can be seen from table 13, the rate of consumption for the two territories combined has dropped from 78.5 per cent in 1979 to 77.0 per cent in 1980, to rise again in 1981 to 81.4 per cent. Correspondingly, the rate of private savings has risen from 21.5 per cent in 1979 to 23.0 per cent in 1980 and dropped to 18.6 per cent in 1981.

Table 13. Consumption and savings in the West Bank and Gaza Strip
 (In millions of Israeli shekels)

	1979	1980	1981
Gross disposable private income from all sources	3 052.1	7 804.3	17 084.3
Private consumption	<u>2 395.5</u>	<u>6 012.7</u>	<u>13 903.5</u>
Savings	<u><u>656.6</u></u>	<u><u>1 791.6</u></u>	<u><u>3 180.8</u></u>
<u>Percentage</u>			
Rate of consumption	78.5	77.0	81.4
Rate of saving	<u>21.5</u>	<u>23.0</u>	<u>18.6</u>
	<u><u>100.0</u></u>	<u><u>100.0</u></u>	<u><u>100.0</u></u>

Source: Statistical Abstract of Israel, 1982.

H. Taxation

73. No comprehensive account of the taxation system in the occupied territories exists. Information from various sources indicates that the Jordanian system of taxation on properties and buildings, on income and on land still prevails, and it has been modified to conform to the Israeli tax system. However, new taxes have been imposed, the most significant of which is the value-added tax.

74. The only detailed account of taxation exists for the West Bank, as is shown in table 14 below:

/...

Table 14. Income and taxation of towns in the West Bank
 (In thousands of Israeli shekels)

Budget years	1980/81	1981/82
Income-Grand Total	178 511 (100.0)	337 709 100.0
Taxes and fees - Total	22 639 (12.7) <u>a/</u>	52 725 (15.6) <u>a/</u>
Property tax	7 423 (32.8) <u>b/</u>	19 458 (36.9)
Fuel tax	2 457 (10.8) <u>b/</u>	4 845 (9.2)
From fees	12 759 (56.4) <u>b/</u>	28 432 (53.9)
Vegetables and fruit fees	8 118 (63.6) <u>c/</u>	15 859 (55.8)
Slaughtering fees	659 (5.2) <u>c/</u>	1 597 (5.6)
Industry, craft and building licenses	659 (5.2) <u>c/</u>	6 285 (22.1)
Other fees	1 907 (15.0) <u>c/</u>	4 682 (16.5)

Source: Statistical Abstract of Israel, 1982.

a/ Taxes and fees-total as percentage of income-grand total.

b/ As percentages of taxes and fees-total.

c/ As percentages of "from fees".

75. The total amount of taxes and fees collected, as a percentage of the total income of towns in the West Bank, has been 12.7 and 15.6 for the budget years of 1980/81 and 1981/82, respectively.

76. The property tax constitutes 32.8 per cent of the IS 22.6 million in taxes and fees collected in 1980/81 and has risen to 36.9 per cent of the total of IS 52.7 million collected in 1981/82.

77. The different type of fees charged by the occupying authorities make the bulk of the total taxes and fees at 56.4 per cent in 1980/81 and 53.9 per cent in 1981/82.

/...

I. Monetary situation

78. One significant result of the predominant trading activities between the occupied territories and Israel and the wages earned by the workers from the West Bank and Gaza Strip employed in Israel as well as those working in the territories on subcontract for Israeli enterprises, has been the virtual integration of the two economies, with the Israeli shekel as the main monetary unit of exchange. The Jordanian dinar continues to be legal tender in the West Bank and a preferred currency for holding by the residents owing to depreciation of the Israeli shekel, but its influence is diminishing with the reduction of trade with Jordan and other countries since 1981.

79. The table below illustrates the changes in the value of the Israeli shekel and the Jordanian dinar in SDR value since 1973.

Table 15. Monetary exchange rates in SDR value a/

Year end	Israeli shekels per SDR	Jordanian dinars per SDR	Israeli shekels per one Jordanian dinar	Annual devaluation of Israeli shekels related to Jordanian dinars %
1973	0.507	0.397	1.277	9.0
1974	0.735	0.386	1.904	49.1
1975	0.831	0.388	2.142	12.5
1976	1.017	0.388	2.621	22.4
1977	1.869	0.388	4.817	83.8
1978	2.477	0.388	6.384	32.5
1979	4.657	0.388	12.003	88.0
1980	9.627	0.388	24.812	106.7
1981	18.163	0.388	46.812	88.7

Source: International Financial Statistics, International Monetary Fund, 1982.

a/ SDR is a calculated "dollar" value taking into account the changes in exchange rate régimes, that is, from the par value period of floating exchange rates.

80. There has been a further fall in the value of the Israeli shekel subsequent to 1981. bb/ At the same time, the inflation in the Israeli economy of more than 100 per cent per annum during the past few years has further eroded the value of the shekel. The mere recovery of the real value of money on loan or in savings would require an annual interest rate of more than 100 per cent, causing all transactions in business, production credits, investments and savings a hazardous undertaking.

81. Branches of Israeli banks dealing mainly in Israeli shekels constitute the monetary market in the occupied territories and continue to provide the credit requirements of the Palestinian entrepreneurs. However, they have not been utilized to any great extent, except for current transactions with Israel.

J. Sectoral structure of the economy

82. The lack of data about the sectoral activities of the occupied territories does not allow any meaningful analysis of the prevailing conditions.

K. Sectoral structure of employment

83. The data on employment by sector available for the West Bank and Gaza Strip are shown in table 16.

Table 16. Employment by sector

	Gaza				West Bank			
	1979	1980	1981	diff. 81-79	1979	1980	1981	diff. 81-79
Total - '000	79.6	80.9	82.5	2.9	132.8	134.8	133.4	0.6
- percentages ()	(100.0)	(100.0)	(100.0)	-2.0	(100.0)	(100.0)	(100.0)	
Agriculture, forestry and fishing	16.2 (20.4) ^{a/}	15.0 (18.5)	14.2 (17.3)	-2.0	33.6 (25.3)	35.3 (26.2)	32.2 (24.1)	-1.4
Industry (mining and manufacturing)	15.8 (19.8)	15.8 (19.5)	14.2 (17.2)	-1.6	24.3 (18.3)	22.8 (16.9)	21.9 (16.4)	-2.4
Construction (bldg. of public works)	18.3 (23.0)	18.7 (23.1)	21.9 (26.5)	3.6	30.0 (22.6)	30.5 (22.6)	32.0 (24.0)	2.0
Commerce, restaurants and hotels	10.0 (12.5)	11.3 (14.0)	11.7 (14.2)	1.7	16.9 (12.7)	17.1 (12.7)	16.6 (12.5)	-0.3
Transport, storage and commerce	5.1 (6.4)	5.3 (6.6)	5.6 (6.8)	0.5	5.8 (4.4)	6.1 (4.5)	6.5 (4.9)	0.7
Public and community services	9.6 (12.1)	10.5 (13.0)	10.6 (12.8)	1.0	17.0 (12.8)	17.9 (13.3)	19.0 (14.2)	2.0
Other	4.6 (5.8)	4.3 (5.3)	4.3 (5.2)	-0.3	5.2 (3.9)	5.1 (3.8)	5.2 (3.9)	0.0

Source: Statistical Abstract of Israel, 1982.

^{a/} All figures in parentheses show percentages of the total for each year.

/...

84. There is a marked resemblance between the sectoral structure of employment in the Gaza and the West Bank. The importance of both territories' agricultural sector as a primary employer of the labour force is diminishing. From 1979 to 1981, the share of that sector in employment was reduced by 3.1 and 2.4 percentage points for the Gaza and the West Bank, respectively. The industrial sector also lost its share of employment within the same period by 2.6 per cent for the Gaza Strip and 1.9 per cent for the West Bank. The rest of the sectors raised their share of employment, construction leading with 3.5 per cent for the Gaza and 1.4 per cent for the West Bank. All the changes show further reliance of the territories' economy on the economic life of Israel, as the employment opportunities decline in the vital sectors of the economy, that is, agricultural and industry, non-productive and services sector tend to employ a higher percentage of the labour force.

L. Agriculture

85. Table 17 summarizes the activities of the agricultural sector in broad categories.

Table 17. Output in agriculture
 (in millions of Israeli shekels)

	<u>Gaza</u>			<u>West Bank</u>		
	1978/79	1979/80	1980/81	1978/79	1979/80	1980/81
Output - Grand total	192.3 (100.0)	392.7 (100.0)	953.3 (100.0)	536.7 (100.0)	1,716.4 (100.0)	3,107.2 (100.0)
Crops - total	144.8 (75.3)	294.9 a/ (75.1)	693.4 (72.7)	326.3 (60.8)	1,277.7 (74.4)	1,886.8 (60.7)
Livestock and live- stock products	47.5 (24.7)	97.8 (24.9)	259.9 (27.3)	210.4 (39.2)	438.7 (25.6)	1,220.4 (39.3)

Source: Statistical Abstract of Israel, 1982.

a/ All figures in parentheses show percentages of the output-Grand total for each agricultural year.

86. The percentage of crop production to the total output of the agricultural sector has decreased over the three-agricultural-calendar-year period for the Gaza Strip, but it rose for the West Bank in 1979/80 by 13.6 per cent to the 74.4 percentage level, to fall back again to almost the same percentage in 1978/79. In the livestock and livestock products, there has been a reciprocal trend, that is, an increased share in the total output for the Gaza strip and keeping to almost the same level of 39.2 and 39.3 percentage points for 1978/79 and 1980/81 for the West Bank. Crop production, even with its declining percentage in 1980/81, still constitutes an output more than 2.6 times the output derived from livestock and livestock products for the Gaza Strip. The same proportion for the West Bank is only 1.5 times the output.

87. Agriculture in the West Bank is characterized by a high proportion of small farms, mainly for dry farming, amounting to about 1.77 million dunums with only about 88,000 dunums under irrigation. In the Gaza Strip, of the total cultivatable land amounting to about 193,000 dunums, about 102,000 dunums are under irrigation devoted mostly to citrus cultivation. Data on agricultural output in the two territories during the years 1978/1979 to 1980/1981 are given in the table below:

Table 18. Agricultural production in the West Bank and Gaza Strip

(Thousand tons)

	Gaza			West Bank		
	1978/79	1979/80	1980/81	1978/79	1979/80	1980/81
Field crops	-	-	-	33.2	42.5 (28.0) <u>a/</u>	41.2 (-3.0)
Vegetables and potatoes	51.4	60.0 (16.7)	72.3 (20.5)	140.9	145.4 (3.2)	159.5 (9.7)
Melons and pumpkins	3.6	4.3 (19.4)	4.6 (7.0)	8.0	19.6 (145.0)	42.7 (117.9)
Olives	-	-	-	21.1	120.0 (468.7)	45.0 (-62.5)
Citrus	192.2	171.5 (-10.8)	179.3 (4.5)	79.1	74.3 (-6.1)	73.5 (-1.0)
Other fruit	18.9	21.4 (13.2)	20.8 (-2.8)	87.0	85.9 (-1.3)	105.9 (23.3)
Meat	4.8	5.6 (16.7)	6.2 (10.7)	23.5	23.1 (-1.7)	25.7 (11.3)
Milk	15.5	14.7 (-5.2)	13.9 (-5.4)	39.4	36.7 (-6.8)	38.8 (5.7)
Fish	1.5	1.2 (-20)	1.4 (16.7)	-	-	-
Eggs (million)	47.5	42.8 (-9.9)	45.6 (6.5)	44.5	44.5 (0.0)	50.0 (12.4)

Source: Statistical Abstract of Israel, 1982.

a/ All figures in parentheses show percentage change over previous year.

/...

88. Agricultural production over the three-year period has shown a considerable degree of fluctuation most possibly owing to climatic conditions. As most of the farm products are cultivated under dry farming conditions, weather conditions play an important role in productivity. On the other hand, those crops grown largely on irrigated land, namely, vegetables and melons, show significant increases in output.

89. More than 43 per cent of the vegetable crop of 1980/81 was exported to the Israeli market for processing or export. The main market for melons and pumpkins is Jordan, to which almost 48 per cent of the crop of 1980/81 was exported. The flow of trade in the supply of fruit and vegetables in the West Bank in 1980/81 is given in table 19 below.

Table 19. Supply of fruit and vegetables in the West Bank
 by source and disposal, 1980/81
 (thousand tons)

	Disposal				Source			
	Gaza	Israel and export	Jordan	Local con- sumption	Gaza	Israel	Local product- ion	Total
TOTAL	5.3	99.3	103.3	262.5	26.9	61.9	381.6	470.4
Fruit (excl. olives)	5.1	23.5	65.5	115.0	7.5	22.2	179.4	209.1
Vegetables	0.2	68.8	18.7	114.4	19.0	23.6	159.5	202.1
Melons and pumpkins	-	7.0	19.1	33.1	0.4	16.1	42.7	59.2

Source: Statistical Abstract of Israel, 1982.

90. The agricultural sector in the territories continues to operate under many disadvantages, including loss of cultivatable land through confiscation and "closure" for military and other purposes, restrictions in the use of water for agricultural purposes, shortage of capital for investment, and inability of Arab farms to compete with Israeli enterprises, including the settlements in the occupied territories. Export constraints have further diminished the profitability of agriculture in the occupied territories.

M. Industry

91. Owing to lack of data comparable to that available in the agricultural sector, the type of analysis in the industrial sector would be different from what was chosen in analysing the structure of the agricultural sector.

92. The structure of industry has not shown any significant change over the years of occupation. It is still characterized by small firms, low capitalization, low level of technology and a preponderance of manually operated machinery and equipment. There has been a sharp drop in the number of establishments in the West Bank, from 4,029 in 1969 to 2,206 in 1979. cc/ The distribution of establishments by groups and level of employment is shown in table 20 below.

Table 20. Distribution of establishments in the West Bank by major groups and level of employment, 1979

Major groups	Distribution by level of employment						
	Total	1	2-3	4-7	8-10	11-20	21+
Food, beverages and tobacco	232	85	61	65	7	6	8
Textiles and clothing	484	132	170	107	26	40	10
Leather and its products	234	62	117	52	2	1	-
Wood and its products	437	160	205	59	7	6	-
Rubber, plastic and chemical	51	6	14	11	5	3	12
Non-metallic minerals	122	4	32	63	11	10	2
Basic metals and metal products	419	57	236	117	3	4	2
Other industrial products	227	79	85	44	10	6	3
Total	2,206	585	920	518	71	76	37

Source: E/ECWA/UNIDO/WP.1 (1981), p. 18, table 7.

93. The data indicate that most of the enterprises are small-scale establishments; 68 per cent of the establishments employ one to three persons, while another 23 per cent employ four to seven persons. The number of establishments employing more than 21 persons is less than 2 per cent. The structure is not very different

in the Gaza Strip. Of the 1,334 establishments there in 1979, 62.1 per cent employed three or fewer persons, while another 25.7 per cent employed four to seven persons. The number of establishments employing more than 21 was 2.2 per cent. dd/

94. Taking both territories together, it is observed that enterprises engaged in production of textiles and clothing, wood and its products, basic metals and metal products, and leather and its products dominate the industrial structure. Establishments engaged in food, beverages and tobacco mainly supply the local market with some specialized items, such as soap and processed olive oil for export to Jordan. However, exports to Jordan, and through it to other Arab countries, are limited by the requirement that the raw material used in the manufacture should originate in the occupied territories. This requirement creates serious problems, since, according to the ECWA/UNIDO survey undertaken in 1980, between 70 per cent and 100 per cent of all raw materials used in manufacturing processes in the West Bank and the Gaza Strip are imported from or through Israel, except in the food, beverages, printing and publishing industries in the West Bank. The Gaza Strip relies most heavily on raw materials imported from Israel because of the extreme scarcity of local raw materials. ee/

95. Industrialists in the occupied territories face the problem of mobilizing adequate finances to improve their establishments and to modernize production methods. Most of them have had to rely on private initiative or partnership financing. Only about 3 per cent of the establishments in the random sample undertaken in the ECWA/UNIDO survey had obtained loans from banks. ff/

96. Apart from the problem of financing, other problems faced by industrialists in the occupied territories include difficulty in obtaining permits to import manufacturing equipment from abroad because of delays or refusals by the occupying authorities to issue such permits. Furthermore, the authorities are reluctant to permit the establishment of new facilities. It was reported that permission to build a cement factory, a factory for batteries and another for the extraction of citrus juice had been refused. A recent PLO economic report mentioned that the purchase of a private, Israeli-owned existing juice-extracting unit to process unsold oranges had been refused. gg/

N. Other sectors

97. As in other production sectors, there is no long-term planning and programming to reorganize and vitalize the industrial sectors to respond to the demand for industrial products by residents of the occupied territories or to develop an export market for the products. This situation is likely to prevail as long as the indigenous leadership in the industrial sector is excluded from directing industrial development and as long as no local institutions are available to meet the technological, commercial and financial needs of those sectors.

V. SOCIAL AND CULTURAL FACTORS

A. Social and cultural conditions

98. Policies and practices of the occupying Power embodied in various military orders, amounting to more than 975 since the occupation, have brought about many changes in the life style of the Palestinian families living in the occupied territories. Restrictions in the use of water for agricultural purposes and the frequent expropriation of land, both private and public, have evoked a sense of deep insecurity and a disincentive to pursue the traditional rural-agricultural mode of life. Some family members have had to seek wage employment, particularly in the Israeli economy or in nearby Israeli settlements, while others have obtained employment in the Gulf States and other countries.

99. Where the wage earners live in the family household, as is customary in Palestinian society, their contributions towards the upkeep of the home, together with remittances from abroad, have enabled the head of the household to retain his land mainly as a means of family security rather than a productive asset. Where there is no outside income to support the family household, the head has had to seek employment himself, thereby neglecting the family farm. Sometimes he has had to sell the land. Since 1979, this has been facilitated through the policy of the occupying Power which legalizes the purchase of private land in the occupied territories by Israeli firms and individuals. For instance, it was reported that 15,000 dunums of Arab land in the West Bank had been purchased by an Israeli company for the construction of Israeli housing (A/37/485, para. 178).

100. Actions amounting to harassment of farmers by Israeli settlers have become much more frequent in recent years. It is due, in part, to the establishment of more settlements and the "thickening" of existing settlements. That those settlements are being established on the periphery of Arab towns and villages has given rise to more friction in day-to-day relationships between the Arab residents and the settlers and very often to physical confrontation in public places. Instances have been reported where settlers have taken over land belonging to local villagers, as in the village of Beit Awwa (A/37/485, para. 136). Settlers from the Shilo settlement have fenced off 500 dunums belonging to the village of Quryut. hh/ Eight-hundred dunums have been claimed by Adumin settlers from the residents of Rumein and Anatra villages (A/37/485, para. 143).

101. Cases of individual harassment have frequently been reported. Palestinian farmers have been threatened or molested while working on their land by settlers who claimed the land belonged to the settlements. Fruit trees on private land have been uprooted or destroyed. Armed settlers have tried to take over houses inhabited by Arabs, have attacked residents and have sometimes kidnapped them, particularly students and young people, on the grounds that they had participated in demonstrations (A/37/485, paras. 136, 138, 139 and 141).

102. Those confrontations have become more serious, following the formation of Israeli settlers and civil administration employees into paramilitary units to assist the security forces in maintaining law and order in the occupied territories. Members of those units, along with security forces, have used

firearms, wounding and sometimes killing Arab residents participating in demonstrations. That has been justified by the occupying authorities as being in compliance with Zahal directives, which authorize such shooting in case of danger of life. ii/

103. The Arab residents of the occupied Palestinian territories continue to be restricted in their movements, more so since the escalation of demonstrations against the occupation, in general, and against specific policies and actions of the occupying authorities, in particular. The frequent curfews imposed on Arab towns, villages and refugee camps disrupt the daily activities of the people in commerce and business, travel to work, including work-places in Israel, attendance at school and performance of religious duties. Most affected by those curfews were the residents of Ramallah, El Bireh, Halhul and the refugee camps of A-Dahaysha and Askar and Balata.

104. Movement of individuals representative of the Arab leadership in the West Bank and Gaza Strip continues to be restricted by their confinement to their towns or places of residence or by the Government's refusal to issue travel permits. The editors of the newspapers Al Fajr, Asha'b and Attalia were placed under house arrest and not allowed to leave their towns of residence.

105. New regulations and procedures have been introduced with regard to crossing the bridges between the West Bank and Jordan, which have made it more difficult for the Arab residents of the occupied territories and their relatives living and working abroad to maintain communication and family relationships. As at June 1982, West Bank residents could no longer fill in the required forms themselves, attach a revenue stamp and travel to the bridge. Fees for crossing the bridges have been increased to 15 Jordanian dinars for an adult to cross from the West Bank into Jordan and 5 JD for a child. There is a further "service" charge of 5 JD for an adult, and a charge of 1 to 3 JD is made on luggage. The fee for a person crossing from Jordan into the West Bank is 20 JD and the fees have to be paid in Jordanian dinars or other hard currencies. If the person leaving the West Bank is under 26 years of age, he cannot return before nine months, on the assumption that he is a student. Those above 26 years of age are allowed to stay out of the occupied territories up to three years, whereas previously it was one year. A Palestinian who exceeds the three-year limit even by a day, is disqualified from returning to the occupied territories.

106. Relatives living abroad who want to visit their families in the occupied territories have to await a permit, which the family has to obtain beforehand from the occupying authorities. On arrival at the bridge, the person, whether visiting or residing in the territories, is subject to a number of physical examinations. Contents of suitcases are electronically examined. A person can take in only 1,000 JD and anything above that amount would be confiscated unless prior approval had been obtained. On entering the occupied territories, the person cannot leave until a week has elapsed; otherwise, special permission has to be obtained to leave the territories. It should also be noted that there is no telephone communication or mail service between Jordan and the occupied territories. All this information was gathered from travellers crossing the King Hussein Bridge during the experts' visit there on 1 March 1983 and from the personal experiences of relatives living in Jordan who had occasion to visit their families in the occupied territories.

107. The truckers of produce from the occupied territories, who were interviewed by the experts on mission at the King Hussein Bridge on 1 March 1983, mentioned the various disadvantages under which they operated. They have to use pre-1967 trucks, as those are registered under Jordanian law. Yet they have to obtain Israeli operating licences, which have to be removed on entry into Jordan. Any new trucks purchased cannot be used for transport of goods into Jordan. The trucker has to pay a number of fees everytime he crosses the bridge and everytime he returns to the West Bank, his truck is subjected to inspection, for which he has to pay a fee. He has to return to the territories within 24 hours and, if he overstays that period, his truck is subjected to a thorough inspection, which can immobilize his use of the truck for up to a week. The extra taxes and fees he has to pay, all in Jordanian dinars, add to the delivery costs of the produce.

108. Other instances of harassment, which have been reported both in the Israeli press and in Arabic newspapers, include parents who are punished for actions by their children; whole communities which are punished for individual acts of protest; arbitrary arrest and removal for interrogation; demolition of houses for alleged terrorist activities; punishment by expulsion; arrest, interrogation, release on bail and then rearrest as a deterrent to participation in demonstrations.

109. The flow of information to residents of the occupied territories has been further curtailed through new regulations governing censorship. The Arab newspapers, Al Fajr, Asha'b and Al Quds, had received new orders from the Military Administration requesting them to submit to its censorship all articles and photographic materials before publication. The order was to be in force until the end of 1982. It has not been possible to ascertain if this order is still in force. The Civil Administration, which was established in the latter part of 1981, has, on a number of occasions, prevented the distribution in the West Bank of the three East Jerusalem Arabic daily newspapers. Asha'b was confiscated for 43 days. Al Fajr (English edition) was heavily censored. About 50 per cent of the articles submitted were totally censored, although some of them had been quoted from the Israeli dailies (A/37/485, para. 100).

110. The prerogative of self-determination in matters of local concern, heretofore exercised by the Arab population of the occupied territories through their elected municipal councils, has been severely eroded by the dismissal of mayors and the dissolution of certain councils and the ever-present fear that similar action might be taken against other mayors and councils, if they decided to pursue policies which were at variance with those of the occupying authorities. The appointment of village leagues, which have no popular base, and the support given to those leagues by the occupying authorities have tended to diminish further the role of the elected bodies to make decisions for advancing the development and well-being of the indigenous population of the occupied territories.

111. Recent events, particularly involving the Israeli settlers in the occupied territories, have caused serious concern among the Arab population about their freedom of worship and development of their culture in consonance with current trends in the Arab countries. There has been constant interference with religious worship, for example, at the Tomb of the Patriarchs in Hebron, where Israeli settlers from Kiryat Arba tried to gain entrance on numerous occasions. Incidents

occurred at the Al-Aqsa Mosque in East Jerusalem, where Israelis have tried to break in. In another instance, a student tried to set fire to the Mosque; he was arrested by the Israeli Police. Kiryat Arba Yeshiva students burst into the Temple Mount area and tried to hold prayers there (A/37/485, paras. 133, 134, 140 and 142). The firing that occurred at the Al-Aqsa Mosque in April 1982 is well known. The latest incident, which was reported in The London Times of 12 March 1983, involved 40 heavily armed Jewish militants, among whom were some from the Israeli military forces, who attempted to establish a symbolic settlement on the Temple Mount, which is regarded as one of the holiest Islamic Shrines after Mecca and Medina.

B. Education

112. School attendance in the occupied territories continues to increase in keeping with the population increase in the school-going age groups. In the West Bank (excluding East Jerusalem), the number of pupils increased by 14,598 in the two year period, 1979/80 to 1981/82, an annual average of 7,299 pupils. To accommodate this increase, the number of schools has increased by 24. The number of classes has increased by 464. There has been a slight increase in the average number of pupils per class, which was around 35 in 1981/82, both in the Government and UNRWA schools. The average per class in the other private institutions had been less; namely 28. In the Gaza Strip, the number of pupils increased by 10,892 in the same two year period, an annual average of 5,446 pupils. The number of institutions increased during the period by 26 of which 19 were UNRWA institutions. The number of classes increased by 242. The average number of pupils per class was around 40 in government schools and 45 in the UNRWA schools. Because of the large refugee population residing in the Gaza Strip, UNRWA plays a major role in the educational system there. jj/

113. The educational system follows the normal structure of 6 years of primary and 3 years of preparatory education (both compulsory), followed by secondary, vocational, teacher training and/or university education. The curricula continue to be those in use at the time of the occupation, namely, the Jordanian one in the West Bank and the Egyptian one in the Gaza Strip. In East Jerusalem, the Israeli educational system and curriculum have been adopted in the education of the Arab pupils.

114. The Ministry of Education of the Jordanian Government continues to have an interest in the state of education in the West Bank and keeps abreast of developments. Approximately 2,000 teachers who had been appointed before the occupation, continue to be paid by the Jordanian Government, although it has no administrative control over the system. The high school diploma issued by the Military Administration of the occupied territories is replaced by one from the Jordanian Ministry of Education.

115. It is the view of the Jordanian Ministry of Education officials, who met with the experts on mission, that although the structure of education in the West Bank remains the same as prior to the occupation, the content of education is in a state of stagnation. Developments which have occurred in the Jordanian system are not

reflected in the system in the West Bank. There was constant interference in attempts to revise the curriculum to incorporate changes in Arab culture and society. Books which are recommended for use in classes are closely scrutinized, modified, revised and reprinted by the occupying authorities. The revisions often distort facts as they relate to the students' understanding and perception of their socio-cultural background and heritage. Most affected by this practice are books in literature and in the social sciences. Teachers who try to remedy these shortcomings and attempt to create nationalistic sentiments in the students are subjected to transfers, dismissals and other punitive measures including arrest, detention and fines. There have been also occasions when pupils expressing such sentiments have been arrested, incarcerated or transferred to other schools. School attendance and fulfilment of course requirements have been seriously affected in those localities, including the refugee camps in which UNRWA imparts education, where curfews have been imposed for various reasons.

116. University education has been subjected to further pressures during the last few years, which have affected the quality of the education imparted. Two military orders which directly affect the universities are Order No. 854 of 8 July 1980 and Order No. 973 of 9 June 1982. The most significant event arising from the application of Order No. 854 has been the expulsion, in October 1982, of 28 professors of Palestinian origin teaching in the various universities in the West Bank for refusing, as a matter of principle, to sign a "pledge" not to support any "terrorist organization". Twenty-one of them have been from the Al Najah University. Seven professors of foreign nationality were debarred from lecturing for the same reason. The result was a reduction in the number of elective courses. Other consequences were a reduction in the required hours for a course and larger attendance in classes. Frequent closing of the universities has aggravated the situation. For example, the Bir Zeit university was closed from 19 February to 19 April 1982; Bethlehem university from 13 June to 5 July 1982 and Al Najah University from 14 to 23 January 1983. kk/

117. The security forces of the occupying authorities have continued to put up road blocks at the entrances to universities. Soldiers have entered the university premises on occasion and searched student dormitories, confiscating books, reviews and posters. On other occasions students have been arrested and detained for varying periods of time (A/37/485, para. 94).

118. The universities are subjected to other forms of control under Order No. 854 as well as administrative directives, the more significant of which are the need to renew annually the licence to operate the university and to obtain the Military Administration's approval of the annual budget. No books can be ordered directly from abroad. They have to be obtained through booksellers in Israel, and they have to be approved by the Military Administration. In the process, many books and periodicals, mostly in literature, history, culture and related subjects, which are essential for research, have been banned, although they are available in the Israeli universities and libraries. In the view of the professors expelled from Al Najah University, some of whom met with the experts on mission in Amman, those actions by the occupying authorities have seriously undermined the scope and quality of university teaching in the West Bank and affected the standard of education achieved by the student body, comprising approximately 10,000.

119. Military Order No. 973 of 9 June 1983 pertaining to the transfer of funds to the occupied territories has created difficulties for the universities, whose resources are from private donations, to be financially viable. By that Order, any money coming from abroad, and this would include donations to the universities, requires a permit to be issued at the discretion of the Head of the Civil Administration. A provision in the Order (para. 3 (b)) stipulates that a "permit will not be granted unless the bringing in of money to the 'region' is intended for remittance to the Fund established by Order No. 974 also of 9 June 1982, entitled, Order with regard to the Region Development Fund. The purpose of the Fund is stated to be to give grants or loans for development programmes in the "region" and for the relief of the population. The "region" is defined as "Israel and any other Region occupied by the Israel Defence Forces".

120. In the view of the former professors and university officials, the implications of the provisions of these two orders, in so far as the universities are concerned, are that any donations from abroad, most of which come from other Arab countries to the universities, are beyond the control of the university authorities, who have no assurance that the Fund will disburse the donations for the purpose for which they were intended.

121. With regard to vocational training, the ILO mission, which has access to the occupied territories, has been evaluating the quantitative and qualitative aspects of the programme during the past few years. It should be mentioned that UNRWA is actively involved in it, and there are significant inputs to it from the United Nations system, notably UNDP, UNICEF, the ILO, UNESCO, UNIDO and WHO in the form of equipment and fellowships.

122. UNRWA operates vocational training centres, two in the West Bank (Kalandia Vocational Training Centre and Ramallah Women's Training Centre) and one in Gaza (Vocational Training Centre). Courses are said to be designed for the acquisition of skills in designing, producing, assembling, servicing or repairing manufactured products and in business and office practice, land surveying, paramedical skills etc. The training is available to refugee children. ll/

123. The Israeli authorities have stated that the programme sponsored by them for non-refugee youth has been expanded to include new fields, such as draftsmanship, accounting, office work and cosmetic training, in addition to such trades as carpentry, construction, metal-working, sewing and embroidery and dressmaking, which formed the bulk of vocational training in previous years (A/37/347 and Corr.1, annex, p. 5). According to information supplied to the ILO mission by the occupying authorities, new courses have been introduced in manufacturing skills, and special vocational training programmes have been introduced for youths 14 and 15 years of age who continue to pursue academic studies; courses are offered in vocational skills during school holidays. mm/

124. In its evaluation of the programme, the ILO mission has observed that:

"The training courses still tend to be short and the level of skills they provide does not seem to have risen significantly. Moreover, the training centres operate in close liaison with the placement offices in the occupied territories, essentially so as to meet the demand for labour from employers in Israel." nn/

/...

During a visit to the biggest vocational training centre in Gaza, the ILO mission observed that 80 per cent of the graduates worked in Israel. On a visit to a training centre in the West Bank, it was observed that almost half of the graduates worked in the Arab countries of the Gulf, while the other half worked in Israel and the occupied territories. oo/

C. Health

125. It is a complex task to analyse the nature and scope of a health-care system that would meet the needs of a given population at a given time, because of such variables as demographic structure, stage of socio-economic development, orientation of the people to health care, utilization of the services provided and the availability of trained manpower to deliver those services, among others. In the case of the occupied Palestinian territories, the World Health Assembly has received in recent years annual reports on the health conditions of the inhabitants of the occupied territories from various sources, in response to its resolutions beginning with WHA 26.56 of 23 May 1973. Three reports were submitted to the World Health Assembly at its thirty-fifth session in 1982, namely, the report of the Special Committee of Experts appointed to study the health conditions of the inhabitants of the occupied territories (A35/16), a report by the Palestine Liberation Organization (A35/INF.DOC./3) and a report by the Ministry of Health of Israel (A35/INF.DOC./4). Additionally, the annual Statistical Abstract of Israel gives data on hospitals and hospitalization.

126. Statistical data pertaining to hospitals in the occupied territories of the West Bank and the Gaza Strip are as follows:

Table 21

	<u>West Bank</u>			<u>Gaza Strip</u>		
	<u>1979</u>	<u>1980</u>	<u>1981</u>	<u>1979</u>	<u>1980</u>	<u>1981</u>
Hospitals (total)	17	17	17	6	7	7
of which:						
governmental	9	9	9	5	6	6
Actual beds (total)	1,406	1,311	1,363	890	928	904
of which:						
in governmental hospitals	970	970	970	815	853	858
Hospitalized patients	64,019	65,011	65,302	51,948	53,230	55,378
Occupancy (percentage)	83.0	81.4	79.2	66.7	66.1	64.0
Surgical operations	14,604	14,454	14,085	13,750	12,973	13,294

Source: Statistical Abstract of Israel, 1982.

127. In the Gaza Strip, the number of hospital beds increased slightly from 1979 to 1980, only to decrease in 1981. In the West Bank, there was a sharp drop from 1979 to 1980, with a modest increase in 1981. The variance in bed availability has been attributed by the Israel Ministry of Health to be the temporary closure of certain sections in the voluntary hospitals in the West Bank. pp/ There are inconsistencies in the data given in the report of the Ministry of Health of Israel and in the annual Statistical Abstract of Israel, 1982. For instance, the total number of beds in the five governmental hospitals in the Gaza Strip is 845 in the report of the Ministry of Health, qq/ while the data above gives it as 858 in 1981. The nine governmental hospitals in the West Bank are reported as having 650 beds, rr/ while the data above indicates 970.

128. An added constraint to analysing meaningfully the health-care data is that their compilation and presentation by the Israel Ministry of Health vary for the two territories. The WHO Special Committee of Experts has noted that "the statistical data are extremely contradictory, depending on the source". ss/ It has been reported that in the Gaza Strip, a monthly and an annual medical bulletin have been published since 1981, while in the West Bank, only an annual report has been prepared; a new monthly information system is in the course of preparation. tt/ It is to be hoped that the information will be presented in a uniform manner so as to make the data of the West Bank and the Gaza Strip comparable, and that more information will be provided on the data pertaining to the voluntary hospitals, which constitute almost half of the institutions and provide almost 29 per cent of the beds available in that territory. It will also be useful to know how the services of the voluntary hospitals are integrated into a total health-care system for the West Bank.

129. As regards services provided by the hospitals, the Israel Ministry of Health report mentions a number of new services introduced since 1967. Since 1979, the following new services have been set up in the hospitals in the occupied territories:

Table 22

<u>Hospital</u>	<u>Services</u>	<u>Year</u>
<u>West Bank</u>		
Nablus	Coronary Care Unit	1980
	Oncology clinic	1981
	Physiotherapy and rehabilitation	1981
Ramallah	Ear, nose and throat	1979
	X-ray	1979
	Neonatal unit	1980
Beit Jallah	Physiotherapy	1979
	Gynaecology/obstetrics	1979
Hebron	Ophthalmology	1979
	Dermatology	1981
Rafidia	Intensive care unit	1980
	Ear, nose and throat	1980
<u>Gaza Strip</u>		
Shifa	Maxillofacial surgery	1980
	Burn unit	1981
Khan Unis	Bacteriology Laboratory	1981
	Intensive coronary unit	1981
	Library and lecture hall	1981
Ophthalmic Hospital	Psychiatry	1979
	Psychiatric outpatient department	1980

Source: Report by the Ministry of Health of Israel transmitted to members of the World Health Assembly under the symbol A35/INF.DOC./4.

130. This expansion of services seems to be in keeping with the policy of the occupying authorities to decentralize activities and services to the level of district hospitals and peripheral health centres. However, according to the WHO Special Committee of Experts, limitation of equipment and qualified staff to deliver these services make it necessary for an increasing number of patients from the occupied territories to be referred to Israeli hospitals. Other measures and services related to environmental health, immunization and maternal and child care are provided through a network of clinics and health centres.

131. The WHO Special Committee of Experts, during its visit to the territories in April 1982, observed that there had not been any fundamental change in the health infrastructure during the previous year. uu/ Medical and surgical equipment supplied during the year, particularly the more sophisticated items, included many given by international organizations and local charitable organizations. All new equipment installed at the Ramallah hospital had been financed by local charitable organizations. A new dialysis unit and an echocardiograph installed at the Hebron hospital were provided by UNDP.

132. Inadequacies were observed by the Special Committee of Experts at various hospitals. Taking Ramallah and Nablus hospitals, which according to the Israeli authorities serve as regional as well as district hospitals, vv/ shortcomings included cardiology and radiology services and equipment, shortage of drugs and lack of adequate staff. Other problems at hospitals include ambulance services, lack of co-ordination at the central level in drug distribution, and difficulties in recruiting teaching staff. It was mentioned to the WHO Special Committee of Experts by the local doctors and mayors that "substantial funds could be mobilized immediately to develop medical services and public health infrastructure that was lacking, but that the requests submitted to the Israelis had been unsuccessful". ww/ Refusal of a request submitted to the Israeli authorities by a local association in Hebron to build a hospital is cited as a specific example.

133. The number of hospital beds has not shown a real significant increase during the last 10 years, in spite of the growth in population. The organization of teams of specialists and adequate resources to respond to the basic health needs of the people is a feature that is lacking in the planning and delivery of health care services in the occupied territories. There is no systematic programme of education for health and nutrition. Sanitation is far from satisfactory, although the Israel Ministry of Health has reported that many improvements have been made in the towns and villages of the occupied territories, particularly the Gaza Strip.

134. There are significant inputs to the health care system in the occupied territories by UNDP, WHO, UNICEF and by local organizations and the Red Crescent Society. This has become necessary because of the low level of budgetary resources allocated to the system. A significant shortcoming would appear to be a lack of planning for the health needs of the population in association with local medical professionals, leaders and community organizations. Community participation at the present time appears to be only at the level of implementing projects and programmes already formulated by the Israeli authorities or the provision of physical facilities for services which have been predetermined, rather than at the formulation stage.

Notes

a/ A35/16.

b/ The Hashemite Kingdom of Jordan, Ministry of Occupied Territories Affairs, The Occupation ... Israeli Colonization of Arab Lands (revised edition) (Amman, January 1983), p. 10.

c/ P. G. Sadler and B. Abu-Kishk, "Options for development: Palestine, Part 1" (unpublished), p. 68.

d/ "Living conditions in Judea-Samaria and the Gaza District", summary of the report prepared by the Government of Israel, submitted to the General Assembly at its thirty-seventh session (A/37/347 and Corr.1, annex), pp. 2-4.

e/ Ibid., p. 2.

f/ Meron Benvenisti, "The West Bank and Gaza Data Base Project: Pilot Study Report", presented to the American Enterprise Institute, Washington, D.C., 1982 (unpublished), p. 55.

g/ Ibid., p. 67.

h/ The Occupation ..., op. cit., p. 9.

i/ The Hashemite Kingdom of Jordan, Ministry of Occupied Territories Affairs, "Palestinian living conditions in the Arab territory" (Amman, February 1982 to February 1983) (unofficial translation), paras. 2 and 3.

j/ See, for example, Showkat Mahmoud, West Bank Water and Agriculture under Israeli Occupation (Ministry of Occupied Territories Affairs, Amman, November 1982), p. 2 (31.6 per cent between 1967 and 1979); and Emile Sahliyah, "West Bank industrial and agricultural development: the basic problems", Journal of Palestinian Studies, No. 42 (winter, 1982), p. 64 (27.3 per cent between 1967 and 1973).

k/ Meron Benvenisti, op. cit., pp. 29-31.

l/ Ibid., p. 32.

m/ Raja Shehadeh, "The West Bank and the rule of law", The International Commission of Jurists and Law in the Service of Man (Geneva, 1980), pp. 59-62.

n/ The Hashemite Kingdom of Jordan, op. cit., p. 9.

o/ Israeli terminology for the West Bank and the Gaza Strip.

p/ "Living conditions in Judea-Samaria and the Gaza District", op. cit., p. 10.

q/ Janet Abu-Lughod, "Israeli settlements in occupied Arab lands: from conquest to colony", Palestinian Rights: Affirmation and Denial, Ibrahim Abu-Lughod, ed. (Medina Press, Wilmette, Illinois, 1983), pp. 135-336.

r/ Raja Shehadeh, op. cit., p. 62.

s/ Turkaya Ataov, "The Israeli use of Palestinian waters", Palestinian Rights: Affirmation and Denial, op. cit., p. 153.

t/ Ibid., p. 154.

u/ Meron Benvenisti, op. cit., p. 25.

v/ Raja Shehadeh, op. cit., p. 66.

w/ See A/37/347 and Corr. 1, annex, p. 9.

x/ International Labour Conference, Sixty-eighth Session, 1982, Report of the Director-General, appendix II, para. 7.

y/ Ibid., para. 31.

z/ For Israel: 8 months of work in agriculture and construction and 12 months in industry and other branches, giving an average of 10 months or 40 weeks of 6 days each week. For the territories: 50 weeks of 6 days each week.

aa/ Meron Benvenisti, op. cit., p. 16.

bb/ For instance, the Jordanian Times of 28 February 1983 quoted the Jordanian dinar at 113.46 Israeli shekels.

cc/ See "The industrial and economic trends in the West Bank and Gaza Strip", (E/ECWA/UNIDO/WP.1, tables 5 and 7).

dd/ Ibid., table 15.

ee/ Ibid., p. 37.

ff/ Ibid., p. 33.

gg/ Report from the Economic Department of the Palestine Liberation Organization, 10 March 1983, p. 29.

hh/ Al Fajr Weekly, 8-14 January 1982.

ii/ Jerusalem Post, 16 May 1983, and Al Fajr Weekly, 28 May-3 June 1982.

jj/ Figures derived from the data in appendix V below.

kk/ Hashemite Kingdom of Jordan, Report of the Ministry of Occupied Territories Affairs, February 1982 to February 1983, annex 8.

ll/ UNRWA/UNESCO Department of Education, 1980-81 Report, p. 31.

mm/ International Labour Conference, op. cit., para. 23.

nn Ibid., para. 24.

oo/ Ibid.

pp/ World Health Organization, "Health and health services in Judaea, Samaria, Gaza and Sinai, 1981-1982", a report by the Ministry of Health of Israel to the Thirty-fifth World Health Assembly, Geneva, March 1982 (A35/INF.DOC./4), annex, table 41.

qq/ Ibid., table 14.

rr/ Ibid., table 41.

ss/ World Health Organization, "Report of the Special Committee of Experts appointed to study the health conditions of the inhabitants of the occupied territories" (A35/16), para. 2.1.

tt/ World Health Organization, A35/INF.DOC./4, annex, p. 17.

uu/ See World Health Organization, A35/16.

vv/ See World Health Organization, A35/INF.DOC./4, annex, p. 70.

ww/ See World Health Organization, A35/16, para. 3.3.

APPENDIX I

Houses demolished, 1967-1981

<u>Year</u>	<u>Number</u>
1967	130
1968	140
1969	301
1970	191
1971	231
1972	35
1973	34
1974	61
1975	77
1976	24
1977	1
1978	2
1979	8
1980	24
1981	32

TOTAL 1 291

1 263 on the West Bank

28 on the Gaza Strip

Source: Ministry of the Occupied Territories Affairs, Amman, Jordan.

APPENDIX II

Population growth in the West Bank (excluding East Jerusalem)
and Gaza Strip, 1979-1981

(Thousands)

End of year	Number of persons	Actual increase	Natural increase	Difference
<u>West Bank</u>				
1979	699.6	9.2	20.9	-11.7
1980	703.1	3.5	20.6	-17.1
1981	707.3	4.2	20.0	-15.8
<u>Gaza Strip</u>				
1979	431.5	12.4	16.1	-3.7
1980	442.0	10.5	15.6	-5.1
1981	451.6	9.6	15.0	-5.4

Source: Statistical Abstract of Israel, 1981 and 1982 (Jerusalem, Central Bureau of Statistics, 1981 and 1982).

APPENDIX III

Employed persons by economic branch in the occupied territories and in Israel

	<u>1979</u>	<u>1980</u>	<u>1981</u>
<u>West Bank</u>			
<u>Total (thousands)</u>	133.4	134.8	132.8
<u>Percentages</u>			
	100.0	100.0	100.0
1. Agriculture, forestry and fishing	25.3	26.2	24.1
2. Industry, mining, manufacturing	18.3	16.9	16.4
3. Construction	22.6	22.6	24.0
4. Commerce, restaurants, hotels	12.7	12.7	12.5
5. Transport, storage, communications	4.4	4.5	4.9
6. Public and community services	12.8	13.3	14.2
7. Other	3.9	3.8	3.9
<u>Gaza Strip</u>			
<u>Total (thousands)</u>	79.6	80.9	82.5
<u>Percentages</u>			
	100.0	100.0	100.0
1. Agriculture, forestry, fishing	20.4	18.5	17.3
2. Industry, mining, manufacturing	19.8	19.5	17.2
3. Construction	23.0	23.1	26.5
4. Commerce, restaurants, hotels	12.5	14.0	14.2
5. Transport, storage, communications	6.4	6.6	6.8
6. Public and community services	12.1	13.0	12.8
7. Other	5.8	5.3	5.2

Source: Statistical Abstract of Israel, 1982.

APPENDIX IV

Employed persons of the occupied territories by selected
economic branch and place of workA/38/278
E/1983/77
English
Page 54

Year	In Israel					In the occupied territories								
	Other branches	Con- struction	Industry	Agriculture	Total % '000	Other branches	Con- struction	Industry	Agriculture	Total % '000				
						<u>West Bank</u>								
1979	18.1	47.7	23.9	10.3	100.0	39.8	40.8	11.8	15.9	31.5	100.0	92.5		
1980	19.0	50.1	21.0	9.9	100.0	40.6	40.9	10.7	15.2	33.2	100.0	94.3		
1981	19.9	52.7	18.1	9.3	100.0	39.9	41.9	11.9	15.7	30.5	100.0	93.5		
						<u>Gaza Strip</u>								
1979	14.0	44.3	21.6	20.1	100.0	34.3	53.7	7.0	18.2	21.1	100.0	45.5		
1980	16.8	44.0	20.9	18.3	100.0	34.5	55.3	7.3	18.6	18.8	100.0	46.3		
1981	15.9	49.5	18.4	16.2	100.0	35.9	57.1	8.4	16.5	18.0	100.0	46.6		

Source: Statistical Abstract of Israel, 1982.

APPENDIX V

Education in the occupied Palestinian territories

	<u>Academic year</u>	
	<u>1979/80</u>	<u>1981/82</u>
<u>West Bank (excluding East Jerusalem)</u>		
Number of institutions	1 012	1 036
Number of classes	7 457	7 921
Number of pupils	253 826	268 424
<u>Gaza Strip</u>		
Number of institutions	281	307
Number of classes	3 455	3 697
Number of pupils	142 113	153 005

Academic Year 1981/82

	<u>Institutions</u>	<u>Classes</u>	<u>Pupils</u>
<u>West Bank</u>			
Government	802	6 069	208 867
UNRWA	93	1 058	37 267
Other	141	794	22 290
	<u>1 036</u>	<u>7 921</u>	<u>268 424</u>
<u>Gaza Strip</u>			
Government	112	1 749	68 852
UNRWA	157	1 791	79 493
Other	38	157	4 660
	<u>307</u>	<u>3 697</u>	<u>153 005</u>

Source: Statistical Abstract of Israel, 1981 and 1982.

APPENDIX VI

Consumer price index, West Bank and Gaza Strip

Year	West Bank		Gaza Strip	
	Percentage increase		Percentage increase	
	1975 = 100			
1979	440.6		402.9	
1980	1 054.5	139.4	1 031.0	155.9
1981	2 257.5	114.1	2 160.5	109.6

Source: Statistical Abstract of Israel, 1982.

APPENDIX VII

Wage-income by sectors and location of employment, 1981

GAZA STRIP

	In Israel			In Gaza Strip		
	Number '000	Daily wage (Israeli shekels)	Total IS '000	Number '000	Daily wage (Israeli shekels)	Total IS '000
Agriculture	5.8	76.7	444.9	8.4	75.0	635.9
Industry	6.6	99.4	656.0	7.7	85.0	654.5
Construction	17.8	120.4	2 143.1	3.9	112.0	436.8
Other	5.7	103.5	590.0	26.6	100.5 a/	2 673.3
Total (per day)			3 834.0			4 400.5

WEST BANK

	In Israel			In West Bank		
	Number '000	Daily wage (Israeli shekels)	Total IS '000	Number '000	Daily wage (Israeli shekels)	Total IS '000
Agriculture	3.7	76.7	284.0	28.5	70.6	2 012.1
Industry	7.2	99.4	715.7	14.7	89.2	1 311.2
Construction	21.0	120.0	2 520.0	11.1	122.0	1 354.2
Other	8.0	103.5	828.0	39.2	97.4 a/	3 818.1
Total (per day)			4 347.7			8 495.6

Note: Wage-income

In Israeli shekels

West Bank:	Employment in Israel	4 347 700 (daily) x 240 days =	1 043 448 000
	Employment in West Bank	8 495 600 (daily) x 300 days =	2 548 680 000
	West Bank subtotal		<u>3 592 128 000</u>
Gaza Strip:	Employment in Israel	3 834 000 (daily) x 240 days =	920 160 000
	Employment in Gaza	4 400 500 (daily) x 300 days =	1 320 150 000
	Gaza subtotal		<u>2 240 310 000</u>
	West Bank and Gaza	TOTAL	<u>5 832 438 000</u>

Source: Derived from Statistical Abstract of Israel, 1982.

a/ Weighted average for commerce, transport, public and community services and other.



General Assembly
Economic and Social Council

Distr.
GENERAL

A/39/233
E/1984/79
25 May 1984

ORIGINAL: ENGLISH

GENERAL ASSEMBLY
Thirty-eighth session
Item 80 (j) of the preliminary list*
DEVELOPMENT AND INTERNATIONAL ECONOMIC
CO-OPERATION: HUMAN SETTLEMENTS

ECONOMIC AND SOCIAL COUNCIL
Second regular session of 1984
Item 15 of the provisional
agenda**
INTERNATIONAL CO-OPERATION IN
THE FIELD OF HUMAN
SETTLEMENTS

Living conditions of the Palestinian people in the
occupied Palestinian territories

Report of the Secretary-General

1. The General Assembly, at its thirty-eighth session, considered the Secretary-General's report on the living conditions of the Palestinian people in the occupied Palestinian territories (A/38/278-E/1983/77), which had been submitted pursuant to its resolution 37/222 of 20 December 1982. On 19 December 1983 it adopted resolution 38/166, in paragraph 8 of which it requested the Secretary-General

"to prepare and submit to the General Assembly at its thirty-ninth session, through the Economic and Social Council, a comprehensive report on the current and future impact of the Israeli settlements on the living conditions of the Palestinian people in the occupied Palestinian territories, including a comparison between the living conditions of the latter and those of the residents of the Israeli settlements".

2. So as to enable the Secretary-General to prepare and submit the required report to the General Assembly at its thirty-ninth session, and in an effort to ensure a balanced and objective expert view, the Secretary-General used the

* A/39/50.

** Economic and Social Council decision 1984/101.

services of three consultants: Dudley Madawela, formerly Co-ordinator of Units, Social Development Branch, Centre for Social Development and Humanitarian Affairs, Department of International Economic and Social Affairs of the United Nations Secretariat; Edward Balassanian, architect, urban designer and city planner; and Mirtha Halim, economist. The consultants were requested to prepare the report on the basis of material available from the United Nations and its subsidiary bodies and from the specialized agencies, and other published and unpublished literature pertaining to the subject. They were also to gather information through visits to Egypt, Jordan, the Syrian Arab Republic and the occupied territories, and through discussions with government officials and others, as well as with representatives of the Palestine Liberation Organization.

3. Since permission to visit the occupied territories was not granted by the Government of Israel, the consultants, in preparing their report, had to rely on secondary sources of information. From 22 January to 28 February 1984, the consultants visited and had discussions with the relevant government officials of Egypt, Jordan and the Syrian Arab Republic. Further discussions were held with the United Nations officials stationed in those countries. Discussions were also held with the relevant officials of the Palestine Liberation Organization in Damascus and Amman. Meetings were held with the former Minister of Awqaf and Holy Places, the former Mayors of Jerusalem, Halhul and Hebron, former professors from the West Bank, and with Palestinians who had recently visited the occupied territories or who had knowledge of recent developments in those territories.

4. The consultants also visited the headquarters of, and gathered relevant information and data from the following bodies: Economic Commission for Western Asia (ECWA), United Nations Conference on Trade and Development (UNCTAD), Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR), United Nations Relief and Works Agency for Palestine Refugees in the Near East (UNRWA), International Labour Organisation (ILO), United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization (UNESCO) and the World Health Organization (WHO). Various United Nations reports dealing with conditions in the occupied Palestinian territories were also reviewed, particularly those of the Special Committee to Investigate Israeli Practices Affecting the Human Rights of the Population of the Occupied Territories, the Security Council Commission established under resolution 446 (1979) of 22 March 1979 on the situation in the occupied Arab territories, and the Committee on the Exercise of the Inalienable Rights of the Palestinian people. A substantial amount of relevant material and information was gathered from those sources, which supplemented other information and data available in published documents of various other organizations of the United Nations system that were made available to the experts and material published in books, periodicals and the popular press, as indicated in the various footnotes contained in the report prepared by the consultants.

5. The report prepared by the three consultants is reproduced in the annex below.

ANNEX

Report of the team of consultants on the living conditions of the
 Palestinian people in the occupied Palestinian territories

CONTENTS

	<u>Paragraphs</u>	<u>Page</u>
I. INTRODUCTION	1 - 7	5
II. SUMMARY OF FINDINGS	8 - 24	6
III. SETTLEMENT TRENDS	25 - 43	9
A. Overview	25 - 32	9
B. Plan formulation	33 - 37	12
C. Investment in the settlement programme	38 - 43	13
IV. IMPACT OF ISRAELI SETTLEMENTS ON LAND AND WATER RESOURCES, HOUSING, PUBLIC AMENITIES, AND INFRASTRUCTURE SERVICES...	44 - 66	14
A. Impact on growth and expansion of Palestinian towns and villages	44 - 50	14
B. Impact on water resources	51 - 54	17
C. Impact on housing	55 - 66	19
V. ECONOMIC IMPACT OF ISRAELI SETTLEMENTS	67 - 106	23
A. Impact on production and trade	67 - 78	23
B. Impact on labour and employment	79 - 88	32
C. Impact on money and finance	89 - 98	37
D. Aggregate impact	99 - 106	38
VI. IMPACT OF ISRAELI SETTLEMENTS ON THE SOCIAL LIFE AND RELIGIOUS PRACTICES OF THE PALESTINIANS	107 - 120	43
VII. IMPACT OF ISRAELI SETTLEMENTS ON THE JUDICIAL AND LOCAL GOVERNMENT SYSTEMS IN THE OCCUPIED TERRITORIES	121 - 126	47

CONTENTS (continued)

	<u>Page</u>
APPENDICES	
I. Settlements in the West Bank and Gaza, with projections to the year 2010	57
A. Settlements established from 1967 to 1983	57
B. Settlements planned for establishment from 1983 to 1986	60
II. Land confiscated during the period February 1983 to February 1984 ..	63
III. Houses demolished in the West Bank and the Gaza Strip by the occupying authorities as a punitive measure, 1967-1982	65

1. INTRODUCTION

1. The present report has been prepared in response to General Assembly resolution 38/166 of 19 December 1983, in which the Assembly requested the Secretary-General to prepare and submit to it at its thirty-ninth session, through the Economic and Social Council, a comprehensive report on the current and future impact of the Israeli settlements on the living conditions of the Palestinian people in the occupied Palestinian territories, including a comparison between the living conditions of the latter and those of the residents of the Israeli settlements.
2. While the previous reports on this question submitted to the General Assembly (A/34/536 and Corr.1; A/35/533 and Corr.1; A/37/238; A/38/278-E/1983/77) dealt with the living conditions of the Palestinian people in the occupied Palestinian territories under the general conditions of occupation, this report, in compliance with the Assembly's request, focuses and examines the direct impact of the Israeli settlements on the living conditions of the Palestinians in the occupied territories. In this context some of the overall policies and practices of the occupying Power have had to be examined in order to determine this impact.
3. As in previous reports, the occupied Palestinian territories are defined as the West Bank, including East Jerusalem, and Gaza. In view of the fact that data on East Jerusalem are not published separately by the Israeli authorities, as is done for the West Bank and Gaza, the consultants have had to rely on information conveyed to them by persons knowledgeable of the conditions there, including the former Minister of Awqaf and Holy Places and the former Mayor of Jerusalem.
4. A matter of particular difficulty in preparing this report was the gathering of information on the living conditions in the Israeli settlements for purposes of comparing them with those in Palestinian communities. Since it was not possible to gather first-hand information, the consultants have had to rely on secondary sources of information obtained through interviews and from published material and have had to arrive at some general conclusions. These have been included in the respective chapters and sections dealing with the current and future impact of the Israeli settlements on the living conditions of the Palestinians in the occupied territories.
5. Section II of the report contains a summary of findings which are documented and substantiated in the body of the report. Section III gives an overview of Israeli settlement trends and plans. Most of the information was gathered from the reports of the Special Committee to Investigate Israeli Practices Affecting the Human Rights of the Population of the Occupied Territories, news items appearing in the popular press and information supplied by the Palestine Liberation Organization. Although the press reports are generally quoted from the Israeli newspapers, the same information did appear in the Arab newspapers in the occupied territories, particularly Al Fajr, Asha'b and Al Quds. Virtually all of the press reports were extracted from the reports of the Special Committee to Investigate Israeli Practices Affecting the Human Rights of the Population of the Occupied Territories.

6. Section IV examines the situation as it affects the growth and expansion of Palestinian towns and villages, water resources and housing. Section V describes the impact of the Israeli settlements on the economy of the occupied territories, section VI, the impact on the social life and religious practices of the Palestinians, and section VII, the impact on the judicial and local government systems in the territories. In each of these aspects of living, the future impact has been assessed on the basis of a continuation of current policies and practices. An empirical comparison of the living conditions of the Palestinians in the occupied territories with those of the Israeli residents in the settlements has also been included under each of the aspects.

7. In the preparation of this report, the consultants relied as much as possible on published sources which were supplemented by interviews with people knowledgeable of the conditions in the occupied territories. The consultants wish to place on record their appreciation of the co-operation offered them by ministers and officials of the Governments of the Arab Republic of Egypt and the Hashemite Kingdom of Jordan, officials of the Government of the Syrian Arab Republic, representatives and officials of the Palestine Liberation Organization, individuals in Amman who are closely in touch with current developments in the occupied territories, and officials of the specialized agencies and other organizations of the United Nations system.

II. SUMMARY OF FINDINGS

8. According to Jordanian sources, at the end of 1983 the State of Israel had expropriated 2,607,901 dunums (260,790 hectares) or 47.4 per cent of the West Bank territory, while according to some Israeli sources, Israel controls at present between 50 and 60 per cent of the land in the occupied territories. Of the expropriated land, 26 per cent has been allocated to Israeli settlements. Estimates based on Israeli and Palestinian data indicate that by now almost all of the Jordan Valley's potentially cultivable land has been expropriated for the Israeli settlements.

9. Israel continues to establish settlements in a manner that limits and/or impairs the expansion and growth of Palestinian towns and villages. As a new development, as has been done in East Jerusalem, Israel has initiated the establishment of an urban settlement in the centre of Hebron. The Government of Israel has also announced a plan known as the "Ben Porat Plan", a major feature of which is to relocate residents of Palestinian refugee camps to new residential quarters in various locations.

10. The impact of Israeli settlements on water resources is a function of the amount of expropriated cultivable land rather than the number of settlers. As a general rule 100,000 people consume 6 million cubic metres of water per year for domestic purposes, whereas an agricultural settlement containing about 300 families (1,200 people) farming 2,500 dunums (250 hectares) of cultivable land uses 2.4 million cubic metres of water per year for irrigation purposes.

11. Water resources of the Gaza are in a critical situation. But in the West Bank annual precipitation supplies eight times more than the present water requirements of the area. However, Israeli authorities, by combining the need of Israel proper with that of the West Bank, have declared water resources in the West Bank at a critical stage as well. As a consequence they are imposing a series of restrictive measures on the indigenous population of the area, such as maintaining the usage of water at 1967 levels. On the other hand, preferential treatment has been reported to be practised by the occupying authorities in supplying water to Israeli settlers.

12. There is an overall annual decline in residential construction in towns and villages of the occupied territories in spite of a 24 per cent increase in towns in Gaza. New construction of housing barely covers the need resulting from the natural increase of the population. Consequently, since 1967 the housing industry has contributed virtually nothing towards amelioration of dilapidated and substandard housing.

13. There has been no publicly subsidized and/or initiated low income housing for many years. Punitive demolition of houses continues at an accelerated rate. In addition, a new punitive measure of sealing houses or rooms with concrete is being applied by the occupying authorities.

14. Absence of construction to replace dilapidated and substandard housing, along with the restrictive policies of the occupying authorities as regards building permits and transfer of funds from abroad, is expected to worsen the already serious housing conditions. The virtually stand-still state of public housing, and the non-existence of financial measures to assist low income families to acquire proper housing are added dimensions to the above-mentioned problem.

15. Indications at the present time are that the Israeli Government will continue to follow the policy of establishing settlements in the occupied territories and settling more Israelis in them, to a projected minimum of 100,000 by 1987 and 190,000 by 2010. These numbers exclude Israelis in East Jerusalem and other Palestinian localities incorporated into the City immediately after the 1967 war.

16. The policies designed to promote, protect and develop the settlements have a direct economic effect in that they diminish the amount of land and water resources available to the Palestinians. The increasing control exercised by the occupation authorities over what agricultural products can be produced and where, the restrictions on industrial production, the control of marketing that limits and directs exchange over the "open bridges" to Jordan and "open border" with Israel, and the negative effect on investment caused by the absence of a financial system, the restrictions on building, the continuous devaluation of the Israeli shekel, and the general feeling of insecurity, are factors that contribute to important structural changes in the economy of the occupied territories. These changes can be summarized as: diminished importance of the agricultural sector without a corresponding development of an industrial base; relative lack of opportunities for employment in the occupied territories, with consequent daily commuting to Israel by the Palestinian labour force; increased concentration of Palestinian labour in the building trades; reorientation of production towards goods that can be sold to and through Israel, while Palestinian consumption is met by increased imports from

Israel; development of a chronic trade deficit for the territories that is not balanced by the earnings of workers or the surplus trade with Jordan, and is partly offset only by remittances from Palestinians abroad.

17. The economic policies of the occupying Power have, therefore, created a situation of total dependence of the economy of the West Bank and Gaza by controlling production and reducing the capacity to create jobs in such a manner as to diminish the potential for economic development. The growth of income that is reported statistically hides the two facts of lack of indigenous development and economic dependency. The persistence of a dual currency system in the West Bank provides an outlet for Palestinian savings, which are not invested in the territories, to a safe haven in Jordan. Dinars are also hoarded as protection against the inflation characteristic of the Israeli economy. This dual system also provides Israel with a useful means to acquire hard currency.

18. Under a system that appears to be designed to attract Israelis to settlements and to compel Palestinians to leave the territories, there is a wide difference in the access to earning opportunities that each group enjoys. While the settlers are often on the government payroll or in private or public enterprises, the Palestinians are hindered from working their land, and if highly educated, have no access to employment, unless they emigrate or join the ranks of commuting manual labourers. In production, the settlers are subsidized, and enjoy assured markets at guaranteed prices, while Palestinians are impeded by restrictions, regulations, and direct controls, and have no access to credit, let alone subsidies.

19. The settlers enjoy all the benefits of full citizenship, including those of the National Insurance Scheme, while the Palestinians working in Israel are denied such benefits on the grounds of non-residence in Israel, although they are full contributors to that system. The settlers enjoy a standard of living superior to that of the Palestinians by the design of the settlements and the amenities they offer, while Palestinians are forbidden to improve their houses and gardens and discouraged from investing in industry. The two groups live under widely disparate conditions. The first are able to look forward to growth and development, the second are fearful of total dispossession, which they believe to be the aim of the occupying Power.

20. The increasing number of Israelis who are moving into the settlements that are being established is affecting adversely the social life of the Palestinians in the occupied territories and disrupting their daily activities. The current policy of establishing Israeli settlements in close proximity to Palestinian populated towns and villages has given rise to more frequent interaction between the settlers and the Palestinians. However, the interaction has been predominantly one of conflict and confrontation often leading to violence. The settlers form a privileged class in the occupied territories, have the support of the administering authorities and the Government, are permitted to carry firearms and often get involved in maintaining law and order.

21. The intervention of the settlers in the day-to-day life of the Palestinians in the occupied territories has included interference with farming activities; obtaining, with the support of the administration, land from the villages for

territorial expansion of their settlements and for provision of infrastructure to them; disruption of classes and school activities because of alleged stone-throwing incidents by students; confrontation in places of religious worship and, more recently, violent acts intended to damage or destroy such places. The latter has been attributed to terrorist groups. The Palestinian residents of some of the refugee camps have been subjected to frequent harassment, partly because of the resistance of the camp dwellers to a plan by the Israeli Government to relocate them elsewhere.

22. The occupied territories are subject to two different judicial and local government systems. A separate system of local government operates for the Israeli settlements which, among other privileges, have powers for planning and development of all the areas which are beyond the existing territorial boundaries of the Palestinian towns and villages. Israeli law is extended to the settlers, while the Palestinians are subject to military law; and justice is dispensed to the Israeli settlers through Israeli courts, while the Palestinians are subject to the jurisdiction of military courts, the judgement of which cannot be appealed.

23. The facilities available to the Israeli settlers to meet their educational and health needs, appear to be superior to those available to the Palestinians in the territories. The systems available to the settlers are of the same high standard and quality as those in Israel. In contrast, the facilities and services available to the Palestinians are below average and not commensurate with the increase in population and advances in the educational and medical sciences.

24. While the Israeli settlers are quite free to pursue their social and cultural interests and activities within the territories without any hindrances, the Palestinians are subjected to frequent curfews which restrict their activities. Security checks carried out by military personnel, the police, and the settlers at any time of the day or night are routine happenings.

III. SETTLEMENT TRENDS

A. Overview

25. The trends in the establishment of Israeli settlements in the Arab territories occupied after June 1967 can roughly be divided into three phases, namely:

- (a) 1967 to 1970;
- (b) 1971 to 1977 when the Labour Government was in power;
- (c) 1977 to the present during the tenure of the Likud Government.

These periods do not form distinct phases but rather a continuous process, considering that the Labour Government was in power during the first two phases and the influence of the National Religious Party has been continuous in both Governments. The differences lie more in emphasis than in radical changes in policy.

26. In the first phase, 1967 to 1970, although there does not seem to have been an initial declaration of policy, the Defence Ministry undertook the establishment of military outposts, commonly known as "nahals", in strategic areas, as security measures and for the purpose of maintaining law and order in the territories. Nahals were established in the Jordan Valley - three in 1968 (Mehola, Kalia and Aragaman); one in 1969 (Patazael); and four in 1970 (Gilgal, Massua, Yitav and Maele Bfravim). A nahal outpost was also established in the Gaza (Kfar Darom - 1970). 1/ Meanwhile, the Ministry of Housing and Construction undertook the construction of urban residential units within the Arab area incorporated in the City of Jerusalem, namely the Arab sector of Jerusalem and the surrounding Arab villages of Sour Baher, Biet Safafa, Eltour, Elamm, El Assaweh and Anata as well as the area around the airport. Units were being constructed, particularly in the Jewish Quarter of the Old City, Ramat Eshkol and French Hill. 2/ Private groups of Israelis were also active in establishing a presence in the occupied territories. Thus, a former Jewish settlement at Kfar Etzion, which had been abandoned after the 1948 war, was re-established by the children of the original settlers, and a religious group illegally established a settlement at Kiryat Arba'a, a suburb of Hebron. One civilian settlement was established in 1969 in the Etzion Block north of Hebron (Rosh Tzurim) and one in 1970 (Alon Shvot). A religious co-operative, (moshav), Mevo Horon, was also established in the Latrun Salient in January 1970.

27. On the whole, the establishment of Israeli settlements during this period appears to have followed the Allon Plan, presented by the then Deputy Prime Minister, Mr. Yigal Allon, to the Government on 13 July 1967, which included fixing the Jordan River as Israel's "secure border" with Jordan; holding a strip of 15 to 20 kilometres wide in the Jordan Valley which would include the first ridge of mountains west of the Valley; holding the eastern slopes of Mt. Hebron and the Judaeen Desert to the Dead Sea; and making minor border adjustments in places like Latrun and the Etzion Block. 3/

28. By the beginning of the second phase in 1971, there was growing evidence of an emerging policy on settlement. The press made reference to the existence of a Ministerial Committee for the settlement of the occupied territories, and announcements to that effect were made by Israeli Government ministers and leaders. 4/ While settlements during this period were established in the priority areas outlined in the Allon Plan, other considerations appear to have influenced the shaping of policy, as was indicated in a statement in the Knesset made on 19 July 1972 by Mr. Israel Galili, Minister without Portfolio and Chairman of the Ministerial Committee for Settlement. He was quoted as saying that the Israeli Government had put no area out of bounds for Jewish settlements and that the only limitations to Israeli settlement in the occupied territories were moral ones; and that settlement policy was not dictated by security alone but historical right as well, if not more so. 5/

29. Further indications given by Israeli ministers as to the trends in settlement policy included a statement made by Mr. Moshe Dayan that the West Bank was part of the fatherland and Israelis had the right to settle there on a permanent basis in accordance with Government policy decisions. 6/ During the period 1971-1976, settlements were established as follows: in the Jordan Valley, 7; Bethelam, 1; Nablus, 1; Ramallah, 1; Gaza, 2; and East Jerusalem, 10 (see appendix I-A). The

settlements in the East Jerusalem area were established according to a master plan drawn up in 1971 for the construction of approximately 21,000 residential units. 7/

30. With the election of the Likud Government in early 1977, settlement trends in the occupied territories were influenced by certain decisions taken by the Government, particularly to "thicken" and strengthen already established settlements and to accelerate the pace of establishing new ones. 8/ While continuing to establish settlements in the priority areas determined by the Labour Government, the Likud Government opened new areas for settlement, which included the northern West Bank, the western slopes of the Jerusalem hills and the vicinities of Palestinian towns, such as Ramallah, Nablus and Jenin. Not only was the Government to establish settlements in these areas, but also private groups, notably the Gush Emunim. 9/ Some of the considerations which led to this expansion were articulated from time to time by Government ministers and other leaders; for example, Mr. Ariel Sharon, Minister of Agriculture and Chairman of the Ministerial Committee for Settlement, on 3 July 1978 stated that settlements had been located on the northern West Bank "partly to outflank the 300,000 Palestinians who straddle the former Armistice Line" (A/33/356, para. 82). On 18 January 1979, he stated that "Jewish settlement is necessary east of Nablus in order to protect a proposed approach road to the Jordan Valley from the coastal plains" (A/34/631, para. 57). He was also reported to have stated during a Cabinet discussion on the matter that "Jews had every right to rebuild their homes in the centre of Hebron, especially at sites like the Hadassa hospital where Jewish title is indisputable". 10/ Mr. Drobles, Co-Chairman of the Jewish Agency's Settlement Department, stated on 18 May 1979 at a press conference that the State of Israel must for political and other reasons develop the entire region of "Judea and Samaria" (West Bank) (A/34/631, para. 49); and referring to nahal outposts established in the fiscal year 1982/83, he said that they were designed to curb "illegal spread of Arabs in vital areas" (A/37/485, para. 209).

31. During the period 1977 to 1983, settlements were established as follows: Jordan Valley, 17; East Jerusalem, 11; Gaza, 11; Hebron, 15; Bethlehem, 8; Ramallah, 17; Nablus, 21; and Jenin, 5 (see appendix I-A).

32. In a survey of the activities of his Ministry, the Minister of Science and Development, Mr. Yuval Ne'eman, who is also the Acting Chairman of the Joint Committee on Settlement of the Government of Israel and the World Zionist Organization, stated on 13 March 1984 that

"there isn't enough settlement ... There isn't enough - not so much in terms of the number - but the problem is rate, since we are establishing settlements, but unfortunately they look like settlements set up by the pre-state Jewish community, when there was no state yet. I would hope that at the time when this is being done by the state, there would not be 15 housing units at the beginning, but 100 and 200 ... If you look at my survey and see where the 48 settlements have been established in the last years, you will find that settlements not in accordance with the 'Allon Plan' can be counted on one hand ... Only six or seven of the settlements we established were outside the (parameters of the) plan. Of course, if you put the Allon Plan in a narrower corridor, then many more settlements are outside the plan". 11/

B. Plan formulation

33. According to the information gathered by the consultants from secondary sources, formulation of settlement plans is done by various bodies, notably the Ministries directly concerned with settlement, for example, the Ministries of Agriculture, Housing and Defence. The Settlement Department of the World Zionist Organization is also actively engaged in settlement planning, and in one instance, the Gush Emunim also had produced a master plan. However, final approval lies with the Ministerial Committee for Settlement and the Israeli Government Cabinet. The Ministerial Committee is composed of seven ministers of Government and an equal number of members of the World Zionist Organization. 12/ The Ministerial Committee as well as the Settlement Department of the World Zionist Organization announce from time to time various plans which have been formulated by each body, sometimes short-term and at other times, long-term.
34. In its planning, the Settlement Department of the World Zionist Organization, which is said to be identical with the Settlement Department of the Jewish Agency which has responsibility for settlement within Israel proper (A/33/356), can draw on the experience in establishing settlements within Israel during the period from 1948 to 1967. The planning is on a regional basis and comprises rural settlements, rural service centres and regional towns, as for example in the Lakhish region within Israel. 13/ Evidence of this approach is contained in a report in the Ma'ariv of 3 March 1974 that plans had been drawn up for the establishment in the Gaza Strip of 6 moshavim and 3 kibbutzim along with a municipal centre. The regional centre of Alon Shvut for the Etzion Block of settlements 14/ and Ma'aleh Ephraim as a service centre for settlers in the Jordan Valley 15/ are further examples of the regional planning approach.
35. Since 1977, coinciding with the election of the Likud Government, the Settlement Department of the World Zionist Organization appears to have become more active in formulating its own plans, which were subject to Government approval. Thus the Jerusalem Post of 19 January 1977 and the Ha'aretz of 13 January 1977 reported a four-year plan by the Settlement Department to establish 56 rural settlements, including 27 in the occupied territories. A five-year project for establishing 59 settlements in the West Bank was put forward in 1980 by the Settlement Department of the World Zionist Organization. Thirty of them had already been established since 1978 and 20 were to be ready by 1983. 16/ Another plan was put forward by the Settlement Department to establish 70 settlements (12 to 15 each year) between 1980 and 1985. They were to be located in proximity to other established settlements around Hebron, Ma'aleh Adumin, Jerusalem, and Jenin area and the Jordan Valley. 17/ In a new development, a committee of experts drawn from various ministries of Government (Defence, Housing and Construction, Labour and Social Services) and representatives of the Settlement Department of the World Zionist Organization have drawn up a master plan to establish Gush Emunim settlements in the West Bank (15 according to Al Ittihad). 18/
36. In the survey of the activities of his Ministry of Science and Development referred to earlier, the Minister, Mr. Yuval Ne'eman mentioned that since 1982, the Joint Committee on Settlement had decided on the establishment of 48 settlements of which 8 were to be in the "Samaria" mountains; 7 in western "Samaria"; 7 in the

Jordan Valley; 5 in the Jerusalem-Etzion Block area; 2 on the Hebron Plateau; 9 in the Yattir region; 3 in Gaza; and 3 in the Arava, the other 4 being in Galilee. Of these, 43 were either populated or started to be built. In 1984 and 1985 some 12 new settlements were to be established by the Settlement Division of the World Zionist Organization. Some of these would be army outposts converted into civilian settlements, "exploiting infrastructure constructed as part of defense activities"; some would be settlements in entirely new areas. 19/

37. According to information provided by the Department of Occupied Homeland Affairs of the Palestine Liberation Organization (appendix II-B), plans have been formulated to establish another 72 settlements during the period 1983-1987, distributed as follows: Jordan Valley, 4; Bethlehem, 9; Nablus, 33; Hebron, 10; Ramallah, 7; unspecified, 9.

C. Investment in the settlement programme

38. It is difficult to determine precisely the magnitude of resources expended in the establishment of the Israeli settlements, particularly because the resources are made available from various sources, as the analysis below indicates. It would appear that funds for the initial establishment, as well as operations and maintenance are included in the budgets of various ministries of Government, notably those concerned with agriculture, housing and defence, the last for the establishment of military outposts (nahals), many of which have been converted subsequently to civilian settlements. The World Zionist Organization, through its Settlement Department, channels substantial resources not only towards the establishment of the settlements, but also for procuring settlers and maintenance of outposts. 20/ The Jewish National Fund expends resources on buying and reclaiming land, and the Israeli Land Authority also purchases land for settlement purposes. 21/ According to the information gathered by the consultants, the parent bodies of various movements, such as Moshav and Kibbutz, and religious groups often bear part of the costs of operations and maintenance during the initial stages of developing the settlements affiliated with them. The resources invested were in settlements in the occupied Palestinian territories as well as the Golan Heights and, up to 1979, in the Sinai.

39. There is no record readily available of the resources expended during the initial years of the settlement movement, apart from a report appearing in the Ha'aretz of 10 February 1975 which mentioned Israeli pounds (I£) 800 million as the amount spent on the settlements since 1967. Another report in the Ha'aretz of 1 February 1977 mentioned a decision of the Ministerial Committee on Settlement to allocate I£ 225 million for establishing 25 settlements, 17 of which were to be built in the occupied territories.

40. More precise information began to be released to the public with the advent of the Likud Government in 1977. Speaking as the Chairman of the Ministerial Committee on Settlement, Mr. Sharon had said that the Committee "intends to spend I£ 108 million, one third of the development budget on new sites", as reported in the Jerusalem Post of 6 March 1978. A report appearing in the Ha'aretz of 6 June 1978 mentioned that the Minister of Housing and Construction had budgeted

I£ 80 million for constructions in new settlements in the northern region of the West Bank, out of a global provision of I£ 170 million earmarked for settlements. The Israeli Government budget for 1978/79 had the following breakdown for settlements (A/33/356, para. 50):

I£ 2.5 billion for new settlements and extension of existing ones

I£ 830 million for the Housing Ministry

I£ 600 million for the Agricultural Ministry.

41. The decision of the Government of Israel on 16 September 1979 to authorize the purchase of land in the West Bank and Gaza by Israeli citizens and corporations opened the door for private investment to flow into the settlement movement; and so did the programme of "Build Your Own Home", sponsored by the Jewish Agency, which provided attractive incentives to prospective settlers.

42. By 1980, the expenditure on settlements was increasing rapidly both because of the accelerated programme of establishing them and also the fall in value of the Israeli pound. It was reported that the Government was to invest at least I£ 7.5 billion during the fiscal year 1980 in the occupied territories. A budget of I£ 3 billion had been allocated by the World Zionist Organization Settlement Department to the development of 103 settlements in the occupied territories (A/35/425, paras. 93 and 94).

43. Concerning the fiscal year 1984/85, the Jerusalem Post of 27 October 1983 reported that the Finance Minister, Mr. Yigal Cohen-Orgad, had stated at the Knesset Finance Committee meeting on 26 October that the expenditure on settlements in the occupied Palestinian territories and the Golan Heights for the fiscal year 1984/85 would be Israeli shekels (IS) 35 billion (pounds changed into shekels in 1981).

IV. IMPACT OF ISRAELI SETTLEMENTS ON LAND AND WATER RESOURCES, HOUSING, PUBLIC AMENITIES, AND INFRASTRUCTURE SERVICES

A. Impact on growth and expansion of Palestinian towns and villages

44. Palestinian communities inhabiting the West Bank and Gaza are basically agricultural. To them the basic elements of land and water are of vital importance. The Ministry of Occupied Territories Affairs of the Government of Jordan reports that up to January 1984, the State of Israel had taken possession of 2,607,901 dunums (260,790 hectares) of West Bank territory, which constitutes 47.4 per cent of the total area. According to the same source, 26 per cent of this land has been allocated to the 165 Israeli settlements created by the end of July 1983. 22/ According to the Washington Post, some Israeli sources have estimated Israeli controlled land in the West Bank at over 50 to 60 per cent of its total area. 23/ The example of the Jordan Valley can serve as an illustration of the magnitude of Israeli expropriation of Palestinian lands. Elisha Efrat, an Israeli geographer, states that "the Jordan Valley is estimated to contain

16,500 acres (66,775 dunums or 6,677 hectares) of cultivable land unevenly distributed along the length of the valley. 24/ By his calculation, on the basis of 7.5 acres (30 dunums) of land per agricultural unit, and approximately 80 agricultural units per settlement, the Jordan Valley could support between 18 and 25 Israeli settlements. 25/ The most recent account of the Department of Occupied Homeland Affairs of the Palestine Liberation Organization shows that by the end of 1983 Israel had established 31 settlements of various types in the Jordan Valley (see appendix I-A).

45. According to Elisha Efrat, the criteria for locating Israeli settlements in the occupied territories are to use the least suitable agricultural land, to avoid densely populated Palestinian localities and to refrain from impairing the growth of Palestinian villages. 26/ However, according to Meron Benvenisti (ex-Deputy Mayor of Jerusalem) the main criteria for planning and locating Israeli settlements are as follows:

(a) Abolishing the independent planning powers of Palestinian village councils and district planning commissions, and vesting all planning powers in the Higher Planning Council, a body composed of Israeli officials only; 27/

(b) Circumventing Palestinian villages; 28/

(c) Locating settlements so that they restrict expansion of adjacent Palestinian villages and farms; 29/

(d) Segregating public services between Palestinian and Israeli settlements; 30/

(e) Locating Israeli settlements on higher ground for a militarily more secure and superior position; 31/

(f) Restricting future spatial expansion of Palestinian towns and villages by limiting their maximum built-up area by restrictive land use regulations, and designating the remaining spaces either "special areas" (i.e. allocated or planned to be allocated for Israeli settlements) or agricultural land, natural reserves or areas for future planning; 32/

(g) Creating extremely wide building lines on either sides of main roads (100 and 150 metres) in order to obstruct traditional expansion of Palestinian housing along main arteries. 33/

46. A very recent development in Israeli settlements' policy is locating Israeli settlements inside densely populated Palestinian urban centres. The Ministry of the Occupied Territories Affairs of Jordan reports that the Government of Israel, in spite of the strong opposition of the local population, has initiated a plan of establishing an urban settlement in the middle of the city of Hebron in the West Bank at the location of the central vegetable market which was burnt down during Israeli-imposed curfew hours. 34/

47. According to recent press reports, "the Israeli authorities are considering a plan drawn up by a committee chaired by Minister Mordechai Porat for the resettlement of Palestinian refugees living in camps in the West Bank". 35/ A major objective of this plan which is known as the "Ben Porat Plan", is to demolish some of the camps and construct proper housing in specified locations, in order to relocate the refugees to new and adequate living quarters. Some Israeli newspapers have announced that the United Nations Relief and Works Agency for Palestine Refugees in the Near East (UNRWA) will be involved in this project. 36/ In a statement to the press, on 14 December 1983, the Commissioner-General of UNRWA made clarifications to the effect that:

(a) UNRWA has not been associated with the plan and does not envisage being involved in its execution;

(b) The agency will not oppose voluntary acceptance of the move to new quarters by the refugees, but will strongly object to any coercive attempt to make refugees comply with any particular attempt;

(c) The agency will expect to continue providing its services to relocated refugees, since their status and eligibility as refugees will not be affected by the move. But relocating installations, such as schools and clinics, will require additional funding. 37/ Palestinian sources consider the "Ben Porat Plan" another attempt by the Government of Israel in the direction of dispersing Palestinians within the occupied territories with the objective of creating a more homogeneous mosaic of Jewish settlements and Palestinian communities in the region, and dismantling the camps which have become strongholds of Palestinian resistance against assimilation and erosion of Palestinian national identity. 38/

48. The future impact of the Israeli settlements on the growth and expansion of Palestinian towns and villages in the occupied territories will be determined by the number of settlements that will be established in the coming years and the increase in the Israeli population living in them. According to the data compiled by the Department of Occupied Homeland Affairs of the Palestine Liberation Organization from Israeli sources, some 78 new settlements will be established during the period 1983-1987 (see appendix I-B). At present, approximately 35,000 Israelis are said to be living in the settlements, and according to government plans 100,000 are expected to live in them by 1987 with a projected figure of 190,000 by the year 2010. 39/

49. Considering that investment resources are being provided on an increasing scale for the settlement movement (see paras. 38-43 above), and Israeli families are inclined to move into the settlements because of the improved quality of life in them and cheaper prices of houses, 40/ the target for 1987 appears to be a possibility, and that for 2010 a more nebulous one. According to one estimate, 41/ during the period 1985-1994, the natural increase of the Palestinian population in the territories is expected to be approximately 685,000. Over the next decade the above-mentioned increase in the number of Israeli settlers, plus the natural growth of the Palestinian population, even without considering the conceivable return of a portion of Palestinian refugees, is expected to double the existing population of the territories. This means that, even at the present unacceptable standards,

there will be a doubling of the need for water, cultivable land, housing, public amenities and services, infrastructural facilities etc.

50. Previous policies and practices of the Government of Israel in expropriating land for the settlements in the occupied territories indicate that to accommodate an additional 65,000 to 155,000 Israeli settlers within the next 26 years will require further expropriation of large quantities of land not only for providing the settlements with the necessary infrastructure but also for their expansion. This would mean that Palestinian towns and villages will not have enough land for their future growth and expansion to accommodate the increase in the Palestinian population projected above.

B. Impact on water resources

51. According to Meron Benvenisti,

"The impact of Israeli settlements on West Bank water is a function of the amount of land irrigated by the settlers and not of the actual number of settlers. Indeed, Israeli settlers today are 2-3 per cent of the West Bank population and use 20 per cent of the total water consumption of the area. Yet 96 per cent of this amount is for irrigation". 42/

The supply of water in the West Bank and Gaza is estimated to be approximately 800 million cubic metres (m^3) and 50 million m^3 per year respectively. The annual consumption of water for agricultural and domestic uses in each of these two regions is estimated at 100 million m^3 per year. This means that while the annual supply of water in the West Bank is eight times more than its consumption, Gaza consumes about double the amount of water available from annual precipitation. 43/ The following table presents water resources and their allocation to domestic and agricultural uses.

52. While the situation in Gaza is very serious and requires immediate remedy to prevent rapid drop of underground water level below the red line, increase of salinity, and intrusion of sea water into the land, the supply of water in the West Bank is more than adequate for the present and the future needs of a much larger population and extended agricultural activities. 44/ However, Israeli sources, by defining the region to be served by the available water resources of the West Bank as the area between the Mediterranean Sea and the Jordan River, which includes the State of Israel, arrive at the following opposite picture and conclusions:

"The scarcity of water in the region between the Mediterranean Sea and the Jordan River has resulted in a situation where all the major groundwater aquifers are already fully exploited. In the Gaza Strip and in the western and northeastern basins of Judea and Samaria, the groundwater aquifers are already overexploited. Exploitation of water resources must end in Judea and Samaria and decrease in the Gaza Strip. According to present forecasts of demographic and economic development, there will be a water deficit by the end of the century of 200-400 million m^3 per year in these two areas." 45/

Table 1: Water resources and their allocation to domestic and irrigation uses: 1982

	Population (thousands)	Land under irrigation (thousand dunums)	Available water (million m ³)	Allocation of water (million m ³)			Annual deficit or surplus (million m ³)
				Irriga- tion <u>a/</u>	Domes- tic <u>b/</u>	Total	
West Bank	748	87.5	800	87.5	15	102.5	+697.5
Gaza Strip	476	102	50	102	9.5	111.5	-61.5

Sources:

For population figures, Statistical Abstract of Israel, 1983;

For land under irrigation, United Nations Conference on Trade and Development, "Palestine: options for development" (TD/B/960), report prepared by P. G. Sadler and B. Abu Kishk, 11 May 1983, p. 18; for available water, p. 19;

For calculating allocated water for irrigation, Elisha Efrat, "Spatial patterns of Jewish and Arab settlements in Judea and Samaria", in Daniel J. Elazar, ed., Judea, Samaria and Gaza: Views on the Present and Future (Washington, D.C., American Enterprise Institute, 1982), p. 22;

For calculating allocated water for domestic use, Meron Benvenisti, The West Bank and Gaza, Data Base Project (Washington, D.C., American Enterprise Institute, 1982), p. 23.

a/ At 1,000 m³/yr/dunum.

b/ At 20 m³/yr/person.

53. Reasons for the above-mentioned conclusion of Israeli sources, which are drawn in spite of the figures presented in the preceding table, is beyond the scope of this report. This conclusion, however, has resulted in restrictive measures imposed by the occupying authorities in terms of limiting the usage of water by the Palestinian population to the maximum level used in 1967, 46/ which has had a direct and detrimental impact upon the living conditions of the Palestinian people. At the same time, Israeli settlements are being created in increasing numbers every year. Each Israeli agricultural settlement consumes an average of 2.4 million m³ of water per year. 47/ "Drilling of irrigation wells has been severely restricted in the West Bank since 1967, while the Israeli Water Company was given permission to drill 30 new wells there. Since 1967, only two new wells for agricultural use have been permitted to the (Palestinian) people of the West Bank". 48/

54. As we stated before, Israel considers the West Bank aquifers as serving Israel and the West Bank, and according to the previous quotation, in paragraph 52, the major aquifers in this area are already fully exploited and even in some areas overexploited. For all practical purposes, therefore, the fact seems to be that the aquifers of the West Bank, instead of serving a population of 748,000 Palestinians and 35,000 Israeli settlers, also serve a significant portion of over 3 million Israelis within Israel proper. If this practice continues, the need created by the future increase of Israeli settlers and the natural growth of population in the West Bank alone, will surpass the capacity of the West Bank water resources.

C. Impact on housing

55. According to figures presented in the Statistical Abstract of Israel, 1983, the amount of residential building completed during 1981 in the West Bank towns and villages declined by 15.4 and 4.1 per cent respectively compared with 1980. In Gaza, residential construction in the towns had increased by 23.9 per cent, while decreasing by 5.8 per cent in the villages. The combined figures of West Bank and Gaza show a decline of 1.2 per cent in towns and 4.3 per cent in villages. This is illustrated in the table below.

Table 2: Area of residential and non-residential buildings completed in 1980 and 1981

(thousands of m²)

	West Bank			Gaza Strip			Total		
	1980	1981	Change (percentage)	1980	1981	Change (percentage)	1980	1981	Change (percentage)
Total	589.0	534.3	-9.3	204.5	238.4	+16.6	793.5	772.7	-2.6
Towns	271.7	229.8	-15.4	154.1	190.9	+23.9	425.8	420.7	-1.2
Villages	317.4	304.5	-4.1	50.4	47.5	-5.8	367.8	352	-4.3

Source: Statistical Abstract of Israel, 1983, table XXVII/36, p. 798.

56. The above-mentioned decline became more significant in the light of the fact that by one estimate there are 200,000 residential units in the West Bank of which 70 per cent (140,000 units) need to be replaced because of either dilapidation or unacceptable standards. 49/ In terms of square metres of construction on the basis of 120 m² per dwelling unit, this means 16,800,000 m² of needed residential construction.

57. As was stated in the report of the Secretary-General to the General Assembly at its thirty-eighth session (A/38/278-E/1983/77, annex, para. 24), there has been

a significant discrepancy in the amount of residential construction in relation to total housing need, which is comprised of need created by population growth plus replacement of dilapidated and substandard housing. The following table updates the figures presented in the above-mentioned report on the supply of housing in relation to housing need in the occupied territories. It can be readily observed that the housing industry over the 15 years since the 1967 occupation, after satisfying the housing need of 38,589 units resulting from population growth, has only contributed a total of 6,721 units (an average of 450 units per year) towards replacing the estimated 140,000 dilapidated and substandard units.

Table 3: Comparison of supply of housing with housing need in the Palestinian territories, 1967-1982

	West Bank	Gaza Strip	Total
Population increase, 1967-1982 <u>a/</u>	161 600	95 500	
Average family size, 1982 <u>b/</u>	6.7	6.6	
Number of families, increase, 1967-1982	24 119	14 470	38 589
Number of families living in substandard and dilapidated housing, 1982 <u>c/</u>			140 000
Total housing need, 1982			<u>178 589</u>
Total residential construction completed, 1967-1982 <u>d/</u> (m ²)	3 888 800	1 615 800	
Average size of dwelling units completed, 1979-1981 <u>e/</u> (m ²)	116.6	132	
Total number of dwelling units, increase, 1967-1982	33 069	12 241	<u>45 310</u>

Sources: Statistical Abstract of Israel, 1983: a/ table XXVII/1; b/ table XXVII/14; d/ table XXVII/33; e/ table XXVII/34;

c/ United Nations Conference on Trade and Development, "Palestine: options for development" (TD/B/960), report prepared by P. G. Sadler and B. Abu Kishk, 11 May 1983, p. 41.

58. The long-term impact of the occupying authorities' lack of attention to residential construction in particular and construction activities in general, could be expected to further aggravate the shortages in housing units and public buildings in the future. The same could be said of the restrictive practices of the occupying authorities in terms of administrative obstacles to issuing building permits 50/ and transfers of funds from abroad. 51/

59. There has been no activity in residential construction by the public sector since 1968 in the West Bank and since 1978 in Gaza. 52/ This means that the occupying authorities have not taken any measures towards helping lower income groups of the local population to acquire adequate housing since those dates. At the same time, virtually all of the Israeli settlers enjoy some kind of direct or indirect subsidy in the form of long-term low interest government loans, and government provision of public amenities, and infrastructural facilities, which further decreases cost of the housing etc. 53/

60. The contrast in housing and community facilities is most apparent in occupied Arab Jerusalem. While new apartment complexes have been built in and around it with all modern amenities, paved roads and open spaces, little or no improvement has been made to the housing and infrastructure in the Arab sector of the city. This neglect is said to extend to municipal services also, such as garbage collection, street cleaning and public lighting. Where other urban settlements have been established, such as Ariel, Ma'aaleh Adumim, Ma'aaleh Efraim and Kiryat Arba'a, the same high standards as in Jerusalem would have been applied, as is evident in the demolished settlement of Yamit in northern Sinai.

61. So far as the standard of housing is concerned, there are many indications, and it is reasonable to assume, that the houses in the Israeli settlements are constructed and equipped at a much higher standard than those occupied by the Palestinians. Assuming that all new house construction in the settlements includes such facilities as kitchen, bathroom, toilet, running water and electricity, an assessment of the lack of these facilities in Palestinian homes in the occupied territories can be made from the table below, extracted from the Statistical Abstract of Israel, 1983.

Table 4. Household facilities in the West Bank and Gaza, 1981
 (percentages)

	West Bank			Gaza		
	Total	Villages	Towns	Total	refugee camps	Towns
Kitchen exclusively for household	73.2	65.8	86.4	80.1	85.5	77.8
No bathroom	49.3	59.6	26.2	38.8	48.9	30.3
No toilet	14.7	21.5	2.4	2.2	1.0	1.7
Running water in dwelling	44.9	29.3	79.0	51.4	39.7	63.1
Electricity round the clock	50.6	26.9	95.8	88.5	83.9	89.2

Source: Statistical Abstract of Israel, 1983, table XXVII/36.

62. Israeli rural settlements go through various stages of development, such as temporary accommodation in the nahals to prefabricated buildings and ultimately to permanent structures of houses with public buildings, electricity, water supply, approach roads and other amenities. Commenting on the facilities available in the settlements, Mr. Nafez Nazzal, in his article on "Land tenure, the settlements and peace" in the book, A Palestinian Agenda for the West Bank and Gaza, 54/ writes that the houses are air-conditioned, and those situated in the Jordan Valley are equipped with a powerful apparatus capable of dealing with the heat of the valley. Each house, or in some cases every pair of houses, has access to a huge air-conditioned shelter, dug in the ground and overtopped by boulders, which is connected by a paved way to the front of each house. Rows of electric lamps criss-cross each settlement and surround the fence. The settlements are flood-lit in the night. Inside the settlement there is a central area covered by grass which requires considerable amounts of water to keep it green. Community services, such as kitchen, clubs and dining rooms are air-conditioned.

63. The Israeli regional planning concept of rural settlements, rural service centres and regional towns has been applied with advantage to provide the basic necessities and services to the Israeli settlers. However, no such planning approach has been applied to improve the living conditions of the Palestinian residents. Palestinian communities have been limited by various regulations from undertaking new constructions whether private or public, and municipalities have been restricted from improving services or providing new facilities. Many restrictions have been placed on improving water service and electricity supply, while the neighbouring settlements have been provided generously with these amenities.

64. The impact of the above-mentioned discrepancy and differing standards in housing conditions of Israeli settlers and Arab population is expected to have far-reaching effects of deprivation, frustration and antagonism of the local inhabitants of the area against the Israeli-Jewish population in the neighbouring settlements. Some of the violent incidents between Israelis and Palestinians, recorded in the reports of the Special Committee to Investigate Israeli Practices Affecting the Human Rights of the Population of the Occupied Territories, 55/ can be reasonably assumed to have been partly due to the frustration resulting from preferential treatment of Israeli settlers.

65. The occupying authorities are continuing their practices of demolishing houses and therefore punishing the families of those suspected or convicted of committing violent acts or engaging in demonstrations, stone throwing etc. against Israeli settlers and authorities. Appendix III presents the number of houses demolished by Israeli authorities from 1967 to 1982. It can be observed from this table, that since 1977, when such demolition was reduced to one, there has been a marked increase of up to 55 units in 1982. The total number of houses demolished for punitive reasons over the 16-year period of occupation has been 1,346 units, 28 of which were demolished in Gaza.

66. According to information supplied to the consultants by Palestinian sources and confirmed by news reports in Israeli papers, 56/ in addition to demolishing houses, Israeli authorities have devised a new method of punishment, by which the house, or the main room of the house of the family whose member is accused of stone throwing, is sealed off with concrete instead of being demolished.

V. ECONOMIC IMPACT OF ISRAELI SETTLEMENTS

A. Impact on production and trade

57. The most immediate and direct consequences of the acceleration of Israeli settlement in the occupied territories are on ownership and use of land. These, in turn, impose radical changes in the economy of the territories, the central characteristic of which has been the predominance of agriculture. Expropriation and confiscation, by their nature, limit the land area accessible to Palestinian farmers, 57/ and the associated control of water resources by Israel 58/ directly affects the utilization and productivity of this land.

58. Other measures adopted by the occupying Power in response to the requirements of its own economy, and to its political and security considerations, further restrict the freedom of Palestinian farmers in the use of their land and impede the independent development of the agricultural sector. Examples of such measures are:

(a) Opening of roads to connect settlements among themselves and with Israel through agricultural land, 59/ and the maintenance of "safety" zones along them, where Palestinians are not allowed to plant or build; 60/

(b) Restrictions on the use of grazing land; 61/

(c) Limitations on the areas cultivated with specific products or in specific geographical areas, e.g. restriction on planting of citrus fruit trees in the West Bank, 62/ and its prohibition in Gaza, 63/ restrictions on planting of tomatoes and eggplant in the Jiftlik region (Jordan Valley), 64/ and on all crops in the Ghor Valley (West Bank) where the pattern of production is to be determined by the authorities; 65/

(d) Prohibition of overnight stays in the Ghor Valley by Palestinian agricultural workers residing elsewhere, so as to discourage their work in this area; 66/

(e) Prevention of the establishment of agricultural co-operatives by Palestinian farmers, and of their access to agricultural credit from East Bank institutions. 67/

59. Related to the policy of "open borders" between Israel and the territories, which has been maintained since 1969, 68/ the agricultural sector has been re-oriented in response to the need of the Palestinian farmer to emphasize those crops that can be sold in Israel, and de-emphasize those which, even if for local consumption, are produced more cheaply in Israel. In their endeavours to use market opportunities in Israel, Palestinian farmers have benefited from access to Israeli technology, but a great part of technical progress, particularly in the second half of the nineteen seventies, has been due also to technical and financial aid from Jordan and charitable organizations; or it has been imitative of developments in Jordan. The obstacle to faster growth of agriculture, it has been observed, lies in Israeli land and water policies 69/ which are associated with the settlement thrust. Use of irrigation by Palestinian farmers is limited. Thus, yields vary according to rainfall, particularly in the West Bank.

70. The contribution of agriculture to the GNP of the territories tends to fluctuate year to year in unison with the fluctuations in the value of agricultural output, which respond, in turn, to the volume of rain. However, a diminution of this contribution between the periods 1968 to 1974 and 1975 to 1980 can be observed in the West Bank, and a downward trend is evident in Gaza, as shown in table 5. Thus the relative importance of the agricultural sector has clearly declined.

71. Employment in agriculture has decreased in both territories, as evidenced in table 6. Given the increase in value of agricultural product, it would seem that labour productivity has increased. This is corroborated by the growth in value added per worker of 6.9 per cent in Gaza and 8 per cent in the West Bank between 1975 and 1981. 70/

72. The labour freed by increased productivity in agriculture has not been absorbed in the industrial sector of the territories but, as will be discussed later, has had to find employment in Israel.

73. Investment in industry has been severely limited by a number of factors: 71/

(a) Lack of an indigenous financial system which would provide producers with credit, specialized knowledge, and advice;

(b) Uncertainty, both political and financial, the latter being the consequence of the high rates of inflation in Israel, and the continued devaluation of the Israeli shekel;

(c) Lack of participation by Palestinians in major economic policy decisions that affect them, which results in lack of protection for their industries, particularly against competition from Israel's far more developed industries;

(d) Import licensing of industrial machinery, under the authority of the military government;

(e) Building licences, the fees for which are high for the level of capitalization of Palestinian industries, and the process lengthy;

(f) Restrictions on the use of water and prohibition on the sinking of new wells. Where new industry is prohibited in or near towns or cities, and well sinking is restricted elsewhere, lack of water becomes an impediment to new industry;

(g) Taxes and customs duties. The Jordanian income tax of 25 per cent and social service tax of 12.5 per cent have been retained. In addition, a value added tax of 8 per cent was introduced in 1976, raised to 12 per cent in 1977 and to 15 per cent in 1981. Customs duties are hidden in the prices charged by the Israeli importers through whom imports are to be made, and an additional value added tax on the transaction with the importer must be borne by the final buyer.

Table 5. Contribution of the agricultural sector to gross national product in the West Bank and Gaza, 1968-1980

(Millions of Israeli pounds in current prices)

	West Bank			Gaza		
	GNP	Value of agricultural product	Contribution of agriculture (percentage)	GNP	Value of agricultural product	Contribution of agriculture (percentage)
1968	330.0	115.0	34.8	128.0	36.0	28.1
1969	420.0	153.0	36.4	154.0	41.0	26.6
1970	481.0	141.0	29.3	206.0	54.0	26.2
1971	722.0	203.0	28.1	288.0	73.0	25.3
1972	1 118.0	307.0	27.4	450.0	106.0	23.5
1973	1 305.0	340.0	26.0	671.0	134.0	19.9
1974	2 257.0	796.0	35.2	961.0	176.0	18.3
1975	3 133.0	713.0	22.7	1 428.0	297.0	20.7
1976	4 705.0	1 243.0	26.4	2 178.0	485.0	22.2
1977	6 280.5	1 380.1	21.9	3 133.0	685.0	21.8
1978	11 560.0	3 090.4	26.7	5 068.0	997.0	19.6
1979	20 080.1	4 430.2	22.0	10 045.0	1 487.0	14.8
1980	51 920.9	15 180.7	29.2	21 457.0	2 642.0	12.3

Source: David Kahan, Agriculture and Water in the West Bank and Gaza (Jerusalem, West Bank Data Base Project, 1983), table 5, p. 16.

Table 6. Employment in agriculture, 1968-1981

(Thousands)

	West Bank		Gaza	
	Total employment	Employment in agriculture	Total employment	Employment in agriculture
		Percentage in agriculture		Percentage in agriculture
1968	84	32.7	46	12.0
1969	100	46.9	52	17.2
1970	101	42.4	53	16.8
1971	91	36.6	52	16.0
1972	90	34.3	46	11.4
1973	88	30.0	45	11.7
1974	95	36.0	46	11.6
1975	91	31.8	47	12.3
1976	92	31.4	47	12.8
1977	93	30.7	49	12.4
1978	95	32.3	49	10.3
1979	93	29.2	45	9.5
1980	93	31.0	46	8.7
1981	93	28.5	46	8.4

Source: David Kahan, Agriculture and Water in the West Bank and Gaza, (Jerusalem, West Bank Data Base Project, 1983), table 7, p. 18.

74. Under the conditions described above, the industrial sector of the territories remains one of small enterprises (98 per cent of them employ 10 or fewer workers) concentrated in the following occupations: repair trades, 13 per cent; quarrying and cement block and tile manufacturing, 11 per cent; carpentry and crafts, 15 per cent; and sewing and garment manufacturing, 20.5 per cent. Most firms are operating at around 50 per cent capacity. 72/ The combined industrial value added in the West Bank and Gaza equals about one per cent of the value added in Israeli industry. 73/ Most firms are owner-financed and cannot offer employment and wage conditions competitive with those in Israel. Those in sewing and garment manufacturing perform finishing work under subcontract for Israeli firms utilizing very low-paid female labour; thus, they contribute very little to industrial value added in the territories.

75. The agricultural and industrial activities of the settlers, in contrast, are promoted and subsidized by the Government of Israel. The extensive use of irrigation by the settlers has been described in section IV, section B. The high degree of protection of Israeli goods is well documented, as is the use of price guarantees for agricultural products. 74/ In addition, the recent settlement drive is complemented by an industrialization plan for the West Bank which is designed to attract industry and Israeli labour to this "hinterland", according to which there will be by the year 2015, over 85,000 Jewish workers in Israeli West Bank industry and only about 23,000 Palestinian workers. The plan proposes the largest Israeli industrial concentrations to be located within the most densely populated regions of the West Bank and near the major Israeli population areas. 75/

76. Israel exercises total control of trade between the occupied territories and the rest of the world, including Israel. The territories have become an important market for Israeli products, while exports of their products are restricted. In the case of agricultural products, restrictions to their exportation to Israel protect Israeli products from competition. 76/ At the same time, Israeli restrictive policies do not permit the development of alternative industrial exports. 77/ Thus the "open borders" policy has operated in one direction. On the other hand, a policy of "open bridges" (those connecting the West Bank with Jordan, across the Jordan River) has also been applied, with limitations. On the export side, the Arab boycott of Israeli products has restricted industrial exports to Jordan, mostly originating in the West Bank, as local industries have had to buy their inputs from or through Israel. 78/ On the import side, restrictions, licences and duties, and the administrative and security controls imposed have discouraged growth. Trade with the rest of the world has not developed, as it has to be channelled through Israeli agents, and is thus subject to Israeli control and direction. Tables 7 and 8 illustrate the pattern of trade that has evolved under these conditions for the West Bank and Gaza, respectively.

77. It is apparent from tables 7 and 8 that, in all years since 1971, the territories have had a negative trade balance. Most importantly, the balance vis-à-vis Israel - a country with which trade was practically nil before the occupation - has been not only negative, but consistently larger than the total trade deficit. Thus the surplus achieved in the trade with Jordan only partly offsets the persistent deficit with the rest of the world and with Israel. Net transfers by Palestinians living abroad paid 21 to 28 per cent of the West Bank trade deficit and 39 to 44 per cent of that of Gaza between 1980 and 1982. 79/

78. Israel became very quickly (by 1971, where the figures in table 9 start) the major trading partner of the territories. 80/ According to table 9, roughly 50 per cent of West Bank and 80 per cent of Gaza exports for 1971-1980 went to Israel, while 79.8 to 87.8 per cent of West Bank imports and 84.9 per cent to 91 per cent of those of Gaza originated in Israel. Industrial products constituted, in all years, over 80 per cent of total imports of both territories from Israel. The territories have become the most important market for Israeli products after that of the United States.

Table 7. West Bank: export, imports and trade balance, by type of product and destination, 1971-1982

(In millions of Israeli shekels)

	1971	1974	1975	1976	1977	1978	1979	1980	1981	1982
Exports	<u>14.8</u>	<u>41.4</u>	<u>69.5</u>	<u>78.3</u>	<u>125.2</u>	<u>243.6</u>	<u>372.6</u>	<u>981.4</u>	<u>2 394.5</u>	<u>5 066.7</u>
To Israel	7.8	29.1	44.6	41.7	77.8	132.7	229.1	567.4	1 496.8	2 726.0
Agricultural products	1.2	5.5	6.6	10.8	16.7	29.2	46.3	138.6	257.5	425.7
Industrial products	6.6	23.6	38.0	30.9	61.1	103.5	182.3	428.8	1 239.3	2 300.3
To Jordan	6.8	12.0	22.1	34.3	46.3	108.6	141.0	405.7	880.6	2 319.5
Agricultural products	1.7	3.5	7.1	9.8	22.4	44.3	52.4	107.9	281.2	776.2
Industrial products	5.1	8.5	15.0	24.5	23.9	64.3	88.6	297.8	599.4	1 543.3
To other countries	0.2	0.3	2.8	2.3	1.1	2.3	2.5	8.3	17.1	21.2
Agricultural products	-	-	1.9	1.8	-	-	-	-	-	-
Industrial products	0.2	0.3	0.9	0.5	1.1	2.3	2.5	8.3	17.1	21.2
Imports	<u>28.6</u>	<u>88.1</u>	<u>146.5</u>	<u>197.1</u>	<u>280.4</u>	<u>440.6</u>	<u>897.4</u>	<u>2 095.5</u>	<u>4 980.5</u>	<u>10 545.0</u>
From Israel	22.8	79.0	129.7	176.7	252.0	381.3	777.1	1 819.4	4 409.5	9 254.6
Agricultural products	4.0	12.6	20.5	29.1	43.1	63.8	117.9	298.5	655.8	1 112.3
Industrial products	18.8	66.4	109.2	147.6	208.9	317.5	659.2	1 520.9	3 753.7	8 142.3
From Jordan	1.4	2.0	3.2	3.1	4.9	8.8	12.7	27.9	85.2	223.5
Agricultural products	0.5	0.2	0.1	0.2	0.3	0.6	1.0	2.6	2.1	10.6
Industrial products	0.9	1.8	3.1	2.9	4.6	8.2	11.7	25.3	83.1	212.9
From other countries	4.4	7.1	13.6	17.3	23.5	50.5	107.6	248.2	485.8	1 066.9
Agricultural products	0.8	1.4	5.0	7.1	7.1	2.4	9.0	16.5	31.1	134.3
Industrial products	3.6	5.7	8.6	10.2	16.4	48.1	98.6	231.7	454.7	932.6
Trade balance	<u>-13.8</u>	<u>-46.7</u>	<u>-77.0</u>	<u>-118.8</u>	<u>-155.2</u>	<u>-197.0</u>	<u>-524.8</u>	<u>-1 114.1</u>	<u>-2 586.0</u>	<u>-5 478.3</u>
With Israel	-15.0	-49.9	-85.1	-135.0	-174.2	-248.6	-548.0	-1 252.0	-2 912.7	-6 528.6
With Jordan	5.4	10.0	18.9	31.2	41.4	99.8	128.3	377.8	795.4	2 096.0
With other countries	-4.2	-6.8	-10.8	-15.0	-22.4	-48.2	-105.1	-239.9	-468.7	-1 045.7

Source: For 1971-1979, United Nations Conference on Trade and Development "Palestine: options for development" (TD/B/960), report by P. G. Sadler and B. Abu Kishk, 11 May 1983, tables V/2 and V/4, pp. 38 and 40.

For 1980-1982, Statistical Abstract of Israel, 1983.

Table 8. Gaza: exports, imports and trade balance, by type of product and destination, 1971-1982

(In millions of Israeli shekels)

	1971	1974	1975	1976	1977	1978	1979	1980	1981	1982
<u>Exports</u>	<u>10.5</u>	<u>27.4</u>	<u>52.6</u>	<u>65.0</u>	<u>138.9</u>	<u>212.6</u>	<u>307.7</u>	<u>782.0</u>	<u>2 162.6</u>	<u>4 430.1</u>
To Israel	3.8	16.7	33.6	52.9	83.6	140.0	207.6	595.5	1 790.3	3 609.0
Agricultural products	.9	2.7	4.8	7.7	18.2	36.1	46.5	120.2	259.4	402.0
Industrial products	2.9	14.0	28.8	45.2	65.4	103.9	161.1	475.3	1 530.9	3 207.0
To Jordan	1.2	5.1	10.5	2.0	42.3	57.6	77.5	138.2	292.7	694.1
Agricultural products	1.2	5.1	10.5	2.0	42.2	57.5	77.5	138.1	291.4	693.7
Industrial products	-	-	-	-	0.1	0.1	-	0.1	1.3	0.4
To other countries	5.5	5.6	8.5	10.1	13.0	15.0	22.6	48.3	79.6	127.0
Agricultural products	5.5	5.6	8.5	10.1	13.0	15.0	22.6	48.3	79.6	127.0
Industrial products	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
<u>Imports</u>	<u>18.4</u>	<u>61.3</u>	<u>111.8</u>	<u>148.4</u>	<u>247.8</u>	<u>346.4</u>	<u>535.3</u>	<u>1 378.9</u>	<u>3 576.2</u>	<u>7 580.8</u>
From Israel	15.6	54.6	105.6	135.6	230.1	314.3	487.6	1 226.7	3 259.1	6 891.1
Agricultural products	2.5	7.4	14.8	18.3	34.3	44.8	68.2	162.8	385.9	765.9
Industrial products	13.1	47.2	90.8	117.3	195.8	269.5	419.4	1 063.9	2 813.2	6 125.2
From Jordan	-	.1	.1	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
Agricultural products	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
Industrial products	-	.1	.1	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
From other countries	2.8	6.6	6.1	12.8	17.7	32.1	47.7	152.2	317.1	689.7
Agricultural products	.1	.7	.9	5.2	8.5	3.6	7.2	13.8	26.3	133.8
Industrial products	2.7	5.9	4.2	7.6	9.2	28.5	40.5	138.4	290.8	555.9
<u>Trade balance</u>	<u>-7.9</u>	<u>-33.9</u>	<u>-59.2</u>	<u>-83.4</u>	<u>-108.9</u>	<u>-133.8</u>	<u>-227.6</u>	<u>-596.9</u>	<u>-1 413.6</u>	<u>-3 150.7</u>
With Israel	-11.8	-37.9	-72.0	-82.7	-146.5	-174.3	-280.0	-631.2	-1 468.8	-3 282.1
With Jordan	1.2	5.0	10.4	2.0	42.3	57.6	77.5	138.2	292.7	694.1
With other countries	2.7	-1.0	2.4	-2.7	-4.7	-17.1	-25.1	-103.9	-237.5	-562.7

Source: For 1971-1979, United Nations Conference on Trade and Development "Palestine: options for development" (TD/B/960), report by P. G. Sadler and B. Abu Kishk, 11 May 1983, tables V/2 and V/4, pp. 38 and 40.

For 1980-1982, Statistical Abstract of Israel, 1983.

Table 9. Israel: Share of exports and imports of West Bank and Gaza, 1971-1982

(Percentage)

	1971	1974	1975	1976	1977	1978	1979	1980	1981	1982
<u>West Bank</u>										
Exports to Israel as share of total exports	55.3	70.5	64.0	62.5	62.2	54.5	61.5	57.8	62.5	53.8
Imports from Israel as share of total imports	79.8	89.6	88.6	89.7	89.9	86.5	86.6	86.8	88.5	87.8
Share of industrial products in total imported from Israel	82.5	84.2	84.2	83.5	82.9	83.2	84.8	83.6	85.1	88.0
Share of industrial products in total imported from all sources	81.7	83.8	82.6	81.6	81.9	84.6	85.7	84.8	86.2	88.1
<u>Gaza</u>										
Exports to Israel as share of total exports	35.1	60.8	63.8	64.2	50.2	65.8	67.7	76.2	82.8	81.5
Imports from Israel as share of total imports	84.9	89.2	94.5	91.2	92.9	91.4	91.0	89.0	91.1	91.0
Share of industrial products in total imported from Israel	83.4	86.4	86.0	86.5	85.1	85.9	86.0	86.7	88.2	88.9
Share of industrial products in total imported from all sources	85.2	86.8	85.1	84.2	82.7	85.8	85.0	87.2	88.5	88.1

Source: For 1971-1979, United Nations Conference on Trade and Development "Palestine: options for development" (TD/B/960), report by P. G. Sadler and B. Abu Kishk, 11 May 1983, tables V/2 and V/4, pp. 38 and 40.

For 1980-1982, Statistical Abstract of Israel, 1983, table XXVII/11.

B. Impact on labour and employment

79. Israel has utilized increasing numbers of workers from the occupied territories. While in 1970 only 11.9 per cent of Palestinian workers were employed in Israel, the percentage had increased to 32.4 by 1975 and 35.5 by 1982, and employment in the territories declined from 88.1 per cent in 1970 to 64.5 per cent in 1982 (see table 10). The dominant feature in the distribution of Palestinian labour in Israel has been the overwhelming importance of the construction sector, where, according to ILO, 81/ there is "a disproportionate concentration of workers from rural areas". It would seem that the marked reduction in agricultural employment in the occupied territories provides a pool for employment in Israel, mostly in construction, but increasingly also in the industrial sector, where by the end of the nineteen seventies, it accounted for about 5 per cent of the total manpower. 82/

80. It is also to be noted that employment of Palestinians in Israel rose fastest up to 1973, when the country enjoyed a booming economy, and declined from 1975 to 1977, following the general recession in Israel, suggesting the contribution made by Palestinian labour to the expansion of the Israeli economy, and its role as "buffer" in time of recession. It may be noted in this regard that during the recession years of 1973 to 1976, Israeli unemployment increased insignificantly - from 2.6 per cent in 1973 to 3.6 in 1976 - compared with unemployment during the 1965-1967 recession, 83/ which was 3.6 per cent in 1965 and 10.4 per cent in 1967.

81. Thus, the land and water policies associated with the settlement policy, by reducing agricultural employment in the territories, have modified not only the structure of employment therein, but, it has been claimed, the class structure of Palestinian society, as a large portion of those engaged in agriculture have been transformed into wage-labour, that is, into an industrial proletariat 84/ which, however, is not utilized for industrialization; this is impeded by occupation policies on land and water, agricultural production, industrial production and trade, as discussed above. The figures in table 11 seem to confirm this claim. The increased employment in Israel has not gone into agriculture and, in the territories, the declining total of employed workers concentrates more and more in construction, industry and services, a shift that could be attributable to settlement construction, and subcontracting for Israeli industry.

82. It has also been observed that this is "proletarianization without urbanization", 85/ as workers have to return to their homes in Gaza and the West Bank every day. According to table 12, more than 80 per cent do so.

83. As table 12 shows, the majority of Palestinian workers are young. Only 15 per cent of them have received no schooling; the majority, 54.4 per cent, have attended between one and eight years of school, and a sizeable group, 30.5 per cent of the total, have more than 9 years of education.

Table 10. Employment of workers from the occupied territories, by place of work, 1970-1982

Year	Total employed (thousands)	Employed in the occupied territories		Employed in Israel	
		(thousands)	(percentage)	(thousands)	(percentage)
1970	173.7	152.7	88.1	20.6	11.9
1971	176.5	142.7	80.6	33.8	19.4
1972	188.7	136.3	72.2	52.4	27.8
1973	194.7	133.4	68.5	61.3	31.5
1974	210.4	141.7	67.3	68.7	32.7
1975	204.9	138.6	67.6	66.3	32.4
1976	205.8	140.9	68.5	64.9	31.5
1977	204.4	141.4	69.2	63.0	30.8
1978	210.9	142.7	67.3	68.2	32.7
1979	212.1	138.0	65.1	74.1	34.9
1980	215.7	140.6	65.2	75.1	34.8
1981	215.9	140.1	64.9	75.8	35.1
1982	222.7	143.6	64.5	79.1	35.5

Source: For all years, except 1971 and 1973, Statistical Abstract of Israel, 1983.

For years 1971 and 1978, United Nations Conference on Trade and Development, "Palestine: options for development" (TD/3/960), report by P. G. Sadler and B. Abu Kishk, 11 May 1983, table 1.7, p. 9.

Table 11. Employment of workers from the occupied territories, by selected economic branch and place of work, 1970-1982

(Percentage)

Year	<u>Employed in the occupied territories</u>				<u>Total</u>	
	Agriculture	Industry	Construction	Other	(percentage)	(thousands)
1970	38.7	13.8	8.4	39.1	100.0	152.7
1971	36.8	13.6	5.6	43.8	100.0	142.7
1972	33.5	13.9	6.2	46.4	100.0	136.3
1973	31.3	15.1	6.4	47.2	100.0	133.4
1974	33.8	14.0	6.2	46.0	100.0	141.7
1975	31.8	14.5	7.3	46.4	100.0	138.6
1976	31.4	14.4	8.2	46.0	100.0	140.9
1977	30.5	14.2	9.1	46.2	100.0	141.4
1978	29.5	15.2	9.5	45.5	100.0	142.7
1979	28.0	16.8	10.1	45.1	100.0	138.0
1980	28.4	16.3	9.6	45.7	100.0	140.6
1981	26.3	16.0	10.7	47.0	100.0	140.1
1982	27.6	15.5	9.9	47.0	100.0	143.6
<u>Employed in Israel</u>						
1970	24.4	11.6	54.3	9.7	100.0	20.6
1971	22.3	14.8	52.3	10.6	100.0	33.8
1972	23.1	17.1	49.5	10.3	100.0	52.4
1973	19.3	18.1	51.7	10.9	100.0	61.3
1974	19.1	17.5	52.5	10.9	100.0	68.7
1975	14.3	18.4	54.4	12.9	100.0	66.3
1976	15.4	19.7	50.3	14.6	100.0	64.9
1977	16.2	21.3	45.3	17.2	100.0	63.0
1978	16.8	22.2	44.8	16.2	100.0	68.2
1979	14.8	22.8	46.2	16.2	100.0	74.1
1980	13.7	20.9	47.4	18.0	100.0	75.1
1981	12.7	18.2	51.0	18.1	100.0	75.8
1982	12.8	17.7	52.8	16.7	100.0	79.1

Sources: For all years except 1971 and 1978, Statistical Abstract of Israel, 1983.

For years 1971 and 1978, United Nations Conference on Trade and Development, "Palestine: options for development", (TD/B/960), by P. G. Sadier and B. Abu Kishk, 11 May 1983, table 1.8, p. 10.

Table 12. Persons from the occupied territories employed in Israel, by age, years of schooling, and frequency of returning home, April-June 1981

	Number (thousands)	Percentage
<u>Age</u>		
14-24	29.1	41.5
25-34	18.9	27.0
35-54	18.1	25.8
55 up	4.0	5.7
	-----	-----
Total	70.1	100.0
<u>Years of schooling</u>		
0	10.5	15.0
1-6	27.0	38.5
7-8	11.2	16.0
9 up	21.4	30.5
	-----	-----
Total	70.1	100.0
<u>Frequency of returning home</u>		
Every day	56.4	80.5
Once a week	9.5	13.5
Other	4.2	6.0
	-----	-----
Total	70.1	100.0

Source: Statistical Abstract of Israel, 1983.

84. The participation of Palestinian labour in the economy of Israel has been aided by Israeli training in the West Bank and Gaza, aimed at skill development primarily in industrial and transport trades, 86/ and by the establishment of "a dense network of employment offices in the occupied territories to which Israeli employers are required to apply for hiring workers, compulsory registering of workers and issuing of a work permit for a given job, and payment of wages and social benefits through the payment division of the employment service". 87/

85. It has been pointed out by ILO that there are deficiencies in vocational training at intermediate level, and a "lack of planned action based on the needs of the local economy". 88/ The consultants were informed by officials of the Ministry of Education of Jordan, as well as by Egyptian authorities and representatives of the Palestine Liberation Organization that the occupying authorities not only have not initiated action in this direction, but have so far denied several requests by Palestinians to be allowed to introduce applied sciences and technological training programmes in Palestinian universities, in the curricula of which the humanities and social sciences are dominant. 89/ In 1980, only 119 university graduates were employed in West Bank industry, according to Meron Benvenisti. Thus the high emigration rate of the highly educated. 90/

86. ILO has also reported that "the residency requirement for entitlement to certain benefits under the National Insurance Law (old age and survivors' benefits, invalidity benefits, child allowances, unemployment benefits), excludes non-resident workers from coverage even though they are required to contribute to the scheme". 91/ that "the special system under which wages and social benefits are paid not directly by the employer but through the employment service means that payments tend to be held up"; 92/ and that concentration of workers from the occupied territories in the construction sector means that they suffer most from the disadvantages of self-employment and subcontracting and "from the high accident rate which is prevalent in the sector. 93/

87. The phenomenon of "illegal" workers - those hired outside the system set up by Israel - is described as "intractable" by ILO. 94/ This organization refers to a 1983 Jerusalem Post survey of workers from Gaza, the findings of which were that 14,000 of the 22,000 "illegal" workers are paid through the payments division of the employment service; that there was a "hard core" of 8,000 "illegal" workers who were contracted by the day or the hour and who spent the night at their place of work, also "illegally"; and that hiring children was also a practice. 95/ ILO reports the estimate of "illegal" workers of the Government of Israel to be 25 per cent of the Palestinian labour force employed in Israel, while Histadrut (the General Federation of Labour in Israel) estimates the number to be 25,000 to 30,000 workers, or about 33 per cent; and, similarly, the Government of Jordan estimates it to be 27,000 workers. If this last figure is accepted and added to those in table 5 (which does not include "illegal" workers), for 1981 and 1982, the percentage of the Palestinian labour force employed in Israel rises to 43 per cent. 96/

88. With respect to wages, most sources agree that the average wage for workers from the territories has remained at about 50 per cent of that for Israeli workers in the same occupations, 97/ but the gap between wages in Israel and in the territories has almost disappeared. According to ILO, 98/ increased demand for

this labour in Israel has resulted in a rate of growth of daily remuneration, in real terms, of 5 per cent between 1970 and 1981.

C. Impact on money and finance

89. One aspect where the economy of the occupied territories has not been rendered totally dependent on that of Israel is the monetary system. After 1967, Israel closed all commercial banks, which were integrated with Egyptian banks in Gaza and with Jordan banks in the West Bank, and replaced them by Israeli banks. But, at the same time, Israel allowed the continued circulation of the Jordanian dinar in order to facilitate recovery and trade with Jordan. Consequently, Israeli banks have not been able to establish themselves strongly, and a dual monetary system persists, where the Israeli shekel is the primary means of exchange, but the stronger and more stable dinar is the reserve of value. Possibly because of the strong preference of Palestinians to hold dinars, a number of measures have been introduced to control the amounts taken into the West Bank, such as Military Order 973, which limits the flow of funds and transfers to the occupied territories. 99/ A new measure to discourage withdrawals from Palestinian bank accounts is a 3 per cent tax on such withdrawals. 100/

90. There also seems to be a tendency for savings to be held outside the West Bank, in Jordanian banks, and to be invested in Jordanian real estate. An informal money market also exists, consisting of exchange agencies that act as intermediaries with the banks in Amman, accepting checks against accounts in those banks. 101/

91. The system of taxation in existence before the occupation was kept by Israel in the territories. However, the increased consumption of Israeli goods means that the consumer pays the taxes that affect those goods as well as Israeli import duties. Thus the increased demand by Palestinians of Israeli goods not only enlarges the market for those goods and thus contributes to the growth of the Israeli economy; it also contributes to the Israeli fiscus. Of greater importance, workers are subject to payroll deductions, which are sizeable, although they do not receive the corresponding benefits. As of January 1983 for Gaza and February for the West Bank, the Jordanian income tax was replaced by an Israeli one. For purposes of estimating the tax base, residents had to declare all their property, movable and immovable, including furniture and jewelry, and their sons' properties inside and outside the territories. 102/

92. In contrast, residents of most settlements are granted a reduction of 7 per cent in income tax up to a certain income. Purchase taxes, the Land Registry Tax and capital gains taxes on sale of property do not apply to them in the West Bank. They are, however, entitled to all the benefits of the National Insurance system by an extra-legal arrangement. 103/

93. According to Meron Benvenisti, public investment comes from two budgets: the military government's civilian budget, which depends on that of Israel's Ministry of Defense and serves the Arab population, and the budgets of the civilian Israeli ministries, which serve the Jewish population, that is, the settlements. 104/ The investment share of the military budget was 11 per cent in 1980. 105/

94. In addition, there is a civil administration, 106/ and two levels of local government: the local councils in charge of settlements' affairs, and municipal councils in charge of local Palestinian affairs. Both have jurisdiction over questions relating to roads, water, electricity, gas, sewage, crafts and industries, health, cleanliness, public places, parks etc., 107/ but no information was available on the levels or proportion of their expenditures in any of these aspects.

95. The civilian administration receives funds from three sources: (a) from the Government of Israel, 28 per cent; (b) from income tax paid by Palestinians working in the territories, value added tax, indirect taxes and fees, 47 per cent; and (c) from the "Deduction Fund", 25 per cent. 108/ The Palestinian municipalities depend on income from government sources, which has declined from 36.8 to 17.1 per cent of the total resources between 1969/70 and 1979/80, on taxes (mainly sales and property), and on transfers from the Arab world which by 1980 constituted close to 50 per cent of their resources. 109/

96. The Deduction Fund is constituted by the deductions taken by the employment service from the wages of Palestinians working in Israel, estimated at about 30 per cent of the wage bill. Since Palestinians are not eligible for benefits from the national insurance system, the Fund is supposed to be utilized for development - i.e. investment - in the occupied territories. However, the Fund is not directly transferred to the civilian administration, as provided by Israeli law, but to the Chief Accountant (Israel's Treasury), who has, on the average, transferred between 55 and 80 per cent of the total to the civilian administration and kept the rest for use in Israel. 110/

97. The property tax payable to the Palestinian municipalities is not collected by them, but by the Ministry of Finance, and all funds thus collected are kept in trust for the municipalities. A percentage is distributed to them according to decisions of the Council of Ministers upon the recommendation of the Ministry of the Interior, and some of these funds may be allocated to other purposes. 111/

98. With respect to administration of finances, Israeli local councils have total discretion without interference, including appointment of their own accountants. Palestinian municipal councils are subject to regulations published by the Ministry of the Interior, with the agreement of the Council of Ministers, and the accountants who inspect their finances are selected by the Council of Ministers. 112/

D. Aggregate impact

99. The growth of gross domestic product and gross national product is portrayed in tables 13 and 14. Even after deflation, the constant price figures show an upward trend, more pronounced in the West Bank than in Gaza. Real GNP per capita also grew at relatively high rates, at least, up to 1980 when the rate of growth started to fall. It cannot be ascertained, however, whether these figures reported by Israeli statistics include the product generated in the Israeli settlements, or refer only to the Palestinian economy.

Table 13. Occupied territories: GDP, GNP and GNP per capita in current and 1968 prices, 1968-1982

(Millions of Israeli shekels)

	1968	1976	1977	1978	1979	1980	1981	1982
<u>West Bank</u>								
Gross domestic product	33.9	372.5	494.9	901.1	1 476.4	3 996.5	7 731.6	17 682.8
Gross national product	34.4	481.8	648.5	1 155.5	1 977.1	5 101.4	10 354.0	24 246.0
<u>Gaza</u>								
Gross domestic product	13.1	157.8	231.2	347.1	641.7	1 459.1	3 323.6	7 024.7
Gross national product	13.1	220.3	315.8	501.7	980.9	2 239.8	5 346.9	11 803.1
At 1968 prices								
<u>West Bank</u>								
Gross domestic product	33.3	77.1	74.7	87.8	81.4	102.1	91.2	98.8
Gross national product	34.4	101.2	99.8	115.0	110.9	131.0	119.7	130.2
Gross national product per capita (in shekels)	59.5	150.2	146.3	166.1	157.9	185.3	167.9	180.4
<u>Gaza</u>								
Gross domestic product	13.1	25.6	26.7	26.5	29.5	28.0	28.3	27.8
Gross national product	13.1	38.2	39.7	41.3	45.6	44.5	46.1	45.9
Gross national product per capita (in shekels)	36.4	89.7	90.9	92.1	103.8	101.5	102.5	100.0

Source: Statistical Abstract of Israel, 1983.

Table 14. Occupied territories: growth of GNP at market prices and of GNP per capita
 (Two year moving average, 1968 prices)

Years	West Bank		Gaza		Total occupied territories	
	GNP at market prices	GNP per capita	GNP at market prices	GNP per capita	GNP at market prices	GNP per capita
1977-78	6.6	5.1	4.0	1.3	5.9	3.8
1978-79	5.4	3.9	7.2	6.8	5.9	5.1
1979-80	6.7	5.6	3.8	5.0	5.9	5.4
1980-81	3.9	3.1	0.5	0.3	2.9	1.7
1981-82	-0.3	-1.3	1.5	-0.8	0.2	-1.1

Source: Statistical Abstract of Israel, 1983.

100. The contribution to GNP made by labour earnings abroad (i.e. Israel) stood about 24 per cent throughout the 1976-1982 period for the West Bank, and between 33 and 39 per cent for Gaza. 113/ This underscores the importance of these earnings in the growth of GNP and in the increased capacity to spend of the people in the territories. In addition, if the increased spending were on locally produced outputs, it could be said that these earnings would contribute to economic growth; but, since they finance imports from Israel, the effect is lost in the territories. Thus the growth in GNP and the resulting increases in private consumption are externally generated and not the result of or cause for economic development within the territories.

101. The consultants were not able to obtain data on distribution of income either between Israeli and Palestinian residents of the occupied territories, or among Palestinians at different income levels. Israeli data on disposable private income and private consumption expenditures in the territories are not disaggregated by group (Israeli/Palestinian, or income group).

102. In sum, it has been the policy of Israel to encourage economic linkages between its economy and that of the West Bank and Gaza in a selective manner. The sale of Israeli products in the territories has been unhampered, while entrance of goods from the West Bank and Gaza into Israel is subject to strict limitations. The bridges connecting the East and West Banks of the Jordan River have been kept open, under selective controls. The employment of workers from the territories in Israel has been encouraged. The subcontracting of work by Israeli firms to individuals and firms in the West Bank and Gaza has been permitted, while development of infrastructure and industry has been impeded. This policy, combined with those of expropriation and confiscation of land, control of water resources, and restriction on agricultural activity, has determined the nature of the economy of the territories as complementary to and dependent on the economy of Israel.

103. Consequently, a significant number of Palestinians emigrate, as illustrated in table 15. Positive migration occurred only in 1969 and 1973 in the West Bank and 1973 in Gaza. All other years register emigration at rates ranging from 2.2 to 2.4 per thousand in the West Bank and from 4.7 to 11.5 in Gaza. Emigration has increased since 1980 in both territories. A view expressed by many of the officials contacted by the consultants was that the occupation policies in the territories are designed, as a whole, to promote the emigration of Palestinians and thus make the colonization of the land by Israel easier. The lower rates of emigration from Gaza reflect not only the distance from Jordan, but also the legal difficulties for Gazans to travel due to the fact that they are not entitled to passports recognized by the countries of destination.

104. Emigration has been particularly high among males aged 14 to 25, as this group tends to seek employment in the Arab countries. This selective pattern of emigration affects the demographic structure of the population. By increasing the percentage of women in childbearing age relative to the total population, it may sustain relatively high rates of natural increase, even in the face of declining fertility. It also contributes to increasing the number of dependants per wage earner: dependency ratios, consequently also to a slower rise in the standard of living. Finally, it has led to lower labour force participation rates, particularly in the West Bank.

Table 15. Migration, West Bank and Gaza, 1967-1981

	<u>West Bank</u>		<u>Gaza</u>	
	Number	Rate per 1000	Number	Rate per 1000
1967	-13 000	21.8	-12 300	32.0
1968	-15 800	27.0	-32 300	87.5
1969	+ 1 300	2.2	- 2 900	8.1
1970	- 5 000	8.3	- 3 300	9.0
1971	- 2 500	4.1	- 2 400	6.5
1972	- 7 200	11.5	- 4 000	10.4
1973	+ 300	.5	+ 1 700	4.3
1974	- 2 800	4.2	- 1 900	4.7
1975	-15 100	22.5	- 3 500	8.3
1976	-14 400	21.2	- 4 200	9.7
1977	-10 400	14.7	- 2 900	6.5
1978	- 9 400	13.4	- 4 700	10.3
1979	-12 600	17.7	- 4 800	10.3
1980	-17 300	24.0	- 5 100	11.3
1981	-15 700	21.6	- 5 300	11.5

Source: Eitan Sabatello, The Populations of the Administered Territories: Some Demographic Trends and Implications, (Jerusalem, West Bank Data Base Project, 1983), table 10, p. 29 A.

105. With respect to future impact, it seems apparent that the central questions are not economic. Yet the new interrelationships developed between the territories and the economy of Israel in the context of expanded settlements are important.

106. Freeing of sizeable numbers of workers from agricultural and industrial occupation in the West Bank and Gaza and their consequent employment in Israel is the most important aspect of the new relationship, which has been characterized as one of dependence. If present trends of expropriation of land and water resources, prohibition or restriction of specific cultures, limitations to industrial development, and incentives for Palestinians to seek wage-employment in Israel continue, it may be expected that the commuting labour force would continue to increase, at the expense of a further shrinking agricultural work force. If present policies on production and exports of agricultural produce also continue, the exposure to the more advanced Israeli technology and to the Israeli market would create pressure to increase and diversify agricultural output. However, if

/...

suppressing agricultural development is, as is claimed by many authors, an Israeli goal, then it would imply additional restrictions and controls to achieve this goal. The possibility of increased numbers of Palestinians yielding to frustration and leaving the territories may be contemplated. On the other hand, the potential for development through the mobilization of the growing wage-labour class and the more technically aware peasantry must also be considered. In this eventuality, the issue of the presence of the Israeli settlements would still remain.

VI. IMPACT OF ISRAELI SETTLEMENTS ON THE SOCIAL LIFE AND RELIGIOUS PRACTICES OF THE PALESTINIANS

107. The movement of an increasing number of Israelis into the settlements that have been and are being set up in the occupied territories is affecting adversely the social life and disrupting the daily activities of the Palestinians in the territories. What is occurring is the emergence of two societies, each distinct from the other in matters of culture, religion, language, customs, outlook, attitudes and behaviour. The situation is further aggravated by certain other factors that make peaceful coexistence more difficult. The Israeli settlements contain only Jews, since non-Jewish Israelis, for instance Arab Israelis, are not admitted to them. 114/ This tends to segregate even more the Israelis in the settlements from the neighbouring Palestinian communities and hinders any meaningful relationships arising between them. That the settlements are usually located, particularly in non-urban areas, on high ground overlooking the countryside, are fenced in and have their entrances guarded, often from a watchtower, make the presence of the settlements even more forbidding to the residents of the nearby Palestinian villages.

108. The Palestinians view the Israeli settlers as intruders in a land in which they have lived and farmed for generations and centuries, who have usurped their space and are exploiting their resources to satisfy a life style quite different from their own. The Israeli settlers, on the other hand, perceive the Palestinians as an alien group of people in a land which, according to the pronouncements of their leaders, is considered part of the Israeli fatherland. 115/

109. The current policy of establishing settlements in clusters in proximity to Palestinian communities has tended to increase the tension between the Palestinians and the Israeli settlers. The tension has been highest and the incidents of confrontation most numerous in those areas where the Israeli settlements comprise members of radical religious groups, such as in Hebron and Nablus.

110. The permission granted to the Israeli settlers to carry arms and to be involved in maintaining law and order has had a direct impact on the normal day-to-day activities of the Palestinians. According to residents of the West Bank visiting Amman, who were interviewed by the consultants, the streets in Palestinian villages and towns are deserted after nightfall. People confine themselves to their homes, fearing to go out lest they be accosted by either the armed settlers, the police or army personnel on patrol, asked to show their identity papers and questioned at length. The presence of a group of armed settlers in a market place or on patrol is sufficient cause for Palestinians to become apprehensive of any

encounter, however peaceful it might be. While the Israeli settlers are free to move as they please and are able to pursue their social and cultural interests without any hindrances, the Palestinians are subjected to frequent curfews. The need to obtain permission from the occupying authorities to hold meetings, which is often denied, and the close supervision exercised over the activities of Palestinian institutions and organizations in the occupied territories has further curtailed the social and cultural activities of the Palestinian residents.

111. The Israeli settlers, in the exercise of their role as maintainers of law and order and having the support of the military authorities administering the territories, have been known to exceed their powers and harass Palestinians individually as well as collectively. For instance, the Ha'aretz of 15 May 1981 reported that Rabbi Kahane had admitted that members of his group from Kiryat Arba'a have armed patrols in the streets of Hebron, check identity papers and enter houses which had once belonged to Jews in order to get the Palestinian occupants to leave. Numerous incidents have also been reported in the press of settlers harassing farmers and interfering in their farming activities on the grounds that the land they were working on belonged to the settlement. Such incidents have been most common in the Etzion Block area between Hebron and Jerusalem. 116/

112. Incidents of stone throwing as an expression of resistance to the occupation, usually by Palestinian youths, have brought about severe reprisals by Israeli settlers in their role of guardians of law and order. These reprisals have been usually directed against educational institutions and have often led to interference in their functioning and disruption of classes. A particularly serious incident presumably in retaliation for a stone throwing incident, reported during the past year, was the attack by masked gunmen, believed to be settlers, on Hebron's Islamic University in the last week of July 1983, when three students were killed and 33 injured. 117/. On another occasion, following an incident in which a minibus carrying children from the settlement at Yattir to school in Kiryat Arba'a was stoned near a Palestinian school in Hebron, settlers travelling on the bus as guards broke into the school firing shots into the air. After failing to catch the youths they suspected of the attack, they detained the headmaster and took him first to Kiryat Arba'a and then to the local military authorities. Subsequently, the army ordered the school closed for a month. 118/

113. With the increase in the number of settlements, Palestinian schools, including those managed by UNRWA for refugee children, situated close to the roads frequented by traffic to and from the settlements, have been subjected to many harassments by settlers in their efforts to curb stone throwing by students. There have been numerous instances when settlers, usually armed, have entered these schools, disrupting classes in order to question students, taking some students away for further questioning and closing the school for a few days until inquiries were completed. As far as the UNRWA schools are concerned, suggestions have been made by the military authorities that concrete walls, two metres high, should be built along the length of the school facing the road, or that the school should be relocated away from the road. 119/

114. Interference in religious places and with religious performances has increased and enlarged in scope in recent years. The numerous incidents involving the

Al Aqsa Mosque in Jerusalem have been widely publicized, the latest being on 27 January 1984, when a cache of hand-grenades and explosives were discovered in the Islamic cemetery abutting the Mosque and the guards at the Mosque had also discovered ladders and ropes dangling over the wall. 120/ Another holy place that has been the scene of frequent confrontation between Palestinian Muslims and Israeli Jews is the Patriarch's Cave at Hebron. Jews have been allowed access to the Cave to hold prayer meetings at which times the Arab Muslims must keep away. In fact, access by Muslims to the Cave has been progressively curtailed. According to the Ha'aretz of 11 September and Al Fajr of 18 September 1983, the Civil Administration in the West Bank had imposed restrictions on Muslim prayers during the Jewish holidays (the Jewish New Year's Day, the Day of Atonement, the Feast of the Tabernacles, and the Rejoicing of the Law) all occurring over a period of three weeks in September.

115. A number of violent attacks against Muslim as well as Christian religious places have been widely reported during the past year. These have included the stabbing of two nuns in the convent of the Russian Orthodox Church in Jerusalem; the planting of explosive devices in mosques at Hebron and Nablus, in a Christian church at Bethany and a Russian Orthodox church at Ain Haren near Jerusalem; and the burning of the library of the Anglican Church in Jerusalem. 121/ These incidents have been attributed to Israeli groups, such as the so-called "Terror Against Terror" group, which have emerged in Jerusalem and the occupied territories and whose intent, according to Jordanian and Palestinian sources, is to harass, intimidate and terrorize Palestinians, compelling them to leave the territories. In this connection, the Israeli Chief of Staff, Moshe Levy, reportedly told a Knesset Committee that he did not know if a Jewish underground existed in the territories, but he could not rule out the possibility that "some dangerous movement is underway". 122/

116. The refugee camps have been the targets of frequent interference by settlers and military personnel, who believe that the camp residents are closely involved in incidents of unrest, demonstrations and stone throwing. 123/ The interferences have been most grave in those camps which have been earmarked in connection with the plans being prepared by the Government of Israel to relocate the refugees, such as Dheishah and Jalazun.

117. The excesses committed by the Israeli settlers in the West Bank in their dealings with Palestinian residents and the laxity of the law enforcement authorities in pursuing these cases led to the appointment by the Government of Israel, in 1981, of what has come to be known as the Karp Commission. The Commission's report was released recently, more than 20 months after its presentation to the Minister of Justice. In its report, the Commission mentions that the civilian police are hindered in their investigations into criminal offences because of the pressure brought to bear by the Military Government for the release of persons detained for questioning. The report also describes the settlers as refusing to co-operate with the police and the district attorney and concludes that the current situation contained "the beginnings of a dangerous process whose end is difficult to foresee". 124/

118. The progressive increase in the number of Israelis living in the occupied territories is bound to aggravate the current conflicts between them and the Palestinian residents in the pursuit of their daily activities. The Palestinians feel that the establishment of Israeli settlements in close proximity to their towns and villages and often surrounding them is intended to prevent them from maintaining close ties with their neighbouring communities. Moreover, the frequent security checks which are carried out both by the security forces and the settlers, and the curfews frequently imposed, are seriously affecting their sense of solidarity and social cohesion. This will be further affected by the intentions of the Government of Israel to disperse the refugees in the present camps, which are located close to Palestinian populated areas.

119. A comparison of the standards of social services available to the Israeli settlers with those available to the Palestinians becomes difficult in the absence of factual data regarding the former. However, based on empirical observation and information from secondary sources, it can be stated that the clustering of Israeli settlements has made it easier to provide the settlers with facilities at a level adequate to meet their needs in education and health and their social and cultural interests. The larger settlements have their own medical clinics, kindergartens and facilities for social and cultural activities. The smaller or under-populated settlements are provided with the means and facilities to make use of these services available at the rural centres and regional towns. The road networks that are being established to interconnect the settlements and provide access to metropolitan centres in Israel, enable the settlers to use educational and health services and to pursue their social and cultural activities without any impediments. In regard to education, welfare and religious services, the standards applied to the settlements in the West Bank are said to be more generous than in Israel proper. 125/ These, as well as health services, are provided exclusively for the benefit of the settlers, emphasizing the segregation of the Israelis and Palestinians living in the territories.

120. Where the Palestinians are concerned, it is known that their educational institutions are often overcrowded, and there are shortages of equipment and teaching personnel. Their activities are frequently interrupted by curfews imposed on the locality, closure because of suspected stone throwing by the students, and classes are often disrupted by security forces and armed settlers entering in search of alleged stone throwers. As far as medical services are concerned, the system available to the Palestinians is considered inadequate and is often affected by shortage of medical personnel and equipment and lack of medical supplies. According to the reports of the Special Committee of Experts appointed by the World Health Organization, which visits the occupied territories annually to study the health conditions of the inhabitants, the improvements made to the health services are far from adequate to meet the needs of a growing population and to reflect the advancements made in medical science. Efforts by local Palestinian groups to provide more facilities and improve services have often been thwarted by the administering authorities, an example being the refusal by the Government of Israel to approve the construction of a new hospital in Hebron which had been initiated through voluntary effort. 126/

VII. IMPACT OF ISRAELI SETTLEMENTS ON THE JUDICIAL AND LOCAL
GOVERNMENT SYSTEMS IN THE OCCUPIED TERRITORIES

121. An anomalous situation has emerged in the occupied territories of the West Bank and Gaza where people occupying a common territorial space are governed by two different judicial and local government systems. 127/ This has come about with the steady increase in Israeli settlements established in the territories and the progressive application of Israeli law to the residents of these settlements, while the Palestinians continue to be subjected to Jordanian law and the Defense Regulations of 1945 enacted by the British mandatory authorities, both in force at the time of Israeli occupation in 1967, which have been amended since by military orders issued from time to time by the Military Command administering the territories.

122. According to a report prepared by the Ministry of Occupied Territories Affairs of Jordan 128/ an attempt is now being made to formalize and facilitate the application of Israeli law to the occupied territories through a Knesset resolution of 2 January 1984 approving two laws. One of the laws is applied to the Jewish settlers, while the emergency law used by the British Mandate in 1945 continues to be applied to the Arab citizens. The new laws permit the Israeli authorities the right to apply the articles of the civil law and the penal law in the occupied territories, if the Legal Committee of the Knesset approves it, without recourse to a Knesset vote.

123. Since the occupation, the Military Command has issued more than a thousand Orders, most of them amending Jordanian law. Violations of these are tried in military courts, although they are deemed to be amendments to Jordanian laws. The judgement of the military courts cannot be appealed. The Military Command also issues from time to time Orders which are applicable to the settlers or the settlements. Violations of these as well as of Israeli laws applicable to the settlers are tried in the Israeli courts.

124. Beginning in 1979, the settlements have been incorporated into local and regional councils by the extension of the Israeli municipal law to them. This was done through the issue of Military Orders No. 783 of 20 March 1979 and No. 982 of 1 March 1981. New settlements are eligible for incorporation as local councils if they are urban settlements or as members of a regional council if they are non-urban. Their method of incorporation and their functions are similar to those of municipal and regional councils in Israel. The Israeli settlements in the West Bank and Gaza have, therefore, elected self-governing bodies empowered to issue by-laws and having jurisdiction over those matters which come within the purview of the municipal law, including planning for the territorial space assigned to them. This includes not only the land allotted to them directly but also land seized for military use and land declared as "state domain". 129/

125. There have arisen, therefore, in the West Bank and Gaza two systems of local government and administration, one comprising the Israeli settlements operating under Israeli municipal law and the other comprising the Palestinian towns and villages operating under former Jordanian law as amended by military orders. While the settlement councils are subject to the due process of law for any omissions or

commissions, the Palestinian councils are subject to unilateral action by the administering authority in the territories either by military order or summary action, as in the case of the dismissal of mayors and dissolution of the elected councils by the Civil Administration a few years back. While the powers and functions of the Palestinian towns and villages are being restricted or curtailed, for example, in matters such as the issue of building permits and the collection of taxes, those of the Israeli settlements and their residents are being expanded through legislation that is enacted in the Knesset or through military orders extending Israeli law to them. 130/

126. Implications for the future of the present policy of having a dual system of local government and administration in the occupied territories of the West Bank and Gaza are twofold. The steady increase in the number of settlements and the tendency of the occupying authorities to confiscate more and more land, which will be allotted to them, will progressively reduce the territorial space that will remain under the jurisdiction of the Palestinian town and villages. The fact that the Israeli settlements, through their councils, are involved in high level decisions pertaining to infrastructural, legal, economic, security, land and water matters in the territories and that they, through the "Council of Jewish settlements in Judaea and Samaria", form a powerful lobby at central Government level, will further erode the powers and functions of the Palestinian towns and villages in these matters.

Notes

1/ See appendix I-A for settlements in the West Bank and Gaza.

2/ Reply received by the Special Committee to Investigate Israeli Practices Affecting the Human Rights of the Population in the Occupied Territories from the Government of Jordan (A/8089), annex V, pp. 4 and 7. See also appendix I-A of the present document.

3/ Yigal Allon, "Israel: the case for defensible borders", Foreign Affairs Review, vol. 55, No. 1 (October 1976), pp. 38-53. See also the statement of Mr. Raymond Tanter, Professor of Political Science, University of Michigan, in his testimony before the Subcommittee on International Organizations and on Europe and the Middle East of the House Committee on International Relations, 95th Cong., 1st session, 12 and 21 September and 19 October 1977 (Washington, D.C., Government Printing Office, 1978), p. 55.

4/ Report of the Special Committee to Investigate Israeli Practices Affecting the Human Rights of the Population of the Occupied Territories, (A/8389), pp. 27-32.

5/ Jerusalem Post, 20 July 1972.

6/ Ha'aretz, 24 July 1974.

7/ Jerusalem Post, 5 March 1971.

Notes (continued)

- 8/ See statements by Mr. Ariel Sharon, reported in the Jerusalem Post, 11 November 1977, and by Mr. Weissman in Ha'aretz, 13 March 1978.
- 9/ The Government's decision to allow the Gush Emunim to set up settlements in army camps was reported in the Jerusalem Post, 2 December 1977, and Al Quds, 2 December 1977.
- 10/ Jerusalem Post, 7 May 1979.
- 11/ Government of Israel, "From the Knesset", press release (Jerusalem, Government Press Office, 14 March 1984).
- 12/ Ma'ariv, 6 July 1977.
- 13/ Government of Israel, "Facts about Israel", Ministry of Foreign Affairs, Information Division (1966), p. 101.
- 14/ Ma'ariv, 14 August 1974.
- 15/ Ma'ariv, 14 August 1975.
- 16/ Times (London), 16 May 1980; Asha'b and Al Quds, 19 May 1980.
- 17/ Asha'b and Al Ittihad, 19 and 23 September 1980.
- 18/ Jerusalem Post, 14 February 1979; Al Ittihad, 20 February 1980.
- 19/ Government of Israel "From the Knesset", press release (Jerusalem, Government Press Office, 14 March 1984).
- 20/ Ha'aretz, 12 March 1980; Ha'aretz, 6 June 1978.
- 21/ Ha'aretz, 31 January 1977.
- 22/ Office of the Crown Prince of the Hashemite Kingdom of Jordan, "Israeli colonization of Arab lands" (Amman, August 1983), annex table 1.
- 23/ Washington Post, 12 September 1982 as referred to in Office of the Crown Prince of the Hashemite Kingdom of Jordan, "Israeli colonization ...", p. 8.
- 24/ Efrat, "Pattern of Jewish and Arab settlements in Judea and Samaria", Daniel Elazar, ed., in Judea, Samaria, and Gaza: Views on the Present and Future (Washington, D.C., 1982), American Institute for Public Policy Research, p. 21.
- 25/ Ibid., p. 22.
- 26/ Ibid., pp. 18, 21 and 23.

Notes (continued)

27/ Meron Benvenisti, "The West Bank and Gaza Data Base Project: pilot study report", presented to the American Enterprise Institute, Washington, D.C. (1982), pp. 35-36.

28/ Ibid., p. 55.

29/ Ibid., p. 55.

30/ Ibid., p. 67.

31/ Ibid., p. 55.

32/ Ibid., pp. 37 and 38.

33/ Ibid.

34/ Hashemite Kingdom of Jordan, "Report presented to the UNCHS delegation, for period February 1983 to February 1984", Ministry of Occupied Territories Affairs (Amman), pp. 9-10. Unofficial translation.

35/ United Nations press release (PAL/1534), 14 December 1983.

36/ Al-Hammishmar (newspaper in Hebrew), 27 November 1983, as referred to in Office of the Crown Prince of the Hashemite Kingdom of Jordan, "UNRWA in Jordan: current situation" (Amman, January 1984), p. 5.

37/ United Nations press release (PAL/1534), 14 December 1983.

38/ Hashemite Kingdom of Jordan, Ministry of Occupied Territories Affairs, "Report presented to UNCHS ..." pp. 2-5.

39/ Ibid., p. 10.

40/ See Ha'aretz, 4 August 1983, reporting the results of a survey conducted in July 1983.

41/ United Nations Conference on Trade and Development, "Palestine: options for development" (TD/B/960), report by P. G. Sadler and B. Abu Kishk, 11 May 1983, p. 5, para. 12.

42/ Benvenisti, op. cit., p. 25.

43/ UNCTAD, op. cit. p. 19, para. 50.

44/ Ibid., p. 19, paras. 49 and 53.

45/ J. Schwartz, "Water resources in Judea, Samaria, and the Gaza Strip", in Elazar, ed., op. cit., p. 100.

Notes (continued)

- 46/ UNCTAD, "Palestine: options ...", p. 33.
- 47/ Efrat, op. cit., p. 22.
- 48/ Office of the Crown Prince of the Hashemite Kingdom of Jordan, "Israeli colonization ...", p. 15.
- 49/ UNCTAD, "Palestine: options ...", p. 41, para. 90.
- 50/ Verbal evidence presented to the consultants by the officials of the Office of the Crown Prince of the Hashemite Kingdom of Jordan, 23 February 1984.
- 51/ Office of the Crown Prince of the Hashemite Kingdom of Jordan, "Israeli colonization ...", pp. 16 and 17.
- 52/ Statistical Abstract of Israel, 1983, table XXVII/33, p. 749.
- 53/ See for example: Efrat, op. cit., p. 23, on educational and health services and supply of utilities to settlements; Office of the Crown Prince of the Hashemite Kingdom of Jordan, "Israeli colonization ...", pp. 9 and 10, on the magnitude of the Government of Israel's subsidy to the settlements; Benvenisti, op. cit. pp. 53-62, on the planning and design of Israeli settlements; and on subsidized housing; the testimony of Dr. Israel Shahak, Professor, Hebrew University, Jerusalem, before the Subcommittee on Immigration and Naturalization of the Senate Committee of Judiciary, 95th Cong., first session on the question of West Bank settlements and the treatment of Arabs in the Israeli-occupied territories, October 17-18 1977, (Washington, D.C., U.S. Government Printing Office, 1978), p. 7.
- 54/ Edited by Emile A. Nakhleh and published by American Enterprises Institute for Public Policy Research (Washington, D.C. 1980), p. 116.
- 55/ See in particular, Special Committee reports of the past five years (A/33/356, 13 November 1978; A/34/63, 13 November 1979; A/35/425, 6 October 1980; A/36/579, 26 October 1981; and A/37/485, 20 October 1982).
- 56/ Reported in Ha'aretz and Ma'ariv, 13 and 14 December 1983, as reported by the Special Committee to Investigate Israeli Practices Affecting the Human Rights of the Population of the Occupied Territories in document A/AC.N5/R.276, 29 December 1983, para. 20. See also Hashemite Kingdom of Jordan, Ministry of Occupied Territories Affairs, "Report presented to UNCHS ..." pp. 1 and 17.
- 57/ For the impact of settlements on land, see chap. IV, sect. A of the present report.
- 58/ Chap. IV, sect. B, of the present report details the methods and impact of Israeli control of water resources.

Notes (continued)

59/ Office of the Crown Prince of the Hashemite Kingdom of Jordan, "Israeli colonization ...".

60/ In Raja Shahadeh, "Jewish settlements in the occupied West Bank: how the land was acquired for their use and how they are structured", paper presented at the eighth United Nations seminar on the Question of Palestine, 9-13 May 1983, Jakarta, Indonesia, organized by the Division of Palestinian Rights on the theme, "The Inalienable Rights of the Palestinian People".

61/ Office of the Crown Prince of the Hashemite Kingdom of Jordan, "Israeli colonization ...", p. 14.

62/ Ibid.

63/ Antoine Mansour, Palestine: une économie de résistance en Cisjordanie et à Gaza, (Paris, Editions l'Harmattan, 1983), p. 141.

64/ United Nations, Special Committee to Investigate Israeli Practices Affecting the Human Rights of the Population of the Occupied Territories, "Summary of reports" (A/AC.145/R.273), 14 November 1983.

65/ Office of the Crown Prince of the Hashemite Kingdom of Jordan, "Israeli colonization ...", p. 4.

66/ Ibid.

67/ Ibid.

68/ A review of the "open border" policy is found in Brian Van Arkadie, Benefits and Burdens: A Report on the West Bank and Gaza Strip Economies Since 1967 (New York, Carnegie Endowment for International Peace, 1977), chap. 1.

69/ For example, by Benvenisti, op. cit.

70/ David Kahan, Agriculture and Water in the West Bank and Gaza, (Jerusalem, West Bank Data Base Project, 1983), table 43, p. 79.

71/ Information obtained from "Survey of the manufacturing industry in the West Bank and Gaza Strip", report prepared by P. G. Sadler, V. Kazi and E. Jabr for the United Nations Industrial Development Organization, July 1983.

72/ "Survey of the manufacturing industry ...", pp. 3 and 4 and 19-21.

73/ Kahan, op. cit., p. 1.

74/ See, for example, Brian Van Arkadie, op. cit., pp. 88-95.

75/ Hillel Frisch, Stagnation and Frontier Arab and Jewish Industry in the West Bank, (Jerusalem, West Bank Data Base Project, 1983), pp. 76-87.

Notes (continued)

- 76/ Office of the Crown Prince of the Hashemite Kingdom of Jordan, "Israeli colonization ...", p. 11.
- 77/ UNCTAD, "Palestine: options ...", p. 35.
- 78/ For further explanation of this point, see Brian Van Arkadie, op. cit., pp. 33, 34, 80 and 81.
- 79/ Figures calculated from Statistical Abstract of Israel, 1983, tables XXVII/10 and XXVII/11.
- 80/ The growth of imports and exports is not as relevant to the argument as the relative importance of the different markets, which is illustrated by table 9.
- 81/ International Labour Conference, Sixty-ninth session, 1983, Report of the Director General, appendix III, p. 26.
- 82/ Ibid., p. 27.
- 83/ Mansour, op. cit., p. 59.
- 84/ See for example, Najwa Makhoul, "Change in the employment structure of Arabs in Israel", in Journal of Palestine Studies, vol. XI, No. 3 (Spring 1982), pp. 77-102.
- 85/ Makhoul, loc. cit.
- 86/ International Labour Conference, Sixty-ninth session, 1983, Report of the Director-General, appendix III, p. 40.
- 87/ Ibid., p. 27.
- 88/ Ibid., p. 41.
- 89/ Office of the Crown Prince of the Hashemite Kingdom of Jordan, "Israeli colonization ...", p. 18, items 2 and 5.
- 90/ Fisch, op. cit., p. 74.
- 91/ ILO, op. cit., pp. 27 and 28.
- 92/ Ibid.
- 93/ Ibid.
- 94/ Ibid., p. 29.

Notes (continued)

95/ On this subject, "illegal" recruitment of children as workers, there have been numerous reports in Arab periodical literature, and research papers have been prepared by a number of organizations, e.g. International Labour Organisation (not available to the consultants), and Committee for the Defense of Palestinian Human Rights under Israeli Occupation, Slave Markets: The Exploitation of Palestinian Children by Israel (Beirut, May 1979).

96/ Some authors put the proportion as high as 75 per cent, e.g. M. W. Khouja and P. G. Sadler, in their report, prepared for UNCTAD, "Review of the economic conditions of the Palestinian people in the occupied Arab territories", (TD/B/870), 26 August 1981.

97/ See, for example, ILO, op. cit., p. 27, and Benvenisti, op. cit., pp. 7 and 8.

98/ ILO, op. cit. pp. 36 and 37.

99/ Office of the Crown Prince of the Hashemite Kingdom of Jordan, "Israeli colonization ...", p. 15.

100/ Hashemite Kingdom of Jordan, Ministry of Labour, Effects of Israeli Policies and Practices on Arab Labour Conditions in the Arab Occupied Territories during 1983 (January 1984). Unofficial translation.

101/ Mansour, op. cit., chap. IV.

102/ Office of the Crown Prince of the Hashemite Kingdom of Jordan, "Israeli colonization ...", pp. 16 and 17.

103/ Meron Benvenisti, Israeli Role in the West Bank, Legal and Administrative Aspects, (Jerusalem, West Bank Data Base Project, 1983), pp. 17 and 18.

104/ Benvenisti, op. cit., p. 16.

105/ Ibid.

106/ The civilian administration was created by Military Order 947 of 8 November 1981, to take over the powers of the military administration in civilian matters. In actuality it is subordinate to the Military Commander of the Defense Forces, who appoints its Head. See Meron Benvenisti, "Israeli Role ...", pp. 19-32.

107/ Shahadeh, op. cit., p. 100.

108/ David (deddi) Zuckor, Avner Halperin, Zeev Haspar, Hagar Kahana, Rivka Levin, Research on Human Rights in the Occupied Territories, 1979-1983, (Tel Aviv, International Center for Peace in the Middle East, 1983), p. 75.

109/ Ibid., p. 73.

Notes (continued)

110/ Ibid., pp. 76 and 77.

111/ Ibid., p. 101.

112/ Ibid., p. 102.

113/ These are, in percentage terms, the differences between GNP and GDP in the West Bank and Gaza, respectively. They are accounted for by net factor payments from abroad (in this case primarily wage income of Palestinians working abroad).

114/ See testimony of Dr. Israel Shahak, Professor, Hebrew University, Jerusalem, Israel, before the Subcommittee on Immigration and Naturalization of the Committee on the Judiciary, United States Senate, ninety-fifth Congress, first session on the question of West Bank Settlements and the Treatment of Arabs in the Israeli-Occupied Territories, October 17 and 18, 1977, (United States Government Printing Office, 1978), pp. 2 and 3.

115/ Mr. Dayan as reported in Ha'aretz, 24 July 1974 and Mr. Begin as reported in L'Express, 23-29 May 1977.

116/ For details of these incidents, see "Report of the Special Committee to Investigate Israeli Practices Affecting the Human Rights of the Population of the Occupied Territories" (A/36/579), paras. 149 to 184. Also see State of Israel, the Report of the Karp Commission, press bulletin (Jerusalem, 9 February 1984).

117/ Jerusalem Post, 2 and 3 August 1983.

118/ Jerusalem Post, 10 November 1983.

119/ Information gathered from the United Nations Relief and Works Agency for Palestine Refugees in the Near East.

120/ Hashemite Kingdom of Jordan, Ministry of Occupied Territories Affairs, "Report presented to the consultants".

121/ These incidents have been documented in the report presented to the consultants by the Jordanian Ministry of Occupied Territories Affairs.

122/ Jerusalem Post, and Ha'aretz, 14 December 1983.

123/ These and other details regarding the rehabilitation of the refugee camps in the West Bank appeared in Ha'aretz, 13, 14 and 21 November, the Jerusalem Post, 21 November, and Ma'ariv, 22 November 1983. For incidents see Ha'aretz, 11 November, Jerusalem Post and Ha'aretz, 27 November and Al Fajr of 25 November 1983.

Notes (continued)

124/ State of Israel, press bulletin (concluding section of the Karp report) (Jerusalem, 7 February 1984).

125/ Benvenisti, op. cit., p. 47.

126/ World Health Organization, documents A/35/16 and A/36/14.

127/ For further details of these issues, see A/38/282, paras. 5-33.

128/ Hashemite Kingdom of Jordan, Ministry of Occupied Territories Affairs, report presented to the consultants, p. 1.

129/ Benvenisti, op. cit., p. 45.

130/ Ibid., p. 42.

APPENDIX I

Settlements in the West Bank and Gaza with projections
to the year 2010

Compiled by the Palestine Liberation Organization
Department of Occupied Homeland Affairs, Amman, Jordan

A. Settlements established from 1967 to 1983

Settlements (Total number)	Location	J	W	G	Area (dunums)		Residential units		Families	
					Present	2010	Present	2010	Present	2010
<u>1967 (2)</u>										
Jewish quarter	E. Jerusalem	x			-	-	220	-	-	-
Kfar Ezyon	Bethlehem		x		870	-	80	120	65	120
<u>1968 (5)</u>										
Argaman	Jordan Valley		x		-	-	40	160	28	160
Kaliya	Jordan Valley		x		1 900	-	26	160	18	-
Kiriat Arba	Hebron		x		900	1 700	1 100	4 000	750	15 000
Mehola	Jordan Valley		x		-	-	70	160	39	70 <u>a/</u>
Ramat Ashkol	E. Jerusalem	x			600	-	1 700	-	-	-
<u>1969 (4)</u>										
Fatazael	Jordan Valley		x		2 000	-	92	160	50	80 <u>a/</u>
Rosh Zorim	Bethlehem		x		400	-	55	120	20	100 <u>b/</u>
French Hill	E. Jerusalem	x			15 000	-	2 400	-	-	-
Haddassa	E. Jerusalem	x								
<u>1970 (7)</u>										
Gilgal	Jordan Valley		x		2 300	-	90	120	50	100 <u>a/</u>
Alon Shvut	Bethlehem		x		470	-	212	600	195	250
Massuu	Jordan Valley		x		-	-	50	160	30	80 <u>a/</u>
Mevo Horon	Ramallah		x		1 050	-	48	160	46	80
Yitav	Jordan Valley		x		2 300	-	50	120	30	90 <u>a/</u>
Atarot	E. Jerusalem	x			10 000	-	61 <u>e/</u>	-	-	-
Muale Efrayim	Jordan Valley		x		-	4 000	240	2 500	264	3 000
<u>1971 (2)</u>										
Hamra	Jordan Valley		x		-	-	60	160	40	120 <u>a/</u>
Mizpe Shalem	Jordan Valley		x		2 300	-	32	-	32	160
<u>1972 (1)</u>										
Bekdut	Jordan Valley		x		-	-	31	80	55	160
<u>1973 (11)</u>										
Newe Yaagov	E. Jerusalem	x			1 000	-	-	-	2 500	-
Ramot	E. Jerusalem	x			-	-	1 500	8 000	-	-
Gillo	E. Jerusalem	x			4 000	-	4 500	10 000	-	-
Talbiot	E. Jerusalem	x			-	-	3 500	5 000	-	-
San Hadria	E. Jerusalem	x			-	-	300	-	-	-
Givat Shaul	E. Jerusalem	x			-	-	-	-	-	-
Ranat Rahel	E. Jerusalem	x			-	-	-	-	-	-

Appendix I-A (continued)

Settlements (Total number)	Location	J	W	G	Area (dunums)		Residential units		Families	
					Present	2010	Present	2010	Present	2010
<u>1973 (continued)</u>										
Givat Hamiftai	E. Jerusalem	x			3 500	-	300	900	-	-
Gittit	Jordan Valley		x		3 700	-	64	1 205	22	120 a/
Mekhora	Jordan Valley		x		-	-	55	160	30	75 a/
Nezr Hazami	Gaza			x	-	-	-	-	39	-
<u>1974 (1)</u>										
Kafar Barom d/	Gaza			x	-	-	-	-	-	-
<u>1975 (6)</u>										
El Azar	Bethlehem		x		850	-	50	120	30	100 b/
Qedumin	Nablus		x		1 000	2 000	265	3 000	170	2 000
Ofra	Ramallah		x		250	350	120	250	100	-
Mishor Adomim	E. Jerusalem	x			-	-	-	-	-	-
Pezael	Jordan Valley		x		-	-	-	-	-	-
Mihlag Dafna	E. Jerusalem	x			270	-	300	1 400	-	-
<u>1976 (1)</u>										
Netiv Hagevue	Jordan Valley		x		2 600	-	68	160	33	80 a/
<u>1977 (18)</u>										
Almog (A) e/	Jordan Valley		x		1 900	-	42	200	23	200
Beit El (A)	Ramallah		x		254	-	139	400	90	-
Beit El (B)	Ramallah		x		75	-	111	152 f/	75	-
El Qana	Nablus		x		2 000	-	280	450 f/	130	7 000
Halamish	Ramallah		x		1 000	-	115	250	73	-
Kafar Ruth	Ramallah		x		-	-	-	-	-	-
Kokhav Hashahar	Ramallah		x		850	-	60	300	27	-
Migdal Oz	Bethlehem		x		650	-	50	160	26	75 b/
Niran (Naaran)	Jordan Valley		x		2 300	-	70	120	30	65 a/
Rehen	Jenin		x		-	-	48	120	13	120
Rimonim	Ramallah		x		310	320	50	320	25	320
Roi	Jordan Valley		x		-	-	50	160	25	75 a/
Salit	Nablus		x		-	-	40	160	38	120
Shave Shomeron	Nablus		x		200	350	91	250	60	250
Teqoa	Bethlehem		x		1 067	-	78	250	54	120 b/
Mahan Givon	E. Jerusalem	x	x		-	-	-	-	-	-
Shelomzi Yyon	Jordan Valley		x		-	-	-	-	-	-
Beit Horon	Ramallah		x		100	-	80	250	40	-
<u>1978 (10)</u>										
Ariel	Nablus		x		-	20 000	1 010	2 500	1 300	2 410
Har Girlo	Bethlehem		x		284	-	80	300	50	200 b/
Karne Shomron	Nablus		x		-	-	220	2 500	500	3 000
Kataf	Gaza			x	-	-	36	112	20	26
Mevo Dotan	Jenin		x		-	-	40	200	24	250
Mizpe Yeriho	E. Jerusalem	x			100	471	57	471	37	-
Shavmot Mehola	Jordan Valley		x		-	-	40	160	30	75 a/
Kfar Tapuah	Nablus		x		-	-	36	250	18	250
Tomer	Jordan Valley		x		2 700	-	74	160	41	80 a/
Zohar	Hebron		x		-	-	-	-	-	-

/...

Appendix I-A (continued)

Settlements (Total number)	Location	J	W	G	Area (dunums)		Residential units		Families	
					Present	2010	Present	2010	Present	2010
<u>1979</u> (5)										
Atzmomah	Gaza			x	-	-	20	25	20	25
Ganeital	Gaza			x	-	-	-	-	-	-
Shillo	Ramallah		x		740	-	124	252	65	-
Zori	Jordan Valley		x		-	-	-	-	-	-
Kafr Adumum	E. Jerusalem	x			10 000	-	92	250	50	-
<u>1980</u> (11)										
Beit Haarava	Jordan Valley		x		1 600	-	21	-	15	160
Efrata	Bethlehem		x		2 350	-	330	4 000	180	5 000
Elon Monreh	Nablus		x		700	1 500	124	1 500	80	1 500
Givon HaGasha	E. Jerusalem	x			25	-	50	120	22	200
Hemdat d/	Jordan Valley		x		-	-	-	200	-	200
Homesh	Nablus		x		-	-	50	250	20	200
Qiryatim	Hebron		x		2 400	-	30	200	25	200
Maale Shomron	Nablus		x		-	-	47	250	46	250
Vered Yeriho	E. Jerusalem	x			2 400	-	50	140	36	-
Yafit	Jordan Valley		x		3 500	-	44	160	19	65 a/
Nezairn	Gaza			x	-	-	-	-	-	-
<u>1981</u> (16)										
Almog (B) e/	Jordan Valley		x		1 900	-	42	200	23	120
Ateret	Ramallah		x		400	-	45	200	18	200
Beit Abba(Barkn)	Nablus		x		200	800	50	250	50	350
Beit Arieih	Ramallah		x		950	-	61	400	61	-
Givon	E. Jerusalem	x			60	60	60	300	24	-
Hinanit	Jenin		x		-	-	40	210	15	250
Maale Adumim	E. Jerusalem	x			-	-	2 800	5 000	1 200	-
Maale Amos	Bethlehem		x		2 350	-	60	2 000	28	250 b/
Maon	Hebron		x		2 400	-	17	200	7	100
Mattityahu	Ramallah		x		500	680	40	160	16	80
Maale Mikhmas	Ramallah		x		1 610	-	40	104	35	200
Nilli	Ramallah		x		2 100	-	68	250	40	-
Pesagot	Ramallah		x		-	200	50	150	45	-
Telem	Hebron		x		4	-	-	200	40	-
Yaqir	Nablus		x		-	-	50	250	40	250
Shaqid	Jenin		x		-	-	40	400	30	250
<u>1982</u> (37)										
El David	Bethlehem		x		350	350	32	200	20	-
Adura	Hebron		x		-	-	-	250	-	-
Brakna (A)	Nablus		x		250	350	15	200	15	-
Alfe Menashe	Nablus		x		-	-	-	2 500	-	2 500
Einav	Nablus		x		-	-	40	200	19	80
Elei Sinai	Gaza			x	-	-	-	-	20	-
Aseel	Ramallah		x		-	-	-	-	-	-
Eshklot	Hebron		x		300	300	20	100	-	100
Gadiv	Gaza			x	-	-	36	120	23	30
Ganor	Gaza			x	-	-	40	164	16	26
Ginnat d/	Jenin		x		-	-	-	250	-	250
Javat Zeev	E. Jerusalem	x			500	1 500	124	2 000	110	-
Iritt d/	Nablus		x		170	250	20	250	-	250

Appendix I-A (continued)

Settlements (Total number)	Location	J	W	G	Area (dunums)		Residential units		Families	
					Present	2010	Present	2010	Present	2010
<u>1982 (continued)</u>										
Kafira	E. Jerusalem	x			-	-	-	350	-	350
Maskiot	Jordan Valley		x		-	-	-	200	-	200
Morag	Gaza			x	-	-	-	-	-	-
Mulnevo	Jordan Valley		x		5 800	-	-	120	-	120
Naama	Jordan Valley		x		3 300	-	-	-	14	60
Newe Dequlin	Gaza			x	-	-	70	160	70	120
Negohot	Hebron		x		-	-	-	250	-	250
Neot Adomin	Hebron		x		-	-	-	150	-	120
Netafim	Nablus		x		170	350	-	-	-	250
Newe Daniel	Bethlehem		x		-	-	2	200	60	-
Ramat Qidron	Bethlehem		x		-	1 000	-	2 000	-	2 000
Samur	Nablus		x		400	400	40	250	12	200
Shaaretiqwe	Nablus		x		-	-	70	700	-	-
Sheqef	Hebron		x		-	-	-	-	-	-
Bedoloh	Gaza			x	-	-	-	-	-	-
Eisha	Jordan Valley		x		-	-	-	-	-	-
Yaqin	Hebron		x		-	-	-	200	-	200
Yatir	Hebron		x		-	-	-	-	500	-
Yoezer	Nablus		x		-	1 000	-	600	-	600
Noat Qedumin	Jordan Valley		x		-	-	-	-	-	-
Nisamit	Gaza			x	-	-	-	-	-	-
Otmiel	Hebron		x		-	-	-	-	-	-
Rotem	Jordan Valley		x		-	-	-	-	-	-
Anassa	Hebron		x		-	-	-	-	-	-
Almon (A)	E. Jerusalem	x			200	500	105	250	11	250
Almon (B)	E. Jerusalem	x			200	500	5	250	11	250
Karmel	Hebron		x		2 400	-	30	200	20	200
Emmanuel	Nablus		x		-	-	880	10 000	-	4 000
Sussia	Hebron		x		-	-	-	200	-	250
Zavta	Nablus		x		-	-	300	2 500	-	-
Naaleh	Ramallah		x		-	-	-	1 100	-	1 100
Ofarim (A)	Ramallah		x		-	-	-	2 500	-	2 500

B. Settlements planned for establishment from 1983 to 1986

Settlements (Total number)	Location	J	W	G	Area (dunums)		Residential units		Families	
					Present	2010	Present	2010	Present	2010
<u>1983-84 (30)</u>										
Ankhi	Bethlehem		x		-	-	-	120	-	120
Atara	Nablus		x		-	250	-	200	-	200
Atniel	Hebron		x		200	-	250	-	-	200
Dolev	Ramallah		x		-	-	-	300	-	300
Elqana (C)	Nablus		x		-	-	-	700	-	700
Ganei Modin	Ramallah		x		-	-	-	700	-	700
Ganim	Nablus		x		-	-	-	200	-	200
Garesh	Nablus		x		200	350	-	250	-	250
Kabirit	Nablus		x		-	-	-	250	-	250

Appendix I-B (continued)

Settlements (Total number)	Location	J	W	G	Area (dunums)		Residential units		Families	
					Present	2010	Present	2010	Present	2010
<u>1983-84 (continued)</u>										
Katzik	Ramallah		x		-	-	-	200	-	200
Khalilim	Hebron		x		-	-	-	250	-	250
Navley Yarak	Nablus		x		-	-	-	400	-	400
Kokhav Einaron	Bethlehem		x		500	500	-	250	-	250
Lev Hashomron	Nablus		x		-	-	-	450	-	450
Mazleh Levona (A)	Nablus		x		-	-	-	200	-	200
Mazleh Levona (B)	Nablus		x		100	250	£/	250	-	250
Matar	Nablus		x		400	400	-	250	-	250
Matti Yahu (B)	Ramallah		x		-	-	-	800	-	800
Migdalim	Nablus		x		-	250	-	200	-	200
Mikhmetat	Nablus		x		100	250	-	200	-	200
Mizpe Yehuda	Bethlehem		x		-	-	-	2 000	-	-
Narciss	Nablus		x		-	200	g/	200	-	200
Nava	Nablus		x		170	250	g/	250	-	250
Neta	Hebron		x		-	-	-	200	-	200
Omarim	Hebron		x		-	-	-	250	-	250
Oranit	Nablus		x		-	-	-	500	-	500
Pragot	Bethlehem		x		-	-	-	250	-	250
Tel Halim	Nablus		x		350	350	-	250	-	250
Zalaf	-		x		-	250	-	200	-	200
Brosh	Jordan Valley		x		-	-	-	200	-	200
<u>1984-85 (18)</u>										
Adoraim	Hebron		x		-	-	-	200	-	200
Akrabit	Nablus		x		-	-	-	250	-	250
Aviel West	Nablus		x		-	-	-	150	£/	150
Avneikhefez	Nablus		x		250	750	£/	1 000	-	1 000
Beitar	Bethlehem		x		-	400	-	500	-	500
Brukheil	Nablus		x		-	-	-	500	-	500
Eshtamoa	Hebron		x		150	250	-	200	-	200
Keshet Yehonaton	Nablus		x		-	-	-	150	-	150
Hur	Nablus		x		-	-	-	1 000	-	1 000
Hermesh North	Nablus		x		300	300	-	250	-	250
Naggid	Bethlehem		x		50	200	£/	250	-	250
Rama	Bethlehem		x		-	500	-	700	-	700
Ras Carker	Ramallah		x		200	350	g/	400	-	4 400
Telem (B)	Bethlehem		x		-	-	-	200	-	200
Terzah	Nablus		x		-	-	-	150	-	150
Zuritadulum	Bethlehem		x		-	-	-	250	-	250
Zik	Hebron		x		-	-	-	200	-	200
Jewish quarter	Hebron		x		-	-	-	-	-	-
<u>1985-86 (4)</u>										
Barakha (B)	Nablus		x		-	-	-	200	-	200
Naaran (B)	Jordan Valley		x		-	-	-	200	-	200
Ofarim (B)	Ramallah		x		-	-	-	1 500	-	1 500
Rihan (B)	Nablus		x		-	-	-	250	-	250
<u>1986 (10)</u>										
Elqana (D)	Nablus		x		-	-	-	1 200	-	1 200
Givat Ehud	Ramallah		x		-	-	-	700	-	700

Appendix I-B (continued)

Settlements (Total number)	Location	J	W	G	Area (dunums)		Residential units		Families	
					Present	2010	Present	2010	Present	2010
<u>1986 (continued)</u>										
Har Mandakh	Hebron		x		300	300	-	200	-	200
Hermesh	Nablus		x		-	-	-	250	-	250
Naaba (B)	Jordan Valley		x		-	-	-	200	-	200
Nahal Zori	Jordan Valley		x		-	-	-	120	-	120
Nahal Zohar	Hebron		x		-	-	-	250	-	250
Rihanit h/	-		x		-	-	-	-	-	-
Shomoronit h/	Nablus		x		-	3 300	-	5 000	-	5 000
Terez h/	-		x		-	-	-	2 000	-	2 000
<u>1986-87 (2)</u>										
Deir Kalaa	Nablus		x		-	-	-	-	-	-
Salit (B)	Nablus		x		-	-	-	-	-	-
<u>Military, or no information available d/</u>										
Mazleh Yonatan	-				-	-	-	-	-	-
Mizpeh Adulam	-				-	-	-	-	-	-
Nahalim	-				-	-	-	-	-	-
Hiria	Nablus				-	-	-	-	-	-
Yarrit	-				-	-	-	-	-	-
Paati Hebron	-				-	-	-	-	-	-
Zur Natan	-				-	-	-	-	-	-
<u>No date available</u>										
Elqana (B)	Nablus		x		-	-	-	1 500	-	1 500

J: East Jerusalem; W: West Bank; G: Gaza Strip; a dash (-) indicates that the information is not available.

Sources: "Israeli settlements in Gaza and the West Bank (including Jerusalem): their nature and aims (United Nations, 1982); Index of Settlements, West Bank and Gaza, vols. 1 and 2: existing, July 1983; planned, April 1983 (Jerusalem, West Bank Data Base Project); Survey of Israel "Map of settlements in Eretz Israel", Settlement Department of the Jewish Agency; Settlement Division of the Zionist Organization (Jerusalem, 1982); Hashemite Kingdom of Jordan, "Jerusalem", report prepared by the Ministry of Foreign Affairs and the Executive Committee of the Occupied Territories (Amman, 1980).

- a/ Expected 1991.
- b/ Expected 1995.
- c/ Total number of factories established: 61.
- d/ Military information, otherwise none available.
- e/ Known also by the name "Anatot".
- f/ Expected 1986.
- g/ Will be built after 1984.
- h/ Will be built after 1986.

APPENDIX II

Land confiscated during the period February 1983 to February 1984

Location/Villages	<u>Area confiscated</u> (dunums)	Subtotal
<u>Ramallah</u>		
Jibia, Umsafa and Nabi Saleh	2,000	
Beit Illo	400	
Beitounia	600	
Deir Dibwan	200	
Ramallah City	<u>7</u>	3,207
<u>Bethlehem-Hebron</u>		
Yatta	23,000	
Between Hebron and the Dead Sea	170,000	
Ain Fares, Abul Zuluf	20,000	
Ras Qanat Saleh		
Slir	800	
Targoum. A	5,000	
Tafouh	500	
Shamjah Family	200	
Sourif	10,000	
Beit Omer	430	
Al Burj	2,000	
Beir Razel	4,000	
Beit Oula	6,000	
Beit Sahour	2,000	
Beit Sahour	6	
Ush Al-Ghrab-Beit Sahour Area	250	
Al-Khader	<u>1,000</u>	245,196
<u>Nabius-Tulkarm-Jenin</u>		
Salem Village land	2,800	
Deir Hatabhazmour	4,000	
Akaaba	2,000	
Jabal Al Raz	1,250	
Kafr Sour	1,300	
Shoufa, Kouri, Beit Heed, Safareen	10,000	
Akaaba	1,600	
Al Mazra'a, Al Qibtineh	3,000	
Qalqilya	4,000	
Raba, Al Zababdeh	5,000	
Al-Zababdeh	<u>400</u>	35,350

Location/Villages	<u>Area confiscated</u> (dunums)	Subtotal
<u>Jerusalem</u>		
Rafat	2,250	
Issawiyeh	7,000	
Shuifat	6	
Beit Hanina	<u>5,000</u>	14,256
	TOTAL:	298,009

Source: Hashemite Kingdom of Jordan, "Report of the Ministry of Occupied Territories Affairs" (Amman, February 1984), annex IV.

APPENDIX III

Houses demolished in the West Bank and the Gaza Strip by the occupying
authorities as a punitive measure, 1967-1982

1967	130
1968	140
1969	301
1970	191
1971	231
1972	35
1973	34
1974	61
1975	77
1976	24
1977	1
1978	2
1979	8
1980	24
1981	32
1982	55

Total 1,346
of which 1,318 on the West Bank
28 on the Gaza Strip

Source: Hashemite Kingdom of Jordan, Ministry of Occupied Territories
Affairs (Amman).



General Assembly
Economic and Social Council

Distr.
GENERAL

A/40/373
E/1985/99
14 June 1985

ORIGINAL: ENGLISH

GENERAL ASSEMBLY
Fortieth session
Item 84 (g) of the preliminary list*
DEVELOPMENT AND INTERNATIONAL ECONOMIC
CO-OPERATION: HUMAN SETTLEMENTS

ECONOMIC AND SOCIAL COUNCIL
Second regular session of 1985
Item 15 of the provisional agenda**
INTERNATIONAL CO-OPERATION IN THE
FIELD OF HUMAN SETTLEMENTS

Living conditions of the Palestinian people in the
occupied Palestinian territories

Report of the Secretary-General

1. The General Assembly at its thirty-ninth session, considered the report of the Secretary-General on the living conditions of the Palestinian people in the occupied Palestinian territories (A/39/233), which had been submitted pursuant to its resolution 38/166. It adopted resolution 39/169 on living conditions of the Palestinian people in the occupied Palestinian territories, in paragraph 6 of which it requested the Secretary-General:

"(a) To organize in 1985, a seminar on remedies for the deterioration of the economic and social conditions of the Palestinian people in the occupied Palestinian territories;

"(b) To make the necessary preparations for the seminar, providing for the participation of the Palestine Liberation Organization;

"(c) To invite experts to present papers to the seminar;

"(d) To invite also relevant intergovernmental and non-governmental organizations;

"(e) To report to the General Assembly at its fortieth session, through the Economic and Social Council, on the seminar."

* A/40/50/Rev.1.

** E/1985/100.

A/40/373
E/1985/99
English
Page 2

2. In compliance with the above request, invitations were sent to the Palestine Liberation Organization to participate in the seminar and to a number of experts to attend the seminar and present papers. Invitations were also sent to relevant intergovernmental and non-governmental organizations and to appropriate United Nations organizations.

3. The seminar was held at the Vienna International Centre from 25 to 29 March 1985. The report on the seminar is contained in the annex below.

ANNEX

Report on the seminar held at Vienna from 25 to 29 March 1985
in pursuance of General Assembly resolution 39/169

CONTENTS

	<u>Paragraphs</u>	<u>Page</u>
I. INTRODUCTION	1 - 4	4
II. OVERALL DEVELOPMENT	5 - 17	4
III. AGRICULTURE	18 - 30	7
IV. INDUSTRY	31 - 38	10
V. TRADE	39 - 47	13
VI. MONETARY SITUATION	48 - 58	16
VII. TAXES AND DUTIES	59 - 63	18
VIII. HOUSING	64 - 69	19
IX. HIGHER EDUCATION	70 - 75	21
X. SOCIAL WELFARE	76 - 90	23

APPENDICES

I. List of participants	28
II. List of papers presented to the seminar	30

I. INTRODUCTION

1. The seminar, which was requested by the General Assembly in paragraph 6 of its resolution 39/169 on living conditions of the Palestinian people in the occupied Palestinian territories, was held at the Vienna International Centre from 25 to 29 March 1985. Twelve experts participated in the seminar. In addition, a delegation of the Palestine Liberation Organization participated, as provided for in the resolution. Representatives of UNIDO, UNCTAD and WHO also participated.

2. Twelve papers prepared by the experts were presented, which together with a background paper prepared by a consultant, formed the basic working documents of the seminar. A list of the participants in the seminar is contained in appendix I, and the papers represented to the seminar are listed in appendix II.

3. Six plenary meetings and five working group meetings were held. The first four plenary meetings were devoted to the opening of the seminar, organization of work, introduction of the background paper, and presentation of and discussions on each of the papers prepared by the experts. The seminar established three working groups which respectively discussed (a) overall economic and social development, (b) economic issues, and (c) social issues. The reports of the working groups were considered at the last two plenary meetings.

4. Among the economic and social issues examined were agriculture, industry, trade, the monetary situation, fiscal policies, housing and basic facilities, higher education and social welfare. Each topic was examined in terms of the current situation and trends, proposals for possible remedies and ways and means of implementing the proposed remedies. The views expressed and suggestions made by the participants are summarized in the sections that follow.

II. OVERALL DEVELOPMENT

5. The participants examined the question of overall development in the light of the information contained in the background paper and in two papers presented to the seminar entitled "The current economic situation in the West Bank and Gaza Strip and prospects for the future" and "Vocational training and employment: constraints and proposals for possible remedies".

6. The overall constraints to self-generating development in the occupied territories were identified as the demographic structure as it affected the quality of human resources available for development, and the policies and practices of the occupying authorities as they affected land and water usage by the indigenous population in the occupied territories, employment opportunities and the direction and flow of trade, particularly external trade. Those constraints would have important implications for any remedies that could be proposed.

A. Demographic aspects

7. The population of the occupied Palestinian territories continued to grow although at a lower rate than in previous years. The estimated annual actual increase was much lower than the estimated annual natural increase, the difference being accounted for by emigration. ^{a/} Over the years of the occupation, emigration from the West Bank had numbered 139,600 persons and from the Gaza Strip, 87,900 persons, for a total of 227,500 persons (A/39/233, annex, table 15). The significance of the emigration indicated that it had affected primarily those groups of working age, particularly the males in those groups.

8. Those who emigrated were usually the educated youth who, lacking suitable opportunities for work or further training in the occupied territories, sought such opportunities in other countries, primarily the neighbouring Arab States. The policies and practices of the occupying authorities often prevented the youth from returning to the territories and complicated the issue of creating the conditions necessary for economic and social progress in the territories based on their knowledge and experience. Other conditions prevailing in the occupied territories, particularly economic stagnation, restrictions to freedom of movement and expression and tight security measures were recognized by the participants as clear disincentives for those of working age to make any meaningful contribution to the economy and society of the occupied territories.

B. Land and water

9. Land and water were the basic natural resources in the occupied Palestinian territories. Under the occupation, the Palestinian people lacked full control over both of those resources. As regards land, according to data compiled by the Jordanian Ministry of Occupied Territories Affairs, the occupying authorities had taken possession of 2,607,901 dunums in the West Bank by January 1984, constituting 47.5 per cent of the total area. Other sources estimated that the occupying authorities controlled 50-60 per cent of the land area in the occupied Palestinian territories (A/39/233, annex, para. 44).

10. Of the land expropriated and under the control of the occupying authorities, 26 per cent had been allocated to Israeli settlements, 165 of which had been built in the occupied Palestinian territories by the end of July 1983 (A/39/233, annex, para. 44). As Israeli settlements continued to be built, it was expected that more of the land expropriated would be allocated to them for both initial establishment and expansion.

11. The adverse economic impact of the expropriation and confiscation of Palestinian land was further aggravated by the loss of control over their water resources. Water used for agriculture had been restricted since the time of the occupation. That had been accomplished by prohibiting the digging of new wells by Palestinians, installing meters on existing ones, limiting the use of water from existing wells to the levels used before the occupation and imposing fines for exceeding the limits specified.

C. Economic development

12. An important characteristic of the national aggregates for the occupied Palestinian territories was the increasing difference between gross domestic product (GDP) and gross national product (GNP), the former was usually lower than GNP, which included transfers from abroad. From IS 1.1 million in 1968 (equivalent to 2.3 per cent of GNP) the difference rose to IS 36.7 million in 1976 and to IS 49.5 million in 1982, both at 1968 prices (equivalent to 26.3 per cent and 28.1 per cent of GNP, respectively). b/ The increase in the difference to approximately a third of GNP was due to the earnings of Palestinian workers from abroad remitted to the occupied territories. GNP was therefore not a good measure of the economy's productive achievement, because it was clear that a percentage of GNP was not generated by the local economy.

13. Thus, in that case, GDP was the better measure. GDP more than doubled in the eight years from 1968 to 1976 and it rose at an annual rate of 3.7 per cent from 1976 to 1982, c/ which was below the rate of growth of GNP - 4.1 per cent - for the same period. In per capita terms, there was practically no growth, since GDP per capita was 103.1 shekels in 1976 and 100.7 shekels in 1982. Thus, eliminating the inward remittances of the earnings of workers outside the territories showed a different picture of growth, when GDP was utilized instead of GNP. That was consistent with the structural changes observed in the economy, namely, a declining share of the agricultural sector in GDP and total employment, accompanied by stagnation in industry and increased shares of services in GDP and total employment, the latter explained by increases in demand disproportionate to the economy's capacity to produce, because of the high proportion of income earned outside the territories.

14. Employment in the occupied Palestinian territories reached a high in 1970 of 152,700 persons. Despite the growth of the population, as of 1982 employment had not yet returned to that level. In relation to the population, employment in the territories had declined, while the percentage of those employed in Israel had risen from 11.9 per cent in 1970 to 35.5 per cent in 1982 (A/39/233, annex, table 10). Employment in Israel and emigration from the occupied territories were explained to a large extent by reduced opportunities in the occupied territories.

15. The discrepancy between GNP and GDP also meant that the economy could not satisfy internally, from GDP, the total demand for goods and services, thus causing increased imports. Consequently, the balance of trade of the occupied Palestinian territories had been negative in all years since 1971. The balance of trade with Israel had been negative and larger than the total trade deficit (A/39/233, annex, tables 7, 8 and 9). Trade with Jordan had partly offset the deficit, while a much larger portion had been covered by remittances from abroad. Israel had become the most important trading partner for the territories. Between 1971 and 1980, 50 per cent and 80 per cent of the exports from the West Bank and the Gaza Strip, respectively, went to Israel, while 79.8-87.8 per cent of West Bank imports and 84.9-91 per cent of Gaza imports originated in Israel (A/39/233, annex, table 9 and paras. 74-78). For Israel, the occupied Palestinian territories had become the most important export market, after the export market of the United States of America.

16. The overall picture that emerged was that of an economy unable to absorb its own workers thus offering a ready supply of labour for the Israeli economy. The industrial sector, deprived of capital and credit, and burdened by restrictions, prohibitions and the competition of the more technologically advanced Israeli producers, had stagnated at a minimal level, while service activities requiring little or no capital investment had increased. The economy depended on Israel for a large proportion of what it consumed - particularly industrial products. The trend appeared to be a process of attrition of the indigenous industrial base, while Israel continued to build its industrial parks in the West Bank in line with the 1980 plan for Jewish industrialization of the area.

17. It is important to emphasize that, ultimately, the improvement of the living conditions of the Palestinian people in the occupied Palestinian territories will depend on the development of their own economy. This necessitates the promotion of productive investment therein, which in turn requires that the Palestinians must be able to determine their own priorities and plan for them.

III. AGRICULTURE

18. The participants discussed the state of agriculture in the occupied Palestinian territories and ways to improve it based on the information in the background paper and a paper presented to the seminar entitled "Development prospects of agriculture in the West Bank and Gaza Strip".

19. Agriculture was considered to be of special significance to the economy of the occupied Palestinian territories, since it constituted the primary component of GDP, which was estimated at 30-40 per cent and provided employment for a sizeable part of the labour force, which was approximately 20-22 per cent. Moreover, agriculture continued to play a conventional role as the source of food supply for the local population.

20. Since the occupation, income from agriculture had undergone wide fluctuations. Notwithstanding conflicting claims, income originating in agriculture had shown a high rate of growth at an overall average of about 10 per cent during the first decade of the occupation. But that growth was induced largely by a marked rise in the productivity of certain high-priced products and not by a corresponding rise in aggregate output. In the past seven years, agricultural income grew at erratic rates.

21. Major changes in output and cropping patterns had emerged during the period of the occupation. Those changes had reflected important transformations in the economics of production and profound constraints on land and water use. Based on a three-year average prior to the occupation (1964-1966), average output during 1976-1979 had undergone the following changes: wheat dropped by 38 per cent, melons by 74 per cent, tomato by 13 per cent and the number of cows by 57 per cent.

22. Despite pronounced variations in the West Bank's physical geography, its agriculture was dominated by relatively few types of farming. Olive production was by far the most important, with an average share of 20 per cent of agricultural

income. Other important types included vegetable crops (17 per cent), citrus (10 per cent) and grain crops (6 per cent). The livestock and poultry sectors made up approximately a third of the gross farm income.

23. It would appear that production of field crops and fruits had not shown any appreciable increase over the years of the occupation. Those crops were cultivated under dry farming conditions, and their productivity depended on rainfall. The field crops and fruits had not attracted the same measure of attention from the occupying authorities as crops grown under irrigated conditions, especially those with a ready market in Israel, such as vegetables, tobacco and citrus.

24. Changes in the area under major crop cultivation were even more pronounced than those of output. The changes between the periods mentioned earlier indicated a drop of 29 per cent in the area under field crops, 59 per cent in the area under vegetables and 95 per cent in the area under melons.

25. The division of land according to the source of water revealed that the area fed by rainwater constituted approximately 95 per cent of all cultivated land in the West Bank. The area under irrigation was estimated at 85 km², or 5 per cent of the area. Surprisingly, the ratio of irrigated land to total cultivated area was considerably lower than in most countries in the Middle East. The amount of water used in agriculture in the West Bank was estimated to be 90 million cubic metres as against 1,280 million cubic metres in Israel.

26. Services supportive to agriculture had undergone important changes during the period of the occupation. Services rendered by the occupation authorities had come almost to a complete standstill due to severe budgetary cuts and reduction in staff.

27. Institutional sources of agricultural credit had also come to an end since the occupation. The military administration had not only refrained from creating alternative sources but it had also severely controlled the flow of funds from other sources.

28. Co-operative organizations served a potentially important role in accelerating agricultural development, especially because of the absence of a national agricultural authority. However, the role of co-operatives had not been particularly effective. In addition to several administrative deficiencies, co-operatives were tightly controlled by the military administration. Despite the importance of agriculture, the West Bank was deficient in agricultural education, while the existing educational system was practically devoid of agricultural subjects. The occupying authorities had responded negatively to requests by certain local universities to establish a faculty of agriculture. Several voluntary organizations commenced in recent years to provide financial support to certain forms of rural development. Despite the small scale of their operations, however, the functioning of those organizations had been hampered by many problems, the most important of which was the opposition of the military administration to development-oriented projects. While some of those organizations were less efficient than others and some were inadequately responsive to the development priorities of local communities, voluntary organizations, on the whole, had played an important role in identifying and implementing development projects.

Proposals for possible remedies and measures to implement them

29. The following remedies were proposed by the working group that considered the question, with a view to overcoming the obstacles and shortcomings that confronted the agricultural sector in the occupied Palestinian territories and inhibited its growth and development:

(a) Planning and programming of agricultural production and development should be undertaken in a more systematic manner than currently;

(b) A programme of in-service training should be initiated for extension and research staff engaged in agricultural activities;

(c) Sources of credit on favourable terms were essential if agriculture in the occupied territories was to progress. Particular attention should be given to the financial needs of those groups of agricultural graduates and educated youth who were desirous of starting agricultural enterprises on a commercial basis;

(d) The agricultural co-operatives in the occupied territories required much support, if they were to play an effective role in the agricultural sector. They required educational and training support, as well as guidance in pursuing business-oriented policies;

(e) Given that agriculture was a most important component of the gross domestic product of the occupied territories, various measures should be taken to assure its products a stable market in the occupied territories, particularly protecting them from unfair competition of subsidized Israeli products currently marketed freely in the territories. At the same time, steps should be taken to liberalize trade in agricultural products with Jordan and other Arab countries, as well as with both eastern and western European countries;

(f) Farmers should be encouraged to employ more efficient irrigation techniques on a wider scale, especially in citrus groves. That would require the provision of adequate credit facilities and the availability of reliable technical back-up services;

(g) Serious thought should be given to establishing appropriate agro-industrial and other supporting services to enable the producers to maximize the profitability of their undertakings.

30. In order to give effect to the proposed remedies, the following measures were proposed:

(a) An agricultural unit, either autonomous or affiliated with a university in the occupied territories, should be established. A primary function of that unit would be to formulate short-term and long-term plans for agricultural development based on surveys and feasibility studies undertaken in co-operation with other institutions and entities in the occupied Palestinian territories concerned with agriculture;

(b) A faculty of agriculture should be established in one of the universities in the occupied territories. The faculty could provide training for extension workers and other agricultural officials, undertake research that would provide inputs to the work of the proposed agricultural unit, and provide education and training to graduates in agriculture, as well as to competent farmers, and furnish orientation and guidance to agricultural businessmen;

(c) The feasibility of establishing a co-operative college should be explored. Such a college could impart instruction and training in all aspects of co-operative activity to various personnel in the co-operative movement. Action could be initiated through a bilateral agreement, for example, with a Government that had experience in assisting co-operative movements in developing countries, or through technical assistance from appropriate international organizations;

(d) A modern soil-water laboratory should be established to render advisory services on various problems relevant to irrigation and fertilization practices;

(e) Negotiations should be initiated with the occupying authorities, if needed through the intermediary of international organizations, to lift restrictions that had been imposed on the use of water for agricultural purposes, the functioning of the co-operatives, the sale of agricultural products in Israeli markets, and trading with other countries. It was also important to negotiate with the occupying authorities ways and means of eliminating the unfair competition that subsidized Israeli products posed to similar products grown and marketed in the occupied Palestinian territories;

(f) Voluntary agencies having programmes in the occupied Palestinian territories should be persuaded to allocate more of their resources to agricultural development projects, in both operational activities and supporting services. A co-ordination of their efforts and the involvement of local expertise and recipients of their aid in a more organized fashion would enhance the quality of their inputs to agricultural development in the occupied territories;

(g) The participants in the seminar felt that international organizations could be of great assistance in the development of agriculture in the occupied Palestinian territories through direct involvement in the various measures proposed above and also in initiating a dialogue with the occupying authorities to facilitate the process of agricultural development in the territories.

IV. INDUSTRY

31. The background paper and two papers presented to the seminar entitled "The position of Palestinian industry in the occupied regions since 1967: the West Bank and Gaza Strip" and "Present situation and sustainment of Palestinian industry in occupied territories", provided the information on which the participants considered the situation of the industrial sector in the occupied Palestinian territories and suggested possible remedies and measures to implement them.

32. The participants noted that industry in the occupied territories was underdeveloped before the occupation. As far as could be ascertained, the Gaza Strip had not developed any kind of industrial base. The West Bank was not identified as an area for industrial development in the regional development plans of the Government of Jordan. Consequently, the industries in the occupied territories were operated on a small scale, largely confined to craft work in low productivity and labour intensive operations. The territories also lacked the infrastructure to provide an impetus for industrial growth. Conditions had not changed since the occupation.

33. The industrial sector in the occupied Palestinian territories comprised a small segment of the total economy. Nevertheless, it had a crucial role to play in the development process, since its growth could make an important contribution to the economy in terms of providing employment to labour displaced by a modernizing agricultural sector and to those persons coming into the labour market through population growth. At present, opportunities for employment in industry are quite limited. Consequently, many job seekers either entered the labour market in Israel or took in work subcontracted by Israeli firms; others emigrated to neighbouring Arab countries and beyond in search of employment.

34. A dynamic industrial sector would afford opportunities for investment of savings generated in other sectors of the economy, thus providing a multiplier effect to internal growth and development. Current industrial activities were conducted in workshops and in-servicing outlets and included the minimal processing of agricultural products, for example, olive oil processing and pickling. There was little factory organization, and manufactures were generally of a simple type, such as cement block manufacture, handicrafts and carpentry.

35. There was minimal industrial export, and that mainly to Israel, consisting for the most part of finished goods subcontracted by Israeli firms to establishments in the occupied territories. The industrial exports to non-Israeli destinations consisted of over 50 per cent of agricultural products requiring a small amount of processing, such as olive oil.

36. The industrial enterprises in the occupied territories suffered from under-capitalization, restrictions in the marketing of products and in the acquisition of machinery and raw materials. They were unable to obtain funds and technical support to modernize their operations. Most of them were said to be operating at 50 per cent of their capacity.

Proposals for possible remedies and measures to implement them

37. It was the view of the working group that considered the issue that whatever proposals that could be made to remedy the existing situation of the industrial sector were contingent on the removal of the many restrictions imposed by the occupying authorities, particularly land use, industrial zoning, water usage for industrial purposes and the import of equipment and raw materials. Nevertheless, the following remedies seemed feasible in the current context:

(a) The current under-utilization of capacity should be brought into full use by a rationalization of the enterprises in question supported by a drive to widen the markets for Palestinian products both within the occupied Palestinian territories and abroad;

(b) New techniques in water conservation and recycling should be investigated so that the maximum use of water could be attained, given the fact that water was, and will remain, a scarce resource;

(c) There was a need for a substantial upgrading of the industry, in both techniques and attitudes. There was also a need to strengthen the organization within the occupied Palestinian territories so that industrialists and entrepreneurs could co-operate with each other to mutual benefit. Under-utilized capacities could be shared, and different processing levels integrated so that value added could be maximized. Through that and other means, processes currently not carried out in the occupied territories could be introduced, thus giving added strength to the economy as a whole;

(d) Funding was a crucial element in industrial activity, for both capital investment and operational expenses. Ways and means should be explored to mobilize the capital needed for industrial development; mobilization should be undertaken within the occupied Palestinian territories as well as from sources abroad;

(e) Energy resources were scarce in the occupied Palestinian territories. All means of energy conservation and the adoption of new techniques, including solar energy, should be explored. While those might be of limited applicability in the short term, the long-term implications must not be overlooked;

(f) Given an efficient and viable industrial organization, there would be greater incentives for external private funds to be invested in the occupied territories. Joint ventures could be encouraged, and specific projects that were complementary to the industrial structure in the territories could also be encouraged. Those projects should be evaluated according to their effectiveness within the economy and their profitability;

(g) The construction industry in the occupied Palestinian territories needed special attention in the context of development of the industrial sector. There was an urgent need for a feasibility study of the industry, possible introduction of prefabrication, the introduction of standardized techniques and appropriate designs to reduce the costs of construction and improve output.

38. In exploring ways and means to implement the proposed remedies that would substantially increase the contribution of the industrial sector to the GDP of the occupied territories, the working group made the following suggestions:

(a) With a view to mobilizing the capital needs for new enterprises and modernizing existing ones, the possibilities should be explored of creating credit institutions specializing in industrial activity. Hire-purchase and other appropriate forms of credit mechanisms should be established and designed for the specific needs of the Palestinian environment. Only when those mechanisms were efficiently organized could one expect outside funds to be forthcoming on a business, as opposed to a charitable, basis;

(b) Co-operative activity should be initiated in the industrial sector, not only by the establishment of industrial co-operatives but also of a viable system of co-operation among such individual co-operatives. That would permit local co-operatives to combine for purposes of plant maintenance, product standardization, information sharing, and so on. It could also be a channel for the efficient distribution and control of financial assistance. Moreover, it would be invaluable in the marketing process by establishing and enforcing standards and grades and by promoting "brand" names and varieties. It would also be a convenient means of organizing current outwork activity into more viable industries without establishing the factory system. The co-operative college suggested under the section on agriculture could provide needed support services to the industrial co-operatives;

(c) Technical institutes and universities in the occupied territories should be encouraged to develop technologies appropriate to conditions in the territories. They could seek help from similar institutes in other countries and from international organizations;

(d) The participants in the seminar considered that the efforts of the international community, through the organizations of the United Nations system, to establish projects and to give assistance within the occupied territories should be supported and strengthened, particularly in project identification and implementation based on the results of more general investigations already made and the appropriateness of such projects taking into account the output structure in neighbouring Arab countries and the feasibility of such projects being undertaken on a national or regional (joint venture) basis. The international community could also be of assistance in exploring the possibilities of energy conservation and the introduction of low-technology alternative energy production.

V. TRADE

39. For the consideration of trade in the occupied territories, the participants had before them the information in the background paper and a paper presented to the seminar entitled "Domestic and foreign trade in the occupied territories".

40. It was evident from the information in the background paper and in the various reports of the Secretary-General on living conditions of the Palestinian people in the occupied Palestinian territories submitted to the General Assembly, that the West Bank and the Gaza Strip had been progressively drawn into a close trading relationship with Israel since the occupation. From a position where there was absolutely no trade with Israel before 1967, the territories found themselves by 1982 exporting to Israel 66.7 per cent of their total exports and importing 89.0 per cent of their total imports, both in value terms. d/

41. Many factors contributed to the predominance of trade with Israel. Factors of major significance were the opening of the borders between the territories and Israel and the prohibition by the occupying authorities of direct exports from the occupied Palestinian territories to countries other than Jordan, in particular the neighbouring Arab countries and certain eastern European countries with which

Israel had no trade relations. Other contributing factors were the channelling of exportable products from the territories through Israeli trade outlets to those countries having trade relations with Israel, the orientation of production in the territories to agricultural crops having a demand in Israel for processing and export; the demand for building materials in Israel and the Israeli settlements that were being established in the territories; and the practice of finishing and returning to Israel manufactured goods subcontracted by Israeli firms to establishments in the occupied territories.

42. The other major trading partner of the occupied Palestinian territories was Jordan. The value of exports to Jordan had fallen from 43.2 per cent of total exports in 1968 to 31.7 per cent in 1982. Imports from Jordan had remained low, and during the period of the occupation they had fallen from 7.3 per cent of the total value of imports in 1968 to 1.2 per cent in 1982. Imports from Jordan were limited to the West Bank; the Gaza Strip imported nothing from Jordan.

43. Trade with other countries had been fluctuating during the period of the occupation. The value of exports had fallen from a high of approximately 13.0 per cent of total exports in 1968 to 1.6 per cent in 1982. Imports had fallen from approximately 16.0 per cent of the total value of imports in 1968 to 9.8 per cent in 1982. e/

44. The net result of those trading activities showed that for Israel, the occupied Palestinian territories had been consistently registering a negative balance of trade since the occupation. The balance of trade with Jordan had been positive all along, and trade with other countries had been registering a negative balance consistently. The overall trade balance for both the West Bank and the Gaza Strip had been negative throughout the period of the occupation. The consistent adverse balance of trade had been largely met through the earnings of Palestinians working in Israel and the considerable remittances from Palestinians working outside the territories. f/

Internal trade

45. The trade and transport sectors together contributed about 36 per cent to the GDP of the West Bank and about 25 per cent to the GDP of the Gaza Strip. The trading activities of the Gaza Strip were less than half the volume of the trading activities of the West Bank, whose total and per capita income were greater than those of the Gaza Strip. Trading activities fluctuated from year to year due to several causes, such as obstacles to issuing licences for the establishment of firms; the imposition of taxes; the imposition of curfews by the occupying authorities from time to time; the frequent confiscation of identity cards in the commercial markets by soldiers; strikes by inhabitants to protest the behaviour and activities of the occupying authorities and the occupation in general. The result of all those impediments was the reduction in the number of effective working days in the occupied territories. About one fourth of the working year was lost because of such practices.

Proposals for possible remedies and measures to implement them

46. The working group that considered the topic was of the view that:

(a) Currently Palestinian trade was facing unfair competition in the internal markets resulting from subsidized products coming from Israel and the Israeli settlements. If Palestinian products were to hold their own, let alone prosper, and be subject to market forces, support should be extended to the local producers and traders at the level that was being given to Israeli agricultural and industrial products;

(b) The market for Palestinian products abroad should be widened. This could be achieved if Palestinian producers and distributors were afforded opportunities to establish direct contact with counterpart producing and marketing organizations in other countries.

47. The following ways and means to implement the remedies were suggested:

(a) A marketing authority should be established for Palestinian products. The authority should develop standards and promote brand names on behalf of Palestinian producers. It could act as a link between markets and producers, as a source of credit for working capital and as an agency for marketing organizations and firms abroad willing to "purchase forward" the crops or products of Palestinian producers. The authority could also be used for the identification of market opportunities for new industrial products that might be developed in the occupied territories;

(b) Chambers of commerce and Palestinian organizations generally should be encouraged to launch a far more active campaign inside the occupied Palestinian territories to promote indigenous products;

(c) Export credit facilities should be developed, and that function could be a major activity of an indigenous banking and commercial system that might emerge in the occupied Palestinian territories;

(d) Communications should be improved, and facilities such as telex allowed to be established in the occupied Palestinian territories, without which no firm could hope to compete on world markets;

(e) The import-export trade should not be restricted to a few points under Israeli control but should include seaports, airports and other outlets, not only to improve facilities for rapid export of high-priced perishable products but also to permit the participation of Palestinians in the process of trading and increasing their share of the value added to the Palestinian output;

(f) Negotiations should be conducted, perhaps through the Arab League, to persuade Arab countries to liberalize their importation of Palestinian products under fair market conditions;

(g) The international community should continue by every means possible to prevail on the Israeli authorities to desist from activities that restricted or interfered with the trade of the occupied territories, both internally and externally.

VI. THE MONETARY SITUATION

48. The participants considered the monetary situation based on the information in the background paper and the paper entitled "Monetary situation: constraints and proposals for possible remedies".

49. The participants noted that the Israeli shekel and the Jordanian dinar were both legal currencies in circulation in the West Bank, whereas in the Gaza Strip the only legal currency in circulation was the shekel. The shekel was regarded by the Palestinian population as being exclusively a means of payment, while the Jordanian dinar was used as a unit of account, as well as a store of value and often as a medium of exchange.

50. Owing to the continuing deterioration of its value, the shekel functioned solely as a means of payment. It was even argued that the shekel did not fully perform that role, as cheques in Israeli currency were not used in transactions between Palestinian residents of the West Bank, but only by enterprises that had commercial relations with Israel. This explained the fact that approximately 90 per cent of the means of payment consisted of currency in circulation.

51. The absence of a proper banking system, political instability and Israeli policy in the West Bank had led to the accumulation by the population of reserves in Jordanian dinars and to increased hoarding. As a result of the state of Israeli currency and the weakness of the banking system, a considerable part of savings had taken the form of hoarding of Jordanian dinars, foreign currencies, gold and jewellery.

52. The Israeli banks that replaced the banks operating in the West Bank before 1967 had played only a secondary role in the monetary and financial market. Foreign banks had refused to resume their activities in the West Bank. The Government provided Israeli banks operating in the occupied Palestinian territories with guarantees for loans made to Arab individuals amounting to 90 per cent of the loan. However, the propensity on the part of Palestinians to obtain loans from the Israeli banks had been minimal.

53. The absence of an adequate banking system and the inability of the informal money market to channel savings and use them in the development of the West Bank had had disastrous effects on the financing of the economy. Thus, the West Bank economy suffered from a substantial lack of the credits that were indispensable for the survival of industrial and agricultural enterprises and for the creation of new economic projects. A very considerable part of savings left the West Bank to be invested in land and real estate in Jordan.

54. The increased deterioration of the Israeli currency and hyperinflation in Israel had affected the economic situation in the West Bank. Also to be taken into account was Israeli policy in the occupied Palestinian territories, which, owing to the many restrictions imposed, discouraged investment. Investments in the occupied territories had been made mainly in the non-productive sectors of the economy, in particular in the infrastructure and the construction sector, which absorbed the greater part of total investments.

55. Depending almost exclusively on self-financing, the West Bank economy thus suffered from a shortage of capital. Nor was that part of savings that was deposited in the banks of Jordan redistributed in the form of credits to the West Bank economy. A further factor was the restrictions imposed by the Israelis on those credits, as well as on capital and on the aid provided by the Jordanian-Palestinian Co-ordination Committee.

Proposals for possible remedies and measures to implement them

56. The working group that considered possible remedies to the monetary situation felt that an effective banking system having the confidence of the population of the occupied Palestinian territories was indispensable for creating a climate of sustained economic growth. The banking system should have a measure of autonomy if it was to function effectively as a conduit for mobilizing savings, granting loans, guaranteeing investments and undertaking other financial activities. Such a system should be supplemented by specialized institutions that could provide the resources and technical guidance needed for financing agricultural and industrial undertakings, as well as commercial and trading activities. In fact, a comprehensive and integrated financial structure would have to be devised, if the stagnant economic conditions currently prevailing in the occupied Palestinian territories were to be overcome.

57. To give effect to the above remedies it was important to undertake negotiations, perhaps through the intermediary of appropriate international organizations and agencies, to persuade the occupying authorities to relax the rigid controls that had been imposed on financial activities in the occupied Palestinian territories, including the liberalization of the inflow of resources from outside the territories.

58. In the meantime, relevant feasibility studies should be undertaken by local institutions, including the universities, to determine the kind of financial institutions that might be appropriate to the conditions prevailing in the occupied Palestinian territories, the structure and functions of such institutions and possible methods of capitalizing on them.

VII. TAXES AND DUTIES

59. For the consideration of taxes and duties, the participants had before them the paper entitled "The effect of taxes imposed on the population of the occupied Palestinian territories". According to the information and data presented in that paper, prior to the occupation in 1967, there had been two types of taxes in force in the West Bank. The first was the income tax; the second comprised other taxes, such as the education tax, the land tax, customs duties and revenue stamps. Since the occupation, significant changes had been made in those taxes; in addition, a new tax, the value-added tax (VAT) of 8 per cent, had been introduced in August 1976, which had currently climbed to 15 per cent.

60. Changes in the existing taxes, which were effected through military orders, included increases in tax rates and changes in tax collection procedures. The appeal procedures had also been changed by replacing the special tax court established under Jordanian law by a military committee.

61. Those changes, particularly in the tax rates and the collection procedures, supposedly introduced to conform to policies and practices prevailing in Israel, had had a profound effect on the personal incomes of the Palestinians and on trends in economic development in the territories, which were at a different stage of development from that of Israel. The tax burden of the Palestinians in the occupied territories had been estimated at 33 per cent of their incomes. It should also be noted that inflation, which had reached unprecedented rates in recent years, constituted a hidden tax, in the absence of adjustments to income brackets on which income tax was calculated. The tax burden on the Palestinian people and its impact on living conditions was bound to worsen in the future because of the erosion of purchasing power through inflation, a lag in the adjustment of wages and earnings comparable to the system in Israel and the differences in the services and benefits provided by the occupying authorities.

Proposals for possible remedies and measures to implement them

62. The working group that considered possible remedies to the problem of taxes and duties expressed the view that:

(a) Changes in the tax structure and in the rates imposed after the occupation should be examined to determine whether they were in conformity with the provisions of international law as they applied to the occupied Palestinian territories, and whether they were equitable vis-à-vis taxes imposed on Israeli citizens, not only in terms of rates but also in terms of their impact on living conditions;

(b) Under the cardinal principle of "no taxation without representation", a system should be established to ensure that the proceeds of the taxes imposed on the Palestinians would be used solely for the benefit of the people in the occupied Palestinian territories and disbursed, as far as possible, through their own representative bodies;

(c) The tax appeal court that existed prior to the occupation should be reinstated in place of the present military committee to ensure equity and justice

to those Palestinians appealing the decisions of the tax enforcers, whose impartiality was often open to question.

63. In considering ways and means of implementing the remedies proposed, the working group made the following observations:

(a) There was little likelihood that the proposed remedies could be implemented without international intervention to persuade the occupying authorities to recognize that a system of taxation applicable to a more advanced economy and society could be inequitable in the context of the economic and social conditions prevailing in the occupied Palestinian territories;

(b) There was an urgent need to assess (i) the levels and incidence of taxes currently imposed on the Palestinian people; (ii) the ways in which taxes collected from the Palestinian people were disbursed; and (iii) the levels of taxes diverted to purposes not in accordance with international law;

(c) Concerned individuals and institutions in the occupied Palestinian territories might want to undertake studies to clarify the above issues, monitor changes in the tax structure and tax enforcement procedures and publicize their findings both within the occupied territories and outside.

VIII. HOUSING

64. Discussions by the participants on the situation of housing in the occupied Palestinian territories were based on the information in the background paper and two papers entitled "Policy recommendations to alleviate the housing problem in the occupied Palestinian territories" and "The contribution of the housing sector to the economy of the occupied territories".

65. The participants noted that the poor state of housing in the occupied territories was a consequence of many years of neglect and an absence of planning. The situation had been aggravated by the occupation. The following two indicators were recognized as useful in measuring the extent of the housing shortage in the occupied Palestinian territories:

(a) Density per room;

(b) Availability of domestic facilities in the existing units. About 40 per cent of the families lived in houses with a density that exceeded three persons per room. By international standards that was considered to be unacceptably high. The size of the Palestinian household was increasing over time owing to the need to accommodate newly formed families. As regards domestic facilities, over 50 per cent of the housing units in the West Bank did not have running water, and close to 50 per cent had no bathroom. Also, the supply of electricity in the West Bank was inadequate, about half of the units having no electricity. Furthermore, one quarter of the units had no kitchen (A/39/233, annex, table 4).

66. The supply of houses in the occupied territories was less than the rate of family formation and the need for replacement of dilapidated units. Figures extracted from the Statistical Abstract of Israel, 1983 showed that over a 15-year period of occupation (from 1967 to 1982) 45,310 residential units were constructed, against a net increase of 38,589 households. In other words, during that period roughly 6,700 additional units were constructed against an estimated stock of 140,000 substandard or dilapidated units. The Statistical Abstract of Israel, 1983 also showed that there had been no residential construction by the public sector in the West Bank since 1968 and in the Gaza Strip since 1978.

67. It was further noted that there was a marked discrepancy in the housing conditions of Israeli settlers and those of the indigenous Palestinian population, the Israeli settlers' housing being far superior to that of the Palestinians. In addition to establishing settlements in unpopulated areas, Israeli settlements were being created within the densely populated areas of Palestinian towns. That new phenomenon, besides bringing the unequal housing conditions of the Palestinians and the Israeli settlers into closer proximity, burdened the already densely populated urban areas and diminished the area available for urban development to alleviate the housing shortage of the indigenous population.

Proposals for possible remedies and measures to implement them

68. The working group that considered the housing problem proposed the following remedies:

(a) The demolition and sealing-off of houses should cease;

(b) The authority of Palestinian village councils and district planning commissions should be restored and the authority for issuing building permits and other regulatory responsibilities should be vested in them;

(c) Effective institutions should be established at local, regional and national levels to resolve the housing problem and implement housing policies and plans;

(d) Institutional arrangements should be made to establish a housing bank to finance housing projects on acceptable terms, taking into account the low level of per capita income in the occupied territories and the rate of inflation;

(e) A data base should be established to determine housing needs in both cities and villages in the occupied Palestinian territories. (Such data, based on a sample survey of more than 150,000 households, is available at Birzeit University.)

69. To implement those remedies, the working group proposed the following:

(a) Measures should be adopted for the equitable and effective distribution of housing to the target population. The allocation of housing units should be based on the following factors:

- (i) How recently the recipient family was formed;
- (ii) The degree of overcrowding in the unit occupied by the family;
- (iii) Household income;
- (iv) The availability of basic facilities in the family dwelling, namely, sewerage, water and electricity;
- (v) Whether the family owns or rents its dwelling;

(b) A housing council should be established with an adequate number of field offices in the occupied territories to examine the applications of the potential recipients, to supervise the actual execution of housing projects and to authorize the release of the funds needed to facilitate construction activities;

(c) Funds to finance public housing should be allocated by the occupying authorities, local authorities, and regional and international funding institutions. The feasibility of establishing a housing bank that could act as a repository for such funds should be explored.

IX. HIGHER EDUCATION

70. The participants in the seminar examined the question of higher education in the occupied Palestinian territories on the basis of a paper entitled "Palestinian higher education: problems and suggested remedies". The establishment of a Palestinian system of higher education which included six universities serving more than 10,000 students, was considered a singular achievement in a society under occupation. It was all the more remarkable in that it was an indigenous effort that had received no encouragement from the occupying authorities. Palestinian universities not only offered educational opportunities but also enriched the cultural life of the society. They helped other institutions by supplying them with the personnel they needed but could no longer get from outside as a result of the severe limitations on the recruitment of personnel imposed by the occupying authorities.

71. However, owing to the conditions of military occupation and the practices of the occupying power, the further development of the Palestinian system of higher education was severely hindered. Furthermore, its ability to function and to implement projected plans for the enlargement and diversification of programmes compatible with the future socio-economic needs of the Palestinians was seriously impaired. The future of the system was threatened. Palestinian higher education was suffering from three serious problems as a result of Israeli practices:

(a) Constraints on the autonomy and freedom of academic institutions. In addition to the various types of controls and constraints imposed since the beginning of the occupation, some of which affected Palestinian society as a whole (such as curfews, road-blocks, censorship and restriction of movement), the Israeli authorities had imposed further restrictions designed to bring higher education

under the immediate and direct control of the occupying authorities. Military Order 854, promulgated in the summer of 1980, gave an officer in the military Government supervisory jurisdiction over higher education, required academic institutions to obtain annual licences and to obtain permission for new programmes, for the employment of faculty and administrative personnel and even for the admission of students;

(b) The absence of an effective local Palestinian authority to plan, co-ordinate, and support higher education. The Council for Higher Education, a private Palestinian organization established in 1977 to perform such functions, was not recognized by the occupying authorities, and its work was impeded primarily by restrictions on the movements of its members;

(c) The scarcity of resources due to the conditions of underdevelopment prevailing in the area, as well as the continuing appropriation of Palestinian resources by the Israeli occupation authorities. The scarcity of resources was compounded by restrictions imposed by the occupying authorities on the entry of funds and the withdrawal of the tax-exempt status enjoyed by educational institutions prior to the occupation.

Proposals for possible remedies and measures to implement them

72. The following remedies were proposed by the working group:

(a) All measures of collective punishment imposed on academic institutions, such as the closure of universities, military checkpoints that impeded access by students, faculty and employees, and curfews on college campuses, should cease;

(b) All measures curtailing the autonomy and restricting the normal academic functions and freedoms of universities should end. That would mean rescinding Military Order 854, the cessation of book-banning and censorship, and the restoration of institutional freedom concerning instructional programmes, faculty recruitment and student admission;

(c) Restrictions imposed by the Israeli authorities on the work of the Council for Higher Education, especially restrictions against the freedom of the members of its Executive Committee and General Assembly to travel and to meet, should be removed;

(d) The Council for Higher Education should be recognized by the appropriate international and national agencies as the local Palestinian authority in the field of higher education and as the appropriate liaison with Palestinian academic institutions;

(e) Israeli restrictions on the entry of funds and other types of contributions to Palestinian higher education should be lifted;

(f) Universities and other national bodies abroad concerned with higher education should be encouraged to establish links with comparable Palestinian

institutions and to explore with them possible co-operation and joint projects, such as research and student exchange;

(g) Appropriate international, regional and national agencies interested in higher education should be encouraged to co-ordinate with Palestinian institutions of higher education to establish needed community-wide training and continuing education programmes, such as literacy campaigns, public health education and in-service teacher training, as well as extension work in agriculture, industry and the like.

73. It was the opinion of the working group that international assistance was of the utmost importance for further progress in higher education in the occupied Palestinian territories. Structures already existed for channelling such assistance. At the local level, there was the Association of Arab Universities (of which Palestinian universities were members) and the Arab League's Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization (ALESCO). The national universities in the Arab world could also provide appropriate institutional linkages for collaboration and assistance to Palestinian universities.

74. Concerned international organizations could be helpful in monitoring Israeli practices and alerting Member States and the public to violations of academic freedom and independence.

75. Various organizations and bodies of the United Nations system, such as the United Nations Development Programme (UNDP), the United Nations Relief and Works Agency for Palestine Refugees in the Near East (UNRWA), the United Nations University, the International Labour Organisation (ILO), the Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations (FAO), United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization (UNESCO) and the World Health Organization (WHO), could provide co-operation and assistance at the functional level. They were particularly suited to involvement in and the funding of joint research, planning and programme development. Non-governmental organizations could also be useful conduits for international assistance to Palestinian higher education.

X. SOCIAL WELFARE

76. To facilitate their discussion of this topic, the participants had before them a paper entitled "Social welfare services in the West Bank and Gaza: appraisal, constraints and proposals for possible remedies". It was noted that until recently, a coherent social welfare programme for the occupied Palestinian territories had been largely overlooked by those concerned with the welfare of Palestinian society. The causes of the poverty and deprivation in the territories included the separation of the family, health hazards and a low level or lack of household income. The basic relief functions to the deprived sectors of the population had been provided in the form of cash subsidies, food rations, medical facilities, community development projects and other kinds of rehabilitation services.

77. In the occupied Palestinian territories, social welfare services were provided by three types of institutions: (a) Israeli-administered public institutions; (b) foreign organizations; and (c) local Palestinian agencies. The welfare services controlled by the military administration provided services to a selected number of destitute people. Foreign organizations comprised United Nations bodies and organizations and non-governmental voluntary agencies. UNRWA provided welfare services to registered refugees. Those services ranged from services to meet basic needs to rehabilitation programmes. The local voluntary activities in such areas as health, education, relief, literacy, and activities for women and youth.

78. As the most important aspect of social welfare services in the occupied Palestinian territories, the health programmes were selected for examination. The Israeli statistics indicated that the infant mortality rate between 1975 and 1980 for the West Bank ranged from 26 to 36 per thousand, and in the Gaza Strip it varied from 43.0 to 69.3 per thousand. Non-governmental health agencies have estimated that the rates for the West Bank fall between 71 and 84 deaths per thousand live births in 1980. That evidence, together with such information as the number of hospitals and available beds and the number of patients treated, indicated that the health-care system in the territories remained extremely underdeveloped.

79. The major factors responsible for high mortality were malnutrition and infection (respiratory and gastro-intestinal). In addition, the unsuitable living conditions among the deprived sectors of the population contributed to the increased number of cases of anxiety-related diseases, mental illness and stress-related sickness. In the Gaza Strip, especially, many types of diseases were endemic. In general, the lack of facilities, such as running water, toilets and sewerage systems, was identified as a major cause of disease, especially in rural areas and among the poor.

Proposals for possible remedies and measures to implement them

80. The working group on social welfare proposed various remedies in the areas of welfare administration, health sector development, public health, nutrition and assistance to voluntary indigenous activities.

Welfare administration

81. It was noted that social welfare programmes covered most aspects of the lives of those who lived below the poverty line. A comprehensive and continuous study to determine what constitutes poverty in the context of the conditions prevailing in the occupied Palestinian territories was therefore essential for the formulation of a sound welfare system. A quantitative and qualitative analysis of the issue could serve a number of purposes, including the generation of effective policy guidelines, the development of interrelated services, the delivery of such services to the most disadvantaged groups and appropriate rehabilitation programmes.

82. One of the major drawbacks of the existing complex of voluntary agencies was that, in spite of their individually valuable activities, the services they

provided were not planned and co-ordinated under a unified and consistent approach that was appropriate to the needs of deprived people. It was important that the efforts of such agencies to provide health and other social welfare services to the people should be guided under a comprehensive and co-ordinated plan.

83. The available evidence suggested that special attention should be paid to women of childbearing age. UNRWA provided a medical registration procedure for pregnant women, which had become a life-saving instrument for mothers and infants registered under it. Such a system should be made available to all disadvantaged women throughout the occupied territories.

Health sector development

84. A sound welfare programme needs a health sector development plan both to establish priorities in the provision of health services and to create a balanced distribution of health resources consistent with an overall national development plan. It must be noted that a large number of health professionals are trained in institutions that emphasize curative instead of preventive medicine. That emphasis obviously is reflected in the health-care system of the occupied Palestinian territories.

85. An appropriate distribution of health resources, such as hospitals, clinics, and medical personnel, would help to improve the health conditions of the poor. Mobile clinics, the strengthening of Palestinian health agencies, and community health centres should be encouraged. One of the major goals of planning for health should be aimed at the improvement of the living conditions of people below the threshold of poverty. That could be achieved by increasing the accessibility of health services, especially of the preventive type, and through health and nutrition education for the needy in all parts of the territories, particularly the rural areas.

86. A special effort should be made and the needed resources mobilized to engage the large number of doctors and other qualified medical personnel who, for want of suitable opportunities, were currently either unemployed, were working in non-health-related fields or had migrated.

Public health

87. Special attention should be directed towards improving the level of health by a variety of means, such as providing supplementary incomes or diets to the deprived families and conducting health education and hygiene campaigns. Matters of concern included optimum use of living space, garbage and sewage disposal, general sanitary conditions and the provision of health clinics and ambulance services to all urban and rural areas. The supply of clean water and the provision of other facilities that promote hygienic conditions among the poor should be made available. Public health infrastructure and sanitation facilities were extremely inadequate as a result of the occupation and the drastic cuts in local budgets for the health services. Allocations in the regional budgets for the development of those services and facilities should be increased in those areas where poverty and poor living conditions were widespread.

Nutrition

88. Measures should be adopted to educate the public, particularly the poor, about proper nutrition, since a lack of proper diet and nutrition was a major problem of people living in poverty. It would also be necessary to conduct public campaigns on the harmful effects associated with specific patterns of food consumption.

Assistance to voluntary indigenous activities

89. Some Palestinian medical agencies had mobilized local professional people in the medical area to supply essential health and medical facilities to the very poor at the grass-roots level on a self-help basis. Those agencies should be encouraged through financial assistance and the provision of medical facilities and equipment, to extend their work to the less accessible regions of the territories. In addition to providing health services, Palestinian welfare societies performed a variety of welfare functions, such as primary education, training of women, child care and nursing. All of those activities were indispensable for the welfare of the people in low-income brackets. Those welfare societies should be given the required aid to encourage and assist them in every possible way. That would enable them to expand their activities in all directions, including the health improvement activities for the disadvantaged population.

90. It was noted that the proposed remedies related to the social welfare programme could not be carried out in the absence of a national agency in the West Bank and the Gaza Strip. International agencies such as WHO, UNRWA, the United Nations Centre for Human Settlements (Habitat) and others must be included in the implementation of those remedies. With the aid of bodies and organizations of the United Nations system and Arab financial and social development institutions, it would be possible to establish a welfare centre outside the occupied Palestinian territories to monitor and maintain the welfare activities in the occupied territories. More foreign investments should be channelled through international bodies active in the area of welfare services to provide new facilities and upgrade existing ones. The non-governmental voluntary agencies, both foreign and national, should be encouraged to collaborate through a national council of voluntary agencies to identify priority areas of assistance to the less privileged groups in the occupied territories and should co-ordinate their services for maximum effectiveness.

Notes

a/ For details of population increases and levels of emigration, see the reports of the Secretary-General on living conditions of the Palestinian people in the occupied Palestinian territories (A/37/238, annex, table 5 and A/38/278, annex, appendix II).

b/ Statistical Abstract of Israel, 1983.

c/ Calculated from the figures in the report of the Secretary-General on living conditions of the Palestinian people in the occupied Palestinian territories (A/39/233, annex, table 13).

Notes (continued)

d/ Computed from the figures in the report of the Secretary-General on living conditions of the Palestinian people in the occupied Palestinian territories (A/39/233, annex, tables 7 and 8).

e/ The ratios and percentages have been computed from the figures in the report of the Secretary-General on living conditions of the Palestinian people in the occupied Palestinian territories (A/39/233, annex, tables 7 and 8).

f/ Ibid.

APPENDIX I

List of participants

Experts

Bakir Abu-Kishk

Hisham Awartani

Edward Balassanian

Mirtha Carrera Halim

Muhammad Ballaj

Abdel-Razek Hassan

Bisham Jabr

Omar Kazi

D. Madawela

Antoine Mansour

Padle M. Naqib

Nidal R. Sabri

Delegation of the Palestine Liberation Organization

Jamal Sourani, Head of Delegation

Daoud Barakat, Deputy Head of Delegation, Permanent Observer for the Palestine Liberation Organization, Vienna

M. Abu-Koash

Mohieddin Massud

United Nations

P. G. Sadler, UNCTAD

Tariq Al Khudeyri, UNIDO

Issan El-Zair, UNIDO

N. Ayyash, WHO

H. Hiddlestone, WHO

A. J. S. Jabra, WHO

Secretariat

D. Johal, Habitat

J. Mugai, Habitat

APPENDIX II

List of papers presented to the seminar

- "The current economic situation in the West Bank and the Gaza Strip and prospects for the future" (F. M. Naqib)
- "The position of Palestinian industry in the occupied regions since 1967, the West Bank and Gaza Strip" (Abdel Razek Hassan)
- "Present situation and sustainment of Palestinian industry in occupied territories" (I. El-Zaim)
- "Domestic and foreign trade in the occupied territories" (B. Jabr)
- "Monetary situation: constraints and proposals for possible remedies" (A. Mansour)
- "The effect of taxes imposed on the population of the occupied Palestinian territories" (N. Sabri)
- "Development prospects of agriculture in the West Bank and Gaza Strip" (H. Awartani)
- "Policy recommendations to alleviate the housing problem in the occupied Palestinian territories" (E. Balassanian)
- "The contribution of the housing sector to the economy of the occupied territories" (B. Abu-Kishk)
- "Palestinian higher education: problems and suggested remedies" (M. Ballaj)
- "Vocational training and employment: constraints and proposals for possible remedies" (M. Carrera Halim)
- "Social welfare services in the West Bank and Gaza: appraisal, constraints and proposals for possible remedies" (O. Kazi)
- "Living conditions of the Palestinian people in the occupied Palestinian territories: a background paper" (D. Madawela)
-



General Assembly
Economic and Social Council

Distr.
GENERAL

A/42/183
E/1987/53
13 April 1987

ORIGINAL: ENGLISH

GENERAL ASSEMBLY
Forty-second session
Item 12 of the preliminary list*
REPORT OF THE ECONOMIC AND
SOCIAL COUNCIL

ECONOMIC AND SOCIAL COUNCIL
Second regular session of 1987
Item 11 of the provisional
agenda**
INTERNATIONAL CO-OPERATION
IN THE FIELD OF HUMAN
SETTLEMENTS

Living conditions of the Palestinian people in the occupied
Palestinian territories

Report of the Secretary-General

1. The General Assembly at its fortieth session, after considering the report of the Secretary-General on the living conditions of the Palestinian people in the occupied Palestinian territories (A/40/373-E/1985/99), adopted resolution 40/201, in paragraph 6 of which it requested the Secretary-General: (a) to organize by April 1987, a seminar on priority development projects needed for improving the living conditions of the Palestinian people in the occupied Palestinian territories, including a comprehensive general housing programme, as recommended in resolution 8/3 of the Commission on Human Settlements; (b) to make necessary preparations for the seminar, providing for the participation of the Palestine Liberation Organization; (c) to invite experts to present papers to the seminar; (d) to invite also relevant intergovernmental and non-governmental organizations; (e) to report to the Assembly at its forty-first session, through the Economic and Social Council, on the preparations for the seminar; (f) to report to the Assembly at its forty-second session, through the Economic and Social Council, on the seminar.

* A/42/50.

** See Economic and Social Council decision 1987/108.

A/42/183
E/1987/53
English
Page 2

2. The Secretary-General accordingly submitted a progress report on preparations for the seminar (A/41/415-E/1986/104) to the General Assembly at its forty-first session, through the Economic and Social Council. The General Assembly took note of the report in decision 41/453.

3. The Seminar was held at the Vienna International Centre from 2 to 6 March 1987. The report on the Seminar is contained in the annex to the present report.

ANNEX

Report of the Seminar on the Living Conditions of the Palestinian
People in the Occupied Palestinian Territories

(Vienna, 2-6 March 1987)

CONTENTS

	<u>Paragraphs</u>	<u>Page</u>
I. INTRODUCTION	1 - 3	5
II. GENERAL FRAMEWORK	4 - 5	5
III. SUMMARIES OF PROJECT PROPOSALS	6	6
A. Establishment of an Arab cement company in the West Bank		7
B. Development of a seaport in Gaza		8
C. Establishment of a co-operative factory to process selected local fruits and vegetables		9
D. Establishment of a marketing agency for Palestinian agricultural products		11
E. Establishment of a training and production centre for arts and crafts		12
F. Production and training centre for textiles and ready-made garments		14
G. Ceramics factory in Hebron		15
H. Sardine canning factory in Gaza		16
I. Development of sheep stock and training of farmers		17
J. Establishment of a poultry hatchery		19
K. Propagation and use of jojoba		20
L. Satisfaction of housing needs		22
M. Satisfaction of the energy needs of rural communities		23

CONTENTS (continued)

	<u>Page</u>
N. Organization and provision of an inexpensive transport network as a co-operative venture	25
O. Improvement of the road network	26
P. Water utilization	27
<u>Appendix.</u> List of participants	29

I. INTRODUCTION

1. The Seminar on the Living Conditions of the Palestinian People in the Occupied Palestinian Territories was held at the Vienna International Centre from 2 to 6 March 1987, pursuant to General Assembly resolution 40/201.
2. The Seminar was attended by 10 experts who prepared project proposals for the Seminar; the representatives of two United Nations Secretariat units, the United Nations Conference on Trade and Development and the Centre for Social Development and Humanitarian Affairs of the Department of International Economic and Social Affairs; and the representatives of one specialized agency, the World Health Organization. Representatives of the Palestine Liberation Organization also participated, in accordance with General Assembly resolution 40/201. The League of Arab States was also represented. A list of participants is given in the appendix.
3. The Seminar established three working groups, which examined project proposals related to:
 - (a) Agriculture and industry;
 - (b) Training, manpower development and employment;
 - (c) Housing and infrastructure.

Summaries of the project proposals, as agreed upon by the working groups, were considered at the final plenary meeting and are presented in section III below.

II. GENERAL FRAMEWORK

4. To facilitate the work of the Seminar, the participants agreed to consider the project proposals in a general framework for project identification and assessment. The following general framework was agreed upon:
 - (a) As there is at present no integrated plan for development in the occupied Palestinian territories, it is necessary to select individual projects that can eventually be implemented;
 - (b) Project identification and selection should focus on:
 - (i) Agriculture, industry and utilization of land and other resources;
 - (ii) Housing, to establish the people on the land and protect that which is not yet confiscated;
 - (iii) Development of manpower and improvement of technological skills as central prerequisites for development, providing job opportunities and expanding the number of beneficiaries of the development process;

(iv) Institution-building to inculcate the values of co-operation, group action and solidarity;

(c) Scarce financial resources should be used optimally; hence, duplication of projects should be avoided, bearing in mind the programmes and activities of the organizations of the United Nations system, governmental, non-governmental and other bilateral and multilateral sources of assistance to the Palestinian people in the occupied Palestinian territories;

(d) The constraints imposed by the Israeli occupation and the need to be inventive and selective in the choice of projects should be borne in mind.

5. The participants agreed to give high priority to projects directed towards the following objectives:

(a) Increased productivity and the expansion, diversification and improvement of production in agriculture and industry;

(b) The use of surplus perishable agricultural produce, particularly through the establishment of agro-industries in which there is complementarity between the two sectors;

(c) The promotion of housing and related activities through a programme to make greater use of physical and financial resources;

(d) Increased import substitution and export potential;

(e) An improvement in the geographical distribution of projects, taking into account resource endowment.

The central theme underlying all these objectives was labour absorption and the entrenchment of the Palestinian people in their homes and on their land.

III. SUMMARIES OF PROJECT PROPOSALS*

6. The participants presented a number of project proposals to the Seminar, which are summarized below.

* It was agreed that the participants would revise their project proposals taking into account the comments made during the discussion at the Seminar, and forward their revised proposals to the United Nations Centre for Human Settlements (Habitat).

A. Establishment of an Arab cement company in the West Bank

1. Development objective: To promote the growth of industry, particularly in the construction sector, including housing and related infrastructure, in the occupied Palestinian territories.
2. Immediate objective: To establish an Arab cement company in the West Bank.
3. Background and justification: At present, almost all cement requirements of the occupied Palestinian territories are supplied by Israel under a quota system which meets less than 50 per cent of the demand for cement. The remaining demand is usually met from private Israeli wholesalers at very high prices. Owing to the Israeli monopoly of the cement market, there are periodical shortages of cement in the occupied Palestinian territories. As cement is an essential commodity for development programmes, especially housing and infrastructure construction, the production of cement locally will help: (a) to make the occupied territories self-sufficient in cement; (b) to mobilize the idle human and natural resources in the occupied territories; (c) to create direct employment opportunities for about 1,000 workers, as well as significant indirect employment opportunities in the construction sector and ancillary industries. Studies indicated that the raw materials needed for cement production are available and that it is possible to establish a cement factory in the vicinity of Hebron.
4. Outputs:
 - (a) Feasibility study report;
 - (b) Construction of a cement factory;
 - (c) Production of 1,500 tons of cement per day.
5. Activities:
 - (a) Raw materials investigations;
 - (b) Feasibility study based on the above investigations;
 - (c) Constitution of the company;
 - (d) Construction of the cement factory;
 - (e) Recruitment of manpower for operation and management.
6. Inputs:
 - (a) Consultants and experts to conduct a feasibility study;

(b) Utilization of the raw materials available in the occupied Palestinian territories;

(c) Mobilization of manpower available in the occupied territories;

(d) Provision of electricity and water to the site;

(e) Expertise from abroad to erect and commission the factory;

(f) Purchase and installation of equipment and machinery.

7. Prerequisites: It will be necessary to obtain permits from the occupying authorities for different activities such as drilling, building, using land, drilling of water wells, constructing a power station and importing equipment and machines as well as eventual mining.

8. Estimated costs:

Pre-investment activities	\$US 1 000 000
Investments	48 100 000
Working capital	<u>2 000 000</u>
TOTAL	\$US 51 100 000

9. Possible sources of funding:

(a) Founder shareholders;

(b) Other shareholders;

(c) Long-/medium-term loans from suppliers of equipment and machines;

(d) Development banks and other financial sources.

10. Available documentation: Said J. Haifa, "Establishment of an Arab cement company in the West Bank", paper prepared for the Seminar, Vienna, 1987.

B. Development of a seaport in Gaza

1. Development objective: To develop the infrastructure in Gaza to improve the economic and social conditions of the Palestinian people in the occupied Palestinian territories.

2. Immediate objective: To develop a seaport in Gaza which will provide the Palestinian people with an outlet to the sea.

3. Background and justification: In view of the isolation of Gaza under occupation, there is an urgent need to find an outlet for its products and

access to outside markets. A seaport can provide such an outlet, thus improving the quality of life and relieving some of the pressures that exist in the Gaza Strip.

4. Outputs:

- (a) Feasibility study report;
- (b) Technical report on design and construction of a commercial seaport;
- (c) Commercial seaport.

5. Activities:

- (a) Geological, oceanographic, climatological and economic surveys;
- (b) Modeling, that is, making a model of the seaport;
- (c) Preparation of the full feasibility report.

6. Inputs and estimated costs:

Data collection and survey	\$US 150 000
Modeling	120 000
Port design by various specialized engineers	450 000
Transportation	20 000
Economic evaluation and financial analysis	215 000
Administration	32 000
Construction of the seaport	(to be determined)
TOTAL	\$US 987 000

7. Institutional framework: To be managed by an independent port authority.

8. Available documentation: Said A. Assaf, "Development of a seaport in Gaza", paper prepared for the Seminar, Vienna, 1987.

C. Establishment of a co-operative factory to process selected local fruits and vegetables

1. Development objectives:

(a) To broaden the industrial sector and increase the contribution ratio of the industrial sector to the GDP, which is now not more than 5 per cent;

/...

(b) To help revive the agricultural sector by creating price stability for farm products as well as increasing the value of such products;

(c) To reduce foreign trade balance deficits for the occupied territories.

2. Immediate objective: To process a substantial part of the surplus of vegetables and fruits. The proposed processing capacity is 50,000 tons of farm products annually. In addition, the factory will manufacture by-products and residues.

3. Background and justification: At present there is on average a surplus of 292,000 tons of fruits, vegetables and olives per year in the West Bank and Gaza Strip. None of the existing agricultural co-operatives and local business firms have succeeded in establishing permanent markets for farm products in the Arab, European or other countries, although pre-feasibility studies have shown the potential for such markets. This co-operative factory will have the advantage of being operational in all seasons, and of hiring workers on a permanent basis, since it will process a variety of farm products in different seasons, including citrus, tomatoes, figs, cucumber, olives, eggplants, peaches, peas and beans. Several alternative processing methods will be available, which may be adopted according to the marketing needs or existing farm product surplus. These include extracting, canning, pickling, drying, freezing of fruits and vegetables, cooking of fruits, jams, jellies, butter and marmalades. The project will be completed in two years and will provide direct employment for 150 persons.

4. Outputs:

(a) Feasibility study report;

(b) An output of 17,500 tons of final food and juice products yearly, in various flavours, types, packages, weights and designs;

(c) Other by-products which may be processed further or sold in raw form.

5. Activities:

(a) Conducting detailed marketing research to identify brands, trademarks, ingredients, components and packaging;

(b) Conducting an economic feasibility study to test the profitability of the suggested process alternatives;

(c) Depending on the findings of the feasibility study, the following steps will be initiated: establishing the co-operative firm; designing and constructing the factory; recruiting manpower; testing of production process.

6. Inputs and estimated costs:

Land	\$US	150 000
Construction		500 000
Equipment		2 100 000
Establishment expenses (including the feasibility study)		50 000
Working capital		<u>200 000</u>
TOTAL	\$US	3 000 000

7. Institutional framework: An institution based on a co-operative firm, owned by at least 800 farmers, will be established.

8. Available documentation: Nidal R. Sabri, "Establishment of a co-operative factory to process selected local fruits and vegetables in the West Bank", paper prepared for the Seminar, Vienna, 1987.

D. Establishment of a marketing agency for Palestinian agricultural products

1. Development objective: To promote the economic independence of the Palestinian people by facilitating the marketing of Palestinian agricultural products at the local and international levels.

2. Immediate objective: The establishment of a marketing agency for agricultural products, which would assist in solving marketing problems, identifying marketing opportunities and improving marketing organization and methods.

3. Background information and justification: The occupied Palestinian territories face numerous problems and constraints in marketing their surplus of agricultural products. Discriminatory regulations govern trade with Israel. Local markets in the occupied territories are unconditionally open to Israeli produce while export of farm products from these territories to Israeli markets are permitted only on a strictly selective basis. In addition, Palestinian exports to the Arab and other markets face various administrative and procedural obstacles including lack of direct access. The constraints to marketing of Palestinian products are aggravated by the absence of any group or institution to deal with the whole marketing process and the absence of an effective market research and information system. The proposed marketing agency is intended to fill these gaps.

4. Output: A report on the feasibility of establishing a marketing agency for Palestinian agricultural products, identifying its functions and its relationships with existing co-operatives and other producers' associations.

5. Activities:

- (a) Survey on advisory services needed at the farm level and on the nature of grading, packing and storage required to serve local as well as foreign markets;
- (b) General survey of specific markets to be served;
- (c) Survey of credit available for marketing fruits and vegetables;
- (d) Identification of investment opportunities in fruit and vegetable processing enterprises.

6. Inputs and estimated costs:

Local and international consultants	\$US 204 000
Experts' travel and other expenses	25 000
Administrative support	<u>5 000</u>
TOTAL	\$US 234 000

7. Institutional framework: The marketing agency may carry out its activities with the assistance of several institutions in the West Bank, such as the Bir Zeit University and the Rural Centre for Research and Studies in Al-Najah University. In addition, the local existing agricultural co-operatives will collaborate in the project's activities.

8. Prerequisites and obligations: Removal of Israeli restrictions on Palestinian exports to Arab and other markets.

9. Available documentation: Antoine Mansour, "Project proposal on the establishment of a marketing agency for Palestinian products"; and Hisham Awartani, "Establishment of an agricultural export corporation", papers prepared for the Seminar, Vienna, 1987.

E. Establishment of a training and production centre for arts and crafts

1. Development objectives:

- (a) To expand production and increase job opportunities and income earnings in the handicraft sector;
- (b) To improve productivity and product quality through appropriate technologies and development of skills.

2. Immediate objective: To establish a production and training centre for traditional arts and crafts to:

(a) Develop demonstrative, promotional and commercial production, starting with specific arts and crafts which would have been identified as areas of priority;

(b) Develop training facilities and other services in product design, production and management;

(c) Train, on a regular basis, a significant number of entrants to the various handicraft areas.

3. Background and justification: At present, there are more than 700 small enterprises employing about 3,700 people engaged in producing handicrafts and supporting 14,000 dependants. This traditional industry is faced with a series of problems leading to poor economic returns, particularly low quality of products and competition from cheap imported articles. It is proposed that the centre as defined above will be established within a period of two years and will commence its activities with international support for an additional period of one year.

4. Output: Production and training centre for traditional arts and crafts.

5. Activities:

(a) Designing and constructing the centre in Bethlehem (West Bank);

(b) Designing, formulating and conducting training programmes at the centre.

6. Inputs and estimated costs:

Personnel	\$US	100 000
Land		200 000
Buildings		800 000
Equipment		300 000
TOTAL	\$US	1 400 000

Running costs for the first year (estimate): \$US 500 000

7. Institutional framework: The centre will be an independent unit operating in close collaboration with craft associations and co-operatives, universities and vocational institutes.

8. Available documentation:

(a) Palestine Liberation Organization, "A preliminary techno-economic feasibility study for the establishment of a production and training centre for the tourist trade industries in the West Bank";

(b) S. Kanaana, "A proposal for the establishment of a centre for traditional Palestinian arts and crafts", papers prepared for the Seminar, Vienna, 1987.

F. Production and training centre for textiles and ready-made garments

1. Development objectives:

(a) To expand production and increase job opportunities and income earnings, especially for women in the textile and garment industries;

(b) To improve productivity and product quality through appropriate technologies and development of skills.

2. Immediate objective: To establish a production and training centre for textiles and ready-made garments to:

(a) Develop demonstrative, promotional and commercial production, starting in specific textile and garment manufacture areas, which would have been identified as areas of priority;

(b) Develop training facilities and other services in product design and quality control, production and management;

(c) Train on a regular basis a significant number of entrants to the various textiles and ready-made garment areas.

3. Background and justification: There are at present more than 819 firms in the textiles and ready-made garment industries employing 2,800 people. The majority of these firms are small workshops employing less than five people. The quality of their products vary and they have not been able to respond adequately to changes in domestic demand in terms of quality and variety as they lack the necessary knowledge and capacity to innovate and modernize their production methods. The proposed centre will help these firms in these aspects of production. The project will produce various types of children's, men's and women's outer and undergarments, socks, stockings, towels and other items. The industry will rely on a variety of raw materials, such as cotton, wool and mixed fibres and dyes. Traditional designs and motifs will be especially encouraged and adapted to present requirements and artistic tastes.

4. Output: A training and production centre which will produce various types of textiles and garments and provide opportunities for related training services to the local industry.

5. Activities:

(a) Designing and constructing the centre in Gaza;

(b) Designing, formulating and conducting training programmes at the centre.

6. Inputs and estimated costs:

Personnel	\$US	100 000
Land		200 000
Building		800 000
Equipment		500 000
TOTAL	\$US	1 600 000
Running costs for the first year:	\$US	400 000

7. Institutional framework: The centre will be an independent unit operating in close collaboration with the textile producers and workers associations as well as the chemical department of the Islamic University and local vocational institutes.

8. Available documentation: Palestine Liberation Organization, "A Preliminary techno-economic feasibility study for the establishment of a training and production centre for the textiles and ready-made garments industry in the occupied Palestinian territories", paper prepared for the Seminar, Vienna, 1987.

G. Ceramics factory in Hebron

1. Development objective: To increase employment opportunities and earnings by improving the quality of ceramic products in the occupied Palestinian territories.

2. Immediate objectives:

(a) To obtain specific geological data on available clay;

(b) To determine methods of upgrading and diversifying local production of ceramics;

(c) To prepare a feasibility study for constructing a clay processing plant.

3. Background and justification: Pottery is a traditional handicraft in the Palestinian territories. However, there is a great need to upgrade the skills of the producers who still use traditional methods which make the produced articles below standards acceptable to buyers. The duration of the project will be 24 months.

4. Outputs:

- (a) A feasibility study including a geological survey for appropriate clay;
- (b) A marketing study;
- (c) A feasibility study for a ceramics plant.

5. Inputs and estimated costs:

Surveys and research reports	\$US 224 000
Engineering design for the factory	22 000
Miscellaneous expenses	17 000
Transport	2 000
Administration costs	4 000
TOTAL	\$US 269 000

6. Institutional framework: Appropriate institutional arrangements will be made to carry out the project in collaboration with existing local institutions.
7. Available documentation: Said A. Assaf, "Project proposal for a ceramics factory in Hebron", paper prepared for the Seminar, Vienna, 1987.

H. Sardine canning factory in Gaza

1. Development objective: To improve the economy of the Gaza Strip by increasing self-sufficiency in fishmeal production and marketing and by processing and marketing the abundant surplus of sardines.
2. Immediate objective: To determine the feasibility of establishing a sardine canning factory in the Gaza Strip.
3. Background and justification: Fishing is an important industry in the Gaza Strip. Two thirds of the fish harvested are sardines. During the fishing period for sardines (May and October), there is a glut in the market, and as they cannot be frozen, prices fluctuate greatly. Canning of the surplus will help stabilize prices and also afford a wider market. This project, with a duration of 12 months, will benefit 2,500 fishermen in the Gaza Strip.
4. Outputs:
 - (a) A report on available sardine resources;

(b) A technical report on the feasibility of establishing a canning factory;

(c) An economic and financial report.

5. Activities:

(a) Preparation of a feasibility study on resources available;

(b) Preparation of a technical, economic and financial study on the canning facility.

6. Inputs and estimated costs:

Data collection on resources	\$US 18 000
Data collection for establishing a canning factory	12 000
Preparation of reports	16 000
Technical designs for canning factory	24 000
Economic evaluation	9 000
Administrative costs	8 000
Construction costs	(to be determined)
TOTAL	\$US 99 000

7. Institutional framework: A local scientific institute with professional food technologists and engineers will undertake the feasibility study and support other activities of a technical nature.

8. Available documentation: Said A. Assaf, "Project proposal for a sardine canning factory in Gaza", paper prepared for the Seminar, Vienna, 1987.

I. Development of sheep stock and training of farmers

1. Development objectives:

(a) To increase the sheep stock and the production of sheep milk, meat and other by-products, with a view to making the population more self-sufficient in food;

(b) To promote the breeding of the two prevalent sheep breeds (Syrian Awassi and Assaf hybrid of Freisian on Awassi);

(c) To improve sheep breeding techniques.

2. Immediate objectives:

(a) To assess the present situation of demand and supply of sheep stock and sheep products;

(b) To examine the potential of Awassi sheep and the Assaf hybrid sheep through the provision of a laboratory for research and the application of appropriate technology;

(c) To develop training programmes to demonstrate and disseminate information on management and the use of hormones, drugs, feed.

3. Background and justification: Palestinian farmers have been raising sheep for thousands of years. Following the occupation in 1967, the number of sheep decreased by roughly 50 per cent due to grazing restrictions. The proposed project aims at increasing the number of Assaf sheep, a hybrid breed now numbering over 7,000 in the West Bank. Assaf sheep have the advantage of thriving well in confined spaces and being more productive in meat and milk. The project is also designed to increase the sheep stock through the proper selection and breeding of the local Awassi sheep. The proposed project will have a duration of two years.

4. Outputs:

(a) A study assessing the present demand and supply of sheep stock and sheep products;

(b) A feasibility study on the potential and appropriate selection of local Awassi sheep and the propagation of the hybrid Assaf sheep;

(c) Appropriate training materials and programmes and dissemination of information to co-operatives and sheep owners;

(d) Demonstration sessions on sheep raising.

5. Activities:

(a) Preparation of a study on sheep resources and markets;

(b) Preparation of a feasibility study on propagation of the Assaf hybrid sheep and on the selection from the Awassi breed;

(c) Preparation of materials for training programmes and demonstration sessions, and for dissemination of information;

(d) Organization of demonstration sessions for sheep owners.

6. Inputs and estimated costs:

Personnel including consultants and technicians

Output (a)	\$US 20 000
Output (b)	20 000
Output (d)	15 000
SUBTOTAL	55 000
Assistance to sheep owners	200 000
Equipment	100 000
Educational materials	45 000
TOTAL	\$US 400 000

7. Institutional framework: The Arab Scientific Institute for Research and Transfer of Technology (ASIR), a local institution based in El-Bireh, West Bank, has already been actively involved in the selection of the local Awassi breed and the development and introduction of a new Assaf hybrid breed. This institute and its existing experimental station could serve as a focal point for the implementation of the project.

8. Available documentation: Said A. Assaf, "Project proposal for sheep development in the West Bank and Gaza Strip using transfer of technology of Assaf hybrid sheep"; and H. Awartani, "Development of sheep raising", papers prepared for the Seminar, Vienna, 1987.

J. Establishment of a poultry hatchery

1. Development objectives:

- (a) Improvement of the quality and productivity of the poultry sector;
- (b) Integration of technologies and services in poultry farming.

2. Immediate objectives:

- (a) The provision of chicks to poultry farmers in the occupied territories;
- (b) Establishment of a hatchery to provide 15 to 20 per cent of the local needs.

3. Background and justification: During the period 1960-1967, the poultry industry in the West Bank developed at a rapid pace but has undergone fundamental changes since then. However, poultry farming still continues to occupy a prominent place in the farming sectors of the West Bank and Gaza Strip. This two-year project will create direct employment for 30 people and indirectly for 200.

4. Outputs:

- (a) An updated feasibility report on the establishment of a poultry hatchery and a breeder farm, in which the capacity of both will be determined;
- (b) Establishment of a poultry hatchery and a breeder farm.

5. Activities:

- (a) Preparation of an updated feasibility study on the economic and technical aspects of the project;
- (b) Preparation of a feasibility study on the financial aspects of the project including resources and cost of the project.

6. Inputs and estimated costs:

Consultants	\$US 15 000
Land	80 000
Construction	320 000
Equipment	380 000
Breeder flock	100 000
Other fixtures	<u>70 000</u>
TOTAL	\$US 965 000

7. Institutional framework: The project will be implemented by the Ramallah poultry co-operative.

8. Available documentation: H. Awartani, "Establishment of a poultry hatchery", paper prepared for the Seminar, Viena, 1987.

K. Propagation and use of jojoba

- 1. Development objective: To improve and diversify the agricultural sector which will lead to an increase in the income of Palestinian farmers.
- 2. Immediate objective: To propagate the jojoba tree and encourage its planting and harvesting by farmers.
- 3. Background and justification: The fruit of the jojoba tree yields an oil which is very similar to olive oil. This multistem tree has been found suitable for the climate in the West Bank and Gaza Strip through experiments carried out by the Arab Scientific Institute for Research and Transfer of Technology (ASIR). The jojoba produces rapidly, requires little care and minimal water. It can be grown on marginal lands. Its cultivation can provide an additional source of income to the farmers in the West Bank and Gaza Strip. This two-year project will provide employment for expert trainers, agricultural technicians and benefit trainees, students and farmers.

4. Outputs:

- (a) A feasibility study;
- (b) Dissemination of information;
- (c) Production of 500,000 jojoba plant seedlings;
- (d) Planting 100 hectares of jojoba in the first two years;
- (e) Investigation of the possibility of producing jojoba shampoo, cosmetics and other useful agro-industrial products by the local cosmetics, pharmaceutical and medicinal factories;
- (f) Training of farmers, agriculture graduates and students;
- (g) Setting up a co-operative of Arab or Palestinian jojoba growers.

5. Activities:

- (a) Dissemination of information;
- (b) Demonstrations and extension;
- (c) Establishment of a solvent extraction system on a pilot scale;
- (d) Setting up of a jojoba press within an existing olive oil mill;
- (e) Assistance to farmers in introducing and planting the tree;
- (f) Initiating development of various products using jojoba oil.

6. Inputs and estimated costs:

Feasibility study	\$US 20 000
Dissemination of information	38 000
Physical facilities	76 000
Equipment	280 400
Supplies	74 600
Irrigation system	9 000
Drip irrigation	19 000
Shared costs with farmers	45 000
Rental of space (per year)	6 000
TOTAL	\$US 568 000

7. Institutional framework: The project will be carried out in close collaboration with appropriate local institutions, especially the Arab Scientific Institute for Research and Transfer of Technology (ASIR).

8. Available documentation: Said A. Assaf, "Project proposal for the propagation and use of jojoba (hohoba) in the West Bank and Gaza Strip", paper prepared for the Seminar, Vienna, 1987.

L. Satisfaction of housing needs

1. Development objective: To improve housing and living conditions of the Palestinian people in the occupied Palestinian territories.
2. Immediate objective: To determine the type, size and cost of affordable housing as well as the organization and technologies required for a comprehensive housing programme in the occupied territories.
3. Background and justification: Estimates of the present housing shortage in the occupied territories vary between 19,000 and 30,000 units. In addition, annual demand resulting from population growth, and movement from rural-to-urban and urban-to-rural areas and replacement of old houses is estimated to be at least 7,200 units. Approximately 5,600 housing units are now being constructed annually through local initiatives. Any housing programme that would effectively alleviate the problem should aim towards at least doubling that number. In addition to the question of financing and organization, the achievement of this objective requires the development of the construction sector and the use of alternative technologies for low-income housing. The duration of the project will be 12 months.
4. Outputs:
 - (a) A report on the income structure of households, target income groups in both rural and urban areas and the housing they can afford;
 - (b) A report on the cost of housing employing traditional construction methods, including the cost of land, infrastructure, taxation and permit fees;
 - (c) A report on the availability of land for housing construction;
 - (d) A report proposing an organizational structure for the financing and administration of the housing programme;
 - (e) Model house designs for the different target income groups;
 - (f) A report on the applicability of alternative technologies;
 - (g) A final consolidated report.
5. Activities:
 - (a) Preparation of a study on the income structure of households;

- (b) Preparation of a study on construction costs and technologies;
- (c) Preparation of a study on land use;
- (d) Determination of housing costs and target income groups;
- (e) Preparation of a study of required organizational structure;
- (f) Preparation of model house designs;
- (g) Preparation of a study on the applicability of Building System V and other alternative technologies;
- (h) Preparation of a final consolidated report.

6. Inputs and estimated costs:

Staff services	\$US 135 200
Travel, etc.	12 000
Transport	<u>2 800</u>
TOTAL	\$US 150 000

7. Institutional framework: Bir Zeit University and the Building Research Centre of the Royal Scientific Society of Jordan will provide the project staff and guide its activities. Each institute should appoint a manager, one of whom will be designated project co-ordinator. The co-ordinator will follow up the joint activities to ensure that the various phases of the work are properly accomplished and will compile and produce the reports.

8. Available documentation: Daud Jabaji, "Technologies and organization for the satisfaction of housing needs in the occupied territories", paper prepared for the Seminar, Vienna, 1987.

M. Satisfaction of the energy needs of rural communities

1. Development objectives:

- (a) Promotion of more comfortable living conditions in rural communities;
- (b) Expansion of employment opportunities;
- (c) Utilization of local renewable energy resources.

2. Immediate objectives:

- (a) To develop an efficient integrated solar/wind energy source for rural communities;

(b) To establish a factory to supply the required equipment for the suggested hybrid solar/wind energy system.

3. Background and justification: One of the most serious impediments to rural development and an improved quality of life is the lack of adequate energy. In fact, 70 per cent of the rural communities in the West Bank are without electricity. This 20-month project will create employment for 35 workers.

4. Outputs:

(a) A report on the feasibility of alternative energy sources for the rural communities;

(b) A plant for manufacturing solar and wind energy units.

5. Activities:

(a) A study on possible alternative energy sources for space heating, domestic water heating and house electrification;

(b) The investigation of the feasibility of solar/wind energy in comparison to the independent generation of electricity employing conventional methods;

(c) Studying the feasibility of setting up a manufacturing facility of solar and wind system components;

(d) Construction of the plant.

6. Inputs and estimated costs:

Research	\$US 60 000
Engineering design	30 000
Staffing	20 000
Land and buildings	250 000
Equipment	200 000
Other expenses	<u>13 000</u>
TOTAL	\$US 573 000

7. Institutional framework:

(a) Bir Zeit University will provide the research and the engineering design teams;

(b) An interested group will form a business firm to manufacture the components.

8. Available documentation: A. T. Hamad, "Energy needs for rural communities in the West Bank and Gaza Strip", paper prepared for the Seminar, Vienna, 1987.

N. Organization and provision of an inexpensive transport network as a co-operative venture

1. Development objective: Improvement of accessibility to employment and service centres for the rural population, particularly in remote areas.

2. Immediate objectives: The establishment of a model transportation co-operative using three mini-buses in the village of Tafouh-Hebron, and strengthening the existing transport co-operatives in Qatanneh and Beit Ikssa by providing one bus to each. This will be followed by the creation of an additional 10 transportation co-operatives forming an integrated network of transportation services for the occupied territories.

3. Background and justification: Public transportation in the rural areas of the occupied territories is often inadequate and sometimes non-existent. Without inexpensive, reliable public transportation, families are forced to leave their villages and settle in urban centres to be near work, schools and markets. Cheap and reliable transportation is also a major factor in marketing agricultural produce to towns and cities. The project will provide employment for about 50 persons.

4. Outputs:

(a) One new transportation co-operative;

(b) Considerable strengthening of two existing transportation co-operatives;

(c) Ten new transportation co-operatives established on the basis of the experience of the above three;

(d) A maintenance unit to service 35 buses.

5. Activities:

(a) Organization of co-operatives;

(b) Registration and licensing;

(c) Purchase of buses and setting up of maintenance units;

(d) Provision of transport for an average of 50 per cent of passengers in the villages concerned.

6. Inputs and estimated costs:

35 mini-buses	\$US 2 275 000
Miscellaneous costs	<u>158 000</u>
TOTAL	\$US 2 433 000

7. Institutional framework: A board of directors will be elected by the members of each co-operative. Each board will appoint a manager for the co-operative who will manage the overall activities. The co-operatives will be supervised by the Co-operative Department and the Jordan Co-operative Organization (JCO).

8. Available documentation: A. Obeidat, "Organization and provision of an inexpensive transport network as a co-operative venture", paper prepared for the Seminar, Vienna, 1987.

O. Improvement of the road network

1. Development objectives:

(a) Promotion of economic growth and social progress in the occupied territories by reducing travel and transportation costs;

(b) Improved accessibility to sources of goods and services to increase the opportunity for people to obtain them.

2. Immediate objective: Improvement of the existing road network to strengthen linkages between Palestinian villages and towns, and creation of new linkages for unserved areas.

3. Background and justification: The road plans prepared and implemented by the occupying authorities neglect completely the existing road system and concentrate mainly on connections between Jewish settlements and the Israeli road system. Many rural Palestinian communities remain poorly connected with urban centres which are the markets for agricultural produce and in which new employment opportunities and essential personal services exist. The inadequacies and poor quality in the form, extent and configuration of the road network lead to a considerable waste of time, effort and energy in the movement of people and goods.

4. Outputs:

(a) Reports on present travel and transportation problems;

(b) Estimates of the future level of demand for road transport;

(c) Testing of alternative transport network improvements;

(d) Recommendations for the implementation of road network improvements.

5. Activities:

- (a) Data gathering and surveying;
- (b) Travel demand analysis and model building;
- (c) Forecasting and plan generation;
- (d) Evaluation and formulation of recommendations.

6. Inputs and estimated costs:

Manpower	\$US 150 000
Survey costs	25 000
Computer	10 000
Reports	<u>5 000</u>
TOTAL	\$US 190 000

7. Institutional framework: The project may be located in the Engineering Centre for Development and Planning of the Bir Zeit University.

8. Available documentation: S. H. Abid, "Improvement of the road network in the occupied territories", paper prepared for the Seminar, Vienna, 1987.

P. Water utilization

1. Development objective: Conservation and utilization of water resources to improve the living conditions of the Palestinian people in the occupied Palestinian territories.

2. Immediate objective: Identification of the problems in providing and utilizing available water resources with a view to formulating remedial measures.

3. Background and justification: Water resources in the occupied Palestinian territories are limited and constantly declining. The provision of sufficient water supply is a prerequisite for the improvement of the quality of life. The present system of obtaining and distributing water is inadequate for the majority of the Palestinian population.

4. Output: A report on the present system of obtaining and distributing water in the occupied territories.

5. Activities:

- (a) A survey of the present system of obtaining and distributing water;

/...

(b) Identification of the problem areas related to above;

(c) Recommendations for remedial measures.

6. Inputs and estimated costs:

Local expertise	\$US 80 000
Staff	150 000
Transport	50 000
Water analysis	15 000
Administrative support	<u>15 000</u>
TOTAL	\$US 310 000

7. Institutional framework: Suitable institutional arrangements will be made to carry out the survey.

8. Available documentation: Said A. Assaf, "Project proposal for the evaluation of the agricultural and drinking water situation in the West Bank and Gaza Strip and the potential for its development under prevailing conditions", paper prepared for the Seminar, Vienna, 1987.

APPENDIX

List of participants

Experts

Samih Abid
Said A. Assaf
Said J. Haifa
A. T. Hamad
Daoud Fahed Jabaji
Sharif Kanaana
Antoine Mansour
Adnan Obeidat
Nidal R. Sabri
I. El-Zaim

United Nations

S. Kazemi, United Nations Conference on Trade and Development
Dorota Gierycz, Centre for Social Development and Humanitarian Affairs, Department
for International Economic and Social Affairs

Specialized agencies

H. Hiddlestone, World Health Organization
A. Robertson, World Health Organization

Palestine Liberation Organization

Yousef Sayegh
Khairuddin Abdul Rahman
Marwan Abdul Hamid
Deif Al-Akhrass
Moh. Abu Koash
Daoud Barakat
Muhieddin Massoud

League of Arab States

Khaled Abdullah
Wail Khaiyal
Khaled Abu Hajalah

Secretariat of the Seminar

Darshan Johal, United Nations Centre for Human Settlements (Habitat)
Joseph Mungai, United Nations Centre for Human Settlements (Habitat)

**General Assembly**Distr.
GENERALA/44/534
5 October 1989

ORIGINAL: ENGLISH

Forty-fourth session
Agenda item 82 (h)

DEVELOPMENT AND INTERNATIONAL ECONOMIC CO-OPERATION

Living conditions of the Palestinian peopleNote by the Secretary-General

1. In its resolution 42/190 of 11 December 1987, entitled "Living conditions of the Palestinian people in the occupied Palestinian territories", the General Assembly requested the Secretary-General to prepare an in-depth study on future needs in the field of infrastructure for the Palestinian people in the Palestinian territories occupied since 1967 and to report to the Assembly at its forty-fourth session, through the Economic and Social Council, on progress made in the implementation of the resolution.
2. Responsibility for the preparation of the study was entrusted to the United Nations Centre for Human Settlements (Habitat). In implementation of the resolution, consultations were held with representatives of the Palestine Liberation Organization with a view to ascertaining more clearly on which specific future needs of the occupied Palestinian territories in the field of infrastructure a study could be prepared. As a result of these consultations, and bearing in mind the limited resources available for an extensive study, it was decided that the report should focus on the specific area of transport infrastructure. Other aspects of infrastructure may be covered in future reports, subject to the availability of the financial resources required for carrying out such work.
3. In the preparation of the study Habitat engaged the services of a private consultant. The independent study prepared by the consultant with the assistance of a team of specialized experts, is annexed hereto (see annex).

ANNEX

Future transportation infrastructure needs for the Palestinian
people in the West Bank and in the Gaza Strip a/

CONTENTS

	<u>Paragraphs</u>	<u>Page</u>
I. INTRODUCTION	1 - 7	4
II. EVOLUTION OF THE TRANSPORTATION SYSTEM	8 - 27	5
III. EXISTING TRANSPORTATION SYSTEM	28 - 56	8
IV. PROPOSED TRANSPORTATION SYSTEM	57 - 115	12
A. Basic objectives	57	13
B. Forecast of future travel demand	58 - 70	13
C. Proposed road transportation system	71 - 103	16
D. Proposed public transport system	104 - 108	22
E. Proposed sea transportation system	109 - 110	23
F. Proposed air transportation system	111 - 115	23
V. INSTITUTIONAL INFRASTRUCTURE	116 - 118	25
VI. CONCLUDING REMARKS AND RECOMMENDATIONS	119 - 126	26

LIST OF TABLES

1. Classification of West Bank roads in 1947 and 1967	28
2. Road service to population centres in the West Bank in 1947 and 1967 ..	28
3. Extent of road network in the West Bank according to the Israeli regional road master plan of 1983	29
4. Existing road network	29

a/ Report submitted by Dr. Rami Abdulhadi, Director, Center for Engineering and Planning, Ramallah, West Bank.

CONTENTS (continued)

	<u>Page</u>
5. Conditions of the existing road network in the West Bank	30
6. Characteristics of some major inter-urban bus routes	30
7. Characteristics of some major inter-urban shared taxi routes	31
8. Basic travel demand determinants for base and design years according to scenario A	32
9. Basic travel demand determinants for base and design years according to scenario B	32
10. Summary of basic travel demand determinants	33
11. Projected traffic volumes at key routes	34
12. Number of lanes for some major corridors	35
13. Extent of existing and proposed road network in the West Bank and Gaza Strip	35
14. Construction and improvement requirements for the proposed road network	36

LIST OF FIGURES

1. Existing road network	37
2. Schematic diagram of regional traffic corridors	38
3. Proposed transportation system	39
4. Existing major public transportation routes	40

I. INTRODUCTION

1. General Assembly resolution 181 of November 1947 called for the establishment of an Arab state and a Jewish state in Palestine. Under the partition plan, the borders of the two States were to be arranged to allow for direct contact between all parts of each. However, the actual borders of the State of Israel as declared in 1948 differed from the borders outlined in the partition plan, so that direct contact between what is now known as the West Bank and the Gaza Strip came under Jordanian and Egyptian control respectively. Only after the Israeli occupation of these two areas in 1967 was direct contact made possible.

2. As a result of these developments, the transportation sector in the West Bank and the Gaza Strip, like other economic sectors, was unable to develop to a level that would have enabled it to provide effective transport services for those regions.

3. The constraints imposed on the Palestinian transportation sector in the West Bank and the Gaza Strip were coupled with the development of a transportation network aimed at enhancing the Jewish settlement activities in the occupied territories by providing relatively higher quality roads to link those settlements with each other and with the metropolitan Israeli road network. This situation inevitably hindered the evolution of a national Palestinian transportation system consistent with the basic requirements for Palestinian economic development. It also resulted in a dual-transportation system: a privileged one effectively serving the Israeli policy and programme of expanding Jewish settlements throughout the West Bank and the Gaza Strip, and an underdeveloped one that is incapable of meeting the needs of the Palestinians or performing its economic functions in an integrated national development process.

4. This report assumes the establishment of a Palestinian State in the occupied Palestinian territories of the West Bank and the Gaza Strip in accordance with the United Nations resolutions. The new State is also expected to undertake a massive economic development programme supported and assisted by the international community and the United Nations agencies, in order to make up for deficiencies created by the prolonged Israeli military occupation and to accommodate the Palestinian returnees.

5. A 1987 report of the United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization (UNESCO) estimated the total number of Palestinians residing outside the West Bank and the Gaza Strip at 3.15 million. The number of Palestinians expected to return to live and work in the new State during the first five years after its conception has been estimated at 1.5 million. They will be settled in a large number of towns and villages of the West Bank and the Gaza Strip, and in new urban and rural settlement centres that will be built and developed in areas where the potential for economic activity and absorption is expected to be high.

6. For the purpose of this report, two scenarios representing two possible future trends were examined. Scenario A assumes that only the Palestinians presently residing in the West Bank and the Gaza Strip, including residents of Jerusalem and

those who are currently working abroad, will constitute the total population of the new State. According to this scenario, the total population in the year 2010 is estimated to be 3.20 million, with an urban/rural distribution ratio of 38 per cent. Scenario B allows for the possible return of 1.5 million Palestinians during the first five years after the conception of the State. According to this scenario, the total population in the year 2010 is estimated to be 5.39 million, with an urban/rural distribution ratio of 43 per cent.

7. The vital task of the transportation sector will be to enhance the unity and integration of all parts of the new State, including safe and reliable linkage between the West Bank and the Gaza Strip; to assist the development of other economic sectors through appropriate and effective transport services and facilities; and to connect the new State with the outside world through appropriate ground, sea and air transportation.

II. EVOLUTION OF THE TRANSPORTATION SYSTEM

8. Historically, Palestine has been a bridge connecting the three continents of Asia, Africa and Europe. It is a link between the Arabian Peninsula and the Mediterranean, and between the eastern and western parts of the Arab world.

Road development

9. Construction of paved roads in Palestine began in the past century. The oldest of these was the Jerusalem road, constructed in 1867 during Ottoman rule.

10. During the early part of the British mandate, which started in 1917, the roads open to traffic in Palestine were concentrated in the mountainous area, most of which is now known as the West Bank. The major axis ran from north to south, connecting the major urban centres and generally following the paths of ancient historic roads. In addition, two transverse roads connected Jericho, Jerusalem and Jaffa in the centre, and Tiberias, Nazareth and Haifa in the north. Some, but not all, were given asphalt surfaces. However, the road network developed between 1936 and 1945 was developed to satisfy British logistic requirements, not to meet local needs. That period saw the construction of roads linking the central part of Palestine with Jordan, and southern Palestine with Egypt through Sinai. In 1945 the total length of the paved roads in Palestine was 266 km, while the dry-weather roads totalled 1,565 km.

11. During the British mandate, the primitive road network in the area now known as the West Bank had two axes; one running from north to south along the mountain series, and the other in the Jordan Valley area. These were linked with transverse roads running from east to west from the valley to the coast. In the Gaza Strip there was only one major road running from north to south, and the majority of local roads serving the smaller towns and villages were dry-weather tracks only.

Road development between 1948 and 1967

12. The establishment of the State of Israel in part of Palestine in 1948 saw the West Bank come under Jordanian rule and the Gaza Strip come under Egyptian rule. This resulted in considerable changes in the transportation system. For example, the Arab towns and villages in the coastal areas of the new State of Israel were disconnected from the interior regions. Towns such as Jenin, Tulkarm and Qalqilia, in the former heart of Palestine, became towns on the frontier with the new State. This severance, together with other factors, saw rapidly deteriorating economic conditions in the West Bank and the Gaza Strip, and the dichotomy of control (Jordan in the West Bank, Egypt in the Gaza Strip) saw these areas subsumed as regions of those countries.
13. The road system in the East Bank of Jordan was realigned to replace the east-west axes by a north-south axis linking Aqaba-Ma'an-Amman-Irbid with Damascus, thus dispensing with the West Bank as a major regional transport centre. However, improvement plans to roads built there during the British mandate were implemented, and the network was expanded to reach almost all the smaller towns and villages of the West Bank, although it was often poorly serviced.
14. Table 1 compares the conditions of the road network in the West Bank at the end of the British mandate in 1947 with the conditions at the end of Jordanian rule in 1967. The proportion of class I and II roads increased from 46 per cent to 93 per cent in that time.
15. The quality of service to 366 of 424 urban and rural settlements in the East Bank, classified according to the condition of roads serving them, is shown in table 2 for the same years, and the figures reflect the efforts made by the Jordanian Government to improve the road network, although the area was considered a fringe area of Jordan as a whole.
16. In the Gaza Strip, no significant improvements to the road network took place between 1947 and 1967.
17. After the Israeli occupation of the West Bank and the Gaza Strip in 1967, the Israeli authorities prepared a national highway master plan. This regarded as a priority the linkage of the newly occupied areas with Israel. In accordance with this plan (known as T/M/A/3), the Israeli authorities began to construct new roads, motivated by their claimed security and settlement needs. During the years between 1967 and 1977, three major north-south roads were completed: the Jordan Valley road, the Dead Sea road and the Allon road. The last was built on the eastern foot of the mountains of the West Bank, and separated the Arab towns and villages in the mountain areas from the intensified Israeli settlement projects in the Jordan Valley. This was in accordance with the Allon settlement plan, which considered the Jordan Valley as part of Israel. Only minor improvements to some of the major roads serving the Arab population centres in the West Bank took place during the same period.

18. After 1967, the Israeli strategy was modified to provide for the full integration of the West Bank network with the Israeli transportation system in order to promote Jewish settlement in all parts of the region. Roads such as the Trans-Samaria road and the Trans-Judea road (by Samaria and Judea the Israeli authorities refer to the northern and southern parts of the West Bank, respectively) ran from east to west, linking Israel with areas of new Israeli settlement.

19. A new plan (regional master plan/order no. 50) was introduced in 1983, based on the national plan referred to above. Although rejected as a result of Arab and international protest, a number of the planned roads were still constructed, linking new Jewish settlements to the main road network in Israel. The plan classified four types of roads (see table 3) and proposed a total network length of 1,873 km. All the roads planned were to link the West Bank with the Israeli highway network and to form an integral part of it. The plan suggested only minor improvements to the existing north-south Jenin-Hebron road and the Jordan Valley-Dead Sea road.

20. In general, highways constructed since 1967 are not intended to serve Arab towns and villages. Instead, they by-pass them in a manner that deters the expansion and development of Arab population centres.

21. In the Gaza Strip, only minor improvements of the road network have taken place since 1967. Again, the roads improved or constructed mostly serve the Israeli settlements. A major highway is also planned across the central area of the Strip to strengthen the link between Jewish settlements in the south with Israel.

Rail transportation

22. The construction of railways in Palestine began in the year 1889, during the Ottoman rule. The first line connected Jerusalem with Jaffa, through an 87 km long track. Later, more lines were opened, such as the one connecting Haifa with Samakh and Dera'a in southern Syria.

23. During the first decade of the British mandate, the authorities supported the construction of new railway systems between the Palestinian towns and also between Palestine and neighbouring countries. The period witnessed the construction of the Rafah-Haifa-Al Naqura line, with a length of 250 km, and the Affulah-Jenin-Nablus-Tulkarm line, 80 km. The railroad development programmes were terminated by the late 1930s, when attention was directed more towards the road system.

24. After the establishment of Israel in 1948, those parts of the railroad which were in the West Bank and the Gaza Strip were taken out of service and abandoned, with large sections of the tracks being dismantled.

Sea transportation

25. Small ports have existed on the Mediterranean coast throughout history. At the beginning of this century Palestine had three small seaports: Akka, Jaffa and Gaza. These ports hosted mainly sailing boats, but in some cases small trade ships

also. However, because these ports were not capable of handling the increasing military and trade traffic that developed during the British mandate, planning for a large, modern seaport at Haifa began in 1923. The port was opened to traffic in 1929 and the role of the other ports became marginal thereafter.

26. After 1948, Gaza was the only seaport available to Palestinians for communication with the outside world, and handled only small trade ships and fishing boats.

Air transportation

27. In 1935, the Lod airport was constructed and opened to air traffic to serve central and southern Palestine, including Gaza, and the Haifa airport was built to serve the north. By the end of the 1930s, the Lod airport had achieved the central role in air transport to Palestine. During the Second World War, the British built other smaller military-oriented airfields. A civilian international airport at Qalandia was opened to air traffic in 1952. International service from here was discontinued after the Israeli occupation in 1967, but the Israeli authorities continue to use the airport, mainly for local flights and general aviation. The only other usable airfield in occupied Palestinian territory is Al Qubbah airport to the east of Gaza City, which provides for limited flights and general services only.

III. EXISTING TRANSPORTATION SYSTEM

Road transportation

28. The total lengths of the existing highway network in the West Bank and the Gaza Strip are 1,890 km and 168 km, respectively. The roads of the networks are classified as main, regional and local roads. The existing road networks in the West Bank and the Gaza Strip are shown in figure 1 and table 4.

29. The main road network of the West Bank consists of two major north-south corridors: the mountainous Jenin-Hebron road, and the Jordan Valley-Dead Sea road. It also includes four major east-west roads: the Damiah Bridge-Nablus road which forks to Tulkarm and Qalqilia, the Allenby Bridge-Jericho-Ramallah-Beit Sira road, the Jericho-Jerusalem road and the so-called Trans-Judea road.

30. The regional road network is also dominated by north-south and east-west axes. The north-south roads include the Jenin-Tubas-Al Fara road, the Northern Jordan Valley-Majdal Bani Fadel road, the Allon road, the Tulkarm-Beit Sira road and two roads on the eastern and western Hebron foothills. The east-west roads include the so-called Trans-Samaria road, the road from A'tara junction on the Nablus-Ramallah highway to A'bud, and the Ramallah-Ne'lin road. There are no regional east-west roads in the southern part of the West Bank. The local road system covers virtually all villages, but in general provides a poor service.

31. The conditions of the West Bank road network are presented in table 5. The proportion of roads maintained in good pavement condition does not exceed 50 per cent of the total, and the proportion of badly maintained roads forms around 40 per cent, most being local roads that serve the centres of Arab population.

32. The present density of paved roads in the West Bank does not exceed 0.33 km per square km, while it was around 0.24 km per square km in 1967. This represents an increase of only 0.09 km per square km since Israeli occupation in 1987, and this slight increase is due mainly to the construction of roads that serve Israeli interests. Road density in kilometres per 1,000 population is currently around 1.7, while it was around 2.4 in 1967. Thus, the limited expansion has not kept pace with the growth of population. Moreover, the primitive and poorly maintained roads generally serve Arab towns and villages, while the modern and better roads generally lead to Jewish settlements.

33. In the Gaza Strip, the road network consists mainly of a major highway that runs from north to south along the eastern part of the Strip, and a regional road that runs along parts of the coast. In addition, a number of local roads connect the villages and refugee camps with these two roads. The quality of the network in the Strip is even lower than that of the West Bank.

34. The road density in the Gaza Strip is 0.46 km per square km, compared with 0.33 for the West Bank. The apparent improvement is attributable to a higher density of population. Road density in kilometres per 1,000 population is 0.26, which is lower than the 1.7 figure for the West Bank.

35. In summary, the existing highway network, the only means of transportation in the West Bank and the Gaza Strip, and the only direct access to neighbouring countries, is still underdeveloped and inadequate for proper economic and social development. The planning, construction and improvement of roads takes place with the interests of Jewish settlements and the occupying authorities in mind. The local Arab authorities have no significant influence over the development of the main and regional road network; the responsibility for such development lies with the Public Works Department, which is headed by an Israeli officer. In addition, the limited financial resources of these local authorities preclude any practical independent initiatives on their part.

36. This absence of a Palestinian national authority in the West Bank and the Gaza Strip is considered a major constraint to the development of the road network. However, the pooling of financial resources, along with the initiative of Palestinian institutions to define development priorities in the transportation sector, would lead to the creation of a highway network that would serve the comprehensive development of both areas.

37. In addition to the national road network, there are agricultural roads constructed to facilitate access of farmers to the fields and the transportation of products to the markets and consumption centres. The total length of the agricultural road system in the West Bank is about 880 km. No reliable data are available on agricultural roads in the Gaza Strip.

38. Agricultural road construction has increased substantially over the last few years through the initiatives of local residents in co-operation with local societies and international charitable organizations. A considerable share of these newly-opened roads are in the Hebron mountain range and foothills, where there have been extensive efforts to open up new lands for agricultural development.

Public transportation

39. Road-based modes of transport carry all intra-urban, inter-urban and rural public transportation in the West Bank and the Gaza Strip. The system is based on private enterprise, but the Israeli authorities issue route operation permits, regulate the frequency of service and determine fare brackets.

40. The inter-urban passenger public transportation system depends on two modes: the bus and the shared taxi. Buses operate between the main urban centres and the smaller towns and villages, and are supplemented by shared taxi services. The total number of registered buses is around 710 in the West Bank and 70 in the Gaza Strip. Of those registered in the West Bank, 378 buses operate on fixed public transport routes. This fleet is owned by 100 bus companies, 70 of which operate one bus only, while the largest operates 36 buses. Only 149 buses operate on inter-urban routes, while the rest operate on intra-urban and rural routes. The vast majority of the inter-urban buses are conventional, with a maximum seating capacity of 50. A small number of minibuses operate on routes with lower passenger demand.

41. In the Gaza Strip, bus services are very limited and operate on a few routes only.

42. The number of registered taxis has remained almost the same since 1967 owing to a strict Israeli policy limiting their number. During the past 20 years, the total number of operating taxis has fluctuated between 1,050 and 1,100 in the West Bank and between 760 and 810 in the Gaza Strip. To satisfy the increasing demand, many private automobiles and double-cab pickups operate without permits on many rural routes, especially within the Gaza Strip.

43. Both the bus and shared-taxi routes are generally radial in pattern. A major hub is located at Jerusalem, which serves several destinations in the West Bank as well as the city of Gaza. Others are located at Nablus, where service to all northern and central urban centres of the West Bank originates, and Gaza, with services to all parts of the Strip.

44. The inter-urban bus service generally follows a fixed time schedule. Nevertheless, the number of passengers is small owing to the poor service and the very frequent stops to serve rural area passengers. Recently, express bus services were introduced on a few major routes, such as Nablus-Ramallah-Jerusalem and Ramallah-Jerusalem.

45. On inter-urban routes, shared taxis provide better, more frequent and faster service, and operate according to a flexible schedule. To remain competitive, buses charge lower fares than the minimum fare brackets set by the authorities.

46. Various criteria have been used to evaluate the performance of inter-urban public transportation on several major routes: (a) ridership; (b) time headway, the time between two successive vehicles leaving the origin; (c) vehicle utilization, the average total number of passenger trips per vehicle per day; (d) service utilization, levels of service and the revenue passengers per vehicle-km. Tables 6 and 7 show these parameters for some major bus and shared taxi routes.

47. Table 6 shows that bus services on the routes connecting Jerusalem with Ramallah, Bethlehem and Hebron attract the highest daily average ridership with a minimum exceeding 5,000 passengers per day. These routes are the most efficient, with vehicle utilization higher than 250 passengers per bus per day, and are the most effective, with a service utilization exceeding one revenue passenger per vehicle-km. It should be noted here that ridership on these routes represents all boarding passengers, including village passengers. These are not actually inter-urban passengers and may represent from 25 to 70 per cent of the total.

48. The figures for the shared taxi service are presented in table 7. This shows that the routes with highest demand are the Nablus-Tulkarm, the Jerusalem-Ramallah and the Jerusalem-Hebron routes, with ridership exceeding 4,000 passengers per day. Almost all passengers make the full trip. Frequency of service on these routes averages 3 minutes or less. In addition, the routes with the highest vehicle utilization are the Nablus-Qalqilia and the Tulkarm-Qalqilia routes. Revenue passengers per vehicle-km are the highest for these routes, followed by those of the Bethlehem route, while service to Gaza from Jerusalem and Qalqilia is the poorest. The apparently high ridership indicates a high demand for inter-urban travel, mainly owing to workers and university students commuting between these areas. In addition, thousands of Muslims visit Jerusalem from all parts of the West Bank and the Gaza Strip, especially on Fridays.

Freight transportation

49. The annual agricultural production of the occupied Palestinian territory, including livestock and its products, averaged over the 1985/1986 and 1986/1987 periods, totalled 869.2 thousand tons in the West Bank and 194.7 thousand tons in the Gaza Strip. Agricultural production generated 21.7 per cent of the gross domestic product (GDP) of \$US 1,180 million in 1986 in the West Bank, while it generated a higher share (32.8 per cent) of the GDP of \$US 315 million in the Gaza Strip during the same year. No data are available on the total tonnage of mining and industrial production. The share of industrial production reached 12.7 per cent of the GDP of the West Bank's GDP but only 7.6 per cent of the GDP of the Gaza Strip.

50. Data is only available for the movement of agricultural products between the West Bank and the Gaza Strip. Only 4.9 thousand tons of agricultural products were transported from the West Bank to the Gaza Strip in the year 1986/1987, while

40 thousand tons were transported from the Gaza Strip to the West Bank. This transport generated an estimated total of 5.5 million ton-km on the roads of the West Bank, the Gaza Strip, and the permitted roads connecting them.

51. As for exports, available data for 1982 indicate agricultural exports of 112 thousand tons to Jordan and other Arab countries via the check-points on the River Jordan and 72 thousand tons from the Gaza Strip to these same areas. Exports of agricultural products to Israel and to other non-Arab countries via Israeli ports totalled around 22 thousand tons from the West Bank and 105 thousand tons from the Gaza Strip.

52. Mining products of the West Bank, which consist mainly of marble and stone, generated exports of 127 thousand tons to Jordan and other Arab countries in 1982. Exports of industrial products from the West Bank to Jordan and other Arab countries (mainly soap and vegetable oils) reached 17 thousand tons. No data are available on the export of other industrial products to Jordan (including plastics, processed foods and other products), which represented only a very small share (5.5 per cent) of the total of \$US 40 million in industrial exports to Jordan. No data on the tonnage of industrial exports from the West Bank and the Gaza Strip to Israel and other countries are available.

53. Freight exports of products with known tonnage had generated an estimated total movement of 22 million ton-km on the road systems of the West Bank and the Gaza Strip, and within the green line to Israeli consumption markets, exporting ports, and border check-points.

54. Regarding imports, no data are available on the tonnage involved, except with respect to agricultural products from Israel to both the West Bank and Gaza Strip, which reached 47.9 and 43.9 thousand tons, respectively, in the year 1986/1987. This generated an estimated 2.3 million ton-km on the roads of the West Bank and Gaza Strip.

55. There is no transit movement through the West Bank and the Gaza Strip. All internal and external freight traffic in the West Bank and Gaza Strip depends on a fleet of over 20,000 trucks and commercial vehicles (4,400 in the Gaza Strip and 15,900 in the West Bank). This represents a nine-fold increase in the total number of vehicles in operation since 1967.

56. Like the buses, the industry is based totally on private enterprise.

IV. PROPOSED TRANSPORTATION SYSTEM

A. Basic objectives

57. The transport system here proposed provides for adequate road, sea and air transportation, to fulfil a defined set of objectives consistent with an integrated national development plan. These objectives include the following:

- (a) Unity: provide adequate and safe linkage within the West Bank and the Gaza Strip and, between them, ensure that all parts of the two regions are accessible to each other.
- (b) Self-reliance: minimize the effects of political change on the system and lower the possibility of system failure under specific adverse conditions, especially in the proposed corridor linking the West Bank with the Gaza Strip.
- (c) Mobility: facilitate the efficient movement of people and goods and achieve the capacity to handle projected demand for passenger travel and freight movement with acceptable speeds and at reasonable costs for the whole population.
- (d) Accessibility: open up areas that are now inaccessible, and increase accessibility to those parts not adequately served at present.
- (e) Economic growth: promote economic development by providing proper means and facilities to enhance developmental activities in agriculture, industry, mining and tourism.
- (f) Social development: satisfy the needs of Palestinian society in the educational, cultural, social and health sectors.
- (g) Connection with other countries: provide links between the West Bank and the Gaza Strip, and between the surrounding Arab countries and others.
- (h) Quality of passenger travel: provide quality service for passenger travel in general, and for public transportation in particular, by providing proper links, vehicles, and terminals and by reducing congestion, especially in urban areas, as well as incentives to encourage public transportation use.
- (i) Reduced travel cost: reduce cost by minimizing the distance between travel demand centres and upgrading the quality of the network. Future transportation planning and policies should aim at reducing the operating costs of vehicles, lowering taxes on public transportation, and reducing energy consumption.
- (j) Improved safety: A major objective of the proposed transportation system is to improve safety for all modes of transportation.
- (k) Reduced harmful environmental impact: Plans will aim to preserve natural resources, such as agricultural land, forests and wildlife. New transportation facilities must avoid harmful effects on sites that have religious, historical and aesthetic value. Aesthetic enhancement by beautification and development of scenic facilities along rights of way will be considered.

B. Forecast of future travel demand

58. The projected population of the West Bank and the Gaza Strip for the year 2010 is calculated on the basis of the two scenarios mentioned earlier. Scenario A is based on the natural growth of the present Palestinian population of the occupied

West Bank, including Jerusalem, and the Gaza Strip (including 11 holders of residency cards issued by Israeli authorities, even if they are living abroad), in addition to the Arab residents of Jerusalem. Scenario B includes A, with an additional 1.5 million Palestinians who would return from their present places of residence abroad during the period 1991 to 1995.

59. Available data indicate that the present Palestinian population of the occupied West Bank, including Jerusalem, and the Gaza Strip is about 1.8 million, and is increasing at an annual rate of 3.0 per cent in the West Bank and 3.4 per cent in the Gaza Strip. The average number of persons per household in these regions is 6.13 and 6.50, respectively.

60. The projected demographic characteristics for the year 2010 according to scenario A are presented in table 8, based on the following assumptions:

(a) The annual rate of growth will tend to decrease with the expected urbanization and rise in living standards.

(b) Owing to increased economic growth in the Gaza Strip, the annual rate of growth of population will tend to drop more rapidly than in the West Bank, reducing the disparity between the two regions.

(c) The expected socio-economic changes will cause the number of extended families living in the same dwelling to decline, and the number of new nuclear families will tend to rise, thus increasing the demand for independent transport

(d) The effects of migration to other countries are negligible and may be ignored.

61. Based on these assumptions, the total population of the West Bank and the Gaza Strip is expected to increase to about 3.2 million by the year 2010, a net increase of 176 per cent over 1989.

62. For scenario B, the distribution of the returning 1.5 million Palestinians is assumed to be 80 per cent to the West Bank and 20 per cent to the Gaza Strip. After 1995, the total population will increase naturally up to about 5.4 million by the year 2010, with a net increase of about 296 per cent over 1989. The projected characteristics for the year 2010 according to scenario B are presented in table 9.

63. Consequent upon a political settlement, it is expected that returning Palestinians, continued financial remittances, and foreign aid and investment would result in much higher per capita incomes. This, along with the projected increase in the number of households, forms the basis for projecting the number of vehicles in general, and private automobiles in particular, in the year 2010. It is estimated that the net increase in the total number of vehicles will be almost 150 per cent for scenario A and 340 per cent for scenario B (see tables 8 and 9 for some major travel demand determinants). It should be noted here that the estimate does not consider the drop in the rate of increase in the number of vehicles after 1987, due to the conditions created by the intifadah.

64. The increase in the total number of vehicles is expected initially to follow the current average annual growth rate of 8 per cent for both the West Bank and the Gaza Strip. It is assumed that growth will continue at that rate until the year 2000. After that, the growth rates will decrease to a steady level, as the results of public transportation policies are realized. By the year 2010 the total numbers of vehicles and private automobiles per 1,000 persons are estimated to reach 111 and 72, respectively, in the West Bank; and 59 and 42, respectively, in the Gaza Strip. (The number of vehicles per 1,000 persons was 770 in the United States of America in 1980; 130 in Bahrain in 1981; 101 in Jordan in 1986; and 194 in Israel in 1986).

65. Although vehicle and private automobile ownership in the West Bank and the Gaza Strip are expected to increase in the manner shown, there will still be a definite need to expand the role of public transportation.

66. The number of drivers, as with vehicles, is also expected to increase, but at a decreasing rate. The number per 100 households is forecast to increase from 55 in 1989 to 75 in 2010 in the West Bank, and from 51 to 61 in the Gaza Strip. It may be noted that the number of drivers is forecast to be at least twice the number of private automobiles per 100 households. This may be attributed to the relatively high number of persons per household and to the sharp increase in the number of driving licence holders in the 1980s. The increase in the number of licence holders is predominantly among the young age groups who believe that possessing a driving licence increases the possibilities of finding a job and helps in commuting to work. Demographic projections show that the share of potential drivers (those 18 to 65 years of age) of the total population will increase slightly from 38.5 per cent currently to 39.6 per cent by 2010.

67. Under scenario B, it is assumed that a period of time will elapse before the 1.5 million returning Palestinians will adjust to the requirements of their new life. This normalization process is expected to last until the year 2000. During this period, private automobile ownership of the returning Palestinians is expected to be lower than that of the original residents. It is assumed that by the end of this period the distribution of private automobile ownership for the whole population will become relatively uniform.

68. The changes in the travel demand determinants for the whole population according to both scenarios are presented in table 10.

69. Studies have shown that the increase in the total number of vehicles over a specific period is closely related to the increase in the number of person/trips per day, and more importantly, to the number of vehicle km of travel. Thus, the demand for travel in the West Bank and Gaza Strip is expected to increase by at least 240 per cent for scenario A, and by 415 per cent for scenario B, by the year 2010.

70. Present and projected traffic volumes on key routes of the network are presented in table 11.

C. Proposed road transportation system

71. The following guidelines and principles have been used in the development of the proposed highway network:

(a) The design must ensure an integrated highway network, so that movement of traffic from one area to another is as smooth, direct and continuous as possible.

(b) The structure of the network should be designed according to a classification system of highway links, based on: (i) capacity requirements to satisfy projected traffic volumes, and (ii) the function and quality of links.

(c) The system must be co-ordinated with other modes of transportation in a compatible and integrated framework.

(d) The structure of the proposed network should include existing highway links whenever possible, and make provision for necessary improvements to be connected with the existing highway system in a proper and economic manner.

(e) Alternative highways to those crossing urban centres should be considered in order to facilitate through traffic, reduce urban congestion and improve safety.

(f) Compatibility with the topography and consideration of highway design standards are to be satisfied.

72. The following highway classification system is used in this study:

(a) National express highways: The primary function of these highways is to ensure efficient and fast movement of traffic, especially long-distance through traffic. These highways have a minimum of four divided lanes with a median, are access-controlled, and have grade separation at intersections whenever possible.

(b) National major highways: These highways connect large population centres and major production/consumption locations. They also have great mobility and little access to abutting land. They consist of one or two lanes in each direction.

(c) Regional secondary highways: These highways provide access between the smaller cities and towns, connecting them both with one another and with the national highway system. In general, they serve regional rather than national demand, with moderate travel distances and speeds, and are designed to the standards of the two-lane rural highways.

(d) Local village roads: The local village road system serves the smaller villages and rural areas, connecting them with the main highway system. They carry low traffic volumes over relatively short travel distances at low speeds.

73. The interrelationships between the major traffic generation and attraction centres and the consequent travel demand requirements are presented schematically in figure 2. Three national traffic corridors are suggested to run from north to south in the West Bank, while another is planned in the same direction along the

Gaza Strip. The proposed network connects the West Bank with the Gaza Strip through an east-west national corridor running within a neutral zone across Israeli-controlled territory. In addition, three national transverse corridors across the West Bank connect major urban areas with major production and consumption centres and facilitate passenger and freight traffic to and from neighbouring countries.

74. A supporting regional highway system is planned to serve areas with less travel demand and smaller through traffic volumes. The proposed highway network also includes a local village road system which links the smaller rural settlements with one another and with the regional and national major highway networks. This system will make remote locations, which are now ignored in many cases, more accessible.

75. In the West Bank, the proposed main north-south corridor runs through Jenin, Nablus, Ramallah, Jerusalem, Bethlehem, Hebron and Al Dahiriyah. An alternative express highway is suggested to bypass the highly populated area extending from Ramallah in the north to northern Hebron in the south. This highway will carry through traffic across the West Bank and the Gaza Strip, connecting the West Bank with Jordan and other Arab countries in the east, and the Gaza Strip with Egypt and other Arab countries in the west. A second parallel national corridor will serve the Jordan Valley and the area west of the Dead Sea, where there is significant potential for economic development. A third corridor will connect Tulkarm in the north-west with Beit Sira in the south, where it will link up with a transverse corridor leading to Jerusalem.

76. Three national highway corridors are planned to cross the West Bank in an east-west direction. One connects Tulkarm and Jenin to Northern Jordan via Al Maleh Bridge. A second connects Tulkarm and Qalqilia through Nablus to the Damiah Bridge, leading to Amman, in the centre. The third connects Beit Sira with the Abdullah Bridge, penetrating the Jerusalem-Ramallah area and running to the south of Jericho.

77. In the Gaza Strip, it is suggested that a national traffic corridor be constructed in the eastern plains from the far north to the southern border with Egypt. An extension around the city of Gaza will serve a proposed seaport, the industrial zone, and the airport to the south of the city.

78. A traffic corridor has been proposed to link the West Bank with the Gaza Strip through a neutral zone passing through Israeli-controlled territory. This corridor will link the southern part of the West Bank to the northern part of the Gaza Strip via Idna and Beit Hanoun.

79. The directional peak hour demands shown in table 12 were calculated assuming that 14 per cent of the total daily traffic is concentrated during the peak hour, and that 55 per cent of total traffic is carried in one direction. The number of lanes per direction was calculated on the assumption that heavy vehicles, including buses and trucks, represented 10 to 15 per cent of the total traffic volume. A level of service is expected on these highways consistent with stable operations at relatively high to moderate average travel speeds.

80. The national and regional highways that constitute the backbone of the proposed highway network for the West Bank and the Gaza Strip are shown in figure 3, and a comparison between the total length of the existing and proposed road networks is presented in table 13. The proposed highway network will increase road density per square kilometre from 0.33 to 0.47. The density per 1,000 population will decrease slightly from 1.13 to 0.91. The extent of the required new construction, rehabilitation and improvement is illustrated in table 14.

81. Further information on the proposed national highway system is provided below.

West Bank-Gaza corridor

82. The West Bank and the Gaza Strip are two geographically distinct regions separated by a minimum distance of 33 km. They will need to be connected via a neutral demilitarized corridor. The suggested zone would extend from the northern end of the Gaza Strip eastward to the western foothills of the Hebron mountains in the West Bank. The length of the zone would be approximately 37 km and the width would vary from 2 to 4 km, with a total area of about 120 square km. A national express highway is planned to run between Hebron and the Gaza Strip through this neutral zone. The criteria for selecting the location of the highway, and consequently the neutral zone, were as follows:

(a) The highway should be as direct and as short as possible;

(b) It should avoid as far as possible any interference with existing Israeli settlement patterns along the neutral zone;

(c) The highway should have a minimum number of crossings of existing Israeli roads, minimizing the need for bridges, tunnels, etc.;

(d) The highway should satisfy the topographic requirements and geometric design standards for express highways.

83. The proposed route satisfies these criteria better than all others considered. The planned highway forms an integral part of the proposed national express highway system. It runs from northern Hebron westward via Idna through through the neutral zone to reach the northern part of the Gaza Strip at Beit Hanoun, where it connects with the Gaza Strip segments of the national highway system. The total length of this highway is approximately 54 km, of which 37 km are within the proposed neutral zone.

84. The travel demand on this highway by the year 2010 is projected to be around 32,400 vehicles per day according to scenario A, and 56,000 vehicles per day according to scenario B. This would require the construction of a six-lane highway with no access, designed according to the standards of express highways.

Jenin-Al Dahiriyah national major highway

85. This major highway in the West Bank runs from Jenin in the north to Al Dahiriyah in the south, serving the urban centres of Nablus, Ramallah,

Jerusalem, Bethlehem and Hebron. The travel demand north of Nablus and south of Hebron is satisfied by two-lane highway segments designed to the standards of rural major highways. The higher travel demand of the rest of the highway is accommodated by four-lane highway segments. For scenario A, extra capacity has to be provided between Jerusalem and Bethlehem (table 11). For scenario B, extra capacity has to be provided between Ramallah and Hebron. For both cases, three lanes in each direction would be needed. However, the combined capacity of this highway and the parallel Ramallah-Hebron national expressway will satisfy the projected total demand.

86. Existing parts of the proposed highway must be upgraded. This will include some minor horizontal curve realignments and the construction of new sections in order to avoid existing difficult topographic terrain, and to by-pass congested population centres (length, 176 km).

Ramallah-Hebron national express highway

87. The Jerusalem area is expected to form the bottleneck of the national highway system. Projected traffic volumes, especially for scenario B, justify the construction of a new highway connecting Ramallah to Hebron running to the east of Jerusalem and Bethlehem, and to the west of Jericho. This will be a divided four-lane highway with access control and grade separation at the junctions, three connectors linking the highway to Jerusalem, Jericho (and on into Jordan), and Bethlehem. New construction is required for most of the highway, but short segments of existing roads can be upgraded and integrated with it. A length of 63 km with seven interchanges is suggested.

Ein El Baydah-Dead Sea national major highway

88. This highway runs from north to south almost parallel to the axis of the major Jenin-Al Dahiriyah national highway to the west, and the River Jordan to the east. It reaches the proposed industrial complex on the western shore of the Dead Sea, via the proposed Damiah major urban settlement and Jericho. The major function of this highway is to meet the requirements of the projected socio-economic development in the Jordan Valley. It is expected to carry large freight traffic volumes, especially in the section between the Damiah and the Abdullah Bridges, where four lanes would be justified. The rest of the highway is planned as a two-lane rural highway. Minor upgrading and rehabilitation of the existing highway is recommended. The total length is 115 km.

Abdullah Bridge-Jerusalem national express highway and Jerusalem-Beit Sira national major highway

89. This corridor links the Abdullah Bridge with the Gaza Strip through Jerusalem, Bethlehem and Hebron areas. It runs as a national express highway from the Abdullah Bridge on the River Jordan to Jerusalem. At the location between Jerusalem and the Ramallah-Hebron express highway, a major highway branches to connect with the Tulkarm-Beit Sira national highway north of Beit Sira, crossing the Ramallah-Jerusalem national highway south of the Qalandia International Airport. The length of this segment is 39 km, and it requires upgrading to meet

the standards of express highways. (The length of the major highway segment is 32 km, and it requires improvement to upgrade it to a four-lane highway. Four-lane segments of this corridor between Qalandia and Beit Sira are now under construction.)

Tulkarm-Beit Sira national major highway

90. This highway runs on the western foothills of the mountain range, extending in the northern and central parts of the West Bank. It connects Tulkarm with Beit Sira, passing east of Qalqilia and linking with the Jerusalem-Beit Sira national highway near Beit Sira. Its major function is to facilitate the movement of passengers and goods between the north-western areas and Jerusalem, Hebron and the Gaza Strip. The expected volume of traffic will not require more than two lanes in both directions. The existing highway will be upgraded to the standards of major roads, where widening and minor relocations are also required. Its length is approximately 61 km.

Tulkarm-Al Maleh Bridge national major highway

91. This highway is suggested to improve the connections of the northern parts of the West Bank with one another, and to facilitate their linkage with Jordan through Al Maleh Bridge, to be constructed across the River Jordan to the south-east of Ein El Baydah. It connects Tulkarm to the bridge, by-passing Anabta and Tubas and crossing the Jenin-Nablus axis to the south of Jenin. The projected volume of traffic on this highway is less than 5,000 vehicles per day, justifying a two-lane configuration. Its length is approximately 53 km, most of which requires new construction, with upgrading and rehabilitation of existing sections.

Damiah Bridge-Tulkarm national major highway

92. This runs from the Damiah Bridge in the Jordan Valley to Nablus, crossing the Ein El Baydah-Dead Sea national highway near the proposed major urban settlement of Damiah. The highway then forks at Nablus into two branches; one continues to Tulkarm, while the other continues to Qalqilia. The expected high demand on this highway justifies a four-lane configuration, except for the Nablus-Qalqilia link, which will need two lanes only. The Damiah Bridge-Nablus-Tulkarm highway is 68 km long, while the Nablus-Qalqilia highway is 32 km.

Gaza national express highway

93. A national express highway is proposed along the eastern plains of the Gaza Strip. It will have four lanes according to scenario A, and six lanes according to scenario B, both with limited access. It will carry through traffic between the West Bank (and possibly neighbouring Arab countries) and Egypt. In addition, traffic within the Gaza Strip will use this facility. Six interchanges are planned to serve Gaza city and its seaport, Gaza Airport, Deir-El-Balah, Khan Yunis and Rafah. The highway connects with the Hebron-Gaza national express highway at the far north of the Strip near Beit Hamoun, and ends at the border with Egypt south of Rafah. The existing major highway runs parallel to this corridor, and would be reclassified as a regional secondary highway. Its length is 42 km. Another

13 km-long section of highway is planned to loop around the city of Gaza, running as a national major highway from Beit Hamoun to the coast, then extending towards the seaport and the Gaza airport.

Regional secondary highway system

94. The Tulkarm-Jenin regional secondary highway links Tulkarm to Jenin in the north of the West Bank via Ya'bad. The existing Tulkarm-Ya'bad section needs improvement, while the Ya'bad-Jenin link must be constructed (length, 37 km).

95. The Jenin-Tubas regional secondary highway runs from Jenin to the south east, crosses the Tulkarm-Al Maleh Bridge national highway near Tubas, and continues south to intersect with the Damiah Bridge-Nablus national highway. A short connector links this highway with Qabatia. Most of the highway already exists but needs surface and alignment improvements (length, 32 km).

96. The Ein El Baydah-Qalandia airport junction regional secondary highway runs from Ein Al Baydah in the far north to the Qalandia Airport junction on the Ramallah-Jerusalem national highway via Milkhas. It runs at the eastern foot of the mountainous areas between the Ein El Baydah-Dead Sea and the Nablus-Ramallah national highways. Most of the highway is already constructed to an acceptable level, but some sections require minor alignment improvement (length, 85 km).

97. The Masha-Fasayel regional secondary highway connects Masha, at the western foot of the central mountains, with Fasayel in the central part of the Jordan Valley, crossing the Jenin-Al Dahiriyah national highway south of Huwara. Most of this highway has been recently constructed by the Israeli authorities to connect Israeli settlements in the Jordan Valley with the Israeli highway network (length, 55 km).

98. The A'bud-A'tara regional secondary highway connects the two major north-south national corridors of the Tulkarm-Beit Sira and the Nablus-Ramallah highways via A'tara. Sections of this highway were recently constructed to acceptable standards. Other sections require surface and alignment improvements (length, 20 km).

99. The Ni'lin-Ramallah regional secondary highway connects the Tulkarm-Beit Sira and the Nablus Ramallah national highways and links several rural settlements with Ramallah. The existing road requires many major improvements (length, 21 km).

100. The Hebron Mountain regional secondary highway loop a regional secondary highway that runs almost parallel to the boundaries of the southern part of the West Bank. Topography and the distribution of settlements necessitates a circumferential highway system in this region. It runs from Bethlehem towards the western foothills, where it meets the Hebron-Gaza highway close to Idna and continues south to reach Al Dahiriyah. It then runs east and north to Bethlehem via Al Samou'. A connector links the loop with the Dead Sea Highway. The eastern part of the loop and the Dead Sea connector need to be constructed, while the existing northern and western sections of the loop need major upgrading and improvement (length of the loop, 128 km; the connector, 20 km). Another section of

21 km is planned to complete a smaller loop connecting Hebron with Al Dahiriyah via Bani Na'im.

101. The Gaza Strip regional secondary highway. The Gaza Strip regional highway system consists of two north-south highways and three east-west highways. One of the north-south highways runs parallel to the national express highways along the eastern plains of the Strip and serves as a service road to the national express highway. The other runs parallel to the coast in the west, and is considered an extension of the major highway serving the seaport and the airport. Transverse regional secondary highways connect the longitudinal highways and serve the urban areas of Deir El-Balah, Khan Yunis and Rafah. Existing local roads constitute most of the sections of this highway system, but will require major upgrading and improvement (length of the network, 80 km).

102. Local village road system connects the Palestinian villages with the national and the regional highway systems. Moreover, it connects neighbouring villages with one other. The major concern of this system is spatial coverage. All the villages in the West Bank and the Gaza Strip are connected with the national and regional systems, but the quality of service on most of them is poor. Major improvement plans need to be prepared to upgrade such roads. Also, new local roads have to be constructed to connect neighbouring villages in order to facilitate overall development needs. It is estimated that the total length of village local roads will increase by 60 per cent.

103. The expanding role of the agricultural sector of the Palestinian economy requires the construction of roads to facilitate the accessibility to, and the opening up of, new lands for agricultural development. Some of these roads may need asphalt surfaces, while the rest may be all-weather, surface-stabilized roads.

D. Proposed public transport system

104. Development plans for the West Bank and the Gaza Strip emphasize a need for expanded public transportation. The use of buses and shared taxis for public transportation should be encouraged, and the possibilities of constructing a rapid transit rail system should be investigated. In order to improve public transportation services, the establishment of one or more public-owned bus transportation companies is recommended. Shared taxi services should be regulated and co-ordinated with the bus service to help upgrade the quality of service provided, otherwise more private automobiles may be purchased and used with consequent deleterious effects. The alternative use of public transportation should be encouraged through policies of tax exemptions and the imposition of higher taxes on private automobile ownership.

105. The mode of public transportation that should be supported on each route will depend on the passenger demand for the route and the route capacity. Bus service is appropriate when public transportation demand is high and the volume of traffic is large in relation to capacity. In other cases, shared taxis may be more appropriate.

106. Rail transit systems for the very high passenger travel demand corridors, such as the Ramallah-Jerusalem-Bethlehem corridor and the corridor along the Gaza Strip, should be subjected to a thorough economic and technical feasibility study, as should other rail transport facilities, such as a railway connecting the West Bank with the Gaza Strip, and possibly connecting Gaza with Egypt, before any detailed recommendations are made.

107. The proposed inter-urban transportation network in the West Bank and the Gaza Strip, unlike the existing network, will provide direct access between regional urban centres without the need to transfer through existing and other hubs, and also access to direct services from many urban centres to neighbouring Arab countries.

108. The suggested network will depend for its success upon a complete upgrading of existing services, including better quality vehicles, more frequent and tighter schedules, and the provision of terminals and passenger facilities, especially in major centres.

E. Proposed sea transportation system

109. A commercial seaport is proposed for construction on the coast of Gaza in order to serve the Gaza Strip and the West Bank, and also neighbouring countries that have no direct access to the Mediterranean, such as Jordan, Iraq and the Arab Gulf States. The seaport is planned to handle exports of agricultural, mining and industrial products and imports of food, raw materials, industrial products and fuel. No data are available on projected tonnage of these exports and imports or on transit freight, and any attempt to provide detailed estimates would be subject to wide margins of error.

110. However, it seems obvious that a major modern port will be vital to the economic development of future Palestine. A recent study has demonstrated the technical feasibility of constructing a seaport on the coastline of the Gaza Strip. It concludes that coastline characteristics present no major technical problems, and the most favourable location of those examined for the seaport development lies on the stretch to the west of Gaza City and south of the presently existing two jetties. The proposed highway segment which will link the seaport to the proposed highway network would offer the basic and necessary infrastructure for expected heavy freight traffic to and from the Gaza Strip, the West Bank and neighbouring countries.

F. Proposed air transportation system

111. An examination of future transportation needs clearly indicates the necessity for air transport services to handle the projected passenger and cargo air travel within the West Bank and the Gaza Strip, and between them and other parts of the world. This requires the construction of a major international airport and local airports. The Qalandia airport north of Jerusalem, which is currently operated by the Israeli authorities for local flight services within Israel, is suggested as the site for the proposed international airport.

112. The main advantage of the Qalandia site over others considered is its central location and accessibility via the two proposed national major highways, which intersect a short distance south of the airport. Other major advantages are its proximity to Jerusalem and its location in relation to other major urban centres. The airport will be around 40 minutes by automobile from both Nablus and Hebron, and around 80 minutes from both Jenin in the far north, and Gaza City in the south west, once the planned highway system is established. The area has been thoroughly investigated according to requirements for public safety set by the International Civil Aviation Organization (ICAO), and proper zoning will ensure this will be safeguarded. Land is available for expansion in the eastern direction, where the topography does not pose problems.

113. The existing airport should be expanded to satisfy the requirements of a modern international airport, and a recent report estimated annual enplaned passenger air travel demand to be close to 2.95 million passengers by the year 2010 for scenario A. This forecast was based on the analysis of possible travel demand for three major travel groups; Palestinian residents and visitors (1.32 million), Muslim visitors (0.77 million) and Christian pilgrims, Holy Land and other tourists (0.86 million). According to scenario B, the total number of enplaned passengers is estimated to be 3.0 million by year 2010. No data are currently available on the projected import and export cargo demand.

114. The estimated annual travel demand is expected to generate no more than 40,000 annual aircraft operations for scenario A, and no more than 50,000 annual aircraft operations for scenario B. This will require a single runway system with a capacity of at least 80,000 annual operations. Therefore, a system consisting of a single runway, with a parallel taxiway, would be adequate. The length of runway is estimated to be 3,500 m, which can serve non-stop flights of the Boeing B-747 aircraft with a range reaching Rabat and London in the west, and Islamabad in the east. Land is available for upgrading and construction work commensurate with these requirements.

115. In addition to the international airport at Qalandia, three smaller local airports are suggested, at Gaza City; Jalameh, north of Jenin; and a site to the east of Jericho. The Gaza airport is to be constructed on available land close to the shore to the south of Gaza City and its proposed seaport, where it will be linked by an extension of the national highway system. Al Qubbah airfield, to the east of Gaza City, was found unsuitable for development owing to its proximity to Israel and consequent interference with Israel air space. The Jenin and Jericho airports will be constructed on old neglected airfields that were built by the British during the mandate period. The air corridor required for flights between the West Bank and the Gaza Strip may be provided through the air space over the proposed neutral land zone. There may be no need to construct an air route traffic control centre, since the newly constructed centre in Jordan covers a large geographic area including the West Bank. However, terminal approach control facilities at Qalandia International Airport will be required.

V. INSTITUTIONAL INFRASTRUCTURE

116. The proposed transportation system for the West Bank and the Gaza Strip cannot be implemented without a proper organizational framework for the planning, execution and control of its development. Sectoral policies, goals, objectives and priorities within the general context of national interest and financial constraints must be clearly defined and understood. Unfortunately, there has been a complete absence of such a framework for the 22 years of Israeli occupation. The only official organizations operating within the transportation sector today are the remains of the extensions of the Jordanian and Egyptian transportation departments which operated until the occupation of 1967. These are now controlled by Israeli officers according to the policies and regulations set by the Israeli authorities.

117. The three major departments in the West Bank and Gaza Strip are the Public Works Department, the Highway Traffic Department and Licensing Department. The Public Works Department is responsible for the planning, construction and maintenance of roads that fall outside municipal boundaries. The Highway Traffic Department is responsible for traffic and safety regulation and control. The licensing department is responsible for vehicle classification and registration as well as the issuing of driving licences. In addition, the Central Planning Department and the Higher Planning Council, which are also composed of and controlled by Israeli officers, are usually involved in the planning and co-ordination of activities in the transport sector.

118. A number of Palestinian operational organizations are needed to cope with the requirements of achieving the objectives of the proposed development plan. The establishment of the following organizations is proposed:

(a) A ministry of transportation for the strategic planning and co-ordination of the activities of all transport organizations;

(b) A highway authority for the construction and maintenance of the road system and the introduction of adequate axle load regulations and overload control measures;

(c) A traffic department for road safety, registration and licensing of drivers and vehicles;

(d) A public transportation authority for the overall planning, regulation, and promotion of all modes of public transportation;

(e) A civil aviation and meteorology authority for the planning and co-ordination of air transport, including the operation and maintenance of the proposed airports and the possible future operations of a national airline and local flight services;

(f) A seaport authority for the operation and maintenance of the proposed commercial and fishery seaport facilities in Gaza, and the possible future operations of a national sea line;

(g) A training school for providing the sector with adequately trained professionals at all levels and undertaking research on matters pertaining to sector development.

VI. CONCLUDING REMARKS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

119. In this study, future sectoral requirements based on the year 2010 have been predicted on the basis of two scenarios. In one scenario, the predicted future population is assumed to result from the natural growth of the present population of the West Bank and the Gaza Strip only. In the other, the total future population is assumed to result from the combined effect of the natural growth of the existing population and the return of 1.5 million Palestinians who are at present living elsewhere.

120. The structure of the proposed system was based on the assumption that the regions of the West Bank and the Gaza Strip will form a single political entity maintaining strong political and economic relations with Jordan and Egypt. It was also assumed that the returning Palestinians will be absorbed in the present cities, in the large rural population centres, and in a number of new urban settlements.

121. The preliminary layout of the proposed highway network is intended to utilize the existing network to the maximum extent possible. Construction of the new facilities, and expansion and development of existing ones, are recommended to meet the future air and sea transport requirements.

122. It was found that the locations of the proposed main highway corridors overlap with the location of the existing road network for almost 80 per cent of the total length. However, basic changes in the classification of the present traffic corridors are proposed to satisfy objectives of the proposed highway network. Approximately 39 per cent of the length of the proposed network will need to be constructed. Affected existing road sections will require improvements in order to upgrade them to the standards of the new system. The total length of the proposed highway network is approximately 2,900 km, an increase of around 41 per cent over the existing system.

123. In the development of the physical infrastructure, priority should be given to the construction of the West Bank-Gaza Strip corridor, and timely arrangements must be concluded for establishing the neutral zone required. In addition, serious consideration should be given to the construction of the international airport at Qalandia and the Gaza seaport in order to meet the expected demand for passenger travel and cargo movement.

124. Proper and effective operation and maintenance of the highway network are essential. Incentives must be established to attract competent professionals to the sector, and continuous training of professional and technical staff must be provided to ensure efficient performance of the transportation system.

125. Efforts must be made to ensure that the essential institutional infrastructure of the transportation system is developed at a pace compatible with the development of the physical infrastructure.

126. Finally, it is recommended that a comprehensive study be conducted to investigate in more detail the design alternatives for the elements of the proposed transportation system, to set up an evaluation mechanism for testing and comparing alternatives, to identify priorities, and to define appropriate implementation programmes.

Table 1Classification of West Bank roads in 1947 and 1967

Road class	1947		1967	
	Length (km)	% of total	Length (km)	% of total
I	273	19.3	368	26.0
II	383	27.0	954	67.3
III	386	27.2	46	3.2
IV	376	26.5	50	3.5
Total	1 418	100.0	1 418	100.0

Where:

Class I refers to first class paved roads, width of surface 4.0 metres or more.

Class II refers to second class paved roads, width of surface 2.5 to 3.0 metres.

Class III refers to other roads, usually unpaved.

Class IV refers to unpaved track paths, partly inaccessible to vehicles, with high slopes and small widths.

Table 2Road service to population centres in the West Bank in 1947 and 1967

Road class	1947		1967	
	Length (km)	% of total	Length (km)	% of total
I	31	8.5	45	12.3
II	80	21.9	267	72.9
III	128	34.9	30	8.2
IV	127	34.7	24	6.6
Total	366	100.0	366	100.0

Table 3

Extent of road network in the West Bank according to the Israeli regional road master plan of 1983

Highway type	Highway width (metre)	Set back from centre line of highway (metre)	Length of highways (km)
Express highways	120	150	93.5
Main highways	100	120	517.5
Regional highways	60	100	636.0
Local highways	4	70	626.0
Total			1 873.0

Table 4

Existing road network

Road type	West Bank		Gaza Strip	
	Length (km)	% of total	Length (km)	% of total
Main	520	27.5	48	28.6
Regional	520	27.5	42	25.0
Local	850	45.0	78	46.4
Total	1 890	100.0	168	100.0

Note: Urban and agricultural roads are not included.

Table 5

Conditions of the existing road network in the West Bank

Road condition	Length	% of total
Good	920	48.7
Medium	210	11.1
Bad	760	40.2
Total	1 890	100.0

Note: This classification of road conditions followed that of the Public Works Department in charge of highway maintenance in the West Bank.

Table 6

Characteristics of some major inter-urban bus routes

Route	Average ridership (pass/day)	Average headway (min)	Total passengers per vehicle	Revenue pass per revenue vehicle-km
Nablus-Ramallah	1 280	30	75	0.78
Nablus-Tulkarm	2 250	30	188	1.67
Nablus-Jenin	1 600	30	228	0.95
Jerusalem-Ramallah	9 250	7	430	2.67
Jerusalem-Bethlehem	5 280	15	480	3.33
Jerusalem-Hebron	9 000	10	250	1.39

Note: Ridership represents all boarding two-directional passengers, including rural area passengers who alight on the way before reaching destination.

Table 7

Characteristics of some major inter-urban shared taxi routes

Route	Average ridership (pass/day)	Average headway (min)	Total passengers per vehicle	Revenue pass per revenue vehicle-km
Nablus-Ramallah	1 510	7	27	0.15
Nablus-Tulkarm	3 920	3	71	0.26
Nablus-Jenin	560	18	23	0.17
Nablus-Qalqilia	1 260	10	70	0.22
Tulkarm-Qalqilia	840	15	70	0.39
Qalqilia-Gaza	170	50	24	0.07
Jerusalem-Ramallah	6 530	2	65	0.46
Jerusalem-Bethlehem	1 050	10	42	0.58
Jerusalem-Hebron	4 100	3	56	0.19
Jerusalem-Jericho	530	19	38	0.18
Jerusalem-Gaza	350	25	14	0.07

Note: Ridership represents all boarding two-directional passengers, including rural area passengers who alight on the way before reaching destination.

Table 8

Basic travel demand determinants for base and design years
 according to scenario A

Parameter	West Bank		Gaza Strip	
	1989	2010	1989	2010
Population (millions)	1.13	1.94	0.69	1.26
Households (thousands)	184	359	107	222
Total vehicles (thousands)	87.7	214.0	28.8	75.5
Private autos (thousands)	55.7	139.1	19.4	52.5
Licensed drivers (thousands)	106.5	269.0	59.2	135.0
Vehicles/1,000 persons	78	111	43	59
Private autos/1,000 persons	52	72	32	42
Private autos/100 households	31	39	20	24
Licensed drivers/100 households	57	75	53	61

Table 9

Basic travel demand determinants for base and design years
 according to scenario B

Parameter	West Bank		Gaza Strip	
	1989	2010	1989	2010
Population (millions)	1.13	3.69	0.69	1.70
Households (thousands)	184	683	107	304
Total vehicles (thousands)	87.7	404.4	28.8	103.3
Private autos (thousands)	55.7	266.4	19.4	72.1
Licensed drivers (thousands)	106.5	512.2	59.2	184.9
Vehicles/1,000 persons	78	111	43	60
Private autos/1,000 persons	52	72	32	42
Private autos/100 households	31	39	20	24
Licensed drivers/100 households	57	75	53	61

Table 10

Summary of basic travel demand determinants

Parameter	Base year conditions (1989)	Scenario A (2010)		Scenario B (2010)	
		Total	Per cent increase	Total	Per cent increase
Population (millions)	1.82	3.20	176	5.39	296
Households (thousands)	291	581	199	987	339
Total vehicles (thousands)	116.5	289.0	248	512.5	440
Private autos (thousands)	75.1	191.6	255	338.5	451
Licensed drivers (thousands)	165.7	404.0	244	797.1	481

Table 11

Projected traffic volumes at key routes

Road	Average daily volume of traffic (vehicle/day)		
	Present volume (1)	Projected volume scenario A	Projected volume scenario B
Nablus-Ramallah	5 100	12 200	21 200
Ramallah-Jerusalem	7 300	17 500	30 300
Jerusalem-Jericho (2)	4 800	11 500	19 900
Jerusalem-Bethlehem (3)	12 300	29 500	51 100
Bethlehem-Hebron	8 000	19 200	33 200
Gaza-Beit Hanoun (4)	13 500	32 400	56 000

(1) Traffic volume estimates for 1987 are based on Department of Public Works statistics.

(2) Existing traffic includes Israeli settlers movements, which may represent up to 30 per cent of the total volume, which is expected to be offset by the increased travel to Jordan when projecting future demand.

(3) Existing traffic includes Israeli settlers movements, which may represent up to 25 per cent of the total volume, which is expected to be offset by the increased tourist travel and travel to Gaza Strip when projecting future travel demand.

(4) Existing traffic includes Israeli settlers movements, which may represent up to 10 per cent of the total volume, which is expected to be offset by the increased travel to Jordan when projecting future demand.

Table 12
Number of lanes for some major corridors

Corridor	Scenario A			Scenario B		
	Total traffic volume (vehicle per day)	Directional peak hour volume (vehicle per hour)	No. of lanes per direction	Total traffic volume (vehicle per day)	Directional peak hour volume (vehicle per hour)	No. of lanes per direction
Nablus-Ramallah	12 200	940	2	21 200	1 360	2
Ramallah-Jerusalem	17 500	1 350	2	30 300	2 330	3
Jerusalem-Jericho	11 500	890	2	19 900	1 530	2
Jerusalem-Bethlehem	29 500	2 270	3	51 100	3 930	3
Bethlehem-Hebron	19 200	1 480	2	33 200	2 560	3
Gaza-Beit Hanoun	32 400	2 500	3	56 000	4 310	3

Table 13
Extent of existing and proposed road network in the West Bank and Gaza Strip

Highway class	Existing		Proposed	
	Length (km)	% of total	Length (km)	% of total
National express	0	0.0	198	6.8
National major	568	27.6	575	19.8
Regional secondary	562	27.3	627	21.6
Local village road	928	45.1	1 500	51.7
Total	2 058	100.0	2 900	100.0

Table 14

Construction/improvement requirements for the proposed road network

Highway	New construction (KM)	Major improvements (KM)	Minor improvements (KM)
4 or 6 lane national	411	5	0
2 lane national	60	90	207
4 lane regional	32	0	0
2 lane regional	97	201	297
Local road	530	400	1 210
Total	1 130	696	1 974

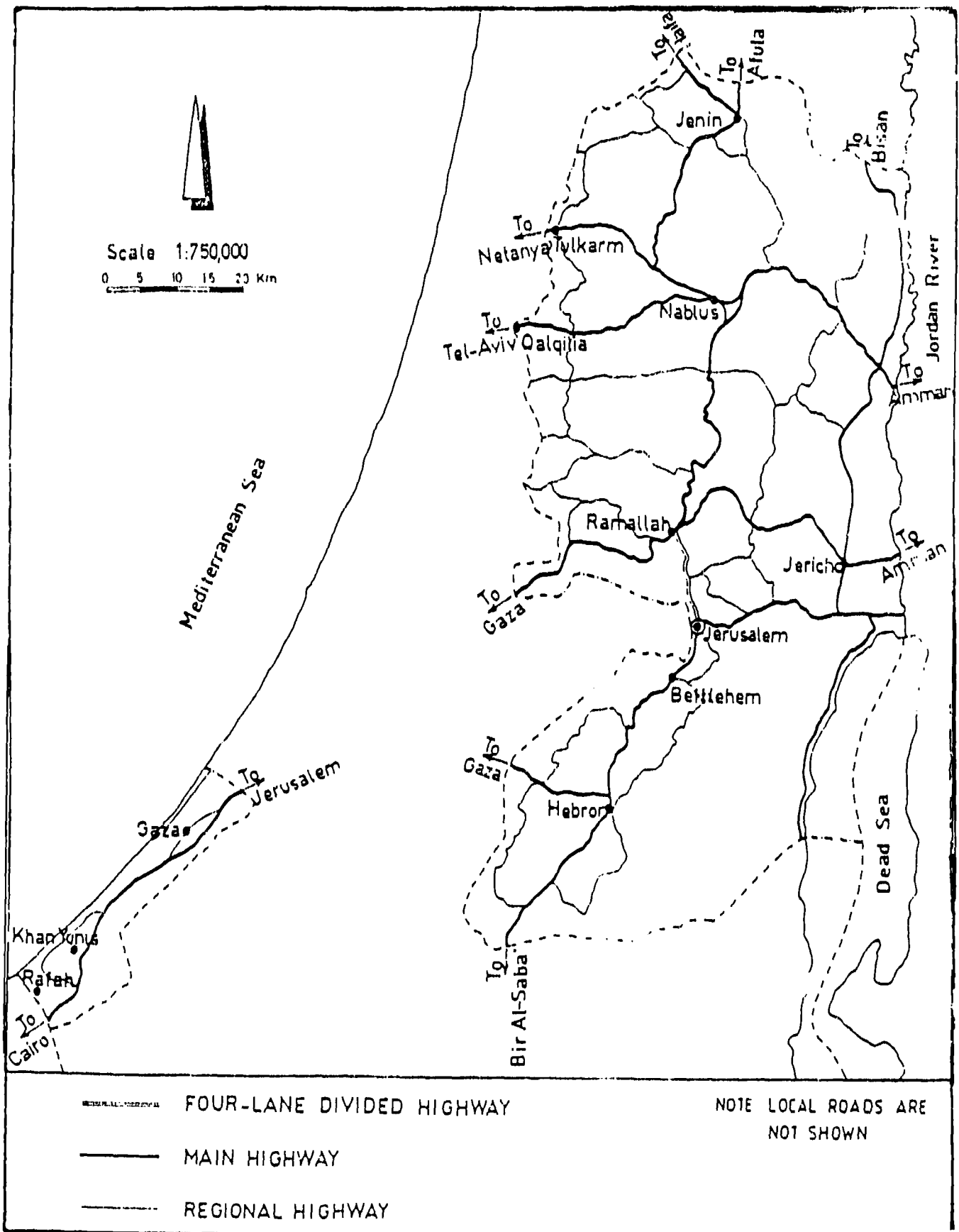


FIGURE 1 EXISTING ROAD NETWORK

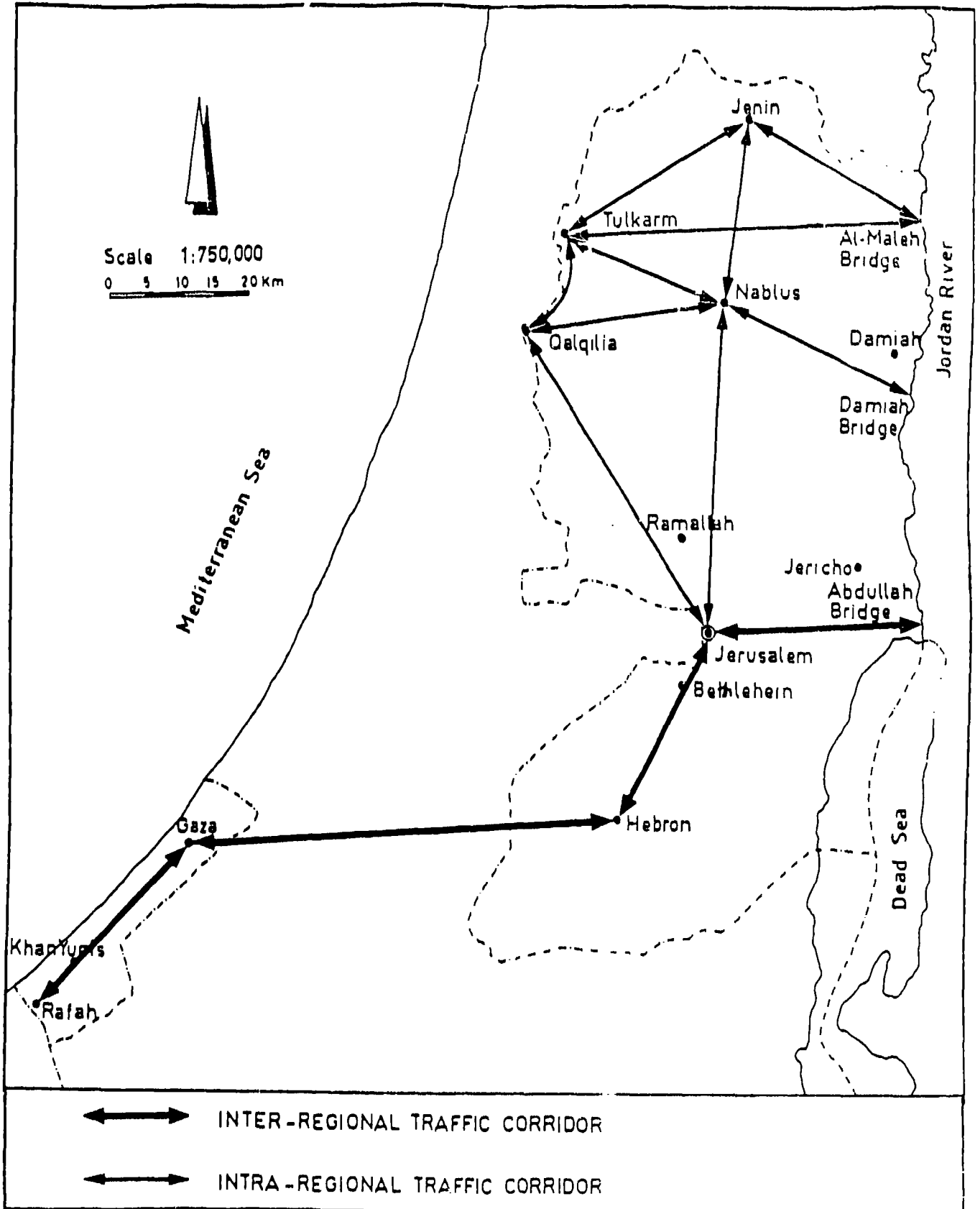


FIGURE 2 : SCHEMATIC DIAGRAM OF REGIONAL TRAFFIC CORRIDORS

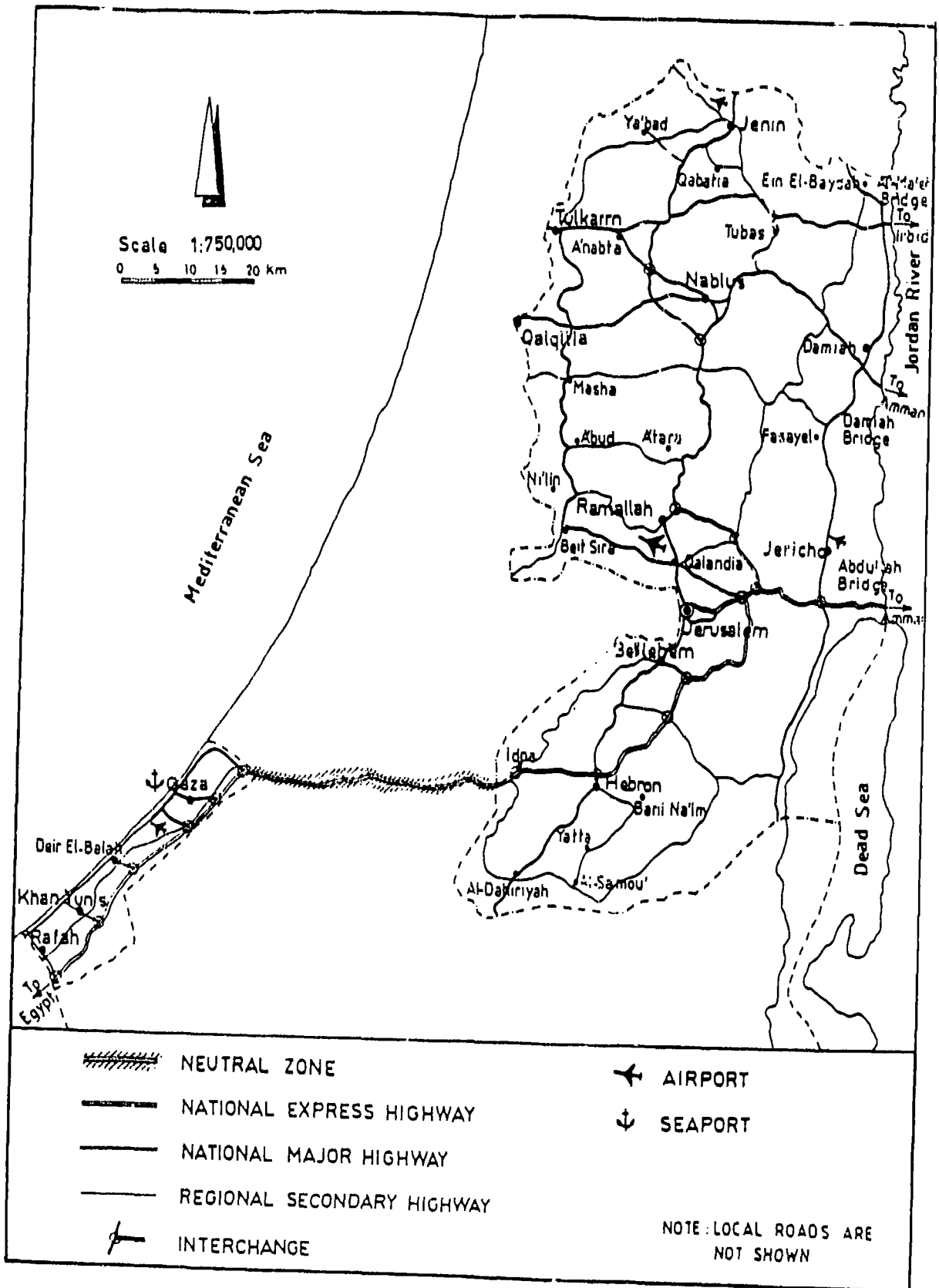


FIGURE 3 - PROPOSED TRANSPORTATION SYSTEM

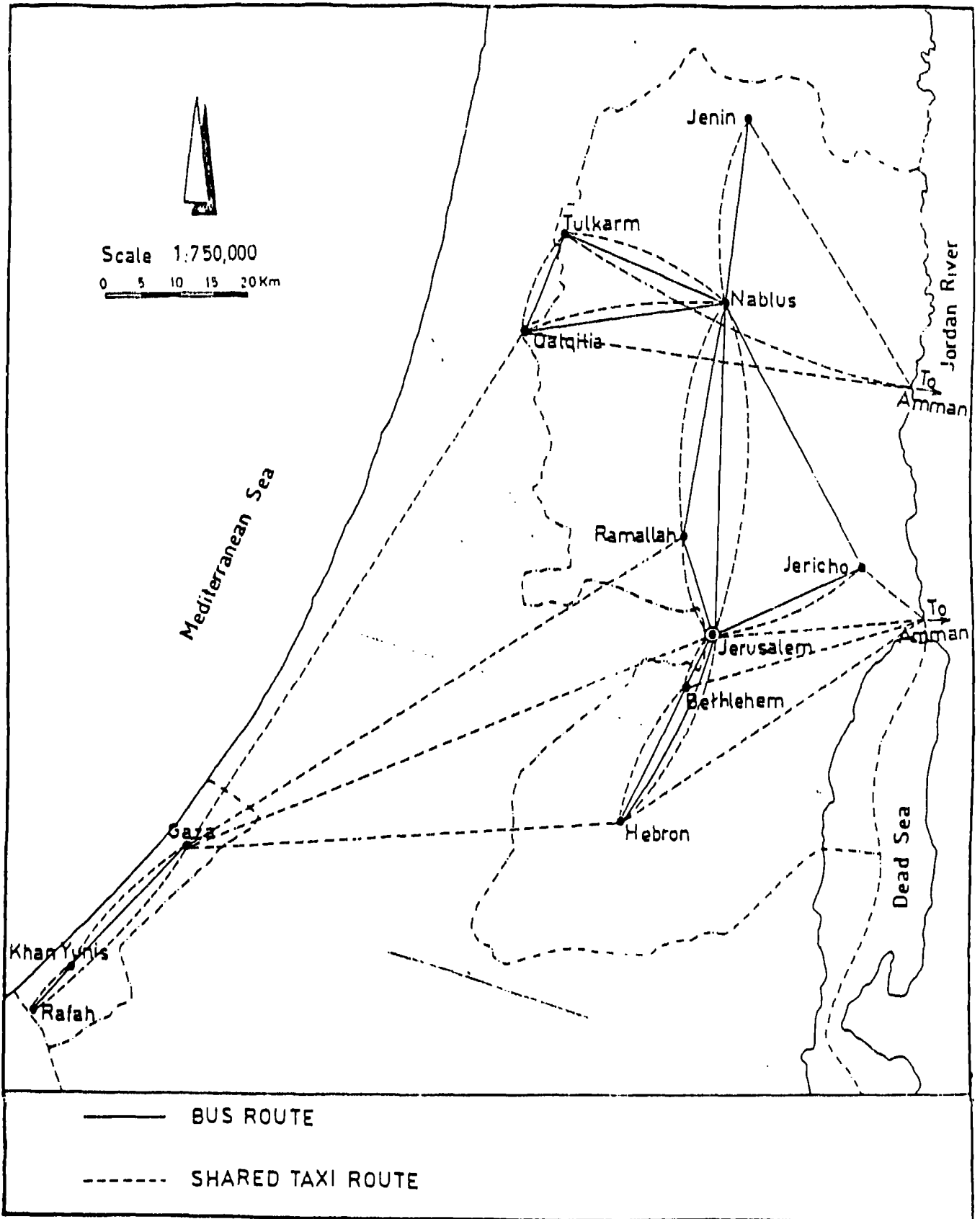


FIGURE 4: EXISTING MAJOR PUBLIC TRANSPORTATION ROUTES



General Assembly
Economic and Social Council

Distr.
GENERAL

A/46/262 /
E/1991/95
18 June 1991

ORIGINAL: ENGLISH

GENERAL ASSEMBLY
Forty-sixth session
Item 78 (g) of the preliminary list*
DEVELOPMENT AND INTERNATIONAL
ECONOMIC COOPERATION: HUMAN
SETTLEMENTS

ECONOMIC AND SOCIAL COUNCIL
Second regular session of 1991
DEVELOPMENT AND INTERNATIONAL
ECONOMIC COOPERATION: HUMAN
SETTLEMENTS

Living conditions of the Palestinian people in the
occupied Palestinian territory

Note by the Secretary-General

In its resolution 44/174 of 19 December 1989, entitled "Living conditions of the Palestinian people in the occupied Palestinian territory", the General Assembly took note of the study annexed to the note of the Secretary-General concerning the infrastructure needs of the Palestinian people (A/44/534), requested the Secretary-General to assure the preparation of the comprehensive study on the economy of the occupied Palestinian territory and requested him to report to the Assembly at its forty-sixth session, through the Economic and Social Council, on the progress made in the implementation of the resolution. The report annexed to the present note is submitted in pursuance of that request.

* A/46/50.

ANNEX

Report on living conditions of the Palestinian people in
the occupied Palestinian territory

INTRODUCTION

1. The present document, prepared pursuant to paragraphs 6 and 7 of General Assembly resolution 44/174 of 19 December 1989 on the living conditions of the Palestinian people in the occupied Palestinian territory, reports on progress made in the preparation of a comprehensive study on the economy of the occupied Palestinian territory referred to in that resolution.
2. The study is intended to be an action-oriented, intersectoral analysis of the problems and prospects of the Palestinian economy, bearing in mind the alarm expressed in the above-mentioned resolution at the deterioration, as a result of the Israeli occupation, in the living conditions of the Palestinian people in the Palestinian occupied territory, and the growing need for an integrated approach to deal with the problems being encountered by the Palestinian people in reviving their economy and ensuring its sustained growth.
3. The design of the study in terms of substantive scope and orientation, as depicted in the outline annexed to the present report, takes into account the provision of Trade and Development Board resolution 239 (XXIII) of 9 October 1981, referred to in General Assembly resolution 44/174, in which the Board specifically called for the preparation of a comprehensive and in-depth assessment of the economy of the occupied Palestinian territory, an elaborate analysis of the potentials for its development in various sectors and the formulation of proposals for alternative development strategies. Accordingly, the study, entitled "The West Bank and Gaza Strip: Prospects for sustained development", will encompass the following three parts:

Part One. An assessment of the economic and social situation in the occupied Palestinian territory
4. This part constitutes a thorough examination of the economic and social situation of the Palestinian people in the West Bank and Gaza Strip during the past 24 years of Israeli occupation. In particular, it is intended to evaluate growth and development trends at the aggregate and sectoral levels. Attention will be focused on the growing impact of measures imposed by the occupation authorities on the Palestinian economy since 1967. It will assess the immediate outlook for the economy, taking into consideration the socio-economic implications of the Palestinian uprising and of the recent developments in the region affecting the economic and social situation of the Palestinian people in the occupied Palestinian territory.
5. The examination in part one is aimed at highlighting the main characteristics of the structural transformation of the Palestinian economy in the occupied territory and its performance since 1967, identifying the

impediments to its growth and development, and examining feasible measures needed for its immediate revival. Special attention will be given to the urgent needs of the economy in the wake of the Palestinian uprising and the recent developments in the region.

Part Two: Prospects for the future

6. Based on the analysis and findings under part one and bearing in mind growth and development expectations and potentials of the Palestinian people, part two of the study will attempt at discerning probable future pattern of growth of the Palestinian economy and working out their implications for feasible strategies and policy options. The approach to be followed is based on a macroeconomic analysis of resource availabilities and uses. Given the limited data available, emphasis will be placed on ascertaining, through parametric exercises, the internal consistencies among major aggregates by investigating resources gaps - with particular emphasis on savings and investments, foreign trade and employment gaps. At the sectoral level, an attempt will be made to examine such consistencies in leading sectors by looking into the sectoral composition of output, as well as employment and resource (physical, human and financial) availabilities and needs.

7. The examination of the aggregate and sectoral consistencies will be extended under varying assumptions to consider alternative scenarios, including one for an independent and self-reliant Palestinian economy. This will entail identifying different growth and development objectives, priorities, targets and policy options at both the aggregate and sectoral levels within a specified time-frame and in line with the socio-economic needs and potentials of an evolving future Palestinian society. Particular attention will be given to those sectors and areas of production in which the economy of the territory would clearly demonstrate comparative advantages and provide possibilities for promoting external complementarities.

Part Three. A substantive framework for the sustained growth and development of the Palestinian economy in the 1990s

8. Based on the results of the investigations and the conclusions reached under parts one and two, part three will deal with the formulation of a consolidated substantive framework for the growth and development of the Palestinian economy into the year 2000. The framework will outline strategy guidelines and policy options for action at various levels.

9. In line with the work plan for the preparation of the study, the secretariat of the United Nations Conference on Trade and Development (UNCTAD) has embarked upon a number of activities. Within the overall substantive scope of the study, a total of 25 sectors, subsectors and issues have been identified for in-depth investigation leading to the preparation of specific studies. These cover the following subjects:

1. Population and demography
2. Public administration

3. Aggregate economic and social performance
4. Labour, employment and human resources
5. Money and banking
6. Public finance
7. Agriculture
8. Manufacturing industries
9. Mining and quarrying
10. Energy resources and development needs
11. Public utilities
12. Housing and construction
13. Israeli settlements
14. Merchandise trade
15. Services
16. Transport and communications
17. Education system
18. Public health conditions and services
19. Social welfare services
20. Women in development
21. International assistance
22. Socio-economic statistics
23. Water resources
24. Dynamics of social change
25. Tourism and related activities.

10. Detailed outlines were developed for the preparation of specific studies on each of the above subjects. The outlines of the studies are structured in such a manner as to correspond to the three parts of the general outline of the overall intersectoral study itself. They are particularly designed to

provide for: (a) an analysis and assessment of economic and social developments over the past 21 years of occupation; (b) an investigation of prospects for the future; and (c) the formulation of a frame of reference for feasible strategies, policy options and measures for action. Accordingly, 27 experts have been commissioned to prepare these studies. A team of senior development experts has also been engaged to assist the UNCTAD secretariat in the evaluation and review of the individual studies and in investigating prospects for the future development of the occupied Palestinian territory.

11. The outlines of the specific studies were also brought to the attention of the relevant organizations of the United Nations system with a view to coordinating efforts and soliciting their observations and possible contributions. These include the Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations (FAO), the United Nations Industrial Development Organization (UNIDO), the United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization (UNESCO), the World Health Organization (WHO), the International Labour Organisation (ILO), the United Nations Relief and Works Agency for Palestine Refugees in the Near East (UNRWA), the United Nations Centre for Human Settlements (Habitat) and the United Nations Development Programme (UNDP), as well as the Department of International Economic and Social Affairs (DIESA), the Department of Technical Cooperation for Development (DTCD), the Centre for Social Development and Humanitarian Affairs - Division for the Advancement of Women (CSDHA) and the United Nations Economic and Social Commission for Western Asia (ESCWA). All these agencies, programmes and secretariat departments have responded positively indicating their willingness to cooperate in the preparation of the intersectoral study; the majority of them have also provided UNCTAD with their substantive contributions to the preparation of the intersectoral study by reflecting on the overall outline of the intersectoral study itself and the detailed outlines of the respective specific studies of interest to them and by providing material as input to these studies. UNDP, through the logistical support provided by its Programme of Assistance to the Palestinian People, has offered to facilitate the task of the UNCTAD secretariat in undertaking these specific studies.

12. Similar contacts were established with regional Arab and other organizations involved in providing assistance to the Palestinian people. These included the Fund for International Development of the Organization of Petroleum-Exporting Countries, the Arab Organization for Agricultural Development, the Arab Organization for Mining and Industrial Development, the Islamic Development Bank, and the Arab Fund for Economic and Social Development, as well as the General Secretariat of the League of Arab States. The Arab Organization for Mining and Industrial Development and the OPEC Fund for International Development also made financial contributions. These contributions have been applied to the investigation of sectors/issues of relevance to the concerns of the contributing agencies. The Economic and Social Council of the League of Arab States has also earmarked a sum to assist in the financing of specific activities of the project.

13. In view of the positive and encouraging responses received from both international and regional organizations, the UNCTAD secretariat will endeavour to benefit from their expertise and to promote further cooperation

with each one of them towards the completion of the intersectoral study, thus providing an integrated framework which will aim at effectively guiding the nature, magnitude and direction of international assistance to the Palestinian people and enhancing its effectiveness.

14. The UNCTAD secretariat has also held consultations on the study with relevant government authorities in Egypt and Jordan. Consultations were also held with representatives of Palestine. One of the objectives behind these consultations has been to identify areas of complementarities between the economies of the region and that of the occupied Palestinian territory and to investigate possibilities of exploiting and promoting such complementarities for the mutual benefit of all concerned. The Secretary-General of UNCTAD is in contact with the Israeli authorities with the view to holding similar consultations on the subject.

15. Parallel to embarking on the preparation of the in-depth studies on specific sectors/issues, the UNCTAD secretariat has also intensified work on the development of its database on the economy of the occupied Palestinian territory. This was intended, *inter alia*, to provide an adequate common basis for meeting the quantitative needs of the intersectoral study in general and of the specific studies in particular. This entailed identification of reliable data sources, followed by the classification of available data in accordance with the system of Economic Time Series (ETS) in use at the UNCTAD secretariat, the entry of the data for the period 1968-1990 into the computer system, including verification and tabulation, covering such series as national accounts, balance of payments, external merchandise trade, population, labour and employment. Accordingly, a fully computerized statistical base on the economy of the occupied Palestinian territory has been established covering the West Bank and Gaza Strip separately and combined. In addition to serving as a consolidated set of statistical series on the Palestinian economy, covering over 20 years of occupation, the new set of statistics also provides the basis for work under way at present in the UNCTAD secretariat on assessing future prospects for the Palestinian economy.

16. Accordingly, and applying the statistical series so established, the UNCTAD secretariat has initiated work on developing a conceptual/analytical framework which will provide technical guidelines for investigating, under different scenarios, future prospects in each of the economic and social fields where specific studies are being prepared. Upon the completion of this framework and the finalization of part one of the specific studies, a meeting of the experts involved in the preparation of these studies will be convened to examine and adopt the guidelines so established, thus providing a common basis for the experts to investigate future prospects in parts two and three of their respective studies. The major findings emerging from the specific studies will be subsequently consolidated into a substantive frame of reference outlining immediate problems and needs, growth and development prospects, strategies and policy options for action at various levels. In view of the recent crisis in the region and the difficulties encountered in commencing the preparation of the intersectoral study, work on the project is now expected to be completed during the first semester of 1992 with the final report and other related documentation appearing soon thereafter.

Annex

**THE WEST BANK AND GAZA STRIP: PROSPECTS FOR SUSTAINED
ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT**

(Provisional outline)

INTRODUCTION (including objective, scope, definitions and methodology)

Part One

**AN ASSESSMENT OF ECONOMIC AND SOCIAL SITUATION IN THE
OCCUPIED PALESTINIAN TERRITORY: IMPACT OF PROLONGED
OCCUPATION AND THE IMMEDIATE OUTLOOK**

Chapter I. Salient features of the occupied Palestinian territory

- A. Area, topography, population and demographic characteristics
- B. Economic and social structures
- C. Public administration setting: executive, legislative and judicial systems

Chapter II. Aggregate economic performance: with particular reference to developments since the Palestinian uprising

- A. Structure and level of output
- B. Income and consumption
- C. Pattern and level of savings and investments
- D. Trade and payments
- E. Labour and employment

Chapter III. Resource availability and use

- A. Natural resources
 - 1. Land and water, including land tenure and water rights
 - 2. Forest, livestock and fisheries
 - 3. Minerals
 - 4. Others

B. Human resources

1. Labour and employment situation: by gender and socio-economic sectors (formal and informal)
2. Development of skills: fields and types of training both institutional and on the job
3. Degree of labour absorption and technology mix
4. Economic and social consequences of migration
5. Other related factors
6. Women in development

C. Financial resources

1. The monetary, banking and financial system, including insurance (structure and performance)
2. Public finance
 - a. Revenues (sources, structure and performance)
 - b. Expenditures (current and development)
3. External resources
 - a. Factor income
 - b. Unrequited transfers (private and official)

Chapter IV. Sectoral performance and constraints

A. Agriculture

1. Relative importance of agriculture in the Palestinian economy: sources of output (land, livestock, forests and fisheries)
2. Food consumption and nutritional status of the Palestinian people: aspects of food security
3. Structure and pattern of output by major branches: aspects of agricultural policy
 - a. Crops: changes in crop area, yield and composition and their underlying causes (e.g., land use, cropping intensity and irrigation, crop yield and the use of modern farm inputs, cropping patterns and changes in the relative share of low- and high-valued crops)

- b. **Livestock and fisheries: production pattern and immediate prospects and needs**
 - c. **Agricultural output and the immediate potential for food processing industries**
 - 4. **Land tenure and water rights, farm organization, finance (private and public sources) manpower (male and female), technology, energy, infrastructures (physical and institutional) and related supporting services as well as factors affecting their availability, efficient allocation and management**
 - 5. **Agriculture and rural employment and income situation**
 - 6. **Channels of distribution - access to markets**
 - a. **Domestic**
 - b. **External**
 - 7. **Policies and support measures affecting agricultural performance (prices, subsidies, wages, technology, markets, financial resources, infrastructures, etc.)**
 - 8. **Prospects for the immediate revival of the agriculture sector**
- B. Industry**
- 1. **Relative importance of industry in the Palestinian economy**
 - 2. **Manufacturing**
 - a. **Structure, raw materials, and orientation of output and consumption**
 - b. **Labour and employment, fixed and working capital financing, institutional requisites (including technical and managerial capacities and needs), sources of raw materials, etc., and factors affecting their availability and efficient use**
 - c. **Wages and productivity, including technology choice and dependency**
 - d. **Size and orientation of markets (internal and external), including subcontracting and competition with Israeli industrial products and prospects for import substitution and export promotion in markets of both developed and developing countries**

- e. Constraints affecting the growth and development of manufacturing and consideration of remedial measures for immediate revival
3. Mining and quarrying
 - a. Role and structure of the mineral industry
 - b. Capital, labour and infrastructures (physical, institutional and human resources), needs and immediate prospects
 4. Energy (role and sources, supply/demand situation and outlook, environmental factors, technical and institutional capacities, financial and human resources needs and immediate prospects)
- C. Construction
1. Housing
 - a. Prevailing situation
 - b. Urban and rural residential needs: demographic considerations
 2. Public works and other non-residential constructions
 3. Capital, manpower, raw material and infrastructural (both physical and institutional) requisites and constraints: immediate prospects
- D. Physical infrastructures
1. Spatial planning and environmental considerations (urban, rural and regional)
 2. Surface, sea and air transportation systems
 3. Other physical infrastructures
- E. Israeli settlements and their implications (geographic, demographic, economic, social, cultural and others)
- F. Trade and services
1. Trade
 - a. Internal
 - b. External (exports/imports)

2. Other services

- a. Transport and communication networks
- b. Tourism
- c. Professional and other private services

Chapter V. The role of social and welfare services in Palestinian economic development

- A. Education: formal and informal (by gender, level, type and field)
- B. Health services: with emphasis on the growing impact of occupation and the concomitant recent developments on the health of specifically vulnerable categories of population such as women, children, youth, handicapped and aged
- C. Social welfare services

Chapter VI. Main findings and conclusions: outlook for the immediate revival of the Palestinian economy

Part Two

PROSPECTS FOR THE FUTURE

Chapter I. The dynamics of growth and development of the Palestinian economy: an examination of the needs and potentials of the economy under varying premises over a medium-term period

- A. Internal consistencies: alternative scenarios
 1. Major aggregates (resources gaps, trade gap and employment gap)
 2. Leading sectors (composition of output and resources)
- B. Growth objectives, priorities and targets

Chapter II. Contribution of agriculture: objectives, strategies and policy options

- A. Objectives
- B. Strategies and policy considerations
 1. Structure, pattern of output and food security: possibilities for upgrading nutritional status of the Palestinian people in the territory including rural poverty alleviation

2. Comparative advantage: feasible options
 - a. Emphasis on fruit plantation
 - b. Horticulture versus staple food production
 - c. Livestock production (including fisheries)
 - d. Links with agro-based industries
 3. Agricultural output, regional complementarities and possibilities for entry into new markets
 4. Efficiency and productivity in agriculture (including ownership, farm organization, production relations, wages, prices and subsidies)
 5. Agriculture and employment opportunities (including rural development dimension)
 6. Agricultural development and resource needs
 - a. Land and water
 - b. Investments (magnitudes and types including equipment and inputs)
 - c. Human resources (including technical, managerial and entrepreneurial skills)
 7. Infrastructural needs
 - a. Physical (including spatial and environmental considerations)
 - b. Institutional (including administrative, legal, credit, marketing, research and development, cooperatives, extension services, training and other requisites)
- C. Potentials for agricultural development and policy considerations

Chapter III. Contribution of industry: objectives, strategies and policy options

- A. Objectives
- B. Strategies and policy options
 1. Sectoral composition, structure and size

- a. Industrial base and potential for restructuring (including prospects for backward/forward linkages in both traditional and modern manufacturing industries, labour (by gender) and technology mix, energy and other such considerations)
 - b. Prospects for agro-based and main traditional industries
 - c. Natural resources exploitation - mining and quarrying
 - d. Other industries
2. Complementarities and interdependence
- a. Market potential (demand considerations, including export promotion and import substitution prospects)
 - b. Economies of scale (internal and external)
 - c. Industrial zoning and joint ventures
 - d. Free trade area (costs and benefits)
 - e. The dynamics of comparative advantage (involving traditional products and technological innovation in new areas of manufacturing)
3. Industrial labour force - in the formal and informal sectors
- a. Composition: by branch, gender and age
 - b. Wages and productivity
 - c. Human resources development and needs (including technical and managerial skills)
4. Investment strategy
- a. Directly productive activities (consumer and capital goods)
 - b. Social over-head capital and external economies
 - c. Rural versus urban industrial development
 - d. Industrial development and environmental considerations
 - e. Entrepreneurship and inducement mechanisms, including the provision of technical, managerial and other forms of support services

5. **Infrastructural requisites**
 - a. **Physical (including industrial zoning)**
 - b. **Institutional capacities (including quality control, standardization and R and D)**
 - c. **Financing industrial development**
- C. **A synthesis of opportunities for the development of Palestinian industry**

Chapter IV. The role of trade and services

- A. **Trade: objectives, strategies and prerequisites**
 1. **Internal**
 2. **External (regional, developed market economy countries, developing countries and socialist countries)**
- B. **Services: objectives, strategies and prerequisites (transport and communication, tourism, finance, and others)**

Chapter V. Infrastructure and social and welfare services: objectives and strategies

- A. **Transport and communication infrastructures: surface, air and sea transport links including railroad, airport and seaport facilities**
- B. **Public utilities (including water, electricity, public transport, PTT, etc.)**
- C. **Housing (including infrastructure needs and related basic services)**
- D. **Education (formal and informal)**
- E. **Health**
- F. **Welfare services**
- G. **Public administration network (including legislative and judicial systems at the central and local levels): the dynamics of an emerging society**
- H. **Role of local non-governmental organizations and "participatory development" programmes**

Chapter VI. Resources mobilization: objectives and strategies

A. Energy resources

1. Sources
2. Supply and demand situation - medium- to long-term prospects
3. Investment requirements - infrastructures
4. Institutional and manpower requirements

B. Human resources

1. Population, labour force and employment opportunities (a supply and demand analysis and forecast by gender)
2. Size and scope of technical, managerial and other skills
3. Entrepreneurship and development needs
4. Wages and productivity (an examination into labour versus capital intensive approaches to development)
5. Labour service exports - economic and social implications
6. Manpower development needs: role of formal and informal education and training programmes
7. The role of women in Palestinian economic and social development

C. Financial resources

1. Savings and investments (capital formation versus aggregate and sectoral rates of growth)
2. Domestic finance
 - a. Public finance (central and local authorities)
 - Revenues (tax and non-tax)
 - Expenditures (current and development)
 - b. Private finance
 - c. Money and banking (including the role of a central monetary authority)
 - d. Role of specialized development finance institutions

3. Resource gap
4. External financial flows
 - a. Factor income and remittances
 - b. Grants and loans
- D. Assessment of international assistance (including substantive and institutional considerations - short- and long-term perspectives)

Part Three

A SUBSTANTIVE FRAMEWORK FOR THE SUSTAINED GROWTH AND DEVELOPMENT
OF THE PALESTINIAN ECONOMY INTO THE 1990s

- Chapter I. Development objectives and priorities: medium- and long-term perspectives
- Chapter II. Strategy considerations: options
- Chapter III. Policy guidelines: overall and sectoral

11. *Welcomes* the continued initiative exercised by the United Nations Development Programme in maintaining close liaison among the specialized agencies and other organizations of the United Nations system and in providing assistance to the peoples of Non-Self-Governing Territories;

12. *Encourages* Non-Self-Governing Territories to take steps to establish and/or strengthen disaster preparedness and management institutions and policies;

13. *Requests* the administering Powers concerned to facilitate the participation of appointed and elected representatives of Non-Self-Governing Territories in the relevant meetings and conferences of the agencies and organizations so that the Territories may benefit from the related activities of the specialized agencies and other organizations of the United Nations system;

14. *Recommends* that all Governments intensify their efforts in the specialized agencies and other organizations of the United Nations system of which they are members to accord priority to the question of providing assistance to the peoples of Non-Self-Governing Territories;

15. *Draws the attention* of the Special Committee on the Situation with regard to the Implementation of the Declaration on the Granting of Independence to Colonial Countries and Peoples to the present resolution and to the discussion held on the subject at the substantive session of 1997 of the Economic and Social Council;

16. *Requests* the President of the Economic and Social Council to continue to maintain close contact on these matters with the Chairman of the Special Committee and to report thereon to the Council;

17. *Requests* the Secretary-General to follow the implementation of the present resolution, paying particular attention to cooperation and integration arrangements for maximizing the efficiency of the assistance activities undertaken by various organizations of the United Nations system, and to report thereon to the Council at its substantive session of 1998;

18. *Decides* to keep these questions under continuous review.

*42nd plenary meeting
25 July 1997*

1997/67. Economic and social repercussions of the Israeli occupation on the living conditions of the Palestinian people in the occupied Palestinian territory, including Jerusalem, and of the Arab population in the occupied Syrian Golan

The Economic and Social Council,

Recalling General Assembly resolution 51/190 of 16 December 1996,

Recalling also its resolution 1996/40 of 26 July 1996,

Guided by the principles of the Charter of the United Nations, affirming the inadmissibility of the acquisition of territory by force, and recalling relevant Security Council

resolutions, including resolutions 242 (1967) of 22 November 1967, 465 (1980) of 1 March 1980 and 497 (1981) of 17 December 1981,

Reaffirming the applicability of the Geneva Convention relative to the Protection of Civilian Persons in Time of War, of 12 August 1949,⁶² to the occupied Palestinian territory, including Jerusalem, and other Arab territories occupied by Israel since 1967,

Stressing the importance of the revival of the Middle East peace process on the basis of Security Council resolutions 242 (1967), 338 (1973) of 22 October 1973 and 425 (1978) of 19 March 1978 and the principle of land for peace, as well as the full and timely implementation of the agreements reached between the Government of Israel and the Palestine Liberation Organization, the representative of the Palestinian people,

Reaffirming the principle of the permanent sovereignty of people under foreign occupation over their natural resources,

Convinced that the Israeli occupation impedes efforts to achieve sustainable development and a sound economic environment in the occupied Palestinian territory, including Jerusalem, and the occupied Syrian Golan,

Gravely concerned about the deterioration of the economic and living conditions of the Palestinian people in the occupied Palestinian territory, including Jerusalem, and of the Arab population of the occupied Syrian Golan, and the exploitation by Israel, the occupying Power, of their natural resources,

Aware of the important work being done by the United Nations and the specialized agencies in support of the economic and social development of the Palestinian people,

Conscious of the urgent need for the development of the economic and social infrastructure of the occupied Palestinian territory, including Jerusalem, and for the improvement of the living conditions of the Palestinian people as a key element of a lasting peace and stability,

1. *Stresses* the need to preserve the territorial integrity of all of the occupied Palestinian territory and to guarantee the freedom of movement of persons and goods in the territory, including the removal of restrictions into and from East Jerusalem, and the freedom of movement to and from the outside world;

2. *Also stresses* the vital importance of the operation and construction of the Gaza airport, the seaport in Gaza and safe passage to the economic and social development of the Palestinian people;

3. *Calls upon* Israel, the occupying Power, to cease its measures against the Palestinian people, in particular the closure of the occupied Palestinian territory, the enforced isolation of Palestinian towns, the destruction of homes and the isolation of Jerusalem;

4. *Reaffirms* the inalienable right of the Palestinian people and the Arab population of the occupied Syrian Golan to all their natural and economic resources, and calls upon Israel, the occupying Power, not to exploit, endanger, or cause loss or depletion of these resources;

5. *Reaffirms* that Israeli settlements in the occupied Palestinian territory, including Jerusalem, and the occupied Syrian Golan are illegal and an obstacle to economic and social development;

6. *Stresses* the importance of the work of the organizations and agencies of the United Nations and of the United Nations Special Coordinator in the Occupied Territories under the auspices of the Secretary-General;

7. *Urges* Member States to encourage private foreign investment in the occupied Palestinian territory, including Jerusalem, in infrastructure, job-creation projects and social development, in order to alleviate the hardship of the Palestinian people and improve their living conditions;

8. *Requests* the Secretary-General to submit to the General Assembly at its fifty-third session, through the Economic and Social Council, a report on the implementation of the present resolution and to continue to include, in the report of the Special Coordinator, an update on the living conditions of the Palestinian people, in collaboration with relevant organizations and agencies of the United Nations;

9. *Decides* to include the item henceforth to be entitled "Economic and social repercussions of the Israeli occupation on the living conditions of the Palestinian people in the occupied Palestinian territory, including Jerusalem, and the Arab population in the occupied Syrian Golan" in the agenda of its substantive session of 1998.

*42nd plenary meeting
25 July 1997*

“Emphasizing that the promotion of a culture of peace and non-violence, by which children learn to live together in peace and harmony which will contribute to the strengthening of international peace and cooperation, should emanate from adults and be instilled in children,

“Underlining that the proposed international decade for a culture of peace and non-violence for the children of the world will contribute to the promotion of a culture of peace based on the principles embodied in the Charter and on respect for human rights, democracy and tolerance, the promotion of development, education for peace, the free flow of information and the wider participation of women as an integral approach to preventing violence and conflicts, and efforts aimed at the creation of conditions for peace and its consolidation,

“Convinced that such a decade, at the beginning of the new millennium, would greatly assist the efforts of the international community to foster peace, harmony, all human rights, democracy and development throughout the world,

“1. Proclaims the period 2001–2010 as the International Decade for a Culture of Peace and Non-violence for the Children of the World;

“2. Invites the Secretary-General to submit, in consultation with Member States, relevant United Nations bodies and non-governmental organizations, a report to the General Assembly at its fifty-fifth session and a draft programme of action to promote the implementation of the Decade at the local, national, regional and international levels, and to coordinate the activities of the Decade;

“3. Invites Member States to take the necessary steps to ensure that the practice of peace and non-violence is taught at all levels in their respective societies, including in educational institutions;

“4. Calls upon the relevant United Nations bodies, in particular the United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization and the United Nations Children’s Fund, and invites non-governmental organizations, religious bodies and groups, educational institutions, artists and the media actively to support the Decade for the benefit of every child of the world;

“5. Decides to consider, at its fifty-fifth session, the question of the International Decade for a Culture of Peace and Non-violence for the Children of the World (2001–2010) under the agenda item entitled ‘Culture of peace’.”

*45th plenary meeting
29 July 1998*

1998/32. Economic and social repercussions of the Israeli occupation on the living conditions of the Palestinian people in the occupied Palestinian territory, including Jerusalem, and the Arab population in the occupied Syrian Golan

The Economic and Social Council,

Recalling General Assembly resolution 52/207 of 18 December 1997,

Recalling also its resolution 1997/67 of 25 July 1997,

Guided by the principles of the Charter of the United Nations, affirming the inadmissibility of the acquisition of territory by force, and recalling relevant Security Council resolutions, including resolutions 242 (1967) of 22 November 1967, 465 (1980) of 1 March 1980 and 497 (1981) of 17 December 1981,

Reaffirming the applicability of the Geneva Convention relative to the Protection of Civilian Persons in Time of War, of 12 August 1949,³¹ to the occupied Palestinian territory, including Jerusalem, and other Arab territories occupied by Israel since 1967,

Stressing the importance of the revival of the Middle East peace process on the basis of Security Council resolutions 242 (1967), 338 (1973) of 22 October 1973 and 425 (1978) of 19 March 1978 and the principle of land for peace, as well as the full and timely implementation of the agreements reached between the Government of Israel and the Palestine Liberation Organization, the representative of the Palestinian people,

Reaffirming the principle of the permanent sovereignty of peoples under foreign occupation over their natural resources,

Convinced that the Israeli occupation impedes efforts to achieve sustainable development and a sound economic environment in the occupied Palestinian territory, including Jerusalem, and the occupied Syrian Golan,

Gravely concerned about the deterioration of the economic and living conditions of the Palestinian people in the occupied Palestinian territory, including Jerusalem, and of the Arab population of the occupied Syrian Golan, and the exploitation by Israel, the occupying Power, of their natural resources,

Aware of the important work being done by the United Nations and the specialized agencies in support of the economic and social development of the Palestinian people,

Conscious of the urgent need for the development of the economic and social infrastructure of the occupied Palestinian territory, including Jerusalem, and for the improvement of the living conditions of the Palestinian people as a key element of a lasting peace and stability,

1. *Stresses* the need to preserve the territorial integrity of all of the occupied Palestinian territory and to guarantee the freedom of movement of persons and goods in the territory, including the removal of restrictions on going into and from East Jerusalem, and the freedom of movement to and from the outside world;

2. *Also stresses* the vital importance of the construction and operation of the Gaza airport, the seaport in Gaza and safe passage to the economic and social development of the Palestinian people;

3. *Calls upon* Israel, the occupying Power, to cease its measures against the Palestinian people, in particular the closure of the occupied Palestinian territory, the enforced isolation of Palestinian towns, the destruction of homes and the isolation of Jerusalem;

4. *Reaffirms* the inalienable right of the Palestinian people and the Arab population of the occupied Syrian Golan to all their natural and economic resources, and calls upon Israel, the occupying Power, not to exploit, endanger or cause loss or depletion of these resources;

5. *Also reaffirms* that Israeli settlements in the occupied Palestinian territory, including Jerusalem, and the occupied Syrian Golan are illegal and an obstacle to economic and social development;

6. *Stresses* the importance of the work of the organizations and agencies of the United Nations and of the United Nations Special Coordinator in the Occupied Territories under the auspices of the Secretary-General;

7. *Urges* Member States to encourage private foreign investment in the occupied Palestinian territory, including Jerusalem, in infrastructure, job-creation projects and social development, in order to alleviate the hardship of the Palestinian people and improve living conditions;

8. *Requests* the Secretary-General to submit to the General Assembly at its fifty-fourth session, through the Economic and Social Council, a report on the implementation of the present resolution and to continue to include, in the report of the Special Coordinator, an update on the living conditions of the Palestinian people, in collaboration with relevant United Nations agencies;

9. *Decides* to include the item entitled "Economic and social repercussions of the Israeli occupation on the living conditions of the Palestinian people in the occupied Palestinian territory, including Jerusalem, and the Arab population in the occupied Syrian Golan" in the agenda of its substantive session of 1999.

*45th plenary meeting
29 July 1998*

1998/33. Question of a draft declaration on the right and responsibility of individuals, groups and organs of society to promote and protect universally recognized human rights and fundamental freedoms

The Economic and Social Council,

Taking note of Commission on Human Rights resolution 1998/7 of 3 April 1998,¹¹⁴ in which the Commission approved the text of the draft declaration on the right and responsibility of individuals, groups and organs of society to promote and protect universally recognized human rights and fundamental freedoms,

1. *Expresses its appreciation* to the Commission on Human Rights for finalizing the draft declaration on the right and responsibility of individuals, groups and organs of society to promote and protect universally recognized human rights and fundamental freedoms;

2. *Approves* the draft declaration, as contained in the annex to Commission resolution 1998/7, and recommends it to the General Assembly for adoption at its fifty-third session;

3. *Recommends* that, after adoption by the General Assembly, the full text of the Declaration should be disseminated as widely as possible.

*46th plenary meeting
30 July 1998*

1998/34. Working group of the Commission on Human Rights to elaborate a draft declaration in accordance with paragraph 5 of General Assembly resolution 49/214

The Economic and Social Council,

Taking note of Commission on Human Rights resolution 1998/14 of 9 April 1998,¹¹⁴

1. *Authorizes* the open-ended inter-sessional working group of the Commission on Human Rights established in accordance with Commission resolution 1995/32 of 3 March 1995¹¹⁶ to meet for a period of ten working days prior to the fifty-fifth session of the Commission, the costs of the meeting to be met from within existing resources;

2. *Requests* the Secretary-General to extend all necessary facilities, from within existing United Nations resources, to the working group for its meetings.

*46th plenary meeting
30 July 1998*

1998/35. Question of a draft optional protocol to the Convention against Torture and Other Cruel, Inhuman or Degrading Treatment or Punishment

The Economic and Social Council,

Taking note of Commission on Human Rights resolution 1998/34 of 17 April 1998,¹¹⁴

1. *Authorizes* an open-ended working group of the Commission on Human Rights to meet for a period of two weeks, with a possibility of extending it to three weeks, within existing resources, prior to the fifty-fifth session of the Commission in order to continue or conclude the elaboration of a draft optional protocol to the Convention against Torture and Other Cruel, Inhuman or Degrading Treatment or Punishment;²⁵

2. *Requests* the Secretary-General to extend to the working group all necessary facilities for its meetings and to transmit the report of the working group¹¹⁷ to Governments, the specialized agencies, the chairpersons of the human rights treaty bodies and the intergovernmental and non-governmental organizations concerned.

*46th plenary meeting
30 July 1998*

¹¹⁶ See *Official Records of the Economic and Social Council, 1995, Supplement No. 3* and corrigenda (E/1995/23 and Corr.1 and 2), chap. II, sect. A.

¹¹⁷ E/CN.4/1998/42 and Corr.1.

1999/53. Economic and social repercussions of the Israeli occupation on the living conditions of the Palestinian people in the occupied Palestinian territory, including Jerusalem, and the Arab population in the occupied Syrian Golan

The Economic and Social Council,

Recalling General Assembly resolution 53/196 of 15 December 1998,

Recalling also its resolution 1998/32 of 29 July 1998,

Guided by the principles of the Charter of the United Nations, affirming the inadmissibility of the acquisition of territory by force, and recalling relevant Security Council resolutions, including resolutions 242 (1967) of 22 November 1967, 465 (1980) of 1 March 1980 and 497 (1981) of 17 December 1981,

Reaffirming the applicability of the Geneva Convention relative to the Protection of Civilian Persons in Time of War, of 12 August 1949,²⁷ to the occupied Palestinian territory, including Jerusalem, and other Arab territories occupied by Israel since 1967,

Stressing the importance of the revival of the Middle East peace process on the basis of Security Council resolutions 242 (1967), 338 (1973) of 22 October 1973 and 425 (1978) of 19 March 1978, and the principle of land for peace as well as the full and timely implementation of the agreements reached between the Government of Israel and the Palestine Liberation Organization, the representative of the Palestinian people,

Reaffirming the principle of the permanent sovereignty of peoples under foreign occupation over their natural resources,

Convinced that the Israeli occupation impedes efforts to achieve sustainable development and a sound economic environment in the occupied Palestinian territory, including Jerusalem, and the occupied Syrian Golan,

Gravely concerned about the deterioration of economic and living conditions of the Palestinian people in the occupied Palestinian territory, including Jerusalem, and of the Arab population of the occupied Syrian Golan, and the exploitation by Israel, the occupying Power, of their natural resources,

Aware of the important work being done by the United Nations and the specialized agencies in support of the economic and social development of the Palestinian people,

Conscious of the urgent need for the development of the economic and social infrastructure of the occupied Palestinian territory, including Jerusalem, and for the improvement of the living conditions of the Palestinian people as a key element of a lasting peace and stability,

1. *Stresses* the need to preserve the territorial integrity of all of the occupied Palestinian territory and to guarantee the freedom of movement of persons and goods in the territory, including the removal of restrictions on going into and from East Jerusalem, and the freedom of movement to and from the outside world;

2. *Also stresses* the vital importance of the construction and operation of the seaport in Gaza and safe

passage to the economic and social development of the Palestinian people;

3. *Calls upon* Israel, the occupying Power, to cease its measures against the Palestinian people, in particular the closure of the occupied Palestinian territory, the enforced isolation of Palestinian towns, the destruction of homes and the isolation of Jerusalem;

4. *Reaffirms* the inalienable right of the Palestinian people and the Arab population of the occupied Syrian Golan to all their natural and economic resources, and calls upon Israel, the occupying Power, not to exploit, endanger or cause loss or depletion of these resources;

5. *Also reaffirms* that Israeli settlements in the occupied Palestinian territory, including Jerusalem, and the occupied Syrian Golan, are illegal and an obstacle to economic and social development;

6. *Stresses* the importance of the work of the organizations and agencies of the United Nations, and of the United Nations Special Coordinator in the Occupied Territories under the auspices of the Secretary-General;

7. *Urges* Member States to encourage private foreign investment in the occupied Palestinian territory, including Jerusalem, in infrastructure, job-creation projects and social development, in order to alleviate the hardship of the Palestinian people and improve living conditions;

8. *Requests* the Secretary-General to submit to the General Assembly at its fifty-fifth session, through the Economic and Social Council, a report on the implementation of the present resolution and to continue to include, in the report of the Special Coordinator, an update on the living conditions of the Palestinian people, in collaboration with relevant United Nations agencies;

9. *Decides* to include the item entitled "Economic and social repercussions of the Israeli occupation on the living conditions of the Palestinian people in the occupied Palestinian territory, including Jerusalem, and the Arab population in the occupied Syrian Golan" in the agenda of its substantive session of 2000.

*45th plenary meeting
29 July 1999*

1999/54. Revitalization of the International Research and Training Institute for the Advancement of Women

The Economic and Social Council,

Recalling its resolution 1998/48 of 31 July 1998 on the International Research and Training Institute for the Advancement of Women,

Reiterating the importance of article I of the statute of the Institute,¹⁵⁰ setting out its autonomous status,

Reiterating also the importance of paragraph 334 of the Beijing Platform for Action²¹ and the relevant provisions contained in its agreed conclusions 1997/2 of 18 July 1997,³⁵

¹⁵⁰ A/39/511, annex.

7. *Requests* the specialized agencies and other organizations of the United Nations system and international and regional organizations to examine and review conditions in each Territory so as to take appropriate measures to accelerate progress in the economic and social sectors of the Territories;

8. *Requests* the specialized agencies and the international institutions associated with the United Nations and regional organizations to strengthen existing measures of support and formulate appropriate programmes of assistance to the remaining Non-Self-Governing Territories, within the framework of their respective mandates, in order to accelerate progress in the economic and social sectors of those Territories;

9. *Recommends* that the executive heads of the specialized agencies and other organizations of the United Nations system formulate, with the active cooperation of the regional organizations concerned, concrete proposals for the full implementation of the relevant resolutions of the United Nations and submit the proposals to their governing and legislative organs;

10. *Also recommends* that the specialized agencies and other organizations of the United Nations system continue to review, at the regular meetings of their governing bodies, the implementation of General Assembly resolution 1514 (XV) and other relevant resolutions of the United Nations;

11. *Welcomes* the continuing initiative exercised by the United Nations Development Programme in maintaining close liaison among the specialized agencies and other organizations of the United Nations system and in providing assistance to the peoples of the Non-Self-Governing Territories;

12. *Encourages* Non-Self-Governing Territories to take steps to establish and/or strengthen disaster preparedness and management institutions and policies;

13. *Requests* the administering Powers concerned to facilitate, when appropriate, the participation of appointed and elected representatives of Non-Self-Governing Territories in the relevant meetings and conferences of the specialized agencies and other organizations of the United Nations system, in accordance with relevant United Nations resolutions and decisions, including resolutions and decisions of the General Assembly and the Special Committee on the Situation with regard to the Implementation of the Declaration on the Granting of Independence to Colonial Countries and Peoples on specific Territories, so that the Territories may benefit from the related activities of those agencies and organizations;

14. *Recommends* that all Governments intensify their efforts in the specialized agencies and other organizations of the United Nations system of which they are members to accord priority to the question of providing assistance to the peoples of the Non-Self-Governing Territories;

15. *Draws the attention* of the Special Committee to the present resolution and to the discussion held on the subject at the substantive session of 2000 of the Council;

16. *Welcomes* the adoption by the Economic Commission for Latin America and the Caribbean of resolution 574 (XXVII) of 16 May 1998²⁸ calling for the necessary mechanisms for its associate members, including small island Non-Self-Governing Territories, to participate in the special sessions of the General Assembly, subject to the rules of procedure of the Assembly, to review and assess the implementation of the plans of action of those United Nations world conferences in which the Territories originally participated in the capacity of observer, and in the work of the Council and its subsidiary bodies;

17. *Also welcomes* the adoption by the General Assembly of its resolution 54/85, in which, inter alia, the Assembly recalled its resolution 53/189 of 15 December 1998, in which, inter alia, it had called for the participation of associate members of regional economic commissions in its special session on small island developing States, subject to the rules of procedure of the Assembly, and in the preparatory process thereof, in the same capacity of observer that had held for their participation in the Global Conference on the Sustainable Development of Small Island Developing States, held at Bridgetown from 25 April to 6 May 1994;

18. *Requests* the President of the Council to continue to maintain close contact on these matters with the Chairman of the Special Committee, and to report thereon to the Council;

19. *Requests* the Secretary-General to follow the implementation of the present resolution, paying particular attention to cooperation and integration arrangements for maximizing the efficiency of the assistance activities undertaken by various organizations of the United Nations system, and to report thereon to the Council at its substantive session of 2001;

20. *Decides* to keep these questions under continuous review.

*45th plenary meeting
28 July 2000*

2000/31. Economic and social repercussions of the Israeli occupation on the living conditions of the Palestinian people in the occupied Palestinian territory, including Jerusalem, and the Arab population in the occupied Syrian Golan

The Economic and Social Council,

Recalling General Assembly resolution 54/230 of 22 December 1999,

Recalling also its resolution 1999/53 of 29 July 1999,

Guided by the principles of the Charter of the United Nations, affirming the inadmissibility of the acquisition of

territory by force, and recalling relevant Security Council resolutions, including resolutions 242 (1967) of 22 November 1967, 465 (1980) of 1 March 1980 and 497 (1981) of 17 December 1981,

Reaffirming the applicability of the Geneva Convention relative to the Protection of Civilian Persons in Time of War, of 12 August 1949,³⁹ to the occupied Palestinian territory, including Jerusalem, and other Arab territories occupied by Israel since 1967,

Stressing the importance of the revival of the Middle East peace process on the basis of Security Council resolutions 242 (1967), 338 (1973) of 22 October 1973 and 425 (1978) of 19 March 1978, and the principle of land for peace as well as the full and timely implementation of the agreements reached between the Government of Israel and the Palestine Liberation Organization, the representative of the Palestinian people,

Reaffirming the principle of the permanent sovereignty of peoples under foreign occupation over their natural resources,

Convinced that the Israeli occupation impedes efforts to achieve sustainable development and a sound economic environment in the occupied Palestinian territory, including Jerusalem, and the occupied Syrian Golan,

Gravely concerned about the deterioration of economic and living conditions of the Palestinian people in the occupied Palestinian territory, including Jerusalem, and of the Arab population of the occupied Syrian Golan, and the exploitation by Israel, the occupying Power, of their natural resources,

Aware of the important work being done by the United Nations and the specialized agencies in support of the economic and social development of the Palestinian people,

Conscious of the urgent need for the development of the economic and social infrastructure of the occupied Palestinian territory, including Jerusalem, and for the improvement of the living conditions of the Palestinian people as a key element of a lasting peace and stability,

1. *Stresses* the need to preserve the territorial integrity of all of the occupied Palestinian territory and to guarantee the freedom of movement of persons and goods in the territory, including the removal of restrictions on going into and from East Jerusalem, and the freedom of movement to and from the outside world;

2. *Also stresses* the vital importance of the construction and operation of the seaport in Gaza and safe passage to the economic and social development of the Palestinian people;

3. *Calls upon* Israel, the occupying Power, to cease its measures against the Palestinian people, in particular the closure of the occupied Palestinian territory, the enforced isolation of Palestinian towns, the destruction of homes and the isolation of Jerusalem;

4. *Reaffirms* the inalienable right of the Palestinian people and the Arab population of the occupied Syrian Golan to all their natural and economic resources, and calls upon Israel, the occupying Power, not to exploit, endanger or cause loss or depletion of these resources;

5. *Also reaffirms* that Israeli settlements in the occupied Palestinian territory, including Jerusalem, and the occupied Syrian Golan, are illegal and an obstacle to economic and social development;

6. *Stresses* the importance of the work of the organizations and agencies of the United Nations, and of the United Nations Special Coordinator for the Middle East Peace Process and Personal Representative of the Secretary-General to the Palestine Liberation Organization and the Palestinian Authority;

7. *Urges* Member States to encourage private foreign investment in the occupied Palestinian territory, including Jerusalem, in infrastructure, job-creation projects and social development, in order to alleviate the hardship of the Palestinian people and improve living conditions;

8. *Requests* the Secretary-General to submit to the General Assembly at its fifty-sixth session, through the Economic and Social Council, a report on the implementation of the present resolution and to continue to include, in the report of the Special Coordinator, an update on the living conditions of the Palestinian people, in collaboration with relevant United Nations agencies;

9. *Decides* to include the item entitled "Economic and social repercussions of the Israeli occupation on the living conditions of the Palestinian people in the occupied Palestinian territory, including Jerusalem, and the Arab population in the occupied Syrian Golan" in the agenda of its substantive session of 2001.

*45th plenary meeting
28 July 2000*

2000/32. Assistance to third States affected by the application of sanctions

The Economic and Social Council,

Recalling its resolution 1999/59 of 30 July 1999,

Recalling also General Assembly resolution 54/107 of 9 December 1999 on the implementation of the provisions of the Charter of the United Nations related to assistance to third States affected by the application of sanctions,

Aware of the decision of the Security Council to establish on a temporary basis an informal working group of the Council to develop general recommendations on how to improve the effectiveness of United Nations sanctions, including, inter alia, the issues of unintended impacts of sanctions and assistance to Member States in implementing sanctions, as contained in the

relevant bodies and authorities, was requested to establish standards to be used in the electronic transmission of data between the Programme and national authorities responsible for drug control,

Recalling also its resolution 1994/3 of 20 July 1994 and Commission on Narcotic Drugs resolution 43/1,⁵⁵ in which the Programme was requested to integrate all annual reports questionnaires, using modern communication and presentation techniques,

Taking into account the report of the Secretary-General on the utilization of the development dividend⁵⁶ and General Assembly resolution 53/220 of 7 April 1999, in which the Assembly approved the sum of 1.1 million United States dollars for the expansion of the computer and telecommunication system for international and national drug control (hereinafter referred to as the national database system) as an important development in building national capacities, in particular in developing countries,

Cognizant of the findings of the in-depth evaluation of the Programme carried out by the Office of Internal Oversight Services,⁵⁷ in which the Programme is requested to strengthen its capacity for gathering information from Governments by expanding the national database system to cover other data-collection activities,⁵⁸

Taking note of the progress made by the Programme through the amendment of the Harmonized Commodity Description and Coding System of the Customs Cooperation Council, also known as the World Customs Organization, to establish a unique system for identifying narcotic drugs and psychotropic substances and precursor chemicals under international control,

1. *Notes with satisfaction* the report of the third meeting of the group of users of the national database system, held in Vienna from 1 to 3 November 2000, at which 25 Governments concluded unanimously that the national database system is a comprehensive and mature product that is highly user-friendly and ready for detailed testing and possible implementation in many countries;

2. *Commends* the United Nations International Drug Control Programme on its success to date in developing the national database system and on its responsiveness to the requirements of Member States in developing the system;

3. *Notes with satisfaction* that the national database system stresses ownership by the users of the system and that it

is being implemented with the emphasis on building capacity within, and promoting cooperation between, developing countries;

4. *Recommends* that States that have not already done so consider implementing the national database system in cooperation with the Programme and the current group of user States or establishing systems compatible with the national database system;

5. *Urges* States that wish to adopt the national database system to cooperate with the Programme in that endeavour by assessing the implications of implementation of the system by their national drug control authorities and by informing the Programme of their needs with regard to initial implementation and training as well as ongoing support;

6. *Also urges* Governments to consider making additional resources available to the Programme to enable it to strengthen its capacity to implement, maintain and further develop the national database system in Member States;

7. *Requests* the United Nations International Drug Control Programme to report to the Commission on Narcotic Drugs at its forty-fifth session on the national database system.

*40th plenary meeting
24 July 2001*

2001/19. Economic and social repercussions of the Israeli occupation on the living conditions of the Palestinian people in the Occupied Palestinian Territory, including Jerusalem, and the Arab population in the occupied Syrian Golan

The Economic and Social Council,

Recalling General Assembly resolution 54/230 of 22 December 1999,

Also recalling its resolution 2000/31 of 28 July 2000,

Guided by the principles of the Charter of the United Nations affirming the inadmissibility of the acquisition of territory by force, and recalling relevant Security Council resolutions, including resolutions 242 (1967) of 22 November 1967, 465 (1980) of 1 March 1980 and 497 (1981) of 17 December 1981,

Reaffirming the applicability of the Geneva Convention relative to the Protection of Civilian Persons in Time of War, of 12 August 1949,¹² to the Occupied Palestinian Territory, including Jerusalem, and other Arab territories occupied by Israel since 1967,

Stressing the importance of the revival of the Middle East peace process on the basis of Security Council resolutions 242 (1967), 338 (1973) of 22 October 1973 and 425 (1978) of 19 March 1978, and the principle of land for peace as well as the full and timely implementation of the agreements reached

⁵⁵ *Ibid.*, 2000, *Supplement No. 8* (E/2000/28), chap. I, sect. C.

⁵⁶ A/53/374 and Add.1.

⁵⁷ See E/AC.51/1998/2 and Corr.1.

⁵⁸ *Ibid.*, paras. 22–38.

between the Government of Israel and the Palestine Liberation Organization, the representative of the Palestinian people,

Reaffirming the principle of the permanent sovereignty of peoples under foreign occupation over their natural resources,

Convinced that the Israeli occupation impedes efforts to achieve sustainable development and a sound economic environment in the Occupied Palestinian Territory, including Jerusalem, and the occupied Syrian Golan,

Gravely concerned about the deterioration of economic and living conditions of the Palestinian people in the Occupied Palestinian Territory, including Jerusalem, and of the Arab population of the occupied Syrian Golan, and the exploitation by Israel, the occupying Power, of their natural resources,

Expressing grave concern over the continuation of the recent tragic and violent events that have led to many deaths and injuries,

Aware of the important work being done by the United Nations and the specialized agencies in support of the economic and social development of the Palestinian people,

Conscious of the urgent need for the development of the economic and social infrastructure of the Occupied Palestinian Territory, including Jerusalem, and for the improvement of the living conditions of the Palestinian people as a key element of a lasting peace and stability,

1. *Stresses* the need to preserve the territorial integrity of all of the Occupied Palestinian Territory and to guarantee the freedom of movement of persons and goods in the Territory, including the removal of restrictions on going into and from East Jerusalem, and the freedom of movement to and from the outside world;

2. *Also stresses* the vital importance of the construction and operation of the seaport in Gaza and safe passage to the economic and social development of the Palestinian people;

3. *Calls upon* Israel, the occupying Power, to cease its measures against the Palestinian people, in particular the closure of the Occupied Palestinian Territory, the enforced isolation of Palestinian towns, the destruction of homes and the isolation of Jerusalem;

4. *Reaffirms* the inalienable right of the Palestinian people and the Arab population of the occupied Syrian Golan to all their natural and economic resources, and calls upon Israel, the occupying Power, not to exploit, endanger or cause loss or depletion of these resources;

5. *Also reaffirms* that Israeli settlements in the Occupied Palestinian Territory, including Jerusalem, and the occupied Syrian Golan, are illegal and an obstacle to economic and social development;

6. *Stresses* the importance of the work of the organizations and agencies of the United Nations and of the

United Nations Special Coordinator for the Middle East Peace Process and Personal Representative of the Secretary-General to the Palestine Liberation Organization and the Palestinian Authority;

7. *Urges* Member States to encourage private foreign investment in the Occupied Palestinian Territory, including Jerusalem, in infrastructure, job-creation projects and social development in order to alleviate the hardship of the Palestinian people and improve living conditions;

8. *Requests* the Secretary-General to submit to the General Assembly at its fifty-seventh session, through the Economic and Social Council, a report on the implementation of the present resolution and to continue to include, in the report of the United Nations Special Coordinator, an update on the living conditions of the Palestinian people, in collaboration with relevant United Nations agencies;

9. *Decides* to include the item entitled "Economic and social repercussions of the Israeli occupation on the living conditions of the Palestinian people in the Occupied Palestinian Territory, including Jerusalem, and the Arab population in the occupied Syrian Golan" in the agenda of its substantive session of 2002.

*42nd plenary meeting
25 July 2001*

2001/20. Developments concerning the question of the observance by the Government of Myanmar of the International Labour Organization Forced Labour Convention, 1930 (No. 29)

The Economic and Social Council,

Recalling the resolution adopted by the International Labour Conference at its eighty-eighth session, held in June 2000, on action to secure compliance with the recommendations of the Commission of Inquiry established by the International Labour Organization to examine the observance by Myanmar of its obligations in respect to the Forced Labour Convention, 1930 (No. 29), in which the Conference recommended the inclusion of the item on the agenda of the Economic and Social Council,

Taking note of the conclusions adopted by consensus by the International Labour Conference at its eighty-ninth session, held in June 2001,

1. *Takes note* of the outcome of the discussion of the Committee on the Application of Standards during the eighty-ninth session of the International Labour Conference, held in June 2001;

2. *Also takes note* of the understanding concluded between the International Labour Office and the authorities of Myanmar regarding an objective assessment to be carried out by an International Labour Organization high-level mission

15. *Draws the attention* of the Special Committee to the present resolution and to the discussion held on the subject at the substantive session of 2002 of the Economic and Social Council;

16. *Welcomes* the adoption by the Economic Commission for Latin America and the Caribbean of resolution 574 (XXVII) of 16 May 1998¹⁰⁵ calling for the necessary mechanisms for its associate members, including small island Non-Self-Governing Territories, to participate in the special sessions of the General Assembly, subject to the rules of procedure of the Assembly, to review and assess the implementation of the plans of action of those United Nations world conferences in which the Territories originally participated in the capacity of observer, and in the work of the Economic and Social Council and its subsidiary bodies;

17. *Requests* the President of the Council to continue to maintain close contact on these matters with the Chairman of the Special Committee, and to report thereon to the Council;

18. *Requests* the Secretary-General to follow the implementation of the present resolution, paying particular attention to cooperation and integration arrangements for maximizing the efficiency of the assistance activities undertaken by various organizations of the United Nations system, and to report thereon to the Council at its substantive session of 2003;

19. *Decides* to keep these questions under continuous review.

*40th plenary meeting
25 July 2002*

2002/31. Economic and social repercussions of the Israeli occupation on the living conditions of the Palestinian people in the Occupied Palestinian Territory, including Jerusalem, and the Arab population in the occupied Syrian Golan

The Economic and Social Council,

Recalling General Assembly resolution 56/204 of 21 December 2001,

Also recalling its resolution 2001/19 of 25 July 2001,

Guided by the principles of the Charter of the United Nations affirming the inadmissibility of the acquisition of territory by force, and recalling relevant Security Council resolutions, including resolutions 242 (1967) of 22 November 1967, 465 (1980) of 1 March 1980 and 497 (1981) of 17 December 1981,

Reaffirming the applicability of the Geneva Convention relative to the Protection of Civilian Persons in Time of War, of 12 August 1949,⁹¹ to the Occupied Palestinian Territory, including Jerusalem, and other Arab territories occupied by Israel since 1967,

Stressing the importance of the revival of the Middle East peace process on the basis of Security Council resolutions 242 (1967), 338 (1973) of 22 October 1973 and 425 (1978) of 19 March 1978, and the principle of land for peace as well as the compliance with the agreements reached between the Government of Israel and the Palestine Liberation Organization, the representative of the Palestinian people,

Reaffirming the principle of the permanent sovereignty of peoples under foreign occupation over their natural resources,

Convinced that the Israeli occupation impedes efforts to achieve sustainable development and a sound economic environment in the Occupied Palestinian Territory, including Jerusalem, and the occupied Syrian Golan,

Gravely concerned about the deterioration of economic and living conditions of the Palestinian people in the Occupied Palestinian Territory, including Jerusalem, and of the Arab population of the occupied Syrian Golan and the exploitation by Israel, the occupying Power, of their natural resources,

Expressing grave concern over the continuation of the recent tragic and violent events since September 2000 that have led to many deaths and injuries and the continuous deterioration of the situation,

Aware of the important work being done by the United Nations and the specialized agencies in support of the economic and social development of the Palestinian people,

Conscious of the urgent need for the reconstruction and development of the economic and social infrastructure of the Occupied Palestinian Territory, including Jerusalem, and for addressing the humanitarian crisis facing the Palestinian people,

1. *Stresses* the need to preserve the territorial integrity of all of the Occupied Palestinian Territory and to guarantee the freedom of movement of persons and goods in the Territory, including the removal of restrictions on going into and from East Jerusalem, and the freedom of movement to and from the outside world;

2. *Also stresses* the vital importance of the construction and operation of the seaport in Gaza and safe passage to the economic and social development of the Palestinian people;

3. *Calls upon* Israel, the occupying Power, to end its occupation of Palestinian cities and other populated centres, to end all kinds of closures and to cease destruction of homes and economic facilities and agricultural fields;

4. *Reaffirms* the inalienable right of the Palestinian people and the Arab population of the occupied Syrian Golan to

¹⁰⁵ See *Official Records of the Economic and Social Council, 1998, Supplement No. 21 (E/1998/41)*, chap. III, sect. G.

all their natural and economic resources, and calls upon Israel, the occupying Power, not to exploit, endanger or cause loss or depletion of these resources;

5. *Also reaffirms* that Israeli settlements in the Occupied Palestinian Territory, including Jerusalem, and the occupied Syrian Golan, are illegal and an obstacle to economic and social development;

6. *Stresses* the importance of the work of the organizations and agencies of the United Nations and of the United Nations Special Coordinator for the Middle East Peace Process and Personal Representative of the Secretary-General to the Palestine Liberation Organization and the Palestinian Authority;

7. *Urges* Member States to encourage private foreign investment in the Occupied Palestinian Territory, including Jerusalem, in infrastructure, job-creation projects and social development in order to alleviate the hardship of the Palestinian people and improve living conditions;

8. *Requests* the Secretary-General to submit to the General Assembly at its fifty-eighth session, through the Economic and Social Council, a report on the implementation of the present resolution and to continue to include, in the report of the United Nations Special Coordinator, an update on the living conditions of the Palestinian people, in collaboration with relevant United Nations agencies;

9. *Decides* to include the item entitled "Economic and social repercussions of the Israeli occupation on the living conditions of the Palestinian people in the Occupied Palestinian Territory, including Jerusalem, and the Arab population in the occupied Syrian Golan" in the agenda of its substantive session of 2003.

*40th plenary meeting
25 July 2002*

2002/32. Strengthening of the coordination of emergency humanitarian assistance of the United Nations

The Economic and Social Council,

Reaffirming General Assembly resolution 46/182 of 19 December 1991, and recalling that humanitarian assistance should be provided in accordance with and with due respect for the guiding principles contained in the annex to that resolution, and also recalling other relevant Assembly resolutions,

Recalling its agreed conclusions 1998/1 of 17 July 1998¹⁰⁶ and 1999/1 of 23 July 1999,¹⁰⁷

¹⁰⁶ See *Official Records of the General Assembly, Fifty-third Session, Supplement No. 3* and corrigendum and addendum (A/53/3 and Corr.1 and Add.1), chap. VII, para. 5.

¹⁰⁷ *Ibid.*, *Fifty-fourth Session, Supplement No. 3 (A/54/3/Rev.1)*, chap. VI, para. 5.

Emphasizing the importance of the discussion of humanitarian policies and activities in the Economic and Social Council,

Reaffirming the need for the Council to continue to consider ways to enhance further the humanitarian affairs segment of future substantive sessions of the Council,

Welcoming the fact that the 2002 humanitarian affairs segment considered the theme "Strengthening the coordination of United Nations humanitarian assistance in cases of natural disasters and complex humanitarian emergencies, with particular attention to reaching the vulnerable populations and the transition from relief to development",

Deeply concerned about alleged sexual abuse and exploitation and the misuse of humanitarian assistance by personnel involved in humanitarian assistance activities, and stressing the need for appropriate measures in this regard,

Encouraging the direct participation of local communities and populations in the identification and implementation of humanitarian and transitional programmes, with a view to supporting overall peace-building, reconciliation, reconstruction and development efforts,

Stressing the need to address the funding and strategic planning gap between relief and development activities in the context of natural disasters and complex emergencies,

Emphasizing the importance of international cooperation in support of the efforts of affected States in dealing with natural disasters and complex emergencies in all their phases,

Recognizing that special attention should be given to women as well as to the most vulnerable, including children, older persons and persons with disabilities, as well as victims of terrorism,

Welcoming the efforts made by the United Nations system to strengthen the consolidated appeals process as a coordination and strategic planning tool for the provision of humanitarian assistance and transition from relief to development,

Noting with concern that, while the consolidated appeals process remains one of the most significant mechanisms for humanitarian resource mobilization, it has suffered consistent shortfalls, and, in this regard, encouraging the Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs of the Secretariat to continue to examine in greater depth the reasons for and implications of this,

Taking note of the assessment by the Secretary-General regarding criminal activities in the context of complex emergencies in pursuit of economic gain including, inter alia, illicit use by armed groups of natural resources and trafficking of women and children, and expressing concern over their impact on humanitarian assistance in such emergencies,

until the Commission on the Status of Women concludes its consideration of the report of the Secretary-General regarding the future work of the Working Group on Communications on the Status of Women and, in the meantime, to continue with present practice, as set out, notably, in its resolution 1983/27 of 26 May 1983;

2. *Confirms* that communications and urgent appeals are to be forwarded to the concerned States under the authorization of the special mechanism mandate-holders;

3. *Decides* that the present decision overrides Commission on Human Rights decision 2003/113 of 25 April 2003.¹⁴⁶

*48th plenary meeting
24 July 2003*

2003/59. Economic and social repercussions of the Israeli occupation on the living conditions of the Palestinian people in the Occupied Palestinian Territory, including Jerusalem, and the Arab population in the occupied Syrian Golan

The Economic and Social Council,

Recalling General Assembly resolution 57/269 of 20 December 2002,

Recalling also its resolution 2002/31 of 25 July 2002,

Guided by the principles of the Charter of the United Nations affirming the inadmissibility of the acquisition of territory by force, and recalling relevant Security Council resolutions, including resolutions 242 (1967) of 22 November 1967, 465 (1980) of 1 March 1980 and 497 (1981) of 17 December 1981,

Reaffirming the applicability of the Geneva Convention relative to the Protection of Civilian Persons in Time of War, of 12 August 1949,¹⁰⁵ to the Occupied Palestinian Territory, including East Jerusalem, and other Arab territories occupied by Israel since 1967,

Stressing the importance of the revival of the Middle East peace process on the basis of Security Council resolutions 242 (1967), 338 (1973) of 22 October 1973, 425 (1978) of 19 March 1978 and 1397 (2002) of 12 March 2002, and the principle of land for peace as well as compliance with the agreements reached between the Government of Israel and the Palestine Liberation Organization, the representative of the Palestinian people,

Reaffirming the principle of the permanent sovereignty of peoples under foreign occupation over their natural resources,

Convinced that the Israeli occupation impedes efforts to achieve sustainable development and a sound economic environment in the Occupied Palestinian Territory, including East Jerusalem, and the occupied Syrian Golan,

Gravely concerned about the deterioration of the economic and living conditions of the Palestinian people in the Occupied Palestinian Territory, including East Jerusalem, and of the Arab population of the occupied Syrian Golan and the exploitation by Israel, the occupying Power, of their natural resources,

Expressing grave concern over the continuation of the recent tragic and violent events since September 2000 that have led to many deaths and injuries,

Aware of the important work being done by the United Nations and the specialized agencies in support of the economic and social development of the Palestinian people,

Conscious of the urgent need for the reconstruction and development of the economic and social infrastructure of the Occupied Palestinian Territory, including East Jerusalem, as well as the urgent need to address the humanitarian crisis facing the Palestinian people,

Welcoming the acceptance of the Quartet road map for peace, presented by the Secretary-General, the United States of America, the Russian Federation and the European Union, as well as the Summit at Aqaba, Jordan, and stressing the importance of prompt and full implementation in good faith by the two sides of the road map and further steps to reduce the level of violence,

1. *Stresses* the need to preserve the territorial integrity of all of the Occupied Palestinian Territory and to guarantee the freedom of movement of persons and goods in the Territory, including the removal of restrictions on going into and from East Jerusalem, and the freedom of movement to and from the outside world;

2. *Also stresses* the vital importance of the construction and operation of the seaport in Gaza and safe passage to the economic and social development of the Palestinian people;

3. *Demands* the complete cessation of all acts of violence, including all acts of terror, provocation, incitement and destruction;

4. *Calls upon* Israel, the occupying Power, to end its occupation of Palestinian cities and other populated centres, to end all kinds of closures and to cease destruction of homes and economic facilities and agricultural fields;

5. *Reaffirms* the inalienable right of the Palestinian people and the Arab population of the occupied Syrian Golan to all their natural and economic resources, and calls upon Israel, the occupying Power, not to exploit, endanger or cause loss or depletion of these resources;

¹⁴⁶ See *Official Records of the Economic and Social Council, 2003, Supplement No. 3 (E/2003/23)*, chap. II, sect. B.

6. *Also reaffirms* that Israeli settlements in the Occupied Palestinian Territory, including East Jerusalem, and the occupied Syrian Golan, are illegal and an obstacle to economic and social development;

7. *Stresses* the importance of the work of the organizations and agencies of the United Nations and of the United Nations Special Coordinator for the Middle East Peace Process and Personal Representative of the Secretary-General to the Palestine Liberation Organization and the Palestinian Authority;

8. *Urges* Member States to encourage private foreign investment in the Occupied Palestinian Territory, including East Jerusalem, in infrastructure, job-creation projects and social development in order to alleviate the hardship of the Palestinian people and improve living conditions;

9. *Requests* the Secretary-General to submit to the General Assembly at its fifty-ninth session, through the Economic and Social Council, a report on the implementation of the present resolution and to continue to include, in the report of the United Nations Special Coordinator, an update on the living conditions of the Palestinian people, in collaboration with relevant United Nations agencies;

10. *Decides* to include the item entitled “Economic and social repercussions of the Israeli occupation on the living conditions of the Palestinian people in the Occupied Palestinian Territory, including East Jerusalem, and the Arab population in the occupied Syrian Golan” in the agenda of its substantive session of 2004.

*48th plenary meeting
24 July 2003*

2003/60. Public administration and development

The Economic and Social Council,

Recalling its resolution 2002/40 of 19 December 2002,

1. *Takes note* of the report of the Committee of Experts on Public Administration on its second session;¹⁴⁷

2. *Reiterates* that efficient, accountable, effective and transparent public administration, at both the national and the international levels, has a key role to play in the implementation of the internationally agreed development goals, including those contained in the United Nations Millennium Declaration,³ and in that context stresses the need to strengthen national public sector administrative and managerial capacity-building, in particular in developing countries and countries with economies in transition;

3. *Reiterates also* that strengthening public administration and the State are at the forefront of the

development agenda to achieve the internationally agreed development goals, including those contained in the Millennium Declaration, and that revitalizing public administration is considered to be one of the essential components of economic and social development, and in this context decides to explore the possibility of considering this theme at a future high-level segment;

4. *Decides* that the Committee shall meet annually, instead of biennially, for one week, given the need to adapt to the ever-changing environment and owing to the fact that rapidly emerging issues need to be addressed in a timely manner, with a focus on the need to modernize in all countries public sector human resource systems, strengthen systems of accountability and transparency and explore the potential of e-government to develop innovative public administrative tools;

5. *Decides also* that the Committee, within the framework decided upon in General Assembly resolution 57/270 B of 23 June 2003, should contribute to the integrated and coordinated follow-up to major United Nations conferences and summits in the economic and social fields;

6. *Approves* the following agenda for the next meeting of the Committee, to be held at United Nations Headquarters from 29 March to 2 April 2004:

1. Revitalizing public administration.
2. Public sector institutional capacity for African renewal.
3. Analysis of existing basic data on the public sector.
4. Review of the United Nations Programme in Public Administration and Finance.

7. *Urges* the Committee to continue to work in accordance with its mandate.

*49th plenary meeting
25 July 2003*

2003/61. Future programme, organization and methods of work of the Commission on Sustainable Development

The Economic and Social Council,

Recalling the Rio Declaration on Environment and Development,¹⁴⁸ Agenda 21¹⁴⁹ and the Programme for the Further Implementation of Agenda 21,¹⁵⁰

¹⁴⁸ *Report of the United Nations Conference on Environment and Development, Rio de Janeiro, 3–14 June 1992* (United Nations publication, Sales No. E.93.I.8 and corrigenda), vol. I: *Resolutions adopted by the Conference*, resolution 1, annex I.

¹⁴⁹ *Ibid.*, annex II.

¹⁵⁰ General Assembly resolution S-19/2, annex.

¹⁴⁷ *Ibid.*, *Supplement No. 24* (E/2003/44).

11. *Welcomes* the continuing initiative exercised by the United Nations Development Programme in maintaining close liaison among the specialized agencies and other organizations of the United Nations system, including the Economic Commission for Latin America and the Caribbean and the Economic and Social Commission for Asia and the Pacific, and in providing assistance to the peoples of the Non-Self-Governing Territories;

12. *Encourages* Non-Self-Governing Territories to take steps to establish and/or strengthen disaster preparedness and management institutions and policies;

13. *Requests* the administering Powers concerned to facilitate, when appropriate, the participation of appointed and elected representatives of Non-Self-Governing Territories in the meetings and conferences of the specialized agencies and other organizations of the United Nations system, in accordance with relevant United Nations resolutions and decisions, including resolutions and decisions of the General Assembly and the Special Committee on the Situation with regard to the Implementation of the Declaration on the Granting of Independence to Colonial Countries and Peoples related to specific Territories, so that the Territories may benefit from the related activities of those agencies and organizations;

14. *Recommends* that all Governments intensify their efforts in the specialized agencies and other organizations of the United Nations system of which they are members to accord priority to the question of providing assistance to the peoples of the Non-Self-Governing Territories;

15. *Draws the attention* of the Special Committee to the present resolution and to the discussion held on the subject at the substantive session of 2004 of the Economic and Social Council;

16. *Welcomes* the adoption by the Economic Commission for Latin America and the Caribbean of its resolution 574 (XXVII) of 16 May 1998¹⁶⁰ calling for the mechanisms necessary for its associate members, including small island Non-Self-Governing Territories, to participate in the special sessions of the General Assembly, subject to the rules of procedure of the Assembly, to review and assess the implementation of the plans of action of those United Nations world conferences in which the Territories originally participated in the capacity of observer, and in the work of the Economic and Social Council and its subsidiary bodies;

17. *Requests* the President of the Council to continue to maintain close contact on these matters with the Chairman of the Special Committee and to report thereon to the Council;

18. *Requests* the Secretary-General to follow the implementation of the present resolution, paying particular attention to cooperation and integration arrangements for maximizing the efficiency of the assistance activities undertaken by various organizations of the United Nations system, and to report thereon to the Council at its substantive session of 2005;

19. *Decides* to keep these questions under continuous review.

*50th plenary meeting
23 July 2004*

2004/54. Economic and social repercussions of the Israeli occupation on the living conditions of the Palestinian people in the Occupied Palestinian Territory, including Jerusalem, and the Arab population in the occupied Syrian Golan

The Economic and Social Council,

Recalling General Assembly resolution 58/229 of 23 December 2003,

Also recalling its resolution 2003/59 of 24 July 2003,

Guided by the principles of the Charter of the United Nations affirming the inadmissibility of the acquisition of territory by force, and recalling relevant Security Council resolutions, including resolutions 242 (1967) of 22 November 1967, 338 (1973) of 22 October 1973, 446 (1979) of 22 March 1979, 452 (1979) of 20 July 1979, 465 (1980) of 1 March 1980, 476 (1980) of 30 June 1980, 478 (1980) of 20 August 1980, 497 (1981) of 17 December 1981, 904 (1994) of 18 March 1994, 1073 (1996) of 28 September 1996, 1397 (2002) of 12 March 2002, 1515 (2003) of 19 November 2003 and 1544 (2004) of 19 May 2004,

Recalling the resolutions of the tenth emergency special session of the General Assembly, including resolutions ES-10/13 of 21 October 2003, ES-10/14 of 8 December 2003 and ES-10/16 of 20 July 2004,

Reaffirming the applicability of the Geneva Convention relative to the Protection of Civilian Persons in Time of War, of 12 August 1949,¹⁶¹ to the Occupied Palestinian Territory, including East Jerusalem, and other Arab territories occupied by Israel since 1967,

Stressing the importance of the revival of the Middle East peace process on the basis of Security Council resolutions 242 (1967), 338 (1973), 425 (1978) of 19 March 1978, 1397 (2002), 1515 (2003) and 1544 (2004) and the principle of land for peace, as well as compliance with the agreements reached between the Government of Israel and the Palestine

¹⁶⁰ See *Official Records of the Economic and Social Council, 1998, Supplement No. 21 (E/1998/41), chap. III, sect. G.*

¹⁶¹ United Nations, *Treaty Series*, vol. 75, No. 973.

Liberation Organization, the representative of the Palestinian people,

Reaffirming the principle of the permanent sovereignty of peoples under foreign occupation over their natural resources,

Convinced that the Israeli occupation has gravely impeded the efforts to achieve sustainable development and a sound economic environment in the Occupied Palestinian Territory, including East Jerusalem, and the occupied Syrian Golan,

Gravely concerned about the deterioration of the economic and living conditions of the Palestinian people in the Occupied Palestinian Territory, including East Jerusalem, and of the Arab population of the occupied Syrian Golan and the exploitation by Israel, the occupying Power, of their natural resources,

Gravely concerned also by the grave impact on the economic and social conditions of the Palestinian people caused by the construction of the wall by Israel inside the Occupied Palestinian Territory and the resulting violation of their economic and social rights, including the rights to work, to health, to education and to an adequate standard of living,

Gravely concerned at the extensive destruction by Israel, the occupying Power, of agricultural land and orchards in the Occupied Palestinian Territory, including East Jerusalem, during the recent period, including, and in particular, as a result of the construction of the wall,

Acknowledging the advisory opinion rendered on 9 July 2004 by the International Court of Justice on the *Legal Consequences of the Construction of a Wall in the Occupied Palestinian Territory*,¹⁶²

Expressing grave concern about the continuation of the recent tragic and violent events since September 2000 that have led to many deaths and injuries,

Aware of the important work being done by the United Nations and the specialized agencies in support of the economic and social development of the Palestinian people, as well as the assistance being provided in the humanitarian field,

Conscious of the urgent need for the reconstruction and development of the economic and social infrastructure of the Occupied Palestinian Territory, including East Jerusalem, as well as the urgent need to address the dire humanitarian crisis facing the Palestinian people,

Calling upon both parties to fulfil their obligations under the road map¹⁶³ in cooperation with the Quartet,

1. *Stresses* the need to preserve the national unity and the territorial integrity of the Occupied Palestinian Territory,

including East Jerusalem, and to guarantee the freedom of movement of persons and goods in the Territory, including the removal of restrictions on going into and from East Jerusalem, and the freedom of movement to and from the outside world;

2. *Also stresses* the vital importance of the construction and operation of the seaport in Gaza and safe passage for the economic and social development of the Palestinian people;

3. *Demands* the complete cessation of all acts of violence, including all acts of terror, provocation, incitement and destruction;

4. *Calls upon* Israel, the occupying Power, to end its occupation of Palestinian cities, towns and other populated centres, to end the imposition of all forms of closure and curfew and to cease its destruction of homes and properties, economic institutions and agricultural fields;

5. *Reaffirms* the inalienable right of the Palestinian people and the Arab population of the occupied Syrian Golan to all their natural and economic resources, and calls upon Israel, the occupying Power, not to exploit, endanger or cause loss or depletion of these resources;

6. *Also reaffirms* that Israeli settlements in the Occupied Palestinian Territory, including East Jerusalem, and the occupied Syrian Golan are illegal and an obstacle to economic and social development;

7. *Stresses* the importance of the work of the organizations and agencies of the United Nations and of the United Nations Special Coordinator for the Middle East Peace Process and Personal Representative of the Secretary-General to the Palestine Liberation Organization and the Palestinian Authority;

8. *Urges* Member States to encourage private foreign investment in the Occupied Palestinian Territory, including East Jerusalem, in infrastructure, job-creation projects and social development in order to alleviate the hardship of the Palestinian people and improve their living conditions;

9. *Requests* the Secretary-General to submit to the General Assembly at its fifty-ninth session, through the Economic and Social Council, a report on the implementation of the present resolution and to continue to include in the report of the United Nations Special Coordinator an update on the living conditions of the Palestinian people, in collaboration with relevant United Nations agencies;

10. *Decides* to include the item entitled "Economic and social repercussions of the Israeli occupation on the living conditions of the Palestinian people in the Occupied Palestinian Territory, including East Jerusalem, and the Arab population in the occupied Syrian Golan" in the agenda of its substantive session of 2005.

¹⁶² See A/ES-10/273 and Corr.1.

¹⁶³ S/2003/529, annex.

and to focus, in the meetings of the regional coordination group organized by the Commission, on the progress of the region towards the realization of those goals;

5. *Requests* the Economic and Social Commission for Western Asia to provide support to member countries in realizing the internationally agreed development goals, including those contained in the Millennium Declaration, including by building capacities to formulate policies, monitor the progress made, measure its impact and prepare regional reports;

6. *Requests* the Executive Secretary to submit a report on the progress made in this regard to the Commission at its twenty-fourth session.

*40th plenary meeting
27 July 2005*

2005/51. Economic and social repercussions of the Israeli occupation on the living conditions of the Palestinian people in the Occupied Palestinian Territory, including Jerusalem, and the Arab population in the occupied Syrian Golan

The Economic and Social Council,

Recalling General Assembly resolution 59/251 of 22 December 2004,

Also recalling its resolution 2004/54 of 23 July 2004,

Guided by the principles of the Charter of the United Nations affirming the inadmissibility of the acquisition of territory by force, and recalling relevant Security Council resolutions, including resolutions 242 (1967) of 22 November 1967, 338 (1973) of 22 October 1973, 446 (1979) of 22 March 1979, 452 (1979) of 20 July 1979, 465 (1980) of 1 March 1980, 476 (1980) of 30 June 1980, 478 (1980) of 20 August 1980, 497 (1981) of 17 December 1981, 904 (1994) of 18 March 1994, 1073 (1996) of 28 September 1996, 1397 (2002) of 12 March 2002, 1515 (2003) of 19 November 2003 and 1544 (2004) of 19 May 2004,

Recalling the resolutions of the tenth emergency special session of the General Assembly, including ES-10/13 of 21 October 2003, ES-10/14 of 8 December 2003 and ES-10/15 of 20 July 2004,

Reaffirming the applicability of the Geneva Convention relative to the Protection of Civilian Persons in Time of War, of 12 August 1949¹²⁰ to the Occupied Palestinian Territory, including East Jerusalem, and other Arab territories occupied by Israel since 1967,

Stressing the importance of the revival of the Middle East peace process on the basis of Security Council resolutions 242 (1967), 338 (1973), 425 (1978) of 19 March 1978, 1397 (2002), 1515 (2003) and 1544 (2004) and the principle of land for peace as well as compliance with the agreements reached between the Government of Israel and the Palestine Liberation Organization, the representative of the Palestinian people,

Reaffirming the principle of the permanent sovereignty of peoples under foreign occupation over their natural resources,

Convinced that the Israeli occupation has gravely impeded the efforts to achieve sustainable development and a sound economic environment in the Occupied Palestinian Territory, including East Jerusalem, and the occupied Syrian Golan,

Gravely concerned about the deterioration of the economic and living conditions of the Palestinian people in the Occupied Palestinian Territory, including East Jerusalem, and of the Arab population of the occupied Syrian Golan and the exploitation by Israel, the occupying Power, of their natural resources,

Gravely concerned also by the grave impact on the economic and social conditions of the Palestinian people caused by Israel's construction of the wall and its associated regime inside the Occupied Palestinian Territory, including in and around East Jerusalem, and the resulting violation

of their economic and social rights, including the right to work, to health, to education and to an adequate standard of living,

Recalling, in this regard, the International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights,⁷⁷ the International Covenant on Economic, Social and Cultural Rights⁷⁷ and the Convention on the Rights of the Child,⁴⁷ and affirming that these human rights instruments must be respected in the Occupied Palestinian Territory, including East Jerusalem, as well as in the occupied Syrian Golan,

Gravely concerned at the extensive destruction by Israel, the occupying Power, of agricultural land and orchards in the Occupied Palestinian Territory, including East Jerusalem, during the recent period, including, and in particular, as a result of its unlawful construction of the wall in the Occupied Palestinian Territory, including in and around East Jerusalem,

Recalling the advisory opinion rendered on 9 July 2004 by the International Court of Justice on the *Legal Consequences of the Construction of a Wall in the Occupied Palestinian Territory*,¹¹⁹ recalling also Assembly resolution ES-10/15, and stressing the need to comply with the obligations mentioned therein,

Expressing concern at the recent escalation of violence that has been characteristic of recent years following a period of relative calm, and, in this context, expressing its concern about the tragic and violent events that have taken place since September 2000, which have led to many deaths and injuries,

Aware of the important work being done by the United Nations and the specialized agencies in support of the economic and social development of the Palestinian people, as well as the assistance being provided in the humanitarian field,

Conscious of the urgent need for the reconstruction and development of the economic and social infrastructure of the Occupied Palestinian Territory, including East Jerusalem, as well as the urgent need to address the dire humanitarian crisis facing the Palestinian people,

Calling upon both parties to fulfil their obligations under the road map¹³⁹ in cooperation with the Quartet,

1. *Stresses* the need to preserve the national unity and the territorial integrity of the Occupied Palestinian Territory, including East Jerusalem, and to guarantee the freedom of movement of persons and goods in the Territory, including the removal of restrictions on going into and from East Jerusalem, and the freedom of movement to and from the outside world;

2. *Also stresses* the vital importance of the construction and operation of the airport and the seaport in Gaza and the establishment of the safe passage between the West Bank and Gaza for the economic and social development of the Palestinian people;

3. *Demands* the complete cessation of all acts of violence, including all acts of terror, provocation, incitement and destruction;

4. *Calls upon* Israel, the occupying Power, to end its occupation of Palestinian cities, towns and other populated centres, to cease its destruction of homes and properties, economic institutions and agricultural fields and to end the imposition of all forms of closure and curfew, which impede efforts aimed at the amelioration of the economic and social conditions and the development of the Palestinian people;

5. *Reaffirms* the inalienable right of the Palestinian people and the Arab population of the occupied Syrian Golan to all their natural and economic resources, and calls upon Israel, the occupying Power, not to exploit, endanger or cause loss or depletion of those resources;

¹³⁹ S/2003/529, annex.

6. *Also reaffirms* that Israeli settlements in the Occupied Palestinian Territory, including East Jerusalem, and the occupied Syrian Golan, are illegal and an obstacle to economic and social development, and calls for the full implementation of the relevant Security Council resolutions;

7. *Stresses* that the wall being constructed by Israel in the Occupied Palestinian Territory, including in and around East Jerusalem, is contrary to international law and is seriously debilitating to the economic and social development of the Palestinian people, and calls in this regard for full compliance with the legal obligations mentioned in the 9 July 2004 advisory opinion of the International Court of Justice¹¹⁹ and in Assembly resolution ES-10/15;

8. *Emphasizes* the importance of the work of the organizations and agencies of the United Nations and of the United Nations Special Coordinator for the Middle East Peace Process and Personal Representative of the Secretary-General to the Palestine Liberation Organization and the Palestinian Authority;

9. *Urges* Member States to encourage private foreign investment in the Occupied Palestinian Territory, including East Jerusalem, in infrastructure, job-creation projects and social development in order to alleviate the hardships being faced by the Palestinian people and improve their living conditions;

10. *Requests* the Secretary-General to submit to the General Assembly at its sixtieth session, through the Economic and Social Council, a report on the implementation of the present resolution and to continue to include in the report of the United Nations Special Coordinator an update on the living conditions of the Palestinian people, in collaboration with relevant United Nations agencies;

11. *Decides* to include the item entitled “Economic and social repercussions of the Israeli occupation on the living conditions of the Palestinian people in the Occupied Palestinian Territory, including East Jerusalem, and the Arab population in the occupied Syrian Golan” in the agenda of its substantive session of 2006.

*40th plenary meeting
27 July 2005*

2005/52. Science and technology for development

The Economic and Social Council,

Welcoming the work of the Commission on Science and Technology for Development on its theme “Science and technology promotion, advice and application for the achievement of the internationally agreed development goals contained in the United Nations Millennium Declaration”;

Taking note of initiatives that call for substantial support for institutes of higher education and centres of excellence in developing countries, particularly in Africa, such as that of the Commission for Africa,¹⁴⁰

Expressing its appreciation for the support provided to the Commission for Africa by donors including the generous financial contributions of the Governments of Italy and Pakistan to the network of centres of excellence to be established, as well as the financial support provided by Austria to expand the Internet connectivity benchmarking tool and the financial and technical support provided by the Centre for Information Technology of the state of Geneva to assist the least developed countries for building capacity in information and communication technologies,

Taking note of General Assembly resolution 58/200 of 23 December 2003, in which the relevant bodies of the United Nations system engaged in biotechnology were urged to work cooperatively so as to ensure that countries received sound scientific information and practical

¹⁴⁰ See www.commissionforafrica.org.

Acknowledging that second-hand smoke at the workplace is a fully preventable occupational health hazard,

Recalling article 8 of the World Health Organization Framework Convention on Tobacco Control,¹⁴¹ entitled “Protection from exposure to tobacco smoke”, which states, inter alia, that each party shall adopt and implement measures to provide “protection from exposure to tobacco smoke in indoor workplaces, public transport, indoor places and, as appropriate, other public places”,

Emphasizing the importance of protecting the well-being of individuals in their working environments,

1. *Recommends* that the General Assembly, at its sixty-first session, consider the implementation of a complete ban on smoking at all United Nations indoor premises, at Headquarters as well as at regional and country offices throughout the United Nations system, and the implementation of a complete ban on sales of tobacco products at all United Nations premises;

2. *Also recommends* that the General Assembly request the Secretary-General to submit a report on the implementation of the present resolution to the Economic and Social Council at its substantive session of 2008;

3. *Decides* to continue its consideration of the agenda item entitled “Tobacco or health” at its substantive session of 2008.

*42nd plenary meeting
27 July 2006*

2006/43. Economic and social repercussions of the Israeli occupation on the living conditions of the Palestinian people in the Occupied Palestinian Territory, including East Jerusalem, and the Arab population in the occupied Syrian Golan

The Economic and Social Council,

Recalling General Assembly resolution 60/183 of 22 December 2005,

Recalling also its resolution 2005/51 of 27 July 2005,

Guided by the principles of the Charter of the United Nations affirming the inadmissibility of the acquisition of territory by force, and recalling relevant Security Council resolutions, including resolutions 242 (1967) of 22 November 1967, 252 (1968) of 21 May 1968, 338 (1973) of 22 October 1973 and 497 (1981) of 17 December 1981,

Recalling the resolutions of the tenth emergency special session of the General Assembly, including ES-10/13 of 21 October 2003, ES-10/14 of 8 December 2003 and ES-10/15 of 20 July 2004,

Reaffirming the applicability of the Geneva Convention relative to the Protection of Civilian Persons in Time of War, of 12 August 1949,²⁴ to the Occupied Palestinian Territory, including East Jerusalem, and other Arab territories occupied by Israel since 1967,

Stressing the importance of the revival of the Middle East peace process on the basis of Security Council resolutions 242 (1967), 338 (1973), 425 (1978) of 19 March 1978, 1397 (2002) of 12 March 2002, 1515 (2003) of 19 November 2003 and 1544 (2004) of 19 May 2004 and the principle of land for peace as well as compliance with the agreements reached between the Government of Israel and the Palestine Liberation Organization, the representative of the Palestinian people,

Reaffirming the principle of the permanent sovereignty of peoples under foreign occupation over their natural resources,

¹⁴¹ United Nations, *Treaty Series*, vol. 2302, No. 41032.

Convinced that the Israeli occupation has gravely impeded the efforts to achieve sustainable development and a sound economic environment in the Occupied Palestinian Territory, including East Jerusalem, and in the occupied Syrian Golan,

Gravely concerned about the deterioration of the economic and living conditions of the Palestinian people in the Occupied Palestinian Territory, including East Jerusalem, and of the Arab population of the occupied Syrian Golan and the exploitation by Israel, the occupying Power, of their natural resources,

Gravely concerned also by the formidable impact on the economic and social conditions of the Palestinian people caused by Israel's construction of the wall and its associated regime inside the Occupied Palestinian Territory, including in and around East Jerusalem, and the resulting violation of their economic and social rights, including the right to work, to health, to education and to an adequate standard of living,

Recalling, in this regard, the International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights,²⁰ the International Covenant on Economic, Social and Cultural Rights²⁰ and the Convention on the Rights of the Child,²¹ and affirming that these human rights instruments must be respected in the Occupied Palestinian Territory, including East Jerusalem, as well as in the occupied Syrian Golan,

Gravely concerned at the extensive destruction by Israel, the occupying Power, of agricultural land and orchards in the Occupied Palestinian Territory, including East Jerusalem, and, in particular, as a result of its construction of the wall, contrary to international law, in the Occupied Palestinian Territory, including in and around East Jerusalem,

Recalling the advisory opinion rendered on 9 July 2004 by the International Court of Justice on the *Legal Consequences of the Construction of a Wall in the Occupied Palestinian Territory*,¹⁹ recalling also General Assembly resolution ES-10/15, and stressing the need to comply with the obligations mentioned therein,

Extremely concerned at the dire humanitarian crisis in the Occupied Palestinian Territory further exacerbated by the current Israeli military operations, the severe restrictions on the Palestinian people, and Israel's withholding of Palestinian tax revenues,

Expressing grave concern at the increasing number of deaths and injuries among civilians, including children,

Commending the important work being done by the United Nations and the specialized agencies in support of the economic and social development of the Palestinian people, as well as the assistance being provided in the humanitarian field,

Conscious of the urgent need for the reconstruction and development of the economic and social infrastructure of the Occupied Palestinian Territory, including East Jerusalem, as well as the urgent need to address the dire humanitarian crisis facing the Palestinian people,

Affirming that the Israeli occupation is a major obstacle to the economic and social development of the Occupied Palestinian Territory, including East Jerusalem, and of the occupied Syrian Golan,

Calling upon both parties to fulfil their obligations under the road map¹⁴² in cooperation with the Quartet,

1. *Calls for* the lifting of the severe restrictions imposed on the Palestinian people, including those arising from the current Israeli military operations, and for other urgent measures to be taken to alleviate the desperate humanitarian situation in the Occupied Palestinian Territory;

2. *Demands* that Israel comply with the Protocol on Economic Relations between the Government of Israel and the Palestine Liberation Organization signed in Paris on 29 April 1994¹⁴³ and urgently transfer Palestinian tax revenues;

¹⁴² S/2003/529, annex.

¹⁴³ See A/49/180-S/1994/727, annex, entitled "Agreement on the Gaza Strip and the Jericho Area", annex IV.

Resolutions

3. *Stresses* the need to preserve the national unity and the territorial integrity of the Occupied Palestinian Territory, including East Jerusalem, and to guarantee the freedom of movement of persons and goods in the Territory, including the removal of restrictions on going into and from East Jerusalem, and the freedom of movement to and from the outside world;
4. *Calls upon* Israel to restore and replace the destroyed civilian infrastructure, including the only power station, where Israeli air strikes on Gaza's power plant have had a far reaching impact on Gaza's hospitals, food production facilities, water and sanitation systems; as well as water networks, schools, bridges, the airport, the seaport and Palestinian ministries and institutions;
5. *Urges* the full implementation of the Agreement on Movement and Access of 15 November 2005, particularly the urgent reopening of Rafah and Karni crossings, which is crucial to ensuring the passage of foodstuffs and essential supplies, as well as the access of the United Nations agencies to and within the Occupied Palestinian Territory;
6. *Urges* all parties to respect the rules of international humanitarian law, and to refrain from violence against the civilian population in accordance with the Geneva Convention relative to the Protection of Civilian Persons in Time of War, of 12 August 1949;²⁴
7. *Reaffirms* the inalienable right of the Palestinian people and the Arab population of the occupied Syrian Golan to all their natural and economic resources, and calls upon Israel, the occupying Power, not to exploit, endanger or cause loss or depletion of those resources;
8. *Calls upon* Israel, the occupying Power, to cease the dumping of all kinds of waste materials in the Occupied Palestinian Territory, including East Jerusalem, and in the occupied Syrian Golan, which gravely threaten their natural resources, namely, water and land resources, and pose an environmental hazard and health threat to the civilian populations;
9. *Reaffirms* that Israeli settlements in the Occupied Palestinian Territory, including East Jerusalem, and the occupied Syrian Golan, are illegal and an obstacle to economic and social development, and calls for the full implementation of the relevant Security Council resolutions;
10. *Stresses* that the wall being constructed at an accelerated pace by Israel in the Occupied Palestinian Territory, including in and around East Jerusalem, is contrary to international law and is isolating East Jerusalem and dividing up the West Bank and is seriously debilitating to the economic and social development of the Palestinian people, and calls in this regard for full compliance with the legal obligations mentioned in the 9 July 2004 advisory opinion of the International Court of Justice¹⁹ and in Assembly resolution ES-10/15;
11. *Emphasizes* the importance of the work of the organizations and agencies of the United Nations and of the United Nations Special Coordinator for the Middle East Peace Process and Personal Representative of the Secretary-General to the Palestine Liberation Organization and the Palestinian Authority;
12. *Requests* the Secretary-General to submit to the General Assembly at its sixty-first session, through the Economic and Social Council, a report on the implementation of the present resolution and to continue to include in the report of the United Nations Special Coordinator an update on the living conditions of the Palestinian people, in collaboration with relevant United Nations agencies;
13. *Decides* to include the item entitled "Economic and social repercussions of the Israeli occupation on the living conditions of the Palestinian people in the Occupied Palestinian Territory, including East Jerusalem, and the Arab population in the occupied Syrian Golan" in the agenda of its substantive session of 2007.

*42nd plenary meeting
27 July 2006*

participated in their capacity as observers, and in the work of the Economic and Social Council and its subsidiary bodies;

19. *Requests* the President of the Economic and Social Council to continue to maintain close contact on these matters with the Chairman of the Special Committee and to report thereon to the Council;

20. *Requests* the Secretary-General to follow up on the implementation of the present resolution, paying particular attention to cooperation and integration arrangements for maximizing the efficiency of the assistance activities undertaken by various organizations of the United Nations system, and to report thereon to the Council at its substantive session of 2008;

21. *Decides* to keep the above questions under continuous review.

*46th plenary meeting
26 July 2007*

2007/26. Economic and social repercussions of the Israeli occupation on the living conditions of the Palestinian people in the Occupied Palestinian Territory, including East Jerusalem, and the Arab population in the occupied Syrian Golan

The Economic and Social Council,

Recalling General Assembly resolution 61/184 of 20 December 2006,

Recalling also its resolution 2006/43 of 27 July 2006,

Guided by the principles of the Charter of the United Nations affirming the inadmissibility of the acquisition of territory by force, and recalling relevant Security Council resolutions, including resolutions 242 (1967) of 22 November 1967, 252 (1968) of 21 May 1968, 338 (1973) of 22 October 1973, 465 (1980) of 1 March 1980 and 497 (1981) of 17 December 1981,

Recalling the resolutions of the tenth emergency special session of the General Assembly, including ES-10/13 of 21 October 2003, ES-10/14 of 8 December 2003, ES-10/15 of 20 July 2004 and ES-10/17 of 15 December 2006,

Reaffirming the applicability of the Geneva Convention relative to the Protection of Civilian Persons in Time of War, of 12 August 1949,³⁷ to the Occupied Palestinian Territory, including East Jerusalem, and other Arab territories occupied by Israel since 1967,

Stressing the importance of the revival of the Middle East peace process on the basis of Security Council resolutions 242 (1967), 338 (1973), 425 (1978) of 19 March 1978, 1397 (2002) of 12 March 2002, 1515 (2003) of 19 November 2003 and 1544 (2004) of 19 May 2004 and the principle of land for peace as well as compliance with the agreements reached between the Government of Israel and the Palestine Liberation Organization, the representative of the Palestinian people,

Reaffirming the principle of the permanent sovereignty of peoples under foreign occupation over their natural resources,

Convinced that the Israeli occupation has gravely impeded the efforts to achieve sustainable development and a sound economic environment in the Occupied Palestinian Territory, including East Jerusalem, and in the occupied Syrian Golan,

Gravely concerned about the deterioration of the economic and living conditions of the Palestinian people in the Occupied Palestinian Territory, including East Jerusalem, and of the Arab population of the occupied Syrian Golan and the exploitation by Israel, the occupying Power, of their natural resources,

Gravely concerned also about the serious repercussions on the economic and social conditions of the Palestinian people caused by Israel's construction of the wall and its associated regime inside the Occupied Palestinian Territory, including in and around East Jerusalem, and the resulting violation of their economic and social rights, including the right to work, to health, to education and to an adequate standard of living,

Recalling, in this regard, the International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights,³³ the International Covenant on Economic, Social and Cultural Rights,³³ and the Convention on the Rights of the Child,³⁴ and affirming that these human rights instruments must be respected in the Occupied Palestinian Territory, including East Jerusalem, as well as in the occupied Syrian Golan,

Gravely concerned at the extensive destruction by Israel, the occupying Power, of agricultural land and orchards in the Occupied Palestinian Territory, including East Jerusalem, and, in particular, as a result of its construction of the wall, contrary to international law, in the Occupied Palestinian Territory, including in and around East Jerusalem,

Recalling the advisory opinion rendered on 9 July 2004 by the International Court of Justice on the *Legal Consequences of the Construction of a Wall in the Occupied Palestinian Territory*,³² recalling also General Assembly resolution ES-10/15, and stressing the need to comply with the obligations mentioned therein,

Extremely concerned about the dire humanitarian crisis in the Occupied Palestinian Territory, further exacerbated by the repeated Israeli military operations, the severe restrictions on the Palestinian people and Israel's withholding of Palestinian tax revenues, part of which has recently been transferred,

Expressing grave concern at the increasing number of deaths and injuries among civilians, including children and women,

Gravely concerned by various reports of the United Nations and the specialized agencies regarding the inordinate rates of unemployment, widespread poverty and severe humanitarian hardships, including food insecurity and a rise in health-related problems, among the Palestinian people in the Occupied Palestinian Territory, including East Jerusalem,

Commending the important work being done by the United Nations, the specialized agencies and the donor community in support of the economic and social development of the Palestinian people, as well as the assistance being provided in the humanitarian field,

Conscious of the urgent need for the reconstruction and development of the economic and social infrastructure of the Occupied Palestinian Territory, including East Jerusalem, as well as the urgent need to address the dire humanitarian crisis facing the Palestinian people,

Recognizing the efforts being undertaken by the Palestinian Authority, with international support, to rebuild, reform and strengthen its damaged institutions, and emphasizing the need to preserve the Palestinian institutions and infrastructure,

Affirming that the Israeli occupation is a major obstacle to the economic and social development of the Occupied Palestinian Territory, including East Jerusalem, and of the occupied Syrian Golan,

Calling upon both parties to fulfil their obligations under the road map¹⁰⁶ in cooperation with the Quartet,

1. *Calls for* the lifting of the severe restrictions imposed on the Palestinian people, including those arising from the repeated Israeli military operations, and for other urgent measures to be taken to alleviate the desperate humanitarian situation in the Occupied Palestinian Territory;

2. *Demands* that Israel comply with the Protocol on Economic Relations between the Government of Israel and the Palestine Liberation Organization signed in Paris on 29 April 1994,¹⁰⁷ takes note, as a first step, of the partial transfer by Israel of withheld Palestinian tax and customs revenues, and reiterates its call for the immediate, complete and regular release of the remaining and future funds;

¹⁰⁶ S/2003/529, annex.

¹⁰⁷ See A/49/180-S/1994/727, annex, entitled "Agreement on the Gaza Strip and the Jericho Area", annex IV.

Resolutions

3. *Stresses* the need to preserve the national unity and the territorial integrity of the Occupied Palestinian Territory, including East Jerusalem, and to guarantee the freedom of movement of persons and goods in the Territory, including the removal of restrictions on going into and from East Jerusalem, and the freedom of movement to and from the outside world;

4. *Calls upon* Israel to restore and replace civilian properties, vital infrastructure, agricultural lands and governmental institutions that have been damaged or destroyed as a result of its military operations in the Occupied Palestinian Territory;

5. *Reiterates* the call for the full implementation of the Agreement on Movement and Access of 15 November 2005,¹⁰⁸ particularly the urgent reopening of Rafah and Karni crossings, which is crucial to ensuring the passage of foodstuffs and essential supplies, as well as the access of the United Nations agencies to and within the Occupied Palestinian Territory;

6. *Calls upon* all parties to respect the rules of international humanitarian law and to refrain from violence against the civilian population in accordance with the Geneva Convention relative to the Protection of Civilian Persons in Time of War, of 12 August 1949;³⁷

7. *Reaffirms* the inalienable right of the Palestinian people and the Arab population of the occupied Syrian Golan to all their natural and economic resources, and calls upon Israel, the occupying Power, not to exploit, endanger or cause loss or depletion of those resources;

8. *Calls upon* Israel, the occupying Power, to cease the dumping of all kinds of waste materials in the Occupied Palestinian Territory, including East Jerusalem, and in the occupied Syrian Golan, which gravely threaten their natural resources, namely, water and land resources, and pose an environmental hazard and health threat to the civilian populations;

9. *Reaffirms* that Israeli settlements in the Occupied Palestinian Territory, including East Jerusalem, and the occupied Syrian Golan, are illegal and an obstacle to economic and social development, and calls for the full implementation of the relevant Security Council resolutions;

10. *Stresses* that the wall being constructed at an accelerated pace by Israel in the Occupied Palestinian Territory, including in and around East Jerusalem, is contrary to international law and is isolating East Jerusalem and dividing up the West Bank and is seriously debilitating to the economic and social development of the Palestinian people, and calls in this regard for full compliance with the legal obligations mentioned in the advisory opinion of the International Court of Justice of 9 July 2004³² and in Assembly resolution ES-10/15;

11. *Emphasizes* the importance of the work of the organizations and agencies of the United Nations and of the United Nations Special Coordinator for the Middle East Peace Process and Personal Representative of the Secretary-General to the Palestine Liberation Organization and the Palestinian Authority;

12. *Expresses its hope* that the recently called for Middle East peace conference will pave the way for the establishment of the independent Palestinian State;

13. *Requests* the Secretary-General to submit to the General Assembly at its sixty-second session, through the Economic and Social Council, a report on the implementation of the present resolution and to continue to include in the report of the United Nations Special Coordinator an update on the living conditions of the Palestinian people, in collaboration with relevant United Nations agencies;

14. *Decides* to include the item entitled “Economic and social repercussions of the Israeli occupation on the living conditions of the Palestinian people in the Occupied Palestinian Territory, including East Jerusalem, and the Arab population in the occupied Syrian Golan” in the agenda of its substantive session of 2008.

*46th plenary meeting
26 July 2007*

¹⁰⁸ Available from <http://unispal.un.org/unispal.nsf>.

12. *Also invites* the Peacebuilding Commission to continue to inform it about the economic and social aspects of peacebuilding in Guinea-Bissau;

13. *Decides* to consider this matter at its substantive session of 2009 under the item entitled “African countries emerging from conflict”.

*44th plenary meeting
25 July 2008*

2008/31. Economic and social repercussions of the Israeli occupation on the living conditions of the Palestinian people in the Occupied Palestinian Territory, including East Jerusalem, and of the Arab population in the occupied Syrian Golan

The Economic and Social Council,

Recalling General Assembly resolution 62/181 of 19 December 2007,

Recalling also its resolution 2007/26 of 26 July 2007,

Guided by the principles of the Charter of the United Nations affirming the inadmissibility of the acquisition of territory by force, and recalling relevant Security Council resolutions, including resolutions 242 (1967) of 22 November 1967, 252 (1968) of 21 May 1968, 338 (1973) of 22 October 1973, 465 (1980) of 1 March 1980 and 497 (1981) of 17 December 1981,

Recalling the resolutions of the tenth emergency special session of the General Assembly, including resolutions ES-10/13 of 21 October 2003, ES-10/14 of 8 December 2003, ES-10/15 of 20 July 2004 and ES-10/17 of 15 December 2006,

Reaffirming the applicability of the Geneva Convention relative to the Protection of Civilian Persons in Time of War, of 12 August 1949,²⁸ to the Occupied Palestinian Territory, including East Jerusalem, and other Arab territories occupied by Israel since 1967,

Recalling the International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights,²⁴ the International Covenant on Economic, Social and Cultural Rights²⁴ and the Convention on the Rights of the Child,²⁵ and affirming that these human rights instruments must be respected in the Occupied Palestinian Territory, including East Jerusalem, as well as in the occupied Syrian Golan,

Stressing the importance of the revival of the Middle East peace process on the basis of Security Council resolutions 242 (1967), 338 (1973), 425 (1978) of 19 March 1978, 1397 (2002) of 12 March 2002, 1515 (2003) of 19 November 2003 and 1544 (2004) of 19 May 2004 and the principle of land for peace as well as compliance with the agreements reached between the Government of Israel and the Palestine Liberation Organization, the representative of the Palestinian people,

Reaffirming the principle of the permanent sovereignty of peoples under foreign occupation over their natural resources, and expressing concern in this regard about the exploitation of natural resources by Israel, the occupying Power, in the Occupied Palestinian Territory, including East Jerusalem, and in the occupied Syrian Golan,

Convinced that the Israeli occupation has gravely impeded the efforts to achieve sustainable development and a sound economic environment in the Occupied Palestinian Territory, including East Jerusalem, and in the occupied Syrian Golan, and expressing grave concern about the consequent deterioration of economic and living conditions,

Gravely concerned, in this regard, about the continuation of settlement activities by Israel and other related measures in the Occupied Palestinian Territory, particularly in and around occupied East Jerusalem, as well as in the occupied Syrian Golan in violation of international humanitarian law and relevant United Nations resolutions,

Gravely concerned also by the serious repercussions on the economic and social conditions of the Palestinian people caused by Israel’s construction of the wall and its associated regime inside the Occupied Palestinian Territory, including in and around East Jerusalem, and the

resulting violation of their economic and social rights, including the right to work, to health, to education and to an adequate standard of living,

Recalling, in this regard, the advisory opinion rendered on 9 July 2004 by the International Court of Justice on the *Legal Consequences of the Construction of a Wall in the Occupied Palestinian Territory*,²³ recalling also Assembly resolution ES-10/15, and stressing the need to comply with the obligations mentioned therein,

Expressing grave concern at the extensive destruction by Israel, the occupying Power, of properties, agricultural land and orchards in the Occupied Palestinian Territory, including East Jerusalem, including, in particular, in connection with its construction of the wall, contrary to international law, in the Occupied Palestinian Territory, including in and around East Jerusalem,

Expressing deep concern about continuing Israeli military operations and the continuing Israeli policy of closures and severe restrictions on the movement of persons and goods, including humanitarian personnel and food, medical, fuel and other essential supplies, via the imposition of crossing closures, checkpoints and a permit regime throughout the Occupied Palestinian Territory, including East Jerusalem, and the consequent negative impact on the socio-economic situation of the Palestinian people, which remains that of dire humanitarian crisis, in particular in the Gaza Strip,

Gravely concerned by various reports of the United Nations and the specialized agencies regarding the inordinate rates of unemployment, widespread poverty and severe humanitarian hardships, including food insecurity and rising health-related problems, including high levels of malnutrition, among the Palestinian people, especially children, in the Occupied Palestinian Territory, including East Jerusalem,

Expressing grave concern at the increasing number of deaths and injuries of civilians, including children and women,

Emphasizing the importance of the safety and well-being of all civilians, and calling for the cessation of all acts of violence, including all acts of terror, provocation, incitement and destruction, and all firing of rockets,

Conscious of the urgent need for the reconstruction and development of the economic and social infrastructure of the Occupied Palestinian Territory, including East Jerusalem, as well as the urgent need to address the dire humanitarian crisis facing the Palestinian people,

Commending the important work being done by the United Nations, the specialized agencies and the donor community in support of the economic and social development of the Palestinian people, as well as the assistance being provided in the humanitarian field,

Recognizing the efforts being undertaken by the Palestinian Authority, with international support, to rebuild, reform and strengthen its damaged institutions and promote good governance, and emphasizing the need to preserve the Palestinian institutions and infrastructure and to ameliorate economic and social conditions,

Stressing the importance of national unity among the Palestinian people, and emphasizing the need for the respect and preservation of the territorial integrity and unity of the Occupied Palestinian Territory, including East Jerusalem,

Calling upon both parties to fulfil their obligations under the road map¹⁰⁶ in cooperation with the Quartet,

1. *Calls for* the lifting of the severe restrictions imposed on the Palestinian people, including those arising from ongoing Israeli military operations, and for other urgent measures to

¹⁰⁶ S/2003/529, annex.

be taken to alleviate the desperate humanitarian situation in the Occupied Palestinian Territory, especially in the Gaza Strip;

2. *Stresses* the need to preserve the national unity and the territorial integrity of the Occupied Palestinian Territory, including East Jerusalem, and to guarantee the freedom of movement of persons and goods throughout the Occupied Palestinian Territory, including East Jerusalem, as well as to and from the outside world;

3. *Demands* that Israel comply with the Protocol on Economic Relations between the Government of Israel and the Palestine Liberation Organization signed in Paris on 29 April 1994;¹⁰⁷

4. *Calls upon* Israel to restore and replace civilian properties, vital infrastructure, agricultural lands and governmental institutions that have been damaged or destroyed as a result of its military operations in the Occupied Palestinian Territory;

5. *Reiterates* the call for the full implementation of the Agreement on Movement and Access of 15 November 2005, particularly the urgent and uninterrupted reopening of Rafah and Karni crossings, which is crucial to ensuring the passage of foodstuffs and essential supplies, including fuel, as well as the unhindered access of the United Nations agencies to and within the Occupied Palestinian Territory, and expresses deep concern at any actions that threaten the integrity of the border crossings and the distribution of fuel;

6. *Calls upon* all parties to respect the rules of international humanitarian law and to refrain from violence against the civilian population in accordance with the Geneva Convention relative to the Protection of Civilian Persons in Time of War, of 12 August 1949;²⁸

7. *Reaffirms* the inalienable right of the Palestinian people and the Arab population of the occupied Syrian Golan to all their natural and economic resources, and calls upon Israel, the occupying Power, not to exploit, endanger or cause loss or depletion of those resources;

8. *Calls upon* Israel, the occupying Power, to cease its destruction of homes and properties, economic institutions and agricultural lands and orchards in the Occupied Palestinian Territory, including East Jerusalem, as well as in the occupied Syrian Golan;

9. *Also calls upon* Israel, the occupying Power, to cease the dumping of all kinds of waste materials in the Occupied Palestinian Territory, including East Jerusalem, and in the occupied Syrian Golan, which gravely threaten their natural resources, namely, the water and land resources, and pose an environmental hazard and health threat to the civilian populations, and calls for the further implementation of critical environmental projects, including the sewage treatment plant in the Gaza Strip;

10. *Reaffirms* that Israeli settlements in the Occupied Palestinian Territory, including East Jerusalem, and the occupied Syrian Golan, are illegal and constitute a major obstacle to economic and social development, and calls for the full implementation of the relevant Security Council resolutions and compliance by Israel, the occupying Power, with international law, including the Fourth Geneva Convention;²⁸

11. *Also reaffirms* that Israel's ongoing construction of the wall in the Occupied Palestinian Territory, including in and around East Jerusalem, is contrary to international law and is isolating East Jerusalem, fragmenting the West Bank and seriously debilitating the economic and social development of the Palestinian people, and calls in this regard for full compliance with the legal obligations mentioned in the advisory opinion rendered on 9 July 2004 by the International Court of Justice²³ and in Assembly resolution ES-10/15;

¹⁰⁷ See A/49/180-S/1994/727, annex, entitled "Agreement on the Gaza Strip and the Jericho Area", annex IV.

12. *Calls upon* Israel to comply with the provisions of the Fourth Geneva Convention, and to facilitate the visits of Syrian citizens of the occupied Syrian Golan whose family members reside in their mother homeland, the Syrian Arab Republic, via the Qunaitra entrance;

13. *Emphasizes* the importance of the work of the organizations and agencies of the United Nations system and of the United Nations Special Coordinator for the Middle East Peace Process and Personal Representative of the Secretary-General to the Palestine Liberation Organization and the Palestinian Authority;

14. *Expresses its hope* that the resumed peace process will speedily advance to pave the way for the establishment of the independent Palestinian State and the achievement of a just, lasting and comprehensive peace settlement in accordance with relevant United Nations resolutions, and stressing in this regard the importance of the Madrid Conference, the Arab Peace Initiative¹⁰⁸ and the principle of land for peace;

15. *Requests* the Secretary-General to submit to the General Assembly at its sixty-third session, through the Economic and Social Council, a report on the implementation of the present resolution and to continue to include in the report of the United Nations Special Coordinator an update on the living conditions of the Palestinian people, in collaboration with relevant United Nations agencies;

16. *Decides* to include the item entitled "Economic and social repercussions of the Israeli occupation on the living conditions of the Palestinian people in the Occupied Palestinian Territory, including East Jerusalem, and the Arab population in the occupied Syrian Golan" in the agenda of its substantive session of 2009.

*44th plenary meeting
25 July 2008*

2008/32. Report of the Committee of Experts on Public Administration on its seventh session

The Economic and Social Council,

Recalling its resolutions 2002/40 of 19 December 2002, 2003/60 of 25 July 2003, 2005/3 of 31 March 2005, 2005/55 of 21 October 2005, 2006/47 of 28 July 2006 and 2007/38 of 4 October 2007 on public administration and development,

Recalling also General Assembly resolutions 50/225 of 19 April 1996, 56/213 of 21 December 2001, 57/277 of 20 December 2002, 58/231 of 23 December 2003, 59/55 of 2 December 2004 and 60/34 of 30 November 2005 on public administration and development,

Recalling further paragraph 11 of General Assembly resolution 60/1 of 16 September 2005,

Taking note with appreciation of the pioneering work of the United Nations Programme on Public Administration, Finance and Development in supporting Member States with administrative reforms, public institution-building, civil service training and post-conflict reconstruction of public administrations during the past sixty years, since its inception in 1948,¹⁰⁹

Recognizing that although the conditions and context of development and governance have changed, public administration priorities, including capacity-building for development and ownership of national development, still remain critical cross-cutting issues for the achievement of the internationally agreed development goals, including the Millennium Development Goals,

1. *Takes note* of the conclusions on the topic of capacity-building for development in the report of the Committee of Experts on Public Administration on its seventh session,¹¹⁰

¹⁰⁸ A/56/1026-S/2002/932, annex II, resolution 14/221.

¹⁰⁹ See General Assembly resolution 246 (III).

¹¹⁰ *Official Records of the Economic and Social Council, 2008, Supplement No. 24 (E/2008/44).*

Resolutions

19. *Requests* the President of the Economic and Social Council to continue to maintain close contact on these matters with the Chair of the Special Committee and to report thereon to the Council;

20. *Requests* the Secretary-General to follow up on the implementation of the present resolution, paying particular attention to cooperation and integration arrangements for maximizing the efficiency of the assistance activities undertaken by various organizations of the United Nations system, and to report thereon to the Economic and Social Council at its substantive session of 2010;

21. *Decides* to keep the above questions under continuous review.

*45th plenary meeting
31 July 2009*

2009/34. Economic and social repercussions of the Israeli occupation on the living conditions of the Palestinian people in the Occupied Palestinian Territory, including East Jerusalem, and the Arab population in the occupied Syrian Golan

The Economic and Social Council,

Recalling General Assembly resolution 63/201 of 19 December 2008,

Recalling also its resolution 2008/31 of 25 July 2008,

Guided by the principles of the Charter of the United Nations affirming the inadmissibility of the acquisition of territory by force, and recalling relevant Security Council resolutions, including resolutions 242 (1967) of 22 November 1967, 252 (1968) of 21 May 1968, 338 (1973) of 22 October 1973, 465 (1980) of 1 March 1980 and 497 (1981) of 17 December 1981,

Recalling the resolutions of the tenth emergency special session of the General Assembly, including resolutions ES-10/13 of 21 October 2003, ES-10/14 of 8 December 2003, ES-10/15 of 20 July 2004 and ES-10/17 of 15 December 2006,

Reaffirming the applicability of the Geneva Convention relative to the Protection of Civilian Persons in Time of War, of 12 August 1949,¹² to the Occupied Palestinian Territory, including East Jerusalem, and to other Arab territories occupied by Israel since 1967,

Recalling the International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights,⁶¹ the International Covenant on Economic, Social and Cultural Rights⁶¹ and the Convention on the Rights of the Child,⁶² and affirming that these human rights instruments must be respected in the Occupied Palestinian Territory, including East Jerusalem, as well as in the occupied Syrian Golan,

Stressing the importance of the revival of the Middle East peace process on the basis of Security Council resolutions 242 (1967), 338 (1973), 425 (1978) of 19 March 1978, 1397 (2002) of 12 March 2002, 1515 (2003) of 19 November 2003, 1544 (2004) of 19 May 2004 and 1850 (2008) of 16 December 2008, the principle of land for peace and the Arab Peace Initiative,¹³⁷ as affirmed at the twenty-first session of the Council of the League of Arab States, held at summit level in Doha on 30 March 2009, as well as compliance with the agreements reached between the Government of Israel and the Palestine Liberation Organization, the representative of the Palestinian people,

Reaffirming the principle of the permanent sovereignty of peoples under foreign occupation over their natural resources, and expressing concern in this regard about the exploitation of natural resources by Israel, the occupying Power, in the Occupied Palestinian Territory, including East Jerusalem, and in the occupied Syrian Golan,

¹³⁷ A/56/1026-S/2002/932, annex II, resolution 14/221.

Resolutions

Convinced that the Israeli occupation has gravely impeded the efforts to achieve sustainable development and a sound economic environment in the Occupied Palestinian Territory, including East Jerusalem, and in the occupied Syrian Golan, and expressing grave concern about the consequent deterioration of economic and living conditions,

Gravely concerned, in this regard, about Israel's continuation of settlement activities and other related measures in the Occupied Palestinian Territory, particularly in and around occupied East Jerusalem, as well as in the occupied Syrian Golan, in violation of international humanitarian law and relevant United Nations resolutions,

Gravely concerned also by the serious repercussions on the economic and social conditions of the Palestinian people caused by Israel's construction of the wall and its associated regime inside the Occupied Palestinian Territory, including in and around East Jerusalem, and the resulting violation of their economic and social rights, including the right to work, to health, to education, to property and to an adequate standard of living,

Recalling, in this regard, the advisory opinion rendered on 9 July 2004 by the International Court of Justice on the *Legal Consequences of the Construction of a Wall in the Occupied Palestinian Territory*¹³⁸ and General Assembly resolution ES-10/15, and stressing the need to comply with the obligations mentioned therein,

Expressing grave concern at the extensive destruction by Israel, the occupying Power, of properties, including homes, economic institutions, agricultural lands and orchards in the Occupied Palestinian Territory, including East Jerusalem, and, in particular, in connection with its construction of the wall, contrary to international law, in the Occupied Palestinian Territory, including in and around East Jerusalem,

Expressing grave concern also over the continued policy of home demolitions and displacement of the population in and around occupied East Jerusalem in particular, as well as over measures to further isolate the city from its natural Palestinian environs, including through the accelerated construction of settlements, the construction of the wall and the imposition of checkpoints, which have seriously exacerbated the already dire socio-economic situation being faced by the Palestinian population,

Expressing grave concern further about continuing Israeli military operations and the continuing Israeli policy of closures and severe restrictions on the movement of persons and goods, including humanitarian personnel and food, medical, fuel and other essential supplies, via the imposition of crossing closures, checkpoints and a permit regime throughout the Occupied Palestinian Territory, including East Jerusalem, and the consequent negative impact on the socio-economic situation of the Palestinian people, which remains that of dire humanitarian crisis, particularly in the Gaza Strip, where grave hardships continue to mount as a result of Israel's imposition of a blockade and siege as collective punishment of the entire civilian population,

Deploring the Israeli military aggression against the Gaza Strip that was launched on 27 December 2008, which caused heavy casualties among civilians, including hundreds of children and women, and widespread damage to homes, vital infrastructure, hospitals, schools and several United Nations facilities, gravely impacting the provision of vital health and social services to Palestinian women and their families, and in this regard calling for the expeditious commencement of the reconstruction process in the Gaza Strip with the assistance of donor countries, including the disbursement of funds pledged at the International Conference in Support of the Palestinian Economy for the Reconstruction of Gaza, held in Sharm el-Sheikh, Egypt, on 2 March 2009,

¹³⁸ See A/ES-10/273 and Corr.1; see also *Legal Consequences of the Construction of a Wall in the Occupied Palestinian Territory, Advisory Opinion, I.C.J. Reports 2004*, p. 136.

Resolutions

Gravely concerned by various reports of the United Nations and the specialized agencies regarding the almost total aid dependency caused by prolonged border closures, the inordinate rates of unemployment, the widespread poverty and the severe humanitarian hardships, including food insecurity and rising health-related problems, including high levels of malnutrition, among the Palestinian people, especially children, in the Occupied Palestinian Territory, including East Jerusalem,

Expressing grave concern at the increasing number of deaths and injuries among civilians, including children and women, and emphasizing that the Palestinian civilian population must be protected in accordance with international humanitarian law,

Emphasizing the importance of the safety and well-being of all civilians, and calling for the cessation of all acts of violence, including all acts of terror, provocation, incitement and destruction, and all firing of rockets,

Conscious of the urgent need for the reconstruction and development of the economic and social infrastructure of the Occupied Palestinian Territory, including East Jerusalem, as well as the urgent need to address the dire humanitarian crisis facing the Palestinian people,

Commending the important work being done by the United Nations, the specialized agencies and the donor community in support of the economic and social development of the Palestinian people, as well as the assistance being provided in the humanitarian field,

Recognizing the efforts being undertaken by the Palestinian Authority, with international support, to rebuild, reform and strengthen its damaged institutions and promote good governance, and emphasizing the need to preserve the Palestinian institutions and infrastructure and to ameliorate economic and social conditions,

Stressing the importance of national unity among the Palestinian people, and emphasizing the need for the respect and preservation of the territorial integrity and unity of the Occupied Palestinian Territory, including East Jerusalem,

Calling upon both parties to fulfil their obligations under the road map¹³⁹ in cooperation with the Quartet,

1. *Calls for* the lifting of all mobility restrictions imposed on the Palestinian people, including those arising from ongoing Israeli military operations and the multilayered closures system, and also calls for other urgent measures to be taken to alleviate the desperate humanitarian situation in the Occupied Palestinian Territory, especially in the Gaza Strip;

2. *Stresses* the need to preserve the national unity and the territorial integrity of the Occupied Palestinian Territory, including East Jerusalem, and to guarantee the freedom of movement of persons and goods throughout the Occupied Palestinian Territory, including East Jerusalem, as well as to and from the outside world;

3. *Demands* that Israel comply with the Protocol on Economic Relations between the Government of Israel and the Palestine Liberation Organization, signed in Paris on 29 April 1994;¹⁴⁰

4. *Calls upon* Israel to restore and replace civilian properties, vital infrastructure, agricultural lands and governmental institutions that have been damaged or destroyed as a result of its military operations in the Occupied Palestinian Territory;

5. *Reiterates* the call for the full implementation of the Agreement on Movement and Access of 15 November 2005, particularly the urgent and uninterrupted reopening of all crossings

¹³⁹ S/2003/529, annex.

¹⁴⁰ See A/49/180-S/1994/727, annex, entitled "Agreement on the Gaza Strip and the Jericho Area", annex IV.

Resolutions

into the Gaza Strip, including the Rafah and Karni crossings, which is crucial to ensuring the passage of foodstuffs and essential supplies, including construction materials and adequate fuel supplies, as well as the unhindered access of the United Nations and related agencies to and within the Occupied Palestinian Territory;

6. *Calls upon* all parties to respect the rules of international humanitarian law and to refrain from violence against the civilian population, in accordance with the Geneva Convention relative to the Protection of Civilian Persons in Time of War, of 12 August 1949;¹²

7. *Reaffirms* the inalienable right of the Palestinian people and the Arab population of the occupied Syrian Golan to all their natural and economic resources, and calls upon Israel, the occupying Power, not to exploit, endanger or cause loss or depletion of these resources;

8. *Calls upon* Israel, the occupying Power, to cease its destruction of homes and properties, economic institutions and agricultural lands and orchards in the Occupied Palestinian Territory, including East Jerusalem, as well as in the occupied Syrian Golan;

9. *Also calls upon* Israel, the occupying Power, to end immediately its exploitation of natural resources, including water and mining resources, and to cease the dumping of all kinds of waste materials in the Occupied Palestinian Territory, including East Jerusalem, and in the occupied Syrian Golan, which activities gravely threaten their natural resources, namely, their water and land resources, and present a serious environmental hazard and health threat to their civilian populations, and also calls upon Israel, the occupying Power, to remove all obstacles that obstruct the implementation of critical environmental projects, including the sewage treatment plants in the Gaza Strip;

10. *Reaffirms* that the construction and expansion of Israeli settlements and related infrastructure in the Occupied Palestinian Territory, including East Jerusalem, and the occupied Syrian Golan are illegal and constitute a major obstacle to economic and social development, and calls for the full cessation of all settlement and settlement-related activity, including all measures aimed at advancing the illegal settlement campaign, in compliance with relevant Security Council resolutions and international law, including the Geneva Convention relative to the Protection of Civilian Persons in Time of War;

11. *Also reaffirms* that Israel's ongoing construction of the wall in the Occupied Palestinian Territory, including in and around East Jerusalem, is contrary to international law and is isolating East Jerusalem, fragmenting the West Bank and seriously debilitating the economic and social development of the Palestinian people, and calls in this regard for full compliance with the legal obligations mentioned in the advisory opinion rendered on 9 July 2004 by the International Court of Justice¹³⁸ and in General Assembly resolution ES-10/15;

12. *Calls upon* Israel to comply with the provisions of the Geneva Convention relative to the Protection of Civilian Persons in Time of War and to facilitate the visits of Syrian citizens of the occupied Syrian Golan whose family members reside in their mother homeland, the Syrian Arab Republic, via the Qunaitra entrance;

13. *Emphasizes* the importance of the work of United Nations organizations and agencies and of the United Nations Special Coordinator for the Middle East Peace Process and Personal Representative of the Secretary-General to the Palestine Liberation Organization and the Palestinian Authority;

14. *Reiterates* the importance of the revival of the peace process on the basis of Security Council resolutions 242 (1967), 338 (1973), 425 (1978), 1397 (2002), 1515 (2003), 1544 (2004) and 1850 (2008), the Madrid Conference, the principle of land for peace and the Arab Peace Initiative,¹³⁷ as well as compliance with the agreements reached between the Government of Israel and the Palestine Liberation Organization, the representative of the Palestinian people, in order to pave the way for the establishment of an independent Palestinian State and the achievement of a just, lasting and comprehensive peace settlement;

15. *Requests* the Secretary-General to submit to the General Assembly at its sixty-fourth session, through the Economic and Social Council, a report on the implementation of the present resolution and to continue to include in the report of the United Nations Special Coordinator an update on the living conditions of the Palestinian people, in collaboration with relevant United Nations agencies;

16. *Decides* to include the item entitled “Economic and social repercussions of the Israeli occupation on the living conditions of the Palestinian people in the Occupied Palestinian Territory, including East Jerusalem, and the Arab population in the occupied Syrian Golan” in the agenda of its substantive session of 2010.

*45th plenary meeting
31 July 2009*

2009/35. Report of the Committee for Development Policy on its eleventh session

The Economic and Social Council,

Recalling General Assembly resolution 59/209 of 20 December 2004 on a smooth transition strategy for countries graduating from the list of least developed countries,

Recalling also its resolutions 2007/34 and 2007/35 of 27 July 2007,

Expressing its conviction that countries graduating from the least developed country category should not have their positive development disrupted or reversed, but rather should be able to continue and sustain their progress and development,

1. *Takes note* of the report of the Committee for Development Policy on its eleventh session,¹⁴¹

2. *Requests* the Committee, at its twelfth session, to examine and make recommendations on the themes chosen by the Economic and Social Council for the high-level segment of its substantive session of 2010;

3. *Takes note* of the proposals made by the Committee regarding its future work programme;¹⁴²

4. *Endorses* the recommendation of the Committee that Equatorial Guinea be graduated from the list of least developed countries;¹⁴³

5. *Recommends* that the General Assembly take note of the recommendation of the Committee that Equatorial Guinea be graduated from the list of least developed countries;

6. *Reiterates* the importance for development partners to implement concrete measures in support of the transition strategy of ensuring durable graduation;

7. *Requests* the Committee to monitor the development progress of countries graduating from the list of least developed countries and to include its findings in its annual report to the Economic and Social Council;

8. *Invites* the Chair and, as necessary, other members of the Committee to continue the practice of reporting orally on the work of the Committee.

*45th plenary meeting
31 July 2009*

¹⁴¹ *Official Records of the Economic and Social Council, 2009, Supplement No. 13 (E/2009/33).*

¹⁴² *Ibid.*, chap. VI.

¹⁴³ *Ibid.*, chap. V, sect. C, para. 20.

Resolutions

14. *Encourages* the Non-Self-Governing Territories to take steps to establish and/or strengthen disaster preparedness and management institutions and policies;

15. *Requests* the administering Powers concerned to facilitate, when appropriate, the participation of appointed and elected representatives of Non-Self-Governing Territories in the relevant meetings and conferences of the specialized agencies and other organizations of the United Nations system, in accordance with relevant United Nations resolutions and decisions, including the resolutions and decisions of the General Assembly and the Special Committee on specific Territories, so that they may benefit from the related activities of those agencies and organizations;

16. *Recommends* that all Governments intensify their efforts within the specialized agencies and other organizations of the United Nations system of which they are members to accord priority to the question of providing assistance to the peoples of the Non-Self-Governing Territories;

17. *Draws the attention* of the Special Committee to the present resolution and to the discussion held on the subject at the substantive session of 2010 of the Economic and Social Council;

18. *Recalls* the adoption by the Economic Commission for Latin America and the Caribbean on 16 May 1998 of its resolution 574 (XXVII),¹⁶⁸ in which the Commission called for the necessary mechanisms to be devised to permit the associate members of regional commissions, including the Non-Self-Governing Territories, to participate, subject to the rules of procedure of the General Assembly, in the special sessions of the Assembly to review and appraise the implementation of the programmes of action of those United Nations world conferences in which the Territories had originally participated in their capacity as observers and to participate in the work of the Economic and Social Council and its subsidiary bodies;

19. *Requests* the President of the Council to continue to maintain close contact on these matters with the Chair of the Special Committee and to report thereon to the Council;

20. *Requests* the Secretary-General to follow up on the implementation of the present resolution, paying particular attention to cooperation and integration arrangements for maximizing the efficiency of the assistance activities undertaken by various organizations of the United Nations system, and to report thereon to the Council at its substantive session of 2011;

21. *Decides* to keep the above questions under continuous review.

*46th plenary meeting
23 July 2010*

2010/31. Economic and social repercussions of the Israeli occupation on the living conditions of the Palestinian people in the Occupied Palestinian Territory, including East Jerusalem, and the Arab population in the occupied Syrian Golan

The Economic and Social Council,

Recalling General Assembly resolution 64/185 of 21 December 2009,

Recalling also its resolution 2009/34 of 31 July 2009,

Guided by the principles of the Charter of the United Nations affirming the inadmissibility of the acquisition of territory by force, and recalling relevant Security Council resolutions, including resolutions 242 (1967) of 22 November 1967, 252 (1968) of 21 May 1968, 338 (1973) of 22 October 1973, 465 (1980) of 1 March 1980 and 497 (1981) of 17 December 1981,

¹⁶⁸ See *Official Records of the Economic and Social Council, 1998, Supplement No. 21 (E/1998/41)*, chap. III, sect. G.

Resolutions

Recalling the resolutions of the tenth emergency special session of the General Assembly, including resolutions ES-10/13 of 21 October 2003, ES-10/14 of 8 December 2003, ES-10/15 of 20 July 2004 and ES-10/17 of 15 December 2006,

Reaffirming the applicability of the Geneva Convention relative to the Protection of Civilian Persons in Time of War, of 12 August 1949,⁶ to the Occupied Palestinian Territory, including East Jerusalem, and other Arab territories occupied by Israel since 1967,

Recalling the International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights,³⁰ the International Covenant on Economic, Social and Cultural Rights³⁰ and the Convention on the Rights of the Child,³¹ and affirming that these human rights instruments must be respected in the Occupied Palestinian Territory, including East Jerusalem, as well as in the occupied Syrian Golan,

Stressing the importance of the revival of the Middle East peace process on the basis of Security Council resolutions 242 (1967), 338 (1973), 425 (1978) of 19 March 1978, 1397 (2002) of 12 March 2002, 1515 (2003) of 19 November 2003, 1544 (2004) of 19 May 2004 and 1850 (2008) of 16 December 2008, the principle of land for peace, and the Arab Peace Initiative,¹⁶⁹ as affirmed at the League of Arab States summit held in Sirte, Libyan Arab Jamahiriya, on 27 and 28 March 2010, and the Quartet road map,¹⁷⁰ as well as compliance with the agreements reached between the Government of Israel and the Palestine Liberation Organization, the representative of the Palestinian people,

Reaffirming the principle of the permanent sovereignty of peoples under foreign occupation over their natural resources, and expressing concern in this regard about the exploitation of natural resources by Israel, the occupying Power, in the Occupied Palestinian Territory, including East Jerusalem, and in the occupied Syrian Golan,

Convinced that the Israeli occupation has gravely impeded the efforts to achieve sustainable development and a sound economic environment in the Occupied Palestinian Territory, including East Jerusalem, and in the occupied Syrian Golan, and expressing grave concern about the consequent deterioration of economic and living conditions,

Commending, in this regard, the efforts of the Palestinian Authority to improve the economic and social situation in the Occupied Palestinian Territory,

Gravely concerned, in this regard, about Israel's continuation of settlement activities and other related measures in the Occupied Palestinian Territory, particularly in and around occupied East Jerusalem, as well as in the occupied Syrian Golan, in violation of international humanitarian law and relevant United Nations resolutions,

Gravely concerned also by the serious repercussions on the economic and social conditions of the Palestinian people caused by Israel's construction of the wall and its associated regime inside the Occupied Palestinian Territory, including in and around East Jerusalem, and the resulting violation of their economic and social rights, including the right to work, to health, to education, to property and to an adequate standard of living,

Recalling, in this regard, the advisory opinion rendered on 9 July 2004 by the International Court of Justice on the *Legal Consequences of the Construction of a Wall in the Occupied Palestinian Territory*¹⁷¹ and General Assembly resolution ES-10/15, and stressing the need to comply with the obligations mentioned therein,

Expressing grave concern at the extensive destruction by Israel, the occupying Power, of properties, including homes, economic institutions, agricultural lands and orchards, in the

¹⁶⁹ A/56/1026-S/2002/932, annex II, resolution 14/221.

¹⁷⁰ S/2003/529, annex.

¹⁷¹ See A/ES-10/273 and Corr.1; see also *Legal Consequences of the Construction of a Wall in the Occupied Palestinian Territory, Advisory Opinion, I.C.J. Reports 2004*, p. 136.

Resolutions

Occupied Palestinian Territory, including East Jerusalem, and, in particular, in connection with its construction of the wall, contrary to international law, in the Occupied Palestinian Territory, including in and around East Jerusalem,

Expressing grave concern also over the continued policy of home demolitions, evictions, revocation of residency rights and displacement of the population in and around occupied East Jerusalem, as well as measures to further isolate the city from its natural Palestinian environs, including through the accelerated construction of settlements, construction of the wall and imposition of checkpoints, which have seriously exacerbated the already dire socio-economic situation being faced by the Palestinian population,

Expressing grave concern further about Israeli military operations and the continuing Israeli policy of closures and severe restrictions on the movement of persons and goods, including humanitarian personnel as well as food, medical supplies, fuel, construction materials and other essential supplies, via the imposition of crossing closures, checkpoints and a permit regime throughout the Occupied Palestinian Territory, including East Jerusalem, and the consequent negative impact on the socio-economic situation of the Palestinian people, which remains that of a dire humanitarian crisis,

Taking note of recent developments regarding the situation of access to the Gaza Strip, although grave hardships continue to prevail as a result of the prolonged Israeli closures and severe economic and movement restrictions that in effect amount to a blockade, and calling in this regard for the full implementation of Security Council resolution 1860 (2009) of 8 January 2009 with a view to ensuring the full opening of the border crossings for the sustained and regular movement of persons and goods, including humanitarian aid, commercial flows and construction materials,

Deploing the heavy casualties among civilians, including hundreds of children and women, the internal displacement of thousands of civilians and widespread damage to homes, vital civilian infrastructure, hospitals, schools, food supply installations, economic, industrial and agricultural properties and several United Nations facilities in the Gaza Strip, which gravely impact the provision of vital health and social services to Palestinian women and their families and their socio-economic living conditions and were all caused by the military operations carried out between December 2008 and January 2009,

Recalling, in this regard, the relevant United Nations reports, including those of the Economic and Social Council, the Economic and Social Commission for Western Asia¹⁷² and the Human Rights Council,

Expressing deep concern about the short- and long-term detrimental impact of such widespread destruction and the hampering of the reconstruction process by Israel, the occupying Power, on the socio-economic and humanitarian conditions of the Palestinian civilian population in the Gaza Strip, and calling in this regard for the expeditious commencement of the reconstruction process in the Gaza Strip with the assistance of the donor countries, including the disbursement of funds pledged in the International Conference in Support of the Palestinian Economy for the Reconstruction of Gaza, held in Sharm el-Sheikh, Egypt, on 2 March 2009,

Gravely concerned by various reports of the United Nations and specialized agencies regarding the almost total aid dependency caused by prolonged border closures, inordinate rates of unemployment, widespread poverty and severe humanitarian hardships, including food insecurity and rising health-related problems, including high levels of malnutrition, among the Palestinian people, especially children, in the Occupied Palestinian Territory, including East Jerusalem,

Expressing grave concern at the increasing number of deaths and injuries among civilians, including children and women, and emphasizing that the Palestinian civilian population must be protected in accordance with international humanitarian law,

¹⁷² See A/65/72-E/2010/13.

Resolutions

Emphasizing the importance of the safety and well-being of all civilians, and calling for the cessation of all acts of violence, including all acts of terror, provocation, incitement and destruction, and all firing of rockets,

Conscious of the urgent need for the reconstruction and development of the economic and social infrastructure of the Occupied Palestinian Territory, including East Jerusalem, as well as the urgent need to address the dire humanitarian crisis facing the Palestinian people, including by ensuring the unimpeded provision of humanitarian assistance and the sustained and regular flow of persons and goods into and out of the Gaza Strip,

Commending the important work being done by the United Nations, the specialized agencies and the donor community in support of the economic and social development of the Palestinian people in line with their national development and State-building plan, as well as the assistance being provided in the humanitarian field,

Recognizing the efforts being undertaken by the Palestinian Authority, with international support, to rebuild, reform and strengthen its damaged institutions and promote good governance, and emphasizing the need to preserve the Palestinian national institutions and infrastructure and to ameliorate economic and social conditions,

Welcoming in this regard and expressing strong support for the plan of the Palestinian Authority entitled “Palestine: Ending the Occupation, Establishing the State”, for constructing the institutions of a Palestinian State within a twenty-four month period,

Stressing the importance of national unity among the Palestinian people, and emphasizing the need for the respect and preservation of the territorial integrity and unity of the Occupied Palestinian Territory, including East Jerusalem,

Calling upon both parties to fulfil their obligations under the road map in cooperation with the Quartet,

1. *Calls for* the full opening of the border crossings of the Gaza Strip, in line with Security Council resolution 1860 (2009), to ensure humanitarian access as well as the sustained and regular flow of persons and goods and the lifting of all movement restrictions imposed on the Palestinian people, including those restrictions arising from ongoing Israeli military operations and the multilayered closures system, and for other urgent measures to alleviate the desperate humanitarian situation in the Occupied Palestinian Territory, especially in the Gaza Strip, and calls for compliance by Israel, the occupying Power, with all of its legal obligations under international humanitarian law and United Nations resolutions in this regard;

2. *Stresses* the need to preserve the territorial contiguity, unity and integrity of the Occupied Palestinian Territory, including East Jerusalem, and to guarantee the freedom of movement of persons and goods throughout the Occupied Palestinian Territory, including East Jerusalem, as well as to and from the outside world;

3. *Also stresses* the need to preserve and develop Palestinian national institutions and infrastructure for the provision of vital public services to the Palestinian civilian population and to contribute to the promotion and protection of human rights, including economic and social rights;

4. *Demands* that Israel comply with the Protocol on Economic Relations between the Government of Israel and the Palestine Liberation Organization signed in Paris on 29 April 1994;¹⁷³

5. *Calls upon* Israel to restore and replace civilian properties, vital infrastructure, agricultural lands and governmental institutions that have been damaged or destroyed as a result of its military operations in the Occupied Palestinian Territory;

¹⁷³ See A/49/180-S/1994/727, annex, entitled “Agreement on the Gaza Strip and the Jericho Area”, annex IV.

Resolutions

6. *Reiterates* the call for the full implementation of the Agreement on Movement and Access of 15 November 2005, particularly the urgent and uninterrupted reopening of all crossings into the Gaza Strip, including the Rafah and Karni crossings, which is crucial to ensuring the passage of foodstuffs and essential supplies, including construction materials and adequate fuel supplies, as well as the unhindered access of the United Nations and related agencies and regular commercial flows necessary for economic recovery to and within the Occupied Palestinian Territory;

7. *Calls upon* all parties to respect the rules of international humanitarian law and to refrain from violence against the civilian population in accordance with the Geneva Convention relative to the Protection of Civilian Persons in Time of War, of 12 August 1949;⁶

8. *Reaffirms* the inalienable right of the Palestinian people and the Arab population of the occupied Syrian Golan to all their natural and economic resources, and calls upon Israel, the occupying Power, not to exploit, endanger or cause loss or depletion of these resources;

9. *Calls upon* Israel, the occupying Power, to cease its destruction of homes and properties, economic institutions and agricultural lands and orchards in the Occupied Palestinian Territory, including East Jerusalem, as well as in the occupied Syrian Golan;

10. *Also calls upon* Israel, the occupying Power, to end immediately its exploitation of natural resources, including water and mining resources, and to cease the dumping of all kinds of waste materials in the Occupied Palestinian Territory, including East Jerusalem, and in the occupied Syrian Golan, activities which gravely threaten their natural resources, namely, their water and land resources, and present a serious environmental hazard and health threat to the civilian populations, and also calls upon Israel, the occupying Power, to remove all obstacles that obstruct the implementation of critical environmental projects, including the sewage treatment plants in the Gaza Strip;

11. *Reaffirms* that the construction and expansion of Israeli settlements and related infrastructure in the Occupied Palestinian Territory, including East Jerusalem, and the occupied Syrian Golan, are illegal and constitute a major obstacle to economic and social development and to the achievement of peace, and calls for the full cessation of all settlement and settlement-related activity, including full cessation of all measures aimed at altering the demographic composition, legal status and character of the occupied territories, including, in particular, in and around Occupied East Jerusalem, in compliance with relevant Security Council resolutions and international law, including the Geneva Convention relative to the Protection of Civilian Persons in Time of War;

12. *Also reaffirms* that Israel's ongoing construction of the wall in the Occupied Palestinian Territory, including in and around East Jerusalem, is contrary to international law and is isolating East Jerusalem, fragmenting the West Bank and seriously debilitating the economic and social development of the Palestinian people, and calls in this regard for full compliance with the legal obligations mentioned in the advisory opinion rendered on 9 July 2004 by the International Court of Justice,¹⁷¹ in General Assembly resolution ES-10/15 and in subsequent relevant resolutions;

13. *Calls upon* Israel to comply with the provisions of the Geneva Convention relative to the Protection of Civilian Persons in Time of War and to facilitate visits of the Syrian citizens of the occupied Syrian Golan whose family members reside in their mother homeland, the Syrian Arab Republic, via the Qunaitra entrance;

14. *Emphasizes* the importance of the work of United Nations organizations and agencies and of the United Nations Special Coordinator for the Middle East Peace Process and Personal Representative of the Secretary-General to the Palestine Liberation Organization and the Palestinian Authority;

15. *Reiterates* the importance of the revival of the peace process on the basis of relevant United Nations resolutions, including Security Council resolutions 242 (1967), 338 (1973), 425 (1978), 1397 (2002), 1515 (2003), 1544 (2004) and 1850 (2008), the Madrid Conference, the

principle of land for peace, the Arab Peace Initiative¹⁶⁹ and the Quartet road map,¹⁷⁰ as well as compliance with the agreements reached between the Government of Israel and the Palestine Liberation Organization, the representative of the Palestinian people, in order to pave the way for the establishment of the independent Palestinian State and the achievement of a just, lasting and comprehensive peace settlement;

16. *Requests* the Secretary-General to submit to the General Assembly at its sixty-fifth session, through the Economic and Social Council, a report on the implementation of the present resolution and to continue to include in the report of the United Nations Special Coordinator an update on the living conditions of the Palestinian people, in collaboration with relevant United Nations agencies;

17. *Decides* to include the item entitled “Economic and social repercussions of the Israeli occupation on the living conditions of the Palestinian people in the Occupied Palestinian Territory, including East Jerusalem, and the Arab population in the occupied Syrian Golan” in the agenda of its substantive session of 2011.

*46th plenary meeting
23 July 2010*

2010/32. Consolidated List of Products Whose Consumption and/or Sale Have Been Banned, Withdrawn, Severely Restricted or Not Approved by Governments

The Economic and Social Council,

Noting the entry into force in 2004 of the Rotterdam Convention on the Prior Informed Consent Procedure for Certain Hazardous Chemicals and Pesticides in International Trade,¹⁷⁴ and of the Stockholm Convention on Persistent Organic Pollutants,¹⁷⁵

Noting also that detailed information on products whose consumption and/or sale have been banned, withdrawn, severely restricted or not approved by Governments is readily accessible on the Internet,

1. *Takes note* of the notes by the Secretary-General transmitting the report of the United Nations Environment Programme on the chemicals volume of the Consolidated List of Products Whose Consumption and/or Sale Have Been Banned, Withdrawn, Severely Restricted or Not Approved by Governments¹⁷⁶ and the report of the World Health Organization on the pharmaceuticals volume of the Consolidated List;¹⁷⁷

2. *Decides* to discontinue consideration of the Consolidated List of Products Whose Consumption and/or Sale Have Been Banned, Withdrawn, Severely Restricted or Not Approved by Governments at its future substantive sessions.

*46th plenary meeting
23 July 2010*

2010/33. Committee of Experts on International Cooperation in Tax Matters

The Economic and Social Council,

Recalling its resolution 2004/69 of 11 November 2004, by which it decided that the Ad Hoc Group of Experts on International Cooperation in Tax Matters would be renamed the Committee of Experts on International Cooperation in Tax Matters,

¹⁷⁴ United Nations, *Treaty Series*, vol. 2244, No. 39973.

¹⁷⁵ *Ibid.*, vol. 2256, No. 40214.

¹⁷⁶ See E/2010/79.

¹⁷⁷ See E/2010/84.

20. *Requests* the Secretary-General to follow up on the implementation of the present resolution, paying particular attention to cooperation and integration arrangements for maximizing the efficiency of the assistance activities undertaken by various organizations of the United Nations system, and to report thereon to the Council at its substantive session of 2012;

21. *Decides* to keep the above questions under continuous review.

*49th plenary meeting
28 July 2011*

2011/41. Economic and social repercussions of the Israeli occupation on the living conditions of the Palestinian people in the Occupied Palestinian Territory, including East Jerusalem, and the Arab population in the occupied Syrian Golan

The Economic and Social Council,

Recalling General Assembly resolution 65/179 of 20 December 2010,

Recalling also its resolution 2010/31 of 23 July 2010,

Guided by the principles of the Charter of the United Nations affirming the inadmissibility of the acquisition of territory by force, and recalling relevant Security Council resolutions, including resolutions 242 (1967) of 22 November 1967, 252 (1968) of 21 May 1968, 338 (1973) of 22 October 1973, 465 (1980) of 1 March 1980 and 497 (1981) of 17 December 1981,

Recalling the resolutions of the tenth emergency special session of the General Assembly, including resolutions ES-10/13 of 21 October 2003, ES-10/14 of 8 December 2003, ES-10/15 of 20 July 2004 and ES-10/17 of 15 December 2006,

Reaffirming the applicability of the Geneva Convention relative to the Protection of Civilian Persons in Time of War, of 12 August 1949,³⁰ to the Occupied Palestinian Territory, including East Jerusalem, and other Arab territories occupied by Israel since 1967,

Recalling the International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights,⁶⁰ the International Covenant on Economic, Social and Cultural Rights⁶⁰ and the Convention on the Rights of the Child,⁶¹ and reaffirming that these human rights instruments must be respected in the Occupied Palestinian Territory, including East Jerusalem, as well as in the occupied Syrian Golan,

Stressing the importance of the revival and acceleration of serious and credible negotiations within the Middle East peace process on the basis of Security Council resolutions 242 (1967), 338 (1973), 425 (1978) of 19 March 1978, 1397 (2002) of 12 March 2002, 1515 (2003) of 19 November 2003, 1544 (2004) of 19 May 2004 and 1850 (2008) of 16 December 2008, the principle of land for peace, the Arab Peace Initiative¹⁴⁵ and the Quartet road map,¹⁴⁶ as well as compliance with the agreements reached between the Government of Israel and the Palestine Liberation Organization, the representative of the Palestinian people,

Reaffirming the principle of the permanent sovereignty of peoples under foreign occupation over their natural resources, and expressing concern in that regard about the exploitation of natural resources by Israel, the occupying Power, in the Occupied Palestinian Territory, including East Jerusalem, and in the occupied Syrian Golan,

Convinced that the Israeli occupation has gravely impeded the efforts to achieve sustainable development and a sound economic environment in the Occupied Palestinian Territory, including East Jerusalem, and in the occupied Syrian Golan, and expressing grave concern about the consequent deterioration of economic and living conditions,

¹⁴⁵ A/56/1026-S/2002/932, annex II, resolution 14/221.

¹⁴⁶ S/2003/529, annex.

Resolutions

Commending, in that regard, the efforts of the Palestinian Authority to improve the economic and social situation in the Occupied Palestinian Territory, especially in the areas of governance, the rule of law and human rights, livelihoods and productive sectors, education and culture, health, social protection, infrastructure and water,

Gravely concerned, in that regard, about the accelerated construction of settlements and implementation of other related measures by Israel in the Occupied Palestinian Territory, particularly in and around occupied East Jerusalem, as well as in the occupied Syrian Golan, in violation of international humanitarian law and relevant United Nations resolutions,

Expressing deep concern about the rising incidence of violence, harassment, provocation and incitement by illegal armed Israeli settlers in the Occupied Palestinian Territory, including East Jerusalem, against Palestinian civilians, including children, and their properties, including historic and religious sites, and agricultural lands,

Gravely concerned by the serious repercussions on the economic and social conditions of the Palestinian people caused by Israel's construction of the wall and its associated regime inside the Occupied Palestinian Territory, including in and around East Jerusalem, and the resulting violation of their economic and social rights, including the right to work, to health, to education, to property, to an adequate standard of living and to freedom of access and movement,

Recalling, in that regard, the advisory opinion rendered on 9 July 2004 by the International Court of Justice on the *Legal Consequences of the Construction of a Wall in the Occupied Palestinian Territory*¹⁴⁷ and General Assembly resolution ES-10/15, and stressing the need to comply with the obligations mentioned therein,

Expressing grave concern at the extensive destruction by Israel, the occupying Power, of properties, including the increased demolition of homes, economic institutions, agricultural lands and orchards, in the Occupied Palestinian Territory, including East Jerusalem, in particular in connection with its construction of the wall, contrary to international law, in the Occupied Palestinian Territory, including in and around East Jerusalem,

Expressing grave concern also over the continuing and intensifying policy of home demolitions, evictions and revocation of residency rights, which have caused the further displacement of the Palestinian population in and around occupied East Jerusalem, as well as measures to further isolate the city from its natural Palestinian environs, including through the accelerated construction of settlements, the construction of the wall, the confiscation of land and the continued imposition of checkpoints, which have seriously exacerbated the already critical socio-economic situation being faced by the Palestinian population,

Expressing grave concern further about Israeli military operations and the continuing Israeli policy of closures and severe restrictions on the movement of persons and goods, including humanitarian personnel and food, medical, fuel, construction material and other essential supplies, via the imposition of crossing closures, checkpoints and a permit regime throughout the Occupied Palestinian Territory, including East Jerusalem, and the consequent negative impact on the socio-economic situation of the Palestinian people, in particular the Palestinian refugee population, which remains that of a humanitarian crisis,

Taking note of recent developments regarding the situation of access to the Gaza Strip, although grave hardships continue to prevail as a result of the prolonged Israeli closures and severe economic and movement restrictions that in effect amount to a blockade, and calling in that regard for the full implementation of Security Council resolution 1860 (2009) of 8 January 2009 with a view to ensuring the full opening of the border crossings for the sustained and regular movement of persons and goods, including humanitarian aid, commercial flows and construction materials,

¹⁴⁷ See A/ES-10/273 and Corr.1; see also *Legal Consequences of the Construction of a Wall in the Occupied Palestinian Territory, Advisory Opinion, I.C.J. Reports 2004*, p. 136.

Resolutions

Deploing the heavy casualties among civilians, including hundreds of children and women, the internal displacement of thousands of civilians and widespread damage to homes, vital civilian infrastructure, hospitals, schools, food supply installations, economic, industrial and agricultural properties and several United Nations facilities in the Gaza Strip, which have a grave impact on the provision of vital health and social services to Palestinian women and their families and on their socio-economic living conditions, all caused by the military operations in December 2008 and January 2009,

Recalling, in that regard, the relevant United Nations reports, including those of the Economic and Social Council, the Economic and Social Commission for Western Asia and the Human Rights Council,

Expressing deep concern about the short- and long-term detrimental impact of such widespread destruction and the hampering of the reconstruction process by Israel, the occupying Power, on the socio-economic and humanitarian conditions of the Palestinian civilian population in the Gaza Strip, and calling in that regard for the immediate acceleration of the reconstruction process in the Gaza Strip with the assistance of the donor countries, including the disbursement of funds pledged at the International Conference in Support of the Palestinian Economy for the Reconstruction of Gaza, held in Sharm el-Sheikh, Egypt, on 2 March 2009,

Gravely concerned at various reports of the United Nations and specialized agencies regarding the substantial aid dependency caused by prolonged border closures, inordinate rates of unemployment, widespread poverty and severe humanitarian hardships, including food insecurity and rising health-related problems, including high levels of malnutrition, among the Palestinian people, especially children, in the Occupied Palestinian Territory, including East Jerusalem,

Expressing grave concern at the deaths and injuries caused to civilians, including children, women and peaceful demonstrators, and emphasizing that the Palestinian civilian population must be protected in accordance with international humanitarian law,

Emphasizing the importance of the safety and well-being of all civilians, and calling for the cessation of all acts of violence, including all acts of terror, provocation, incitement and destruction, and all firing of rockets,

Expressing deep concern that thousands of Palestinians, including hundreds of children and women, continue to be held in Israeli prisons or detention centres under harsh conditions,

Conscious of the urgent need for the reconstruction and development of the economic and social infrastructure of the Occupied Palestinian Territory, including East Jerusalem, as well as the urgent need to address the humanitarian crisis facing the Palestinian people, including by ensuring the unimpeded provision of humanitarian assistance and the sustained and regular flow of persons and goods into and out of the Gaza Strip,

Commending the important work being done by the United Nations, the specialized agencies and the donor community in support of the economic and social development of the Palestinian people in line with their national development and State-building plan, which is to be completed by the end of August 2011, as well as the assistance being provided in the humanitarian field,

Recognizing the efforts being undertaken by the Palestinian Authority, with international support, to rebuild, reform and strengthen its damaged institutions and promote good governance, and emphasizing the need to preserve the Palestinian national institutions and infrastructure and to ameliorate economic and social conditions,

Welcoming in that regard, and calling upon the international community to continue its strong support for, the plan of the Palestinian Authority entitled "Palestine: Ending the Occupation, Establishing the State", for constructing the institutions of a Palestinian State by September 2011,

Resolutions

Stressing the importance of national unity among the Palestinian people, and emphasizing the need for the respect and preservation of the territorial integrity and unity of the Occupied Palestinian Territory, including East Jerusalem,

Calling upon both parties to fulfil their obligations under the road map in cooperation with the Quartet,

1. *Calls for* the full opening of the border crossings of the Gaza Strip, in line with Security Council resolution 1860 (2009), to ensure humanitarian access as well as the sustained and regular flow of persons and goods and the lifting of all movement restrictions imposed on the Palestinian people, including those restrictions arising from ongoing Israeli military operations and the multilayered closures system, and for other urgent measures to be taken to alleviate the serious humanitarian situation in the Occupied Palestinian Territory, which is critical in the Gaza Strip, and calls for compliance by Israel, the occupying Power, with all of its legal obligations under international humanitarian law and United Nations resolutions in that regard;

2. *Stresses* the need to preserve the territorial contiguity, unity and integrity of the Occupied Palestinian Territory, including East Jerusalem, and to guarantee the freedom of movement of persons and goods throughout the Occupied Palestinian Territory, including East Jerusalem, as well as to and from the outside world;

3. *Also stresses* the need to preserve and develop Palestinian national institutions and infrastructure for the provision of vital public services to the Palestinian civilian population and to contribute to the promotion and protection of human rights, including economic and social rights;

4. *Demands* that Israel comply with the Protocol on Economic Relations between the Government of Israel and the Palestine Liberation Organization, signed in Paris on 29 April 1994;¹⁴⁸

5. *Calls upon* Israel to restore and replace civilian properties, vital infrastructure, agricultural lands and governmental institutions that have been damaged or destroyed as a result of its military operations in the Occupied Palestinian Territory;

6. *Reiterates* the call for the full implementation of the Agreement on Movement and Access of 15 November 2005, particularly the urgent and uninterrupted reopening of all crossings into the Gaza Strip, which is crucial to ensuring the passage of foodstuffs and essential supplies, including construction materials and adequate fuel supplies, as well as to ensuring the unhindered access of the United Nations and related agencies and regular commercial flows necessary for economic recovery to and within the Occupied Palestinian Territory;

7. *Calls upon* all parties to respect the rules of international humanitarian law and to refrain from violence against the civilian population, in accordance with the Geneva Convention relative to the Protection of Civilian Persons in Time of War, of 12 August 1949;³⁰

8. *Reaffirms* the inalienable right of the Palestinian people and the Arab population of the occupied Syrian Golan to all their natural and economic resources, and calls upon Israel, the occupying Power, not to exploit, endanger or cause loss or depletion of those resources;

9. *Calls upon* Israel, the occupying Power, to cease its destruction of homes and properties, economic institutions and agricultural lands and orchards in the Occupied Palestinian Territory, including East Jerusalem, as well as in the occupied Syrian Golan;

10. *Also calls upon* Israel, the occupying Power, to end immediately its exploitation of natural resources, including water and mining resources, and to cease the dumping of all kinds of waste materials in the Occupied Palestinian Territory, including East Jerusalem, and in the occupied Syrian Golan, which gravely threaten their natural resources, namely, the water, land and energy resources, and present a serious environmental hazard and health threat to the civilian

¹⁴⁸ See A/49/180-S/1994/727, annex, entitled “Agreement on the Gaza Strip and the Jericho Area”, annex IV.

Resolutions

populations, and also calls upon Israel, the occupying Power, to remove all obstacles that obstruct implementation of critical environmental projects, including the sewage treatment plants in the Gaza Strip;

11. *Reaffirms* that the construction and expansion of Israeli settlements and related infrastructure in the Occupied Palestinian Territory, including East Jerusalem, and the occupied Syrian Golan, are illegal and constitute a major obstacle to economic and social development and to the achievement of peace, and calls for the full cessation of all settlement and settlement-related activity, including full cessation of all measures aimed at altering the demographic composition, legal status and character of the occupied territories, including, in particular, in and around Occupied East Jerusalem, in compliance with relevant Security Council resolutions and international law, including the Geneva Convention relative to the Protection of Civilian Persons in Time of War;

12. *Also reaffirms* that the ongoing construction by Israel of the wall in the Occupied Palestinian Territory, including in and around East Jerusalem, is contrary to international law and is isolating East Jerusalem, fragmenting the West Bank and seriously debilitating the economic and social development of the Palestinian people, and calls in that regard for full compliance with the legal obligations mentioned in the 9 July 2004 advisory opinion of the International Court of Justice¹⁴⁷ and in General Assembly resolution ES-10/15 and subsequent relevant resolutions;

13. *Calls upon* Israel to comply with the provisions of the Geneva Convention relative to the Protection of Civilian Persons in Time of War and to facilitate visits of the Syrian citizens of the occupied Syrian Golan whose family members reside in their mother homeland, the Syrian Arab Republic, via the Qunaitra entrance;

14. *Emphasizes* the importance of the work of United Nations organizations and agencies in the Occupied Palestinian Territory, including East Jerusalem, and of the United Nations Special Coordinator for the Middle East Peace Process and Personal Representative of the Secretary-General to the Palestine Liberation Organization and the Palestinian Authority;

15. *Reiterates* the importance of the revival and accelerated advancement of negotiations of the peace process on the basis of relevant United Nations resolutions, including Security Council resolutions 242 (1967), 338 (1973), 425 (1978), 1397 (2002), 1515 (2003), 1544 (2004) and 1850 (2008), the Madrid Conference, the principle of land for peace, the Arab Peace Initiative¹⁴⁵ and the Quartet road map,¹⁴⁶ as well as compliance with the agreements reached between the Government of Israel and the Palestine Liberation Organization, the representative of the Palestinian people, in order to pave the way for the establishment of the independent Palestinian State and the achievement of a just, lasting and comprehensive peace settlement;

16. *Requests* the Secretary-General to submit to the General Assembly at its sixty-sixth session, through the Economic and Social Council, a report on the implementation of the present resolution and to continue to include in the report of the United Nations Special Coordinator an update on the living conditions of the Palestinian people, in collaboration with relevant United Nations agencies;

17. *Decides* to include the item entitled “Economic and social repercussions of the Israeli occupation on the living conditions of the Palestinian people in the Occupied Palestinian Territory, including East Jerusalem, and the Arab population in the occupied Syrian Golan” in the agenda of its substantive session of 2012.

*49th plenary meeting
28 July 2011*

2011/42. Strengthening crime prevention and criminal justice responses to protect cultural property, especially with regard to its trafficking

The Economic and Social Council

Recommends to the General Assembly the adoption of the following draft resolution:

2012/23. Economic and social repercussions of the Israeli occupation on the living conditions of the Palestinian people in the Occupied Palestinian Territory, including East Jerusalem, and the Arab population in the occupied Syrian Golan

The Economic and Social Council,

Recalling General Assembly resolution 66/225 of 22 December 2011,

Recalling also its resolution 2011/41 of 28 July 2011,

Guided by the principles of the Charter of the United Nations affirming the inadmissibility of the acquisition of territory by force, and recalling relevant Security Council resolutions, including resolutions 242 (1967) of 22 November 1967, 252 (1968) of 21 May 1968, 338 (1973) of 22 October 1973, 465 (1980) of 1 March 1980 and 497 (1981) of 17 December 1981,

Recalling the resolutions of the tenth emergency special session of the General Assembly, including resolutions ES-10/13 of 21 October 2003, ES-10/14 of 8 December 2003, ES-10/15 of 20 July 2004 and ES-10/17 of 15 December 2006,

Reaffirming the applicability of the Geneva Convention relative to the Protection of Civilian Persons in Time of War, of 12 August 1949,¹¹³ to the Occupied Palestinian Territory, including East Jerusalem, and other Arab territories occupied by Israel since 1967,

Recalling the International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights,¹¹⁴ the International Covenant on Economic, Social and Cultural Rights¹¹⁴ and the Convention on the Rights of the Child,¹¹⁵ and reaffirming that these human rights instruments must be respected in the Occupied Palestinian Territory, including East Jerusalem, as well as in the occupied Syrian Golan,

Stressing the importance of the revival and acceleration of serious and credible negotiations within the Middle East peace process on the basis of Security Council resolutions 242 (1967), 338 (1973), 425 (1978) of 19 March 1978, 1397 (2002) of 12 March 2002, 1515 (2003) of 19 November 2003, 1544 (2004) of 19 May 2004 and 1850 (2008) of 16 December 2008, the principle of land for peace, the Arab Peace Initiative¹¹⁶ and the Quartet road map,¹¹⁷ as well as compliance with the agreements reached between the Government of Israel and the Palestine Liberation Organization, the representative of the Palestinian people,

Reaffirming the principle of the permanent sovereignty of peoples under foreign occupation over their natural resources, and expressing concern in that regard about the exploitation of natural resources by Israel, the occupying Power, in the Occupied Palestinian Territory, including East Jerusalem, and in the occupied Syrian Golan,

Convinced that the Israeli occupation has gravely impeded the efforts to achieve sustainable development and a sound economic environment in the Occupied Palestinian Territory, including East Jerusalem, and in the occupied Syrian Golan, and expressing grave concern about the consequent deterioration of economic and living conditions,

Commending, in that regard, the efforts of the Palestinian Authority to improve the economic and social situation in the Occupied Palestinian Territory, especially in the areas of governance, the rule of law and human rights, livelihoods and productive sectors, education and culture, health, social protection, infrastructure and water,

Gravely concerned, in that regard, about the accelerated construction of settlements and implementation of other related measures by Israel in the Occupied Palestinian Territory, particularly in and around occupied East Jerusalem, as well as in the occupied Syrian Golan, in violation of international humanitarian law and relevant United Nations resolutions,

Expressing deep concern about the rising incidence of violence, harassment, provocation, vandalism and incitement by illegal armed Israeli settlers in the Occupied Palestinian Territory, including East Jerusalem, against Palestinian civilians, including children, and their properties, including historic and religious sites, and agricultural lands,

¹¹³ United Nations, *Treaty Series*, vol. 75, No. 973.

¹¹⁴ See General Assembly resolution 2200 A (XXI), annex.

¹¹⁵ United Nations, *Treaty Series*, vol. 1577, No. 27531.

¹¹⁶ A/56/1026-S/2002/932, annex II, resolution 14/221.

¹¹⁷ S/2003/529, annex.

Gravely concerned by the serious repercussions on the economic and social conditions of the Palestinian people caused by the construction by Israel of the wall and its associated regime inside the Occupied Palestinian Territory, including in and around East Jerusalem, and the resulting violation of their economic and social rights, including the right to work, to health, to education, to property, to an adequate standard of living and to freedom of access and movement,

Recalling, in that regard, the advisory opinion rendered on 9 July 2004 by the International Court of Justice on the legal consequences of the construction of a wall in the Occupied Palestinian Territory,¹¹⁸ and General Assembly resolution ES-10/15, and stressing the need to comply with the obligations mentioned therein,

Expressing grave concern at the extensive destruction by Israel, the occupying Power, of properties, including the increased demolition of homes, economic institutions, historical landmarks, agricultural lands and orchards, in the Occupied Palestinian Territory, including East Jerusalem, in particular in connection with its construction of the wall, contrary to international law, in the Occupied Palestinian Territory, including in and around East Jerusalem,

Expressing grave concern also over the continuing and intensifying policy of home demolitions, evictions and revocation of residency rights, which have caused the further displacement of the Palestinian population in and around occupied East Jerusalem, as well as measures to further isolate the city from its natural Palestinian environs, including through the accelerated construction of settlements, the construction of the wall, the confiscation of land and the continued imposition of checkpoints, which have seriously exacerbated the already critical socioeconomic situation being faced by the Palestinian population,

Expressing grave concern further about Israeli military operations and the continuing Israeli policy of closures and severe restrictions on the movement of persons and goods, including humanitarian personnel and food, medical, fuel, construction material and other essential supplies, via the imposition of crossing closures, checkpoints and a permit regime throughout the Occupied Palestinian Territory, including East Jerusalem, and the consequent negative impact on the socioeconomic situation of the Palestinian people, in particular the Palestinian refugee population, which remains that of a humanitarian crisis,

Taking note of recent developments regarding the situation of access to the Gaza Strip, although grave hardships continue to prevail as a result of the prolonged Israeli closures and severe economic and movement restrictions that in effect amount to a blockade, calling in that regard for the full implementation of Security Council resolution 1860 (2009) of 8 January 2009 with a view to ensuring the full opening of the border crossings for the sustained and regular movement of persons and goods, including humanitarian aid, commercial flows and construction materials, and emphasizing the need for security for all civilian populations,

Deploring the heavy casualties among civilians, including hundreds of children and women, the internal displacement of thousands of civilians and widespread damage to homes, vital civilian infrastructure, hospitals, schools, food supply installations, economic, industrial and agricultural properties, and several United Nations facilities in the Gaza Strip, which have a grave impact on the provision of vital health and social services to Palestinian women and their families and on their socioeconomic living conditions, all caused by the military operations between December 2008 and January 2009,

Recalling, in that regard, the relevant United Nations reports, including those of the Economic and Social Council, the Economic and Social Commission for Western Asia and the Human Rights Council,

Expressing deep concern about the short- and long-term detrimental impact of such widespread destruction and the hampering of the reconstruction process by Israel, the occupying Power, on the socioeconomic and humanitarian conditions of the Palestinian civilian population in the Gaza Strip, and calling in that regard for the immediate acceleration of the reconstruction process in the Gaza Strip with the assistance of the donor countries, including the disbursement of funds pledged at the International Conference in Support of the Palestinian Economy for the Reconstruction of Gaza, held in Sharm el-Sheikh, Egypt, on 2 March 2009,

Gravely concerned about various reports of the United Nations and specialized agencies regarding the substantial aid dependency caused by prolonged border closures, inordinate rates of unemployment, widespread

¹¹⁸ See A/ES-10/273 and Corr.1.

Resolutions

poverty and severe humanitarian hardships, including food insecurity and rising health-related problems, including high levels of malnutrition, among the Palestinian people, especially children, in the Occupied Palestinian Territory, including East Jerusalem,

Expressing grave concern at the deaths and injuries caused to civilians, including children, women and peaceful demonstrators, and emphasizing that the Palestinian civilian population must be protected in accordance with international humanitarian law,

Emphasizing the importance of the safety and well-being of all civilians, and calling for the cessation of all acts of violence, including all acts of terror, provocation, incitement and destruction, and all firing of rockets,

Expressing deep concern that thousands of Palestinians, including many children and women, continue to be held in Israeli prisons or detention centres under harsh conditions, including unhygienic conditions, solitary confinement, excessive use of administrative detention, lack of proper medical care and denial of family visits and of due process, that impair their well-being, and expressing deep concern also about any ill-treatment and harassment of Palestinian prisoners and all reports of torture, while taking note of the recent agreement reached on conditions of detention in Israeli prisons and calling for its full and immediate implementation,

Conscious of the urgent need for the reconstruction and development of the economic and social infrastructure of the Occupied Palestinian Territory, including East Jerusalem, as well as the urgent need to address the humanitarian crisis facing the Palestinian people, including by ensuring the unimpeded provision of humanitarian assistance and the sustained and regular flow of persons and goods into and out of the Gaza Strip,

Recognizing the efforts being undertaken by the Palestinian Authority, with international support, to rebuild, reform and strengthen its damaged institutions and promote good governance, emphasizing the need to preserve the Palestinian national institutions and infrastructure, commending in that regard the implementation of the 2009 plan of the Palestinian Authority, entitled “Palestine: Ending the Occupation, Establishing the State”, for building the institutions of an independent Palestinian State within a 24-month period and the significant achievements that have been brought about, as confirmed by international institutions, including the United Nations, the International Monetary Fund and the World Bank in their reports to the meeting of the Ad Hoc Liaison Committee for the Coordination of the International Assistance to Palestinians held on 13 April 2011, and acknowledging the development plan of the Palestinian Authority for the period 2011–2013,

Commending, in that regard, the important work being done by the United Nations, the specialized agencies and the donor community in support of the economic and social development of the Palestinian people in line with their national development and State-building plan, completed at the end of August 2011, as well as the assistance being provided in the humanitarian field,

Stressing the importance of national unity among the Palestinian people, and emphasizing the need for the respect and preservation of the territorial integrity and unity of the Occupied Palestinian Territory, including East Jerusalem,

Calling upon both parties to fulfil their obligations under the road map in cooperation with the Quartet,

1. *Calls for* the full opening of the border crossings of the Gaza Strip, in line with Security Council resolution 1860 (2009), to ensure humanitarian access as well as the sustained and regular flow of persons and goods and the lifting of all movement restrictions imposed on the Palestinian people, including those restrictions arising from ongoing Israeli military operations and the multilayered closures system, and for other urgent measures to be taken to alleviate the serious humanitarian situation in the Occupied Palestinian Territory, which is critical in the Gaza Strip, and calls for compliance by Israel, the occupying Power, with all of its legal obligations under international humanitarian law and United Nations resolutions in that regard;

2. *Stresses* the need to preserve the territorial contiguity, unity and integrity of the Occupied Palestinian Territory, including East Jerusalem, and to guarantee the freedom of movement of persons and goods throughout the Occupied Palestinian Territory, including East Jerusalem, as well as to and from the outside world;

3. *Also stresses* the need to preserve and develop Palestinian national institutions and infrastructure for the provision of vital public services to the Palestinian civilian population and to contribute to the promotion and protection of human rights, including economic and social rights;

Resolutions

4. *Demands* that Israel comply with the Protocol on Economic Relations between the Government of Israel and the Palestine Liberation Organization, signed in Paris on 29 April 1994;¹¹⁹

5. *Calls upon* Israel to restore and replace civilian properties, vital infrastructure, agricultural lands and governmental institutions that have been damaged or destroyed as a result of its military operations in the Occupied Palestinian Territory;

6. *Reiterates the call* for the full implementation of the Agreement on Movement and Access of 15 November 2005, particularly the urgent and uninterrupted reopening of all crossings into the Gaza Strip, which is crucial to ensuring the passage of foodstuffs and essential supplies, including construction materials and adequate fuel supplies, as well as to ensuring the unhindered access of the United Nations and related agencies and regular commercial flows necessary for economic recovery to and within the Occupied Palestinian Territory, and emphasizes the need for security for all civilian populations;

7. *Calls upon* all parties to respect the rules of international humanitarian law and to refrain from violence against the civilian population, in accordance with the Geneva Convention relative to the Protection of Civilian Persons in Time of War, of 12 August 1949;¹¹³

8. *Reaffirms* the inalienable right of the Palestinian people and the Arab population of the occupied Syrian Golan to all their natural and economic resources, and calls upon Israel, the occupying Power, not to exploit, endanger or cause loss or depletion of those resources;

9. *Calls upon* Israel, the occupying Power, to cease its destruction of homes and properties, economic institutions and agricultural lands and orchards in the Occupied Palestinian Territory, including East Jerusalem, as well as in the occupied Syrian Golan;

10. *Also calls upon* Israel, the occupying Power, to end immediately its exploitation of natural resources, including water and mining resources, and to cease the dumping of all kinds of waste materials in the Occupied Palestinian Territory, including East Jerusalem, and in the occupied Syrian Golan, which gravely threaten their natural resources, namely, the water, land and energy resources, and present a serious environmental hazard and health threat to the civilian populations, and also calls upon Israel, the occupying Power, to remove all obstacles that obstruct implementation of critical environmental projects, including the sewage treatment plants in the Gaza Strip;

11. *Reaffirms* that the construction and expansion of Israeli settlements and related infrastructure in the Occupied Palestinian Territory, including East Jerusalem, and the occupied Syrian Golan, are illegal and constitute a major obstacle to economic and social development and to the achievement of peace, and calls for the full cessation of all settlement and settlement-related activity, including full cessation of all measures aimed at altering the demographic composition, legal status and character of the occupied territories, including, in particular, in and around Occupied East Jerusalem, in compliance with relevant Security Council resolutions and international law, including the Geneva Convention relative to the Protection of Civilian Persons in Time of War;

12. *Also reaffirms* that the ongoing construction by Israel of the wall in the Occupied Palestinian Territory, including in and around East Jerusalem, is contrary to international law and is isolating East Jerusalem, fragmenting the West Bank and seriously debilitating the economic and social development of the Palestinian people, and calls in that regard for full compliance with the legal obligations mentioned in the advisory opinion of the International Court of Justice rendered on 9 July 2004¹¹⁸ and in General Assembly resolution ES-10/15 and subsequent relevant resolutions;

13. *Calls upon* Israel to comply with the provisions of the Geneva Convention relative to the Protection of Civilian Persons in Time of War and to facilitate visits of the Syrian citizens of the occupied Syrian Golan whose family members reside in their mother homeland, the Syrian Arab Republic, via the Qunaitra entrance;

14. *Emphasizes* the importance of the work of United Nations organizations and agencies in the Occupied Palestinian Territory, including East Jerusalem, and of the United Nations Special Coordinator for the Middle East Peace Process and Personal Representative of the Secretary-General to the Palestine Liberation Organization and the Palestinian Authority;

¹¹⁹ See A/49/180-S/1994/727, annex, entitled "Agreement on the Gaza Strip and the Jericho Area", annex IV.

15. *Reiterates* the importance of the revival and accelerated advancement of negotiations of the peace process on the basis of relevant United Nations resolutions, including Security Council resolutions 242 (1967), 338 (1973), 425 (1978), 1397 (2002), 1515 (2003), 1544 (2004) and 1850 (2008), the Madrid Conference, the principle of land for peace, the Arab Peace Initiative¹¹⁶ and the Quartet road map,¹¹⁷ as well as compliance with the agreements reached between the Government of Israel and the Palestine Liberation Organization, the representative of the Palestinian people, in order to pave the way for the realization of the two-State solution of Israel and Palestine living side by side in peace and security within recognized borders, based on the pre-1967 borders, and the achievement of a just, lasting and comprehensive peace settlement;

16. *Requests* the Secretary-General to submit to the General Assembly at its sixty-seventh session, through the Economic and Social Council, a report on the implementation of the present resolution and to continue to include in the report of the United Nations Special Coordinator an update on the living conditions of the Palestinian people, in collaboration with relevant United Nations agencies;

17. *Decides* to include the item entitled “Economic and social repercussions of the Israeli occupation on the living conditions of the Palestinian people in the Occupied Palestinian Territory, including East Jerusalem, and the Arab population in the occupied Syrian Golan” in the agenda of its substantive session of 2013.

*47th plenary meeting
26 July 2012*

2012/24. Mainstreaming a gender perspective into all policies and programmes in the United Nations system

The Economic and Social Council,

Reaffirming its agreed conclusions 1997/2 of 18 July 1997 on mainstreaming a gender perspective into all policies and programmes in the United Nations system,¹²⁰ and recalling its resolutions 2001/41 of 26 July 2001, 2002/23 of 24 July 2002, 2003/49 of 24 July 2003, 2004/4 of 7 July 2004, 2005/31 of 26 July 2005, 2006/36 of 27 July 2006, 2007/33 of 27 July 2007, 2008/34 of 25 July 2008, 2009/12 of 28 July 2009, 2010/29 of 23 July 2010 and 2011/6 of 14 July 2011,

Reaffirming also the commitments to gender equality and the advancement of women made at the Millennium Summit,¹²¹ the 2005 World Summit,¹²² the high-level plenary meeting of the General Assembly on the Millennium Development Goals¹²³ and other major United Nations summits, conferences and special sessions, and reaffirming further that their full, effective and accelerated implementation is integral to achieving the internationally agreed development goals, including the Millennium Development Goals,

Reaffirming further the commitment made at the 2005 World Summit to actively promote the mainstreaming of a gender perspective in the design, implementation, monitoring and evaluation of policies and programmes in all political, economic and social spheres and to further undertake to strengthen the capabilities of the United Nations system in the area of gender,

Reaffirming that gender mainstreaming is a globally accepted strategy for achieving gender equality and the empowerment of women and constitutes a critical strategy in the full, effective and accelerated implementation of the Beijing Declaration and Platform for Action¹²⁴ and the outcomes of the twenty-third special session of the General Assembly,¹²⁵

Recalling the section of General Assembly resolution 64/289 of 2 July 2010 entitled “Strengthening the institutional arrangements for support of gender equality and the empowerment of women”,

¹²⁰ See *Official Records of the General Assembly, Fifty-second Session, Supplement No. 3 (A/52/3/Rev.1)*, chap. IV, sect. A, para. 4.

¹²¹ General Assembly resolution 55/2.

¹²² General Assembly resolution 60/1.

¹²³ General Assembly resolution 65/1.

¹²⁴ *Report of the Fourth World Conference on Women, Beijing, 4–15 September 1995* (United Nations publication, Sales No. E.96.IV.13), chap. I, resolution 1, annexes I and II.

¹²⁵ General Assembly resolution S-23/2, annex, and resolution S-23/3, annex.

Resolutions

1. *Welcomes* the cooperation on the project for the link through the Strait of Gibraltar between the Economic Commission for Africa, the Economic Commission for Europe, the Governments of Morocco and Spain, and specialized international organizations;
2. *Also welcomes* the progress made in the project studies as a result, in particular, of geological and geotechnical exploration and the technical, economic and traffic update studies currently being finalized, and the fact that a new action plan for the period 2013–2016 will be adopted;
3. *Commends* the Economic Commission for Europe and the Economic Commission for Africa for the work done in preparing the project follow-up report requested by the Economic and Social Council in its resolution 2011/12;¹³
4. *Renews its invitation* to the competent organizations of the United Nations system and to specialized governmental and non-governmental organizations to participate in the studies and work on the fixed link through the Strait of Gibraltar;
5. *Requests* the Executive Secretaries of the Economic Commission for Africa and the Economic Commission for Europe to continue to take an active part in the follow-up to the project and to report to the Council at its substantive session of 2015 on the progress made on the project studies;
6. *Requests* the Secretary-General to provide formal support and, to the extent that priorities permit, the resources necessary, from within the regular budget, to the Economic Commission for Europe and the Economic Commission for Africa, to enable them to carry out the activities mentioned above.

*40th plenary meeting
19 July 2013*

2013/8. Economic and social repercussions of the Israeli occupation on the living conditions of the Palestinian people in the Occupied Palestinian Territory, including East Jerusalem, and the Arab population in the occupied Syrian Golan

The Economic and Social Council,

Recalling General Assembly resolutions 67/120 of 18 December 2012 and 67/229 of 21 December 2012,

Recalling also its resolution 2012/23 of 26 July 2012,

Guided by the principles of the Charter of the United Nations affirming the inadmissibility of the acquisition of territory by force and recalling relevant Security Council resolutions, including resolutions 242 (1967) of 22 November 1967, 252 (1968) of 21 May 1968, 338 (1973) of 22 October 1973, 465 (1980) of 1 March 1980 and 497 (1981) of 17 December 1981,

Recalling the resolutions of the tenth emergency special session of the General Assembly, including resolutions ES-10/13 of 21 October 2003, ES-10/14 of 8 December 2003, ES-10/15 of 20 July 2004 and ES-10/17 of 15 December 2006,

Taking note of the report by the Economic and Social Commission for Western Asia on the economic and social repercussions of the Israeli occupation on the living conditions of the Palestinian people in the Occupied Palestinian Territory, including East Jerusalem, and the Arab population in the occupied Syrian Golan, as transmitted by the Secretary-General,¹⁵

Reaffirming the applicability of the Geneva Convention relative to the Protection of Civilian Persons in Time of War, of 12 August 1949,¹⁶ to the Occupied Palestinian Territory, including East Jerusalem, and other Arab territories occupied by Israel since 1967,

¹⁵ A/68/77-E/2013/13.

¹⁶ United Nations, *Treaty Series*, vol. 75, No. 973.

Resolutions

Recalling the International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights,¹⁷ the International Covenant on Economic, Social and Cultural Rights¹⁷ and the Convention on the Rights of the Child,¹⁸ and affirming that these human rights instruments must be respected in the Occupied Palestinian Territory, including East Jerusalem, as well as in the occupied Syrian Golan,

Taking note of General Assembly resolution 67/19 of 29 November 2012,

Stressing the importance of the revival and acceleration of serious and credible negotiations within the Middle East peace process on the basis of Security Council resolutions 242 (1967), 338 (1973), 425 (1978) of 19 March 1978, 1397 (2002) of 12 March 2002, 1515 (2003) of 19 November 2003, 1544 (2004) of 19 May 2004 and 1850 (2008) of 16 December 2008, the principle of land for peace, the Arab Peace Initiative¹⁹ and the Quartet road map,²⁰ as well as compliance with the agreements reached between the Government of Israel and the Palestine Liberation Organization, the representative of the Palestinian people,

Reaffirming the principle of the permanent sovereignty of peoples under foreign occupation over their natural resources, and expressing concern in that regard about the exploitation of natural resources by Israel, the occupying Power, and Israeli settlers in the Occupied Palestinian Territory, including East Jerusalem, and in the occupied Syrian Golan, particularly as a result of settlement activities, which are illegal under international law,

Convinced that the Israeli occupation has gravely impeded the efforts to achieve sustainable development and a sound economic environment in the Occupied Palestinian Territory, including East Jerusalem, and in the occupied Syrian Golan, and expressing grave concern about the consequent deterioration of economic and living conditions,

Commending the efforts of the Palestinian Government, despite the many constraints, to improve the economic and social situation in the Occupied Palestinian Territory, especially in the areas of governance, the rule of law and human rights, livelihoods and productive sectors, education and culture, health, social protection, infrastructure and water,

Gravely concerned about the accelerated construction of settlements and implementation of other related measures by Israel in the Occupied Palestinian Territory, particularly in and around occupied East Jerusalem, as well as in the occupied Syrian Golan, in violation of international humanitarian law and relevant United Nations resolutions,

Expressing deep concern about the rising incidence of violence, harassment, provocation, vandalism and incitement by illegal armed Israeli settlers in the Occupied Palestinian Territory, including East Jerusalem, against Palestinian civilians, including children, and their properties, including homes, historic and religious sites, and agricultural lands,

Gravely concerned by the serious repercussions on the economic and social conditions of the Palestinian people caused by the construction by Israel of the wall and its associated regime inside the Occupied Palestinian Territory, including in and around East Jerusalem, and the resulting violation of their economic and social rights, including the rights to work, to health, to education, to property, to an adequate standard of living and to freedom of access and movement,

Recalling, in that regard, the advisory opinion rendered on 9 July 2004 by the International Court of Justice on the legal consequences of the construction of a wall in the Occupied Palestinian Territory²¹ and General Assembly resolution ES-10/15, and stressing the need to comply with the obligations mentioned therein,

Expressing grave concern at the extensive destruction by Israel, the occupying Power, of properties, including the increased demolition of homes, economic institutions, historical landmarks, agricultural lands and orchards, in the Occupied Palestinian Territory, including East Jerusalem, in particular in connection with its construction of settlements and the wall and confiscation of land, contrary to international law, in the Occupied Palestinian Territory, including in and around East Jerusalem,

¹⁷ See General Assembly resolution 2200 A (XXI), annex.

¹⁸ United Nations, *Treaty Series*, vol. 1577, No. 27531.

¹⁹ A/56/1026-S/2002/932, annex II, resolution 14/221.

²⁰ S/2003/529, annex.

²¹ See A/ES-10/273 and Corr.1.

Resolutions

Expressing grave concern also over the continuing forced displacement of Palestinian civilians, including the Bedouin community, due to the continuing and intensifying policy of home demolitions, evictions and revocation of residency rights in and around occupied East Jerusalem, as well as measures to further isolate the city from its natural Palestinian environs, which have seriously exacerbated the already critical socioeconomic situation being faced by the Palestinian population,

Expressing grave concern further about ongoing Israeli military operations and policies of closures and severe restrictions on the movement of persons and goods via the imposition of crossing closures, checkpoints and a permit regime throughout the Occupied Palestinian Territory, including East Jerusalem, and the consequent negative impact on the socioeconomic situation of the Palestinian people, in particular the Palestinian refugee population, which remains that of a humanitarian crisis,

Taking note of recent developments regarding the situation of access to the Gaza Strip, although grave hardships continue to prevail as a result of the prolonged Israeli closures and severe economic and movement restrictions that in effect amount to a blockade, calling in that regard for the full implementation of Security Council resolution 1860 (2009) of 8 January 2009 with a view to ensuring the full opening of the border crossings for the sustained and regular movement of persons and goods, including humanitarian aid, commercial flows and construction materials, and emphasizing the need for security for all civilian populations,

Deploring the heavy casualties among civilians, including hundreds of children and women, the internal displacement of thousands of civilians and widespread damage to homes, vital civilian infrastructure, hospitals, schools, food supply installations, economic, industrial and agricultural properties, and several United Nations facilities in the Gaza Strip, which have a grave impact on the provision of vital health and social services to Palestinian women and their families and on their socioeconomic living conditions caused by the military operations between December 2008 and January 2009 and in November 2012,

Recalling, in that regard, the relevant United Nations reports, including those of the Economic and Social Council, the Economic and Social Commission for Western Asia and the Human Rights Council,

Expressing deep concern about the short- and long-term detrimental impact of such widespread destruction and the hampering of the reconstruction process by Israel, the occupying Power, on the socioeconomic and humanitarian conditions of the Palestinian civilian population in the Gaza Strip, and calling in that regard for the immediate acceleration of the reconstruction process in the Gaza Strip with the assistance of the donor countries, including the disbursement of funds pledged at the International Conference in Support of the Palestinian Economy for the Reconstruction of Gaza, held in Sharm el-Sheikh, Egypt, on 2 March 2009,

Gravely concerned about various reports of the United Nations and specialized agencies regarding the substantial aid dependency caused by prolonged border closures, inordinate rates of unemployment, widespread poverty and severe humanitarian hardships, including food insecurity and rising health-related problems, including high levels of malnutrition, among the Palestinian people, especially children, in the Occupied Palestinian Territory, including East Jerusalem,

Expressing grave concern at the deaths and injuries caused to civilians, including children, women and peaceful demonstrators, and emphasizing that the Palestinian civilian population must be protected in accordance with international humanitarian law,

Emphasizing the importance of the safety and well-being of all civilians, and calling for the cessation of all acts of violence, including all acts of terror, provocation, incitement and destruction, and all firing of rockets,

Expressing deep concern that thousands of Palestinians, including many children and women, continue to be held in Israeli prisons or detention centres under harsh conditions, including unhygienic conditions, solitary confinement, excessive use of administrative detention, lack of proper medical care and denial of family visits and of due process, that impair their well-being, and expressing deep concern also about any ill-treatment and harassment of Palestinian prisoners and all reports of torture, while taking note of the agreement reached in May 2012 on conditions of detention in Israeli prisons and calling for its full and immediate implementation,

Conscious of the urgent need for the reconstruction and development of the economic and social infrastructure of the Occupied Palestinian Territory, including East Jerusalem, as well as the urgent need to address the humanitarian crisis facing the Palestinian people, including by ensuring the unimpeded provision of humanitarian assistance and the sustained and regular flow of persons and goods into and out of the Gaza Strip,

Recognizing the efforts by the Palestinian Government, with international support, to rebuild, reform and strengthen its damaged institutions and promote good governance, emphasizing the need to preserve the Palestinian national institutions and infrastructure and commending in that regard the implementation of the 2009 plan of the Palestinian Authority, entitled “Palestine: Ending the Occupation, Establishing the State”, for building the institutions of an independent Palestinian State within a 24-month period and the significant achievements made, as confirmed by the positive assessments regarding readiness for statehood made by international institutions, including the World Bank, the International Monetary Fund and the United Nations, in their reports to the meeting on 13 April 2011 and subsequent meetings of the Ad Hoc Liaison Committee for the Coordination of the International Assistance to Palestinians, and acknowledging the Palestinian National Development Plan 2011–2013 on governance, economy, social development and infrastructure,

Commending, in that regard, the important work being done by the United Nations, the specialized agencies and the donor community in support of the economic and social development of the Palestinian people in line with their national development and State-building plan, completed at the end of August 2011, as well as the assistance being provided in the humanitarian field,

Stressing the importance of national unity among the Palestinian people, and emphasizing the need for the respect and preservation of the territorial integrity and unity of the Occupied Palestinian Territory, including East Jerusalem,

Calling upon both parties to fulfil their obligations under the road map, in cooperation with the Quartet,

Aware that development and fostering healthy economic and social conditions are difficult under occupation and best promoted in circumstances of peace and stability,

1. *Calls for* the full opening of the border crossings of the Gaza Strip, in line with Security Council resolution 1860 (2009), to ensure humanitarian access as well as the sustained and regular flow of persons and goods and the lifting of all movement restrictions imposed on the Palestinian people, including those restrictions arising from ongoing Israeli military operations and the multilayered closures system, and for other urgent measures to be taken to alleviate the serious humanitarian situation in the Occupied Palestinian Territory, which is critical in the Gaza Strip, and calls for compliance by Israel, the occupying Power, with all of its legal obligations under international humanitarian law and United Nations resolutions in that regard;

2. *Stresses* the need to preserve the territorial contiguity, unity and integrity of the Occupied Palestinian Territory, including East Jerusalem, and to guarantee the freedom of movement of persons and goods throughout the Occupied Palestinian Territory, including East Jerusalem, as well as to and from the outside world;

3. *Also stresses* the need to preserve and develop Palestinian national institutions and infrastructure for the provision of vital public services to the Palestinian civilian population and to contribute to the promotion and protection of human rights, including economic and social rights;

4. *Demands* that Israel comply with the Protocol on Economic Relations between the Government of Israel and the Palestine Liberation Organization, signed in Paris on 29 April 1994;²²

5. *Calls upon* Israel to restore and replace civilian properties, vital infrastructure, agricultural lands and governmental institutions that have been damaged or destroyed as a result of its military operations in the Occupied Palestinian Territory;

6. *Reiterates the call* for the full implementation of the Agreement on Movement and Access of 15 November 2005, particularly the urgent and uninterrupted reopening of all crossings into the Gaza Strip, which is crucial to ensuring the passage of foodstuffs and essential supplies, including construction materials and adequate fuel supplies, as well as to ensuring the unhindered access of the United Nations and related agencies and regular commercial flows necessary for economic recovery to and within the Occupied Palestinian Territory, and emphasizes the need for security for all civilian populations;

²² See A/49/180-S/1994/727, annex, entitled “Agreement on the Gaza Strip and the Jericho Area”, annex IV.

Resolutions

7. *Calls upon* all parties to respect the rules of international humanitarian law and to refrain from violence against the civilian population, in accordance with the Geneva Convention relative to the Protection of Civilian Persons in Time of War, of 12 August 1949;¹⁶

8. *Reaffirms* the inalienable right of the Palestinian people and the Arab population of the occupied Syrian Golan to all their natural and economic resources, and calls upon Israel, the occupying Power, not to exploit, endanger or cause loss or depletion of those resources;

9. *Calls upon* Israel, the occupying Power, to cease its destruction of homes and properties, economic institutions and agricultural lands and orchards in the Occupied Palestinian Territory, including East Jerusalem, as well as in the occupied Syrian Golan;

10. *Also calls upon* Israel, the occupying Power, to end immediately its exploitation of natural resources, including water and mining resources, and to cease the dumping of all kinds of waste materials in the Occupied Palestinian Territory, including East Jerusalem, and in the occupied Syrian Golan, which gravely threaten their natural resources, namely, the water, land and energy resources, and present a serious environmental hazard and health threat to the civilian populations, and also calls upon Israel, the occupying Power, to remove all obstacles that obstruct implementation of critical environmental projects, including the sewage treatment plants in the Gaza Strip;

11. *Reaffirms* that the construction and expansion of Israeli settlements and related infrastructure in the Occupied Palestinian Territory, including East Jerusalem, and the occupied Syrian Golan, are illegal and constitute a major obstacle to economic and social development and to the achievement of peace, and calls for the full cessation of all settlement and settlement-related activity, including full cessation of all measures aimed at altering the demographic composition, legal status and character of the occupied territories, including, in particular, in and around Occupied East Jerusalem, in compliance with relevant Security Council resolutions and international law, including the Geneva Convention relative to the Protection of Civilian Persons in Time of War;

12. *Calls for* accountability for the illegal actions perpetrated by Israeli settlers in the Occupied Palestinian Territory, including East Jerusalem, recalls in that regard Security Council resolution 904 (1994) of 18 March 1994, and stresses the need for its implementation;

13. *Reaffirms* that the ongoing construction by Israel of the wall in the Occupied Palestinian Territory, including in and around East Jerusalem, is contrary to international law and is isolating East Jerusalem, fragmenting the West Bank and seriously debilitating the economic and social development of the Palestinian people, and calls in that regard for full compliance with the legal obligations mentioned in the advisory opinion of the International Court of Justice rendered on 9 July 2004²¹ and in General Assembly resolution ES-10/15 and subsequent relevant resolutions;

14. *Calls upon* Israel to comply with the provisions of the Geneva Convention relative to the Protection of Civilian Persons in Time of War and to facilitate visits of the Syrian citizens of the occupied Syrian Golan whose family members reside in their mother homeland, the Syrian Arab Republic, via the Qunaitra entrance;

15. *Emphasizes* the importance of the work of United Nations organizations and agencies in the Occupied Palestinian Territory, including East Jerusalem, and of the United Nations Special Coordinator for the Middle East Peace Process and Personal Representative of the Secretary-General to the Palestine Liberation Organization and the Palestinian Authority;

16. *Expresses appreciation* to the Member States, United Nations bodies and intergovernmental, regional and non-governmental organizations that have provided and continue to provide economic and humanitarian assistance to the Palestinian people, which has helped to ameliorate their critical economic and social conditions, and urges the continued provision of assistance, in cooperation with official Palestinian institutions and consistent with the Palestinian National Development Plan;

17. *Reiterates* the importance of the revival and accelerated advancement of negotiations of the peace process on the basis of relevant United Nations resolutions, including Security Council resolutions 242 (1967), 338 (1973), 425 (1978), 1397 (2002), 1515 (2003), 1544 (2004) and 1850 (2008), the Madrid Conference, the principle of land for peace, the Arab Peace Initiative¹⁹ and the Quartet road map,²⁰ as well as compliance with the agreements reached between the Government of Israel and the Palestine Liberation Organization, the representative of the Palestinian people, in order to pave the way for the realization of the two-State solution of Israel and Palestine living side by side in peace and security within recognized borders, based on the pre-1967 borders, and the achievement of a just, lasting and comprehensive peace settlement;

18. *Requests* the Secretary-General to submit to the General Assembly at its sixty-eighth session, through the Economic and Social Council, a report on the implementation of the present resolution and to continue to include in the report of the United Nations Special Coordinator an update on the living conditions of the Palestinian people, in collaboration with relevant United Nations agencies;

19. *Decides* to include the item entitled “Economic and social repercussions of the Israeli occupation on the living conditions of the Palestinian people in the Occupied Palestinian Territory, including East Jerusalem, and the Arab population in the occupied Syrian Golan” in the agenda of its substantive session of 2014.

*40th plenary meeting
19 July 2013*

2013/9. Assessment of the progress made in the implementation of and follow-up to the outcomes of the World Summit on the Information Society

The Economic and Social Council,

Recalling the outcome documents of the World Summit on the Information Society,²³

Recalling also its resolution 2006/46 of 28 July 2006 on the follow-up to the World Summit and review of the Commission on Science and Technology for Development and the mandate that it gave to the Commission,

Recalling further its resolution 2012/5 of 24 July 2012 on the assessment of the progress made in the implementation of and follow-up to the outcomes of the World Summit,

Recalling General Assembly resolution 67/195 of 21 December 2012 on information and communications technologies for development,

Taking note with satisfaction of the report of the Secretary-General on the progress made in the implementation of and follow-up to the outcomes of the World Summit at the regional and international levels,²⁴

Taking note of the report of the Secretary-General entitled “Internet broadband for an inclusive digital society”,²⁵

Expressing its appreciation to the Secretary-General of the United Nations Conference on Trade and Development for his role in helping to ensure completion of the aforementioned reports in a timely manner,

Taking stock: reviewing the implementation of the outcomes of the World Summit on the Information Society

1. *Notes* the ongoing implementation of the outcomes of the World Summit on the Information Society,²³ emphasizing, in particular, its multi-stakeholder nature, the roles played in this regard by leading agencies as action line facilitators and the roles of the regional commissions and the United Nations Group on the Information Society, and expresses its appreciation for the role of the Commission on Science and Technology for Development in assisting the Economic and Social Council as the focal point in the system-wide follow-up to the World Summit;

2. *Takes note* of the reports of many United Nations entities, with their respective executive summaries, submitted as input for the elaboration of the annual report of the Secretary-General of the United Nations to the Commission and published on the website of the Commission as mandated in Council resolution 2007/8 of 25 July 2007, and recalls the importance of close coordination among the leading action line facilitators and with the secretariat of the Commission;

3. *Notes* the implementation of the outcomes of the World Summit at the regional level facilitated by the regional commissions, as observed in the report of the Secretary-General on the progress made in the implementation of and follow-up to the outcomes of the World Summit at the regional and international levels,²⁴

²³ See A/C.2/59/3 and A/60/687.

²⁴ A/68/65-E/2013/11.

²⁵ E/CN.16/2013/3.

2014/26. Economic and social repercussions of the Israeli occupation on the living conditions of the Palestinian people in the Occupied Palestinian Territory, including East Jerusalem, and the Arab population in the occupied Syrian Golan

The Economic and Social Council,

Recalling General Assembly resolutions 68/235 of 20 December 2013 and 68/82 of 11 December 2013,

Recalling also its resolution 2013/8 of 19 July 2013,

Guided by the principles of the Charter of the United Nations affirming the inadmissibility of the acquisition of territory by force, and recalling relevant Security Council resolutions, including resolutions 242 (1967) of 22 November 1967, 252 (1968) of 21 May 1968, 338 (1973) of 22 October 1973, 465 (1980) of 1 March 1980 and 497 (1981) of 17 December 1981,

Recalling the resolutions of the tenth emergency special session of the General Assembly, including ES-10/13 of 21 October 2003, ES-10/14 of 8 December 2003, ES-10/15 of 20 July 2004 and ES-10/17 of 15 December 2006,

Taking note of the report by the Economic and Social Commission for Western Asia on the economic and social repercussions of the Israeli occupation on the living conditions of the Palestinian people in the Occupied Palestinian Territory, including East Jerusalem, and the Arab population in the occupied Syrian Golan, as transmitted by the Secretary-General,¹⁹⁵

Reaffirming the applicability of the Geneva Convention relative to the Protection of Civilian Persons in Time of War, of 12 August 1949,¹⁹⁶ to the Occupied Palestinian Territory, including East Jerusalem, and other Arab territories occupied by Israel since 1967,

Recalling the International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights,¹⁹⁷ the International Covenant on Economic, Social and Cultural Rights,¹⁹⁷ and the Convention on the Rights of the Child,¹⁹⁸ and affirming that these human rights instruments must be respected in the Occupied Palestinian Territory, including East Jerusalem, as well as in the occupied Syrian Golan,

Taking note, in that regard, of the accession by Palestine, on 1 April 2014, to several human rights treaties and the core humanitarian law conventions,

Taking note also of General Assembly resolution 67/19 of 29 November 2012,

Stressing the importance of the revival and acceleration of serious and credible negotiations within the Middle East peace process on the basis of Security Council resolutions 242 (1967), 338 (1973), 425 (1978) of 19 March 1978, 1397 (2002) of 12 March 2002, 1515 (2003) of 19 November 2003, 1544 (2004) of 19 May 2004 and 1850 (2008) of 16 December 2008, the principle of land for peace, the Arab Peace Initiative¹⁹⁹ and the Quartet road map,²⁰⁰ as well as compliance with the agreements reached between the Government of Israel and the Palestine Liberation Organization, the representative of the Palestinian people,

Reaffirming the principle of the permanent sovereignty of peoples under foreign occupation over their natural resources, and expressing concern in that regard about the exploitation of natural resources by Israel, the occupying Power, and Israeli settlers in the Occupied Palestinian Territory, including East Jerusalem, and in the occupied Syrian Golan, particularly as a result of settlement activities, which are illegal under international law,

Convinced that the Israeli occupation has gravely impeded the efforts to achieve sustainable development and a sound economic environment in the Occupied Palestinian Territory, including East Jerusalem, and in the occupied Syrian Golan, and expressing grave concern about the consequent deterioration of economic and living conditions,

¹⁹⁵ A/69/81-E/2014/13.

¹⁹⁶ United Nations, *Treaty Series*, vol. 75, No. 973.

¹⁹⁷ See General Assembly resolution 2200 A (XXI), annex.

¹⁹⁸ United Nations, *Treaty Series*, vol. 1577, No. 27531.

¹⁹⁹ A/56/1026-S/2002/932, annex II, resolution 14/221.

²⁰⁰ S/2003/529, annex.

Resolutions

Commending the efforts of the Palestinian Government, despite the many constraints, to improve the economic and social situation in the Occupied Palestinian Territory, especially in the areas of governance, the rule of law and human rights, livelihoods and productive sectors, education and culture, health, social protection, infrastructure and water, and welcoming in that regard the United Nations Development Assistance Framework, launched on 15 August 2013, which is aimed at, inter alia, enhancing developmental support and assistance to the Palestinian people and strengthening institutional capacity in line with Palestinian national priorities,

Gravely concerned about the accelerated construction of settlements and implementation of other related measures by Israel in the Occupied Palestinian Territory, particularly in and around occupied East Jerusalem, as well as in the occupied Syrian Golan, in violation of international humanitarian law and relevant United Nations resolutions,

Encouraging all States and international organizations to continue to actively pursue policies to ensure respect for their obligations under international law with regard to all illegal Israeli practices and measures in the Occupied Palestinian Territory, including East Jerusalem, particularly Israeli settlements,

Taking note of the report of the independent international fact-finding mission to investigate the implications of the Israeli settlements on the civil, political, economic, social and cultural rights of the Palestinian people throughout the Occupied Palestinian Territory, including East Jerusalem,²⁰¹

Expressing deep concern about the rising incidence of violence, harassment, provocation, vandalism and incitement in the Occupied Palestinian Territory, including East Jerusalem, in particular by illegal armed Israeli settlers against Palestinian civilians, including children, and their properties, including homes, historic and religious sites and agricultural lands, and calling for accountability for the illegal actions perpetrated in that regard,

Gravely concerned by the serious repercussions on the economic and social conditions of the Palestinian people caused by Israel's construction of the wall and its associated regime inside the Occupied Palestinian Territory, including in and around East Jerusalem, and the resulting violation of their economic and social rights, including the rights to work, to health, to education, to property, to an adequate standard of living and to freedom of access and movement,

Recalling, in that regard, the advisory opinion rendered on 9 July 2004 by the International Court of Justice on the legal consequences of the construction of a wall in the Occupied Palestinian Territory²⁰² and General Assembly resolution ES-10/15, and stressing the need to comply with the obligations mentioned therein,

Expressing grave concern at the extensive destruction by Israel, the occupying Power, of properties, including the increased demolition of homes, economic institutions, historical landmarks, agricultural lands and orchards, in the Occupied Palestinian Territory, including East Jerusalem, in particular in connection with its construction of settlements and the wall and confiscation of land, contrary to international law, in the Occupied Palestinian Territory, including in and around East Jerusalem,

Expressing grave concern also over the continuing forced displacement and dispossession of Palestinian civilians, including the Bedouin community, due to the continuing and intensifying policy of home demolitions, evictions and revocation of residency rights in and around occupied East Jerusalem, as well as measures to further isolate the city from its natural Palestinian environs, which have seriously exacerbated the already critical socioeconomic situation being faced by the Palestinian population,

Expressing grave concern further about ongoing Israeli military operations and policies of closures and severe restrictions on the movement of persons and goods, the imposition of crossing closures, checkpoints and a permit regime throughout the Occupied Palestinian Territory, including East Jerusalem, and the consequent negative impact on the socioeconomic situation of the Palestinian people, in particular the Palestinian refugee population, which remains that of a humanitarian crisis,

Expressing grave concern, in particular, about the continuing crisis in the Gaza Strip as a result of the prolonged Israeli closures and severe economic and movement restrictions that in effect amount to a blockade, and

²⁰¹ A/HRC/22/63.

²⁰² See A/ES-10/273 and Corr.1.

calling in that regard for the full implementation of Security Council resolution 1860 (2009) of 8 January 2009 with a view to ensuring the full opening of the border crossings for the sustained and regular movement of persons and goods, including humanitarian aid, commercial flows and construction materials, and emphasizing the need for security for all civilian populations,

Recognizing the prolonged negative impact of the military operations between December 2008 and January 2009 and in November 2012 on the economic conditions, the provision of social services and the living conditions of the Palestinian civilian population in the Gaza Strip, including as a result of the heavy casualties among civilians, including hundreds of children and women, the internal displacement of thousands of civilians and the widespread damage to homes, vital civilian infrastructure, hospitals, schools, food supply installations, economic, industrial and agricultural properties and several United Nations facilities in the Gaza Strip,

Recalling, in that regard, the relevant United Nations reports, including those of the Economic and Social Council, the Economic and Social Commission for Western Asia and the Human Rights Council,

Expressing deep concern about the short- and long-term detrimental impact of such widespread destruction and the hampering of the reconstruction process by Israel, the occupying Power, on the socioeconomic and humanitarian conditions of the Palestinian civilian population in the Gaza Strip, where the humanitarian crisis continues to deepen, and calling in that regard for the immediate acceleration of the reconstruction process in the Gaza Strip with the assistance of the donor countries, including the disbursement of funds pledged at the International Conference in Support of the Palestinian Economy for the Reconstruction of Gaza, held in Sharm el-Sheikh, Egypt, on 2 March 2009,

Gravely concerned about various reports of the United Nations and specialized agencies regarding the substantial aid dependency caused by prolonged border closures, inordinate rates of unemployment, widespread poverty and severe humanitarian hardships, including food insecurity and rising health-related problems, including high levels of malnutrition, among the Palestinian people, especially children, in the Occupied Palestinian Territory, including East Jerusalem,

Expressing grave concern at the deaths and injuries caused to civilians, including children, women and peaceful demonstrators, and emphasizing that the Palestinian civilian population must be protected in accordance with international humanitarian law,

Emphasizing the importance of the safety and well-being of all civilians, and calling for the cessation of all acts of violence, including all acts of terror, provocation, incitement and destruction, and all firing of rockets,

Expressing deep concern that thousands of Palestinians, including many children and women, continue to be held in Israeli prisons or detention centres under harsh conditions, including unhygienic conditions, solitary confinement, excessive use of administrative detention, lack of proper medical care and denial of family visits and of due process, that impair their well-being, and expressing deep concern also about any ill-treatment and harassment of Palestinian prisoners and all reports of torture, while taking note of the agreement reached in May 2012 on conditions of detention in Israeli prisons and calling for its full and immediate implementation,

Conscious of the urgent need for the reconstruction and development of the economic and social infrastructure of the Occupied Palestinian Territory, including East Jerusalem, as well as the urgent need to address the humanitarian crisis facing the Palestinian people, including by ensuring the unimpeded provision of humanitarian assistance and the sustained and regular flow of persons and goods into and out of the Gaza Strip,

Recognizing the efforts by the Palestinian Government, with international support, to rebuild, reform and strengthen its damaged institutions and promote good governance, emphasizing the need to preserve the Palestinian national institutions and infrastructure, and commending in that regard the ongoing efforts to develop the institutions of an independent Palestinian State, including through the implementation of the Palestinian National Development Plan 2011–2013 on governance, economy, social development and infrastructure, and the significant achievements made, as confirmed by the positive assessments made by international institutions regarding readiness for statehood, including by the World Bank, the International Monetary Fund, the United Nations and the Ad Hoc Liaison Committee for the Coordination of the International Assistance to Palestinians, while also expressing concern about the negative impact of the current financial crisis being faced by the Palestinian Government,

Commending, in that regard, the important work being done by the United Nations, the specialized agencies and the donor community in support of the economic and social development of the Palestinian people in line with their national development and State-building plan, as well as the assistance being provided in the humanitarian field,

Resolutions

Welcoming the formation of the new Palestinian Government of national consensus under the authority of President Mahmoud Abbas, in line with the Quartet principles, and emphasizing the need for the respect and preservation of the territorial integrity and unity of the Occupied Palestinian Territory, including East Jerusalem,

Calling upon both parties to fulfil their obligations under the road map, in cooperation with the Quartet,

Aware that development and fostering healthy economic and social conditions are difficult under occupation and best promoted in circumstances of peace and stability,

1. *Calls for* the full opening of the border crossings of the Gaza Strip, in line with Security Council resolution 1860 (2009), to ensure humanitarian access as well as the sustained and regular flow of persons and goods and the lifting of all movement restrictions imposed on the Palestinian people, including those restrictions arising from ongoing Israeli military operations and the multilayered closures system, and for other urgent measures to be taken to alleviate the serious humanitarian situation in the Occupied Palestinian Territory, which is critical in the Gaza Strip, and calls for compliance by Israel, the occupying Power, with all of its legal obligations under international humanitarian law and United Nations resolutions in that regard;

2. *Stresses* the need to preserve the territorial contiguity, unity and integrity of the Occupied Palestinian Territory, including East Jerusalem, and to guarantee the freedom of movement of persons and goods throughout the Occupied Palestinian Territory, including East Jerusalem, as well as to and from the outside world;

3. *Also stresses* the need to preserve and develop Palestinian national institutions and infrastructure for the provision of vital public services to the Palestinian civilian population and to contribute to the promotion and protection of human rights, including economic and social rights;

4. *Demands* that Israel comply with the Protocol on Economic Relations between the Government of Israel and the Palestine Liberation Organization signed in Paris on 29 April 1994;²⁰³

5. *Calls upon* Israel to restore and replace civilian properties, vital infrastructure, agricultural lands and governmental institutions that have been damaged or destroyed as a result of its military operations in the Occupied Palestinian Territory;

6. *Reiterates the call* for the full implementation of the Agreement on Movement and Access of 15 November 2005, particularly the urgent and uninterrupted reopening of all crossings into the Gaza Strip, which is crucial to ensuring the passage of foodstuffs and essential supplies, including construction materials and adequate fuel supplies, as well as to ensuring the unhindered access of the United Nations and related agencies and regular commercial flows necessary for economic recovery to and within the Occupied Palestinian Territory, and emphasizes the need for security for all civilian populations;

7. *Calls upon* all parties to respect the rules of international humanitarian law and to refrain from violence against the civilian population, in accordance with the Geneva Convention relative to the Protection of Civilian Persons in Time of War, of 12 August 1949;¹⁹⁶

8. *Reaffirms* the inalienable right of the Palestinian people and the Arab population of the occupied Syrian Golan to all their natural and economic resources, and calls upon Israel, the occupying Power, not to exploit, endanger or cause loss or depletion of those resources;

9. *Calls upon* Israel, the occupying Power, to cease its destruction of homes and properties, economic institutions and agricultural lands and orchards in the Occupied Palestinian Territory, including East Jerusalem, as well as in the occupied Syrian Golan, and to prevent Israeli settlers from perpetrating such illegal activities;

10. *Also calls upon* Israel, the occupying Power, to end immediately its exploitation of natural resources, including water and mining resources, and to cease the dumping of all kinds of waste materials in the Occupied Palestinian Territory, including East Jerusalem, and in the occupied Syrian Golan, which gravely threaten their natural resources, namely, the water, land and energy resources, and present a serious environmental hazard and health threat to the civilian populations, and also calls upon Israel, the occupying Power, to remove all obstacles that obstruct the implementation of critical environmental projects, including the sewage treatment plants in the Gaza

²⁰³ See A/49/180-S/1994/727, annex, entitled "Agreement on the Gaza Strip and the Jericho Area", annex IV.

Resolutions

Strip, and notably to provide electrical power needed for the work on the northern Gaza emergency treatment project, and stresses in that regard the urgency of the reconstruction and development of water infrastructure, including the project for the desalination facility for the Gaza Strip;

11. *Reaffirms* that the construction and expansion of Israeli settlements and related infrastructure in the Occupied Palestinian Territory, including East Jerusalem, and the occupied Syrian Golan, are illegal and constitute a major obstacle to economic and social development and to the achievement of peace, and calls for the full cessation of all settlement and settlement-related activity, including full cessation of all measures aimed at altering the demographic composition, legal status and character of the occupied territories, including, in particular, in and around occupied East Jerusalem, in compliance with relevant Security Council resolutions and international law, including the Geneva Convention relative to the Protection of Civilian Persons in Time of War;

12. *Calls for* accountability for the illegal actions perpetrated by Israeli settlers in the Occupied Palestinian Territory, including East Jerusalem, and recalls in that regard Security Council resolution 904 (1994) of 18 March 1994, and stresses the need for its implementation;

13. *Reaffirms* that the ongoing construction by Israel of the wall in the Occupied Palestinian Territory, including in and around East Jerusalem, is contrary to international law and is isolating East Jerusalem, fragmenting the West Bank and seriously debilitating the economic and social development of the Palestinian people, and calls in that regard for full compliance with the legal obligations mentioned in the advisory opinion of the International Court of Justice rendered on 9 July 2004²⁰² and in General Assembly resolution ES-10/15 and subsequent relevant resolutions;

14. *Calls upon* Israel to comply with the provisions of the Geneva Convention relative to the Protection of Civilian Persons in Time of War and to facilitate visits of the Syrian citizens of the occupied Syrian Golan whose family members reside in their mother homeland, the Syrian Arab Republic, via the Qunaitra entrance;

15. *Emphasizes* the importance of the work of United Nations organizations and agencies in the Occupied Palestinian Territory, including East Jerusalem, and of the United Nations Special Coordinator for the Middle East Peace Process and Personal Representative of the Secretary-General to the Palestine Liberation Organization and the Palestinian Authority;

16. *Expresses appreciation* to the Member States, United Nations bodies and intergovernmental, regional and non-governmental organizations that have provided and continue to provide economic and humanitarian assistance to the Palestinian people, which has helped to ameliorate their critical economic and social conditions, and urges the continued provision of assistance, in cooperation with official Palestinian institutions and consistent with the Palestinian National Development Plan;

17. *Reiterates* the importance of the revival and accelerated advancement of negotiations of the peace process on the basis of relevant United Nations resolutions, including Security Council resolutions 242 (1967), 338 (1973), 425 (1978), 1397 (2002), 1515 (2003), 1544 (2004) and 1850 (2008), the Madrid Conference, the principle of land for peace, the Arab Peace Initiative¹⁹⁹ and the Quartet road map,²⁰⁰ as well as compliance with the agreements reached between the Government of Israel and the Palestine Liberation Organization, the representative of the Palestinian people, in order to pave the way for the realization of the two-State solution of Israel and Palestine living side by side in peace and security within recognized borders, based on the pre-1967 borders, and the achievement of a just, lasting and comprehensive peace settlement;

18. *Requests* the Secretary-General to submit to the General Assembly at its sixty-ninth session, through the Economic and Social Council, a report on the implementation of the present resolution and to continue to include in the report of the United Nations Special Coordinator an update on the living conditions of the Palestinian people, in collaboration with relevant United Nations agencies;

19. *Decides* to include in the provisional agenda of its 2015 session the item entitled “Economic and social repercussions of the Israeli occupation on the living conditions of the Palestinian people in the Occupied Palestinian Territory, including East Jerusalem, and the Arab population in the occupied Syrian Golan”.

*45th plenary meeting
16 July 2014*

Resolutions

15. *Requests* the administering Powers concerned to facilitate, when appropriate, the participation of appointed and elected representatives of Non-Self-Governing Territories in the relevant meetings and conferences of the specialized agencies and other organizations of the United Nations system, in accordance with relevant resolutions and decisions of the United Nations, including the resolutions and decisions of the General Assembly and the Special Committee on specific Territories, so that they may benefit from the related activities of those agencies and organizations;

16. *Recommends* that all Governments intensify their efforts within the specialized agencies and other organizations of the United Nations system of which they are members to accord priority to the question of providing assistance to the peoples of the Non-Self-Governing Territories on a case-by-case basis;

17. *Draws the attention* of the Special Committee to the present resolution and to the discussion held on the subject at the substantive session of 2015 of the Economic and Social Council;

18. *Recalls* the adoption by the Economic Commission for Latin America and the Caribbean on 16 May 1998 of its resolution 574 (XXVII),⁸⁵ in which the Commission called for the mechanisms necessary for its associate members, including the Non-Self-Governing Territories, to participate, subject to the rules of procedure of the General Assembly, in the special sessions of the Assembly convened to review and assess the implementation of the plans of action of those United Nations world conferences in which the Territories had originally participated in their capacity as observers, and in the work of the Council and its subsidiary bodies;

19. *Requests* the President of the Council to continue to maintain close contact on those matters with the Chair of the Special Committee and to report thereon to the Council;

20. *Requests* the Secretary-General to follow up on the implementation of the present resolution, paying particular attention to cooperation and integration arrangements for maximizing the efficiency of the assistance activities undertaken by various organizations of the United Nations system, and to report thereon to the Council at its 2016 session;

21. *Decides* to keep the above questions under continuous review.

*50th plenary meeting
20 July 2015*

2015/17. Economic and social repercussions of the Israeli occupation on the living conditions of the Palestinian people in the Occupied Palestinian Territory, including East Jerusalem, and the Arab population in the occupied Syrian Golan

The Economic and Social Council,

Recalling General Assembly resolutions [69/241](#) of 19 December 2014 and [69/92](#) of 5 December 2014,

Recalling also its resolution 2014/26 of 16 July 2014,

Guided by the principles of the Charter of the United Nations affirming the inadmissibility of the acquisition of territory by force, and recalling relevant Security Council resolutions, including resolutions 242 (1967) of 22 November 1967, 252 (1968) of 21 May 1968, 338 (1973) of 22 October 1973, 465 (1980) of 1 March 1980 and 497(1981) of 17 December 1981,

Recalling the resolutions of the tenth emergency special session of the General Assembly, including ES-10/13 of 21 October 2003, ES-10/14 of 8 December 2003, ES-10/15 of 20 July 2004 and ES-10/17 of 15 December 2006,

Taking note of the report by the Economic and Social Commission for Western Asia on the economic and social repercussions of the Israeli occupation on the living conditions of the Palestinian people in the Occupied Palestinian Territory, including East Jerusalem, and the Arab population in the occupied Syrian Golan, as transmitted by the Secretary-General,⁸⁶

⁸⁵ See *Official Records of the Economic and Social Council, 1998, Supplement No. 21 (E/1998/41)*, chap. III, sect. G

⁸⁶ A/70/82-E/2015/13.

Resolutions

Reaffirming the applicability of the Geneva Convention relative to the Protection of Civilian Persons in Time of War, of 12 August 1949,⁸⁷ to the Occupied Palestinian Territory, including East Jerusalem, and other Arab territories occupied by Israel since 1967,

Recalling the International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights,⁸⁸ the International Covenant on Economic, Social and Cultural Rights⁸⁸ and the Convention on the Rights of the Child,⁸⁹ and affirming that these human rights instruments must be respected in the Occupied Palestinian Territory, including East Jerusalem, as well as in the occupied Syrian Golan,

Taking note, in this regard, of the accession by Palestine to several human rights treaties and the core humanitarian law conventions as well as other international treaties,

Taking note also of General Assembly resolution 67/19 of 29 November 2012,

Stressing the urgency of achieving, without delay, an end to the Israeli occupation that began in 1967 and a just, lasting and comprehensive peace settlement on all tracks on the basis of Security Council resolutions 242 (1967), 338 (1973), 425 (1978) of 19 March 1978, 1397 (2002) of 12 March 2002, 1515 (2003) of 19 November 2003, 1544 (2004) of 19 May 2004 and 1850 (2008) of 16 December 2008, the principle of land for peace, the Arab Peace Initiative⁹⁰ and the Quartet road map,⁹¹ as well as compliance with the agreements reached between the Government of Israel and the Palestine Liberation Organization, the representative of the Palestinian people,

Reaffirming the principle of the permanent sovereignty of peoples under foreign occupation over their natural resources, and expressing concern in that regard about the exploitation of natural resources by Israel, the occupying Power, and Israeli settlers in the Occupied Palestinian Territory, including East Jerusalem, and in the occupied Syrian Golan, particularly as a result of settlement activities, which are illegal under international law and which, deplorably, continued during the reporting period,

Convinced that the Israeli occupation has gravely impeded the efforts to achieve sustainable development and a sound economic environment in the Occupied Palestinian Territory, including East Jerusalem, and in the occupied Syrian Golan, and expressing grave concern about the consequent deterioration of economic and living conditions,

Expressing alarm, in this regard, about the extremely high levels of unemployment in the Gaza Strip in particular, which, according to World Bank estimates, is 43 per cent, with youth unemployment reaching 60 per cent, and is exacerbated by the prolonged Israeli closures and severe economic and movement restrictions that in effect amount to a blockade, and about the continuing negative repercussions of the military operations in the Gaza Strip on economic and social infrastructure and living conditions,

Commending the efforts of the Palestinian Government, despite the many constraints, to improve the economic and social situation in the Occupied Palestinian Territory, especially in the areas of governance, the rule of law and human rights, livelihoods and productive sectors, education and culture, health, social protection, infrastructure and water, and welcoming in this regard the United Nations Development Assistance Framework, launched on 15 August 2013, which aims at, inter alia, enhancing developmental support and assistance to the Palestinian people and strengthening institutional capacity in line with Palestinian national priorities,

Gravely concerned about the accelerated construction of settlements and the implementation of other related measures by Israel in the Occupied Palestinian Territory, particularly in and around occupied East Jerusalem, as well as in the occupied Syrian Golan, in violation of international humanitarian law and relevant United Nations resolutions,

Encouraging all States and international organizations to continue to actively pursue policies to ensure respect for their obligations under international law with regard to all illegal Israeli practices and measures in the Occupied Palestinian Territory, including East Jerusalem, particularly Israeli settlements,

⁸⁷ United Nations, *Treaty Series*, vol. 75, No. 973.

⁸⁸ See General Assembly resolution 2200 A (XXI), annex.

⁸⁹ United Nations, *Treaty Series*, vol. 1577, No. 27531.

⁹⁰ A/56/1026-S/2002/932, annex II, resolution 14/221.

⁹¹ S/2003/529, annex.

Resolutions

Taking note of the report of the independent international fact-finding mission to investigate the implications of the Israeli settlements on the civil, political, economic, social and cultural rights of the Palestinian people throughout the Occupied Palestinian Territory, including East Jerusalem,⁹²

Expressing deep concern about the rising incidence of violence, harassment, provocation, vandalism and incitement in the Occupied Palestinian Territory, including East Jerusalem, in particular by illegal armed Israeli settlers against Palestinian civilians, including children, and their properties, including homes, historic and religious sites, and agricultural lands, and calling for accountability for the illegal actions perpetrated in this regard,

Gravely concerned by the serious repercussions on the economic and social conditions of the Palestinian people caused by Israel's construction of the wall and its associated regime inside the Occupied Palestinian Territory, including in and around East Jerusalem, and the resulting violation of their economic and social rights, including the rights to work, to health, to education, to property, to an adequate standard of living and to freedom of access and movement,

Recalling, in this regard, the advisory opinion rendered on 9 July 2004 by the International Court of Justice on the legal consequences of the construction of a wall in the Occupied Palestinian Territory⁹³ and General Assembly resolution ES-10/15, and stressing the need to comply with the obligations mentioned therein,

Expressing grave concern at the extensive destruction by Israel, the occupying Power, of properties, including the increased demolition of homes, economic institutions, historical landmarks, agricultural lands and orchards, in the Occupied Palestinian Territory, including East Jerusalem, in particular in connection with its construction of settlements and the wall and confiscation of land, contrary to international law, in the Occupied Palestinian Territory, including in and around East Jerusalem,

Expressing grave concern also over the continuing forced displacement and dispossession of Palestinian civilians, including the Bedouin community, due to the continuing and intensifying policy of home demolitions, evictions and revocation of residency rights in and around occupied East Jerusalem, as well as measures to further isolate the city from its natural Palestinian environs, which have seriously exacerbated the already critical socioeconomic situation being faced by the Palestinian population,

Expressing grave concern further about ongoing Israeli military operations and policies of closures and severe restrictions on the movement of persons and goods, the imposition of crossing closures, checkpoints and a permit regime throughout the Occupied Palestinian Territory, including East Jerusalem, and the consequent negative impact on the socioeconomic situation of the Palestinian people, in particular the Palestine refugee population, which remains that of a humanitarian crisis,

Expressing grave concern, in particular, over the continuing crisis in the Gaza Strip as a result of the prolonged Israeli closures and severe economic and movement restrictions that in effect amount to a blockade, stressing that the situation is unsustainable, and calling in that regard for the full implementation of Security Council resolution 1860 (2009) of 8 January 2009 with a view to ensuring the full opening of the border crossings for the sustained and regular movement of persons and goods, including humanitarian aid, commercial flows and construction materials, and emphasizing the need for security for all civilian populations,

Deploring the conflict in and around the Gaza Strip in July and August 2014 and the civilian casualties caused, including the killing and injury of thousands of Palestinian civilians, including children, women and the elderly, the widespread destruction of or damage to thousands of homes and vital civilian infrastructure, including schools, hospitals, water, sanitation and electricity networks, economic, industrial and agricultural properties, public institutions, religious sites and United Nations schools and facilities, as well as the internal displacement of hundreds of thousands of civilians, and any violations of international law, including humanitarian and human rights law, in this regard,

Gravely concerned about the consequent prolonged and extensive negative impact of the military operations in July and August 2014, as well as between December 2008 and January 2009 and in November 2012, on economic conditions, the provision of social services and the social, humanitarian and physical living conditions of the Palestinian civilian population, including the Palestine refugee population,

⁹² A/HRC/22/63.

⁹³ See A/ES-10/273 and Corr.1.

Resolutions

Recalling, in this regard, the relevant United Nations reports, including those of the Economic and Social Council, the Economic and Social Commission for Western Asia and the Human Rights Council,

Expressing deep concern about the short- and long-term detrimental impact of such widespread destruction and the hampering of the reconstruction process, by Israel, the occupying Power, on the socioeconomic and humanitarian conditions of the Palestinian civilian population in the Gaza Strip, where the humanitarian crisis continues to deepen, and calling in that regard for the immediate acceleration of the reconstruction process in the Gaza Strip with the assistance of the donor countries, including the disbursement of funds pledged at the Cairo International Conference on Palestine: Reconstructing Gaza, held on 12 October 2014,

Gravely concerned at various reports of the United Nations and specialized agencies regarding the substantial aid dependency caused by prolonged border closures, inordinate rates of unemployment, widespread poverty and severe humanitarian hardships, including food insecurity and rising health-related problems, including high levels of malnutrition, among the Palestinian people, especially children, in the Occupied Palestinian Territory, including East Jerusalem,

Expressing grave concern at the deaths and injuries caused to civilians, including children, women and peaceful demonstrators, and emphasizing that the Palestinian civilian population must be protected in accordance with international humanitarian law,

Emphasizing the importance of the safety and well-being of all civilians, and calling for the cessation of all acts of violence, including all acts of terror, provocation, incitement and destruction, and all firing of rockets,

Expressing deep concern that thousands of Palestinians, including many children and women, continue to be held in Israeli prisons or detention centres, subject to harsh conditions, including unhygienic conditions, solitary confinement, excessive use of administrative detention, lack of proper medical care and widespread medical neglect, including for prisoners who are ill, with the risk of fatal consequences, and the denial of family visits and of due process, that impair their well-being, and expressing deep concern also about any ill-treatment and harassment of Palestinian prisoners and detainees and all reports of torture, while taking note of the agreement reached in May 2012 on conditions of detention in Israeli prisons and calling for its full and immediate implementation,

Conscious of the urgent need for the reconstruction and development of the economic and social infrastructure of the Occupied Palestinian Territory, including East Jerusalem, as well as the urgent need to address the humanitarian crisis facing the Palestinian people, including by ensuring the unimpeded provision of humanitarian assistance and the sustained and regular flow of persons and goods into and out of the Gaza Strip,

Recognizing the efforts by the Palestinian Government, with international support, to rebuild, reform and strengthen its damaged institutions and promote good governance, emphasizing the need to preserve the Palestinian national institutions and infrastructure, and commending in this regard the ongoing efforts to develop the institutions of an independent Palestinian State, including through the implementation of the Palestinian National Development Plan 2011–2013 on governance, economy, social development and infrastructure, and the significant achievements made, as confirmed by the positive assessments made by international institutions regarding readiness for statehood, including by the World Bank, the International Monetary Fund and the United Nations and the Ad Hoc Liaison Committee for the Coordination of the International Assistance to Palestinians, while also expressing concern about the negative impact of the current financial crisis being faced by the Palestinian Government,

Commending, in this regard, the important work being done by the United Nations, the specialized agencies and the donor community in support of the economic and social development of the Palestinian people in line with their national development and State-building plan, as well as the vital assistance being provided in the humanitarian field,

Welcoming the formation of the new Palestinian Government of national consensus under the authority of President Mahmoud Abbas, in line with the Quartet principles, emphasizing the need for the respect and preservation of the territorial integrity and unity of the Occupied Palestinian Territory, including East Jerusalem, and affirming the need to support the Palestinian Government of national consensus in its assumption of full government responsibilities in all fields in both the West Bank and the Gaza Strip,

Calling upon both parties to fulfil their obligations under the road map in cooperation with the Quartet,

Aware that development and fostering healthy economic and social conditions are difficult under occupation and best promoted in circumstances of peace and stability,

Resolutions

1. *Calls for* the full opening of the border crossings of the Gaza Strip, in line with Security Council resolution 1860 (2009), to ensure humanitarian access as well as the sustained and regular flow of persons and goods and the lifting of all movement restrictions imposed on the Palestinian people, including those restrictions arising from ongoing Israeli military operations and the multilayered closure system, and for other urgent measures to be taken to alleviate the serious humanitarian situation in the Occupied Palestinian Territory, which is dire in the Gaza Strip, and calls for compliance by Israel, the occupying Power, with all of its legal obligations under international humanitarian law and United Nations resolutions in that regard;
2. *Stresses* the need to preserve the territorial contiguity, unity and integrity of the Occupied Palestinian Territory, including East Jerusalem, and to guarantee the freedom of movement of persons and goods throughout the Occupied Palestinian Territory, including East Jerusalem, as well as to and from the outside world;
3. *Also stresses* the need to preserve and develop Palestinian national institutions and infrastructure for the provision of vital public services to the Palestinian civilian population and to contribute to the promotion and protection of human rights, including economic and social rights;
4. *Demands* that Israel comply with the Protocol on Economic Relations between the Government of Israel and the Palestine Liberation Organization signed in Paris on 29 April 1994;⁹⁴
5. *Calls upon* Israel to restore and replace civilian properties, vital infrastructure, agricultural lands and governmental institutions that have been damaged or destroyed as a result of its military operations in the Occupied Palestinian Territory;
6. *Reiterates the call* for the full implementation of the Agreement on Movement and Access of 15 November 2005, particularly the urgent and uninterrupted reopening of all crossings into the Gaza Strip, which is crucial to ensuring the passage of foodstuffs and essential supplies, including construction materials and adequate fuel supplies, as well as to ensuring the unhindered access of the United Nations and related agencies and regular commercial flows necessary for economic recovery to and within the Occupied Palestinian Territory, and emphasizes the need for security for all civilian populations;
7. *Calls upon* all parties to respect the rules of international humanitarian law and to refrain from violence against the civilian population, in accordance with the Geneva Convention relative to the Protection of Civilian Persons in Time of War, of 12 August 1949;⁸⁷
8. *Reaffirms* the inalienable right of the Palestinian people and the Arab population of the occupied Syrian Golan to all their natural and economic resources, and calls upon Israel, the occupying Power, not to exploit, endanger or cause loss or depletion of those resources;
9. *Calls upon* Israel, the occupying Power, to cease its destruction of homes and properties, economic institutions and agricultural lands and orchards in the Occupied Palestinian Territory, including East Jerusalem, as well as in the occupied Syrian Golan, and to prevent Israeli settlers from perpetrating such illegal activities;
10. *Also calls upon* Israel, the occupying Power, to end immediately its exploitation of natural resources, including water and mining resources, and to cease the dumping of all kinds of waste materials in the Occupied Palestinian Territory, including East Jerusalem, and in the occupied Syrian Golan, which gravely threaten their natural resources, namely, the water, land and energy resources, and present a serious environmental hazard and health threat to the civilian populations, and also calls upon Israel, the occupying Power, to remove all obstacles that obstruct the implementation of critical environmental projects, including the sewage treatment plants in the Gaza Strip, notably the provision of the electrical power needed for the work of the northern Gaza emergency sewage treatment project, and stresses in this regard the urgency of the reconstruction and development of water infrastructure, including the project for the desalination facility for the Gaza Strip;
11. *Calls for* the assistance necessary for the safe removal of all unexploded ordnance in the Gaza Strip, which endangers Palestinian lives and has a negative impact on the environment and on reconstruction and development efforts, and urges support for the efforts of the United Nations Mine Action Service in this regard;

⁹⁴ See A/49/180-S/1994/727, annex, entitled “Agreement on the Gaza Strip and the Jericho Area”, annex IV.

Resolutions

12. *Reaffirms* that the construction and expansion of Israeli settlements and related infrastructure in the Occupied Palestinian Territory, including East Jerusalem, and the occupied Syrian Golan, are illegal and constitute a major obstacle to economic and social development and to the achievement of peace, and calls for the full cessation of all settlement and settlement-related activity, including full cessation of all measures aimed at altering the demographic composition, legal status and character of the occupied territories, including, in particular, in and around occupied East Jerusalem, in compliance with relevant Security Council resolutions and international law, including the Geneva Convention relative to the Protection of Civilian Persons in Time of War;

13. *Calls for* accountability for the illegal actions perpetrated by Israeli settlers in the Occupied Palestinian Territory, including East Jerusalem, recalls in this regard Security Council resolution 904 (1994) of 18 March 1994, and stresses the need for its implementation;

14. *Also calls for* urgent attention to be paid to the plight and the rights, in accordance with international law, of Palestinian prisoners and detainees in Israeli prisons, and for efforts between the two sides for the further release of prisoners and detainees;

15. *Reaffirms* that the ongoing construction by Israel of the wall in the Occupied Palestinian Territory, including in and around East Jerusalem, is contrary to international law and is isolating East Jerusalem, fragmenting the West Bank and seriously debilitating the economic and social development of the Palestinian people, and calls in that regard for full compliance with the legal obligations mentioned in the advisory opinion of the International Court of Justice rendered on 9 July 2004⁹⁵ and in General Assembly resolution ES-10/15 and subsequent relevant resolutions;

16. *Calls upon* Israel to comply with the provisions of the Geneva Convention relative to the Protection of Civilian Persons in Time of War and to facilitate visits of the Syrian citizens of the occupied Syrian Golan whose family members reside in their mother homeland, the Syrian Arab Republic, via the Qunaitra entrance;

17. *Emphasizes* the importance of the work of United Nations organizations and agencies in the Occupied Palestinian Territory, including East Jerusalem, and of the United Nations Special Coordinator for the Middle East Peace Process and Personal Representative of the Secretary-General to the Palestine Liberation Organization and the Palestinian Authority;

18. *Expresses appreciation* to the Member States, United Nations bodies and intergovernmental, regional and non-governmental organizations that have provided and continue to provide economic and humanitarian assistance to the Palestinian people, which has helped to ameliorate their critical economic and social conditions, and urges the continued provision of assistance commensurate with their increased socioeconomic and humanitarian needs, in cooperation with official Palestinian institutions and consistent with the Palestinian National Development Plan;

19. *Reiterates* the importance of and need for increased and renewed international efforts on the basis of relevant United Nations resolutions, including Security Council resolutions 242 (1967), 338 (1973), 425 (1978), 1397 (2002), 1515 (2003), 1544 (2004) and 1850 (2008), and the Madrid Conference, the principle of land for peace, the Arab Peace Initiative⁹⁰ and the Quartet road map,⁹¹ as well as compliance with the agreements reached between the Government of Israel and the Palestine Liberation Organization, the representative of the Palestinian people, in order to pave the way for the realization of the two-State solution of Israel and Palestine living side by side in peace and security within recognized borders, based on the pre-1967 borders, and the achievement of a just, lasting and comprehensive peace settlement;

20. *Requests* the Secretary-General to submit to the General Assembly at its seventieth session, through the Economic and Social Council, a report on the implementation of the present resolution and to continue to include in the report of the United Nations Special Coordinator an update on the living conditions of the Palestinian people, in collaboration with relevant United Nations agencies;

21. *Decides* to include in the agenda of its substantive session of 2016 the item entitled “Economic and social repercussions of the Israeli occupation on the living conditions of the Palestinian people in the Occupied Palestinian Territory, including East Jerusalem, and the Arab population in the occupied Syrian Golan”.

*50th plenary meeting
20 July 2015*

2016/14. Economic and social repercussions of the Israeli occupation on the living conditions of the Palestinian people in the Occupied Palestinian Territory, including East Jerusalem, and the Arab population in the occupied Syrian Golan

The Economic and Social Council,

Recalling General Assembly resolutions [70/1](#) of 25 September 2015, [70/89](#) of 9 December 2015 and [70/225](#) of 22 December 2015,

Recalling also its resolution [2015/17](#) of 20 July 2015,

Guided by the principles of the Charter of the United Nations affirming the inadmissibility of the acquisition of territory by force, and recalling relevant Security Council resolutions, including resolutions [242 \(1967\)](#) of 22 November 1967, [252 \(1968\)](#) of 21 May 1968, [338 \(1973\)](#) of 22 October 1973, [465 \(1980\)](#) of 1 March 1980 and [497 \(1981\)](#) of 17 December 1981,

Recalling the resolutions of the tenth emergency special session of the General Assembly, including resolutions [ES-10/13](#) of 21 October 2003, [ES-10/14](#) of 8 December 2003, [ES-10/15](#) of 20 July 2004 and [ES-10/17](#) of 15 December 2006,

Taking note of the report by the Economic and Social Commission for Western Asia on the economic and social repercussions of the Israeli occupation on the living conditions of the Palestinian people in the Occupied Palestinian Territory, including East Jerusalem, and the Arab population in the occupied Syrian Golan, as transmitted by the Secretary-General,⁸⁴

Reaffirming the applicability of the Geneva Convention relative to the Protection of Civilian Persons in Time of War, of 12 August 1949,⁸⁵ to the Occupied Palestinian Territory, including East Jerusalem, and other Arab territories occupied by Israel since 1967,

Recalling the International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights,⁸⁶ the International Covenant on Economic, Social and Cultural Rights,⁸⁶ and the Convention on the Rights of the Child,⁸⁷ and affirming that these human rights instruments are applicable and must be respected in the Occupied Palestinian Territory, including East Jerusalem, as well as in the occupied Syrian Golan,

Taking note, in this regard, of Palestine's accession to several human rights treaties and the core humanitarian law conventions as well as other international treaties,

Taking note also of General Assembly resolution [67/19](#) of 29 November 2012,

Stressing the urgency of achieving without delay an end to the Israeli occupation that began in 1967 and a just, lasting and comprehensive peace settlement on all tracks on the basis of Security Council resolutions [242 \(1967\)](#), [338 \(1973\)](#), [425 \(1978\)](#) of 19 March 1978, [1397 \(2002\)](#) of 12 March 2002, [1515 \(2003\)](#) of 19 November 2003, [1544 \(2004\)](#) of 19 May 2004 and [1850 \(2008\)](#) of 16 December 2008, the principle of land for peace, the Arab Peace Initiative⁸⁸ and the Quartet road map,⁸⁹ as well as compliance with the agreements reached between the Government of Israel and the Palestine Liberation Organization, the representative of the Palestinian people,

Reaffirming the principle of the permanent sovereignty of peoples under foreign occupation over their natural resources, and expressing concern in that regard about the exploitation of natural resources by Israel, the occupying Power, and Israeli settlers in the Occupied Palestinian Territory, including East Jerusalem, and in the occupied Syrian Golan, particularly as a result of settlement activities, which are illegal under international law and which, deplorably, continued during the reporting period,

⁸⁴ [A/71/86-E/2016/13](#).

⁸⁵ United Nations, *Treaty Series*, vol. 75, No. 973.

⁸⁶ See General Assembly resolution 2200 A (XXI), annex.

⁸⁷ United Nations, *Treaty Series*, vol. 1577, No. 27531.

⁸⁸ [A/56/1026-S/2002/932](#), annex II, resolution 14/221.

⁸⁹ [S/2003/529](#), annex.

Resolutions

Convinced that the Israeli occupation has gravely impeded the efforts to achieve sustainable development and a sound economic environment in the Occupied Palestinian Territory, including East Jerusalem, and in the occupied Syrian Golan, and expressing grave concern about the consequent deterioration of economic and living conditions,

Expressing alarm, in this regard, about the extremely high levels of unemployment in the Gaza Strip in particular, which according to World Bank estimates is 43 per cent, with youth unemployment reaching 60 per cent, exacerbated by the prolonged Israeli closures and severe economic and movement restrictions that in effect amount to a blockade, and the continuing negative repercussions of the military operations in the Gaza Strip on economic and social infrastructure and living conditions,

Commending, despite the many constraints, including the obstacles imposed by the ongoing Israeli occupation, the efforts of the Palestinian Government to improve the economic and social situation in the Occupied Palestinian Territory, especially in the areas of governance, the rule of law and human rights, livelihoods and productive sectors, education and culture, health, social protection, infrastructure and water,

Stressing the importance of the United Nations Development Assistance Framework, which was launched on 15 August 2013, and which aims, inter alia, at enhancing development support and assistance to the Palestinian people and strengthening institutional capacity in line with Palestinian national priorities,

Gravely concerned about the accelerated construction of settlements and implementation of other related measures by Israel in the Occupied Palestinian Territory, particularly in and around occupied East Jerusalem, as well as in the occupied Syrian Golan, in violation of international humanitarian law and relevant United Nations resolutions, and stressing that such illegal measures are main sources of other Israeli violations and discriminatory policies,

Encouraging all States and international organizations to continue to actively pursue policies to ensure respect for their obligations under international law with regard to all illegal Israeli practices and measures in the Occupied Palestinian Territory, including East Jerusalem, particularly Israeli settlements,

Taking note of the report of the independent international fact-finding mission to investigate the implications of the Israeli settlements on the civil, political, economic, social and cultural rights of the Palestinian people throughout the Occupied Palestinian Territory, including East Jerusalem,⁹⁰

Expressing deep concern about the rising incidence of violence, harassment, provocation, vandalism and incitement in the Occupied Palestinian Territory, including East Jerusalem, in particular by illegal armed Israeli settlers against Palestinian civilians, including children, and their properties, including homes, historic and religious sites and agricultural lands, and calling for accountability for the illegal actions perpetrated in this regard,

Gravely concerned by the serious repercussions on the economic and social conditions of the Palestinian people caused by Israel's construction of the wall and its associated regime inside the Occupied Palestinian Territory, including in and around East Jerusalem, and the resulting violation of their economic and social rights, including the rights to work, to health, to education, to property, to an adequate standard of living and to freedom of access and movement,

Recalling, in that regard, the advisory opinion rendered on 9 July 2004 by the International Court of Justice on the legal consequences of the construction of a wall in the Occupied Palestinian Territory,⁹¹ and General Assembly resolution [ES-10/15](#), and stressing the need to comply with the obligations mentioned therein,

Deploring all loss of innocent civilian life and injury to scores of civilians, and calling upon all parties to fully respect international law, including international humanitarian and human rights law, including for the protection of civilian life, as well as for the promotion of human security, the de-escalation of the situation, the exercise of restraint, including from provocative actions and rhetoric, and the establishment of a stable environment conducive to the pursuit of peace,

Expressing grave concern at the extensive destruction by Israel, the occupying Power, of properties, including the increased demolition of homes, economic institutions, historical landmarks, agricultural lands and orchards, in the

⁹⁰ [A/HRC/22/63](#).

⁹¹ See [A/ES-10/273](#) and Corr. I.

Resolutions

Occupied Palestinian Territory, including East Jerusalem, in particular in connection with its construction of settlements and the wall and confiscation of land, contrary to international law, in the Occupied Palestinian Territory, including in and around East Jerusalem,

Expressing grave concern also over the continuing forced displacement and dispossession of Palestinian civilians, including the Bedouin community, due to the continuing and intensifying policy of home demolitions, evictions and revocation of residency rights in and around occupied East Jerusalem, as well as measures to further isolate the city from its natural Palestinian environs, which have seriously exacerbated the already critical socioeconomic situation being faced by the Palestinian population,

Expressing grave concern further about ongoing Israeli military operations and policies of closures and severe restrictions on the movement of persons and goods, the imposition of crossing closures, checkpoints and a permit regime throughout the Occupied Palestinian Territory, including East Jerusalem, and the consequent negative impact on the socioeconomic situation of the Palestinian people, in particular the Palestine refugee population, which remains that of a humanitarian crisis,

Expressing grave concern, in particular, over the continuing crisis in the Gaza Strip as a result of the prolonged Israeli closures and severe economic and movement restrictions that in effect amount to a blockade, stressing that the situation is unsustainable, and calling in that regard for the full implementation of Security Council resolution 1860 (2009) of 8 January 2009 with a view to ensuring the full opening of the border crossings for the sustained and regular movement of persons and goods, including humanitarian aid, commercial flows and construction materials, and emphasizing the need for security for all civilian populations,

Deploring the conflict in and around the Gaza Strip in July and August 2014 and the civilian casualties caused, including the killing and injury of thousands of Palestinian civilians, including children, women and the elderly, as well as the widespread destruction of or damage to thousands of homes and vital civilian infrastructure, including schools, hospitals, water, sanitation and electricity networks, economic, industrial and agricultural properties, public institutions, religious sites and United Nations schools and facilities, as well as the internal displacement of hundreds of thousands of civilians, and any violations of international law, including humanitarian and human rights law, in this regard,

Gravely concerned about the consequent prolonged and extensive negative impact of the military operations of July and August 2014, as well as the military operations between December 2008 and January 2009 and of November 2012, on economic conditions, the provision of social services and the social, humanitarian and physical living conditions of the Palestinian civilian population, including the Palestine refugee population,

Recalling, in that regard, the relevant United Nations reports, including those of the Economic and Social Council, the Economic and Social Commission for Western Asia and the Human Rights Council,

Expressing deep concern about the short- and long-term detrimental impact of such widespread destruction and the hampering of the reconstruction process, by Israel, the occupying Power, on the socioeconomic and humanitarian conditions of the Palestinian civilian population in the Gaza Strip, where the humanitarian crisis continues to deepen, and calling in that regard for the immediate acceleration of the reconstruction process in the Gaza Strip with the assistance of the donor countries, including the disbursement of funds pledged at the Cairo International Conference on Palestine: Reconstructing Gaza, held on 12 October 2014,

Gravely concerned about various reports of the United Nations and specialized agencies regarding the substantial aid dependency caused by prolonged border closures, inordinate rates of unemployment, widespread poverty and severe humanitarian hardships, including food insecurity and rising health-related problems, including high levels of malnutrition, among the Palestinian people, especially children, in the Occupied Palestinian Territory, including East Jerusalem,

Expressing grave concern at the deaths and injuries caused to civilians, including children, women and peaceful demonstrators, and emphasizing that the Palestinian civilian population must be protected in accordance with international humanitarian law,

Emphasizing the importance of the safety and well-being of all civilians, and calling for the cessation of all acts of violence, including all acts of terror, provocation, incitement and destruction, and all firing of rockets,

Expressing deep concern that thousands of Palestinians, including many children and women, continue to be held in Israeli prisons or detention centres under harsh conditions, including unhygienic conditions, solitary

Resolutions

confinement, excessive use of administrative detention, including of children, lack of proper medical care and widespread medical neglect, including for ill prisoners, with the risk of fatal consequences, and denial of family visits and of due process, that impair their well-being, and expressing deep concern also about any ill-treatment and harassment of Palestinian prisoners and detainees and all reports of torture, while taking note of the May 2012 agreement reached on conditions of detention in Israeli prisons and calling for its full and immediate implementation,

Conscious of the urgent need for the reconstruction and development of the economic and social infrastructure of the Occupied Palestinian Territory, including East Jerusalem, as well as the urgent need to address the humanitarian crisis facing the Palestinian people, including by ensuring the unimpeded provision of humanitarian assistance and the sustained and regular flow of persons and goods into and out of the Gaza Strip,

Recognizing the efforts by the Palestinian Government, with international support, to rebuild, reform and strengthen its damaged institutions and promote good governance, emphasizing the need to preserve the Palestinian national institutions and infrastructure and commending in this regard the ongoing efforts to develop the institutions of an independent Palestinian State, including through the implementation of the Palestinian National Development Plan on governance, economy, social development and infrastructure (2014–2016), and the significant achievements made, as confirmed by the positive assessments made by international institutions regarding readiness for statehood, including by the World Bank, the International Monetary Fund, the United Nations and the Ad Hoc Liaison Committee for the Coordination of the International Assistance to Palestinians, while also expressing concern about the negative impact of the current instability and financial crisis being faced by the Palestinian Government,

Commending, in that regard, the important work being done by the United Nations, the specialized agencies and the donor community in support of the economic and social development of the Palestinian people in line with their national development and State-building plan, as well as the vital assistance being provided in the humanitarian field,

Affirming the need to support the Palestinian Government of national consensus in its assumption of full government responsibilities in both the West Bank and the Gaza Strip, in all fields, as well as through its presence at Gaza's crossing points, and Palestinian national reconciliation, and emphasizing the need for the respect and preservation of the territorial integrity and unity of the Occupied Palestinian Territory, including East Jerusalem,

Calling upon both parties to fulfil their obligations under the road map in cooperation with the Quartet,

Aware that development and fostering healthy economic and social conditions are difficult under occupation and best promoted in circumstances of peace and stability,

1. *Calls for* the full opening of the border crossings of the Gaza Strip, in line with Security Council resolution 1860 (2009), to ensure humanitarian access as well as the sustained and regular flow of persons and goods and the lifting of all movement restrictions imposed on the Palestinian people, including those restrictions arising from ongoing Israeli military operations and the multilayered closure system, and for other urgent measures to be taken to alleviate the serious humanitarian situation in the Occupied Palestinian Territory, which is dire in the Gaza Strip, and calls for compliance by Israel, the occupying Power, with all of its legal obligations under international humanitarian law and United Nations resolutions in that regard;

2. *Stresses* the need to preserve the territorial contiguity, unity and integrity of the Occupied Palestinian Territory, including East Jerusalem, and to guarantee the freedom of movement of persons and goods throughout the Occupied Palestinian Territory, including East Jerusalem, as well as to and from the outside world;

3. *Also stresses* the need to preserve and develop Palestinian national institutions and infrastructure for the provision of vital public services to the Palestinian civilian population and to contribute to the promotion and protection of human rights, including economic and social rights;

4. *Demands* that Israel comply with the Protocol on Economic Relations between the Government of Israel and the Palestine Liberation Organization signed in Paris on 29 April 1994;⁹²

⁹² See [A/49/180-S/1994/727](#), annex, entitled "Agreement on the Gaza Strip and the Jericho Area", annex IV.

Resolutions

5. *Calls upon* Israel to restore and replace civilian properties, vital infrastructure, agricultural lands and governmental institutions that have been damaged or destroyed as a result of its military operations in the Occupied Palestinian Territory;

6. *Reiterates the call* for the full implementation of the Agreement on Movement and Access of 15 November 2005, particularly the urgent and uninterrupted reopening of all crossings into the Gaza Strip, which is crucial to ensuring the passage of foodstuffs and essential supplies, including construction materials and adequate fuel supplies, as well as to ensuring the unhindered access of the United Nations and related agencies and regular commercial flows necessary for economic recovery to and within the Occupied Palestinian Territory, and emphasizes the need for security for all civilian populations;

7. *Calls upon* all parties to respect the rules of international humanitarian law and to refrain from violence against the civilian population, in accordance with the Geneva Convention relative to the Protection of Civilian Persons in Time of War, of 12 August 1949;⁸⁵

8. *Reaffirms* the inalienable right of the Palestinian people and the Arab population of the occupied Syrian Golan to all their natural and economic resources, and calls upon Israel, the occupying Power, not to exploit, endanger or cause loss or depletion of those resources;

9. *Calls upon* Israel, the occupying Power, to cease its destruction of homes and properties, economic institutions and agricultural lands and orchards in the Occupied Palestinian Territory, including East Jerusalem, as well as in the occupied Syrian Golan, and to prevent Israeli settlers from perpetrating such illegal activities;

10. *Also calls upon* Israel, the occupying Power, to end immediately its exploitation of natural resources, including water and mining resources, and to cease the dumping of all kinds of waste materials in the Occupied Palestinian Territory, including East Jerusalem, and in the occupied Syrian Golan, which gravely threaten their natural resources, namely, the water, land and energy resources, and present a serious environmental hazard and health threat to the civilian populations, and also calls upon Israel, the occupying Power, to remove all obstacles that obstruct the implementation of critical environmental projects, including the sewage treatment plants in the Gaza Strip, notably the provision of the electric power needed for the work of the northern Gaza emergency sewage treatment plant, and stresses in this regard the urgency of the reconstruction and development of water infrastructure, including the desalination facility project for the Gaza Strip;

11. *Calls for* the assistance necessary for the safe removal of all unexploded ordnance in the Gaza Strip, which endangers Palestinian lives and has a negative impact on the environment as well as reconstruction and development efforts, welcomes the efforts exerted by the Mine Action Service of the United Nations to date, and urges support for the efforts of the Service in this regard;

12. *Reaffirms* that the construction and expansion of Israeli settlements and related infrastructure in the Occupied Palestinian Territory, including East Jerusalem, and the occupied Syrian Golan, are illegal and constitute a major obstacle to economic and social development and to the achievement of peace, and calls for the full cessation of all settlement and settlement-related activity, including full cessation of all measures aimed at altering the demographic composition, legal status and character of the occupied territories, including in particular in and around occupied East Jerusalem, in compliance with relevant Security Council resolutions and international law, including the Geneva Convention relative to the Protection of Civilian Persons in Time of War;

13. *Calls for* accountability for the illegal actions perpetrated by Israeli settlers in the Occupied Palestinian Territory, including East Jerusalem, and recalls in this regard Security Council resolution [904 \(1994\)](#) of 18 March 1994 and stresses the need for its implementation;

14. *Also calls for* urgent attention to the plight and the rights, in accordance with international law, of Palestinian prisoners and detainees in Israeli prisons, and calls for efforts between the two sides for the further release of prisoners and detainees;

15. *Reaffirms* that Israel's ongoing construction of the wall in the Occupied Palestinian Territory, including in and around East Jerusalem, is contrary to international law and is isolating East Jerusalem, fragmenting the West Bank and seriously debilitating the economic and social development of the Palestinian people, and in that regard calls for full compliance with the legal obligations mentioned in the 9 July 2004 advisory opinion of the International Court of Justice⁹¹ and in General Assembly resolution [ES-10/15](#) and subsequent relevant resolutions;

Resolutions

16. *Calls upon* Israel to comply with the provisions of the Geneva Convention relative to the Protection of Civilian Persons in Time of War and to facilitate visits of the Syrian citizens of the occupied Syrian Golan whose family members reside in their mother homeland, the Syrian Arab Republic, via the Qunaytirah entrance;

17. *Emphasizes* the importance of the work of United Nations organizations and agencies in the Occupied Palestinian Territory, including East Jerusalem, and of the United Nations Special Coordinator for the Middle East Peace Process and Personal Representative of the Secretary-General to the Palestine Liberation Organization and the Palestinian Authority;

18. *Expresses appreciation* to the Member States, United Nations bodies and intergovernmental, regional and non-governmental organizations that have provided and continue to provide economic and humanitarian assistance to the Palestinian people, which has helped to ameliorate their critical economic and social conditions, and urges the continued provision of assistance commensurate with increased socioeconomic and humanitarian needs, in cooperation with official Palestinian institutions and consistent with the Palestinian National Development Plan;

19. *Reiterates* the importance of and need for increased and renewed international efforts on the basis of relevant United Nations resolutions, including Security Council resolutions [242 \(1967\)](#), [338 \(1973\)](#), [425 \(1978\)](#), [1397 \(2002\)](#), [1515 \(2003\)](#), [1544 \(2004\)](#) and [1850 \(2008\)](#), and the Madrid Conference, the principle of land for peace, the Arab Peace Initiative⁸⁸ and the Quartet road map,⁸⁹ as well as compliance with the agreements reached between the Government of Israel and the Palestine Liberation Organization, the representative of the Palestinian people, in order to pave the way for the realization of the two-State solution of Israel and Palestine living side by side in peace and security within recognized borders, based on the pre-1967 borders, and the achievement of a just, lasting and comprehensive peace settlement;

20. *Requests* the Secretary-General to submit to the General Assembly at its seventy-first session, through the Economic and Social Council, a report on the implementation of the present resolution and to continue to include in the report of the United Nations Special Coordinator an update on the living conditions of the Palestinian people, in collaboration with relevant United Nations agencies;

21. *Decides* to include the item entitled “Economic and social repercussions of the Israeli occupation on the living conditions of the Palestinian people in the Occupied Palestinian Territory, including East Jerusalem, and the Arab population in the occupied Syrian Golan” in the agenda of its 2017 session.

*44th plenary meeting
25 July 2016*

2016/15. Programme of Action for the Least Developed Countries for the Decade 2011–2020

The Economic and Social Council,

Recalling the Istanbul Declaration⁹³ and the Programme of Action for the Least Developed Countries for the Decade 2011–2020,⁹⁴ adopted by the Fourth United Nations Conference on the Least Developed Countries, held in Istanbul, Turkey, from 9 to 13 May 2011, and endorsed by the General Assembly in resolution [65/280](#) of 17 June 2011, in which the Assembly called upon all the relevant stakeholders to commit to implementing the Programme of Action,

Reaffirming the overarching goal of the Istanbul Programme of Action of overcoming the structural challenges faced by the least developed countries in order to eradicate poverty, achieve the internationally agreed development goals and enable graduation from the least developed country category,

Recalling the Political Declaration adopted by the Comprehensive High-level Midterm Review of the Implementation of the Istanbul Programme of Action for the Least Developed Countries for the Decade 2011–2020,

⁹³ *Report of the Fourth United Nations Conference on the Least Developed Countries, Istanbul, Turkey, 9–13 May 2011 (A/CONF.219/7)*, chap. I.

⁹⁴ *Ibid.*, chap. II.

the impact assessments of the Department of Economic and Social Affairs of the Secretariat and the monitoring reports of the Committee on countries graduating or graduated from the least developed country category;

7. *Encourages* the United Nations Conference on Trade and Development, the United Nations Development Programme, the secretariat of the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change, the United Nations Industrial Development Organization, the secretariat of the Enhanced Integrated Framework, the World Trade Organization, the Office of the High Representative for the Least Developed Countries, Landlocked Developing Countries and Small Island Developing States and the regional commissions, among others, to provide inputs to the impact assessments prepared by the Department of Economic and Social Affairs, to further contribute to the smooth transition of countries graduating from the least developed country category, highlighting those entities' operational activities relating to building productive capacity in the least developed countries and the possible impact of graduation on such activities;

8. *Reiterates* that treating the least developed countries as a group on the basis of their low per capita income, human asset development and economic vulnerability remains the fundamental premise for special measures in their favour and that wider recognition of least developed country status could stimulate and facilitate better integration of the Programme of Action for the Least Developed Countries for the Decade 2011–2020²²¹ into development policies, and in this regard encourages the entities of the United Nations development system to consistently apply the least developed country category in the provision of international support measures, including through the adoption of common guidelines in this regard;

9. *Also reiterates* the invitation by the General Assembly to the governing bodies of the United Nations funds and programmes and other multilateral organizations and international financial institutions to contribute to implementing the Istanbul Programme of Action and to integrate it into their work programmes, as appropriate and in accordance with their respective mandates;

10. *Requests* the entities of the United Nations development system to continue to prioritize resource allocations to the least developed countries, in accordance with General Assembly resolution [71/243](#) of 21 December 2016;

11. *Also requests* the entities of the United Nations development system to provide assistance to graduating countries in the formulation and implementation of their national transition strategies and to consider country-specific support for graduated countries for a fixed period of time and in a predictable manner;

12. *Invites* the Committee to brief the Council every four years, in the year preceding the quadrennial comprehensive policy review, on how the United Nations development system is applying the least developed country category;

13. *Acknowledges with satisfaction* the contributions made by the Committee to the various aspects of the programme of work of the Council, reiterates its invitation for increased interactions between the Council and the Committee, and encourages the Chair and, as necessary, other members of the Committee to continue this practice, as specified in Council resolution 2011/20 of 27 July 2011, within existing resources and as appropriate.

*49th plenary meeting
25 July 2017*

2017/30. Economic and social repercussions of the Israeli occupation on the living conditions of the Palestinian people in the Occupied Palestinian Territory, including East Jerusalem, and the Arab population in the occupied Syrian Golan

The Economic and Social Council,

Recalling General Assembly resolutions [71/97](#) of 6 December 2016 and [71/247](#) of 21 December 2016,

Recalling also its resolution [2016/14](#) of 25 July 2016,

Guided by the principles of the Charter of the United Nations affirming the inadmissibility of the acquisition of territory by force, and recalling relevant Security Council resolutions, including resolutions [242 \(1967\)](#) of 22 November 1967, [252 \(1968\)](#) of 21 May 1968, [338 \(1973\)](#) of 22 October 1973, [465 \(1980\)](#) of 1 March 1980, [497\(1981\)](#) of 17 December 1981 and [2334 \(2016\)](#) of 23 December 2016,

Recalling the resolutions of the tenth emergency special session of the General Assembly, including resolutions [ES-10/13](#) of 21 October 2003, [ES-10/14](#) of 8 December 2003, [ES-10/15](#) of 20 July 2004 and [ES-10/17](#) of 15 December 2006,

Taking note of the report of the Economic and Social Commission for Western Asia on the economic and social repercussions of the Israeli occupation on the living conditions of the Palestinian people in the Occupied Palestinian Territory, including East Jerusalem, and the Arab population in the occupied Syrian Golan, as transmitted by the Secretary-General,²²⁴

Reaffirming the applicability of the Geneva Convention relative to the Protection of Civilian Persons in Time of War, of 12 August 1949,²²⁵ to the Occupied Palestinian Territory, including East Jerusalem, and other Arab territories occupied by Israel since 1967,

Recalling the International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights,²²⁶ the International Covenant on Economic, Social and Cultural Rights²²⁶ and the Convention on the Rights of the Child,²²⁷ and affirming that these human rights instruments are applicable and must be respected in the Occupied Palestinian Territory, including East Jerusalem, as well as in the occupied Syrian Golan,

Noting with concern that it has been 70 years since the adoption of General Assembly resolution 181 (II) of 29 November 1947 and 50 years since the occupation of Palestinian territory, including East Jerusalem, in 1967,

Taking note, in this regard, of Palestine's accession to several human rights treaties and the core humanitarian law conventions as well as other international treaties,

Taking note also of General Assembly resolution [67/19](#) of 29 November 2012,

Stressing the urgency of achieving without delay an end to the Israeli occupation that began in 1967 and a just, lasting and comprehensive peace settlement on all tracks on the basis of Security Council resolutions [242 \(1967\)](#), [338 \(1973\)](#), [425 \(1978\)](#) of 19 March 1978, [1397 \(2002\)](#) of 12 March 2002, [1515 \(2003\)](#) of 19 November 2003, [1544 \(2004\)](#) of 19 May 2004, [1850 \(2008\)](#) of 16 December 2008 and [2334 \(2016\)](#), the principle of land for peace, the Arab Peace Initiative²²⁸ and the Quartet road map,²²⁹ as well as compliance with the agreements reached between the Government of Israel and the Palestine Liberation Organization, the representative of the Palestinian people,

Reaffirming the principle of the permanent sovereignty of peoples under foreign occupation over their natural resources, and expressing concern in that regard about the exploitation, endangerment and depletion of natural resources by Israel, the occupying Power, and Israeli settlers in the Occupied Palestinian Territory, including East Jerusalem, and in the occupied Syrian Golan, particularly as a result of settlement activities, which are illegal under international law and which, deplorably, continued during the reporting period,

Convinced that the Israeli occupation has gravely impeded the efforts to achieve environmentally sustainable development and a sound economic environment in the Occupied Palestinian Territory, including East Jerusalem, and in the occupied Syrian Golan, and expressing grave concern about the consequent deterioration of economic and living conditions,

Expressing alarm, in this regard, about the extremely high levels of unemployment in the Gaza Strip in particular, which remains at over 40 per cent, with youth unemployment reaching 60 per cent, exacerbated by the prolonged Israeli closures and severe economic and movement restrictions that in effect amount to a blockade, and the continuing negative repercussions of the military operations in the Gaza Strip on economic and social infrastructure and living conditions,

Commending, despite the many constraints, including the obstacles imposed by the ongoing Israeli occupation, the efforts of the Palestinian Government to improve the economic and social situation in the Occupied Palestinian

²²⁴ [A/72/90-E/2017/71](#).

²²⁵ United Nations, *Treaty Series*, vol. 75, No. 973.

²²⁶ See General Assembly resolution 2200 A (XXI), annex.

²²⁷ United Nations, *Treaty Series*, vol. 1577, No. 27531.

²²⁸ [A/56/1026-S/2002/932](#), annex II, resolution 14/221.

²²⁹ [S/2003/529](#), annex.

Resolutions

Territory, especially in the areas of governance, the rule of law and human rights, livelihoods and productive sectors, education and culture, health, social protection, infrastructure and water,

Stressing the importance of the United Nations Development Assistance Framework, which was launched on 15 August 2013 and which aims, inter alia, at enhancing development support and assistance to the Palestinian people and strengthening institutional capacity in line with Palestinian national priorities,

Gravely concerned about the accelerated construction of settlements and implementation of other related measures by Israel in the Occupied Palestinian Territory, particularly in and around occupied East Jerusalem, as well as in the occupied Syrian Golan, in violation of international humanitarian law and relevant United Nations resolutions, and stressing that such illegal measures are main sources of other Israeli violations and discriminatory policies,

Encouraging all States and international organizations to continue to actively pursue policies to ensure respect for their obligations under international law with regard to all illegal Israeli practices and measures in the Occupied Palestinian Territory, including East Jerusalem, particularly Israeli settlements,

Taking note of the report of the independent international fact-finding mission to investigate the implications of the Israeli settlements on the civil, political, economic, social and cultural rights of the Palestinian people throughout the Occupied Palestinian Territory, including East Jerusalem,²³⁰

Expressing deep concern about the rising incidence of violence, harassment, provocation, vandalism and incitement in the Occupied Palestinian Territory, including East Jerusalem, in particular by illegal armed Israeli settlers against Palestinian civilians, including children, and their properties, including homes, historic and religious sites and agricultural lands, and calling for accountability for the illegal actions perpetrated in this regard,

Gravely concerned by the serious repercussions on the economic and social conditions of the Palestinian people caused by Israel's construction of the wall and its associated regime inside the Occupied Palestinian Territory, including in and around East Jerusalem, and the resulting violation of their economic and social rights, including the rights to work, to health, to education, to property, to an adequate standard of living and to freedom of access and movement,

Recalling, in that regard, the advisory opinion rendered on 9 July 2004 by the International Court of Justice on the legal consequences of the construction of a wall in the Occupied Palestinian Territory,²³¹ and General Assembly resolution [ES-10/15](#), and stressing the need to comply with the obligations mentioned therein,

Deploing all loss of innocent civilian life and injury to scores of civilians, and calling upon all parties to fully respect international law, including humanitarian and human rights law, including for the protection of civilian life, as well as for the promotion of human security, the de-escalation of the situation, the exercise of restraint, including from provocative actions and rhetoric, and the establishment of a stable environment conducive to the pursuit of peace,

Expressing grave concern at the extensive destruction by Israel, the occupying Power, of properties, including the increased demolition of homes, economic institutions, historical landmarks, agricultural lands and orchards, in the Occupied Palestinian Territory, including East Jerusalem, in particular in connection with its construction of settlements and the wall and confiscation of land, contrary to international law, in the Occupied Palestinian Territory, including in and around East Jerusalem,

Expressing grave concern also over the continuing forced displacement and dispossession of Palestinian civilians, including the Bedouin community, due to the continuing and intensifying policy of home demolitions, evictions and revocation of residency rights in and around occupied East Jerusalem, as well as measures to further isolate the city from its natural Palestinian environs, which have seriously exacerbated the already critical socioeconomic situation being faced by the Palestinian population,

Expressing grave concern further about ongoing Israeli military operations and policies of closures and severe restrictions on the movement of persons and goods, the imposition of crossing closures, checkpoints and a permit

²³⁰ [A/HRC/22/63](#).

²³¹ See [A/ES-10/273](#) and [A/ES-10/273/Corr.1](#).

regime throughout the Occupied Palestinian Territory, including East Jerusalem, and the consequent negative impact on the socioeconomic situation of the Palestinian people, in particular the Palestine refugee population, which remains that of a humanitarian crisis,

Expressing grave concern, in particular, over the continuing crisis in the Gaza Strip as a result of the prolonged Israeli closures and severe economic and movement restrictions that in effect amount to a blockade, stressing that the situation is unsustainable, as reflected in numerous reports, including the report of 26 August 2016 of the United Nations country team, entitled “Gaza: two years after”, and calling in that regard for the full implementation of Security Council resolution 1860 (2009) of 8 January 2009 with a view to ensuring the full opening of the border crossings for the sustained and regular movement of persons and goods, including humanitarian aid, commercial flows and construction materials, and emphasizing the need for security for all civilian populations,

Deploring the conflict in and around the Gaza Strip in July and August 2014 and the civilian casualties caused, including the killing of and injury to thousands of Palestinian civilians, including children, women and the elderly, as well as the widespread destruction of or damage to thousands of homes and vital civilian infrastructure, including schools, hospitals, water, sanitation and electricity networks, economic, industrial and agricultural properties, public institutions, religious sites and United Nations schools and facilities, as well as the internal displacement of hundreds of thousands of civilians, and any violations of international law, including humanitarian and human rights law, in this regard,

Gravely concerned about the consequent prolonged and extensive negative impact of the military operations of July and August 2014, as well as the military operations between December 2008 and January 2009 and of November 2012, on economic conditions, the provision of social services and the social, humanitarian and physical living conditions of the Palestinian civilian population, including the Palestine refugee population,

Recalling, in that regard, the relevant United Nations reports, including those of the Economic and Social Council, the Economic and Social Commission for Western Asia and the Human Rights Council,

Expressing deep concern about the short- and long-term detrimental impact of such widespread destruction and the hampering of the reconstruction process, by Israel, the occupying Power, on the socioeconomic and humanitarian conditions of the Palestinian civilian population in the Gaza Strip, where the humanitarian crisis continues to deepen, and calling in that regard for the immediate acceleration and fulfilment of the reconstruction process in the Gaza Strip with the assistance of the donor countries, including the disbursement of funds pledged at the Cairo International Conference on Palestine: Reconstructing Gaza, held on 12 October 2014,

Gravely concerned about various reports of the United Nations and specialized agencies regarding the substantial aid dependency caused by prolonged border closures, inordinate rates of unemployment, widespread poverty and severe humanitarian hardships, including food insecurity and rising health-related problems, including high levels of malnutrition, among the Palestinian people, especially children, in the Occupied Palestinian Territory, including East Jerusalem,

Expressing grave concern at the deaths of and injuries caused to civilians, including children, women and peaceful demonstrators, and emphasizing that the Palestinian civilian population must be protected in accordance with international humanitarian law,

Emphasizing the importance of the safety and well-being of all civilians, and calling for the cessation of all acts of violence, including all acts of terror, provocation, incitement and destruction, and all firing of rockets,

Expressing deep concern that thousands of Palestinians, including many children and women, continue to be held in Israeli prisons or detention centres under harsh conditions, including unhygienic conditions, solitary confinement, excessive use of administrative detention, including of children, lack of proper medical care and widespread medical neglect, including for ill prisoners, with the risk of fatal consequences, and denial of family visits and of due process, that impair their well-being, and expressing deep concern also about any ill-treatment and harassment of Palestinian prisoners and detainees and all reports of torture,

Conscious of the urgent need for the reconstruction and development of the economic and social infrastructure of the Occupied Palestinian Territory, including East Jerusalem, as well as the urgent need to address the humanitarian crisis facing the Palestinian people, including by ensuring the unimpeded provision of humanitarian assistance and the sustained and regular flow of persons and goods into and out of the Gaza Strip,

Resolutions

Recognizing the efforts being undertaken by the Palestinian Government, with international support, to reform, develop and strengthen its institutions and infrastructure, emphasizing the need to preserve and further develop Palestinian institutions and infrastructure, despite the obstacles presented by the ongoing Israeli occupation, and commending in this regard the ongoing efforts to develop the institutions of an independent Palestinian State, including through the implementation of the Palestinian National Policy Agenda: National Priorities, Policies and Policy Interventions (2017–2022),

Expressing concern about the risks posed to the significant achievements made, as confirmed by the positive assessments made by international institutions regarding readiness for statehood, including by the World Bank, the International Monetary Fund, the United Nations and the Ad Hoc Liaison Committee for the Coordination of the International Assistance to Palestinians, owing to the negative impact of ongoing instability and the financial crisis being faced by the Palestinian Government and the continued absence of a credible political horizon,

Commending, in that regard, the important work being done by the United Nations, the specialized agencies and the donor community in support of the economic and social development of the Palestinian people in line with their national development and State-building plan, as well as the vital assistance being provided in the humanitarian field,

Affirming the need to support the Palestinian Government of national consensus in its assumption of full government responsibilities in both the West Bank and the Gaza Strip, in all fields, as well as through its presence at Gaza's crossing points, and Palestinian national reconciliation, and emphasizing the need for the respect and preservation of the territorial integrity and unity of the Occupied Palestinian Territory, including East Jerusalem,

Calling upon both parties to fulfil their obligations under the road map in cooperation with the Quartet,

Aware that development and fostering healthy economic, social and environmental conditions are difficult under occupation and best promoted in circumstances of peace and stability,

1. *Calls for* the full opening of the border crossings of the Gaza Strip, in line with Security Council resolution 1860 (2009), to ensure humanitarian access as well as the sustained and regular flow of persons and goods and the lifting of all movement restrictions imposed on the Palestinian people, including those restrictions arising from ongoing Israeli military operations and the multilayered closure system, and for other urgent measures to be taken to alleviate the serious humanitarian situation in the Occupied Palestinian Territory, which is dire in the Gaza Strip, and also calls for compliance by Israel, the occupying Power, with all of its legal obligations under international humanitarian law and United Nations resolutions in that regard;

2. *Stresses* the need to preserve the territorial contiguity, unity and integrity of the Occupied Palestinian Territory, including East Jerusalem, and to guarantee the freedom of movement of persons and goods throughout the Occupied Palestinian Territory, including East Jerusalem, as well as to and from the outside world;

3. *Also stresses* the need to preserve and develop Palestinian national institutions and infrastructure for the provision of vital public services to the Palestinian civilian population and to contribute to the promotion and protection of human rights, including economic and social rights;

4. *Demands* that Israel comply with the Protocol on Economic Relations between the Government of Israel and the Palestine Liberation Organization signed in Paris on 29 April 1994;²³²

5. *Calls upon* Israel to restore and replace civilian properties, vital infrastructure, agricultural lands and government institutions that have been damaged or destroyed as a result of its military operations in the Occupied Palestinian Territory;

6. *Reiterates* the call for the full implementation of the Agreement on Movement and Access of 15 November 2005, particularly the urgent and uninterrupted reopening of all crossings into the Gaza Strip, which is crucial to ensuring the passage of foodstuffs and essential supplies, including construction materials and adequate fuel supplies, as well as to ensuring the unhindered access of the United Nations and related agencies and regular commercial flows necessary for economic recovery to and within the Occupied Palestinian Territory, and emphasizes the need for security for all civilian populations;

²³² See [A/49/180-S/1994/727](#), annex, entitled "Agreement on the Gaza Strip and the Jericho Area", annex IV.

Resolutions

7. *Calls upon* all parties to respect the rules of international humanitarian law and to refrain from violence against the civilian population, in accordance with the Geneva Convention relative to the Protection of Civilian Persons in Time of War, of 12 August 1949;²²⁵

8. *Reaffirms* the inalienable right of the Palestinian people and the Arab population of the occupied Syrian Golan to all their natural and economic resources, and calls upon Israel, the occupying Power, not to exploit, endanger or cause loss or depletion of those resources;

9. *Calls upon* Israel, the occupying Power, to cease its destruction of homes and properties, economic institutions and agricultural lands and orchards in the Occupied Palestinian Territory, including East Jerusalem, as well as in the occupied Syrian Golan, and to prevent Israeli settlers from perpetrating such illegal activities;

10. *Also calls upon* Israel, the occupying Power, to end immediately its exploitation of natural resources, including water and mining resources, and to cease the dumping of all kinds of waste materials in the Occupied Palestinian Territory, including East Jerusalem, and in the occupied Syrian Golan, which gravely threaten their natural resources, namely, the water, land and energy resources, and present a serious environmental hazard and health threat to the civilian populations, and also calls upon Israel, the occupying Power, to remove all obstacles that obstruct the implementation of critical environmental projects, including the sewage treatment plants in the Gaza Strip, notably the provision of the electric power needed for the work of the northern Gaza emergency sewage treatment plant, and stresses in this regard the urgency of the reconstruction and development of water infrastructure, including the desalination facility project for the Gaza Strip;

11. *Calls for* the assistance necessary for the safe removal of all unexploded ordnance in the Gaza Strip, which endanger Palestinian lives and negatively impact the environment as well as reconstruction and development efforts, and welcomes the efforts exerted by the Mine Action Service of the United Nations to date;

12. *Reaffirms* that the construction and expansion of Israeli settlements and related infrastructure in the Occupied Palestinian Territory, including East Jerusalem, and the occupied Syrian Golan, are illegal and constitute a major obstacle to economic and social development and to the achievement of peace, and calls for the full cessation of all settlement and settlement-related activity, including full cessation of all measures aimed at altering the demographic composition, legal status and character of the occupied territories, including in particular in and around occupied East Jerusalem, in compliance with relevant Security Council resolutions, including resolution 2334 (2016), and international law, including the Geneva Convention relative to the Protection of Civilian Persons in Time of War;

13. *Calls for* accountability for the illegal actions perpetrated by Israeli settlers in the Occupied Palestinian Territory, including East Jerusalem, and recalls in this regard Security Council resolution 904 (1994) of 18 March 1994 and stresses the need for its implementation;

14. *Also calls for* urgent attention to the plight and the rights, in accordance with international law, of Palestinian prisoners and detainees in Israeli prisons, and calls for efforts between the two sides for the further release of prisoners and detainees;

15. *Reaffirms* that Israel's ongoing construction of the wall in the Occupied Palestinian Territory, including in and around East Jerusalem, is contrary to international law and is isolating East Jerusalem, fragmenting the West Bank and seriously debilitating the economic and social development of the Palestinian people, and calls in that regard for full compliance with the legal obligations mentioned in the 9 July 2004 advisory opinion of the International Court of Justice²³¹ and in General Assembly resolution ES-10/15 and subsequent relevant resolutions;

16. *Calls upon* Israel to comply with the provisions of the Geneva Convention relative to the Protection of Civilian Persons in Time of War and to facilitate visits of the Syrian citizens of the occupied Syrian Golan whose family members reside in their mother homeland, the Syrian Arab Republic, via the Qunaytirah entrance;

17. *Emphasizes* the importance of the work of United Nations organizations and agencies in the Occupied Palestinian Territory, including East Jerusalem, and of the United Nations Special Coordinator for the Middle East Peace Process and Personal Representative of the Secretary-General to the Palestine Liberation Organization and the Palestinian Authority;

18. *Expresses appreciation* to the Member States, United Nations bodies and intergovernmental, regional and non-governmental organizations that have provided and continue to provide economic and humanitarian assistance to the Palestinian people, which has helped to ameliorate their critical economic and social conditions, and urges the

continued provision of assistance commensurate with increased socioeconomic and humanitarian needs and in cooperation with official Palestinian institutions and consistent with the Palestinian National Development Plan;

19. *Reiterates* the importance of and need for increased and renewed international efforts on the basis of relevant United Nations resolutions, including Security Council resolutions [242 \(1967\)](#), [338 \(1973\)](#), [425 \(1978\)](#), [1397 \(2002\)](#), [1515 \(2003\)](#), [1544 \(2004\)](#), [1850 \(2008\)](#) and [2334 \(2016\)](#), and the Madrid Conference, the principle of land for peace, the Arab Peace Initiative²²⁸ and the Quartet road map,²²⁹ as well as compliance with the agreements reached between the Government of Israel and the Palestine Liberation Organization, the representative of the Palestinian people, in order to pave the way for the realization of the two-State solution of Israel and Palestine living side by side in peace and security within recognized borders, based on the pre-1967 borders, and the achievement of a just, lasting and comprehensive peace settlement;

20. *Requests* the Secretary-General to submit to the General Assembly at its seventy-second session, through the Economic and Social Council, a report on the implementation of the present resolution and to continue to include in the report of the United Nations Special Coordinator an update on the living conditions of the Palestinian people, in collaboration with relevant United Nations agencies;

21. *Decides* to include the item entitled “Economic and social repercussions of the Israeli occupation on the living conditions of the Palestinian people in the Occupied Palestinian Territory, including East Jerusalem, and the Arab population in the occupied Syrian Golan” in the agenda of its 2018 session.

*50th plenary meeting
25 July 2017*

2017/31. Support to Non-Self-Governing Territories by the specialized agencies and international institutions associated with the United Nations

The Economic and Social Council,

Having examined the report of the Secretary-General²³³ and the report of the President of the Economic and Social Council containing the information submitted by the specialized agencies and other organizations of the United Nations system on their activities with regard to the implementation of the Declaration on the Granting of Independence to Colonial Countries and Peoples,²³⁴

Having heard the statement by the representative of the Special Committee on the Situation with regard to the Implementation of the Declaration on the Granting of Independence to Colonial Countries and Peoples,²³⁵

Recalling General Assembly resolutions 1514 (XV) of 14 December 1960 and 1541 (XV) of 15 December 1960, the resolutions of the Special Committee and other relevant resolutions and decisions, including, in particular, Economic and Social Council resolution [2016/20](#) of 27 July 2016,

Bearing in mind the relevant provisions of the final documents of the successive Conferences of Heads of State or Government of Non-Aligned Countries and of the resolutions adopted by the Assembly of Heads of State and Government of the African Union, the Pacific Islands Forum and the Caribbean Community,

Conscious of the need to facilitate the implementation of the Declaration on the Granting of Independence to Colonial Countries and Peoples, contained in General Assembly resolution 1514 (XV),

Welcoming the current participation, in their capacity as observers, of those Non-Self-Governing Territories that are associate members of the regional commissions in the world conferences in the economic and social sphere, subject to the rules of procedure of the General Assembly and in accordance with relevant resolutions and decisions of the United Nations, including resolutions and decisions of the Assembly and the Special Committee on specific Non-Self-Governing Territories,

²³³ [A/72/69](#).

²³⁴ [E/2017/59](#).

²³⁵ See [E/2017/SR.50](#).

Resolutions

to development challenges in a more flexible and effective manner, with special emphasis on an integrated approach to capacity-building, and encourages all development partners, including the United Nations system and developing countries, to support such modalities;

9. *Calls upon* the Government of Haiti and development partners to support civil society organizations in Haiti, to benefit from their local knowledge and to strengthen their capacity to engage in the development process and become more effective agents of change in support of Haiti's development objectives;

10. *Invites* donors to align their efforts with the National Plan for the Elimination of Cholera in Haiti (2013–2022), the new United Nations approach to cholera in Haiti and the national health plan, as well as with other national activities to prevent waterborne diseases, and to provide the financial resources necessary for their implementation, and welcomes the efforts undertaken by the United Nations Special Envoy for Haiti to mobilize adequate funding to eliminate cholera from Haiti;

11. *Calls urgently for* adequate funding for humanitarian activities, including the cholera epidemic response, as presented in the 2018 Humanitarian Response Plan for Haiti, and encourages partners to connect short-term activities with long-term development to build resilience and reduce the recurrence of crises;

12. *Encourages* all relevant actors within the United Nations system, including the peacebuilding architecture, as appropriate, to consider ways in which they can coordinate their efforts, at the request of the Government of Haiti, to better contribute to the strengthening of national institutions and the implementation of strategies and programmes to support reconstruction and sustainable development;

13. *Decides* to extend the mandate of the Ad Hoc Advisory Group on Haiti until the conclusion of the 2019 session, with the purpose of following closely and providing advice on the long-term development strategy of Haiti to promote socioeconomic recovery, reconstruction and stability, with particular attention to the need to ensure coherence and sustainability in international support for Haiti, based on the long-term national development priorities, building upon the Strategic Plan for the Development of Haiti, and stressing the need to avoid overlap and duplication with respect to existing mechanisms;

14. *Expresses its satisfaction* to the Secretary-General for the support provided to the Advisory Group, and requests him to continue to support the activities of the Group adequately and within existing resources;

15. *Requests* the Advisory Group, in accomplishing its mandate, to continue to cooperate with the Secretary-General and his Special Representative for Haiti and Head of the United Nations Mission for Justice Support in Haiti, the United Nations Sustainable Development Group, relevant United Nations funds and programmes, the specialized agencies, the international financial institutions, regional organizations and institutions, including the Economic Commission for Latin America and the Caribbean, the Organization of American States, the Caribbean Community, the Union of South American Nations and the Inter-American Development Bank, other major stakeholders and civil society organizations, and in this regard welcomes the continuation of the dialogue between the members of the Advisory Group and the Organization of American States;

16. *Also requests* the Advisory Group to submit a report on its work, with recommendations, as appropriate, to the Economic and Social Council for its consideration at its 2019 session.

*50th plenary meeting
24 July 2018*

2018/20. Economic and social repercussions of the Israeli occupation on the living conditions of the Palestinian people in the Occupied Palestinian Territory, including East Jerusalem, and the Arab population in the occupied Syrian Golan

The Economic and Social Council,

Recalling General Assembly resolutions [72/86](#) of 7 December 2017 and [72/240](#) of 20 December 2017,

Recalling also its resolution [2017/30](#) of 25 July 2017,

Guided by the principles of the Charter of the United Nations affirming the inadmissibility of the acquisition of territory by force, and recalling relevant Security Council resolutions, including resolutions [242 \(1967\)](#) of 22 November 1967, [252 \(1968\)](#) of 21 May 1968, [338 \(1973\)](#) of 22 October 1973, [465 \(1980\)](#) of 1 March 1980, [497 \(1981\)](#) of 17 December 1981 and [2334 \(2016\)](#) of 23 December 2016,

Resolutions

Recalling the resolutions of the tenth emergency special session of the General Assembly, including resolutions [ES-10/13](#) of 21 October 2003, [ES-10/14](#) of 8 December 2003, [ES-10/15](#) of 20 July 2004 and [ES-10/17](#) of 15 December 2006,

Taking note of the report of the Economic and Social Commission for Western Asia on the economic and social repercussions of the Israeli occupation on the living conditions of the Palestinian people in the Occupied Palestinian Territory, including East Jerusalem, and of the Arab population in the occupied Syrian Golan, as transmitted by the Secretary-General,¹²⁶

Reaffirming the applicability of the Geneva Convention relative to the Protection of Civilian Persons in Time of War, of 12 August 1949,¹²⁷ to the Occupied Palestinian Territory, including East Jerusalem, and other Arab territories occupied by Israel since 1967,

Recalling the International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights,¹²⁸ the International Covenant on Economic, Social and Cultural Rights¹²⁸ and the Convention on the Rights of the Child,¹²⁹ and affirming that these human rights instruments are applicable and must be respected in the Occupied Palestinian Territory, including East Jerusalem, as well as in the occupied Syrian Golan,

Noting with concern that more than 70 years have passed since the adoption of General Assembly resolution 181 (II) of 29 November 1947 and 51 years since the occupation of Palestinian territory, including East Jerusalem, in 1967,

Taking note, in this regard, of Palestine's accession to several human rights treaties and the core humanitarian law conventions as well as other international treaties,

Taking note also of General Assembly resolution [67/19](#) of 29 November 2012,

Stressing the urgency of achieving without delay an end to the Israeli occupation that began in 1967 and a just, lasting and comprehensive peace settlement on all tracks on the basis of Security Council resolutions [242 \(1967\)](#), [338 \(1973\)](#), [425 \(1978\)](#) of 19 March 1978, [1397 \(2002\)](#) of 12 March 2002, [1515 \(2003\)](#) of 19 November 2003, [1544 \(2004\)](#) of 19 May 2004, [1850 \(2008\)](#) of 16 December 2008 and [2334 \(2016\)](#), the principle of land for peace, the Arab Peace Initiative¹³⁰ and the Quartet road map,¹³¹ as well as compliance with the agreements reached between the Government of Israel and the Palestine Liberation Organization, the representative of the Palestinian people,

Reaffirming the principle of the permanent sovereignty of peoples under foreign occupation over their natural resources, and expressing concern in that regard about the exploitation, endangerment and depletion of natural resources by Israel, the occupying Power, and Israeli settlers in the Occupied Palestinian Territory, including East Jerusalem, and in the occupied Syrian Golan, particularly as a result of settlement activities, which are illegal under international law and which, deplorably, continued during the reporting period,

Convinced that the Israeli occupation has gravely impeded the efforts to achieve environmentally sustainable development and a sound economic environment in the Occupied Palestinian Territory, including East Jerusalem, and in the occupied Syrian Golan, and expressing grave concern about the consequent deterioration of economic and living conditions,

Expressing alarm, in this regard, about the extremely high levels of unemployment in the Gaza Strip in particular, which remains at over 40 per cent, with youth unemployment reaching 60 per cent, exacerbated by the prolonged Israeli closures and severe economic and movement restrictions that in effect amount to a blockade, and the continuing negative repercussions of the military operations in the Gaza Strip on economic and social infrastructure and living conditions,

¹²⁶ [A/73/87-E/2018/69](#).

¹²⁷ United Nations, *Treaty Series*, vol. 75, No. 973.

¹²⁸ See General Assembly resolution [2200 A \(XXI\)](#), annex.

¹²⁹ United Nations, *Treaty Series*, vol. 1577, No. 27531.

¹³⁰ [A/56/1026-S/2002/932](#), annex II, resolution 14/221.

¹³¹ [S/2003/529](#), annex.

Resolutions

Commending, despite the many constraints, including the obstacles imposed by the ongoing Israeli occupation, the efforts of the Palestinian Government to improve the economic and social situation in the Occupied Palestinian Territory, especially in the areas of governance, the rule of law and human rights, livelihoods and productive sectors, education and culture, health, social protection, infrastructure and water,

Stressing the importance of the United Nations Development Assistance Framework, which aims, inter alia, at enhancing development support and assistance to the Palestinian people and strengthening institutional capacity in line with Palestinian national priorities,

Gravely concerned about the accelerated construction of settlements and implementation of other related measures by Israel in the Occupied Palestinian Territory, particularly in and around occupied East Jerusalem, as well as in the occupied Syrian Golan, in violation of international humanitarian law and relevant United Nations resolutions, and stressing that such illegal measures are main sources of other Israeli violations and discriminatory policies,

Encouraging all States and international organizations to continue to actively pursue policies to ensure respect for their obligations under international law with regard to all illegal Israeli practices and measures in the Occupied Palestinian Territory, including East Jerusalem, particularly Israeli settlements,

Taking note of the report of the independent international fact-finding mission to investigate the implications of the Israeli settlements on the civil, political, economic, social and cultural rights of the Palestinian people throughout the Occupied Palestinian Territory, including East Jerusalem,¹³²

Expressing deep concern about the rising incidence of violence, harassment, provocation, vandalism and incitement in the Occupied Palestinian Territory, including East Jerusalem, in particular by illegal armed Israeli settlers against Palestinian civilians, including children, and their properties, including homes, historic and religious sites and agricultural lands, and calling for accountability for the illegal actions perpetrated in this regard,

Gravely concerned by the serious repercussions on the economic and social conditions of the Palestinian people caused by Israel's construction of the wall and its associated regime inside the Occupied Palestinian Territory, including in and around East Jerusalem, and the resulting violation of their economic and social rights, including the rights to work, to health, to education, to property, to an adequate standard of living and to freedom of access and movement,

Recalling, in that regard, the advisory opinion rendered on 9 July 2004 by the International Court of Justice on the legal consequences of the construction of a wall in the Occupied Palestinian Territory,¹³³ and General Assembly resolution [ES-10/15](#), and stressing the need to comply with the obligations mentioned therein,

Deploring all loss of innocent civilian life and injury to scores of civilians, and calling upon all parties to fully respect international law, including humanitarian and human rights law, including for the protection of civilian life, as well as for the promotion of human security, the de-escalation of the situation, the exercise of restraint, including from provocative actions and rhetoric, and the establishment of a stable environment conducive to the pursuit of peace,

Expressing grave concern at the extensive destruction by Israel, the occupying Power, of properties, including the increased demolition of homes, economic institutions, historical landmarks, agricultural lands and orchards, in the Occupied Palestinian Territory, including East Jerusalem, in particular in connection with its construction of settlements and the wall and confiscation of land, contrary to international law, in the Occupied Palestinian Territory, including in and around East Jerusalem,

Expressing grave concern also over the continuing forced displacement and dispossession of Palestinian civilians, including the Bedouin community, due to the continuing and intensifying policy of home demolitions, evictions and revocation of residency rights in and around occupied East Jerusalem, as well as measures to further isolate the city from its natural Palestinian environs, which have seriously exacerbated the already critical socioeconomic situation being faced by the Palestinian population,

¹³² [A/HRC/22/63](#).

¹³³ See [A/ES-10/273](#) and [A/ES-10/273/Corr.1](#).

Resolutions

Expressing grave concern further about ongoing Israeli military operations and policies of closures and severe restrictions on the movement of persons and goods, the imposition of crossing closures, checkpoints and a permit regime throughout the Occupied Palestinian Territory, including East Jerusalem, and the consequent negative impact on the socioeconomic situation of the Palestinian people, in particular the Palestine refugee population, which remains that of a humanitarian crisis,

Expressing grave concern, in particular, over the continuing crisis in the Gaza Strip as a result of the prolonged Israeli closures and severe economic and movement restrictions that in effect amount to a blockade, stressing that the situation is unsustainable, as reflected in numerous reports, including the report of 26 August 2016 of the United Nations country team, entitled “Gaza: two years after”, and calling in that regard for the full implementation of Security Council resolution 1860 (2009) of 8 January 2009 with a view to ensuring the full opening of the border crossings for the sustained and regular movement of persons and goods, including humanitarian aid, commercial flows and construction materials, and emphasizing the need for security for all civilian populations,

Deploring the conflict in and around the Gaza Strip in July and August 2014 and the civilian casualties caused, including the killing of and injury to thousands of Palestinian civilians, including children, women and the elderly, as well as the widespread destruction of or damage to thousands of homes and vital civilian infrastructure, including schools, hospitals, water, sanitation and electricity networks, economic, industrial and agricultural properties, public institutions, religious sites and United Nations schools and facilities, as well as the internal displacement of hundreds of thousands of civilians, and any violations of international law, including humanitarian and human rights law, in this regard,

Gravely concerned about the consequent prolonged and extensive negative impact of the military operations of July and August 2014, as well as the military operations between December 2008 and January 2009 and of November 2012, on economic conditions, the provision of social services and the social, humanitarian and physical living conditions of the Palestinian civilian population, including the Palestine refugee population,

Recalling, in that regard, the relevant United Nations reports, including those of the Economic and Social Council, the Economic and Social Commission for Western Asia and the Human Rights Council,

Expressing deep concern about the short- and long-term detrimental impact of such widespread destruction and the hampering of the reconstruction process, by Israel, the occupying Power, on the socioeconomic and humanitarian conditions of the Palestinian civilian population in the Gaza Strip, where the humanitarian crisis continues to deepen, and calling in that regard for the immediate acceleration and fulfilment of the reconstruction process in the Gaza Strip with the assistance of the donor countries, including the disbursement of funds pledged at the Cairo International Conference on Palestine: Reconstructing Gaza, held on 12 October 2014,

Gravely concerned about various reports of the United Nations and specialized agencies regarding the substantial aid dependency caused by prolonged border closures, inordinate rates of unemployment, widespread poverty and severe humanitarian hardships, including food insecurity and rising health-related problems, including high levels of malnutrition, among the Palestinian people, especially children, in the Occupied Palestinian Territory, including East Jerusalem,

Expressing grave concern at the deaths of and injuries caused to civilians, including children, women and peaceful demonstrators, and emphasizing that the Palestinian civilian population must be protected in accordance with international humanitarian law,

Emphasizing the importance of the safety and well-being of all civilians, and calling for the cessation of all acts of violence, including all acts of terror, provocation, incitement and destruction, and all firing of rockets,

Expressing deep concern that thousands of Palestinians, including many children and women, continue to be held in Israeli prisons or detention centres under harsh conditions, including unhygienic conditions, solitary confinement, excessive use of administrative detention, including of children, lack of proper medical care and widespread medical neglect, including for ill prisoners, with the risk of fatal consequences, and denial of family visits and of due process, that impair their well-being, and expressing deep concern also about any ill-treatment and harassment of Palestinian prisoners and detainees and all reports of torture,

Conscious of the urgent need for the reconstruction and development of the economic and social infrastructure of the Occupied Palestinian Territory, including East Jerusalem, as well as the urgent need to address the humanitarian

crisis facing the Palestinian people, including by ensuring the unimpeded provision of humanitarian assistance and the sustained and regular flow of persons and goods into and out of the Gaza Strip,

Recognizing the efforts being undertaken by the Palestinian Government, with international support, to reform, develop and strengthen its institutions and infrastructure, emphasizing the need to preserve and further develop Palestinian institutions and infrastructure, despite the obstacles presented by the ongoing Israeli occupation, and commending in this regard the ongoing efforts to develop the institutions of an independent Palestinian State, including through the implementation of the Palestinian National Policy Agenda: National Priorities, Policies and Policy Interventions (2017–2022),

Expressing concern about the risks posed to the significant achievements made, as confirmed by the positive assessments made by international institutions regarding readiness for statehood, including by the World Bank, the International Monetary Fund, the United Nations and the Ad Hoc Liaison Committee for the Coordination of the International Assistance to Palestinians, owing to the negative impact of ongoing instability and the financial crisis being faced by the Palestinian Government and the continued absence of a credible political horizon,

Commending, in that regard, the important work being done by the United Nations, the specialized agencies and the donor community in support of the economic and social development of the Palestinian people in line with their national development and State-building plan, as well as the vital assistance being provided in the humanitarian field,

Affirming the need to support the Palestinian Government of national consensus in its assumption of full government responsibilities in both the West Bank and the Gaza Strip, in all fields, as well as through its presence at Gaza's crossing points, and Palestinian national reconciliation, and emphasizing the need for the respect and preservation of the territorial integrity and unity of the Occupied Palestinian Territory, including East Jerusalem,

Calling upon both parties to fulfil their obligations under the road map in cooperation with the Quartet,

Aware that development and fostering healthy economic, social and environmental conditions are difficult under occupation and best promoted in circumstances of peace and stability,

1. *Calls for* the full opening of the border crossings of the Gaza Strip, in line with Security Council resolution 1860 (2009), to ensure humanitarian access as well as the sustained and regular flow of persons and goods and the lifting of all movement restrictions imposed on the Palestinian people, including those restrictions arising from ongoing Israeli military operations and the multilayered closure system, and for other urgent measures to be taken to alleviate the serious humanitarian situation in the Occupied Palestinian Territory, which is dire in the Gaza Strip, and also calls for compliance by Israel, the occupying Power, with all of its legal obligations under international humanitarian law and United Nations resolutions in that regard;

2. *Stresses* the need to preserve the territorial contiguity, unity and integrity of the Occupied Palestinian Territory, including East Jerusalem, and to guarantee the freedom of movement of persons and goods throughout the Occupied Palestinian Territory, including East Jerusalem, as well as to and from the outside world;

3. *Also stresses* the need to preserve and develop Palestinian national institutions and infrastructure for the provision of vital public services to the Palestinian civilian population and to contribute to the promotion and protection of human rights, including economic and social rights;

4. *Demands* that Israel comply with the Protocol on Economic Relations between the Government of Israel and the Palestine Liberation Organization signed in Paris on 29 April 1994;¹³⁴

5. *Calls upon* Israel to restore and replace civilian properties, vital infrastructure, agricultural lands and government institutions that have been damaged or destroyed as a result of its military operations in the Occupied Palestinian Territory;

6. *Reiterates* the call for the full implementation of the Agreement on Movement and Access of 15 November 2005, particularly the urgent and uninterrupted reopening of all crossings into the Gaza Strip, which is crucial to ensuring the passage of foodstuffs and essential supplies, including construction materials and adequate fuel supplies, as well as to ensuring the unhindered access of the United Nations and related agencies and regular commercial flows necessary for economic recovery to and within the Occupied Palestinian Territory, and emphasizes the need for security for all civilian populations;

¹³⁴ See A/49/180-S/1994/727, annex, entitled "Agreement on the Gaza Strip and the Jericho Area", annex IV.

Resolutions

7. *Calls upon* all parties to respect the rules of international humanitarian law and to refrain from violence against the civilian population, in accordance with the Geneva Convention relative to the Protection of Civilian Persons in Time of War, of 12 August 1949,¹²⁷

8. *Reaffirms* the inalienable right of the Palestinian people and the Arab population of the occupied Syrian Golan to all their natural and economic resources, and calls upon Israel, the occupying Power, not to exploit, endanger or cause loss or depletion of those resources;

9. *Calls upon* Israel, the occupying Power, to cease its destruction of homes and properties, economic institutions and agricultural lands and orchards in the Occupied Palestinian Territory, including East Jerusalem, as well as in the occupied Syrian Golan, and to prevent Israeli settlers from perpetrating such illegal activities;

10. *Also calls upon* Israel, the occupying Power, to end immediately its exploitation of natural resources, including water and mining resources, and to cease the dumping of all kinds of waste materials in the Occupied Palestinian Territory, including East Jerusalem, and in the occupied Syrian Golan, which gravely threaten their natural resources, namely, the water, land and energy resources, and present a serious environmental hazard and health threat to the civilian populations, and also calls upon Israel, the occupying Power, to remove all obstacles that obstruct the implementation of critical environmental projects, including the sewage treatment plants in the Gaza Strip, notably the provision of the electric power needed for the work of the northern Gaza emergency sewage treatment plant, and stresses in this regard the urgency of the reconstruction and development of water infrastructure, including the desalination facility project for the Gaza Strip;

11. *Calls for* the assistance necessary for the safe removal of all unexploded ordnance in the Gaza Strip, which endangers Palestinian lives and negatively impacts the environment, as well as reconstruction and development efforts, and welcomes the efforts exerted by the Mine Action Service of the United Nations to date;

12. *Reaffirms* that the construction and expansion of Israeli settlements and related infrastructure in the Occupied Palestinian Territory, including East Jerusalem, and the occupied Syrian Golan, are illegal and constitute a major obstacle to economic and social development and to the achievement of peace, and calls for the full cessation of all settlement and settlement-related activity, including full cessation of all measures aimed at altering the demographic composition, legal status and character of the occupied territories, including in particular in and around occupied East Jerusalem, in compliance with relevant Security Council resolutions, including resolution [2334 \(2016\)](#), and international law, including the Geneva Convention relative to the Protection of Civilian Persons in Time of War;

13. *Calls for* accountability for the illegal actions perpetrated by Israeli settlers in the Occupied Palestinian Territory, including East Jerusalem, and recalls in this regard Security Council resolution [904 \(1994\)](#) of 18 March 1994 and stresses the need for its implementation;

14. *Also calls for* urgent attention to the plight and the rights, in accordance with international law, of prisoners and detainees, and calls for efforts between the two sides for the further release of prisoners and detainees, and deplors the practice of withholding the bodies of those killed, and calls for the release of the bodies that have not yet been returned to their relatives, in line with international humanitarian law and human rights law, in order to ensure dignified closure in accordance with their religious beliefs and traditions;

15. *Reaffirms* that Israel's ongoing construction of the wall in the Occupied Palestinian Territory, including in and around East Jerusalem, is contrary to international law and is isolating East Jerusalem, fragmenting the West Bank and seriously debilitating the economic and social development of the Palestinian people, and calls in that regard for full compliance with the legal obligations mentioned in the 9 July 2004 advisory opinion of the International Court of Justice¹³³ and in General Assembly resolution [ES-10/15](#) and subsequent relevant resolutions;

16. *Calls upon* Israel to comply with the provisions of the Geneva Convention relative to the Protection of Civilian Persons in Time of War and to facilitate visits of the Syrian citizens of the occupied Syrian Golan whose family members reside in their mother homeland, the Syrian Arab Republic, via the Qunaytirah entrance;

17. *Emphasizes* the importance of the work of United Nations organizations and agencies in the Occupied Palestinian Territory, including East Jerusalem, and of the United Nations Special Coordinator for the Middle East Peace Process and Personal Representative of the Secretary-General to the Palestine Liberation Organization and the Palestinian Authority;

18. *Welcomes and urges* further engagement by the Secretary-General and the United Nations Special Coordinator to assist, in cooperation with concerned partners, in the efforts to address urgent infrastructure, humanitarian and economic development needs, including through the implementation of projects endorsed by the Ad Hoc Liaison Committee for the Coordination of the International Assistance to Palestinians;

19. *Expresses appreciation* to the Member States, United Nations bodies and intergovernmental, regional and non-governmental organizations that have provided and continue to provide economic and humanitarian assistance to the Palestinian people, which has helped to ameliorate their critical economic and social conditions, and urges the continued provision of assistance commensurate with increased socioeconomic and humanitarian needs and in cooperation with official Palestinian institutions and consistent with the Palestinian National Development Plan;

20. *Reiterates* the importance of and need for increased and renewed international efforts on the basis of relevant United Nations resolutions, including Security Council resolutions 242 (1967), 338 (1973), 425 (1978), 1397 (2002), 1515 (2003), 1544 (2004), 1850 (2008) and 2334 (2016), and the Madrid Conference, the principle of land for peace, the Arab Peace Initiative¹³⁰ and the Quartet road map,¹³¹ as well as compliance with the agreements reached between the Government of Israel and the Palestine Liberation Organization, the representative of the Palestinian people, in order to pave the way for the realization of the two-State solution of Israel and Palestine living side by side in peace and security within recognized borders, based on the pre-1967 borders, and the achievement of a just, lasting and comprehensive peace settlement;

21. *Requests* the Secretary-General to submit to the General Assembly at its seventy-third session, through the Economic and Social Council, a report on the implementation of the present resolution and to continue to include in the report of the United Nations Special Coordinator an update on the living conditions of the Palestinian people, in collaboration with relevant United Nations agencies;

22. *Decides* to include the item entitled “Economic and social repercussions of the Israeli occupation on the living conditions of the Palestinian people in the Occupied Palestinian Territory, including East Jerusalem, and the Arab population in the occupied Syrian Golan” in the agenda of its 2019 session.

*50th plenary meeting
24 July 2018*

2018/21. Admission of French Guiana as an associate member of the Economic Commission for Latin America and the Caribbean

The Economic and Social Council,

Taking note of resolution 726 (XXXVII) of 11 May 2018 of the Economic Commission for Latin America and the Caribbean, by which the Commission decided that French Guiana should be granted associate membership in the Commission,

Approves the granting to French Guiana of associate membership in the Economic Commission for Latin America and the Caribbean.

*51st plenary meeting
24 July 2018*

2018/22. African Institute for Economic Development and Planning

The Economic and Social Council,

Taking note of resolution 956 (LI) of 15 May 2018 of the Economic Commission for Africa Conference of African Ministers of Finance, Planning and Economic Development, by which the Conference endorsed the updated statute of the African Institute for Economic Development and Planning,

Endorses the updated statute of the African Institute for Economic Development and Planning, as set out in the annex to the present resolution.

*51st plenary meeting
24 July 2018*

levels by, inter alia, promoting women's capacity, leadership, participation and engagement in political, economic and humanitarian decision-making;

12. *Requests* the Secretary-General to continue to review the situation, to assist Palestinian women by all available means, including those set out in his report, and to include information on the gender-specific impact of the occupation and the progress made in the implementation of the present resolution in his report on the economic and social repercussions of the Israeli occupation on the living conditions of the Palestinian people in the Occupied Palestinian Territory, including East Jerusalem, and the Arab population in the occupied Syrian Golan to the Economic and Social Council at its 2020 session.

*37th plenary meeting
23 July 2019*

2019/29. Economic and social repercussions of the Israeli occupation on the living conditions of the Palestinian people in the Occupied Palestinian Territory, including East Jerusalem, and the Arab population in the occupied Syrian Golan

The Economic and Social Council,

Recalling General Assembly resolutions [73/98](#) of 7 December 2018 and [73/255](#) of 20 December 2018,

Recalling also its resolution [2018/20](#) of 24 July 2018,

Guided by the principles of the Charter of the United Nations affirming the inadmissibility of the acquisition of territory by force, and recalling relevant Security Council resolutions, including resolutions [242 \(1967\)](#) of 22 November 1967, [252 \(1968\)](#) of 21 May 1968, [338 \(1973\)](#) of 22 October 1973, [465 \(1980\)](#) of 1 March 1980, [497 \(1981\)](#) of 17 December 1981 and [2334 \(2016\)](#) of 23 December 2016,

Recalling the resolutions of the tenth emergency special session of the General Assembly, including resolutions [ES-10/13](#) of 21 October 2003, [ES-10/14](#) of 8 December 2003, [ES-10/15](#) of 20 July 2004 and [ES-10/17](#) of 15 December 2006,

Taking note of the report of the Economic and Social Commission for Western Asia on the economic and social repercussions of the Israeli occupation on the living conditions of the Palestinian people in the Occupied Palestinian Territory, including East Jerusalem, and of the Arab population in the occupied Syrian Golan, as transmitted by the Secretary-General,²⁰⁶

Reaffirming the applicability of the Geneva Convention relative to the Protection of Civilian Persons in Time of War, of 12 August 1949,²⁰⁷ to the Occupied Palestinian Territory, including East Jerusalem, and other Arab territories occupied by Israel since 1967,

Recalling the International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights,²⁰⁸ the International Covenant on Economic, Social and Cultural Rights²⁰⁸ and the Convention on the Rights of the Child,²⁰⁹ and affirming that these human rights instruments are applicable and must be respected in the Occupied Palestinian Territory, including East Jerusalem, as well as in the occupied Syrian Golan,

Noting with concern that more than 70 years have passed since the adoption of General Assembly resolution [181 \(II\)](#) of 29 November 1947 and 52 years since the occupation of the Palestinian territory, including East Jerusalem, in 1967,

Taking note, in this regard, of Palestine's accession to several human rights treaties and the core humanitarian law conventions as well as other international treaties,

²⁰⁶ [A/74/88-E/2019/72](#).

²⁰⁷ United Nations, *Treaty Series*, vol. 75, No. 973.

²⁰⁸ See General Assembly resolution [2200 A \(XXI\)](#), annex.

²⁰⁹ United Nations, *Treaty Series*, vol. 1577, No. 27531.

Resolutions

Taking note also of General Assembly resolution [67/19](#) of 29 November 2012,

Stressing the urgency of achieving without delay an end to the Israeli occupation that began in 1967 and a just, lasting and comprehensive peace settlement on all tracks on the basis of Security Council resolutions [242 \(1967\)](#), [338 \(1973\)](#), [425 \(1978\)](#) of 19 March 1978, [1397 \(2002\)](#) of 12 March 2002, [1515 \(2003\)](#) of 19 November 2003, [1544 \(2004\)](#) of 19 May 2004, [1850 \(2008\)](#) of 16 December 2008 and [2334 \(2016\)](#), the principle of land for peace, the Arab Peace Initiative²¹⁰ and the Quartet road map,²¹¹ as well as compliance with the agreements reached between the Government of Israel and the Palestine Liberation Organization, the representative of the Palestinian people,

Reaffirming the principle of the permanent sovereignty of peoples under foreign occupation over their natural resources, and expressing concern in that regard about the exploitation, endangerment and depletion of natural resources by Israel, the occupying Power, and Israeli settlers in the Occupied Palestinian Territory, including East Jerusalem, and in the occupied Syrian Golan, particularly as a result of settlement activities, which are illegal under international law and which, deplorably, continued during the reporting period,

Convinced that the Israeli occupation has gravely impeded the efforts to achieve environmentally sustainable development and a sound economic environment in the Occupied Palestinian Territory, including East Jerusalem, and in the occupied Syrian Golan, and expressing grave concern about the consequent deterioration of economic and living conditions,

Expressing alarm, in this regard, about the extremely high levels of unemployment in the Gaza Strip in particular, which remains at over 40 per cent, with youth unemployment reaching 60 per cent, exacerbated by the prolonged Israeli closures and severe economic and movement restrictions that in effect amount to a blockade, and the continuing negative repercussions of the military operations in the Gaza Strip on economic and social infrastructure and living conditions,

Commending, despite the many constraints, including the obstacles imposed by the ongoing Israeli occupation, the efforts of the Palestinian Government to improve the economic and social situation in the Occupied Palestinian Territory, especially in the areas of governance, the rule of law and human rights, livelihoods and productive sectors, education and culture, health, social protection, infrastructure and water,

Stressing the importance of the United Nations Development Assistance Framework, which aims, inter alia, at enhancing development support and assistance to the Palestinian people and strengthening institutional capacity in line with Palestinian national priorities,

Gravely concerned about the accelerated construction of settlements and implementation of other related measures by Israel in the Occupied Palestinian Territory, particularly in and around occupied East Jerusalem, as well as in the occupied Syrian Golan, in violation of international humanitarian law and relevant United Nations resolutions, and stressing that such illegal measures are main sources of other Israeli violations and discriminatory policies,

Encouraging all States and international organizations to continue to actively pursue policies to ensure respect for their obligations under international law with regard to all illegal Israeli practices and measures in the Occupied Palestinian Territory, including East Jerusalem, particularly Israeli settlements,

Taking note of the report of the independent international fact-finding mission to investigate the implications of the Israeli settlements on the civil, political, economic, social and cultural rights of the Palestinian people throughout the Occupied Palestinian Territory, including East Jerusalem,²¹²

Expressing deep concern about the rising incidence of violence, harassment, provocation, vandalism and incitement in the Occupied Palestinian Territory, including East Jerusalem, in particular by illegal armed Israeli settlers against Palestinian civilians, including children, and their properties, including homes, historic and religious sites and agricultural lands, and calling for accountability for the illegal actions perpetrated in this regard,

²¹⁰ [A/56/1026-S/2002/932](#), annex II, resolution 14/221.

²¹¹ [S/2003/529](#), annex.

²¹² [A/HRC/22/63](#).

Gravely concerned by the serious repercussions on the economic and social conditions of the Palestinian people caused by Israel's construction of the wall and its associated regime inside the Occupied Palestinian Territory, including in and around East Jerusalem, and the resulting violation of their economic and social rights, including the rights to work, to health, to education, to property, to an adequate standard of living and to freedom of access and movement,

Recalling, in that regard, the advisory opinion rendered on 9 July 2004 by the International Court of Justice on the legal consequences of the construction of a wall in the Occupied Palestinian Territory,²¹³ and General Assembly resolution [ES-10/15](#), and stressing the need to comply with the obligations mentioned therein,

Deploring all loss of innocent civilian life and injury to scores of civilians, and calling upon all parties to fully respect international law, including humanitarian and human rights law, including for the protection of civilian life, as well as for the promotion of human security, the de-escalation of the situation, the exercise of restraint, including from provocative actions and rhetoric, and the establishment of a stable environment conducive to the pursuit of peace,

Expressing grave concern at the extensive destruction by Israel, the occupying Power, of properties, including the increased demolition of homes, economic institutions, historical landmarks, agricultural lands and orchards, in the Occupied Palestinian Territory, including East Jerusalem, in particular in connection with its construction of settlements and the wall and confiscation of land, contrary to international law, in the Occupied Palestinian Territory, including in and around East Jerusalem,

Expressing grave concern also over the continuing forced displacement and dispossession of Palestinian civilians, including the Bedouin community, due to the continuing and intensifying policy of home demolitions, evictions and revocation of residency rights in and around occupied East Jerusalem, as well as measures to further isolate the city from its natural Palestinian environs, which have seriously exacerbated the already critical socioeconomic situation being faced by the Palestinian population,

Expressing grave concern further about ongoing Israeli military operations and policies of closures and severe restrictions on the movement of persons and goods, the imposition of crossing closures, checkpoints and a permit regime throughout the Occupied Palestinian Territory, including East Jerusalem, and the consequent negative impact on the socioeconomic situation of the Palestinian people, in particular the Palestine refugee population, which remains that of a humanitarian crisis,

Expressing grave concern, in particular, over the continuing crisis in the Gaza Strip as a result of the prolonged Israeli closures and severe economic and movement restrictions that in effect amount to a blockade, stressing that the situation is unsustainable, as reflected in numerous reports, including the report of 26 August 2016 of the United Nations country team, entitled "Gaza: two years after", and calling in that regard for the full implementation of Security Council resolution [1860 \(2009\)](#) of 8 January 2009 with a view to ensuring the full opening of the border crossings for the sustained and regular movement of persons and goods, including humanitarian aid, commercial flows and construction materials, and emphasizing the need for security for all civilian populations,

Deploring the conflict in and around the Gaza Strip in July and August 2014 and the civilian casualties caused, including the killing of and injury to thousands of Palestinian civilians, including children, women and the elderly, as well as the widespread destruction of or damage to thousands of homes and vital civilian infrastructure, including schools, hospitals, water, sanitation and electricity networks, economic, industrial and agricultural properties, public institutions, religious sites and United Nations schools and facilities, as well as the internal displacement of hundreds of thousands of civilians, and any violations of international law, including humanitarian and human rights law, in this regard,

Gravely concerned about the consequent prolonged and extensive negative impact of the military operations of July and August 2014, as well as the military operations between December 2008 and January 2009 and of November 2012, on economic conditions, the provision of social services and the social, humanitarian and physical living conditions of the Palestinian civilian population, including the Palestine refugee population,

²¹³ See [A/ES-10/273](#) and [A/ES-10/273/Corr.1](#).

Resolutions

Recalling, in that regard, the relevant United Nations reports, including those of the Economic and Social Council, the Economic and Social Commission for Western Asia and the Human Rights Council,

Expressing deep concern about the short- and long-term detrimental impact of such widespread destruction and the hampering of the reconstruction process, by Israel, the occupying Power, on the socioeconomic and humanitarian conditions of the Palestinian civilian population in the Gaza Strip, where the humanitarian crisis continues to deepen, and calling in that regard for the immediate acceleration and fulfilment of the reconstruction process in the Gaza Strip with the assistance of the donor countries, including the disbursement of funds pledged at the Cairo International Conference on Palestine: Reconstructing Gaza, held on 12 October 2014,

Gravely concerned about various reports of the United Nations and specialized agencies regarding the substantial aid dependency caused by prolonged border closures, inordinate rates of unemployment, widespread poverty and severe humanitarian hardships, including food insecurity and rising health-related problems, including high levels of malnutrition, among the Palestinian people, especially children, in the Occupied Palestinian Territory, including East Jerusalem,

Expressing grave concern at the deaths of and injuries caused to civilians, including children, women and peaceful demonstrators, and emphasizing that the Palestinian civilian population must be protected in accordance with international humanitarian law,

Emphasizing the importance of the safety and well-being of all civilians, and calling for the cessation of all acts of violence, including all acts of terror, provocation, incitement and destruction, and all firing of rockets,

Expressing deep concern that thousands of Palestinians, including many children and women, continue to be held in Israeli prisons or detention centres under harsh conditions, including unhygienic conditions, solitary confinement, excessive use of administrative detention, including of children, lack of proper medical care and widespread medical neglect, including for ill prisoners, with the risk of fatal consequences, and denial of family visits and of due process, that impair their well-being, and expressing deep concern also about any ill-treatment and harassment of Palestinian prisoners and detainees and all reports of torture,

Conscious of the urgent need for the reconstruction and development of the economic and social infrastructure of the Occupied Palestinian Territory, including East Jerusalem, as well as the urgent need to address the humanitarian crisis facing the Palestinian people, including by ensuring the unimpeded provision of humanitarian assistance and the sustained and regular flow of persons and goods into and out of the Gaza Strip,

Recognizing the efforts being undertaken by the Palestinian Government, with international support, to reform, develop and strengthen its institutions and infrastructure, emphasizing the need to preserve and further develop Palestinian institutions and infrastructure, despite the obstacles presented by the ongoing Israeli occupation, and commending in this regard the ongoing efforts to develop the institutions of an independent Palestinian State, including through the implementation of the Palestinian National Policy Agenda: National Priorities, Policies and Policy Interventions (2017–2022),

Expressing concern about the risks posed to the significant achievements made, as confirmed by the positive assessments made by international institutions regarding readiness for statehood, including by the World Bank, the International Monetary Fund, the United Nations and the Ad Hoc Liaison Committee for the Coordination of the International Assistance to Palestinians, owing to the negative impact of ongoing instability and the financial crisis being faced by the Palestinian Government and the continued absence of a credible political horizon,

Commending, in that regard, the important work being done by the United Nations, the specialized agencies and the donor community in support of the economic and social development of the Palestinian people in line with their national development and State-building plan, as well as the vital assistance being provided in the humanitarian field,

Affirming the need to support the Palestinian Government of national consensus in its assumption of full government responsibilities in both the West Bank and the Gaza Strip, in all fields, as well as through its presence at Gaza's crossing points, and Palestinian national reconciliation, and emphasizing the need for the respect and preservation of the territorial integrity and unity of the Occupied Palestinian Territory, including East Jerusalem,

Calling upon both parties to fulfil their obligations under the road map in cooperation with the Quartet,

Aware that development and fostering healthy economic, social and environmental conditions are difficult under occupation and best promoted in circumstances of peace and stability,

Resolutions

1. *Calls for* the full opening of the border crossings of the Gaza Strip, in line with Security Council resolution 1860 (2009), to ensure humanitarian access as well as the sustained and regular flow of persons and goods and the lifting of all movement restrictions imposed on the Palestinian people, including those restrictions arising from ongoing Israeli military operations and the multilayered closure system, and for other urgent measures to be taken to alleviate the serious humanitarian situation in the Occupied Palestinian Territory, which is dire in the Gaza Strip, and also calls for compliance by Israel, the occupying Power, with all of its legal obligations under international humanitarian law and United Nations resolutions in that regard;
2. *Stresses* the need to preserve the territorial contiguity, unity and integrity of the Occupied Palestinian Territory, including East Jerusalem, and to guarantee the freedom of movement of persons and goods throughout the Occupied Palestinian Territory, including East Jerusalem, as well as to and from the outside world;
3. *Also stresses* the need to preserve and develop Palestinian national institutions and infrastructure for the provision of vital public services to the Palestinian civilian population and to contribute to the promotion and protection of human rights, including economic and social rights;
4. *Demands* that Israel comply with the Protocol on Economic Relations between the Government of Israel and the Palestine Liberation Organization signed in Paris on 29 April 1994;²¹⁴
5. *Calls upon* Israel to restore and replace civilian properties, vital infrastructure, agricultural lands and government institutions that have been damaged or destroyed as a result of its military operations in the Occupied Palestinian Territory;
6. *Reiterates* the call for the full implementation of the Agreement on Movement and Access of 15 November 2005, particularly the urgent and uninterrupted reopening of all crossings into the Gaza Strip, which is crucial to ensuring the passage of foodstuffs and essential supplies, including construction materials and adequate fuel supplies, as well as to ensuring the unhindered access of the United Nations and related agencies and regular commercial flows necessary for economic recovery to and within the Occupied Palestinian Territory, and emphasizes the need for security for all civilian populations;
7. *Calls upon* all parties to respect the rules of international humanitarian law and to refrain from violence against the civilian population, in accordance with the Geneva Convention relative to the Protection of Civilian Persons in Time of War, of 12 August 1949;²⁰⁷
8. *Reaffirms* the inalienable right of the Palestinian people and the Arab population of the occupied Syrian Golan to all their natural and economic resources, and calls upon Israel, the occupying Power, not to exploit, endanger or cause loss or depletion of those resources;
9. *Calls upon* Israel, the occupying Power, to cease its destruction of homes and properties, economic institutions and agricultural lands and orchards in the Occupied Palestinian Territory, including East Jerusalem, as well as in the occupied Syrian Golan, and to prevent Israeli settlers from perpetrating such illegal activities;
10. *Also calls upon* Israel, the occupying Power, to end immediately its exploitation of natural resources, including water and mining resources, and to cease the dumping of all kinds of waste materials in the Occupied Palestinian Territory, including East Jerusalem, and in the occupied Syrian Golan, which gravely threaten their natural resources, namely, the water, land and energy resources, and present a serious environmental hazard and health threat to the civilian populations, and also calls upon Israel, the occupying Power, to remove all obstacles that obstruct the implementation of critical environmental projects, including the sewage treatment plants in the Gaza Strip, notably the provision of the electric power needed for the work of the northern Gaza emergency sewage treatment plant, and stresses in this regard the urgency of the reconstruction and development of water infrastructure, including the desalination facility project for the Gaza Strip;
11. *Calls for* the assistance necessary for the safe removal of all unexploded ordnance in the Gaza Strip, which endangers Palestinian lives and negatively impacts the environment, as well as reconstruction and development efforts, and welcomes the efforts exerted by the Mine Action Service of the United Nations to date;

²¹⁴ See A/49/180-S/1994/727, annex, entitled "Agreement on the Gaza Strip and the Jericho Area", annex IV.

Resolutions

12. *Reaffirms* that the construction and expansion of Israeli settlements and related infrastructure in the Occupied Palestinian Territory, including East Jerusalem, and the occupied Syrian Golan, are illegal and constitute a major obstacle to economic and social development and to the achievement of peace, and calls for the full cessation of all settlement and settlement-related activity, including full cessation of all measures aimed at altering the demographic composition, legal status and character of the occupied territories, including in particular in and around occupied East Jerusalem, in compliance with relevant Security Council resolutions, including resolution 2334 (2016), and international law, including the Geneva Convention relative to the Protection of Civilian Persons in Time of War;

13. *Calls for* accountability for the illegal actions perpetrated by Israeli settlers in the Occupied Palestinian Territory, including East Jerusalem, and recalls in this regard Security Council resolution 904 (1994) of 18 March 1994 and stresses the need for its implementation;

14. *Also calls for* urgent attention to the plight and the rights, in accordance with international law, of prisoners and detainees, and calls for efforts between the two sides for the further release of prisoners and detainees, and deplors the practice of withholding the bodies of those killed, and calls for the release of the bodies that have not yet been returned to their relatives, in line with international humanitarian law and human rights law, in order to ensure dignified closure in accordance with their religious beliefs and traditions;

15. *Reaffirms* that Israel's ongoing construction of the wall in the Occupied Palestinian Territory, including in and around East Jerusalem, is contrary to international law and is isolating East Jerusalem, fragmenting the West Bank and seriously debilitating the economic and social development of the Palestinian people, and calls in that regard for full compliance with the legal obligations mentioned in the 9 July 2004 advisory opinion of the International Court of Justice²¹³ and in General Assembly resolution ES-10/15 and subsequent relevant resolutions;

16. *Calls upon* Israel to comply with the provisions of the Geneva Convention relative to the Protection of Civilian Persons in Time of War and to facilitate visits of the Syrian citizens of the occupied Syrian Golan whose family members reside in their mother homeland, the Syrian Arab Republic, via the Qunaytirah entrance;

17. *Emphasizes* the importance of the work of United Nations organizations and agencies in the Occupied Palestinian Territory, including East Jerusalem, and of the United Nations Special Coordinator for the Middle East Peace Process and Personal Representative of the Secretary-General to the Palestine Liberation Organization and the Palestinian Authority;

18. *Welcomes and urges* further engagement by the Secretary-General and the United Nations Special Coordinator to assist, in cooperation with concerned partners, in the efforts to address urgent infrastructure, humanitarian and economic development needs, including through the implementation of projects endorsed by the Ad Hoc Liaison Committee for the Coordination of the International Assistance to Palestinians;

19. *Expresses appreciation* to the Member States, United Nations bodies and intergovernmental, regional and non-governmental organizations that have provided and continue to provide economic and humanitarian assistance to the Palestinian people, which has helped to ameliorate their critical economic and social conditions, and urges the continued provision of assistance commensurate with increased socioeconomic and humanitarian needs and in cooperation with official Palestinian institutions and consistent with the Palestinian National Development Plan;

20. *Reiterates* the importance of and need for increased and renewed international efforts on the basis of relevant United Nations resolutions, including Security Council resolutions 242 (1967), 338 (1973), 425 (1978), 1397 (2002), 1515 (2003), 1544 (2004), 1850 (2008) and 2334 (2016), and the Madrid Conference, the principle of land for peace, the Arab Peace Initiative²¹⁰ and the Quartet road map,²¹¹ as well as compliance with the agreements reached between the Government of Israel and the Palestine Liberation Organization, the representative of the Palestinian people, in order to pave the way for the realization of the two-State solution of Israel and Palestine living side by side in peace and security within recognized borders, based on the pre-1967 borders, and the achievement of a just, lasting and comprehensive peace settlement;

21. *Requests* the Secretary-General to submit to the General Assembly at its seventy-fourth session, through the Economic and Social Council, a report on the implementation of the present resolution and to continue to include in the report of the United Nations Special Coordinator an update on the living conditions of the Palestinian people, in collaboration with relevant United Nations agencies;

22. *Decides* to include the item entitled “Economic and social repercussions of the Israeli occupation on the living conditions of the Palestinian people in the Occupied Palestinian Territory, including East Jerusalem, and the Arab population in the occupied Syrian Golan” in the agenda of its 2020 session.

*37th plenary meeting
23 July 2019*

2019/30. Developing the work of the Technical Committee on Liberalization of Foreign Trade, Economic Globalization and Financing for Development

The Economic and Social Council,

Taking note of resolution 332 (XXX) of 28 June 2018 of the Economic and Social Commission for Western Asia,

Approves the splitting of the Technical Committee on Liberalization of Foreign Trade, Economic Globalization and Financing for Development into two committees, the Committee on Financing for Development in the States members of the Economic and Social Commission for Western Asia and the Committee on Trade Policies in the States members of the Economic and Social Commission for Western Asia, which will each hold biennial sessions, in accordance with the provisions of Commission resolution 332 (XXX), annexed to the present resolution.

*37th plenary meeting
23 July 2019*

Annex

Resolution 332 (XXX)

Developing the work of the Technical Committee on Liberalization of Foreign Trade, Economic Globalization and Financing for Development

The Economic and Social Commission for Western Asia,

Referring to its resolutions 313 (XXVII) of 10 May 2012 on the frequency of sessions of the Technical Committee on Liberalization of Foreign Trade, Economic Globalization and Financing for Development in the Countries of the Region of the Economic and Social Commission for Western Asia and 214 (XIX) of 7 May 1997 on the establishment of that Committee,

Recalling the Doha Declaration on the Implementation of the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development, adopted by member States at the twenty-ninth session of the Commission, in which they requested that focus be placed on financing for development and that a forum for discussing the issue be created,

Taking into consideration the recommendations of the Technical Committee on Liberalization of Foreign Trade, Economic Globalization and Financing for Development at its twelfth and thirteenth sessions on splitting the Committee into two committees, which would each hold biennial sessions,

Realizing the importance of increased participation of member States in prioritizing, planning and developing Commission programmes on financing for development,

Aware of the need to enhance coordination and complementarity between the Commission and Arab regional organizations in their work on financing for development policies, in order to respond to the needs of member States and build their capacity to finance national development plans,

Recognizing the importance of the role of the Commission in tackling trade policy issues to support Arab States on the path towards regional integration and sustainable development,

Guided by action taken by other United Nations regional commissions to develop the work of their subsidiary bodies to better respond to the priorities of their member States,

1. *Approves* the splitting of the Technical Committee on Liberalization of Foreign Trade, Economic Globalization and Financing for Development into two committees, the Committee on Financing for Development in the States members of the Economic and Social Commission for Western Asia and the Committee on Trade Policies in the States members of the Economic and Social Commission for Western Asia, which will each hold biennial sessions, without any additional financial implications;

Taking note also of the Economic and Social Commission for Western Asia documents on progress in the reform of the Commission¹³ and on the proposed programme plan for 2021,¹⁴

Taking note further of Economic and Social Commission for Western Asia resolution 335 (S-VI) of 21 December 2019, by which the Commission adopted its programme plan for 2021,

Endorses the new strategic vision of the Economic and Social Commission for Western Asia as outlined in the note by the Secretary-General.

*1st plenary meeting
14 September 2020*

2021/4. Economic and social repercussions of the Israeli occupation on the living conditions of the Palestinian people in the Occupied Palestinian Territory, including East Jerusalem, and the Arab population in the occupied Syrian Golan

The Economic and Social Council,

Recalling General Assembly resolutions [74/88](#) of 13 December 2019 and [74/243](#) of 19 December 2019,

Recalling also its resolution [2019/29](#) of 23 July 2019,

Guided by the principles of the Charter of the United Nations affirming the inadmissibility of the acquisition of territory by force, and recalling relevant Security Council resolutions, including resolutions [242 \(1967\)](#) of 22 November 1967, [252 \(1968\)](#) of 21 May 1968, [338 \(1973\)](#) of 22 October 1973, [465 \(1980\)](#) of 1 March 1980, [497 \(1981\)](#) of 17 December 1981 and [2334 \(2016\)](#) of 23 December 2016,

Recalling the resolutions of the tenth emergency special session of the General Assembly, including resolutions [ES-10/13](#) of 21 October 2003, [ES-10/14](#) of 8 December 2003, [ES-10/15](#) of 20 July 2004 and [ES-10/17](#) of 15 December 2006,

Taking note of the report of the Economic and Social Commission for Western Asia on the economic and social repercussions of the Israeli occupation on the living conditions of the Palestinian people in the Occupied Palestinian Territory, including East Jerusalem, and of the Arab population in the occupied Syrian Golan, as transmitted by the Secretary-General,¹⁵

Reaffirming the applicability of the Geneva Convention relative to the Protection of Civilian Persons in Time of War, of 12 August 1949,¹⁶ to the Occupied Palestinian Territory, including East Jerusalem, and other Arab territories occupied by Israel since 1967,

Recalling the International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights,¹⁷ the International Covenant on Economic, Social and Cultural Rights¹⁸ and the Convention on the Rights of the Child,¹⁹ and affirming that these human rights instruments are applicable and must be respected in the Occupied Palestinian Territory, including East Jerusalem, as well as in the occupied Syrian Golan,

¹³ [E/ESCWA/S-6/14](#).

¹⁴ [E/ESCWA/S-6/16](#).

¹⁵ [A/75/86-E/2020/62](#).

¹⁶ United Nations, *Treaty Series*, vol. 75, No. 973.

¹⁷ See General Assembly resolution [2200 A \(XXI\)](#), annex.

¹⁸ *Ibid.*

¹⁹ United Nations, *Treaty Series*, vol. 1577, No. 27531.

Resolutions

Noting with concern that more than 70 years have passed since the adoption of General Assembly resolution [181 \(II\)](#) of 29 November 1947 and 53 years since the occupation of the Palestinian territory, including East Jerusalem, in 1967,

Taking note, in this regard, of Palestine's accession to several human rights treaties and the core humanitarian law conventions as well as other international treaties,

Taking note also of General Assembly resolution [67/19](#) of 29 November 2012,

Stressing the urgency of achieving without delay an end to the Israeli occupation that began in 1967 and a just, lasting and comprehensive peace settlement on all tracks on the basis of Security Council resolutions [242 \(1967\)](#), [338 \(1973\)](#), [425 \(1978\)](#) of 19 March 1978, [1397 \(2002\)](#) of 12 March 2002, [1515 \(2003\)](#) of 19 November 2003, [1544 \(2004\)](#) of 19 May 2004, [1850 \(2008\)](#) of 16 December 2008 and [2334 \(2016\)](#), the principle of land for peace, the Arab Peace Initiative²⁰ and the Quartet road map,²¹ as well as compliance with the agreements reached between the Government of Israel and the Palestine Liberation Organization, the representative of the Palestinian people,

Reaffirming the principle of the permanent sovereignty of peoples under foreign occupation over their natural resources, and expressing concern in that regard about the exploitation, endangerment and depletion of natural resources by Israel, the occupying Power, and Israeli settlers in the Occupied Palestinian Territory, including East Jerusalem, and in the occupied Syrian Golan, particularly as a result of settlement activities, which are illegal under international law and which, deplorably, continued during the reporting period,

Convinced that the Israeli occupation has gravely impeded the efforts to achieve environmentally sustainable development and a sound economic environment in the Occupied Palestinian Territory, including East Jerusalem, and in the occupied Syrian Golan, and expressing grave concern about the consequent deterioration of economic and living conditions,

Expressing alarm, in this regard, about the extremely high levels of unemployment in the Gaza Strip in particular, which remains at over 40 per cent, with youth unemployment reaching 60 per cent, exacerbated by the prolonged Israeli closures and severe economic and movement restrictions that in effect amount to a blockade, and the continuing negative repercussions of the military operations in the Gaza Strip on economic and social infrastructure and living conditions,

Commending, despite the many constraints, including the obstacles imposed by the ongoing Israeli occupation, the efforts of the Palestinian Government to improve the economic and social situation in the Occupied Palestinian Territory, especially in the areas of governance, the rule of law and human rights, livelihoods and productive sectors, education and culture, health, social protection, infrastructure and water,

Stressing the importance of the United Nations Sustainable Development Cooperation Framework, which aims, inter alia, at enhancing development support and assistance to the Palestinian people and strengthening institutional capacity in line with Palestinian national priorities,

Gravely concerned about the accelerated construction of settlements and implementation of other related measures by Israel in the Occupied Palestinian Territory, particularly in and around occupied East Jerusalem, as well as in the occupied Syrian Golan, in violation of international humanitarian law and relevant United Nations resolutions, and stressing that such illegal measures are main sources of other Israeli violations and discriminatory policies,

²⁰ [A/56/1026-S/2002/932](#), annex II, resolution 14/221.

²¹ [S/2003/529](#), annex.

Encouraging all States and international organizations to continue to actively pursue policies to ensure respect for their obligations under international law with regard to all illegal Israeli practices and measures in the Occupied Palestinian Territory, including East Jerusalem, particularly Israeli settlements,

Taking note of the report of the independent international fact-finding mission to investigate the implications of the Israeli settlements on the civil, political, economic, social and cultural rights of the Palestinian people throughout the Occupied Palestinian Territory, including East Jerusalem,²²

Expressing deep concern about the rising incidence of violence, harassment, provocation, vandalism and incitement in the Occupied Palestinian Territory, including East Jerusalem, in particular by illegal armed Israeli settlers against Palestinian civilians, including children, and their properties, including homes, historic and religious sites and agricultural lands, and calling for accountability for the illegal actions perpetrated in this regard,

Gravely concerned by the serious repercussions on the economic and social conditions of the Palestinian people caused by Israel's construction of the wall and its associated regime inside the Occupied Palestinian Territory, including in and around East Jerusalem, and the resulting violation of their economic and social rights, including the rights to work, to health, to education, to property, to an adequate standard of living and to freedom of access and movement,

Recalling, in that regard, the advisory opinion rendered on 9 July 2004 by the International Court of Justice on the legal consequences of the construction of a wall in the Occupied Palestinian Territory,²³ and General Assembly resolution [ES-10/15](#), and stressing the need to comply with the obligations mentioned therein,

Deploring all loss of innocent civilian life and injury to scores of civilians, and calling upon all parties to fully respect international law, including humanitarian and human rights law, including for the protection of civilian life, as well as for the promotion of human security, the de-escalation of the situation, the exercise of restraint, including from provocative actions and rhetoric, and the establishment of a stable environment conducive to the pursuit of peace,

Expressing grave concern at the extensive destruction by Israel, the occupying Power, of properties, including the increased demolition of homes, economic institutions, historical landmarks, agricultural lands and orchards, in the Occupied Palestinian Territory, including East Jerusalem, in particular in connection with its construction of settlements and the wall and confiscation of land, contrary to international law, in the Occupied Palestinian Territory, including in and around East Jerusalem,

Expressing grave concern also over the continuing forced displacement and dispossession of Palestinian civilians, including the Bedouin community, due to the continuing and intensifying policy of home demolitions, evictions and revocation of residency rights in and around occupied East Jerusalem, as well as measures to further isolate the city from its natural Palestinian environs, which have seriously exacerbated the already critical socioeconomic situation being faced by the Palestinian population,

Expressing grave concern further about ongoing Israeli military operations and policies of closures and severe restrictions on the movement of persons and goods, the imposition of crossing closures, checkpoints and a permit regime throughout the Occupied Palestinian Territory, including East Jerusalem, and the consequent negative impact on the socioeconomic situation of the Palestinian people, in particular the Palestine refugee population, which remains that of a humanitarian crisis,

²² [A/HRC/22/63](#).

²³ See [A/ES-10/273](#) and [A/ES-10/273/Corr.1](#).

Resolutions

Expressing grave concern, in particular, over the continuing crisis in the Gaza Strip as a result of the prolonged Israeli closures and severe economic and movement restrictions that in effect amount to a blockade, stressing that the situation is unsustainable, as reflected in numerous reports, including the report of 26 August 2016 of the United Nations country team, entitled “Gaza: two years after”, and calling in that regard for the full implementation of Security Council resolution [1860 \(2009\)](#) of 8 January 2009 with a view to ensuring the full opening of the border crossings for the sustained and regular movement of persons and goods, including humanitarian aid, commercial flows and construction materials, and emphasizing the need for security for all civilian populations,

Deploring the conflict in and around the Gaza Strip in July and August 2014 and the civilian casualties caused, including the killing of and injury to thousands of Palestinian civilians, including children, women and the elderly, as well as the widespread destruction of or damage to thousands of homes and vital civilian infrastructure, including schools, hospitals, water, sanitation and electricity networks, economic, industrial and agricultural properties, public institutions, religious sites and United Nations schools and facilities, as well as the internal displacement of hundreds of thousands of civilians, and any violations of international law, including humanitarian and human rights law, in this regard,

Gravely concerned about the consequent prolonged and extensive negative impact of the military operations of July and August 2014, as well as the military operations between December 2008 and January 2009 and of November 2012, on economic conditions, the provision of social services and the social, humanitarian and physical living conditions of the Palestinian civilian population, including the Palestine refugee population,

Recalling, in that regard, the relevant United Nations reports, including those of the Economic and Social Council, the Economic and Social Commission for Western Asia and the Human Rights Council,

Expressing deep concern about the short- and long-term detrimental impact of such widespread destruction and the hampering of the reconstruction process, by Israel, the occupying Power, on the socioeconomic and humanitarian conditions of the Palestinian civilian population in the Gaza Strip, where the humanitarian crisis continues to deepen, and calling in that regard for the immediate acceleration and fulfilment of the reconstruction process in the Gaza Strip with the assistance of the donor countries, including the disbursement of funds pledged at the Cairo International Conference on Palestine: Reconstructing Gaza, held on 12 October 2014,

Gravely concerned about various reports of the United Nations and specialized agencies regarding the substantial aid dependency caused by prolonged border closures, inordinate rates of unemployment, widespread poverty and severe humanitarian hardships, including food insecurity and rising health-related problems, including high levels of malnutrition, among the Palestinian people, especially children, in the Occupied Palestinian Territory, including East Jerusalem,

Expressing grave concern at the deaths of and injuries caused to civilians, including children, women and peaceful demonstrators, and emphasizing that the Palestinian civilian population must be protected in accordance with international humanitarian law,

Emphasizing the importance of the safety and well-being of all civilians, and calling for the cessation of all acts of violence, including all acts of terror, provocation, incitement and destruction, and all firing of rockets,

Expressing deep concern that thousands of Palestinians, including many children and women, continue to be held in Israeli prisons or detention centres under harsh conditions, including unhygienic conditions, solitary confinement, excessive use of administrative detention, including of children, lack of proper medical care and widespread medical neglect, including for ill prisoners, with the risk of fatal consequences, and denial of family visits and of due process, that impair their well-being, and expressing deep concern also about any ill-treatment and harassment of Palestinian prisoners and detainees and all reports of torture,

Resolutions

Conscious of the urgent need for the reconstruction and development of the economic and social infrastructure of the Occupied Palestinian Territory, including East Jerusalem, as well as the urgent need to address the humanitarian crisis facing the Palestinian people, including by ensuring the unimpeded provision of humanitarian assistance and the sustained and regular flow of persons and goods into and out of the Gaza Strip,

Recognizing the efforts being undertaken by the Palestinian Government, with international support, to reform, develop and strengthen its institutions and infrastructure, emphasizing the need to preserve and further develop Palestinian institutions and infrastructure, despite the obstacles presented by the ongoing Israeli occupation, and commending in this regard the ongoing efforts to develop the institutions of an independent Palestinian State, including through the implementation of the Palestinian National Policy Agenda: National Priorities, Policies and Policy Interventions (2017–2022),

Expressing concern about the risks posed to the significant achievements made, as confirmed by the positive assessments made by international institutions regarding readiness for statehood, including by the World Bank, the International Monetary Fund, the United Nations and the Ad Hoc Liaison Committee for the Coordination of the International Assistance to Palestinians, owing to the negative impact of ongoing instability and the financial crisis being faced by the Palestinian Government and the continued absence of a credible political horizon,

Commending, in that regard, the important work being done by the United Nations, the specialized agencies and the donor community in support of the economic and social development of the Palestinian people in line with their national development and State-building plan, as well as the vital assistance being provided in the humanitarian field,

Affirming the need to support the Palestinian Government of national consensus in its assumption of full government responsibilities in both the West Bank and the Gaza Strip, in all fields, as well as through its presence at Gaza's crossing points, and Palestinian national reconciliation, and emphasizing the need for the respect and preservation of the territorial integrity and unity of the Occupied Palestinian Territory, including East Jerusalem,

Calling upon both parties to fulfil their obligations under the road map in cooperation with the Quartet,

Aware that development and fostering healthy economic, social and environmental conditions are difficult under occupation and best promoted in circumstances of peace and stability,

1. *Calls for* the full opening of the border crossings of the Gaza Strip, in line with Security Council resolution [1860 \(2009\)](#), to ensure humanitarian access as well as the sustained and regular flow of persons and goods and the lifting of all movement restrictions imposed on the Palestinian people, including those restrictions arising from ongoing Israeli military operations and the multilayered closure system, and for other urgent measures to be taken to alleviate the serious humanitarian situation in the Occupied Palestinian Territory, which is dire in the Gaza Strip, and also calls for compliance by Israel, the occupying Power, with all of its legal obligations under international humanitarian law and United Nations resolutions in that regard;

2. *Stresses* the need to preserve the territorial contiguity, unity and integrity of the Occupied Palestinian Territory, including East Jerusalem, and to guarantee the freedom of movement of persons and goods throughout the Occupied Palestinian Territory, including East Jerusalem, as well as to and from the outside world;

3. *Also stresses* the need to preserve and develop Palestinian national institutions and infrastructure for the provision of vital public services to the Palestinian civilian population and to contribute to the promotion and protection of human rights, including economic and social rights;

Resolutions

4. *Demands* that Israel comply with the Protocol on Economic Relations between the Government of Israel and the Palestine Liberation Organization signed in Paris on 29 April 1994;²⁴

5. *Calls upon* Israel to restore and replace civilian properties, vital infrastructure, agricultural lands and government institutions that have been damaged or destroyed as a result of its military operations in the Occupied Palestinian Territory;

6. *Reiterates* the call for the full implementation of the Agreement on Movement and Access of 15 November 2005, particularly the urgent and uninterrupted reopening of all crossings into the Gaza Strip, which is crucial to ensuring the passage of foodstuffs and essential supplies, including construction materials and adequate fuel supplies, as well as to ensuring the unhindered access of the United Nations and related agencies and regular commercial flows necessary for economic recovery to and within the Occupied Palestinian Territory, and emphasizes the need for security for all civilian populations;

7. *Calls upon* all parties to respect the rules of international humanitarian law and to refrain from violence against the civilian population, in accordance with the Geneva Convention relative to the Protection of Civilian Persons in Time of War, of 12 August 1949;

8. *Reaffirms* the inalienable right of the Palestinian people and the Arab population of the occupied Syrian Golan to all their natural and economic resources, and calls upon Israel, the occupying Power, not to exploit, endanger or cause loss or depletion of those resources;

9. *Calls upon* Israel, the occupying Power, to cease its destruction of homes and properties, economic institutions and agricultural lands and orchards in the Occupied Palestinian Territory, including East Jerusalem, as well as in the occupied Syrian Golan, and to prevent Israeli settlers from perpetrating such illegal activities;

10. *Also calls upon* Israel, the occupying Power, to end immediately its exploitation of natural resources, including water and mining resources, and to cease the dumping of all kinds of waste materials in the Occupied Palestinian Territory, including East Jerusalem, and in the occupied Syrian Golan, which gravely threaten their natural resources, namely, the water, land and energy resources, and present a serious environmental hazard and health threat to the civilian populations, and also calls upon Israel, the occupying Power, to remove all obstacles that obstruct the implementation of critical environmental projects, including the sewage treatment plants in the Gaza Strip, notably the provision of the electric power needed for the work of the northern Gaza emergency sewage treatment plant, and stresses in this regard the urgency of the reconstruction and development of water infrastructure, including the desalination facility project for the Gaza Strip;

11. *Calls for* the assistance necessary for the safe removal of all unexploded ordnance in the Gaza Strip, which endangers Palestinian lives and negatively impacts the environment, as well as reconstruction and development efforts, and welcomes the efforts exerted by the Mine Action Service of the United Nations to date;

12. *Reaffirms* that the construction and expansion of Israeli settlements and related infrastructure in the Occupied Palestinian Territory, including East Jerusalem, and the occupied Syrian Golan, are illegal and constitute a major obstacle to economic and social development and to the achievement of peace, and calls for the full cessation of all settlement and settlement-related activity, including full cessation of all measures aimed at altering the demographic composition, legal status and character of the occupied territories, including in particular in and around occupied East Jerusalem, in compliance with relevant Security Council resolutions, including resolution [2334 \(2016\)](#), and international law, including the Geneva Convention relative to the Protection of Civilian Persons in Time of War;

²⁴ See [A/49/180-S/1994/727](#), annex, entitled “Agreement on the Gaza Strip and the Jericho Area”, annex IV.

Resolutions

13. *Calls for* accountability for the illegal actions perpetrated by Israeli settlers in the Occupied Palestinian Territory, including East Jerusalem, and recalls in this regard Security Council resolution [904 \(1994\)](#) of 18 March 1994 and stresses the need for its implementation;

14. *Also calls for* urgent attention to the plight and the rights, in accordance with international law, of prisoners and detainees, and calls for efforts between the two sides for the further release of prisoners and detainees, and deplores the practice of withholding the bodies of those killed, and calls for the release of the bodies that have not yet been returned to their relatives, in line with international humanitarian law and human rights law, in order to ensure dignified closure in accordance with their religious beliefs and traditions;

15. *Reaffirms* that Israel's ongoing construction of the wall in the Occupied Palestinian Territory, including in and around East Jerusalem, is contrary to international law and is isolating East Jerusalem, fragmenting the West Bank and seriously debilitating the economic and social development of the Palestinian people, and calls in that regard for full compliance with the legal obligations mentioned in the 9 July 2004 advisory opinion of the International Court of Justice and in General Assembly resolution [ES-10/15](#) and subsequent relevant resolutions;

16. *Calls upon* Israel to comply with the provisions of the Geneva Convention relative to the Protection of Civilian Persons in Time of War and to facilitate visits of the Syrian citizens of the occupied Syrian Golan whose family members reside in their mother homeland, the Syrian Arab Republic, via the Qunaytirah entrance;

17. *Emphasizes* the importance of the work of United Nations organizations and agencies in the Occupied Palestinian Territory, including East Jerusalem, and of the United Nations Special Coordinator for the Middle East Peace Process and Personal Representative of the Secretary-General to the Palestine Liberation Organization and the Palestinian Authority;

18. *Welcomes and urges* further engagement by the Secretary-General and the United Nations Special Coordinator to assist, in cooperation with concerned partners, in the efforts to address urgent infrastructure, humanitarian and economic development needs, including through the implementation of projects endorsed by the Ad Hoc Liaison Committee for the Coordination of the International Assistance to Palestinians;

19. *Expresses appreciation* to the Member States, United Nations bodies and intergovernmental, regional and non-governmental organizations that have provided and continue to provide economic and humanitarian assistance to the Palestinian people, which has helped to ameliorate their critical economic and social conditions, and urges the continued provision of assistance commensurate with increased socioeconomic and humanitarian needs and in cooperation with official Palestinian institutions and consistent with the Palestinian National Development Plan;

20. *Reiterates* the importance of and need for increased and renewed international efforts on the basis of relevant United Nations resolutions, including Security Council resolutions [242 \(1967\)](#), [338 \(1973\)](#), [425 \(1978\)](#), [1397 \(2002\)](#), [1515 \(2003\)](#), [1544 \(2004\)](#), [1850 \(2008\)](#) and [2334 \(2016\)](#), and the Madrid Conference, the principle of land for peace, the Arab Peace Initiative and the Quartet road map, as well as compliance with the agreements reached between the Government of Israel and the Palestine Liberation Organization, the representative of the Palestinian people, in order to pave the way for the realization of the two-State solution of Israel and Palestine living side by side in peace and security within recognized borders, based on the pre-1967 borders, and the achievement of a just, lasting and comprehensive peace settlement;

21. *Requests* the Secretary-General to submit to the General Assembly at its seventy-fifth session, through the Economic and Social Council, a report on the implementation of the present resolution and to continue to include in the report of the United Nations Special Coordinator an update on the living conditions of the Palestinian people, in collaboration with relevant United Nations agencies;

22. *Decides* to include the item entitled “Economic and social repercussions of the Israeli occupation on the living conditions of the Palestinian people in the Occupied Palestinian Territory, including East Jerusalem, and the Arab population in the occupied Syrian Golan” in the agenda of its 2022 session.

*1st plenary meeting
14 September 2020*

2021/5. Situation of and assistance to Palestinian women

The Economic and Social Council,

Having considered the report of the Secretary-General,²⁵

Recalling its relevant resolutions and all other relevant United Nations resolutions,

Recalling also Security Council resolution [1325 \(2000\)](#) of 31 October 2000, including its call upon all parties to armed conflict to respect fully international law applicable to the rights and protection of women and girls, especially as civilians, and its emphasis on the responsibility of all States to put an end to impunity,

Recalling further the Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination against Women,²⁶

Recalling the Declaration on the Elimination of Violence against Women²⁷ as it concerns the protection of civilian populations,

Reaffirming the obligations of States and all parties to armed conflict to comply with international humanitarian law and international human rights law, as applicable, and the need to end all violations of international humanitarian law and all violations and abuses of human rights,

Reaffirming also the Nairobi Forward-looking Strategies for the Advancement of Women,²⁸ the Beijing Declaration and Platform for Action,²⁹ the outcomes of the twenty-third special session of the General Assembly, entitled “Women 2000: gender equality, development and peace for the twenty-first century”,³⁰ and the political declaration on the occasion of the twentieth anniversary of the Fourth World Conference on Women adopted by the Commission on the Status of Women at its fifty-ninth session,³¹ and reaffirming its commitment to their full, effective and accelerated implementation,

Reaffirming further the importance of increasing the role of women in peacebuilding and decision-making with regard to conflict prevention and the peaceful resolution of conflicts as part of efforts to ensure the safety and well-being of all women in the region, stressing the importance of women’s equal participation and involvement in all efforts for the achievement, maintenance and

²⁵ [E/CN.6/2019/6](#).

²⁶ United Nations, *Treaty Series*, vol. 1249, No. 20378.

²⁷ General Assembly resolution [48/104](#).

²⁸ *Report of the World Conference to Review and Appraise the Achievements of the United Nations Decade for Women: Equality, Development and Peace, Nairobi, 15–26 July 1985* (United Nations publication, Sales No. E.85.IV.10), chap. I, sect. A.

²⁹ *Report of the Fourth World Conference on Women, Beijing, 4–15 September 1995* (United Nations publication, Sales No. E.96.IV.13), chap. I, resolution 1, annexes I and II.

³⁰ General Assembly resolution [S-23/2](#), annex, and resolution [S-23/3](#), annex.

³¹ *Official Records of the Economic and Social Council, 2015, Supplement No. 7 (E/2015/27)*, chap. I, sect. C, resolution 59/1, annex.

Resolutions

17. *Recommends* that all Governments intensify their efforts within the specialized agencies and other organizations of the United Nations system of which they are members to accord priority to the question of providing assistance to the peoples of the Non-Self-Governing Territories on a case-by-case basis;

18. *Draws the attention* of the Special Committee to the present resolution and to the discussion held on the subject at the 2022 session of the Economic and Social Council;

19. *Recalls* the adoption by the Economic Commission for Latin America and the Caribbean on 16 May 1998 of its resolution 574 (XXVII),¹⁵⁰ in which the Commission called for the mechanisms necessary for its associate members, including the Non-Self-Governing Territories, to participate, subject to the rules of procedure of the General Assembly, in the special sessions of the Assembly convened to review and assess the implementation of the plans of action of those United Nations world conferences in which the Territories had originally participated in their capacity as observers, and in the work of the Council and its subsidiary bodies;

20. *Requests* the President of the Council to continue to maintain close contact on those matters with the Chair of the Special Committee and to report thereon to the Council;

21. *Requests* the Secretary-General to follow up on the implementation of the present resolution, paying particular attention to cooperation and integration arrangements for maximizing the efficiency of the assistance activities undertaken by various organizations of the United Nations system, and to report thereon to the Council at its 2023 session;

22. *Decides* to keep the above questions under continuous review.

*34th plenary meeting
22 July 2022*

2022/22. Economic and social repercussions of the Israeli occupation on the living conditions of the Palestinian people in the Occupied Palestinian Territory, including East Jerusalem, and the Arab population in the occupied Syrian Golan

The Economic and Social Council,

Recalling General Assembly resolutions [76/82](#) of 9 December 2021 and [76/225](#) of 17 December 2021,

Recalling also its resolution [2021/4](#) of 14 September 2020,

Guided by the principles of the Charter of the United Nations affirming the inadmissibility of the acquisition of territory by force, and recalling relevant Security Council resolutions, including resolutions [242 \(1967\)](#) of 22 November 1967, [252 \(1968\)](#) of 21 May 1968, [338 \(1973\)](#) of 22 October 1973, [465 \(1980\)](#) of 1 March 1980, [497 \(1981\)](#) of 17 December 1981 and [2334 \(2016\)](#) of 23 December 2016,

Recalling the resolutions of the tenth emergency special session of the General Assembly, including resolutions [ES-10/13](#) of 21 October 2003, [ES-10/14](#) of 8 December 2003, [ES-10/15](#) of 20 July 2004 and [ES-10/17](#) of 15 December 2006,

Taking note of the report of the Economic and Social Commission for Western Asia on the economic and social repercussions of the Israeli occupation on the living conditions of the Palestinian people in the Occupied Palestinian Territory, including East Jerusalem, and of the Arab population in the occupied Syrian Golan, as transmitted by the Secretary-General,¹⁵¹

Reaffirming the applicability of the Geneva Convention relative to the Protection of Civilian Persons in Time of War, of 12 August 1949,¹⁵² to the Occupied Palestinian Territory, including East Jerusalem, and other Arab territories occupied by Israel since 1967,

¹⁵⁰ See *Official Records of the Economic and Social Council, 1998, Supplement No. 21 (E/1998/41)*, chap. III, sect. G.

¹⁵¹ [A/77/90-E/2022/66](#).

¹⁵² United Nations, *Treaty Series*, vol. 75, No. 973.

Recalling the International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights,¹⁵³ the International Covenant on Economic, Social and Cultural Rights¹⁵⁴ and the Convention on the Rights of the Child,¹⁵⁵ and affirming that these human rights instruments are applicable and must be respected in the Occupied Palestinian Territory, including East Jerusalem, as well as in the occupied Syrian Golan,

Noting with concern that more than 70 years have passed since the adoption of General Assembly resolution [181 \(II\)](#) of 29 November 1947 and 55 years since the occupation of the Palestinian territory, including East Jerusalem, in 1967,

Taking note, in this regard, of Palestine's accession to several human rights treaties and the core humanitarian law conventions as well as other international treaties,

Taking note also of General Assembly resolution [67/19](#) of 29 November 2012,

Stressing the urgency of achieving without delay an end to the Israeli occupation that began in 1967 and a just, lasting and comprehensive peace settlement on all tracks on the basis of Security Council resolutions [242 \(1967\)](#), [338 \(1973\)](#), [425 \(1978\)](#) of 19 March 1978, [1397 \(2002\)](#) of 12 March 2002, [1515 \(2003\)](#) of 19 November 2003, [1544 \(2004\)](#) of 19 May 2004, [1850 \(2008\)](#) of 16 December 2008 and [2334 \(2016\)](#), the principle of land for peace, the Arab Peace Initiative¹⁵⁶ and the Quartet road map,¹⁵⁷ as well as compliance with the agreements reached between the Government of Israel and the Palestine Liberation Organization, the representative of the Palestinian people,

Reaffirming the principle of the permanent sovereignty of peoples under foreign occupation over their natural resources, and expressing concern in that regard about the exploitation, endangerment and depletion of natural resources by Israel, the occupying Power, and Israeli settlers in the Occupied Palestinian Territory, including East Jerusalem, and in the occupied Syrian Golan, particularly as a result of settlement activities, which are illegal under international law and which, deplorably, continued during the reporting period,

Convinced that the Israeli occupation has gravely impeded the efforts to achieve environmentally sustainable development and a sound economic environment in the Occupied Palestinian Territory, including East Jerusalem, and in the occupied Syrian Golan, and expressing grave concern about the consequent deterioration of economic and living conditions,

Expressing alarm, in this regard, about the extremely high levels of unemployment in the Gaza Strip in particular, which remains at over 40 per cent, with youth unemployment reaching 60 per cent, exacerbated by the prolonged Israeli closures and severe economic and movement restrictions that in effect amount to a blockade, and the continuing negative repercussions of the military operations in the Gaza Strip on economic and social infrastructure and living conditions,

Commending, despite the many constraints, including the obstacles imposed by the ongoing Israeli occupation, the efforts of the Palestinian Government to improve the economic and social situation in the Occupied Palestinian Territory, especially in the areas of governance, the rule of law and human rights, livelihoods and productive sectors, education and culture, health, social protection, infrastructure and water,

Stressing the importance of the United Nations Sustainable Development Cooperation Framework, which aims, inter alia, at enhancing development support and assistance to the Palestinian people and strengthening institutional capacity in line with Palestinian national priorities,

Gravely concerned about the accelerated construction of settlements and implementation of other related measures by Israel in the Occupied Palestinian Territory, particularly in and around occupied East Jerusalem, as well as in the occupied Syrian Golan, in violation of international humanitarian law and relevant United Nations resolutions, and stressing that such illegal measures are main sources of other Israeli violations and discriminatory policies,

¹⁵³ See General Assembly resolution [2200 A \(XXI\)](#), annex.

¹⁵⁴ *Ibid.*

¹⁵⁵ United Nations, *Treaty Series*, vol. 1577, No. 27531.

¹⁵⁶ [A/56/1026-S/2002/932](#), annex II, resolution 14/221.

¹⁵⁷ [S/2003/529](#), annex.

Encouraging all States and international organizations to continue to actively pursue policies to ensure respect for their obligations under international law with regard to all illegal Israeli practices and measures in the Occupied Palestinian Territory, including East Jerusalem, particularly Israeli settlements,

Taking note of the report of the independent international fact-finding mission to investigate the implications of the Israeli settlements on the civil, political, economic, social and cultural rights of the Palestinian people throughout the Occupied Palestinian Territory, including East Jerusalem,¹⁵⁸

Expressing deep concern about the rising incidence of violence, harassment, provocation, vandalism and incitement in the Occupied Palestinian Territory, including East Jerusalem, in particular by illegal armed Israeli settlers against Palestinian civilians, including children, and their properties, including homes, historic and religious sites and agricultural lands, and calling for accountability for the illegal actions perpetrated in this regard,

Gravely concerned by the serious repercussions on the economic and social conditions of the Palestinian people caused by Israel's construction of the wall and its associated regime inside the Occupied Palestinian Territory, including in and around East Jerusalem, and the resulting violation of their economic and social rights, including the rights to work, to health, to education, to property, to an adequate standard of living and to freedom of access and movement,

Recalling, in that regard, the advisory opinion rendered on 9 July 2004 by the International Court of Justice on the legal consequences of the construction of a wall in the Occupied Palestinian Territory,¹⁵⁹ and General Assembly resolution [ES-10/15](#), and stressing the need to comply with the obligations mentioned therein,

Deploring all loss of innocent civilian life and injury to scores of civilians, and calling upon all parties to fully respect international law, including humanitarian and human rights law, including for the protection of civilian life, as well as for the promotion of human security, the de-escalation of the situation, the exercise of restraint, including from provocative actions and rhetoric, and the establishment of a stable environment conducive to the pursuit of peace,

Expressing grave concern at the extensive destruction by Israel, the occupying Power, of properties, including the increased demolition of homes, economic institutions, historical landmarks, agricultural lands and orchards, in the Occupied Palestinian Territory, including East Jerusalem, in particular in connection with its construction of settlements and the wall and confiscation of land, contrary to international law, in the Occupied Palestinian Territory, including in and around East Jerusalem,

Expressing grave concern also over the continuing forced displacement and dispossession of Palestinian civilians, including the Bedouin community, due to the continuing and intensifying policy of home demolitions, evictions and revocation of residency rights in and around occupied East Jerusalem, as well as measures to further isolate the city from its natural Palestinian environs, which have seriously exacerbated the already critical socioeconomic situation being faced by the Palestinian population,

Expressing grave concern further about ongoing Israeli military operations and policies of closures and severe restrictions on the movement of persons and goods, the imposition of crossing closures, checkpoints and a permit regime throughout the Occupied Palestinian Territory, including East Jerusalem, and the consequent negative impact on the socioeconomic situation of the Palestinian people, in particular the Palestine refugee population, which remains that of a humanitarian crisis,

Expressing grave concern, in particular, over the continuing crisis in the Gaza Strip as a result of the prolonged Israeli closures and severe economic and movement restrictions that in effect amount to a blockade, stressing that the situation is unsustainable, as reflected in numerous reports, including the report of 26 August 2016 of the United Nations country team, entitled "Gaza: two years after", and calling in that regard for the full implementation of Security Council resolution [1860 \(2009\)](#) of 8 January 2009 with a view to ensuring the full opening of the border crossings for the sustained and regular movement of persons and goods, including humanitarian aid, commercial flows and construction materials, and emphasizing the need for security for all civilian populations,

Deploring the conflict in and around the Gaza Strip in July and August 2014 and the civilian casualties caused, including the killing of and injury to thousands of Palestinian civilians, including children, women and the elderly, as

¹⁵⁸ [A/HRC/22/63](#).

¹⁵⁹ See [A/ES-10/273](#) and [A/ES-10/273/Corr.1](#).

well as the widespread destruction of or damage to thousands of homes and vital civilian infrastructure, including schools, hospitals, water, sanitation and electricity networks, economic, industrial and agricultural properties, public institutions, religious sites and United Nations schools and facilities, as well as the internal displacement of hundreds of thousands of civilians, and any violations of international law, including humanitarian and human rights law, in this regard,

Gravely concerned about the consequent prolonged and extensive negative impact of the military operations of July and August 2014, as well as the military operations between December 2008 and January 2009 and of November 2012, on economic conditions, the provision of social services and the social, humanitarian and physical living conditions of the Palestinian civilian population, including the Palestine refugee population,

Recalling, in that regard, the relevant United Nations reports, including those of the Economic and Social Council, the Economic and Social Commission for Western Asia and the Human Rights Council,

Expressing deep concern about the short- and long-term detrimental impact of such widespread destruction and the hampering of the reconstruction process, by Israel, the occupying Power, on the socioeconomic and humanitarian conditions of the Palestinian civilian population in the Gaza Strip, where the humanitarian crisis continues to deepen, and calling in that regard for the immediate acceleration and fulfilment of the reconstruction process in the Gaza Strip with the assistance of the donor countries, including the disbursement of funds pledged at the Cairo International Conference on Palestine: Reconstructing Gaza, held on 12 October 2014,

Gravely concerned about various reports of the United Nations and specialized agencies regarding the substantial aid dependency caused by prolonged border closures, inordinate rates of unemployment, widespread poverty and severe humanitarian hardships, including food insecurity and rising health-related problems, including high levels of malnutrition, among the Palestinian people, especially children, in the Occupied Palestinian Territory, including East Jerusalem,

Expressing grave concern at the deaths of and injuries caused to civilians, including children, women and peaceful demonstrators, and emphasizing that the Palestinian civilian population must be protected in accordance with international humanitarian law,

Emphasizing the importance of the safety and well-being of all civilians, and calling for the cessation of all acts of violence, including all acts of terror, provocation, incitement and destruction, and all firing of rockets,

Expressing deep concern that thousands of Palestinians, including many children and women, continue to be held in Israeli prisons or detention centres under harsh conditions, including unhygienic conditions, solitary confinement, excessive use of administrative detention, including of children, lack of proper medical care and widespread medical neglect, including for ill prisoners, with the risk of fatal consequences, and denial of family visits and of due process, that impair their well-being, and expressing deep concern also about any ill-treatment and harassment of Palestinian prisoners and detainees and all reports of torture,

Conscious of the urgent need for the reconstruction and development of the economic and social infrastructure of the Occupied Palestinian Territory, including East Jerusalem, as well as the urgent need to address the humanitarian crisis facing the Palestinian people, including by ensuring the unimpeded provision of humanitarian assistance and the sustained and regular flow of persons and goods into and out of the Gaza Strip,

Recognizing the efforts being undertaken by the Palestinian Government, with international support, to reform, develop and strengthen its institutions and infrastructure, emphasizing the need to preserve and further develop Palestinian institutions and infrastructure, despite the obstacles presented by the ongoing Israeli occupation, and commending in this regard the ongoing efforts to develop the institutions of an independent Palestinian State, including through the implementation of the Palestinian National Policy Agenda: National Priorities, Policies and Policy Interventions (2017–2022),

Expressing concern about the risks posed to the significant achievements made, as confirmed by the positive assessments made by international institutions regarding readiness for statehood, including by the World Bank, the International Monetary Fund, the United Nations and the Ad Hoc Liaison Committee for the Coordination of the International Assistance to Palestinians, owing to the negative impact of ongoing instability and the financial crisis being faced by the Palestinian Government and the continued absence of a credible political horizon,

Commending, in that regard, the important work being done by the United Nations, the specialized agencies and the donor community in support of the economic and social development of the Palestinian people in line with their national development and State-building plan, as well as the vital assistance being provided in the humanitarian field,

Affirming the need to support the Palestinian Government of national consensus in its assumption of full government responsibilities in both the West Bank and the Gaza Strip, in all fields, as well as through its presence at Gaza's crossing points, and Palestinian national reconciliation, and emphasizing the need for the respect and preservation of the territorial integrity and unity of the Occupied Palestinian Territory, including East Jerusalem,

Calling upon both parties to fulfil their obligations under the road map in cooperation with the Quartet,

Aware that development and fostering healthy economic, social and environmental conditions are difficult under occupation and best promoted in circumstances of peace and stability,

1. *Calls for* the full opening of the border crossings of the Gaza Strip, in line with Security Council resolution 1860 (2009), to ensure humanitarian access as well as the sustained and regular flow of persons and goods and the lifting of all movement restrictions imposed on the Palestinian people, including those restrictions arising from ongoing Israeli military operations and the multilayered closure system, and for other urgent measures to be taken to alleviate the serious humanitarian situation in the Occupied Palestinian Territory, which is dire in the Gaza Strip, and also calls for compliance by Israel, the occupying Power, with all of its legal obligations under international humanitarian law and United Nations resolutions in that regard;

2. *Stresses* the need to preserve the territorial contiguity, unity and integrity of the Occupied Palestinian Territory, including East Jerusalem, and to guarantee the freedom of movement of persons and goods throughout the Occupied Palestinian Territory, including East Jerusalem, as well as to and from the outside world;

3. *Also stresses* the need to preserve and develop Palestinian national institutions and infrastructure for the provision of vital public services to the Palestinian civilian population and to contribute to the promotion and protection of human rights, including economic and social rights;

4. *Demands* that Israel comply with the Protocol on Economic Relations between the Government of Israel and the Palestine Liberation Organization signed in Paris on 29 April 1994;¹⁶⁰

5. *Calls upon* Israel to restore and replace civilian properties, vital infrastructure, agricultural lands and government institutions that have been damaged or destroyed as a result of its military operations in the Occupied Palestinian Territory;

6. *Reiterates* the call for the full implementation of the Agreement on Movement and Access of 15 November 2005, particularly the urgent and uninterrupted reopening of all crossings into the Gaza Strip, which is crucial to ensuring the passage of foodstuffs and essential supplies, including construction materials and adequate fuel supplies, as well as to ensuring the unhindered access of the United Nations and related agencies and regular commercial flows necessary for economic recovery to and within the Occupied Palestinian Territory, and emphasizes the need for security for all civilian populations;

7. *Calls upon* all parties to respect the rules of international humanitarian law and to refrain from violence against the civilian population, in accordance with the Geneva Convention relative to the Protection of Civilian Persons in Time of War, of 12 August 1949;

8. *Reaffirms* the inalienable right of the Palestinian people and the Arab population of the occupied Syrian Golan to all their natural and economic resources, and calls upon Israel, the occupying Power, not to exploit, endanger or cause loss or depletion of those resources;

9. *Calls upon* Israel, the occupying Power, to cease its destruction of homes and properties, economic institutions and agricultural lands and orchards in the Occupied Palestinian Territory, including East Jerusalem, as well as in the occupied Syrian Golan, and to prevent Israeli settlers from perpetrating such illegal activities;

10. *Also calls upon* Israel, the occupying Power, to end immediately its exploitation of natural resources, including water and mining resources, and to cease the dumping of all kinds of waste materials in the Occupied

¹⁶⁰ See A/49/180-S/1994/727, annex, entitled "Agreement on the Gaza Strip and the Jericho Area", annex IV.

Resolutions

Palestinian Territory, including East Jerusalem, and in the occupied Syrian Golan, which gravely threaten their natural resources, namely, the water, land and energy resources, and present a serious environmental hazard and health threat to the civilian populations, and also calls upon Israel, the occupying Power, to remove all obstacles that obstruct the implementation of critical environmental projects, including the sewage treatment plants in the Gaza Strip, notably the provision of the electric power needed for the work of the northern Gaza emergency sewage treatment plant, and stresses in this regard the urgency of the reconstruction and development of water infrastructure, including the desalination facility project for the Gaza Strip;

11. *Calls for* the assistance necessary for the safe removal of all unexploded ordnance in the Gaza Strip, which endangers Palestinian lives and negatively impacts the environment, as well as reconstruction and development efforts, and welcomes the efforts exerted by the Mine Action Service of the United Nations to date;

12. *Reaffirms* that the construction and expansion of Israeli settlements and related infrastructure in the Occupied Palestinian Territory, including East Jerusalem, and the occupied Syrian Golan, are illegal and constitute a major obstacle to economic and social development and to the achievement of peace, and calls for the full cessation of all settlement and settlement-related activity, including full cessation of all measures aimed at altering the demographic composition, legal status and character of the occupied territories, including in particular in and around occupied East Jerusalem, in compliance with relevant Security Council resolutions, including resolution 2334 (2016), and international law, including the Geneva Convention relative to the Protection of Civilian Persons in Time of War;

13. *Calls for* accountability for the illegal actions perpetrated by Israeli settlers in the Occupied Palestinian Territory, including East Jerusalem, and recalls in this regard Security Council resolution 904 (1994) of 18 March 1994 and stresses the need for its implementation;

14. *Also calls for* urgent attention to the plight and the rights, in accordance with international law, of prisoners and detainees, and calls for efforts between the two sides for the further release of prisoners and detainees, and deplors the practice of withholding the bodies of those killed, and calls for the release of the bodies that have not yet been returned to their relatives, in line with international humanitarian law and human rights law, in order to ensure dignified closure in accordance with their religious beliefs and traditions;

15. *Reaffirms* that Israel's ongoing construction of the wall in the Occupied Palestinian Territory, including in and around East Jerusalem, is contrary to international law and is isolating East Jerusalem, fragmenting the West Bank and seriously debilitating the economic and social development of the Palestinian people, and calls in that regard for full compliance with the legal obligations mentioned in the 9 July 2004 advisory opinion of the International Court of Justice and in General Assembly resolution ES-10/15 and subsequent relevant resolutions;

16. *Calls upon* Israel to comply with the provisions of the Geneva Convention relative to the Protection of Civilian Persons in Time of War and to facilitate visits of the Syrian citizens of the occupied Syrian Golan whose family members reside in their mother homeland, the Syrian Arab Republic, via the Qunaytirah entrance;

17. *Emphasizes* the importance of the work of United Nations organizations and agencies in the Occupied Palestinian Territory, including East Jerusalem, and of the United Nations Special Coordinator for the Middle East Peace Process and Personal Representative of the Secretary-General to the Palestine Liberation Organization and the Palestinian Authority;

18. *Welcomes and urges* further engagement by the Secretary-General and the United Nations Special Coordinator to assist, in cooperation with concerned partners, in the efforts to address urgent infrastructure, humanitarian and economic development needs, including through the implementation of projects endorsed by the Ad Hoc Liaison Committee for the Coordination of the International Assistance to Palestinians;

19. *Expresses appreciation* to the Member States, United Nations bodies and intergovernmental, regional and non-governmental organizations that have provided and continue to provide economic and humanitarian assistance to the Palestinian people, which has helped to ameliorate their critical economic and social conditions, and urges the continued provision of assistance commensurate with increased socioeconomic and humanitarian needs and in cooperation with official Palestinian institutions and consistent with the Palestinian National Development Plan;

20. *Reiterates* the importance of and need for increased and renewed international efforts on the basis of relevant United Nations resolutions, including Security Council resolutions 242 (1967), 338 (1973), 425 (1978), 1397 (2002), 1515 (2003), 1544 (2004), 1850 (2008) and 2334 (2016), and the Madrid Conference, the principle of land for peace, the Arab Peace Initiative and the Quartet road map, as well as compliance with the agreements reached

between the Government of Israel and the Palestine Liberation Organization, the representative of the Palestinian people, in order to pave the way for the realization of the two-State solution of Israel and Palestine living side by side in peace and security within recognized borders, based on the pre-1967 borders, and the achievement of a just, lasting and comprehensive peace settlement;

21. *Requests* the Secretary-General to submit to the General Assembly at its seventy-eighth session, through the Economic and Social Council, a report on the implementation of the present resolution and to continue to include in the report of the United Nations Special Coordinator an update on the living conditions of the Palestinian people, in collaboration with relevant United Nations agencies;

22. *Decides* to include the item entitled “Economic and social repercussions of the Israeli occupation on the living conditions of the Palestinian people in the Occupied Palestinian Territory, including East Jerusalem, and the Arab population in the occupied Syrian Golan” in the agenda of its 2023 session.

*34th plenary meeting
22 July 2022*

2022/23. Situation of and assistance to Palestinian women

The Economic and Social Council,

Having considered the report of the Secretary-General,¹⁶¹

Recalling its relevant resolutions and all other relevant United Nations resolutions,

Recalling also Security Council resolution [1325 \(2000\)](#) of 31 October 2000, including its call upon all parties to armed conflict to respect fully international law applicable to the rights and protection of women and girls, especially as civilians, and its emphasis on the responsibility of all States to put an end to impunity,

Recalling further the Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination against Women,¹⁶²

Recalling the Declaration on the Elimination of Violence against Women¹⁶³ as it concerns the protection of civilian populations,

Reaffirming the obligations of States and all parties to armed conflict to comply with international humanitarian law and international human rights law, as applicable, and the need to end all violations of international humanitarian law and all violations and abuses of human rights,

Reaffirming also the Nairobi Forward-looking Strategies for the Advancement of Women,¹⁶⁴ the Beijing Declaration and Platform for Action,¹⁶⁵ the outcomes of the twenty-third special session of the General Assembly, entitled “Women 2000: gender equality, development and peace for the twenty-first century”,¹⁶⁶ and the political declaration on the occasion of the twenty-fifth anniversary of the Fourth World Conference on Women adopted by the Commission on the Status of Women at its sixty-fourth session,¹⁶⁷ and reaffirming its commitment to their full, effective and accelerated implementation,

Reaffirming further the importance of increasing the role of women in peacebuilding and decision-making with regard to conflict prevention and the peaceful resolution of conflicts as part of efforts to ensure the safety and well-being of all women in the region, stressing the importance of women’s equal participation and involvement in all

¹⁶¹ See [A/77/90-E/2022/66](#).

¹⁶² United Nations, *Treaty Series*, vol. 1249, No. 20378.

¹⁶³ General Assembly resolution [48/104](#).

¹⁶⁴ *Report of the World Conference to Review and Appraise the Achievements of the United Nations Decade for Women: Equality, Development and Peace, Nairobi, 15–26 July 1985* (United Nations publication, Sales No. E.85.IV.10), chap. I, sect. A.

¹⁶⁵ *Report of the Fourth World Conference on Women, Beijing, 4–15 September 1995* (United Nations publication, Sales No. E.96.IV.13), chap. I, resolution 1, annexes I and II.

¹⁶⁶ General Assembly resolution [S-23/2](#), annex, and resolution [S-23/3](#), annex.

¹⁶⁷ *Official Records of the Economic and Social Council, 2020, Supplement No. 7 (E/2020/27)*, chap. I, sect. A.



Economic and Social Council

Distr.: General
25 August 2023

2023 session

Agenda item 16

Economic and social repercussions of the Israeli occupation on the living conditions of the Palestinian people in the Occupied Palestinian Territory, including East Jerusalem, and the Arab population in the occupied Syrian Golan

Resolution adopted by the Economic and Social Council on 26 July 2023

[on a proposal considered in plenary meeting (E/2023/L.34)]

2023/34. Economic and social repercussions of the Israeli occupation on the living conditions of the Palestinian people in the Occupied Palestinian Territory, including East Jerusalem, and the Arab population in the occupied Syrian Golan

The Economic and Social Council,

Recalling General Assembly resolutions [77/126](#) of 12 December 2022 and [77/187](#) of 14 December 2022,

Recalling also its resolution [2022/22](#) of 22 July 2022,

Guided by the principles of the Charter of the United Nations affirming the inadmissibility of the acquisition of territory by force, and recalling relevant Security Council resolutions, including resolutions [242 \(1967\)](#) of 22 November 1967, [252 \(1968\)](#) of 21 May 1968, [338 \(1973\)](#) of 22 October 1973, [465 \(1980\)](#) of 1 March 1980, [497 \(1981\)](#) of 17 December 1981 and [2334 \(2016\)](#) of 23 December 2016,

Recalling the resolutions of the tenth emergency special session of the General Assembly, including resolutions [ES-10/13](#) of 21 October 2003, [ES-10/14](#) of 8 December 2003, [ES-10/15](#) of 20 July 2004 and [ES-10/17](#) of 15 December 2006,

Taking note of the report of the Economic and Social Commission for Western Asia on the economic and social repercussions of the Israeli occupation on the living conditions of the Palestinian people in the Occupied Palestinian Territory, including East Jerusalem, and of the Arab population in the occupied Syrian Golan, as transmitted by the Secretary-General,¹

¹ [A/78/86-E/2023/83](#).



Reaffirming the applicability of the Geneva Convention relative to the Protection of Civilian Persons in Time of War, of 12 August 1949,² to the Occupied Palestinian Territory, including East Jerusalem, and other Arab territories occupied by Israel since 1967,

Recalling the International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights,³ the International Covenant on Economic, Social and Cultural Rights⁴ and the Convention on the Rights of the Child,⁵ and affirming that these human rights instruments are applicable and must be respected in the Occupied Palestinian Territory, including East Jerusalem, as well as in the occupied Syrian Golan,

Noting with concern that more than 70 years have passed since the adoption of General Assembly resolution 181 (II) of 29 November 1947 and 56 years since the occupation of the Palestinian territory, including East Jerusalem, in 1967,

Taking note, in this regard, of Palestine's accession to several human rights treaties and the core humanitarian law conventions as well as other international treaties,

Taking note also of General Assembly resolution 67/19 of 29 November 2012,

Stressing the urgency of achieving without delay an end to the Israeli occupation that began in 1967 and a just, lasting and comprehensive peace settlement on all tracks on the basis of Security Council resolutions 242 (1967), 338 (1973), 425 (1978) of 19 March 1978, 1397 (2002) of 12 March 2002, 1515 (2003) of 19 November 2003, 1544 (2004) of 19 May 2004, 1850 (2008) of 16 December 2008 and 2334 (2016), the principle of land for peace, the Arab Peace Initiative⁶ and the Quartet road map,⁷ as well as compliance with the agreements reached between the Government of Israel and the Palestine Liberation Organization, the representative of the Palestinian people,

Reaffirming the principle of the permanent sovereignty of peoples under foreign occupation over their natural resources, and expressing concern in that regard about the exploitation, endangerment and depletion of natural resources by Israel, the occupying Power, and Israeli settlers in the Occupied Palestinian Territory, including East Jerusalem, and in the occupied Syrian Golan, particularly as a result of settlement activities, which are illegal under international law and which, deplorably, continued during the reporting period,

Convinced that the Israeli occupation has gravely impeded the efforts to achieve environmentally sustainable development and a sound economic environment in the Occupied Palestinian Territory, including East Jerusalem, and in the occupied Syrian Golan, and expressing grave concern about the consequent deterioration of economic and living conditions,

Expressing alarm, in this regard, about the extremely high levels of unemployment in the Gaza Strip in particular, which remains at over 40 per cent, with youth unemployment reaching 60 per cent, exacerbated by the prolonged Israeli closures and severe economic and movement restrictions that in effect amount to a blockade, and the continuing negative repercussions of the military operations in the Gaza Strip on economic and social infrastructure and living conditions,

² United Nations, *Treaty Series*, vol. 75, No. 973.

³ See General Assembly resolution 2200 A (XXI), annex.

⁴ *Ibid.*

⁵ United Nations, *Treaty Series*, vol. 1577, No. 27531.

⁶ A/56/1026-S/2002/932, annex II, resolution 14/221.

⁷ S/2003/529, annex.

Commending, despite the many constraints, including the obstacles imposed by the ongoing Israeli occupation, the efforts of the Palestinian Government to improve the economic and social situation in the Occupied Palestinian Territory, especially in the areas of governance, the rule of law and human rights, livelihoods and productive sectors, education and culture, health, social protection, infrastructure and water,

Stressing the importance of the United Nations Sustainable Development Cooperation Framework, which aims, inter alia, at enhancing development support and assistance to the Palestinian people and strengthening institutional capacity in line with Palestinian national priorities,

Gravely concerned about the accelerated construction of settlements and implementation of other related measures by Israel in the Occupied Palestinian Territory, particularly in and around occupied East Jerusalem, as well as in the occupied Syrian Golan, in violation of international humanitarian law and relevant United Nations resolutions, and stressing that such illegal measures are main sources of other Israeli violations and discriminatory policies,

Encouraging all States and international organizations to continue to actively pursue policies to ensure respect for their obligations under international law with regard to all illegal Israeli practices and measures in the Occupied Palestinian Territory, including East Jerusalem, particularly Israeli settlements,

Taking note of the report of the independent international fact-finding mission to investigate the implications of the Israeli settlements on the civil, political, economic, social and cultural rights of the Palestinian people throughout the Occupied Palestinian Territory, including East Jerusalem,⁸

Expressing deep concern about the rising incidence of violence, harassment, provocation, vandalism and incitement in the Occupied Palestinian Territory, including East Jerusalem, in particular by illegal armed Israeli settlers against Palestinian civilians, including children, and their properties, including homes, historic and religious sites and agricultural lands, and calling for accountability for the illegal actions perpetrated in this regard,

Gravely concerned by the serious repercussions on the economic and social conditions of the Palestinian people caused by Israel's construction of the wall and its associated regime inside the Occupied Palestinian Territory, including in and around East Jerusalem, and the resulting violation of their economic and social rights, including the rights to work, to health, to education, to property, to an adequate standard of living and to freedom of access and movement,

Recalling, in that regard, the advisory opinion rendered on 9 July 2004 by the International Court of Justice on the legal consequences of the construction of a wall in the Occupied Palestinian Territory,⁹ and General Assembly resolution [ES-10/15](#), and stressing the need to comply with the obligations mentioned therein,

Deploring all loss of innocent civilian life and injury to scores of civilians, and calling upon all parties to fully respect international law, including humanitarian and human rights law, including for the protection of civilian life, as well as for the promotion of human security, the de-escalation of the situation, the exercise of restraint, including from provocative actions and rhetoric, and the establishment of a stable environment conducive to the pursuit of peace,

Expressing grave concern at the extensive destruction by Israel, the occupying Power, of properties, including the increased demolition of homes, economic

⁸ [A/HRC/22/63](#).

⁹ See [A/ES-10/273](#) and [A/ES-10/273/Corr.1](#).

institutions, historical landmarks, agricultural lands and orchards, in the Occupied Palestinian Territory, including East Jerusalem, in particular in connection with its construction of settlements and the wall and confiscation of land, contrary to international law, in the Occupied Palestinian Territory, including in and around East Jerusalem,

Expressing grave concern also over the continuing forced displacement and dispossession of Palestinian civilians, including the Bedouin community, due to the continuing and intensifying policy of home demolitions, evictions and revocation of residency rights in and around occupied East Jerusalem, as well as measures to further isolate the city from its natural Palestinian environs, which have seriously exacerbated the already critical socioeconomic situation being faced by the Palestinian population,

Expressing grave concern further about ongoing Israeli military operations and policies of closures and severe restrictions on the movement of persons and goods, the imposition of crossing closures, checkpoints and a permit regime throughout the Occupied Palestinian Territory, including East Jerusalem, and the consequent negative impact on the socioeconomic situation of the Palestinian people, in particular the Palestine refugee population, which remains that of a humanitarian crisis,

Expressing grave concern, in particular, over the continuing crisis in the Gaza Strip as a result of the prolonged Israeli closures and severe economic and movement restrictions that in effect amount to a blockade, stressing that the situation is unsustainable, as reflected in numerous reports, including the report of 26 August 2016 of the United Nations country team, entitled “Gaza: two years after”, and calling in that regard for the full implementation of Security Council resolution [1860 \(2009\)](#) of 8 January 2009 with a view to ensuring the full opening of the border crossings for the sustained and regular movement of persons and goods, including humanitarian aid, commercial flows and construction materials, and emphasizing the need for security for all civilian populations,

Deploring the conflict in and around the Gaza Strip in July and August 2014 and the civilian casualties caused, including the killing of and injury to thousands of Palestinian civilians, including children, women and the elderly, as well as the widespread destruction of or damage to thousands of homes and vital civilian infrastructure, including schools, hospitals, water, sanitation and electricity networks, economic, industrial and agricultural properties, public institutions, religious sites and United Nations schools and facilities, as well as the internal displacement of hundreds of thousands of civilians, and any violations of international law, including humanitarian and human rights law, in this regard,

Gravely concerned about the consequent prolonged and extensive negative impact of the military operations of July and August 2014, as well as the military operations between December 2008 and January 2009 and of November 2012, on economic conditions, the provision of social services and the social, humanitarian and physical living conditions of the Palestinian civilian population, including the Palestine refugee population,

Recalling, in that regard, the relevant United Nations reports, including those of the Economic and Social Council, the Economic and Social Commission for Western Asia and the Human Rights Council,

Expressing deep concern about the short- and long-term detrimental impact of such widespread destruction and the hampering of the reconstruction process, by Israel, the occupying Power, on the socioeconomic and humanitarian conditions of the Palestinian civilian population in the Gaza Strip, where the humanitarian crisis continues to deepen, and calling in that regard for the immediate acceleration and

fulfilment of the reconstruction process in the Gaza Strip with the assistance of the donor countries, including the disbursement of funds pledged at the Cairo International Conference on Palestine: Reconstructing Gaza, held on 12 October 2014,

Gravely concerned about various reports of the United Nations and specialized agencies regarding the substantial aid dependency caused by prolonged border closures, inordinate rates of unemployment, widespread poverty and severe humanitarian hardships, including food insecurity and rising health-related problems, including high levels of malnutrition, among the Palestinian people, especially children, in the Occupied Palestinian Territory, including East Jerusalem,

Expressing grave concern at the deaths of and injuries caused to civilians, including children, women and peaceful demonstrators, and emphasizing that the Palestinian civilian population must be protected in accordance with international humanitarian law,

Emphasizing the importance of the safety and well-being of all civilians, and calling for the cessation of all acts of violence, including all acts of terror, provocation, incitement and destruction, and all firing of rockets,

Expressing deep concern that thousands of Palestinians, including many children and women, continue to be held in Israeli prisons or detention centres under harsh conditions, including unhygienic conditions, solitary confinement, excessive use of administrative detention, including of children, lack of proper medical care and widespread medical neglect, including for ill prisoners, with the risk of fatal consequences, and denial of family visits and of due process, that impair their well-being, and expressing deep concern also about any ill-treatment and harassment of Palestinian prisoners and detainees and all reports of torture,

Conscious of the urgent need for the reconstruction and development of the economic and social infrastructure of the Occupied Palestinian Territory, including East Jerusalem, as well as the urgent need to address the humanitarian crisis facing the Palestinian people, including by ensuring the unimpeded provision of humanitarian assistance and the sustained and regular flow of persons and goods into and out of the Gaza Strip,

Recognizing the efforts being undertaken by the Palestinian Government, with international support, to reform, develop and strengthen its institutions and infrastructure, emphasizing the need to preserve and further develop Palestinian institutions and infrastructure, despite the obstacles presented by the ongoing Israeli occupation, and commending in this regard the ongoing efforts to develop the institutions of an independent Palestinian State, including through the implementation of the Palestinian National Policy Agenda: National Priorities, Policies and Policy Interventions (2017–2022),

Expressing concern about the risks posed to the significant achievements made, as confirmed by the positive assessments made by international institutions regarding readiness for statehood, including by the World Bank, the International Monetary Fund, the United Nations and the Ad Hoc Liaison Committee for the Coordination of the International Assistance to Palestinians, owing to the negative impact of ongoing instability and the financial crisis being faced by the Palestinian Government and the continued absence of a credible political horizon,

Commending, in that regard, the important work being done by the United Nations, the specialized agencies and the donor community in support of the economic and social development of the Palestinian people in line with their national development and State-building plan, as well as the vital assistance being provided in the humanitarian field,

Affirming the need to support the Palestinian Government of national consensus in its assumption of full government responsibilities in both the West Bank and the Gaza Strip, in all fields, as well as through its presence at Gaza's crossing points, and Palestinian national reconciliation, and emphasizing the need for the respect and preservation of the territorial integrity and unity of the Occupied Palestinian Territory, including East Jerusalem,

Calling upon both parties to fulfil their obligations under the road map in cooperation with the Quartet,

Aware that development and fostering healthy economic, social and environmental conditions are difficult under occupation and best promoted in circumstances of peace and stability,

1. *Calls for* the full opening of the border crossings of the Gaza Strip, in line with Security Council resolution 1860 (2009), to ensure humanitarian access as well as the sustained and regular flow of persons and goods and the lifting of all movement restrictions imposed on the Palestinian people, including those restrictions arising from ongoing Israeli military operations and the multilayered closure system, and for other urgent measures to be taken to alleviate the serious humanitarian situation in the Occupied Palestinian Territory, which is dire in the Gaza Strip, and also calls for compliance by Israel, the occupying Power, with all of its legal obligations under international humanitarian law and United Nations resolutions in that regard;

2. *Stresses* the need to preserve the territorial contiguity, unity and integrity of the Occupied Palestinian Territory, including East Jerusalem, and to guarantee the freedom of movement of persons and goods throughout the Occupied Palestinian Territory, including East Jerusalem, as well as to and from the outside world;

3. *Also stresses* the need to preserve and develop Palestinian national institutions and infrastructure for the provision of vital public services to the Palestinian civilian population and to contribute to the promotion and protection of human rights, including economic and social rights;

4. *Demands* that Israel comply with the Protocol on Economic Relations between the Government of Israel and the Palestine Liberation Organization signed in Paris on 29 April 1994;¹⁰

5. *Calls upon* Israel to restore and replace civilian properties, vital infrastructure, agricultural lands and government institutions that have been damaged or destroyed as a result of its military operations in the Occupied Palestinian Territory;

6. *Reiterates* the call for the full implementation of the Agreement on Movement and Access of 15 November 2005, particularly the urgent and uninterrupted reopening of all crossings into the Gaza Strip, which is crucial to ensuring the passage of foodstuffs and essential supplies, including construction materials and adequate fuel supplies, as well as to ensuring the unhindered access of the United Nations and related agencies and regular commercial flows necessary for economic recovery to and within the Occupied Palestinian Territory, and emphasizes the need for security for all civilian populations;

7. *Calls upon* all parties to respect the rules of international humanitarian law and to refrain from violence against the civilian population, in accordance with the Geneva Convention relative to the Protection of Civilian Persons in Time of War, of 12 August 1949;

¹⁰ See A/49/180-S/1994/727, annex, entitled "Agreement on the Gaza Strip and the Jericho Area", annex IV.

8. *Reaffirms* the inalienable right of the Palestinian people and the Arab population of the occupied Syrian Golan to all their natural and economic resources, and calls upon Israel, the occupying Power, not to exploit, endanger or cause loss or depletion of those resources;

9. *Calls upon* Israel, the occupying Power, to cease its destruction of homes and properties, economic institutions and agricultural lands and orchards in the Occupied Palestinian Territory, including East Jerusalem, as well as in the occupied Syrian Golan, and to prevent Israeli settlers from perpetrating such illegal activities;

10. *Also calls upon* Israel, the occupying Power, to end immediately its exploitation of natural resources, including water and mining resources, and to cease the dumping of all kinds of waste materials in the Occupied Palestinian Territory, including East Jerusalem, and in the occupied Syrian Golan, which gravely threaten their natural resources, namely, the water, land and energy resources, and present a serious environmental hazard and health threat to the civilian populations, and also calls upon Israel, the occupying Power, to remove all obstacles that obstruct the implementation of critical environmental projects, including the sewage treatment plants in the Gaza Strip, notably the provision of the electric power needed for the work of the northern Gaza emergency sewage treatment plant, and stresses in this regard the urgency of the reconstruction and development of water infrastructure, including the desalination facility project for the Gaza Strip;

11. *Calls for* the assistance necessary for the safe removal of all unexploded ordnance in the Gaza Strip, which endangers Palestinian lives and negatively impacts the environment, as well as reconstruction and development efforts, and welcomes the efforts exerted by the Mine Action Service of the United Nations to date;

12. *Reaffirms* that the construction and expansion of Israeli settlements and related infrastructure in the Occupied Palestinian Territory, including East Jerusalem, and the occupied Syrian Golan, are illegal and constitute a major obstacle to economic and social development and to the achievement of peace, and calls for the full cessation of all settlement and settlement-related activity, including full cessation of all measures aimed at altering the demographic composition, legal status and character of the occupied territories, including in particular in and around occupied East Jerusalem, in compliance with relevant Security Council resolutions, including resolution [2334 \(2016\)](#), and international law, including the Geneva Convention relative to the Protection of Civilian Persons in Time of War;

13. *Calls for* accountability for the illegal actions perpetrated by Israeli settlers in the Occupied Palestinian Territory, including East Jerusalem, and recalls in this regard Security Council resolution [904 \(1994\)](#) of 18 March 1994 and stresses the need for its implementation;

14. *Also calls for* urgent attention to the plight and the rights, in accordance with international law, of prisoners and detainees, and calls for efforts between the two sides for the further release of prisoners and detainees, and deplores the practice of withholding the bodies of those killed, and calls for the release of the bodies that have not yet been returned to their relatives, in line with international humanitarian law and human rights law, in order to ensure dignified closure in accordance with their religious beliefs and traditions;

15. *Reaffirms* that Israel's ongoing construction of the wall in the Occupied Palestinian Territory, including in and around East Jerusalem, is contrary to international law and is isolating East Jerusalem, fragmenting the West Bank and seriously debilitating the economic and social development of the Palestinian people, and calls in that regard for full compliance with the legal obligations mentioned in

the 9 July 2004 advisory opinion of the International Court of Justice and in General Assembly resolution [ES-10/15](#) and subsequent relevant resolutions;

16. *Calls upon* Israel to comply with the provisions of the Geneva Convention relative to the Protection of Civilian Persons in Time of War and to facilitate visits of the Syrian citizens of the occupied Syrian Golan whose family members reside in their mother homeland, the Syrian Arab Republic, via the Qunaytirah entrance;

17. *Emphasizes* the importance of the work of United Nations organizations and agencies in the Occupied Palestinian Territory, including East Jerusalem, and of the United Nations Special Coordinator for the Middle East Peace Process and Personal Representative of the Secretary-General to the Palestine Liberation Organization and the Palestinian Authority;

18. *Welcomes and urges* further engagement by the Secretary-General and the United Nations Special Coordinator to assist, in cooperation with concerned partners, in the efforts to address urgent infrastructure, humanitarian and economic development needs, including through the implementation of projects endorsed by the Ad Hoc Liaison Committee for the Coordination of the International Assistance to Palestinians;

19. *Expresses appreciation* to the Member States, United Nations bodies and intergovernmental, regional and non-governmental organizations that have provided and continue to provide economic and humanitarian assistance to the Palestinian people, which has helped to ameliorate their critical economic and social conditions, and urges the continued provision of assistance commensurate with increased socioeconomic and humanitarian needs and in cooperation with official Palestinian institutions and consistent with the Palestinian National Development Plan;

20. *Reiterates* the importance of and need for increased and renewed international efforts on the basis of relevant United Nations resolutions, including Security Council resolutions [242 \(1967\)](#), [338 \(1973\)](#), [425 \(1978\)](#), [1397 \(2002\)](#), [1515 \(2003\)](#), [1544 \(2004\)](#), [1850 \(2008\)](#) and [2334 \(2016\)](#), and the Madrid Conference, the principle of land for peace, the Arab Peace Initiative and the Quartet road map, as well as compliance with the agreements reached between the Government of Israel and the Palestine Liberation Organization, the representative of the Palestinian people, in order to pave the way for the realization of the two-State solution of Israel and Palestine living side by side in peace and security within recognized borders, based on the pre-1967 borders, and the achievement of a just, lasting and comprehensive peace settlement;

21. *Requests* the Secretary-General to submit to the General Assembly at its seventy-ninth session, through the Economic and Social Council, a report on the implementation of the present resolution and to continue to include in the report of the United Nations Special Coordinator an update on the living conditions of the Palestinian people, in collaboration with relevant United Nations agencies;

22. *Decides* to include the item entitled “Economic and social repercussions of the Israeli occupation on the living conditions of the Palestinian people in the Occupied Palestinian Territory, including East Jerusalem, and the Arab population in the occupied Syrian Golan” in the agenda of its 2024 session.

*45th plenary meeting
26 July 2023*



**General Assembly
Economic and Social Council**

Distr.: General
14 July 1998

Original: English

*

General Assembly

Fifty-third session

Item 100 of the preliminary list**

Permanent sovereignty of the Palestinian people in the occupied Palestinian territory, including Jerusalem, and of the Arab population in the occupied Syrian Golan over their natural resources

Economic and Social Council

Substantive session of 1998

Agenda item 11

Economic and social repercussions of the Israeli occupation on the living conditions of the Palestinian people in the occupied Palestinian territory, including Jerusalem, and of the Arab population in the occupied Syrian Golan

Economic and social repercussions of the Israeli occupation on the living conditions of the Palestinian people in the occupied Palestinian territory, including Jerusalem, and of the Arab population in the occupied Syrian Golan

Note by the Secretary-General

In its resolution 1997/67 of 25 July 1995, entitled "Economic and social repercussions of the Israeli occupation on the living conditions of the Palestinian people in the occupied Palestinian territory, including Jerusalem, and of the Arab population in the occupied Syrian Golan", the Economic and Social Council requested the Secretary-General to submit to the General Assembly at its fifty-third session, through the Council, a report on the implementation of the resolution. The General Assembly, in its resolution 52/207 of 18 December 1997, reiterated the request for a report. The annexed report, covering the period from June 1997 to May 1998, which was prepared by the Economic and Social Commission for Western Asia, is being submitted in response to that request.

* Reissued for technical reasons.

** A/53/50.

Annex

Report prepared by the Economic and Social Commission for Western Asia

I. Introduction

1. The General Assembly, in its resolution 52/207 of 18 December 1997, aware of the additional, detrimental economic and social impact of the Israeli settlements on Palestinian and other Arab natural resources, especially the confiscation of land and the forced diversion of water resources, took note of the report of the Secretary-General on the economic and social repercussions of the Israeli settlements on the Palestinian people in the Palestinian territory, including Jerusalem, occupied since 1967, and on the Arab population in the occupied Syrian Golan (A/52/172-E/1997/71 and Corr.1), reaffirmed the inalienable rights of the Palestinian people and the population of the occupied Syrian Golan over their natural resources, including land and water, and requested the Secretary-General to submit to it at its fifty-third session a report on the progress made in the implementation of the resolution. The present report is submitted in response to that request and covers developments through May 1998. This report also constitutes a response to Economic and Social Council resolution 1997/67 of 25 July 1997.

II. Economic and social repercussions of the Israeli occupation

2. The stalling peace process has been accompanied by continuing hardship for the Palestinians in the occupied territory as well as for the Arab population of the occupied Syrian Golan. Israeli occupation policies and closures of the occupied territories continued to aggravate the living conditions of the Palestinian people.

3. Israeli settlements have been built at some 200 sites seized by civilian and military bodies representing the Government of Israel, as well as by Israeli civilians empowered by Israel to undertake such activity. The land under exclusive Israeli control amounts to about 72 per cent of the West Bank (area C)¹ and 40 per cent of the Gaza Strip. In addition, 30 per cent of the area of East Jerusalem is under effective Israeli ownership. No similar estimates are available for the Golan Heights, where some 15,000 inhabitants of Syrian nationality are living in a few villages close to the Syrian-Lebanese border.²

4. Israel has established approximately 150 settlements in the West Bank, with a civilian population of 170,000; in East Jerusalem, approximately 180,000 Israelis are resident; in the Gaza Strip, 5,500 settlers live in 16 settlements; and in the Golan Heights, 15,000 settlers reside in 36 settlements. By the end of 1998, more than 350,000 Israelis will be living in over 200 communities established since 1967 in the West Bank, East Jerusalem, the Gaza Strip and the Golan Heights.³

5. The Jabal Abu Ghneim (Har Homa) project represents a specific example of this policy. Although Israel's decision to establish the new settlement at Jabal Abu Ghneim has been opposed in resolutions adopted by the General Assembly, the present Government has declared that it has no intention of halting or suspending the project. It is intended to become one of the largest settlement projects initiated to date. It is located south of Jerusalem and overlooks the cities of Bethlehem and Beit Sahour. The area of the land set aside for the project amounts to 1,850 dunums (a dunum is equal to approximately 1,000 square metres); the master plan covers an area of 2,056 dunums. In the first stage, this settlement is expected to accommodate 4,000 settlers in 1,000 housing units, gradually increasing to 30,000 settlers occupying some 6,500 units in the final stage.⁴

6. The second half of 1997 was marked by a substantial increase in building construction throughout the occupied territories. New construction has been observed at 93 of the 130 settlements in the West Bank, in settlements close to Jerusalem, as well as isolated posts in the West Bank heartland. Because of their distance from existing facilities, at least 13 of these construction sites could be characterized as new settlements, although they are considered by Israel to be part of existing settlements. Press reports in Israel place the number of new units under construction at 5,000 during 1997. Other sources have confirmed the approval and initial construction of 4,000 units in West Bank settlements, enough to increase the settler population in the West Bank and Gaza Strip by more than 10 per cent. There are currently more than 160,000 Israelis living in 45,000 units in the West Bank and Gaza Strip.⁵

7. The situation of Israeli settlements expansion in the occupied territories, at the end of 1997, could be summarized as follows:

A. Settler population

West Bank: 165,000

Gaza Strip: 5,500
Golan Heights: 15,000
East Jerusalem: 180,000

B. Settlement expansion

New settlement areas established: 13
New dwellings begun in settlements: 4,500-5,000

C. Number of new dwellings formally approved
(August 1996-March 1998): 2,268

D. Number of units sold in West Bank settlements:
1,560

E. Number of units completed in West Bank settlements: 4,000

F. Total lands confiscated in 1997: 25,000 dunums

Bypass roads: 4,951 dunums
New settlements: 723 dunums
Settlement expansion: 14,784
Industrial settlements: 4,480

G. Palestinian homes demolished by the Israel Defence Forces, area C: 233 in 1997

290 from January 1997 to March 1998

Sources: Foundation for Middle East Peace. *Report on Israeli Settlements in the Occupied Territories* (Washington, D.C., March 1998), pp. 1-2, Khalil Tufakji, Orient House; Palestinian Society for the Protection of Human Rights and the Environment, E-mail communication, 24 April 1998.

8. The plans of the Ministry of Housing and Construction for 1998 include tendering land for the first 1,000 units to be built in the settlement of Har Homa, as well as 820 units in the "greater Jerusalem" settlement of Givat Ze'ev. These allocations are part of a 1998 programme to tender more than 27 per cent of the national total of 23,000 units in land occupied in 1967, a goal which, if implemented, will indicate a significant campaign of intended settlement expansion.⁵

9. Settlement expansion in the West Bank appears to be occurring not only in those areas within easy commuting distance of Jerusalem and the Tel Aviv metropolis, but also in the rural, isolated outposts throughout the West Bank. The increasing dependence on market forces in the housing market appears not to have stopped the expansion of settlements in these latter areas.

10. Since 1967, only 12 per cent of all new construction in Jerusalem has taken place in East Jerusalem. During the period 1977-1983, for example, 90 per cent of construction

was for Israelis. The figure translates into an annual pace of apartment construction of 2,170 for Israelis and only 230 for Palestinians. Housing construction for Israelis in East Jerusalem, occupied since 1967, has been critical to the overall growth of the city. The 180,000 Israelis who today live in this area comprise 76 per cent of the total increase in Jerusalem's Jewish population since 1967.⁶

11. Government restrictions on Palestinian housing construction, and the complementary boom in Israeli construction that has amounted to more than 40,000 apartment units built in East Jerusalem settlement communities, have ensured that Palestinians today comprise no greater a share of the city's population than they did in 1967. An additional 46,300 housing units are planned for the entire city. Out of these, about 10,000 will be built on 14,000 dunums (3,500 acres) of Israeli territory included in West Jerusalem in May 1996. An additional 17,710 units will be located in East Jerusalem settlement communities.⁷

12. During the next 15 years, the outer ring of settlements of greater Jerusalem might accommodate more than 200,000 new settlers, in addition to the 50,000 currently residing there, according to some estimates. During this period, completion of the Israeli suburban sections within Jerusalem itself (Har Homa and other locations) is expected to increase the number of East Jerusalem's 180,000 Israeli citizens to at least 250,000. In that sense, settlement expansion in East Jerusalem continues to play a crucial role in offsetting Palestinian population growth. This increase in Israel's settler population would bring the total number of Israeli settlers in and around East Jerusalem by the year 2015 to 500,000. The Palestinian population is expected to double over the same period, to 1.5 million within greater Jerusalem and to 1 million in the metropolitan region.⁸

13. The scheme⁹ for development of this area has significance beyond the territory that it encompasses, demonstrating the degree to which settlement expansion has been integrated into Israel's national planning schemes. E-1 controls the main axis of socio-economic development for Israel itself, as outlined in the metropolitan master plan, completed in 1994-1995. This critical area runs along the trajectory of road 45, which originates in greater Tel Aviv and leads via Ben Gurion Airport – with expansion planned in conjunction with large industrial zones around the new city of Modi'in to greater Jerusalem at the West Bank settlement of Givat Ze'ev. The road continues along the recently developed archeological site next to the Prophet Samuel's tomb – to be surrounded at a distance by gentrified housing estates – and passes the East Jerusalem settlement community of Ramot and the expanding high-technology industrial park of Har Hotzvim to arrive at the projected "Eastern Gate"

settlement site in East Jerusalem. From there it passes to Ma'ale Adumim, with its industrial zone, also scheduled to expand greatly, and another large residential area projected at Tibek Kuteif, on the heights above the Jordan Valley.

14. In 1967, 2,300 square kilometres of the West Bank and Gaza Strip were under Palestinian cultivation. In 1989, the figure had been reduced to 1,945 square kilometres, or 31.5 per cent of the West Bank and Gaza Strip. Agriculture comprised 24 per cent of gross domestic product (GDP) in 1966, the same percentage as in the period 1980-1985. By 1994, the percentage had decreased to less than 15 per cent.¹⁰ In 1966, the agricultural sector provided employment for 55,000, or 43 per cent of total employment, whereas in the period 1980-1985, there were 40,000 employed in the agricultural sector, comprising 24 per cent of those Palestinians employed.¹¹ In 1993, the percentage of employed persons working in agriculture was 22 per cent.¹²

15. These gross indicators, however, cannot lead to any specific conclusions regarding the real effect of settlements on agricultural employment or production, or land under cultivation. Settlements are only one of a number of variables that must be considered when assessing these trends.

16. In this context, there are regions such as the Jordan Valley where a direct link may be established between the loss of Palestinians' agricultural opportunities and Israeli settlements. Contamination by sewage also directly affects Palestinian agriculture, albeit on a smaller scale, in the region around Kiryat Arba near Hebron. The confiscation of agricultural lands and their transfer to settlements, which has occurred on numerous occasions, may well result in loss of agricultural income and employment, though this has never been quantified beyond anecdotal reporting. There are also costs associated with Israeli-owned industries in the occupied territories, such as a recycling plant for used motor oil, stone quarries and other plants where harmful and toxic by-products are produced.

17. Limited access to water remains the greatest obstacle to Palestinian agricultural development. According to a recent report by Miriam Lowi for the American Academy of Arts and Sciences, almost the entire increase in Israeli water use since 1967 derives from the waters of the West Bank and the upper Jordan River.¹³ However, Israel is today in the midst of a water emergency. Even with the resources acquired in 1967, it is pumping more water from aquifers than nature can replace. In the West Bank, Israel is exploiting water amounting to 15 per cent of total consumption for its own population in Israel and the occupied territories. It is also preventing the Palestinian community from increasing its water use to barely 20 per cent beyond the amount used in

1967, and only for personal use, not for agriculture and economic development. "The status quo", wrote Leopold Laufer in a recent report for an Israeli think tank, "has effectively barred economic development in the territories and in Gaza".¹⁴

18. In both the bilateral and multilateral negotiations which began in Madrid, Israel has sought to protect its continuing control over this resource in the West Bank, which was described by Israel's State Comptroller in February 1993 as the principal reservoir of drinking water for the Dan region, Tel Aviv, Jerusalem and Beersheba, and the most important long-term source in the national water system.¹⁴

19. In 1987, when settlers were barely 10 per cent of the Palestinian population in the West Bank, Palestinian consumption totalled 115 cm³ while settler consumption equalled 97 cm³.¹⁵ A report by Peace Now noted that the Jewish settlers' per capita irrigated areas are 7 and 13 times larger than the areas accorded to the Palestinians for irrigation in the Gaza Strip and West Bank, respectively.¹⁵

20. A report prepared by the Jerusalem Media and Communication Center in November 1992 notes that lack of water has forced Palestinian farmers to remove tracts from cultivation and that the digging of new deep wells for settlements, particularly in the Jordan Valley, has caused subsequent shortages for Palestinian farmers.¹⁶

21. There are approximately 260 Israeli-owned industrial enterprises in the West Bank. Environmental regulations on soil, air and water quality, and restrictions on industrial development, have generally been far less comprehensive and much less enforced in the occupied territories compared to Israel proper.¹⁷ Combined with state-subsidized incentives for Israeli concerns to locate to industrial parks in and nearby settlements, the relative laxity of environmental enforcement and monitoring has led to the relocation of polluting industries into the occupied territories.

22. The factories posing an environmental risk generally utilize wet processes in the industrial sectors of packaged food, manufacturing, metal coating and textiles.¹⁸

23. The Shomron Municipal Environmental Association, a governmental body established by settlements in the northern part of the West Bank to monitor and improve environmental quality, acknowledges that "waste-water effluents from these plants and from nearly 100 residential communities in our region, if not properly treated, pose a threat to the groundwater quality in the region. In addition, industrial air emissions and noise generation can be problematic at some factories".¹⁹

24. There are 45 enterprises operating in the industrial park of Burkan adjacent to the settlement of Ariel. Most are engaged in the production of fabric and plastics for export. The owners of these factories escape the tighter rules on health and the environment inside Israel itself to work in the West Bank where they get tax breaks.²⁰ In addition to Burkan, Palestinians have complained about the operation of industrial facilities at Ariel, Karne Shomron, Kiryat Arba, and Adumim.²¹ Of particular concern is the effect of industrial development on the quality of groundwater, which Palestinian investigators have found to be “significantly more polluted” near settlements than elsewhere.²¹

25. The settlement of Kiryat Arba has been identified by Palestinian investigators as “the main source of pollution in the Hebron area”.²² A tile factory located in the settlement’s industrial area was flushing its wastewater through the sewage system, resulting in numerous problems. The city of Hebron successfully petitioned the court to stop this practice. The wastewater is now trucked off in tanks and dumped on Palestinian fields.²² The water contains high levels of calcium carbonate, increasing the already high pH level of the land.

26. Geshurei Industries, a manufacturer of pesticides and fertilizers, was originally located in the Israeli town of Kfar Saba. Public concern about the environmental effects of the factory – on land, public health and agriculture – resulted in an Israeli court order in 1982 closing the plant. Since 1987, the factory has been operating across the Green Line, in Tulkarm, where there are effectively no controls on waste disposal or air pollution. Other Israeli industrial polluters, including those working in the fields of asbestos, fibreglass, pesticides and flammable gases, also relocated to the Tulkarm area. According to a report by the Palestinian Society for the Protection of Human Rights and the Environment, the factory pollution directly affects 144 dunums of prime agricultural land and causes substantial damage to the public health.²³ The Israeli court has ordered some remedial action, including compensation to affected farmers, but the plant remains in operation.

27. The same report notes severe negative effects of the factory operation on the nearby community, including decay of a majority of trees and other vegetation around the plant, chemical dust and residue and a liquid substance causing a decrease in productivity in field and hot house agriculture, and factory by-products, including sodium and salt, prominent in soil samples of land found to be non-arable. These effects are a consequence of factory by-products and waste-water contamination of agricultural land.

28. The report further points to clear evidence of polluting groundwater through leakage of chemicals, and proof of the improper disposal of wastes and by-products.²³

29. The report also documented a very high ratio of health-related problems among farmers and people living around the factory, including severe headaches, itchy eyes, spastic and chronic coughs and bronchial asthma.²³ The Palestinian Ministry of Agriculture notes that the public health of the community has not been well documented owing to decades of military occupation and direct conflict, suggesting that environmentally related health problems may be more pervasive than currently estimated. The long-term impact on soil and groundwater has similarly received inadequate attention.²⁴

30. As a consequence of the harmful effects of Israeli-operated industry around Tulkarm, the Palestinian Ministry of Agriculture estimated that 17 per cent of Tulkarm’s agricultural land has been affected by pollution originating at the six Israeli concerns that have located in the Tulkarm area. Three of the factories are sited on what Palestinians claim to be Waqf land. Other sites are claimed by private Palestinian owners. Several factories are located less than 100 metres from residential housing.²⁴

31. There are hundreds of sites for the disposal of trash in the occupied territories, including dozens that are unauthorized. There are 246 sites in the West Bank north of Jerusalem alone. Most of the sites are simple, primitive sites with few if any environmental safeguards. And none is used exclusively by settlements or Palestinian communities. The Shomron Municipal Environmental Association acknowledges that the sites are improperly maintained, generating odours and smoke which are a nuisance to neighbouring residents, as well as posing a threat to groundwater quality.²⁵

32. The site in Jiyous near Kalkilya is typical. Located on 12 dunums, 200 metres from the wadi that serves as a source of drinking water for the village of Azoun, the site opened in 1990. It is used principally by the settlements of Karnei Shomron, Keddu and Ma’al Shomron. The Shomron Municipal Environment Association is now being pressured by trash contractors in Israel to permit them to use the dump for trash generated in Israel, after the Israeli dump they had been using was closed by the Israeli Government.²⁶

33. Israel conducted a geographical information system study in 1996 as part of an effort to develop a master plan to establish an order of priorities to improve and consolidate the system of trash disposal in the West Bank. The master plan for trash disposal in the West Bank is being conducted

exclusively by Israel, without official or informal Palestinian participation.

34. There are literally thousands of stone quarries on the West Bank, supplying 80 per cent of the material needs of Israel's construction sector. Many of these stones are used in settlement construction.²⁶ The clouds of white dust produced by the quarries pose certain health risks. Recent reports note that those residing near such enterprises suffer from increased levels of asthma and acute bronchial infections.²⁷

35. The mitigation of environmental problems in the occupied territories, including those caused by the existence and expansion of settlements, are viewed by Israelis as a forum for joint Israeli-Palestinian action. Yet, Israeli environmental planners in the territories continue to view Palestinians as junior partners, at best. Palestinians, for their part, are willing to cooperate with Israeli communities within Israel's pre-1967 borders, but they refuse, as a matter of principle, to participate in joint efforts with settlers.²⁶

36. Palestinians have traditionally made up the bulk of the workforce engaged in the construction and daily maintenance of settlements throughout the occupied territories. Some 12,000 Palestinian labourers work in Israeli settlements; 3,500 work in the Erez industrial zone and settlements in the Gaza Strip, and 8,500 in industrial parks and settlements in the West Bank²⁷ not including those working in the settlement communities of East Jerusalem.

37. The unemployment situation in the West Bank and Gaza Strip remains critical, in particular owing to closures and increased reliance of Israel on expatriate workers from outside the region. The number of Palestinian workers in Israel dropped from an average of 120,000 on a monthly basis in 1992 to an average of about 25,000 in 1996.²⁸

38. The overall economic environment in the West Bank and Gaza Strip inhibits investment and growth owing to the continued ambiguity of the legal and political situation. According to the Palestinian Economic Policy Research Institute, "the complex overlay of laws and Israeli military orders in force during the occupation remains in place. This is further aggravated by border closures which include banning movement of goods, factors of production and people between the Palestinian areas and Israel and the Gaza Strip, and between the rest of the West Bank and Jerusalem. Closure also often entails banning movement between the West Bank, Jordan and the Gaza Strip".²⁹

39. In the period 1993-1996, there were a total of 342 days of closure affecting the Gaza Strip and 291 days in the West Bank. In 1996 alone, closures increased over the year before by 57 per cent in the West Bank and 35 per cent in the Gaza

Strip. The 1996 closures differed from those in preceding years in that they were in effect for much longer periods, which has a significant effect on the continuity and regularity of production, marketing, income generation and employment.³⁰

40. Frequent Israeli closures have been a major factor behind the 18 per cent drop in gross national product (GNP) in the West Bank and Gaza Strip and the 35 per cent drop in per capita GNP between 1992 and 1996. In addition, in 1997 gross domestic product (GDP) was estimated to have grown by 1.2 per cent, down from 5.5 per cent in 1996, as estimated by the Palestinian Authority and the International Monetary Fund, while the population growth was estimated at 4.5 per cent, thus explaining the further deterioration in GDP per capita in the West Bank and Gaza Strip.³¹

41. However, economic indicators show that the actual deterioration in standards of living has been far more dramatic in the West Bank, with a 19.7 per cent loss of per capita GDP compared with 8.4 per cent in the Gaza Strip in the period 1993-1995. This drop does not reflect the further deterioration, which occurred with the lengthy closures and widespread confrontations in later years.³²

42. Frequent closures have also negatively affected trade, particularly exports from the territories, causing long delays at the border which are detrimental to export goods, particularly vegetables and fruits. In addition, the delay in arrival of raw materials from Israel to the West Bank and Gaza Strip leads to the upsetting of production plans and to a lowering of capacity utilization.³³

43. Bank lending and deposits in the West Bank and Gaza Strip have been modest. In 1997, lending remained at about 19 per cent of the total assets, reflecting a depressed demand for credit by investors. The relatively low deposit/GDP ratio was, at the end of 1996, about 57.5 per cent. A further substantial increase in total bank deposits is not, however, expected to take place before a successful conclusion of final status negotiations. Owing to political uncertainties, many residents maintain bank accounts abroad.³⁴

44. Tourism, which was one of the first economic sectors to benefit from the peace dividend as it boomed during the period 1994-1995, has been affected by the stalemate in the peace process. According to the Palestinian Economic Policy Research Institute, "the Israeli authorities refuse to issue permits for new hotels or for expanding existing ones in East Jerusalem. This resulted in the freezing of the number of rooms at Arab-owned hotels in East Jerusalem at their 1967 level while the number of rooms at hotels operating in the rest of the West Bank and Gaza Strip declined. As a result of Israeli licensing policies, the number of Palestinian guides

in East Jerusalem dropped from 154 in 1967 to 47 in 1995, and their number in the rest of the West Bank and Gaza Strip was down to 24 in 1995, six of whom were newly licensed by the Palestinian Ministry of Tourism. Furthermore, the fact that the Israeli authorities neglected the infrastructure in the West Bank and Gaza Strip has made it difficult for the tourism sector to attract new investments".³⁵ Visitors to the West Bank and Gaza Strip still come through Israeli airports. Palestinian travel agents are prevented from meeting arriving clients and there are no tourist bus companies based in the West Bank outside East Jerusalem.³⁶

45. While incentives and investment continued to promote the Israeli civilian presence in the Syrian Golan, the Arab population faces further deterioration in their living conditions owing to Israeli settlements, restrictions on employment opportunities and education, as well as the Israeli taxation policy.³⁷

46. In the Golan Heights, there are currently 15,000 Israelis living in 33 settlement communities established in the wake of Israel's 1967 capture of the Golan Heights. The Syrian population, numbering an equal amount, resides in five villages in the Golan's north-eastern corner.³⁸

47. Some 2,000 dwellings are in various stages of construction in the Golan settlements. The completion of some was frozen by previous governments. Others were rented to army officers stationed in the area. A few completed units remained empty in previous years because of the lack of demand in view of the uncertainty created by negotiations between Israel and the Syrian Arab Republic over the Golan's future.³⁹

48. In the months before Prime Minister Netanyahu's election, this picture was already changing. After the collapse of the negotiations with the Syrian Arab Republic in February 1996, then Prime Minister Shimon Peres ordered the sale of many of these apartments, and made building plots available for private construction. The last of the 700 units built during the past three years at Katzrin, the largest settlement, had already been sold. Katzrin's population grew by 50 per cent during this period, from 4,000 to 6,000. A full 20 per cent of the area's residents arrived during 1996.⁴⁰ Planning and site work for 1,000 additional units is currently under way. Some 115 new units for the Elad settlement were approved in April 1996.⁴¹ And in May 1996, the Golan Regional Council began a drive to sell 250 units scattered throughout the area's 32 settlements.

49. Among the most prominent projects now under way are a \$130 million tourism and hotel project at Hamat Gader, a deal between MacDonald's and the kibbutz settlement of Merom Golan to grow potatoes for the company's french fries

on 300 dunums, and at the settlement of Ortal, a \$4.5 million dairy, the largest in the Middle East.⁴²

50. At meetings with Golan settlers soon after his election, Prime Minister Netanyahu reiterated his commitment to increase Katzrin's population to 15,000 during his tenure. He also announced his approval of the "Golan 2000" plan presented to him before the election. The plan calls for a \$202 million public sector investment in infrastructure, and new housing construction in 10 settlements, to reach the goal of increasing the plateau's Israeli population by 10,000 during the next four years.⁴³

51. On 20 January 1997, construction began on 600 new units at the settlements of Hmat Ghadar, Ramot and Gamla.⁴⁴ "In fact", noted *Ma'ariv* on 30 December 1996, "we are speaking of an 'expansion plan' according to which new settlements will be established in the Golan, under the rubric of 'expanding' existing settlements".⁴⁵ Three new settlements will be established as part of the first stage of the expansion. Despite such efforts to increase the Golan settler population, by May 1996, settlement leaders were complaining that there was an "enormous gap" between settlement plans and their actual implementation.⁴⁶

52. At the outset of a campaign to expand residential construction and to increase the settler population – part of the "Golan 2000" programme – settlement leaders reported that the settler population in the Golan is to increase by 10,000 to more than 25,000 by the year 2000.⁴⁷

53. Settlement leader Yehuda Wolman reported that 1,600 units had been constructed in the period 1989-1996, at a rate averaging 225 units annually. He also noted that of the 14,000 Israelis residing in the Golan, 3,000 are employed by the local government council, and one third are engaged in agriculture. In 1996, agricultural production reached \$240 million, while industrial production reached \$100 million, tourism \$40 million, sales and services \$50 million, and public services \$20 million. Investment in industrial production amounted to \$16 million in the period 1992-1996.⁴⁸ Settlement expansion is concentrated at the settlement of Katzrin, with a current population of 7,000, the largest among 32 Golan settlements. Three hundred new units were begun in mid-1997 and formal approval from the Minister of Defence was awaited to begin construction of an additional 1,000 units. To enable construction of the 1,000 units, the municipal area of Katzrin was expanded by 1,200 dunums bordering a nature reserve.⁴⁹

54. For the first time since the beginning of Israeli settlement in the Golan, a private sector contractor, as opposed to government companies, undertook a residential construction project. The 300 cottages being built at Katzrin

sell for \$95,000 to \$110,000. The State provides subsidized grants, benefits and loans comprising 90 per cent of this amount.⁴⁹ For example, beginning in October 1997, 35 building plots were marketed in the settlement of Katzrin as part of the popular “build your own house” programme. The one-half dunum plots were offered at no cost. Buyers were required to pay \$10,000 towards development costs, one half the actual investment by the State. By mid-December, more than 100 prospective buyers had signed up for the 35 available lots.⁵⁰

55. A number of incentives were adopted to attract prospective Israeli settlers into the Golan Heights, including individual grants of 50,000 shekels (equivalent to US\$ 16,500) and mortgage facilities as high as 95 per cent of the value of the house, with generous repayment terms.⁵¹ In addition, substantial state subsidies are provided in various economic sectors to strengthen the Israeli settlements policy. This includes an ongoing plan for the development of tourism in the Golan Heights, which is estimated at about US\$ 5.5 million. Of that sum, \$4 million is in the form of government funding. The Ministry of Tourism sponsors this project, in cooperation with the Jewish agency and the local council of settlements in the Golan.⁵²

56. Employment opportunities for the Syrian Arab population in the Golan Heights are extremely restricted, since the movement of the Arab population between the Golan and the Syrian Arab Republic remains problematic with the current stalled peace process. Hence, the only employment opportunities available to the Syrian population in the Golan are limited to unskilled and semi-skilled daily wage labour. In most conditions, these workers have no access to social benefits, and health insurance and are under constant threat of being made redundant with no compensation. In addition, a substantial differential in wages prevails, to the detriment of the Syrian Arab population of the Golan.⁵³ Furthermore, improvement of living conditions is further aggravated owing to restrictions on expanding educational facilities, facilitation of education in the Syrian Arab Republic and access to education in Israeli colleges.⁵⁴

57. The Arab population living in the Golan are subjected to prohibitive levels of taxation, including tax on income, health services, local councils, land and housing ownership, value added, ownership of cattle and use of water resources. Such measures have systematically deterred the Arab population from investing in agricultural or small-scale industrial development and have incited many of them to give up farming, or move to other areas and seek wage labour employment.⁵⁵

Notes

- ¹ On 28 September 1995, in Washington, D.C., Israel and the Palestine Liberation Organization (PLO) signed the Israeli-Palestinian Interim Agreement on the West Bank and Gaza Strip. This accord detailed the mechanisms for, and the limitation of, the extension of Palestinian self-rule to significant portions of the West Bank. The main feature of the Agreement was the provision for the division of the West Bank into three areas, each with varying degrees of Israeli and Palestinian responsibility. Area A consisted of the seven major Palestinian towns, Jenin, Kalkiliya, Tulkarm, Nablus, Ramallah, Bethlehem and Hebron, in which Palestinians would have complete authority for civilian security. In area B, which comprised all other Palestinian population centres (except for some refugee camps), Israel would retain “overriding security responsibility”. In area C, which includes all settlements, military bases and areas, and State lands, Israel would retain sole security authority.
- ² Based on the report of the Civil Administration for the West Bank, chart 8.7 (no date).
- ³ Based on the Economic and Social Commission for Western Asia, *The Socio-Economic Impact of Israeli Settlements* (to be issued shortly).
- ⁴ Israeli attorney Daniel Seidemann, as quoted in Foundation for Middle East Peace, *Report on Israeli Settlements in the Occupied Territories* (Washington, D.C., March 1997), p. 8.
- ⁵ Foundation for Middle East Peace, *Report on Israeli Settlements in the Occupied Territories* (Washington, D.C., March 1998), p. 1.
- ⁶ Nadav Shargay, in *Ha'aretz*, 31 May 1992.
- ⁷ Foundation for Middle East Peace, *Report on Israeli Settlements in the Occupied Territories* (Washington, D.C., July 1997), p. 1.
- ⁸ Jan de Jong, in “Greater Jerusalem”, a special report of the Foundation for Middle East Peace (Washington, D.C., summer 1997), p. 4SR.
- ⁹ E-1 Development Plan and Environment 1998; E-1 analysis, presented in “E-1 settlement expansion plans – preempting the growth of Arab Jerusalem”, a special report of the Foundation for Middle East Peace (Washington, D.C., winter 1998).
- ¹⁰ Central Bureau of Statistics, *Statistical Abstract of Israel*, 1995, p. 764.
- ¹¹ Central Bureau of Statistics, *Statistical Abstract of Israel*, 1995 and 1992.
- ¹² Central Bureau of Statistics, *Statistical Abstract of Israel*, 1995, p. 776.
- ¹³ Miriam Lowi, “West Bank water resources and the resolution of conflict in the Middle East”, *American Academy of Arts and Sciences*, September 1992.
- ¹⁴ *Al-Wasat*, 21 April 1993.
- ¹⁵ Peace Now, “The real map – a demographic and demographical analysis of the population of the West Bank and Gaza Strip” (Jerusalem, January 1993).

- ¹⁶ “Israeli obstacles to economic development in the occupied territories”, report prepared by the Jerusalem Media and Communications Center, November 1992, p. 49.
- ¹⁷ Aookued Research Institute, “Environmental profile of the West Bank” (Jerusalem, no date).
- ¹⁸ Shomron Municipal Environmental Association Report (no date), p. 5.
- ¹⁹ *Ibid.*, p. 6.
- ²⁰ Hisham Abdallah, “A tour of the West Bank: from settlement to settlement”, *Agence France Presse*, 17 October 1997.
- ²¹ The Palestinian Society for the Protection of Human Rights and the Environment, “Water quality in the West Bank” (October 1996), p. 6.
- ²² The Palestinian Society for the Protection of Human Rights and the Environment, *op. cit.*, p. 9.
- ²³ The Palestinian Society for the Protection of Human Rights and the Environment, “The slow death of man and the environment” (March 1992).
- ²⁴ Palestinian Authority, “Environmental pollution as a tool for post-Oslo Israeli control: the case of Tulkarm”, report prepared by the Ministry of Agriculture (undated).
- ²⁵ Palestinian Authority, *op. cit.*, and Shomron, *op. cit.*, p. 7.
- ²⁶ *Ha’aretz*, 14 November 1997.
- ²⁷ Israeli Foreign Ministry, Information Division, “Economic relations between Israel and the Palestinian Authority”, background paper (Jerusalem, February 1998).
- ²⁸ Economic and Social Commission for Western Asia, *Survey of Economic and Social Developments in the ESCWA Region, 1997-1998* (to be issued shortly).
- ²⁹ Palestinian Economic Policy Research Institute (MAS), *MAS Economic Monitor*, No. 1, 1997, pp. 2-3.
- ³⁰ Palestinian Economic Policy Research Institute, *op. cit.*, pp. 7-9.
- ³¹ Economic and Social Commission for Western Asia, *Survey of Economic and Social Developments ...*, p. 25.
- ³² Palestinian Economic Policy Research Institute, *op. cit.*, pp. 11-13.
- ³³ Palestinian Economic Policy Research Institute, *op. cit.*, pp. 8-9.
- ³⁴ Palestinian Economic Policy Research Institute, *op. cit.*, pp. 31-36.
- ³⁵ Palestinian Economic Policy Research Institute, *op. cit.*, p. 19.
- ³⁶ Economic and Social Commission for Western Asia, “Impact of the peace process on trade in services: the tourism sector in the ESCWA region, case studies on Egypt, Jordan and Palestine” (E/ESCWA/ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT/ 1997/8), p. 56.
- ³⁷ Syrian Arab Republic, Ministry of Foreign Affairs, “Report on Israeli practices against human rights of Syrian citizens in the occupied Syrian Golan” (June 1997), pp. 12-20.
- ³⁸ Economic and Social Commission for Western Asia, *The Socio-Economic Impact of Israeli Settlements ...*
- ³⁹ *Yediot Aharanot*, 13 August 1996.
- ⁴⁰ *Ha’aretz*, 17 June 1996.
- ⁴¹ *Ha’aretz*, 28 April 1996.
- ⁴² *Ha’aretz*, 8 July 1996.
- ⁴³ *Ha’aretz*, 9 July 1996.
- ⁴⁴ Foundation for Middle East Peace, *Report on Israeli Settlements in the Occupied Territories* (Washington, D.C., March-April 1997), p. 4.
- ⁴⁵ *Ma’ariv*, 30 December 1996.
- ⁴⁶ *Ma’ariv*, 5 May 1997.
- ⁴⁷ *Yediot Aharanot*, 20 June 1997.
- ⁴⁸ *Ha’aretz*, 20 June 1997.
- ⁴⁹ *Yediot Aharanot*, 6 May 1997.
- ⁵⁰ *Ma’ariv*, 30 December 1997.
- ⁵¹ *Yediot Aharanot*, 21 March 1996, as quoted in “Report on Israeli practices against human rights of Syrian citizens in the occupied Syrian Golan” ..., p. 9.
- ⁵² *El-Quds Press*, January 1997, as quoted in “Report on Israeli practices against human rights of Syrian citizens in the occupied Syrian Golan” ..., p. 10.
- ⁵³ “Report on Israeli practices against human rights of Syrian citizens in the occupied Syrian Golan” ..., pp. 16-17.
- ⁵⁴ *Ibid.*, pp. 20-24.
- ⁵⁵ *Ibid.*, pp. 14 and 15.



**General Assembly
Economic and Social Council**

Distr.: General
25 June 1999

Original: English

**General Assembly
Fifty-fourth session**
Item 104 of the preliminary list*
**Permanent sovereignty of the Palestinian
people in the occupied Palestinian territory,
including Jerusalem, and of the Arab
population in the occupied Syrian Golan over
their natural resources**

**Economic and Social Council
Substantive session of 1999**
Agenda item 11
**Economic and social repercussions of the
Israeli occupation on the living conditions of
the Palestinian people in the occupied
Palestinian territory, including Jerusalem,
and the Arab population in the occupied
Syrian Golan**

**Economic and social repercussions of the Israeli occupation on
the living conditions of the Palestinian people in the occupied
Palestinian territory, including Jerusalem, and of the Arab
population in the occupied Syrian Golan**

Note by the Secretary-General

In its resolution 1998/32 of 29 July 1998, entitled “Economic and social repercussions of the Israeli occupation on the living conditions of the Palestinian people in the occupied Palestinian territory, including Jerusalem, and the Arab population in the occupied Syrian Golan”, the Economic and Social Council requested the Secretary-General to submit to the General Assembly at its fifty-fourth session, through the Council, a report on the implementation of the resolution. The General Assembly, in its resolution 53/196 of 15 December 1998, reiterated the request for a report. The annexed report is submitted in response to the two above-mentioned resolutions.

* A/54/50.

Annex

Report prepared by the Economic and Social Commission for Western Asia

I. Introduction

1. At its forty-fifth plenary meeting on 29 July 1998, the Economic and Social Council adopted resolution 1998/32 on the economic and social repercussions of the Israeli occupation on the living conditions of the Palestinian people in the occupied Palestinian territory, including Jerusalem, and the Arab population in the occupied Syrian Golan. In that resolution, the Council, *inter alia*, stressed the importance of the revival of the Middle East peace process on the basis of Security Council resolutions 242 (1967), 338 (1973) of 22 October 1973 and 425 (1978) of 19 March 1978, and the principle of land for peace as well as the full and timely implementation of the agreements reached between the Government of Israel and the Palestine Liberation Organization, the representative of the Palestinian people. It also stressed the need to preserve the territorial integrity of all of the occupied Palestinian territory and to guarantee the freedom of movement of persons and goods in the territory, including the removal of restrictions into and from East Jerusalem, and the freedom of movement to and from the outside world. The Council further stressed the vital importance of the operation and construction of the Gaza airport, the seaport in Gaza and safe passage to the economic and social development of the Palestinian people. The Council called upon Israel to cease its measures against the Palestinian people, in particular the closure of the occupied Palestinian territory, the enforced isolation of Palestinian towns, the destruction of homes and the isolation of Jerusalem. The Council reaffirmed the inalienable right of the Palestinian people and the Arab population of the occupied Syrian Golan to all their natural and economic resources and called upon Israel not to exploit, endanger, or cause loss or depletion of those resources. It also reaffirmed that Israeli settlements in the occupied Palestinian territory, including Jerusalem, and the occupied Syrian Golan, were illegal and an obstacle to economic and social development. The Council requested the Secretary-General to submit to the General Assembly at its fifty-fourth session, through the Council, a report on the implementation of the resolution.

2. In its resolution 53/196, of 15 December 1998 on the permanent sovereignty of the Palestinian people in the occupied Palestinian territory, including Jerusalem, and of the Arab population of the occupied Syrian Golan over their natural resources, the General Assembly took note of the

report of the Secretary-General on the economic and social repercussions of the Israeli occupation on the living conditions of the Palestinian people in the Palestinian territory, including Jerusalem, occupied since 1967, and of the Arab population in the occupied Syrian Golan (A/53/163–E/1998/79, annex). It reaffirmed the inalienable rights of the Palestinian people and the population of the occupied Syrian Golan over their natural resources, including land and water; and called upon Israel, the occupying power, not to exploit, to cause loss or depletion of or to endanger the natural resources in the occupied Palestinian territory, including Jerusalem, and in the occupied Syrian Golan. It recognized the right of the Palestinian people to claim restitution as a result of any exploitation, loss or depletion of, or danger to, their natural resources, and expressed the hope that the issue would be dealt with in the framework of the final status negotiation between the Palestinian and Israeli sides. It requested the Secretary-General to submit a report to the Assembly at its fifty-fourth session. The present report responds to the two above-mentioned resolutions.

II. Economic and social repercussions of the Israeli occupation

A. Occupied Palestinian territory, including Jerusalem

3. The failure to fully implement the terms of agreements reached between Israel and the Palestine Liberation Organization (PLO) has caused continuing hardship to Palestinians in the occupied territory. Israeli settlement policy and closures of occupied territory continue to aggravate the living conditions of the Palestinian people and of the Arab population of the occupied Syrian Golan.

4. Civilian Israeli settlements have been built at some 200 sites seized by civilian and military bodies representing the Government of Israel and by Israeli civilians empowered by Israel to undertake such activity. The land under exclusive Israeli control amounts to around 71.8 per cent of the West Bank (Area C) and 20 per cent of the Gaza Strip. In addition, 30 per cent of the area of East Jerusalem is under effective Israeli ownership. No similar estimates are available for the Golan Heights, although it is known that over 17,000 inhabitants of Syrian nationality are living in a few villages

close to the borders of the Syrian Arab Republic and Lebanon and that a similar number of Israelis have settled there.¹

5. Israel has established approximately 150 settlements in the West Bank with a civilian population of 175,000. There are approximately 180,000 Israeli residents in East Jerusalem. In the Gaza Strip, there are 6,000 settlers in 16 settlements and 16,500 settlers in 33 settlements in the Golan Heights. By the end of 1999, more than 375,000 Israelis will be living in over 200 communities established since 1967 in the West Bank, East Jerusalem, the Gaza Strip and the Golan Heights.²

6. The geographic distribution of settlements in the occupied Palestinian territory severely restricts the growth of Palestinian communities. In most cases, settlements either surround Palestinian communities, and therefore prevent their natural growth, or huge tracts of Palestinian land are confiscated for future settlement expansion. A clear example is the Bethlehem area, which is surrounded in the south by the Gush Etzion bloc; in the west by Har Gilo and Beitar Ilit, as well as by two bypass roads; in the east by Tekoa and a bypass road; and in the north by Gilo and a bypass road. In the north also lies the site of the proposed settlement of Jabal Abu Ghneim.³

7. Israeli Government sources claim that 20,000 dwelling units have been constructed, if not necessarily completed and occupied, in the Palestinian territory under the new Government formed in 1996. Almost 14,000 units have been sold during the same period.⁴ During 1998, existing West Bank settlements were expanded by 8,219 dunums (a dunum is equal to approximately 1,000 square metres), and those in East Jerusalem by 8,400 dunums.⁵ The Prime Minister of Israel has inaugurated six new industrial parks, in the south Hebron area, near Ma'ale Mikmash, at Keddumim, Shaked, Ma'ale Ephraim and Ariel. Twenty new neighbourhoods in existing settlements and over 100 new "footholds", some of which are destined to evolve into new and distinct settlements, have been established. Five paramilitary settlements, known as "nahals", have been transformed into permanent civilian settlements: at Giva'ot near the Etzion Bloc, at Rachelim near Shilo and at Hemdat, Avnat and Baroush in the Jordan Valley. The Government has created five regional colleges, in Kiryat Arba, Ma'ale Ephraim, Avnat, Elon Moreh, and Kedumim.⁶

8. In the aftermath of the Wye accords, the Israeli Cabinet approved the construction of 20 bypass roads at a cost of \$70 million throughout the West Bank. The purpose of the roads is to strengthen the Israeli presence in the West Bank by forging modern communication, security and transport links between the settlements and Israel.⁷ By early January

1999, 14 of the 20 roads were in advanced stages of construction. In addition to many bypass roads whose construction has been facilitated through negotiations with the Palestinian Authority, comprising 18,036 dunums in 1998 alone, the Government of Israel has spent close to \$70 million on major road construction projects in the West Bank, notably along the length of the Jordan Valley, the "Trans-Samaria Highway" crossing the northern West Bank, the road from the East Jerusalem community of Ramot to Ben Shemen in Israel, and Road 45, a major transport route from Tel Aviv to Jerusalem.⁸

9. According to the Wye Memorandum, agreements about the southern safe passage route, designed to connect Gaza with the West Bank via Hebron, should have concluded within a week of the date of entry into force of the Memorandum, and operation of this route should have begun as soon as possible thereafter. Agreements on the southern route have been delayed by unresolved issues relating to the northern route. There is no confirmed opening date for any safe passage between the Gaza and West Bank areas. Opening the port of Gaza has been similarly delayed owing to security demands by Israel. On the other hand, the international airport in the Gaza Strip, under joint Israeli and Palestinian Authority supervision, opened to limited traffic in late 1998. Continuing restrictions on the Palestinian Authority's operation of the facility have contributed to its failure, until now, to make a recognizable contribution to the Palestinian economy.

10. Peace Now reports that housing starts in West Bank settlements increased by 136 per cent during the first half of 1998, compared with a similar period in 1997. Using figures compiled by the Central Bureau of Statistics, Peace Now reports that there were 1,420 starts in the first half of 1998, compared with 600 in the same period one year earlier. Government construction increased by 245 per cent, from 290 to 970 units, while private sector construction in settlements increased by 45 per cent, from 310 to 450 units. At the end of June 1998, there were 3,390 units in various phases of construction, an increase of 16 per cent over June 1997. The public sector contribution to this figure increased by 41 per cent, from 1,660 units in June 1997 to 2,340 in June 1998.⁹

11. Peace Now reported on 19 July 1998 that 11 per cent of the apartments that had so far been built and marketed by the Ministry of Construction and Housing in 1998 were located in settlements (excluding East Jerusalem). Figures from the Ministry and the Israel Land Authority reveal that 5,242 of the 48,862 units that were planned for marketing in 1998 were located in settlements (excluding East Jerusalem). In November 1998, the Ministry of Construction and Housing issued tenders for the first 1,000 units to be built in the settlement of Jabal Abu Ghneim. This allocation was part of

a 1998 programme to tender more than 27 per cent of the national total of 23,000 units in lands occupied in 1967.¹⁰ The construction under way attests to a significant campaign of intentional settlement expansion.

12. More than 20 per cent of all land to be marketed by the Ministry of Construction and Housing during 1999 is located in the occupied Palestinian territory. The Ministry intends to market land for 3,729 dwelling units in the occupied Palestinian territory during 1999 and 1,320 units at Jabal Abu Ghneim in East Jerusalem. Nationally, land for only 19,800 units will be marketed. The Ministry sales do not give a complete picture of the housing market, however, as they are geared towards young families and others eligible for Government assistance. Sites selected for sales in 1999 include Ariel (500 units), Alfe Menache (500), Emmanuel (400), Beitar (636), Efrat (100), Ma'ale Adumim (600), Givat Ze'ev (811) and Adam (182).¹¹ On 21 January 1999, the first contract was signed for the sale of apartments at Jabal Abu Ghneim.¹²

13. Close to 80 per cent of the 4,000 to 5,000 dwelling units on which construction began in the West Bank and Gaza Strip settlements during 1997 have been sold, according to numbers compiled by the Office of the Prime Minister.¹³ The relatively attractive value of the settlements is the product of a number of factors: the classification of settlements as Development Area A, which entitles them to the highest level of public subsidy, including 50 per cent of the land costs; the low profit margins accepted by Amana, the construction arm of the settlement movement Gush Emunim and by settlement-based contractors; and less stringent building codes than apply in Israel. Construction costs of \$500 to \$600 per square metre result in selling costs of only \$700 per square metre, far less expensive than similar charges in central Israel.¹⁴ Notwithstanding this expansion in the West Bank, Peace Now reports a current vacancy rate of 25 per cent — 454 units out of 1,800 — in the Gaza settlements, a number disputed by settlement leaders as inflated. Tenders for the construction of 100 new units were issued in mid-1998 for the settlement of Nisanit, near the Jabaliya refugee camp. On 10 December 1998 a tender for the construction of four additional homes was published.¹⁵

14. The upsurge in settlement expansion in the West Bank continues. Thousands of apartment units are planned for settlements east of Jerusalem, in order to produce a ring of Israeli settlements around Jerusalem and a territorial bridge between Ma'ale Adumim and the settlement communities north and west of Jerusalem. Thousands of dunums of land currently under military control will be transferred to civil authorities for housing construction. In the Etzion Bloc of settlements south of Jerusalem, for example, 630 new

dwelling units are currently under construction alongside 1,300 existing houses. Hundreds more are under construction in the larger settlement towns of Efrat, Ma'ale Adumim and Betar Ilit. A new industrial plant for the production of concrete has opened in the settlement bloc, the first in the settler area, to respond to the increased demand for construction materials.¹⁶ In the "Benjamin region" (north-west of Jerusalem), more than 20,000 Israelis live in 30 settlements. In this area, there are 1,500 new dwellings under construction, enough to increase the population by 6,000. Expansion is occurring at Bet El, where 150 of these new homes are under construction, with an additional 50 expected to begin before the end of 1998. Located just north of Ramallah, Bet El is already home to almost 700 families and is one of the few settlements that may be in closer proximity to territory controlled by the Palestinian Authority after an anticipated redeployment of the Israeli military forces required by the Oslo and Wye accords.¹⁷ Even in the Jordan Valley settlements, depressed by economic problems and a stagnant population, a new wave of expansion is under way.¹⁸

15. Israeli television channel one reported in June 1998 that there were 3,600 mobile homes, 1,400 of which stood empty, stationed in West Bank settlements, and 1,700 State-owned apartments were also reported empty. Amana, which was responsible for receiving the trailers, has become the almost exclusive controller of State assets in the West Bank in the past two years.¹⁹ Peace Now reported on 13 August 1998 that 5,892 new units were under construction and that 2,888 out of approximately 42,000 dwellings in occupied Palestinian territory settlements were empty.²⁰ The Council of Jewish Communities in Judea, Samaria and Gaza reported in May 1998 that 95 per cent of current construction consisted of structures begun but later frozen by the Governments of Yitzhak Rabin and Shimon Peres.²¹

16. The Palestinian Center for Human Rights reported on 12 December 1998 that "wide-scale bulldozing can be witnessed in various areas of the Gaza Strip, especially close to the settlements in the agricultural areas (Khan Younis and Rafah City) and the area of Tel Zorub, which lies close to the Egyptian border. It is clear that Israeli settlement activity has taken on a new life, especially after the signing of the Wye River Memorandum on 23 October 1998."

17. The report of the Palestinian Center for Human Rights also noted the following activities:

(a) Three hundred and fifty dunums of land has been bulldozed in Tel Gnam, in the Khan Younis agricultural area and on land beside the Neve Dekalim settlement;

(b) Since 2 December 1998, Israeli bulldozers have been bulldozing a parcel of 150 dunums next to the Pe'at Sade settlement in an attempt to confiscate the land;

(c) On 6 December 1998, Israeli bulldozers stepped up their activities on a 30-dunum parcel along the road between the Gush Katif settlement and the Bedolah settlements (in the Rafah agricultural area);

(d) On 9 December 1998, five dunums of land planted with trees bearing unpicked fruit were bulldozed in the Tel Zorub area in Rafah (near the Egyptian border);

(e) The transport of sand from the Rafah agricultural area was also reported during the latter part of 1998;

“These activities”, notes the Palestinian Center for Human Rights, “not only contribute to negatively changing the geography of the land, but also must be considered part of the organized theft of Palestinian natural resources by Israel.”²²

18. During 1998, Israeli authorities demolished 100 Palestinian homes in the West Bank and 45 in East Jerusalem.²³ Approximately 2 per cent of the West Bank has been confiscated for the use of bypass roads constructed since January 1996. In many, if not most, cases, confiscation orders date from 1993 or earlier.²⁴ According to a report in *Ha'aretz*, “since Oslo, 35 square kilometres of bypass roads have been paved for Israelis. Thousands of olive trees have been cut down and are being cut down in the process of the expansion of these roads. Palestinian villagers report that, in September 1998, 4,000 olive trees were uprooted in the area of Salfit near the settlement of Ariel.”²⁵

19. Bypass roads are built with a safety buffer of 50 to 100 metres on either side where all Palestinian residential and commercial construction is prohibited. “Existing Palestinian houses located in areas close to planned bypass roads”, noted a recent study by a Palestinian researcher, “are being systematically demolished. The bypass roads built in the West Bank to date exceed 276 kilometres in length; those in the planning stage are estimated to reach 425 kilometres. With the safety buffer zone they enjoy, the construction of these bypass roads requires the confiscation and destruction of approximately 109,000 dunums of Palestinian land, most of which is agricultural, depriving owners of their main source of income.”²⁶ Where bypass roads cross agricultural areas, there is an immediate financial impact. For example, along Road #60 running south from Jerusalem, one dunum sells for \$60,000. The value of one dunum of grapes planted in the Hebron area is \$2,800. Expected confiscations for the Arroub bypass south of Bethlehem, on lands known for their agricultural value, will have a particularly severe economic impact.²⁷

20. Even though Israel continues to retain security control of Area B and the access roads to settlements in close proximity to areas under Palestinian control, the security of these settlements remains impaired. A few settlements, such as Sanur, west of Jenin, which is already almost empty, are not likely to survive as civilian settlements. In this regard, former head of Israeli military intelligence noted that protecting access roads to these settlements will be a constant source of provocations and conflict. The example of Netzarim in the Gaza Strip is most frequently recalled in this context. All travel from this isolated settlement proceeds under Israeli Defence Forces escort. Yet, the population of this isolated outpost has grown from 60 people to more than 200 in recent years.²⁸

21. On 2 July 1998, a stand-off developed along the road from the Gaza town of Deir al-Balah to the al-Mouassi district after Israeli Defence Forces prevented a group of Palestinians, including a minister, from passing. The road had been closed to Palestinian traffic for three years. Palestinians, in response, blocked major road junctions near settlements. During the incident, Israeli Defence Forces reinforcements were sent to Gaza. Settlers were unable to enter or leave many settlements owing to the Palestinian blockades. At one point, the Israeli Defence Forces offered residents of Netzarim an airlift by helicopter to their settlement, but the 50 men, women and children stranded at the Karni crossing declined the offer. The road was opened to Palestinian traffic in early 1999.²⁹

22. The immediate repercussions of Israeli settlement activity in the occupied Palestinian territory are the constant frictions between the settlers and the Palestinians. According to a report published by the Palestinian Authority in late August 1998, there have been attacks in the Hebron region involving firings at vehicles belonging to the Palestinian police and civilians. Reports of settlers torching Palestinian vehicles and trying to forcibly enter homes were received. Reports of a similar nature were received in the Nablus region, along with reports of settler attempts to establish control over Palestinian lands, as at the Yitzhar settlement, uprooting fruit trees, destroying crops and contaminating drinking water.³⁰

23. Settlers continued to expose themselves to attacks, increasing tension in the occupied Palestinian territory. Towards the end of 1998, Israeli security officials noted that settlers had been targeted by Palestinian opposition groups. Locations where everyday friction between Palestinians and settlers occurs, particularly in Hebron, as well as in the Nablus region, were cited as probable sites for violence against settlers. Both areas had experienced an upsurge in attacks on settlers and soldiers in the latter part of 1998, including the killing of two settlers from Yitzhar near Nablus

on 5 August, the murder of a settler in Hebron on 20 August, an attack on a bus travelling to Joseph's Tomb in Nablus on 10 September and a grenade attack in Hebron on 30 September in which soldiers were injured. The constant friction in Hebron is leading to the de facto division of the city.³¹

24. According to the Palestinian Center for Human Rights, Israeli settlers and soldiers either shot and killed or otherwise caused the death of 34 Palestinian civilians during 1998. Settlers were directly responsible for 11 deaths in the occupied Palestinian territory.³²

25. The repercussions of Israeli occupation on Palestinian health care has been severe. Responsibility for health care has been transferred to the Palestinian Authority as part of the Oslo I agreement, but has been largely supported by private organizations. The Palestinian Authority has not been able to cope financially with the burden of high population growth and extremely limited economic resources. As indicated in a 1993 survey, clinics in the West Bank numbered 85. There were 19 hospitals consisting of only 365 beds in 1993, 47 per cent of which were sponsored by the Government, 39 per cent by charitable organizations and 9 per cent by the United Nations Relief and Works Agency for Palestine Refugees in the Near East (UNRWA).³³ These health services cater to a population of 2,018,818,³⁴ which by 1998 had grown to an estimated 3,017,296.³⁵ In 1993, only 18 per cent of the West Bank rural population was enrolled in the Government health insurance scheme.³⁶

26. Regarding the occupation's repercussions on education, movement restrictions continue to affect school attendance for those students who must cross Israeli-controlled checkpoints. Furthermore, the increase in the size of the population in the occupied Palestinian territory is clearly reflected in the number of students attending schools. Student enrolment in the 1993/94 school year totalled 528,276. The total enrolment had grown to 832,729 by the 1996/97 school year. However, the increase in the number of students was not matched by an increase in the number of teachers. On the contrary, the number of teachers' training institutes decreased from 21 in 1993 to 16 in 1997.³⁷

27. Economic development in Israeli settlements can have deleterious effects upon the Palestinian community. For example, at the settlement of Migdalim, the expansion of a leather factory resulted in the construction of a factory on 500 dunums of land claimed by a resident of the village of Jurish. New roads were opened to the factory site, near the main road leading to the village, which prevented landowners from reaching their lands.³⁸

28. Numerous restrictions imposed by Israel for security reasons negatively affect Palestinians. For example, at a meeting on 28 April 1998 to discuss environmental issues, the Palestinian delegation demanded the removal of military roadblocks on the road leading to Shuwaykah north of Tulkarm, and the Nazlat 'Isa roadblock in the West Bank, which divides Nazlat 'Isa in two parts and obstructs the movement of citizens. The Palestinian side also demanded the reopening of Hablah Old Road, which had been closed by the Israelis. The Israelis replied that the road was closed for security reasons and stressed that these issues were being discussed by the higher security and civilian bodies. The Israeli side also said reopening Hablah Old Road would create many problems and cause several accidents. The Khirbat al-Hafasah road, which passes through a settlement, is the only road linking the village with the outside world. The Israeli side stressed that citizens and vehicles could not travel this road for security reasons and to prevent any friction with the settlers. The Israelis stressed the need to find an alternative route.³⁹

29. The confiscation of lands declared by Israel as "State land" as a prelude to their transfer to Israeli control has a critical impact upon the Palestinian community. For example, at a 28 April 1998 meeting to discuss environmental issues at the Joint Israeli-Palestinian Liaison Committee headquarters in the settlement of Keddumim, the Palestinian delegation protested periodic Israeli efforts to alienate Palestinian land. The delegation cited the case of the Kafr al-Labad lands, which were annexed to the settlement of Avnei Hefetz, the Ramin lands, which were annexed to Enav settlement and the confiscation of lands and the uprooting of trees in Kafr Qaddum, near the settlement of Oranit. The Israeli delegation responded by stressing that no new confiscation orders would be issued, and emphasized that the areas noted by the Palestinian delegation included government land.⁴⁰

30. Between 1972 and 1997, the Israeli population in East Jerusalem grew from 10.3 per cent to 48.1 per cent. It now comprises almost half of the sector's population. The Israeli population of East Jerusalem has increased to 17 times its 1972 level over this period, compared with the Palestinian population, which more than doubled over the same 25 years (118 per cent growth).⁴¹

31. Reports of the large-scale depopulation in Palestinian areas of East Jerusalem have been confirmed by a recent census conducted by the Palestinian Authority. Palestinians holding Jerusalem identity documents issued by Israel are generally believed to number almost 200,000. The number of Palestinians physically residing within the municipal boundaries enlarged by Israel is less than half that number.

The number of Palestinians in the occupied Palestinian territory, including East Jerusalem, in 1998 was 2,895,683.⁴²

32. A continuing factor in the Palestinian exodus from Jerusalem is financial. Many thousands of Palestinian residents of East Jerusalem have moved to more affordable housing in the nearby West Bank. In hundreds of cases, Palestinians with Jerusalem identity documents who reside outside the city have been forced by Israel to surrender their Jerusalem identity documents and thus their right to reside in the city. From January 1996 to March 1998, 2,000 Palestinians carrying East Jerusalem identity documents were denied the right to live in East Jerusalem by Israel, compared with 327 during 1987–1995.⁴³ The total number of identity documents confiscated in 1998 was 788 according to Israel's Ministry of Interior. The number is in accord with independent assessments.⁴⁴

33. According to a report in *Kol Ha'ir*, on 6 February 1999, the Mayor of Jerusalem ordered that the demolition of "illegally built" structures in East Jerusalem be stepped up. From his election in 1994 to June 1998, the Mayor of Jerusalem has overseen the demolition of 49 Palestinian homes constructed without permits.⁴⁵ Peace Now reported on 22 June 1998 that, from January to June 1998, the Government of Israel had demolished 68 Palestinian dwellings in East Jerusalem and the West Bank, compared with 14 during a similar period in 1997. *Ha'aretz* reported that 249 Palestinian dwellings had been demolished in 1997 in the West Bank and East Jerusalem.⁴⁶ According to the Palestinian Authority, 40 Palestinian buildings were destroyed in East Jerusalem during the first six months of 1998.⁴⁷

34. The plan for an "umbrella municipality" for Jerusalem and its environs, unveiled in June 1998, will, if implemented, bring West Bank settlements into "Greater Jerusalem" one administrative step further along the road to de facto annexation. The new plan would invest Israeli civilian agencies with more extensive powers over the development and expansion of settlements to be included in the scheme. Israeli officials insist that the proposal, important details of which remain to be approved, "is entirely an internal Israeli matter on the municipal administrative level rather than on the international level."⁴⁸ No settlements were specified for inclusion in the proposal but it appears likely that Ma'ale Adumim, Givat Ze'ev and Betar Ilit, with a combined population of almost 40,000, are high on the list of potential participants.⁴⁹ An analysis of the proposal by the United States Department of State was reported to note, "Insofar as planning and construction is concerned, the relevant Jewish settlements in the West Bank will be functionally detached from the authority of the Civil Administration (the Military

Commander) and, in essence, will come under the direct control of civilian Israeli authority."⁵⁰

35. Israeli occupation is strictly affecting and undermining the Palestinians' supply of drinking water as well as its quality. A report issued on 9 September 1998 by the Israeli human rights group B'tselem charged that Mekorot, Israel's national water company, drastically cuts water to Palestinian communities in the West Bank during the summer to meet increased consumption in Israel and its settlements in the territory. The report notes that the current division of water in the occupied territory is "based on an unfair division of resources shared by Israel and the Palestinians. Israel created a system of restrictions that prevents the Palestinians from utilizing water resources in a manner that meets their basic needs and population's birth rate." The report also indicates that Israel has imposed obstacles to the drilling of new wells, established quotas on the water drawn from wells, expropriated wells owned by Palestinians and neglected to maintain water systems. The report further notes that Mekorot supplies an unlimited amount of water to Israeli settlements, while denying nearby Palestinian communities a sufficient amount. One result has been an increase in infectious diseases from the use of unclean water.⁵¹ According to the Oslo II agreement, of the 601 million cubic metres (mcm) of water available annually in the three main West Bank aquifers, 340 mcm (56.6 per cent) is earmarked for use in Israel, 143 mcm (23.8 per cent) for use by the 170,000 West Bank settlers (excluding those residing in East Jerusalem) and 118 mcm (19.6 per cent) for the 1.2 million Palestinians living in the West Bank.⁵² It was reported in *Ha'aretz* on 27 July 1998 that more than 500,000 Palestinians in the West Bank, one third of the population, were without reliable regular sources of water. Palestinians blame the distribution policies of Israel's water carrier, Mekorot, a charge denied by Israel. *Ha'aretz* reported on 20 August 1998 that Palestinians are supplied with 50 to 85 litres of water a day, while settlers consume 280 to 300 litres a day.

36. Israeli control and neglect of the occupied Palestinian territory is having negative repercussions on the environment. There are approximately 260 Israeli-owned industrial concerns in the West Bank. These factories are located either in Israeli-operated industrial zones or inside settlements. Information about these industrial activities is scarce. Some products have been identified, but detailed information on quantities produced, labour and waste generated is not available. The major industries within these industrial zones include: aluminium, leather tanning, textile dyeing, batteries, fibreglass, plastics and other chemical industries. For Israeli industrialists, the West Bank has, at least in one sphere, a comparative advantage over Israel.⁵³ Environmental

regulations on soil, air and water quality and restrictions on industrial development have generally been far less comprehensive and much less assiduously enforced in the occupied Palestinian territory as compared with Israel itself. Combined with State-subsidized incentives for Israeli concerns to locate to industrial parks in and near settlements, the relative laxity of environmental enforcement and monitoring has led to the relocation of polluting industries into the occupied territory. On 16 October 1998, a military order was issued enabling Israel's Ministry of Environment to undertake enforcement actions and to enforce Israeli environmental legislation in West Bank settlements. It is too early to assess the record of enforcement under this new regulation.⁵⁴

37. According to the Applied Research Institute of Jerusalem, a Palestinian environmental organization, "The accurate composition of industrial waste cannot be easily determined unless laboratory analysis is conducted, as its quality depends on the type of manufacturing process involved. Palestinian scientists face difficulties in collecting waste samples owing to lack of access to the effluent source. Therefore, only estimates of the composition of the generated waste can be made, where the type of industry indicates the major constituents of the hazardous material in the waste. The generated industrial wastes contain toxic elements, such as aluminium, chromium, lead, zinc and nickel. For example, the aluminium industry produces aluminium and acidic wastes. Electroplating produces nickel, chrome and acidic wastes."⁵⁵

38. Reliable data about waste-water generated in the settlements is difficult to obtain. Approximately 4.3 million cubic metres of waste-water is generated annually from settlements in the West Bank. A large amount is dumped, untreated, on Palestinian land, creating a health hazard for many communities.⁵⁶ According to the documented statements of the Palestinian Ministry of Health, and the Environmental Health Department, the waste-water of numerous settlements flows onto the lands of Palestinian villages and towns nearby.⁵⁷

39. Settlers acknowledge the problems caused by the increasing amount of waste products generated by expanding settlements. Settlers in Ofra, concerned about inadequate sewage disposal, agreed in early 1998 to fund a new treatment facility in part with municipal funds. Lack of attention to this issue in the construction phase is a more general problem, noted an environmental official in the settlement government offices. Ofra is not the only settlement where settlers acknowledge the problem. At nearby Kochav Ya'acov and Adam, sewage flows into streams and wadis.⁵⁸

40. There are 45 concerns operating in the industrial park of Barkan adjacent to the settlement of Ariel. Most are engaged in the production of fabric and plastics for export. Until recently, the owners of these factories escaped the tighter rules on health and the environment applicable in Israel by operating in the West Bank, where they also receive tax breaks.⁵⁹ In addition to the industrial facilities at Barkan, industries operating at Ariel, Karnei Shomron, Kiryat Arba and Keddumim have been the target of Palestinian complaints.⁶⁰ Of particular concern is the effect of industrial development on the quality of groundwater, which Palestinian investigators have found to be significantly more polluted near settlements than elsewhere.⁶¹

41. At an 28 April 1998 meeting to discuss environmental issues at the Israeli Civilian Liaison headquarters in the settlement of Keddumim, the Palestinian delegation demanded the closure of Israeli factories built near the border area to the west of Tulkarm, especially the Geshurei and Dickson Gas factories that were moved from inside Israel. The Israeli delegation confirmed that an environment team had recently conducted a study on the subject but had not presented its final report; it added that the Palestinian side would be informed of the results.⁶²

42. Numerous stone quarries in the West Bank supply 80 per cent of the material needs of Israel's construction sector. Israeli concerns operate six West Bank quarries, covering 1,673.3 hectares.⁶³ Many of these quarries are located in close proximity to Palestinian residential areas. The clouds of white dust produced by the quarries pose certain health risks. Recent reports note that those residing near such enterprises suffer from increased levels of asthma and acute bronchial infections.⁶⁴

43. Palestinians have traditionally made up the bulk of the workforce engaged in the construction and daily maintenance of settlements throughout the occupied Palestinian territory. Palestinian labourers working in Israeli settlements number between 10,000 and 12,000 in more than 100 Israeli enterprises, including some 3,500 in the Erez industrial zone and settlements in the Gaza Strip and approximately 8,500 in industrial parks and settlements in the West Bank,⁶⁵ but excluding those working in the settlement communities of East Jerusalem. The number of such workers has risen by around 50 per cent since the imposition of the closure in 1993, in parallel to an increase in the number of Israeli-owned factories in the occupied Palestinian territory.⁶⁶

44. In contrast to the salaries of Palestinians employed in Israel itself, those of Palestinians employed in the settlements are not paid through the Payments Section of the State Employment Bureau. The Payments Section ensures that

workers are paid at least the minimum wage and enjoy the accompanying social benefits (holidays, rest and recuperation pay, sick pay and pension funds). Wages paid to Palestinians working in the settlements range from 7 to 13 shekels per hour, although the legal minimum hourly wage is 14.3 shekels (the exchange rate is approximately 4 shekels to 1 United States dollar).⁶⁷

45. In cases of work accidents in settlements, only workers who are Israeli citizens are insured by Israel's National Insurance Institute. Employers are required to provide Palestinian employees with private medical insurance, but there is no supervisory authority ensuring that they do so, nor is there any State supervision concerning safety conditions for Palestinian workers in the settlements. Furthermore, representatives of Palestinian trade unions are prevented from visiting workplaces in the settlements. In cases of litigation initiated by Palestinian workers against settlement employers, the latter choose the courts in the occupied territory and benefit from the application of the laxer Jordanian labour law still in force there.⁶⁸

46. The unemployment situation in the occupied Palestinian territory remains critical, owing in particular to closures and the increased reliance of Israel on expatriate workers from outside the region. The number of Palestinian workers in Israel dropped from an average of 120,000 on a monthly basis in 1992 to 45,800 during the first half of 1998.⁶⁹ This situation worsened on 11 September 1998, when the Israeli authorities imposed a comprehensive closure on the occupied Palestinian territory, thereby invalidating over 45,000 work permits, and approximately 21,000 business persons' permits to enter Israel. On 17 September, the Israeli authorities began to issue valid work permits. By 29 September, 13,800 permits for Gaza workers and 9,500 for West Bank workers had been issued. On that day, the Israeli authorities re-imposed the comprehensive closure, which, except for 2 October, lasted until 13 October when permits began to be re-issued.⁷⁰ In September 1998, the reduction in labour flows resulted in estimated wage income losses of \$11.4 million for permitted Palestinian workers, with perhaps greater losses for unofficial workers. By the end of 1998, more than 100,000 Palestinians were reported to be employed by Israeli enterprises, including 60,000 lawfully employed in Israel and 13,000 working in industrial zones and settlements.⁷¹

47. The July to September (1998) round of the Labour Force Survey Series conducted by the Palestinian Central Bureau of Statistics reveals the labour force participation rate in the occupied Palestinian territory to be 41.4 per cent (44.3 per cent in the West Bank and 34.4 per cent in the Gaza Strip). The unemployment rate was 21.5 per cent (18.2 per cent in the West Bank and 31.6 per cent in the Gaza Strip).

The employment rate was 69.2 per cent (70.4 per cent in the West Bank, and 65.7 per cent in the Gaza Strip). The underemployment was 9.3 per cent (11.4 per cent in the West Bank and 2.7 per cent in the Gaza Strip). The same source indicates the average wage for the Palestinians was 54.4 shekels in the West Bank, 43.5 shekels in the Gaza Strip and 90.7 shekels in Israel.⁷²

48. The macroeconomic impact of Israeli occupation on the occupied Palestinian territory inhibits investment and growth as a result of the continued ambiguity of the legal and political situation. There is no basic investment code in the areas controlled by the Palestinian Authority. Moreover, there is no final status agreement with Israel. In fact, "the complex overlay of laws and Israeli military orders in force during the occupation remains in place. This is further aggravated by border closures which include the ban on the movement of goods, factors of production and people between the Palestinian areas, Israel and the Gaza Strip, and between the rest of the West Bank and Jerusalem. Closure also often entails banning movement between the West Bank and Jordan and between the Gaza Strip and Egypt".⁷³

49. Closures have a significant effect on the continuity and regularity of production, marketing, income generation and employment.⁷⁴ "Comprehensive closures were imposed on 26 days during 1998 ... Excluding weekends and holidays, there were 14.5 effective closure days, a loss of 5.2 per cent of total potential workdays, as compared with a 20.5 per cent loss in 1997."⁷⁵ According to a source at the International Monetary Fund (IMF), "the regime of border closures has a particularly adverse impact both because of the direct effect on investment incentives in the context of an already weak productive base and a small domestic market, and because the severe economic costs it imposes tend to slow or divert efforts by the Palestinian Authority and donors to alleviate the other significant impediments to private investment in the West Bank and Gaza Strip."⁷⁶ According to one source on issues related to property taxes, 240 commercial outlets inside Jerusalem's Old City have closed down as a result of the closures imposed since 1991.⁷⁷

50. According to a recent report by the Office of the United Nations Special Coordinator in the Occupied Territories (UNSCO), real per capita GDP and GNP at end-1998 were, respectively, about \$1,380 and \$1,630, a 3.4 per cent decline in the former and a 2.1 per cent decline in the latter, as compared with 1997.⁷⁸

51. Frequent border closures have also negatively affected trade, particularly exports from the territory, causing long delays that are detrimental to export goods, particularly fruits and vegetables. In addition, the delay in the arrival of raw materials from Israel to the occupied Palestinian territory

upsets production plans and lowers capacity utilization.⁷⁹ Nevertheless, fewer imposed closures in 1998 resulted in an improvement in trade flows. Monitored truckload movements exiting and entering the territory grew an estimated 12.4 per cent in 1998 relative to 1997. Imported truckloads grew by 14.7 per cent while the number of exported ones grew by only 1.9 per cent. In nominal shekel value terms, total trade with Israel grew by about 9.3 per cent, with exports rising by 17.3 per cent (to about \$492 million) and imports growing by 7.2 per cent (to about \$1,714 million) as between 1997 and 1998. Direct registered imports from countries other than Israel grew by about 24.3 per cent (to about \$143 million).⁸⁰

52. The revival of private investment anticipated at the time of the Oslo accords has not materialized. Estimates show that the share of private investment in GDP fell from 19 per cent in 1993 to about 10 per cent in 1997. Moreover, private investment has been focused on the residential construction sector rather than on the traded-goods sectors.⁸¹ In this light, “the new surface area licensed by Palestinian local authorities for private construction rose by 4.6 per cent in 1998. The area licences for residential construction rose by only 0.1 per cent while that for business construction increased by 32.6 per cent. Slower growth in overall construction licensing, despite the relative improvement in economic conditions, may be due to increased uncertainty regarding the peace process and/or a relative surplus of housing after several years of rapid expansion.”⁸²

53. The current uncertain border status and closures are the key reasons why expectations for a revival of private investment following the signing of the Oslo peace accords have not been met. The regime of closures, the failure to open a secure transport link and the failure to open the anticipated port in Gaza have reduced the profitability of the critical export sector and have resulted in a distorted pattern of investment in the occupied Palestinian territory. The opening of the airport in late 1998 may reduce the uncertainty regarding exports of certain goods.⁸³ Real private investment is estimated to have declined by an average of 10 per cent per year between 1993 and 1997, and private investment’s share of GDP to have declined from 19 per cent of GDP, in 1993 to 10 per cent of GDP in 1997.⁸⁴ According to a top IMF economist, the year 1998 did not witness a significant change in real private investment.⁸⁵

54. Bank lending and deposits in the occupied Palestinian territory have been modest. In 1997, lending remained at about 19 per cent of total assets, reflecting a depressed demand for credit by investors. The relatively low deposit to GDP ratio was, at the end of 1996, around 57.5 per cent. A substantial increase in total bank deposits is not, however, expected to take place before the successful conclusion of

final status negotiations. Owing to political uncertainties, many Palestinians maintain bank accounts abroad.⁸⁶

B. Occupied Syrian Golan

55. In the occupied Syrian Golan there are currently 16,500 Israelis, including 7,000 in the settlement community of Katzrin, the most populous in the region.⁸⁷ Settlers reside in 33 settlement communities established in the wake of Israel’s 1967 capture of this area. The Syrian population of 17,000 resides in five villages in the north-eastern corner of the Golan.⁸⁸

56. Settlement expansion in the Golan is concentrated at the settlement of Katzrin, with a population of 7,000, making it the largest. Three hundred new units were begun in mid-1997, and formal approval from the Minister of Defence is expected for the construction of an additional 1,000 units. To enable construction of the additional units, the municipal area of Katzrin was expanded by 1,200 dunums bordering a nature reserve.⁸⁹ For the first time since the beginning of Israeli settlement in the Golan, a private-sector contractor, as opposed to Government companies, undertook this residential construction project. The 300 cottages being built at Katzrin sell for \$95,000 to \$110,000. The State provides subsidized grants, benefits and loans comprising 90 per cent of this amount.⁹⁰

57. In May 1998, 380 garden homes in 14 settlements were put up for sale. Monetary assistance of up to 95 per cent of the value of the property was offered. In August 1998, the Government of Israel unveiled a plan to almost double the settler population by constructing 4,500 new dwellings, including 2,500 vacation homes. A December 1998 report by Israel’s Ministry of the Interior advises expanding settlement as part of a national effort to encourage the expansion of village settlement.⁹¹ During the first eight months of 1998, 84 Israeli families moved to settlements in the Golan. In late January 1999, the Government of Israel decided to expand a number of settlements: 200 homes would be built in four settlements. If tenders for these projects prove successful, additional projects will be tabled. In August 1998, Israel’s National Planning Council approved the tripling of the population in the settlements.⁹²

58. A second home in a settlement in the Golan is also viewed by some Israelis as a vacation/financial investment. During the first weeks of 1999, 20 residents from Tel Aviv purchased, for \$2.6 million, homes in the settlement of Katzrin for investment purposes. Since the beginning of the decade, the average price of a home has more than doubled.⁹³ In early February 1999, the establishment of a settlement at

the paramilitary outpost of Nimrod, located between the Syrian villages of Masada and Majdal Shams, was reported. Up to eight families were expected to settle at the site.⁹⁴

59. Israeli-controlled territory in the occupied Golan, excluding considerable military zones and settlement areas, encompass nature reserves (24,908 hectares), cultivated areas (8,100 hectares), grazing areas (46,575 hectares) and orchards (2,531 hectares).⁹⁵ With regard to water, important streams flowing to Galilee, the Jordan River, as well as the Baniyas and the Dan rivers, originate in the Golan. These sources provide more than 300 cubic metres of water to Israel annually.⁹⁶ Local environmentalists in the Golan claim that Government officials have failed to do enough to protect the area's wildlife and to take into consideration the needs of local farmers seeking to protect their livestock. Poison placed in the area by local farmers to kill wolves attacking livestock appears to be the cause of what some environmental experts are calling an "ecological disaster". According to laboratory tests, the poisons used may continue to have an effect on the wildlife in the area for years to come and take as long as two decades to totally break down.⁹⁷

60. While incentives and investment continue to promote the Israeli presence in the occupied Syrian Golan, the Arab population faces further deterioration in living conditions resulting from Israeli restrictions on employment and education in Israel, as well as from Israeli taxation policy.⁹⁸ Employment opportunities for the Arab population in the Syrian Golan are extremely restricted since movement remains problematic, particularly in the light of the current stalled peace process. The employment available to the Syrian population in the Golan is limited to unskilled and semi-skilled daily wage labour. In most instances, these workers have no access to social benefits or health insurance. Job security is extremely precarious, with no provision for unemployment compensation. Over and above these concerns, substantial wage differences prevail, to the detriment of the Syrian population of the Golan.⁹⁹ The improvement of living conditions is further inhibited by measures that restrict the expansion of educational facilities, and limited access to education in the Syrian Arab Republic or in Israeli colleges.¹⁰⁰

Notes

- ¹ "Report of the Civil Administration for the West Bank", mimeo, chart 8.7 (no date).
- ² Economic and Social Commission for Western Asia, "The socioeconomic effects of Israeli settlement" (forthcoming).
- ³ "Current and projected Israeli redeployment according to the Wye Memorandum-1998 (map)", *Report* (November 1998), p. 5.

⁴ *Yerushalim*, 11 December 1998.

⁵ According to the Palestinian geographer Khalil Tufakji. *Yerushalim*, 11 December 1998; *Ma'ariv*, 3 January 1999.

⁶ *Yerushalim*, 11 December 1998; *Ma'ariv*, 3 January 1999.

⁷ *Ma'ariv*, 3 January 1999.

⁸ *Yerushalim*, 11 December 1998; *Ma'ariv*, 3 January 1999.

⁹ *Ha'aretz*, 17 December 1998.

¹⁰ *Report*, March 1998, p. 1.

¹¹ *Ha'aretz*, 8 January 1999; *Yerushalim*, 22 January 1999.

¹² *Ha'aretz*, 8 January 1999; *Yerushalim*, 22 January 1999.

¹³ *Report*, May 1998, p. 1.

¹⁴ *Report*, May 1998, p. 1; *Yediot Aharonot*, 10 December 1999.

¹⁵ *Ibid.*; *Yediot Aharonot*, 10 December 1999.

¹⁶ *Report*, September 1998, p. 9.

¹⁷ *Ibid.*

¹⁸ *Report*, September 1998, p. 1.

¹⁹ *Report*, September 1998, p. 7.

²⁰ *Ibid.*

²¹ "What's really happening in the settlements", Margot Dudkevitch, *Jerusalem Post*, daily Internet edition at <http://www.jpost.co.il/com/Archive/21.May.1998/RealEstate/Article-21.html>.

²² "The Israeli occupation forces step up settlement in the Gaza Strip", 12 December 1998, Palestinian Center for Human Rights.

²³ *Jordan Times*, 7 January 1999.

²⁴ *Report*, January 1999, p. 11.

²⁵ "Trespassers on their own land — The backbone of the Palestinian economy, and the traditional, emotional mainstay of Palestinian existence — the olive tree — is under attack by Jewish settlers", by Amira Hass, *Ha'aretz*, 16 October 1998.

²⁶ *Report*, January 1999, p. 11.

²⁷ Estimates provided by Orient House officials in November 1998.

²⁸ *Report*, July 1998, p. 4.

²⁹ *Report*, September 1998, p. 7.

³⁰ *Ha'aretz*, 25 August 1998.

³¹ *Report*, January 1999, pp. 6–7.

³² Press release, Annual Report of the Palestinian Center for Human Rights, 15 February 1999.

³³ The West Bank Rural PHC Survey online, 1993; "Infrastructure and Health Services in the West Bank".

³⁴ Ajun L. Adlakha and others, "Demography of the Palestinian population, with special emphasis on the occupied Palestinian territory", ESCWA Population Bulletin, No. 43, ESCWA, Amman, 1995.

- ³⁵ Economic and Social Commission for Western Asia, *Demographic and Related Socio-Economic Data Sheets for Countries of the Economic and Social Commission for Western Asia as Assessed in 1998*, Table 1, Population by age group (forthcoming).
- ³⁶ The West Bank Rural PHC Survey online, 1993; "Infrastructure and health services in the West Bank".
- ³⁷ Economic and Social Commission for Western Asia, *Statistical Abstract of the ESCWA Region*, number of students by level of education and number of schools, institutes and universities by level of education, eighteenth issue (forthcoming).
- ³⁸ *Al Quds* (Internet version), www.cmep.com/september9.htm#Israel.
- ³⁹ *Ibid.*, 29 April 1998.
- ⁴⁰ *Ibid.* The Joint Israeli-Palestinian Liaison Committee is a body created by the Oslo accords with the PLO to coordinate activities and responses to incidents in the West Bank and Gaza Strip.
- ⁴¹ Statistical Yearbook of Jerusalem, 1997; Table III/13: "Population of Jerusalem, by age, population group, quarter and sub-quarter, 1996" (pp. 46–51).
- ⁴² Results of a census taken in 1997 by the Population Bureau of the Palestinian Authority, *Ma'ariv*, 21 January 1998. East Jerusalem is defined as the old city occupied and annexed by Israel in 1967.
- ⁴³ *Kol Ha'ir*, 18 December 1998.
- ⁴⁴ E-mail dated 27 March 1999 from the Palestinian Society for the Protection of Human Rights and the Environment.
- ⁴⁵ The name of the Jerusalem Mayor referred to is Ehud Olmert. In contrast, during the last four years of Mayor Teddy Kollek's administration, 91 homes were destroyed. *Ha'aretz* reported in mid-1998 that five structures had been demolished. See *Report* (September 1998), p. 6.
- ⁴⁶ *Report*, September 1998, p. 6; *Ha'aretz*, 22 June 1998.
- ⁴⁷ *Report*, September 1998, p. 6.
- ⁴⁸ *Ibid.*
- ⁴⁹ *Ibid.*, p. 7.
- ⁵⁰ Excerpts from a United States Department of State analysis of the proposed plan for an "umbrella municipality", including undetermined West Bank settlements, approved by the Israeli cabinet on 21 June 1998, *Report* (July 1998), p. 8.
- ⁵¹ Steve Rodan, "B'tselem decries denial of water to Palestinians", *The Jerusalem Post Daily Internet Edition*, 10 September 1998.
- ⁵² *Report*, September 1998, p. 8.
- ⁵³ "Environmental profile of the West Bank", Applied Research Institute of Jerusalem (no date).
- ⁵⁴ The Israeli Ministry of Environment and the Manufacturers Association of Israel have signed an agreement to reduce industrial plant emissions in order to meet standards that have been set by the Ministry, based on European Union standards. A joint committee will be set up by the Ministry and the Association to deal with problems, violations and complaints regarding the agreement (Economic Survey, Israel Government Press Office, 16 November 1998).
- ⁵⁵ Applied Research Institute of Jerusalem (www.arij.org).
- ⁵⁶ "Environmental Impact", p. 34.
- ⁵⁷ "Environmental Pollution and Settlements", in Water Environment, Saleh Rabi and Ramez Titi, *The Palestine Hydrology Group*, February 1998, pp. 33–37.
- ⁵⁸ *Kol Ha'ir*, 20 March 1998.
- "Burkan Settlement waste-water flows into Kufr Ad Diek, Bruquain and Surtah area sometimes reaching Balout. This kind of waste-water is the most dangerous since it consists of industrial waste-water, such as metal plating and others. Enamel settlement waste-water flows to the collection station of waste-water in Qana valley in Salfeet. Waste-water is then pumped to the foot of the near mountain for planting purposes and the excess of the waste-water flows in the valley. Even the pumped water is returned to the valley. An inefficient desalination plant for waste-water is found in Ariel. The waste-water flows into Al Matwi Valley west of Salfeet, where it mixes with the flowing water from Al Matwi Valley, which is then used for agriculture.
- "Waste-water flows from the settlement of Shar'arei Tikva to the agricultural lands of Beit Amin in Kalqilia, causing agricultural damage. The sewage of Alfe Menashe flows through a closed pipe to the pumping station of waste-water within the boundaries of 1948. The inefficiency of the pump has led to sewage and waste-water flowing into the village of Habla and Kalqilia. Waste-water from Efrat flows to the agricultural lands in Bethlehem. Waste-water flows from the settlement of Neve Daniel, damaging agricultural lands in Bethlehem and in el Khader village as well as groundwater aquifers.
- "The Israeli army camp of Al Majnuneh near Hebron causes environmental damage owing to the waste-water flowing into the al Fawwar spring. This spring is usually used for agricultural purposes", "Environmental Pollution and Settlements".
- ⁵⁹ Hisham Abdallah, "A tour of the West Bank: from settlement to settlement", Agence France Press, 17 October 1997.
- ⁶⁰ Palestinian Society for the Protection of Human Rights and the Environment, "Water quality in the West Bank" (October 1996), p. 6.
- ⁶¹ *Ibid.*
- ⁶² *Al Quds* (Internet version), 29 April 1998.
- At the meeting, the Palestinian side demanded an end to the Israeli works in the industrial zone in 'Izbat al-Tabib and Jayyus quarries. The Israeli side responded by saying all works in 'Izbat al-Tabib area would be stopped at the request of the Palestinian side, and added that all the work that had been done in the past had not been coordinated with the military bodies. Within the same context, the Israeli side said that work in the Wadi al-Tin area had been stopped at the Palestinians' request following a thorough study of the subject that had lasted over one year. Minister

- al-Tarifi referred to the issue of bribes associated with the quarries, and Major General Ya'cov Or responded that a committee had been set up to investigate the subject and presented its recommendations to the Israeli defence minister, adding that the report did not reveal that any Israeli official acted inappropriately.
- ⁶³ Applied Research Institute of Jerusalem, "Wadi Teen Quarry and the Systematic Expropriation of Palestinian Natural Resources", www.arij.org/paleye/waditeen/, p. 2.; "Legislative Council Investigates Israeli/Palestinian Partnership in Stone Production", *People's Rights*, July 1997, p. 6.
- ⁶⁴ *Palestine Report*, 27 June 1997.
- ⁶⁵ Israeli Ministry of Foreign Affairs, Information Division, "Economic relations between Israel and the Palestinian Authority", background paper (February 1998).
- ⁶⁶ *Kav Le'oved* (Workers' Hotline) Newsletter, August 1998.
- ⁶⁷ *Ibid.*
- ⁶⁸ *Ibid.*
- ⁶⁹ Economic and Social Commission for Western Asia, *Survey of Economic and Social Developments in the ESCWA Region, 1997-1998* (E/ESCWA/ED/1998/5); UNSCO report on Economy of the West Bank and Gaza Strip (Autumn 1998), Salem Aulini, Head, Economic and Social Monitoring Unit, Office of the United Nations Special Coordinator in the Occupied Territory, Gaza, p. 2.
- ⁷⁰ UNSCO, op. cit., pp. 5-6.
- ⁷¹ *The Prime Minister's Report*, 25 November 1998, issued by the office of Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu.
- ⁷² *Nakba Report*, "The Palestinian territories in statistical figures and indicators", Palestinian Central Bureau of Statistics, May 1998.
- ⁷³ "Palestine Economy Policy Research Institute (MAS)", *Mas Economic Monitor*, No. 1 (1997), pp. 2-3.
- ⁷⁴ *Ibid.*, pp. 7-9.
- ⁷⁵ UNSCO report on economic and social conditions in the West Bank and Gaza Strip, spring 1999.
- ⁷⁶ "Private investment and uncertainty in the West Bank and Gaza Strip", Oussama Kanaan, *Economy*, p. 25.
- ⁷⁷ *Al Ayyam*, 23 October 1998.
- ⁷⁸ UNSCO, op. cit., p. 3.
- ⁷⁹ Palestine Economic Policy Research Institute, op. cit., pp. 8-9.
- ⁸⁰ UNSCO report on economic and social conditions in the West Bank and Gaza Strip, spring 1999.
- ⁸¹ "Introduction", Milan Zavadjil, in *Economy*, p. 2.
- ⁸² UNSCO report on economic and social conditions in the West Bank and Gaza Strip, spring 1999.
- ⁸³ "Introduction", Milan Zavadjil, in *Economy*, p. 2.
- ⁸⁴ Oussama Kanaan, op. cit., p. 18.
- ⁸⁵ Oussama Kanaan, 6 April 1999.
- ⁸⁶ Palestine Economic Policy Research Institute, op. cit., pp. 31-36.
- ⁸⁷ *Report*, September 1998, p. 5.
- ⁸⁸ *Ibid.*
- ⁸⁹ *Report*, September 1998, p. 5; *Ha'aretz*, 22 August 1998; *Yediot Aharonot*, 20 December 1998.
- ⁹⁰ *Ibid.*
- ⁹¹ *Report*, September 1998, *Ha'aretz*, 23 August 1998; *Yediot Aharonot*, 20 December 1998.
- ⁹² *Ha'aretz*, 31 January 1999.
- ⁹³ *Ibid.*
- ⁹⁴ *Ha'aretz*, 9 February 1999.
- ⁹⁵ Golan Heights information server (www.golan.org.il).
- ⁹⁶ *Ibid.*
- ⁹⁷ *IsraelWire*, 5 July 1998.
- ⁹⁸ "Report on Israeli practices against human rights of Syrian citizens in the occupied Syrian Golan, by the Ministry of Foreign Affairs, Syrian Arab Republic, June 1997 (Mimeo) (in Arabic), pp. 12-20.
- ⁹⁹ *Ibid.*, pp. 16-17.
- ¹⁰⁰ *Ibid.*, pp. 20-24.



General Assembly Economic and Social Council

Distr.: General
14 June 2000

Original: English

**General Assembly
Fifty-fifth session**

Item 100 of the preliminary list*

Permanent sovereignty of the Palestinian people in the occupied Palestinian Territory, including Jerusalem, and of the Arab population in the occupied Syrian Golan over their natural resources

**Economic and Social Council
Substantive session of 2000**

Item 11 of the provisional agenda**

Economic and social repercussions of the Israeli occupation on the living conditions of the Palestinian people in the occupied Palestinian territory, including Jerusalem, and the Arab population in the occupied Syrian Golan

Economic and social repercussions of the Israeli occupation on the living conditions of the Palestinian people in the occupied Palestinian territory, including Jerusalem, and of the Arab population in the occupied Syrian Golan

Note by the Secretary-General

In its resolution 1999/53 of 29 July 1999, entitled "Economic and social repercussions of the Israeli occupation on the living conditions of the Palestinian people in the occupied Palestinian territory, including Jerusalem, and the Arab population in the occupied Syrian Golan", the Economic and Social Council requested the Secretary-General to submit to the General Assembly at its fifty-fifth session, through the Council, a report on the implementation of the resolution. The General Assembly, in its resolution 54/230 of 22 December 1999, reiterated the request for a report. The annexed report, which has been prepared by the Economic and Social Commission for Western Asia (ESCWA), is submitted in response to the two resolutions.

* A/55/50.

** E/2000/100.

Annex

Report prepared by the Economic and Social Commission for Western Asia

I. Introduction

1. At its substantive session, the Economic and Social Council adopted, on 29 July 1999, resolution 1999/53 on the economic and social repercussions of the Israeli occupation on the living conditions of the Palestinian people in the occupied Palestinian territory, including Jerusalem, and of the Arab population in the occupied Syrian Golan. The resolution, *inter alia*, stressed the importance of the revival of the Middle East peace process on the basis of Security Council resolutions 242 (1967) and 338 (1973) of 22 October 1973, and 425 (1978) of 19 March 1978, and the principle of land for peace as well as the full and timely implementation of the agreements reached between the Government of Israel and the Palestine Liberation Organization, the representative of the Palestinian people. It also stressed the need to preserve the territorial integrity of all of the occupied Palestinian territory and to guarantee the freedom of movement of persons and goods in the territory, including the removal of restrictions on going into and from East Jerusalem, and the freedom of movement to and from the outside world. The resolution also stressed the vital importance of the operation and construction of the Gaza airport, the seaport in Gaza and safe passage to the economic and social development of the Palestinian people. The resolution called upon Israel to cease its measures against the Palestinian people, particularly the closure of the occupied Palestinian territory, the enforced isolation of Palestinian towns, the destruction of homes and the isolation of Jerusalem. The resolution reaffirmed the inalienable right of the Palestinian people and the Arab population of the occupied Syrian Golan to all their natural and economic resources and called upon Israel not to exploit, endanger or cause loss or depletion of those resources. It also reaffirmed that Israeli settlements in the occupied Palestinian territory, including Jerusalem, and the occupied Syrian Golan, were illegal and an obstacle to economic and social development. In the resolution, the General Assembly requested the Secretary-General to submit a report on

its implementation to the General Assembly at its fifty-fourth session, through the Economic and Social Council.

2. In its resolution 54/230 of 22 December 1999, the General Assembly took note of the report of the Secretary-General on the economic and social repercussions of the Israeli occupation on the living conditions of the Palestinian people in the Palestinian territory, including Jerusalem, occupied since 1967, and of the Arab population in the occupied Syrian Golan.¹ It reaffirmed the inalienable rights of the Palestinian people and the population of the occupied Syrian Golan over their natural resources, including land and water; and called upon Israel, the occupying Power, not to exploit, to cause loss or depletion of or to endanger the natural resources in the occupied Palestinian territory, including Jerusalem, and in the occupied Syrian Golan. In the resolution the Assembly recognized the right of the Palestinian people to claim restitution as a result of any exploitation, loss or depletion of, or danger to, their natural resources, and expressed the hope that the issue would be dealt with in the framework of the final status negotiations between the Palestinian and Israeli sides. It also requested the Secretary-General to submit a report to the Assembly at its fifty-fifth session. The present report responds to the two above-mentioned resolutions.

II. Economic and social repercussions of the Israeli occupation

A. Occupied Palestinian territory, including Jerusalem

3. The delays in the implementation of the agreements reached between Israel and the Palestine Liberation Organization (PLO), the fact that those agreements are not usually fully implemented and Israeli practices, particularly with regard to settlement expansion and to the closure of passage routes from areas controlled by the Palestine Authority to Israel, continue to aggravate the living conditions of the Palestinian people.

4. On 23 October 1998, Israel and the PLO agreed in the Wye River Memorandum to a revised timetable for the phased implementation of the first and second further redeployments of Israeli military forces as outlined in the Israeli-Palestinian Interim Agreement

on the West Bank and Gaza (Oslo II). The Sharm el-Sheikh Memorandum on implementation of the timetable of outstanding commitments of agreements signed and the resumption of permanent status negotiations was signed on 4 September 1999. The new format splits into three parts Israeli redeployments that were to have occurred, according to Wye in two phases, and according to Oslo II, in one phase. From 10 to 13 September 1999, 7 per cent of the West Bank was transferred from Area C status, where Israel retains exclusive security control to Area B status, where Israel retains overriding security responsibility. On 20 January 2000, an additional 3 per cent was transferred from Area C to Area B status, with an additional 2 per cent moving from Area B to Area A status, where Palestinians have complete authority for civilian security. The third redeployment phase was scheduled for 20 January 2000, but postponed. On 19 March 2000, the Israeli cabinet approved the third and last stage of Israeli redeployment undertaken during the interim period set forth in the Oslo II accords. The transfer of 5.1 per cent from Area B status and 1 per cent from Area C status to full Palestinian control was implemented on 21 March 2000.² Wye makes no mention of a date or the territorial extent of the third redeployment called for in Oslo II that was to have been implemented in October 1997, nor does the Sharm el-Sheikh agreement.³

5. The bulk of the transfers from Area C outlined in the Sharm el-Sheikh Memorandum — all but 100-200 square kilometres of a scheduled 600 square kilometres — is located in the Nablus-Jenin region and south of Hebron. Although neither area is heavily populated by settlers, they comprise part of the heartland of the occupied Palestinian territory. The territory to be surrendered to Palestinian civil control in the Nablus region is much less problematic from the settlers' perspective than comparable transfers around Ramallah would have been. With few exceptions, settlements in affected areas will be connected by bypass roads, either existing or planned, to main transport routes to Israel. Twelve new bypass roads, costing \$70 million, are in various stages of planning and construction. In addition, new Israeli military bases are being established throughout the West Bank, according to the Israeli newspaper *Yediot Aharnot*, "particularly next to isolated settlements. The intention is not to leave isolated settlements in the heart of Palestinian areas without an army base nearby. The camps to be established, therefore, will separate the

territory under Palestinian control from the settlements."

6. Civilian Israeli settlements have been built at some 200 sites seized by civilian and military bodies representing the Government of Israel as well as by Israeli civilians empowered by Israel to undertake such activity. The land under exclusive Israeli control amounts to 60 per cent of the West Bank (Area C) and 20 per cent of Gaza. In addition, 30 per cent of the area of East Jerusalem is under effective Israeli ownership. Israel has established approximately 170 settlements in the West Bank with a civilian population of approximately 190,000. There are approximately 200,000 Israeli residents in East Jerusalem and 7,000 settlers live in 16 settlements in Gaza. In the Golan Heights, 17,000 settlers reside in 33 settlements. By the end of 2000, more than 400,000 Israelis will be living in over 200 communities established since 1967 in the West Bank, East Jerusalem, the Gaza Strip and the Golan Heights.⁴

7. The geographic distribution of settlements on the occupied Palestinian territories severely restricts the growth of Palestinian communities. According to an Amnesty International report, the Oslo Accords have created 227 separate areas under Palestinian control. Of these areas 190 measure less than 2 square kilometres. While only 40,000 Palestinians live within Area C, under exclusive Israeli military and civil control, all Palestinians live within 6 or less kilometres of it. The Amnesty International report states that since Oslo, all the 200 applications for building permits in Area C have been rejected.⁵

8. Regarding the future of Israel's settlement population of 200,000 in the West Bank (193,000) and Gaza (7,000), according to *Ha'aretz* the new Israeli Prime Minister noted that the settlements of "Alfe Menache, the Etzion Bloc, Ariel, Nirit, the Corridor, the Jordan Valley settlements, and many more places are part of the State of Israel, now and in the permanent agreement."⁶ As to territorial settlement with the Palestinians, the principles underlying such a settlement are broad: "united Jerusalem under Israeli sovereignty; no return to the 1967 borders; no foreign army west of the Jordan River; most of the Judea and Samaria settlers — not even most of the settlements — to remain under our sovereignty in the permanent arrangement; a defence and settlement presence in the Jordan Rift Valley."⁷ "As for the borders, it would naturally make no sense to draw them prematurely. The

borders will be determined in the permanent-status talks.”⁸

9. In an on-site survey of settlement expansion carried out by Peace Now in May 1999, 6,500 housing units were under construction in the West Bank and Gaza Strip, a 14 per cent increase compared to May 1998.⁹ According to *Ma’ariv*, the Ministry of Housing approved a plan for the construction of 1,800 dwelling units in the West Bank adjacent to the East Jerusalem settlement suburb of Neve Ya’acov. The new construction will form a territorial link between the settlements of East Jerusalem and the West Bank settlement of Adam. *Ma’ariv* also reported that the area will be annexed to Jerusalem upon the completion of construction.¹⁰ Other construction in the area includes 450 units in Tel Zion (out of 1,000 approved) and 300 in Adam.

10. Settlements continued to expand during the first months of the new Government. The Ministry of Housing issued tenders for the construction of 3,196 new units in the West Bank and Gaza Strip settlements, excluding East Jerusalem, during the first six months of Mr. Barak’s government, a rate higher than annual averages.¹¹ In December 1999, Mr. Barak announced a temporary halt in the issuance of new tenders for settlement housing construction. This prohibition does not, however, extend to scores of smaller settlements.

11. According to Peace Now, between 15 October and 13 December 1999, the Israeli Government approved building plans for 2,757 new dwellings in six West Bank settlements, the “deposit” of plans for an additional 2,139 units, and the placement of 85 mobile homes in settlements.¹² At the end of February 2000, there were more than 7,120 units in various stages of construction, enough to increase the settler population in the West Bank and Gaza Strip by 30,000. Thousands of others have already been approved and await only a decision by contractors to begin construction. There are no restrictions on settlement expansion in East Jerusalem, where construction at Jebel Abu Ghneim and at Ras al Amud, among other locations, proceeds apace.¹³ The five-year plan of the Ministry of Housing calls for the construction of 12,000 new dwelling units in West Bank settlements, including 3,000 in Ma’ale Adumim, 2,000 in Kiryat Sefer, and 1,500 in Ariel.¹⁴

12. The relative attractive value available in settlements is the product of a number of factors: the classification of settlements as Development Area A,

which entitles them to the highest level of public subsidy, including 50 per cent of the land costs; the low profit margins accepted by Amana, the construction arm of the settlement movement Gush Emunim, and by settlement-based contractors; and less stringent building codes than apply in Israel. Construction costs of \$500 to \$600 per square metre result in selling costs of only \$700 per square metre, far less expensive than similar charges in central Israel. Despite early indications that he might do so, Prime Minister Barak has not changed the preferential access of many settlements and settlement-based industrial enterprises to state benefits and subsidies.¹⁵

13. The confiscation of lands declared by Israel as “state land” as a prelude to their transfer to Israeli control has a critical impact upon the Palestinian community. During 1999, Israel took formal possession of 40,178 dunams of Palestinian land, of which 19,691 dunams were used for settlement expansion and the establishment of new settlements, and 16,657 dunams were used to build new bypass roads. Projects to build nine additional roads which will require about 10,875 dunams were approved. Six new bypass roads are to be built covering 5,782 dunams. An additional 7,550 dunams were levelled; 15,180 trees, mostly olive, almond and fig trees, were uprooted or burnt.¹⁶

14. Settlement expansion exacts immediate costs to nearby Palestinian communities. Israeli settlers residing in Efrat, a city that has been built in part on lands belonging to Al Khader, are making rapid progress in paving a road that will connect Efrat with Herndon to the east. The road will use the sole land reserves of several Arab villages, as well as Bethlehem’s land reserves. However, the villages are forbidden to construct a hothouse or sheep-shed or even to plant a tree beyond the boundaries of the Area B land allotted to them.¹⁷ The joint Israeli-Palestinian Civilian Affairs Committee met on 27 May 1999 to hear complaints of Palestinians from the Jordan Valley village of Nu’ema who charged that settlers from nearby Na’ami had placed mobile homes and a water tower on their agricultural land. Israel maintains that the disputed land is “state land.”¹⁸

15. The Palestinian Centre for Human Rights reported on 25 August 1999 that settlers from Netzarim in the Gaza Strip established a 450 metre-long water pipe from their settlement to a piece of land (estimated at 500 dunams) located to the south of the settlement, thereby paving the way to expand the borders of

Netzarim to the south. The move was the latest in a series of expansions to Netzarim since the signing of the Oslo Accords. The military post situated on the western side of Netzarim has also been expanded. Construction activities include the construction of a synagogue and 35 additional houses. The future port of Gaza, where construction is scheduled to begin in March 2000, will be built on the beachfront south of Gaza City, three kilometres from the settlement.¹⁹

16. LAW (Palestinian Society for the Protection of Human Rights and the Environment) reported that during 1999, Israel demolished 93 homes, barracks and water reservoirs in various Palestinian areas, including 53 houses and barracks, 7 agricultural nurseries, 8 stores, 10 reservoirs and water wells, and 6 walls. These properties were distributed as follows: 33 in Jerusalem, 17 in Bethlehem, 15 in Nablus, 10 in Hebron, 7 in Ramallah, 7 in Khan Yunis, 3 in Jenin and 1 in Kalkilya.²⁰

17. According to LAW's documentation, during 1999, 460 Palestinians received notifications that their houses or barracks or other facilities would be demolished. Most of these properties are located in Jerusalem and Hebron. Two of the buildings threatened for demolition are used as mosques, one of them is located in Ras al-Amud in Jerusalem and the other in the village of al-Walajeh in Bethlehem. Three schools in Ramallah, Jenin and Hebron are also threatened with demolition.²¹ Israeli forces also on occasion prevent residents from cultivating the land adjacent to their houses. Many people were detained because of their attempts to cultivate their own land. Moreover, water supplies to their neighbourhood were cut off.²²

18. On 5 May 1999, 16 military orders were issued, declaring that any person entering lands in 69 villages in the West Bank would be prosecuted under Israeli military laws.²³ In November 1999, Israeli authorities notified citizens from Jaloud and Qaryout villages in the Nablus area of their intention to confiscate their lands in order to expand the Rahalim settlement. According to the Legal Centre for Lands Defence, the area of land in that region, which Israel claims as state land, is estimated at 2,306 dunams.²⁴

19. Bypass roads are built with a safety buffer of 50 to 100 metres on either side, where all Palestinian residential and commercial construction is prohibited. "Existing Palestinian houses located in areas close to planned bypass roads," noted a recent study by a

Palestinian researcher, "are being systematically demolished. The bypass roads are estimated to reach 425 km. With the safety buffer zone they enjoy, the construction of these bypass roads requires the confiscation and destruction of approximately 109,000 dunams of Palestinian land, most of which is agricultural, depriving owners of their main source of income."²⁵

20. Even though Israel continues to retain security control of Area B and the access roads to settlements in close proximity to areas under Palestinian control, the security of these settlements remains impaired. A few settlements such as Sanur west of Jenin, which is already almost empty, are not likely to survive as civilian settlements. In this regard, a former head of Israeli military intelligence noted that protecting access roads to these settlements will be a constant source for provocations and conflict and the example of Netzarim in the Gaza Strip is most frequently recalled in this context. All travel from this isolated settlement proceeds under IDF escort. Yet the population of this isolated outpost has grown from 60 people to more than 400 in recent years.²⁶

21. During 1999, seven Palestinians were killed by the Israeli occupying forces, one by the Israeli police, two by settlers and three workers died after being crushed by cars. Two people died in Israeli prisons, two others were killed as a result of the eruption of land mines and another two died from injuries suffered during the intifada.²⁷

22. The list of isolated settlements appearing in the February 2000 IDF planning map contains few surprises to anyone familiar with the principles guiding Israel's successive redeployments. Kfar Tapuach, which now sits astride one of the most vital transportation junctions in the West Bank, may be marginalized when a new road linking Ariel with the settlement of Rachelim, south of Tapuach, is completed. Inclusion of the Allon Road settlements of Rimonim and Kochav Ha Shahar is said to suggest an Israeli willingness to establish a secure Palestinian corridor between the Ramallah region and Jericho. The Allon Plan, devised within weeks of the 1967 war, outlined such a corridor along the Ramallah-Jericho road. Today, IDF planners appear ready to consider a 5-6 kilometre-wide corridor running across the Allon Road where the settlements of Rimonim and Kochav Ha Shahar are now located. There are, however, ways

of establishing such a corridor without impacting either of these two settlements.²⁸

23. Both Prime Minister Barak and Deputy Minister of Defence Ephraim Sneh denied that the settlements on the list are marked for evacuation, but settlement leaders, who convened an emergency meeting to discuss the issue, assume that is just what is on offer. “Whoever splits the country also splits the people of Israel,” declared one settlement leader, “and this is what seems to be happening now by those examining planning options.”²⁹ Peace Now was less circumspect, noting that “the published list proves that the government of Israel recognizes the principal of evacuating settlements in return for peace.”³⁰

24. In East Jerusalem, Israel has expropriated more than 5,845 acres of mostly Palestinian-owned land — one third of East Jerusalem — for the construction of 10 major Israeli settlement neighbourhoods. These areas, with a population approaching 200,000, ring almost the entire northern, eastern and southern perimeter of the city.³¹ *Ha'aretz* reported on 2 March 1999 that of 201 demolition orders issued by the Ministry of Interior in 1998 for Palestinian properties in East Jerusalem, only 9 were implemented. The municipality destroyed 13 additional homes. Palestinians requested 320 building permits, of which 254 were granted.³²

25. The Jerusalem municipality estimates that it will cost \$180 million to bring infrastructure in the Palestinian areas of East Jerusalem to the prevailing standard in West Jerusalem. The 1999 municipal budget allocated \$100,000 for the planning of settlement areas in East Jerusalem, a 25 per cent increase over the 1998 development budget. At least \$20 million was to be spent on improving major new roads in East Jerusalem, facilitating movement between the city, the coastal region, and Greater Jerusalem settlements.³³

26. The number of Palestinians holding Jerusalem identity documents issued by Israel is generally believed to number almost 200,000, which would put the Palestinian percentage in the entire city — West and East — at 30 per cent. The census, however, along with other investigations undertaken by Palestinian officials at Orient House, suggests that the number of Palestinians actually residing in the city is half that number, or approximately 100,000. In addition, there are 30,000 Palestinians without Jerusalem documents

who currently reside in the city, as well as 20,000 who live in the West Bank villages, such as Anata, that are considered to be within Jerusalem’s municipal borders. Palestinians with Jerusalem documents who live outside Palestine number 50,000.³⁴

27. According to figures compiled in the *Statistical Yearbook of Jerusalem*, Israel’s share of the population in East Jerusalem was much smaller than the Palestinian share in 1972, but it increased steadily until 1986, when the two groups were almost equal. Since 1986, however, there has been a small, fluctuating Palestinian majority in East Jerusalem, based upon the number of Palestinians entitled by Israel to residency in East Jerusalem.³⁵

28. According to a study by the Badil Resource Centre for Palestinian Refugee Rights, 8 per cent of Jerusalem residents are forced to leave Jerusalem and reside in the West Bank every year owing to Israeli discriminatory measures in the city. The number of Jerusalemites and their descendants forced to leave their city since 1948 is 480,000, the study reported. In addition, prior to the 1948 war, Palestinians owned 80 per cent of lands in Jerusalem. Today, only 6,000 dunams, or 7.3 per cent of the East Jerusalem is Palestinian-owned. That number decreases to 4.3 per cent if the entire Jerusalem area is taken into account (al-Quds).³⁶

29. The revocation of residency rights of Palestinians in Jerusalem continues to be a problem. By the beginning of November, five months after the formation of Mr. Barak’s government, complaints continued to arrive in the offices of civil rights organizations in Jerusalem. More than 100 Palestinians complained that they had received notices from the Interior Ministry in East Jerusalem informing them that they had lost their residency rights.³⁷

30. Many of the requests of those who had appealed in the past to register births and marriages went unfulfilled, while the requests of those who asked to have their confiscated identity cards returned were ignored.³⁸ Many Arabs living in East Jerusalem do not have identity cards for numerous reasons. According to different estimates, the situation applies to thousands of Arab families whose registration in the city has not been set in order. For example, there are couples of whom one person is not a resident of Jerusalem; their children, therefore, are also not registered as permanent residents of Israel. These children are not eligible to

study in Jerusalem schools or to receive medical care. Another typical case involves a man who does not have an Israeli identity card and who therefore cannot legally live with his wife and children.³⁹

31. According to LAW, during 1999, three Palestinians were killed in the city and the residency rights of 393 Palestinians were revoked, increasing the number of Palestinians whose residency rights had been revoked to 3,309 since 1987. Israel demolished 33 constructions during 1999 in addition to tens of demolition warnings received by Palestinians in the city.⁴⁰

32. Construction in East Jerusalem faces many hurdles. Planning measures ban construction of more than three storeys tall in Palestinian neighbourhoods and an extremely difficult and slow process is required for obtaining building permits.⁴¹ On the other hand, land for new construction in 1999 was offered principally in the East Jerusalem settlement communities of Har Homa and Pisgat Ze'ev.⁴²

33. An Israeli inter-ministerial committee on Jerusalem recommended that in order to maintain a 70/30 per cent Jewish majority in Jerusalem, Israel needs to build 116,000 new dwelling units in the city for Jews by 2020, an annual rate of 5,500, far higher than is currently the case.⁴³ In May 1999, settlement construction of 130 units in the East Jerusalem neighbourhood of Ras al-Amud commenced on a 3.5-acre site.

34. The Ministry of Housing approved, according to *Ma'ariv*, a plan for the construction of 1,800 dwelling units in the West Bank adjacent to the East Jerusalem settlement suburb of Neve Ya'acov. The new construction will form a territorial link between the settlements of East Jerusalem and the West Bank settlement of Adam. The newspaper reported that the area will be annexed to Jerusalem upon the completion of construction.⁴⁴ Other construction in the area includes 450 units in Tel Zion (out of 1,000 approved) and 300 in Adam.

35. The continuing Israeli occupation is severely affecting and undermining the supply of drinking water to Palestinians. Rainfall in the West Bank amounted to some 220 millimetres (the average at eight measuring stations), while the normal average rainfall is 537 millimetres. While this decline has significantly disrupted the supply and pressure of water resources in villages linked to a running water system, the shortage

has most detrimentally affected those villages that are unconnected to a supply network. The West Bank has some 180 unconnected villages, in which close to 300,000 persons live, comprising approximately 20 per cent of the West Bank's Palestinian population. Another group suffering from the drought is the Bedouins living in the West Bank, who number about 20,000 persons.⁴⁵

36. For Palestinians in unconnected villages and for Bedouins, rainfall is the primary source of water for their household needs. In most houses in the occupied Palestinian territory, and particularly in unconnected villages, the residents maintain containers on their roofs and in their yards for the collection of water. Water collected in this way during the winter meets part of their summer needs. These families rely, primarily in the summer, on nearby springs, from which water is collected in canisters and other vessels. The West Bank has more than 500 springs, some of which flow only during the winter. Of those that are active also in the summer, a few are used by Palestinians to meet their household needs. The drought during 1999 clearly reduced the amount of water flowing in these springs and in some instances, even dried them up completely.⁴⁶

37. The overall current water consumption in the West Bank varies between 110 and 115 million cubic meters (mcm) annually and in Gaza it is about 100 mcm a year. These figures have hardly changed since the Israeli occupation in 1967, despite growing water needs due to the nearly 3 per cent population growth, as well as the needs of socio-economic development.⁴⁷

38. Israel has control over the majority of available water in the occupied Palestinian territory. For domestic consumption, the occupied Palestinian territory uses 53 mcm of water, settlements 13 mcm and Israel 520 mcm. For agricultural purposes, while the occupied territory uses 152 mcm of water, Israel uses 1,200 mcm. The settlements use more water than Israel itself. Israel currently consumes 80 per cent of the water in the West Bank.⁴⁸ There has been a severe lack of progress in the implementation of the Oslo Agreement, specifically article 40, in which Israel committed to give the Palestinians 28.6 mcm of water immediately after its signature. Until now, they have only given 10 mcm.⁴⁹

39. Israel controls water distribution through control of permits for drinking water networks and for drilling

wells. Israel takes the liberty of tapping into mountain aquifers in times of water shortages while the Palestinians are prohibited to do so, even for agricultural purposes. Another problem Palestinians face is Israel's demolition of water-harvesting storage pools. According to the *Palestine Report*, "For example, in the Hebron areas of Aroub and near the Israeli settlement Kiryat Arba, some farmers tried to build storage tanks to collect rainwater, but the Israeli authorities destroyed them."⁵⁰

40. Palestinians are faced with the growing problem of pollution from water waste coming from Israeli settlements. These settlements dump their wastewater, especially industrial waste, into Palestinian lands. This not only pollutes agricultural lands but also groundwater.⁵¹

41. Contamination of water resources by residential and commercial development can have a deleterious effect on public health. *Ma'ariv* reported that Palestinian children near prosperous settlements fall ill because they lack water and suffer from poor hygiene.⁵² A study by Bethlehem University reported that the water sources of many Palestinian villages are contaminated to a degree that endangers the lives and health of their residents.⁵³

42. Tests carried out on the mountain aquifer near Herndon and Beit Fager showed that 60 per cent of the samples contained unsafe levels of bacteria, caused by sewage contamination. In addition, many of the samples also contained nitrates and other organic and industrial impurities known to be hazardous to human health.⁵⁴ Water from some 70 springs was found to be unfit for human consumption, but due to the absence of any viable alternative the population continued to use the water for both domestic and agricultural purposes.⁵⁵

43. Israeli's control of the occupied Palestinian territory has had negative repercussions on the environment. There are approximately 260 Israeli-owned industrial concerns in the West Bank. These factories are either located in Israeli-operated industrial zones or inside settlements. Information about these industrial activities is scarce. Some products are identified, but detailed information on quantities produced, labour and waste generated is not available. The major industries within these industrial zones include: aluminium, leather tanning, textile dyeing, batteries, fiberglass, plastics, and other chemical industries.

44. Environmental regulations on soil, air, and water quality, and restrictions on industrial development have generally been far less comprehensive and much less assiduously enforced in the occupied Palestinian territory as compared with Israel itself. Combined with State-subsidized incentives for Israeli concerns to locate to industrial parks in and near settlements, the relative laxity of environmental enforcement and monitoring has, until recently, led to the relocation of polluting Israeli industries into the occupied territories.⁵⁶ Another major problem is foreseen by the construction of large quarries near Avnei Hefetz and south of Ofra.⁵⁷

45. Reliable data about waste water generated in the settlements is difficult to obtain. Approximately 4.3 million cubic metres of waste water is generated annually from settlements in the West Bank. A large amount is dumped, untreated, on Palestinian land, creating a health hazard for many communities.⁵⁸ On 14 November 1999, Israeli forces prevented Palestinian citizens from erecting a sand barrier in order to stop the flow of waste water from untreated sewage coming from the Kfar Darom settlement in southern Gaza.⁵⁹ Thus, the flow of waste water from settlements increases mosquitoes and other insects and contagious diseases, particularly skin disease among children. The amount of waste water spilled into the valley is quite substantial, leading to flooding and overflowing into people's houses, as well as the submersion of thousands of dunams nearby.⁶⁰

46. Palestinian health officials estimate that during the past four years, 66,000 people have been hospitalized with water-pollution-related illnesses, and another 290,000 sought outpatient care. There is no breakdown for cases caused by pollution originating in settlements and that originating in Palestinian areas.⁶¹ Solid wastes from Israeli industrial zones are routinely dumped in Palestinian areas. Wadi Beit Hanoun, for example, is the receptacle for wastes from the nearby Erez industrial zone.⁶²

47. A report by Palestinian Ministry of Environment states that, since 1987, Israel dumped solid waste in the Azzoun area near Qalqilia, leading to a marked increase in dangerous diseases such as cancer among the Palestinians in the area. The report reviewed the many attempts to smuggle Israeli solid waste into the Palestinian land. The report also warned against the Israeli attempts to relocate factories causing environmental hazards from within Israel into West

Bank settlements and pointed out that 40 out of the 160 factories in the settlements pose real environmental hazards.⁶³

48. Palestinians have traditionally made up the bulk of the work force engaged in the construction and daily maintenance of settlements throughout the occupied territories. Palestinians working in Israeli settlements number between 10,000 and 12,000 in more than 100 Israeli enterprises, including 3,500 in the Erez industrial zone and settlements in Gaza, and 8,500 in industrial parks and settlements in the West Bank, not including those working in the settlement communities of East Jerusalem. The number of such workers has risen by about 50 per cent since the imposition of the closure in 1993, paralleling an increase in Israeli-owned factories in the occupied Palestinian territory.⁶⁴ There are another 35,000 Palestinians with permits and another 40,000 Palestinians without permits working in Israel.⁶⁵

49. The macro-economic impact of Israeli occupation of the Palestinian territory is to inhibit investment and growth due to the continued ambiguity of the legal and political situation. There is no basic investment code, nor a settled legal code in the areas controlled by the Palestinian Authority. Moreover, there is no final status agreement with Israel. In fact, "the complex overlay of laws and Israeli military orders in force during the occupation remains in place. This is further aggravated by Israeli-imposed restrictions on the movement of goods, factors of production and people between Israel and the West Bank and Gaza, and between the West Bank and Jerusalem".⁶⁶

50. According to the Wye Memorandum, agreements about the southern "safe passage" route should have concluded within a week of entry into force of the Memorandum, and operation of this route should have begun as soon as possible thereafter. The southern route was opened on 25 October 1999. Passage of Palestinians is, however, effectively restricted by Israeli security protocols.⁶⁷ There has been no agreement regarding the opening of the northern passage. The opening of the port of Gaza has been similarly delayed due to security demands by Israel, although work on the three-year project is expected to commence this year. On the other hand, the International Airport in Gaza, under joint Israeli and Palestinian Authority supervision, opened to limited traffic in late 1998. Continuing restrictions on the Palestinian Authority's operation of the facility have

contributed to its failure, until now, to make a recognizable contribution to the Palestinian economy.

51. According to LAW, during 1999, the Israeli occupying forces closed all the occupied Palestinian territory including the areas controlled by the Palestinian Authority for 11 days, far fewer than in previous years.⁶⁸ However, despite the few days of total closure in 1999, the Palestinian economic situation remains precarious due to limited economic activity. In particular, investment and exports have been stagnant — the two most critical variables for sustainable private sector-led employment growth. Also worrisome was the downward trend in public investment, the result of reduced levels of donor disbursements in 1999.⁶⁹

52. In nominal terms, Palestinian registered exports to Israel amounted to US\$ 222.6 million, while registered imports from Israel were \$843.5 million in first half of 1999. Palestinian direct registered imports from third countries increased to an estimated \$87.4 million, a 43.4 per cent nominal increase in the last year. Higher transaction costs, border and mobility restrictions, limited access to foreign markets, as well as low levels of investment in productivity continue to hinder export development.⁷⁰ Political uncertainty about the shape of the permanent status and the still weak legal and institutional environment, particularly from the point of view of foreign capital, constitute continuing obstacles to investment in the occupied Palestinian territory.⁷¹

53. Beginning in March 2000, Israel imposed a number of restrictions on Palestinian economic transactions, including the suspension of the "convoy system", which allows vehicles from Gaza to pass through Israeli territory under military escort for the purpose of export and import. The Office of the United Nations Special Coordinator in Occupied Territories estimates show that the average number of trucks using the convoy system on a monthly basis in 1999 was 18.6 per cent lower than in 1990 (3,868 versus 4,756, respectively). This includes exports of agricultural products to Israel (and foreign markets via Israel) and imports of a range of commodities from Israel (and foreign products via the Israeli ports). Thus, there is a downward trend in use of the convoy system.⁷²

54. Israel announced that from March 2000 it would admit only the passage of persons through the Erez border crossing between Gaza and Israel. Until now

Erez crossing has been used for the passage of vehicles as well. From March, all commercial transactions and passage of goods will be admitted only through the Karni border crossing, located in the east of Gaza. Palestinian vehicles are not allowed to pass through Karni crossing, but instead are forced to unload their product, which must be reloaded into Israeli vehicles after a lengthy security check. Consequently, transportation costs are significantly higher than under the convoy system and is estimated to increase by 100-110 per cent under the new restrictions. The Palestinian Authority will also be unable to tax shipments from Karni.⁷³ Thus, restrictions on the movement of goods has contributed to further decline in economic growth.

B. Occupied Syrian Golan

55. The Golan Heights, captured from Syria in June 1967, has an extensive, yet comparatively small settlement infrastructure. The 17,000 Israeli settlers, residing in 33 settlements, represent an increase of 18 per cent since 1994. By comparison, the settler population of the West Bank (excluding East Jerusalem) has almost doubled to 200,000 during the same period. This slower pace is in no small part due to the location and small number of Syrians remaining after 1967, clustered in four villages at the plateau's northern tip.⁷⁴ Israeli-controlled territory in the occupied Golan, excluding considerable military zones and settlement areas, encompass nature reserves of 24,908 hectares, cultivated areas comprising 8,100 hectares, grazing areas of 46,575 hectares, and 2,531 hectares of orchards.⁷⁵ In September 1999, a new settlement, Nimrod, was established. Fewer than 10 families live at the outpost, located 1.5 kilometres from Majdal Shams.⁷⁶

56. In spite of possible evacuation of settlements as part of a peace agreement with Syria, settlement expansion in the Golan Heights is still going on. In April 2000, the Israeli Government authorized the establishment of a tourism project which entails the construction of a 400-room hotel, a commercial centre and a boardwalk at Kursi Junction on the eastern shore of Lake Kinneret, about 5 kilometres north of kibbutz Ein Gev. In addition, a small hotel of 28 rooms is planned near the Hamat Gader hot springs. In the town of Katzrin, the already existing industrial zone is to be expanded. With regard to agriculture in the Golan

Heights, the Israeli authorities plan to allocate 1,157 dunams of land in seven settlements.⁷⁷ Moreover, 358 new homes will be built in 11 settlements. In the long run, there are plans for 2,500 homes in the four settlements of Had-Ness, Knaf, Gamala and Ramot. In Katzrin, hundreds of homes are under construction; in Ein Zivan, 40 dwellings are being built and in Neot Galan, 55 new dwellings were recently completed.⁷⁸

57. Employment opportunities for the Arab population in the Syrian Golan Heights are extremely restricted, since the movement of the Arab population between the Golan and the Syrian Arab Republic remains problematic. The employment available to the Syrian population in the Golan is limited to unskilled and semi-skilled daily wage labour. In most instances, these workers have no access to social benefits or health insurance, and job security is extremely precarious, with no provision for unemployment compensation. Over and above these concerns, substantial wage differences prevail, to the detriment of the Syrian Arab population of the Golan.⁷⁹ Improvement of living conditions is further inhibited owing to measures that restrict the expansion of educational facilities, as well as limit access to education, either in the Syrian Arab Republic or in Israeli colleges.⁸⁰

58. Only about 400 of the approximately 18,000 residents of villages in the northern Golan Heights — Masadah, Majdal Shams, Ein Kiniya and Rajar — agreed to accept Israeli citizenship. Every few months the holders of the Israeli identity cards organize a protest demanding to be permitted to renounce their citizenship — so far unsuccessfully. The boycott extends into almost every sphere of life, from family celebrations to funerals, which the holders of Israeli citizenship are not permitted to attend, and to an absolute ban on greeting them in the street, even by a nod of the head.⁸¹

59. On 15 February 2000, Syrians in the Golan protested Israel's annexation of the Golan Heights 18 years ago. About 1,000 participated in the demonstration and six were injured by tear gas and rubber-coated bullets fired by Israeli troops.⁸²

Notes

- ¹ A/54/152-E/1999/92, annex.
- ² Foundation for Middle East Peace, *Report on Israeli Settlement in the Occupied Territories* (henceforth referred to as *Report*), March-April 2000, p. 1.
- ³ *Report*, September-October 1999, p. 1.
- ⁴ *Ha'aretz*, 2 February 2000; *Ha'aretz*, 28 February 2000; *Ha'aretz*, 21 February 2000.
- ⁵ Amnesty International, *Israel and the Occupied Territories: The Demolition and Dispossession of Palestinian Homes*, December 1999.
- ⁶ *Ha'aretz*, 2 February 1999.
- ⁷ *Report*, July-August 1999, p. 4.
- ⁸ *Ibid.*, p. 1.
- ⁹ *Report*, September-October 1999, p. 5.
- ¹⁰ *Ma'ariv*, 27 June 1999.
- ¹¹ *Ha'aretz*, 23 January 2000.
- ¹² Peace Now press release, 26 December 1999.
- ¹³ Peace Now press release, "Settlement Situation under the Barak Government", 23 February 2000.
- ¹⁴ *Report*, September-October 1999, p. 6.
- ¹⁵ *Report*, May-June 1998, p. 1; *Yediot Aharonot*, 10 December 1999.
- ¹⁶ LAW (Palestinian Society for the Protection of Human Rights and the Environment), "A Summary of 1999 Annual Report on Human Rights Violations", 18 January 2000.
- ¹⁷ *Ha'aretz*, 10 February 1999; *Report*, March-April 1999, p. 3.
- ¹⁸ *Report*, September-October 1999, p. 6.
- ¹⁹ *Report*, November-December 1999, p. 4.
- ²⁰ LAW, "Law Publishes a Summary of its 1999 Annual Report on Human Rights Violations", 18 January 2000.
- ²¹ *Ibid.*
- ²² LAW's Settlement Chronicle, "Escalation of Settlement Activity Since Wye", 2nd report, 18 April 1999.
- ²³ For details about the orders, see Land Defence Council, e-mail from Issa Samander, head of Land Defence General Committee, 20 January 2000.
- ²⁴ *Palestine Report*, published by Jerusalem Media and Communications Centre (JMCC), 17 November 1999.
- ²⁵ *Report*, January 1999, p. 11.
- ²⁶ Source: interview with Arale Tsur, Chairman of the Hof Aza [settler] Regional Council, 27 February 2000.
- ²⁷ Press conference by LAW, 18 January 2000, in Ramallah; LAW, "LAW Publishes a Summary of its 1999 Annual Report on Human Rights Violations", 18 January 2000.
- ²⁸ *Ibid.*
- ²⁹ *Ibid.*
- ³⁰ *Ibid.*
- ³¹ *Report*, May-June 1999, p. 7.
- ³² *Ibid.*, p. 4.
- ³³ *Ibid.*, p. 5.
- ³⁴ *Ibid.*, p. 7.
- ³⁵ *Ibid.*, p. 8; *Statistical Yearbook of Jerusalem*, 1997: table III/13; 1996: table III/14; 1992: table III/12; 1991: table III/1; and 1982: table III/10.
- ³⁶ *Palestine Report*, 25 August 1999.
- ³⁷ *Ha'aretz Daily Newspaper* — English Internet edition, 15 January 2000.
- ³⁸ *Ibid.*
- ³⁹ *Ha'aretz Daily Newspaper* — English Internet edition, 15 January 2000.
- ⁴⁰ LAW, "LAW's Director Meets with Finnish Minister of Justice", 26 January 2000.
- ⁴¹ *Report*, May-June 1999, p. 10.
- ⁴² *Ha'aretz*, 11 April 1999.
- ⁴³ *Ha'aretz*, 19 April 1999.
- ⁴⁴ *Ma'ariv*, 27 June 1999.
- ⁴⁵ From Betzelem, Water Shortage in the West Bank, Update: Summer 1999, 28 July 1999.
- ⁴⁶ *Ibid.*
- ⁴⁷ *Palestine Report*, 28 July 1999.
- ⁴⁸ *Ibid.*
- ⁴⁹ *Ibid.*
- ⁵⁰ *Ibid.*
- ⁵¹ *Ibid.*
- ⁵² *Middle East Mirror*, 19 October 1999.
- ⁵³ *Ha'aretz*, 16 June 1999.
- ⁵⁴ *Ibid.*
- ⁵⁵ *Ibid.*

- ⁵⁶ *Report*, November-December 1999, p. 4.
- ⁵⁷ Arutz Sheva News Service, 10 September 1999.
- ⁵⁸ “The Environmental Impact of Jewish Settlements in the West Bank”, Violent Qumsieh, *Palestine-Israel Review*, vol. V, No. 1, 1998, p. 3.
- ⁵⁹ *Al-Hayat al-Jadida*, 15 November 1999; *Palestine Report*, 17 November 1999.
- ⁶⁰ *Ibid.*
- ⁶¹ *Ibid.*
- ⁶² *Palestine Report*, 8 December 1999.
- ⁶³ Palestine Ministry of Information, 30 October 1999.
- ⁶⁴ *Report*, September-October 1999, p. 3.
- ⁶⁵ *Ha’aretz*, 10 February 2000.
- ⁶⁶ Palestine Economic Policy Research Institute (MAS), *MAS Economic Monitor*, No. 1 (1997), pp. 2-3.
- ⁶⁷ Information Brief Number 26, “Closure and Apartheid: Seven Years of ‘Peace’ through Separation”, Allegra Pacheco, The Centre for Policy Analysis on Palestine, 6 March 2000.
- ⁶⁸ LAW, “LAW Publishes a Summary of its 1999 Annual Report on Human Rights Violations”, 18 January 2000.
- ⁶⁹ Executive Summary of the Report on the Palestinian Economy, prepared by the Office of the United Nations Special Coordinator, Autumn 1999.
- ⁷⁰ *Ibid.*
- ⁷¹ *Ibid.*
- ⁷² *Ibid.*
- ⁷³ *Palestinian Report*, 16 February 2000.
- ⁷⁴ *Report*, November-December 1999, p. 6.
- ⁷⁵ Golan Heights Information Server, www.golan.org.il.
- ⁷⁶ *Report*, January-February 2000, p. 6.
- ⁷⁷ *Ha’aretz*, 14 April 2000 (Internet edition).
- ⁷⁸ *Ha’aretz*, 14 April 2000 (Internet edition) and *Report*, November-December, 1999, p. 6.
- ⁷⁹ Report on Israeli Practices Against Human Rights of Syrian Citizens in the Occupied Syrian Golan, by the Ministry of Foreign Affairs, Syrian Arab Republic, June 1997 (mimeo) (in Arabic), pp. 12-20.
- ⁸⁰ *Ibid.*
- ⁸¹ *Ha’aretz*, 1 August 1999.
- ⁸² *Israel Wire*, 15 February 2000.

**General Assembly
Economic and Social Council**Distr.: General
20 June 2001

Original: English

**General Assembly
Fifty-sixth session**

Item 114 of the preliminary list*

Permanent sovereignty of the Palestinian people in the Occupied Palestinian Territory, including Jerusalem, and of the Arab population in the occupied Syrian Golan over their natural resources**Economic and Social Council
Substantive session of 2001
2-27 July 2001**

Item 11 of the provisional agenda**

Economic and social repercussions of the Israeli occupation on the living conditions of the Palestinian people in the occupied Palestinian territory, including Jerusalem, and the Arab population in the occupied Syrian Golan**Economic and social repercussions of the Israeli occupation on the living conditions of the Palestinian people in the occupied Palestinian territory, including Jerusalem, and of the Arab population in the occupied Syrian Golan****Note by the Secretary-General**

In its resolution 2000/31 of 28 July 2000, entitled "Economic and social repercussions of the Israeli occupation on the living conditions of the Palestinian people in the occupied Palestinian territory, including Jerusalem, and the Arab population in the occupied Syrian Golan", the Economic and Social Council requested the Secretary-General to submit to the General Assembly at its fifty-sixth session, through the Council, a report on the implementation of the resolution. The General Assembly, in its resolution 55/209 of 20 December 2000, also requested a report. The annexed report, which has been prepared by the Economic and Social Commission for Western Asia (ESCWA), is submitted in response to the two resolutions.

* A/56/50.

** E/2001/100.



Annex

Report prepared by the Economic and Social Commission for Western Asia

I. Introduction

1. In its resolution 2000/31, adopted on 28 July 2000, on the economic and social repercussions of the Israeli occupation on the living conditions of the Palestinian people in the occupied Palestinian territory, including Jerusalem, and of the Arab population in the occupied Syrian Golan, the Economic and Social Council stressed, inter alia, the importance of the revival of the Middle East peace process on the basis of Security Council resolutions 242 (1967) of 22 November 1967, 338 (1973) of 22 October 1973 and 425 (1978) of 19 March 1978, and the principle of land for peace as well as the full and timely implementation of the agreements reached between the Government of Israel and the Palestine Liberation Organization, the representative of the Palestinian people. In the resolution, the Council reaffirmed the inalienable right of the Palestinian people and the Arab population of the occupied Syrian Golan to all their natural and economic resources and called upon Israel not to exploit, endanger or cause loss or depletion of those resources. It also reaffirmed that Israeli settlements in the occupied Palestinian territory, including Jerusalem and the occupied Syrian Golan, were illegal and an obstacle to economic and social development.

2. In its resolution 55/209 of 20 December 2000, the General Assembly reaffirmed the inalienable rights of the Palestinian people and the population of the occupied Syrian Golan over their natural resources, including land and water; and called upon Israel, the occupying Power, not to exploit, to cause loss or depletion of or to endanger the natural resources in the occupied Palestinian territory, including Jerusalem, and in the occupied Syrian Golan. In the resolution, the Assembly recognized the right of the Palestinian people to claim restitution as a result of any exploitation, loss or depletion of, or danger to, their natural resources, and expressed the hope that the issue would be dealt with in the framework of the final status negotiations between the Palestinian and Israeli sides.

3. The delays in the implementation of the agreements reached between Israel and the Palestine Liberation Organization, the fact that those agreements

have not been fully implemented and the delay in reaching a final status agreement intended to settle all outstanding claims between the two parties continue to have an adverse effect on the living conditions of the Palestinian people. Moreover, these delays and Israeli practices, particularly with regard to settlement expansion and the closure of passage routes, were among the primary causes of the outbreak of current tensions and violence, with thousands of people, including children, killed or wounded.

4. As a consequence of the crisis, restrictions on the mobility of the Palestinians have increased. For most of the period since October 2000, mobility between the West Bank and Gaza, and between the occupied Palestinian territory and the rest of the world, has been severely impeded. Travel for Palestinians between the West Bank and Gaza via the "safe passage" route has been blocked by Israeli authorities since 6 October 2000. As a consequence, students from the Gaza Strip have been unable to attend classes in the West Bank and relatives unable to visit one another; financial ties between the two areas have been damaged. According to the Oslo Accords, two routes were to be designated as safe passages. Israel is entitled, for security reasons, to close one of them or to alter the terms of entrance but must ensure that one of the passages is always open.¹ Today there is only one safe passage, thus obliging Israel to allow Palestinians to use it to travel between the Gaza Strip and the West Bank.

5. The Gaza International Airport and the border crossings at Rafah and the Allenby/Karamah Bridge have been closed for extended periods. Palestinian foreign trade has also been affected. Imports and exports trans-shipped through Israeli ports have been delayed or blocked completely for most of this period, while the commercial crossings at Rafah and the Allenby/Karamah Bridge have been closed about 70 per cent and 12 per cent of the time, respectively, between 28 September and 26 November 2000.

6. There have been varying levels of restrictions on mobility between cities, towns and villages in the West Bank and Gaza owing to reduced levels of security on roads and the imposition of internal closures by the Israeli authorities. Such measures have routinely

included the placement of physical barriers between Palestinian villages and cities and the deployment of military checkpoints on main roads. In addition, the Israeli authorities have imposed curfews on several areas in the West Bank, most notably in the city of Hebron and on numerous villages in the Nablus area.²

II. Economic and social repercussions of the Israeli occupation

A. Occupied Palestinian territory, including Jerusalem

7. During its 34-year occupation, Israel has established a range of civilian and military installations throughout the occupied Palestinian territory. Civilian Israeli settlements have been built at some 200 sites seized by civilian and military bodies representing the Government of Israel as well as by Israeli civilians empowered by Israel to undertake such activity. The land under exclusive Israeli control amounts to 59 per cent of the West Bank (Area C) and 20 per cent of the Gaza Strip. In addition, 30 per cent of the area of East Jerusalem is under effective Israeli ownership.

8. Israel has established approximately 170 settlements in the West Bank with a civilian population of approximately 200,000. Approximately 180,000 Israelis reside in East Jerusalem and in the Gaza Strip, 7,500 settlers live in 16 settlements.

9. With few exceptions, settlements are connected by bypass roads, either existing or planned, to main transport routes to Israel. As a consequence of the unrest that began in September 2000, Israel has engaged in a wide-ranging campaign to construct scores of new roads aimed at ensuring safe passage between the settlements and Israel. Israeli military bases have been established throughout the West Bank, according to the Israeli newspaper *Yediot Aharonot*, “particularly next to isolated settlements. The intention is not to leave isolated settlements in the heart of occupied Palestinian territory areas without an army base nearby. The camps to be established, therefore, will separate the territory under Palestinian control from the settlements”.³

10. The Government of Israel granted building permits for 1,184 housing units during the first 10 months of 2000. Data from the Central Bureau of Statistics and the Ministry of Construction and Housing

indicate that 529 of those units were in the greater Jerusalem area. However, many permits were also granted in settlements far from Israel. They included permits for 59 units in Kedumim, 13 in Talmon and 18 in Psagot.

11. During 2000, the Ministry of Construction and Housing began building 1,943 housing units in the territory, up from 1,367 in 1999. However, this number does not include private construction, which can range from 50 to 150 per cent of public building. In addition, the population of the settlements rose by 8 per cent during the year, to 203,068 people. The Israel Land Administration sold 2,804 lots for building in the territories in 2000, or 12.5 per cent of the total number of lots it sold that year.⁴

12. The geographic distribution of settlements on the occupied Palestinian territory restricts the growth of Palestinian communities. Although settlements themselves directly control less than 10 per cent of the West Bank and 5 per cent of the Gaza Strip, prospects for Palestinian sovereignty would be compromised by the extensive security measures required to ensure their existence. This necessarily includes the ever-expanding system of roads linking settlements with each other and with main access arteries to Israel, and the permanent presence of the Israeli army in the territory.⁵

13. According to the mayor of Khan Yunis, “settlement continuity poses a major obstacle to the Palestinian Authority and its sovereignty over the land and, in addition, the settlements prevent any real development activity in the area. The settlements control 34 per cent of the Khan Yunis area, amounting to 112 square kilometres. The presence of the settlements adversely affects developments in tourism and fishing. The entire settlement policy places the region on the brink of a volcano and on the way to a huge new [crisis] that, this time, will not end until the settlements are removed”. The mayor termed the struggle over the settlements “a major aspect of the conflict”, explaining that “no peace is possible in the shadow of the settlements”.⁶

14. Israel has declared 290,970 acres of the West Bank (20.2 per cent of its total area), mostly in the Jordan Valley, as closed military areas, and has created an additional 29 closed military areas in Gaza (420 acres). Moreover, Israel maintains 71 military bases in the West Bank (9,563 acres). Although most of these areas have low agricultural value, they constitute the

major grazing areas in the West Bank. Since Palestinian pastoralists are denied access to these areas, the remaining grazing areas suffer from severe overgrazing and are under threat of permanent desertification. Furthermore, the wildlife and rich biodiversity that characterize these areas are harmed by the use of heavy military vehicles and tanks.⁷

15. According to Palestinian sources, Israel seized around 48,904 dunums (one dunum equals 1,000 square metres) of West Bank land and demolished more than 53 houses in the period from May 1999 to May 2000.⁸

16. In the Khan Yunis area, Israel is reinforcing military posts near the Amal quarter, and fortifying posts near the settlements close to the Mawasi area. These fortifications, composed of tons of cement and sandbags and yards of barbed wire, are topped by new machine-gun emplacements. The work involves the annexation of a hundred-yard strip within the city boundary. Incursions have also been made into Area B land near Mawasi.⁹

17. In March 2000, Israel's Ministry of Construction and Housing prepared plans for the construction of 22,410 new units in the (East) Jerusalem region of the West Bank, whose settler population at the end of 1997 was 40,000. The Ministry's objective is to increase the number of Israelis living in this area to 250,000 by the year 2020. The Israel Land Administration plans to merge the settlement of Beitar with nearby Sur Hadassah in Israel.¹⁰

18. On 10 April 2000, the Knesset's Budget and Security Committee approved \$400 million for settlement security and construction of 12 bypass roads in the occupied territory. The funds will be taken from \$1.2 billion in aid from the United States of America promised as part of the Wye River agreement in October 1998. Overall expenditures on settlements are approximately \$500 million annually.¹¹

19. In addition to settlement expansion and the seizure of land, water remains a critical issue for Palestinians. Over 150 West Bank villages, home to some 215,000 Palestinians, are not connected to a network to supply running water.¹² As a result, a number of municipalities in the West Bank have been forced to establish a rotation programme between different areas of the town, in order to distribute the little water they have.¹³

20. The scope of Israeli control of the critical water sector did not significantly change as a consequence of the Oslo-related agreements between Israel and the Palestinian Authority, according to the Israeli human rights organization B'Tselem. Israel's control is evident in its power to veto any new water project for Palestinians, both through the Joint Water Committee and through the Civil Administration.

21. The starting point for the agreement on the division of water from the shared sources is that the amount of water for Israeli consumption, both within the Green Line (pre-1967 border) and in the settlements, is not reduced. According to this principle, any additional water that the Palestinians utilize comes from new sources, not from a redivision of existing sources. From the perspective of Israeli-Palestinian water needs, the sole achievement in this agreement is the Israeli-Palestinian understanding to increase the water supply to the occupied Palestinian territory by approximately 30 per cent during the interim period, from September 1995 to May 1999. As of June 2000, only half of the promised additional quantity was produced and supplied to the Palestinians. B'Tselem concludes that "the [Israeli] Mekorot water company continues to conduct a policy of discrimination. Mostly during the summer months, Mekorot does not increase, and even decreases, the quantity of water supplied to Palestinian towns and villages so that it can meet the increased demand in settlements that receive water from the same pipelines".¹⁴

22. According to the Director of the Palestinian Hydrology Group, "the overall current water consumption in the West Bank varies between 110 and 115 mcm (million cubic metres) annually and in Gaza it is 100 mcm/year. All throughout the Israeli occupation from 1967 to the present, these figures have hardly changed, despite growing water needs due to the nearly three per cent in population growth, not to mention socio-economic development".¹⁵ "In Palestinian society, the agricultural sector consumes more water than any other sector, around 70 per cent of the available water in the West Bank and Gaza. In terms of distribution, water usage can be divided into the West Bank and Gaza (including settlements) and Israel, which has control over the majority of available water in the West Bank and Gaza and in Israel proper. For domestic use, the occupied Palestinian territory as well as Palestinian Authority-controlled areas, use 53 mcm, settlements use 13 mcm and Israel swallows up

520 mcm. In agriculture, for example, while Palestinians consume 152 mcm, Israelis use up 1,200 mcm. In overall consumption, while Palestinians consume 114.5 mcm per year, the settlements consume a total of 592 mcm and Israelis consume 400 mcm. The settlements actually use more water than Israel proper. Israel currently consumes 80 per cent of West Bank water".¹⁶

23. It was reported in June 2000 that Israeli authorities had sabotaged 20 ancient water cisterns located on Islamic Waqf land near the Jewish settlement of Efrat, west of Bethlehem. It was also reported that the Israeli authorities had ruined the water channels that feed the cisterns in order to diminish local farmers' reserve waters for irrigation. The cisterns are located in an archeological site near Bethlehem where new housing units are being built to expand Efrat. The settlers continue to pump their sewage into the cisterns and agricultural land, ruining 1,000 dunums or 250 acres of land.¹⁷

24. The construction by Israel of security trenches in the Jericho and Ramallah regions in March 2001 also impacted the provision of water for Palestinian communities. The water pipes leading to the village of Surda, north of Ramallah, for example, were destroyed by the construction of these barriers, creating a temporary interruption in the water supply.¹⁸

25. Not only does waste produced by Israeli settlements located in the occupied Palestinian territory continue to degrade the area's water resources, but Israeli practices in the occupied Palestinian territory remain insensitive to environmental considerations, thereby compromising the Palestinian population's quality of life. The Jordanian environmental institution has confirmed that the condition of the water in the River Jordan has deteriorated dramatically owing to wastes coming from Israeli settlements which affected the river's fish and led to the loss of an important source of water life.¹⁹

26. In April 2000, after years of complaints that the Israeli settlement of Kfar Darom was dumping its raw sewage into the Palestinian town of Deir Al Balah, causing sickness and polluting coastal water, Palestinians attempted to improve the situation. However, Israeli occupation forces intervened to prevent a Palestinian bulldozer from redirecting the sewage away from populated areas.²⁰

27. *Voice of Palestine* reported that lands in the West Bank's Salfit district had been adversely affected by the dumping of waste produced in the Israeli settlements of Ariel and Burkan. The settlers had been pumping wastewater and chemicals from their factories on Palestinian agricultural land and into freshwater sources. The Salfit region is the Palestinians' main source of freshwater, which comes from artesian wells.²¹

28. Sewage from homes in the West Bank settlement of Adam, East of Jerusalem's Neve Ya'akov settlement neighbourhood, is seriously contaminating the springs that feed into Wadi Kelt, causing a stench and killing animal life, according to an investigation by Israel's Nature Reserves and National Parks Authority. The study said the sewage overflow was due to an increase in the number of families who had moved into Adam, despite the lack of a proper sewage infrastructure to accommodate them.²²

29. The Palestinian Ministry of Agriculture warned of imminent environmental disaster in the village of Deir Ballout in the district of Nablus. Apparently, the area has been polluted by waste from an Israeli military base, Israeli dumping ground and sewage, and dirty wastewater from surrounding settlements.²³ Additionally, the construction of at least seven industrial zones in the West Bank by the Government of Israel has contributed to the pollution. Located mainly on hilltops and occupying a total area of approximately 746 acres, these industries produce industrial wastewater and solid waste that often pollute adjacent Palestinian lands. At least 200 factories are located in the West Bank, notably aluminium, leather-tanning, textile-dyeing, battery, fibreglass, plastic and other chemical factories. Clear evidence that Israeli factories operating in the occupied Palestinian territory do not follow pollution prevention measures is provided by the Barqan industrial zone, which houses factories producing aluminium, fibreglass, plastic, electroplating, and military items. Industrial wastewater from this zone flows untreated into the nearby valley, damaging agricultural land belonging to the Palestinian villages of Sarta, Kufr Al-Deek and Burqin, and polluting the groundwater with heavy metals. In the central part of the Gaza Strip, the Israeli settlement of Kfar Darom releases sewage and chemical waste from its industrial plants to the Al-Saqa valley.²⁴

30. A declaration stating that water and sewage infrastructures must not be harmed despite the military conflict was signed by Israeli and Palestinian representatives at the Erez Junction on 31 January 2001. In the declaration, the two sides promised to take all the necessary steps, despite the current difficult circumstances, to provide water and treat sewage in the West Bank and Gaza Strip, and to quickly repair malfunctions and damage to the systems. Both sides made it clear in an appeal to their public opinions, that the water systems of the two peoples were intertwined and serve both populations, and that any harm done to them would cause damage to Israelis and Palestinians alike.²⁵ However, Palestinians from the village of Hares report that water has regularly been cut off since the recent crisis began — not by the Israeli water company that provides it, but by Jewish settlers operating under cover of darkness.²⁶

31. A report in November 2000 noted the “domino effect” of Israeli curfews on the environment. For example, medical waste produced in the hospitals is not being disposed of properly. Transportation means to central and regional dumping facilities are being cut off (that is, Bethlehem hospitals dispose of their waste in Hebron) and local autoclaving units are overwhelmed and often inoperable.²⁷

32. In the Gaza Strip, numerous solid waste piles accumulated and collection efforts were interrupted, owing to the continued closure of transportation routes to disposal sites and prolonged harassment of municipality workers attempting to remove the existing garbage. Municipality employees and volunteer workers were the targets of Israeli guns, even while collecting the trash overnight.²⁸

33. Concurrently, the Hebron-Bethlehem joint landfill project funded by the European Investment Bank has come to a halt, as have preparations for a solid waste project intended for implementation in Ramallah. In Jenin, the World Bank sanitary landfill project was stopped, and two projects in Tulkarem (the installation of an incinerator in Anabta along with an Italian landfill project) have been placed on hold indefinitely.²⁹

34. On 21 February 2001, Ramallah and Al Bireh municipalities held a protest against Israeli measures to stop the movement of Palestinian garbage to local dumps. From early January, the Israeli authorities prevented solid waste from being dumped at the Al

Bireh landfill, forcing garbage dumps to deposit their load at the Ramallah landfill, which had been closed the year before. Palestinian environmental affairs ministry officials warned that the seepage from the landfill could cause an epidemic in the area.³⁰

35. According to a recent study, the total area in the West Bank and Gaza officially designated as forest land decreased from 300,736 dunums in 1971 to 231,586 dunums in 1999. More than half of the affected areas are in Gaza, where 95 per cent of the forests have disappeared (from 42,000 dunums in 1971 to 2,000 dunums in 1999).³¹

36. About 80 per cent of the deforestation of land in the occupied Palestinian territory is attributable to the Israeli occupation: 78 per cent to settlements, about 2 per cent to the establishment of military bases, and less than 1 per cent to bypass roads. Local Palestinians are responsible for deforesting 14 per cent of the land, while the remaining 6 per cent is privately owned.³² Moreover, the Israeli army and Jewish settlers have uprooted more than half a million fruit trees, mainly olive trees, on privately owned land.³³ Olive trees have become targets in the cycle of provocation and reprisal. As of 9 November 2000, 4,495 trees have been cut down by Israeli forces.³⁴

37. Israeli occupation inhibits economic growth and investment, as a result of the continued ambiguity of the legal and political situation. There is no basic investment code in areas controlled by the Palestinian Authority, nor is there a settled legal code passed and signed by the chairman of the Palestinian Authority. In fact, “the complex overlay of laws and Israeli military orders in force during the occupation remains in place. This is further aggravated by Israeli-imposed restrictions on the movement of goods, factors of production and people between the areas controlled by the Palestinian Authority, Israel and the Gaza Strip, and between the rest of the West Bank and Jerusalem”.³⁵

38. Under the closure measures, Israel closes all the exits from the Gaza Strip into Israeli territory and prevents Palestinians from entering into Israel. Usually, imports from and exports to the Gaza Strip are also prevented under these measures. Under a partial closure, a limited number of citizens are allowed to move between the West Bank and the Gaza Strip, and to work inside Israel.³⁶

39. The Israeli occupation forces continued imposing restrictions and obstacles on the trading activities of

the Gaza Strip. In February 2000, the Israeli occupation authorities announced that, from March 2000, Palestinian commercial vehicles would no longer be able to pass through the Erez checkpoint under the convoy system. Under this system, Palestinian trucks, after extensive searching, which sometimes lasts up to six hours, have been able to pass into Israel in a convoy with an Israeli military escort. More than 450 Gazan vehicles operated under this system, with more than 150 trucks using it daily.³⁷

40. From March 2000, all commercial vehicles have been required to go to the Karni checkpoint, where they have to unload their product and have it reloaded onto Israeli trucks. Palestinian industry officials have estimated that, under the new restrictions, transport costs will increase by 100 to 110 per cent.³⁸

41. According to the Wye River Memorandum, agreements on the southern "safe passage" route should have been concluded within a week of entry into force of the Memorandum, and operation of this route should have begun as soon as possible thereafter. The southern route was opened on 25 October 1999. Passage of Palestinians, however, is effectively restricted by Israeli security protocols.³⁹ There has been no agreement regarding the opening of the northern passage. Opening the port of Gaza has been similarly delayed owing to security demands made by Israel, although work on the three-year project commenced in 2000. The international airport in the Gaza Strip, under joint Israeli and Palestinian Authority supervision, opened to limited traffic in late 1998. Israel has shut down the facility for extended periods since the outbreak of violence in September 2000. The continuing restrictions on the operation of the airport have contributed to its failure, until now, to make a recognizable contribution to the Palestinian economy.

42. The crisis that erupted between Israel and the Palestinian Authority in September 2000 ended more than three years of limited economic recovery and progress in the areas of the Palestinian Authority. The recovery from the crisis of 1996 was robust enough to substantially reduce unemployment rates, stem the decline in real wages and reduce poverty rates. There had also been some significant progress in the rehabilitation and expansion of the physical infrastructure and institution-building projects. This progress has been undermined since the beginning of the crisis.⁴⁰

43. The Palestinian gross domestic product (GDP) during 2000 was \$580 million less than expected. According to the Palestinian Central Bureau of Statistics, GDP had fallen to \$3.99 billion for all of 2000 from a forecasted \$4.57 billion, owing to the Israeli closure and the siege on Palestinian towns since late September 2000.⁴¹

44. Private economic losses during the first three weeks of the crisis were estimated at \$186.2 million. Lost income-earning opportunities were estimated at about half of the value of domestic production and nearly all of the income earned by Palestinians working in Israel. Since then, the economic losses have been compounded, while the loss of life, injuries and the physical destruction of private and public property have become more widespread.⁴²

45. The lack of freedom of movement for people and goods caused by the current crisis has resulted in socio-economic hardships in the territory controlled by the Palestinian Authority. During the 123-day period from 1 October 2000 to 31 January 2001, the Israeli-Palestinian border used for labour and trade flows was closed for 93 days or 75.6 per cent of the time. Internal movement restrictions and internal closures, partial or severe, have been in place 100 per cent of the time in the West Bank and 89 per cent of the time in Gaza. The international border crossings to Jordan (from the West Bank) and to Egypt (from Gaza) have been closed for 29 per cent and 50 per cent of the time, respectively.⁴³

46. The main impact of mobility restrictions and border closures has been the disruption of productive activities and the circulation of goods. The short-term economic losses include a reduction in the income of farmers, workers, merchants and business people who cannot reach their places of employment in the occupied Palestinian territory or who are unable to obtain inputs or sell their goods and services. This has been the case for a broad spectrum of economic activities, including agriculture, manufacturing, construction, trade, transportation and services.⁴⁴

47. It is estimated that, in 1999, Palestinian workers earned about \$750 million from jobs in Israel proper, Israeli settlements and industrial zones. In the first half of 2000, there was an average of about 125,000 Palestinians employed in Israeli-controlled areas on a daily basis. The average worker was earning a daily wage of about \$27.50. As a group, these workers were earning approximately \$3.4 million for each normal

working day prior to the crisis. Assuming no border closures and no change in the average number of workers or the average wage, Palestinian workers in Israel could have earned an estimated \$822 million in 2000. Internal movement restrictions and border closures substantially reduced such income-generating opportunities for the last quarter of the year.⁴⁵ In the aggregate, excluding material damage to property and other losses, Palestinians are estimated to have lost \$505.0 million during the 60-day period from 28 September to 26 November. The estimated losses are more than 2.5 times the value of donor disbursements to the Palestinian Authority during the first half of the year (\$183 million). If these losses are distributed over normal working days in the occupied Palestinian territory, of which there were 51 during this period, the average daily loss is estimated at about \$10 million.⁴⁶

48. Prior to the crisis, there were approximately 70,000 unemployed Palestinians. It is estimated that another 190,000 persons have lost their jobs since September 2000. Thus, it is currently estimated that there are more than 260,000 unemployed persons in the occupied Palestinian territory. Evidence suggests that the average employed Palestinian supports himself/herself plus four others. Therefore, in addition to the negative impact on the livelihoods of 190,000 workers, the crisis has directly reduced the income of 760,500 other Palestinians. In total, more than 1,000,000 persons, or about one third of the population in the occupied Palestinian territory, have been immediately and negatively affected by mobility restrictions. If previously unemployed persons and their dependants are included (some 350,000 persons) the number of Palestinians enduring a certain amount of economic distress rises to 1,370,000 or 45.5 per cent of the population.⁴⁷

49. Loss of employment in Israel plus mobility restrictions and border closures have resulted in an average unemployment rate of 38 per cent (more than 250,000 persons) as compared with 11 per cent (71,000 persons) in the first nine months of 2000. Owing to the high dependency ratio, unemployment now directly affects the incomes of about 900,000 Palestinians or 29 per cent of the population.⁴⁸

50. The direct economic losses arising from movement restrictions are estimated at 50 per cent of the GDP for the four-month period from October 2000 to January 2001 and 75 per cent of wage income earned by Palestinian workers in Israel. The GDP loss is

estimated at \$907.3 million while the loss of labour income from employment in Israel is estimated at \$243.4 million. The total loss is estimated at \$1,150.7 million, equal to 20 per cent of the projected GDP for the year 2000 (assuming no border closures). The loss is about \$11 million per working day or \$3.50 per person per working day during the reporting period.⁴⁹

51. In addition, there has been hundreds of millions of dollars in damage to public buildings and infrastructure and to private property and agricultural land as well as in costs for caring for more than 11,000 injured Palestinians, and in public revenue losses and other effects of the closures.⁵⁰

52. During the period from 29 September 2000 to 15 January 2001, the Israeli occupation forces razed 6,291.5 dunums of land in the Gaza Strip, about 4,776.5 dunums (76 per cent) of which were agricultural lands, and about 1,515 dunums (24 per cent) were wooded and sandy areas. During the period from 19 December 2000 to 15 January 2001, the Israeli occupation forces razed 1,835.5 dunums of land, about 1,240.5 dunums (67.6 per cent) of which were agricultural lands and 595 dunums (32.4 per cent) were wooded lands. These figures do not include houses and civilian and agricultural facilities established on these properties, which were also razed and demolished. Bulldozers of the Israeli occupation forces also demolished 88 Palestinian houses during the period from 29 September 2000 to 15 January 2001, leaving the residents homeless.⁵¹

53. Since the beginning of the crisis, there has been a 50 per cent increase in the number of people living below the poverty line, estimated by the World Bank at \$2.10 per person per day in consumption expenditures (less than 9 new shekels per day). The number of poor people has increased from about 650,000 to 1 million. The poverty rate has increased from 21 per cent to 32 per cent.⁵² Thus, the occupation and the ensuing crisis have had deleterious effects on the welfare and quality of life of the Palestinian people.

B. Occupied Syrian Golan

54. The Golan Heights, captured from the Syrian Arab Republic in June 1967, has an extensive yet comparatively small settlement infrastructure, with 17,000 Israeli settlers residing in 33 settlements. Over 17,000 Syrians are clustered in five villages close to

the borders of the Syrian Arab Republic and Lebanon. Israeli-controlled territory in the occupied Golan, excluding considerable military zones and settlement areas, encompass nature reserves of 24,908 hectares, cultivated areas comprising 8,100 hectares, grazing areas of 46,575 hectares, and 2,531 hectares of orchards.⁵³

55. The effective failure of negotiations between Israel and the Syrian Arab Republic in March 2000 resulted in a number of policy decisions aimed at reinvigorating settlement expansion in the Golan Heights. Subsequently, Israel's Ministry of Industry and Trade approved a \$6.5 million investment for the expansion of an industrial concern in the Golan settlement of Mevo Hama. The producer of polypropylene exports 80 per cent of its production to Europe and the United States of America.⁵⁴ Israel's Ministry of Construction and Housing approved a new housing development in the Golan settlement of Katzrin, the first such action in many months.⁵⁵

56. In April 2000, the Office of Prime Minister Barak informed the Golan Regional Council that the two-month ban on new construction in the Golan Heights had been lifted. Golan officials moved to implement new construction plans that focus on promoting tourism. Future plans include 2,500 homes in the four settlements Had-Ness, Kanaf, Gamla and Ramot.⁵⁶

57. Employment opportunities for the Arab population in the Syrian Golan Heights continue to be restricted, since the movement of the Arab population between the Golan and the Syrian Arab Republic remains problematic. The employment available to the Syrian population in the Golan is limited to unskilled and semi-skilled daily wage labour. In most instances, these workers have no access to social benefits or health insurance, and job security is precarious, with no provision for unemployment compensation. Over and above these concerns, substantial wage differences prevail, to the detriment of the Syrian Arab population of the Golan.⁵⁷

58. Improvement of living conditions is further inhibited owing to measures that restrict the expansion of educational facilities, as well as limited access to education, either in the Syrian Arab Republic or in Israeli colleges.⁵⁸

59. Israel's taxation policy, according to a Syrian report, enhances the deterioration of living standards of the Golan Arab population. Taxation covers radios,

television sets, households, income, land crops and local government. Almost all aspects of life are heavily taxed.⁵⁹

Notes

¹ Oslo II Accords, Appendix 1, para. (c) (4)X.

² United Nations, Office of the United Nations Special Coordinator, *The Impact on the Palestinian Economy of Confrontations, Mobility Restrictions and Border Closures*, 28 September-26 November 2000, February 2001, <http://www.arts.mcgill.ca/mepp/unsco/nov00/nov00.html>, p. 1.

³ *Report*, September-October 1999, p. 1.

⁴ *Ha'aretz*, 16 January 2001; 5 March 2001.

⁵ See A/55/84-E/2000/16, para. 3.

⁶ *Hatzofe*, 16 March 2000, p. 10.

⁷ Jad Issac, "The Environmental Impact of the Israeli Occupation", *Centre for Policy Analysis on Palestine*, Information Brief, No. 27, 14 March 2000.

⁸ Palestinian Affairs Department, Annual report, 2000.

⁹ *Ramattan Daily*, cited in *Hear Palestine*, 24 January 2001.

¹⁰ *Report*, "Settlement Timeline", vol. 10, No. 3, May-June 2000.

¹¹ *Ibid.*, No. 4, July-August 2000.

¹² B'Tselem, "Thirsty for a solution: the water crisis in the occupied territories and its resolution in the final status agreement", July 2000, p. 59.

¹³ *Ibid.*, p. 7.

¹⁴ *Ibid.*, p. 95.

¹⁵ *Palestine Report*, "Building Palestine", vol. 6, No. 5, 28 July 1999.

¹⁶ *Ibid.*

¹⁷ *Report*, "News Shorts", vol. 7, No. 1, 21 June 2000.

¹⁸ *Ha'aretz*, 12 March 2001.

¹⁹ *Hear Palestine*, 23 January 2001.

²⁰ B'Tselem, the Israeli Information Center for Human Rights in the Occupied Territories, Position Paper entitled "Thirsty for a solution: the water shortage in the Occupied Territories and its solution in the Final Status Agreement", July 2000, p. 7.

²¹ *Report*, "News Shorts", vol. 7, No. 21, 18 June 2000.

²² *Ibid.*, vol. 6, No. 35, 23 February 2000.

- ²³ *Hear Palestine*, 13 July 2000.
- ²⁴ Jad Issac, Information Brief, No. 27, 14 March 2000.
- ²⁵ *Ha'aretz*, 13 February 2001.
- ²⁶ *The Independent*, 18 November 2000 (according to mayor Hassoun Daoud in Hares).
- ²⁷ *Jordan Times*, according to a report of the Palestinian Ministry of Environmental Affairs, 22 November 2000.
- ²⁸ *Ibid.*
- ²⁹ The solid waste project is an initiative undertaken by Deutsche Gesellschaft für Technische Zusammenarbeit (GTZ), a German service company in international development cooperation, and KFW, a German promotional bank.
- ³⁰ *Report*, "Building Palestine", vol. 7, No. 35, 21 February 2001.
- ³¹ Jad Issac, Information Brief, No. 27, 14 March 2000.
- ³² *Ibid.*
- ³³ *Ibid.*
- ³⁴ The Independent Palestinian Information Network, 30 November 2000, <http://www.infopal.org>.
- ³⁵ Palestine Economic Policy Research Institute (MAS), *MAS Economic Monitor*, No. 1 (1997), pp. 2-3.
- ³⁶ Submission to the Commission on Human Rights at its fifty-sixth session by the Palestinian Centre for Human Rights, under item 8, Human rights violations in the Palestinian territories. The submission was presented on behalf of the following organizations: Fédération Internationale des ligues des droits de l'homme, the Palestinian Society for the Protection of Human Rights and the Environment, Arab Organization for Human Rights, Cairo Institute for Human Rights Studies, Arab Lawyers' Union, World Federation for Democratic Youth, South-North Organization, and the Palestinian Centre for Human Rights.
- ³⁷ *Ibid.*
- ³⁸ *Ibid.*
- ³⁹ Allegra Pacheco, "Closure and apartheid: seven years of peace through separation", *The Centre for Policy Analysis on Palestine*, Information Brief, No. 26, 6 March 2000.
- ⁴⁰ "Palestinian document on economic losses due to Israeli siege — 1st installment", 16 November 2000, Jerusalem, *Al-Quds* (in Arabic), 16 November 2000, p. 14.
- ⁴¹ *The Palestine Report*, "Building Palestine", vol. 7, No. 29, 10 January 2001.
- ⁴² UNSCO report, February 2001, p. 3.
- ⁴³ UNSCO, summary report (1 October 2000-31 January 2001), 17 February 2001.
- ⁴⁴ UNSCO report, p. 1.
- ⁴⁵ Domestic output and income amount to \$388,000,000 and labour income from Israel amount to \$117,010,080. Thus, total income losses would amount to \$505,010,080. For further information refer to UNSCO report, February 2001, p. 2.
- ⁴⁶ *Ibid.*, p. 3.
- ⁴⁷ *Ibid.*
- ⁴⁸ UNSCO, summary report, 17 February 2001.
- ⁴⁹ *Ibid.*
- ⁵⁰ *Ibid.*
- ⁵¹ "Uprooting Palestinian trees and leveling agricultural land", *The Fourth Report on Israeli Land Sweeping and Demolition of Palestinian Buildings and Facilities in the Gaza Strip*, Palestinian Centre for Human Rights, *Hear Palestine*, 26 January 2001.
- ⁵² UNSCO, summary report, 17 February 2001.
- ⁵³ *Golan Heights Information Server*, www.golan.org.il.
- ⁵⁴ *Report*, 27 March 2000, vol. 10, No. 4, July-August 2000, p. 6.
- ⁵⁵ *Report*, 28 March 2000, vol. 10, No. 4, July-August 2000, p. 6.
- ⁵⁶ *Report*, 14 April 2000, vol. 10, No. 4, July-August 2000, p. 7.
- ⁵⁷ Report on Israeli practices against human rights of Syrian citizens in the Occupied Syrian Golan, by the Ministry of Foreign Affairs, Syrian Arab Republic, May 2000 (mimeo) (in Arabic), pp. 15-16.
- ⁵⁸ *Ibid.*, pp. 16-20.
- ⁵⁹ *Ibid.*, pp. 12-13.



General Assembly Economic and Social Council

Distr.: General
17 May 2002

Original: English

**General Assembly
Fifty-seventh session**

Item 93 of the preliminary list*

Permanent sovereignty of the Palestinian people in the Occupied Palestinian Territory, including Jerusalem, and of the Arab population in the occupied Syrian Golan over their natural resources

**Economic and Social Council
Substantive session of 2002**

1-26 July 2002

Item 11 of the provisional agenda**

Economic and social repercussions of the Israeli occupation on the living conditions of the Palestinian people in the occupied Palestinian territory, including Jerusalem, and the Arab population in the occupied Syrian Golan

Economic and social repercussions of the Israeli occupation on the living conditions of the Palestinian people in the occupied Palestinian territory, including Jerusalem, and of the Arab population in the occupied Syrian Golan

Note by the Secretary-General***

In its resolution 2001/19 of 25 July 2001, entitled "Economic and social repercussions of the Israeli occupation on the living conditions of the Palestinian people in the occupied Palestinian territory, including Jerusalem, and the Arab population in the occupied Syrian Golan", the Economic and Social Council requested the Secretary-General to submit to the General Assembly at its fifty-seventh session, through the Council, a report on the implementation of the resolution. The General Assembly, in its resolution 56/204 of 21 December 2001, also requested a report. The annexed report, which has been prepared by the Economic and Social Commission for Western Asia (ESCWA), is submitted in response to the two resolutions.

* A/57/50/Rev.1.

** E/2002/100.

*** Because of lack of official sources for most of the information contained in the present report, a longer period for clearance was required for extensive consultations within the various United Nations entities at Headquarters and in the field. The report was therefore delayed for processing by four weeks.

Annex

Report prepared by the Economic and Social Commission for Western Asia

Summary

Continued occupation of the Palestinian territory by Israel, the delays in the implementation of the agreements reached between Israel and the Palestine Liberation Organization (PLO), and the delay in reaching a final solution intended to settle all outstanding claims between the two parties continue to aggravate the living conditions of the Palestinian people.

The Israel Defense Forces (IDF) have resorted to excessive use of force, house demolitions, increasingly severe mobility restrictions and closure policies, negatively affecting the Palestinian economy and living conditions. Internal closures have, in effect, divided the West Bank and Gaza Strip into 54 isolated areas. At the end of 2001, the Gaza International Airport and the Gaza harbour were severely damaged by the Israeli army. In addition, the strict closure policy and movement restrictions imposed by the Israeli authorities since September 2000 have seriously impeded the ability of aid agencies to deliver humanitarian assistance.

The Israeli settlements in the occupied Palestinian territory remain the primary issue fuelling the conflict between the two peoples. There are some 190 settlements in the West Bank and Gaza, inhabited by approximately 380,000 settlers, of whom some 180,000 live in the East Jerusalem area. Settlements are linked to each other and Israel by a vast system of bypass roads. These settlements and roads, which separate Palestinian communities and deprive Palestinians of agricultural land, have fragmented both land and people.

There is an extensive yet comparatively smaller settlement infrastructure in the occupied Syrian Golan Heights with some 17,000 Israeli settlers in 33 settlements. The failure of negotiations between Israel and the Syrian Arab Republic in March 2000 has resulted in decisions aimed at reinvigorating settlement expansion. Employment opportunities for the Arab population in the Syrian Golan Heights continue to be restricted and access to education facilities are limited.

I. Introduction

1. The present report covers the period April 2001 to March 2002. In its resolution 2001/19 of 25 July 2001 on the economic and social repercussions of the Israeli occupation on the living conditions of the Palestinian people in the occupied Palestinian territory, including Jerusalem, and of the Arab population in the occupied Syrian Golan, the Economic and Social Council stressed, inter alia, the importance of the revival of the Middle East peace process on the basis of Security Council resolutions 242 (1967), 338 (1973) of 22 October 1973 and 425 (1978) of 19 March 1978, and the principle of land for peace as well as the full and timely implementation of the agreements reached between the Government of Israel and the Palestine Liberation Organization, the representative of the Palestinian people.

2. In its resolution 56/204 of 21 December 2001, the General Assembly reaffirmed the inalienable rights of the Palestinian people and the population of the occupied Syrian Golan over their natural resources, including land and water; and called upon Israel, the occupying Power, not to exploit, to cause loss or depletion of or to endanger the natural resources in the occupied Palestinian territory, including Jerusalem and in the occupied Syrian Golan.

3. The delays in the implementation of the agreements reached between Israel and the Palestine Liberation Organization (PLO) continue to aggravate the living conditions of the Palestinian people and to sustain, relentlessly, the current cycle of violence. In his briefing to the Security Council on 21 February 2002, the Secretary-General stated that:

“a reduction in the violence is the most immediate priority. But I have become more and more convinced that trying to resolve the security problem on its own cannot work. Security cannot be dealt with in isolation. It has to have a context. It has to be addressed alongside key political issues, particularly the question of land, and the economic and social issues, including the increasing critical desperate conditions of the Palestinians. Failure to address these issues together will only spawn new and perhaps deadlier exchanges of reciprocal violence.”¹

II. Occupied Palestinian territory, including Jerusalem

Upsurge in violence

4. Since the report of last year, the upsurge in violence has continued to rise and the nature of confrontations has increased in severity as characterized by the utilization of heavy conventional weapons, extrajudicial killings and collective punishment of the civilian population. Between 28 September 2000 and 31 January 2002, the records of the United Nations Relief and Works Agency for Palestine Refugees in the Near East (UNRWA) indicate that an estimated 558 Palestinians were killed in the West Bank, and an estimated 364 Palestinians were killed in the Gaza Strip. According to the Palestinian Central Bureau of Statistics, 54 of the fatalities and 1,600 of the injured in the Gaza Strip were children under the age of 18. Twenty-nine of those killed and 700 of those injured were UNRWA pupils.²

5. As the situation has continued to deteriorate, Israeli security forces have resorted to heavier weaponry, including tanks, combat helicopters and fighter jets. Currently, most Palestinian deaths result from Israeli missile attacks directed at selected individuals suspected of terrorism, but which, inevitably, have also killed innocent bystanders, and from shootings carried out by soldiers and settlers, sometimes after an exchange of gunfire. Lately, intensive military incursions into Palestinian areas controlled by the Palestinian Authority have resulted in many civilian deaths. Israeli deaths have largely been caused by suicide bomb attacks in Israel itself and by gunfire directed at settlers on bypass roads or in the proximity of settlements. The Secretary-General has continually condemned, in the strongest possible terms, suicide bombing attacks against citizens of Israel. He has also repeatedly stated that such indiscriminate terrorist attacks are morally repugnant and harmful to the Palestinian cause.

6. There have been 58 extrajudicial killings, or targeted assassinations, of Palestinians by Israel since September 2000. In some cases, other Palestinians have been killed by helicopter missile fire, tank fire and gunfire in the course of carrying out the assassinations.³ Many innocent civilians were also killed in the bombing of villages or in gunfire

exchanges, in circumstances indicating an indiscriminate and disproportionate use of force.

7. The Israeli authorities have continued the widespread practice of destruction of property. UNRWA recorded 167 home demolitions in the West Bank in 2001. In the Gaza Strip, between September 2000 and 31 January 2002, UNRWA recorded the complete or partial destruction of 660 homes housing 845 families. Of these, 407 shelters housing 551 families — including 320 dwellings belonging to 448 refugee families — were completely destroyed.⁴ Most such demolitions took place at night, without any advance warning being given to the residents; some residents were forced to flee their homes without being able to even remove their possessions. Dozens of houses have also been destroyed or damaged as a result of the use of heavy weaponry. Moreover, during the current crisis, IDF has destroyed a significant amount of agricultural land, especially in Gaza. The creation of buffer zones for bypass roads and settlements has resulted in the “sweeping” of large areas of agricultural land by bulldozers. A total of 385,808 fruit and olive trees have been uprooted, and wells and agricultural constructions destroyed.

8. UNRWA recorded 772 instances in 2001 when settlers in the West Bank attacked Palestinians, vandalized their property, blocked roads, or bulldozed agricultural land. In the Gaza Strip, where the settler population is small and largely confined to settlement enclaves, settler activity was minimal by comparison.⁵ It should be noted that a substantial segment of the settlers carry weapons that they received from IDF.⁶

9. All such acts of violence and the occupation itself have a negative impact on the psyche of the Palestinian population. However, considering the high percentage of the population which is under the age of 18, the impact can be expected to significantly affect the next generation for years to come. Many people reportedly experience an overwhelming fear of the future and feelings of hopelessness. Studies show that, as a result of the crisis, there are high incidences of post-traumatic stress disorder among Palestinian children and youth.

10. Over 600 Palestinian children were arrested by the Israeli authorities between September 2000 and September 2001; around 160 remained incarcerated in Israeli jails. Moreover, almost all Palestinian child detainees face physical and psychological torture while under interrogation. While in prison, children are also

denied the right to education and visits from family and lawyers.⁷

11. The crisis has serious gender impacts. As children are afraid of leaving the house, it has become more difficult for women to seek employment or education outside the house. Furthermore, the incidences of gender-based violence within families have been multiplying. The destruction of homes, the death of male heads of households coupled with men’s frustration due to unemployment and immobility have resulted in a sharp increase in incest and domestic violence. According to the Gaza Mental Health Clinic, some former prisoners use the same tactics they experienced during interrogation to torture their wives and children.⁸

12. The sense of hopelessness and frustration due to unemployment tends to be associated with a loss of status for male household heads when they are the only or main economically active family members and can no longer meet their families’ basic needs. This psychosocial impact of unemployment in turn is associated with an increase in domestic violence.⁹

Mobility restrictions and closure policies

13. Checkpoints, closures and curfews severely impede access to medical care, education and employment. There were many reports that Israeli authorities treat Palestinians in an abusive manner at checkpoints, subjecting them to verbal and physical harassment. Each day, hundreds of thousands of Palestinians who wish to travel between Palestinian towns and villages must pass through one or more of the approximately 130 Israeli checkpoints across the occupied territory.¹⁰

14. Israeli closure policy has become the single most important factor negatively affecting the Palestinian economy and living conditions. Closure implies varying degrees of movement restrictions on Palestinian people, vehicles and goods: within the West Bank and Gaza; between the West Bank and Gaza and Israel; and at the international crossings between the West Bank and Gaza and neighbouring Jordan and Egypt. Generalized movement restrictions were first imposed in the West Bank and Gaza during the Gulf War in 1991 and have become more formalized and pervasive since 1993.¹¹

15. For most of the period since October 2000, mobility between the West Bank and Gaza, and between the occupied Palestinian territory and the rest of the world, has been severely impeded. Travel for Palestinians between the West Bank and Gaza via the "safe passage" route has been blocked by the Israeli authorities since 6 October 2000. The passage was closed even though the Oslo Accords forbid its closure. According to the Accords, two routes were to be designated as safe passages. Israel is entitled, for security reasons, to close one of them or to alter the terms of entrance but must assure that one of the passages is always open.¹²

16. IDF has substantially increased the restrictions on movement of Palestinians in the occupied territory during the al-Aqsa intifada. Many of those harmed by these restrictions have been persons requiring medical treatment, mainly newborns, women and the elderly. From 1 October 2000 to 3 March 2002, there were 23 births at Israeli military roadblocks in the West Bank and Gaza Strip. Among these, three miscarriages were caused by tear gas grenades and an additional three miscarriages were caused by the delays and harassment.¹³ According to the Badil Resource Centre for Palestinian Residency and Refugee Rights, 435 Palestinian children have been killed since September 2000.¹⁴ Furthermore, since September 2001, more than 165 Palestinian ambulances have been hit by IDF fire; about 135 members of medical teams have been wounded and 8 killed, according to Physicians for Human Rights.¹⁵

17. While internal closure measures seemed to have been relaxed during the second quarter of 2001, internal closure in the West Bank was tightened again in June and has remained so to date. Internal closure is much more severe in the West Bank than in Gaza.¹⁶ Israeli forces further restricted freedom of movement of Palestinians by imposing curfews, often for extended periods, on specific Palestinian towns or neighbourhoods. IDF practice on the ground involves the placement of checkpoints at the entrances to villages. Consequently, entry and exit are often possible only via dirt roads, entailing enormous hardships.

18. International border crossings have also been severely affected. Between October 2000 and February 2002, all of Gaza's border crossings through which residents, exports and imports transit, were closed for lengthy periods. The Gaza International Airport has

remained closed since February 2001. In December 2001, the radar station and parts of the runway were destroyed by IDF. In January 2002, the runway was bulldozed. The Gaza harbour was destroyed by IDF during the last quarter of 2001.¹⁷ Israeli attacks have resulted, according to the Palestinian Authority's Ministry of Transport, in the direct loss of 68 km of main roads between cities and the destruction of 121 km of secondary roads between Palestinian towns. In addition, the Ministry also indicated that 654 public buses and 3,450 trucks have been forced out of service and that 6,505 public vehicles are working at 50 per cent of capacity.¹⁸ Owing to these restrictions and attacks, Palestinian foreign trade has been affected, and imports and exports, trans-shipped through Israeli ports, have been delayed or blocked completely for most of this period.

19. Mobility restrictions have been made even more burdensome by road checkpoints, which have become a regular feature of Palestinian life. Palestinians are obliged to wait for long periods while Israeli soldiers check vehicles and inspect identity documents. In order to avoid these delays, Palestinians often abandon their cars or leave their taxis and cross the checkpoint on foot to catch a taxi on the other side of the checkpoint.

20. By mid-2001, there were 97 Israeli military checkpoints in the West Bank. Roads were also blocked with piles of earth, ripped up, or cut across with trenches. These measures divided the West Bank into over 100 separate, isolated sectors. In Gaza, there were 32 Israeli military checkpoints.¹⁹ A study by the United Nations Conference on Trade and Development indicated that internal closures have, in effect, divided the West Bank and Gaza Strip into 54 isolated areas.²⁰ From September 2000 to December 2001, 33 Palestinian civilians have died as a result of being prohibited from reaching hospitals or seeking medical treatment. Such delays occur most frequently at checkpoints established by IDF.²¹

21. Israel's imposition of severe restrictions on freedom of movement carries a devastating impact on the already fragile Palestinian economy. The Palestinian population is poor even under normal conditions, with 50 per cent living in refugee camps. The imposition of additional burdens on such a population inevitably creates severe material, social and psychological hardships.

22. The strict closure policy and movement restrictions imposed by the Israeli authorities since September 2000 have seriously impeded the ability of aid agencies to deliver both regular and emergency humanitarian assistance to the refugees in need. UNRWA staff, numbering 3,500 in the West Bank and 7,000 in Gaza, experienced severe work disruptions owing to IDF checkpoints that frequently delayed them or prevented them outright from reporting to their schools, clinics and field offices. The financial cost to UNRWA of forced workplace absences and lateness is estimated at US\$ 2.8 million.²²

23. The chief impact of the strife in the occupied Palestinian territory on UNRWA health services has been an increased demand for medical care. UNRWA regular health services have been burdened by the growing number of refugees who previously used private health providers but turned to UNRWA for free medical care because of the economic hardships associated with the closure. Another serious initial outcome of the restrictions on movement in the West Bank was a temporary decline in the number of children immunized in late 2000. Other indicators of a breakdown in preventive services in the West Bank, in particular, include an increase in stillbirths and low birth weight rates; late registration and irregular attendance of pregnant women for antenatal care; an increase in anaemia rates (an indicator of deterioration in nutritional status) and declining follow-up with medical providers by patients suffering from non-communicable diseases, such as diabetes, with a concomitant drop in control rates.²³

24. Restrictions on the freedom of movement imposed by the Israeli authorities have had severe impacts on education. Reports indicate that 190 schools have been temporarily closed, 55 per cent of older students have experienced difficulties in reaching higher education institutions and 1,300 students from Gaza have been unable to reach their universities in the West Bank.²⁴ There was a marked deterioration in scores on final examinations in UNRWA schools in the West Bank and Gaza Strip in 2001, resulting from both psychological trauma triggered by the strife and disruptions in learning caused by the persistent absences of teaching staff who were prevented from reaching their schools during internal closures.

The Palestinian economy

25. The crisis and the growing atmosphere of profound political and economic uncertainty had a devastating impact on the Palestinian economy. Consequently, the percentage of Palestinian people living below the poverty line (\$2 per person per day) is reaching 50 per cent, which is more than double the poverty rate prior to the current crisis. The Office of the United Nations Special Coordinator in the Occupied Territories (UNSCO) estimates that the total income losses to the Palestinian economy, during the period 1 October 2000 to 31 December 2001, range between \$3.1 and \$4.1 billion.

26. The World Bank estimates per capita gross national product (GNP) in 2001 to be 30 per cent lower than it was in 1994, at the beginning of the Oslo peace process. In 2000, real gross domestic product (GDP) contracted by between 6 and 7 per cent mainly owing to the poor performance of the Palestinian economy in the last quarter of 2000. The economy had been performing relatively well until the outbreak of violence. In 2001, the World Bank projected an additional 10 per cent decline in real GDP. The estimated decline of GNP is larger, at around 14 per cent, since the volume of worker activity abroad is expected to be over 30 per cent lower than in 2000.²⁵

27. The cumulative effect of the restrictions on the freedom of movement of people and goods is perceived by the Palestinians as a siege. It has resulted in severe socio-economic hardships. The restriction on the entry of Palestinians into Israel has meant denial of access to their places of work in Israel to an estimated 115,000 Palestinians. The consequences have been devastating: the families of these workers are now suffering from a complete lack of income. Over 50 per cent of the Palestinian workforce is now unemployed.²⁶

28. The Palestinian Central Bureau of Statistics reported that the volume of goods imported into the occupied Palestinian territory had dropped by 8.5 per cent during the last quarter of 2000 compared with 1999 figures; the drop continued in 2001 to 47 per cent as a result of Israeli closure measures. Palestinian exports declined by 4.9 per cent in 2000 and 52 per cent in 2001. The Bureau reported that the number of people working in industry declined by 38 per cent between 1 October 2000 and 31 May 2001. During the same period, the number of workers in construction dropped by 20 per cent; in home trade by 26 per cent;

in transportation and telecommunications by 23 per cent; and in the services sector by 36 per cent. Production levels in agriculture dropped by 13 per cent, in industry by 19 per cent; in construction by 29 per cent; in home trade by 14 per cent; in transportation and telecommunications by 2 per cent; and in other activities by 23 per cent between 1 October 2000 and 31 May 2001.²⁷

29. A survey undertaken by the Palestinian Federation of Chambers of Commerce found that total imports into the West Bank and Gaza had declined by 56.1 per cent compared with pre-crisis levels.²⁸ Especially large declines were observed in the following import categories: capital goods (83.7 per cent); vehicles (79 per cent); household equipment (63.3 per cent); construction materials (52.7 per cent); and consumption products (48 per cent). Imports from Arab countries decreased by 62.2 per cent; from Israel by 44.5 per cent; and from Europe by 41.5 per cent. In addition, the survey indicates an increase of 25 per cent in the cost of imports and an increase of 46.1 per cent in import time delay.²⁹

30. The survey found that, during the crisis, total exports from the West Bank and Gaza Strip to Israel and other countries had declined by 50.3 per cent compared with pre-crisis levels. Palestinian agriculture exports declined by 52.6 per cent while industrial exports fell by 49.6 per cent. Palestinian exports to Israeli markets declined 51.9 per cent while exports to Arab countries dropped by 27 per cent.³⁰

31. The Palestinian Authority's fiscal situation and prospects have been severely impacted by the current crisis. With closure measures disrupting tax collection, the contraction of the Palestinian economy eroding the Palestinian tax base and with the Israeli suspension of tax clearances, the fiscal revenues declined by about 57 per cent during the first nine months of the crisis. The international community has responded to the Palestinian Authority fiscal crisis by providing large amounts of direct fiscal support. By the end of 2001, the Palestinian Authority had received approximately \$575 million, primarily from Arab countries and the European Union.³¹

32. According to the survey by the Palestinian Central Bureau of Statistics, 14 per cent of households have reported that they have lost their sources of usual income during the past year. Of these, 10.1 per cent (35,000 households) were in the West Bank and 21.9

per cent (38,000 households) in the Gaza Strip. About 47.7 per cent of the households reported that they had lost more than 50 per cent of their usual income. The median monthly income of Palestinian households has decreased from 2,500 Israeli shekels before the outbreak of the crisis to 1,500 shekels in October 2001. The median income in March 2001 was 1,200 shekels and in June 1,300 shekels. The median income in the West Bank decreased from 3,000 shekels to 1,700 shekels and in the Gaza Strip from 1,944 shekels to 900 shekels.³²

33. The current crisis has compounded the long-term economic decline of East Jerusalem's economic base. A study prepared by the Palestinian Chamber of Commerce and Industry revealed that Arab hotels in Jerusalem witnessed the cancellation of 94 per cent of their reservations during the period from October 2000 to March 2001. Debts accrued in the tourism sector during early 2001 were approximately \$13.5 million. Losses in the tourism sector between October 2000 and March 2001 were approximately \$50 million.

34. A World Bank report concluded that, notwithstanding security and political considerations, unless the Palestinian territory is able to achieve high levels of economic growth, the prospects for future poverty reduction are not encouraging. Not only will the number of poor Palestinians grow rapidly, but their share in the population will also increase, which could become a socially destabilizing factor. Furthermore, unless Palestinians gain greater access to external markets and to better paying jobs, whether in Israel or in higher productivity occupations in the West Bank and Gaza Strip, it will be difficult for them to escape poverty.

Water, environment and natural resources

35. In general terms, the environmental impact of Israeli measures taken during the crisis fall into three broad categories: land degradation, water resource damage and a halt to essential infrastructure work. Land degradation is occurring rapidly owing to the felling of thousands of trees and orchards and the blockade of roads used by Palestinians, resulting in thousands of new dirt tracks being created as alternative transport routes. Water resource damage is occurring through damage to environmental facilities, particularly sewage infrastructure, and due to

restrictions imposed on proper waste disposal. Owing to the internal closures, outlying Palestinian villages are being denied access to drinking water. Many infrastructure projects supported by the international aid community to improve the Palestinian environment have been brought to a halt because of the closures.³³

36. Two hundred thousand Palestinians living in 218 West Bank villages are not connected to a water network and therefore have no running water. This population suffers a severe water crisis. They are unable to meet their basic water needs, including basic personal hygiene and house cleaning, and as a result, face significant health risks. The restrictions on movement imposed by IDF since the beginning of the crisis aggravate the situation and make it difficult for tankers to transport water to affected communities.³⁴

37. Since the establishment of the Palestinian Authority, Israel has continued to maintain almost complete control of the water sector in the occupied Palestinian territory. Every new water project, including projects in Area A (in which Palestinians would have complete authority for civilian security), requires the consent of Israel's representatives on the Israeli-Palestinian Joint Water Committee. The additional water quantities that Israel and the Palestinian Authority developed pursuant to the Interim Agreement led to a certain improvement in the supply of water for household and urban use in various areas of the West Bank. However, in the summer, many Palestinians continue to suffer from frequent disconnections of the water network. These disconnections result from the allocation programmes that various cities are compelled to implement because of the increased demand in summer months.³⁵

38. The average Palestinian in the West Bank consumes 60 litres of water a day. The precise consumption of residents in communities that are not connected to a water network is not known. However, it is significantly less than the overall average. By comparison, average per capita consumption in Israel and the settlements is 350 litres a day. The minimum quantity of water recommended by the United States Agency for International Development for household and urban use alone is 100 litres a day per person.³⁶

39. There are 36 Palestinian villages that are completely dependent on water vendors to supply their water needs. During periods of the siege, these villages (with a total of 86,255 inhabitants) are reported to have

had no water supplied to them for periods ranging from a week to two months.³⁷ Furthermore, owing to the difficulties in access to water springs (many being in Area C, where Israel retains sole security authority), the price of trucked water has increased considerably at a time when employment and income for Palestinians has plummeted.³⁸

40. The occupation legacy is responsible for the gross lack of attention to environmental issues and investment in physical infrastructure within the Palestinian cities and villages themselves. This includes a degraded solid waste management infrastructure, lack of wastewater treatment plants and proper water supply facilities, and degraded groundwater quality and quantity (particularly in Gaza). A report written by the World Bank Reform Campaign claims that there has been no effort to improve the sewage situation in the southern West Bank and untreated sewage threatens to pollute the water supply.

41. Land confiscation for establishing settlements has had a major impact on Palestinians and their economy, especially the agriculture sector, which accounts for about 30 per cent of Palestinian national income. The dispersed location of Israeli settlements is an important factor in the reduction of open spaces, including in some cases the loss of biologically important areas, such as forests and sensitive ecosystems.³⁹ Bypass roads, which are established to enable settlers and military vehicles to move around without traversing Palestinian residential areas in the belief that their security is improved, contribute to a further deterioration of the environment. The roads are designed for moving at high speeds, which require that the angles be minimized: wadis are therefore filled up and hills bulldozed to make way. No buildings or trees are allowed to remain on a wide strip of 50-100 metres on either side. This translates into a 350-metre wide swath⁴⁰ of landscape destruction over more than 200 kilometres of bypass roads already built. An additional 250 kilometres of bypass roads are in the planning stages.⁴¹

Israeli settlements

42. The great majority of the Member States regard Israeli settlements in the West Bank and Gaza as contrary to article 49 (6) of the Fourth Geneva Convention, which prohibits an occupying Power from

transferring parts of its own civilian population into the territory it occupies. Numerous resolutions of the Security Council and the General Assembly have condemned the settlements as illegal. In the words of the Special Rapporteur on Israeli Practices, "Expanding settlements, demolition of houses and the destruction of property, restrictions on freedom of movement and the economic blockade are a constant reminder to Palestinians of the occupation".⁴² Moreover, apart from the fact that settlements are a constant source of friction between the two peoples, assuring the security of the settlements and roads is imposing a tremendous burden on Israel. It is estimated that the numerous settlements in the occupied Palestinian territory require the defence of borders 10 times longer than the 1967 Green Line (a border approximately 2,000 miles long).⁴³

43. Today, there are some 190 settlements in the West Bank and Gaza inhabited by approximately 380,000 settlers, of whom some 180,000 live in the East Jerusalem area. Settlements are linked to each other and Israel by a vast system of bypass roads (from which Palestinian vehicles are excluded) which have a 50- to 75-metre buffer zone on each side in which no building is permitted. These settlements and roads, which separate Palestinian communities and deprive Palestinians of agricultural land, have fragmented both land and people. In effect, they seriously hamper the possibility of a Palestinian State as they destroy the territorial integrity of the occupied Palestinian territory.⁴⁴

44. More than half of the net increase of 2,561 in the settlement population during the first half of 2001 was due to increases at three religious settlements: Beitar, south-west of Jerusalem; Tel Zion/Adam, bordering the north-east corner of East Jerusalem; and Modi'in Ilit, on the Green Line between Tel Aviv and Jerusalem. In the Gaza Strip, where clashes have been the most violent, the 17 settlements with a population of approximately 7,000 have sustained a small net increase in population during 2001.

45. According to an Israeli Housing Ministry report, most of the thousands of housing units constructed in public housing projects in Givat Ze'ev and Ma'ale Adumim over the past six years remain unsold and empty. Despite the existence of empty units, the Ministry issued a tender for an additional 496 units for Ma'ale Adumim on 5 April 2001. The Ministry noted that 76 per cent of the housing units offered in Har

Homa between 1999 and 2000 (2,200) remained unsold in early 2001. In efforts to encourage prospective settlers, a programme offering a grant of \$6,250 and a subsidized mortgage for an equal amount to buyers was initiated. According to the Central Bureau of Statistics, there are currently 6,130 units under construction in settlements throughout the West Bank and Gaza.

III. Occupied Syrian Golan

46. There is an extensive, yet comparatively small settlement infrastructure in the Golan Heights in the Syrian Arab Republic, occupied by Israel since June 1967. Some 17,000 Israeli settlers, residing in 33 settlements, represent an increase of 18 per cent since 1994. Over 17,000 Syrians, remaining after 1967, are clustered in five villages close to the borders of the Syrian Arab Republic and Lebanon.⁴⁵

47. Negotiations conducted between Israel and the Syrian Arab Republic aimed at ending Israel's occupation of the Golan Heights and establishing peaceful relations between the two countries ended in failure in March 2000. This resulted in a number of decisions aimed at reinvigorating settlement expansion on the Golan Heights. The Golan Heights Regional Council intends to open a campaign in early 2002 for the construction of 1,000 new dwelling units in Israeli settlements during the next three years.⁴⁶

48. Employment opportunities for the Arab population in the Syrian Golan Heights continues to be extremely restricted, since the movement of the Arab population between the Golan and the Syrian Arab Republic remains problematic. The employment available to the Syrian population in the Golan is limited to unskilled and semi-skilled daily wage labour. In most instances, these workers have no access to social benefits or health insurance, and job security is extremely precarious, with no provision for unemployment compensation. Over and above these concerns, substantial wage differences prevail, to the detriment of the Syrian Arab population of the Golan.⁴⁷ The improvement of living conditions is further inhibited owing to measures that restrict the expansion of educational facilities, as well as limited access to education, either in the Syrian Arab Republic or Israel.⁴⁸

Notes

- ¹ United Nations, Department of Public Information, press release, SG/SM/8129; SC/7305; 21 February 2002.
- ² United Nations Relief and Works Agency for Palestine Refugees in the Near East (UNRWA) estimates, dated 6 March 2002.
- ³ B'Tselem, "Statistics on the al-Aqsa Intifada: Assassinations — Extrajudicial Executions".
- ⁴ UNRWA estimates, 6 March 2002.
- ⁵ UNRWA contribution to this report, 6 March 2002.
- ⁶ B'Tselem, *Tacit Consent: Israeli Policy on Law Enforcement toward Settlers in the Occupied Territories*.
- ⁷ These rights are conferred by article 37 of the Convention of the Rights of the Child.
- ⁸ United Nations Development Fund for Women (UNIFEM) contribution to the present report dated 6 February 2002.
- ⁹ Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Human Rights contribution to the present report, 8 March 2002.
- ¹⁰ United States, Department of State, 2001 Human Rights Report, Israel and the occupied territories.
- ¹¹ United Nations, Office of the United Nations Special Coordinator (UNSCO), Closure Update Summary: "The Impact on the Palestinian Economy of Confrontation, Border Closures and Mobility Restrictions", 1 October 2000-30 September 2001.
- ¹² See Oslo II Accords, appendix 1.
- ¹³ Al-Haq.
- ¹⁴ BADIL (Resource Centre for Palestinian Residency and Refugee Rights).
- ¹⁵ *Ha'aretz*, 22 March 2002.
- ¹⁶ UNSCO contribution to the present report dated 21 February 2002.
- ¹⁷ UNSCO contribution to the present report, 21 February 2002.
- ¹⁸ Communication of the Ministry of Transport to ESCWA, 9 February 2002.
- ¹⁹ BADIL, 23 August 2001.
- ²⁰ UNCTAD, *Secretariat Report on UNCTAD Assistance to the Palestinian People*, Geneva, August 2001.
- ²¹ *Hear Palestine*, 8 December 2001.
- ²² UNRWA estimates, 6 March 2002.
- ²³ *Ibid.*
- ²⁴ UNSCO Closure Update Summary: "The Impact on the Palestinian Economy of Confrontation, Border Closures and Mobility Restrictions", 1 October 2000-30 September 2001.
- ²⁵ *The Economist*, The EU Country Report October 2001, pp. 52-53.
- ²⁶ OHCHR contribution to this report, 8 March 2002.
- ²⁷ *Ha'aretz*, 5 October 2001.
- ²⁸ Palestinian Federation of Chambers of Commerce, "Palestinian External Trade and Israeli Impediments", July 2001 (Arabic).
- ²⁹ UNSCO Closure Update Summary: "The Impact on the Palestinian Economy of Confrontation, Border Closures and Mobility Restrictions", 1 October 2000-30 September 2001.
- ³⁰ *Ibid.*
- ³¹ UNSCO contribution to the present report, 21 February 2002.
- ³² *The Jerusalem Times*, 5 October 2001.
- ³³ Applied Research Institute — Jerusalem (ARIJ), "Israel's Double Standard towards Environmental Protection", 2001.
- ³⁴ B'Tselem, *Not Even a Drop: The Water Crisis in Palestinian Villages without a Water Network*, 5 August 2001.
- ³⁵ *Ibid.*
- ³⁶ *Ibid.*
- ³⁷ Palestinian Hydrology Group, *Report on Israeli aggressions against Palestinian water sector during Al-Aqsa intifada*, December 2000.
- ³⁸ Applied Research Institute — Jerusalem, "Israel's Double Standard towards Environmental Protection", 2001.
- ³⁹ *Ibid.*
- ⁴⁰ From the Israeli Coalition Against House Demolitions and other sources.
- ⁴¹ Applied Research Institute — Jerusalem, "Israel's Double Standard towards Environmental Protection", 2001.
- ⁴² OHCHR contribution to the present report, 21 February 2002.
- ⁴³ *Report*, May-June 2001, p. 2.
- ⁴⁴ *Ibid.*
- ⁴⁵ *Report*, November-December 1999, p. 6.
- ⁴⁶ *Ma'ariv*, 25 November 2001.

⁴⁷ Syrian Arab Republic, Ministry of Foreign Affairs, "Report on Israeli Practices Against Human Rights of Syrian Citizens in the Occupied Syrian Golan", June 1997, pp. 12-20.

⁴⁸ Ibid., pp. 20-24.

**General Assembly
Economic and Social Council**Distr.: General
12 June 2003

Original: English

General Assembly**Fifty-eighth session**

Item 105 of the preliminary list*

Permanent sovereignty of the Palestinian people in the Occupied Palestinian Territory, including East Jerusalem, and of the Arab population in the occupied Syrian Golan over their natural resources**Economic and Social Council****Substantive session of 2003**

30 June-25 July 2003

Item 11 of the provisional agenda**

Economic and social repercussions of the Israeli occupation on the living conditions of the Palestinian people in the occupied Palestinian territory, including Jerusalem, and the Arab population in the occupied Syrian Golan**Report prepared by the Economic and Social Commission for Western Asia on the economic and social repercussions of the Israeli occupation on the living conditions of the Palestinian people in the occupied Palestinian territory, including Jerusalem, and of the Arab population in the occupied Syrian Golan****Note by the Secretary-General*****

In its resolution 2002/31 of 25 July 2002, the Economic and Social Council requested the Secretary-General to submit to the General Assembly at its fifty-eighth session, through the Council, a report on the implementation of the resolution. The General Assembly, in its resolution 57/269 of 20 December 2002, also requested a report. The Secretary-General has the honour to transmit the report requested, which has been prepared by the Economic and Social Commission for Western Asia and is submitted in response to the two resolutions. A report on assistance to the Palestinian people, covering the period June 2002 to May 2003, is also being submitted to the General Assembly through the Economic and Social Council, as requested in resolution 57/147 of 16 December 2002. The annual report of the Commissioner-General of the United Nations Relief and Works Agency for Palestine Refugees in the Near East provides information, inter alia, on the socio-economic conditions of the registered population in the occupied Palestinian territory.¹

* A/58/50/Rev.1 and Corr.1.

** E/2003/100.

*** As official sources were lacking for most of the information contained in the present report, a longer period for clearance was required for extensive consultations within the various United Nations entities at Headquarters and in the field. The report was therefore delayed two weeks for processing.

Report prepared by the Economic and Social Commission for Western Asia* on the economic and social repercussions of the Israeli occupation on the living conditions of the Palestinian people in the occupied Palestinian territory, including Jerusalem, and of the Arab population in the occupied Syrian Golan

Summary

The occupation of Palestinian territory by Israel continues to have a serious detrimental effect on all aspects of the living conditions of the Palestinian people.

The Israeli army has continued to resort to excessive use of force, arbitrary detention, house demolitions, increasingly severe mobility restrictions and closure policies, as well as the confiscation and bulldozing of productive Palestinian agricultural land.

The Palestinian economy continues to accumulate losses, currently equal to half of its annual gross domestic product. Unemployment has increased threefold, and poverty has risen among more than two thirds of the population.

Women and children bear a special and enduring burden resulting from the occupation. Palestinian children face exposure to mounting violence, and their access to educational opportunities and health facilities have been reduced to unacceptably low levels. Educational outcomes are consistently declining, as are nutritional standards and public health conditions.

As noted in previous reports, Israeli settlements in the occupied Palestinian territory remain one of the principal issues fuelling the conflict between the two peoples. The geographic distribution of Israeli settlements in the occupied Palestinian territory severely restricts the growth of the Palestinian communities.

The Israeli-occupied Syrian Golan Heights continues to witness settlement expansion beyond the 33 settlements already in place. Social services such as schooling, higher education and medical facilities remain insufficient for the Arab population in the Syrian Golan Heights.

* The Economic and Social Commission for Western Asia would like to acknowledge with appreciation the substantive contributions of the United Nations Children's Fund, the United Nations Conference on Trade and Development, the United Nations Population Fund, the United Nations Relief and Works Agency for Palestine Refugees in the Near East, the Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Human Rights, the World Health Organization and the Office of the United Nations Special Coordinator in the Occupied Territories to this report.

I. Introduction

1. In its resolution 2002/31 of 25 July 2002, the Economic and Social Council stressed, inter alia, the importance of reviving the Middle East peace process on the basis of Security Council resolutions 242 (1967) of 22 November 1967, 338 (1973) of 22 October 1973 and 425 (1978) of 19 March 1978, and the principle of land for peace as well as the compliance with the agreements reached between the Government of Israel and the Palestine Liberation Organization, the representative of the Palestinian people. The resolution reaffirmed the applicability of the Geneva Convention relative to the Protection of Civilian Persons in Time of War, of 12 August 1949, to the Occupied Palestinian Territory, including Jerusalem, and other Arab territories occupied by Israel since 1967. The resolution stressed the need to preserve the territorial integrity of all of the Occupied Palestinian Territory and to guarantee the freedom of movement of persons and goods in the territory, including the removal of restrictions on going into and from East Jerusalem, and the freedom of movement to and from the outside world. The Council reaffirmed the inalienable right of the Palestinian people and the Arab population of the occupied Syrian Golan to all their natural and economic resources and called upon Israel not to exploit, endanger or cause loss or depletion of those resources. It also reaffirmed that Israeli settlements in the Occupied Palestinian Territory, including Jerusalem and the occupied Syrian Golan, were illegal and an obstacle to economic and social development. The Council requested the Secretary-General to submit to the General Assembly, through the Council, a report on the implementation of the resolution.

2. In its resolution 57/269 of 20 December 2002, the General Assembly reaffirmed the inalienable rights of the Palestinian people and the population of the occupied Syrian Golan over their natural and economic resources, including land and water; and called upon Israel, the occupying Power, not to exploit, cause loss or depletion of or endanger the natural resources in the Occupied Palestinian Territory, including Jerusalem and the occupied Syrian Golan. In the resolution, the Assembly recognized the right of the Palestinian people to claim restitution as a result of any exploitation, loss or depletion of, or danger to, their natural resources, and expressed the hope that this issue would be dealt with in the framework of the final status negotiations between the Palestinian and Israeli sides. The Assembly requested the Secretary-General to submit a report to it at its fifty-eighth session.

3. On 30 April 2003, the Secretary-General warmly welcomed the formal presentation of the road map for Middle East peace, declaring that it gave the Israeli and Palestinian people a real chance to end their long and painful conflict, and thus a chance for all the people of that troubled region to establish, at last, a just and comprehensive peace. The Secretary-General expressed his belief that the road map's goal of two States, a secure and prosperous Israel and an independent, viable, sovereign and democratic Palestine, living side by side in peace and security, must be the focus of all energies and efforts.

4. It has been noted that humanitarian assistance is not the answer to the crisis in the occupied Palestinian territory. The crisis is fundamentally political, as observed by the United Nations Technical Assistance Mission following its visit in October 2002 to the Occupied Palestinian Territory: the crisis will continue to worsen unless political decisions are taken to lift closures, curfews and other restrictions on the civilian population. Durable and productive security cannot be achieved by violence

or the construction of walls and barricades. It depends on trust and respect between people.²

II. Occupied Palestinian Territory, including Jerusalem

Deaths and injuries

5. From the beginning of March 2002 until 7 May 2002, Israel endured an estimated 16 bombings, the large majority of which were suicide attacks. More than 100 persons were killed. On 29 March 2002 Israel launched Operation Defensive Shield. The operation included incursions into a number of Palestinian cities, including Jenin, which have resulted in numerous Palestinian civilian deaths (see A/ES-10/186). As the report of the Secretary-General prepared pursuant to General Assembly resolution ES-10/10 indicated, a total of 497 Palestinians were killed in the course of the Israeli army reoccupation of Palestinian area A from 1 March to 7 May 2002 and in the immediate aftermath.³

6. The Palestinian Ministry of Health reported 2,520 Palestinian deaths by occupation forces between 29 September 2000 and 24 September 2002. Israel reported 624 Israeli deaths from 27 September 2000 to 26 September 2002. Several thousand injuries have resulted on both sides. However, the Palestinian death rate has been at such a high level that it has directly affected the general Palestinian mortality rate, which has increased by about 2 per cent since 2001.

7. Israel continues to pursue a policy of extrajudicial killings of Palestinians suspected of involvement in armed attacks against Israelis. In 2002, there were 51 extrajudicial killings/attempts, resulting in the death of 66 suspected persons and 46 bystanders.

8. Many of the civilians killed have been children. Over 450 children have been killed in the conflict since September 2000. The Israeli army and settlers have killed 367 Palestinian children (under 18). However, Palestinian attacks on Israeli targets have killed 82 Israeli children.

9. Medical facilities and personnel administering to the wounded have been attacked. The Israeli army has killed 18 health workers and injured 370; and it has damaged 240 ambulances and destroyed 34.

Arbitrary arrests and detentions

10. The Israeli army's house-to-house searches have affected from 30 to 50 per cent of Palestinian homes in various areas of the occupied Palestinian territory, and between 12 and 36 per cent of households have reported the arrest of at least one family member. Mass arrests were conducted, as illustrated by the Friday, 29 March 2002 raid on Al-Bireh (West Bank), where the occupation army assembled all male residents aged 15 to 45 in a school yard. They forced the majority to remain in the school throughout the day and night, releasing some the next morning, but hauling others away in buses.

11. During the two major Israel army incursions into the occupied Palestinian territory, in February and in late March 2002, the number of Palestinians arrested

was 10,000. Some have been released, but about 4,000 persons remain in detention, including 38 women prisoners (A/57/207, para. 37). Prior to the launch of Operation Defensive Shield, 60 Palestinians had been held in administrative detention. According to B'Tselem, an Israeli non-governmental organization, as of January 2003, more than 1,000 Palestinians were being held in administrative detention.⁴

12. Israeli forces have also detained local staff of the United Nations. The United Nations Relief and Works Agency for Palestine Refugees in the Near East (UNRWA) has been refused access to and information about its detained staff members. The United Nations Relief and Works Agency for Palestine Refugees in the Near East has also complained that its buildings have been used repeatedly as detention centres. On 9 April 2002, special Israeli forces and army units broke into the UNRWA Ramallah Men's Training Centre, arresting its dean and 104 others.

13. Children are affected by arbitrary detention, not only by being deprived of family members and their right to visit them in detention, but also as detainees and prisoners themselves. A total of 280 children have been detained. The Israeli army has confirmed that it prohibited Palestinian juvenile detainees at Ofer Camp from meeting their families and from continuing their studies.⁵

Population displacements

14. The destruction of Palestinian homes and the military siege and curfews on residential areas have had multiple effects on the population of the occupied Palestinian territory, including Jerusalem. Both those rendered homeless and those facing military threat in their place of residence have been obliged to seek refuge elsewhere. At the end of the 2002 incursions, between 23 and 37 per cent of the families housed other families as a result of life-threatening danger around the displaced family's home, demolition or confiscation of homes by the Israeli army, or being stranded and unable to reach home.

15. From late 2000 through 2002, Israeli measures have compelled some 70,000 Palestinians (1.3 per cent of the West Bank population, and 2.6 per cent in the Gaza Strip) to change their residence. Direct military activity has caused 60 per cent of the displacements. Those forced to endure long detentions and humiliation by the Israeli military at checkpoints have had to shift residences to ensure access to work or study. More than two thirds of the displaced persons expected the change to be temporary, which implies yet another displacement in the future. Statistics show a higher proportion of displaced males than females (15/20).

16. The military siege, closures and curfews also isolate residential areas for long periods. In certain areas, especially Al-Muwasi, in the southern part of the Gaza Strip, and in Al-Syafa, in northern Gaza, the siege has meant full isolation. Only local residents are allowed in and out, at the army's discretion. Construction materials are not allowed to enter, nor are medical personnel. Hundreds of families have been displaced as a result, and such population transfer appears to be the objective of military operations, extinguishing all aspects of normal life for Palestinians living near Israeli settlements.

Property destruction

17. In November 2001, the Committee against Torture concluded that Israeli policies of closure and house demolition may, in certain circumstances, amount to cruel, inhuman or degrading treatment or punishment, and called on Israel to desist from the practice (CAT/C/XVII/Concl.5, paras. (i) and (j)). The Israeli forces escalated their acts of forced eviction, seizure, demolition and closure of Palestinian structures throughout the occupied Palestinian territory in 2002 and 2003. During the period, Israeli forces demolished well over 1,275 Palestinian homes. UNRWA has reported that, between March and November 2002, the army destroyed 304 refugee homes in the West Bank, in addition to the approximately 600 refugee housing units destroyed in their assault on Jenin (April 2002).

18. Following the army incursions of spring 2002, between 31 and 87 per cent of Palestinian families in the Occupied Palestinian Territory reported considerable destruction to their neighbourhoods, and between 28 and 59 per cent reported exposure to shooting and/or destruction of their homes. In the single raid on Jenin refugee camp, the Israeli army completely destroyed some 600 homes with bombs and bulldozers, leaving an additional 200 homes unfit for habitation and 1,250 families (over 6,000 individuals) homeless, including a majority of children.

19. On 29 January 2003 in Rafah, the Israeli army shelled the Tal al-Sultan neighbourhood. The destroyed apartments had been newly built to house Palestinian families that army attacks had previously rendered homeless. The families were to take delivery of the new apartments on 1 February 2003.⁶

20. Such operations are accompanied by intensive fire, preventing the victims from salvaging their belongings. In most cases, the Israeli authorities do not warn the affected civilians in advance. Israel has escalated the destruction of Palestinian homes with explosives since early September 2002, following the policy of destroying the homes of Palestinians suspected of armed resistance.

21. During 2002, in occupied Jerusalem, Israeli authorities escalated the demolition of Palestinian houses by destroying more than 120 structures of different types. This practice has reached its highest level since 1987.⁷

22. In the Gaza Strip, a total of at least 2,424 Palestinian homes had been damaged by the end of 2002. The Israeli army has completely destroyed 704 homes, leaving 23,122 people homeless, including a majority of children. This preceded the army's destruction of 439 Palestinian homes in the north Gaza governorate in 2003, representing a sharp increase over the rate of destruction in 2001-2002.⁸

23. In addition to family homes (worth \$66 million in 2002), the Israeli army has destroyed private assets in the form of buildings; equipment and inventory (\$97 million); physical infrastructure (\$88 million, of which \$64 million were road networks); cultural heritage (\$48 million); Palestinian Authority assets, including ministries and municipalities (\$20 million); private and public cars (\$6 million); and non-governmental organization and private social services (\$56 million). Loss of institutional memory and equipment have made basic functions impossible, particularly with the Israeli army's destruction and confiscation of vital records, computers and software in the key Palestinian Authority ministries (Finance, Education and Interior). The army's destruction of water, electricity generation facilities and grids, solid waste disposal stations and road networks, and its

confiscation of equipment and machinery of private institutions alone have generated an estimated \$360 million in losses in April 2002.⁹

Mobility restrictions and closure policies

24. Between 1 October 2000 and 31 December 2002, Israeli authorities closed the main Gaza crossing at Erez checkpoint completely for 362 days, and partially for 262 days. Erez industrial zone was closed for 67 days; Karni commercial crossing was completely closed for 143 days and partially for 41 days. Sofa was closed for 275.

25. In May 2002, Israel introduced a new feature to the pass system under which Palestinian residents need special permits from the Israeli Civil Administration to travel between Palestinian localities within the West Bank and the Gaza Strip. The new policy formally fragmented the West Bank into eight blocks, creating 64 Palestinian distinct enclaves, maintained by 46 permanent checkpoints and 126 roadblocks.

26. The Israeli Government has initiated the construction of physical barriers running through the West Bank to separate the Israeli and Palestinian populations, initially with over 100 kilometres of high concrete walls, fences, buffer zones, trenches and security watchtowers. According to the long-term plans, two walls will extend the entire 360-kilometre length of the West Bank.¹⁰

27. The construction is taking place in the most fertile and dense agricultural valley areas of the western Occupied Palestinian Territory. It has already severed farmers from their plots. In the Qalqilya governorate alone, the wall will stretch along the fields of 300 farmers, and 1,000 farmers will lose significant portions of land to the western side of the wall. The loss of wells will deprive the remaining accessible land of water needed to farm it, while the close proximity of Israeli armed guards will pose a threat to farmers cultivating what fields remain. As of December 2002, documentation of wall-related destruction of agricultural land and assets had been conducted in 53 communities in Jenin, Tulkarm and Qalqilya districts, an area containing an estimated population of 141,800. Direct damage to those communities from wall and barrier preparations and construction up to that time included the destruction of some 83,000 olive and other fruit trees, and 615 dunums of irrigated land, including greenhouses, 37 kilometres of water networks and 15 kilometres of agricultural roads. In addition, a total of 238,350 dunums of land (238.3 square kilometres) were being isolated between the Green Line and the Wall; 57 per cent of that area was cultivated land, planted mostly with olive trees and field crops.¹¹

Israeli settlements

28. The geographic distribution of Israeli settlements in the Occupied Palestinian Territory continues to severely restrict the growth of Palestinian communities and is an obstacle to their economic and social development. The settlements have been condemned as illegal under numerous resolutions of the Security Council and the General Assembly.

29. Forty-five Israeli settlements are being expanded by 11,128 dunums; four of the settlements are new, and the new outposts (care vans) number 113, spread across the West Bank.

30. Israel contends that the expansion of settlements is a function of the existing population's "natural growth". This term has never been precisely defined. Successive Israeli Governments have strongly encouraged migration from Israel to the settlements by offering generous financial benefits and incentives. The current annual increase of 11 to 12 per cent in settler numbers far exceeds the 2 per cent population growth inside Israel (E/CN.4/2003/5/Add.1).

31. A critical factor affecting Palestinian life is the lavish allotment of land resources for settlement. Planning maps remain largely inaccessible to the public. However, available data indicate that the authorities have allotted 41.9 per cent of all the West Bank to settlements as building, planning and development zones.¹² For example, in the Migilot settlement in the Judean desert, Israeli planning authorities have allotted 700,000 dunums of land to its settler population of 900 (E/CN.5/2003/5/Add.1, para. 39).

32. The Israeli Government finances some 50 per cent of settlement costs in the Occupied Palestinian Territory and 25 per cent of housing inside the Green Line. Israeli illegal settlers in the Occupied Palestinian Territory, who recorded the highest per capita income of Israelis in the 1990s, receive \$520 per capita in subsidies from the budgets publicly disclosed, while, in the communities of Arab citizens of Israel, the most disadvantaged individuals receive the equivalent of \$235 in public benefits.¹³

33. In its 2002 budget, the Government of Israel appropriated \$154 million for infrastructure, industrial investment grants, housing, agricultural programmes and educational subsidies for the settlements. For 2003, it is devoting 1.9 billion new sheqalim (NIS) (\$452 million) from its budget for the settlements.¹⁴

34. It is reported that there are plans to construct five new settlements in Rimal Halutza, in Gaza near the Egyptian border. The location is planned to attract around 15,000 Israelis into an area of 80,000 Palestinian dunums, with implementation anticipated in 2004.¹⁵

35. Settler bypass roads also impose the demolition of structures and closure of over 150 metres of Palestinian lands to each side.¹⁶ The bypass roads link Israeli settlements to each other and to Israel proper, and this easy access allows for attractive living conditions for settlers, thus facilitating the expansion and consolidation of settlements. The network divides the occupied Palestinian territory into areas separated and surrounded by military-controlled roads, cutting the Palestinian areas into a number of isolated homelands. That network, along with other planning restrictions, prevents the development of Palestinian towns and villages, exacerbates overcrowding, prevents Palestinian territorial contiguity and further disconnects Palestinian communities from each other. The network undermines the Palestinian economy by restricting movement and impeding commerce.

36. Settler actions against Palestinians include erecting roadblocks to disrupt normal movement, shooting at roof-top water tanks, burning cars, smashing windows, destroying crops and uprooting trees, and harassing merchants. Settlers have also attacked paramedics and fire fighters. Monitors recorded at least 156 cases of such attacks during the period 1 March to 30 November 2002. Settler violence in

the past year concentrated on preventing and confiscating the autumn olive harvest in the West Bank, the main source of livelihood for most rural Palestinians.

37. The confiscation of land and properties is a dominant feature of Israeli occupation and population transfer policy. The confiscated land area has reached well over 70 per cent of the entire West Bank; and in the Gaza Strip, roughly one third of the land. Settlements implanted near built-up Palestinian areas impose a 500-metre buffer zone, creating a planning pretext for removing Palestinian homes and buildings and confiscating a wide swath of land around the settlements, at the expense of the Palestinian owners.

38. By end February 2002, the army had destroyed 31,283 hectares of agricultural land and 485,665 trees in the Occupied Palestinian Territory, leaving 5,243 farmers without a livelihood.¹⁷

Water and environment

39. Palestinian entitlements to water include the aquifers of the West Bank and the Gaza Strip, in addition to their rightful share as riparians of the Jordan River. However, patterns of Israeli military and settler land use coincide with severe discrimination against Palestinians in access to water throughout the Occupied Palestinian Territory and excessive consumption by the Israeli settlements (see E/C.12/1/Add.27, paras. 10, 24, 32 and 41).

40. Israel extracts more than 85 per cent of the Palestinian water from the West Bank aquifers, accounting for about 25 per cent of Israel's water use. Under Israeli restrictions, Palestinian water consumption per capita is 82 cubic metres as compared with 326.5 cubic metres for Israeli citizens and settlers. Figures for daily per capita water use indicate that Israelis use five times more water (350 litres) than Palestinians (70 litres). In the water-scarce Gaza Strip, Israeli settlers consume 584 litres per day, or about seven times the Palestinian per capita consumption there. Moreover, leakage from poor infrastructure is estimated to decrease the Palestinian allotment by another 24 to 36 per cent.¹⁸ The World Health Organization (WHO) recommends a 100-litre per capita minimum daily consumption.¹⁹

41. In a pre-dawn assault on 29 February 2003, Israeli tanks and army bulldozers invaded Rafah (Gaza Strip) and completely destroyed the town's two main water-wells. The wells had produced 50 per cent of the town's scarce water resources.²⁰

42. About 150 Palestinian communities have no independent water supply. Army closures and movement restrictions have cut them off completely from any water source. Armed Israeli settlers and uniformed soldiers occasionally destroy cisterns, contaminate collection tanks and damage pumps belonging to Palestinians. Israeli soldiers have destroyed water supplies of refugee camp families by shooting holes in roof-top cisterns.²¹

43. The shortage of water has obvious effects on the region's fragile environment. At the Wadi Gaza catchment, extending from Jabal Khalil (West Bank) to the Gaza coast, a levee on the Israeli side prevents the natural flow of water from reaching Gaza, although some flooding occasionally takes place. Aerial photos show the Gaza border as demarcating a land deprived of water. The site where the Israeli army recently extirpated some 26,000 trees had been the only significant green area in the northern Gaza Strip east of Beit Hanun.²² The Israeli occupation has also left

95 per cent of the few forested areas in the Gaza Strip denuded.²³ The remaining green areas, such as El-Mawasi on the south Gaza coast, are the sites of intense settler activity and the current subject of Israeli military siege and comprehensive curfew on 15,000 Palestinian citizens.

44. The Desk Study on the environment in the Occupied Palestinian Territory, conducted by the United Nations Environment Programme (UNEP), observed that biodiversity and conservation problems had been aggravated in the present conflict by various means, including the following:

- Direct degradation from military operations
- Population pressures on natural systems owing to high growth rates and the continuing refugee crisis
- Growth of Israeli settlements where land is already scarce
- Restrictions on communications, movement and access, limiting environmental management measures
- Construction of the separation fence, blocking terrestrial fauna and cutting ecological corridors
- Solid waste and wastewater pollution
- Israel's clearing of vegetation for security, settlement and other purposes
- Fragmentation of areas, enforced by interim arrangements, making coherent and integrated approaches to environmental management impossible
- Lack of trust and cooperation between Israeli and Palestinian Authority institutions concerned with the environment, impeding cooperation.²⁴

45. Industrial and waste-management practices are generally inadequate to preserve environmental health, and the required investment in treatment and protection measures is beyond the current means of most Palestinian institutions, even with the modest level of international assistance to date. More stringent Israeli standards do not apply in its settlements in the Occupied Palestinian Territory, owing to fiscal incentives and non-enforcement. Reportedly, this has caused migration of polluting Israeli industries, including asbestos, fibreglass, pesticide and flammable gas, notably in the settlements near Tulkarem (West Bank).²⁵ Further cooperation and field studies are needed to assess conflicting claims about contamination, such as from polychlorinated biphenyls (PCBs) and radioactive waste, including possible depleted uranium munitions.²⁶

46. Israeli closures and destruction of water and sanitation facilities and other infrastructure have degraded environmental health conditions, with children typically being affected disproportionately. Owing to army-imposed closures, solid waste disposal in the Gaza Strip has been particularly restricted, and this is also the case in all West Bank towns under the intermittent Israeli army curfews imposed since June 2002. Israeli army destruction of both the water network and sewage lines in Balata and Askar refugee camps (West Bank) has caused sewage to contaminate the water line, while Israeli army closures have hampered both personnel access to affected areas and material access to chlorine to administer needed remedial measures to treat the water supply. The World Health Organization

reported an outbreak of over 600 cases of shigellosis there between December 2002 and January 2003.

Public health

47. The World Health Organization has warned that the occupied Palestinian territory health system is in danger of collapse.²⁷ The crisis is reflected in a shortage of medicine/antibiotics used to treat injuries encountered; the inability of health personnel and patients to gain access to health facilities; and the lack of food, water and electricity. Frequent and long utility cuts have affected medicine supplies in central stores, and maintenance and other personnel have been prevented from reaching refrigerators and other equipment when needed to save precious supplies.

48. Closures and curfews have resulted in Palestinian health facilities operating at only 30 per cent capacity. There has been a 60 per cent decline in the implementation of school health programmes and similarly dramatic interruption of immunization coverage, including that for measles, tuberculosis (BCG) and polio.²⁸ UNRWA reports that only 46.5 per cent of refugee children are being immunized according to schedule. In addition, the Agency has reported a reduction in the use of preventive health services and a 52 per cent decrease in women attending post-natal care. Meanwhile, Israel's curtailment of Palestinian and international health worker movements has impeded epidemiological surveillance in the Occupied Palestinian Territory, making impossible the timely identification of, and response to, dreaded epidemic outbreaks.

49. On most days, 75 per cent of UNRWA health services personnel cannot reach their workplace. Consequently, 14,278 health staff workdays have been lost in the West Bank alone.²⁹ Despite the upgrading of 65 primary care centres, a recent survey by the United Nations Children's Fund (UNICEF) found that health workers had been unable to attend the clinics and that most centres had run out of essential medical supplies. The Director-General of the International Committee of the Red Cross described as absolutely unacceptable the fact that "useless humiliations take place" against Red Cross and Red Crescent staff and delegates in the field (A/57/207, para. 42).

50. Throughout the occupied Palestinian territory there are 100,000 persons with disabilities, either congenital or resulting from accidents. During the current crisis, Israeli settlers and soldiers have rendered 5,300 individuals permanently disabled through various acts of violence (Ibid., para. 61), such as incidents at the checkpoints and shootings. In the Jenin refugee camp assault, for example, three blind youths were left handcuffed in the street by the Israeli army for two and a half days. Other individuals with disabilities were also exposed to targeted army shooting (Ibid., paras. 62 and 63).

51. The Palestinian Ministry of Health reported that delays at checkpoints had resulted in 46 women delivering their babies while waiting for permission to pass through; as a result, 24 women and 27 newborn babies had died.

52. Soaring poverty has limited the local Palestinian food basket, leading to micronutritional deficiencies. Children and women are of special concern for nutritional depletion. A recent survey has shown a 15.6 per cent rate of severe

anaemia among children 6 to 59 months of age, and 6.6 per cent among non-pregnant women 15 to 49 years of age.³⁰

53. The proportion of Palestinian children in the occupied Palestinian territory with wasting or acute malnutrition, one symptom of recent stress, is 9.3 per cent, four times the norm. The cases in the Gaza Strip are three times those in the West Bank (4.3 per cent versus 13.2 per cent), and the incidence is higher in non-urban areas than in urban centres (12.1 per cent as compared with 13.2 per cent).

54. Birth registers show a decline in the total number of births over the past several years, reflecting a trend begun before the *Intifada* and rooted in changing socio-economic conditions. While the birth rate was above 30 per 1,000 population per year in the mid-1990s, it dropped to less than 30 in 2001; the change is also partly attributable to delayed marriages.

55. The nature of the occupation and local conditions makes the collection of reliable data on population dynamics difficult, especially those on fertility, mortality and migration. While available mortality statistics are reported above, the birth rate has been a matter of considerable speculation.

56. Almost all children are exposed to violence, including shooting, witnessing violent death, and the destruction of their home and property, despite parental efforts to protect them from such horrors. Sleep-related dysfunctions are the most common manifestations of trauma. Distress among children especially leads to nightmares, bedwetting, insomnia and interrupted sleep patterns. Psychosomatic afflictions are common, including stress, headaches, stomach cramps, skin diseases, developmental regression, withdrawal, risk-taking behaviour, rebellion and rejection of authority, aggression and depression.

57. At the end of the 2002 incursions, a Bir Zeit University study showed 70 to 93 per cent of the interviewees reported at least one member of the family with mental health problems. Symptoms included great fear among children, manifesting in shivering, crying, appetite loss and sleeplessness.

Education

58. Violence and mobility restrictions keep children from educational opportunities. Neither teachers nor students can reach schools, and the Israeli army has destroyed 185 schools, while, of the 275 schools in the line of fire, others have been closed or are disused. Normal levels of classroom concentration are impossible in the unstable and often violent circumstances, especially when the army or settlers kill or injure a fellow student.³¹

59. There is no available assessment of academic achievement in the current school year, since Israeli-imposed closures and curfews have rendered examinations difficult to administer. Nevertheless, the United Nations Relief and Works Agency for Palestine Refugees in the Near East reports that final exam scores among refugee pupils in the Occupied Palestinian Territory for main curriculum subjects fell dramatically in 2002 as compared with 2000 and 2001. The proportion of students obtaining passing grades in Arabic declined from 71 per cent in 1999 and 2000 to 38 per cent in 2001; and the proportion with passing grades in mathematics dropped from 54 per cent to 26 per cent during the same period. The UNRWA compensatory

educational programme has since resulted in some recovery, but student achievement is still below the pre-2000 rates.

60. UNRWA schools reported the loss of 75,571 teacher days in 2001/2002, which is a 14-fold increase over the previous academic year. The consequent material cost to UNRWA regular school operations in 2001/2002 was \$1,959,417, and an additional cost of \$111,340 was incurred by the Agency's technical and vocational training programme.

61. With many schools closed, recreational and social activities are insufficient to meet children's needs. Moreover, many parents keep children indoors for their safety, although that does not prevent them from observing the conflict and suffering the moral and material losses.

62. With school systems failing to function, young people — the majority of Palestinians — have few productive outlets for their energies. Many children have sought odd jobs and dropped out of school to support the family, including selling gum and candy, washing car windows and selling newspapers. They run a high risk of long-term mental instability, physical insecurity, domestic violence and self-destructive behaviour. In East Jerusalem, this manifests itself in increased drug use and sales, reportedly with full knowledge of the Israeli police.³² With 66 per cent of Palestinian residents of East Jerusalem living below the poverty line, the common correlation between indigence and drug abuse makes this aspect of life another indicator of Arab Jerusalem as the concentrated microcosm of the negative effects of occupation.

Economic situation

63. Owing to closures and the consequent loss of employment, Palestinian per capita gross national product declined by 12 per cent in 2000, 19 per cent in 2001 and 24 per cent in 2002. The sharp decline in Palestinian workers employed in Israel led to income losses of \$757 million from October 2000 to end April 2002, or about 20 per cent of gross national income (GNI).

64. The decline in GNI has been considerable, dropping 23.2 in 2001 and 26.4, in 2002.³³ Estimates show that the crisis has already cost the Palestinian economy \$5.4 billion in GNI, equivalent to the entire 1999 GNI, and over 50 per cent of 1999 gross domestic product. This is compounded by some \$728 million in physical damage, including \$150 million damage to donor-funded infrastructure.³⁴

65. Poverty has risen substantially: 66.5 per cent of households are living below the poverty line, with a disproportionate number (84.6 per cent) in Gaza. Poverty levels have long-term consequences for public finance, trade balance, the savings-investment gap and social services. The Palestinian Authority has been forced into heavier dependence upon donor support for basic functions, diverting attention from long-term development goals.

66. Remittances from abroad have only partially offset the losses at the family and national levels. A total of 56.5 per cent of Palestinian households have lost more than half their income; more than 25 per cent (33 per cent in Gaza; 22 per cent in the West Bank) reported a loss of over 75 per cent; and 58.3 per cent have received humanitarian assistance, mostly in food aid. The dependency ratio has burgeoned to

more than 50 per cent. Whereas each bread winner was supporting an average of 5.1 persons in September 2000, she/he had to support 8.1 persons as of September 2002.

67. In comparison with the 128,000 workers from the occupied Palestinian territory employed in Israel in 2001, today 32,000 have been issued permits, of which only half can be used. In the meantime, foreign workers have filled the positions of many Palestinians formerly working in Israel, foreclosing the prospects of a return to former levels.

68. Recovery efforts seem remote. Most forms of aid seek to provide minimum welfare through humanitarian assistance. An unlikely doubling of donor support to a level of \$2 billion could reduce the poverty rate only by 10 per cent,³⁵ and that only temporarily.

69. Production losses (manufacturing, construction, commerce, public and private services) have drastically increased where internal trade is nearly halted, reflecting a 75 per cent contraction in domestic output, for example, in April 2002. Palestinian enterprises have scaled down production activities, laying off employees; others have shut down completely. Diminished access to finance capital and building materials, and reductions in savings have forced a rapid decline in residential construction. Closures and destruction of crops have devastated the agricultural sector. Prior to 2002, the Israeli army had already destroyed 17 per cent of Palestinian productive agricultural crops, leading to a drop in production.³⁶

70. Some 44 per cent of Palestinian households have had to reduce the quantity of their food, while 66 per cent have reduced the quality of food. Most (75 per cent) reported the reduction of monthly expenditures on meat of all kinds and on fruits, and 58 per cent have reduced their consumption of milk and milk products.³⁷

71. Until recently, Israel had withheld Palestinian Authority revenues collected by agreement under the clearance system, including customs duties and excise taxes. By end February 2002, the loss amounted to \$507 million. That, plus the declining ability to collect tax revenues, contributed to mounting Palestinian Authority budget deficits, leading to salary reductions and delayed liability payments,³⁸ borrowing on the commercial market and generally reducing expenditures on services. Through 2002, donors had contributed \$40 million per month, or about half of Palestinian Authority spending, totalling \$1.1 billion by the end of the year.³⁹ The Palestinian Authority public debt rose sharply to \$1.2 billion by mid-2002.⁴⁰

72. The informal economy, especially in West Bank villages, has expanded as impoverished households have resorted to desperate subsistence strategies. By 2002, the protracted conflict had exhausted most coping strategies, rendering families increasingly more dependent upon humanitarian assistance, including direct food aid and financial assistance.⁴¹

73. More Palestinian men than women have directly undergone the physical violence of Israel's military occupation, such as killing, injury, imprisonment and torture. In addition, as a result of the closures, detention and outright humiliation of commuting to jobs through Israeli checkpoints, the overall economic depression and resulting poverty have combined to prevent Palestinian men from performing their traditional role as breadwinners. Meanwhile, women's domestic roles and responsibilities have expanded, while their socio-economic roles and position have deteriorated. Among the consequences are the high levels of anxiety and despair that translate into domestic and apparently gender-based violence.

74. The socio-economic burden on Palestinian women has increased with their assumption of the role of head of household in the absence of the husband. In acute poverty, women have adopted coping strategies to maintain the domestic economy, such as planting, bartering or selling foodstuffs.

III. Occupied Syrian Golan

75. Israel has occupied the Golan Heights in the Syrian Arab Republic since 1967.

76. Under such a prolonged occupation, the consequences have been extensive, affecting all aspects of life for families, villages and communities. There has been no change in Israeli policy regarding the occupied Golan. The number of settlers has increased, with the 37 existing settlements expanded during the period under review.⁴² Relations between the settlers and the Arab population remain tense, particularly where settlements are located close to Syrian villages.

77. The occupation of the Syrian Golan has perpetuated the separation of families who live on either side of the valley constituting the demarcation line. Syrian students returning to their families in the Syrian Golan Heights reportedly face severe interrogations and confiscation of their belongings. Others are reportedly held in arbitrary detention for many days, facing torture and humiliation.

78. School facilities are inadequate to cover the needs of all Syrian children of school age: among a population of 25,000 located in five villages, only 5,500 boys and girls are in overcrowded classrooms. A rapid school drop-out rate is putting the children in the labour market in Israel, where they receive a lower salary than others doing the same job. There is a shortage of health centres, hospitals or clinics, maternal care, and laboratories for basic analysis and emergency services.

79. The economic consequences of the occupation for the local population include a lack of equal employment opportunities, heavy taxes, fixed low prices imposed on the main agricultural products (for example, apples), arbitrary arrest and detention, and inadequate health care. Israeli authorities have depleted the Golan environment by uprooting trees, burning forests and allowing dumping of untreated chemical waste from factories in the Israeli settlements.

80. Settlers compete with Syrians in economic activities, especially in agriculture, the principal activity of the Arab population. This is compounded by the Arab population's restricted access to water as compared with the settlers.

Notes

¹ *Official Records of the General Assembly, Fifty-eighth Session, Supplement No. 13 (A/58/13).*

² United Nations Technical Assessment Mission, *Humanitarian Plan of Action 2003 for the Occupied Palestinian Territory* (New York and Geneva, 2002).

³ A/ES-10/186. Area A designates the vicinity where the Palestinian Authority has complete authority over civilian security.

⁴ B'Tselem; available from <http://www.btselem.org/english/statistics/imprisoned.asp>.

⁵ In response to a letter sent by the Public Committee against Torture in Israel (PCATI), 26 November 2002; available from <http://www.stoptorture.org.il/eng/press.asp?menu=7&submenu=1&item=94>.

- ⁶ Al-Mezan Center for Human Rights, “Families have their homes destroyed for the second time; the IDF target water resources in Rafah” (press release 8/2003, 30 January 2003), available from <http://www.mezan.org/main.htm>.
- ⁷ Land Research Center (Jerusalem); see <http://www.lrcj.org>.
- ⁸ Al-Mezan Center for Human Rights; see <http://www.mezan.org/main.htm>.
- ⁹ E/CN.4/2202/184, para. 15; A/57/207, paras. 32 and 69; and World Bank, *Fifteen Months — Intifada, Closures and Palestinian Economic Crisis: An Assessment* (Washington, D.C., 2002), chap. 3.
- ¹⁰ See Mission to the Humanitarian and Emergency Policy Group of the Local Aid Coordination Committee, *The Impact of Israel’s Separation Barrier on Affected West Bank Communities* (2003).
- ¹¹ Ibid.
- ¹² Yehezkel Lein, “Land grab: Israel’s Settlement Policy on the West Bank” (B’Tselem, 2000). This is in addition to some 30 per cent of West Bank land that the Israeli army have confiscated and closed for other purposes.
- ¹³ Shlomo Swirski, Ety Konor-Attias and Alon Etkin, *Government Funding of the Israeli Settlements in the West Bank, Gaza Strip and Golan Heights in the 1990s of Local Governments, Home Construction, and Road Building* (Tel Aviv, Adva Center, 2002). Values based on exchange rate of NIS 4.45 per United States dollar.
- ¹⁴ See Dror Zaban, *Israeli Government Expenditures for Settlements, 2001-2002* (Jerusalem, Peace Now, January 2003).
- ¹⁵ “Plan for five new colonies in Rimal Haloutza near the Egyptian border”, *Monitoring Israeli Colonizing Activities in the Palestinian West Bank and Gaza* (Applied Research Institute Jerusalem, 14 January 2003), available from arij.org/paleye/index.htm.
- ¹⁶ According to the Palestinian Center for Human Rights (Gaza), for each 100 km road, some 10,000 dunums (2,500 acres) of land are confiscated. Available from <http://www.pchrgaza.org/>. Path: Statistics/Settlements.
- ¹⁷ Ministry of Agriculture, “Report on Palestinian agriculture losses due to recent Israeli action: September 2000-February 2002” (Ramallah, Palestinian Authority, 2002).
- ¹⁸ B’Tselem, “Thirsty for a solution: the water shortage in the occupied territories and its resolution in the final status agreement”, position paper (Jerusalem, 2000).
- ¹⁹ United States Agency for International Development, “Report of the West Bank and Gaza mission”, (Washington, 1999); and World Health Organization, *Guidelines for Drinking Water Quality* (Geneva, 1998), available from http://www.who.int/water_sanitation_health/dwq/guidelines/en.
- ²⁰ Al-Mezan Center for Human Rights, op. cit.
- ²¹ See B’Tselem, “Not even a drop: the water crisis in Palestinian villages without a water network” (Jerusalem, B’Tselem, 2001).
- ²² The World Bank had counted 23,000 by early November 2001. See *Fifteen Months — Intifada, Closures and Palestinian Economic Crisis: An Assessment* (2002). See also Applied Research Institute of Jerusalem (ARIJ).
- ²³ The 42,000 dunums in 1971 had already been reduced to 2,000 by 1999. See <http://www.arij.org>.
- ²⁴ Based on findings of the *Desk Study on the Environment in the Occupied Palestinian Territories* (Nairobi, United Nations Environment Programme, 2002), available from <http://www.unep.org/Documents>. Path: press releases, July 2002.
- ²⁵ Ibid.

- ²⁶ Ibid.
- ²⁷ World Health Organization, *West Bank/Gaza Strip Health Update* (4 April 2002).
- ²⁸ Ibid.
- ²⁹ Palestinian Ministry of Health.
- ³⁰ The Palestinian Central Bureau of Statistics, the United States Agency for International Development (USAID), al-Quds University and Johns Hopkins University have shown an increase in malnourishment and anaemic children. The Bureau survey showed 9.2 per cent moderate to severe malnutrition among children 6 to 59 months old. In the same survey, non-childbearing women from 15 to 49 showed moderate to acute malnutrition at 5.5 per cent. The USAID survey showed those instances at 13.2 and 9.3 per cent respectively.
- ³¹ See Conal Urquhart, "Playground bombing injures 20 Palestinians", *The Guardian* (UK), 10 April 2003. Jewish extremists from the shadowy "Revenge of the Infants" group claimed responsibility for exploding a bomb in a West Bank school playground on 9 April 2003 at the village of Jaba'a, south of Jenin, wounding 20 children.
- ³² Amira Hass, "Under the noses of the Israeli police", *Ha'aretz*, 4 February 2003.
- ³³ World Bank, *Two Years of Intifada, Closures and Palestinian Economic Crisis: An Assessment* (Washington, D.C., 2003)
- ³⁴ Ibid.
- ³⁵ Ibid.
- ³⁶ Palestinian Economic Council for Development and Reconstruction (PECDAR), "People under siege: Palestinian economic losses, September 2000-September 2001" (Ramallah, 2002).
- ³⁷ According to the Palestinian Central Bureau of Statistics.
- ³⁸ \$527 million in arrears at June 2002.
- ³⁹ World Bank, *Two Years of Intifada, Closures and Palestinian Economic Crisis: An Assessment* (Washington, D.C., 2003). The Arab League contributed \$840 million, and the European Union \$230 million.
- ⁴⁰ *MAS Economic Monitor*, No. 6, April 2000; "Interview with Palestinian Authority Finance Minister Salam Fayyad", *Al-Ayyam* (Ramallah daily), 6 July 2002.
- ⁴¹ United Nations Special Coordinator in the Occupied Territories, "Paying the price: coping with closure in Jericho, Gaza City and in two Palestinian villages" (Gaza, January 2002).
- ⁴² Some 77 per cent of the residents are European/North American by birth. Available from http://www.fmep.org/images/charts/chart0007_1.jpg.
-



General Assembly Economic and Social Council

Distr.: General
7 June 2004

Original: English

**General Assembly
Fifty-ninth session**

Item 94 of the preliminary list*

Permanent sovereignty of the Palestinian people in the Occupied Palestinian Territory, including East Jerusalem, and of the Arab population in the occupied Syrian Golan over their natural resources

**Economic and Social Council
Substantive session of 2004**

Item 11 of the provisional agenda**

Economic and social repercussions of the Israeli occupation on the living conditions of the Palestinian people in the occupied Palestinian territory, including Jerusalem, and the Arab population in the occupied Syrian Golan

Economic and social repercussions of the Israeli occupation on the living conditions of the Palestinian people in the occupied Palestinian territory, including Jerusalem, and of the Arab population in the occupied Syrian Golan

Note by the Secretary-General***

In its resolution 2003/59 of 24 July 2003, the Economic and Social Council requested the Secretary-General to submit to the General Assembly at its fifty-ninth session, through the Council, a report on the implementation of that resolution. The Assembly, in its resolution 58/229 of 23 December 2003, also requested the Secretary-General to submit a report to it at its fifty-ninth session. The annexed report, which has been prepared by the Economic and Social Commission for Western Asia (ESCWA), is submitted in response to the two resolutions. A report of the Secretary-General on assistance to the Palestinian people is also being submitted to the Assembly through the Council, as requested in Assembly resolution 58/113 of 17 December 2003. The annual report of the Commissioner-General of the United Nations Relief and Works Agency for Palestine Refugees in the Near East (UNRWA) provides information, inter alia, on the socio-economic conditions of the registered population in the occupied Palestinian territory.

* A/59/50 and Corr.1.

** E/2004/100.

*** A longer period for clearance was required for extensive consultations within the various United Nations entities at Headquarters and in the field. The report annexed to the present note was therefore delayed three weeks for processing.

Annex

Report prepared by the Economic and Social Commission for Western Asia on the economic and social repercussions of the Israeli occupation on the living conditions of the Palestinian people in the occupied Palestinian territory, including Jerusalem, and of the Arab population in the occupied Syrian Golan*

Summary

The occupation of Palestinian territory by Israel continues to deepen the economic and social hardship for Palestinians. The Israeli army continues to resort to extrajudicial killings, arbitrary detention, household demolition, severe mobility restrictions and closure policies.

Economic indicators continue to show negative trends: unemployment reaching 70 per cent in some areas; greater dependence on food aid; and untold losses from physical destruction of Palestinian homes, public buildings, agricultural assets, infrastructure and private property. Israel's confiscation of Palestinian land and water resources for settlements and the erection of the West Bank barrier accelerated during 2003, affecting one third of West Bank inhabitants. Refugees, women and children bear the major brunt of these measures. Malnutrition and other health problems afflict a growing number of Palestinians at a time of curtailed access to needed services. Israeli restrictions regularly impede humanitarian services to the occupied Palestinian territory.

Israeli settlements and the construction of a barrier in the occupied Palestinian territory, contrary to the Geneva Convention and other norms of international law, continue to fuel the conflict, having detrimental repercussions on the living conditions of the Palestinian people.

Expansion of Israeli settlements in the occupied Syrian Golan Heights continues unabated. Access to natural resources and social services, in particular schooling, higher education and medical facilities, remains inadequate for the Arab population in the Syrian Golan Heights.

* The Economic and Social Commission for Western Asia would like to acknowledge with appreciation the substantive contributions to the present report of the United Nations Children's Fund (UNICEF), the United Nations Conference on Trade and Development (UNCTAD), the United Nations Population Fund (UNFPA), the Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations (FAO), the World Food Programme (WFP), the United Nations Human Settlements Programme (UN-Habitat), the United Nations Relief and Works Agency for Palestine Refugees in the Near East (UNRWA), the Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Human Rights, the Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs of the United Nations Secretariat (OCHA), the United Nations Development Programme (UNDP), the World Health Organization (WHO), the International Labour Organization (ILO) and the Office of the United Nations Special Coordinator in the Occupied Territories (UNSCO) as well as the World Bank and the International Monetary Fund (IMF).

I. Introduction

1. In its resolution 2003/59 of 24 July 2003, the Economic and Social Council stressed the importance of reviving the Middle East peace process on the basis of Security Council resolutions 242 (1967) of 22 November 1967, 338 (1973) of 22 October 1973, 425 (1978) of 19 March 1978 and 1397 (2002) of 12 March 2002, and the principle of land for peace as well as compliance with the agreements reached between the Government of Israel and the Palestinian Liberation Organization, the representative of the Palestinian people. In the same resolution, the Economic and Social Council reaffirmed the applicability of the Geneva Convention relative to the Protection of Civilian Persons in Time of War, of 12 August 1949,¹ to the occupied Palestinian territory, including Jerusalem, and other Arab territories occupied by Israel since 1967; stressed the need to preserve the territorial integrity of all of the occupied Palestinian territory and to guarantee the freedom of movement of persons and goods in the territory, including the removal of restrictions on travel to East Jerusalem, and the freedom of movement to and from the outside world; reaffirmed the inalienable right of the Palestinian people and the Arab population of the Syrian Golan to all their natural and economic resources, and called upon Israel not to exploit, endanger or cause loss or depletion of those resources; also reaffirmed that Israeli settlements in the occupied Palestinian territory, including Jerusalem, and the occupied Syrian Golan, were illegal and an obstacle to economic and social development; and requested the Secretary-General to submit to the General Assembly, through the Council, a report on the implementation of the resolution.

2. In its resolution 58/229 of 23 December 2003, the General Assembly reaffirmed the inalienable rights of the Palestinian people and the population of the occupied Syrian Golan over their natural resources, including land and water; and called upon Israel, the occupying power, not to exploit, cause loss or depletion of or endanger the natural resources in the occupied Palestinian territory, including Jerusalem, and in the occupied Syrian Golan. In the same resolution, the Assembly noted the detrimental impact on Palestinian natural resources of the wall being constructed by Israel inside the occupied Palestinian territory, including in and around East Jerusalem, and of its grave effect on the economic and social conditions of the Palestinian people; recognized the right of the Palestinian people to claim restitution as a result of any exploitation, loss or depletion of, or danger to, their natural resources, and expressed the hope that that issue would be dealt with in the framework of the final status negotiations between the Palestinian and Israeli sides; and requested the Secretary-General to submit a report to it at its fifty-ninth session on the implementation of the resolution.

II. Occupied Palestinian territory, including Jerusalem

Deaths and injuries

3. Between 1 December 2002 and 31 December 2003, 785 Palestinian fatalities as well as 5,130 injuries were recorded.² Children bear a particular brunt of the conflict. Since September 2000, 512 Palestinian children have been killed, and more than 9,000 have been injured.³

4. Israel has intensified its policy of extrajudicial killings of Palestinians suspected of involvement in armed attacks against Israelis, which culminated in the assassination of Sheikh Ahmed Yassin on 22 March 2004 and of Abdelaziz Rantissi on 17 April 2004. From October 2000 to 1 March 2004, Israeli army extrajudicial killings/attempts resulted in the deaths of 349 Palestinians, including at least 137 bystanders, among them 35 children and 25 women.⁴ The Secretary-General repeatedly expressed his apprehension that extrajudicial killings would lead to further bloodshed and death and acts of revenge and retaliation, reiterating that these acts were against international law and calling upon the Government of Israel immediately to end that practice.⁵

5. While the purpose of the present report is to describe the effects of the Israeli occupation on the Palestinian people, it is important to point out that, since September 2000, 946 Israelis have been killed and injured as a result of the conflict. The Secretary-General has condemned acts of terrorism and has called upon the Palestinian Authority to bring to justice those who plan, facilitate and carry out attacks on Israeli civilians.

Arbitrary arrests and detentions

6. Approximately 8,000 Palestinians remain in Israeli prisons and detention centres,⁶ including 70 women and 175 juveniles as young as 12 years of age.⁷ Some 800 persons remain in administrative detention, without any charge or judicial procedure.⁸

7. At least for the first half of 2003, “hundreds of Palestinians have been subjected to one degree or another of torture or other cruel, inhuman or degrading treatment, at the hands of the GSS (General Security Service) and bodies working on its behalf”.⁹ This is in addition to other forms of abuse, including harsh solitary confinement and neglect of Palestinian prisoners’ medical needs, which has resulted in deaths.¹⁰

8. Responding to an August 2003 High Court petition, the Israeli Government admitted the existence of a secret military prison (Camp 1391). Prisoners, their lawyers and their families do not know the prison’s location, and Israeli authorities have censored the media’s publication of the prison’s location, or prisoners’ names or conditions. The Israeli Government has banned the International Committee of the Red Cross, Knesset members and media access to the facility. On 1 December, the High Court ordered the Israeli Government to release information on this prison by 20 February 2004; however, it remains secret.¹¹

Population displacement

9. Israel transferred at least 19 Palestinians from their residence in the West Bank to Gaza in 2003. The Israeli High Court dismissed all of their appeals.¹² In December, Israel denied entry to three Palestinians deported from abroad to the West Bank and Gaza, returning them to the deporting country, where they currently reside as stateless persons.¹³

10. Israel’s confiscation and destruction of Palestinian homes and lands swelled the numbers of homeless and internally displaced Palestinians by 13,000-16,000

persons in 2003,¹⁴ without their recognition as refugees eligible for international relief and protection. This has been in addition to some 2 per cent of the Palestinian population already forced to change their place of residence during October 2000-May 2001 owing to Israeli house demolitions and incursions.¹⁵

Property destruction and confiscation

11. Home demolition is among the most destructive Israeli practices in socio-economic terms. Some 28,000 Palestinian homes remain under threat of demolition at any moment.¹⁶ The violence accompanying these demolitions was dramatized on 16 March 2003, when an Israeli bulldozer crushed to death United States solidarity worker Rachel Corrie while she tried to defend a Palestinian home in Gaza from destruction.¹⁷ From 1 December 2002 to 31 December 2003, the Israeli army demolished 511 homes in the West Bank, of which 77 were shelters of refugees whom Israeli forces had previously dispossessed. In the Gaza Strip, the Israeli army completely or partially demolished at least 858 homes in 2003, of which 776 were refugee shelters.¹⁸ In largely refugee neighbourhoods of Rafah, southern Gaza, Israel has totally demolished 961 homes, leaving 9,434 people homeless.¹⁹

12. In the Gaza Strip, the Israeli army bulldozed 1,107 acres of land with their 132,840 trees, and destroyed five water wells, while also demolishing houses during 2003. Cumulatively, Israeli forces have levelled 10 per cent of Gaza's arable land.²⁰ However, Israel conducted most 2003 confiscations in the path of the barrier in the West Bank. From 29 September 2000 to 31 May 2003, Israeli army and settlers uprooted hundreds of thousands of olive, citrus and other fruit trees, destroyed 806 wells and 296 agricultural warehouses, tore up 2,000 roads and blocked thousands of others with concrete and dirt mounds.²¹ According to the World Bank, damage inflicted on agriculture reached \$217 million in 2003.²²

13. Israeli military ordnance and equipment, as well as Israeli soldiers and settlers, have damaged or destroyed both private and public Palestinian infrastructure. Deterioration of equipment and infrastructure was calculated at \$700 million-\$800 million towards a combined value of \$1.7 billion lost at the beginning of 2003. Calculable physical damage to the Palestinian economy from September 2002 through April 2003 stands at \$370 million, cumulatively totalling \$1.1 billion since October 2000.²³ This indicates sharp reductions in existing capital stock, thereby contracting domestic supply capacities. Israel's destruction of Palestinian-built environment and infrastructure contrasts with its simultaneous build-up of settlements and related infrastructure facilitating illegal population transfer.

Mobility restrictions and closure policies

14. Restricting movement of goods and persons exacerbates the humanitarian crisis in the occupied Palestinian territory by deepening unemployment and poverty, preventing health care, interrupting education and generally humiliating the Palestinian people individually and collectively. Curfews in 2003 generally were less severe than in 2002. An average of 390,000 civilians were under curfew in November 2002-April 2003, compared with 520,000 in the second half of 2002. However, inhabitants of Hebron, Jenin and parts of Gaza came under tighter and more continuous curfew during 2003.²⁴

15. Since March 2003, the construction of 85 new checkpoints, 538 different types of trenches and ditches, 47 road gates and blockades, and innumerable “flying” (mobile) checkpoints has effectively dissected the entire occupied territory into more discontinuous, isolated pockets.²⁵

16. Between December 2002 and December 2003, the Israeli army closed the Erez Checkpoint (Gaza) for 138 days, the Erez Industrial Zone for 15 days, and the main commercial crossing at Karni, Gaza, for 57 days, plus 51 partial days, with the southern Gaza checkpoint at Sufa closed for 141 days. The Israeli army completely closed the Rafah crossing, on the Egyptian border, and closed the border to 15-35 year-old Palestinian males for 105 days. Within the Gaza Strip, the Israeli army prevented passage on the main north-south access road at Gush Qatif settlement for 336 partial days, and entirely for two days, while fully foreclosing all traffic through Gaza’s north-south artery at Netzarim Junction for 342 days. Israeli occupation forces maintained the complete closure of the Gaza Airport throughout the period, and allowed no effort towards its repair or operation.²⁶

Israeli settlements

17. Israeli settlements in the occupied Palestinian territory, deemed illegal by the international community, continue to fuel the conflict, with detrimental repercussions on the living conditions of the Palestinian people. In the West Bank, Israel has more than 136 settlements with 236,000 settlers. In the Gaza Strip, 17 settlements house some 7,000 settlers. About 180,000 settlers live in occupied East Jerusalem. Some of the settlements are now completely developed towns and villages, as is the case for the Ariel (population 17,000), in the West Bank, and Ma’aleh Edumim (East Jerusalem), with a population of 28,000.²⁷

18. There is no “freeze” on the construction or growth of settlements, as the road map of the Quartet (S/2003/529, annex) demanded. All settlement categories remain a significant portion of Israel’s public investment²⁸ and new building in settlements actually increased in 2003 by 35 per cent.²⁹ In 2003, the Israeli Government budgeted 1.9 billion Israeli new shequalim (NIS) for settlements,³⁰ while construction activity inside Israel itself has fallen to its lowest level in more than a decade.³¹ Moreover, settlement population growth is increasing 16 per cent under the current government, compared with 1.8 per cent in Israel. In Gaza, Kfar Darom grew 52 per cent, and Netzarim 24 per cent in the last three years. In the West Bank, Tupuach increased by 50 per cent, Yitzhar by 30 per cent and Hebron settlements grew 15 per cent.³²

19. More significant than the numbers of settlers is the land area exclusively allotted to settlements. The planning zone for Ma’aleh Edumim extends from the Palestinian village of al-`Azariyya to the outskirts of Jericho, nearly the entire width of the West Bank at that point. Already in 2002, the settler planning zones had absorbed 41.9 per cent of West Bank land.³³ A 400-metre-wide “sterile zone” surrounds most of them, while bypass roads and other infrastructure linking settlements to each other and to Israel strategically consume Palestinians’ land.³⁴

20. The total area confiscated for settlements, or designated as military zones in the Gaza Strip, amounts to 165.04 square kilometres (km²), or 45 per cent of the Gaza territory, benefiting 7,000 settlers. This compares with the situation of over 1 million Palestinians eking out a living on the remaining 55 per cent of land.

Gaza's Palestinian population density is one of the world's highest, and almost 100 times that of Israeli settlers.³⁵

21. The Israeli Government's settlement entrenchment is symbiotic with the West Bank separation barrier, which has led to the confiscation and fragmentation of Palestinian land. Such a policy has given rise to serious concerns about the future possibility of establishing an independent, contiguous and viable Palestinian State. Official Israeli perseverance manifests in generous allocation of military and financial resources to settlements and the barrier.

22. Despite Israel's official budget commitment to settlements, a July 2003 Israeli poll revealed that 74 per cent of the settlers in the occupied territory would leave their settlements in return for compensation.³⁶

Barrier

23. The barrier is a complex of 8-metre-high walls, trenches up to 4 metres deep, earthen and concrete mounds, double walls, fences with electronic sensors, asphalt two-lane patrol roads, a trace strip to detect footprints and a stack of six barbed-wire coils. The barrier also features several "depth barriers", ancillary structures 150 metres long, placed a few kilometres further east, apparently to channel traffic flows towards five checkpoints. In addition, 26 "agricultural checkpoints" were planned in the first phase.³⁷

24. With a total length — both planned and built — of 638 km,³⁸ the barrier's design incorporates 975 km² (16.6 per cent) of occupied land on the side towards Israel. This constitutes the occupied territory inhabited by 320,000 settlers, including those in occupied Jerusalem.³⁹

25. Only 6 per cent of the barrier lies within 100 metres of the Green Line. It deviates up to 22 km inside the West Bank.⁴⁰ Approximately, 191,000 acres — or about 13.5 per cent — of West Bank land (excluding East Jerusalem) will lie between the barrier and the Green Line, according to Israeli government projections. This will include 39,000 acres enclosed in a series of enclaves and 152,000 acres in closed areas between the Green Line and the barrier. This land, some of the most fertile in the West Bank, is currently the home of more than 189,000 Palestinians living in 100 villages and towns. Of these people, 20,000 will live in closed areas — areas between the barrier and the Green Line. Another 169,000 will live in nine enclaves — totally surrounded by the barrier. The barrier will also affect those people living east of it who need to have access to their farms, jobs and services.⁴¹

26. With the barrier, Israel effectively will annex most of the western aquifer system (which provides 51 per cent of the West Bank's water resources). It severs communities from their land and water, leaving them without other means of subsistence, and forcing many Palestinians living in these areas to leave, as has already been the case with 6,000-8,000 Qalqiliya residents. Reportedly, some 600 shops and enterprises have closed in Qalqiliya as a result.⁴² Israeli military forces accompanying the process have destroyed homes and commercial structures in their course, as in the town of Nazlat Issa, to the north of Qalqiliya, where Israeli forces demolished at least 7 homes and 125 shops to make way for the barrier wall.⁴³ In Aqaba village (West Bank), 12 out of its 18 structures face demolition. Israel has destroyed many thousands of fruit and olive trees in pursuance of the construction.⁴⁴

27. To acquire land for the barrier, Israel's West Bank Military Commander has issued military orders, requisitioning private property. Similarly in Jerusalem, the Ministry of Defence has issued requisitioning orders for land.⁴⁵ Confiscation orders become operative when signed, whether or not they are served to the owner. The owner generally has one week from the signature date to appeal the requisition. Some such orders are retroactive. However, most of the petitions to the Appeals Committee or the High Court have been denied, although some confiscations have been delayed and reduced under appeal⁴⁶ and the High Court has urged negotiations with affected villages regarding the route. The speed with which the occupying Power is building the barrier, working 24 hours a day, makes any proper judicial process difficult. The Government of Israel has announced that it will change the route of the barrier so that it will be closer to the Green Line.

28. On 2 October, Israel's Military Government in the occupied territory issued a series of Military Orders determining that "no person will enter the 'seam zone' and no one will remain there". These directives affect 73 km² and some 5,300 Palestinians living in 15 communities. Indigenous residents so far have been able to obtain permits to remain in their homes at considerable expenditure of time and resources, but only for incremental periods of one, three or six months. According to the Israeli army, there are 27 gates (out of a total 46 gates) through the barrier open to Palestinians with the correct permit, although the Palestinians claim only 19 can be used. In some agricultural areas, crossings are open for 15-30 minutes, three times a day, or according to Israeli soldiers' arbitrary criteria.⁴⁷

Natural resources, water and environment

29. On average, Palestinians use 70 litres of water per capita daily. Israelis in the settlements use 350 litres (or 500 per cent of Palestinian consumption).⁴⁸ Israel extracts more than 85 per cent of its water from occupied Palestinian territory aquifers and inequitable Israeli distribution has created a serious water shortage in the occupied territory, despite local resources. Under the system of checkpoints and closures, water tankers cannot always reach villages, leaving some communities without water for days at a time.⁴⁹ The situation is desperate for some 280 rural communities in the occupied territory with no access to wells or running water, who depend completely on municipal or private water deliveries. Under present economic and trade dependence, Palestinian tanker services have typically purchased water from the Israeli national water carrier at 80 per cent inflation after September 2000,⁵⁰ and 60 per cent of Palestinian families depend on tanker water, which costs 17-40 per cent of household incomes in summer months.⁵¹

30. In the first phase of the barrier construction, Palestinians lost 29 wells with a total annual yield of 3,880,000 cubic metres (m³).⁵² In Abu Nujaym (Bethlehem area), the Israeli army severed the water delivery system by digging up and destroying the pipelines.⁵³ Physical damage to the occupied territory water and waste-water sector from Israeli military actions is valued at about \$140 million.⁵⁴

Food

31. Occupation policies and practices have depleted Palestinians' food consumption by 25-30 per cent since September 2000, and Palestinians are now

consuming less protein-rich foods.⁵⁵ The main cause is job loss and curfews.⁵⁶ The occupied Palestinian territory is not currently self-sufficient in food: much of the cereals, sugar and oils, making up 65 per cent of current dietary calories, are imported. Some 1.4 million people (40 per cent of the population) live with food insecurity, and another 1.1 million (30 per cent) face imminent threat of food insecurity if present conditions continue.⁵⁷ As of 2003, 13.2 per cent of children in the Gaza Strip under age 5, and 4.3 per cent of children in the West Bank, suffered from acute malnutrition. Chronic malnutrition now afflicts 17.5 per cent of children in the Gaza Strip and 7.9 per cent of children in the West Bank.⁵⁸

32. The United Nations and other international and non-governmental organizations provide food aid to the Palestinians. However, food aid offers no sustainable solution. Relief food supplies provide 80 per cent of the total dietary energy supplies (mainly wheat flour). Domestic production is essential in augmenting this diet.⁵⁹

Housing

33. Overcrowding has resulted from the waves of population transfer. New and expanding settlements have severely depleted Palestinian housing and housing prospects, especially around hill-top settlements.⁶⁰ With a current population of 3.3 million Palestinians in the occupied territory, and a projected total of 4.0 million by 2010, natural growth now places housing needs at 151,000 units over 2001-2010, or roughly 15,000 units per year.⁶¹ In addition to Israel's seizure of Palestinian habitat, prohibitive economic conditions under closure, and current Palestinian institutional capacity (producing under 10,000 units per year) prefigure an increased housing deficit and still greater density. High density of housing is a source of a range of family-level problems, from skin ailments to domestic violence.⁶²

34. Besides destruction and confiscation of Palestinian habitat, there is the increasingly prohibitive cost of building needed homes. Building restrictions have depleted the potential housing supply, pushing up housing prices in time of crisis. Closure has also inflated the cost of transportation and building materials, having raised housing costs by 12 per cent during the first 15 months after September 2000.⁶³

35. At the level of the Palestinian Authority, housing finance institutions do not provide appropriate solutions for the neediest segments of the population, and the Palestinian Housing Ministry has developed no housing policy to date. The essence of the challenge lies in the lack of Palestinian control over land and resources.⁶⁴

Public health

36. Checkpoints and curfews have lowered health standards by preventing access to hospitals and clinics, impeding health-care programmes (for example, vaccinations) and leading to untreated psychological trauma arising from the physical, economic and social consequences of occupation.⁶⁵ Despite constrained capacity, budget and movement, the demand for UNRWA medical services increased 40.3 per cent in the West Bank, and 45.1 per cent in Gaza, totalling 4.4 million visits during the period from mid-2002 to mid-2003.⁶⁶ With the increase in demand, the quality of service has declined, especially with most facilities operating with

reduced staff and inadequate transport, water, electricity and medical supplies under Israeli-imposed restrictions.⁶⁷

37. The accessibility, affordability, availability and quality of reproductive health have deteriorated. Anaemia afflicted 48 per cent in 2003, up from 31.5 per cent in 2002 and 23.4 per cent in 2001. The percentage of birth deliveries in hospital has declined annually. Only 33 per cent of mothers received antenatal care, and just 19 per cent received any post-natal care last year.⁶⁸ Owing to deteriorating water quality, dysentery and intestinal parasites have increased significantly.⁶⁹

38. The Palestinian birth rate in the occupied territory is estimated at 3.6 per cent, but low birth weight cases increased by 25 per cent in 2003, and infant weight monitoring declined by 5 per cent.⁷⁰ The 36 per cent decline in the numbers of infants immunized on schedule prefigures disease outbreaks, including cross-border infections.⁷¹

39. The barrier is likely to further aggravate public-health conditions and services, leaving 73.7 per cent of the people to its west without access to a health facility. Medical personnel will be obstructed from reaching 76.4 per cent of them, and resulting economic destitution will leave 69 per cent unable to pay for services, including 65 per cent without any maternal care.⁷²

Youth and education

40. In the occupied territory, 67 per cent of the population are aged 24 years or younger. The psychological effects of the conflict on children and youth derive from exposure to political violence, disruption of family life, loss of educational opportunities or other productive outlets, and general decline of living conditions. Most of the 9,000 children injured are adolescents (aged 13-18), a group more vulnerable to aggression, rebellion, risky behaviour, helplessness, frustration, depression and withdrawal. They manifest symptoms of sleeplessness, emotional problems, headaches, loss of appetite and volatility, running greater risk of mental disorder, domestic violence and self-destructive behaviour. About 75 per cent of adults report that children are experiencing more and greater emotional problems than one year ago.⁷³ Hypertension is the principal psychological symptom among student-age children, who account for a quarter of all cases.⁷⁴ The long-term consequences include the loss of confidence in adults, lack of respect for authority institutions, acceptance of violence as a means of solving problems, and diminished hopes or belief in a just or meaningful future.⁷⁵

41. A decade of effort to improve the educational system has been lost with the closures and mobility restrictions, affecting nearly 1 million students and over 39,000 teachers in 1,900 schools. In the West Bank, 68 per cent of students reported obstacles to reaching their institutions in November 2002-November 2003.⁷⁶ At least 498 schools closed during the 2002-2003 scholastic year, owing to movement restrictions that confined children to their homes. Israeli forces destroyed or damaged at least 269 schools.⁷⁷

42. Palestinian students' overall success rate dropped by 14.5 per cent in scholastic year 2002-2003, compared with scholastic year 2001-2002.⁷⁸

Economic and social indicators

43. During 1998-2000, the occupied Palestinian territory's economy had shown a steady 5 per cent annual growth. However, closure and curfew in 2003 led to losses and trade stagnation, raising unemployment and poverty.⁷⁹ These conditions drove Palestine's economy to be heavily dependent on informal sector activity, and petty commercial and rent-seeking services. Agriculture, forming the base of the Palestinian economy, is still practised, but under extremely repressive conditions. The United Nations Conference on Trade and Development (UNCTAD) has begun to refer to Palestine as a "war-torn economy", because it shares the structural factors, external constraints, fiscal constraints and private sector performance common to other war-torn countries.⁸⁰

44. Three years of economic decline have accumulated losses in the key indicators. In real terms, the Palestinian economy has lost all the growth it achieved in the preceding 15 years, with real gross domestic product (GDP) now below its 1986 level.⁸¹ The World Bank, the International Monetary Fund (IMF) and the Palestinian Authority's Ministry of Finance point to an estimated growth rate of 4.5 per cent which, when matched with the population growth rate, indicates that per capita income remained constant in 2003. However, as a result of mobility restrictions, Palestinians still cannot resume normal, regular economic and trade relations, either inside the West Bank or with Israel — a prerequisite of economic recovery.⁸²

45. The annual unemployment rate declined in the fourth quarter of 2003 to 26 per cent according to the International Labour Organization (ILO) definition, compared with a rate of 31 per cent in the fourth quarter of 2002. However, unemployment remained well above the pre-crisis (third quarter of 2000) level of 10 per cent. In 2003, jobs were recovered across various sectors of the economy: but according to Palestinian Central Bureau of Statistics data, Palestinians increasingly are self-employed and working at unpaid labour. They are also turning to low productivity sectors like agriculture and commerce to find work, often creating disguised unemployment. That more Palestinians are now employed in agriculture than in construction, once a major source of jobs, is indicative of significant structural change in the economy. This change has been partly due to loss of jobs in Israel, which declined from 135,000 before the crisis to 57,000 in 2003.⁸³

46. Israel resumed its payment of some clearance revenues owed to the Palestinian Authority, amounting to some \$130 million in January-September 2003.⁸⁴ However, the downward trend in most other indicators persisted. The political uncertainty, Israel's cessation of clearance revenue payments, decreasing donor disbursements, Palestinian losses arising from the progressive construction of Israel's West Bank barrier, breakdown of the ceasefire, and tougher Israeli restrictions on movement contributed to the net decline in macroeconomic indicators.⁸⁵

47. By end-March 2003, household median income had plummeted to its lowest point, decreasing by 44 per cent since October 2000.⁸⁶ About 47 per cent of households had lost more than 50 per cent of their income in the same period. Taking into consideration the 13 per cent growth in the population and the over 46 per cent drop in real incomes since 1999, poverty is increasing, with the rate having risen to 60 per cent, in 2002⁸⁷ and to 63 per cent, in mid-2003. Calculated as living on less than \$2.1 per day, this rate of absolute poverty now afflicts 2 million food-dependent Palestinians.⁸⁸

48. Combined factors brought unprecedented economic hardship and poverty in 2003. Salaries and social services to be provided by the Palestinian Authority (49 per cent of total household wage income) were not delivered.⁸⁹ Moreover, Israeli army and settlers prevented farmers from accessing their fields to plant, tend, harvest or market produce. Most Palestinian workers in Israel — many originating from expelled and dispossessed communities inside the Green Line — lost their wages owing to closure, and unemployment which had been 10 per cent in 2000⁹⁰ reached 70 per cent in some areas.⁹¹

49. Households cope by drastically reducing consumption and expenditures for basic needs. Food consumption is down by 86 per cent⁹² and utility payments are delayed by 60 per cent. While 63 per cent of families have resorted to informal borrowing from friends and relatives to make ends meet, 20 per cent of families have had to sell assets such as jewellery and other belongings as a kind of “erosive coping strategy”, irreversibly depleting their subsistence base.⁹³ By March 2003, 42 per cent of families were destitute and dependent upon humanitarian assistance.⁹⁴ Child labour, having doubled over 2001-2002 and now at 3.1 per cent,⁹⁵ forecloses educational opportunities, reduces future productivity and depresses livelihoods across generations.

50. The most vulnerable fall into two categories: the chronic poor (social hardship cases) and the “new poor”. The former category typically comprises households with a high proportion of women, elderly and children, having no savings, enduring poor living conditions and with no stable source of income. The new poor are those who have recently lost their homes, income, assets or livelihood and have a limited capacity to recover. This category includes, especially, many farmers who have experienced the destruction, confiscation or foreclosure of access to land, water, crops, other means of production and markets by Israeli settlers and/or the military. Gaza fisherfolk, Bedouins, and daily wage earners denied access to job markets exemplify those belonging to this category. Those with stable incomes have to support a greater number of persons. Dependency ratios have increased from 5.9 to 6.6 in the West Bank and to 7.5 in Gaza.⁹⁶

51. The occupied Palestinian territory started 2003 with foreign investment down by 90 per cent, from about \$1.45 billion in 1999, to some \$150 million in 2002.⁹⁷ When the gap between actual investment and that projected in the absence of conflict was calculated, the loss came to \$3.2 billion.⁹⁸ The foreign investment lost, combined with the raw physical damage and deterioration of infrastructure, resulted in a \$1 billion (or 19 per cent in real per capita terms) decline in productive capital stock at the beginning of 2003.⁹⁹

52. Commercial banking in the occupied Palestinian territory has been relatively new, emerging only in the past nine years with the Oslo process. On 25 February 2004, the Israeli army raided four bank branches in Ramallah, seizing cash worth between \$8.6 million and \$9 million, equivalent to what Israel security sources claimed were the holdings of “suspect accounts”. Observers recognized that these actions “risk destabilizing the Palestinian banking system”.¹⁰⁰

53. Under occupation, the economy of the occupied territory largely depends upon Israel, to such an extent that 96 per cent of Palestinian exports and some 25 per cent of labour were destined for Israel.¹⁰¹ With Palestinian domestic demand at about 150 per cent of GDP, the excessive leakage of economic resources indicates that approximately 71 per cent of the overall Palestinian trade deficit lies currently with

Israel. Of foreign borrowing by Palestine (mostly donor support funds) to finance trade, 70 per cent goes to pay for Israeli imports. With the deficit at 45 per cent of GDP through 2002, the current period began with 45 cents of each domestically produced dollar channelled into the Israeli economy.¹⁰² That trend appeared to continue; for example, the second quarter 2003 trade figures indicated a 17 per cent increase in imports from Israel and a decrease of 3.4 per cent in exports to Israel as compared with second quarter 2002.¹⁰³

54. Most Palestinian enterprises (90 per cent) are microscale units (having less than five employees) with limited capacity to withstand the present adversity, but they employ 56 per cent of domestic labour. Medium-scale enterprises (20-50 employees) constitute only 1 per cent of firms.¹⁰⁴ Employment and compensation levels fell in all sectors, except for medium-scale firms producing food and beverages. Their 13 per cent increase in employment and 36 per cent rise in compensation are attributable to increased demand for local products that replaced Israeli imports. Larger firms' ability to withstand the crisis did not compensate for the loss in employment across the sector. In 2003, 75 per cent of Palestinian firms operated at one-third capacity, and 43 per cent of industrial enterprises have shut down since September 2000.¹⁰⁵

55. The occupation and resulting conflict have also altered the very structure of the economy. The number of microenterprises has increased significantly (28 per cent as of 2002), while the number of small enterprises has decreased in similar proportion. Likewise, the numbers of medium-sized and large enterprises also have decreased significantly (49 per cent and 48 per cent, respectively).¹⁰⁶ Firms have tried to adjust by decreasing working hours and productive capacity, or by using Israeli-registered vehicles for transport; but these strategies have also increased already inflated production costs.¹⁰⁷

56. Israel continues to withhold clearance to revenues belonging to the Palestinian Authority. Israel's timely transfer of these revenues is one economic measure set out in the Quartet's road map. At end-2003, Israel continued to hold \$299.47 million belonging to the Palestinian Authority.¹⁰⁸ The ministries and other assets of the Palestinian Authority also have been targets of Israeli military strikes, impeding public services. The damage of Israeli forces to Palestinian public infrastructure, including the "widespread ransacking of Palestinian Authority ministry buildings and municipal offices", approximates \$251 million.¹⁰⁹

Status of women

57. Gender inequality and inequity typically become more pronounced under crisis conditions. Women's family and social roles expand, while economic hardships mount and supportive resources shrink, or become inaccessible. The result includes additional stress and crushing psychological burden on women.¹¹⁰

58. The death, imprisonment and unemployment of adult male members of the community — approaching 80 per cent in some areas of the occupied territory — have increased poverty and social burdens that contribute to increased domestic violence and stress. Violence in the environment exacerbates the occurrence of abuse at home: children's and parents' exposure to political violence is the strongest predictor of violence in the family, whether between spouses, against the children or among siblings.¹¹¹

Access to humanitarian assistance

59. The August 2002 visit of the Secretary-General's Personal Humanitarian Envoy was intended to secure commitments from the Israeli Government to facilitate access to humanitarian aid. Although some improvements resulted, the commitments are still far from being fully respected.¹¹² Israeli forces and authorities frequently impeded humanitarian organizations or denied their access through checkpoints and closures, and subjected them to the "back-to-back" cargo system.

60. The obstruction of ambulances at checkpoints remains a serious problem. In the past year, the Israeli army detained some 60 ambulances per month at checkpoints, of which a quarter were denied passage. In March 2003 alone, Israeli forces fired on 15 ambulances.¹¹³ In June 2003, UNRWA reported 231 instances of excessive delay or denial of passage at checkpoints.¹¹⁴ UNRWA medical personnel operated under dangerous conditions during military operations and movement restrictions. From mid-2002 to mid-2003, UNRWA lost 7,881 health staff hours in the West Bank alone.¹¹⁵ During the full closure on Gaza, from 16 to 27 April 2003, Israeli forces denied access for the World Food Programme (WFP) and UNRWA. Israel's Ashdod Port and army also imposed dilatory procedures for humanitarian and development material, exacerbating financial costs and delays for most operations.¹¹⁶

61. The barrier promises to further prevent access to internationally supported humanitarian aid and other social services, including denial of refugee access to UNRWA-contracted health services in Jerusalem hospitals and the prevention of pupils' access to UNRWA schools, as in the case of the UNRWA school in Sur Bahir (Jerusalem), lying in the barrier's intended path.¹¹⁷

62. Israeli restrictions on UNRWA movement created a cumulative cost of some \$24 million from October 2000 to November 2003. During most of 2003, the Israeli military government in the occupied territory denied permits to enter Jerusalem¹¹⁸ to 47 per cent of UNRWA staff.

63. Israel completely bans the movement of humanitarian goods through the main Erez crossing into Gaza, leaving the Karni crossing as the sole transit point, where Israeli authorities operate the back-to-back haulage system. Israel has also imposed transport fees on humanitarian goods, costing UNRWA \$260,000 annually.¹¹⁹ On 30 March 2004, UNRWA announced that Israeli-imposed obstructions and unacceptable security risks, coupled with underfunding, had forced it to stop food aid to Gaza.¹²⁰ UNRWA recommenced the distribution of emergency food aid to the some 600,000 refugees that it serves in the Gaza Strip on 21 April 2004.

III. Occupied Syrian Golan

64. Israel now maintains some 40 settlements on the Golan Heights, housing 15,700 Israelis.¹²¹

65. Israeli authorities have appropriated most of the Syrian Golan land for military use and settlement. According to local sources, the remaining 18,000 indigenous Syrian Arabs maintain control over only about 6 per cent of the original territory under occupation.¹²²

66. In 2004, Israel's Ministerial Committee on Settlement Affairs decided to double the Israeli Government's investment in the Golan, in addition to long-standing funding from various organizations.¹²³ In 2004, Israeli occupation forces confiscated 354 dunums of village land, and announced the construction of 9 new settlements, and 900 settler-housing units, and the intention of doubling Israel's settler population.¹²⁴

67. Golan is primarily an agricultural region. However, Syrians are unable to cultivate their land to capacity while Israel prohibits them from building needed water infrastructure and levies heavy taxes on their water use, land and transportation.¹²⁵ Israeli forces incrementally confiscate land and uproot trees, as attested, for example, by the March 2004 uprooting of 50 apples trees in Arab villages by the "Israel Land Circle".¹²⁶

68. As vestiges of previous wars, landmines with no military purpose today remain a hazard for the local population that occasionally claims life and limb.¹²⁷ Of the victims, 50 per cent have been under age 17.¹²⁸ Landmines are a life-threatening feature in 19 agriculture and grazing areas in the occupied Golan.¹²⁹ Whereas landmine clearance was a priority two years ago, other security concerns have intervened, prolonging the risks to the Syrian population in the Golan.¹³⁰ On 22 February 2003, heavy rains caused the erosion of a minefield in the town of Majdal Shams, where landmines slid downhill to the back of houses, forcing inhabitants to seek refuge elsewhere.¹³¹

69. As has been the case for the occupation of Palestinian territory, occupation of the Syrian Golan has resulted in the dismemberment of families in the Golan. Young Syrian graduates from the Golan and from Syrian universities have only limited access to job opportunities back home. If they visit their families once a year in the Syrian Golan during their studies, Israel refuses them re-entry.¹³²

70. School facilities remain inadequate to cover the needs of all Syrian children of school age. A rapidly rising school dropout rate has been responsible for the entry of children into the labour market in Israel, where they receive a lower salary than others doing the same job. There remains also a shortage of health centres and services.¹³³

IV. Conclusion

71. The present review period demonstrates mounting economic and social damage under military occupation. Most social and economic data show marked deterioration of living conditions for the Palestinian people, including new forms of dispossession and destruction of private and public assets of all kinds. The accumulated consequences have newly brought the occupied Palestinian territory to "war-torn economy" status. Humanitarian assistance is not sufficient to ensure a sustainable life with dignity and rights for the Palestinian civilians under occupation. The sustainable option for addressing the current economic and social deprivation lies in lifting the occupation of the Palestinian territory, as well as the Syrian Golan.

Notes

¹ United Nations, *Treaty Series*, vol. 75, No. 973.

² Contribution to the report of the United Nations Relief and Works Agency for Palestine

Refugees in the Near East (UNRWA), 15 February 2004.

- ³ Contribution to the report of the United Nations Children's Fund (UNICEF), 26 March 2004.
- ⁴ Report of the Special Rapporteur of the Commission on Human Rights, John Dugard, on the situation of human rights in the Palestinian territories occupied by Israel since 1967, submitted in accordance with Commission resolution 1993/2 A (E/CN.4/2004/6), p. 11, paras. 24-25 (over 230 victims up until April 2003), updated at Palestine Monitor, available from http://www.palestinemonitor.org/factsheet/Palestinian_intifada_fact_sheet.htm; and Palestinian Centre for Human Rights (PCHR), "Statistics of Al Aqsa intifada: September 29, 2000-April 07, 2004", available from http://www.pchrgaza.org/special/statistics_intifada.htm.
- ⁵ Press release SG/SM/9210 of 22 March 2004.
- ⁶ United States Department of State ("Israel and the occupied territories", *Country Reports on Human Rights Practices* (Washington, D.C., United States Department of State, 25 February 2003); sect. 1.d) places this number at 8,400.
- ⁷ Ibid.
- ⁸ Ibid.
- ⁹ *Back to a Routine of Torture: Torture and Ill-Treatment of Palestinian Detainees during Arrest, Detention and Interrogation, September 2001-April 2003* (Jerusalem, Public Committee against Torture in Israel (PCATI), 2003), p. 11.
- ¹⁰ "Israel and the occupied territories," ..., sect. I.a; 2.d; and sect. II.c.
- ¹¹ "Israel and the occupied territories" ..., sect. 1.c; and *Ha'aretz*, 6 April 2004.
- ¹² "Israel and the occupied territories" ..., sect. II.d.
- ¹³ Ibid.
- ¹⁴ The number displaced by the barrier construction was 6,000-8,000 (UNFPA contribution to report, 4 February 2004); plus 6,875-8,214 from at least 1,369 house demolitions ("Statistics of Al Aqsa intifada ...").
- ¹⁵ UNFPA contribution to report, 4 February 2004; also UNFPA, "Input to the Secretary-General's note" (2003), pp. 6-7, citing Palestinian Central Bureau of Statistics (PCBS) (2001) and University of Geneva study.
- ¹⁶ UN-Habitat, "Housing situation and the establishment of a human settlements fund for the Palestinian people in the occupied Palestinian territories" (HSP/GC/19/2/Add.3), 17 March 2003, p. 8, table 2.
- ¹⁷ "Israel and the occupied territories" ..., sect. 4; BBC, 17 March 2003, available from http://news.bbc.co.uk/2/hi/middle_east/2856433.stm.
- ¹⁸ UNRWA contribution to report, 15 February 2004.
- ¹⁹ "Statistics of Al Aqsa intifada ...".
- ²⁰ OCHA, "Consolidated Appeals Process (CAP): Humanitarian Appeal 2004 for the occupied Palestinian territory", 18 November 2003, p. 16, table: "Evolution of Israeli security measures".

- ²¹ See Roubina Ghattas, Nader Hrimat and Jad Isaac, *Forests in Palestine* (Jerusalem, Applied Research Institute of Jerusalem (ARIJ), 2004), available from [http://www.arij.org/pub/Forests per cent20in per cent20Palestine/index-1.htm#Abstract](http://www.arij.org/pub/Forests%20in%20Palestine/index-1.htm#Abstract). See also Palestinian National Information Centre (PNIC), “Palestinian economic losses due the Israeli siege, closures and aggressions (Sept. 29, 2000 to May 31, 2003)”, available from [http://www.ipc.gov.ps/ipc_e/ipc_e-1/e_News Reports/2003/reports-012.html](http://www.ipc.gov.ps/ipc_e/ipc_e-1/e_News%20Reports/2003/reports-012.html).
- ²² World Bank, *Twenty-Seven Months — Intifada, Closures and the Palestinian Economic Crisis: An Assessment* (Jerusalem, World Bank, May 2003), p. 46.
- ²³ UNCTAD, “Report on UNCTAD’s assistance to the Palestinian people” (TD/B/50/4) of 28 July 2003 (hereinafter referred to as “UNCTAD report”), p. 6.
- ²⁴ Dugard, loc. cit., para. 18.
- ²⁵ World Food Programme contribution to report, 5 February 2004.
- ²⁶ UNRWA contribution to report, 15 February 2004.
- ²⁷ Foundation for Middle East Peace (FMEP), “Settlement Database”, web site at <http://www.fmep.org/database/westbank.html>.
- ²⁸ “New report on illegal outposts prompts calls for probe of WZO”, *Forward* (2 January 2004); and *Ha’aretz*, 3 April 2004.
- ²⁹ Israel Central Bureau of Statistics figures, in James Reynolds, “New building in Jewish settlements on occupied land grew substantially in 2003”, *BBC News* (2 March 2004), available from http://news.bbc.co.uk/go/pr/fr/-/2/hi/middle_east/3526791.stm.
- ³⁰ *Ha’aretz*, 26 December 2003.
- ³¹ Tikva Honig-Parnass, “All’s clear for full-scale war against the Palestinians”, *Between the Lines*, June 2003, p. 6.
- ³² Israel Defense Forces Radio (30 December 2003), cited in Peace Now, *Middle East Report*, vol. 5, Issue 23 (5 January 2004).
- ³³ Yehezkel Lein with Eyal Weizman, *Land Grab: Israel’s Settlement Policy in the West Bank* (Jerusalem, B’Tselem, May 2002), p. 93, table 9.
- ³⁴ *Ha’aretz*, 16 April 2004.
- ³⁵ Report of the Special Rapporteur, Jean Ziegler, on the right to food: mission to the Occupied Palestinian Territories (E/CN.4/2004/10/Add.2), para. 47 (31 October 2004).
- ³⁶ *Ha’aretz*, 23 July 2003, on Peace Now web site: <http://www.peacenow.org/PNintheN/haaretz29.html>.
- ³⁷ According to Israeli military plans submitted to the Israeli High Court. Cited in Humanitarian and Emergency Policy Group of the Local Aid Coordination Committee, “The impact of Israel’s separation barrier on affected West Bank communities” (4 May 2003), available from <http://www.reliefweb.int/w/rwb.nsf/s/29F7516E5E08750385256D1D00699A70>, p. 2.
- ³⁸ OCHA, “Humanitarian implications of the new barrier projections”, available from http://www.reliefweb.int/hic-opt/docs/UN/OCHA/Barrierprojections_Jan04%20_25Feb04_eng.pdf.
- ³⁹ Report of the Secretary-General prepared pursuant to General Assembly resolution ES-10/13 (A/ES-10/248) of 24 November 2003, p. 3, para. 8.
- ⁴⁰ *Ibid.*, p. 3, para. 7.
- ⁴¹ OCHA, “Analysis of Humanitarian Impact”, January 2004.
- ⁴² Ziegler, loc. cit., para. 51.
- ⁴³ See report of the Secretary-General prepared pursuant to General Assembly resolution ES-10/13 ..., p. 6, para. 24.

- ⁴⁴ The Palestinian National Information Center (PNIC) reported that, between 29 September 2000 and 31 May 2003, the occupying forces uprooted hundreds of thousands of olive, citrus and other fruit trees, cited in Ziegler, loc. cit., para. 45.
- ⁴⁵ In Jerusalem, the legal instrument used is the Land Seizure Act in Emergency Time (1949).
- ⁴⁶ Dugard, loc. cit., para. 9.
- ⁴⁷ See report of the Secretary-General prepared pursuant to General Assembly resolution ES-10/13 ..., p. 5, paras. 19-21; Palestinian Ministry of Foreign Affairs, International Cooperation and International Organizations, "Israeli separation wall activity since United Nations General Assembly request for an advisory opinion from the International Court of Justice", 24 February 2004, p. 2; and OCHA contribution to this report, 3 June 2004.
- ⁴⁸ B'Tselem, "Not even a drop: the water crisis in Palestinian villages without a water network" (July 2001), p. 4.
- ⁴⁹ OCHA, "Humanitarian Monitoring Report on the 'Bertini Commitments'" (June 2003).
- ⁵⁰ World Bank, *Twenty-Seven Months* ..., p. 47.
- ⁵¹ Ali Sha`ar, Patrick Kelley and Eckhard Kleinau, "Environmental Health Assessment: Phase II (USAID Village Water and Sanitation Program, West Bank)" (Washington, D.C., USAID, June 2003), cited in "Coordinated Appeals Process (CAP) ...", p. 19.
- ⁵² ARIJ, *Wall and Water in Palestine* (Powerpoint presentation), available from [http://www.arij.org/pub/Water per cent20in per cent20Palestine/Wall per cent20and per cent20Water per cent20in per cent20Palestine.zip](http://www.arij.org/pub/Water%20in%20Palestine/Wall%20and%20Water%20in%20Palestine.zip).
- ⁵³ OCHA, "Humanitarian Monitoring Report ...".
- ⁵⁴ World Bank, *Twenty-Seven Months* ..., p. 46.
- ⁵⁵ WFP contribution to report, 5 February 2004.
- ⁵⁶ World Bank, *Twenty-Seven Months* ..., p. 36; Riccardo Bocco and others, *Palestinian Public Perceptions on their Living Conditions* (Geneva, December 2002), p. 51.
- ⁵⁷ FAO, "Summary of the Executive Report of the Food Security Assessment West Bank and Gaza Strip" (Rome, FAO and WFP, 2003), pp. 1 and 3.
- ⁵⁸ UNRWA contribution to report, 15 February 2004.
- ⁵⁹ FAO, "Summary of the Executive Report ...", p. 3.
- ⁶⁰ Report of the Special Rapporteur on adequate housing as a component of the right to an adequate standard of living, Mr. Miloon Kothari: addendum: visit to the occupied Palestinian territories (5-10 January 2002) (E/CN.4/2003/5/Add.1), 12 June 2002.
- ⁶¹ UN-Habitat, "Housing situation ...", p. 4, and p. 5, table 1. Projections are based on an average 35 annual population growth, with 2.6 per cent growth projected for the West Bank and 3.75 per cent for the Gaza Strip.
- ⁶² See World Health Organization, *Health Principles of Housing* (Geneva, WHO, 1989).
- ⁶³ Cited in UN-Habitat, "Housing situation ...", p. 2, para. 11.
- ⁶⁴ Ibid., p. 3, para. 15.
- ⁶⁵ WFP contribution to report, 5 February 2004; and Dugard, loc. cit, para. 21.
- ⁶⁶ UNRWA contribution to report, 15 February 2004.
- ⁶⁷ Ibid.
- ⁶⁸ UNFPA contribution to report, 4 February 2004.

- ⁶⁹ UNICEF contribution to report, 26 March 2004; OCHA, "Humanitarian Monitoring Report ..."; also Ziegler, loc. cit., para. 14.
- ⁷⁰ UNFPA contribution to report, 4 February 2004.
- ⁷¹ UNRWA contribution to report, 15 February 2004.
- ⁷² PCBS and UNFPA, "The impact of the separation wall on the socio-economic conditions of Palestinian households in the localities in which the separation wall passes through", cited in UNFPA contribution to report, 4 February 2004.
- ⁷³ UNFPA contribution to report, 4 February 2004; and <http://www.ecwbg.info/BudgetGovType.asp>.
- ⁷⁴ UNICEF contribution to report, 26 March 2004.
- ⁷⁵ Findings of PCBS, Canaan Institute and Palestinian Ministry of Social Affairs, cited in UNFPA contribution to report, 4 February 2004.
- ⁷⁶ UNICEF contribution to report, 26 March 2004.
- ⁷⁷ UNRWA figure. Palestinian Ministry of Education (MoE) cites 282 schools damaged by rocket and tank shelling since the breakout of the crisis ("The effect of the Israeli occupation on education from 28 September 2000 to 16 January 2004", assessment 8 (Gaza, MoE, 2004), p. 3).
- ⁷⁸ UNRWA, Department of Education West Bank, "Emergency appeal, 6 June-December 2003", (December 2003), table 24; cited in UNICEF contribution to report, 26 March 2004.
- ⁷⁹ World Bank, *Twenty-Seven Months ...*, chap. 2, p. 8, para. 2.5.
- ⁸⁰ For elaboration of these factors, see UNCTAD report, p. 4.
- ⁸¹ On the basis of the UNCTAD Palestinian integrated database, estimated 2002 real GDP in 1997 US dollars was 2,514 million, and 2,390 million in 1986 (UNCTAD report, p. 4, note 6).
- ⁸² UNSCO contribution to this report, 27 February 2004.
- ⁸³ Ibid.
- ⁸⁴ Preliminary data on the Palestinian Ministry of Finance web site: <http://www.mof.gov.ps/>.
- ⁸⁵ World Bank, "Closure/curfew and economic/fiscal monitoring indicators", Report No. 11, 31 January 2004, p. 4, table: "Summary of economic indicators".
- ⁸⁶ UNCTAD report, p. 9.
- ⁸⁷ World Bank, *Twenty-Seven Months ...*, pp. xi and 31.
- ⁸⁸ Consisting of 54 per cent in the West Bank and 84 per cent in Gaza ("Israel and the occupied territories" ..., sect. II). The World Bank has issued the 2002 figure of 60 per cent living below the poverty line, defined as those living on less than \$2.1 per day. The 2003 figure of 63 per cent is calculated as income of \$390 per month for a six-person household (circa \$2.16/day) (Palestinian Central Bureau of Statistics (PCBS), "Impact of the Israeli measures on the economic conditions of Palestinian households: 5th round: April-May 2003" (Ramallah, PCBS, 2003), cited in UNCTAD report, p. 9).
- ⁸⁹ WFP contribution to the report, 5 February 2004.
- ⁹⁰ Including discouraged workers, the rate was 20 per cent. UNSCO contribution to present report, 27 February 2004, para. 3.
- ⁹¹ ILO contribution to present report, 16 February 2004, p. 1, para. 1.
- ⁹² Reflecting the March 2000-March 2003 period (PCBS, "Impact of the Israeli measures ...", p. 9).
- ⁹³ Ibid.

- ⁹⁴ UNCTAD report, p. 10.
- ⁹⁵ Institute for Palestinian Studies (IPS) and Palestine News Agency (Wafa), “Bad economy”, (6 April 2004), available from http://www.ipc.gov.ps/ipc_e/ipc_e-1/e_News/news2004/2004_04/038.html.
- ⁹⁶ OCHA, “Coordinated Appeals Process (CAP) ...”, p. 17, table: “Economic indicators”, and pp. 23-24.
- ⁹⁷ World Bank, *Twenty-Seven Months ...*, p. xi.
- ⁹⁸ *Ibid.*, p. 8.
- ⁹⁹ *Ibid.*, p. xi.
- ¹⁰⁰ United States Department of State spokesman Richard Boucher quoted in “Israel seizes Palestinian cash”, CBS News (25 February 2004), available from <http://www.cbsnews.com/stories/2004/02/22/world/printable601538.shtml>; “Israeli raids threaten stability of Palestinian banks: US”, *Sydney Morning Herald* (27 February 2004), available from <http://www.smh.com.au/articles/2004/02/26/1077676900789.html>.
- ¹⁰¹ World Bank, *Long-term Policy Options for the Palestinian Economy* (Jerusalem, World Bank, July 2002).
- ¹⁰² UNCTAD report, p. 8, para. 14.
- ¹⁰³ World Bank, “Closure/curfew and economic/fiscal monitoring indicators”, Report No. 11, p. 12, Economic appendix table 5a: Indicators: Palestinian imports from, and exports to, Israel (\$ million).
- ¹⁰⁴ PCBS, “Number of establishments and employees by employment size category in the Palestinian Territory” (unpublished), cited in UNCTAD report, p. 11.
- ¹⁰⁵ Palestinian Ministry of Foreign Affairs, International Cooperation and International Organizations, “Briefing on the current economic situation”, 25 February 2004.
- ¹⁰⁶ UNCTAD report, p. 11.
- ¹⁰⁷ *Ibid.*, pp. 9-13.
- ¹⁰⁸ *Ibid.*, p. 9, para. 16
- ¹⁰⁹ World Bank, *Twenty-Seven Months ...*, p. 19.
- ¹¹⁰ Women’s Centre for Legal Aid and Counselling (WCLAC), “Focus Group Study” (Jerusalem, WCLAC, 2002), cited in UNFPA contribution to report, 4 February 2004, p. 2, para 5.
- ¹¹¹ *Ha’aretz*, 1 December 2003, cited in UNFPA contribution to report, 4 February 2004.
- ¹¹² Ziegler, loc. cit., para. 20. See also OCHA, “Humanitarian Monitoring Report”...
- ¹¹³ Dugard, loc. cit., para. 20.
- ¹¹⁴ One hundred eighty-six incidents of delay, 41 incidents where access was denied and 4 incidents in which staff members were detained (OCHA, “Humanitarian Monitoring Report” ...).
- ¹¹⁵ UNRWA contribution to report, 15 February 2004.
- ¹¹⁶ *Ibid.*
- ¹¹⁷ *Ibid.*
- ¹¹⁸ *Ibid.*
- ¹¹⁹ *Ibid.*; and “UNRWA suspends emergency food aid in Gaza”, (UNRWA press release (HQG/06/2004), 1 April 2004), available from <http://www.un.org/unrwa/news/releases/pr-2004/hqg06-04.pdf>.
- ¹²⁰ *Agence France Presse*, 30 March 2004.

- ¹²¹ FMEP, “Settlement database” ...
- ¹²² Jawlan Development Organization, “Facts and figures” (Arabic), available from <http://www.jawlan.org/golan/facts.htm>.
- ¹²³ *Ha’aretz*, 3 April 2004.
- ¹²⁴ Ayman Abu Jabal, “Syria Asks the Security Council to Stop Assaults”, *al-Safir* (20 March 2004), available from <http://www.jawlan.org/news/news.asp?sn=64>.
- ¹²⁵ ILO contribution to report, 16 February 2004.
- ¹²⁶ *Ibid.*
- ¹²⁷ “Mine laying in the Israel Defense Forces”, Israeli State Comptroller’s Report No. 50 A, for the year 1999 (Jerusalem, Israel Government Printing Office, 1999).
- ¹²⁸ *Al-Ahram Weekly*, 20-26 April 2000, available from <http://weekly.ahram.org.eg/2000/478/re7.htm>.
- ¹²⁹ According to al-Haq: Law in the Service of Man, cited in *Landmine Monitor Report: Israel* (2003), available from <http://www.icbl.org/lm/2003/syria.html>.
- ¹³⁰ Interview with *Maavarim* President Ben Steinberg and staffer Dror Schimmel, Jerusalem, 5 January 2003, in *Landmine Monitor Report: Israel* (2003), available from <http://www.icbl.org/lm/2003/israel.html> - fn4899.
- ¹³¹ “Israel”, *Landmine Monitor* (2003), available from <http://www.icbl.org/lm/2003/israel.html>.
- ¹³² Note by the Secretary-General of 22 August 2003 transmitting the report of the Special Committee to Investigate Israeli Practices Affecting the Human Rights of the Palestinian People and other Arabs of the Occupied Territories (A/58/311), para. 83.
- ¹³³ Document A/58/75-E/2003/21, p. 15, para. 78.
-

**General Assembly
Economic and Social Council**Distr.: General
24 May 2005

Original: English

**General Assembly
Sixtieth session**

Item 41 of the preliminary list*

Permanent sovereignty of the Palestinian people in the Occupied Palestinian Territory, including East Jerusalem, and of the Arab population in the occupied Syrian Golan over their natural resources**Economic and Social Council
Substantive session of 2005**

Item 11 of the provisional agenda**

Economic and social repercussions of the Israeli occupation on the living conditions of the Palestinian people in the occupied Palestinian territory, including Jerusalem, and the Arab population in the occupied Syrian Golan**Economic and social repercussions of the Israeli occupation on the living conditions of the Palestinian people in the occupied Palestinian territory, including Jerusalem, and of the Arab population in the occupied Syrian Golan****Note by the Secretary-General*****

In its resolution 2004/59 of 23 July 2004, the Economic and Social Council requested the Secretary-General to submit to the General Assembly at its sixtieth session, through the Council, a report on the implementation of that resolution. The Assembly, in its resolution 59/251 of 22 December 2004, also requested the Secretary-General to submit a report to it at its sixtieth session. The annexed report, which has been prepared by the Economic and Social Commission for Western Asia (ESCWA), is submitted in response to the two resolutions.

* A/60/50 and Corr.1.

** E/2005/100.

*** A longer period for clearance was required for extensive consultations within the various United Nations entities at Headquarters and in the field. The report annexed to the present note was therefore delayed 12 days for processing.

Annex

Report prepared by the Economic and Social Commission for Western Asia on the economic and social repercussions of the Israeli occupation on the living conditions of the Palestinian people in the occupied Palestinian territory, including Jerusalem, and of the Arab population in the occupied Syrian Golan*

Summary

The occupation of Palestinian territory by Israel continues to deepen the economic and social hardship for Palestinians. In response to real or perceived attacks by Palestinian armed elements, the Israeli army continues to resort to arbitrary detention, home demolition, severe mobility restrictions and closure policies.

Economic indicators continue to show negative trends: high unemployment; greater dependency on food aid; and untold losses from physical destruction of Palestinian homes, public buildings, agricultural assets, infrastructure and private property. That state of affairs has exacerbated poverty, rendering more than 2.2 million Palestinians poor.

Israel's confiscation of Palestinian land and water resources for settlements and the erection of the West Bank barrier accelerated during 2004. Refugees, women and children bear a significant brunt of those measures. Malnutrition and other health problems afflict a growing number of Palestinians at a time of curtailed access to needed services. Over 60 per cent of children below 2 years of age, 36 per cent of pregnant women, and over 43 per cent of nursing mothers in the Gaza Strip are anaemic. An estimated 38 per cent of the Palestinian population is food insecure. Israeli restrictions regularly impede humanitarian services to the occupied Palestinian territory.

Israeli settlements, land confiscation and the construction of a barrier in the occupied Palestinian territory, contrary to the Geneva Convention and other norms of international law, isolate occupied East Jerusalem, bisect the West Bank, curtail normal economic and social life, and continue to fuel the conflict. In 2004, the number of Israeli settlers in the West Bank and Gaza Strip grew to 250,179, which is a 6 per cent increase from 2003.

Israeli settlements in the occupied Syrian Golan Heights, housing an estimated 20,000 Israeli settlers, continue to expand unabated. Access to natural resources and social services remain inadequate for the Arab population in the Syrian Golan Heights.

* The Economic and Social Commission for Western Asia would like to acknowledge with appreciation the substantive contributions of the United Nations Children's Fund, the United Nations Conference on Trade and Development, the United Nations Population Fund, the Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations, the World Food Programme, the United Nations Relief and Works Agency for Palestine Refugees in the Near East, the United Nations High Commissioner for Human Rights, the United Nations Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs, the World Health Organization, the International Labour Organization and the Office of the United Nations Special Coordinator for the Middle East Peace Process.

I. Introduction

1. In its resolution 2004/54 of 23 July 2004, the Economic and Social Council stressed the importance of reviving the Middle East peace process on the basis of Security Council resolutions, including 242 (1967) of 22 November 1967, 338 (1973) of 22 October 1973, 425 (1978) of 19 March 1978, 1397 (2002) of 12 March 2002, 1515 (2003) of 19 November 2003 and 1544 (2004) of 19 May 2004, and the principle of land for peace as well as compliance with the agreements reached between the Government of Israel and the Palestine Liberation Organization, the representative of the Palestinian people. In the same resolution, the Economic and Social Council reaffirmed the applicability of the Geneva Convention relative to the Protection of Civilian Persons in Time of War, of 12 August 1949,¹ to the occupied Palestinian territory, including Jerusalem, and other Arab territories occupied by Israel since 1967; stressed the need to preserve the national unity and the territorial integrity of the occupied Palestinian territory, including East Jerusalem, and to guarantee the freedom of movement of persons and goods in the Territory, including the removal of restrictions on going to and from East Jerusalem, and the freedom of movement to and from the outside world; reaffirmed the inalienable right of the Palestinian people and the Arab population of the occupied Syrian Golan to all their natural and economic resources, and called upon Israel, the occupying Power, not to exploit, endanger or cause loss or depletion of those resources; also reaffirmed that Israeli settlements in the occupied Palestinian territory, including East Jerusalem, and the occupied Syrian Golan, are illegal and an obstacle to economic and social development; and requested the Secretary-General to submit to the General Assembly, through the Council, a report on the implementation of the resolution.

2. In its resolution 59/251 of 22 December 2004, the General Assembly reaffirmed the inalienable rights of the Palestinian people and the population of the occupied Syrian Golan over their natural resources, including land and water; and called upon Israel, the occupying Power, not to exploit, damage, cause loss or depletion of or endanger the natural resources in the occupied Palestinian territory, including Jerusalem and the occupied Syrian Golan. In the resolution, the Assembly recalled the advisory opinion rendered on 9 July 2004 by the International Court of Justice on the “Legal Consequences of the Construction of a Wall in the Occupied Palestinian Territory” (see A/ES-10/273 and Corr.1), and recalled also its resolution ES-10/15 of 20 July 2004. The Assembly noted the detrimental impact on Palestinian natural resources being caused by the unlawful construction of the wall by Israel inside the occupied Palestinian territory, including in and around East Jerusalem, and of its grave effect on the economic and social conditions of the Palestinian people. The Assembly recognized the right of the Palestinian people to claim restitution as a result of any exploitation, damage, loss or depletion of, or endangerment of their natural resources, and expressed the hope that the issue would be dealt with in the framework of the final status negotiations between the Palestinian and Israeli sides. The Assembly requested the Secretary-General to submit a report to it at its sixtieth session.

II. Occupied Palestinian territory, including Jerusalem

Death and injuries

3. Between 1 January and 29 December 2004, 869 Palestinian fatalities and 3,975 injuries were recorded. The cumulative total of Palestinian fatalities and injuries since September 2000 were 3,497 and 28,321 respectively.² Since September 2000, 70 per cent of Palestinian victims have been civilians. Apart from Palestinian fighters killed and injured, civilian casualties are mainly caused by the Israeli army's disproportionate use of force.³

4. Between March and December 2004, 41 of the fatalities and 32 of the injured were UNRWA pupils. Two of the deaths occurred while the pupils were inside their classrooms.⁴ The cumulative total of Palestinian child fatalities from September 2000 through November 2004 reached 775. More than 12,000 Palestinian children have been injured since October 2000.⁵

5. While the purpose of the present report is to describe the effects of the Israeli occupation on the Palestinian people, it is important to point out that, between September 2000 and December 2004, 1,030 Israelis have been killed and 6,964 injured as a result of the conflict. From September 2000 to September 2004, there were 104 Israeli child fatalities.²

6. The Secretary-General has repeatedly emphasized that violence cannot provide a solution to the conflict, and that only through negotiations can peace be achieved. On numerous occasions, the Secretary-General had called on both parties to exercise maximum restraint and responsibility, and reiterated his long-standing and adamant opposition to all terrorist attacks, from whatever quarter.⁶

Arbitrary arrests and detentions

7. An estimated 7,600 Palestinians remain in Israeli prisons and detention centres.⁷ By 6 January 2005, 848 Palestinians remained in administrative detention, without charge or judicial procedure.⁸

8. As of 6 January 2005, at least 259 Palestinian children were under Israeli detention.⁹ Israeli authorities have arrested some 2,500 Palestinian children since September 2000,¹⁰ holding them for long periods and denying them contact with a lawyer or relatives during interrogation.¹¹ Some 30 imprisoned Palestinian children in Israel have fallen ill and have been inadequately treated; 41.6 per cent of their ailments directly or indirectly resulting from their incarceration.¹²

Property destruction

9. Home demolition is among the most destructive Israeli practices in socio-economic terms. Such demolitions have predominantly taken place at night, and inhabitants receive only a few minutes' notice to remove their possessions.¹³

10. Between 1 March and 21 December 2004, the Israeli army destroyed at least 630 Palestinian homes in the West Bank, of which 29 were refugee shelters. Throughout 2004, Israeli authorities in occupied East Jerusalem destroyed 115 Palestinian residential buildings, including over 170 residential units.¹⁴ In 2004, the Israeli army destroyed 1,443 homes, affecting about 14,481 persons in the Gaza Strip.⁴ During the first nine months of 2004, the Israeli army demolished an average

of 120 residential buildings per month in the West Bank, and 77 homes per month in Rafah, in southern Gaza Strip.²

11. Since September 2000, the Israeli army destroyed over 2,990 shelters in the Gaza Strip that were home to 28,500 people,⁴ and demolished or damaged more than 12,000 homes in the West Bank.²

12. From September 2000 to 31 January 2005, the Israeli army uprooted over 1,325,000 fruit-bearing trees.¹⁵ Those huge losses will take years to recover, as any fruit tree requires five to seven years of steady cultivation before yielding any income.¹⁶

13. Throughout the Gaza Strip, land levelling increased in 2004. Over 50 per cent of the Gaza Strip's Beit Hanoun's agricultural land, mainly comprising of citrus fruit and olive trees has been destroyed in the last four years. In July 2004, the Israeli army cleared 289 hectares of land in the same area during a military operation.¹⁷

14. Israeli military ordnance, equipment and soldiers have damaged or destroyed both private and public Palestinian infrastructure. The destruction in both Tel al-Sultan and Brazil Camp demonstrates Israel's use of bulldozers to tear up roads, along with their water and sewage networks, thereby also producing a significant public health risk in already vulnerable communities. The Israeli army destroyed 51.2 per cent of Rafah's roads in that manner.¹⁸

15. The total cost of accumulated physical damage to housing, factories, infrastructure and land from October 2000 to September 2004 is conservatively estimated at \$2.2 billion, or almost 19 per cent of the estimated Palestinian capital stock. With subsequent incursions, the occupied territory's war-torn economy has lost about one fifth of its economic base.¹⁹

16. During its military operations in the Gaza Strip, the Israeli army targeted Palestinian factories and workshops, with the declared aim of destroying local rocket-making capabilities. However, that has resulted in the destruction of and severe damage to civil and private enterprises essential to the community's economic life. Operation "Forward Shield" exemplified that pattern, where the army damaged or destroyed 22 industrial facilities.²⁰

Mobility restrictions and closure policies

17. Restricting movement of goods and persons exacerbates the humanitarian crisis in the occupied Palestinian territory by deepening unemployment and poverty, preventing health care, interrupting education and generally humiliating the Palestinian people individually and collectively. Restrictions on the movement of people and goods continued in 2004 and became more severe in the Gaza Strip. The Gaza Strip remained severed into three segments, where new pass restrictions have especially affected isolated communities, including Siafa, al-Ma'ani and the al-Mawasi areas (Khan Yunis and Rafah).²¹

18. In 2004, the Erez checkpoint in north Gaza was fully closed to Palestinians for 179 days; Erez industrial zone for 190 days, Karni checkpoint (the main commercial crossing between Gaza and Israel) for 47 full days and 188 partial days, Netzarim junction for 41 days and the Sofa crossing south of Gaza for 56 full days. During the same period, the Rafah Terminal (the only border crossing between the Gaza Strip and Egypt) was closed for 66 full days and partially closed for 182 days (from

16 April to 21 October 2004 it was completely closed to males aged between 16 and 35). Gaza International Airport remained closed for the entire period. Within the Gaza Strip, the Gush Qatif checkpoint, on the main north-south road, was fully closed for 27 days and partially closed on all remaining days.⁴

19. The monthly average number of Gazan workers who entered Israel and Erez industrial zone was 2,960, representing a 69 per cent decline from the 2003 monthly average of 9,670 workers.²²

20. In 2004, exports from the Gaza Strip through Karni crossing decreased by 30 per cent from the previous year. Exported truckloads fell from 934 trucks per month in 2003 to 655 in 2004. Imported truckloads rose by 5 per cent from 3,429 per month in 2003 to 3,589 in 2004. In March, Israel imposed new restrictions on the volume of goods passing through Karni crossing by reducing the height of goods placed on the conveyor belt at the security check from 1.7 metres to 70 centimetres. That has significantly slowed the passage of goods through the crossing.²²

21. In the West Bank, over 700 physical obstacles, including checkpoints, military observation towers, concrete blocks, road gates and earth mounds, obstruct internal movement. At the beginning of 2004, the Israeli army announced that it would ease the West Bank closure regime. Subsequently, about 50 roadblocks were removed, making vehicular movement between districts easier in the northern and southern West Bank, but erratically constructed “flying checkpoints”, were still used.²²

22. Curfews continue to be imposed on West Bank cities. Between 18 June 2002 and 6 March 2005, Hebron came under 5,828 hours (243 days) of curfew, while Nablus and Jenin came under 4,808 hours (200 days) and 3,766 hours (157 days) of curfew, respectively.²³

Israeli settlements

23. Israeli settlements in the occupied Palestinian territory, deemed illegal by the international community, continue to exacerbate the conflict, with detrimental repercussions on the living conditions of the Palestinian people.

24. The number of Israeli settlers in the West Bank and Gaza Strip increased by 6 per cent, growing from 236,381 in 2003 to 250,179 in 2004.²⁴ Israeli settlers in occupied East Jerusalem total about 180,000. In the Gaza Strip, 17 Israeli settlements house 8,693 settlers, representing an 11 per cent increase from 2003.²⁴

25. In 2004, Israel established two new settlements in the occupied East Jerusalem area: Kidmat Zion (400 units) and Nof Zahav (550 units). Thereafter, in June 2004, the Israeli Government revealed plans for Givat Yael, west of Bayt Jala (West Bank), entailing the confiscation of 411 hectares of Palestinian land. That new settlement is planned to accommodate 55,000 settlers in 13,500 housing units.²⁵ The World Zionist Organization is also supporting new settlement construction in the Jordan Valley.²⁶

26. The Israeli Ministry of Housing and Construction revived the 4,000-unit “E-1” expansion plan in 2004, which links Ma’ale Adumim with other Jerusalem-area settlements, bisecting the West Bank. Intensive road construction is already under way in that area. Israel’s Finance Ministry has allocated \$4.4 million for the project.²⁷ In late August, the Israeli Lands Authority approved another 767 units for Jerusalem-area settlements.²⁸ In January 2005, Israeli authorities approved 3,500

housing units in the area between Ma'aleh Adumim and Jerusalem. The construction of those units aims to reinforce Israel's hold on settlement blocs, "filling in" the closed areas between the Green Line and the barrier.²⁹

27. The four West Bank settlements included in Israel's "disengagement plan" also grew in 2004. The residents of Sa-Nur nearly tripled.³⁰ The larger West Bank settlements also increased in population: Modi'in Ilit by 14 per cent, totalling 27,301; Ma'aleh Adumim by 6 per cent, adding 1,800 newcomers to total 28,546.

28. Two settlements are expanding around Alfei Manashe: Nof Sharon, implanting 50 settler houses on Palestinian lands near Habla village; and Givat Tal, with 400 new units. Extensive construction since mid-2004 is nearly doubling the size of Alfei Manashe itself.²⁵

29. The Ari'el settlement already has expanded westward with 2,000 new housing units. In May 2004, Israel's Attorney General granted the Housing and Construction Ministry permission to resume funding for settlement construction. In August, the same ministry published tenders for building 1,001 new units in the West Bank, plus 600 housing units that were approved for Ma'ale Adumim.²⁸ The Israeli Lands Administration marketed 1,783 new housing units in the West Bank in 2004, announcing plans for 2005 to support the construction of over 6,391 new settler homes and retroactively approved 120 settler outposts.³¹ The latter decision was modified on 13 March 2005 when the Israeli cabinet decided to set up a committee to dismantle 24 of the outposts following the findings of the Sasson report.³²

30. In the Gaza Strip, land-seizure orders increased throughout 2004, where at least 350 settlement development projects awaited approval. On 26 July 2004, the Gaza Regional Council won approval for 26 residential buildings in Gush Katif and new schoolrooms for Kfar Darom, Netzarim and Neve Dekalim.³³

31. In August 2004, the Israeli Government announced exceptional financial incentives to Israeli settlers in the West Bank.³⁴ It also announced new incentives for Gaza Strip settlers redeploying to the West Bank, as well as a \$30,000 bonus for settlers moving to the Negev or the Galilee.³⁵ Settlements in the Gaza Strip should be evacuated over a period of 12 weeks beginning mid-August 2005 as part of the \$680 million disengagement procedure.³⁶

Barrier

32. General Assembly resolution ES-10/15 of 20 July 2004 acknowledged the advisory opinion of the International Court of Justice that the construction of the barrier in the occupied Palestinian territory, including in and around East Jerusalem, is contrary to international law. Nevertheless, Israel continues to construct the barrier in the West Bank. The barrier is approximately 209 kilometres long, with some 105 kilometres actively under construction,³⁷ and forms a complex of fences, ditches, razor wire, groomed trace sands, electronic monitoring system and patrol roads. A total of 22 kilometres consist of an average width of 60 metres, with 8- to 9-metre-high concrete slabs, forming a wall (mostly in urban areas such as in occupied Jerusalem, Bethlehem, Qalqiliya, and Tulkarm).³⁸

33. Based on the map of the planned route of the barrier that the Government of Israel published on 20 February 2005, the barrier includes sections around the Ma'ale Adumim and Ari'el/Emmanuel settlements that constitute 108 kilometres, or 16 per cent of the whole barrier route. If the aforementioned sections are to be

included, the barrier's ultimate length will be 670 kilometres, which equals about twice that of the Green Line. Accordingly, 57,726 hectares, or 10.1 per cent of the West Bank land, including East Jerusalem, will lie between the barrier and the Green Line.³⁷

34. The damage caused by the destruction of land and property for the barrier construction is long lasting and undermines Palestinians' ability to recover should a political situation allow it. In that regard, and as requested by the General Assembly in resolution ES-10/15, the Secretary-General intends to establish a register of barrier-related damages, which is expected to begin later in 2005. Some 1,323 hectares of land have recently been cleared or damaged owing to the construction of the barrier.² It is estimated that once the construction of the barrier is complete, access to 8,500 hectares of olive trees (approximately one million trees) will be either impossible or severely restricted.²¹ Among other consequences resulting from the construction of the barrier are the following:

- Confiscation of land, particularly for those living east of the barrier, where agricultural land comprises the major source of income for its inhabitants
- Seizure, destruction and isolation of water sources
- Loss of and defaults on investments, which will have longer-term financial consequences
- Environmental degradation affecting flora, fauna and geology of Palestinian habitat
- Negative impact on social relations and family ties due to movement restrictions³⁹
- Sharp decline in commercial activity (including loss of access to the Arab-Israeli market), employment and economic viability, especially along the barrier route itself
- Emergence of additional categories of "new poor", especially among farmers and farm labourers
- Greater dependency upon labour and commercial markets in Israel for those living in the "closed" areas.

35. Excluding the population of occupied East Jerusalem, the barrier is expected directly to affect 49,400 Palestinians living in 38 villages and towns. More than 500,000 Palestinians live within a 1-kilometre strip of the barrier, including occupied East Jerusalem. The planned Ma'ale Adumim section will cut 14 km east across the West Bank, or 45 per cent of its width. That would restrict movement for Palestinians between the northern and southern parts of the West Bank, as well as for those residing in and around occupied East Jerusalem.⁴⁰

36. The area between the barrier and the Green Line, excluding occupied East Jerusalem, will include 56 Israeli settlements with approximately 170,123 Israeli settlers, which is an estimated 76 per cent of the West Bank settler population.³⁷

37. In February 2005, 63 gates in the constructed barrier were observed, of which only 25 were accessible to Palestinians with the correct permits.³⁷ However, the permit system severely limits passage for Palestinians and has proven inadequate to ensure normal daily life.⁴¹

38. Palestinians residing in “closed areas” between the Green Line and the barrier face an uncertain future in terms of both their personal and lands’ status. Approximately 5,000 Palestinian residents in Jenin, Qalqilya and Tulkarm districts are required to apply for permits to remain living in their homes.²¹

39. The barrier will further restrict farmers living outside “closed areas” between the Green Line and the barrier from getting to their land located in those areas. Medical staff, business people and international humanitarian organizations also have to apply for special permits. If the military orders that restrict entry into “closed areas” are to be applied to new parts of the barrier, then many thousands of Palestinians are likely to face difficulty continuing to live in their homes or access their land.²¹

40. By most estimates, approximately 220,000 persons in 60 communities are being affected in the completed first phase of the barrier in the Qalqilya, Tulkarm and western Jenin areas, of whom as many as 40 per cent are refugees. Outside of Tulkarm and Qalqilya towns, these communities have not figured prominently on UNRWA’s agenda to date because the area was relatively well-off before September 2000. Land-owning refugees were the least in need of assistance, and with few facilities in the area, they were not strongly relying on UNRWA health and education services. However, it is possible that a “new poor” category will emerge, particularly among landless labourers. Outside of the “Jerusalem Envelope”, approximately 120 such communities will be affected in the Salfit, Ramallah, Jerusalem, Bethlehem and Hebron areas. UNRWA has projected that the disadvantaged socio-economic conditions of refugees, as compared to the non-refugee population, will make them particularly vulnerable to further declines in their living standards.⁴

41. Problems of access to educational and health services are part of the detrimental impact of the barrier on refugee livelihoods. This is particularly relevant to UNRWA operations in the Jerusalem surroundings, given the high number of UNRWA installations (schools and health centres) in the area. The UNRWA Jerusalem Health Centre epitomizes difficulties in refugees’ access to Agency services. Whereas about 10,000 visits per month were completed between August and October 2003, mostly of patients coming from outside town, visits have dropped considerably by more than half in July 2004. In January 2005, this number continued to drop, falling to 4,112 visits, with a marked decrease in visits from patients with non-communicable diseases and registering infants for vaccinations. Furthermore, over 6,600 refugees in three UNRWA-conventioned Jerusalem hospitals had received secondary health care in 2003. Most such patients will no longer be able to access the city when the barrier is completed.⁴

Natural resources, water and environment

42. Mekorot, the Israeli public corporation that supplies about 80 per cent of Israel’s water,⁴² has consolidated control over most surface and underground water in the occupied Palestinian territory since 1967.⁴³ Palestinians under Israeli occupation are increasingly growing dependent on water purchased from Mekorot, especially in areas affected by the barrier and other land confiscations, as in the case of the town of Nabi Elyas, where Israeli authorities refuse to connect a well to the local network.⁴⁴

43. Palestinian water networks in the occupied Palestinian territory sustained significant damage due to the Israeli army's military activities. In the Gaza Strip, Bayt Hanun sustained damage to water infrastructure worth \$250,000,⁴⁵ while 120 private rooftop water tanks and 17 private water wells used for drinking water and irrigation were also destroyed.⁴⁶ In Rafah, the Israeli army destroyed 17 out of 30 kilometres of water pipes, and 15 out of 20 kilometres of sewage pipes, valued at \$713,900.⁴⁷ The consequent mixing of water and sewerage has spawned waterborne diseases. Some 70 per cent of common illnesses in the area stem from water pollution,⁴⁸ and traces of polio have been detected in the Gaza Strip water supply.⁴⁹

44. The Israeli army has buried rubble in sites risking pollution, especially in sand dune areas, which are natural infiltration for the Gaza aquifer.⁵⁰

45. Poor and deteriorated waste disposal infrastructure also threatens environmental health. Hebron's raw sewage flows cause both immediate health problems and potential long-term contamination of the western aquifer.⁵¹ In Salfit, liquid, gas, and solid wastes left by the 17 settlements in the district are causing pollution to the environment, agriculture and water. Industrial waste is often discharged into Palestinian land without treatment. Untreated wastewater may contain many pollutants, especially heavy metals, which increase the risk of intoxication and epidemics such as hepatitis A or infectious diarrhoea.⁵²

Public health

46. The destruction of water and sanitation infrastructure has resulted in decreased average per capita availability of water, as well as in contaminated drinking water causing increased gastrointestinal infections, especially among children.⁵³

47. Power and water cuts during prolonged curfews, which curtail access to clean water, have increased the number of diarrhoea cases. Overcrowding in schools during incursions in Rafah led to an outbreak of chickenpox among young children.⁵³ A severe outbreak of mumps afflicted Nablus-area camps and villages from autumn 2003 until August 2004, affecting 2,190 children, 73 per cent of whom had previously been vaccinated.⁴

48. UNRWA is also seeing an epidemiological shift characterized by increased incidences of non-communicable diseases, such as diabetes mellitus, cardiovascular diseases and cancers, which place an additional burden on UNRWA's scarce human and financial resources.⁴ Moreover, 45.3 per cent of households have had difficulty accessing health services for financial reasons, 40.1 per cent owing to Israeli closures, 38.3 per cent because of military checkpoints, and 8.9 per cent because of the barrier.⁵⁴ In barrier-affected areas, 73.7 per cent of Palestinians living in "closed areas" reported difficulty accessing health facilities and services.⁵⁵ Over the last four years, access to physical therapy services for the 322,000 residents in the Gaza Strip's middle area has become nearly impossible.⁵⁶

49. There has been a decrease in immunization coverage in some pocket areas of the occupied Palestinian territory, while less than two thirds of children vaccinated against measles have acquired immunity.⁵³ Israeli restrictions on Palestinian Ministry of Health vehicles and staff have limited outreach services, i.e., immunization in remote areas is now being provided only on an exceptional basis with United Nations logistical and material support.⁵⁷

50. One per thousand birth deliveries of women in the occupied Palestinian territory took place at Israeli checkpoints and 4.1 per cent of deliveries were at home. Since September 2000, nearly 70 births at Israeli military checkpoints have resulted in the death of mother and/or child. Even when the maternal and infant outcomes are positive, the resulting humiliation and trauma inflicted on women in distress during labour have potentially longer-term psychological consequences.⁴

51. Increasing psychological distress among the population is reflected in the growing number of patients seeking care for mental health problems.⁵³

52. The nutritional status of the population has deteriorated. About 15 per cent of children suffer goitre or present signs of iodine deficiency, thus exposing a large number of children to mental retardation.⁵⁷ Seventy per cent of children have vitamin A deficiencies or are “borderline” cases.⁵⁷ Stunting (low height for age) reached 9.0 per cent and wasting (low weight for height) 2.5 per cent among Palestinian children due to poor nutrition.⁵⁸

53. Food insecurity also has affected women’s and children’s health adversely. Preliminary results of a study conducted by UNRWA revealed that over 60 per cent of children below 2 years of age, 36 per cent of pregnant women, and over 43 per cent of nursing mothers in the Gaza Strip are anaemic.⁴

Food

54. Overall food consumption of Palestinian households has fallen by 25 to 30 per cent since September 2000.² Approximately 1.3 million people in the occupied Palestinian territory, or 38 per cent of the population, are food insecure, while a further 26 per cent of the population is at risk of becoming food insecure.⁵⁹ A quarter of Palestinians living in the Gaza Strip are unable to feed themselves adequately, even with food aid.⁵⁵ Sixteen per cent of the Palestinian population is affected by subsistence poverty; with monthly consumption of less than \$48, they cannot afford to consume the minimum caloric intake as established by FAO and WHO.⁶⁰

55. The coping strategies adopted by the most vulnerable and affected groups of the population, including the chronic poor and the “new poor”, have been exhausted and become unsustainable. Palestinian households have resorted to purchasing food through credit with shopkeepers and neighbours, forgoing payment of utilities, and selling assets. Others cope through receiving assistance from relatives. In some instances, Palestinians have used extreme coping mechanisms such as withdrawing children from schools.⁵⁹

Youth and education

56. Children are the most affected by the conflict, showing critical signs of distress. Thirty-six per cent of parents reported aggressive behaviour among their children, 31 per cent noticed low achievement in school, 25 per cent reported that their children are bedwetting, and 28 per cent reported regular nightmares. All four signs of distress are most prevalent in refugee camps and among poorer households in the Gaza Strip.⁵⁷

57. Family life and health is being threatened in far-reaching ways. There is growing evidence that chronic anxiety, low self-esteem and feeling a loss of control have overcome the population in the occupied Palestinian territory, negatively

affecting family relationships and life: 30.8 per cent of children are reported to have been exposed to some type of violence, 68 per cent had experienced physical and/or verbal violence in the home environment and 30 per cent coming from teachers. Given the implications for later adult behaviour by people who were abused as children, these findings could bode ill for future family and social stability.⁶¹

58. According to a study of Palestinian public perceptions of their living conditions, 54 per cent of economic hardship-case households, compared to 23 per cent above the poverty line, were reported to be experiencing chronic low school achievement among their children.⁶¹

59. Owing to ongoing closures and curfews, more than 226,000 children in 580 schools find attending school impossible, irregular or very risky. In the West Bank and Gaza 272 UNRWA schools were closed for a collective total of 391 school days in the 2003/04 academic year. Teachers lost over 56,000 teaching days. The disruptions in schooling in the West Bank in three consecutive academic years have led to a further deterioration in students' achievement. In UNRWA schools, exam pass rates declined dramatically between 2000/01 and 2003/04. The mathematics pass rate for sixth grade dropped from 68.7 per cent to 33.6 per cent, while the science pass rate for fourth grade dropped from 71.5 per cent to 38 per cent. Movement restrictions also affect quality of learning, since education authorities are pressured to recruit teachers who live close to schools rather than those who are best qualified for the teaching posts.⁶²

60. During the past three years, Palestinian universities have lost an estimated \$4.85 million worth of infrastructure, teaching and learning facilities, equipment and library books. The overall university dropout rate has increased by 7 per cent in 2004 because families were unable to afford university fees.²

Economic indicators

61. Geographic fragmentation, including the isolation of occupied East Jerusalem, has separated economic actors from each other, and deteriorated the economic status of Palestinians and the general economy of the occupied Palestinian territory. Land scarcity (where 40 per cent of the population living in the Gaza Strip live on 6 per cent of the land), a high population growth rate of at least 3.4 per cent and a young population (of which 45.8 per cent are under 15 years old) pose further challenges to social and economic development efforts.⁶³

62. Israeli movement restrictions continue to play a major role in the ongoing socio-economic deterioration in the occupied Palestinian territory. World Bank estimates for the overall economic performance show that in 2004, Palestinian gross domestic product (GDP) was lower by 20 per cent compared to 1999 while GDP per capita was lower by 37 per cent. In dollar terms, GDP estimates dropped from \$4.1 billion in 1999 to \$3.3 billion in 2004, while GDP per capita fell from \$1,493 to \$934 over the same period.⁶⁴ According to the World Bank, this contraction in the economy has continued despite unprecedented per capita levels of international aid disbursed to the occupied Palestinian territory in the past four years.⁶⁵

63. The labour market is still in crisis. Despite a period of employment growth in 2003, the number of unemployed remained three times higher in the third quarter of 2004 than in September 2000. According to the data of the Palestinian Central Bureau of Statistics, the number of Palestinians employed in Israel and Israeli

settlements has declined by 97,000 since late 2000.⁶⁶ Taking into account discouraged workers who have given up looking for work,⁶⁷ the adjusted unemployment rate in the third quarter of 2004 stood at 32.6 per cent, which is a 3 per cent rise compared to the third quarter of the previous year.⁶⁸ About one in three employed persons works for the Palestinian Authority, UNRWA or non-governmental organizations.⁶⁹

64. Rural communities have adapted to making a living by engaging in agriculture and trade activities close to home.⁷⁰ However, this is limited to short-term coping and cannot recuperate economic conditions prior to September 2000. Agriculture is largely for subsistence, and trade activity will not be sustained if local customers lose their outside incomes or if access to urban centres fails to improve. The shift from waged labour to informal, unpaid family labour and self-employment provides poor-quality work and does not contribute to stabilization or expansion of employment.²²

65. The fragmentation of economic life has taken its toll on the Palestinian population. Every working individual supports 6.4 non-employed persons. Furthermore, poor households amounted to 58.1 per cent in the occupied Palestinian territory. There are more than 2.2 million poor Palestinians; approximately 1.27 million in the West Bank and 945,000 in the Gaza Strip.²

66. After plummeting in the first two years of the *intifada* as a result of depleted private savings and political instability,⁷¹ private investment grew by 5 per cent in 2003 owing to economic stabilization observed towards the end of 2002.⁷² This moderate recovery was again stalled in 2004.⁷³

67. Reliance on Israel has not stopped despite strict movement restrictions and the completion of the barrier in the northern West Bank. On the contrary, the West Bank rural economy continues to depend on Israel for access to export and labour markets albeit at a reduced level.⁷⁴ In January 2004, the ratio of imports to exports through Karni crossing was 3:1. By June 2004 it rose to 12:1, significantly increasing in the transfer of income from the Gaza Strip to Israel.²¹

68. The Palestinian loss of agricultural outputs due to land confiscations and access impediments reached \$320 million.⁷⁵ With 45 per cent of Palestinian agricultural land (89,826 hectares) cultivated with olive trees, Israeli closures and Israeli settler harassment of olive harvesting and transport cost untold millions in harvest and product sales.⁷⁶

69. Of the estimated 1.3 million people living in the Gaza Strip, an estimated 40,000 live from fishing. The Israeli authorities have hampered the Gaza fishing industry by closing 40 per cent of Gaza's coastline to its fishermen, and restricting fishing to six nautical miles of the coast, despite the 20-mile limit set out in the Oslo Accords.²¹ As a result, most of the fishermen have seen their incomes drop by 70 per cent. Over-fishing also has resulted from coping strategies, as Palestinians resorted to exploiting the sea after losing jobs in Israel.⁷⁷

70. The Israeli planned route for the barrier effectively removes Rachel's Tomb and the surrounding neighbourhood from Bethlehem into Jerusalem's expanded boundaries. This has spelled the demise of once thriving Palestinian commercial and tourism areas. In addition, intense closure, barrier construction and consequent depression in tourism and the general economy, has prompted 9.3 per cent of Bethlehem's Christian community to emigrate in the last four years.⁷⁸

Status of women

71. Female-headed households display an incidence of poverty 1.3 times higher than households headed by men. Community and family disapproval of women's work in the absence of male breadwinners is a major obstacle to women seeking wage employment.⁷⁹

72. In spite of high-level educational attainment, women remained marginalized in the labour market. The generally positive correlation between female education and labour force participation was not applicable to the occupied Palestinian territory. Those factors, coupled with the large numbers of male Palestinian prisoners, the high number of persons killed in conflict and the destruction of homes, placed increased pressure on the care economy, and specifically on women, the primary providers of care.⁸⁰

Access to humanitarian assistance

73. UNRWA incurred approximately \$31 million in losses and additional costs between October 2000 and September 2004 in the occupied Palestinian territory as a result of Israeli measures, including restrictions on the movement of people and goods, which were imposed on the grounds of security.

74. UNRWA incurred over \$500,000 in extra costs owing to the relocation of international staff to Jerusalem and Amman from August to December 2004. In the Gaza Strip, UNRWA was forced to suspend food distribution twice in 2004 owing to heightened security measures, affecting approximately two thirds of the refugee population.⁴

75. Damage to UNRWA facilities in the occupied Palestinian territory caused by the Israeli army in 2004 amounted to approximately \$141,000. Facilities that have been damaged include schools, clinics, and food distribution centres.⁴

76. The number of Jerusalem entry permits issued by the Israeli authorities to UNRWA staff members has decreased. At the end of 2004, 262 of 478 employees, or 55 per cent of employees, held valid entry permits compared to 83 per cent at the end of 2003. Moreover, 93 staff members continue to be denied permits for "security" reasons. The short validity of permits, which are valid only for either one or three months, combined with delays in reissuing valid permits, resulted in serious disruptions to Agency operations.⁴ The total cost of lost working hours in the Gaza Strip in 2004 was \$1.83 million.⁴

77. The Israeli authorities banned the movement of humanitarian goods from Israel into Gaza through Erez crossing. Karni crossing was then designated the sole crossing point for humanitarian goods coming into the Gaza Strip. The Israeli-imposed "back-to-back" haulage system on vehicles transporting goods impedes the delivery of humanitarian assistance. Costs have increased considerably following a suicide attack at Ashdod port in mid-March 2004. Additional costs to UNRWA due to port operations and Karni crossing fees, for the period between October 2000 and the end of December 2004 alone, are almost \$8 million.⁴

III. Occupied Syrian Golan

78. There are currently about 20,000 Israeli settlers in 44 settlements in the occupied Syrian Golan. Following a decision by the Israeli authorities, this population is expected to increase by 15,000 over the next three years. Israeli authorities already have authorized nine new settlements and the expansion of existing ones, requiring the expropriation of 35 hectares of land and the uprooting of 1,800 apple and cherry trees in Mas'adah village, which has been declared a military zone.⁸¹

79. The Israeli Mekorot company pumps 400-500 million cubic metres of water annually from the occupied Golan, supplying Israeli water networks to the south and serving local settlers with seven times more water than that allocated to Syrian citizens.⁸² Discrimination against the Arab population continues in the form of taxes at higher rates than Israeli settlers on water use, television licences, housing, income and property, health insurance, local council and national insurance taxes and value-added taxes. Israel also taxes the harvests of Syrian farmers.⁸³

80. The Israeli authorities have continued to lay anti-personnel landmines on 100 hectares of land along the Golan border strip, banning farmers from cultivating their lands, and uprooting trees.⁸⁴

81. The occupied Syrian villages do not have hospitals and suffer from a chronic shortage of health centres and clinics, particularly affecting women and children.⁸⁵ Syrian Arabs have to pay for all health services, including primary health care, which was free of charge prior to the occupation.⁸⁵

82. Israeli authorities continued to impose the Hebrew-language requirements on Syrian pupils and teach exclusively Jewish history and Hebrew literature.⁸⁶

83. Israel is the only market accessible to Syrian Arab farmers, and the closure of the West Bank and Gaza Strip has eliminated 30 per cent of the consumer market for their produce.⁸⁷ Apple production declined from 25,000 tons in 2002, to 15,000 tons in 2003, with a reduction of cultivated land from 5,000 to 2,000 hectares. Land appropriation and institutional discrimination, including prohibiting Syrian Arabs from digging wells or collecting snow for irrigation, are forcing Syrian farmers to abandon their livelihoods.⁸³

84. Syrian workers in the occupied Syrian Golan continue to suffer from unemployment and job insecurity. Those in temporary work are under constant threat of dismissal. Governmental and public institutions hire Israeli settlers exclusively and reject employment of Syrian citizens on the pretext of Hebrew language criteria or for security reasons.⁸⁸

85. Students visiting their families in the occupied Syrian Golan during holidays endured weekly police interrogations.⁸⁵ Israeli authorities have raided Syrian Arab homes at night and arrested young people on charges of resisting the occupation by writing slogans, organizing demonstrations, commemorating national events or distributing publications. In 2004, Israel arrested 19 Syrian Arabs, holding them under poor conditions in distant Israeli prisons.⁸⁹ Five were sentenced to 27 years of imprisonment, and one to 15 years.⁹⁰

86. At least 11 Syrian Arabs remain in Israeli prisons for resisting the occupation.⁹¹ Their visitors cannot have direct contact with them, and when visiting

their relatives in prison, Syrian Arab women undergo invasive personal searches and/or are made to stand for long hours before being allowed in the prison.⁸⁵

87. Israel has reportedly buried nuclear waste in insecure containers close to the Syrian border in the Golan, leading to fears of depleted uranium leakage and future ecological catastrophe. To date, Israel has refused to comply with relevant international conventions or allow the International Atomic Energy Agency to monitor its nuclear reactors or waste-storage sites.⁹²

IV. Conclusion

88. Investment in the occupied Palestinian territory is projected to remain flat according to the World Bank's recently developed "status quo scenario", which assumes no significant change in closures, the completion of the barrier, continuing decline in the number of workers in Israel and a reduction of donor assistance. Thus, unemployment would increase to 37 per cent by 2008 as the domestic economy cannot replace jobs lost in Israel and the growing labour force. Real GDP and GDI (gross domestic income) per capita would decline by a further 17 per cent and 20 per cent, respectively, by 2008, with poverty afflicting 62 per cent of the population.⁹³ The World Bank has estimated that even a further increase of international assistance to the occupied Palestinian territory would do little to arrest the current process of overall economic decline.⁹⁴

89. The deterioration in the economic situation, poverty, a worsening health and nutritional status of women and children, difficult access to health services and educational facilities will render the attainment of the Millennium Development Goals by 2015 extremely difficult.

90. The sustainable option for creating better conditions to address the current economic and social deprivation, as well as to ensure a life of dignity and rights for the Palestinian and Syrian civilians under occupation, lies in ending the occupation of the Palestinian territory, as well as the Syrian Golan. This highlights the urgent need to accelerate the peace process to achieve a comprehensive, just and lasting solution to the Middle East problem.

Notes

¹ United Nations, *Treaty Series*, vol. 75, No. 973.

² OCHA, *Humanitarian Information Fact Sheet*, January 2005.

³ *Razing Rafah: Mass Home Demolitions in the Gaza Strip* (New York, Human Rights Watch, October 2004), p. 76.

⁴ UNRWA contribution to report, 3 March 2005.

⁵ *Idem*, December 2004; citing DCI-PS November, 2004, B'Tselem sources.

⁶ SG/SM/9857, 5 May 2005; SG/SM/9569, 1 November 2004 and SG/SM/9571, 1 November 2004.

⁷ Palestinian National Information Center, [http://www.reliefweb.int/rw/RWB.NSF/db900SID/VBOL-6A4KEC?Open Document&rc=3&emid=ACOS-635PFR](http://www.reliefweb.int/rw/RWB.NSF/db900SID/VBOL-6A4KEC?Open+Document&rc=3&emid=ACOS-635PFR).

⁸ http://www.btselem.org/english/Administrative_Detention/Statistics.asp.

- ⁹ http://www.btselem.org/english/statistics/Minors_in_IDF_Detention.asp.
- ¹⁰ UNICEF contribution to report, December 2004.
- ¹¹ Report of the Palestinian Ministry of Prison Affairs, as reported in “300 Palestinian Children in Israeli Prisons”, Wafa (7 November 2004), http://english.wafa.ps/body.asp?field=tech_news&id=1839.
- ¹² Instead of receiving the proper medical treatment, these children are prescribed paracetamol for every disease. Report of the Palestinian Ministry of Prison Affairs, as reported in “300 Palestinian Children in Israeli Prisons”, Wafa (7 November 2004), http://english.wafa.ps/body.asp?field=tech_news&id=1839.
- ¹³ *Through No Fault of Their Own: Punitive House Demolitions during the al-Aqsa Intifada* (Jerusalem, B’Tselem, November 2004), p. 15.
- ¹⁴ OCHA, *Humanitarian Update — December 2004*, p. 4, according to the Jerusalem Center for Social and Economic Rights.
- ¹⁵ Palestinian National Information Center, http://www.pnic.gov.ps/arabic/quds/arabic/viol/quds_viol_01-2005.html.
- ¹⁶ “Report of the Special Committee to Investigate Israeli Practices Affecting the Human Rights of the Palestinian People and Other Arabs of the Occupied Territories”, note by the Secretary-General, A/59/381, 23 September 2004, p. 18.
- ¹⁷ OCHA contribution to report, 3 March 2005.
- ¹⁸ Including claims that such destruction clears the path of improvised explosive devices; however, the army has used rear-mounted “rippers” that afforded no frontal protection for the bulldozers or their drivers. Tearing up paved roads also creates loose debris that could facilitate the concealment of explosives and booby-traps. *Razing Rafah: Mass Home Demolitions in the Gaza Strip*, p. 11, 93 (Rafah Municipality Assessment, 9 June 2004).
- ¹⁹ UNCTAD, “UNCTAD Report on Palestinian Economy Calls for Intensified Donor Commitment to Development”, 29 September 2004, at <http://www.unctad.org/palestine> and <http://domino.un.org/UNISPAL.NSF/9a798adbf322aff38525617b006d88d7/16a51bf9fefed2d285256f1f004cf535!OpenDocument>.
- ²⁰ OCHA, “Preliminary Humanitarian Situation Report: Operation ‘Forward Shield’” (August 2004).
- ²¹ OCHA contribution to report, 21 December 2004.
- ²² UNSCO contribution to report, 23 December 2004.
- ²³ Palestinian Red Crescent Society, http://www.palestinercs.org/Presentation%20PowerPoint%20Curfew%20Tracking%20July%202002_files/frame.htm.
- ²⁴ Statistics published by the Israeli Interior Ministry’s Population Registry on 9 January 2005, cited in *Ha’aretz*, 10 January 2005, at <http://www.haaretzdaily.com/hasen/spages/524998.html>; also in Geoffrey Aronson, “Settlers Losing the Battle for Gaza Settlements”, *Report on Israeli Settlements in the Occupied Territories*, vol. 15, No. 1, at <http://www.fmep.org/reports/2005/Jan-Feb/v15n1.html>.
- ²⁵ Negotiations Support Unit, Negotiations Affairs Department, “Update on Recent Israeli Settlement Activity June 15-August 24 2004”, 24 August 2004, p. 2.
- ²⁶ Americans for Peace Now, *Yediot Ahronot*, 28 July 2004, cited in *Middle East Peace Report*, vol. 6, Issue 3, 2 August 2004.
- ²⁷ Negotiations Support Unit, Negotiations Affairs Department, “Update on Recent Israeli Settlement Activity June 15-August 24 2004”, 24 August 2004, pp. 1-2. It should be noted that the E-1 plan aims at linking the West Bank settlements with those of occupied East Jerusalem as well as with Israel.

- ²⁸ Negotiations Support Unit, Negotiations Affairs Department, “Update on Recent Israeli Settlement Activity June 15-August 24 2004”, 24 August 2004, p. 1.
- ²⁹ *Ha’aretz*, 22 March 2005. Following the Israeli Government’s approval, this plan was referred to the West Bank’s Supreme Planning Council in February. Final approval from the Council is needed for the implementation of the plan.
- ³⁰ *Ha’aretz*, 10 January 2005.
- ³¹ “Israel plans 6,000 West Bank settlement homes-report”, Reuters, 25 February 2005, at <http://www.alertnet.org/thenews/newsdesk/L25597642.htm>; “APN Attacks Plan for 6,000+ New Settlement Houses, Authorization for 120 Illegal Outposts”, Americans for Peace Now, at <http://www.peacenow.org/updates.asp?rid=0&cid=337> (accessed on 1 March 2005).
- ³² *Ha’aretz*, 14 March 2005. This Israeli-commissioned report by attorney Talia Sasson concludes that all settler outposts are illegal and that the Israeli Government supported and budgeted these outposts, which — according to the Sasson report — amount to 105.
- ³³ “ARIJ Christmas Message”, at <http://www.arij.org/Christmas%202004/index.htm>.
- ³⁴ Negotiations Support Unit, Negotiations Affairs Department, “Update on Recent Israeli Settlement Activity June 15-August 24 2004”, 24 August 2004, p. 3.
- ³⁵ Conal Urquhart, “Gaza Strip settlers may go to West Bank”, *The Guardian* (17 November 2004), <http://www.guardian.co.uk/international/story/0,1352889,00.html>.
- ³⁶ Geoffrey Aronson, “Settlers Losing the Battle for Gaza Settlements”, op. cit.
- ³⁷ OCHA, *Preliminary Analysis of the Humanitarian Implications of February 2005 Barrier Projections*, 8 March 2005.
- ³⁸ Humanitarian Emergency Policy Group, OCHA, UNRWA, *The Humanitarian Impact of the West Bank Barrier on Palestinian Communities Update No. 4* (Jerusalem, OCHA, 1 September 2004), p. 3, and OCHA contribution to report, 21 December 2004.
- ³⁹ A 2004 survey indicated that 64.2 per cent of families object to a family member marrying a spouse living on the other side of the barrier, “‘State’ inside the ‘Wall’” (Bethlehem, Ma’an Development Centre, 2004), p. 2.
- ⁴⁰ OCHA, *Preliminary Analysis of the Humanitarian Implications of February 2005 Barrier Projections*, 8 March 2005. There are approximately 230,000 Palestinians with East Jerusalem residency permits.
- ⁴¹ Humanitarian Emergency Policy Group, OCHA, UNRWA, *The Humanitarian Impact of the West Bank Barrier on Palestinian Communities Update No. 4* (Jerusalem, OCHA, 1 September 2004), p. 28, and OCHA contribution to report, 21 December 2004.
- ⁴² Humanitarian Emergency Policy Group, OCHA, UNRWA, *The Humanitarian Impact of the West Bank Barrier on Palestinian Communities Update No. 4* (Jerusalem, OCHA, 1 September 2004), at note 16, p. 35.
- ⁴³ Report of Special Rapporteur Giorgio Giacomelli on the human rights situation in the occupied Palestinian Arab territories since 1967, E/CN.4/2000/25 [Arabic], 15 March 2000, p. 11, paras. 24-25. In the Bethlehem area, some additional agricultural land is now included in the barrier-created enclaves, but separates farmers from much of their surrounding agricultural land and water sources for agriculture, which serve as back-up during the dry season and when the Israeli-owned Mekorot pipelines are not functioning. Humanitarian Emergency Policy Group, OCHA, UNRWA, *The Humanitarian Impact of the West Bank Barrier on Palestinian Communities Update No. 4* (Jerusalem, OCHA, 1 September 2004), p. 23.
- ⁴⁴ UNRWA, *UNRWA Case Study: Reports on the West Bank Barrier*, 31 July 2004 at <http://domino.un.org/unispal.nsf/0/9c463d6eff83545885256ee700513b91?OpenDocument>.

- ⁴⁵ International Management Group (IMG) estimates, in OCHA, “Preliminary Humanitarian Situation Report: Operation ‘Forward Shield’”, at <http://domino.un.org/unispal.nsf/0/5e4e866e111a903085256f01004f6bae?OpenDocument>.
- ⁴⁶ Palestinian Hydrology Group, in coordination with Palestinian Water Authority, “Water and Sanitation, Hygiene (WaSH) Monitoring Project: Impact of the Current Crisis in the West Bank and Gaza Strip” Survey Report #12, August 2004, p. 2, available at <http://www.phg.org/campaign>.
- ⁴⁷ *Rafah Municipality, Damage Assessment*, 9 June 2004, in *Razing Rafah: Mass Home Demolitions in the Gaza Strip* (New York: Human Rights Watch, October 2004), p. 76.
- ⁴⁸ *Razing Rafah: Mass Home Demolitions in the Gaza Strip* (New York: Human Rights Watch, October 2004), p. 92. UNRWA and OCHA, *Rafah Humanitarian Needs Assessment*, 6 June 2004.
- ⁴⁹ *Razing Rafah*, op. cit., p. 92. Human Rights Watch interview with Joachim Paul, UNICEF, Gaza City, 12 July 2004.
- ⁵⁰ “Technical Paper IV — Settlements”, in *Stagnation or Revival? Israeli Disengagement and Palestinian Economic Prospects* (Jerusalem, World Bank, 1 December 2004), p. 1, available at <http://www.worldbank.org/ps> and <http://web.worldbank.org/WBSITE/EXTERNAL/COUNTRIES/MENAEXT/WESTBANKGAZAEXTN/0,contentMDK:20209926~pagePK:141137~piPK:217854~theSitePK:294365,00.html>, note 22, p. 6.
- ⁵¹ “USAID constructs wastewater plant”, United States Agency for International Development (USAID) press release, 14 January 2005, p. 1, at <http://www.notes.reliefweb.int/w/rwb.nsf/0/77f1a2148ac3497f49256f8a0017bfab?OpenDocument>.
- ⁵² Médecins du Monde, *The Ultimate Barrier*, February 2005, p. 19.
- ⁵³ WHO contribution to report, 24 December 2004.
- ⁵⁴ Caritas Jerusalem, “Main Findings of the Survey on the Impact of Israeli Measures on the Economic Conditions of the Palestinian Households”, press release, 1 October 2004; “The Humanitarian Impact of the West Bank Barrier on Palestinian Communities”, at Holy Land Christian Ecumenical Foundation, <http://www.hcef.org/hcef/index.cfm/mod/news/ID/16/SubMod/NewsView/NewsID/1175.cfm>, p. 2.
- ⁵⁵ UNFPA contribution to report, January 2005.
- ⁵⁶ Robyn Long, “OPT: Caring for Gaza’s Disabled”, American Near East Refugee Aid (ANERA), 11 January 2005, at <http://www.notes.reliefweb.int/w/rwb.nsf/0/01d024a0c141360549256f87001c109d?OpenDocument>.
- ⁵⁷ UNICEF contribution to report, December 2004.
- ⁵⁸ UNICEF, “Early Years”, at <http://www.unicef.org/oPt/children.html>.
- ⁵⁹ WFP contribution to report, 21 December 2004.
- ⁶⁰ World Bank, 2004, *Poverty in West Bank and Gaza after three years of economic crisis*.
- ⁶¹ UNICEF contribution to report, December 2004; citing “Study on Palestinian Public Perceptions on Their Living Conditions”, Institut Universitaire des Études du Développement, Geneva, Report 7 (July 2004).
- ⁶² UNRWA contribution report, 3 March 2005; also, UNICEF contribution to report, December 2004.
- ⁶³ UNFPA contribution to report, January 2005. UNICEF cites a 3.9 per cent growth rate in “At a Glance: occupied Palestinian territory”, at www.unicef.org/infobycountry/opt_statistdtics.html.
- ⁶⁴ Office of the United Nations Special Coordinator in the Occupied Territories UNSCO contribution to report, 23 December 2004, citing: World Bank, *Disengagement, the Palestinian economy and the settlements*, 23 June 2004 (table 1, p. 30).

- ⁶⁵ Ibid., citing: World Bank, *Stagnation or Revival?*, p. 42.
- ⁶⁶ UNSCO contribution to report, 23 December 2004, citing: World Bank, *Four Years — Intifada, Closures and Palestinian Economic Crisis: An Assessment*. October 2004, p. 14.
- ⁶⁷ UNSCO contribution to report, 23 December 2004. This definition includes discouraged workers who are not actively looking for work.
- ⁶⁸ Ibid. The standard unemployment rate, standing at 26.8 per cent, also increased by 3 percentage points compared with the same period the previous year. This standard definition includes unemployed persons 15 years and over who did not work at all during the reference week and who were available for work and actively seeking a job during the reference week. Persons who work in Israel and were absent from work owing to closure are considered unemployed as are those people who are waiting to return back to their work in Israel and settlements.
- ⁶⁹ Ibid. According to PCBS labour force data, this represents an increase in the proportion of people employed in the public sector compared with 2003 (29 per cent) and with pre-*intifada* (23 per cent).
- ⁷⁰ UNSCO contribution to report, 23 December 2004. According to a recent study, in 18 of the 30 sample communities, agriculture which was not the main activity in any of the communities before September 2000, became the main economic activity in 2004. About 56 per cent of the household in these communities engaged in agriculture for subsistence only. *Economic Adaptation and Fragmentation in the Rural West Bank (unpublished)*.
- ⁷¹ UNSCO contribution to report, 23 December 2004. In 2000, private investments dropped by more than 30 per cent and another 40 per cent in 2001 (see World Bank, *Four years — Intifada, Closure and Palestinian Economic Crisis, An Assessment*, October 2004, p. 24).
- ⁷² This “fragile recovery” in 2003 was insufficient to bring the capital base to its pre-*intifada* levels (ibid., p. 24).
- ⁷³ UNSCO contribution to report, 23 December 2004, citing: World Bank, *Stagnation or Revival?*, p. 6.
- ⁷⁴ UNSCO field research found that the only rural enterprises that continue to employ relatively large numbers of workers are those that still have access to formal Israel markets. These include cucumber farms, textile workshops and stonecutting factories (UNSCO, *Economic Adaptation and Fragmentation*).
- ⁷⁵ World Bank, *Stagnation or Revival? Israeli Disengagement and Palestinian Economic Prospects* (December 2004), cited in UNSCO contribution, 23 December 2005, p. 2.
- ⁷⁶ In 2003, 10,000 metric tons of Palestinian olive oil, valued at \$35 million went unsold. OCHA contribution to the report.
- ⁷⁷ OCHA, “OCHA Humanitarian Update Occupied Palestinian Territories Oct 2004”, 30 October 2004, p. 3, at <http://www.reliefweb.int/rw/RWB.NSF/db900SID/MHII-6V3TX?OpenDocument>.
- ⁷⁸ OCHA contribution to report, 21 December 2004; and UNSCO/OCHA, *Costs of Conflict: The Changing Face of Bethlehem* (Jerusalem, United Nations, December 2004), p. 11.
- ⁷⁹ Report of the Secretary-General on the situation of and assistance to Palestinian women (E/CN.6/2005/4) of 10 December 2004, para. 13.
- ⁸⁰ Ibid., para. 14.
- ⁸¹ “Report of the Special Committee to Investigate Israeli Practices Affecting the Human Rights of the Palestinian People and Other Arabs of the Occupied Territories”, note by the Secretary-General (A/59/381) of 23 September 2004, para. 91.
- ⁸² Ibid., para. 92.
- ⁸³ Ibid., para. 97.
- ⁸⁴ Ibid., para. 94.

⁸⁵ Ibid., para. 99.

⁸⁶ Ibid., para. 96.

⁸⁷ Shahada Nasr Allah (in Arabic) “Report on the 2004 Apple Season in the Golan” (Majdal Shams: Agricultural Services Center, Golan Development, 2005), at Golan for Development Organization website, <http://www.jawlan.org/reports/applereport2004.htm>.

⁸⁸ Ibid., para. 98.

⁸⁹ “Prison Administration Continues Its Arbitrary Measures” (in Arabic), 2 March 2005, at Golan for Development Organization website, <http://www.jawlan.org/news/news.asp?sn=644>.

⁹⁰ See A/59/381, para. 93.

⁹¹ Golan for Development Organization website, <http://www.jawlan.org/prisoners/prisoners.htm>.

⁹² Ibid, para. 95. See also General Assembly resolution 59/106 of 16 December 2004, “The risk of nuclear proliferation in the Middle East”, and United Nations, *Treaty Series*, vol. 729, No. 10485.

⁹³ UNSCO contribution to report, 23 December 2004, citing: World Bank, *Stagnation or Revival?*, p. 7.

⁹⁴ *Idem*, pp. 31-36.

**General Assembly
Economic and Social Council**Distr.: General
3 May 2006

Original: English

**General Assembly
Sixty-first session**

Item 39 of the preliminary list*

Permanent sovereignty of the Palestinian people in the Occupied Palestinian Territory, including East Jerusalem, and of the Arab population in the occupied Syrian Golan over their natural resources**Economic and Social Council
Substantive session of 2006**

Item 11 of the provisional agenda**

Economic and social repercussions of the Israeli occupation on the living conditions of the Palestinian people in the occupied Palestinian territory, including Jerusalem, and the Arab population in the occupied Syrian Golan**Economic and social repercussions of the Israeli occupation on the living conditions of the Palestinian people in the occupied Palestinian territory, including Jerusalem, and of the Arab population in the occupied Syrian Golan****Note by the Secretary-General**

In its resolution 2005/51 of 27 July 2005, the Economic and Social Council requested the Secretary-General to submit to the General Assembly at its sixtieth session, through the Council, a report on the implementation of that resolution. The Assembly, in its resolution 60/183 of 22 December 2005, also requested the Secretary-General to submit a report to it at its sixty-first session. The annexed report, which has been prepared by the Economic and Social Commission for Western Asia, is submitted in response to the two resolutions.

* A/61/50.

** E/2006/100.

Annex

Report prepared by the Economic and Social Commission for Western Asia on the economic and social repercussions of the Israeli occupation on the living conditions of the Palestinian people in the occupied Palestinian territory, including Jerusalem, and of the Arab population in the occupied Syrian Golan*

Summary

The occupation of Palestinian territory by Israel continues to deepen the economic and social hardship of Palestinians. Citing the right to self-defence, the Israeli army continues to mount military operations in the occupied Palestinian territory, frequently employing arbitrary detention, the disproportionate use of force, home demolition, severe mobility restrictions and closure policies.

The Israeli closure system remains a primary cause of poverty and humanitarian crisis in the occupied Palestinian territory, and restricts Palestinian access to health and education services, employment, markets and social and religious networks. Israeli restrictions also impede humanitarian services to the occupied territory. The United Nations Relief and Works Agency for Palestine Refugees in the Near East alone incurred over \$10 million in losses in 2005.

While the Palestinian gross domestic product grew in 2005 by some 6 per cent, economic indicators continue to show negative trends. Unemployment and poverty rates remained high, estimated at 23 per cent and 62 per cent respectively.

Israel's confiscation of Palestinian land and water resources for settlements and the construction of the West Bank barrier accelerated during 2005. Israeli settlements, land confiscation and the construction of a barrier in the occupied Palestinian territory, contrary to the Geneva Convention and other norms of international law, isolate occupied East Jerusalem, bisect the West Bank and curtail normal economic and social life.

Refugees, women and children bear a significant brunt of these measures. Malnutrition and other health problems afflict a growing number of Palestinians at a time of curtailed access to needed services. There are 350,000 children under the age of five who suffer from chronic malnutrition.

* The Economic and Social Commission for Western Asia would like to acknowledge with appreciation the substantive contributions of the United Nations Children's Fund, the United Nations Conference on Trade and Development, the United Nations Population Fund, the Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations, the World Food Programme, the United Nations Relief and Works Agency for Palestine Refugees in the Near East, the Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Human Rights, the United Nations Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs, the World Health Organization, the International Labour Organization and the Office of the United Nations Special Coordinator for the Middle East Peace Process.

I. Introduction

1. In its resolution 2005/51 of 27 July 2005, the Economic and Social Council stressed the importance of reviving the Middle East peace process on the basis of Security Council resolutions, including resolutions 242 (1967), 338 (1973), 425 (1978), 1397 (2002), 1515 (2003) and 1544 (2004), and the principle of land for peace, as well as compliance with the agreements reached between the Government of Israel and the Palestinian Liberation Organization, the representative of the Palestinian people. In the same resolution, the Economic and Social Council reaffirmed the applicability of the Geneva Convention relative to the Protection of Civilian Persons in Time of War, of 12 August 1949,¹ to the occupied Palestinian territory, including Jerusalem, and other Arab territories occupied by Israel since 1967; stressed the need to preserve the national unity and the territorial integrity of the occupied Palestinian territory, including East Jerusalem, and to guarantee the freedom of movement of persons and goods in the Territory, including the removal of restrictions going to and from East Jerusalem, and the freedom of movement to and from the outside world; also stressed that the wall being constructed by Israel in the occupied Palestinian territory, including in and around East Jerusalem, is contrary to international law and is seriously debilitating to the economic and social development of the Palestinian people, and called in this regard for full compliance with legal obligations mentioned in the 9 July 2004 advisory opinion of the International Court of Justice (see A/ES-10/273 and Corr.1) and in General Assembly resolution ES-10/15. The resolution reaffirmed the inalienable right of the Palestinian people and the Arab population of the occupied Syrian Golan to all their natural and economic resources, and called upon Israel, the occupying Power, not to exploit, endanger or cause loss or depletion of these resources; it also reaffirmed that Israeli settlements in the occupied Palestinian territory, including East Jerusalem, and the occupied Syrian Golan, are illegal and an obstacle to economic and social development; and requested the Secretary-General to submit to the General Assembly, through the Council, a report on the implementation of the resolution.

2. In its resolution 60/183 of 22 December 2005, the General Assembly reaffirmed the inalienable rights of the Palestinian people and the population of the occupied Syrian Golan over their natural resources, including land and water, and called upon Israel, the occupying Power, not to exploit, damage, cause loss or depletion of or endanger the natural resources in the occupied Palestinian territory, including Jerusalem, and the occupied Syrian Golan; affirming the right of the Palestinian people to claim restitution as a result of any exploitation, damage, loss or depletion, or endangerment of their natural resources resulting from illegal measures taken by Israel, the occupying Power, in the occupying Palestinian territory, including East Jerusalem. The Assembly stressed that the wall being constructed by Israel, the occupying Power, in the occupied Palestinian territory, including in and around East Jerusalem, is contrary to international law and deprives the Palestinian people of their natural resources, and called in this regard for full compliance with the legal obligations stipulated in the 9 July 2004 advisory opinion of the International Court of Justice and General Assembly resolution ES-10/15. The Assembly called on Israel, the occupying Power, to cease the dumping of all kinds of waste materials in the occupied Palestinian territory, including East

¹ United Nations, *Treaty Series*, vol. 75, No. 973.

Jerusalem, and in the occupied Syrian Golan, which gravely threaten their natural resources, namely the water and land resources, and pose an environmental hazard and health threat to the civilian populations. The Assembly requested the Secretary-General to submit a report to it at its sixty-first session on the implementation of the resolution.

II. Occupied Palestinian territory, including Jerusalem

Death and injuries

3. In 2005, 180 Palestinian fatalities and 1,554 injuries were recorded in the West Bank. In the Gaza Strip, 99 Palestinian fatalities and 266 injuries were recorded. Four of those killed, and nine of the wounded, were pupils of the United Nations Relief and Works Agency for Palestine Refugees in the Near East (UNRWA). One of the deaths occurred while the pupil was inside the classroom.² Since January 2006, some 50 Palestinian children were injured and 11 died owing to the conflict.³ Civilian casualties are mainly caused by the disproportionate use of force by the Israeli army.

4. Israeli forces continued to conduct extrajudicial killings of Palestinians suspected of involvement in armed attacks against Israelis. According to the Palestinian Human Rights Group, between 1 January 2005 and 1 January 2006 such attacks resulted in the killing of 34 suspected militants and 13 bystanders. The Palestinian Human Rights Group further reports that during the same period, Israeli settlers killed nine Palestinians, without recourse for victims or judicial consequence for perpetrators. Israelis recorded eight fatalities caused by Palestinian militants.⁴

5. The Secretary-General has repeatedly called on all parties to the conflict to abide by their obligations under international law, in particular to ensure the protection of the civilian population, both Palestinian and Israeli (see SG/SM/10358).

Arbitrary arrests and detentions

6. Over 9,000 Palestinian political prisoners currently remain in Israeli prisons, including approximately 129 Palestinian women prisoners. In its annual summary, the Palestinian Human Rights Group reports that, without any charge or judicial process, 741 Palestinians, including 11 women, are in administrative detention. Of those, 74 are being held pending trial and 44 have been sentenced. Of the women prisoners, 12 are under the age of 18.⁵ According to the Israeli-based Women's Organization for Political Prisoners, most women political prisoners are held in Hasharon (Tel Mond) Prison, but some remain in Neve Tirza Prison and other

² UNRWA contribution to the report (9 February 2006); Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs, "Humanitarian update — emerging humanitarian risks" (January 2006) (www.ochaopt.org).

³ UNICEF Humanitarian Action, Occupied Palestinian Territory donor update, 8 March 2005.

⁴ The Palestinian Human Rights Monitoring Group, "Annual summary" (www.phrmg.org/pressrelease/2005/January,%202006.htm); PHRMG is a Palestinian NGO.

⁵ Report of the Palestinian Ministry of Prisoner Affairs, "Palestinian women prisoners in Israeli prisons" (2005) (see www.btselem.org/english/Administrative_Detention/Statistics.asp).

detention centres. Daily life of women prisoners and the general conditions in the prisons are very harsh.⁶ Israeli detention centres hold some 344 children.³

7. On 14 March 2006, Israeli forces attacked a Palestine Authority-controlled prison compound in Jericho and took into custody, among many others, Ahmed Sa'dat, leader of the Popular Front for the Liberation of Palestine, who had been accused of involvement in 2001 murder of an Israeli minister.

Population displacement

8. Registered refugees form 29 per cent of the West Bank's Palestinian population and 70 per cent of the total Gaza Strip population.⁷

9. At least 60,000 Palestinian residents of occupied East Jerusalem with Israeli identity cards, including 3,600 school-age children, will be closed outside the "Jerusalem envelope," as the barrier prevents them from reaching the municipal centre.⁸ This phenomenon also affects 11,000 persons already separated from their livelihood in the "closed zone" (west of the barrier) (see A/60/271, para. 20). The most impoverished are those who have been historically displaced and are again made destitute. The typically landless, labouring refugees, especially those losing their agricultural jobs, now form the bulk of new "deep poverty" cases.

10. In April 2005, Israeli forces expelled 300 Palestinian families (1,500 persons) and confiscated 10,000 dunums of land east of Tubas.⁹ South-east of Bethlehem they expelled six families, requisitioned 20 water wells and destroyed 20 shelters for about 22,000 sheep and 500 camels. Subsequently, Israeli forces ordered hundreds of Bedouins in Sawahra al-Sharkiyya, in the central valley, to surrender 25,000 dunums of land.¹⁰

Property destruction and confiscation

11. No United Nations entity systematically monitors house demolitions, land confiscations or the destruction of agricultural land in the West Bank. However, through the course of its work in 2005, UNRWA recorded a total of 224 Palestinian structures¹¹ demolished by the Israeli army in the West Bank, 39 of which belonged to Palestine refugees. Other sources place the number at 251 structures destroyed through September 2005.¹² Reasons for the demolition orders, as given by the Israeli army, were lack of construction permit, being close to the constructed sections of the barrier, or being the house of a Palestinian detainee.

⁶ Women's Organization for Political Prisoners, Newsletter January 2006, "Female political prisoners in Israeli prisons" (see www.kibush.co.il/show_file.asp?num=11943).

⁷ Refugee population according to UNRWA statistics as of 31 March 2005 (www.un.org/unrwa/publications/pdf/rr_countryandarea.pdf); West Bank general population according to *The World Factbook*, as of 2005 estimates (www.cia.gov/cia/publications/factbook/geos/we.html#People).

⁸ UNRWA contributions; *Ha'aretz* (7 November 2005) (www.haaretz.com).

⁹ One dunum equals 1/10 hectare.

¹⁰ Jamal Juma, "The eastern wall: closing the circle of our ghettoization", *Znet* (24 December 2005) (www.zmag.org/content/showarticle.cfm?SectionID=107&ItemID=9398).

¹¹ Residential houses, agricultural houses, tents, commercial shacks and livestock barracks are included under the denomination of structure.

¹² Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs, Consolidated Appeals Process (December 2005) (www.ochaopt.org).

12. According to UNRWA, among particularly affected locations were Bardala village in the Nablus area, where Israeli security forces demolished 10 agricultural structures reportedly belonging to 210 Palestinians, among them 35 registered refugee families. Additionally, a number of demolition orders were delivered to refugees families of Arab Hathalin in the Hebron area.

13. Also significant was a confiscation order for five hectares issued in February 2005 in Shu'fat Camp, reportedly for expansion of the checkpoint at the camp entrance and the deployment of a gate in the barrier. Confiscation orders continued being delivered throughout 2005, according to the projected route of the barrier, affecting refugee households living outside of camps.

14. On 10 October 2005, Israeli contractors removed large quantities of topsoil from 'Ayn al-Baydha' lands, transporting it to nearby settlements. Other actions in 2005 included Israeli soldiers confiscating and selling local Palestinians' sheep herds.¹³

15. Israeli authorities destroyed at least 114 Palestinian homes in occupied Jerusalem through 2005.¹⁴ In July 2005, the Jerusalem municipality announced its intentions to demolish 88 homes in the Palestinian Silwan neighbourhood of occupied East Jerusalem, amid 1,000 demolitions currently planned.¹⁵

16. The construction of military observation towers, new road barriers and the West Bank barrier have resulted in the requisition of 7,884 dunums (788 hectares) of land in the West Bank between August 2005 and January 2006.¹⁶

17. In the Gaza Strip, no refugee shelters were destroyed or damaged by the Israeli army in 2005. This is a major change from 2004, which saw major destruction in Rafah and Jabalia owing to Israeli incursions. According to UNRWA statistics, since the start of the crisis in September 2000, over 2,990 shelters, home to 28,500 people from the Gaza Strip, have been destroyed or damaged beyond repair.

18. The Gaza Strip also saw a reduction in land-levelling operations. In total, 180 hectares of agricultural land were bulldozed in the Gaza Strip. Bulldozing operations ceased in April 2005. The destruction of orchards has contributed significantly to food insecurity in the Gaza Strip. For example, over 50 per cent of Beit Hanoun orchards have been destroyed in the past four years.

19. Israeli forces have razed 28,882 dunums of agricultural land, uprooting trees and destroying crops belonging to Palestinians and impoverishing 60,101 Palestinians.¹⁷ Of that land, Israeli forces razed 8,000 dunums more than once and razed approximately 26 cultivated dunums in 2005. Since 2000, Israeli forces have destroyed 244 wells in the Gaza Strip, including two drinking-water sources, and one in 2005. In October 2005, Israeli forces reoccupied and transformed a swath of agricultural land 2,100-2,700 m wide and 6,350 m long along the northern Gaza

¹³ Applied Research Institute-Jerusalem (ARIJ), "The ongoing Israeli violations in the Jordan Valley" (14 January 2006) (www.poica.org/editor/case_studies/view.php?recordID=745).

¹⁴ Land Research Center, "Forced eviction of Palestinian citizens and demolition of their houses in occupied Jerusalem is growing Israeli policy" (29 November 2005).

¹⁵ *BBC News* (1 June 2005) (http://news.bbc.co.uk/2/hi/middle_east/4597401.stm).

¹⁶ Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs, "West Bank closure count and analysis" (January 2006) (www.ochaopt.org).

¹⁷ A dunum equals 1,000 m².

Strip border into an Israeli military launching and shelling position, extending from the sea eastward to the former industrial zone.¹⁸

20. Physical capital loss in the occupied Palestinian territory is estimated at \$3.5 billion, as a result of destruction of private and public infrastructure and capital stock and overuse of surviving physical capital. This estimated loss is equivalent to 30 per cent of pre-2000 Palestinian capital stock. In addition, the cumulative economic opportunity cost of potential income lost over the period 2000-2004 is estimated at \$6.4 billion (1997 dollars), or a value equal to 140 per cent of the Palestinian gross domestic product (GDP) before 2000. Thus, the Palestinian economy operated with a much smaller capital base in 2005 than that of 1999.¹⁹

Mobility restrictions and closure policies, including access to humanitarian assistance

21. The Israeli closure system is a primary cause of poverty and humanitarian crisis in the occupied Palestinian territory, and restricts Palestinian access to health and education services, employment, markets and social and religious networks.¹⁶

22. The West Bank closure system comprises a series of blockages placed by the Israeli army to control and restrict Palestinian movement within the West Bank and between the West Bank and Israel. The Government of Israel has stated that the closure regime and restrictions of movement are part of Israeli security policies designed to prevent attacks on Israeli citizens.

23. The north-south barrier and the simultaneous east-west bisection of the West Bank at its heart has effectively surrounded towns such as Qalqiliya, Bethlehem and occupied Jerusalem. Israel's closures and land confiscations in the Jordan Valley increasingly isolate Jericho.²⁰ Completing the encirclement of all major Palestinian population centres, Israel has established putative borderlines that enclose most of the Palestinian population.²¹

24. Despite some easing of closure, Palestinian movement in the West Bank remains problematic. Access by some villagers to nearby urban centres improved temporarily when the number of closure obstacles decreased to 376 between February and August 2005; however, by March 2006 there were 471 obstacles. Movement between the southern, middle and northern parts of the West Bank remained problematic. Important obstacles to movement remained in place in areas considered by the Israeli authorities to be subject to security threats, including

¹⁸ Habitat International Coalition, Housing and Land Rights Network, and Al Mezan Center for Human Rights, "Israel's violations of Palestinian civilians' rights to housing and land in the occupied Palestinian territory".

¹⁹ UNCTAD, "Report on UNCTAD's assistance to the Palestinian people" (TD/B/52/2) (21 July 2005).

²⁰ Aluf Been, "Israel begins construction of police station in E-1 area", *Ha'aretz* (14 March 2006) (www.haaretz.com).

²¹ Chris McGreal, "Israel unveils plan to encircle Palestinian state", *The Guardian* (8 February 2006) (www.guardian.co.uk/israel/story/0,,1705021.00.html).

settlements, junctions between Palestinian roads and Israeli bypass roads and certain major urban centres such as Nablus and Hebron.²²

25. Israeli forces have surrounded Jericho governorate with seven permanent checkpoints, foreclosing regular Palestinian access and, on 11 February 2006, sealing the entire governorate for the first time.²³

26. For Palestinian workers and traders, access to and from the Gaza Strip eased in the first part of 2005, progressively allowing a low daily average of 66 crossings in January to a peak daily average of 3,950 crossings in June. Workers' access to Israel was virtually shut down just prior to and following disengagement, with only 1,304 Gazans able to exit the Strip daily by November 2005.²⁴ By the end of November, however, that figure had climbed to approximately 4,000. According to a recent study by the World Health Organization (WHO), the Israeli authorities granted special exit permits for humanitarian (medical) passage to Israel and Egypt to 84 per cent of applicants in the three months following disengagement.²⁵

27. Access by health and humanitarian workers to different areas in the West Bank continued to be impeded in the form of denials, delays and obstructions. There were 720 access incidents reported by humanitarian agencies and 278 reported by ambulance providers in the first 10 months of 2005.²⁴ UNRWA incurred over \$42 million in losses and additional costs between October 2000 and October 2005 as a result of movement restrictions imposed by the Israeli authorities on grounds of security. Over \$10 million in losses were incurred through 2005 alone. The bulk of those losses were in lost labour and port charges. The total cost incurred to UNRWA in lost working hours in 2005 was \$154,830, compared to \$1.83 million in 2004.

28. In the light of the July 2004 International Court of Justice advisory opinion, the United Nations is not to seek permits for access to areas within the West Bank that are located to west of the barrier. United Nations agencies have agreed not to seek such permits and the Office of the United Nations Special Coordinator for the Middle East Peace Process (UNSCO), in cooperation with the United Nations and the Task Force on Project Implementation, has initiated a working level dialogue with the Israeli Government to attempt to resolve this issue.

29. Convoy arrangements between the West Bank and Gaza Strip were agreed in principle under the Quartet-facilitated Access and Movement Agreement of November 2005. Implementation of the agreement, which was to commence on 15 December 2005, has been delayed as a result of security threats cited by Israel.²⁵

²² Some checkpoints and crossings through the barrier have been upgraded, suggesting a more permanent presence. Israel is also constructing underpasses and bridges that link Palestinian areas separated from each other by Israeli settlements and bypass roads. OCHA has noted that 28 underpasses and bridges have been constructed and 16 are planned; see Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs, "Humanitarian update — closure count and analysis" (August 2005) (www.ochaopt.org).

²³ ARIJ, "Under the slogan of security, the Israeli Occupation Forces imprisons Jericho residents" (14 February 2006) (www.poica.org/editor/case_studies/view.php?recordID=769).

²⁴ Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs, "Humanitarian update — the Jordan Valley" (October 2005) (www.ochaopt.org).

²⁵ Office of the United Nations Special Coordinator for the Middle East Peace Process (UNSCO) contribution to the report (29 December 2005) (UNSCO contribution).

30. Restriction on movement to and from the Gaza Strip for humanitarian goods and personnel generally improved in comparison to 2004, but remained closely linked to security incidents or alerts at the main crossing points of Karni (goods) and Erez (personnel). Improved dialogue between the Israeli authorities and the donor Task Force on Project Implementation led to the clearance of a large backlog of United Nations humanitarian containers early in the year, and to swifter passage of humanitarian personnel at the Erez crossing. A clear, predictable humanitarian access regime, as set out in the minimum standards for access document of the Task Force, did not materialize.²⁵

31. During 2005, the Erez checkpoint north of the Gaza Strip was fully closed to Palestinians for 156 days;²⁶ Israeli authorities closed the Erez industrial zone for 256 days and the Sofa crossing south of the Gaza Strip for 27 full days. During the same period, they closed the Rafah terminal (the only border crossing between the Gaza Strip and Egypt) for 118 full days and 11 partial days. The Gaza airport remained closed for the entire period. The Karni checkpoint (the main commercial crossing between the Gaza Strip and Israel) was closed for 55 full days and 305 partial days in 2005.²

32. UNRWA has reported that within the Gaza Strip, the Gush Qatif checkpoint on the main north-south road was fully closed for 4 days and partially closed on 96 days. During the same period, Netzarim junction was closed for 254 days. All internal closures were lifted on 12 September 2005, following the completion of the Israeli withdrawal, allowing free Palestinian movement across the Gaza Strip. These positive events are unlikely to arrest the deepening crisis in the Gaza Strip unless they are soon followed by further measures to secure commercial export outlets and to ensure a land link to the West Bank.²⁵ The Rafah terminal was handed over to the Palestinian Authority on 12 September 2005. It remained closed from 18 September to 26 November 2005, until an agreement on border-crossing procedures was reached between the parties. By the end of December, the terminal was functioning for up to eight hours per day.²

33. In addition, throughout 2005 the Israeli authorities banned the movement of humanitarian goods from Israel into the Gaza Strip through the Erez crossing, the main transportation hub. The Karni crossing was then designated the sole crossing point for humanitarian goods coming into the Gaza Strip. The Israeli-imposed "back-to-back" haulage system on vehicles transporting goods violates the Convention on the Privileges and Immunities of the United Nations by impeding the delivery of humanitarian assistance. Import/export levels at Karni remained at approximately 2004 levels, although during the period of July to August 2005 the Israeli authorities permitted increased movement of containers in order to pre-position supplies in preparation for the Israeli withdrawal from the Gaza Strip. Agreement was reached in November 2005 between Israel and the Palestinian Authority to extend the opening hours at the crossing and to regularize passage of traffic.² However, between 1 January and 19 March 2006, the Karni crossing was closed for 46 days. On 19 March 2006, the Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs issued a warning that most bakeries in the Gaza Strip were closed on that day because wheat flour stocks were exhausted. UNRWA was unable to start its emergency food distribution on 19 March because of insufficient wheat

²⁶ Approximately 1,000 Palestinian labourers crossed into Israel each day. Prior to September 2000, the figure was approximately 30,000.

flour supplies. The World Food Programme reported that 3,594 metric tons (mt) of wheat flour contracted to local mills were unable to enter the Gaza Strip during the brief period Karni was opened.²⁷

34. Ongoing construction of the barrier, the completion of new passage points and the introduction of new identity technologies have made Palestinian access to occupied East Jerusalem from the West Bank increasingly complicated.

Barrier

35. Israel continues construction of the barrier as per the new route approved by the Israeli cabinet in February 2005, contrary to General Assembly resolution ES-10/15 of July 2004, which acknowledged the advisory opinion of the International Court of Justice that the construction of the barrier in the occupied Palestinian territory, including in and around occupied East Jerusalem, is contrary to international law. According to the revised route, an additional 40-kilometre segment is expected to surround the Ma'ale Adumim settlement, the settlements near it (Kfar Adumim, Antut, Nofei Prat and Kedar) and the separate Ari'el/Emmanuel "fingers". These two sections comprise 16 per cent of the barrier's total 670-kilometre (km) length. Further changes involved the Gush Etzion sections of the barrier and an extension to the barrier route along the southern Hebron hills.²

36. As of October 2005, approximately 243 km (36.3 per cent) of the barrier have been completed, while 166 km (24.8 per cent) are under construction.²⁸ The barrier route places approximately 10 per cent of West Bank territory on its west side.²⁹ Approximately 75 per cent of settlers will be located on the west side of the barrier,³⁰ where, contrastingly, their movement and access is de facto unrestricted. Some 70,000 settlers currently remain east of the barrier.³¹

37. According to UNRWA, 10.1 per cent of some of the most fertile Palestinian land, home to approximately 50,000 Palestinians living in 38 communities, is expected to be isolated between the barrier and the Green Line, severely limiting the Palestinian potential for urban and agricultural development. The barrier and its population control/transfer regime, integrated with Israeli confiscation, settlement and separation policies, stand as the most visually obvious factors affecting Palestinian life. The cumulative impact of the barrier on Palestinian livelihoods makes subsistence untenable, owing to the constant bulldozing and confiscation of large Palestinian land areas and the incremental eviction orders, as well as demolition of Palestinian property in both rural and urban areas. Seemingly arbitrary passage restrictions hinder those eligible to apply for permits from reaching lands west of the barrier (see A/60/271, para. 17), effectively rendering idle, impoverishing and dispossessing Palestinian landowners. Typically, only titled

²⁷ Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs, "Gaza Strip situation report — the humanitarian impact of the Karni crossing closure: bread running out in Gaza" (19 March 2006) (www.ochaopt.org).

²⁸ Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs, "Humanitarian impact of the West Bank Barrier", Update No. 6, January 2006 (www.ochaopt.org).

²⁹ This includes East Jerusalem, the Ariel finger and Ma'ale Adumim settlement expansion plan.

³⁰ Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs, "Preliminary analysis — the humanitarian implications of the February 2005 projected West Bank barrier route", Update No. 4, April 2005 (www.ochaopt.org).

³¹ Peace Now, "The West Bank — facts and figures" (August 2005) (www.peacenow.org.il/site/en/peace.asp?pi+195&docid=1430).

owners are allowed access to their lands, forsaking all other needed farm hands. Permitting only singular — especially elderly — landowners to tend their fields alone immobilizes social capital and drives titleholders to physical exhaustion and despair.³²

38. A further deterioration in the living standards of UNRWA-registered Palestine refugees is also expected by the increasing eligibility and passage restrictions, hindering the ability of those applying for permits to reach land located west of the completed barrier in the northern West Bank areas. Furthermore, once constructed, the Ma'ale Adumim bloc of the barrier is expected to severely impede movement between the northern and southern areas of the West Bank, adding to the complex system of terminal-like checkpoints and the pedestrian and/or vehicle gates planned to regulate persons and goods access into and from the city. The completion of the planned barrier around Jerusalem will have a significant impact upon the ability of UNRWA to provide assistance to the refugee community in the West Bank. Notably, 60 per cent of the Agency's West Bank field office staff and staff from occupied East Jerusalem are expected to face access problems travelling to their duty stations in occupied East Jerusalem. Similar restrictions involve the Agency's programmes providing social, relief, education and health services.

39. Through September 2005, Israeli land-levelling and confiscation continued, with more than 4,100 hectares taken for construction of the barrier.³³ No official party has undertaken to quantify the consequent costs and losses consistent with the General Assembly's call in 2004 for a register of damages arising from the barrier (see A/ES-10/L.18/Rev.1).

Israeli settlements

40. Israel transferred some 7,200 former Israeli settlers from the Gaza Strip to Israeli settlements in the West Bank and occupied Jerusalem. The Israeli Government has also provided special incentives to increase Israeli presence inside Israel, where sizeable communities of Palestinian citizens remain.³⁴

41. After the dismantling of four northern West Bank settlements (Ganim, Kadim, Homesh and Sanur), Israel maintains 121 settlements in the West Bank, plus 14 Israeli settlements in occupied Jerusalem.³⁴ As of 31 August 2005, there are an estimated 100 unofficial settlements or "outposts" in the West Bank.³⁵

42. Between January and June 2005, 1,097 new settlement-housing starts showed a 28 per cent increase over the 860 in early 2004.³⁶ Correspondingly, ongoing construction of settlements at the end of June 2004 totalled 3,984 housing units, which grew at 6 per cent at the end of June 2005, with 4,207 units under

³² *Do-it-yourself Apartheid* (<http://stopthewall.org/activistresources/983.shtml>).

³³ UNSCO contribution; Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs, Consolidated Appeals Process (December 2005).

³⁴ Dror Etkes and Lara Friedman, "Taking inventory of the West Bank", *Settlements in Focus*, vol. 1, issue 9 (9 September 2005) (www.peacenow.org/briefs.asp?rid=&cid=1393).

³⁵ *Ibid.*, "The West Bank — facts and figures" (August 2005) (www.peacenow.org.il/site/en/peace.asp?pi=195&docid=1430).

³⁶ Israeli Central Bureau of Statistics; Dror Etkes and Lara Friedman, "Current trends in settlement construction and growth", Peace Now (December 2005) (www.peacenow.org/briefs.asp?rid=&cid=1393).

construction.³⁷ At the end of 2005 there were 3,696 new West Bank settlement housing units being built, in addition to 1,654 in occupied Jerusalem. Large-scale housing construction (hundreds of units) is under way in seven settlements within the barrier. Medium-scale housing construction (tens of units) is proceeding in another 17 settlements, all but three of which fall inside the barrier route.³⁷

43. The Israeli Government initiated around 57 per cent of settlement construction projects during 2005, funding around 40 per cent of the total investment. Israeli Government construction investment was greater in the occupied territory than inside Israel, where the government initiated around 27 per cent of construction projects and funded 16 per cent of total investment.³⁸ While Israel built twice as many new settler homes in the occupied Palestinian territory in the first quarter of 2005 as in the first quarter of 2004, housing starts inside Israel fell 6 per cent from the first quarter of 2004 (see A/60/271, para. 23).

44. Conservative calculations estimate Israel's annual non-military spending for the settlements in recent years at NIS 2.5 billion.³⁹

45. Since 2001, Israel's annual settler population growth rate in the West Bank has exceeded 5 per cent, compared to the general Israeli rate of growth, which is estimated at 1.8 per cent.³⁴ The rates of the 12 settlements west of the barrier route (Israeli side) with the highest growth rates range from 5.3 per cent (Immanuel, in Ariel bloc) to 16.1 per cent (Mevo Horon, near the Green Line). East of the barrier route, the annual population growth rates of 15 expanding settlements range from 7.7 per cent, in Ma'ale Michmash, north of occupied Jerusalem, to 35 per cent in Gittit, in the Jordan Valley, with the highest current population transfer rate.³⁴ The number of West Bank Israeli settlers exceeded 243,000 at the end of 2005, with 190,000 additional settlers in occupied Jerusalem (see E/CN.4/2006/29).⁴⁰

46. Most Israeli settlers in the West Bank are now situated between the Green Line and the barrier (Jordan Valley settlements notwithstanding). Settlements in that "closed zone" are expanding and new settlements are being developed. The Israeli civil and military authorities indulge the settlers with assured lenient treatment. Settlers have become more aggressive towards Palestinians. Settler violence and theft have increased, especially in the Hebron area, with 68 incidents reported in May 2005 and 67 in June 2005 (see A/60/271, para. 27; E/CN.4/2006/29).

Natural resources, water and the environment

47. Israel uses 73 per cent of the water available from West Bank aquifers, Palestinians in the West Bank use 17 per cent and Israeli settlers use 10 per cent. While 10 to 14 per cent of Palestine's GDP is related to agriculture, 90 per cent of Palestinian farms have to rely on rain-fed methods. Agriculture accounts for only 3 per cent of Israeli GDP, but Israel irrigates more than 50 per cent of its

³⁷ Dror Etkes and Lara Friedman, "Current trends in settlement construction and growth", Peace Now (December 2005) (www.peacenow.org/briefs.asp?rid=&cid=1393).

³⁸ Gadi Golan, "Adva — Settlements in territories still get bigger budgets" (12 February 2006) (<http://globes.co.il/serveen/globes/docview.asp?did=1000060578&fid=942>).

³⁹ Moti Bassok, "The extra civilian price tag — at least NIS 2.5 billion a year", *Ha'aretz* (www.haaretz.com); Dror Etkes and Lara Friedman, "Current trends in settlement construction and growth", Peace Now (December 2005) (www.peacenow.org/briefs.asp?rid=&cid=1393).

⁴⁰ Associated Press, "Jewish settler population seen growing 4.3 per cent in 2005", *Ha'aretz* (2 December 2005).

landholdings.⁴¹ Israeli settlements in the Jordan Valley alone, for example, consume an equivalent of 75 per cent of the water that the entire West Bank Palestinian population of approximately two million consumes for domestic and urban uses.⁴²

48. The Israeli occupation has negatively affected the environment and natural resources of the occupied Palestinian territory. At least 14 settlements drain liquid waste onto Palestinian lands.⁴³ In addition to direct pollution created by Israeli forces and settlements, the occupation has annulled Palestinian plans to establish dumping sites. Israeli military closure of landfills has complicated solid-waste management in the West Bank. Pollution from dismantled settlements now poses a potential hazard in the Gaza Strip. Disproportionately to their respective populations, Palestinians in the West Bank produce some 500,000 tons of solid waste annually (1,370 tons daily), while Israeli settlements produce an average 224,000 tons yearly (614 tons daily).⁴⁴

49. In April 2005, Israeli authorities began to transfer a planned 10,000 tons of garbage monthly from the Dan and Sharon regions across the Green Line to dump it in the West Bank at Abu Shusha quarry. Four water wells serving Nablus and nearby villages are located very near the dumping site.

50. Israeli movement restrictions impede Palestinians from assessing contamination risks and managing nature reserves, all of which are located in areas that Israel controls. While an essential tool of environmental management is an inventory of national hazardous waste substances, no such inventory exists in the occupied Palestinian territory.⁴⁵

Public health and food insecurity

51. The rate of chronic malnutrition (stunting) in children under five has increased, reaching almost 10 per cent. Children in the Gaza Strip are the most affected. In the occupied Palestinian territory, some 350,000 children are stunted, with malnutrition mostly afflicting children 12 to 23 months old. More than 15 per cent of them are malnourished at this period critical to their future development.³

52. Newborn mortality accounts for about three quarters of all infant deaths. Notably in the Gaza Strip, the under-one-year and under-five year mortality figures have increased by about 30 per cent, mainly owing to an increase in the mortality of children under 12 months. This is the consequence of poor newborn care in hospitals. Currently, in major hospitals of the Gaza Strip about one in three newborns admitted to newborn care units dies. About 8 per cent of children have low birth weight (below 2,500 grams), contributing to infant and newborn mortality and severe morbidity. These are severe constraints for child development outcomes.³

53. Mental health is an increasing concern in the occupied Palestinian territory. Recent studies have shown that stressors such as the severe restriction of movement

⁴¹ Palestine Monitor, "Water in Palestine", fact sheet (www.palestinemonitor.org/new_web/factsheet_water.htm).

⁴² B'Teselem, "Land grab: Israel's settlement policy in the West Bank" (May 2002).

⁴³ Palestinian National Information Center, "Israeli violations of the Palestinian environment" (www.pnic.gov.ps/english/Environment_Israeli%20Violations.html).

⁴⁴ ARIJ, "Israel escalates its violations against the Palestinian environment: the new Israeli dumping site" (5 April 2005) (www.poica.org/editor/case_studies/view.php?recordID=548).

⁴⁵ See www.grid.unep.ch/product/map/index.php?region=west_asia.

and lack of access to education and health care are present in everyday life. One study⁴⁶ showed that 52 per cent of those surveyed had thought of ending their life, 92 per cent felt no hope for the future, 100 per cent reported feeling stressed and 84 per cent expressed feelings of constant anger because of circumstances beyond their control.

54. Non-communicable diseases present important public health problems. Among the eight leading causes of death, seven are non-communicable diseases. In 2004, 3,481 persons died from cardiovascular diseases (1,781 males and 1,700 females), with a rate of 99.7 per 100,000 population.⁴⁷

55. Food insecurity is adversely affecting the health of women and children. The results of a study conducted by UNRWA revealed that 54.7 per cent and 34.3 per cent of children of ages 6-36 months are anaemic, as are 40.2 per cent and 29.9 per cent of pregnant women and 45.7 per cent and 23 per cent of nursing mothers in the Gaza Strip and the West Bank, respectively. Other micronutrient deficiencies of concern are subclinical vitamin A deficiency,⁴⁸ rickets and iodine deficiency. The incidence of obesity and diet related chronic diseases appears to be increasing, particularly among the older age group, presenting a major challenge in the area of nutrition.⁴⁹

56. Israel's construction of the barrier has impeded access to health care. Access to primary health-care services and UNRWA-contracted hospitals in occupied East Jerusalem decreased 18 per cent in 2005 and is likely to deteriorate further with the continuing barrier construction. In order to mitigate effects on health, UNRWA has been running five mobile units since 2003, treating more than 12,000 patients in 2005.

Youth and education

57. Fewer Palestinian children start school each year. The quality of their education is deteriorating. The student drop-out rate is increasing dramatically and few children have the opportunity to experience a child-friendly learning environment, with safe spaces and opportunities for sports and recreation. In addition, children lack educational materials and schools lack adequate teaching aids.³

58. Live-fire from Israeli positions, air attacks and sporadic sonic booms particularly affect children, instilling constant fear and keeping them awake at night. With half of the Gaza Strip's 1.3 million residents under the age of 18 years, and three quarters of all households having at least one child in school, daily events impede educational efforts and erode past achievements. One third of families indicate that their child suffers from at least one symptom of psychosocial distress, impeding concentration at school.³

⁴⁶ Palestinian Counseling Center, "The psychological implications of Israel's separation wall on Palestinians" (2004).

⁴⁷ World Health Organization contribution to the report (WHO contribution).

⁴⁸ The Maram Project, "Prevalence of vitamin A deficiency among children 12 to 59 months of age in the West Bank and Gaza Strip" (2004).

⁴⁹ Palestinian National Authority Ministry of Health and WHO, "The state of nutrition, West Bank and Gaza Strip, 2005", cited in WHO contribution.

59. Israeli military operations forced UNRWA schools in the West Bank and Gaza Strip to close for a total of 272 days in the 2004/2005 scholastic year (compared to 391 days in 2003/2004).

60. In the West Bank, UNRWA schools lost 29 school days and teachers lost over 705 working days during the 2004/2005 school year. In addition, instructors lost 23 working days during the same period at three training centres.

61. Before the redeployment of Israeli settlers from the Gaza Strip, internal closures prevented Gaza Strip teachers from reaching their duty station. During the 2004/2005 school year, UNRWA teachers recorded a collective loss of 29,399 teaching days. Since October 2000 more than 264,000 school days have been lost.

62. UNRWA has also reported that in the 2004/2005 academic year, no Gaza Strip students (277 applied) were able to attend technical training centres in the West Bank for lack of a passage permit. Moreover, closures continued to prevent students in higher education from reaching their institutions, barring Gaza Strip students in particular from reaching West Bank universities.

63. Although examination scores of the 2004/2005 period were slightly higher than those of the 2003/2004 period, overall educational achievement continues to decline. Since the 1999/2000 school year, Arabic scores in the Gaza Strip declined by 6.1 per cent, math scores by 8.5 per cent and science scores by 12 per cent. In the West Bank, only 44 per cent of eighth-graders passed their Arabic examination and 49.6 per cent passed science. However, these figures represent a major improvement (10 per cent and 15 per cent, respectively) over the previous year.

Economic indicators

64. World Bank estimates for overall economic performance point to the continuation of GDP growth over the past three years (GDP growth is estimated at 6 per cent for 2005). However, this growth does not reflect the economic potential of the occupied Palestinian territory, as the current GDP is approximately 25 per cent lower than it was in 1999.⁵⁰

65. Demographic growth, which outran average growth in GDP during the period 2000-2005, contributed to negative growth in annual GDP per capita. Demographic growth also generated a labour force involving some 40,000 new entrants each year, outpacing demand in the labour market, and thereby swelling the number of the unemployed and adding pressure on existing household incomes.⁵¹

66. Despite persistently high rates of unemployment during 2005, estimated by the World Bank at 23.4 per cent,⁵² the labour market improved, with the unemployment rate dropping some 3 per cent from 2004. Job creation in the Gaza Strip, largely a result of Israel's disengagement, increased 14 per cent, while the West Bank saw an 8 per cent increase.⁵³

⁵⁰ International Monetary Fund, "Macroeconomic developments and outlook in the West Bank and Gaza" (December 2005), as cited in the UNSCO contribution.

⁵¹ World Bank, "West Bank and Gaza update" (June 2005).

⁵² World Bank, "Economic update and potential outlook" (15 March 2006).

⁵³ World Bank, "The Palestinian economy and the prospects for its recovery" (December 2005), as cited in the UNSCO contribution.

67. The financial sector remains sound, due to the expansion of the private sector and increase in credit; yet a rapidly growing public sector wage bill has widened the budget deficit significantly. According to the World Bank, the fiscal situation is now unsustainable. Employment by the Palestinian Authority, however, continues to rise, with some 4,000 militants being integrated into the security forces. According to Palestinian Authority security organizations, some 8,000 to 10,000 employees were identified as “non-performing”. The projected fiscal deficit, driven primarily by wage cost increases, was calculated by the International Monetary Fund to exceed \$900 million for 2006.⁵⁰

68. Despite GDP growth, both the Palestinian Central Bureau of Statistics and the World Bank reported persistently high levels of poverty. Although available statistics vary, the Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs estimated poverty at 62 per cent of the population.⁵⁴ Poverty in the occupied Palestinian territory evolved in 2005 in significant ways. First, geographical concentration of poverty is increasing, with higher levels registered in the Gaza Strip, in the southern areas of the West Bank (Hebron area) and in the northern areas of the West Bank (Jenin area). Second, the gap between rich and poor is increasing, which demonstrates the inability of the market to ensure equitable distribution of wealth. Third, the number of Palestinians living in “deep poverty” (that is, a daily consumption level below \$1.6/day) increased during 2005.²⁵

69. Steady economic growth with persistent and possibly rising poverty rates suggests that growth alone has not been sufficient to alleviate or reverse the cumulative impact of the conflict. Several factors appear responsible for eroding the positive effects of growth over the 2003-2005 period. These include the immediate and cumulative effects of intensified closures, which continued to restrict commercial and individual movement, thereby fragmenting established economic linkages in the occupied Palestinian territory and complicating access to employment, markets and services.²⁵

70. An overall decline in income levels, in particular but not exclusively among those who have moved from employment in Israel to lower paying activities in the occupied Palestinian territory, shows declining levels of household consumption. Also contributing to poverty is the exhaustion of assets and borrowing options since September 2000 by large numbers of households seeking to cope with declining incomes, rising job insecurity or outright loss of jobs and incomes.⁵⁵ The effects of those losses were largely offset through the provision of emergency assistance.

71. The private sector continued to expand. Private sector credit expanded by 30 per cent in 2005, but remained lower than in other countries of the region.⁵⁰ In a climate of fiscal crisis, growth in private sector activities injected the economy with significant liquidity.⁵³

72. Closures remain a significant hindrance to economic recovery. Yet, according to the World Bank, the situation has become increasingly predictable, allowing for adaptation. Economic growth in Israel has increased demand for Palestinian exports. The number of Palestinians working in Israel also increased remittances by 25 per

⁵⁴ Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs, “Humanitarian update — emerging humanitarian risks” (January 2006) (www.ochaopt.org).

⁵⁵ World Bank and Palestinian Central Bureau of Statistics, *Deep Palestinian Poverty in the Midst of Economic Crisis* (October 2004).

cent in comparison to 2004.⁵³ Nevertheless, the pace of economic growth witnessed since 2003 suggests that pre-September 2000 per capita income levels might not return before 2012.⁵⁶

Status of women

73. Palestinian women historically have had low participation in the workforce. However, women traditionally have played a major role in agricultural production. With the loss of land to Israel, Palestinian women are doubly affected, by the loss of both a vital source of income and their role as economic producers. Affected by the barrier, women's mobility has decreased to about 85.7 per cent in the western part of the barrier, and to 63.3 per cent in the eastern part of the barrier.⁵⁷ Before the September 2000 crisis, their participation rate was 15.8 per cent, but with the Israeli closures and barriers, the rate of women in the job force declined to 10.5 per cent.⁵⁸

III. Occupied Syrian Golan

74. In 2005, the Arab population in the occupied Syrian Golan was estimated at 18,400. The Arab population is fully incorporated into the Israeli legal, administrative and social service delivery systems. Some 14 per cent have opted for Israeli citizenship.²⁵

75. The total area of the Syrian Golan under Israeli occupation is 1.15 million dunums (1,150 square km). About 1 million dunums are considered suitable for grazing land. At the moment, Israel utilizes about 500,000 dunums for cattle, while 100,000 dunums were declared as natural reservations. The remainder (400,000 dunums) are closed military areas. Cultivated land is divided between the Syrian Arab population and the 20,000 Israeli settlers and Syrian Arabs can access about 20,000 dunums, while Israeli settlers have access to about 80,000 dunums.⁵⁹ Although Arab and Israeli populations in the Golan are roughly equivalent in number, Israeli settlements are reported to use a disproportionate quantity of water resources for domestic and agricultural purposes.

76. As of 2005, Israeli settlers occupy 33 settlements, of which 27 are primarily agricultural. Israeli settlers trade their produce of wine, beef, apples, cherries and mineral water in Israel's domestic and export markets.⁶⁰ The other settlements are focused on industry and tourism (including two tourist facilities on the eastern coast of Lake Tiberias). Additionally, Qatzrin and Bnei Yehuda settlements maintain industrial areas.²⁵

77. The Arab population of the occupied Syrian Golan is generally unable to travel to the Syrian Arab Republic to visit family members on the other side of the line of separation and have, over time, experienced increasing limitations on land use owing to military and environmental zoning restrictions imposed by Israel. A large

⁵⁶ World Bank, "The Palestinian economy and the PA's fiscal situation" (1 February 2006).

⁵⁷ Palestinian Central Bureau of Statistics, "Impact of the Israeli measures on the economic conditions of Palestinian households" (April-June 2004).

⁵⁸ Amnesty International, "*Israel and the Occupied Territories — conflicts, occupation and patriarchy — women carry the burden*" (31 March 2005).

⁵⁹ UNSCO contribution (see <http://english.golan.org.il/vaad/efacts.asp>).

⁶⁰ See <http://golan-marsad.org/default.asp?sn=9#a28>.

number of the Syrian Arab population has lost significant acreage traditionally used for pasture. This has resulted in changing production, commercial and land-use patterns within a traditionally rural/pastoral society.

78. The Arab population labour force in the occupied Golan is made up of some 6,500 workers, of which some 750 work in local services. Another 3,200 work in Israel in agriculture and construction. Nearly 40 per cent of the total labour force is unemployed.⁶¹

79. Trade in agricultural products, particularly apples, olive oil, honey and other horticultural goods, relies mainly on Israeli markets, with a small percentage of surplus apple production exported to the Syrian Arab Republic each year with facilitation by the International Committee of the Red Cross.⁶² The export of the 2006 apple harvest began on 19 March 2006. Over a period of four weeks some 400 mt will cross the line of control.²⁵

80. The Arab population has become dependent on Israeli agricultural products and partially on products of the settlements (especially dairy-related products). Production and trade in livestock have decreased markedly since 1967. Local opportunities in the construction sector remain limited owing to housing restrictions.²⁵

81. Israel has applied its educational system in the occupied Syrian territory since 1967, replacing the Syrian curriculum. Six elementary schools, three junior high schools and two high schools operate for the Syrian Arab community. Since 1987, delegations of the International Committee of the Red Cross in Damascus and Tel Aviv have facilitated the passage of an average of 400 students each year across the line of separation to attend Syrian universities.²⁵ During 2005, the International Committee of the Red Cross handled the administrative details for between 400 and 500 pilgrims (religious men only) wishing to make an annual visit to holy sites in the Syrian Arab Republic. The International Committee of the Red Cross has also facilitated several weddings for couples from either side of the line of separation, including five such weddings in 2005.⁶³

82. The Arab community funds and operates five health clinics in the occupied Golan, providing basic maternal-newborn health services, including vaccinations. In addition, the Israeli Ministry of Health funds one basic health clinic that the Syrian Arab community operates. The nearest referral hospital is a 30-minute drive from the Arab communities in the occupied Golan into Israel. Specialized services are within a 70-minute drive inside Israel. There are three fully equipped Israeli ambulances in the occupied Golan area, two in Majdal Shams and one in Bqa'atha. Where necessary, patients are treated at clinics inside the Israeli settlements of the occupied Golan.²⁵ The International Committee of the Red Cross, with the participation of local non-governmental organizations, is developing plans to construct a 30-bed hospital facility for the community.²⁵

83. Landmines remain a hazard for Arab communities in the occupied Golan. A field research study shows that 66 Arab residents have suffered landmine incidents

⁶¹ Interview with Al Marsad in Majdal Shams; cited in the UNSCO contribution.

⁶² Interview with International Committee of the Red Cross in Majdal Shams; cited in the UNSCO contribution.

⁶³ Interview with International Committee of the Red Cross in Jerusalem; cited in the UNSCO contribution.

since 1967, of which 16 were fatal. The data indicate that among the 50 surviving victims, 86 per cent (43 victims) were under the age of 18. Eight of the 16 fatally wounded were under the age of 18.⁶⁴

IV. Conclusions

84. Israel's disengagement from the Gaza Strip and parts of the West Bank raised the possibility of new movement towards social and economic recovery.

85. Disengagement occurred in a rapid and peaceful manner. The economy grew in 2005 by 6 per cent for the second year running. Unemployment fell by 3 per cent over the previous year. The parties signed the Access and Movement Agreement of November 2005, securing a passage regime from the Gaza Strip to Egypt and ensuring a minimum level of commodity exports from the Gaza Strip. Nonetheless, these gains were insufficient to arrest or reverse the decline in social and economic indicators which showed the ongoing, and in some cases deepening, distress among large numbers of Palestinians. During the first quarter of 2006, crossings for the transfer of goods between the Gaza Strip and Israel were closed over 50 per cent of the time.⁶⁴ Poverty rates remained high as result of declining income levels, rising food and transport prices, high demographic growth and increasingly inequitable distribution of wealth.

86. While internal closures in the Gaza Strip were removed, West Bank closures, after several months of easing, were tightened again towards the end of the year. A severe fiscal crisis loomed at the end of 2005, raising serious doubts about the ability of the Palestinian Authority to meet public sector wage commitments for the first months of the new year.

87. Planned elections in both Israel and the occupied Palestinian territory meant that neither side was in a position to make meaningful policy commitments into 2006. For its part, the international community also signalled its intention to delay additional funding commitments to the occupied Palestinian territory until a new cabinet could be formed in the first half of 2006. A major pledging conference, aiming to raise up to \$3 billion in international funds for Palestinian social economic recovery, was nonetheless tentatively scheduled for May 2006, testifying to the ongoing hope of donors that an enabling environment for accelerated social, economic and institutional recovery can be established over the next year.

⁶⁴ Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs, "Gaza Strip situation report (23 March 2006) (www.ochaopt.org).



General Assembly Economic and Social Council

Distr.: General
3 May 2007

Original: English

**General Assembly
Sixty-second session**

Item 43 of the preliminary list*

Permanent sovereignty of the Palestinian people in the Occupied Palestinian Territory, including East Jerusalem, and of the Arab population in the occupied Syrian Golan over their natural resources

**Economic and Social Council
Substantive session of 2007**

Item 11 of the provisional agenda**

Economic and social repercussions of the Israeli occupation on the living conditions of the Palestinian people in the occupied Palestinian territory, including Jerusalem, and the Arab population in the occupied Syrian Golan

Economic and social repercussions of the Israeli occupation on the living conditions of the Palestinian people in the occupied Palestinian territory, including Jerusalem, and of the Arab population in the occupied Syrian Golan

Note by the Secretary-General

In its resolution 2006/43, the Economic and Social Council requested the Secretary-General to submit to the General Assembly at its sixty-first session, through the Council, a report on the implementation of that resolution. The Assembly, in its resolution 61/184, also requested the Secretary-General to submit a report to it at its sixty-second session. The present report, which has been prepared by the Economic and Social Commission for Western Asia, is submitted in response to the resolutions of the Assembly and the Council.

* A/62/50.

** E/2007/100.



Report prepared by the Economic and Social Commission for Western Asia on the economic and social repercussions of the Israeli occupation on the living conditions of the Palestinian people in the occupied Palestinian territory, including Jerusalem, and of the Arab population in the occupied Syrian Golan*

Summary

The occupation of Palestinian territory by Israel continues to deepen the economic and social hardship for Palestinians. Citing the right to self-defence from such actions as the continuation of attacks by Palestinian militants on Israeli civilians, the launching of rockets into Israeli cities from the Gaza Strip and the capture of an Israeli corporal, the Israeli army continues to mount military operations in the occupied Palestinian territory, employing arbitrary detention, disproportionate use of force, house demolitions, severe mobility restrictions and closure policies. However, there has been a marked decline in Palestinian-Israeli violence in Gaza since the ceasefire of 26 November 2006.

The Israeli closure system remains a primary cause of poverty and humanitarian crisis in the occupied Palestinian territory, and restricts Palestinian access to health and education services, employment, markets and social and religious networks.

The fiscal situation deteriorated significantly following the legislative elections of January 2006. In line with the principles set by the Quartet on 30 January 2006, the election results led donors to reconsider their aid to the Palestinian Authority. Palestinian GDP declined by approximately 8 per cent in the third quarter of 2006 compared to the same period in 2005. Economic indicators continue to show negative trends. Unemployment and poverty rates remained high, estimated at 30 and 64 per cent respectively, while 65 per cent of households rely on informal borrowing to subsist.

Israeli settlements, land confiscation and the construction of a barrier in the occupied Palestinian territory, contrary to the Geneva Convention and other norms of international law, isolate occupied East Jerusalem, bisect the West Bank and curtail normal economic and social life.

* The Economic and Social Commission for Western Asia would like to acknowledge its appreciation for the substantive contributions of the Department for Political Affairs, the United Nations Development Programme (Programme of Assistance to the Palestinian People), the United Nations Conference on Trade and Development, the United Nations Population Fund, the United Nations Development Fund for Women, the Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations, the World Food Programme, the United Nations Relief and Works Agency for Palestine Refugees in the Near East, the Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Human Rights, the Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs, the World Health Organization, the International Labour Organization and the Office of the United Nations Special Coordinator for the Middle East Peace Process.

Refugees, women and children bear the brunt of these measures. Malnutrition and other health problems afflict a growing number of Palestinians at a time of curtailed access to needed services. In the Gaza Strip alone, 57.5 per cent of children from 6 to 36 months old and 44.9 per cent of pregnant women are anaemic.

I. Introduction

1. In its resolution 2006/43, the Economic and Social Council stressed the importance of reviving the Middle East peace process on the basis of Security Council resolutions, including 242 (1967), 338 (1973), 425 (1978), 1397 (2002), 1515 (2003) and 1544 (2004), and the principle of land for peace as well as compliance with the agreements reached between the Government of Israel and the Palestine Liberation Organization, the representative of the Palestinian people. In the same resolution, the Economic and Social Council urged all parties to respect the rules of international humanitarian law and to refrain from violence against the civilian population in accordance with the Geneva Convention relative to the Protection of Civilian Persons in Time of War, of 12 August 1949.¹ The Council, convinced that the Israeli occupation has gravely impeded efforts to achieve sustainable development and a sound economic environment in the occupied Palestinian territory, including East Jerusalem, and in the occupied Syrian Golan, and concerned by the formidable impact on the economic and social conditions of the Palestinian people caused by the construction of the wall and its associated regime inside the occupied Palestinian territory, including in and around East Jerusalem, and the resulting violation of their economic and social rights, including the right to work, to health, to education and to an adequate standard of living, recalled in this regard the International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights,² the International Covenant on Economic, Social and Cultural Rights² and the Convention on the Rights of the Child,³ and affirmed that these human rights instruments must be respected in the occupied Palestinian territory, including East Jerusalem and the occupied Syrian Golan. The Council stressed the need to preserve the national unity and the territorial integrity of the occupied Palestinian territory, including East Jerusalem, and to guarantee the freedom of movement of persons and goods in the territory, including the removal of restrictions on going to and from East Jerusalem, and the freedom of movement to and from the outside world. It also stressed that the wall being constructed at an accelerated pace by Israel in the occupied Palestinian territory, including in and around East Jerusalem, is contrary to international law and is isolating East Jerusalem and dividing up the West Bank and is seriously debilitating to the economic and social development of the Palestinian people, and calls in this regard for full compliance with legal obligations laid out in the advisory opinion of the International Court of Justice rendered on 9 July 2004 (see A/ES-10/273 and Corr.1) and in General Assembly resolution ES-10/15. In that resolution, the Assembly reaffirmed the inalienable rights of the Palestinian people and the Arab population of the occupied Syrian Golan to all their natural and economic resources, and called upon Israel, the occupying Power, not to exploit, endanger or cause loss or depletion of those resources; it also reaffirmed that Israeli settlements in the occupied Palestinian territory, including East Jerusalem and the occupied Syrian Golan, are illegal and an obstacle to economic and social development and called for the full implementation of the relevant Security Council resolutions and requested the Secretary-General to submit to the Assembly, through the Council, a report on the implementation of the resolution.

¹ United Nations, *Treaty Series*, vol. 75, No. 973.

² See General Assembly resolution 2200 A (XXI), annex.

³ United Nations, *Treaty Series*, vol. 1577, No. 27531.

2. In its resolution 61/184, the General Assembly reaffirmed the inalienable rights of the Palestinian people and the population of the occupied Syrian Golan over their natural resources, including land and water, and called upon Israel, the occupying Power, not to exploit, damage, cause loss or depletion of, or endanger the natural resources in the occupied Palestinian territory, including Jerusalem and in the occupied Syrian Golan. The Assembly recognized the right of the Palestinian people to claim restitution as a result of any exploitation, damage, loss or depletion, or endangerment of their natural resources resulting from illegal measures and actions taken by Israel, the occupying Power, in the occupied Palestinian territory, including East Jerusalem. The Assembly stressed that the wall being constructed by Israel in the occupied Palestinian territory, including in and around East Jerusalem, is contrary to international law and is seriously depriving the Palestinian people of their natural resources, and called in this regard for full compliance with the legal obligations stipulated in the 9 July 2004 advisory opinion of the International Court of Justice and in resolution ES-10/15. The Assembly called on Israel, the occupying Power, to cease the dumping of all kinds of waste materials in the occupied Palestinian territory, including East Jerusalem, and in the occupied Syrian Golan, which gravely threaten their natural resources, namely the water and land resources, and poses an environmental hazard and health threat to the civilian populations. The Assembly further called upon Israel to cease its destruction of vital infrastructure, including water pipelines and sewage networks, which, inter alia, has a negative impact on the natural resources of the Palestinian people. The Assembly requested the Secretary-General to submit a report to it at its sixty-second session on the implementation of the resolution.

II. Occupied Palestinian territory, including Jerusalem

Death and injuries

3. Citing the right to self-defence from such actions as the continuation of attacks by Palestinian militants on Israeli civilians, the launching of rockets into Israeli cities from the Gaza Strip and the capture of an Israeli corporal, the Israeli army continues to mount military operations in the occupied Palestinian territory. However, there has been a marked decline in Palestinian-Israeli violence in Gaza since the ceasefire of 26 November 2006. From January 2006 to February 2007, the Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs recorded 697 Palestinian fatalities and 3,558 injuries as a direct result of the conflict. A total of 132 Palestinian children were killed and 515 injured.⁴ No fewer than 28 of those killed and 120 of those wounded attended schools run by the United Nations Relief and Works Agency for Palestine Refugees in the Near East (UNRWA). One of the deaths in the West Bank and two of the injuries in the Gaza Strip occurred while the pupils were inside their classroom.

4. In the 15 unmarked Israeli minefields in the West Bank and the Jordan Valley,⁵ at least 21 casualties related to mines or explosive remnants of war were recorded from January to May 2006 (6 killed, 15 injured), mostly children.⁶ In addition, Israel has introduced the use of dense inert metal explosive missiles in Bayt Hanun

⁴ www.ochaopt.org/documents/PoC_tables_Feb07.xls.

⁵ See Portfolio of Mine Action Projects 2006, at www.mineaction.org.

⁶ *Landmine Monitor 2006*, at www.icbl.org/lm/2006/palestine.html#fnB75.

and elsewhere in the Gaza Strip, causing an increasing number of injuries that necessitate amputations.⁷

5. From January 2006 to February 2007, internal Palestinian violence, characterized by tensions between the main Palestinian factions, armed confrontations between established security organs, the creation of new security bodies, the proliferation of weapons in the Gaza Strip and the hardening of political positions, caused 248 fatalities, of which 20 were children; 1,350 injuries were recorded.⁸ It should be noted that the most significant increase in Palestinian deaths and injuries was a result of intra-Palestinian violence. The Office of the United Nations Special Coordinator for the Middle East Peace Process calculated a tenfold increase in 2006 over 2005.

6. From January 2006 to February 2007, attacks by Palestinian armed elements reportedly killed 29 Israelis and injured 524.⁸

Arbitrary arrests and detentions

7. As at March 2006, over 9,400 Palestinian political prisoners remained in Israeli prisons, 421 of whom had been imprisoned for over 10 years. Since January 2006, Israeli authorities have arrested an average of 500 Palestinians per month in serial raids on towns, particularly Bayt Hanun, Nablus and Jenin.⁹

8. About 120 Palestinian women political prisoners remain in Israeli jails, including two under 18 years of age.¹⁰ According to the United Nations Development Fund for Women (UNIFEM), 8 female detainees have given birth in prison; 3 are imprisoned with their babies; 31 are not allowed to care for their children; 6 have been deprived of family visits; and 8 have been diagnosed with chronic psychological problems.

9. As at 30 September 2006, the Israeli army was detaining 389 Palestinian children, including two 12-year-old boys. It is reported that Israeli authorities have used physical coercion on 60 per cent of the children.¹¹

10. At the end of December 2006, Israeli authorities were detaining 20 United Nations Relief and Works Agency for Palestine Refugees in the Near East (UNRWA) West Bank staff members and denying UNRWA access to them.

Population displacement

11. The ongoing construction of the barrier in the West Bank has contributed to population displacement throughout the West Bank and occupied East Jerusalem.

⁷ Report of the Special Rapporteur on the situation of human rights in the Palestinian territories occupied since 1967, John Dugard (A/HRC/4/17), para. 10.

⁸ www.ochaopt.org/documents/PoC_tables_Feb07.xls.

⁹ A/HRC/4/17, paras. 10 and 43.

¹⁰ See website of the Women's Organization for Political Prisoners, www.wofpp.org/english/december.html.

¹¹ Report of the Secretary-General on children and armed conflict (A/61/529-S/2006/826), para. 65.

Of the 32.9 per cent of Palestinians living in Jerusalem who recently changed their place of residence, 17.3 per cent did so because of the barrier.¹²

12. Although population data will not be updated until the census is conducted later in 2007, the closures of the towns and villages of the West Bank, the circumvention of occupied East Jerusalem, the construction of the barrier, physical isolation and the closures imposed on the Gaza Strip have most likely led to internal migration patterns.

Property destruction and confiscation

13. In 2006, UNRWA recorded a total of 233 Palestinian structures demolished by the Israeli army in the West Bank. Of those, 115 were residential homes, 74 agricultural sites, 35 commercial stores and 9 public facilities. According to the Palestinian Bureau of Statistics, 29,314 households currently live in Israeli-damaged homes, 28,997 in Gaza Strip and 317 in the West Bank.¹³

14. Nablus was the most affected area. On 26 August 2006, 19 houses were demolished by the Israeli authorities in Nablus city. A total of 23 commercial roadside structures, used by farmers to market their produce, were demolished in Bardala village and in Marj Na'ja in the Jordan Valley for alleged lack of permits. For the same reason, the Israeli army demolished 14 livestock barracks in Zbeidat, Khibat Atuf, Frush Beit Dajan, Jiftlik and Ash Shuna.

15. Confiscation orders continued to be issued by the Israeli authorities throughout 2006. According to UNRWA, land confiscation orders were issued for 3,845 dunums in the southern West Bank (in Al Khadr, Um Salmuna, Halhoul, Yatta, Ad Dahiriyah and Beit Ummar), 1,768 dunums in the northern West Bank (in Deir Ballut, Burgin, Hajjah, Faroun, Asira and Kufur Laqef) and 1,337 in the central West Bank (mostly in Anata and Bir Nabala).

16. During 2006, the Israeli Jerusalem municipality used its home-demolition budget of 4 million new Israeli sheqalim (NIS) to flatten 68 Palestinian homes. According to a report issued by the Land Research Center in February 2007, the Jerusalem municipality conducted 10 more forced evictions of Palestinian inhabitants predicated on the state of disrepair of their homes.¹⁴ In 2006, Palestinian inhabitants of occupied East Jerusalem lost 6,000 m² of residential space. The Israeli Committee against House Demolitions reported that the municipality had also confiscated building machinery, especially cement mixers, forcing higher prices for building cement, and increased the rate of financial guarantees required for courts to suspend demolitions. Israeli authorities have given forewarnings of more demolitions of Palestinian homes in 2007.

17. From March 2006 to the end of January 2007, in the Gaza Strip, the Israeli army damaged 3,077 refugee shelters and demolished 210, affecting 3,356 families.

¹² Badil Resource Center for Palestinian Residency and Refugee Rights and the Norwegian Refugee Council/Internal Displacement Monitoring Centre, *Displaced by the Wall: Pilot Study on Forced Displacement caused by the Construction of the West Bank Wall and its Associated Regime in the Occupied Palestinian Territories* (Bethlehem and Geneva, 2006). Also available from www.badil.org/publications/Books/Wall-Report.pdf.

¹³ "A Report about Housing Conditions in the Palestinian Territory, 2006", Palestinian Central Bureau of Statistics.

¹⁴ Land Research Center report, 19 February 2007.

This is a major deterioration from 2005, when 116 shelters were damaged and 37 were demolished.

18. The Gaza Strip also saw a vast increase in land levelling and excavating operations. At least 6,516 dunums of agricultural land were bulldozed in the Gaza Strip.

19. On 27 June 2006, the Israeli Air Force destroyed six transformers of the Gaza Strip's only domestic power plant, which supplied 43 per cent of Gaza's daily needs. Full electrical capacity has since been restored to Gaza by means of technical assistance from Egypt and financial support from Sweden.¹⁵

20. No quantification of the demolition and confiscation losses in the occupied Palestinian territory, including occupied East Jerusalem, currently exists. However, the direct damages from the military offensive by Israel from 26 June to 28 August 2006 were estimated by the United Nations Development Programme (UNDP) at US\$ 46 million in the Gaza Strip alone.

21. In April 2006, the Israeli army narrowed the "safety zone" for artillery shelling, allowing targeting much closer to Palestinian homes and populated areas, which contributed substantially to the increase in the loss of life and property. The assault on Bayt Hanun confined 40,000 residents to their homes under curfew, as Israeli military operations resulted in the destruction of 279 homes, an 800-year-old mosque, public buildings, electricity networks, schools and hospitals, orchards, water and sanitation networks; paved roads were ripped up with specially designed back-hoes.¹⁶ UNDP estimated infrastructure damages at \$2,372,970.

Mobility restrictions and closure policies, including access to humanitarian assistance

22. The Agreement on Movement and Access signed by the Palestinian Authority and the Government of Israel under the auspices of the Quartet contains specific provisions for the movement of people and goods within the occupied Palestinian territory and outside it.

23. The first of the six points of the Agreement was the re-opening of the Rafah border crossing with Egypt, which opened on 15 November 2005. It was the first historical instance of Palestinian Authority control over an international land border crossing. From 26 November 2005 to 25 June 2006, Rafah was continuously open for passengers travelling in both directions.

24. Following an attack by Palestinians on an Israeli military post at Kerem Shalom and the capture of an Israeli soldier on 25 June 2006, the crossing was closed and access by the Border Assistance Mission of the European Union to the Rafah terminal was restricted by the Israeli authorities on security grounds. Since then, the crossing has been opened on an exceptional basis, such as during peak periods of movement by students or pilgrims. Overall, Rafah was open for an average of 14 per cent of scheduled days between 25 June and 15 December 2006. Infrequent and sporadic openings of the crossing have led to large crowds gathering

¹⁵ See A/HRC/4/17, para. 19. See also "Act of Vengeance: Israel's Bombing of the Gaza Power Plant and its Effects", in *B'Tselem* (September 2006), available from www.btselem.org/English/Summaries/200609_Act_of_Vengeance.asp.

¹⁶ A/HRC/4/17, para. 10.

at the terminal on designated days, leading to public insecurity. Although the mandate of the mission was renewed in November 2006, its access to the terminal remains restricted because of Israeli security concerns.

25. The Karni crossing remained closed for over 50 per cent of the scheduled time. Openings were often only partial, owing to perceived security threats by Israel. Both imports into Gaza and exports from the Strip to Israel, the West Bank and beyond suffered as a result. However, in the period from November 2006 to March 2007, exports through Karni increased by 115 per cent, which was an improvement, though still short of the targets of the Agreement on Movement and Access. Food imports plummeted in April and May, resulting in a drastic fall in Gaza's strategic reserves of wheat flour and the closure of main bakery outlets along the Strip. Import restrictions were eased in May under heavy international pressure. Gaza exports, however, experienced the deepest and most sustained restrictions during 2006. Only 12 export truckloads, on average, were able to leave Gaza from January to November 2006, a mere fraction of the 400 trucks per day envisaged for the end of 2006 under the Agreement. The effect of export restrictions on Gaza producers was severe, with some millions in lost revenues for the period.

26. The Sufa crossing is the main passage point for the import of aggregates used for construction into the Gaza Strip, and is covered by the Agreement on Movement and Access. The crossing was closed on 14 February. Since then it has not opened regularly. Overall, the crossing remained open for 60 per cent of scheduled days during the first year of implementation of the Agreement, restricting the importation of aggregates into the Gaza Strip. One effect of the restriction has been to raise the price of aggregate building materials in the Gaza Strip.

27. The Agreement provided for measures to ease the movement of Palestinians and commercial goods within the West Bank. The decrease in West Bank checkpoints, which had been verified at the end of 2005, was reversed in 2006. According to the Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs, the number of physical obstacles in the West Bank grew from 475 in January 2006 to 550 in February 2007. The main impact of these measures has been the fragmentation of the Palestinian economy in the West Bank and serious disruptions to normal links between communities and public services, employment and land.

28. The target date for establishing bus convoys to link the West Bank with the Gaza Strip, in accordance with the Agreement, was 15 December 2005; for establishing truck convoys, the date was 15 January 2006. Neither deadline was met and there has been no movement towards implementation of this provision of the Agreement.

29. The construction of a seaport has not started, and no discussions on security arrangements, reconstruction and operation of the airport have been held. The Israeli army occupied the Gaza airport for five months up to the week of 22 November 2006. Airport damages as a result of the Israeli military operation amount to an estimated \$16 million.

30. The access of holders of West Bank identification cards to occupied East Jerusalem has deteriorated further since the introduction of new, elaborate terminal systems restricting access from both the Bethlehem (south) and Ramallah (north) directions. According to the Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs, since January 2006, the Israeli army has barred Palestinian pedestrians and vehicles

from using 8 of the 12 routes to occupied East Jerusalem. Increasingly restricted access to occupied East Jerusalem impedes the ability of UNRWA to deliver refugee services to the West Bank, as 65 per cent of its West Bank field office staff are West Bank identification card holders.

31. In the West Bank, among the thousands of incidents of delayed and denied access reported by UNRWA staff, a good number affected the delivery of emergency humanitarian assistance, in particular through the hindrance of the movement of Agency or contracted vehicles transporting food aid, medicines, mobile health teams or food distribution teams. Regular programmes were affected by the impeded movement of teachers, social workers and field office staff, and the imposition of curfews on West Bank camps, villages and towns further added to the disruption of Agency services. The West Bank field office has lost an estimated 832 man-days since March 2006.

Barrier

32. Israel continues construction of the barrier, contrary to General Assembly resolution ES-10/15, in which the Assembly acknowledged the advisory opinion of the International Court of Justice that the construction of the barrier in the occupied Palestinian territory, including in and around occupied East Jerusalem, was contrary to international law.

33. The construction of the barrier is having a major humanitarian impact on Palestinian communities living in the West Bank. On 30 April 2006, the Israeli Cabinet approved a second revision of the barrier route. Accordingly, the barrier will be 703 km long, an increase of 33 km compared to the previous plan.¹⁷ The Emmanuel and Ari'el settlement groups will be split into separate fingers surrounding more than 25,500 Palestinians on three sides, with one access route on the east side of the barrier. As a result, 10,771 Palestinians from Deir Ballut, Rafat and Az Zawiyah villages will remain on the west side of the barrier, between the Green Line and the barrier. Though this will leave three Palestinian villages east of the barrier, the environmental impact on their lands will be considerable. According to the new revised route, the barrier will move approximately one and a half kilometres northwards from road 465 and incorporate olive groves and land from Rantis village. Beit Iksa village and surrounding lands will become part of the Biddu/Beit Surik enclave (about 46,321 people), currently surrounded by the barrier on three sides and closed by road 443 northwards. Al Walaja village will be encircled by the barrier and isolated from its farmland. Many sections of the barrier in the south, originally planned to be built on the Green Line, will be moved inside the West Bank.¹⁸

34. As at February 2007, 58 per cent of the barrier had been completed (408 km) and 9 per cent was still under construction. Construction advanced in occupied East Jerusalem, where about 55 per cent of the plans had been completed and 10 per cent were under construction. As a result, about 3,000 Bedouins living in the Ma'ale Aduin area, most of whom are refugees, are likely to be forcibly displaced. Once completed, 80 per cent of the barrier will lie within the occupied Palestinian territory and only 20 per cent on the Green Line. Furthermore, 575 km² (about

¹⁷ See the website of the Israeli Ministry of Defense at www.seamzone.mod.gov.il.

¹⁸ Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs, preliminary analysis of the humanitarian implications of the April 2006 barrier projections.

10 per cent of the West Bank area) will be isolated between the barrier and the Green Line in the “seam zone”. On the basis of the current route, 60,500 Palestinians living in that area will be severely affected in their access to the West Bank and main sources of livelihoods, and 31,400 will be completely encircled by the barrier.¹⁹

35. Palestinian communities located east of the barrier are facing increasing difficulties in reaching their farm and grazing land in the closed areas. Although the Government of Israel maintained that the barrier would not affect ownership of land and residents’ access to their sources of livelihoods,²⁰ the Israeli permit regime and the erratic operation of gates are severely hindering Palestinian farming practices. Over 230 km² of the West Bank’s most fertile land (some 15 per cent of all West Bank agricultural land) has already been confiscated in connection to the construction of the barrier²¹ and the risk of further dispossession is very high owing to the inability of Palestinian farmers to secure continuous access to their land.

Israeli settlements

36. According to military sources, Israel’s Civil Administration (the military administration in the occupied Palestinian territory) has handed over thousands of dunums of Palestinian lands in the Jordan Valley for illegal settlement construction and army bases.²² Meanwhile, Israel authorized the establishment of a new settlement, Maskiot, in the Jordan Valley issuing a permit for the first 30 of 100 residential units. Construction of the units has not yet started.²³

37. In March 2006, the Israeli settler population in the West Bank totalled 246,100. Their growth rate remains high, at 5.1 per cent, in contrast with the 1.8 per cent general population growth rate in Israel.²⁴ According to the Palestinian Central Bureau of Statistics as at January 2007, settlers numbered 260,000, in addition to some 200,000 living in occupied East Jerusalem.

38. Israeli military orders confirmed the confiscation of 1,328 dunums in occupied East Jerusalem, reportedly for the expansion of the Almon settlement near Ma’ale Adumim, which bisects the West Bank. In mid-2006, the Government of Israel authorized the near doubling of the Ramat Shlomo settlement (with about 2,000 units) in occupied East Jerusalem.²⁵ Some 2,700 to 3,000 Jahalin Bedouin now face further displacement by the end of 2007 to make room for the expansion of the Ma’ale Adumim E1 Block and the construction of the barrier.²⁶

¹⁹ Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs, West Bank barrier route projections, July 2006.

²⁰ Summary legal position of the Government of Israel (A/ES-10/248, annex I).

²¹ United Nations Conference on Trade and Development, Report on UNCTAD’s Assistance to the Palestinian People, July 2006 (TD/B./53/2).

²² Foundation for Middle East Peace, “Jordan Valley Short Takes”, *Settlement Report*, vol. 17, No. 1 (January-February 2007).

²³ European Union Presidency statement on the Israeli-Palestinian relations (press release 544/2006, 27 December 2006; available from www.eu2006.fi/en_GB).

²⁴ “Population in Israel and West Bank settlements, 1995-2005”, *Report on Israeli Settlement in the Occupied Territories*, vol. 16, No. 5 (September-October 2006).

²⁵ *Kol Ha’Zeman* (26 May 2006).

²⁶ Report of the Badil Resource Center for Palestinian Residency and Refugee Rights, 7 March 2007.

39. More than 3,500 housing units were under construction in West Bank settlements in October 2006, compared to 4,144 in October 2005.²⁷ Formerly temporary West Bank outposts have become permanent, as in the notable cases of Neve Erez, Nofei Prat, Palgei Mayim and Zayit Raanan in the Ramallah area.²⁸

Natural resources, water and environment

40. The construction of the barrier has closed off the access of Palestinians to 95 per cent of their own water resources (630 million m³ of 670 million m³ annually) by destroying 403 wells and 1,327 cisterns.²⁹ It has cut off access of owners to 136 wells providing 44.1 million m³ of water annually. The barrier has closed 46 springs (23 million m³/year) and 906 dunums of underground water (99 per cent of underground West Bank water).³⁰ Consequently, over 7,000 Palestinian agriculture-dependent families have lost their livelihood²⁹ in a region where water resources are scarce and increasingly costly to develop.³¹ The latest barrier route will isolate another 62 springs and 134 wells in the “seam zone”.³²

41. The quantity and quality of water supply and sanitation services for Palestinians in the occupied Palestinian territory are insufficient, inefficient and unreliable. The overall daily average of water consumption per capita in the occupied Palestinian territory is 85 litres (75 in the West Bank and 95 in the Gaza Strip), far below the minimum standard recommended by the World Health Organization (WHO) of 150 litres. Only 45 per cent of domestic water services meet WHO quality standards in the Gaza Strip, where high chloride and nitrate concentrations abound. In the West Bank, 87 per cent of the population accesses piped water, where 220 unserved communities rely on rainwater harvesting and costly water purchases, subjecting them to waterborne diseases and deeper impoverishment.

42. Israeli settlements and the behaviour of settlers put strain on the environment, as seen in the destruction of hundreds of fruit-bearing trees in 2006 by burning, felling and uprooting. Settlements occasionally direct their sewage flow on to agricultural lands of Palestinian farmers, affecting the West Bank villages of Yatta, Wadi Fukin and Nahhalin.³³

43. While Israel’s settlement practices are the primary cause of environmental degradation, weak and fragmented wastewater and waste management also play a role. The lack of solid waste disposal services leads to increased burning. Smoke from waste burning was the principal air pollutant for 48.4 per cent of exposed households in 2006 in the occupied Palestinian territory.²⁹

²⁷ Peace Now report in *Ha’aretz* (3 October 2006).

²⁸ *Yediot Aharonot* (16 November 2006).

²⁹ Data supplied by the Palestinian Central Bureau of Statistics.

³⁰ See Palestinian Agricultural Association, “Impact of occupation and globalization on the agricultural sector in the Occupied Palestinian Territories”, presentation at World Social Forum 2007, Nairobi (20–25 January 2007).

³¹ UNDP, “Water rights in the Occupied Palestinian Territory”, *Human Development Report* (New York: UNDP, 2006).

³² See Applied Research Institute — Jerusalem, “The Effect of the Israeli Segregation Wall on the Palestinian Natural Resources”, October 2006. Available from www.poica.org/editor/case_studies/view.php?recordID=929.

³³ See “Foundation for Middle East Peace Settlement Timeline”, *Settlement Report*, vol. 16, No. 4 (July-August 2006) and vol. 17, No. 1 (January-February 2007).

Palestinian fiscal crisis

44. The fiscal situation of the Palestinian Authority was already considered unsustainable by the end of 2005. The fiscal situation further deteriorated following the victory of Hamas in the legislative elections in January 2006. Those electoral results led to a significant review of donor policies towards the Palestinian Authority. In March 2006, a number of key donors started rechanneling their financial support to Palestinians away from the Palestinian Authority pending its commitment to the three principles laid down by the Quartet on 30 January 2006, namely, the renunciation of violence, the recognition of Israel, and the acceptance of previous agreements and obligations, including the road map. For its part, Israel withheld Customs and Value Added Tax (VAT) revenues from the Palestinian Authority amounting to roughly \$60 million per month plus interest, or approximately 50 per cent of the Palestinian Authority's monthly budget. Through the Quartet and other channels, the United Nations worked to facilitate the release of Palestinian Customs and tax revenues through agreed mechanisms; following the meeting of Mahmoud Abbas and Ehud Olmert in December 2006, Israel authorized a transfer of \$100 million. The transfer was made in January 2007. The United Nations views that as a first positive step, and encourages a return to regular transfers as agreed between the parties.

45. According to the International Monetary Fund (IMF), the financial resources of the Palestinian Authority shrank by 60 per cent, from \$1.2 billion in the third quarter of 2005 to \$0.5 billion by the same quarter of 2006.³⁴ This decline put significant strain on Palestinian institutions, particularly those providing basic public services and security, and all but halted salary payments to approximately 165,000 Palestinian Authority employees (supporting an estimated one quarter of the Palestinian population).

46. Loss of public salaries was partially compensated by the distribution of cash allowances to public sector workers and social hardship cases. Overall, the equivalent of 40 per cent of salaries was paid through the temporary international mechanism of the European Commission and Presidential accounts in 2006.³⁵ In addition, the international community channelled some \$450 million, equivalent to 15 per cent of GDP and 90 per cent of Government revenues for the year, in direct humanitarian assistance to Palestinians through United Nations agencies and non-governmental organizations. Together, these measures helped to mitigate the full effect of the fiscal crisis of the Palestinian Authority in 2006.

Public health and food insecurity

47. Under the temporary international mechanism, which supported the payment of allowances and non-salary costs for the health sector, health workers received, on average, up to 60 per cent of their normal wages from April 2006 to January 2007. Nevertheless, the financial crisis has left the public health system unable to sustain care levels, especially as 2006 was a non-investment year. Hospitals lack adequate supplies, equipment maintenance, cleaning agents and the hygienic environments necessary to control infections.

³⁴ IMF, *West Bank and Gaza: Recent Fiscal and Financial Developments*, October 2006.

³⁵ IMF, *Mission Statement: 17 December 2006*.

48. The 15-week public workers strike over unpaid wages further crippled health services and put more pressure on clinics run by international and non-governmental organizations. Meanwhile, the Augusta Victoria Hospital in occupied East Jerusalem, which serves West Bank Palestinians, actually saw a 30 per cent decrease in in-patient numbers, due to the barrier and associated movement restrictions.³⁶

49. Access to reproductive health care, including antenatal, delivery and post-natal care has been jeopardized by the long closures, the financial crisis of the Ministry of Health and the ongoing Israeli military incursions. Both primary and secondary services have declined, especially as the large majority of delivery and newborn care services (80 per cent of the deliveries in six Health Ministry hospitals in the West Bank and the Gaza Strip) are unable to perform regular maintenance. Pregnant women with post-natal complications may also be at greater risk when discharged too early from hospital owing to lack of staff and space. Emergency obstetrics has become a priority.

50. Five UNRWA mobile clinics in the “seam zone” and frontier villages are increasingly becoming the only accessible health-care services for residents of remote localities, seeing 11,200 patients monthly in 2006. Logistical constraints foiled plans to facilitate access to primary health-care services in isolated rural areas through five additional health points.

51. Food insecurity disproportionately affects women and children. A study conducted by UNRWA in September 2006 revealed that 57.5 per cent of children from 6 to 36 months and 44.9 per cent of pregnant women in the Gaza Strip were anaemic. Of children under 5, 22 per cent were vitamin A-deficient;³⁷ 20 per cent showed signs of iodine deficiency (32 per cent in the West Bank and 3 per cent in the Gaza Strip); and 4.1 per cent suffered from clinical vitamin D-deficiency (rickets) in the Gaza Strip. The increased incidence of non-communicable diseases, such as diabetes mellitus, cardiovascular diseases and cancer represents an epidemiological shift that imposes additional burdens on the scarce human and financial resources.

52. Significantly, 65 per cent of households rely on informal borrowing to subsist.³⁸ Data indicate that the majority endures a lower quality of life, including reduced caloric intake and greater economic dependency and aid reliance. The lower per capita GDP led to a decline in food consumption of 8 per cent. Palestinian households also reuse wastewater at a rate of 45.3 per cent, up from 44.7 per cent in 2005 and 39.3 per cent in 1999.²⁹

53. Mental health is an increasing concern in the occupied Palestinian territory. Comprehensive data are lacking, but localized studies have shown that stressors such as severe movement restriction and lack of access to education and health care are present in everyday life. About one in four people reports suffering from some sort of psychological strain.

³⁶ Report of the Secretary-General on children and armed conflict (A/61/529-S/2006/826), para. 67.

³⁷ WHO considers a major public health problem a prevalence above 20 per cent.

³⁸ UNCTAD, *op. cit.*, para. 8.

Youth and education

54. The public workers' strike disrupted education services. The majority of public schools were totally or partially closed, affecting some 70 per cent of students.³⁹

55. In the 2006/07 academic year, no student in Gaza was able to attend technical training centres in the West Bank because none received permits to travel there. Only 10 students applied, down from the 277 who had been rejected in the previous school year.

56. Although 2005/06 examination scores improved over the previous year, educational achievement continues to wane. Only 50 per cent of West Bank eighth-grade students passed their mathematics examinations, and only 56 per cent passed their science examinations.

57. Internal closures forced teachers in the Gaza Strip away from their duty stations. Since October 2000, UNRWA schools have lost 277,973 days at a cost of over \$5,559,460. During the 2005/06 scholastic year, UNRWA teachers, including those at the Gaza training centre, recorded a total loss of 13,674 teaching days. This represented an improvement over the 56,000 recorded lost during the previous reporting period.

Economic indicators

58. The unemployment rate rose to 30 per cent in the third quarter of 2006 from 29.4 per cent at the end of 2005, affecting 265,000 Palestinians and their dependants.⁴⁰ Although this rate might appear to be relatively stable under the crisis circumstances, further analysis reveals discrepancies between the West Bank and the Gaza Strip, the latter showing an increase of 2.2 per cent.⁴¹ The refugee population is affected by a higher unemployment rate (32.7 per cent in November 2006) that is rapidly rising.⁴² In the first half of 2006, refugee unemployment rose 5.7 per cent over the rate for the same period in 2005.²⁹ Young people (20-24 years) had the highest unemployment rate: 32.3 per cent in the West Bank and 53.7 per cent in Gaza Strip. Around 44,000 young people are expected to enter the labour force annually.⁴² It should be noted that, while the 2005/06 employment rate appears to have remained relatively stable, the rate is now about twice that of 1999. Moreover, income derived from formal employment is likely to have fallen, thus explaining the sharp rise in poverty.

59. The number of Palestinians living in poverty in the occupied Palestinian territory is estimated at 64 per cent.⁴¹ The most pronounced increase was seen in the Gaza Strip, where 87.7 per cent of households live below the official poverty line.⁴³

³⁹ UNICEF, "Six months without pay spark teachers' strike in Gaza and West Bank", New York, 5 September 2006.

⁴⁰ In a context of protracted crisis, the standard unemployment definition might be somehow deficient, since a considerable number of people simply no longer seek employment. A "relaxed definition" of unemployment is here applied, by adding to the total number of unemployed people (according to International Labour Organization standards) the number of people currently not engaged in active job hunting (commonly defined as "inactive").

⁴¹ Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs, *Humanitarian Monitor* (November 2006).

⁴² UNRWA, *Prolonged crisis in the Occupied Palestinian Territories: socio-economic impacts of the new phase on refugees and non-refugees* (November 2006).

⁴³ UNRWA, *Prolonged crisis in the occupied Palestinian territories: recent socio-economic trends* (November 2006).

The number of Palestinians living in deep poverty throughout the occupied Palestinian territory rose by 64.3 per cent to affect some 1,069,200 people.⁴³ At the end of the second quarter of 2006, the number of poor Palestinians increased to 2.1 million, compared with 1.3 million at the end of 2005.²⁹

60. Palestinian GDP declined by approximately 8 per cent in the third quarter of 2006, compared to the same period in 2005. That decline was considerably less than was initially expected, mainly on account of both official and private inflows, including increased humanitarian assistance. Effects were felt the hardest in the Gaza Strip, where closures and poverty rates have been most prevalent.

61. Poverty, unemployment, closures and land loss are all causes of the current Palestinian housing shortage. However, a bigger crisis is looming: 401,867 of the households in the occupied Palestinian territory will need to build new housing units during the next 10 years. Official statistics, however, reveal that only 117,909 households will be able to do so.¹³

62. According to IMF, the banking sector in the occupied Palestinian territory remains sound, despite the depressed economy. Private sector deposits continued to expand slowly in 2006, and banks have continued to extend credit.³⁵

63. Two aspects of Israeli controls over the Palestinian economy have been discussed above: intensifying closures within and around the Gaza Strip and the West Bank, and the withholding of Customs and VAT revenues since the first quarter of 2006. In addition to these, a new set of external financial controls has been introduced with the implementation of the temporary international mechanism of the European Commission. These controls are designed to ensure that Palestinian Authority government channels are bypassed while still allowing for public institutions to function and aid to be transferred to social hardship cases.

Status of women

64. A large majority of women in households (83 per cent) are not at all involved in economic activities. Younger females mostly assume the domestic work and are least involved in economic activities.⁴⁴

65. In occupied East Jerusalem, as elsewhere in the West Bank affected by closures and the barrier, many families are reluctant to let their daughters go through the degrading experience of waiting at checkpoints or barrier crossing points, to be searched and subjected to harassment by Israeli soldiers, or have to walk long distances to avoid such experiences. Consequently, families are now much more likely to pressure young women to drop out of school and not pursue a higher level of education.

66. The general fragmentation of Palestinian communities has exacerbated the isolation of women; rural women constitute a particularly vulnerable group. Attendance at rural girls' schools declines further at each education level. While women account for 44.8 per cent of public sector workers in rural communities, the public sector strike and the withholding of wages have had a devastating effect on the overall poverty rate, which in rural areas has reached an alarming 59.4 per cent.

⁴⁴ Report of the Graduate Institute of Development Studies, available at www.unige.ch/iued/new/information/publications/pdf/ReportVIII_ES-EN.pdf.

67. Since family coping mechanisms are exhausted, children and women (especially pregnant women) are most vulnerable to domestic and gender-based violence.

III. Occupied Syrian Golan

68. The Syrian Golan remains under the Israeli occupation that began in 1967. Israel prevents the return of the Arab population of the occupied Syrian Golan expelled in 1967. As at March 2005, 27 of the 33 Israeli settlements, developed as agricultural colonies, produce wine, beef, fruit and mineral water for Israeli domestic and export markets at preferential terms, to the detriment of the produce of the Syrian Arabs.⁴⁵

69. In April 2006, Israel began the construction of three new tourist settlements on the occupied Lake Tiberias lowlands.⁴⁵ Matzok Orvim is a new neighbourhood that expands the settlement of Qela, where tenders for 300 dunums of settlement construction were published in 2006. Another 100 families are expected to join the settlement by summer 2007.⁴⁶ Katzrin, the largest settlement in the occupied Syrian Golan, grows by 100 residents annually.⁴⁷ On 2 July, the Avne Eitan settlement in the southern Golan announced the arrival of 20 former Gaza settler families with a plan to build them 60 homes, plus 40 homes for more newcomers. Their settlers receive a 35-dunum land allotment.⁴⁵ In December 2006, the Interior Minister announced the intention to facilitate accelerated settlement construction near the border with the Syrian Arab Republic.⁴⁸ Israel officially seeks to double its Golan Heights settler population in the next 10 years.⁴⁹

70. The Ministry of Health of Israel funds one basic health clinic operated by the Golan Arab community. The community operates and funds five health clinics by itself, providing basic maternal and newborn health services, including vaccinations. When necessary, Syrian Arab patients seek treatment in clinics inside the Israeli settlements, or at distant referral hospitals in Israel. In June 2006, the International Committee of the Red Cross (ICRC) opened an emergency and diagnostic medical centre in Majdal Shams and provided two ambulances, addressing long-assessed needs.⁵⁰

71. Israel replaced the Syrian curriculum with its own educational system in 1967. Israel now operates six elementary schools, three junior high schools and two high schools for Syrian Arabs.

72. The destruction by Israel of fruit trees belonging to Syrian Arabs has continued. Israel is harvesting all the Banyas River's estimated 121 million m³ of water per year.⁵¹ The Golan Heights supply one third of Israel's water consumption,

⁴⁵ Data contributed by the Syrian Arab Republic, Prime Ministry, State Planning Commission.

⁴⁶ *Ma'ariv* (11 October 2006).

⁴⁷ *Washington Post* (30 October 2006).

⁴⁸ Foundation for Middle East Peace, "Golan Update", *Settlement Report*, vol. 17, No. 1 (January-February 2007).

⁴⁹ *Washington Post* (30 October 2006).

⁵⁰ "Majdal Shams Hospital" project, occupied Golan: ICRC statement (20 June 2006) available at www.icrc.org/Web/Eng/siteeng0.nsf/htmlall/conference29-statement-200606.

⁵¹ Report of the Special Committee to Investigate Israeli Practices Affecting the Human Rights of the Palestinian People and Other Arabs of the Occupied Territories (A/61/500), para. 84.

while Israel sells water to Syrian Arabs at prices higher than those charged to Israeli settlers.⁴⁵ Israel has confiscated Arab-owned acreage traditionally used for pasture, and that has transformed production, commercial and land-use patterns and eliminated traditional rural and pastoral occupations. Indigenous Syrian livestock production and trade have decreased. Trade in Syrian Arab-produced apples, olive oil and honey are dependent on Israeli markets. This year, ICRC helped to transport 10,000 tons of Arab-produced Golani apples to the Syrian market.⁵² Israel helped to facilitate this transport and subsidized the farmers.

73. The Syrian Arab labour force in the occupied Syrian Golan numbers approximately 6,500 workers, of whom some 750 work in local services. Another 3,200 work in Israel in agriculture and construction. Local opportunities in the construction sector remain limited due to planning criteria, particularly those restricting Syrian Arab housing.

IV. Conclusions

74. A combination of intensified external and internal closures, the withholding of vital financial assistance from the Palestinian Authority and intensified conflict in 2006 have led to a measurable deepening of the socio-economic crisis in the occupied Palestinian territory. All social and public health indicators reveal declining standards in living conditions, social and spatial dismemberment, growing despair and violence. This crisis on the ground was accompanied by a weakening capacity of Palestinian institutions to independently provide for the essential services and welfare of the Palestinian population.

75. The crisis has been partly offset by increased international investment through alternative funding channels. The situation prompted the United Nations country team to launch a common appeal in December 2006 which, at \$453 million, was double the amount requested in 2005. Increasing proportions of international assistance were shifted from long-term development support to immediate emergency response. While these temporary measures served to stabilize the situation to a significant degree, they were not expected to contribute to the long-term improvement of socio-economic conditions in the occupied Palestinian territory. Nor were they expected to be a substitute for the direct responsibility of local parties, or for a rejuvenated political process that could address the underlying issues of the conflict.

⁵² "Occupied Golan: ICRC supports local communities by transporting apples" (2 March 2007), at www.alertnet.org/thenews/fromthefield/220224/191cfd29ce6b306bf05478513bcd60e.htm.

**General Assembly
Economic and Social Council**Distr.: General
6 May 2008

Original: English

**General Assembly
Sixty-third session**

Item 41 of the preliminary list*

Permanent sovereignty of the Palestinian people in the Occupied Palestinian Territory, including East Jerusalem, and of the Arab population in the occupied Syrian Golan over their natural resources**Economic and Social Council
Substantive session of 2008**

Item 11 of the provisional agenda**

Economic and social repercussions of the Israeli occupation on the living conditions of the Palestinian people in the occupied Palestinian Territory, including Jerusalem, and the Arab population in the occupied Syrian Golan**Economic and social repercussions of the Israeli occupation on the living conditions of the Palestinian people in the occupied Palestinian territory, including East Jerusalem, and of the Arab population in the occupied Syrian Golan****Note by the Secretary-General**

In its resolution 2007/26, the Economic and Social Council requested the Secretary-General to submit to the General Assembly at its sixty-second session, through the Council, a report on the implementation of that resolution. The Assembly, in its resolution 62/181, also requested the Secretary-General to submit a report to it at its sixty-third session. The present report, which has been prepared by the Economic and Social Commission for Western Asia, is submitted in response to the resolutions of the Assembly and the Council.

* A/63/50.

** E/2008/100.



Report prepared by the Economic and Social Commission for Western Asia on the economic and social repercussions of the Israeli occupation on the living conditions of the Palestinian people in the occupied Palestinian territory, including East Jerusalem, and of the Arab population in the occupied Syrian Golan*

Summary

The Israeli occupation of the Palestinian territory and Syrian Golan continues to intensify the economic and social hardship of the Palestinian and Syrian people.

Attacks by Palestinian militants and the launching of rockets into Israeli cities from the Gaza Strip continue, as do Israeli military operations, together with measures of arbitrary detention, the disproportionate use of force, house demolitions, severe mobility restrictions and closure policies in the occupied Palestinian territory. However, there was a decline in Palestinian-Israeli violence in 2007 and an increase in intra-Palestinian violence, culminating in the takeover of the Gaza Strip by Hamas in June 2007.

Internal conflict in the occupied Palestinian territory has compounded existing hardships. After the Hamas takeover of Gaza, Israel imposed additional restrictions on the movement of goods and people into the Gaza Strip, which led to deteriorating conditions and shortages of basic commodities, including food, electricity and fuel. Increased restrictions on the operations of humanitarian agencies hindered the delivery of humanitarian aid in the Gaza Strip and the West Bank.

The Israeli closure system, which restricts Palestinian access to health and education services, employment, markets and social and religious networks, led to increased poverty and humanitarian need in the occupied Palestinian territory. Israeli settlements, land confiscation and the construction of the barrier in the West Bank, contrary to the Geneva Convention and other norms of international law, isolate occupied East Jerusalem, bisect the West Bank and curtail normal economic and social life.

The ongoing occupation and expansion of settlements by Israel in the occupied Syrian Golan and the restrictions imposed on the Syrian citizens living there also continue, in violation of Security Council and General Assembly resolutions.

* The Economic and Social Commission for Western Asia would like to acknowledge its appreciation for the substantive contributions of the Department of Political Affairs, the United Nations Development Programme (Programme Assistance to the Palestinian People), the United Nations Conference on Trade and Development, the United Nations Population Fund, the United Nations Development Fund for Women, the Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations, the World Food Programme, the United Nations Relief and Works Agency for Palestine Refugees in the Near East, the Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Human Rights, the Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs, the World Health Organization, the International Labour Organization and the Office of the United Nations Special Coordinator for the Middle East Peace Process to the present report.

I. Introduction

1. In its resolution 2007/26, the Economic and Social Council stressed the importance of reviving the Middle East peace process on the basis of Security Council resolutions, including 242 (1967), 338 (1973), 425 (1978), 1397 (2002), 1515 (2003) and 1544 (2004), and the principle of land for peace as well as compliance with the agreements reached between the Government of Israel and the Palestine Liberation Organization, the representative of the Palestinian people. In the same resolution, the Economic and Social Council urged all parties to respect the rules of international humanitarian law and to refrain from violence against the civilian population in accordance with the Geneva Convention relative to the Protection of Civilian Persons in Time of War, of 12 August 1949. The Council stressed the need to preserve the national unity and the territorial integrity of the occupied Palestinian territory, including East Jerusalem, and to guarantee the freedom of movement of persons and goods in the territory, including the removal of restrictions on going to and from East Jerusalem, and the freedom of movement to and from the outside world. It also stressed that the wall being constructed by Israel in the occupied Palestinian territory, including in and around East Jerusalem, is contrary to international law and is isolating East Jerusalem and dividing up the West Bank and is seriously debilitating to the economic and social development of the Palestinian people, and called in this regard for full compliance with legal obligations laid out in the advisory opinion of the International Court of Justice rendered on 9 July 2004 (see A/ES-10/273 and Corr.1) and in General Assembly resolution ES-10/15. In that resolution, the Assembly reaffirmed the inalienable rights of the Palestinian people and the Arab population of the occupied Syrian Golan to all their natural and economic resources, and called upon Israel, the occupying Power, not to exploit, endanger or cause loss or depletion of those resources; it also reaffirmed that Israeli settlements in the occupied Palestinian territory, including East Jerusalem and the occupied Syrian Golan, are illegal and an obstacle to economic and social development and called for the full implementation of the relevant Security Council resolutions and requested the Secretary-General to submit to the Assembly, through the Council, a report on the implementation of the resolution.

2. In its resolution 62/181, the General Assembly reaffirmed the inalienable rights of the Palestinian people and the population of the occupied Syrian Golan over their natural resources, including land and water, and called upon Israel, the occupying Power, not to exploit, damage, cause loss or depletion of, or endanger the natural resources in the occupied Palestinian territory, including East Jerusalem, and in the occupied Syrian Golan. The Assembly recognized the right of the Palestinian people to claim restitution as a result of any exploitation, damage, loss or depletion, or endangerment of their natural resources resulting from illegal measures and actions taken by Israel, the occupying Power, in the occupied Palestinian territory, including East Jerusalem. The Assembly stressed that the wall being constructed by Israel in the occupied Palestinian territory, including in and around East Jerusalem, is contrary to international law and is seriously depriving the Palestinian people of their natural resources, and called in this regard for full compliance with the legal obligations stipulated in the 9 July 2004 advisory opinion of the International Court of Justice and in resolution ES-10/15. The Assembly called on Israel, the occupying Power, to cease the dumping of all kinds of waste materials in the occupied Palestinian territory, including East Jerusalem, and in the occupied Syrian Golan,

which gravely threaten their natural resources, namely the water and land resources, and pose an environmental hazard and health threat to the civilian populations. The Assembly further called upon Israel to cease its destruction of vital infrastructure, including water pipelines and sewage networks, which, inter alia, has a negative impact on the natural resources of the Palestinian people. The Assembly requested the Secretary-General to submit a report to it at its sixty-third session on the implementation of the resolution.

II. Occupied Palestinian territory, including East Jerusalem

Deaths and injuries

3. Israeli military operations in the West Bank and Gaza and attacks by Palestinian militants continued throughout 2007. The number of Palestinians killed as a result of the conflict declined from 678 in 2006 to 396 in 2007.¹ The majority (76 per cent) were killed in the Gaza Strip, with more than 40 per cent of those fatalities the result of targeted killings.

4. The total number of Palestinians injured in the conflict with Israel in 2007 was 1,843, down from 3,194 in 2006.¹ The majority (64 per cent) were injured in the West Bank, predominantly by the Israeli army. In the Gaza Strip, more than 70 per cent were injured during targeted killing or ground operations.

5. While the number of casualties of Israeli-Palestinian violence decreased by almost half from 2006 to 2007, internal Palestinian violence increased, owing to political discord between the two main Palestinian factions, Hamas and Fatah. The total number of Palestinian deaths due to internal violence in 2007 was 490, as compared with 146 in 2006 and 12 in 2005. Of those 490 fatalities, 454 occurred in the Gaza Strip. The number of injuries resulting from internal fighting increased from 130 in 2005 to 871 in 2006 and to 2,726 in 2007.¹

6. While the purpose of the present report is to describe the effects of the Israeli occupation on the Palestinian people, it is important to note that in 2007 13 Israelis were killed in direct conflict-related incidents with Palestinian armed elements. During the same period, 322 Israelis were injured, some of them, in the West Bank, by other Israelis.

Arbitrary arrests and detentions

7. Administrative detention is legal under Israeli law, and military commanders in the West Bank are empowered to detain an individual for up to six months, extendable for unlimited additional six-month periods. Between 1999 and October 2001, the average number of Palestinians held in Israeli administrative detention was less than 20. After October 2001, the use of administrative detention began to increase. As at 31 December 2007, the total number of Palestinians held in Israeli prison facilities was 8,378. Of those, 842 were being held in administrative detention without charge or trial, as opposed to 34 Palestinians held in 2001.²

¹ Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs, *The Humanitarian Monitor*, No. 20 (December 2007).

² B'Tselem (see http://www.btselem.org/english/Administrative_Detention/Statistics.asp).

8. A monthly average of 445 Israeli army search operations and 409 detentions/arrests in the West Bank and 4 Israeli army search operations and 99 detentions/arrests in the Gaza Strip were reported by the Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs.

9. The United Nations Relief and Works Agency for Palestine Refugees in the Near East (UNRWA) reported that as at the end of December 2007, six West Bank staff members were being held by the Israeli authorities. In spite of repeated written requests, access to the detained staff has been denied. The Agency has not been provided with full records of the Israeli military court proceedings, nor has it been permitted to interview any of the detainees.

10. In the Gaza Strip, an UNRWA staff member was arrested by the Israeli forces on 23 August 2007 and remains in administrative detention. One additional staff member remained in custody following his arrest in August 2002.

Population displacement and the destruction and confiscation of property

11. Palestinians were displaced as a result of the destruction of property, the confiscation of land and the revocation of residency permits, as well as occasional deportation. Over the past 10 years, the Israeli authorities have demolished more than 2,200 residences, leaving more than 13,000 Palestinians homeless.³ Between 1967 and 2006, 8,269 Palestinians had their residency rights revoked in occupied East Jerusalem. In 2006, 1,363 Palestinian residents of occupied East Jerusalem had their residency rights revoked, as compared with 222 in 2005 and 16 in 2004.⁴

12. The Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs reported that 83 inhabited residential structures were demolished between February and December 2007. Those demolitions resulted in the displacement of more than 611 Palestinians, including 235 children. In all, 39 per cent of homes were demolished owing to the lack of building permits issued by the Israeli authorities in the West Bank.

13. Between February and December 2007, Israeli authorities demolished 114 other structures, primarily greenhouses, animal pens and uninhabited or partly built houses and water network facilities, mainly because of the lack of building permits; 85 per cent of those demolitions took place in the West Bank.

14. The ongoing construction of the barrier has contributed to population displacement throughout the West Bank and occupied East Jerusalem. On 29 October 2007, the entire community of Qassa, which is in the Hebron governorate and is located between the barrier and the Green Line, was displaced by the Israeli army. In all, 25 families, consisting of more than 180 people, including 47 children, were forcibly removed and deposited at Tarqumiya commercial checkpoint.⁵

15. In the Gaza Strip, there were 11 instances of damage caused by Israeli forces to UNRWA facilities and property in 2007, including to seven schools. On one occasion, Israeli soldiers entered an UNRWA school with two tanks, blindfolded and handcuffed two UNRWA guards and proceeded to vandalize the school, including by

³ B'Tselem (see http://www.btselem.org/english/Planning_and_Building).

⁴ B'Tselem (see http://www.btselem.org/english/Jerusalem/Revocation_Statistics.asp).

⁵ Badil Resource Center for Palestinian Residency and Refugee Rights (see A/HRC/6/NGO/54).

urinating and defecating in the classrooms. In a separate incident, a school was hit by an Israeli shell, which broke through the outer wall and continued through an adjacent wall.

Barrier

16. Israel is continuing with the construction of the barrier, contrary to General Assembly resolution ES-10/15, in which the Assembly acknowledged the advisory opinion of the International Court of Justice that the route of the barrier in the occupied Palestinian territory was contrary to international law.

17. The current planned length of the barrier, as approved by the Israeli Cabinet in April 2006, is 723 km — more than twice the length of the 320-km Green Line, the internationally recognized boundary between the West Bank and Israel. The planned length of the barrier has gradually increased: it was 670 km in 2005 and 703 km in 2006.⁶ As of November 2007, some 56 per cent had been constructed and 9 per cent was under construction. Only approximately 20 per cent of the route follows the Green Line; most of it deviates from it, in some places by as much as 22 km, into the West Bank.

18. The route of the barrier follows Israeli settlements, dissecting the West Bank into dozens of enclaves. This fragmentation has had a negative effect on social and economic life for the vast proportion of Palestinian residents, who must compete with Israeli settlers for limited resources such as land and water, while their freedom of access and movement is restricted.

19. The western area between the barrier and the Green Line was declared a “closed zone” by military order in October 2003. The almost 10,000 Palestinians living in the closed area now require permanent resident permits in order to continue to live in their own homes and may leave their communities only through a gate in the barrier.⁷ These Palestinians are cut off from familial and social networks as well as essential health and education services located on the eastern side of the barrier.

20. Non-resident Palestinians living east of the barrier who want to enter the closed zone to gain access to agricultural land and water resources must apply for visitor permits. Only approximately 20 per cent of the people who formerly worked the land in the closed area now hold permits. For those granted permits, the irregular placement and limited opening times of the gates further restrict access: of the 67 gates, only approximately 19 are open on a daily basis. Another 19 are open seasonally (usually for the olive harvest), and 29 are never open to Palestinians.

21. Israel has largely completed the construction of a 168-km segment of the barrier separating East Jerusalem from the rest of the West Bank.⁸ Approximately 25 per cent of Palestinians living in occupied East Jerusalem are separated by the barrier from the city and from essential services to which they are entitled as residents. More than 30,000 Palestinians living in villages within the municipal boundaries are now outside the barrier. Neighbouring West Bank villages that were

⁶ See A/62/75-E/2007/13, para. 33, and A/61/67-E/2006/13, para. 35.

⁷ Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs, *OCHA Special Focus: The Barrier Gate and Permit Regime Four Years on — Humanitarian Impact in the Northern West Bank* (November 2007).

⁸ Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs, *The Humanitarian Impact of the West Bank Barrier on Palestinian Communities: East Jerusalem*, Update No. 7 (June 2007).

once closely connected to occupied East Jerusalem, with populations of over 84,000, are also excluded by the barrier.

22. These Palestinians depend for treatment on the six non-government hospitals in occupied East Jerusalem, which receive over 3,000 referrals annually. Tightened restrictions have resulted in a 50 per cent drop in patient caseloads and are preventing essential staff from reaching medical facilities. The restrictions are also hampering the ability of 6,000 pupils and 650 teachers to reach their schools and hundreds of thousands of people in neighbouring towns and villages to gain access to their places of worship.

Mobility restrictions and closure policies, including access to humanitarian assistance

23. The closure regime, which covers both internal and external closure, impedes normal economic activity and is a main cause of the deteriorating humanitarian situation. External closure, in the form of control of crossings out of the West Bank, has become intimately linked with the construction of the barrier and is progressively sealing off the West Bank from Israel. Internal closure is controlled by Israel through the use of physical obstacles: earth mounds, trenches, roadblocks, gates, restricted and fenced-off roads and checkpoints.

24. The Palestinian export trade in particular is affected by the closure system. Goods must first pass through the internal closure system around the urban centres where they are produced and then exit the West Bank via a barrier terminal. The number of internal physical obstacles in the West Bank increased from 528 in January 2007 to 563 in December 2007. The number of fixed physical obstacles is augmented by flying checkpoints, of which there were on average an estimated 488 per month in 2007.

25. The closure system increases the cost of transporting basic commodities because of the long detours necessitated by roadblocks and the back-to-back system. In Nablus, the main commercial centre in the West Bank, only 120 trucks have permits allowing them to be driven outside the city. The majority of trucks must pass through the Awarta commercial crossing, currently the only back-to-back crossing inside the West Bank. There, goods are unloaded from one truck, searched, ferried through a barrier of concrete blocks, and loaded onto another truck on the other side of the barrier. Israel announced in 2007 that it intended to introduce a compulsory back-to-back system for goods throughout the West Bank.

26. Following the Hamas takeover of the Gaza Strip in mid-June 2007, Israel increased border closures and restrictions on the access of goods and people to and from the Gaza Strip. This near-total isolation resulted in shortages of food and medical and relief items, spare parts for critical health-care and water-sanitation installations and raw materials for commerce and industry in Gaza.

27. The Agreement on Movement and Access between the Palestinian Authority and the Government of Israel contains specific provisions for the movement of people and goods within the occupied Palestinian territory and outside it.

28. The first of the six points of the Agreement was the reopening of the Rafah border crossing with Egypt. From 1 January to 9 June 2007, Rafah was open for passengers travelling in both directions only 33 per cent of scheduled days and 24.4 per cent of scheduled hours. The Rafah crossing was closed completely on

10 June and has remained so, except for 3, 4 and 7 December, when it was opened for the departure of Palestinian pilgrims.⁹ In January 2008, sections of the Rafah border crossing were blown open by Palestinian armed elements attempting to break the blockade. It was estimated that half of the 1.5 million residents of Gaza took the opportunity to cross into Egypt to buy supplies.¹⁰ After talks between Hamas representatives and Egyptian officials, on 3 February 2008 Egyptian soldiers closed the gap, stopping any further crossing of the border into Egypt.

29. Since 12 June 2007, the Erez crossing has been closed to virtually all Palestinians wishing to leave Gaza other than a limited number of traders, aid workers and medical cases.⁹ With the closure of the Erez and Rafah crossings, patients have been prevented from or delayed in gaining access to health care that is not available in the Gaza Strip. Moreover, hundreds of students with places at universities abroad, and Gazans with foreign residency, were delayed in leaving Gaza.

30. Karni, the principal crossing for goods, was open for only about 40 per cent of scheduled days in 2007. Imports into Gaza were increasingly restricted throughout the year, with a 67 per cent decrease between January and December 2007. Since 12 June 2007, the crossing has been closed, except for a single-lane conveyor belt, which functioned an average of two days per week for wheat and animal feed.

31. The Sufa crossing used to be the main passage point into Gaza for the import of aggregates used for construction. After mid-June 2007, Sufa was also used for importing humanitarian and commercial goods. However, no aggregates were allowed into Gaza in 2007, halting nearly all public infrastructure and maintenance projects. On 28 October 2007, Israel officially announced the closure of the Sufa crossing. Overall, the crossing remained open for approximately 60 per cent of scheduled days in 2007.

32. After the end of October 2007, Kerem Shalom became the only goods crossing in operation. On 2 December, Israel began to allow Palestinians with foreign residency or visas to exit Gaza through Kerem Shalom. As at 11 December, 920 persons had crossed, although 198 were refused entry to Egypt and sent back to Gaza.¹¹

33. The target date for establishing bus convoys to link the West Bank with the Gaza Strip, in accordance with the Agreement on Movement and Access, was 15 December 2005. The target date for establishing truck convoys was 15 January 2006. As at the end of January 2007, neither target had been met.

34. On 28 October 2007, Israel began to limit the supply of fuel and spare parts entering Gaza. The Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs reported that in November 2007 there was a 40 per cent decrease in the supply of petrol, a 49 per cent decrease in the supply of diesel and a 14 per cent decrease in the supply of industrial gasoline, which is necessary for the operation of the Gaza power plant and the water and sewerage systems.¹¹

⁹ United Nations Report No. 54, Implementation of the Agreement on Movement and Access (28 November-11 December 2007).

¹⁰ BBC News, "Egypt reseals Gaza border breach", 3 February 2008 (http://news.bbc.co.uk/1/hi/world/middle_east/7224734.stm).

¹¹ Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs, *OCHA Special Focus: The closure of the Gaza Strip — the economic and humanitarian consequences* (December 2007).

35. The Gaza Strip requires about 240 megawatts of electrical power, of which 120 are supplied by Israel and 17 by Egypt. On 5 January 2008, the Gaza Power Generating Company, which has the capacity to produce 80 megawatts, reduced its power supply to the Gaza Strip by 23 megawatts, and on 20 January, it stopped producing electricity altogether when its fuel supplies became too low for it to continue operating. This resulted in daily power cuts of up to 8 hours — in some areas up to 12 hours. Fuel supplies were resumed on 22 January, allowing the power plant to produce 65 megawatts. As from that date, there were power cuts of 8 hours per day in central Gaza, 10 hours every two days in northern Gaza and 8 hours every two days in Gaza City.¹²

36. Humanitarian organizations have also faced further restrictions on the movement of people and goods through and into the occupied Palestinian territory. Owing to the closure of the Karni crossing, UNRWA has been forced to palletize its goods, including food commodities, and bring them into Gaza through the secondary crossings of Sufa and Kerem Shalom.

37. Prohibitions on the importation of building materials have resulted in the cessation of work on \$213 million worth of United Nations building projects as well as on other, non-United Nations, projects, including the rehousing of refugees and Gazans living in dilapidated housing and the repair and construction of public infrastructure such as sewerage and drainage systems.

38. In the West Bank, UNRWA staff reported thousands of incidents of access being delayed or denied, a good many of which hindered the delivery of emergency humanitarian assistance in the form of food aid and medicines and the work of mobile health-care and food distribution teams. Regular programmes were affected because the movement of teachers, social workers and field office staff was impeded, and the imposition of curfews on West Bank camps, villages and towns further added to the disruption of agency services.

39. United Nations staff continue to face difficulties and lengthy delays crossing into Israel at the Erez checkpoint. The hours of operation of the checkpoint were significantly reduced in 2007, including complete closure between 2 p.m. on Fridays and 8 a.m. on Sundays.

Israeli settlements

40. More than 38 per cent of the West Bank consists of settlements, closed military areas or other related structures that are off-limits to Palestinians, or at least tightly restricted.¹³ The settlements are linked to each other and to Israel by an extensive road network and encircled by the barrier, which encloses approximately 69 settlements, containing 83 per cent of settlers. Palestinians for the most part are either prevented from using those roads or have only restricted access to them. The roads have also fragmented the West Bank, breaking it up into a series of isolated enclaves to which Palestinians can gain access only via a network of alternative roads, checkpoints and bridges over or tunnels under roads reserved primarily for settlers.

¹² Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs, "Gaza closure: situation report", 18-24 January 2008.

¹³ Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs, *The humanitarian impact on Palestinians of Israeli settlements and other infrastructure in the West Bank* (July 2007).

41. There are currently 473,000 settlers living in the West Bank and occupied East Jerusalem (282,000 in the West Bank and 191,000 in East Jerusalem) in 132 settlements.¹⁴ In addition, there are about 100 “outposts” — settlements that have not been authorized by the Government of Israel — populated by 3,000 Israeli settlers. In 2001, Israel promised to evacuate all outposts established after March 2001. To date, no outposts have been fully dismantled. The settler population continues to grow at a rate of 5.5 per cent a year, three times that of the population of Israel itself. The majority of new arrivals settle in the large settlement blocs west of the barrier. On the basis of the current growth rate, the settler population will double to nearly 900,000 in just 12 years.

42. As of December 2007, there were more than 4,000 dwelling units under construction in the West Bank.¹⁵ A new settlement outpost, comprising 27 trailers, was under construction in February 2008 near the settlement of Eli, north of Ramallah, reportedly on land privately owned by Palestinians. In addition, in February 2008, it was reported that construction had been renewed without authorization in Maskiot in the Jordan valley and that 10 settler families had moved in.¹⁶

43. Israel planned significant settlement expansion in occupied East Jerusalem in 2007 in an attempt to establish an unbroken belt of settlement along the northern perimeter of East Jerusalem. A plan to expand the Giva Binyamin/Adam settlement by constructing 1,200 units for 7,000 people was reported. The new development will be linked with the settlement of Neve Ya’acov¹⁷ in occupied East Jerusalem. A new settlement of between 11,000 and 13,000 units — accommodation for more than 60,000 people — was in the initial planning stages for the site of the Atarot airport, adjacent to the barrier and the Qalandiya checkpoint. If approved, it would be the largest settlement project in occupied East Jerusalem since June 1967. In addition, in February 2008 Israel announced that tenders would be issued for the construction of more than 1,000 new homes in the settlements of Har Homa and Pisgat Ze’ev.¹⁸

Natural resources, water and environment

44. The water supply and sanitation services for Palestinians in the occupied Palestinian territory are insufficient and unreliable in terms of quality. The overall daily average of water consumption per capita in the West Bank in 2007 was 60 litres, down from 65.3 litres in 2006. In the Gaza Strip, overall daily consumption in 2007 was 57.8 litres, down from 80.5 litres in 2006. This is far below the minimum standard recommended by the World Health Organization (WHO) of 150 litres per day. In 2007, on average 35.2 per cent of households in the West Bank and 36.3 per cent of households in Gaza had piped water.¹

¹⁴ Foundation for Middle East Peace, *Report on Israeli Settlement in the Occupied Territories*, vol. 18, No. 1 (January-February 2008).

¹⁵ *Ibid.*, vol. 17, No. 6 (November-December 2007).

¹⁶ *Ha’aretz*, “Construction continuing in West Bank settlements despite PM’s pledge”, 21 February 2008.

¹⁷ Foundation for Middle East Peace, *Report on Israeli Settlement in the Occupied Territories*, vol. 17, No. 2 (March-April 2007).

¹⁸ BBC News, “Israel plans new settlement homes”, 12 February 2008 (http://news.bbc.co.uk/2/hi/middle_east/7240557.stm).

45. Owing to the lack of electrical power in Gaza as a result of the cuts in the fuel supply since October 2007 and the ban on the importation of spare parts, water wells and pumping stations throughout the Gaza Strip have been falling into disrepair or standing idle, with the result that 15 per cent of the population has been receiving water for only 1 or 2 hours, per day.¹¹ As at 21 January 2008, the water authority had only enough fuel to pump water from 40 of its 130 wells and sewage at 21 of its 33 pumping stations. As a result, as at 23 January, about 30 per cent of Gazans had limited access to running water¹² and about 35 million litres of sewage were entering the sea per day.¹⁹

46. In 2007, an average of 318 trees in the West Bank and 2,883 trees in the Gaza Strip were uprooted, burned or cut down by Israeli authorities or settlers per month. In the Gaza Strip, Israel levelled an average of 1,623 dunums of arable land per month. In the West Bank, an average of 131 dunums of land per month were requisitioned and an average of 126 dunums per month were levelled.¹

Palestinian fiscal crisis

47. The Palestinian Authority is beginning to recover from the liquidity crisis that followed the formation of the Hamas-led Government early in 2006. The fiscal deficit for 2006 reached \$1.2 billion, or 26 per cent of gross domestic product (GDP). About \$0.9 billion in expenditure arrears were accumulated, owed to Government employees, who received only 60 per cent of their regular salaries in 2006, as well as to the pension fund and private sector suppliers. The accumulation continued to rise to \$1.3 billion (27 per cent of GDP) by the end of June 2007.²⁰

48. Following the appointment of a caretaker Government in June 2007, the fiscal situation of the Palestinian Authority started to improve, particularly after the resumption of clearance revenues transfers by Israel in July, allowing monthly salary payments to be resumed and back payments to Palestinian Authority employees to be made.

Socio-economic indicators

49. Gross domestic product contracted by nearly 8 per cent in 2006. In 2007, rebounding economic activity in the West Bank offset the decline in private sector activity in Gaza, leading to a projected real growth in GDP of zero for 2007. Preliminary results show a slight rise in GDP to \$4.2 billion in 2007 from \$4.1 billion in 2006. On the other hand, GDP per capita is estimated to have declined by 5 per cent in 2007 compared with 2006, and almost by 40 per cent compared with 1999. Inflation for 2007 remains low, at about 3 per cent, as the indicator is tied to the shekel, which has gained against the dollar since 2006.²⁰

50. Between January 2006 and June 2007, business productivity in Gaza fell to 46 per cent of capacity. With the tightening of the closure regime in June, there was a further drop in productivity to an average of 11 per cent of capacity.²¹ Nearly 95 per cent of all industrial establishments (3,705 of 3,900) have closed down since

¹⁹ Crisis Action, *The Gaza Strip: A Humanitarian Implosion*.

²⁰ International Monetary Fund, "Medium-term macroeconomic and fiscal framework for the West Bank and Gaza: report for the donors' conference", Paris, 17 December 2007.

²¹ United Nations Development Programme, "The Gaza Strip: a private sector in decline", December 2007.

mid-June 2007.¹⁹ The trade deficit has reached unprecedented proportions and stands at 73 per cent of GDP — 30 per cent higher than the 30-year average.

51. In the fourth quarter of 2007, the unemployment rate was 22.2 per cent, as compared with 10 per cent in the third quarter of 2000. The fourth-quarter unemployment rate was 29 per cent in Gaza and 19.2 per cent in the West Bank. According to the relaxed definition of unemployment, which includes discouraged workers, the overall rate of unemployment in the fourth quarter of 2007 was 28.8 per cent: 25.9 per cent in the West Bank and 35.3 per cent in Gaza.²²

52. Poverty was estimated at 36.9 per cent in the second quarter of 2006, down slightly from 38.8 per cent in the first quarter of 2005, but up from 27.7 per cent in the first quarter of 2004.¹ The decrease in 2007 as compared with 2006 was due mainly to the resumption of Palestinian Authority salaries payments and international donor assistance, as well as to the fact that the local economy of the West Bank was able to generate enough private jobs to compensate slightly for those lost in Gaza. According to the income-based definition of poverty, poverty rates increased from 45 per cent in 2001 to 56.8 per cent in 2006: from 35.5 per cent to 49.1 per cent in the West Bank and from 64.7 per cent to 79.3 per cent in the Gaza Strip.

Public health and food insecurity

53. Given that only basic food goods are entering Gaza and that imports and exports have been shut down, dependency on agencies such as UNRWA and the World Food Programme for humanitarian aid in Gaza now stands at over 80 per cent, as compared with 63 per cent in 2006.¹¹ In 2007, about 60 per cent of the refugee population received emergency food aid. In addition, more than 25,000 families in the West Bank and approximately 3,000 families in the Gaza Strip received emergency cash assistance from UNRWA in 2007.

54. While some essential food items remain available, shortages of other items have caused drastic price increases. During 2007, the price of wheat flour increased by 97 per cent in the West Bank and 51 per cent in the Gaza Strip.¹ The price of other basic commodities in Gaza increased sharply during May and June 2007: baby milk by 30 per cent and rice by 20.5 per cent.¹⁹ The rise in the consumer price index, which was relatively gentle given the sharp reduction in the supply of food to Gaza, is attributable to a decline in both supply and demand.²³ As poverty levels increase, families have fewer funds to spend on food items.

55. In the absence of regular fuel and electricity, supplies, the ability to provide essential and emergency health-care services rapidly diminished in the Gaza Strip in the latter part of 2007. After the cuts in electricity and fuel supplies at the beginning of December 2007, 11 of the hospitals operated by the Ministry of Health and most of the primary health-care centres shut down their emergency generators. Hospitals reported shortages of about 60 to 70 per cent in the diesel supplies required for generating electricity.¹⁹ WHO reported that the average number of hours of daily

²² Palestinian Central Bureau of Statistics, labour force survey for the fourth quarter of 2007, March 2008.

²³ United Nations Special Coordinator for the Middle East Peace Process, "Socio-economic report", December 2007.

electricity in Gaza health-care facilities was 10 in North Gaza and Gaza City districts, 4 in Mid Zone and Khan Younis districts and 2 in Rafah district.

56. 2007 was marked by a shortage of drugs, with about 40 per cent of the items on the essential drug list at critical levels for most of the year. In the Gaza Strip, by December 2007, 100 of 416 items on the essential drug list were at level zero. The number of medical supply items at level zero was 203 in December 2007.¹

57. In March 2007, a sewage infiltration pond in the Gaza Strip breached its banks and tens of thousands of cubic metres of raw sewage flooded a small village in northern Gaza, killing 5 people, injuring 25 and displacing about 2,000. The inability of municipalities to continue to remove solid waste resulted in additional illness and an infestation by vermin. UNRWA has been forced to support municipalities with over 100,000 litres of diesel each month for the fleets of vehicles required to collect solid waste.

58. As a result of strict closures and curfews in the West Bank and the Gaza Strip, women trying to gain access to health care during pregnancy and childbirth were delayed in — and in some cases completely prevented from — obtaining the care they needed. An estimated 2,500 women per year give birth while attempting to reach a delivery facility. Food insecurity is also adversely affecting the health of women and children. According to the results of a study undertaken by UNRWA in September 2006, 57.5 per cent of children aged between 6 and 36 months and 44.9 per cent of pregnant women in Gaza are anaemic.

Youth and education

59. Overall enrolment in basic education has fallen from a peak of 96.8 per cent in 2000 to 91.2 per cent in the 2006-2007 school year.²⁴

60. Over the years, chronic violence, underfunding, and disruptions have led to a near-collapse of the education sector in the Gaza Strip. UNRWA operates 214 schools for nearly 200,000 students in the Gaza Strip. Violence in 2007 led to 14,730 lost teaching days in UNRWA schools. The number of children who dropped out of school in Gaza is estimated to have reached 2,000 during the second half of 2007.¹⁹ For the 2005-2006 school year, between 66 and 90 per cent of children in the Gaza Strip failed mathematics examinations, while between 28 and 61 per cent failed Arabic examinations.

61. In the West Bank, UNRWA schools lost 35 days during the 2006-2007 school year. Although examination scores showed an upward trend in the 2006-2007 school year, educational achievement continues to flag in the West Bank. For example, of students in the eighth grade, only 45 per cent passed mathematics examinations, 56 per cent passed science examinations and 69 per cent passed Arabic examinations.

62. As part of its strict embargo on products entering the Gaza Strip, Israel has prohibited the importation of paper, which is required for printing textbooks for children. Children did not receive textbooks on time in either the first or the second semester of the 2007-2008 school year, as paper entered Gaza only after the start of

²⁴ United Nations Children's Fund media release, "Schools re-open to darker, colder classrooms", 1 February 2008.

each semester. Furthermore, as many as 40 per cent of children in Gaza are suffering from insomnia and 34 per cent are suffering from anxiety.²⁵

Status of women

63. The literacy rate for women was 89.8 per cent in 2006, an increase of 7 per cent from 2000. The literacy rate for men was 97.1 per cent, an increase of 2.9 per cent from 2000.²⁶

64. The enrolment rate in basic education is higher for women than it is for men, but decreased from 98 per cent in 2000-2001 to 90 per cent in 2006-2007. Fewer women than men attain a higher degree: the percentage of women with bachelors degrees was 6.2 per cent in 2006, compared with 9.6 per cent for men.

65. The participation rate for women in the labour force was only 16.6 per cent in the second quarter of 2007, as compared with 67.8 per cent for men. The employment rate for women has increased, however, from 10.3 per cent in 2001.

66. Worsening socio-economic conditions in the Gaza Strip seem to be causing increased levels of violence against women. According to the United Nations Children's Fund, two in five women reported being victims of violence in Gaza in 2007, up from one in five in 2006. There were 12 honour killings in Gaza, up from 4 in 2004.²⁵

III. Occupied Syrian Golan

67. The Syrian Golan, which measures about 1,250 km², has been under Israeli occupation since 1967. The decision of the Government of Israel to annex the occupied Syrian Golan was deemed illegal by the Security Council in its resolution 497 (1981). Israel prevents the return of the Arab population of the occupied Syrian Golan expelled in 1967, which at that time comprised approximately 130,000 Syrian citizens living in about 200 villages and farms. As of March 2007, the population of Syrian Arabs was down to an estimated 21,000 persons living in five main towns. The Golan also has about 20,000 Israeli settlers.²⁷

68. In August 2007, the Syrian Arab Republic reported that the number of Israeli settlements in the Golan had increased to 45. As part of a new settlement campaign, plans were announced for the construction of 300 new housing units in the occupied Golan, and the land department of Israel put 2,500 dunums of land up for sale to settlers. In mid-April 2007, the Alonei Habashan settlement announced the sale of housing units built on the ruins of the Arab village of Juwayza, at a cost of \$27,000 each.²⁸

²⁵ United Nations Children's Fund, "Humanitarian Action Update: Occupied Palestinian Territory", 17 December 2007.

²⁶ Palestinian Central Bureau of Statistics, *Women and Men in Palestine: Issues and Statistics* (August 2007).

²⁷ International Committee of the Red Cross operational update, "ICRC activities in the occupied Golan", 22 March 2007.

²⁸ Report of the Special Committee to Investigate Israeli Practices Affecting the Human Rights of the Palestinian People and Other Arabs of the Occupied Territories (A/62/360), para. 74.

69. As of August 2007, 15 Syrian citizens of the Golan were held in Israeli prisons, accused of resisting the occupation. A further two were arrested by the Israeli authorities at the end of July 2007, after a police raid on the villages of Majdal Shams and Buq'ata. The Israeli authorities have repeatedly refused requests from international institutions, including the International Committee of the Red Cross, to visit Syrian Arab prisoners.²⁹

70. Landmines continue to pose a threat to Syrian Arab villagers of the occupied Golan. On 27 November 2006, in the unoccupied part of Quneitra, a mine in the form of a child's toy exploded, and two children from the village of Al-Jarran received injuries to the chest and eyes. In an area between Khan Arnbah village and Baath City, four children were injured on 23 December 2006 by the explosion of a mine that looked like a cube-shaped child's toy.³⁰

71. According to the Government of the Syrian Arab Republic, Israel has embarked on a project to dispose of nuclear waste in the Golan, in an underground facility close to Mount Hermon. This claim has not been verified by any independent source.

72. According to the Government of the Syrian Arab Republic, Syrian citizens of the occupied Golan have restricted access to water. Farmers receive only 25 per cent of the amount of water they need to grow apples, which has a negative effect on the agricultural output of Arab land.³¹ They are reportedly not permitted to dig wells or to build cisterns for the storage of rainwater or snow water. The Syrian residents are also prohibited from using the waters of Lake Mas'adah, which is diverted for the use of Israeli settlements.³² According to information provided by the Government of the Syrian Arab Republic, the Israeli authorities impose disproportionately high taxes on Syrian Arab farmers in the Golan, sometimes equal to 50 per cent of the value of the crops being taxed. Through their assistance efforts, the United Nations Disengagement Observer Force (UNDOF) and ICRC facilitated the transfer of about 10,000 tons of apples to Syrian markets through a system of back-to-back trucking.³¹

73. For the Syrian residents of the occupied Golan, travel to the Syrian Arab Republic for religious, educational or family purposes is severely restricted by the Israeli authorities. UNDOF and the ICRC provide assistance and coordination, working with both the Israeli and the Syrian authorities, to facilitate the passage of persons through the area of separation. During 2007, UNDOF assisted in the crossing of 670 students, 500 pilgrims, 2 brides and 5 other civilians. UNDOF also provided health-care services to 243 villagers and medical treatment to 116 civilians. In addition, UNDOF assisted in the handover from Israeli forces to the

²⁹ Ibid., para. 76.

³⁰ Ibid., para. 77.

³¹ *The Situation of Workers of the Occupied Arab Territories* (Geneva, International Labour Office, 2007). Appendix to the report of the Director-General, International Labour Conference, 96th session, 2007.

³² Report of the Special Committee to Investigate Israeli Practices Affecting the Human Rights of the Palestinian People and Other Arabs of the Occupied Territories (A/62/360), para. 75.

Syrian authorities of one Syrian civilian who had crossed into the Israeli-occupied Golan.³³

74. The five Syrian Arab towns in the Golan have 12 schools that are overcrowded and ill-equipped such that they provide an unhealthy environment for children. The Government of the Syrian Arab Republic reports that Syrian Arab professionals, including medical doctors and pharmacists, are denied licences to work in the Golan, prompting many of them to migrate. Arab residents in the Golan are reportedly required to accept Israeli nationality if they wish to seek employment. Furthermore, the Government of the Syrian Arab Republic asserts that Syrian Arab labourers in the Golan suffer from discrimination in favour of their Israeli counterparts, with comparatively poor working conditions and lower wages.

75. The Government of the Syrian Arab Republic has also reported that the Israeli authorities have prohibited the establishment of any Arab print press in the Golan and impose strict censorship on books and other printed materials. That claim has not been verified by any independent source.

IV. Conclusions

76. While the number of casualties of Israeli-Palestinian violence decreased by almost half compared with 2006-2007, a combination of intensified closures and sanctions imposed by Israel and increased Palestinian internal conflict led to the measurable deepening of the socio-economic crisis in the occupied Palestinian territory in 2007. All economic, social and public health indicators reveal that standards in living conditions are declining and that there is social and spatial dismemberment, growing despair and increased violence against fellow Palestinians. Residents of the Gaza Strip have become almost completely isolated from the outside world, with access to only basic commodities and humanitarian items.

77. Both the Security Council and the General Assembly have declared that the Israeli decision to annex the Golan is null and void.³⁴ Nevertheless, in 2007 Israel continued its expansion of settlements and violation of the rights of the Syrian residents of the occupied Syrian Golan.

78. The situation in the occupied Palestinian territory prompted the United Nations country team to launch the 2008 consolidated appeal, which, at \$454 million, represents an 8.51 per cent increase from the level of the 2007 appeal. The 2008 consolidated appeal focuses on four main issues with a view to sustaining livelihoods and preventing further deterioration: (a) humanitarian aid; (b) the protection of civilians and the implementation of international humanitarian law; (c) humanitarian monitoring and reporting; and (d) the strengthening of United Nations humanitarian coordination. While those measures are aimed at stabilizing socio-economic conditions, they are not expected to contribute to the long-term improvement of such conditions in the occupied Palestinian territory.

³³ Report of the Secretary-General on the United Nations Disengagement Observer Force (for the period from 2 December 2006 to 6 June 2007) (S/2007/331), paras. 3 and 4; report of the Secretary-General on the United Nations Disengagement Observer Force (for the period from 7 June to 31 December 2007) (S/2007/698), paras. 3 and 4.

³⁴ Security Council resolution 497 (1981); General Assembly resolution 61/27.

79. In his message of 19 February 2008 to the United Nations Seminar on Assistance to the Palestinian People, the Secretary-General reiterated the United Nations position that only a permanent political settlement which ends the occupation and gives Palestinians their independence can fundamentally alter the economic and humanitarian problems of the Palestinian people. He stressed that the key ingredients for a breakthrough existed, pointing to bilateral negotiations and the support of donors. Finally, he expressed his belief that with the right mixture of wisdom, realism and political courage, historic progress towards the vision of two States, Israel and Palestine, living side by side in peace and security, could be made.



General Assembly Economic and Social Council

Distr.: General
7 May 2009

Original: English

**General Assembly
Sixty-fourth session**

Item 41 of the preliminary list*

**Permanent sovereignty of the Palestinian people
in the Occupied Palestinian Territory, including East
Jerusalem, and of the Arab population in the occupied
Syrian Golan over their natural resources**

**Economic and Social Council
Substantive session of 2009**

Item 11 of the provisional agenda**

**Economic and social repercussions of the
Israeli occupation on the living conditions
of the Palestinian people in the Occupied
Palestinian Territory, including East
Jerusalem, and the Arab population in the
occupied Syrian Golan**

Economic and social repercussions of the Israeli occupation on the living conditions of the Palestinian people in the Occupied Palestinian Territory, including Jerusalem, and of the Arab population in the occupied Syrian Golan

Note by the Secretary-General

In its resolution 2008/31, the Economic and Social Council requested the Secretary-General to submit to the General Assembly at its sixty-third session, through the Council, a report on the implementation of that resolution. The Assembly, in its resolution 63/201, also requested the Secretary-General to submit a report to it at its sixty-fourth session. The present report, which has been prepared by the Economic and Social Commission for Western Asia, is submitted in response to the resolutions of the Assembly and the Council.

* A/64/50.

** E/2009/100.



**Report prepared by the Economic and Social Commission
for Western Asia on the economic and social repercussions
of the Israeli occupation on the living conditions of the
Palestinian people in the occupied Palestinian territory,
including Jerusalem, and of the Arab population in the
occupied Syrian Golan***

Summary

The occupation of Palestinian territory, including East Jerusalem, the use of arbitrary detention, the disproportionate use of force, house demolitions, severe mobility restrictions, lack of building permits and closure policies continue to intensify the economic and social hardship of the Palestinian residents of the occupied Palestinian territory. Internal Palestinian conflict has also continued to cause casualties and disrupted the delivery of essential services to the population.

Attacks by Palestinian militants and the launching of rockets into Israeli cities from the Gaza Strip continued in 2008, as did Israeli military operations. In December 2008, the Israeli army launched a 22-day military operation in the Gaza Strip that killed a reported 1,440 people and injured 5,380, and gravely deepened the existing humanitarian and economic crisis caused by the ongoing blockade imposed by Israel on the Gaza Strip, which has remained isolated since June 2007, with rapidly deteriorating conditions, a near collapse of the private sector and shortages of essentials such as food, electricity and fuel.

The Israeli closure system remains a primary cause of poverty and humanitarian crisis in the occupied Palestinian territory, and restricts Palestinian access to natural resources, including land, basic social services, employment, markets and social and religious networks. However, despite those constraints, the Palestinian Authority managed to make some progress in areas such as security, public financial management, local public infrastructure and health and education services, not least because it was able to fully pay civil servants every month.

Israeli settlement and outpost expansion, land confiscation and the construction of a barrier in the occupied Palestinian territory, contrary to the road map and the Geneva Convention and other norms of international law, isolate occupied East Jerusalem, severely intrude into the West Bank and curtail economic and social life.

The ongoing occupation and expansion of settlements by Israel in the occupied Syrian Golan since 1967, in violation of Security Council resolution 497 (1981), and the restrictions imposed on the Syrian citizens living there also continue to create economic and social hardship for the Syrian Arab residents.

* The Economic and Social Commission for Western Asia would like to acknowledge its appreciation for the substantive contributions to the present report of the Department for Political Affairs, the United Nations Conference on Trade and Development, the United Nations Population Fund, the United Nations Relief and Works Agency for Palestine Refugees in the Near East, the Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs, the International Labour Organization and the Office of the United Nations Special Coordinator for the Middle East Peace Process.

I. Introduction

1. In its resolution 2008/31, the Economic and Social Council stressed the importance of reviving the Middle East peace process on the basis of Security Council resolutions, including 242 (1967), 338 (1973), 425 (1978), 1397 (2002), 1515 (2003) and 1544 (2004), and the principle of land for peace, as well as compliance with the agreements reached between the Government of Israel and the Palestine Liberation Organization, the representative of the Palestinian people. The Economic and Social Council called for the lifting of the severe restrictions imposed on the Palestinian people, including those arising from ongoing Israeli military operations, and for other urgent measures to be taken to alleviate the humanitarian situation in the occupied Palestinian territory, especially the Gaza Strip. The Council stressed the need to preserve the national unity and territorial integrity of the occupied Palestinian territory, including East Jerusalem, and to guarantee the freedom of movement of persons and goods in the territory, including the removal of restrictions on going to and from East Jerusalem, and the freedom of movement to and from the outside world. In the same resolution, the Economic and Social Council called upon all parties to respect the rules of international humanitarian law and to refrain from violence against the civilian population, in accordance with the Geneva Convention relative to the Protection of Civilian Persons in Time of War, of 12 August 1949.

2. The Council called upon Israel, the occupying Power, to cease its destruction of homes and properties, economic institutions and agricultural lands and orchards in the occupied Palestinian territory, including East Jerusalem, as well as in the occupied Syrian Golan. It reaffirmed that Israeli settlements in the occupied Palestinian territory, including East Jerusalem and the occupied Syrian Golan, are illegal and an obstacle to economic and social development, and called for full implementation of the relevant Security Council resolutions and compliance by Israel, the occupying Power, with international law, including the Fourth Geneva Convention. It also stressed that the wall being constructed by Israel in the occupied Palestinian territory, including in and around East Jerusalem, is contrary to international law and is isolating East Jerusalem, fragmenting the West Bank and seriously debilitating the economic and social development of the Palestinian people, and called in this regard for full compliance with legal obligations laid out in the advisory opinion of the International Court of Justice rendered on 9 July 2004 (see A/ES-10/273 and Corr.1) and in General Assembly resolution ES-10/15. It requested the Secretary-General to submit to the Assembly at its sixty-third session, through the Council, a report on the implementation of the resolution.

3. In its resolution 63/201, the General Assembly reaffirmed the inalienable rights of the Palestinian people and the population of the occupied Syrian Golan over their natural resources, including land and water, and called upon Israel, the occupying Power, not to exploit, damage, cause loss or depletion of, or endanger the natural resources in the occupied Palestinian territory, including East Jerusalem, and in the occupied Syrian Golan. The Assembly recognized the right of the Palestinian people to claim restitution as a result of any exploitation, damage, loss or depletion, or endangerment of their natural resources resulting from illegal measures and actions taken by Israel, the occupying Power, in the occupied Palestinian territory, including East Jerusalem. The Assembly stressed that the wall being constructed by Israel in the occupied Palestinian territory, including in and around East Jerusalem,

is contrary to international law and is seriously depriving the Palestinian people of access to their natural resources, and called in this regard for full compliance with the legal obligations stipulated in the 9 July 2004 advisory opinion of the International Court of Justice and in resolution ES-10/15. The Assembly called on Israel, the occupying Power, to cease the dumping of all kinds of waste materials in the occupied Palestinian territory, including East Jerusalem, and in the occupied Syrian Golan, which gravely threaten their water and land resources, and pose an environmental hazard and health threat to the civilian populations. The Assembly further called upon Israel to cease its destruction of vital infrastructure, including water pipelines and sewerage networks, which, inter alia, has a negative impact on the natural resources of the Palestinian people. The Assembly requested the Secretary-General to submit a report at its sixty-fourth session on the implementation of the resolution.

II. Occupied Palestinian territory, including East Jerusalem

Deaths and injuries

4. The Israeli army continued to launch military operations in the West Bank and the Gaza Strip. Attacks by Palestinian militants and the launching of rockets into Israeli cities from the Gaza Strip continued in 2008. The number of casualties caused by the conflict has risen dramatically, mainly as a result of a series of Israeli military operations in the Gaza Strip, culminating in “Operation Cast Lead”, which began on 27 December 2008. The Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs reported that casualties in the West Bank were related to settler-related violence, anti-barrier demonstrations, search and arrest operations, military patrols and Israeli army undercover operations. Between January 2008 and 19 January 2009, at least 1,766 Palestinians were killed as a result of the Israeli-Palestinian conflict, as compared with 396 in 2007. The majority, 1,715 — of whom 469 were children — were killed in the Gaza Strip. The number of Palestinians injured during the same period was 7,164, as compared with 1,843 in 2007. The majority, 5,814 — of whom at least 1,886 were children — were injured in the Gaza Strip.

5. During the 22 days of the Israeli military operation “Cast Lead”, the population of Gaza endured intensive and almost uninterrupted aerial bombardments, artillery shelling and ground operations, resulting in the deaths of 1,440 people and injury to 5,380, according to the Palestinian Ministry of Health in Gaza. Of those killed, 431 were children and 114 were women; 1,872 of those injured were children and 800 were women.

6. While not directly a result of occupation, Palestinian internal conflict has also caused casualties. From January to October 2008, 106 Palestinians were killed and 573 injured as a result of internal violence.¹

7. While the purpose of the present report is to describe the effects of the Israeli occupation on the Palestinian people, it is important to note that between September 2000 and December 2008, a reported 580 Israelis — 490 civilians and 90 security force personnel — were killed by Palestinians.² In 2008, 12 Israelis were killed and

¹ Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs, protection of civilians database (figures to the end of 2008 are not yet available).

² B’Tselem (see <http://www.btselem.org/english>).

23 injured between 1 January and 26 December, the date of the initiation of Operation Cast Lead. During Operation Cast Lead, the lives of approximately 1 million Israeli citizens living within 40 km of the border of the Gaza Strip were threatened by Palestinian rocket and mortar fire. Three Israeli civilians were killed and 182 injured. Ten Israeli military personnel were killed.³

Arbitrary arrests and detentions

8. On 3 February 2009, 7,951 Palestinians were reported to be detained in Israeli prisons, of whom 374 were minors, 50 of them under the age of 16. Of those, 564 Palestinian prisoners, including 5 children, are “administrative detainees” (detention without charge or trial).⁴ As at the end of November 2008, more than 60 Palestinian women and more than 300 Palestinian children were reportedly being held in custody in Israeli prisons. In the West Bank, the Israeli authorities carried out at least 4,878 search operations and 3,896 detentions between 1 February and 31 December 2008. In the Gaza Strip, the Israeli army carried out 51 search operations and made 684 arrests.

Population displacement and property destruction and confiscation

9. Palestinians are displaced as a result of property destruction, land confiscation and the revocation of residency permits, as well as occasional deportation. During the first quarter of 2008, Israeli authorities demolished 124 structures in the West Bank because of a lack of permits. As 61 of the structures were residential, their demolition led to the displacement of 435 Palestinians, including at least 135 children. Most of the demolitions were carried out in January. The Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs recorded the demolition of 204 Palestinian-owned structures, including 108 residential structures, between February and December 2008. Those demolitions led to the displacement of more than 400 Palestinians. A total of 95 per cent of those demolitions were carried out because of the lack of a building permit, which is required by the Israeli authorities. Permits are seldom issued and very difficult for Palestinians to obtain, forcing many to build without them. During the first half of 2008, Israeli authorities demolished 37 homes in the Gaza Strip for military purposes, rendering 141 Palestinians, including 67 children, homeless.⁵

10. Displacement in the West Bank is also a result of the construction of the barrier. A survey conducted by the Palestinian Central Bureau of Statistics found that by June 2008, 27,841 people had been displaced since the beginning of the construction of the barrier, as compared with the 2005 figure of 14,364.

11. In the first 10 months of 2008, the Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs recorded 290 settler-related incidents targeting Palestinians and their property. It should be noted that, while not comprehensive, that total

³ Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs, “Protection of Civilians Weekly Report”, 16-20 January 2009, p.1; *The Humanitarian Monitor*, No. 33 (January 2009).

⁴ Palestinian Authority contribution; B’Tselem (see http://www.btselem.org/english/statistics/Minors_in_Custody.asp and http://www.btselem.org/english/statistics/Detainees_and_Prisoners.asp).

⁵ Palestinian Authority contribution; B’Tselem (see http://www.btselem.org/english/planning_and_building).

surpasses the number recorded by the Office in each of the previous two years (182 and 243 in 2006 and 2007, respectively).⁶

12. During the course of the Israeli operation Cast Lead in the Gaza Strip, tens of thousands of Palestinians were internally displaced. The human rights non-governmental organization Al Mezan estimated that, as at 15 January, at least 200,000 people had been displaced. Surveys conducted immediately after the ceasefire indicated that between 37 and 38 per cent of Gazans — over half a million people — had fled their homes at some point during the conflict for at least a short period of time. A survey led by the United Nations Development Programme of damaged and destroyed housing throughout Gaza conducted immediately following the ceasefire there, found that 3,354 houses had been completely destroyed and 11,112 houses were partially damaged. While the vast majority of the displaced stayed with relatives or friends, many were housed in schools and facilities of the United Nations Relief and Works Agency for Palestine Refugees in the Near East (UNRWA). By 17 January, just prior to the commencement of the ceasefire, UNRWA was hosting close to 51,000 displaced persons in 50 emergency shelters.

13. During Operation Cast Lead, 52 UNRWA installations in Gaza were damaged by Israeli fire. On 15 January, the main UNRWA compound in Gaza City was directly hit by several Israeli shells. Hundreds of tons of food and medicine were destroyed. Approximately 700 Palestinians taking refuge in the building had to be evacuated. According to UNRWA, the shell that struck the building contained white phosphorus.⁷ Preliminary estimates indicate that the cost of repairs to damaged Agency installations will exceed \$3 million, not including the cost of replacement supplies and equipment. Losses in supplies are estimated at \$3.6 million. It should be noted that other United Nations agencies, namely the Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs and the World Food Programme (WFP), reported damage to their offices and warehouses as a result of Operation Cast Lead.

Barrier

14. The total length of the barrier, as approved by the Israeli Cabinet in April 2006, is 723 km, more than twice as long as the 320 km Armistice Line of 1949 (Green Line). The majority of the route, approximately 87 per cent, runs inside the West Bank and occupied East Jerusalem, rather than along the Green Line. General Assembly resolution ES-10/15 acknowledged the advisory opinion of the International Court of Justice to the effect that the route of the barrier in the occupied Palestinian territory is contrary to international law.

15. The barrier intrudes significantly into the West Bank, looping around settlements and fragmenting the West Bank into non-contiguous enclaves of Palestinian territory, isolated from the rest of the West Bank. By September 2008, 57 per cent of the barrier had been constructed, passing through 171 Palestinian communities and displacing 27,841 people in 3,880 families. The Israeli authorities have confiscated 49,291 dunums⁸ of land for the construction of the barrier, most of

⁶ Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs, OCHA Special Focus: Unprotected — Israeli settler violence against Palestinian civilians and their property (December 2008).

⁷ United Nations News Centre, <http://www.un.org/apps/news/story.asp?NewsID=29558&Cr=gaza&Cr1=unrwa#>.

⁸ One dunum = 1,000 m².

which lie in the northern West Bank, which contains the most fertile lands. The barrier has also segregated 274,607 dunums from their owners.⁹

16. In the northern West Bank, the area between the barrier and the Green Line was declared a closed zone by military order in October 2003. Approximately 10,000 Palestinians residing in these areas have become physically separated from the rest of the West Bank. The majority require “permanent resident” permits from the Israeli military to continue to live in their own homes. Health and education services are generally located on the other side of the barrier, so children, patients and workers have to pass through gates in order to reach schools, medical facilities and workplaces and to maintain family and social relations. When complete, approximately 35,000 West Bank Palestinians will be located in between the barrier and the Green Line, as will the majority of the approximately 250,000 Palestinian residents of occupied East Jerusalem. The percentage of Palestinian households displaced by the barrier has increased by 58 per cent since 2005, and the areas completely closed increased by 50 per cent.¹⁰

17. The barrier also isolates the land and water resources of an ever larger number of Palestinians, in particular farmers, who now require “visitor” permits to access their lands through designated gates. In the northern West Bank, permit requirements have become more stringent over the years. Fewer than 20 per cent of those who used to farm their lands in the closed area are now granted permits.¹¹ For the minority who are granted permits, access is through one of the approximately 70 designated barrier gates and checkpoints which open on a daily, weekly or seasonal basis. There are also restrictions on the passage of vehicles, agricultural equipment and materials. The restrictions resulting from the permit and gate regime severely curtail opportunities for cultivation, which has a negative impact on agricultural practice and rural livelihoods.

18. The barrier isolates densely populated Palestinian localities currently inside the Jerusalem municipal boundary from the city, while physically separating neighbouring West Bank villages that were once closely connected to occupied East Jerusalem. The completion of the barrier around the Ma’ale Adumim settlement bloc will physically separate occupied East Jerusalem from the rest of the West Bank and will further restrict access by Palestinians to workplaces, health, education and other services and places of worship.

19. Further south, the barrier already separates Bethlehem from occupied East Jerusalem. Construction of the barrier around the Gush Etzion settlement bloc will sever the territorial contiguity of Bethlehem and curtail its potential for natural growth. It will also separate the city from its agricultural hinterland, which comprises nine Palestinian communities of approximately 22,000 residents, who will face restricted access to services in Bethlehem, including markets, health services and higher education.

⁹ Palestinian Central Bureau of Statistics.

¹⁰ Ibid.

¹¹ Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs, *OCHA Special Focus: The Barrier Gate and Permit Regime Four Years On — Humanitarian Impact in the Northern West Bank* (November 2007).

Mobility restrictions and closure policies, including access to humanitarian assistance

West Bank access in 2008

20. Palestinian restrictions on movement have remained severely constrained. In its latest survey, completed on 11 September 2008, the Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs documented 630 closure obstacles blocking internal Palestinian movement, including 93 staffed checkpoints and 537 unstaffed obstacles (roadblocks, earth mounds, road barriers and so forth).¹² The weekly average number of “flying” (random) checkpoints in 2008 stood at 73. The survey also found that almost three quarters of the main routes leading into the 18 most populated Palestinian cities and towns in the West Bank and almost half of the alternate routes were either blocked or controlled by an Israeli army checkpoint.

21. The closure obstacles constitute only one of several layers of a complex system of movement restrictions. The barrier also plays a major role in that system. Approximately 21 per cent of the West Bank has been declared “closed military zone” over the years, and an additional 3 per cent lies within the outer limits of 149 Israeli settlements and industrial zones, largely inaccessible to Palestinians.

22. Access by Palestinians to occupied East Jerusalem is prohibited by Israeli law, except for those Palestinians who hold an Israeli identity card or a special permit, which is rarely granted. In the Ramallah district, Israeli authorities have constructed a road system which effectively diverts Palestinian traffic away from primary roads in the occupied territory, which are now reserved for the exclusive use of Israelis. That exclusion is reinforced by hundreds of physical obstacles restricting access by Palestinians to primary roads.

23. The Israeli authorities have reduced from 12 to 4 the number of crossings through which the United Nations is authorized to import goods from Israel to the West Bank. Israeli security staff at checkpoints cause United Nations staff to experience delays, most of which are due to requests that go against the agreed privileges and immunities of the United Nations. A peak in the number of incidents occurred in April 2008 (181 incidents).

24. In the West Bank, a considerable number of the 918 incidents of delayed or denied access reported by UNRWA staff in 2008 affected the delivery of emergency humanitarian assistance, including the transportation of food aid, medicine, mobile health teams and food distribution teams. The number of access incidents reported in 2008 (918) was nearly four times as high as in 2007 (231). Those affected included teachers, doctors and nurses, social workers and field office staff, this had a negative impact on the delivery of education and health services and relief operations. UNRWA reported that its West Bank field office lost an estimated 2,199 workdays in 2008 as a result of access restrictions.

Restrictions on access to and from the Gaza Strip

25. The blockade imposed on the Gaza Strip following the forceful Hamas takeover of Gaza in June 2007 continued throughout 2008. The Government of

¹² This figure does not include 8 checkpoints located on the Green Line, 69 obstacles located in the Israeli-controlled section of Hebron City (H-2) and 56 gates along the West Bank barrier.

Israel has expressed concern that arms were being smuggled through the borders of the Gaza Strip and that rocket and mortar fire continued from the Gaza Strip into Israel during the reporting period. The main components of the blockade are the closure of Karni, the largest commercial crossing; the suspension of all exports and most industrial/non-humanitarian imports; a severe reduction in the amount of fuel allowed to enter; an almost total ban on the movement of Palestinians through Erez, the sole passenger crossing with Israel and the West Bank; and a partial closure of the Rafah crossing point, the only passenger crossing point with Egypt. This blockade has created a deep humanitarian crisis leading to the widespread erosion of livelihoods and a significant deterioration in infrastructure and essential services.

26. The daily average of truckloads allowed into the Gaza Strip during 2008 through official crossings stood at approximately 100, about one fifth of the number allowed in May 2007, immediately before the beginning of the blockade (475 truckloads a day). Throughout the year, Israel also continued to place restrictions on the type of commodities allowed to enter, damaging the Gaza Strip's already depressed private sector and compromising the provision of basic services.

27. The Erez crossing — the only passage for movement of people between the Gaza Strip and the West Bank via Israel — remained inaccessible for the large majority of the Palestinian population, with the exception of a small number of businessmen and emergency medical cases holding special permits. United Nations staff continued to face difficulties crossing at the Erez checkpoint from Gaza into Israel.

28. The Rafah crossing, which connects the Gaza Strip with Egypt, has remained officially closed since June 2007. However, the crossing has been opened by the Egyptian authorities for a few days every month to allow the movement of limited numbers of medical patients, pilgrims, students and political delegations.

29. As a result of the Israeli military operation Cast Lead in the Gaza Strip, on 8 January 2009 the Security Council adopted resolution 1860 (2009), calling for an immediate ceasefire and withdrawal of Israeli troops from Gaza and for unimpeded provision of humanitarian assistance, and condemning all violence directed against civilians. The Council also called for efforts to prevent illicit trafficking in arms and to ensure sustained reopening of crossing points on the basis of the 2005 Agreement on Movement and Access between the Palestinian Authority and Israel.

30. Since the cessation of Operation Cast Lead, the Israeli authorities have allowed only selected international aid workers into the Gaza Strip. According to the Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs, of the 178 requests to enter the Gaza Strip submitted by international non-governmental organizations during January 2009, only 18 requests for medical staff were approved.

The humanitarian and socio-economic impact of the Israeli military operation Cast Lead

31. By April 2009, the closure had not been lifted, and the flow of goods and cash into the Gaza Strip continue to be severely restricted. An alternative tunnel economy, largely regulated by Hamas, has developed in Rafah along the Egypt-Gaza border, with estimates of the number of active tunnels ranging from 200 to 600. These were targeted by Israeli air strikes starting in December 2008 because of suspicions that arms were being smuggled through the tunnels. Following the

ceasefire, operations are reported to have resumed in many of the tunnels, supplying the market with a range of goods, including fuel.

32. During Operation Cast Lead, the limited supply of fuel allowed into the Gaza Strip from Israel, combined with damage incurred to main power lines and transformers, the limited access for technical teams to damaged areas and the closure of the power plant, rendered more than 60 per cent of the population of the Gaza Strip without electricity during the three-week period of military operations.

33. The power outages, coupled with the severe shortage of fuel and spare parts for backup generators, have disabled parts of the water and sanitation system. On 27 December, about 80 per cent of the Gaza Strip's water wells were partially functioning and the rest were non-functional. The lack of fuel and spare parts forced the Gaza water utility to discharge millions of litres of raw sewage into the sea every day, resulting in significant environmental damage, including to marine life.

34. At the height of Operation Cast Lead, approximately 500,000 Palestinians in the Gaza Strip did not have access to running water, as the Coastal Municipalities Water Utility was unable to repair damage to water and wastewater networks. A further 500,000 people received water for only a few hours a week, and the remaining population received water for between 4 and 6 hours every 2 or 3 days.

35. Damage to sewerage networks and pumping stations affected thousands of people, with raw sewage flooding some streets. On 10 January 2009, the Gaza City wastewater treatment plant was hit during military operations. As a result, one pond treatment embankment was severely damaged, causing the leakage of 200,000 m³ of wastewater into the nearby agricultural fields. Moreover, one of the plant's sewage pipelines was also hit and damaged on the same day. The damage resulted in the leakage of an estimated 20,000 m³ per day until 23 January.

36. Preliminary findings of the Palestinian Hydrology Group initial rapid needs assessment of households showed that some 5,700 rooftop tanks were completely destroyed and 2,900 damaged. In a couple of areas, 50 per cent of the water networks were destroyed, while other areas sustained damage to 30 to 35 per cent of their water networks.

37. The Gaza Strip health-care system faced serious challenges during Operation Cast Lead. Medical facilities were repeatedly struck during bombardments, and medical staff were themselves victims of some attacks. In the course of the three-week military operation, 16 medical personnel were killed and 26 were injured while on duty. The Israeli bombardment damaged or destroyed 29 ambulances and hit medical facilities. Of the 122 health facilities in the Gaza Strip, 48 per cent were either damaged or destroyed by direct or indirect shelling. On 20 March 2009, all Gaza Strip patient referrals for treatment outside of the Gaza Strip were halted owing to the refusal of the Palestinian Ministry of Health to approve applications issued by the Hamas-controlled Ministry of Health Referral Department in the Gaza Strip.¹³

38. The three weeks of continuous bombardment by air, land and sea has also had a serious detrimental psychosocial impact on residents of the Gaza Strip, particularly on children.

¹³ Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs/World Health Organization, joint statement of concern over the halting of Gaza medical patient referrals (30 March 2009).

39. Of particular concern is the impact of the conflict on chronically ill patients. It is estimated that the treatment of 40 per cent of such patients was interrupted as a result of the fact that life-threatening injuries were accorded higher priority in the overwhelmed system. The referral of chronically ill patients to Israeli and West Bank hospitals came to an almost complete halt during the course of the military operations.

40. The United Nations issued a flash appeal on 5 February 2009 amounting to \$613 million. The appeal incorporates 106 non-governmental organizations and 82 United Nations projects to respond to the emergency humanitarian and early recovery needs of 1.4 million people in Gaza over a period of nine months in the areas of education, agriculture, health and food security, among others. Despite the assurances by the Government of Israel that humanitarian goods would be allowed into the Gaza Strip, by April 2009 the United Nations was still unable to implement large parts of the flash appeal owing to the refusal to permit the entry of necessary goods and personnel.

Israeli settlements

41. From 1967 to the end of 2007, Israel established 120 settlements in the West Bank, excluding occupied East Jerusalem, which were recognized by the Ministry of the Interior of Israel as Israeli “communities” within the occupied territory. Twelve other settlements are located on land annexed by Israel in 1967 and made part of the Israeli municipality of Jerusalem. In addition, there are approximately 100 “outposts”, which are settlements unauthorized and unrecognized by the Israeli authorities. As a result, almost 40 per cent of the West Bank is currently taken up by Israeli infrastructure associated with the settlements, including roads, barriers, buffer zones and military bases.

42. At the end of 2008, an estimated 193,700 Israeli settlers were living in occupied East Jerusalem,¹⁴ while approximately 289,600 Israeli settlers were living in the West Bank.¹⁵ A study by Ariel University Centre of Samaria revealed that over a period of 12 years, the settler population in the West Bank grew by 107 per cent, from 130,000 in 1995 to 270,000 at the end of 2007. In 2008, the number of tenders issued in occupied East Jerusalem increased by a factor of nearly 40 as compared with 2007.¹⁶

43. During 2008, 1,518 new Israeli structures were constructed in the West Bank, 61 per cent of them west of the barrier and 39 per cent east of it. Those structures include 748 permanent buildings in Israeli settlements, as compared with 800 in 2007, marking a 60 per cent increase.¹⁷

44. In March 2009, Peace Now, an Israeli non-governmental organizations, revealed that the Government of Israel had already approved the construction of at least 15,000 housing units in the occupied Palestinian territory, while approval was pending for plans for an additional 58,000 housing units. Of those housing units, 5,722 are planned for occupied East Jerusalem. If those plans materialize, the

¹⁴ B’Tselem (see <http://www.btselem.org/english/Settlements/Statistics.asp>).

¹⁵ Israeli Central Bureau of Statistics (see http://www.cbs.gov.il/population/new_2009/table1.pdf).

¹⁶ European Union heads of mission report on East Jerusalem.

¹⁷ Peace Now, “Summary of Construction in the West Bank 2008”, available at <http://www.peacenow.org.il/site/en/peace.asp?pi=61&docid=3508&pos=1>.

number of settlers in the occupied territory will be doubled (an addition of approximately 300,000 settlers, based on an average of 4 people in each housing unit).¹⁸

Natural resources, water and environment

45. The water supply and sanitation services for Palestinians in the occupied Palestinian territory continue to be insufficient and unreliable in terms of quality and quantity. The Israeli authorities and water utility companies withdraw water from sources within the occupied Palestinian territory to supply Israeli cities, and then sell the surplus back to Palestinians. Preliminary data from the Palestinian Water Authority indicates that water purchased by Palestinians in the West Bank for domestic use from the Israeli water company Mekorot amounted to 47.8 million m³ in 2008.¹⁹ Israel prevents Palestinians from drawing water from the Jordan River, while itself using 86 per cent of renewable underground water sources in Palestinian areas. In addition, 35 Palestinian wells have become isolated by the barrier and thus unavailable to Palestinians.

46. According to the Israeli non-governmental organizations Yesh Din, 11 Israeli corporations are illegally operating quarries in the West Bank. Yesh Din alleges that 75 per cent of the output from the quarries is for the use of the Israeli construction industry, in violation of the obligations of Israel under international law to protect and preserve the national resources of the West Bank.²⁰

Socio-economic indicators

47. The occupation of the West Bank and the Gaza Strip continues to cause socio-economic hardship for the Palestinian population. Poverty levels in the Gaza Strip for 2007 are estimated at 80 per cent of households, as compared with 45 per cent in the West Bank.²¹ While data on 2008 poverty levels are not yet available, the humanitarian crisis, severe restrictions on the entry of goods and humanitarian aid and cash shortages in the Gaza Strip suggest that poverty levels for 2008 will increase even further. According to the Palestinian Central Bureau of Statistics, unemployment (relaxed definition, which includes those not actively seeking work) rose from 32.7 per cent in the third quarter of 2008 to 33.4 per cent in the fourth quarter, with 48.8 per cent unemployed in the Gaza Strip, as compared with 26 per cent in the West Bank.²² Inflation has risen dramatically, from about 1 per cent in 2007 to about 7 per cent in December 2008, which has further strained the coping strategies of the poor.²¹

48. The reduction in the number of imports and the ban on exports have had a destructive impact on the livelihoods of the population of the Gaza Strip. According to the United Nations Conference on Trade and Development, about 95 per cent of

¹⁸ Peace Now, "Ministry of Housing's Plans for the West Bank — March 2009", available at <http://www.peacenow.org.il/site/en/peace.asp?pi=61&docid=3566>.

¹⁹ Palestinian Central Bureau of Statistics, press release on the occasion of World Water Day, 22 March 2009.

²⁰ See www.yesh-din.org/site/index.php?lang=en.

²¹ International Monetary Fund, *Macroeconomic and fiscal framework for the West Bank and Gaza: third review of progress* (February 2009), p. 2.

²² Palestinian Central Bureau of Statistics, labour force survey for the fourth quarter of 2008 (February 2009).

industrial operations had already been suspended by the end of 2007. On the eve of the military operation of December 2008, an estimated 23 out of 3,900 industries were operating and an estimated 34,000 workers in the industrial sector had lost their jobs. The blockade paralysed large parts of the agricultural sector. Repeated Israeli incursions into the Gaza Strip have damaged land, crops and equipment and rendered large agricultural areas located in the so-called buffer zone off-limits to Palestinians. The lack of cash flow into the Gaza Strip has rendered Palestinian Authority employees, pensioners and social hardship cases unable to collect their salaries, pensions and welfare payments in cash.

49. Initial estimates by the Palestinian Central Bureau of Statistics put direct economic losses resulting from infrastructure and property destruction from Operation Cast Lead at approximately \$1.4 billion by 13 January 2008 for the first 17 days of the operation. Income losses are estimated at \$24 million per day. For the 17-day period, the cumulative loss is estimated to be approximately \$408 million. This represents 80 per cent of the annual gross domestic product (GDP) of the Gaza Strip in recent years.

Palestinian fiscal situation

50. Despite continued restrictions on mobility and access to natural and financial resources, the Palestinian Authority has continued with institution-building and fiscal policy reforms. Government employment policy has been curtailed, wage rates have been reduced by 11 per cent in real terms and measures have been implemented to improve utility bill payments. The public finance management system has been strengthened by prioritizing and improving the quality of spending. Non-wage expenditure was about 1 per cent higher than budgeted. The draft 2009 budget includes further reforms and deficit-reduction measures, with the continued diversion of spending away from wages and subsidies and towards public investment. A supplementary budget is currently being prepared to include the cost of reconstruction and rehabilitation in the wake of the destruction in the Gaza Strip resulting from Operation Cast Lead.²³ Palestinian Authority total revenue fluctuated sharply, dropping from \$1.1 billion in 1999 to \$300 million in 2002, rising to \$1.2 billion in 2005, and falling back down to \$360 million in 2006 before increasing to \$1.2 billion in 2007. Consequently, despite austerity measures, the Palestinian fiscal deficit jumped from 17 per cent of GDP in 2005 to 27 per cent in 2007. In 2008, the Palestinian Authority continued its implementation of fiscal policy reforms, with the result that the recurrent fiscal deficit is estimated to have declined to 19 per cent of GDP, reflecting a wage bill reduction of 11 per cent in real terms and reduced utility subsidies.²¹

Public health and food insecurity

51. Despite large inflows of aid, a joint rapid food survey conducted by WFP, the Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations and UNRWA in April 2008 estimated that 38 per cent of the Palestinian population of the occupied territory is food insecure. Food insecurity is higher in the Gaza Strip than in the West Bank:

²³ International Monetary Fund, *Macroeconomic and fiscal framework for the West Bank and Gaza: third review of progress* (February 2009), pp. 4-6; World Bank, *West Bank and Gaza Financial Sector Review* (December 2008).

56 per cent, as compared with 25 per cent.²⁴ High unemployment and underemployment in the Gaza Strip, compounded by the global inflation in food prices, has had a significant impact on the food security and nutrition level of the population. The survey also reveals that there has been a gradual shift in the diet of Gazans from high-cost, protein-rich fruits, vegetables and animal products to low-cost, high-energy cereals, sugar and oil. That change is likely to be reflected in increased rates of micronutrient deficiency, with children and women of childbearing age being the worst affected.

52. Because of frequent power cuts, most hospitals and health facilities in the Gaza Strip have had to rely extensively on backup generators to ensure the provision of medical services. Medical equipment has been damaged as a result of power cuts and water impurities. The situation is further compounded by the lack of maintenance and spare parts due to the blockade.

53. Health indicators in the Gaza Strip continued to compare unfavourably with those in the West Bank, with consistently higher infant and maternal mortality rates (infant mortality rates: 25.2 per 1,000 in the Gaza Strip and 15.3 per 1,000 in West Bank; maternal mortality rates: 37.5 per 100,000 births in the Gaza Strip and 8.2 per 100,000 births in West Bank, according to UNRWA data), a lower life expectancy and higher levels of undernutrition and micronutrient deficiency.

Youth and education

54. The Israeli occupation continues to have a negative impact on access to education by young people in both the West Bank and the Gaza Strip. Restrictions on movement and the construction of the barrier in the West Bank and military operations in the Gaza Strip impede access to schools and other educational activities by students and teachers. As a consequence, the quality of education is reportedly declining. The Palestinian Authority Ministry of Education reported a decline in enrolment rates and test scores in mathematics, Arabic and English, according to the results of national tests conducted for the school year 2007/08.²⁵

55. According to the United Nations Children's Fund (UNICEF), violence against children in the occupied Palestinian territory rose between late 2006 and early 2008, reflecting growing tensions in schools and households caused by worsening socio-economic and humanitarian conditions in the West Bank and the Gaza Strip. UNICEF has also reported that children are manifesting high levels of psychological distress such as withdrawal, sleeplessness, nightmares, aggressiveness and poor concentration.²⁶

56. With 56 per cent of the population of the Gaza Strip under the age of 18, children and young people bore a disproportionate share of the impact of Operation Cast Lead in the Gaza Strip. Current reports show that 7 schools in the northern part of the Gaza Strip were badly damaged and over 150 primary schools were partially damaged. The movement of teachers, young people and, in particular, children, to and from schools remains dangerous, owing to unexploded ordnance. In the days immediately following the ceasefire, two Palestinian children were killed by

²⁴ Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs, *Occupied Palestinian territory: 2009 Consolidated Appeal*, p. 34.

²⁵ *Ibid.*, pp. 27 and 42.

²⁶ *Ibid.*, pp. 27 and 28.

unexploded ordnance in Al-Zaitoun. Schools, 60 per cent of which were already running double shifts prior to the recent conflict, may now have to run triple shifts. They are not designed to accommodate such an additional student load.

Status of women

57. The participation rate for women in the labour force was only 15.2 per cent in 2008, as compared with 66.8 per cent for men. The unemployment rate for women in 2008 was 23.8 per cent. The poverty rate among households headed by females was 61.2 per cent, compared with 56.9 per cent for households headed by males in the occupied Palestinian territory in 2007. The poverty rate among female-headed households with seven or more children is 79.7 per cent, compared with 68.6 per cent for households with five or six children.

58. According to UNICEF and the United Nations Development Fund for Women, an estimated 2,500 pregnant women per year face difficulties in obtaining access to a delivery facility owing to the Israeli closure system. In addition, the United Nations Population Fund highlighted the risks for more than 40,000 pregnant women in the Gaza Strip who were denied proper medical treatment during the military operation of December 2008 and January 2009.

III. Occupied Syrian Golan

59. The Syrian Golan, which measures approximately 1,250 km², has been under Israeli occupation since 1967. The decision of the Israeli Government to impose its law, jurisdiction and administration over the occupied Syrian Golan was deemed null and void by the Security Council in its resolution 497 (1981).

60. Israel prevents the return of those members of the Arab population of the occupied Syrian Golan expelled in 1967. By 2008, the remaining 18,000 Syrian citizens were living in five main towns in the occupied Syrian Golan.²⁷ At the same time, an estimated 18,000 Israeli settlers live in 32 settlements in the occupied Syrian Golan.²⁸

61. Construction of infrastructure and housing by Israel was actively pursued in 2007 and early 2008.²⁹ The Israeli Land Department put up 2,500 dunums of land in the occupied Golan for sale to settlers. According to a recent decision by the Regional Settlements Council in the occupied Syrian Golan, a new settlement tourism village will be built by 2010, on 40 dunums of land close to the destroyed village of Amudiyah, with an earmarked amount of \$30 million.³⁰

62. The Israeli occupation continues to have a negative impact on the livelihoods of the Syrian population in the occupied Golan as a result of measures imposed by the Israeli authorities, particularly the restrictions on land cultivation and farming, alleged land confiscation, the uprooting and destruction of trees and seedlings and discrimination with regard to access to water and construction. Land left

²⁷ Al Marsad, *Changing the Landscape: Israel's Gross Violations of International Law in the Occupied Syrian Golan* (November 2008), p. 21.

²⁸ A/63/519, para. 42.

²⁹ Ibid.

³⁰ A/63/273, para. 102.

uncultivated is subject to confiscation by the Israeli authorities.³¹ It should be noted that the International Committee of the Red Cross (ICRC), with the support of the United Nations Disengagement Observer Force (UNDOF), assisted in transporting almost 8,000 tons of apples in 2009 from the occupied Golan to markets in the Syrian Arab Republic. There were no apple transfers in 2008 because of poor harvests.³²

63. As a result of discrimination with regard to access to water and subsidies granted to Israeli producers, combined with a high dependency on the Israeli market, cultivation is more difficult for the Syrian citizens of the Golan.³³ The Israeli water authority imposes discriminatory water quotas on Syrian farmers: the quota for Israeli settlers is 450 m³ of water per dunum of land, and the quota for Arab farmers is 90 m³ per dunum. In addition, Syrian citizens pay more for water as a result of an indirectly discriminatory tariff system. Syrian citizens are therefore unable to produce the same quantity of high-quality produce per dunum of land as Israeli settlers in the region.³⁴

64. Employment prospects for the Syrian population in the occupied Syrian Golan remain bleak. Students benefiting from university education find few employment prospects in the occupied Syrian Golan. Employment opportunities in the Israeli administration are limited and Syrian citizens reportedly face discrimination in access to such jobs because of their political opinions and refusal to take up Israeli citizenship.³⁵

65. Syrian community leaders have launched an appeal to end restrictions on travel from the occupied Syrian Golan to other parts of the Syrian Arab Republic and to maintain their Syrian Arab identity.³⁶ During the first six months of 2008, 19 students and 7 civilians crossed between the occupied Golan Heights and the Syrian Arab Republic with the assistance of UNDOF and ICRC.³⁷ However, it has been reported that on 18 April 2008, Israeli authorities confiscated the Syrian identity cards of 19 students from the occupied Golan who were returning home after having completed their studies at Syrian universities. The Syrian authorities reported that students from the occupied Golan Heights are prevented from completing their university education or gaining entry to particular faculties in Israeli institutions unless they accept Israeli nationality.³⁸

66. The five occupied Syrian villages in the Golan suffer from a shortage of health centres and clinics. The villages have no access to a nearby hospital and citizens must go elsewhere for simple surgical procedures. Increased costs are incurred and there is resultant hardship because of the lack of doctors, specialist clinics,

³¹ *The situation of workers of the occupied Arab territories* (Geneva, International Labour Office, 2008); appendix to the report of the Director-General, International Labour Conference, 97th session, 2008, para. 83.

³² International Committee of the Red Cross, press release, 17 February 2009, available at <http://www.icrc.org/Web/Eng/siteeng0.nsf/html/israel-syria-news-170209!OpenDocument>.

³³ *The Situation of workers in the occupied Arab territories* (Geneva, International Labour Office, 2008); appendix to the report of the Director-General, International Labour Conference, 97th session, 2008, para. 88.

³⁴ *Ibid.*, para. 84.

³⁵ *Ibid.*, para. 86.

³⁶ *Ibid.*, para. 88.

³⁷ S/2008/390, para. 3.

³⁸ A/63/273, para. 108.

including gynaecological and obstetrics departments, X-ray services and emergency rooms.³⁹

67. There are an estimated 2 million mines and 76 minefields in the occupied Syrian Golan.⁴⁰ The long-term presence of the mines and the deterioration of their detonation systems continue to pose a threat to local inhabitants.⁴¹ The total number of victims of Israeli mines in the occupied Syrian Golan is reported to be 531. Of those, 202 were fatalities. Children in particular are vulnerable to this threat. A total of 329 people have sustained permanent disabilities since the beginning of the occupation.⁴⁰

68. The Syrian authorities have reported that as at 1 July 2008, 16 citizens from the occupied Syrian Golan were being detained in Israeli prisons.⁴²

IV. Conclusions

69. A combination of closures and sanctions imposed by Israel in the occupied Palestinian territory and the recent military operation in the Gaza Strip led to a deepening of the humanitarian and socio-economic crisis in the occupied Palestinian territory in 2008.

70. Both the Security Council and the General Assembly have declared that the Israeli decision to annex the Golan is null and void.⁴³ Nevertheless, in 2007, Israel continued its expansion of settlements and its curtailment of the rights of the Syrian residents of the occupied Syrian Golan.

71. In his message of 10 March 2009 to the United Nations Seminar on Assistance to the Palestinian People, the Secretary-General called for a proper and durable ceasefire as soon as possible to allow for a return of calm in the Gaza Strip and southern Israel. He added that the situation at the crossings was intolerable, and that it was crucial that Israel take meaningful steps to ease the closure, without which Palestinian economic recovery cannot take place. He underscored that a ceasefire should pave the way for the reopening of all Gaza crossings based on the 2005 Agreement on Movement and Access, stating that Security Council resolution 1860 (2009) embodied those basic parameters. He pointed out that, in the West Bank, the efforts of Prime Minister Fayyad to improve security arrangements — an obligation under the road map — have borne fruit. However, he noted that Israeli raids had continued; checkpoints and curfews were still present; and settlement activity had accelerated. The latter contravened the road map obligations of Israel, as reaffirmed by both parties before the Quartet at Sharm el-Sheikh in November 2008. In closing, the Secretary-General observed that only a permanent negotiated political settlement, which would end the occupation, could provide a sustainable solution to the economic and humanitarian problems of the Palestinian people and lasting security for Israel. The United Nations would continue to do its part towards realizing the vision of two States, Israel and Palestine, living side by side in peace and security.

³⁹ Ibid., para. 110.

⁴⁰ Ibid., para. 107.

⁴¹ S/2008/390, para. 4.

⁴² A/63/273, para. 106.

⁴³ Security Council resolution 497 (1981), General Assembly resolution 61/27.



General Assembly Economic and Social Council

Distr.: General
20 April 2010

Original: English

General Assembly Sixty-fifth session

Item 61 of the preliminary list**

Permanent sovereignty of the Palestinian people in the Occupied Palestinian Territory, including East Jerusalem, and of the Arab population in the occupied Syrian Golan over their natural resources

Economic and Social Council Substantive session of 2010

Item 11 of the provisional agenda***

Economic and social repercussions of the Israeli occupation on the living conditions of the Palestinian people in the Occupied Palestinian Territory, including East Jerusalem, and the Arab population in the occupied Syrian Golan

Economic and social repercussions of the Israeli occupation on the living conditions of the Palestinian people in the Occupied Palestinian Territory, including East Jerusalem, and the Arab population in the occupied Syrian Golan

Note by the Secretary-General

In its resolution 2009/34, the Economic and Social Council requested the Secretary-General to submit to the General Assembly at its sixty-fourth session, through the Council, a report on the implementation of that resolution. The Assembly, in its resolution 64/185, also requested the Secretary-General to submit a report to it at its sixty-fifth session. The present report, which has been prepared by the Economic and Social Commission for Western Asia, is submitted in response to the resolutions of the Assembly and the Council.

* Reissued for technical reasons on 6 August 2010.

** A/65/50.

*** E/2010/100.



Report prepared by the Economic and Social Commission for Western Asia on the economic and social repercussions of the Israeli occupation on the living conditions of the Palestinian people in the Occupied Palestinian Territory, including East Jerusalem, and the Arab population in the occupied Syrian Golan*

Summary

The Israeli occupation of Palestinian territory, including East Jerusalem, the use of arbitrary detention, disproportionate use of force, property destruction, home demolitions, mobility restrictions, lack of building permits and closure policies continue to intensify the economic and social hardships of the Palestinian residents in the occupied Palestinian territory. Despite the constraints posed by the occupation, the Palestinian Authority continued to make progress in implementing its reform agenda and security plan and in building its institution.

Between February 2009 and February 2010, 67 Palestinians were killed and 145 injured by Israeli military operations. At the same time, attacks by Palestinian militants and the launching of rockets into Israel from the Gaza Strip continued, although at a diminished rate over that of previous years.

Between February 2009 and February 2010, Israeli authorities demolished 220 Palestinian-owned structures in the West Bank (excluding East Jerusalem). As a result of those demolitions, over 400 Palestinians were displaced. In occupied East Jerusalem, the Israeli authorities demolished approximately 80 Palestinian-owned structures between February 2009 and March 2010, thereby displacing approximately 260 Palestinians.

The blockade imposed by Israel on the Gaza Strip following the forceful takeover of Gaza by Hamas in June 2007 entered its third year as of August 2009. The blockade detrimentally affects reconstruction and economic recovery in the Strip in addition to exacerbating humanitarian conditions. In the West Bank, there has been a general relaxation of the crossing procedures at most checkpoints to the east of the barrier. However, since November 2009 there has been a steady increase in the number of “flying” (ad hoc) checkpoints erected for short periods.

Contrary to its obligations under the road map, Israel continued illegal settlement activity in the West Bank, including East Jerusalem. On 26 November 2009 Israel announced a 10-month settlement “freeze order” in the West Bank, but it does not apply to the East Jerusalem area.

* The Economic and Social Commission for Western Asia would like to acknowledge its appreciation for the substantive contributions to the present report of the Department for Political Affairs, the United Nations Conference on Trade and Development (UNCTAD), the United Nations Development Programme (UNDP), the United Nations Population Fund (UNFPA), the United Nations Relief and Works Agency for Palestine Refugees in the Near East (UNRWA), the Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs, the International Labour Organization (ILO), the Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations (FAO), the World Food Programme (WFP), the World Health Organization (WHO), and the Office of the United Nations Special Coordinator for the Middle East Peace Process.

The Syrian Golan has been under Israeli occupation since 1967. The decision of the Government of Israel to impose its laws, jurisdiction and administration in the occupied Syrian Golan was deemed null and void and without international legal effect by Security Council resolution 497 (1981). That annexation continues to affect the lives and human rights of the Syrian citizens living in the occupied Syrian Golan.

I. Introduction

1. In its resolution 2009/34, the Economic and Social Council stressed the importance of reviving the Middle East peace process on the basis of Security Council resolutions, including 242 (1967), 338 (1973), 252 (1968), 425 (1978), 465 (1980), 497 (1981), 1397 (2002), 1515 (2003), 1544 (2004) and 1850 (2008); the principle of land for peace; the Arab Peace Initiative,¹ as affirmed at the Arab League Summit in Doha on 31 March 2009; and compliance with the agreements reached between the Government of Israel and the Palestine Liberation Organization, the representative of the Palestinian people. The Economic and Social Council called for the lifting of the severe restrictions imposed on the Palestinian people, including those arising from ongoing Israeli military operations and the multilayered closure system, and for other urgent measures to be taken to alleviate the desperate humanitarian situation in the occupied Palestinian territory, especially the Gaza Strip. The Council called upon all parties to respect the rules of international humanitarian law and to refrain from violence against the civilian population in accordance with the Geneva Convention relative to the Protection of Civilian Persons in Time of War, of 12 August 1949.² The Council called upon Israel, the occupying Power, to cease its destruction of homes and property, economic institutions, agricultural lands and orchards in the occupied Palestinian territory, including East Jerusalem, as well as in the occupied Syrian Golan. The Economic and Social Council reaffirmed that Israeli settlements in the occupied Palestinian territory, including East Jerusalem and the occupied Syrian Golan, are illegal and an obstacle to economic and social development, and called for full implementation of the relevant Security Council resolutions and compliance by Israel, the occupying Power, with international law, including the Fourth Geneva Convention.² It also reaffirmed that the wall being constructed by Israel in the occupied Palestinian territory, including in and around East Jerusalem, is contrary to international law and is isolating East Jerusalem, fragmenting the West Bank and seriously debilitating the economic and social development of the Palestinian people, and in this regard called for full compliance with the legal obligations laid out in the advisory opinion rendered on 9 July 2004 by the International Court of Justice³ and in General Assembly resolution ES-10/15. It requested the Secretary-General to submit to the Assembly at its sixty-fourth session, through the Council, a report on the implementation of the resolution.

2. In its resolution 64/185, the General Assembly reaffirmed the inalienable rights of the Palestinian people and the population of the occupied Syrian Golan over their natural resources, including land and water, and demanded that Israel, the occupying Power, cease its exploitation, damage, loss or depletion, or endangerment of the natural resources in the occupied Palestinian territory, including East Jerusalem, and in the occupied Syrian Golan. The Assembly recognized the right of the Palestinian people to claim restitution as a result of any exploitation, damage, loss or depletion, or endangerment of their natural resources resulting from illegal measures and actions taken by Israel, the occupying Power, in the occupied

¹ Adopted by the Council of the League of Arab States at its fourteenth session, held in Beirut on 27 and 28 March 2002 (A/56/1026-S/2002/932, annex II, resolution 14/221).

² United Nations *Treaty Series*, vol. 75, No. 973.

³ See A/ES-10/273 and Corr.1; see also *Legal Consequences of the Construction of a Wall in the Occupied Palestinian Territory, Advisory Opinion, I.C.J. Reports 2004*, p. 136.

Palestinian territory, including East Jerusalem. The Assembly stressed that the wall being constructed by Israel in the occupied Palestinian territory, including in and around East Jerusalem, is contrary to international law and is seriously depriving the Palestinian people of access to their natural resources, and in this regard called for full compliance with the legal obligations stipulated in the 9 July 2004 advisory opinion of the International Court of Justice and in resolution ES-10/15. The Assembly called upon Israel, the occupying Power, to comply strictly with its obligations under international law, including international humanitarian law, with respect to the alteration of the character and status of the occupied Palestinian territory, including East Jerusalem. The Assembly also called upon Israel, the occupying Power, to cease all actions harming the environment, including the dumping of all kinds of waste materials in the occupied Palestinian territory, including East Jerusalem, and in the occupied Syrian Golan, which gravely threaten their natural resources, including water and land resources, and which pose environmental, sanitation and health threats to the civilian populations. The Assembly further called upon Israel to cease its destruction of vital infrastructure, including water pipelines and sewerage networks, which, inter alia, has a negative impact on the natural resources of the Palestinian people. The Assembly requested the Secretary-General to submit a report at its sixty-fifth session on the implementation of the resolution.

II. Occupied Palestinian territory, including East Jerusalem

Death and injuries

3. Between 1 February 2009 and 9 February 2010, a total of 85 Palestinians were killed and 845 injured as a result of Israeli military operations. Most of the casualties occurred in the context of Israeli air strikes inside the Gaza Strip.⁴ Furthermore, the Palestinian Ministry of Health attributed the death of 242 Palestinian citizens in Gaza to the Israeli blockade on the Strip, and the impediments it caused in the provision of adequate medical care in Gaza (see paras. 58-60).⁵

4. Since the imposition of the blockade against the Gaza Strip, tunnels under the border with Egypt have proliferated, with their operation employing thousands of people whose lives are endangered daily. Indeed, 74 Palestinians lost their lives and 129 others were injured working inside tunnels under the Gaza-Egypt border. Of those, 10 were killed and 35 injured due to Israeli air strikes. Without the relaxation of the blockade, further loss of life and injury remain likely.⁴

5. In the West Bank, Israeli military operations resulted in the death of 18 Palestinians and at least 700 injuries, some of which occurred in the context of anti-barrier demonstrations in the villages of Ni'lin and Bil'in. Settler-related incidents also resulted in 144 Palestinian injuries in 2009.⁴

6. At the same time, attacks by Palestinian militants and the launching of rockets into Israel continued in 2009, although at a diminished rate compared with that of previous years. Between 1 February 2009 and 10 March 2010, there were 5 fatalities

⁴ Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs contribution.

⁵ Palestinian Authority Ministry of Health (see www.moh.gov.ps/newsite/ar/index.php?page=siegevictims&archive=true&pagenum=1).

and 114 injuries recorded among Israelis due to attacks and clashes with Palestinians.⁶

Arbitrary arrests and detentions

7. Citing security concerns, Israeli forces carried out at least 5,631 search operations in the West Bank and arrested 3,538 Palestinians between 1 February 2009 and 9 February 2010. The majority of the search operations took place in the northern West Bank.⁴ According to official Palestinian sources, 7,415 Palestinians were being detained in Israeli prisons at the end of 2009. As of the end of January 2010, over 300 Palestinian children were reportedly being held in custody in Israeli prisons.⁷

8. Some 650 Palestinians were being held as administrative detainees (in detention without charge or trial), including 5 children. There have been reports of numerous denials of basic due-process rights.⁴

Population displacement and property destruction and confiscation

9. Between 1 February 2009 and 9 February 2010, Israeli authorities demolished 220 Palestinian-owned structures, including 92 residential structures, in the West Bank (excluding East Jerusalem). Over 400 Palestinians were displaced as a result of those demolitions, the justification for almost all of which was the lack of a building permit, as required by the Israeli authorities. However, it is virtually impossible for Palestinians to obtain such permits, a situation forcing many Palestinians to build without them. Most of the demolitions occurred in the Jordan River valley, where over 100 demolitions occurred in June 2009. In one incident there on 10 January 2010, Israeli authorities demolished 34 Palestinian-owned structures in the Khirbet Tana Bedouin community. The demolition led to the displacement of 100 Palestinians, including 34 children. It should be noted that information provided by the Israeli Ministry of Defense in 2007 indicated that there are over 3,000 outstanding demolition orders for Area C structures.⁴

10. Over 80 per cent of the Area C demolitions in 2009 occurred in areas declared as “firing zones” by the Israeli military authorities. Many of these areas, which account for some 18 per cent of the West Bank, have been “closed” for a number of years, although numerous residents reported that they had never seen the Israeli military training in the vicinity. Many of the communities in those areas have been residing there prior to 1967. They are some of the poorest communities in the West Bank, relying on small-scale agriculture and herding for their livelihood.⁴

11. In occupied East Jerusalem, the Israeli authorities demolished approximately 80 Palestinian-owned structures between February 2009 and March 2010. Approximately 260 Palestinians were reportedly displaced as a result of those demolitions.⁴ That figure can be added to the 1,495 Palestinian Jerusalemites who had been evicted by the Israeli authorities between 2004 and 2009. Furthermore, according to the Palestinian Authority, during 2009 the Israeli authorities revoked

⁶ Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs, online casualty database.

⁷ Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs and Palestinian Authority contributions.

the identification papers of 4,570 Palestinian residents of East Jerusalem, thereby denying their right to reside in the city.⁸

12. On 2 August 2009, Israeli forces forcibly evicted nine families comprising 53 people, including 20 children, in the Sheikh Jarrah neighbourhood in occupied East Jerusalem. The evicted families, all of whom were refugees, had been living in the area since 1956, following the construction of the homes by the United Nations Relief and Works Agency for Palestine Refugees in the Near East (UNRWA) on land granted by the Government of Jordan. A group of Israeli settlers, authorized by Israeli courts and protected by Israeli security forces, subsequently took over the evicted families' homes. The neighbourhood has since become a scene of regular tension between the Israeli settlers and the Palestinians.⁴

13. Between 1 February 2009 and 9 February 2010, there were 129 recorded incidents of Israeli settlers damaging Palestinian property, including razing, uprooting and burning 1,400 fruit-bearing trees and 2,000 dunams⁹ of cropland, in addition to damage to houses and vehicles. The value of settler-related property damage is significant and has a direct impact on the livelihoods of Palestinians through direct damage of, or access denied to, Palestinian agricultural or grazing land. In certain cases, such damage affects the ability of Palestinians to access basic services. In a number of areas, systematic settler violence has led to displacement of Palestinians.⁷

Barrier

14. The total length of the barrier, as approved by the Israeli cabinet in April 2006, is 723 km, which is more than twice as long as the 320 km Armistice Line of 1949 (Green Line). The major portion of the barrier, approximately 87 per cent of it, runs inside the West Bank and occupied East Jerusalem, rather than along the Green Line.¹⁰

15. The barrier cuts deep into the West Bank, looping around settlements and fragmenting the West Bank into non-contiguous enclaves of Palestinian territory, isolated from the rest of the West Bank. As of February 2010, some 58 per cent of the barrier had been constructed and an additional 10 per cent was under construction. If further constructed as currently planned, the barrier will isolate approximately 9.5 per cent of Palestinian territory, including occupied East Jerusalem and some of the West Bank's most agriculturally productive lands.⁴

16. As of March 2009, the barrier had 66 gates; only half of them are open to Palestinian use, and then only for holders of a special permit from the Israeli military. The gates available for Palestinian use are open only part of the day.¹¹

17. The barrier also continues to isolate the land and water resources of a large number of Palestinians, in particular farmers who, while residing to the east of the barrier, are now required to possess "visitor" permits in order to access their lands through designated gates. In the northern West Bank, permit requirements have become more stringent over the years. Fewer than 20 per cent of those who used to

⁸ Palestinian Authority contribution.

⁹ 1 dunam = 1,000 square metres.

¹⁰ A/64/77-E/2009/13, para. 14.

¹¹ A/HRC/12/37, p. 25.

farm their lands in the closed area before completion of the barrier are now granted permits.¹²

18. These measures have caused an average annual loss of 53.8 per cent in the production of olives in the area.¹³ Some farmers have abandoned their lands owing to the lack of access and high cost of needed agricultural inputs, including fuel, and thus are unable to sustain their livelihood. Furthermore, small-scale breeders of ruminants are restricted from accessing rich pasture land behind the barrier, causing overgrazing on the limited lands available. They are forced to feed their animals fodder throughout most of the year; most such breeders cannot afford to do so which causes them to rely on humanitarian assistance in order to sustain their livelihood.¹⁴

19. The barrier isolates densely populated Palestinian localities currently inside the municipal boundary of Jerusalem, while physically separating neighbouring West Bank villages that were once closely connected to East Jerusalem. Completion of the barrier around the Ma'ale Adumim settlement bloc will physically separate East Jerusalem from the rest of the West Bank and will further restrict access by Palestinians to workplaces, services such as health and education, among others, and places of worship.¹⁵ Further south, the barrier already separates Bethlehem from Jerusalem. Construction of the barrier around the Gush Etzion settlement bloc will sever the territorial contiguity of Bethlehem and curtail its potential for natural growth. It will also separate the city from its agricultural hinterland, which comprises nine Palestinian communities of approximately 22,000 residents that will face restricted access to services in Bethlehem, including markets, health services and higher education.

20. It should be noted however that, after ruling that the current route of the barrier caused disproportionate harm to Palestinians, the Israeli High Court of Justice, in September 2009, ordered the State to relocate three sections of the barrier in the Qalqilya and Tulkarem governorates. The new route approved by the Court should improve the access of farmers to some areas.

¹² Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs, *OCHA Special Focus: The Barrier Gate and Permit Regime Four Years On: Humanitarian Impact in the Northern West Bank* (November 2007) (www.ochaopt.org/documents/OCHA_SpecialFocus_BarrierGates_2007_11.pdf). This figure was replicated in a follow-up survey of the same communities in the period May-June 2008. See also A/64/77-E/2009/13, p. 7.

¹³ Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations (FAO) and Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs, *Olive production losses by the wall (survey), 2009*, as cited in the FAO contribution.

¹⁴ Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations contribution.

¹⁵ For an assessment of the barrier's impact on the access of Palestinians to health, education, religious and economic services and facilities in Jerusalem, see *Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs: The Humanitarian Impact of the West Bank Barrier on Palestinian Communities: East Jerusalem, Update No. 7* (June 2007) (www.ochaopt.org/documents/Jerusalem-30July2007.pdf). See also A/64/77-E/2009/13, paras. 14-19.

Mobility restrictions and closure policies, including access to humanitarian assistance

Movement of persons and goods in the West Bank

21. As of February 2010 there were approximately 550 closure obstacles inside the West Bank territory, 80 fewer than in the preceding year. These include 69 permanently staffed checkpoints, of which more than half are located along the barrier and are used to enable Israelis to commute between Israel and the settlements, to control access to East Jerusalem and to Israel of limited numbers of Palestinians holding special permits and to control access to and from small Palestinian communities isolated by the barrier. All of these checkpoints restrict Palestinian access to West Bank areas on the other side of the barrier.⁴

22. There has been a general relaxation in the crossing procedures at most checkpoints to the east of the barrier, following the removal of military staff at some of them, the lifting of permit requirements and the performance of searches and documentation checks on a random basis only. In addition, the Israeli authorities have also eased restrictions directly affecting economic development, including the extension by three working hours per day of the Tarkumiya commercial goods crossing and the movement of tourist buses through the Jalameh crossing into the West Bank. In the specific locations where the changes have been implemented, these measures have improved mobility, commerce and access to goods.¹⁶

23. However, since November 2009 there has also been a steady increase in the number of “flying” (ad hoc) checkpoints erected for short periods throughout the West Bank.⁴ These checkpoints have an adverse impact on the economy and on the movement of Palestinians.

24. The closure obstacles constitute only one of several layers of a complex system of movement restrictions. Therefore, their total number and geographical distribution at a given time, although indicative, do not capture the entire scope of the system. The barrier plays a major role in this system, as previously described. In addition, approximately 18 per cent of the area comprising the West Bank has over the years been declared “closed military zones”.⁴

25. An additional 3 per cent of the West Bank lies within the outer limits of 149 Israeli settlements and industrial zones, largely inaccessible to Palestinians.⁴ This situation was institutionalized by the Government of Israel in 2002 through the “special security area” framework, whereby closed areas 300 metres wide (later expanded to 400 metres) were established around a number of settlements.¹⁷

26. In January 2009, the Israeli authorities issued a military order declaring the area between the barrier and the Green Line in the Hebron Governorate a closed military area. In the same month, three similar military orders were issued concerning the land between the barrier and the Green Line in parts of the districts of Salfit, Ramallah, Jerusalem and northern Bethlehem. These were the first such orders to be issued since October 2003, when all of the land between the barrier and the Green Line in the governorates of Jenin, Tulkarm and Qalqiliya was designated as a closed area. Based on the experience of barrier-affected communities in the

¹⁶ United Nations Special Coordinator in the Occupied Territories contribution.

¹⁷ A/64/516, para. 16.

northern West Bank since 2003, the new military orders give rise to serious humanitarian concerns regarding the access of Palestinians to lands, livelihoods and services.⁴

27. Access of Palestinians to East Jerusalem, which is also surrounded by the barrier, is prohibited by Israeli law, except for those Palestinians who hold an Israeli Jerusalem identity card or difficult-to-obtain special permits. Since July 2008, medical staff (except doctors) and patients holding valid permits have also been barred from accessing East Jerusalem through two of the vehicular checkpoints located at main routes into the city: Hizma and Az-Zayyem checkpoints. This restriction has had a negative impact on the provision of health-care services to the Palestinian population.⁴

28. Recurrent demands by Israeli security staff to search United Nations vehicles (buses in particular) at checkpoints continued to cause United Nations staff to experience delays as a consequence of either engaging in protracted negotiations or spending time rerouting through alternative checkpoints. During 2009, UNRWA faced continued restrictions in accessing refugee communities in the West Bank, which had major implications on its ability to meet the humanitarian needs of Palestinian refugees. A total of 567 access incidents were reported in 2009, resulting in a loss to UNRWA of an estimated 625 work days or 4,688 hours.¹⁸

29. There was no significant improvement in the levels of import/export activity, and obstacles faced by traders at the West Bank commercial crossings continued. The enforced procedures place additional costs on import/export processes. Restrictions on the size of trucks, inspection procedures and the enforcement of back-to-back transfer of goods caused damage to the products, thus adding to the cost of this process.¹⁹

Restrictions on access to and from the Gaza Strip and the impact of the blockade

30. The blockade imposed by Israel on the Gaza Strip following the forceful takeover of Gaza by Hamas in June 2007 entered its third year in August 2009. As noted by senior United Nations human rights and humanitarian officials, the blockade of Gaza amounts to collective punishment, which is prohibited under international humanitarian law.²⁰ The Israeli authorities cite security concerns and the absence of a ceasefire as the rationale for maintaining restrictions on access to and from the Gaza Strip.

31. The Karni commercial crossing between Israel and the Gaza Strip has remained closed since June 2007, other than for the transfer of wheat and animal feed via conveyor belt. Another secondary crossing at Sufa was previously available as an alternative to the one at Karni, but it has not operated since September 2008. As a result, prices for transporting food commodities from the Israeli port of Ashdod to Gaza have increased dramatically.¹⁸ The total number of truckloads imported into Gaza during 2009 increased by about 16 per cent compared with that of 2008, that is, 31,110 truckloads compared with 26,838. These shipments constituted 18 per cent of the volume of imports during the first five months of 2007, before the

¹⁸ United Nations Relief and Works Agency for Palestine Refugees in the Near East contribution.

¹⁹ United Nations Development Programme contribution, citing a semi-annual report on West Bank crossings movement (March-September 2009).

²⁰ A/64/517, para. 18.

imposition of the blockade. Moreover, 85 per cent of goods brought in, both by the humanitarian and commercial sectors during 2009, consisted of food and cleaning/hygiene items, compared with 17 per cent of the goods before the blockade. The process for the clearance of import requests remains long (several weeks), unpredictable and lacking in transparency.⁴

32. In citing concerns over tunnelling and the risk of attack, the Israeli authorities on 1 January closed the Nahal Oz crossing, which had been used for the transfer of fuel from Israel to Gaza. Imports of those goods have been diverted to the southern Kerem Shalom crossing. This change has led to a significant reduction in the supply of cooking gas to Gaza, due to the smaller capacity of the pipeline at Kerem Shalom, which is less than half that of Nahal Oz.⁴ However, work is under way to expand capacity at Kerem Shalom.

33. The insufficient and irregular supply of industrial fuel needed to operate Gaza's sole power plant has exacerbated the chronic shortage of electricity affecting Gaza and the situation has negative humanitarian implications. Under the Israeli restrictive import regime (2.2 million litres of fuel a week), the Gaza power plant can produce only a quarter of the average electricity demand. Half the demand is met through the purchase of electricity from Israel and 5-10 per cent is purchased from Egypt, creating a permanent deficit of 15-20 per cent. As a result, Gaza's electricity company is forced to implement power cuts ranging from four to eight hours a day in some parts of the Gaza Strip. In addition, in several instances, also citing security concerns, Israel closed the crossing for fuels for several consecutive days; as a result, the Gaza power plant ran out of fuel and had to shut down completely, triggering power cuts lasting up to 16 hours a day in Gaza City. If enough fuel is provided (3.15 million litres a week), the Gaza power plant currently could produce up to one third of the electricity demand, although that level is still below the capacity that had existed before June 2006, when Israel bombed the power plant.⁴

34. The ban on the import of building materials has prevented the reconstruction of most of the 3,500 homes destroyed, the 2,900 homes severely damaged and those lightly damaged during the Israeli military offensive of December 2008 and January 2009. The ban on importing building material has also prevented the construction of 7,500 planned housing units intended to cater to the Gaza Strip's rapidly expanding population. More than 3,500 families are still displaced. While most of those families live in rented apartments or in the houses of relatives, about 200 families continue living in tents or makeshift shelters without proper roofing, windows or doors.⁴

35. In December 2009, Israel exceptionally approved the import of 100 truckloads of glass (almost all of which had already entered Gaza)⁴ and an additional 100 truckloads started entering Gaza on 3 March 2010. In addition, during the week of 23 February, the Palestinian Energy Authority coordinated the crossing of four truckloads of materiel for the electricity distribution company. However, construction projects worth an estimated \$76 million that had been under way before the imposition of the blockade remain on hold, including re-housing refugees living in dilapidated housing and repairing and constructing public infrastructure, such as for water, sewerage and solid waste removal.¹⁸

36. The Israeli blockade also includes restrictions on shipment of cash from West Bank financial institutions to the Gaza Strip. Cash shortages and the halting of

private sector investment in the Gaza Strip have led to a precipitous decline in real private sector credit.²¹

37. The Israeli authorities have also prohibited exports from Gaza, which is one of the main factors preventing its economic reactivation. Since December 2009, however, Israel has allowed the export of a few dozen truckloads of cut flowers and strawberries.⁴

38. In May 2009, the Israeli military extended its self-declared “buffer zone”²² to 300 metres, representing 30 per cent of Gaza’s arable land. The Israeli army enforces the “buffer zone” through open fire, as well as land levelling. Palestinian farmers indicate that their access is often restricted on an ad hoc basis in agricultural areas beyond 300 metres, at times as far as 1,000 metres from the border. In 2009, four Palestinians were killed and 11 injured in incidents when the Israeli army opened fire on farmers in the vicinity of the border. In addition to restrictions on access and threats to personal safety, agricultural land, water wells and water networks have been damaged due to repeated Israeli incursions into the border areas for the purpose of levelling land. The measures imposed by the Israeli military in the “buffer zone” contribute (along with the blockade and adverse weather conditions) to the difficulties facing Gaza’s agriculture sector.⁴

39. Furthermore, the area in which fishermen are allowed to fish has been progressively reduced to 3 nautical miles in 2009. As a result, employment in fishing fell by 66 per cent since 2000, with only 3,400 fishermen currently being active and only 0.3 per cent of Gaza’s population having their dietary needs for fish met.²¹

40. During the reporting period, the Gaza economy has been sustained largely by the smuggling of goods from Egypt through tunnels. There are an estimated 1,000 such tunnels, which employ thousands of people. The tunnels allow for the supply of a wide range of goods otherwise unavailable, including food, livestock, electric appliances, furniture, clothes and fuel, mostly at lower prices (and quality) than those previously imported from Israel. There are also concerns regarding reports that weapons are smuggled through the tunnels. Nonetheless, the Israeli blockade has greatly contributed to the viability and sustainability of the tunnels, where the smuggling of goods has further damaged the private sector and legitimate commerce.

Israeli settlement activity

41. Settlement activity in the West Bank amounts to violation of the provisions of numerous humanitarian laws including Article 55 of the Hague Regulations²³ and Article 49 of the Fourth Geneva Convention,² which stipulates that “the Occupying Power shall not deport or transfer parts of its own civilian population into the

²¹ United Nations Conference on Trade and Development contribution.

²² Following Israel’s “disengagement” from the Gaza Strip in August 2005, the Israeli military declared a “buffer zone” on a strip of land 150 metres wide along the border with Israel, where access by Palestinians is prohibited.

²³ For the Regulations annexed to The Hague Convention IV of 1907, see Carnegie Endowment for International Peace, *The Hague Conventions and Declarations of 1899 and 1907* (New York, Oxford University Press, 1915).

territory it occupies". Israel's continued settlement activity is in flagrant violation of this provision.²⁴

42. The number of Israeli settlers in the West Bank, excluding occupied East Jerusalem, was estimated at 301,200 in September 2009, constituting an annual growth rate of 4.9 per cent throughout 2009. This growth rate is considerably higher than the average rate of growth of the Israeli population, which was recorded at 1.8 per cent per annum.²⁵ The settlers reside in 120 settlements and 99 "outposts",²⁶ all of which are deemed illegal under international law. By the end of 2008 another 195,000 Israeli settlers were living in 12 settlements in occupied East Jerusalem.²⁷ In June 2009, about 900 and 800 housing units were under construction in Ma'ale Adumim and Giv'at Zeev Illit (near East Jerusalem), respectively. Hundreds of other housing units are being constructed in Beitar Illit, Modin Illit and more than 22 other settlements in the West Bank.²⁸

43. In addition to existing settlements in East Jerusalem, Israeli authorities have been planning to construct a new settlement between Ma'ale Adumim and East Jerusalem. That settlement, which is commonly known as the E1 or "East 1" plan, would consist of about 3,500 housing units for approximately 15,000 settlers, in addition to commercial and tourist areas.²⁹

44. On 26 November 2009, the Government of Israel announced a 10-month settlement "freeze order" which prohibited any new construction in West Bank settlements, but allowed the continuation of construction where foundation work had already been started. There have been a number of measures on the ground to enforce the settlement freeze and remove outposts. However, Israeli authorities have also reported various violations of the freeze order, which furthermore does not apply to Israeli settlements in East Jerusalem.³⁰

45. According to the Foundation for Middle East Peace, close to 4,000 housing units were under construction in West Bank settlements in January and February 2010. The Foundation reported that, by 15 January 2010, only 140 "stop-work orders" had been issued to construction sites in violation of the moratorium.³¹

Natural resources, water and the environment

46. The water supply and sanitation services for Palestinians in the occupied Palestinian territory continue to be insufficient and unreliable in terms of quality and quantity. Israeli authorities and companies withdraw water from the occupied

²⁴ See A/HRC/12/37, para. 57, p. 21, as cited in the Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Human Rights contribution.

²⁵ Israeli Central Bureau of Statistics (www1.cbs.gov.il/population/new_2010/table1.pdf). The average annual population growth rate was calculated to include Israeli settlers in the West Bank, excluding East Jerusalem.

²⁶ Peace Now (www.peacenow.org.il/site/en/peace.asp?pi=61&docid=4372&pos=4).

²⁷ A/64/516, para. 13.

²⁸ A/64/516, para. 14.

²⁹ A/64/516, paras. 23 and 25.

³⁰ Peace Now (www.peacenow.org.il/site/en/peace.asp?pi=61&docid=4564).

³¹ Foundation for Middle East Peace, *Report on Israeli Settlement in the Occupied territories*, vol. 20, No. 1, January-February 2010, p. 4.

Palestinian territory in order to supply Israeli cities, and then sell the surplus back to Palestinians.

47. More than 200 Palestinian communities, with a total of 215,000 inhabitants, are reportedly not connected to a running water network and are forced to buy water from private suppliers, using up to 20 per cent of their income for this purpose. According to the World Bank, the Palestinian population has access to only about a quarter of the water ration per capita of Israelis: 123 litres a person daily for West Bank Palestinians in contrast to 544 litres for Israelis. Some Palestinians are surviving on as little as 10 to 15 litres of water a day.³² The Israeli national water company reportedly reduces the supply of water to Palestinian communities substantially during the summer months, causing considerable water shortages, in order to meet increased consumption needs in Israel and in Israeli settlements in the West Bank.³³

48. The current water crisis for Palestinians in the West Bank is coupled with the problem of wastewater flowing into much needed natural reservoirs, aquifers and streams. Some of the settlements are not connected to wastewater treatment facilities; hence, their untreated wastewater flows into nearby Palestinian communities. A Palestinian study showed that crops and water sources in 70 Palestinian villages with nearby settlements were contaminated.³³

Socio-economic indicators

49. The Palestinian Central Bureau of Statistics estimated the cumulative losses to the economy for the year following “Operation Cast Lead” to be in the range of \$800 million.³⁴ Nevertheless, estimates at constant prices for the fourth quarter of 2009 revealed that GDP in the Palestinian Territory increased by 1.6 per cent compared with that of the third quarter of 2009, and that GDP increased by 10.3 per cent compared with that of the fourth quarter of 2008, also at constant prices with the base year being 2004.³⁵

50. According to the Palestinian Central Bureau of Statistics, there was an increase in the main economic activities that contributed considerably to GDP. Short-term economic indicators showed growth in agriculture and fishing, mining, manufacturing, electricity and water, wholesale and retail trade, transportation, financial intermediation, public administration and defence, thus raising GDP.

51. The partial destruction of Palestinian productive capacity, the loss of land and natural resources to settlements and the barrier, the restrictions on access and movement, high political risk and layers of other institutional and administrative obstacles have undermined investment to a certain extent. As a result, the private sector’s ability to create employment opportunities has been declining in the face of a growing labour force. The decimation of the private sector has resulted in more

³² Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Human Rights contribution cited in A/64/516, para. 43.

³³ A/64/516, para. 46.

³⁴ United Nations Development Programme contribution citing www.pcbs.gov.ps/Portals/_pcbs/PressReleases/Gaza_lost_e.pdf.

³⁵ Palestinian Central Bureau of Statistics (www.pcbs.gov.ps/desktopmodules/newscrollEnglish/newscrollView.aspx?ItemID=1122&mID=11170).

dependence on the public sector to provide employment and social transfers. The Palestinian Authority has reached the limit of its ability to act as “employer of last resort” and has had to embark on fiscal reforms that include a hiring and wage freeze and the elimination of utility subsidies.²¹

52. According to a relaxed definition of unemployment as the percentage of persons who do not work but nevertheless are seeking work, unemployment in the occupied Palestinian territory decreased to 31.4 per cent of the working age population in the third quarter of 2009 compared with 32.7 per cent in the third quarter of 2008. Women face systematic discrimination in the labour market: their share of wage employment in the non-agricultural sector stood at 18 per cent in 2008 compared with 12.3 per cent in 1999.³⁶ It should be noted that 67 per cent of the unemployed are young people: in the male population aged 15-29, half are employed, whereas for females in that age group just 1 in 7 is working.³⁷

53. Economic indicators generally disguise the variations between the different parts of the territory (East Jerusalem, West Bank and Gaza Strip). The Gaza Strip presents the least favourable indicators as the combined impact of the blockade, the destruction of property in the last Israeli military operation and the inability to reconstruct continues to have an adverse impact on economic conditions. A recent survey by the Palestinian Private Sector Coordinating Council found that only 258 industrial establishments in Gaza were operational compared with over 2,400 in 2006.³⁸ As a result, unemployment rates soared to 42 per cent compared with 32 per cent before the blockade.⁴ The expansion of the public sector by Hamas authorities and the growth of the tunnel economy have partially compensated for the massive loss of jobs.⁴

54. The most recent poverty data available are unpublished 2007 data which indicate that absolute poverty rates had reached 57.3 per cent in the occupied Palestinian territory. In Gaza, 76.9 per cent of households were under the national poverty line, and in the West Bank 47.2 per cent of them were under the national poverty line.³⁶

55. The inflation rates in 2009 reached 4.34 per cent. The main drivers of the price increases causing inflation were the prices of food and beverages, clothing, shoes, educational services and housing.³⁹

Fiscal situation

56. On 25 August 2009, the Palestinian Authority announced a programme entitled “Palestine: Ending the Occupation, Establishing the State”, which highlighted the

³⁶ United Nations Development Programme contribution.

³⁷ See <http://imeu.net/news/printer0014747.shtml>, which is cited in the United Nations Development Programme contribution.

³⁸ United Nations Development Programme contribution citing [http://www.pscs.ps/download/PSCC%20-%20Gaza%20Private%20Sector%20\(Post%20War%20Status%20Needs\)%20-250209.pdf](http://www.pscs.ps/download/PSCC%20-%20Gaza%20Private%20Sector%20(Post%20War%20Status%20Needs)%20-250209.pdf).

³⁹ United Nations Development Programme contribution citing http://www.pcbs.gov.ps/Portals/_pcbs/PressRelease/CPI_1209_A.pdf.

importance of enhancing public sector institutions and building on the Authority's reform and development plan for the period 2008-2010.⁴⁰

57. The Palestinian Authority continued to make progress in implementing its reform agenda. According to the World Bank, in spite of unfavourable circumstances, namely the blockade of Gaza, mobility restrictions in the West Bank and political uncertainty, the institution-building efforts of the Palestinian Authority demonstrated competence in the provision of basic services. The Bank also maintained that, despite the difficult fiscal position that the Palestinian Authority faced in the second quarter of 2009, it had carried on implementing structural reforms, including holding the line on public employment and improving public financial management.⁴¹ In that regard, the establishment of a single window-single file system in collaboration with the World Customs Organization was also significant, in streamlining the management of various forms of taxation and improving the standards and packaging of goods produced by the Palestinian private sector for the purpose of increasing market share. Structural reforms also included new microfinance regulations, which entrench microfinance as an integral part of the financial sector. Moreover, a new law on comprehensive company registration facilitates the registration of various types of companies.¹⁶

58. The Palestinian Authority has also largely succeeded in containing public spending by controlling public wages and phasing out utility subsidies. However, the destruction of Gaza's local economy and its infrastructure has had serious consequences on the Palestinian Authority's fiscal position, structural reform efforts and the economy of the occupied territory as a whole owing to the consequent elimination of tax and customs revenue from Gaza, and having to bear the financial burden of providing relief and reconstruction funds in the aftermath of the military attack.²¹

59. The Israeli military offensive against Gaza has directly contributed to increasing the recurrent budget deficit to 23 per cent of GDP, which is 5 percentage points above the level envisaged in the original budget for 2009. The Palestinian Authority was forced to resort to borrowing from banks, accumulating arrears and amending the 2009 budget to take into account the emergency spending and fiscal implications of the offensive against Gaza.²¹

60. In 2008, the total value of imports amounted to almost \$3.8 billion, 72 per cent of which was from Israel. These data show the dependence of the Palestinian economy on Israel. Israel transforms the Palestinian market into a secondary market for its products while significantly restricting imports from the occupied territory.⁴²

61. For the Palestinian Authority, the average rate of clearance for monthly revenues (on an accrual basis) during 2009 was about 354 million New Israeli Shekels. One third of those revenues were illegally retained in order to cover the cost of electricity, water and other services provided by Israel. The average size of such monthly deductions was about 124 million New Israeli Shekels.³⁶

⁴⁰ See Palestinian Authority, *Palestine: Ending the Occupation, Establishing the State*, August 2009, and the Palestinian Reform and Development Plan (2008-2010).

⁴¹ World Bank, *A Palestinian State in Two Years: Institutions for Economic Revival*, 22 September 2009; and see <http://web.worldbank.org>.

⁴² United Nations Development Programme contribution citing www.pcbs.gov.ps/Portals/_pcbs/PressRelease/tejara_E_08.pdf.

Public health and food insecurity

62. The quality of functioning medical services in the Gaza Strip is in decline due to the blockade and the internal divide between Gaza and Ramallah. The inability to expand the health facilities that are available as a result of the lack of building materials has been further compounded by recurring power cuts. The functionality of medical equipment is deteriorating for lack of maintenance capacity and spare parts.⁴³ The blockade has also reduced the availability of medicines. As of December 2009, 24 per cent of the items on the list of essential drugs and 18 per cent of those on the list of essential medical disposables were out of stock in the Gaza Strip.⁴

63. In the West Bank, the fragmentation of the health system as a result of the occupation and the restrictions on the movement of people and goods in the West Bank seriously impedes the provision of efficient and effective health care, especially to those in need of tertiary care services in East Jerusalem hospitals.⁴³

64. Demand for UNRWA primary health services continues to rise. In the Gaza Strip and the West Bank, the total number of patient consultations during 2009 was 5.7 and 5 per cent higher, respectively, than in 2008.¹⁸

65. Infant deaths occur mostly within the neonatal period, with many of them being concentrated within the first week of life. The neonatal mortality rate could still be substantially reduced, especially in Gaza Strip where it is 30 per cent higher than in the West Bank. The main causes of neonatal mortality are asphyxia, infections and low birth weight. With regard to maternal mortality, the main causes of death are haemorrhage during and after delivery, infection, eclampsia, anaemia and obstructed labour.⁴³

66. Israeli restrictions on Gazan fishermen have reduced the quantity, quality and type of fish available to Gazans, a situation which has aggravated the already acute problems of malnutrition, poverty and food insecurity.⁴

67. Based on a 2009 socio-economic and food security report,⁴⁴ it is estimated that almost 1.6 million persons are “food insecure” in the occupied Palestinian territory, that is, 38 per cent of the population. These include 625,200 food insecure persons in the West Bank (25 per cent of the West Bank population) and 973,600 persons in the Gaza Strip (61 per cent). In addition, 269,300 persons in the West Bank (11 per cent) and 218,950 persons in the Gaza Strip (16 per cent) are vulnerable to food insecurity.⁴⁵

68. The main cause of the high levels of food insecurity is poverty: 71 per cent of the population receive at least one form of assistance, mostly food assistance. Food insecurity is translated into reduced consumption of animal products, particularly fresh meat and dairy products, as well as some vegetables. The destruction of livelihoods inflicted by the “Cast Lead” offensive also caused about 14 per cent of households to decrease their expenditures, mostly on food. More than half of those

⁴³ World Health Organization contribution.

⁴⁴ Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations and World Food Programme, *Socio-Economic and Food Security (SEFSEC) Survey Report 2 — Gaza Strip, November 2009: Data collected by the Palestinian Central Bureau of Statistics (April-June 2009)* (www.apis.ps/documents/Socio-Economic%20November%202009.pdf).

⁴⁵ World Food Programme contribution.

households reduced the quantity of food consumed and the vast majority decreased the quality of that food. Household diet changes may have negative consequences on the intake of micronutrients. While the energy intake has been preserved due to the shift towards staples and energy-dense food (wheat/bread, beans, oil and sugar), mineral and vitamin deficiencies can occur and cause delayed growth in young children, reduced resistance to infections and pregnancy-related problems. Micronutrient deficiencies have led to high levels of anaemia (57 per cent) among children 6-36 months of age.⁴

69. Since the end of March 2009 UNRWA reduced its emergency food aid caseload in Gaza to about 650,000. UNRWA estimated the financial cost of meeting the emergency needs of refugees at \$456.7 million between January and September 2009. By the end of that year, total confirmed pledges to the Agency's emergency appeal stood at \$324 million, or 71 per cent of total needs.¹⁸

Youth and education

70. The Israeli occupation continues to have a negative impact on access to education by youth in both the West Bank and the Gaza Strip. Restrictions on movement, the construction of the barrier in the West Bank and military operations in the Gaza Strip impede access by students and teachers to schools and other educational activities. As a consequence, the quality of education is reportedly declining.

71. In the Gaza Strip, due to underfunding and high population growth rates, 89 per cent of UNRWA schools operate on a double shift basis. Recent years have witnessed a collapse in education standards at Agency schools in the Gaza Strip, as the effects of underfunding have been compounded by the ongoing blockade and other restrictions and periodic violence.¹⁸

III. Occupied Syrian Golan

72. The Syrian Golan, which encompasses an area of about 1,250 square km, has been under Israeli occupation since 1967. The decision of the Government of Israel to impose its laws, jurisdiction and administration in the occupied Syrian Golan was deemed null and void and without international legal effect by Security Council resolution 497 (1981). This annexation continues to affect on a daily basis the lives and human rights of the Syrian citizens living in the occupied Syrian Golan.⁴⁶

73. The Syrian Arab population, estimated to be 21,100, lives in five main towns, while 19,000 Israeli inhabitants live in 33 settlements.⁴⁷ Since 1967, the Government of Israel has continued its settlement expansion, despite renewed United Nations resolutions calling upon Israel to desist from doing so.

⁴⁶ International Labour Office, *The situation of workers of the occupied Arab territories*, report of the Director-General, International Labour Conference, ninety-seventh session, Geneva, 2008, appendix, para. 94.

⁴⁷ International Committee of the Red Cross (www.icrc.org/web/eng/siteeng0.nsf/htmlall/israel-golan-update-291009?opendocument).

74. In past years, investments in tourist infrastructure in the occupied Syrian Golan reportedly increased. In 2009, the Ministry of Housing embarked on a plan to increase the population of Katzrin settlement from 6,500 to 20,000 over the ensuing 20 years. The Israel Land Administration issued 14 tenders for the construction of apartment buildings in the settlements.⁴⁸ On 10 February 2010, the Israeli Knesset passed preliminary reading of a bill that would grant tax benefits to Israeli residents of the Golan Heights.⁴⁹

75. ILO reports that no significant changes have been recorded between 2008 and 2009 regarding employment conditions and opportunities for Syrian citizens in the occupied Syrian Golan. Syrian citizens of the occupied Syrian Golan suffer from a lack of employment opportunities in their communities, and there are no prospects for economic development in that region. Employment in the Israeli construction sector remains the only option for many. However, dependence on subcontractors for access to the Israeli labour market makes Syrian labourers vulnerable to exploitative practices and violations of their labour rights. Syrian women are particularly affected by the lack of employment opportunities in the occupied Syrian Golan, especially since their occupational and regional mobility is restricted.⁵⁰

76. Israeli policies and measures, including discriminatory water quotas and tariff schemes, favour Israeli settlers and restrict the access of Syrian citizens to land and water, which severely constrains the agricultural activities of Syrian citizens, who have traditionally relied on such activities for their livelihood.⁵⁰

77. By October 2009, the International Committee of the Red Cross reported 18 registered Syrian detainees in Israeli prisons.⁵¹ The Government of Syria maintains that at least one detainee suffers from a life-threatening health condition which is being disregarded by the Israeli authorities.⁵²

IV. Conclusion

78. In his message to the United Nations International Meeting in Support of Israeli-Palestinian Peace on 12 February 2010, the United Nations Secretary-General welcomed the reform efforts of the Palestinian Authority, which seek to establish the economic, social and institutional basis of Palestinian statehood. He said that it was vital that the Palestinian Authority continue to advance this state-building agenda while striving to meet its other road map obligations in full. He also expressed profound concern regarding the protracted suffering of civilians in the Gaza Strip, maintaining that “the continued blockade is unacceptable and counterproductive, destroying legitimate commerce and denying aid organizations and the United Nations itself the means to begin civilian reconstruction”. He condemned the continued rocket fire from Gaza, which indiscriminately targets Israeli civilians. In closing, the Secretary-General concluded that the clear

⁴⁸ A/64/516, para. 48.

⁴⁹ Haaretz (www.haaretz.com/hasen/spages/1148860.html).

⁵⁰ International Labour Office, *The situation of workers of the occupied Arab territories*, report of the Director-General, International Labour Conference, 97th session, Geneva, 2008, appendix, paras. 95-98.

⁵¹ International Committee of the Red Cross, www.icrc.org/web/eng/siteeng0.nsf/htmlall/israel-golan-update-291009?opendocument.

⁵² See A/64/343, chap. II, entry of Cuba.

parameters to end the occupation that began in 1967 and create the State of Palestine living side-by-side with Israel in peace and security are contained in Security Council resolutions, the road map and the Arab Peace Initiative, emphasizing that political will is required by the leadership of both sides, along with creative support by third parties.⁵³

⁵³ Statement of United Nations Secretary-General, Ban Ki-moon for the United Nations International Meeting in Support of Israeli-Palestinian Peace, Qawra, Malta, 12 February 2010.



General Assembly Economic and Social Council

Distr.: General
9 May 2011

Original: English

General Assembly Sixty-sixth session

Item 62 of the preliminary list*

Permanent sovereignty of the Palestinian people in the Occupied Palestinian Territory, including East Jerusalem, and of the Arab population in the occupied Syrian Golan over their natural resources

Economic and Social Council Substantive session of 2011

Item 11 of the provisional agenda**

Economic and social repercussions of the Israeli occupation on the living conditions of the Palestinian people in the Occupied Palestinian Territory, including East Jerusalem, and the Arab population in the occupied Syrian Golan

Economic and social repercussions of the Israeli occupation on the living conditions of the Palestinian people in the Occupied Palestinian Territory, including East Jerusalem, and of the Arab population in the occupied Syrian Golan

Note by the Secretary-General

In its resolution 2010/31, the Economic and Social Council requested the Secretary-General to submit to the General Assembly at its sixty-fifth session, through the Council, a report on the implementation of that resolution. The Assembly, in its resolution 65/179, also requested the Secretary-General to submit a report to it at its sixty-sixth session. The present report, which has been prepared by the Economic and Social Commission for Western Asia, is submitted in response to the resolutions of the Assembly and the Council.

* A/66/50.

** E/2011/100.



**Report prepared by the Economic and Social Commission
for Western Asia on the economic and social repercussions
of the Israeli occupation on the living conditions of the
Palestinian people in the Occupied Palestinian Territory,
including East Jerusalem, and of the Arab population in the
occupied Syrian Golan***

Summary

The occupation of Palestinian territory, including East Jerusalem, by Israel continues to constrain the existence and successful functioning of institutions of the Palestinian Authority and contribute to the economic and social hardship of Palestinians. This includes the Israeli army's continued resort to arbitrary detention, disproportionate use of force, settlement expansion, property destruction, home demolitions, mobility restrictions, restriction of building permits and closure policies.

Between 1 February 2010 and 29 March 2011, 98 Palestinians were killed and 1,871 were injured by Israeli security forces and settlers. During the same period, 5 Israeli fatalities and 82 injuries were recorded as a result of the conflict.

By the end of 2010, an estimated 6,000 Palestinians were detained in Israeli prisons, including 213 Palestinian children and 210 administrative detainees who are held without charge or trial.

In 2010, more demolitions were recorded than in any other year since 2005. At least 431 Palestinian structures were demolished in occupied East Jerusalem and Area C in the West Bank, including 137 residential structures, displacing 594 people and affecting 14,136 others.

The Government of Israel announced its decision to ease the blockade on the Gaza Strip on 20 June 2010. This decision resulted in an increase in imports of consumer goods. Yet, most of the fundamental parameters of Israel's blockade, namely restrictions on the movement of people, the import of only those raw materials and basic construction materials that are used in projects under international supervision and the export of only limited categories of products, remain in place. In the West Bank, Palestinian access to occupied East Jerusalem and their land, mainly located in the Jordan Valley, in areas behind the Wall and in areas in the vicinity of Israeli settlements, remain difficult.

* The Economic and Social Commission for Western Asia would like to acknowledge its appreciation for the substantive contributions of the Department for Political Affairs, the United Nations Conference on Trade and Development, the United Nations Development Programme, the United Nations Population Fund, the United Nations Human Settlements Programme, the United Nations Relief and Works Agency for Palestine Refugees in the Near East, the Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs, the International Labour Organization, the Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations, the World Food Programme, the World Health Organization and the Office of the United Nations Special Coordinator for the Middle East Peace Process.

As at mid-2010, 517,774 Israeli settlers lived in 144 settlements in the Occupied Palestinian Territory, including about 200,000 settlers in occupied East Jerusalem. This population has more than doubled since the beginning of the Oslo Peace Process in 1992.

Occupation and the tightly closed crossing into the Syrian Arab Republic constitute the most important barriers to economic development and the normalization of the social fabric in the occupied Syrian Golan. Syrian citizens who wish to maintain their Syrian Arab identity face hardship and severely restricted prospects with regard to income generation.

I. Introduction

1. In its resolution 2010/31, the Economic and Social Council called for the full opening of the border crossings of the Gaza Strip, in line with Security Council resolution 1860 (2009), to ensure humanitarian access as well as the sustained and regular flow of persons and goods and the lifting of all movement restrictions imposed on the Palestinian people. The Council also called upon all parties to respect the rules of international humanitarian law and to refrain from violence against the civilian population. It further called upon Israel, the occupying Power, to cease its destruction of homes and properties, economic institutions and agricultural lands and orchards in the Occupied Palestinian Territory, including East Jerusalem, as well as in the occupied Syrian Golan. The Council reaffirmed that Israeli settlements in the Occupied Palestinian Territory, including East Jerusalem and the occupied Syrian Golan, were illegal and constituted a major obstacle to economic and social development. It also reaffirmed that the ongoing construction of the wall in the Occupied Palestinian Territory, including in and around East Jerusalem, was contrary to international law and was isolating East Jerusalem, fragmenting the West Bank and seriously debilitating the economic and social development of the Palestinian people.

2. In its resolution 65/179, the General Assembly reaffirmed the inalienable rights of the Palestinian people and the population of the occupied Syrian Golan over their natural resources, including land and water, and demanded that Israel cease the exploitation, damage, cause of loss or depletion of, and endangerment of natural resources. The Assembly stressed that the wall and settlements being constructed in the Occupied Palestinian Territory, including in and around East Jerusalem, were contrary to international law and were seriously depriving the Palestinian people of access to their natural resources. The Assembly called upon Israel, the occupying Power, to comply strictly with its obligations under international law, including international humanitarian law with respect to the alteration of the character and status of the Occupied Palestinian Territory, including East Jerusalem. The Assembly also called upon Israel to cease all actions harming the environment and its destruction of vital infrastructure.

II. Occupied Palestinian Territory, including East Jerusalem

Deaths and injuries

3. Between 1 February 2010 and 29 March 2011, 98 Palestinians were killed and 1,871 were injured by Israeli security forces and settlers. The majority of the deaths were recorded in the Gaza Strip, largely as a result of Israeli air strikes and shootings in restricted areas in the vicinity of the buffer zone near the fence separating the Strip from Israel. Most of the injuries, which increased by 60 per cent in 2010 compared with the previous year,¹ occurred in the West Bank and resulted

¹ Information contributed by the Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs of the Secretariat.

from clashes between Israeli forces and Palestinian demonstrators, particularly in occupied East Jerusalem.²

4. Eleven children were killed and 360 were injured as a result of the clashes. In September and October 2010 alone, 26 Palestinian children were injured and one 15-month-old baby died after inhaling tear gas in occupied East Jerusalem; most cases involved private armed guards hired by the Ministry of Construction and Housing of Israel to protect Israeli settlers in the neighbourhood of Silwan.³

5. Three separate cases of Palestinian children being used by Israeli security forces as human shields were documented in the West Bank in 2010 compared with seven such cases during Operation Cast Lead in Gaza.³

6. During the same period, 5 Israeli fatalities and 82 injuries were recorded as a result of the conflict.²

Arbitrary arrests and detentions

7. Citing security concerns, during 2010 Israeli forces conducted over 4,200 search and arrest operations throughout the West Bank, including occupied East Jerusalem, arresting around 2,940 Palestinians.¹ Since the occupation of the Palestinian territory in 1967, Israeli authorities have detained an estimated 760,000 Palestinians for various periods, including 13,000 women and 15,000 children. At the end of 2010, an estimated 6,000 Palestinians were being detained in Israeli prisons, including 210 administrative detainees held without charge or trial.⁴ Since 25 June 2006, the Gaza-based Palestinian armed faction has held one Israeli soldier.

8. In the same period, 213 Palestinian children between the ages of 12 and 17 were reported to be detained in Israeli prisons.⁵ According to Israeli police figures, 1,267 criminal files were opened against children accused of throwing stones in occupied East Jerusalem between October 2009 and October 2010. Ninety cases of torture and ill treatment of detained children were documented in 2010, in 24 of which the children were under the age of 15, compared with 101 such cases in 2009. In addition, 13 cases of threatened and 1 case of actual sexual violence against detained children aged between 13 and 17 were reported in 2010, compared with nine such cases in 2009.³

9. Between January 2010 and the end of 2010, 645 complaints were filed against Israeli security agency interrogators for alleged ill treatment and torture of Palestinian detainees. The Israeli Police Investigation Department of the Ministry of Justice, which is the relevant authority charged with investigating these complaints, did not conduct any criminal investigation.³

² Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs, Protection of Civilians: Casualties Database. Available from www.ochaopt.org/poc.aspx?id=1010002.

³ United Nations Children's Fund (UNICEF) and others, "Children Affected by Armed Conflict: Israel and the Occupied Palestinian Territory (2010 Annual Review)". Available from www.unicef.org/oPt/CAAC_2010_annual_bulletin.pdf.

⁴ Information contributed by the Palestinian Authority.

⁵ Defence of Children International-Palestine Section, "In their own words: a report on the situation facing Palestinian children detained in the Israeli military court system" (January 2011). Available from www.dci-pal.org/English/Doc/Press/JANUARY2011.pdf.

Population displacement, property destruction and confiscation

10. Master plans for Palestinian communities in Area C of the West Bank, which is under Israeli jurisdiction, are either non-existent or have been prepared by the Israeli Civil Administration without the participation of and without consulting with local Palestinian communities.⁶ As a consequence, housing and infrastructure needs remain largely unmet, resulting in overdensification and displacement to Areas A and B, which are administratively controlled by the Palestinian Authority.

11. Palestinian land and structures continue to be at risk of confiscation for Israeli purposes, such as the construction of the wall and the roads serving Israeli settlements.⁷ In addition to the displacement resulting from home demolitions, the destruction of Palestinian livelihood-related structures often have a devastating impact on the socio-economic status of affected families.⁸

12. The incidence of demolitions rose in 2010, up 59 per cent from 2009, a rate higher than in any year since 2005. At least 431 Palestinian structures were demolished in occupied East Jerusalem and Area C⁹ in the West Bank, including 137 residential structures, displacing 594 people and affecting the livelihood of 14,136 others.¹⁰ At least 20,194 Palestinians have been left homeless as a result of home demolitions since 2004.¹¹

13. On 8 December 2010, Israeli military forces demolished 29 structures in the village of Khirbet Tana, including homes and the town school. It was the third wave of demolitions endured by the community in just over five years. One week later, the Israeli authorities issued eviction orders targeting most of the remaining structures in the village.¹⁰

14. Israeli policies, which the facts on the ground have shown to be aimed at the annexation of East Jerusalem, include home demolitions, the revocation of residency permits, undermining constructions by and confiscating the land of

⁶ Binkom, *The Prohibited Zone* (2008), available from http://eng.bimkom.org/_Uploads/23ProhibitedZone.pdf; World Bank, *West Bank and Gaza: The Economic Effects of Restricted Access to Land in the West Bank* (2008), available from <http://siteresources.worldbank.org/INTWESTBANKGAZA/Resources/EconomicEffectsofRestrictedAccessToLandintheWestBankOct.20,08.pdf>.

⁷ According to the World Bank, in the period 2000-2007 33 per cent of demolition orders were issued against Palestinian structures and only 91 building permits were issued to Palestinians, while 7 per cent of demolition orders were issued against Israeli structures and 18,472 building permits were issued to Israelis (see footnote 6).

⁸ Information contributed by the United Nations Relief and Works Agency for Palestine Refugees in the Near East.

⁹ Area C, which constitutes the vast majority of the West Bank, is under full control of the Israeli military, even with regard to civilian affairs.

¹⁰ Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs, *The Humanitarian Monitor* (December 2010), available from www.ochaopt.org/documents/ocha_opt_the_humanitarian_monitor_2011_01_19_english.pdf.

¹¹ See www.btselem.org. Data on house demolitions as a punitive measure are available until 2004; data on house demolitions for alleged military purposes are available for the period 2004-2010 (and exclude Operation Cast Lead); and data on the demolition of houses built without a permit in the West Bank and East Jerusalem are available only for the periods 2006-2010 and 2004-2010, respectively.

Palestinians, have resulted in the expropriation of 23,378 dunams¹² of land in occupied East Jerusalem since 1968.¹³

15. Only 13 per cent of occupied East Jerusalem is zoned by the Israeli authorities for Palestinian construction. However, most of this area is already heavily built-up. Moreover, Israel's policy for granting building permits to Palestinians is restrictive and involves a process that is often complicated and expensive.¹

16. As a result, the number of building permits granted annually does not meet the existing demand for housing. The gap between housing needs based on population growth and legally permitted construction is estimated to be of at least 1,100 housing units per year. Thus, 28 per cent of all Palestinian homes in occupied East Jerusalem have been built without permits, a situation that could be used, at any time, as a pretext by the Israeli authorities to demolish the homes, potentially rendering 60,000 Palestinians homeless.¹⁴ Since 1967, the Israeli authorities have demolished thousands of Palestinian-owned structures in East Jerusalem, including an estimated 2,000 homes.¹⁵ Consequently, housing is becoming increasingly unaffordable, overdensification is becoming a problem and some families have no choice but to move out of occupied East Jerusalem.

17. In the first half of 2010, 46 residency permits for Palestinians in Jerusalem were revoked, adding to the 13,115 permits that had been revoked between 1967 and November 2009.¹⁶

18. During 2010, Israeli authorities confiscated about 8,407.5 dunams of land and razed another 1,532 dunams for the purpose of constructing the West Bank wall and for expanding settlements.⁴

19. In the Gaza Strip, the blockade continues to impede the construction, reconstruction and restoration of Palestinian homes. The Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs estimates that 26,500 new housing units are needed to accommodate the natural growth that occurred between June 2007 and December 2010. Additional units are needed to replace the 6,300 units that were destroyed or severely damaged during Operation Cast Lead and the 2,900 units that were destroyed or damaged in previous military operations; 5,500 additional units are needed to replace substandard and unsanitary homes in refugee camps. The (conservative) total estimate is 41,200 housing units needed.¹⁷

¹² 1 dunam = 1,000 m².

¹³ See www.btselem.org/english/Jerusalem/Land_Expropriation_Statistics.asp.

¹⁴ Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs, "West Bank Movement and Access Update" (June 2010), available from <http://unispal.un.org/UNISPAL.NSF/0/4694C27BF640414685257744004ACE17>.

¹⁵ Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs, "East Jerusalem: Key Humanitarian Concerns" (March 2011), available from www.ochaopt.org/documents/ocha_opt_jerusalem_report_2011_03_23_web_english.pdf.

¹⁶ See www.btselem.org/english/Jerusalem/Revocation_Statistics.asp.

¹⁷ Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs, *Easing the Blockade* (March 2011), available from www.ochaopt.org/documents/ocha_opt_special_easing_the_blockade_2011_03_english.pdf.

Israeli settlements and settler violence

20. As at mid-2010, more than half a million Israeli settlers were estimated to be living in 144 settlements in the Occupied Palestinian Territory, including around 200,000 settlers in occupied East Jerusalem.⁴ This population has more than doubled since the beginning of the Oslo Peace Process in 1992.

21. The Israeli settler population in the West Bank, including occupied East Jerusalem, increased by 68 per cent between 1997 and 2010 (equal to a growth rate of about 4 per cent a year, which is more than double the overall natural demographic growth of Israel during the same period), while the Palestinian population in the area increased by 41 per cent during the same period, as shown in table 1.

Table 1
Growth in the Israeli settler and Palestinian populations in the West Bank, including East Jerusalem

Year	1992	1997	2002	2007	2010
Israeli settlers	241 500	308 689	383 275	461 169	517 774
Palestinians	—	1 787 562	2 042 306	2 323 469	2 513 283

Sources: www.btselem.org/English/Settlements/Settlement_population.xls; *Human Rights Watch, Separate and Unequal: Israel's Discriminatory Treatment of Palestinians in the Occupied Territories* (December 2010); information contributed by the Palestinian Authority's Palestinian Central Bureau of Statistics (see www.pcbs.gov.ps/Portals/_pcbs/populati/GOVER1997-2010E.htm).

22. In addition to settlements, there are currently about 100 settlement outposts in the West Bank that were built without official Israeli authorization and have therefore been deemed illegal by the Government of Israel, but that are often tolerated by governmental ministries and protected by the Israeli army. As with the settlements, the outposts are illegal under international humanitarian law.¹⁸ The outposts control some 16,000 dunams of land, of which 7,000 consist of private, Palestinian-owned land (see A/65/365, para. 15).

23. A 10-month partial moratorium on settlement construction in the West Bank ended on 26 September 2010. Construction continued during the 10 months on units authorized and commenced before the partial restraint. In addition, the Israeli non-governmental organization Peace Now has reported a number of violations of the partial restraint (see A/HRC/16/72, para. 14).

24. In the six weeks following the end of the moratorium, the rate of settlement construction increased compared to what it had been before the moratorium (see A/HRC/16/72, para. 14). In fact, the number of housing units built in settlements was about four times higher in 2010 (6,764) than in 2009 (1,703); 2,107 units were constructed in 2008, 1,471 in 2007 and 1,518 in 2006.¹⁹

¹⁸ A 2005 report (the Sasson Report) commissioned by the then Prime Minister of Israel, Ariel Sharon, concluded that the outposts were illegal even under Israeli law.

¹⁹ Palestinian Central Bureau of Statistics, press release on the occasion of Land Day, available from www.pcbs.gov.ps/Portals/_pcbs/PressRelease/land_day_E30032011.pdf.

25. Israel has drawn plans to construct a new settlement between Ma'ale Adumim and East Jerusalem, the implementation of which would connect the two areas and cut off East Jerusalem from the rest of the West Bank. Israel already built the new Police District Headquarters in this area some years ago, in the course of which it paved roads and built infrastructure to serve the planned settlement, thereby splitting the West Bank in two (see A/65/365, para. 23).

26. Israeli settlements are linked to each other and to Israel by an extensive road network. Palestinians are either prevented from using these roads or have only restricted access to them. As a result, the roads have fragmented the West Bank into isolated enclaves that Palestinians must access via alternative roads, checkpoints, bridges and tunnels that circumvent the roads reserved for settlers.

27. In December 2009, the High Court of Justice of Israel cancelled the ban on the movement of Palestinians along that section of route 443 to and from Jerusalem that lies beyond the Green Line. In response, the Israeli army proposed new traffic arrangements resulting in the continued exclusion of Palestinians from utilizing the route, in contravention of the High Court's rulings.²⁰

28. Israeli settlements, their infrastructure and the territory zoned for their expansion, have been identified as the single largest factor shaping the system of access restrictions applied to the Palestinian population in the West Bank, including East Jerusalem. While in some cases the restricted areas have been unilaterally established and enforced by Israeli settlers, in other cases the Israeli military erects fences around settlements and declares the area behind the fence a special security area (see A/65/365, para. 16).

29. In 2010, settler attacks more than doubled compared with 2009. Between February 2010 and February 2011, the Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs recorded a total of 304 settler-related incidents, of which 101 were perpetrated by settlers against Palestinians and their properties. In 2010, a Palestinian boy was killed by settlers. Moreover, settlers took over at least 10 Palestinian housing units in occupied East Jerusalem, leading to the eviction of at least 70 Palestinians.¹

30. Israeli settlers burned down a Palestinian church in occupied East Jerusalem and three mosques in the West Bank. Six mosques were vandalized, set on fire or both by Israeli settlers during 2010, the fifth such occurrence that year.²¹

31. During the 2010 olive harvest season, the Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs recorded more than 30 incidents resulting either in injury to Palestinians or in damage to olive trees, compared with 20 incidents in each of the 2008 and 2009 olive harvest seasons. In addition, Israeli settlers caused dozens of other incidents, including intimidation, trespassing and preventing access. These attacks resulted in 17 injuries to Palestinians and the destruction of roughly 4,000 olive trees.¹

²⁰ See www.btselem.org/english/freedom_of_movement/road_443.asp.

²¹ Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs, *The Humanitarian Monitor* (October 2010), available from www.ochaopt.org/documents/ocha_opt_the_humanitarian_monitor_2010_11_12_english.pdf.

32. In one incident, 3,000 dunams of cultivated land were set on fire by Israeli settlers in August 2010, thus undermining the livelihoods of some 100 Palestinian families from the Beit Furik village (Nablus).²²

33. No indictment was filed after 97 investigations were launched by Israeli security forces into the vandalization of Palestinian trees between 2005 and 2010.²³ On 27 March, a settler was sentenced to one and a half years in prison and had to pay compensation after a Jerusalem court convicted him for kidnapping a Palestinian minor in 2007.

The wall

34. Israel continues to construct the wall initiated in 2002, with approximately 85 per cent of its planned route running within the West Bank, including occupied East Jerusalem. Should the wall be completed as planned, approximately 33,000 Palestinians in the West Bank, as well as the majority of Palestinian residents of occupied East Jerusalem, will reside between the wall and the Green Line.¹

35. By the end of 2010, approximately 61.4 per cent of the 707-kilometre-long wall had been completed. A further 8.4 per cent was under construction and 30.1 per cent was planned but had not yet been constructed.¹

36. The wall has already severely affected social and economic life; it restricts the freedom of access and movement of Palestinians in the West Bank, affecting around 855,000 Palestinians in 206 communities. The impact of the wall will continue to increase as construction progresses.⁴

37. The wall separates occupied East Jerusalem from the remainder of the West Bank. Only holders of West Bank identification documents with valid permits can access occupied East Jerusalem, through 3 of 14 checkpoints, in order to reach their jobs or health-care facilities.⁴ Around 50,000 holders of Jerusalem identification documents live within the municipal boundaries but have been left on the West Bank side of the wall. Moreover, 140,000 people living in the Jerusalem governorate in communities historically connected to Jerusalem are now physically separated by the wall.¹⁴

38. The area between the wall and the Green Line has been designated a “closed military area” that is also referred to as the “Seam Zone”. It covers almost 733 km², which represents about 13 per cent of the area of the West Bank. These isolated and confiscated areas include 348 km² of agricultural land, 110 km² of land utilized for Israeli settlements and military bases, 250 km² of forests and open areas and 25 km² of land that has been built up by Palestinians.¹⁹ Approximately 7,800 Palestinians currently reside in this closed area. Furthermore, Palestinians are obliged to obtain “visitor” permits to access their farming land and water resources that are located in the Seam Zone. Access is channelled via specific gates erected in the wall.¹ Restricted allocation of these permits and the limited number and opening times of

²² Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs, *The Humanitarian Monitor* (August 2010), available from www.ochaopt.org/documents/ocha_opt_the_humanitarian_monitor_2010_09_16_english.pdf.

²³ Yesh Din, “Police investigation of vandalization of Palestinian trees in the West Bank” (October 2010). Available from www.yesh-din.org/userfiles/file/datasheets/YESH%20DIN_Eng.pdf.

the wall gates have severely curtailed agricultural practice and undermined rural livelihoods.¹

39. The United Nations Relief and Works Agency for Palestine Refugees in the Near East (UNRWA) has reported that its access to the Seam Zone — for the provision of mobile health services, food assistance and mental health services, as well as for social work teams — remains difficult due to Israeli demands that vehicles and staff be searched. Israeli authorities continue to require that UNRWA goods be transferred “back-to-back” at one of the five commercial crossings along the wall.⁸

Mobility restrictions and closure policies, including access to humanitarian assistance

40. Israel’s adoption, citing security concerns, of a closed regime with regard to the Occupied Palestinian Territory makes it complicated for Palestinian households to conduct normal lives (to reach school, health-care facilities, the local market, the workplace and agricultural land). Restricting movement in the occupied territory is in contradiction with the Geneva Convention relative to the Protection of Civilian Persons in Time of War, of 12 August 1949,²⁴ (Fourth Geneva Convention) and creates a shattered socio-economic space where, on any given day, the ability of an ordinary Palestinian household to conduct a normal life is continuously subject to non-transparent decisions and delays. Such a system of movement restrictions induces people to live under a continuous sense of uncertainty and vulnerability.

41. Israel continued to control the export and import of Palestinian goods. The Occupied Palestinian Territory has no seaport, airport or railway, and suffers from constraints to road transportation, as a result of which its trade has been concentrated with and through Israel.

Restrictions on access to and from the Gaza Strip

42. The blockade imposed by Israel on the Gaza Strip since June 2007 remained in effect, constituting a clear, systematic and sustained case of collective punishment imposed on an entire civilian population in direct violation of article 33 of the Fourth Geneva Convention (see A/HRC/16/72, para. 23).

43. It remains difficult for Gaza’s population to move in and out of the Strip, with exceptional access granted in humanitarian cases. This means that a limited number of people requiring urgent medical care and those accompanying them, with permits, can enter Israel.¹ Moreover, national staff of humanitarian organizations were less able to travel in and out of Gaza after June 2010, when only half as many applications for such staff to access Gaza were approved.²⁵

44. Until June 2010, limited quantities of only 76 items were allowed compared with the approximately 4,000 items that were traded before the blockade.¹⁰ In June 2010, Israel announced an easing of the blockade, moving from a positive to a

²⁴ United Nations, *Treaty Series*, vol. 75, No. 973.

²⁵ See [http://ochadms.unog.ch/quickplace/cap/main.nsf/h_Index/CAP_2011_Humanitarian_Appeal/\\$FILE/CAP_2011_Humanitarian_Appeal_SCREEN.pdf?openElement](http://ochadms.unog.ch/quickplace/cap/main.nsf/h_Index/CAP_2011_Humanitarian_Appeal/$FILE/CAP_2011_Humanitarian_Appeal_SCREEN.pdf?openElement).

negative list of goods that resulted in a slight increase in the importation of consumer goods and a corresponding decline in the illegal trade in such items through tunnels. Yet, the fundamental restrictions on the movement of people and on the importation of raw materials and basic construction materials, as well as the ban on the export of goods beyond a limited selection of agricultural products, remained, in spite of limited progress in the entry of construction materials.²⁶ It should be noted that, according to an announcement made by Israel on 8 December 2010, permissible exports are to include agricultural produce, furniture and textile products, which will be subject to security and logistical preparations at the Kerem Shalom crossing.²⁷

45. These incremental improvements can easily be withdrawn or amended and, as such, are unlikely to give people the certainty they need to carry out their ordinary businesses. Currently, approval procedures remain burdensome and limited capacity at crossing points delays the flow of essential goods and the implementation of international projects under the recovery and reconstruction plan for Gaza. To date, United Nations projects valued at \$155.5 million have been approved by the Government of Israel. It is now important to ensure timely implementation of these projects and a steady flow of approvals. For instance, the arbitrary closure of the Nahal Oz crossing at the beginning of 2010 negatively affected the importation of cooking gas, just as capacity limitations at Karni and Kerem Shalom crossings have failed to accommodate the need for construction supplies.¹

46. Between January 2010 and February 2011, 3,407 truckloads of goods entered the Gaza Strip.²⁷ While this figure marks an increase from 2009, it remains well below the monthly average of 12,350 truckloads in the months preceding the imposition of the blockade in 2007.¹⁰ Despite an overall increase in the volume of non-food items, including new raw materials, food items continue to make up the majority, or 58 per cent, of imported goods; the share of food items prior to June 2007 was of about 20 per cent.¹⁷ At the time of writing this report, the announcement by Israeli authorities of an easing of export restrictions, which was made in December 2010, remains mostly unimplemented.¹ In fact, 99 truckloads of goods were exported in December 2010, 107 in January 2011 and 52 in February 2011, compared to 4 in November 2010 and zero in the preceding six months. Exports in December 2010 and February 2011 were all agricultural.²⁷

47. The importation of basic construction materials remains heavily restricted. Materials that are designated by Israel as “dual-use” items are restricted for projects approved by the Palestinian Authority and supervised by international organizations,¹ thereby imposing delays and extra costs on project implementation. The unilateral designation of construction materials as “dual-use items for projects” undermines recovery and reconstruction efforts and renders inconsequential the commitment by international donors to alleviate the plight of the civilian population.

48. In addition, a very cumbersome coordination and monitoring system needs to be adhered to, often resulting in the interruption of imports and projects. The unmet need for 41,200 housing units,¹⁷ (including as a result of natural growth) is causing

²⁶ Information contributed by the Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs and the Office of the United Nations Special Coordinator for the Middle East Process.

²⁷ Information contributed by the Office of the United Nations Special Coordinator for the Middle East Process.

an increasingly severe housing crisis, with a negative impact on the housing stock, hygiene and the social stability of families.

49. While the Israeli authorities continue to make efforts to expand the capacity of Kerem Shalom crossing, the fact that the conveyor belt at Karni Crossing currently operates only twice weekly, to transfer grain and gravel, has been a significant constraint in the implementation of construction projects authorized by the Israeli authorities,²⁸ as well as in the maintenance of adequate reserves of wheat.¹ During the first half of March 2011, the conveyor belt was closed.

50. Since late 2008, Palestinians have been totally or partially prevented from accessing land located between 1,000 and 1,500 metres from the Green Line and sea areas beyond 3 nautical miles from shore. At sea, fishermen are prevented from accessing their exclusive economic zone. It should be noted that in all Member States exclusive economic zones are designated at 200 nautical miles, as stipulated by article 57 of the United Nations Convention on the Law of the Sea.²⁹ Overall, it is estimated that 17 per cent of the total land mass of the Gaza Strip and 35 per cent of its agricultural land is restricted. An estimated 178,000 people (12 per cent of the population of the Gaza Strip) are directly affected by the access regime implemented by the Israeli military. This includes approximately 113,000 people affected by restrictions on access to land and 65,000 people affected by restrictions on access to maritime areas.³⁰

Movement of persons and goods in the West Bank

51. While movement between urban centres throughout the West Bank, excluding occupied East Jerusalem, has marginally improved, Palestinian access to their land located in the Jordan Valley, in areas behind the wall and in areas in the vicinity of Israeli settlements, continues to be difficult.¹ Crossing procedures at gates that provide access to East Jerusalem or to other parts of the West Bank through Area C are managed arbitrarily by Israeli authorities. Crossing permits are normally only valid at certain gates and alternative passages are not allowed.

52. The mobility of Palestinians throughout the West Bank continues to be controlled through Israeli military checkpoints and obstacles to movement. As at 4 January 2011, there were over 500 obstacles in the West Bank — compared to the 571 that were in place at the end of 2009 and the average of 518 that existed in 2006 — including approximately 64 permanently staffed checkpoints, some 24 partially staffed checkpoints and over 420 unstaffed obstacles (roadblocks, earth mounds, earth walls, road barriers, road gates and trenches). These obstacles to movement were augmented by ad hoc or “flying” checkpoints; throughout 2010, an average of 92 such checkpoints was erected each week.¹ There was no improvement in East Jerusalem and Area C. Israel granted tourist access to Bethlehem and more

²⁸ Once approved, a strict monitoring and verification procedure is implemented by the Israeli authorities for each imported truckload used in the project. This procedure has resulted in a significant increase in administrative and operational costs and has slowed down project implementation.

²⁹ United Nations, *Treaty Series*, vol. 1833, No. 31363.

³⁰ Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs and the World Food Programme, “Between the Fence and a Hard Place: the Humanitarian Impact of Israeli-imposed Restrictions on Access to Land and Sea in the Gaza Strip” (August 2010). Available from www.ochaopt.org/documents/ocha_opt_special_focus_2010_08_19_english.pdf.

predictable access for meat and dairy products into East Jerusalem from the rest of the West Bank.

53. Palestinians are prohibited from crossing checkpoints to the Jordan River areas of the West Bank (an area with very high potential in terms of agriculture, trade logistics, and religious and health-related tourism) with their private vehicles, unless they have obtained a special permit that is usually difficult to secure.¹⁴

54. During 2010, UNRWA faced continued restrictions in accessing refugee communities in the West Bank, with major implications on its ability to meet the humanitarian needs of Palestinian refugees. A total of 339 access-related incidents were reported in 2010, resulting in a loss to UNRWA of an estimated 293 workdays or 2,200 work-hours. Those affected included teachers, medical doctors and nurses, social workers and field office staff. The incidents negatively affected the delivery of education and health services and relief operations. The overwhelming majority of the incidents (337) were due to Israeli restrictions.⁸

Exploitation, endangerment and depletion of Palestinian natural resources and the environment

55. The expansion of Israeli settlements, the wall and the Israeli military operations have severely restricted the ability of Palestinians to access their natural resources, namely water, land and energy, as well as adversely affected the environment, for example through the depletion of water resources and the deterioration of the quality of those resources. The land has been degraded and both the land and the air have been polluted. This will have long-term ecological and health effects, further undermining the development and welfare of the Palestinian population.

56. Palestinians have very limited access to surface water resources such as the Jordan River. Israel extracts 80 per cent of the estimated potential of the aquifers under the West Bank. In addition, Israel overdraws more than half of the potential by means of deep wells without any regular consultation mechanism with the Palestine Authority; this has led to a drop in water tables and in the drying up of half of Palestinians' wells over the last two decades. Current Israeli restrictions mean that over the past decade Palestinians have had access to between 113 million and 138 million m³ of water compared with the approximately 75 million m³ supplied to the settler population. In 2007, West Bank Palestinians had access to 123 litres per capita per day while Israelis had access to 544 litres per capita per day.³¹

57. Palestinians have extremely limited access to domestic fresh water, averaging 73 litres per capita per day in the West Bank (in parts of Hebron, the average is as low as 10 litres per person per day) and 52 in the Gaza Strip. This is well below the World Health Organization's recommendation of 100 litres per day.⁴ Moreover, it is estimated that 313,000 people in the West Bank are not connected to a water network and therefore pay between 4 and 5 times as much for water than those who

³¹ World Bank, *West Bank and Gaza: Assessment of Restrictions on Palestinian Water Sector Development* (2009) (<http://siteresources.worldbank.org/INTWESTBANKGAZA/Resources/WaterRestrictionsReport18Apr2009.pdf>).

are connected to the network.³² Those not connected to the water network rely mainly on water cisterns to collect rainwater or tanker water whose quality can vary. Those purchasing tanker water in the West Bank pay on average five times more per cubic metre than those getting water from the network (19.4 versus 3.8 new sheqalim per cubic metre).³³ The poor in the Gaza Strip end up paying up to 10 times the standard household expenditure benchmark set by UNICEF and the World Health Organization.³²

58. In Gaza, the ban on importing spare parts and construction material has led to the deterioration of the water quality and a decrease in its quantity. Approximately 85 per cent of water in wells in the Gaza Strip is not suitable for drinking because of increasing levels of alkalinity and a heightened concentration of salts and nitrates.^{4,34} According to the Palestinian Central Bureau of Statistics the water in the Gaza Strip suffers from a high percentage of salinity since the coastal aquifer had a concentration of 1,000 mg of chloride per litre compared with the 300 mg per litre recommended by international standards.³³

59. As a result of limited capacity and the continual breakdown of sanitation facilities in Gaza, which serve only two thirds of the population, approximately 60 million litres of untreated or partly treated sewage are reaching agricultural lands, the sea and sources of drinking water on a daily basis.^{25,35}

60. Most of the wastewater produced in the West Bank (40-50 million m³ per year) is dumped into the environment as untreated sewage, polluting agricultural lands and underground aquifers.²⁵ Approximately 40 million m³ of wastewater and solid waste produced by Israeli settlements are estimated to be dumped on Palestinian land annually.⁴

61. These Israeli practices are resulting in land degradation and a loss of agricultural productivity. The wall in the West Bank was constructed on approximately 19,000 dunams of agricultural land,⁴ isolating about 170,000 dunams of fertile land with an estimated economic value of \$38 million, thereby depriving Palestinian farmers of the right to use this resource for their livelihood.

62. Palestinians continue to face difficulties in accessing energy supplies because of the instability of the electric power supply controlled by Israel and the severe restrictions placed on supplies of bottled gas. Despite the fact that natural gas fields suitable for commercial production were discovered on Gaza's shores, the development of those fields was halted owing to the failure of negotiations with Israel and other concerned stakeholders.³⁶

³² UNICEF/Palestinian Hydrology Group, *Water, Sanitation and Hygiene Household Survey: Gaza* (2010), available from www.ewash.org/files/library/FINAL_WASH_REPORT.pdf.

³³ Palestinian Central Bureau of Statistics, press release on the occasion of World Water Day (22 March 2011), available from www.pcbs.gov.ps/DesktopModules/Articles/ArticlesView.aspx?tabID=0&lang=en&ItemID=1664&mid=12235.

³⁴ Palestinian Central Bureau of Statistics, press release on the occasion of World Environment Day, available from www.pcbs.gov.ps/Portals/_pcbs/PressRelease/Envirm-DayE.pdf.

³⁵ United Nations Environment Programme, *Environmental Assessment of the Gaza Strip* (2009), available from http://oneresponse.info/crosscutting/environment/publicdocuments/UNEP_Gaza_EA.pdf.

³⁶ Palestine Monetary Authority and others, *Quarterly Economic and Social Monitor*, vol. 22 (November 2010).

Socio-economic indicators

63. The Palestinian economy has been heavily affected by Israeli occupation since 1967 and continuously suffers from very limited access to sources of growth and welfare such as land, natural resources, tourist and cultural sites, telecommunications frequencies and uninterrupted access to both domestic and international markets. After the September 2000 crisis, the occupying power imposed additional restrictive policies. As a result, the Palestinian economy has been characterized by volatile trends over the last 10 years. Indeed, the United Nations Conference on Trade and Development estimates that the per capita gross domestic product (GDP) in 2010 was 30 per cent less than it was in 2000 (see TD/B/57/4). Recently, the GDP growth rates have been relatively high, as the Palestinian economy recovers from the depletion of its capital stock and a slowdown in economic activity. This can be seen in the Gaza Strip's real GDP growth rate of 15 per cent in the first quarter of 2010 relative to the corresponding period in 2009, a figure higher than that for the West Bank (10 per cent).³⁷

64. The occupation regime confined Palestinian-controlled cities and towns with tight temporary borders. As a consequence, urban growth has been heavily constrained, inflating land prices, making housing increasingly unaffordable for Palestinian families and negatively affecting the overall economic status.³⁸

65. The collapse of the Palestinian economy and its subsequent recovery can be seen in significant changes in both labour force participation and employment trends. While the rate of labour force participation was already low by international standards in the year 2000 (43.5 per cent in the third quarter of that year), its subsequent decline in the face of policies pursued by the Israeli authorities never fully reversed, not even a decade later (the rate of labour participation was 40.5 per cent for the whole territory but only 36 per cent in Gaza in the third quarter of 2010).³⁹ Despite very high levels of human capital across the territory relative to the rest of the region and beyond, trends in employment, underemployment and unemployment rates, together with overall decreasing real wages, highlight not just the precarious employment situation in Palestine since the September 2000 crisis but also the existence of an economy that is increasingly bifurcated between the West Bank and the Gaza Strip, as indicated in table 2.³⁹ The overall unemployment rate has more than doubled since 2000.

³⁷ World Bank, *The Underpinnings of the Future Palestinian State: Sustainable Growth and Institutions* (2010). Available from <http://siteresources.worldbank.org/INTWESTBANKGAZA/Resources/WorldBankSep2010AHLCCReport.pdf>.

³⁸ Information contributed by the United Nations Human Settlements Programme (UN-Habitat).

³⁹ Palestinian Central Bureau of Statistics, labour force surveys.

Table 2
Employment statistics in the West Bank and the Gaza Strip in the third quarter of 2000 and 2010

(Percentage)

	<i>Full employment</i>		<i>Underemployment</i>		<i>Unemployment</i>	
	<i>2000</i>	<i>2010</i>	<i>2000</i>	<i>2010</i>	<i>2000</i>	<i>2010</i>
West Bank	84.8	73.0	7.7	6.9	7.5	20.1
Gaza Strip	81.0	54.1	3.5	5.4	15.5	40.5

66. There are differences in the duration of unemployment depending on location: people in the Gaza Strip are unemployed for an average of 24.1 months while people in the West Bank are unemployed for an average of 7.8 months. The highest rate of unemployment is 70.6 per cent, which relates to youth aged between 15 and 19 years in the Gaza Strip; 33.5 per cent of their peers in the West Bank are unemployed.³⁹ With a labour force expanding by 3 per cent each year, in part because of a youth bulge that is still growing, only sustained economic growth that includes the tradable goods sector can keep the increasing level of frustration among youths under control.

67. Although labour market access to the Israeli economy is unavailable to those from the Gaza Strip, it remains open, albeit with tight restrictions, to Palestinians residing in the West Bank. In fact, 78,800 West Bank Palestinians were employed in the Israeli economy in the fourth quarter of 2010, forming 13.82 per cent of those employed from the West Bank. This is a slight increase from the corresponding period in 2009, when approximately 72,079 (13.40 per cent) of employed West Bank residents worked in the Israeli economy.³⁹

68. The industrial sector in the Gaza Strip is still suffering from the damage caused by Operation Cast Lead and the June 2007 closure. Records show that 1,365 establishments were operational during June and July 2010, compared with 3,900 prior to the closure. Of those establishments, 15 per cent were working at a capacity of between 30 and 60 per cent, a fifth at a capacity of 20 per cent and 65 per cent remained out of commission. There has also been a fall in employment at these establishments, from 35,000 to 6,000 workers. The construction sector was in a similar predicament: 50 working establishments were hiring 1,500 workers in 2010, while prior to the closures 125 establishments were employing 50,000 workers.³⁷ Nevertheless, the construction sector is witnessing improvements in the West Bank, where 11.8 per cent more building licences were issued in the third quarter of 2010 compared with the corresponding period in 2009.⁴⁰

69. Damage also continues to be done to the agricultural sector. Of the agricultural land in the Gaza Strip, 35 per cent is located in restricted zones; lack of access to that land is estimated to result in the loss of approximately 75,000 tons of potential produce annually, whose market value is conservatively estimated at \$50.2 million. In the fishing sector, it is estimated that access restrictions have resulted in the loss

⁴⁰ See www.pcbs.gov.ps/desktopDefault.aspx?tabID=3491&lang=en.

of approximately 7,000 tons of potential fishing catch, with a related income loss of some \$26.5 million over a period of five years.⁴¹

70. Movement restrictions dramatically reduce enterprise competitiveness by raising transportation costs and inducing low levels of capacity utilization, which in turn results in high fixed costs. In addition, the very limited working hours at Israeli crossing points, combined with inadequate infrastructure, such as the lack of cold storage facilities and large scanners, and the use of a slow and inefficient back-to-back system at commercial crossings instead of containers, make it impossible for Palestinian enterprises to make cost-effective shipments, thereby preventing them from entering international markets that require rigorous delivery times and limiting their ability to achieve economies of scale.

71. Poverty measurements were recently revised by the Palestinian Central Bureau of Statistics. Overall, poverty rates remain extremely low in occupied East Jerusalem and are declining in the West Bank and the Gaza Strip. However, poverty rates in the Gaza Strip are almost twice as high as those in the West Bank. The population remains highly vulnerable to poverty and a significant proportion of households live close to the poverty line. Poverty is more prevalent among households headed by women.

72. By dedicating more than half of their total cash expenditures to food, Palestinian households are particularly sensitive to variations in food prices and income levels. As food prices rise — in part as a result of Israeli restrictions on movement, which inflate the cost of transport — and as income levels decline, Palestinians resort to coping mechanisms that involve deferring the payment of utility bills, purchasing food on credit and consuming lower-quality and smaller quantities of food. Most of these coping strategies, even if they are reversible, can exact a permanent cost on people's lives and livelihoods by leading to poorer health and a poorer nutritional status, excessive indebtedness and the loss of future opportunities for higher qualifications, better skills and better paid jobs.

73. Economic deterioration and increasing vulnerability have made the Occupied Palestinian Territory one of the most aid-dependent economies in the world. The stifling of the Palestinian productive sector substantially reduces the multiplier effects of aid.

Public health and food insecurity

74. Food insecurity remains a pressing issue for 1.43 million Palestinians, although those in the West Bank fare better than those in the Gaza Strip, with 22 per cent of the former experiencing food insecurity compared with 52 per cent of the latter.^{41,42}

75. In the Gaza Strip, the blockade, recurrent power cuts and unstable power supply have had a significant impact on medical care. Moreover, shortages of essential medicines and supplies are evident. By the end of January 2011, there were no stocks of 38 per cent of essential drugs in Gaza's central drug store.¹⁷

⁴¹ Information contributed by the World Food Programme.

⁴² The indicators used to define food insecurity in the Occupied Palestinian Territory combined information on income and/or consumption levels (dollars per capita) and trends in food and non-food expenditures (decrease/no change).

76. Refugees are particularly financially vulnerable, and thus increase the burden on the health services provided by UNRWA in the Gaza Strip. Psychosocial health care throughout the Gaza Strip has also suffered due to conflicts and economic isolation. In particular, 56.6 per cent of children have reported a moderate reaction to trauma and 10.6 per cent have reported severe reactions. The prevalence of post-traumatic stress among families is estimated at 45 per cent.⁴³

77. Palestinians within the Seam Zone face severe restrictions to health care, having to cross Israeli checkpoints in order to seek basic health services located in Palestinian cities in the West Bank.⁴⁴ The health-care system in both the West Bank and occupied East Jerusalem continues to fragment as a result of the occupation and the restrictions placed on the movement of people (not only of patients but also of health staff) and goods.⁴⁵ In addition, providers of specialized care are often located in occupied East Jerusalem, requiring residents in the West Bank and the Gaza Strip to obtain permits to visit those centres;⁴⁶ this, in turn, leads to a substantial drain in already scarce public and household financial resources.

Youth and education

78. Forty incidents in which students were prevented from accessing schools, learning was disrupted or the safety of students was compromised were documented in 2010. Of those cases, 38 per cent involved the closure of roads and checkpoints, searches and the harassment or assault of students at checkpoints by Israeli authorities. In 33 per cent of cases, children missed school hours and were exposed to violence by settlers because the Israeli authorities did not provide military escorts to protect children passing near settlements and outposts prone to violence in the West Bank.³

79. The situation in the Gaza Strip is particularly pressing given the rate of population growth, that the average class size is of between 38 and 40 students and that 79 per cent of Ministry of Education schools and 90 per cent of UNRWA schools are running double or triple shifts. In mid-2010 it was estimated that the Ministry of Education needed 160 new schools to alleviate the problem of double or triple shifts.¹⁷

80. In the West Bank some 10 schools are threatened with demolition due to the lack of permits, another 22 have been declared unsafe or have unhygienic facilities and 5 more face ongoing intimidation by Israeli settlers.⁴⁷ In Area C, new schools and repairs cannot be undertaken without running the risk of becoming subject to long and uncertain procedures that may end up in demolition or sealing orders.

⁴³ UNRWA, *Emergency Appeal 2011* (December 2010). Available from www.unrwa.org/userfiles/2010121464938.pdf.

⁴⁴ World Health Organization and Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs, *The Impact of the Barrier on Health* (July 2010). Available from www.ochaopt.org/documents/ocha_opt_special_focus_july_2010_english.pdf.

⁴⁵ Rita Giacaman and others, "Health status and health services in the occupied Palestinian territory", *The Lancet*, vol. 373, No. 9666 (March 2009), pp. 837-849.

⁴⁶ Information contributed by the World Health Organization.

⁴⁷ Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs, *The Humanitarian Monitor* (September 2010). Available from www.ochaopt.org/documents/ocha_opt_the_humanitarian_monitor_2010_10_19_english.pdf.

81. In spite of the limited territory under its control and other constraints, the Palestinian Authority has accelerated progress in improving its government functions. In the areas where the United Nations is engaged the most (governance, rule of law and human rights; livelihoods and productive sectors; education and culture; health; social protection; infrastructure; and water), the Authority's governmental functions are now sufficiently developed to allow for a functioning State government.⁴⁸

III. Occupied Syrian Golan

82. The Syrian Golan was occupied by Israel during the 1967 Arab-Israeli conflict. In 1981, Israel passed the Golan Heights Law, which extended Israeli law and administration and thus annexed the entire Israeli-controlled territory of Golan (see A/65/327, para. 81). The Security Council, in its resolution 497 (1981), declared that the Israeli decision to impose its laws, jurisdiction and administration in the Syrian Golan was null and void.

83. The occupied area of the Golan covers about 1,200 km². An estimated 22,000 Syrians still reside there, in five towns. The occupied Syrian Golan also has about 19,000 Israeli settlers, who live in some 33 settlements.⁴⁹

84. Occupation and the closed crossing into the Syrian Arab Republic constitute the most important barriers to economic development and the normalization of the social fabric in the occupied Syrian Golan. Syrian citizens who wish to maintain their Syrian Arab identity face hardship and severely restricted prospects of earning a decent living.⁵⁰

85. Agriculture remains the main source of income for most Syrian families. According to the Syrian Government, there is discrimination against Syrian workers and landowners in the occupied Syrian Golan. This discrimination takes the form of denial of jobs as a result of not having served in the Israeli army, as well as restrictions on the use of water, especially for irrigation, and high taxation. Taxation on the agricultural produce of the occupied population can be as high as 50 per cent. Another impediment to agricultural production was reportedly the uprooting of trees and destruction of crops. The Ministry of Foreign Affairs of the Syrian Arab Republic and witnesses reported several instances of uprooting of trees and burning of land in May 2010.⁵⁰

86. A dispute broke out in the town of Majdal Shams when land was said to have been confiscated to allow for the expansion of the Nimrod settlement in the summer of 2009. Another incident occurred in 2010, when farmers reported that between 70 and 80 trees per dunam had been uprooted on an area of 25 dunams.⁵⁰

⁴⁸ Office of the United Nations Special Coordinator for the Middle East Process, "Palestinian State-building: a decisive period" (13 April 2011). Available from http://unispal.un.org/pdfs/AHLC-Apr2011_UNSCOrpt.pdf.

⁴⁹ International Committee of the Red Cross, "Occupied Golan: nurturing ties with the rest of Syria", 15 February 2011. Available from www.icrc.org/eng/resources/documents/update/2011/golan-update-2011-02-15.htm.

⁵⁰ International Labour Organization, "The situation of workers of the occupied Arab territories" (2010). Available from www.ilo.org/wcmsp5/groups/public/---ed_norm/---relconf/documents/meetingdocument/wcms_130550.pdf.

87. Israeli settlers farm 80 km² of land, including large patches of agricultural land. Syrians farm about 20 km² of land. The water allocated for use by Arabs is subject to strict controls, with disparities between the water allotted to Israeli settlers and Syrian residents. The diversion of water resources to Israeli settlements has resulted in the drying up of springs supplying water to Arab villages in the occupied Golan, adversely affecting crops and livelihoods.⁵¹

88. Late in 2009, the Syrian Arab Republic expressed concern at the solicitation by Israel of competitive bids in relation to the sale of 11 residential buildings in the village of Ain Qunyah in the occupied Syrian Golan (see A/65/327, para. 86). Israeli authorities continue to encourage settler population growth. For example, on 10 February 2010, the Knesset voted in favour of a bill to grant tax breaks to settlers living in the Golan Heights.⁵²

89. In 2010, the International Labour Organization noted few local employment opportunities, particularly for university graduates and other young people seeking professional posts (see A/65/327, para. 90).

90. As at 27 August 2010, approximately seven prisoners from the occupied Syrian Golan were detained in Israeli prisons, one of whom had spent some 25 years in detention. Detainees were reported to be suffering from inadequate medical care in conditions that may not meet the Standard Minimum Rules for the Treatment of Prisoners (see A/65/327, para. 91).

91. United Nations human rights mechanisms and agencies, as well as other relevant organizations, lack access to the occupied Syrian Golan. Furthermore, local non-governmental organizations and individuals operating in the occupied Golan have expressed difficulties with access to information, for example obtaining official figures on water consumption, due to a lack of cooperation by Israel and Israeli settlers (see A/65/327, para. 94).

92. The International Committee for the Red Cross (ICRC), however, remains active in the occupied Syrian Golan. In 2010, ICRC arranged for the passage of 262 students and 666 pilgrims from the occupied Golan to the Syrian Arab Republic and transferred more than 8,000 tons of apples across the demarcation line separating the occupied Syrian Golan from the rest of the Republic.⁴⁹

93. To support its citizens in the occupied Golan, the Syrian Government has enacted new legislation granting the continued payment of wages to Syrian citizens who have been dismissed from employment by the Israeli authorities. The legislation is to assist nationals in retaining their Syrian national identity and ties to the homeland (Legislative Decree No. 17 of 14 February 2010).⁵⁰

⁵¹ Report of the United Nations Special Rapporteur on the right to food on his mission to Syria from 29 August to 7 September 2010. Available from www2.ohchr.org/english/issues/food/docs/SyriaMissionPreliminaryConclusions_07092010.pdf.

⁵² Foundation for Middle East Peace, *Report on Israeli Settlement in the Occupied Territories*, vol. 20, No. 4 (July-August), p. 4. Available from www.fmep.org/reports/archive/vol.-20/no.-4/PDF.

IV. Conclusion

94. The Israeli occupation of Palestinian territory and the Syrian Golan continued to exacerbate economic and social hardship among the populations under occupation during 2010.

95. Illegal settlements and outposts continue to expand, the issues of settler violence against Palestinians and of adequately enforcing the law on settlers remain a very serious concern, Palestinian access to water remains inadequate, the environment continues to become degraded, poverty levels remain high, unemployment continues to be endemic despite some growth in GDP and health indicators continue to deteriorate.

96. There has been a limited easing of the Israeli blockade on the Gaza Strip, but essential supplies for reconstruction remain prohibited, truck traffic remains at a fraction of its pre-blockade levels and the movement of people remains tightly restricted.

97. Attacks by Palestinian factions on Israeli cities and towns have continued to inflict civilian casualties. Israel continues to violate international law, including by causing the death of and injury to Palestinian civilians, detaining thousands of Palestinians, including children, continuing to construct settlements and the wall and imposing a blockade on the Gaza Strip.

98. In his message to the United Nations Latin American and Caribbean Meeting in Support of Israeli-Palestinian Peace on 29 March 2011, the Secretary-General said that all expressions of violence must stop, and their perpetrators brought to justice. He also said that the occupation that began in 1967 must end. He stressed that the Palestinians have a legitimate right to the establishment of an independent and viable State of their own, and that Israel has the right to live in peace and security within internationally recognized and secure borders. Pointing to the urgency of realizing a two-State solution, he said that serious efforts should be exerted to bring the parties back to the negotiating table as soon as possible, based on existing agreements between the parties, the relevant Security Council resolutions, the Road Map and the Arab Peace Initiative.⁵³

99. The United Nations will continue to work towards the realization of a just, lasting and comprehensive peace in the Middle East based on international law and all relevant General Assembly and Security Council resolutions, to put an end to the occupation that began in 1967 and to establish a sovereign, democratic, viable and contiguous Palestinian State existing peacefully side-by-side with a secure Israel.

⁵³ The full text of the message of the Secretary-General is available from www.un.org/apps/sg/sgstats.asp?nid=5173.



General Assembly Economic and Social Council

Distr.: General
17 May 2012

Original: English

**General Assembly
Sixty-seventh session**

Item 62 of the preliminary list*

Permanent sovereignty of the Palestinian people in the Occupied Palestinian Territory, including East Jerusalem, and of the Arab population in the occupied Syrian Golan over their natural resources

**Economic and Social Council
Substantive session of 2012**

Item 11 of the provisional agenda**

Economic and social repercussions of the Israeli occupation on the living conditions of the Palestinian people in the Occupied Palestinian Territory, including East Jerusalem, and the Arab population in the occupied Syrian Golan

Economic and social repercussions of the Israeli occupation on the living conditions of the Palestinian people in the Occupied Palestinian Territory, including East Jerusalem, and of the Arab population in the occupied Syrian Golan

Note by the Secretary-General

In its resolution 2011/41, the Economic and Social Council requested the Secretary-General to submit to the General Assembly at its sixty-sixth session, through the Council, a report on the implementation of that resolution. The Assembly, in its resolution 66/225, also requested the Secretary-General to submit a report to it at its sixty-seventh session. The present report, which has been prepared by the Economic and Social Commission for Western Asia, is submitted in response to the resolutions of the Assembly and the Council.

* A/67/50.

** E/2012/100.



Report prepared by the Economic and Social Commission for Western Asia on the economic and social repercussions of the Israeli occupation on the living conditions of the Palestinian people in the Occupied Palestinian Territory, including East Jerusalem, and of the Arab population in the occupied Syrian Golan, covering the period 30 March 2011-29 March 2012*

Summary

The occupation of Palestinian territory, including East Jerusalem, by Israel and the use of policies and measures that violate a number of provisions of international humanitarian laws have had adverse social and economic ramifications on the Palestinian people in the occupied territory.

During the reporting period, 122 Palestinians were killed, including 12 children, and 2,077 were injured, including 362 children. By February 2012, 4,411 Palestinians remained in Israeli prisons, with reports of violations of their rights. Israeli authorities destroyed over 620 Palestinian-owned structures in 2011, a 42 per cent increase compared to 2010. A total of 1,100 Palestinians were displaced as a result of home demolitions and another 140 were displaced following settler violence.

Around 519,000 Israeli settlers live in 144 illegal settlements and around 100 outposts across the Occupied Palestinian Territory. 2011 marked an increase in settlement activity, compared to the previous year, jeopardizing the contiguity of the Palestinian territory. Settler violence also continued to increase, along with a continued takeover of Palestinian property.

Israel continued the construction of the 708-kilometre-long wall, 85 per cent of which lies within the West Bank. The wall isolates communities and natural resources while severing East Jerusalem from the rest of the Occupied Palestinian Territory.

Israel's blockade, imposed on the Gaza Strip since the takeover by Hamas in June 2007, continued to collectively punish the civilian population.

Over the course of 2011, Israeli obstacles, which impede the movement of Palestinians within the West Bank, increased to a total of 520 different types of obstacles.

* The Economic and Social Commission for Western Asia would like to acknowledge its appreciation for the substantive contributions of the Department of Political Affairs, the United Nations Conference on Trade and Development, the United Nations Relief and Works Agency for Palestine Refugees in the Near East, the Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs, the International Labour Organization, the Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations, the World Health Organization, the Office of the United Nations Special Coordinator for the Middle East Peace Process, the United Nations Environment Programme, the Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Human Rights and the League of Arab States.

Israel persisted in exploiting and endangering natural resources in the occupied territories. In addition, Palestinians and Syrians living under occupation continue to suffer from discrimination with respect to water allotment.

Economic growth in the Occupied Palestinian Territory continues to be unsustainable and reflects an economy recovering from a low base, driven mainly by the non-tradable sector. Unemployment remained high and poverty and food insecurity, especially in Gaza, continue to be alarming.

Israel continued its settlement expansion in the occupied Syrian Golan, while the Syrian Arab population continued to suffer from discrimination and restrictions to access, including the expropriation of resources for the exclusive use of Israeli settlers.

I. Introduction

1. The Economic and Social Council, in its resolution 2011/41, and the General Assembly, in its resolution 66/225, expressed concerns over those practices of Israel, the occupying Power in the Occupied Palestinian Territory and the occupied Syrian Golan, which violate international humanitarian law. Those practices include causing deaths of and injuries to civilians, including children and women, all of whom must be protected in accordance with international humanitarian law. The Council expressed its deep concern about “the rising incidence of violence [...] by illegal armed Israeli settlers [...] against Palestinian civilians [...] and their properties”, in addition to its concern about the continued detention of thousands of Palestinians, including children and women, under harsh conditions. Of concern also to the Council and the Assembly are the accelerated construction by Israel of settlements; the construction of the wall inside the Occupied Palestinian Territory; the exploitation of natural resources; the increased demolition of homes, economic institutions, agricultural lands and infrastructure; the revocation of residency rights of Palestinians in and around occupied East Jerusalem; and the continuing Israeli policy of closures and severe restrictions on the movement of persons and goods, including the blockade on the Gaza Strip. The Council and the Assembly, through their respective resolutions 2011/41 and 66/225, also highlighted the detrimental impact of Israeli practices on the natural resources and the social and economic conditions of the Palestinian people and the Arab population in the occupied Syrian Golan.

2. The Council and the Assembly requested that the Secretary-General submit reports on the implementation of their respective resolutions 2011/41 and 66/225, examining the practices of Israel, the occupying Power, that are contrary to those resolutions.

II. Occupied Palestinian Territory, including East Jerusalem

Deaths and injuries

3. Between 30 March 2011 and 29 March 2012, 122 Palestinians were killed and 2,077 others were injured as a result of direct conflict. While the majority of casualties were inflicted by Israeli security forces, 1 fatality and 205 injuries were the result of settler attacks. Among the casualties, 12 children were killed and 362 were injured. During the same period, 6 Israelis were killed, including 2 children, and 66 were injured, including 2 children.¹

4. Approximately two thirds of the Palestinian casualties in the West Bank were related to settler violence or settlement activities, including casualties incurred during clashes in demonstrations protesting settler attacks, the takeover of land and access restrictions aimed at protecting settlements and their expansion.² In accordance with Israeli Military Order No. 101 (1967), Israeli authorities define rallies and demonstrations in the occupied territory, which did not receive a permit

¹ Information contributed by the Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs of the Secretariat, from its Protection of Civilians: Casualties Database, available from www.ochaopt.org/poc.aspx?id=1010002.

² Information contributed by the Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs, 2012.

from the Israeli military commander, as illegal assemblies, even if they are non-violent, and most are forcibly dispersed.³

5. In the Gaza Strip, Palestinian casualties were mainly caused by Israeli airstrikes, military incursions and extrajudicial assassinations. Among the casualties were 21 Palestinians, including 7 children and 2 women, who were shot and killed in areas of restricted access within the Strip.²

Arrests and detentions

6. During 2011, Israeli forces conducted approximately 4,200 search-and-arrest operations throughout the West Bank, including East Jerusalem, during which they arrested over 3,150 Palestinians.² By February 2012, 4,411 Palestinians remained in Israeli prisons, among them 183 minors.⁴

7. Administrative detentions are authorized by military commanders and the detainees are held, without trial or charges, for a period of six months that may be renewed an unlimited number of times. While detainees may appeal the detention order before a military court, their lawyers do not have access to the information on which the detention is based.⁵ By February 2012, there were 320 Palestinian administrative detainees in Israeli prisons.⁶

8. Furthermore, the Israeli policy of transferring Palestinian prisoners to Israeli territory violates the obligations of Israel as the occupying Power under Article 76 of the Geneva Convention relative to the Protection of Civilian Persons in Time of War, of 12 August 1949⁷ (Fourth Geneva Convention). The policy inflicts hardships not only on prisoners but also on family members who have almost no visitation rights, and those rights that are formally available are made essentially redundant due to the onerous permit and permission system imposed by Israel, as reported by the Special Rapporteur on the situation of human rights in the Palestinian territories occupied since 1967 (see A/66/358, para. 18).

9. Palestinian children detained by Israel also continue to be “systematically ill-treated during their arrest, transfer and interrogation”, including physical and verbal abuse, as well as threats, intimidation and solitary confinement, which in some cases may amount to torture.⁸

10. Palestinian children, unlike Israeli children, are subject to Israeli military law, which offers far fewer protections for minors than Israeli criminal law (see A/66/358, para. 35). On average, 192 Palestinian children were detained in Israeli prisons throughout 2011.⁹ Since 2000, around 7,500 Palestinian children have been

³ Association for Civil Rights in Israel, *The State of Human Rights in Israel and the OPT*, December 2011, p. 50, available from www.acri.org.il.

⁴ Figures recorded by Btselem, available from: www.btselem.org/statistics/minors_in_custody and www.btselem.org/statistics/detainees_and_prisoners.

⁵ *The State of Human Rights in Israel and the OPT*, pp. 14-15.

⁶ See www.btselem.org/statistics/detainees_and_prisoners.

⁷ United Nations, *Treaty Series*, vol. 75, No. 973.

⁸ For details, see Defence for Children International — Palestine Section, “In their own words: a report on the situation facing Palestinian children detained in the Israeli military court system” (January 2012), p. 3.

⁹ *Ibid.*, p. 7.

detained and prosecuted by the Israeli authorities.¹⁰ It is estimated that 99.74 per cent of cases brought against minors in the West Bank ended in conviction, with custodial sentences being imposed on children in 98 per cent of cases. This contrasts with a custodial sentence rate of around 6.5 per cent for Israeli children.¹¹

Israeli administrative and legislative measures

11. Violence by Israeli civilians against Palestinians is exacerbated by the existence of a dual legal system, namely, civil courts for Israeli civilians and a less protective military justice system for Palestinians.¹² Filing a complaint against settlers or the Israeli military is often a complicated and intimidating process for many Palestinians. Many refrain from this process.

12. Israel promotes a land development model that excludes, discriminates against and displaces Palestinian and Bedouin communities.¹³ The zoning and planning regime enforced by Israel in Area C¹⁴ and East Jerusalem restricts Palestinian growth and development, while providing preferential treatment for Israeli settlements. This treatment includes the approval of master plans and the provision of essential infrastructure, participation in the planning process, and the allocation of land and water resources.²

13. The aforementioned restrictions prevent the establishment of Palestinian social and economic activities in 70 per cent of Area C.¹⁵ In occupied East Jerusalem, 35 per cent of the city's land has been confiscated for the development of Israeli settlements and 22 per cent is zoned for green areas and public infrastructure, whereas only 13 per cent of the annexed area is zoned for Palestinian construction, which is insufficient for the natural growth of the Palestinian population.¹⁶

Property destruction and confiscation

14. Article 53 of the Fourth Geneva Convention prohibits the destruction of property belonging to "private persons, or to the State, or to other public authorities, or to social or cooperative organizations".

¹⁰ Ibid., p. 4.

¹¹ Ibid., p. 5.

¹² Information contributed by the Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Human Rights (OHCHR), 2012.

¹³ Information reported by the Special Rapporteur on adequate housing as a component of the right to an adequate standard of living, and on the right to non-discrimination in this context, on her mission to Israel and the Occupied Palestinian Territory, available from www.ohchr.org/EN/NewsEvents/Pages/DisplayNews.aspx?NewsID=11815&LangID=E.

¹⁴ Area C, which constitutes the vast majority of the West Bank, is under full control of the Israeli military, even with regard to civilian affairs.

¹⁵ International Labour Organization, "The situation of workers of the occupied Arab territories" (2011), p. 3, available from www.ilo.org/wcmsp5/groups/public/---ed_norm/---relconf/documents/meetingdocument/wcms_155419.pdf.

¹⁶ Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs, "East Jerusalem: Key Humanitarian Concerns" (December 2011), p. 2, available from www.ochaopt.org/documents/ocha_opt_Jerusalem_FactSheet_December_2011_english.pdf.

15. In total, Israeli authorities destroyed over 620 Palestinian-owned structures in 2011, a 42 per cent increase compared to 2010. This included 222 homes, 170 animal shelters, 43 rainwater cisterns or pools, two classrooms and two mosques. Some 4,200 people were affected by these demolitions.²

16. The above-mentioned figures are in addition to approximately 24,800 Palestinian structures that were demolished in the occupied Palestinian territory between 1967 and 2010.¹⁷ According to Israeli authorities, demolitions in 2011 were carried out against structures that lack Israeli building permits. It should be noted that it is extremely difficult for Palestinian residents to obtain such permits. Over 60 per cent of the Palestinian-owned structures demolished in 2011 were located in areas allocated by Israeli authorities to settlements.²

17. In occupied East Jerusalem, at least 32 per cent of all Palestinian homes lack building permits, which are difficult to obtain, thus potentially placing at least 86,500 residents at risk of displacement, especially since the number of outstanding demolition orders against Palestinian homes is estimated at up to 20,000.¹⁸

18. Israeli authorities demolished the Shepherd Hotel in East Jerusalem, which is a historical Palestinian landmark in the city, to make way for new settler housing units.¹⁹

19. The Palestinian Authority reported that Israeli authorities confiscated around 896,000 m² of agricultural land in the West Bank during 2011.¹⁹

Displacement and deportation

20. Article 49 of the Fourth Geneva Convention prohibits the forcible transfer of civilians of an occupied territory, except when necessary to ensure the security of the civilians involved or for imperative military reasons.

21. Almost 1,100 Palestinians, more than half of them children, were forcibly displaced as a result of home demolitions in the West Bank in 2011. This is twice the number of people displaced in 2010. In addition, 140 Palestinians were forcibly displaced as a result of Israeli settler violence in 2011.²

22. Conditions for the 155 herding communities remaining in Area C have deteriorated since 2000, with half their population having been forced out of the West Bank grazing areas, losing their herds and being involuntarily relocated to small towns and villages, thus forcing a sedentary lifestyle on them. This has partly been the result of an Israeli policy of systematic demolition of the traditional cistern-based water infrastructure essential for maintaining the Bedouin people's nomadic and agricultural way of life (see A/66/358, para. 42). Up to 2,300 Bedouin living in the Jerusalem periphery, the majority of whom are refugees, could also be forcibly displaced in 2012 if Israeli authorities follow through with their reported

¹⁷ Information reported by the Israeli Committee Against House Demolitions, available from www.icahd.org/?page_id=5508.

¹⁸ Information reported by the Israeli Committee Against House Demolitions, available from www.icahd.org/?page_id=5374.

¹⁹ Information contributed by the Palestinian Authority, 2012.

settlement plans. Rural communities in the Jordan Valley are also facing the prospect of further demolitions as settlements continue to expand.²⁰

23. Palestinians who were physically present in occupied East Jerusalem upon its occupation in 1967 were designated permanent residents. Under Israeli law, permanent residents are considered foreign citizens who wish to live in Israel but do not immigrate to the country under the Law of Return. Israel therefore treats Palestinian residents of East Jerusalem as immigrants (see A/66/356, para. 34).²¹ Palestinian East Jerusalemites can and do lose their permanent residency status if they reside outside Israel or occupied East Jerusalem for a period of seven years, or if they obtain permanent residency or citizenship in another country. Lack of “loyalty to the State of Israel”, can be, and has been, used as pretext for the revocation of residency of Palestinian East Jerusalemites. This is prohibited by the Regulations annexed to The Hague Convention IV of 1907²² and could potentially pose a risk to many Palestinian residents of East Jerusalem of revocation of their permanent residency status, if they exercise their right to freedom of expression and opinion (see A/66/356, paras. 35-37).

24. Furthermore, the constitutionality of the Citizenship and Entry into Israel Law was upheld by the Supreme Court in January 2012. This law bars family reunification for Israelis married to Palestinians from the West Bank and Gaza. It specifically affects Palestinian Jerusalemites marrying spouses from the rest of the occupied territories. Such Palestinian families are thus forced to move abroad, live together illegally or live apart. This law violates the absolute prohibition of discrimination contained in international human rights law, notably in several treaties that Israel has ratified and is obliged to uphold, including the International Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Racial Discrimination,²³ the International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights,²⁴ the International Covenant on Economic, Social and Cultural Rights²⁴ and the Convention on the Rights of the Child,²⁵ as recalled by the Office of the United Nations Special Coordinator for the Middle East Peace Process.²⁶

25. Between 1967 and the end of December 2011, around 14,000 Palestinians had their Jerusalem residency revoked by Israeli authorities.²⁷

26. In addition, it continues to be difficult to obtain permanent residency status permits, especially in cases of family unification, when East Jerusalemites are married to Palestinians from other parts of the West Bank or Gaza and wish to live together in East Jerusalem. Since 2003, a freeze on family reunification has obstructed “mixed residency” marriages. The registration of the children of such

²⁰ Information reported by Amnesty International, available from www.amnesty.org/en/news/record-number-palestinians-displaced-demolitions-quartet-continues-talk-2011-12-13.

²¹ The policy is based on the *Mubarak Awad* case of the High Court of Justice, which decided that the status of Palestinian residents should be regulated in accordance with the Entry in Israel Law (5712-1952), which is immigration legislation.

²² See Carnegie Endowment for International Peace, *The Hague Conventions and Declarations of 1899 and 1907* (New York, Oxford University Press, 1915).

²³ United Nations, *Treaty Series*, vol. 660, No. 9464.

²⁴ See resolution 2200 A (XXI), annex.

²⁵ United Nations, *Treaty Series*, vol. 1577, No. 27531.

²⁶ Information contributed by the Office of the United Nations Special Coordinator for the Middle East Peace Process, 2012.

²⁷ “East Jerusalem: Key Humanitarian Concerns”, p. 1.

couples as residents of East Jerusalem remains a long and arduous process (see A/66/356, para. 38).

27. Settlement activities, which at times entail eviction of Palestinians from their homes, continue to threaten residents of East Jerusalem, placing them at risk of forced displacement. Particularly affected are the Old City of Jerusalem and Silwan, and 500 people in the Sheikh Jarrah neighbourhood.²⁷

Settlements and settler violence

28. Security Council resolution 446 (1979) considers Israeli settlements illegal and a serious obstruction to achieving peace. The illegality of Israeli settlements in the Occupied Palestinian Territory is based on article 49 of the Fourth Geneva Convention, which stipulates that the “Occupying Power shall not deport or transfer parts of its own civilian population into the territory it occupies.” The settlements are also viewed as part of the “new frontiers of dispossession of the traditional inhabitants ... and control of the Palestinian territory”.¹³

29. Around 519,000 Israeli settlers live in 144 illegal settlements²⁸ and 100 outposts across the Occupied Palestinian Territory. The outposts are typically smaller settlements that are often tolerated and supported by the Government, sometimes in defiance of Israeli court rulings, but are illegal under Israeli law.²⁹

30. Around 40 per cent of the West Bank has been seized by the Israeli authorities for the purpose of settling its civilian population in the Occupied Palestinian Territory, in violation of international humanitarian law.³⁰

31. Furthermore, the Palestinian population continues to suffer from institutionalized discrimination between Palestinian residents and Israeli settlers, which privileges the interests of the settlers over those of Palestinians. This regime is characterized, among other things, by two separate judiciary systems, one for Palestinians and another for Israeli settlers.³¹ Israeli settlers are also provided with benefits by the Israeli Government as incentives to encourage migration into illegal settlements. These incentives include financial benefits, low housing costs and high standards of living.³²

Settlement activity

32. 2011 marked a year of increased settlement activity, with a 20 per cent rise in new construction in the settlements, compared to 2010. A number of planned

²⁸ Palestinian Central Bureau of Statistics, press release dated 3 August 2011, available from: www.pcbs.gov.ps/Portals/_pcbs/PressRelease/Sett_E2011.pdf.

²⁹ Information recorded by Btselem, available from: www.btselem.org/settlements/statistics.

³⁰ Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs, fact sheet, “How Dispossession Happens: The Humanitarian Impact of the Takeover of Palestinian Water Springs by Israeli Settlers”, March 2012, p. 4, available from: www.ochaopt.org/documents/ocha_opt_springs_report_march_2012_english.pdf.

³¹ *The State of Human Rights in Israel and the OPT*, p. 12.

³² Israel defines most settlements in the West Bank as priority areas. See Btselem, www.btselem.org/settlements/migration.

settlement units are located in areas that are vital to the contiguity of the Palestinian territory.³³

33. In addition, during 2011, the Israeli cabinet announced its intention to officially legalize 11 outposts where 2,300 settlers reside to become fully recognized settlements, and to legalize hundreds of units of illegal construction in existing settlements.³³

34. In occupied East Jerusalem, 4,000 new settler housing units were approved during 2011. This figure is the highest since at least 2006.²⁰ The Israeli Government also began the construction of 55 new settlement units in three locations at the heart of Palestinian neighbourhoods in Jerusalem.³³

35. The Palestinian Authority has reported that over the past three years, the Israeli authorities expanded settlements in the occupied territory with 28,000 new housing units that would house around 103,000 settlers.³⁴

Settler violence

36. The failure of the Israeli authorities in law enforcement vis-à-vis settler violence and takeover of Palestinian property continues to perpetuate a state of impunity in the occupied West Bank, encouraging further violence.² It also constitutes an ongoing violation of its most fundamental obligation under international humanitarian law to protect a civilian population living under occupation, and to accord particular protection to children as specified in article 77 of the Protocol Additional to the Geneva Conventions of 12 August 1949, and relating to the Protection of Victims of International Armed Conflicts (Protocol I) (see also A/66/358, para. 27).³⁵

37. A 30 per cent increase in the number of settler attacks resulting in either Palestinian casualties or damage to their property was recorded in 2011, as compared with 2010.² The figure for 2011 is more than 165 per cent higher than that recorded in 2009. Around 10,000 Palestinian-owned trees, mainly olive trees, were damaged or uprooted by Israeli settlers, severely affecting the livelihood of hundreds of Palestinian families.¹²

38. Between February 2011 and February 2012, Israeli settlers vandalized and set fire to seven mosques and one church.³⁶

39. A further manifestation of these attacks is the frequent settler harassment of Palestinian children on their way to school, which has reportedly discouraged many children and their families from attending school, thereby violating their right to education (see A/66/358, para. 27).

40. The Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Human Rights documented several cases where the Israeli army appeared to provide direct support to settlers when they attacked Palestinian communities. Israeli troops focused their

³³ Information recorded by Peace Now, available from peacenow.org.il/eng/2011Summary.

³⁴ Palestinian Liberation Organization, Negotiations Affairs Department, Report on Israeli activities in 2011 (January 2012), p. 3.

³⁵ United Nations, *Treaty Series*, vol. 1125, No. 17512.

³⁶ See the monthly reports of the Palestinian Monitoring Group (Palestinian Liberation Organization, Negotiations Affairs Department), available from: www.nad-plo.org/monthlyreports.php.

efforts in dispersing Palestinians or removing them from their lands rather than protecting them and their private properties from Israeli settlers.¹²

The wall

41. Contrary to the advisory opinion of the International Court of Justice, Israel continues the construction of the 708-kilometre-long wall in the West Bank, which is more than twice the length of the 320-kilometre-long 1949 Armistice Line (Green Line) between the West Bank and Israel, and runs inside the West Bank and East Jerusalem for approximately 85 per cent of its route. By end of 2011, 61.8 per cent of it was complete, while a further 8.2 per cent was under construction and another 30 per cent was planned but not yet constructed.²

42. Upon completion, the wall will isolate around 11.9 per cent of the West Bank lands and 27,500 Palestinians, in the “Seam Zone”³⁷ while directly affecting 247,800 others.³⁸ Additionally, it will isolate East Jerusalem and its 270,000 Palestinian residents from the rest of the Occupied Palestinian Territory and physically separate approximately 55,000 residents of the East Jerusalem Governorate from its urban centre.²⁷

43. Approximately 6,500 Palestinians currently reside in the closed area between the wall and the Green Line.²

44. Access for Palestinians to lands in the Seam Zone is channelled through 66 designated gates erected in the wall, most of which are only open during the olive harvest season and usually only for a limited period during the day. Such access is also dependent on obtaining a permit from the Israeli authorities. To apply for, or to renew such a permit, applicants must satisfy Israeli security considerations and also submit documents to prove a “connection to the land”.² In April 2011, the Israeli Supreme Court ruled against petitions submitted by Israeli organizations against this permit regime.³⁹

Mobility restrictions and closure policies

The Gaza Strip blockade

45. The blockade imposed by Israel on the Gaza Strip continues to collectively punish the civilian population, in violation of Israel’s international legal obligations (see A/66/370, para. 12), with a disproportionate impact on vulnerable groups and the aid agencies trying to help them.⁴⁰

46. In June 2010, Israel moved away from a “positive” list of goods allowed into Gaza to a “negative” list of goods whose entry is prohibited. Israeli authorities issued a list of “dual-use” items restricted for import, which is still in force. The list includes items, which are not considered as to allow for dual usage by Israeli

³⁷ The Seam Zone is the West Bank area located between the wall and the Green Line and completely isolated from the rest of the West Bank.

³⁸ Information recorded by Btselem, available from: www.btselem.org/separation_barrier/statistics.

³⁹ *The State of Human Rights in Israel and the OPT*, p. 36.

⁴⁰ Information contributed by the United Nations Relief and Works Agency for Palestine Refugees in the Near East, 2012.

legislation or by any other international standard. It also lacks specificity and is therefore extensive, including most construction material and equipment for water and sanitation projects. Consequently, while imports to the Gaza Strip have increased through official channels, they remain at less than 40 per cent of the pre-2007 levels.²

47. Between 2010 and 2011, imports of raw agricultural materials and animal feed into the Gaza Strip decreased, indicating that the policy decision of the relaxation of trade in June 2010 did not improve the availability of agricultural inputs in the Gaza Strip.⁴¹

48. Private sector manufacturing companies surveyed in June 2011 reported that 21 per cent of the raw materials essential to production were not available at all in Gaza.²

49. The need for specific approvals for importing material has resulted in prolonged delays in essential projects addressing humanitarian needs. This, in addition to delays in acquiring Israeli approval for infrastructure projects, has deepened the decline in key areas, for such essential international projects as housing, water and sanitation. As time passes, funds pledged by donors to specific projects may become unavailable in the future.²

50. By the end of the 2010 and 2011 seasons, the total cash crop exports of carnations and strawberries to Europe did not surpass 25 per cent of pre-blockade levels, while vegetable exports amount to 0.4 per cent of those levels.⁴¹

“Access restricted areas” within the Gaza Strip

51. In addition to the blockade, Israel imposes land and maritime “access restricted areas” in the Gaza Strip and along its coast. As a result of this measure, 35 per cent of Gaza’s cultivable land and 85 per cent of its maritime area have become totally or partially inaccessible to Palestinians.⁴²

52. The lowest fishing catch of the past 12 years was recorded in 2011. In addition, fishermen remain vulnerable to various forms of violence at sea, including the use of live ammunition against fishing boats and arbitrary detention. In 2011, 72 incidents targeting fishermen were recorded.²

Mobility in the West Bank

53. By the end of 2011, there were approximately 520 obstacles hindering Palestinian movement within the West Bank, a 4 per cent increase from the equivalent figure by the end of 2010. These include permanently staffed and partial (staffed on an ad hoc basis) checkpoints, as well as unstaffed physical obstacles, including roadblocks, earth mounds, road gates, barriers and trenches.²

54. The regime of restrictions is often related to Israeli settlements, securing areas for their expansion, or improving the connectivity between settlements and Israel itself. This regime continues to hinder the access of the Palestinian population to livelihoods and basic services. Overall, 200,000 people from 70 villages are forced

⁴¹ Information contributed by the Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations, 2012.

⁴² “The Access Restricted Areas in the Gaza Strip: update for January-December 2011”, p. 1, available from: <http://reliefweb.int/sites/reliefweb.int/files/resources/ARA%20Update%202011.pdf>.

to use detours between two and five times longer than the direct route to their closest city, owing to movement restrictions. To date, 9 of the 10 governorates' main cities continue to have one or more of their historical entrances blocked. Access to the main traffic arteries leading from the villages to the cities also continues to be limited to select junctions.²

55. The Old City of Hebron is separated from the rest of the city by 122 closure obstacles, while Palestinian movement by car, and in some cases also by foot, remained banned along certain streets. In June 2011 the Israeli Supreme Court⁴³ approved the travel restrictions that have been in place for more than a decade, banning Palestinians from traversing the centre of Hebron, essentially marking it for Israeli use only.⁴³

56. The Jordan Valley and Dead Sea area covers around 30 per cent of the West Bank, and is home to nearly 60,000 Palestinians. Eighty-seven per cent of the land is designated as Area C, virtually all of which is earmarked for the use of the Israeli military or settlements. An additional 7 per cent, formally part of Area B, was designated a nature reserve. Palestinian access to and from the area is severely restricted by Israeli checkpoints. These restrictions severely harm Palestinians living there and who are completely dependent on services available outside the Jordan Valley, including hospitals and most educational institutions. The restrictions on movement also apply to ambulances, which are not permitted to enter the Jordan Valley.⁴⁴

57. During 2011, Israel prevented more than 4,000 Palestinians from travelling to Jordan by the Al-Karamah border crossing, citing security considerations, without giving further details, according to the Euro-Mediterranean Observatory for Human Rights.

Access to occupied East Jerusalem

58. Palestinians holding West Bank identification documents continued to require special entry permits to access occupied East Jerusalem. Overcrowding, along with the multiple layers of checks and security procedures at the four designated checkpoints, have made entry into occupied East Jerusalem a long and difficult experience. Restricted access to occupied East Jerusalem has had a particularly negative impact on access to Palestinian hospitals located in the city, as well as on Muslims and Christians wishing to access Jerusalem's holy sites.²

59. The United Nations Relief and Works Agency for Palestine Refugees in the Near East (UNRWA) reported a total of 280 access incidents involving its staff in 2011, affecting teachers, medical doctors and nurses, social and relief workers and field office staff. These included demands for searches of United Nations vehicles entering occupied East Jerusalem, in contravention of the Convention on the Privileges and Immunities of the United Nations,⁴⁵ to which Israel is a party. Moreover, access to Seam Zone areas for mobile health, food assistance, mental health services and social work teams was further restricted with the majority of staff from the Agency unable to reach communities in the Seam Zone.⁴⁰

⁴³ *The State of Human Rights in Israel and the OPT*, pp. 34-35.

⁴⁴ Btselem, "Dispossession and Exploitation: Israel's policy in the Jordan Valley and Northern Dead Sea", May 2011, p. 29.

⁴⁵ Resolution 22 A (I).

Exploitation, endangerment and depletion of Palestinian natural resources

60. Israeli policies regarding natural resources in the Occupied Palestinian Territory violate The Hague Regulations of 1907 and the Fourth Geneva Convention, of 1949, which stipulate that the occupying Power is obliged to safeguard the natural resources of the occupied country and to provide the original citizens with their needs from these resources.

61. Palestinians live under conditions of significant water stress. Water shortage is a serious problem facing most districts in the West Bank and Gaza Strip, not only due to climatic conditions but also due to Israeli access restrictions. The water allocated to the Palestinians translates to 83 cubic metres of water per Palestinian per year, compared to 333 cubic metres per Israeli per year. In other words, a Palestinian is allocated one quarter of the amount of water allocated to an Israeli.⁴⁶

62. Since 1967, Palestinian drilling for new wells in the occupied territory has been banned and quotas have been imposed on existing ones. Water that was allocated to the Palestinians was capped at 1967 levels, despite the growth in population. Israel uses 73 per cent of the West Bank's water, diverting an additional 10 per cent of it to its settlements and selling the remaining 17 per cent to the Palestinians.⁴⁶

63. The Jordan Valley area is considered one of the richest natural water sources in the West Bank. Israel has taken control of most of the water sources in the area and has earmarked the use of most of the resources exclusively for Israeli settlers.⁴⁷

64. Thirty of the water springs in the West Bank have been taken over completely by Israeli settlers, while the other 26 are at risk of settler takeover, due to regular settler "tours" and patrolling. At least 84 per cent of springs affected by settler activities are located on land recognized by the Israeli Civil Administration as privately owned by Palestinians.⁴⁸

65. Wastewater from Israeli settlements is collected and discharged to the nearby Palestinian valleys without treatment, thereby affecting water quality in the West Bank. In addition, the wall has isolated 58 different water sources within the "Seam Zone". As a result, many farming families and communities are unable to survive and to maintain their lands. Another negative impact is the wall's interference with the natural drainage systems. In times of high rainfall, both flooding and substantial environmental and agricultural damage are being caused.⁴⁶

66. Furthermore, to make way for the construction of the wall, Israel has uprooted more than 100,000 trees and destroyed 36,000 m of irrigation works, affecting some 170 km² or 10 per cent of the fertile agricultural land in the West Bank.⁴⁶

67. On 26 December 2011, Israel's High Court of Justice issued a ruling that enables the Israeli State and private enterprises to continue using quarries in the West Bank. While such practices started in the mid-1970s, currently there are 10

⁴⁶ Information contributed by the United Nations Environment Programme, 2012.

⁴⁷ "Dispossession and Exploitation: Israel's policy in the Jordan Valley and Northern Dead Sea", p. 19.

⁴⁸ "How Dispossession Happens: The Humanitarian Impact of the Takeover of Palestinian Water Springs by Israeli Settlers", p. 2.

Israeli-owned quarries in the West Bank, eight of which are active and produce some 12 million tons of mined material per year, 94 per cent of which is taken to Israel.⁴⁹

68. Israeli businesses continue to build and run industrial zones in the occupied territory, especially since the Israeli Government offers tax reductions for such activity, with more than 18 Israeli industrial zones and 160 industrial facilities currently located in the Occupied Palestinian Territory. The Israeli Government itself constructed at least seven industrial zones in the West Bank, located mainly on hilltops, which often result in the flow of industrial wastewater into adjacent Palestinian lands. The industrial solid waste generated by factories is often collected and dumped in areas near Palestinian villages. Such waste can cause damage to agricultural crops and orchards as well as polluting the soil and the potential damage to groundwater.⁴⁶

69. The United Nations Environment Programme cites concerns that Israel illegally transfers hazardous and toxic wastes generated inside Israel into the West Bank, thereby violating the Basel Convention on the Control of Transboundary Movements of Hazardous Wastes and their Disposal.⁵⁰

70. In the Gaza Strip, the population relies predominantly on ground wells, where water is increasingly infiltrated by salty seawater because of the overpumping of groundwater by Israel between 1967 and 2005. As a result, Gaza is facing a severe water crisis and warnings that Gaza will have no potable water within 15 years.⁴⁶

71. Farmers in the Gaza Strip are thus forced to use salty and polluted water from agricultural wells for irrigation, which subsequently restricts both agricultural productivity and the quality of the produce, reducing its export potential in addition to presenting health risks owing to the resulting degradation in food quality.⁴¹

Socioeconomic conditions in the Occupied Palestinian Territory

Economic conditions

72. Economic growth in the Occupied Palestinian Territory continues to be unsustainable and reflects an economy recovering from a low base, mainly driven by the non-tradable sector, especially the economy of the Gaza Strip. This highlights the importance of donor aid in sustaining the Palestinian economy, rather than the private sector, which remains stifled by Israeli restrictions on access to natural resources and markets. Unemployment remains high, and poverty and food insecurity, especially in Gaza, continue to be alarming.⁵¹

73. In the first half of 2011, GDP in the Occupied Palestinian Territory grew at a rate of 10 per cent. The strong performance was driven by an exceptionally high rate of growth of 28 per cent in Gaza, owing mainly to the revitalization of construction works following the loosening in 2010 of the Israeli blockade and an increase in the

⁴⁹ Btselem, "High Court sanctions looting: Israeli quarries in the West Bank", 16 January 2012, available from www.btselem.org/printpdf/127713.

⁵⁰ United Nations, *Treaty Series*, vol. 1673, No. 28911.

⁵¹ World Bank, "Sustaining Achievements in Palestinian Institution-building and Economic Growth", Economic Monitoring Report to the ad hoc liaison committee, 18 September 2011, p. 6.

supply of materials through the tunnels. In the West Bank, over the same period, growth was only 4 per cent, compared to 8 per cent in 2010. Output in the West Bank actually fell by nearly 5 per cent between the fourth quarter of 2010 and the first quarter of 2011.⁵² This slowdown was caused by continued fiscal retrenchment, declining aid and a resulting liquidity crisis, as well as continued Israeli restrictions during 2011.

74. Long-term development prospects remain grim. Israeli restrictions not only increase prices of basic staples such as vegetables, fruits and sugar, but also continue to obstruct wider agricultural development and more rational urban and regional economic and spatial planning. A large trade deficit and dependence on the Israeli economy persisted.⁵³

75. Israel's different forms of restrictions, as mentioned in the present report, combined with the shortfall in external financing, high Palestinian Authority wage bills and other expenditures, and low rates of tax collection,²⁶ have led to a fiscal crisis for the Palestinian Authority, weakened the private sector and caused a decline in business confidence.⁵⁴

76. While Gaza's growth in 2010 may appear impressive, much of it represents a recovery of real GDP following its contraction by a cumulative 30 per cent during the period from 2006 to 2009, as a result of trade restrictions. Even after its surge in 2010-2011, Gaza's real GDP was projected to be 6 per cent below its 2005 level by the end of 2011.⁵⁵

77. The ongoing blockade of the Gaza Strip, in particular, resulted in increasing reliance on the illicit "tunnel economy", which expanded during 2011. Imports of basic construction materials and other productive inputs through tunnels vastly outpaced those through Israeli-controlled crossings, despite a relative easing in the movement of goods through the latter.⁴⁰ The tunnel economy has thus become the main driver of economic activity. Its role is so overwhelming that established legitimate businesses have had to adapt to it to some extent.⁵⁶

78. Despite some improvement, unemployment remained alarmingly high, and labour force participation low, in both the West Bank and Gaza Strip. The labour force participation rate stood at 44.4 per cent. The unemployment rate in the 4th quarter of 2011 among labour force participants was 21 per cent, for the Occupied Palestinian Territory, 30.3 per cent in the Gaza Strip and 16.6 per cent in the West Bank. The most affected are youths aged 20-24, whose labour participation rate stood at 45.3 per cent, while the rate of unemployment among them was at 38 per cent, and unemployment among refugees was at 27.5 per cent.⁵⁷ The divergence in employment indicators between the West Bank and Gaza Strip reflects tighter restrictions in Gaza on external trade and on the employment of workers in Israel, the higher sensitivity of its output to such restrictions given its small domestic

⁵² "Sustaining Achievements in Palestinian Institution-building and Economic Growth", pp. 7-8.

⁵³ Information contributed by the United Nations Conference on Trade and Development, 2012.

⁵⁴ "Sustaining Achievements in Palestinian Institution-building and Economic Growth", p. 7.

⁵⁵ International Monetary Fund, "Recent Experience and Prospects of the Economy of the West Bank and Gaza" staff report prepared for the meeting of the ad hoc liaison committee, New York, 18 September 2011, p. 21.

⁵⁶ "The situation of workers of the occupied Arab territories", p. 5.

⁵⁷ Palestinian Central Bureau of Statistics, "Labour Force Survey (October-December 2011)" (February 2012).

market, and higher uncertainty faced by the private sector as a result of more frequent hostilities and the degradation of public institutions and infrastructure since 2006. Despite limited gains in employment, real wages continued to deteriorate with the purchasing power of the average monthly wage declining some 2.8 per cent in 2011.⁴⁰

79. Eighty per cent of the Gazan population is currently dependent on international assistance for subsistence (see A/66/358, para. 41). And in the light of the trend for declining international aid, there is a risk that, should Gazan families' average income decline by 20 per cent, the proportion living in poverty would immediately increase from 33 per cent to a staggering 49 per cent.⁵⁸

80. Since June 2010, Israel has prohibited any pharmaceutical, dairy or meat products from the West Bank from entering into East Jerusalem, which is estimated to entail up to \$48 million in losses annually for the Palestinian economy. Even when goods are allowed into East Jerusalem, they pass through commercial crossing points where they undergo a process called "back to back" transfer, which adds to the high transaction costs of Palestinian trade.⁵³

81. According to the International Monetary Fund, even with a significant easing of movement and access restrictions, combined with sufficient donor funding to finance recurrent and development spending, Gaza's real GDP per capita by 2013 would remain at 10 per cent below its 1994 level.⁵⁹

Food security

82. Food insecurity levels for Palestinian families across the Occupied Palestinian Territory in 2011 were recorded at 27 per cent, 18 per cent in the West Bank and 44 per cent in the Gaza Strip.⁴¹ Nutrition indicators also remain of concern, including the prevalence of underweight children increasing from 3.2 per cent in 2010 to 3.9 per cent in 2011.⁴⁰ The fact that 95 per cent of Gaza's water is unfit for human consumption also leads to a disproportionately high number of cases of methaemoglobinaemia ("blue-baby syndrome") among babies in Gaza (see A/66/370, paras. 14 and 15).

83. Food insecurity in the West Bank is largely determined by the socioeconomic conditions of Palestinian households and the physical and economic barriers to food access, production and trade.⁶⁰ Some geographical areas have shown particularly high levels of food insecurity, such as the Israeli-controlled administrative Area C, the Seam Zone and refugee camps.⁴⁰

Public health

84. According to UNRWA, as a result of Operation Cast Lead and the blockade, approximately one third of the population of Gaza lives in overcrowded and dilapidated camps, with inadequate environmental, health, commercial, social and recreational infrastructure.⁴⁰

⁵⁸ World Bank, "Coping with Conflict: Poverty and Inclusion in the West Bank and Gaza", October 2011.

⁵⁹ "Recent Experience and Prospects of the Economy of the West Bank and Gaza", p. 36.

⁶⁰ World Food Programme and Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations, "Socioeconomic and Food Security Survey: West Bank and Gaza Strip, Occupied Palestinian Territory" (February 2011).

85. The blockade on the Gaza Strip has adversely affected the quality of medical services in the Gaza Strip by hindering national health planning efforts, limiting the access of health personnel to professional development training outside of Gaza and the movement of health professionals into Gaza, restricting the construction and rehabilitation of the health infrastructure, and disrupting power and fuel supplies.⁶¹

86. In 2011, electricity cuts lasting up to 10 hours per day strained back-up power sources and affected medical equipment, causing interruption or postponement of medical treatment.⁶¹ Electricity cuts reportedly worsened during the first months of 2012.

87. The blockade also exacerbates the chronic shortages of essential medicines, of which between 32 and 36 per cent were at zero stock throughout 2011, and of required medical disposables, of which only 260 of the 900 needed were available.⁶² For instance, a cancer patient in Gaza can only expect to find half of the drugs required for effective chemotherapy.⁶³

88. These chronic shortages forced patients to be referred abroad, in spite of the difficulties in obtaining a permit to exit the Gaza Strip. In this regard, five patients died, after being referred for treatment outside of Gaza, while waiting either for Israeli permits to cross Erez checkpoint or for appointments to an appropriate referral hospital.⁶¹

89. The United Nations Relief and Works Agency for Palestine Refugees in the Near East estimates that 45 per cent of poor and food insecure refugee households in refugee camps and 51 per cent of such households in cities have at least one member with a chronic disease.

90. In the West Bank, difficulties in obtaining building permits hinder appropriate maintenance and expansion of necessary health infrastructure such as primary health clinics. In Area C, 22 per cent of the 271 communities face difficulties in accessing health services, owing to road detours, road barriers and the cost of transportation.⁶¹

91. Despite reported improvements, movement restrictions prevent Palestinians from accessing six Palestinian hospitals run by non-governmental organizations in East Jerusalem, which are the main providers of specialized care for the Occupied Palestinian Territory. The World Health Organization estimates that 95 per cent of all patient ambulance transfers into Jerusalem are restricted from direct entry into the city and are conducted by “back to back” ambulances.⁶¹

92. In the West Bank, UNRWA reported a threefold increase in demand for mental health services during 2011, in connection with stress-related disorders. This rise in demand can be directly linked to protection concerns related to the occupation, including violence, the wall, forced displacement and subsequent socioeconomic hardship.⁴⁰

93. Gazans continue to live under an intense degree of psychological trauma. Fifty-four per cent of pregnant women experience depression, and 33 per cent were

⁶¹ Information contributed by the World Health Organization, 2012.

⁶² Médecins Sans Frontières, press release dated 17 November 2011, available from: www.msf-me.org/en/news/news-media/news-press-releases/gaza-chronic-shortages-of-drugs-and-medical-supplies.html.

⁶³ International Committee of the Red Cross, “Israel and the occupied territories: another year without change”, 6 February 2012.

suffering from anaemia (see A/66/370, paras. 14 and 15). Almost a quarter of the patients assisted through UNRWA community mental health services in Gaza in 2011 were children with problems including bedwetting, which is a frequent symptom of psychological trauma. Depression, anxiety, fear and anger were also common reasons for seeking care.⁴⁰

Education

94. In Area C in the West Bank, children have to overcome daily obstacles on their way to school such as mobility restrictions and facing harassment and violence from settlers and the military.⁶⁴ According to a recent survey, 26 out of 101 surveyed Palestinian communities in the West Bank reported that schoolchildren, youths and teachers experienced harassment and/or violence by Israeli military or security forces while going to and from school, while 28 communities reported settler violence along the same lines.⁶⁵

95. Since building permits are very difficult to obtain for Palestinians in Area C, many schools fall short of basic safety and hygiene standards, while facing demolition and stop-work orders.⁶⁴

96. Between January and November 2011, 32 attacks by Israeli settlers and security forces against Palestinian schools were reported, 21 in the West Bank and 11 in Gaza.⁶⁶ Thirteen schools serving 4,497 girls and boys are located in the access restricted areas.⁶⁵

97. The Palestinian Authority also reported that Israeli authorities had issued directives to the effect that the exclusive source of textbooks for public schools in occupied East Jerusalem is the Israeli administered municipality, consequently banning schools from acquiring books from Palestinian sources.¹⁹

98. The United Nations Relief and Works Agency for Palestine Refugees in the Near East needs to construct 100 schools in order to meet the needs of all eligible refugee children across the Gaza Strip over a three-year period. Currently, due to chronic underfunding and the inability to build new schools under Israeli-imposed restrictions, more than 94 per cent of UNRWA schools in Gaza operate on a double-shift basis. In some cases, shipping containers have been utilized as classrooms.⁴⁰

99. In occupied East Jerusalem, 1,000 additional classrooms are required to accommodate Palestinian children in schools, while many existing facilities are substandard or unsuitable.²⁷ In the West Bank, at least 10,000 students have to study in tents, caravans or tin shacks.⁶⁴

III. The occupied Syrian Golan

100. The occupation of the Syrian Golan in 1967 and its purported annexation in 1981 by the passing of the Golan Heights Law continue. The Security Council, in its

⁶⁴ Information recorded by the United Nations Children's Fund (UNICEF), available from: www.unicef.org/infobycountry/media_59706.html.

⁶⁵ Save the Children, fact sheet "Children's Right to Education in Armed Conflict" (October 2011).

⁶⁶ UNICEF, Children Affected by Armed Conflict bulletins for September 2011 and November 2011.

resolution 497 (1981), declared that the Israeli decision to impose its laws, jurisdiction and administration in the Syrian Golan was null and void.

101. In 2011 Israel continued its settlement expansion, while the Syrian Arab population continues to suffer from discrimination and access restrictions, including the expropriation of resources for the exclusive use of settlers in the occupied Syrian Golan. Approximately 19,000 Israeli settlers live in 33 settlements in the occupied Syrian Golan (see A/66/364, para. 34).

102. Land continues to be expropriated from Syrian citizens, for military or security pretexts. Permits for the expansion of the Syrian villages in the occupied Syrian Golan are not granted by the Israeli authorities. The Syrian population thus continues to build without Israeli permits. Although standing demolition orders have not been implemented, fines have been imposed for building without permits.⁶⁷

103. Israel is building a 2-kilometre-long, 8-metre-high wall, which would reinforce an existing fence and also cut off the “valley of screams” (see A/66/370, para. 59).

104. On 15 May 2011, after firing warning shots, Israeli forces opened fire on hundreds of demonstrators commemorating Nakba Day, who tried to cross the ceasefire line into the occupied Syrian Golan (see S/2011/359). As a result, 44 civilian casualties, including four fatalities, were recorded.

105. Syrian citizens in the occupied Syrian Golan are not allowed to exploit the available lake waters, drill artesian wells or build water tanks to collect rainwater and melted snow.⁶⁸ Hence they are forced to pay high prices for water extracted from occupied Syrian territory. Israeli settlers, who had access to significantly more water, reportedly paid lower rates (see A/66/370, para. 58).

106. Moreover, Syrian farmers may be subjected to rationing, which prematurely cuts off their water supply, preventing them from using the full amount of water allocated to them. Such rationing is not applied to the settlers. In addition, the high taxes levied on agricultural products reduce the earnings obtained by producers, in particular for apples, which are their main crop.⁶⁷

107. There continue to be few employment opportunities, particularly for Syrian university graduates and other young people seeking professional posts. In practice, they are deprived of adequate work in line with their academic and professional qualifications. Syrian workers hired to work for Israeli employers often do not benefit from social security arrangements. They do not accept Israeli citizenship, and do not wish to join the Israeli labour unions. They cannot form their own trade unions. Young people in particular are under pressure to leave the area, thus affecting its already precarious demographic balance.⁶⁹

108. Meanwhile, the Syrian population of the occupied Syrian Golan continues to be banned from visiting family members in the Syrian Arab Republic (see A/66/364, para. 34). A number of Syrian residents were reportedly arrested for attempting to make a connection with their home country.⁶⁷

109. There are concerns regarding the conditions and treatment of Syrians detained by Israel, namely limited family visits, degrading treatment and denial of

⁶⁷ “The situation of workers of the occupied Arab territories”, p. 31.

⁶⁸ “The situation of workers of the occupied Arab territories”, pp. 31-32.

⁶⁹ “The situation of workers of the occupied Arab territories”, p. 32.

educational opportunities. Dozens of Syrians are also reportedly detained without having had any formal charges brought against them (see A/66/370, para. 60).

110. Landmines continue to pose a serious threat to civilians in the occupied Syrian Golan. To date, 532 casualties have been recorded, including 202 fatalities.⁶⁷ Owing to the long-term presence of the mines and the deterioration of their detonation systems, the threat has increased (see S/2011/748, para. 6).

IV. Conclusion

111. Despite some welcome measures aimed at supporting the economy in the Occupied Palestinian Territory, the occupation continues to have grave socioeconomic consequences for the Palestinian population.

112. Israeli violations including violence, settlements, restrictions and discrimination towards Palestinians, and Syrians in the occupied Syrian Golan, and their ensuing grave social and economic consequences, do not serve peace nor inspire confidence. The occupation is politically, economically and morally not sustainable and must end, as part of a negotiated solution and peace agreement that ends the conflict and addresses all final status issues. The international community should persist in its efforts to achieve this goal through a comprehensive, just and lasting peace in the Middle East, in line with international law and relevant resolutions of the United Nations.



General Assembly Economic and Social Council

Distr.: General
8 May 2013

Original: English

**General Assembly
Sixty-eighth session**

Item 61 of the preliminary list*

**Permanent sovereignty of the Palestinian people
in the Occupied Palestinian Territory, including
East Jerusalem, and of the Arab population in the
occupied Syrian Golan over their natural resources**

**Economic and Social Council
Substantive session of 2013**

Item 11 of the provisional agenda**

**Economic and social repercussions of
the Israeli occupation on the living
conditions of the Palestinian people in the
Occupied Palestinian Territory, including
East Jerusalem, and the Arab population
in the occupied Syrian Golan**

Economic and social repercussions of the Israeli occupation on the living conditions of the Palestinian people in the Occupied Palestinian Territory, including East Jerusalem, and the Arab population in the occupied Syrian Golan

Note by the Secretary-General

Summary

In its resolution 2012/23, the Economic and Social Council requested the Secretary-General to submit to the General Assembly at its sixty-seventh session, through the Council, a report on the implementation of that resolution. The Assembly, in its resolution 67/229, also requested the Secretary-General to submit a report to it at its sixty-eighth session. The present report, which has been prepared by the Economic and Social Commission for Western Asia, is submitted in compliance with the resolutions of the Assembly and the Council.

In the forty-sixth year of its occupation of Palestinian territory, Israel continued in its practices and policies that violate the occupying Power's obligations under international law. These discriminatory policies, which "amount to de facto segregation", adversely affect the living conditions of the Palestinian population, with a dire impact on various Palestinian social and economic sectors, as well as on the Palestinian natural resources and environment.

* A/68/50.

** E/2013/100.



Excessive and disproportionate use of force by Israeli security forces continued. The ill-treatment of Palestinian child detainees appears to be widespread, systematic and institutionalized. Israel's frequent use of administrative detention amounts to a policy of widespread and systematic arbitrary detention. Israeli authorities and settlers commit transgressions against Palestinians and their property with impunity.

Since 1967, Israel has revoked the residency status of more than 260,000 Palestinians from the Occupied Palestinian Territory, while Israeli policies and practices, including home demolitions, lead to the forced displacement of Palestinians. Settler violence also is aimed mainly to force Palestinians to move from their lands.

The scale of Israel's settlement project in the occupied territories, as well as the construction of the West Bank wall, are not only illegal but also appear to confirm Israel's intention to retain control over large parts of the Occupied Palestinian Territory, thus violating a core principle of the Charter of the United Nations, which prohibits the acquisition of territory by the use or threat of force.

Palestinians living in the Occupied Palestinian Territory face daily obstacles and humiliation to travel both inside and outside the territory, while the Gaza blockade amounts to collective punishment, also illegal under international law.

The continued Israeli occupation of the Syrian Golan similarly includes policies and practices that discriminate against its Syrian citizens and encourage illegal Israeli settlement therein.

The Economic and Social Commission for Western Asia would like to acknowledge its appreciation for the substantive contributions and inputs of the Department for Political Affairs, the United Nations Conference on Trade and Development, the United Nations Relief and Works Agency for Palestine Refugees in the Near East, the Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs, the International Labour Organization, the Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations, the World Health Organization, the Office of the United Nations Special Coordinator for the Middle East Peace Process, the United Nations Environment Programme, the United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization, the Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Human Rights, the United Nations Population Fund and the League of Arab States.

I. Introduction

1. Economic and Social Council resolution 2012/23 and General Assembly resolution 67/229 expressed the concerns of the two bodies about the practices of Israel, the occupying Power in the Occupied Palestinian Territory and the occupied Syrian Golan, which violate international humanitarian law. These practices included actions that caused death and injuries to civilians, including children, women and peaceful demonstrators, all of whom must be protected in accordance with international humanitarian law, as well as the rising incidence of violence by illegal, armed Israeli settlers against Palestinian civilians and their properties, in addition to the continued detention of thousands of Palestinians, including children and women, under harsh conditions. Of concern also to the Council and the Assembly are the accelerated construction by Israel of settlements, the construction of the wall inside the Occupied Palestinian Territory, the exploitation of Palestinian natural resources, the increased demolition of homes, economic institutions, agricultural lands and infrastructure, the revocation of residency rights of Palestinians in and around occupied East Jerusalem, and the continuing Israeli policy of closures and severe restrictions on the movement of persons and goods, including what amounts to a blockade of the Gaza Strip. The Council and Assembly, through their aforementioned resolutions, also highlighted the detrimental impact of Israeli practices on the natural resources and the social and economic conditions of the Palestinian people and the Arab population in the occupied Syrian Golan.

2. The present note highlights the practices by Israel, the occupying Power, that are of concern to the Economic and Social Council and the General Assembly and that persisted over the reporting period. Although Israel cites security concerns to justify most of its policies and practices, the note indicates that many of these practices as well as the occupation regime constitute continuous violations of international law.

II. Occupied Palestinian Territory

Israeli policies affecting Palestinians

3. Israel implements policies and practices in the Occupied Palestinian Territory that “amount to de facto segregation”, including the establishment of two entirely separate Israeli legal systems and sets of institutions for Jewish communities grouped in illegal settlements, on the one hand, and Palestinian populations living under Israeli military occupation in towns and villages, on the other. Furthermore, Palestinians do not enjoy either equal use of roads and infrastructure or equal access to basic services and water resources. Such separation is concretized by the implementation of a complex combination of restrictions on movement, the existence of separate roads and a permit regime that only impacts the Palestinian population.¹ Moreover, a matrix of military orders applies, by law or by practice, only to Palestinians to regulate and control most aspects of daily life, including by restricting an extensive range of rights (A/HRC/22/63, para. 40).

¹ CERD/C/ISR/CO/14-16, para. 24.

4. In June 1967 Israel formally, yet illegally, annexed 70 km² of land incorporating East Jerusalem and a number of nearby Palestinian villages into the expanded boundaries of the Jerusalem municipality of Israel (ibid., para. 25).

5. For decades Israel has pursued a strategy that has led to the debilitation of East Jerusalem in every respect, including socioeconomic.² Furthermore, Israel has employed the following policies and practices: physically isolating East Jerusalem from the rest of the West Bank in part by building the wall; discrimination in planning and building; land expropriation and demolition of houses; revoking residency and social benefits of Palestinians; and inequitably disbursing the municipal budget between the two parts of the city (A/67/379, para. 16). The cumulative effects of these methods have led to the deterioration in the conditions of Palestinian East Jerusalemites.³

6. According to human rights organizations, since 2001, Israeli authorities have closed down at least 28 Palestinian organizations operating in Jerusalem that had been involved in educational, cultural and social activities for Palestinians in East Jerusalem.⁴

Planning and zoning

7. Area C constitutes over 60 per cent of the West Bank, excluding East Jerusalem. As the only contiguous territory, it is the key to economic cohesion and is the most resource abundant space in the West Bank as it holds the majority of the territory's water, agricultural lands, natural resources and land reserves. Israel maintains full security control and control over building and planning in Area C. About 150,000 Palestinians live in 270 communities that are totally or partially in Area C.⁵

8. In Area C the zoning regime applied by Israel benefits the establishment and growth of settlements, while denying the development of Palestinian communities. This regime effectively allows Palestinian construction on 1 per cent of Area C. As a result, many Palestinians are left with no choice but to build without a permit, which leads to "inhumane Israeli responses involving demolition and displacement" (A/67/379, para. 15).

9. From 2005 to 2009, only 13 per cent of the Israeli building permits issued for housing units in East Jerusalem were granted to Palestinian neighbourhoods. In Jewish neighbourhoods, there is an average of 20 square metres of housing per resident, compared to 11 square metres in Palestinian neighbourhoods.⁶

Residency status

10. Since 1967, Israel has retained control over the residency status of the Palestinian population of the Occupied Palestinian Territory, implementing discriminatory policies that often lead to the displacement of Palestinians.⁷

² ACRI, *Policies of Neglect in East Jerusalem*, May 2012, p. 2.

³ Ibid.; see paras. 86-95 below.

⁴ A/67/372, para. 41; and The Civic Coalition for Palestinian Rights in Jerusalem, submission to the United Nations.

⁵ Information received from the Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs (OCHA).

⁶ ACRI, *East Jerusalem in Numbers*, <http://www.acri.org.il/en/2012/05/16/east-jerusalem-in-numbers/>.

⁷ Information received from OCHA.

11. Up until the establishment of the Palestinian Authority in 1994, Israel revoked the residency status of 250,000 Palestinians from the West Bank and the Gaza Strip, in addition to 14,188 Palestinian East Jerusalemites whose residency permits were revoked from 1967 to 2011.⁸

12. Israel regulates the Palestinian residents of East Jerusalem almost as if they were foreign nationals living in Israel, with little regard for their status as protected persons under international humanitarian law (A/67/372, para. 38). If they reside outside Israel or East Jerusalem for a period of seven years, Palestinian residents lose their permanent residency status, as stipulated in the Entry into Israel Regulations of 2003.⁹

13. Policies that apply only to Palestinian residents of Jerusalem include the Entry into Israel Law, which stipulates that a permanent resident who marries a non-resident must submit, on behalf of the spouse, a request for “family unification” in order for the partner to reside in East Jerusalem, a process that has frozen for almost 10 years the entry of those spouses from the West Bank and Gaza.¹⁰

Disproportionate use of force

14. Excessive and disproportionate use of force by Israeli security forces, including the Israeli military and border police, continued in the West Bank. Most injuries occurred during demonstrations, where Israeli Military Order 101 outlaws “assemblies”, and Israeli troops use excessive force to disperse them, thereby violating Palestinians’ right to peaceful protest. Civilians were also injured and killed as a result of the excessive use of force during other forms of military operations, including search and arrest raids (see A/67/372, paras. 15-24).

15. Apart from air strikes and military operations, methods used by the Israeli military to enforce the access-restricted areas in the Gaza Strip, including the use of live ammunition, violate the international humanitarian law principle of distinction, which establishes that civilians are not to be targeted (see A/67/372, paras. 8-10).

16. From 30 March 2012 to 29 March 2013, 268 Palestinians were killed and 4,483 others were injured. The vast majority of casualties involved civilians and were inflicted by Israeli security forces. A total of 132 Palestinian injuries were the result of settler attacks. Among the casualties, 42 Palestinian children were killed and 615 were injured. During the same period, 3 Israeli civilians were killed and 279 were injured, including 3 injured children.¹¹

17. On 14 November 2012, Israel launched a military offensive against the Gaza Strip that went on until 21 November, during which Palestinian militants also shelled Israeli towns and army posts in Israel. At least 165 Palestinians were killed by Israeli military action, of whom 99 were civilians, including 13 women and 33 children. An additional 1,399 Palestinians were injured, the majority of whom

⁸ See *Ceased Residency*, <http://www.hamoked.org/Document.aspx?dID=Updates1175>; information received from OCHA.

⁹ Information received from the Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Human Rights (OHCHR); see also A/67/372, para. 38.

¹⁰ Information received from OCHA.

¹¹ OCHA, Protection of Civilians: Casualties Database, <http://www.ochaopt.org/poc.aspx?id=1010002>; and OCHA Protection of Civilians Weekly Report, 19-25 March 2013; casualties include those who were injured or killed during the November 2012 offensive (see para. 17 below).

are believed to be civilians. During the offensive, 3 Israeli civilians were killed and 224 Israelis, most of whom were also civilians, were injured by Palestinian shelling. An additional six Palestinian civilians were killed by stray shells from Palestinian militants.¹²

18. A common denominator affecting all victims of unlawful acts of violence against Palestinians is the absence of effective investigations and redress for victims, leaving Israeli security apparatuses to enjoy significant impunity vis-à-vis such acts of violence against Palestinians.¹³

Arbitrary arrests and detentions

19. According to official Israeli figures, at the end of February 2013, about 4,713 Palestinian security detainees and prisoners were held in Israeli prisons, including 253 children.¹⁴

20. In addition to the denial of due process rights during trial and the conviction of Palestinian detainees in the Israeli military court system,¹⁵ it has been reported that considerable physical and psychological pressure to sign confessions is placed on defendants during interrogations. Practices in this regard include beatings and threats, sleep deprivation, position abuse, prolonged cuffing, having family members threatened and, in some cases, arrested.¹⁶ Some of such cases amount to torture (see A/67/550, para. 17).

21. On 24 February 2013, a Palestinian prisoner, Arafat Jaradat, lost his life during his incarceration in an Israeli prison, sparking wide protests across the West Bank amidst allegations that torture and ill-treatment caused his death. On 2 April 2013, another Palestinian prisoner, Maysara Abu Hamdiyeh, died while incarcerated in an Israeli prison from cancer amidst accusations of medical negligence and ill-treatment.¹⁷ The Palestinian Prisoner Support and Human Rights Association (ADDAMEER) maintains that since 1967, a total of 72 Palestinian prisoners have died under torture and 53 have died owing to medical neglect.¹⁸

22. Although the Israeli military issued an order raising the age of majority for Palestinians to 18 for security-related matters, children are not treated in a manner that takes into account their age, needs and special circumstances.¹⁹ To the contrary, the ill-treatment of Palestinian children who are arrested, detained or prosecuted by the Israeli military system appears to be widespread, systematic and institutionalized.²⁰

23. Sixty per cent of all detentions of Palestinian children by Israeli security forces occur between midnight and 5 a.m. Eighty-seven per cent of Palestinian children in

¹² Information provided by OCHA.

¹³ Information provided by OCHA.

¹⁴ Btselem, http://www.btselem.org/statistics/detainees_and_prisoners, and http://www.btselem.org/statistics/minors_in_custody.

¹⁵ Information provided by OCHA; see also the concerns raised in the report of the United Nations Special Rapporteur on the independence of judges and lawyers (A/HRC/14/26/Add.1).

¹⁶ Information provided by OCHA.

¹⁷ <http://www.guardian.co.uk/world/2013/apr/02/palestinian-prisoners-israel-hunger-strike>.

¹⁸ ADDAMEER, <http://www.addameer.org/etemplate.php?id=578>.

¹⁹ Information provided by OCHA.

²⁰ United Nations Children's Fund (UNICEF), *Children in Israeli Military Detention*, February 2013, p. 1.

detention are denied bail and thus remain detained until the conclusion of a legal process. Ninety per cent plead guilty in order to avoid extended pretrial detention. Israel uses solitary confinement for 12 per cent of Palestinian child detainees (see A/67/550, paras. 10-12).

24. Israel's treatment of Palestinian child detainees is grossly inconsistent with the treatment it affords the children of Israeli settlers in the Occupied Palestinian Territory. This discrimination includes the minimum age of the child to receive a custodial sentence or an adult sentence; the right to have a parent present during interrogation; having interrogations recorded audiovisually; the time limit for being held in custody before being brought before a judge; having access to a lawyer and without charges being brought; and the maximum period of time between charges and a trial (see A/67/550, para. 16). UNICEF reports that: "In no other country are children systematically tried by juvenile military courts that, by definition, fall short of providing the necessary guarantees to ensure respect for their rights".²¹

Administrative detention

25. Israel's frequent use of administrative detention amounts to a policy of widespread and systematic arbitrary detention (A/67/550, para. 20). One of the most problematic issues with such detention is that in most cases, evidence on which the detention order is based is kept secret and neither the detainee nor his or her counsel has access to it (see A/67/372, paras. 26-27). By the end of February 2013, 169 Palestinians remained under administrative detention, which constitutes a decline from the number of administrative detainees in 2012.²²

26. Throughout 2012, more than 1,200 Palestinian prisoners reportedly participated in a series of hunger strikes to protest their conditions of detention and treatment by Israeli authorities, including the widespread use of administrative detention.²³

Population displacement, property destruction and confiscation

27. Israeli military operations have been the main cause of forced displacement in the Gaza Strip. The November 2012 offensive led to the displacement of an additional 3,000 Palestinians whose homes had been destroyed or severely damaged.²⁴

28. In 2012 the Israeli authorities demolished 540 Palestinian structures in Area C in the West Bank, including 165 homes. This resulted in the displacement of 815 people, including 474 children.²⁵ In January 2013 alone at least 139 structures, including 59 homes and other residential structures, were destroyed in 20 separate incidents.²⁶

29. In a number of cases, emergency shelters and other items provided as a form of emergency response have similarly been demolished and/or confiscated by Israeli authorities.²⁷

²¹ UNICEF, *Children in Israeli Military Detention*, February 2013, p. 1.

²² Btselem, http://www.btselem.org/statistics/detainees_and_prisoners.

²³ A/HRC/21/33/AUV, para. 19.

²⁴ Information received from OCHA.

²⁵ Information received from OCHA.

²⁶ OCHA, *Humanitarian Monitor Monthly Report*, January 2013, p. 14.

²⁷ Information received from OCHA.

30. During 2012, the Israeli authorities demolished 64 Palestinian structures in East Jerusalem comprising 24 residential structures and 40 others, including livelihood and animal structures, and 15 “self-demolitions” imposed by these authorities.²⁸

31. Overall, there are at least 93,100 residents of East Jerusalem who live in structures built without permits and are therefore at potential risk of displacement.²⁹

32. The forced eviction of Palestinians from their homes by settlers, backed by the Government, is in itself incompatible with international human rights law (see A/67/372, para. 31) and has contributed to changing the demography of East Jerusalem. The Government of Israel supports the settlers’ actions by sending security forces to accompany the takeover of Palestinian homes (A/67/379, para. 16).

33. In July 2011 Israeli authorities indicated their intention to “relocate” approximately 27,000 Bedouin and herding Palestinians living in Area C. Should this plan be implemented, it would amount to individual and mass forcible transfers and forced evictions contrary to Israel’s obligations under international law (A/67/372, para. 37).

34. Since the beginning of the occupation, Israel has seized over 1 million dunums³⁰ of Palestinian land (approximately 40 per cent of the West Bank) and placed it within the jurisdictional boundaries of local and regional settlement councils, prohibiting Palestinian access to that land (A/HRC/22/63, paras. 63-64).

Settlements and settler violence

35. The establishment of the settlements on occupied territories is a violation of the Fourth Geneva Convention and the Hague Convention IV of 1907. In building settlements and associated infrastructure, Israel further violates international law through the appropriation of Palestinian property not justified by military necessity (see A/67/379, paras. 11-12).

36. Israel defined settlements as “national priority areas”, whose residents benefit from housing and education subsidies and direct incentives (A/HRC/22/63, para. 22). This amounts to the transfer by Israel of its population into the Occupied Palestinian Territory (see A/67/375, para. 10), which is prohibited under international law.³¹

37. The scale of Israel’s settlement project and the massive financial investment in it appear to confirm Israel’s intention to retain control over these areas, thus violating a core principle of the Charter of the United Nations, which prohibits the acquisition of territory by the use or threat of force (see A/67/379, para. 12).

38. At present there are about 150 settlements together with approximately 100 unauthorized outposts.³² The number of settlers in the Occupied Palestinian Territory stood at 536,932 in 2011, including 267,643 in East Jerusalem.³³ The

²⁸ http://www.ochaopt.org/documents/ocha_opt_Jerusalem_FactSheet_December_2012_english.pdf.

²⁹ See paras. 7-9 above; see also OCHA Fact Sheet, *East Jerusalem: Key Humanitarian Concerns Update*, December 2012, at http://www.ochaopt.org/documents/ocha_opt_Jerusalem_FactSheet_December_2012_english.pdf.

³⁰ 1 dunum = 1,000 m².

³¹ A/HRC/22/63, para. 38; Fourth Geneva Convention, article 49.

³² Information provided by OCHA.

³³ Palestinian Central Bureau of Statistics, http://www.pcbs.gov.ps/Portals/_pcbs/PressRelease/settlmt2011E.pdf.

settler population (excluding that of East Jerusalem) has grown over the past decade at an average yearly rate of 5.3 per cent, compared with 1.8 per cent for the Israeli population as a whole. Israeli settlers now represent approximately 19 per cent of the overall population of the West Bank (see A/67/375, paras. 7 and 12).

39. On 30 November 2012, the day after the General Assembly accorded Palestine non-member Observer State status in the United Nations, the Government of Israel announced the advancement of the E1 settlement plan, comprising several thousand housing units.³⁴ This plan, if implemented, would completely sever East Jerusalem from the rest of the West Bank and compromise the territorial contiguity between the northern and southern parts thereof.³⁵

Settler violence

40. As the occupying Power, Israel has the obligation to protect the right to life and physical integrity of Palestinians.³⁶ Yet, various aspects of Palestinian life are significantly affected by a minority of settlers who are engaged in violence and intimidation with the aim of forcing Palestinians off their land (see A/HRC/22/63, para. 50).

41. There has been an increase in “racist violence and acts of vandalism on the part of Jewish settlers in the Occupied Palestinian Territory targeting non-Jews, including Muslims and Christians and their holy places”, with impunity.³⁷

42. Since 2008, Israeli settlers committed at least nine arson attacks against Palestinian mosques and 21 incidents where graffiti was used to desecrate mosques, churches and burial grounds (see A/HRC/22/63, para. 60).

43. In 2012 355 settler violence incidents were recorded, resulting in injuries to 169 Palestinians, in addition to 240 incidents resulting in damage to Palestinian private property.³⁸ Israeli security forces have, in numerous instances, failed to protect Palestinians from acts of violence committed by Israeli settlers, even when those acts occurred in their presence. Instead, in a number of documented cases, the Israeli military focused on dispersing Palestinians (see A/67/375, para. 19).

44. From March 2012 to January 2013, a total of 5,832 trees were destroyed or uprooted by settlers.³⁹

45. Settler violence continues with a culture of impunity.⁴⁰ Of 162 Israeli-monitored police investigations of cases of vandalism of Palestinian-owned trees in the West Bank since 2005, only 1 resulted in an indictment.⁴¹

³⁴ Information provided by OCHA.

³⁵ Btselem, http://www.btselem.org/settlements/20121202_e1_human_rights_ramifications.

³⁶ See A/67/375, paras. 30-35; see also article 43 of the Hague Regulations annexed to the Fourth Geneva Convention, respecting the laws and customs of war on land, of 18 October 1907.

³⁷ See CERD/C/ISR/CO/14-16, para. 28.

³⁸ Information provided by OCHA.

³⁹ Information received from United Nations Relief and Works Agency for Palestine Refugees in the Near East (UNRWA).

⁴⁰ Information received from OCHA.

⁴¹ Yesh Din, Police investigations of Palestinian tree vandalization in the West Bank, October 2012.

West Bank wall

46. In combination with the gate and permit regimes, the wall continues to be the single largest obstacle to Palestinian movement within the occupied West Bank.⁴² The International Court of Justice concluded in its advisory opinion of 9 July 2004, that “the wall and its associated regime are contrary to international law” and that Israel is obligated to cease construction of and dismantle the wall and to make reparations for damages caused by the construction of this 708 km wall (see A/ES-10/273 and Corr.1). Israel has yet to comply with the advisory opinion.

47. Israel cites security reasons for the construction of the wall, even though most of its planned route runs within the Occupied Palestinian Territory, not along the Green Line. In addition, the wall’s route shows that its aim was to encircle as many Israeli settlements as possible, so as to enable de facto annexation to Israel of lands that lie to the Israeli side of the wall.⁴³

48. These lands constitute 9.4 per cent of the territory of the West Bank, including East Jerusalem and some of the most fertile land (238 km² of agricultural land)⁴⁴ of the West Bank.⁴⁵ About 21 per cent, 31 per cent and 13.1 per cent of the grasslands, forests and shrub lands, respectively, will also be annexed behind the wall upon its completion under the planned route.⁴⁶

49. Palestinians aged 16 and above require “permanent resident” permits from the Israeli authorities to continue to live in their homes if located in the seam zone,⁴⁷ while Israelis and foreign visitors have unrestricted access (see A/HRC/22/63, para. 40).

50. To enable the construction of the wall, the Israeli army issued military orders for the expropriation of 30,261 dunums of land, 88 per cent of which (i.e. 26,622 dunums) are “private lands belonging to Palestinian residents”.⁴⁸ In addition, the wall has resulted in the uprooting of 8.4 km² of olive groves and orchards.⁴⁹

51. Thousands of Palestinian farmers whose lands lie in this zone also need to obtain hard to get permits from the Israeli authorities to have access to and work their own land. Farmers also may not be able to obtain permits for workers to carry out agricultural work and are not allowed to store equipment on their land in the seam zone.⁵⁰

52. Herders in most cases are not allowed to bring livestock across the wall for grazing, thus about 90 per cent of the directly affected communities report that the wall had led to a decrease in their livestock numbers.⁵¹

⁴² Information received from OHCHR; see A/67/372, para. 44.

⁴³ Btselem, *Arrested development: the long-term impact of the separation barrier*, October 2012, p. 4.

⁴⁴ Information provided by the United Nations Environment Programme (UNEP).

⁴⁵ Btselem, *Arrested development: the long-term impact of the separation barrier*, October 2012, p. 13.

⁴⁶ Information provided by UNEP.

⁴⁷ Information received from OCHA; the seam zone is the West Bank area that lies between the wall and the 1967 armistice Green Line.

⁴⁸ Btselem, *Arrested development: the long-term impact of the separation barrier*, October 2012, p. 14.

⁴⁹ Information received from UNEP.

⁵⁰ See UNCTAD document TD/B/59/2.

⁵¹ Information provided by UNRWA.

Closure policies and mobility restrictions

53. Palestinians living in the Occupied Palestinian Territory face daily obstacles and humiliation to travel both inside and outside the territory as a result of the wall, military checkpoints permit requirements and travel bans by Israel (see A/HRC/20/17/Add.2, paras. 61-63).

Blockade of the Gaza Strip

54. Israel continues to maintain the blockade imposed on the Gaza Strip since June 2007.⁵² However, despite cited Israeli security concerns and relaxations introduced in its provisions in 2010 and 2012, this blockade amounts to collective punishment⁵³ and has “locked in” over 1.6 million people in what is one of the most densely populated areas on Earth. It has also led to the “de-development” of Gaza, with degrading living conditions.⁵⁴

55. The movement of people from Gaza through the Beit Hanoun (Erez) Crossing is prohibited, apart from exceptional situations. In 2012 there was an improvement in the transfer of patients from Gaza via the crossing. During the same period, an average of fewer than 200 permitted Palestinians and international persons passed through the crossing each day, compared to an average of 26,000 per day in 2000.⁵⁵ At the same time, Israel generally prohibited entry into Gaza of Arab Christian clergy, including bishops and other senior clergy, to visit congregations or ministries under their pastoral authority.⁵⁶

56. The Israeli military has gradually expanded restrictions on access to farmland on the Gaza side of the 1949 Green Line, and to fishing areas along the Gaza Strip coast. Overall, the restricted land area was estimated to encompass 17 per cent of the total land mass of the Gaza Strip and 35 per cent of its agricultural land. At sea, fishermen have been prevented from accessing some 85 per cent of the maritime areas to which they were entitled in accordance with the Oslo Agreements,⁵⁷ resulting in an 80 per cent decline in the overall catch.⁵⁸

57. Since the end of the November 2012 military offensive, improved access to fishing and farming areas was recorded, without any significant easing of restrictions on the movement of people and goods through the Israeli-controlled crossings.⁵⁹

Mobility restrictions within the West Bank

58. The application of access restrictions is discriminatory, targeting mostly Palestinian residents, for the benefit of the Israeli settler population.⁶⁰

⁵² A partial blockade was imposed on Gaza Strip in June 2006.

⁵³ Under-Secretary-General for Humanitarian Affairs, Valerie Amos, 13 June 2012, at <http://ochanet.unocha.org/p/Documents/USG%20Valerie%20Amos%20Statement%20on%20Gaza%2013Jun12.pdf>.

⁵⁴ Information received from OCHA.

⁵⁵ Information received from OCHA.

⁵⁶ United States Department of State, International religious freedom report for 2011, at http://www.state.gov/j/drl/rls/irf/religiousfreedom/index.htm?dynamic_load_id=192889#wrapper.

⁵⁷ Information provided by OCHA.

⁵⁸ See A/HRC/21/33/AUV, para. 16.

⁵⁹ Information provided by OCHA.

⁶⁰ Information provided by OCHA; see also A/HRC/22/63, paras. 72-76.

59. In 2012 the number of obstacles (e.g. checkpoints, flying checkpoints, earth mounds, concrete blocks and ditches), witnessed a slight increase, from 529 to 542. In spite of a number of measures to ease access, 180,000 Palestinians in 55 communities are still compelled to use detours that are two to five times longer than the direct route to the closest city.⁶¹

60. Movement within the Israeli-controlled part of Hebron City, H2, also remained severely restricted, with Palestinian traffic banned from using most of the roads leading to the Israeli settlements and pedestrian movement also prohibited in other areas, including parts of what was once the main commercial artery.⁶²

61. The Jordan Valley and Dead Sea area covers about 30 per cent of the West Bank and is home to nearly 60,000 Palestinians and about 9,500 Israeli settlers. Although there was improvement in Palestinian access to the Jordan Valley during 2012, it remains one of the areas most severely affected by the access restrictions imposed since 2000 and continues to be separated from the rest of the West Bank by dozens of physical obstacles.⁶³

62. On 12 November 2012, the Israeli military issued “closed military zone” orders prohibiting anyone apart from residents from entering or approaching the villages of Bil’in, Ni’lin, Nabi Salah and Kafr Quddum on Fridays until March 2013. These are all villages in which weekly demonstrations have been held — and violently dispersed by security forces — regularly on Fridays for the past several years.⁶⁴

63. About 40 per cent of the West Bank, excluding East Jerusalem, has been allocated to 135 settlements, with their municipal boundaries being designated as closed military zones into which the entry of Palestinians is restricted. In other cases, access by Palestinians to agricultural land in the vicinity of settlements has been limited by means of systematic intimidation by Israeli settlers. For the last few years, access to Palestinian private land within the settlements’ outer limits has been subject to “prior coordination” with the Israeli authorities, even in cases where the fencing-off of Palestinian private land was carried out independently by Israeli settlers.⁶⁵

64. Approximately 18 per cent of the West Bank has been designated by Israel as a closed military zone for training, or a “firing zone”. The presence of Palestinians is formally prohibited in these zones without permission from the Israeli authorities, which is rarely granted. Many residents report that there is in practice little or no military training in their areas.⁶⁶

65. Palestinians, who reside within firing zones, are mainly those who did so prior to the designation of the area as “closed”. They face a range of other difficulties, including the confiscation and demolition of property, settler violence, harassment by soldiers, access and movement restrictions, and/or water scarcity. This is in contrast to Israeli settlement outposts established in the firing zones that do not normally face such measures.⁶⁷

⁶¹ Information received from OCHA.

⁶² Information received from OCHA.

⁶³ Information received from OCHA.

⁶⁴ ACRI, <http://www.acri.org.il/en/2012/11/13/closed-military-zone-orders-delivered-to-activists/>.

⁶⁵ Information received from OCHA.

⁶⁶ Information received from OCHA.

⁶⁷ Information received from OCHA.

66. Humanitarian organizations reported around 535 access incidents in the Occupied Palestinian Territory in 2012.⁶⁸ UNRWA alone reported a total of 235 such incidents involving its staff in 2012, affecting teachers, medical doctors and nurses, social and relief workers and field office staff. Moreover, access to seam zone areas for mobile health, food assistance, mental health services and social work teams was further restricted.⁶⁹

67. Israeli restrictions hinder the ability of Palestinian Muslims and Christians to reach some places of worship and to practice their religious rites, particularly in Jerusalem. The wall also significantly impeded Bethlehem-area Christians from reaching the Church of the Holy Sepulchre in Jerusalem and made visits to Christian sites in Bethany and Bethlehem difficult for Palestinian Christians who live on the Jerusalem side of the wall. Furthermore, foreign pilgrims and religious aid workers occasionally experienced difficulty obtaining access to Christian holy sites in the West Bank because of Israeli restrictions on movement in the West Bank. Israel's permitting regime also generally restricted most West Bank Muslims from accessing the Haram al-Sharif/Temple Mount.⁷⁰

Access to East Jerusalem

68. Despite an easing of access restrictions for West Bank Palestinians to East Jerusalem, particularly during the month of Ramadan in 2012, such access continued to be restricted to permit holders who could only cross on foot using 4 of the 16 checkpoints functioning along the wall. The remaining 12 checkpoints are used by Israelis, international persons and Palestinians holding Jerusalem identification cards.⁷¹

69. Approximately 55,000 Palestinian Jerusalemites who reside on the West Bank side of the wall need to cross checkpoints to have access to health, education and other services in the heart of the city, to which they are entitled as residents of Jerusalem.⁷²

Exploitation, endangerment and depletion of Palestinian natural resources

70. Israel controls almost all Palestinian water resources and exploits around 89 per cent of the available water, leaving only 11 per cent to the Palestinians.⁷³ Recent figures indicate a per capita consumption at below 70 litres per day for Palestinians in the West Bank, while Israelis living in illegal settlements enjoy access of up to 450 litres per day.⁷⁴

71. Wells and springs that are available to Palestinians are generally degraded, as the Israeli authorities deny Palestinians permits for installing, upgrading or protecting

⁶⁸ OCHA, Access incidents of humanitarian organizations database, <http://www.ochaopt.org/dbs/acs/index.aspx?id=1010005>.

⁶⁹ Information provided by UNRWA.

⁷⁰ United States Department of State, International religious freedom report for 2011, at http://www.state.gov/j/drl/rls/irf/religiousfreedom/index.htm?dynamic_load_id=192889#wrapper.

⁷¹ Information provided by OCHA.

⁷² Information provided by OCHA.

⁷³ Information provided by UNEP.

⁷⁴ Information provided by UNEP.

their water sources to provide sufficient quantities, while they simultaneously continue to drill deeper and more efficient wells for Israeli use.⁷⁵

72. Furthermore, the construction of the West Bank wall has damaged, destroyed or made inaccessible vital sources of water, such as wells, cisterns and springs, which, once damaged, can rarely be repaired or replaced owing to planning restrictions.⁷⁶

73. In addition, Palestinians are denied access to what are supposed to be shared water resources, such as the Jordan River.⁷⁷

74. The targeting of water sanitation and hygiene facilities by the Israeli authorities, including basic systems and facilities funded by international donors, was increased in 2012. In the first nine months of 2012, 33 water infrastructure facilities and 16 sanitation infrastructure facilities were demolished, affecting over 1,500 persons.⁷⁸

75. The increased pressure on available water resources, combined with the blockade and continued Israeli military strikes, has damaged water resources, exacerbating the water crisis in the Gaza Strip.⁷⁹

76. Palestinians in Gaza have resorted to overextraction from the coastal aquifer.⁸⁰ This has caused the water table to drop below sea level and saline water and other pollutants to intrude, rendering 90 to 95 per cent of the water unfit for human consumption.⁸¹

77. The four wastewater treatment plants in the Gaza Strip have limited treatment capacity and efficiency.⁸² As a result, about 89 million litres of untreated or partially treated sewage are discharged directly into the sea every day, posing a potentially serious health and sanitation hazard.⁸³

78. The sanitation crisis is further compounded by approximately 40,000 cesspits in use in Gaza, of which 84 per cent are manually emptied by household members owing to the lack of connections to the sewage network.⁸⁴ In 2012 alone, three children drowned in pools of open sewage that cannot be adequately addressed as long as the blockade hinders sanitation development.⁸⁵

79. In the West Bank, excluding East Jerusalem, only 31 per cent of Palestinians are connected to the sewage network. Only one wastewater treatment plant is operational owing to the Israeli authorities' refusal to grant the necessary permits for the development of sanitation and wastewater treatment infrastructure. As a result, almost 40 to 50 million cubic metres of sewage each year reach natural drainages as untreated sewage.⁸⁶

⁷⁵ Information provided by OCHA.

⁷⁶ Information provided by UNEP.

⁷⁷ Information provided by UNEP.

⁷⁸ Information provided by OCHA.

⁷⁹ Information provided by UNEP.

⁸⁰ Information provided by UNEP.

⁸¹ Information provided by UNEP.

⁸² Information provided by UNEP.

⁸³ Information provided by OCHA.

⁸⁴ Information provided by OCHA.

⁸⁵ See Save the Children-Medical Aid for Palestinians, *Gaza's children: falling behind*, 2012, p. 3.

⁸⁶ Information provided by OCHA.

80. Israeli settlements in the West Bank, including East Jerusalem, generate 54 million cubic metres of domestic wastewater annually, with much of it entering the environment untreated.⁸⁷

81. Apart from wastewater, solid waste from the settlements is dumped without restriction on Palestinian lands, fields and side roads, or is burned. Several polluting industries were relocated from Israel to the West Bank, including aluminium, tanning, plastics and electroplating, and do not abide by any environmental laws. The industrial waste produced by these industries and other Israeli industries located in the West Bank is disposed of on the nearby Palestinian agricultural lands, thereby constituting a threat to the environment.⁸⁸

82. The wall also obstructs the flow of surface water, with trapped water causing flooding and the degradation of adjacent agricultural lands,⁸⁹ especially since Palestinians are not permitted to approach and clear the blockages in drainage pipes under the wall.⁹⁰

83. The construction of the wall has caused physical separation as well as compaction of the soil, uprooting of trees and loss of agricultural land. The uprooting of trees leaves soils exposed and exacerbates land degradation.⁹¹

84. Farmers have been compelled to leave their lands barren because of the wall, losing a valuable source of reliable income and exposing the soil to erosion. Access difficulties also resulted in the overexploitation of remaining community lands, which also led to increased degradation.⁹²

85. The construction of the wall has also altered and destroyed the natural habitats of a number of species, threatening biodiversity and depleting ecosystems. Common floral and faunal species are under serious threat of becoming rare, with some very rare species potentially disappearing altogether. About 22 terrestrial animal species are also under the threat of extinction, as the wall negatively impacted habitat fragmentation and prevented the movement of mammals for food and mating.⁹³

Economic and social conditions

Economy

86. The economic growth in the West Bank and Gaza Strip continues to be unsustainable and restrained by the policies of the Israeli occupation, namely persistent restrictions on movement and access.

87. Reflecting the slowdown in economic activity, unemployment in the West Bank and Gaza remained stubbornly high and rose to 22.9 per cent in the fourth quarter of 2012 from 21 per cent during the same period in 2011.⁹⁴ This indicates that labour-

⁸⁷ Information provided by UNEP.

⁸⁸ Information provided by UNEP.

⁸⁹ Information provided by UNEP.

⁹⁰ UNRWA-Applied Research Institute Jerusalem (ARIJ), Barrier impacts on the environment and rural livelihoods, 2012, at <http://www.unrwa.org/userfiles/2012062812240.pdf>.

⁹¹ UNRWA-ARIJ, Barrier impacts on the environment and rural livelihoods, 2012, at <http://www.unrwa.org/userfiles/2012062812240.pdf>.

⁹² UNRWA-ARIJ, Barrier impacts on the environment and rural livelihoods, 2012, at <http://www.unrwa.org/userfiles/2012062812240.pdf>.

⁹³ Information provided by UNEP.

⁹⁴ Palestinian Central Bureau of Statistics (PCBS), Labour Force Survey, February 2013, p. 36.

intensive tradable sectors are excessively and disproportionately impacted by Israeli occupation policies.⁹⁵ One issue of concern is the duration of unemployment with adverse effects, including diminished employability and significant forgone income. The average duration of unemployment in the West Bank and Gaza is 11 months (6.6 months in the West Bank and 16.1 months in the Gaza Strip in 2012).⁹⁶

88. Unemployment has been much higher in Gaza (averaging 33.5 per cent in 2010 and 2011) than in the West Bank (17 per cent in 2010 and 2011). By the end of 2012 (fourth quarter), this pattern persisted: the West Bank unemployment rate was 18.3 per cent, while it stood at 32.2 per cent in Gaza.⁹⁷

89. The persistence of high unemployment in the West Bank can be attributed, among other things, to low levels of private sector investment, particularly in Area C, which covers 60 per cent of the West Bank, where investment is highly restricted.⁹⁸

90. Overall wage growth lagged behind inflation, leaving 2011 average real wages 8.4 per cent lower than their level five years earlier.⁹⁹ Real wages have fallen over the past decade at all education levels. For example, among those with five years of schooling, real wages were about 30 per cent lower in 2009 compared to 1999 and among those with 16 to 18 years of schooling, wages in 2009 were lower by 10 per cent.¹⁰⁰

91. In 2011 slightly more than one of four (25.8 per cent) individuals in the West Bank and Gaza were living below the poverty line (17.8 per cent in the West Bank and 38.8 per cent in the Gaza Strip). Similarly, about 12.9 per cent of individuals were living below the deep poverty line in 2011 (7.8 per cent in the West Bank and 21.1 per cent in the Gaza Strip).¹⁰¹

92. One significant feature of poverty in the West Bank and Gaza is that many Palestinians have consumption levels that are just above the poverty line, implying that in the event of an economic shock they could easily fall below the poverty line.¹⁰²

93. Seventy-eight per cent of Palestinians living in the Jerusalem district and 84 per cent of children live below the poverty line — the worst rates on record.¹⁰³ In addition, 2011 data indicates that 40 per cent of the male Arab population and 85 per cent of Palestinian women in Jerusalem do not participate in the labour market, and more than 5,000 Palestinian businesses in Jerusalem have closed their doors since 1999.¹⁰⁴

⁹⁵ See International Monetary Fund (IMF), *Recent experience and prospects of the economy of the West Bank and Gaza*, 19 March 2013.

⁹⁶ PCBS, *Labour Force Survey*, February 2013, p. 20.

⁹⁷ PCBS, *Labour Force Survey*, February 2013, pp. 37-38.

⁹⁸ See IMF, *Recent experience and prospects of the economy of the West Bank and Gaza*, 23 September 2012.

⁹⁹ See UNCTAD, TD/B/59/20.

¹⁰⁰ See World Bank, *Towards Economic Sustainability of a Future Palestinian State: Promoting Private Sector-Lead Growth*, April 2012.

¹⁰¹ See PCBS, *Levels of living and poverty in the Palestinian territory*, June 2012.

¹⁰² See World Bank, *Coping with Conflict? Poverty and Inclusion in the West Bank and Gaza*, 2011.

¹⁰³ See ACRI, *East Jerusalem in Numbers*, at <http://www.acri.org.il/en/2012/05/16/east-jerusalem-in-numbers/>.

¹⁰⁴ See ACRI, *Policies of Neglect in East Jerusalem*, May 2012.

94. The withholding and redirection by Israel of tax revenues it collects on behalf of the Government of Palestine, and the decline in donor support observed in 2011 and 2012 had a negative impact on growth and exacerbated a deep fiscal crisis. In November and December 2012 Israel temporarily withheld Palestinian tax revenues as a punitive step in light of the November vote admitting Palestine as a non-member Observer State to the General Assembly. This led to the delay of the payment of salaries to civil servants, who have embarked on strikes in protest since mid-December 2012.¹⁰⁵

95. The key long-term constraints blocking the emergence of a strong economy are the loss of Palestinian natural resources, land and water to occupation and settlements, and the isolation of Palestinian producers from regional and global markets, leading to their limited ability to procure production inputs and to export their goods and services.¹⁰⁶

Food security

96. FAO maintains that while food security levels have improved throughout the Occupied Palestinian Territory, these gains are uneven and temporary in nature.¹⁰⁷

97. More than 40 per cent of Palestinian households are classified as food insecure or vulnerable to food insecurity. After assistance, 1.3 million Palestinians (27 per cent of Palestinian households) are food insecure and unable to meet their basic food and household expenses.¹⁰⁸

98. In the West Bank, post-assistance food insecurity still reaches 17 per cent, while these rates in the Gaza Strip reach up to 44 per cent.¹⁰⁹

99. In the Gaza Strip, UNRWA distributes food to over 700,000 refugees. Without improvements in the economy, which can only come about with the lifting of the blockade, that figure could rise to over 900,000.¹¹⁰ The World Food Programme distributes food aid to an additional 300,000 persons.¹¹¹ Even so, about 44 per cent of recipients of food assistance remain food insecure.¹¹²

Public health

100. The continuing occupation of Palestinian territory hinders national health planning and the ability to implement health programmes. It leads many highly qualified doctors and other health personnel to leave the country, causing shortages in many specialties.¹¹³

¹⁰⁵ See Office of the United Nations Special Coordinator for the Middle East Peace Process (UNSCO), Briefing to the Security Council on the situation in the Middle East, 23 January 2013.

¹⁰⁶ See UNCTAD, TD/B/59/2, para. 5.

¹⁰⁷ Information received from FAO.

¹⁰⁸ Information received from FAO.

¹⁰⁹ Information received from FAO.

¹¹⁰ Information received from UNRWA.

¹¹¹ Information received from UNSCO.

¹¹² See United Nations country team in the Occupied Palestinian Territory, Gaza in 2020: a liveable place?, August 2012, p. 6.

¹¹³ Information received from WHO.

101. In addition, the blockade of the Gaza Strip has adversely affected the training and movement of health professionals into Gaza, and restricted the construction and rehabilitation of health infrastructure.¹¹⁴

102. Patients from Gaza have to apply for Israeli permits in order to access hospital treatment outside Gaza. In spite of some easing of the restriction, two female patients died in 2012 after being delayed in accessing medical treatment. Other patients and/or patient-companions were detained at the Beit Hanoun border between Gaza and Israel while crossing with a valid permit.¹¹⁵

103. Before and during the November 2012 offensive, more than 40 per cent of the drug items in the essential drug list and more than 50 per cent of medical consumables were out of stock. Hospitals had difficulty coping with the shortages. Some hospitals reported reuse of single use supplies, as well as the use of alternative and less effective antibiotics when the drug of choice was not available.¹¹⁶

104. Also during the November 2012 offensive, 13 primary health care centres and 2 hospitals were partially damaged, whereas a field hospital sustained serious damage after being directly hit. In addition, three ambulance drivers were injured and six ambulances were damaged owing to the shelling.¹¹⁷

105. After the November offensive, high rates of psychosocial trauma were reported in Gaza, particularly among children and young people. The number of people receiving assistance in UNRWA health centres related to psychological trauma doubled from November to December, with 42 per cent of those being children under the age of nine.¹¹⁸ As a conservative estimate, it is reasonable to assume that 25,000 to 50,000 people will need some form of psychological intervention to address the long-term effects of the offensive.¹¹⁹

106. In the West Bank, UNRWA reported a continued demand for mental health services during 2012, in connection with stress-related disorders. The demand can be directly linked to protection concerns related to the occupation, including violence, the wall, forced displacement and subsequent socioeconomic hardship.¹²⁰ Psychological studies of Palestinian children 12 years of age and under show a disturbingly high correlation between witnessing a parent beaten or humiliated by Israeli soldiers and the loss by the child of the will to live (see A/HRC/20/32, para. 8).

107. Moreover, 58.6 per cent of school children, 68.1 per cent of children (between 9 and 12 months of age) and 36.8 per cent of pregnant women suffer from anaemia. Stunting, or long-term exposure to chronic malnutrition, affects 10 per cent of children under five years of age in the Gaza Strip.¹²¹ It is also estimated that 50 per cent of infants and young children under two years of age in the West Bank and the

¹¹⁴ Information received from WHO.

¹¹⁵ Information received from WHO.

¹¹⁶ See WHO, Initial health assessment report — Gaza Strip, December 2012.

¹¹⁷ See WHO, Initial health assessment report — Gaza Strip, December 2012.

¹¹⁸ Information received from UNRWA.

¹¹⁹ See WHO, Initial health assessment report — Gaza Strip, December 2012.

¹²⁰ Information received from UNRWA.

¹²¹ See Save the Children-Medical Aid for Palestinians, Gaza's children: falling behind, 2012, p. 2.

Gaza Strip suffer from iron deficiency anaemia, which is associated with inappropriate feeding practices.¹²²

Education

108. In the Gaza Strip, it is estimated that 250 new schools are now needed, including 100 UNRWA schools, and an additional 190 schools will be needed by 2020, to accommodate the increase in the student population.¹²³ Currently, more than 87 per cent of UNRWA schools in Gaza operate on a double shift basis. In some cases, shipping containers have been utilized as classrooms.¹²⁴

109. During the November offensive, 286 educational facilities, including schools, kindergartens and tertiary education institutions, suffered damage or destruction, affecting at least 249,067 students.¹²⁵

110. In the West Bank, the restrictive planning regime results in inadequate or a significant shortage of school infrastructure and exposes schools to the threat of demolition. Currently, at least 38 schools serving approximately 3,000 children in Area C of the West Bank and in East Jerusalem have been issued verbal and written stop-work or demolition orders by the Israeli authorities, meaning they are under constant threat of demolition. Access to school can be hindered by physical obstacles, threats and harassment by the Israeli army and settlers.¹²⁶

111. The East Jerusalem school system, which operates under the Israel Ministry of Education and the municipality's Jerusalem Education Administration, suffers from severe neglect, disproportionately low budget allocations, overcrowding, the lack of available classrooms and many other woes.¹²⁷

III. Occupied Syrian Golan

112. Israel continues to occupy the Syrian Golan Heights in its resolution 497 (1981) the Security Council decided that the Israeli decision to impose its laws, jurisdiction and administration in the occupied Syrian Golan Heights is null and void and without international legal effect (A/67/375, para. 45).

113. Approximately 19,000 Israelis have settled in 33 Israeli settlements in the occupied Syrian Golan. That figure nearly equals the number of Syrians who live in the occupied Syrian Golan (ibid.).

114. Israel persists in implementing legal and administrative measures to provide socioeconomic incentives, security, infrastructure and social services to settlers residing in the occupied Syrian Golan, which amounts to the illegal transfer of its population into occupied territory (ibid.), whereas the five remaining Syrian villages of the occupied Syrian Golan are deprived of physical space for organic growth. In the village of Majdal Shams, approximately 11,000 Syrian citizens live in 1,200 houses. As new construction is not authorized, houses are either renovated or

¹²² WHO, A/65/27/Rev.1, para. 4.

¹²³ See United Nations country team, Gaza in 2020: a liveable place?, August 2012.

¹²⁴ Information provided by UNRWA.

¹²⁵ Information provided by OCHA.

¹²⁶ Information provided by OCHA.

¹²⁷ See ACRI, Policies of Neglect in East Jerusalem, May 2012.

new floors are added, without the requisite permits, to accommodate the growth of these households.¹²⁸

115. Syrian residents of the occupied Syrian Golan suffer from inequality regarding access to land, housing and basic services. The Citizenship Law continues to impact family ties for Syrians in the occupied Golan, which continue to be disrupted as a consequence of the territory's illegal annexation in 1981.¹²⁹

116. High levels of taxes and restrictions on the use of water put a significant burden on Syrian farmers, who are thus in an unequal and disadvantaged position. Israeli settlements continued to receive the allotted share of 750 cubic metres of water per dunum of land, while the Syrian producers received 200 cubic metres. The cost of the water supply for agriculture to the Syrian farmers is approximately four times more than to the settlers. Water shortages usually result in the diversion of water resources to the settlements and, consequently, in some reduction of water provision to the Syrian farmers.¹³⁰

117. In February 2013 Israeli media reported the intention of the Israel authorities to authorize drilling for oil in the occupied Golan Heights by issuing a license to prospect to a United States-Israeli energy company.¹³¹

IV. Conclusion

118. The prolonged Israeli occupation, its discriminatory regime and practices violate United Nations resolutions and international law, and should not be allowed to persist with impunity. The practices and regime, and their socioeconomic ramifications for the Palestinian people and Syrian citizens, will only result in increased suffering and, consequently, contribute to undermine peace and justice, which can only be achieved upon the realization of the right to self-determination for peoples under occupation.

119. Israeli settlements in the Occupied Palestinian Territory and the occupied Syrian Golan not only are illegal but also constitute an obstacle to peace. The international community should exert all possible efforts to ensure the implementation of international law and relevant United Nations resolutions. These efforts should include providing support for initiatives that seek to end the Israeli violations of international law in the occupied territories, especially Israeli settlement activities, as a first step towards a final and just resolution to the conflict that ends the occupation and allows the attainment of the inalienable rights of the Palestinian people, as guaranteed by international law.

¹²⁸ International Labour Organization (ILO), ILC.101/DG/APP, para. 137.

¹²⁹ CERD/C/ISR/CO/14-16, para. 29.

¹³⁰ ILO, ILC.101/DG/APP, paras. 131-132; and information received from UNSCO.

¹³¹ Yediot Ahronoth, <http://www.ynetnews.com/articles/0,7340,L-4347549,00.html>.



General Assembly Economic and Social Council

Distr.: General
2 May 2014

Original: English

General Assembly**Sixty-ninth session**

Item 61 of the preliminary list*

Permanent sovereignty of the Palestinian people in the Occupied Palestinian Territory, including East Jerusalem, and of the Arab population in the occupied Syrian Golan over their natural resources

Economic and Social Council**2014 session**

Item 14 of the provisional agenda**

Economic and social repercussions of the Israeli occupation on the living conditions of the Palestinian people in the Occupied Palestinian Territory, including East Jerusalem, and the Arab population in the occupied Syrian Golan

Economic and social repercussions of the Israeli occupation on the living conditions of the Palestinian people in the Occupied Palestinian Territory, including East Jerusalem, and of the Arab population in the occupied Syrian Golan

Note by the Secretary-General

Summary

In its resolution 2013/8, the Economic and Social Council requested the Secretary-General to submit to the General Assembly at its sixty-seventh session, through the Council, a report on the implementation of the resolution. The Assembly, in its resolution [68/235](#), also requested the Secretary-General to submit a report to it at its sixty-eighth session. The present report, which has been prepared by the Economic and Social Commission for Western Asia, is submitted in response to the resolutions of the Assembly and the Council.

At its eightieth session, the Committee on the Elimination of Racial Discrimination censured Israel in connection with its general recommendation 19 (1995) concerning segregation and apartheid, as prohibited by article 3 of the International Convention for the Elimination of All Forms of Racial Discrimination.

Continued disproportionate use of force by Israeli security forces amounts to unlawful killings, and may amount to wilful killings in some cases. During the reporting period, 40 Palestinians were killed (including 5 children), and 3,654 injured (including 1,001 children).



A total of 4,881 Palestinians (including 183 minors) had been detained or imprisoned by Israeli security forces by January 2014, with reported torture, ill-treatment and denial of rights.

In 2013, 663 Palestinian structures, including homes, were demolished, displacing 1,103 people. Over 1 billion square metres of Palestinian land has been seized by Israel since the onset of the occupation.

Government-supported illegal settlement expansion and the construction of the wall, which have led to “a creeping annexation”, continue in the Occupied Palestinian Territory, with 40 per cent of the West Bank land transferred to the jurisdiction of settlement-related councils. In 2013 there was a 123.7 per cent increase in the construction of settlement housing units.

Violence and attacks by settlers continued, with impunity. In 2013, 93 attacks were recorded against Palestinians (including children), their property and holy places.

Israeli mobility restrictions, which constitute illegal collective punishment, also persist, affecting almost all aspects of Palestinian life. These restrictions amount to a blockade in the Gaza Strip, with severe consequences on the social, economic and humanitarian conditions of its population.

Israeli measures continue to have a detrimental impact on the environment and natural resources and curtail Palestinian development and livelihood through discriminatory policies, including in access to land and water allocation; Israeli settlers consume six times more water than Palestinians in the West Bank. Ninety per cent of the water from the Gaza aquifer is not safe for drinking without prior treatment, further exacerbating the living conditions of the Palestinians living there.

The economy of the Occupied Palestinian Territory continued its negative trend during 2013. Unemployment was recorded at 38.5 per cent in Gaza, compared to 18.2 per cent in the West Bank.

The level of food insecurity rose dramatically, affecting over 1.5 million Palestinians (34 per cent of the population), with a rate of 57 per cent in the Gaza Strip.

Almost 15,000 patients had to leave Gaza in 2013 in order to access life-saving medical care owing to the serious shortage of drugs and medical supplies. In the West Bank, Palestinian patients and their companions need special Israeli-issued permits to access hospitals in East Jerusalem.

The educational system in the Occupied Palestinian Territory requires additional facilities. The expansion of the system is restricted in Gaza because of the blockade, and in the West Bank owing to Israeli permit requirements. Palestinian students and their schools are often exposed to settler violence.

Israel continues to occupy the Syrian Golan, and is illegally expanding its settlement activities and exploiting natural resources there. Syrian residents of the occupied Syrian Golan continue to suffer from discrimination in terms of access to land, housing and basic services and water allocation.

The Economic and Social Commission for Western Asia would like to acknowledge its appreciation for the substantive contributions of the Department of Political Affairs, the United Nations Conference on Trade and Development, the

United Nations Relief and Works Agency for Palestine Refugees in the Near East, the Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs, the United Nations Children's Fund, the Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Human Rights, the United Nations Entity for Gender Equality and the Empowerment of Women, the United Nations Human Settlements Programme, the United Nations Development Programme, the International Labour Organization, the Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations, the World Health Organization, the United Nations Environment Programme, the Office of the United Nations Special Coordinator for the Middle East Peace Process and the League of Arab States.

I. Introduction

1. In its resolution 2013/8, the Economic and Social Council expressed concerns over the practices of Israel, the occupying Power, in the Occupied Palestinian Territory and the occupied Syrian Golan, which violate international humanitarian law. These concerns were echoed by the General Assembly in its resolution [68/235](#). The practices included causing deaths and injuries to civilians, including children, women and peaceful demonstrators, all of whom must be protected in accordance with international humanitarian law; the rising incidence of violence by illegal, armed Israeli settlers against Palestinian civilians and their properties; and the continued detention of thousands of Palestinians, including children and women, under harsh conditions. Of concern also to the Council and the Assembly were the accelerated construction by Israel of settlements; the construction of the wall inside the Occupied Palestinian Territory; the exploitation of Palestinian natural resources; the increased demolition of homes, economic institutions, agricultural lands and infrastructure; the revocation of residency rights of Palestinians in and around occupied East Jerusalem; and the ongoing Israeli military operations and policies of closures and severe restrictions on the movement of persons and goods, including what in effect amounts to a blockade on the Gaza Strip. The Council and Assembly in their respective resolutions also highlighted the detrimental impact of Israeli practices on the natural resources and the social and economic conditions of the Palestinian people and the Arab population in the occupied Syrian Golan.

2. The present note highlights the practices by Israel, the occupying Power, that are of concern to the Economic and Social Council and the General Assembly as reflected in the aforementioned resolutions, and that have persisted over the reporting period, 1 April 2013 to 31 March 2014.

II. Occupied Palestinian Territory

3. Eighteen Security Council resolutions¹ reaffirm the applicability of the Geneva Convention of 12 August 1949 relative to the Protection of Civilian Persons in Time of War (Fourth Geneva Convention) to territories occupied by Israel since 1967 (see [A/HRC/22/63](#), para. 14).

Israeli policies affecting Palestinians

4. At its eightieth session, the Committee on the Elimination of Racial Discrimination reiterated previous concerns about the general segregation of communities under Israeli jurisdiction. The Committee censured Israel in connection with its general recommendation 19 (1995) concerning segregation and apartheid, as prohibited by article 3 of the International Convention for the Elimination of All Forms of Racial Discrimination, and urged Israel to prohibit and eradicate policies or practices of racial segregation and apartheid, which “severely and disproportionately affect the Palestinian population”.²

¹ Resolutions 237 (1967), 271 (1969), 446 (1979), 465 (1980), 471 (1980), 476 (1980), 484 (1980), 592 (1986), 605 (1987), 636 (1989), 641 (1989), 672 (1990), 673 (1990), 681 (1990), 726 (1992), 799 (1992), 1322 (2000), 1544 (2004).

² John Dugard and John Reynolds, “Apartheid, international law, and the Occupied Palestinian Territory”, *European Journal of International Law*, vol. 24, No. 3 (2013) pp. 867-913; CERD/C/ISR/CO/14-16, para. 24; see also [A/HRC/25/67](#).

Discrimination and segregation

5. Many of Israel's policies related to settlements activity in the Occupied Palestinian Territory amount to "de facto segregation". This includes cases of inequality and separation between Palestinians and Israeli settlers related to the use of roads and infrastructure or access to basic services and water resources. Such separation is concretized by the implementation of a complex combination of movement restrictions consisting of the wall, roadblocks, the obligation to use separate roads and a permit regime that only impacts the Palestinian population (see [CERD/C/ISR/CO/14-16](#), para. 24).

6. A legal regime of segregation is operating in the Occupied Palestinian Territory, enabling the establishment and the consolidation of settlements, whereby Israeli laws applied personally to Israelis in the West Bank give them preferential legal status over Palestinians. This violates Palestinians' rights to non-discrimination, equality before the law and equal protection of the law (see [A/HRC/22/63](#), paras. 40 and 49). This is particularly disconcerting since recent years have witnessed racist and xenophobic acts, manifestations and discourse, especially by Israeli settlers against Palestinians (see [CERD/C/ISR/CO/14-16](#), para. 23) (see the section on settler violence below).

Zoning and planning

7. The restrictive regime for Palestinian construction in the West Bank, including East Jerusalem, constitutes another example of discrimination against Palestinians (see [A/68/513](#), para. 12). This regime and its associated planning policies render it "virtually impossible" for the Palestinian residents of Area C,³ as well as East Jerusalem, to meet their basic housing, livelihood and development needs and rights.⁴

8. Area C, constituting over 60 per cent of the West Bank, is the only contiguous territory, owing to the fragmented nature of Areas A and B.⁵ The Israeli authorities have in practice permitted Palestinian construction on lands comprising only 0.5 per cent of Area C; in contrast, construction related to Israeli settlements is allowed on 8.5 per cent of the land in Area C, while an additional 61 per cent of Area C land comes under the jurisdictional areas of the settlements' local and regional councils and can be made available for settlement planning and development in the future.⁶

9. Furthermore, Israeli authorities prevent Palestinians from developing most private lands in Area C on the grounds that they were zoned for agricultural use, whereas extensive areas of Area C have been reclassified from "agricultural" to "residential" to allow for the establishment of settlements.⁷ Hence, more than

³ Area C is the area that lies under full Israeli security and administrative control, according to the Oslo Accords.

⁴ Information from the Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs, citing World Bank, "West Bank and Gaza: Area C and the Future of the Palestinian economy", report No. AUS2922, 2 October 2013.

⁵ Area A is the area where the Palestinian government is granted security and administrative control, while Area B is the area where Israel exercises security control while the Palestinian government controls administrative aspects.

⁶ Information provided by the Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs.

⁷ Ibid.

94 per cent of Palestinian construction permit applications in Area C were rejected by the Israeli authorities between 2000 and 2012.⁸

10. In June 1967, Israel illegally annexed 70 square kilometres (km²) of land, incorporating East Jerusalem and a number of nearby Palestinian villages into the expanded boundaries of the Israeli-defined municipality of Jerusalem (see Security Council resolution 478 (1980)). It promptly built 12 Israeli settlements that virtually enveloped nearby Palestinian quarters and villages. Another outer layer of settlements beyond the municipal boundaries was also built, compromising the geographical continuity of the city — traditionally the economic, cultural and spiritual centre of Palestine — from the rest of the West Bank (see A/HRC/22/63, para. 25).

11. In addition, since the 1970s, the Jerusalem municipality of Israel has openly pursued a policy known as “demographic balance”, most recently seen in the city master plan also known as “Jerusalem 2000”, which calls for a 60/40 demographic balance in favour of Jewish residents (ibid.).

12. Over 35 per cent of Palestinian land in the Israeli-defined municipal area of East Jerusalem has been confiscated since 1967 for settlement use, and only 13 per cent is available for Palestinian construction. However, much of this land is already built up and the permitted construction density is limited. The difficulty and high cost of the permit application process, as well as a range of issues related to land registration, make it extremely difficult for Palestinians to obtain building permits from the Israeli authorities.⁹

13. As a result, it is estimated that at least 33 per cent of all Palestinian homes in East Jerusalem lack Israeli-issued building permits and are hence vulnerable to demolitions and stop-work orders, placing over 93,000 Palestinians at risk of displacement.¹⁰

Other East Jerusalem policies

14. In Jerusalem, displays of Palestinian political symbols have been punishable by fines or imprisonment. Israeli security forces regularly prohibit and shut down meetings or conferences held in Jerusalem that are affiliated with official Palestinian institutions or with Palestinian officials in attendance.¹¹

15. Although Israeli law entitles Palestinian residents of Jerusalem to full and equal municipal and other services, the municipality of Jerusalem has failed to provide sufficient social services, infrastructure, emergency planning and postal service for Palestinian neighbourhoods in Jerusalem. In addition, bus services in Jerusalem have been largely segregated between Israelis and Palestinians.¹²

⁸ B'tselem, *Acting the Landlord: Israel's Policy in Area C, the West Bank*, June 2013, p. 19.

⁹ Information from the Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs.

¹⁰ Information from the United Nations Human Settlements Programme.

¹¹ United States Department of State, Country Reports on Human Rights Practices for 2013, Israel and The Occupied Territories — The Occupied Territories, available from www.state.gov/j/drl/rls/hrrpt/humanrightsreport/index.htm?dynamic_load_id=220358&year=2013#wrapper.

¹² Ibid.

Residency status

16. The right to reside in East Jerusalem was restricted to those Palestinians who were recorded as living within this expanded municipal boundary at the time of its occupation by Israel in 1967. These Palestinians were defined as permanent residents of Israel, with strict rules governing their residency status and a number of provisions allowing the revocation of this status.¹³ Based on these rules, in addition to other regulations it has invoked, Israel has de facto expelled about 15,000 Palestinians from East Jerusalem so far (see [A/68/77-E/2013/13](#)).

17. The ban on granting Israeli citizenship to children born of an Israeli parent and a parent from the Occupied Palestinian Territory, the Israeli decision to stop processing residency applications for Palestinian children since 2000 and the revocation of residency of those living in East Jerusalem have resulted in an estimated 10,000 unregistered Palestinian children¹⁴ being excluded from access to health services, education and any other type of social benefits. In addition, these restrictions prevent thousands of Palestinian children from living with their parents (see [CRC/C/ISR/CO/2-4](#), para. 29), while others live with the fear of being separated because of the severe restrictions on family reunification under the Citizenship and Entry into Israel Law as amended in 2005 and 2007. These laws and measures can also prevent children who have lost one of their parents from reuniting with their surviving parent (ibid., para. 49).

Excessive use of force

18. During the reporting period, 40 Palestinian civilians were killed and another 3,654 were injured by Israeli security forces and settlers throughout the Occupied Palestinian Territory. The casualties included at least 5 Palestinian children killed and another 1,001 injured.

19. The year 2013 witnessed more than double the number of child casualties compared to 2012;¹⁵ children account for approximately 32 per cent of those injured in violence by Israeli forces in the West Bank.¹⁶

20. Also during the reporting period, 2 Israeli civilians were killed in the Occupied Palestinian Territory and another 134 were injured, including 2 children.¹⁷

21. According to Amnesty International, which investigated the shooting deaths of 25 Palestinians in the West Bank in 2013, the circumstances point to those killed having been the victims of unlawful killings and, in some cases, wilful killings; “if so, such killings would amount to war crimes”.¹⁸

22. Amnesty International also concluded that the patterns of excessive use of force by Israeli forces have taken place with virtual impunity.¹⁹ Approximately 94 per cent of criminal investigations launched by the Israeli army against soldiers

¹³ Information from the Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs.

¹⁴ Defence for Children International Palestine, “Israeli law tears Palestinian families apart”, available from www.dci-palestine.org/documents/israeli-law-tears-palestinian-families-apart.

¹⁵ Information provided by the United Nations Children’s Fund (UNICEF).

¹⁶ Information provided by the Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs.

¹⁷ Ibid.

¹⁸ Amnesty International, “Trigger-happy: Israel’s use of excessive force in the West Bank” (London, 2014), pp. 10, 12, 60.

¹⁹ Ibid., p. 10.

suspected of criminal violent activity against Palestinians and their property are closed without any indictments. In the rare cases that indictments are served, conviction leads to very light sentencing.²⁰

Arbitrary arrests and detentions

23. Israeli forces, claiming security concerns, conducted 3,844 search and arrest operations in the West Bank in 2013, during which 8 Palestinian civilians were killed and another 239 were injured; 4,652 Palestinian civilians were arrested during these operations.²¹ In the Gaza Strip, 11 patients and patient companions en route to medical facilities were detained at the Erez checkpoint during 2013.²²

24. Some 800,000 Palestinians have been detained in Israel since 1967.²³ At the end of January 2014, according to B'tselem, 4,881 Palestinian so-called security detainees and prisoners were held in Israeli prisons,²⁴ including 183 children.²⁵

25. Although Israeli law provides safeguards against arbitrary arrest and detention, key safeguards do not apply to Palestinian "security detainees", who are subject to the jurisdiction of Israeli military law; Israeli military courts had a conviction rate of more than 99 per cent for Palestinians.²⁶

26. Throughout 2013, a monthly average of 198 children were in Israeli military custody.²⁷ Notwithstanding Israel's announcements that it would take steps to address the concerns of United Nations and other entities,²⁸ Palestinian children continue to be routinely arrested in the middle of the night, taken hand-tied and blindfolded to unknown destinations; their parents rarely know where their children have been taken. They are systematically subjected to physical and verbal violence, humiliation, painful restraints, threats of death and other forms of violence, and restricted access to toilet, food and water. "These crimes" are perpetrated from the time of arrest, during transfer and interrogation, to obtain a confession but also on an arbitrary basis. In addition, Palestinian children are subjected to solitary confinement, sometimes for months (see [CRC/C/ISR/CO/2-4](#), para. 35).

27. During 2013, UNICEF and partners documented 107 cases of ill-treatment of children by the Israeli security forces, including 11 cases under the age of 14.²⁹

28. Arrested Palestinian children can be detained for four days before being brought before a judge. They are not always informed of their rights and confessions obtained from them under duress are used as the main evidence. Most of the

²⁰ Yesh Din, "Criminal accountability of Israeli security forces", available from www.yesh-din.org/cat.asp?catid=2, accessed on 27 March 2014.

²¹ Information from the Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs.

²² Information from the World Health Organization (WHO).

²³ Palestinian Central Bureau of Statistics, "Special statistical bulletin on the 65th anniversary of the Palestinian nakba", available from www.pcbs.gov.ps/portals/_pcbs/PressRelease/Press_En_nakba65E.pdf.

²⁴ B'tselem, "Statistics on Palestinians in the custody of the Israeli security forces", available from www.btselem.org/statistics/detainees_and_prisoners, accessed on 24 March 2014.

²⁵ Information provided by UNICEF.

²⁶ United States Department of State.

²⁷ B'tselem, "Statistics on Palestinian minors in the custody of the Israeli security forces", available from www.btselem.org/statistics/minors_in_custody.

²⁸ Information provided by UNICEF.

²⁹ Ibid.

Palestinian children are accused of stone throwing, which is considered a security offence that can carry a maximum penalty of 20 years of imprisonment (*ibid.*, para. 73).

29. At least 215 Palestinian children detained since 2009 have been transferred out of the Occupied Palestinian Territory to serve their detention and sentences inside Israel, in breach of article 76 of the Fourth Geneva Convention. A large number of them are detained in overcrowded cells together with adults in poor conditions, with poor ventilation and no access to natural light. Poor-quality and inadequate amounts of food, harsh treatment by prison officials and deprivation of any form of education add to their plight (*ibid.*, para. 73).

30. The Addameer organization reported that female prisoners were also subjected to the same psychological and physical abuse as their male counterparts, such as beatings, intrusive body searches, threats and sexual harassment.³⁰

31. The Public Committee against Torture in Israel reported in July 2013 that, despite having filed more than 776 complaints since 1999, no complaint of torture resulted in a criminal investigation, prosecution or conviction.³¹

32. Of continuing concern was the ongoing practice of administrative detention, which permits detainees to be held for indefinite renewable periods.³² Citing security concerns, Israeli authorities do not afford administrative detainees an opportunity to refute allegations or access the evidentiary material presented against them in court.³³ According to B'tselem, by the end of January 2014, there were 175 Palestinian administrative detainees in Israeli prisons.³⁴

Displacement, property destruction and confiscation

33. In the Occupied Palestinian Territory as a whole, Israeli authorities demolished 663 Palestinian structures in 2013 (98 in East Jerusalem), compared with 604 in 2012, thereby displacing 1,103 people, compared with 886 in the previous year,³⁵ with refugees accounting for 34 per cent of those displaced.³⁶

34. In a number of instances, the Government of Israel charges demolition fees to demolish a home. That, at times, caused Palestinians to destroy their own homes to avoid the higher costs associated with Israeli demolitions.³⁷

35. Since the beginning of the occupation in 1967, Palestinians have seen over 1 billion square metres (m²) of their land seized and placed within the jurisdictional boundaries of local and regional settlement councils (see [A/HRC/22/63](#), paras. 63-64);

³⁰ Information provided by the United Nations Entity for Gender Equality and the Empowerment of Women.

³¹ United States Department of State.

³² Information provided by the Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs.

³³ United States Department of State.

³⁴ B'tselem, "Statistics on Palestinians in the custody of the Israeli security forces", available from www.btselem.org/statistics/detainees_and_prisoners, accessed on 11 March 2014.

³⁵ Input provided by the Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs.

³⁶ Information provided by the United Nations Relief and Works Agency for Palestine Refugees in the Near East (UNRWA).

³⁷ United States Department of State.

this includes approximately 40 per cent of the total area of the West Bank³⁸ (see sections above for East Jerusalem).

36. In Gaza, it is estimated that there is a shortfall of over 70,000 housing units, while 12,500 people remain displaced.³⁹

37. The situation in Gaza is compounded by substandard housing; overcrowding results in the deterioration of health and hygiene conditions, in turn leading to heightened public health risks.⁴⁰

Settlements and settler violence

38. In addition to violating international humanitarian law, the establishment of Israeli settlements, along with their infrastructure, in the West Bank, including East Jerusalem, is leading to “a creeping annexation that prevents the establishment of a contiguous and viable Palestinian State and undermines the right of the Palestinian people to self-determination” (see [A/HRC/22/63](#), paras. 101 and 102).

39. These settlements are established for the exclusive benefit of Israeli Jews, and are being maintained and developed through a system of total segregation between the settlers and the rest of the population living in the Occupied Palestinian Territory (*ibid.*, para. 103).

40. Since 1967, consecutive Governments of Israel have directly promoted settlements, and their expansion, by means of planning policies, legalizing outposts, controlling land on which settlements are subsequently built, providing them with infrastructure and public services, granting benefits and incentives to settlers and sponsoring economic activities (see [A/68/513](#), para. 15).

41. In 2013, the Government of Israel added nine new settlements, including three former outposts, legalized in 2012, to the 91 settlements on the list of national priority area level A, which receive the maximum benefits in all fields (*ibid.*, paras. 24-26).

42. These policies amount to the transfer of Israeli citizens into the Occupied Palestinian Territory, which is prohibited under international humanitarian law and international criminal law (see [A/HRC/22/63](#), para. 38).

43. Data indicate that there were 563,546 settlers in the West Bank in 2012⁴¹ living in 250 Israeli settlements across the occupied West Bank territory, including occupied East Jerusalem (*ibid.*, para. 28).

44. During 2013, Israel started construction on 2,534 housing units in settlements in the West Bank, excluding East Jerusalem, comprising an increase of 123.7 per cent over 2012.⁴²

³⁸ Input provided by the Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs.

³⁹ Information provided by the Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Human Rights (OHCHR), citing Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs, Protection of Civilian Weekly Report, 14-21 December 2013.

⁴⁰ Information provided by UNRWA.

⁴¹ Palestinian Central Bureau of Statistics, press release, 13 August 2013.

⁴² Israel Central Bureau of Statistics, “Construction begun and construction completed in 2013”, available from www1.cbs.gov.il/reader/newhodaot/tables_template_eng.html?hoda=201404052.

Settler violence

45. Recent years have witnessed an increase in racist violence and acts of vandalism on the part of Israeli settlers targeting Palestinians (see [CERD/C/ISR/CO/14-16](#), para. 28).

46. With few exceptions, Israeli settlers who are responsible for attacking Palestinians and their property enjoy a high degree of impunity.⁴³ This occurs despite the fact that settler attacks and intimidation regularly take place during daylight hours; the identities of perpetrators are well known, or could easily be identified; there is usually video and photographic footage of the incident; and the frequent presence of Israeli security forces at the scene during such incidents. However, when acts of violence are committed by Palestinians against settlers, they are swiftly and effectively addressed (see [A/HRC/22/63](#), paras. 43 and 50).

47. Thus, another form of institutionalized discrimination is noted in addressing the issue of violence. Between 90 and 95 per cent of cases of Palestinian violence are investigated and go to court (*ibid.*), while 84 per cent of investigations into settler attacks against Palestinians and their property (97.4 per cent of cases of vandalism of trees) are closed without indictments.⁴⁴

48. In 2013, 93 settler attacks were recorded that resulted in injuries to 146 Palestinians, in addition to 306 attacks that resulted in damage to Palestinian private property. Another 201 Palestinians were injured by Israeli forces who intervened during clashes between settlers and Palestinians.⁴⁵ Among the casualties, 40 Palestinian boys and 9 girls were injured in settler attacks in the West Bank and East Jerusalem. Most of these incidents took place when children were going to or returning from school.⁴⁶ In some cases, attacks are followed by settlers taking over land in the area of the incident and starting to cultivate it.⁴⁷

49. During 2013, settlers uprooted 13,097 trees⁴⁸ and burned over 280,000 m² of agricultural and grazing land.⁴⁹

50. Since 2008, mosques and churches have been targeted in settler attacks, including at least nine arson attacks against Palestinian mosques and 21 incidents in which graffiti were used to desecrate mosques, churches and burial grounds with provocative slogans of a racist or sacrilegious nature (see [A/HRC/22/63](#), para. 60).

West Bank wall

51. In spite of the advisory opinion of the International Court of Justice on the legal consequences of the Construction of a Wall in the Occupied Palestinian Territory, of 9 July 2004, Israel continued the construction of the wall in 2013. Approximately 62.3 per cent of the wall has been completed and a further 9.1 per

⁴³ Amnesty International, "Trigger-happy", p. 60.

⁴⁴ Yesh Din, "97.4 percent of investigative files relating to damage to Palestinians' olive trees are closed due to police failings", available from www.yesh-din.org/infoitem.asp?infocatid=473, accessed on 27 March 2014.

⁴⁵ Information provided by the Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs.

⁴⁶ Information provided by UNICEF.

⁴⁷ Information provided by the Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs.

⁴⁸ Input from the United Nations Environment Programme (UNEP).

⁴⁹ Information provided by UNRWA.

cent is under construction, with at least 85 per cent of the route intruding into the West Bank.⁵⁰

52. Once the wall is complete, 80 per cent of the settler population in the West Bank and East Jerusalem will live on the Israel side, in effect rendering it “a de facto annexation wall”⁵¹ that seriously impairs the contiguity and, thus, the viability, of a future Palestinian State.⁵² It would also isolate 680 km² of Palestinian land between the wall and the Green Line, comprising approximately 12 per cent of the West Bank, including 454 km² of agricultural land, pastures and open areas. The wall also isolates 37 localities and deprives more than 50,000 Palestinian Jerusalemites from the right to reside in Jerusalem. Moreover, the wall surrounds 173 localities with a population of more than 850,000 inhabitants.⁵³

53. The wall obliges farmers in approximately 150 communities who have land isolated between the wall and the Green Line to use a “prior coordination” mechanism or to obtain “visitor” permits from the Israeli authorities to access their farmland and water resources, with access restricted to a designated gate.⁵⁴

Closure policies and mobility restrictions

54. B'tselem attests that Israel's policy pertaining to the mobility restrictions is “based on the assumption that every Palestinian is a security threat ...”. This “racist assumption” brings with it the violation of the human rights of an entire population based on national origin.⁵⁵ Such restrictions amount to gross violations of the economic, social and cultural rights of the Palestinian people (ibid., para. 76).

Blockade on the Gaza Strip

55. The Israeli-imposed blockade on persons and goods imposed on the Gaza Strip since 2007⁵⁶ is considered by the International Committee of the Red Cross to be a collective punishment, in clear violation of Israel's obligations under international humanitarian law (see [CRC/C/ISR/CO/2-4](#), para. 25), and having a disproportionate impact on vulnerable groups and the aid agencies trying to help them.⁵⁷

56. Categories of individuals permitted to enter or exit the Gaza Strip at the Erez crossing with Israel were largely confined to humanitarian cases and a limited number of businesspersons.⁵⁸

57. The import of essential goods and materials for public use in Gaza remains very limited. Despite announced Israeli measures towards easing the import of construction material, only very limited volumes and types of materials are allowed

⁵⁰ Information provided by the Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs.

⁵¹ Information provided by the United Nations Conference on Trade and Development (UNCTAD).

⁵² Information provided by the Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs.

⁵³ Palestinian Central Bureau of Statistics, “Special statistical bulletin”.

⁵⁴ Information provided by the Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs.

⁵⁵ B'tselem, “Checkpoints, physical obstructions, and forbidden roads”, available from www.btselem.org/freedom_of_movement/checkpoints_and_forbidden_roads, accessed on 10 March 2014.

⁵⁶ The partial blockade had started in June 2006.

⁵⁷ Information provided by UNRWA.

⁵⁸ United States Department of State.

into Gaza,⁵⁹ which still falls significantly short of meeting the needs of the Gaza population.⁶⁰

58. In addition to the blockade, the failure of internal Palestinian negotiations on fuel prices led to the shutdown of the only power station in Gaza,⁶¹ and since then the power supply has been restricted to eight hours a day.⁶²

59. International aid organizations, particularly UNRWA and the United Nations Development Programme (UNDP), continued to report challenges related to the implementation of humanitarian projects in Gaza owing to significant delays and costs associated with the Israeli project-approval process and the import of materials.⁶³

60. On 13 October 2013, Israeli authorities abruptly halted coordination and entry of construction material. In December 2013, coordination was made conditional upon additional measures for the control of construction material being implemented by UNRWA, which caused extra administrative and construction project costs.⁶⁴

61. The fishing limit imposed by Israel remains at 6 nautical miles, though the most profitable fishing areas start at 8 nautical miles from shore. Fishermen continued to be subjected to shooting with live ammunition, detention, and confiscation and damaging of fishing boats and equipment by Israeli forces even while fishing in the permitted fishing zones.⁶⁵

62. Citing militant activity, Israel also continues to impose “access restricted areas” along the Gaza borders of up to 300 m from the border fence, most of which are agricultural areas, which Palestinians are barred from entering.⁶⁶

Movement of persons and goods within the West Bank

63. Prolonged checks and searches at some of the checkpoints, humiliating treatment by soldiers and long lines deter Palestinian drivers from using some of the roads, while some of the main roads are used almost exclusively by settlers.⁶⁷

64. The fear of physical threats, ranging from settler violence to fear of harassment and humiliation at checkpoints, compounds the exclusion of women and girls, confining their movement and, in consequence, their access to basic services, public spaces and economic and education opportunities.⁶⁸

⁵⁹ Information provided by OHCHR.

⁶⁰ Ibid., citing Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs, Protection of Civilian Weekly Report, 1-7 October 2013.

⁶¹ Information provided by OHCHR.

⁶² Information provided by the Office of the United Nations Special Coordinator for the Middle East Peace Process (UNSCO).

⁶³ Information provided by UNRWA and the United Nations Development Programme (UNDP).

⁶⁴ Information provided by UNRWA.

⁶⁵ Information provided by OHCHR, citing information from the Union of Agricultural Work Committees.

⁶⁶ Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs, Humanitarian Bulletin Monthly Report, November 2013, p. 8.

⁶⁷ B'tselem, “Checkpoints, physical obstructions, and forbidden roads”.

⁶⁸ Ibid.

65. By September 2013, 65.12 km of roads in the West Bank were classified by Israel for the sole, or virtually sole, use of Israelis. In addition, Palestinian motor traffic is prohibited on 6.72 km of internal roads in downtown Hebron, where some sections are off-limits to Palestinian pedestrian traffic as well.⁶⁹ The prohibition, which began in 2000, resulted in the closure of 1,829 businesses and 1,014 Palestinian housing units, according to B'tselem.⁷⁰

66. During 2013, UNRWA faced continued restrictions by Israeli authorities in accessing refugee communities in the West Bank, with major implications for its ability to meet the humanitarian needs of Palestine refugees.⁷¹

Access to East Jerusalem

67. Restrictions on movement affected virtually all aspects of life, including access by Palestinians to places of worship, employment, agricultural lands, schools and hospitals, as well as the conduct of journalistic, humanitarian and non-governmental organization activities.⁷²

68. Patients referred for treatment to the East Jerusalem hospitals, as well as parents accompanying ill children and hospital staff from Gaza and the West Bank, must obtain a permit from the Israeli authorities in order to access their health care or work. Twenty per cent of applicants are routinely denied, and permit holders are restricted to travel by foot across designated checkpoints. Checkpoints that are crowded and can be closed without warning also halt the direct entry of 90 per cent of Palestinian Red Crescent ambulances from the West Bank into Jerusalem.⁷³

Exploitation, endangerment and depletion of Palestinian natural resources

Water

69. The Western Aquifer Basin is among the most productive water basins in the Occupied Palestinian Territory. Israel currently controls 100 per cent of the aquifer and abstracts 94 per cent of its water, while Palestinians abstract only 6 per cent.⁷⁴

70. Discriminatory allocation of water resources persists. Approximately 1 million Palestinians in the West Bank consume 60 litres of water per capita per day or less, significantly below the WHO recommendation of 100 litres per day, while Israeli settlers consume six times that amount. In addition, an estimated 313,000 Palestinians are not connected to a water network, which translates into enormous costs related to water purchase.⁷⁵ Settlements benefit from enough water to run farms and orchards, and for swimming pools and spas, while Palestinians struggle to satisfy their minimum water requirements (see [A/HRC/22/63](#), para. 85).

71. The capacity of the Palestinian Water Authority to develop new water resources is hampered by the water management arrangements governed by the Joint

⁶⁹ Ibid.

⁷⁰ United States Department of State.

⁷¹ Information provided by UNRWA.

⁷² United States Department of State.

⁷³ Information provided by WHO.

⁷⁴ Economic and Social Commission for Western Asia and Federal Institute for Geosciences and Natural Resources (Bundesanstalt für Geowissenschaften und Rohstoffe), *Inventory of Shared Water Resources in Western Asia* (United Nations publication, Sales No. E.13.II.L.4).

⁷⁵ Information provided by UNICEF.

Water Committee set up in the context of the Oslo Accords, where Israel has predominance in terms of the allocation of West Bank water resources, of which it withdraws 90 per cent. A large number of Palestinian projects are rejected by the Committee. In Area C, additional approval is required from the Israeli civil administration, even for such small-scale projects as wells and rainwater collection cisterns (*ibid.*, para. 81). As a result, wells and springs that are available to Palestinians are generally degraded, while Israel simultaneously continues to drill deeper and more efficient wells for its own use. In addition, when Palestinians do have piped water, it is often siphoned off from water points for Israeli settlements, albeit with lesser volume. The diversion points are usually placed within settlements, making them vulnerable to settlers disconnecting or shutting down the water flowing to the Palestinian villages.⁷⁶ Furthermore, in the event of a water shortage, valves supplying Palestinian communities are closed. This does not happen for settlements (*ibid.*, paras. 83 and 84).

72. As a result, over 300,000 people are at risk of acute water scarcity, receiving supply through unreliable connections.⁷⁷ Palestinian communities in Area C have come to depend on purchasing water from Israeli private suppliers.

73. Between 2009 and 2012, 92 cisterns, 62 wells, 30 pools and 19 water tanks, 5 springs, 1 pipeline and 20 sanitation structures were demolished by Israel, and 27 water and sanitation structures were confiscated. Furthermore, of 56 water springs in the West Bank in the vicinity of Israeli settlements, 30 have been taken over completely by Israeli settlers, while the other 26 are at risk of takeover.⁷⁸

74. The denial of water is used to trigger displacement, particularly in areas slated for settlement expansion, since these communities are comprised mostly of farmers and herders who depend on water for their livelihoods (*ibid.*, para. 88).

75. In East Jerusalem, residency permits compound the difficulty for Palestinian Jerusalemites to connect legally to the water network because of a lack of building permits, which are almost impossible to obtain.⁷⁹

76. Gaza relies almost completely on the underlying coastal aquifer in which salinity levels have risen well beyond guidelines set by WHO for safe drinking water. Today, 90 per cent of the water from the aquifer is not safe for drinking without prior treatment. Households in Gaza are spending up to one third of their income on drinking water. In addition, bacteriological contamination has been detected in the purchased water, putting 1,145,941 people at risk.⁸⁰

⁷⁶ Information provided by UNICEF, citing Emergency Water, Sanitation and Hygiene Group and Al-Haq, "Israel's violations of the International Covenant on Economic, Social and Cultural Rights with regard to the human rights to water and sanitation in the Occupied Palestinian Territory", September 2011.

⁷⁷ Information provided by UNICEF, citing Emergency Water, Sanitation and Hygiene Group, Advocacy Task Force Briefing.

⁷⁸ Information provided by UNICEF, citing the Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs, 2012.

⁷⁹ Information provided by UNICEF, citing Emergency Water, Sanitation and Hygiene Group, Advocacy Task Force Briefing.

⁸⁰ Information provided by UNICEF, citing August 2011 statistics.

Waste management and sanitation

77. In Gaza, huge investment in treatment facilities and associated infrastructure is urgently needed to cope with the existing demand. Operation of the systems is also currently subjected to electricity fluctuations. Some 90 million litres of raw or partly treated sewage have to be released daily into the Mediterranean Sea, creating pollution, health hazards and problems for the fishing industry.⁸¹

78. In the West Bank, a restrictive permit regime has prevented the development of wastewater networks. About 68 per cent of the West Bank population (1.6 million people) are not connected to the wastewater network. In the rural area, there are almost no sewer networks and the communities depend on haphazardly constructed septic tanks or cesspits that leach into the groundwater.⁸²

79. An additional risk to Palestinians is the 5.5 million cubic metres (m³) of wastewater generated every year by settlements and released into the West Bank.⁸³

80. In 2013, Israeli security forces closed the disposal site of Al Bireh municipality, creating a huge environmental problem in the governorate. The Israeli authorities informed the relevant parties that the Al Minya sanitary landfill, a project funded by the World Bank and other donors, could not be opened unless it also received waste from the Israeli settlements in the vicinity.⁸⁴

Access to land

81. In the West Bank, Palestinian farmers whose agricultural lands are located inside or near settlements face regular restrictions on access and settler attacks against them and their properties. Access by Palestinians to such land is subject to “prior coordination” with the Israeli authorities, even in cases where the land was fenced off by settlers without authorization from the Israeli authorities (A/68/513, para. 49).

82. Overall, the restricted land area was estimated to encompass 17 per cent of the total land mass of the Gaza Strip and 35 per cent of its agricultural land (see A/68/77-E/2013/13, para. 56).

Economic and social conditions

83. In a context of continued deterioration of socioeconomic conditions, the gap between increasing humanitarian needs and available funding has grown sharply during the reporting period, particularly regarding UNRWA and the Gaza Strip.⁸⁵

The economy

84. The economy of the Occupied Palestinian Territory, directly and indirectly afflicted by the Israeli occupation, continued its negative trend during 2013.

⁸¹ Information provided by UNICEF, citing the Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs, 2012.

⁸² Information provided by UNICEF.

⁸³ Information provided by UNICEF, citing B'tselem, 2009.

⁸⁴ Information provided by UNEP.

⁸⁵ Information provided by UNRWA.

85. The real gross domestic product (GDP) of the West Bank and Gaza increased by only 1.5 per cent in 2013, according to estimates by the International Monetary Fund (IMF).⁸⁶ This continues the marked slowdown from growth rates of 12.2 per cent in 2011 and 5.9 per cent in 2012.⁸⁷

86. The destruction of the productive base in the West Bank and Gaza as a result of recurrent Israeli military actions, restriction of movement of Palestinian workers, limitations on transport and telecommunication infrastructure, loss of sovereignty over domestic natural resources, severe constraints on international trade and use of the relatively strong Israeli currency, among other factors, have weakened the Palestinian economy. As a result, the productivity of the economy has fallen sharply, leading to a loss of competitiveness of the exporting sector. Indeed, by 2012 the exports of goods and services accounted for only 16 per cent of GDP.⁸⁸

87. A direct consequence of the slowing economic growth is the high unemployment rate in the West Bank and Gaza, which stood at 25.2 per cent of the labour force in the fourth quarter of 2013, significantly above the rate of 22.9 per cent observed during the same period of 2012.^{89,90}

88. Unemployment particularly affected specific groups of the Palestinian population: those living in Gaza (38.5 per cent, compared to 18.2 per cent in the West Bank), women (33.5 per cent), the refugee population (32.3 per cent) and youth (39.0 per cent for the population aged 15-29).⁹¹

89. Prolonged episodes of high unemployment and unstable working conditions will inevitably exact a high socioeconomic toll into the foreseeable future because of the resulting large-scale deskilling of workers, discouraging investment and rendering some of the workers not just unemployed, but unemployable.⁹²

90. The latest poverty statistics indicate that 26 per cent of Palestinians lived below the poverty line in 2011 (18 per cent in the West Bank and 30 per cent in Gaza). The poverty rate in Gaza is much higher and the poverty gap is deeper and more severe there. This is a direct consequence of the occupation policies, which

⁸⁶ IMF, "Statement at the conclusion of an IMF mission to the West Bank and Gaza", press release No. 14/44, 6 February 2014, available from www.imf.org/external/np/sec/pr/2014/pr1444.htm, accessed 8 April 2014.

⁸⁷ Palestinian Central Bureau of Statistics, Gross domestic product by expenditure for the years 1994-2011 at constant prices, available from www.pcbs.gov.ps/Portals/_Rainbow/Documents/EXPconstant%2094-11E.htm; and Value added by economic activity and region during the year 2012 at constant prices, available from www.pcbs.gov.ps/Portals/_Rainbow/Documents/GDP-%20ValueAdded2012E.htm.

⁸⁸ Palestinian Central Bureau of Statistics, Gross domestic product by expenditure and region for the quarters of the years 2011-2013 at constant prices, available from www.pcbs.gov.ps/Portals/_Rainbow/Documents/GDP-EXPCon2011-2012E.htm.

⁸⁹ Palestinian Central Bureau of Statistics, Labour Force Survey (October-December 2013) Round (Q4/2013), press report on the Labour Force Survey Results, available from www.pcbs.gov.ps/portals/_pcbs/PressRelease/Press_En_LFSQ42013E.pdf.

⁹⁰ Palestinian Central Bureau of Statistics, Labour Force Survey (October-December 2012) Round (Q4/2012), press report on the Labour Force Survey Results, available from www.pcbs.gov.ps/portals/_pcbs/PressRelease/Press_En_LFSQ42012E.pdf.

⁹¹ Palestinian Central Bureau of Statistics, Labour Force Survey (October-December 2013) Round (Q4/2013), press report on the Labour Force Survey Results, available from www.pcbs.gov.ps/portals/_pcbs/PressRelease/Press_En_LFSQ42013E.pdf.

⁹² Ibid.

have been particularly damaging in Gaza as a result of the blockade. In fact, GDP per capita in Gaza fell from 76 per cent of the West Bank GDP per capita in 2004 to only 51 per cent in 2012.⁹³ The fiscal crisis of the government of Palestine is exacerbated by Israel's control over the tax and customs clearance revenue (60-70 per cent of total public revenue), which it collects on behalf of the government of Palestine in accordance with the Protocol on Economic Relations between the Government of Israel and the Palestine Liberation Organization (Paris Protocol). Israel has repeatedly withheld this revenue, thereby creating severe difficulties with fiscal planning and leading to instability and reduced economic growth.⁹⁴

91. The Israeli restriction on the economic activity in Area C is one of the occupation policies that most severely limit the development potential of the economy, given its territorial extension and the richness of the natural resources.

92. According to the World Bank, potential value added from easing current restrictions on access to, and activity and production in, Area C would likely have amounted to 35 per cent of Palestinian GDP in 2011. Such potential, if realized, would significantly reduce the budget deficit and would also be expected to lead to a large decrease in poverty, as a result of a 35 per cent increase in employment.⁹⁵

Food security

93. The improvement of food security in the Occupied Palestinian Territory from 2009 to 2011 was reversed in 2012. Food insecurity levels rose dramatically, to reach 1,570,000 Palestinians (34 per cent of the population).⁹⁶ Overall, the deterioration in household food security reflects the worsening of socioeconomic conditions in both the West Bank and the Gaza Strip,⁹⁷ with an anticipated significant increase in food insecurity levels in 2014.⁹⁸

94. In the West Bank, the "marginally secure" and "vulnerable" groups expanded, thus limiting the increase of the "food insecure" group. By 2012, an estimated 19 per cent of households were assessed as food insecure in the West Bank, indicating a lower resilience status of households.⁹⁹

95. In the Gaza Strip, the combination of soaring unemployment, falling purchasing power and recurrent shocks has pushed the majority of the population into food insecurity. An estimated 57 per cent of households are food insecure, with food insecurity growing faster among refugees and in refugee camps.¹⁰⁰

⁹³ Ibid.

⁹⁴ Information provided by UNCTAD, 2013.

⁹⁵ World Bank, "West Bank and Gaza".

⁹⁶ Information provided by the Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations (FAO).

⁹⁷ Ibid.

⁹⁸ Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs, Humanitarian Bulletin Monthly Report, February 2014, p. 3.

⁹⁹ Information provided by FAO.

¹⁰⁰ Information provided by UNRWA, citing Palestinian Central Bureau of Statistics, FAO, World Food Programme and UNRWA, "Socio-economic & food security survey: West Bank and Gaza Strip, Palestine" (2012).

96. Food insecurity, affecting 23 per cent of the population, is also particularly high in refugee camps in the West Bank, compared with a food insecurity level of 18 per cent of non-refugee households in 2012.¹⁰¹

97. A fully fledged food insecurity crisis has been prevented only by the large-scale humanitarian assistance provided. Since 2000, UNRWA has spent more than \$900 million in food and cash assistance benefiting the poorest refugees in Gaza, where more than 800,000 refugees now depend on the Agency's food assistance programme.¹⁰²

Health

98. The poor quality and insufficient quantity of available water and inadequate wastewater treatment pose a major public health problem, particularly for children in the Gaza Strip.¹⁰³

99. The public health system in Gaza remains fragile, dependent on donor aid and vulnerable to the closure of borders, restrictions on the movement of people and goods and Israeli military operations. These conditions are exacerbated by power cuts of up to 16 hours a day owing to a shortage of fuel entering Gaza.¹⁰⁴

100. Almost 15,000 patients had to leave Gaza in 2013 in order to access life-saving medical care in East Jerusalem, the West Bank, Israel and Egypt. The volume of permit applications through the Erez crossing increased by 48 per cent in 2013 compared with 2012, reflecting more demand owing to drug shortages and reduced access via Rafah to Egypt. Twelve per cent of applicants were either denied permits or did not receive timely replies and missed their hospital appointments. Physical and bureaucratic delays in accessing treatment and the difficulty of passage present health risks, while the serious shortage of drugs and supplies in Gaza has made referrals to medical treatment outside the Strip even more necessary.¹⁰⁵

101. Gaza health authorities estimate that by 2020 there will be a need for 800 additional doctors, 700 nurses and 900 administrative staff for optimal functioning of the Gaza public health network.¹⁰⁶ However, permits for travel to the West Bank and East Jerusalem for training have been restricted for many Gaza health staff.¹⁰⁷

102. In the West Bank, Palestinian patients and their companions also need special Israeli-issued permits to access outside hospitals. In 2013 about 20 per cent of those requesting permits were denied or delayed in accessing referral health facilities in East Jerusalem and Israel.¹⁰⁸

¹⁰¹ Information provided by UNRWA.

¹⁰² Ibid.

¹⁰³ Information provided by OHCHR, citing Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs, Protection of Civilian Weekly Report, 14-21 December 2013.

¹⁰⁴ Information provided by the Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs.

¹⁰⁵ Information provided by WHO.

¹⁰⁶ See www.unsco.org/Documents/Special/Gaza%20in%202020%20a%20liveable%20place%20English.pdf.

¹⁰⁷ Information provided by WHO.

¹⁰⁸ Ibid.

103. Restrictions prohibiting East Jerusalem health-care institutions from procuring pharmaceuticals from suppliers in the West Bank have increased costs for hospitals in East Jerusalem.¹⁰⁹

104. While Palestinian residents of East Jerusalem are entitled to the health services provided by the Israeli authorities, by virtue of their monthly payments to the Israeli National Health Insurance, there are inequalities in the number of facilities available to Palestinians compared with Israeli residents of Jerusalem, especially with regard to specialized services such as prenatal and paediatric clinics.¹¹⁰

Education

105. Gaza had a high literacy rate of 96 per cent in 2011.¹¹¹ Some 463,567 children, half of them girls, were attending school during the 2012/13 school year. Notwithstanding high attendance rates, sustaining the quality of education constitutes a significant challenge, owing partly to a shortage of schools — 67 per cent of government schools and 85 per cent of UNRWA schools run double shifts¹¹² — and as education staff cannot receive training abroad.¹¹³

106. The blockade has led to the stalling of investments in educational infrastructure in Gaza, resulting in the inability to build new schools. It is estimated that 250 new schools were needed in 2012, and an additional 190 schools would be needed by 2020, in order to accommodate the increase in the student population.¹¹⁴

107. In the West Bank, particularly Area C, the seam zone, East Jerusalem and other vulnerable areas such as Hebron, students and teachers are vulnerable to harassment, threats and violence on their way to and returning from school, and at times while at school, by Israeli settlers and Israeli security forces. A 2012 assessment of 116 communities in the West Bank showed that 33 per cent of children had to travel more than 5 km to school.¹¹⁵

108. In 2013, 36 boys and 9 girls were injured, mostly in Palestinian communities near Israeli settlements and when the children were going to or returning from school.¹¹⁶

109. During the same period, there were four instances of settlers attacking schools. Another 164 incidents, attacks or threats of attacks by settlers on schoolchildren were documented, resulting in disruption of classes or delays in going to school. This included instances of physical assault on schoolchildren by settlers, evacuation

¹⁰⁹ Ibid.

¹¹⁰ Information provided by UNICEF.

¹¹¹ Information provided by UNICEF, citing the Palestinian Central Bureau of Statistics.

¹¹² Information provided by UNICEF, citing the Ministry of Education and Higher Education, 2012/13.

¹¹³ Information provided by OHCHR, citing Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs, Protection of Civilian Weekly Report, 14-21 December 2013.

¹¹⁴ Information provided by UNICEF, citing United Nations, Gaza and 2020: A liveable place?, August 2012.

¹¹⁵ Information provided by UNICEF, citing Protection Cluster and Education Cluster, "Protection issues affecting access to education in the West Bank", March 2012.

¹¹⁶ Information provided by UNICEF.

of schools owing to the threat of settler attacks and sewage from Israeli settlements flooding into school grounds.¹¹⁷

110. An estimated 10,000 Palestinian students in the West Bank attend classes in tents, caravans or tin shacks, with minimal protection from the heat or cold. Area C schools have poor sanitation. Inadequate water and sanitation facilities can contribute to school dropout rates.¹¹⁸ The Palestinian government has been unable to obtain permits to build necessary classrooms or upgrade severely dilapidated buildings. In addition, there are 25 active demolition orders and 20 stop-work and one sealing orders for education facilities,¹¹⁹ including two schools and one kindergarten.¹²⁰

111. It is also estimated that, among other obstacles to movement into East Jerusalem, over 5,000 students face daily delays at checkpoint crossings because of permit checks on their way to school or ad hoc “flying” checkpoints being established. Children face harassment, threats and, in some cases, violence at these checkpoints. The resulting fear of harm and humiliation creates stress and fear among children and their families.¹²¹

112. It is estimated that there is a shortage in East Jerusalem of 2,200 classrooms.¹²² As many as 90,000 school-age children in East Jerusalem do not have access to free public education. An estimated 4,329-5,300 children are not enrolled in any education institution in East Jerusalem, and the estimated secondary dropout rate is as high as 50 per cent in municipality schools.¹²³

III. Occupied Syrian Golan

113. Israel continues to occupy the Syrian Golan, after it illegally announced its annexation in 1981. It is estimated that approximately 20,000 Israeli settlers live in 33 settlements in the occupied Syrian Golan. Israel continues to encourage the growth of the settler population in the Golan through socioeconomic incentives, in violation of the Fourth Geneva Convention. Israel also controls scarce water resources in the Golan and distributes a disproportionate share to Israeli settlements while a private Israeli company supplies water directly to Israeli settlers at preferential rates (see [A/68/513](#), para. 53).

114. Syrian residents of the occupied Syrian Golan continue to suffer from discrimination in terms of access to land, housing and basic services, while the Citizenship Law continues to negatively impact on family ties (see [CERD/C/ISR/CO/14-16](#), para. 29). Furthermore, Israel also violates its human rights obligations, including the right of Syrian citizens in the occupied Syrian Golan to

¹¹⁷ Ibid.

¹¹⁸ Information provided by UNICEF, citing UNICEF, “Bedouin schools fighting for survival in Area ‘C’”, September 2011.

¹¹⁹ Education Cluster, Vulnerable School Matrix, 25 April 2013.

¹²⁰ Information provided by UNICEF.

¹²¹ Information provided by UNICEF, citing Association for Civil Rights in Israel, Failed Grade: The Education System in East Jerusalem 2010, August 2010.

¹²² Information provided by OHCHR, citing Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs, Protection of Civilian Weekly Report, 14-21 December 2013.

¹²³ Information provided by UNICEF.

freedom of movement and the right to an adequate standard of living (see [A/68/379](#), para. 61).

115. Agriculture was the main source of income prior to the 1967 occupation, and is still the most important single source. However, it currently cannot sustain the population owing to discrimination in access to water as well as land, rendering farming uncompetitive and revenues from agricultural work insufficient. Employment has to be sought elsewhere, noting that prospects for the Syrian citizens in the occupied Syrian Golan remain constrained.¹²⁴

116. Syrian farmers have access to only 200 m³ of water per dunam of land, a mere 30 per cent of the water allocated to Israeli settlements. Hence, Syrian farmers have to pay considerably more than settlers for water owing to a discriminatory pricing system. Furthermore, the settlements have privileged access to markets as they can benefit from a range of distribution and retail networks.¹²⁵

117. Israel also continues to exploit natural resources in the occupied Syrian Golan for its own benefit. In February 2013, the Israeli Ministry of Energy and Water exclusive petroleum exploration licence in the occupied Syrian Golan (see [A/68/513](#), para. 54).

118. There have been reports that dispute Israeli claims that it lacked the resources to remove all landmines around the occupied Syrian Golan, including in agricultural land and in areas in close proximity to schools. Arab villagers in the Golan were being exposed as human shields to clear the landmines. It has also been reported that negligence by the Israeli forces in maintaining and repairing barbed wire around mined areas continued to claim the lives of children and villagers ([A/68/379](#), para. 63).

119. Although there have been incidents over the ceasefire line in relation to the conflict in the Syrian Arab Republic, they have not had longer-term consequences for the area so far. However, the ongoing conflict in Syria can have a further negative impact on the situation of workers and their families.¹²⁶

IV. Conclusion

120. The Israeli occupation has entailed institutionalized discriminatory measures, including laws, policies and military orders. A number of Israeli practices, including the settlement activities, which are illegal under international law, continue to constitute an obstacle to peace and a violation of the rights of the Palestinians and Syrians living under occupation.

121. The goal remains comprehensive peace and the resolution of all pertinent issues. This can only be achieved by ending the occupation, attaining the rights of the Palestinian and Syrian populations living under occupation, the implementation of relevant United Nations resolutions and adherence to international law and norms.

¹²⁴ International Labour Office, *The Situation of Workers of the Occupied Arab Territories*, ILC.102/DG/APP (Geneva, 2013), para. 130.

¹²⁵ *Ibid.*, para. 131.

¹²⁶ *Ibid.*, para. 128.



General Assembly Economic and Social Council

Distr.: General
8 May 2015

Original: English

General Assembly**Seventieth session**

Item 65 of the preliminary list**

Permanent sovereignty of the Palestinian people in the Occupied Palestinian Territory, including East Jerusalem, and of the Arab population in the occupied Syrian Golan over their natural resources

Economic and Social Council**2015 session**

21 July 2014-22 July 2015

Agenda item 16

Economic and social repercussions of the Israeli occupation on the living conditions of the Palestinian people in the Occupied Palestinian Territory, including East Jerusalem, and the Arab population in the occupied Syrian Golan

Economic and social repercussions of the Israeli occupation on the living conditions of the Palestinian people in the Occupied Palestinian Territory, including East Jerusalem, and the Arab population in the occupied Syrian Golan

Note by the Secretary-General

Summary

In its resolution 2014/26, the Economic and Social Council requested the Secretary-General to submit to the General Assembly at its sixty-ninth session, through the Council, a report on the implementation of that resolution. The Assembly, in its resolution 69/241, also requested the Secretary-General to submit a report to it at its seventieth session. The present report, which was prepared by the Economic and Social Commission for Western Asia, is submitted in compliance with the resolutions of the Council and the Assembly.

* Reissued for technical reasons on 18 September 2015.

** [A/70/50](#).



Israel continues employing practices and policies in violation of international humanitarian law and international human rights law. In 2014 the Palestinian civilian death toll was the highest recorded since 1967, and the level of destruction was unprecedented, owing in particular to the Gaza conflict in July and August 2014. Israeli discriminatory policies and practices in the Occupied Palestinian Territory and the occupied Syrian Golan include excessive use of force, settlement expansion, property destruction and exploitation of natural resources. Impunity is afforded to Israeli security and military personnel and settlers. The cumulative impact of these policies and practices not only violates the rights of the population, but also exacerbates their social and economic conditions.

The Economic and Social Commission for Western Asia wishes to acknowledge its appreciation for the substantive contributions of the United Nations Conference on Trade and Development, the Office of the Special Representative of the Secretary-General for Children and Armed Conflict, the United Nations Relief and Works Agency for Palestine Refugees in the Near East, the Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs, the International Labour Organization, the Food and Agricultural Organization of the United Nations, the World Health Organization, the World Food Programme, the United Nations Environment Programme, the United Nations Human Settlements Programme, the United Nations Entity for Gender Equality and the Empowerment of Women, the United Nations Population Fund, the Department for Political Affairs and the League of Arab States.

I. Introduction

1. The Economic and Social Council, in its resolution 2014/26, and the General Assembly, in its resolution 69/241, expressed concerns over the practices of Israel, the occupying Power, in the Occupied Palestinian Territory and the occupied Syrian Golan that were in violation of international humanitarian law. These practices have included causing the deaths and injuries of civilians, including children, women and peaceful demonstrators, all of whom must be protected in accordance with international humanitarian law. They have also included increasing acts of violence by illegal armed Israeli settlers against Palestinian civilians and their properties, as well as the continued detention of thousands of Palestinians, including children and women, under harsh conditions. The Council and the Assembly also expressed their concern about the accelerated construction by Israel of settlements, the construction of the wall inside the Occupied Palestinian Territory, the exploitation of Palestinian natural resources, the increased demolition of homes, economic institutions, agricultural lands and infrastructure, the revocation of residency rights of Palestinians in and around occupied East Jerusalem, Israeli military operations and policies of closures and severe restrictions on the movement of persons and goods, including what in effect amounts to a blockade of the Gaza Strip. The Council and the Assembly requested that the Secretary-General submit a report on the implementation of Economic and Social Council resolution 2014/26 and General Assembly resolution 69/241 examining the aforementioned practices of Israel and their socioeconomic impact.

II. Occupied Palestinian Territory

2. In spite of the 2004 advisory opinion of the International Court of Justice on the *Legal Consequences of a Wall in the Occupied Palestinian Territory* (see [A/ES-10/273](#) and Corr. 1), among other assertions, Israel continues to deny the established fact that international human rights law and international humanitarian law are applicable in the Occupied Palestinian Territory (see [A/69/347](#)).

3. A number of Israeli policies and practices continue to undermine the right of the Palestinian people to self-determination. These include the transfer of Israeli citizens into occupied territory; the revocation of residency rights of Palestinians in East Jerusalem; Israel's blockade of Gaza; the closure regime in the West Bank, including the continued construction of the wall; restricted access in Gaza; demolition and/or confiscation of Palestinian structures, including residential, and the eviction of their inhabitants; control of the population registry; and the use of Palestinian natural resources (see [A/69/347](#), para. 15).

4. Violations of international humanitarian law and international human rights law have been further entrenched through Israeli policies and practices (see [A/69/347](#), para. 8).¹ In this context, the Committee on the Elimination of Racial Discrimination had censured Israel under the rubric of apartheid and segregation (see [CERD/C/ISR/CO/14-16](#), para. 24).

5. On 7 July 2014, Israel launched a 51-day military offensive against the Gaza Strip, causing unprecedented loss of life and destruction. Concerns over the

¹ See also [CRC/C/ISR/CO/2-4](#), para. 7 and [CCPR/C/ISR/CO/3](#), para. 16.

possibility that international crimes were committed during the offensive prompted the establishment and dispatch of an independent, international commission of inquiry into relevant violations (see Human Right Council resolution S-21/1, para. 13).

Segregation and discrimination

6. Since the onset of the occupation in 1967, Israel has gradually created two different regimes in the West Bank that discriminate against residents according to their religion. A regime for Jewish residents, who are usually Israeli citizens and whose presence in settlements in occupied territory in itself contravenes international law,² ensures that they enjoy all the rights granted to Israeli citizens. Another regime has been created for Palestinians, under which the occupied people live under harsh military rule that primarily serves the interests of Israel and the settlers.³

7. Jewish Israeli citizens, Palestinian citizens of Israel and Palestinian residents of East Jerusalem are treated differently in terms of civil status, rights and legal protection, in the Israeli domestic legal framework that maintains a three-tiered system (see [CCPR/C/ISR/CO/4](#), para. 7). A fourth tier governs Palestinians living in the rest of the West Bank who are subject to the Israeli military legal system.⁴

Legal system

8. The application of the two legal systems in the West Bank — the Israeli domestic legal system for Israeli settlers and the military system for Palestinians — has been enshrined in rulings of the Israeli High Court of Justice, where Israeli courts regard settlements in the occupied territory as Israeli enclaves.⁵ Thus, in criminal cases, the national identity of a person in the West Bank determines which law will apply to that person in every stage of the legal proceedings, including the trial, the sentencing and the conditions of imprisonment. In all the stages, Palestinians adults and minors are discriminated against when compared to Israelis.⁵

9. Furthermore, while an Israeli “minor” under Israeli criminal law is a person who has not yet turned 18, the age of majority for Palestinians is still 16 for the purpose of arrest, detention and interrogation. While Israeli law prohibits the imprisonment of persons who are not yet 14 years old, Israeli military legislation allows for the issuance of prison sentences of up to six months to Palestinian children who are over the age of 12 but not yet 14, and up to one year to children over the age of 14 but not yet 16.⁵

² See Association for Civil Rights in Israel, (ACRI), *One Rule, Two Legal Systems: Israel’s Regime of Laws in the West Bank*, October 2014.

³ See B’tselem, *47 Years of Temporary Occupation*. Available at www.btselem.org/publications/47_year_long_temporary_occupation.

⁴ ACRI, *The Status of the Right to Demonstrate in the Occupied Territories*.

⁵ ACRI, *One Rule, Two Legal Systems: Israel’s Regime of Laws in the West Bank*, October 2014, citing High Court of Justice 10104/04, *Peace Now S.A.L. Educational Enterprises v. Supervisor of the Jewish Settlements in Judea and Samaria*, 61(2) 93 (2006), p. 14 of the judgement.

Freedom of movement

10. Israeli authorities impose movement restrictions on Palestinians in the occupied West Bank, while there are almost no restrictions on the movement of Israelis therein, except in Area A, which constitutes 18 per cent of the West Bank.⁵

11. The free and safe movement of settlers is secured at the expense of Palestinians (see [A/HRC/22/63](#), para. 75). By February 2014, Israel had designated 65 kilometres of West Bank roads for the exclusive, or almost exclusive, use of Israelis.²

12. In 1997, the commander of the Israeli army in the West Bank published an order declaring all municipal areas of settlements as military zones closed to Palestinians. The order, which was expanded in 2002 to include additional areas, stipulated that it does not apply to Israelis.²

Residency

13. Between 1967 and 1993, Israeli authorities de facto exiled more than quarter of a million Palestinians from the Occupied Palestinian Territory by means of revocation of their residency permits (see [A/69/81-E/2014/13](#), para. 16). In East Jerusalem, 14,416 Palestinians have had their residency permits revoked until the end of 2014.⁶

14. Since 2007, Israel has treated Palestinians originating from Gaza and living in the West Bank as “illegal stayers”, unless they hold a permit issued by the military. In April 2010 the Israeli army issued an order that deemed any person found in the West Bank without an Israeli permit to be an infiltrator who would face imprisonment, even if the person permanently resided in the West Bank. That automatically turned tens of thousands of Palestinians living in the West Bank, including students, into offenders. The Israeli army spokespersons clarified that the order would not be used against Israelis. To the contrary, an Israeli who chooses to move into the Occupied Palestinian Territory receives economic and other incentives.²

15. In occupied East Jerusalem, Palestinian residents are treated as “aliens”, thereby exacerbating the insecurity of their permanent residency status (see [CCPR/C/ISR/CO/4](#), para. 18). Israeli laws and the Government’s “demographic balance” policy⁷ governing residency of Palestinians do not allow family reunification permits in cases of marriages involving Palestinians outside East Jerusalem. Such policies force Palestinians to reside outside East Jerusalem with their spouses in order to maintain family life, resulting in the revocation of their East Jerusalem residencies (see [A/69/81-E/2014/13](#), paras. 11-17).

Zoning, planning and construction

16. Area C, where Israel retains nearly exclusive control, including over law enforcement, planning and construction, encompasses 62 per cent of the West Bank.

⁶ Hamoked, <http://www.hamoked.org/Document.aspx?dID=Updates1285>, and <http://www.hamoked.org/Document.aspx?dID=Documents2654> accessed on 6 May 2015.

⁷ The Jerusalem municipality of Israel has openly pursued a policy known as “demographic balance”, which calls for a 60/40 demographic balance in favour of Jewish residents, see [A/69/81-E/2014/13](#).

The Israeli Government has designated 39 per cent of Area C for settlements and their future expansion, 20 per cent for closed Israeli military areas (including “firing zones”) and 13 per cent for natural reserves.⁸

17. The discriminatory zoning and planning regime regulating the construction of housing and structures by Palestinians in Area C of the West Bank and the East Jerusalem periphery makes it almost impossible for Palestinians to obtain building permits, while facilitating the growth of Israeli settlements in those areas (see [CCPR/C/ISR/CO/4](#), para. 9).

18. The combined area in which Palestinians can undertake construction is approximately 0.5 per cent of Area C (see [A/69/81-E/2014/13](#), para. 8), compared to 26 per cent for Israeli settlements.² As such, more than 94 per cent of the Palestinian construction permit applications in Area C between 2000 and 2012 were rejected by the Israeli authorities.⁹

19. Similarly in East Jerusalem, the Israeli construction permit system and plans authorization process makes it very difficult for Palestinians to undertake formal and legal construction.¹⁰ By August 2014, Israel had demolished at least 2,000 Palestinian homes in East Jerusalem. Today, at least an additional 33 per cent of Palestinian homes lack Israeli-issued building permits, leaving at least 93,100 residents at risk of eviction, home demolition and displacement.¹¹

20. The widespread practice of building without Israeli permits in East Jerusalem is largely attributed to the extremely limited opportunities for authorized construction. Over 35 per cent of the land in the Israeli-defined municipal area of East Jerusalem has been confiscated since 1967 for settlement use. Much of 13 per cent of the total East Jerusalem area available for Palestinian construction is already built up.¹¹

21. The Palestinian population of East Jerusalem also suffers from neglect in terms of municipal services and availability of public buildings and facilities, industrial and commercial zones, and social and cultural institutions. There has also been increasing evidence of problematic and even criminal action by police officers from various units when dealing with Palestinians in East Jerusalem.¹²

Excessive use of force, arbitrary detention and population displacement

22. The Palestinian death toll during the reporting period was unprecedented since the onset of the occupation. A total of 2,306 Palestinians were killed and 17,186 were injured between 31 March 2014 and 28 February 2015.¹³

23. Citing rocket attacks launched in June 2014 into Israel from Gaza, in July Israel launched its deadliest offensive against the Gaza Strip since its occupation in 1967. During the 51-day offensive the Israeli military carried out 4,028 air raids,

⁸ Information received from the United Nations Conference on Trade and Development (UNCTAD).

⁹ B'tselem, *Acting the Landlord: Israel's Policy in Area C*, June 2013, p. 19.

¹⁰ Information received from the United Nations Human Settlements Programme (UN-Habitat).

¹¹ Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs East Jerusalem: *Key Humanitarian Concerns Update*, August 2014.

¹² ACRI, *The State of Human Rights in Israel and the OPT 2014*, December 2014.

¹³ Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs, *Humanitarian Bulletin Monthly Report*, February 2015.

firing 5,830 missiles, 16,507 artillery and tank projectiles and 3,494 naval shells (see [A/HRC/28/80/Add.1](#), para. 24) into one of the most densely populated areas in the world. As a result, 2,220 Palestinians were killed, of whom at least 1,492 were civilians, including 551 children.¹⁴

24. During the offensive, Palestinian militant groups also launched approximately 4,881 rockets and 1,753 mortars towards Israel. During the offensive a total of 6 Israeli civilians and 66 soldiers were killed (see [A/HRC/28/80/Add.1](#), para. 25).

25. According to the Palestinian Ministry of Health, 11,231 Palestinians were also injured (see [A/HRC/28/80/Add.1](#), para. 24). Around 10 per cent of them may acquire long-term or permanent disability, almost a third of them children.¹⁵

26. On seven separate occasions during the offensive, Israeli ordnance struck United Nations Relief and Works Agency for Palestine Refugees in the Near East (UNRWA) schools designated as emergency shelters, whose exact positions had been reported to the Israeli army by the Agency. United Nations premises are inviolable under the 1946 Convention on the Privileges and Immunities of the United Nations. Among those killed were 11 UNRWA personnel, while others were seriously wounded.¹⁶

27. Furthermore, Human Rights Watch and other international and Israeli non-governmental organizations report to have documented cases of Israeli troops using Palestinian civilians as human shields.¹⁷ Israeli forces also reportedly fired at ambulances, preventing them from reaching the wounded, and shot and killed fleeing civilians.¹⁸

28. According to the United Nations Mine Action Service, an estimated 7,000 explosive remnants of war and other explosive hazards remain in Gaza, placing the lives of Palestinians in Gaza at risk.¹⁹

29. The West Bank also witnessed a rise in the number of Palestinian casualties, particularly during the period between May and August 2014. The fatal shooting of two Palestinian boys²⁰ in May preceded the kidnapping and killing of three Israeli youths in June and the kidnapping and the burning of a Palestinian child in July. Following the disappearance of the three Israeli teenage settlers, the Israeli army launched a military operation in the West Bank that resulted in the death of 32 Palestinians, including 5 children, and the injury of more than 3,137 others, including 560 children, between 1 June and 31 August 2014 alone.¹³

30. Another issue of concern is Israel's continued failure to meet its obligations under international law to promptly, thoroughly, effectively, independently,

¹⁴ Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs, *Fragmented lives: Humanitarian Overview 2014*, March 2015.

¹⁵ Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs, 2015 Strategic Response Plan OPT.

¹⁶ Information received from UNRWA.

¹⁷ Human Rights Watch, *World Report 2015*; Defence of Children International, <http://www.dci-palestine.org/documents/israeli-forces-use-palestinian-child-human-shield-gaza>; Physicians for Human Rights-Israel, *Gaza 2014: Findings of an Independent Medical Fact-Finding Mission*.

¹⁸ Human Rights Watch, *World Report 2015*.

¹⁹ Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs, *Humanitarian Bulletin Monthly Report*, September 2014.

²⁰ Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs, *Protection of civilians weekly report*, 13-19 May 2014.

impartially and transparently investigate incidents of killings and serious injury by its security and armed forces.²¹

Detention, torture and ill-treatment

31. Israeli forces conducted 4,956 search and arrest operations in 2014, marking a 31 per cent increase (weekly average) compared with 2013.¹³

32. By the end of February 2015, 6,670 Palestinians, including 182 children, were detained in Israeli prisons.²²

33. Israeli authorities' practice of administrative detention of Palestinians continues. Concerns over this practice stem from detention orders being based on secret evidence and the denial of access to counsel, independent doctors and family contacts (see [CCPR/C/ISR/COH/4](#), para. 10). As at the end of March 2015, 412 Palestinians were held as administrative detainees, compared to 186 held in January 2014.²²

34. The use of torture and other ill treatment in Israeli detention facilities continues to be reported, including widespread, systematic and institutionalized ill treatment of Palestinian children (see [CCPR/C/ISR/CO/4](#), para. 15).

35. Palestinian children in the West Bank continued to be detained and prosecuted through the military court system, mostly in relation to allegations of stone throwing. On average, throughout 2014, almost 185 Palestinian children were held in Israeli prisons.¹³

36. In relation to the cases of military detention, from January to September 2014, the United Nations gathered 74 sworn testimonies of children between the ages of 13 and 17 who reported ill treatment by the Israeli military and security forces while in detention in the West Bank; 54 of the testimonies included reports of having been subjected to at least 10 different types of violations of their rights.²³

37. Since 2001 more than 800 complaints of torture during interrogations by Israeli security services have been filed. No criminal investigations have been initiated as a result of the complaints.²⁴ Along the same lines, at least 133 complaints were filed by the Public Committee Against Torture in Israel, between 2007 and 2013, regarding soldier violence against detainees in the Palestinian occupied territory; 73 per cent of the complaint files were closed and only 2 complaints resulted in an indictment against a soldier, on assault charges.²⁴

Population displacement, property destruction and confiscation²⁵

38. During the Gaza conflict in 2014, some 19,000 housing units were severely damaged or totally destroyed. Another 98,421 units sustained partial or minor

²¹ See [A/HRC/28/45](#), para. 31; [A/69/347](#), paras. 52-69; [CCPR/C/ISR/CO/4](#), para. 13.

²² B'tselem, http://www.btselem.org/statistics/detainees_and_prisoners, accessed on 6 May 2015.

²³ Information received from the Office of the Special Representative of the Secretary-General for Children and Armed Conflict.

²⁴ The Public Committee Against Torture in Israel, *Prosecutorial Indifference: Systematic Failures in the Investigation of Soldier Violence against Detainees in the Occupied Palestinian Territory*, June 2014.

²⁵ Information on destruction of and damage to businesses and agricultural property during the 2014 summer offensive.

damage.¹⁴ As such, approximately 44 per cent of all housing units in Gaza were affected. According to the Palestinian Ministry of Public Works and Housing estimates, prior to the offensive, the Gaza Strip lacked 122,669 housing units to meet the needs of the population.²⁶

39. Also during the offensive, over 290,000 out of 500,000 internally displaced Palestinians were sheltered in 90 UNRWA school buildings.¹⁶ In the aftermath, approximately 100,000 Palestinians were rendered homeless and were either renting or still in collective centres or with host families.¹⁴

40. In the West Bank, including East Jerusalem, Palestinians continue to suffer from forced displacement, mainly as a result of destruction of property, forced evictions, settler violence and movement and access restrictions. In East Jerusalem, these factors are coupled with lack of civil documentation and revocation of residency rights, as mentioned above.¹⁴

41. During 2014, Israeli authorities demolished 601 structures, including homes, in the West Bank, including East Jerusalem, displacing 1,215 Palestinians, the highest scale of such displacement since 2009.¹³ It included the complete displacement of four Palestinian communities (see A/69/347, para. 26).

42. Israeli authorities resumed punitive home demolitions in 2014 in the West Bank. Four houses were entirely destroyed in this context and another was sealed.¹⁴ Punitive house demolitions constitute collective punishment, and thus violate international law and Israeli law.²⁷

43. Israeli authorities have recently increased pressure on 7,000 Bedouins and herders in 46 communities in Area C to leave their places of residence by issuing and enforcing more demolition orders and stop-work and seizure orders against residential and agricultural structures (see A/69/348, para. 13). The overwhelming majority of Bedouins targeted for transfer are Palestine refugees.¹⁶ Furthermore, it is reported that the Israeli military is using military firing zones as a way to push Palestinians out of certain areas (see A/69/348, para. 15).

44. By 2013, Israel had officially confiscated more than 1,000 km² of Palestinian-owned land comprising 20 per cent of the West Bank (including East Jerusalem), (see A/HRC/22/63, paras. 63-64), mostly for the use of settlements. During 2014, Israeli authorities confiscated an additional 7.3 km² of Palestinian privately owned lands, including 4 km² that were confiscated in a single confiscation order, the biggest such order since 1967.²⁸

Settlements and settler violence

45. Israeli settlements continue to be at the centre of multiple violations of the human rights of Palestinians, their right to development and their right to self-determination. The settlement enterprise, including Israel's continued transfer of its population into the Occupied Palestinian Territory, also violates international

²⁶ Ministry of Public Works and Housing, http://www.mpwh.ps/index.php?option=com_content&view=article&id=223%3A2013-09-24-08-29-25&catid=35&lang=en, accessed on 25 March 2015.

²⁷ See Hamoked, Punitive House Demolitions, <http://www.hamoked.org/timeline.aspx?pageID=timelinehousedemolitions>.

²⁸ Information received from the United Nations Entity for Gender Equality and the Empowerment of Women (UN-Women).

humanitarian law (see [A/69/348](#), para. 11), and may have already “killed” the prospects for the two-State solution.²⁹

46. Yet, successive Israeli Government administrations pursued the expansion of those illegal settlements, “even as that very exercise fuels tension and conflict in the city and across the Occupied Palestinian Territory” (see [A/HRC/28/45](#), para. 47). By March 2015, there were approximately 250 Israeli settlements and an estimated 580,000 settlers in the Occupied Palestinian Territory.³⁰ Since May 2011, 25 of the 100 settlements that had not been officially authorized by the Israeli Government have been either “retroactively approved, or in the process following government-level instructions to advance their retroactive approval”.³¹

47. In at least the past decade 2014 was a record year regarding the publication of tenders for construction in Israeli settlements. In addition, on 30 January 2015, tenders for another 450 units in the West Bank were issued; 2014 also saw a 40 per cent increase in construction starts compared to 2013.³²

48. In September and October 2014, the Israeli Government announced plans to construct some 1,000 settlement units in occupied East Jerusalem. This announcement came directly after the Israeli decision at the end of September to accelerate the process of constructing another 2,600 residential units also in settlements in East Jerusalem.³³

Settler violence

49. Violence by Israeli settlers against Palestinians and their property in the West Bank, including East Jerusalem, continued with impunity, despite the fact that measures have been implemented by Israeli authorities to curb settler violence. UNRWA recorded 719 incidents of Israeli settler violence, harassment or other transgressions in the West Bank in 2014; 203 of the incidents occurred in and around the al-Aqsa Mosque compound in East Jerusalem.¹⁶ Of those incidents, 331 resulted in Palestinian casualties or damage to property in 2014. Another 62 such attacks were recorded in the first three months of 2015.³⁴

50. Israeli settlers also target fruit trees, mostly olive trees. During 2014, 10,596 trees were uprooted, burned or sprayed with toxic chemicals, leading to loss of production and exposure over soils to degradation.³⁵

51. Israeli authorities continue to take inadequate action against Israeli settlers who commit violent acts against Palestinians. This includes the failure to effectively and impartially investigate crimes committed by Israeli settlers and to hold the perpetrators accountable, thereby propagating a culture of impunity. Between 2005

²⁹ Office of the United Nations Special Coordinator for the Middle East Process, Briefing to the Security Council on the Situation in the Middle East, 26 March 2015.

³⁰ Palestinian Central Bureau of Statistics, Press Release on Israeli Settlements in Palestine, September 2014.

³¹ Yesh Din, Under the Radar, Israel’s silent policy of transforming unauthorized outposts into official settlements.

³² See Peace Now, available at peacenow.org.il/eng/Construction2014, accessed: 9 March 2015.

³³ UN-Habitat input citing the Department of Political Affairs of the United Nations Secretariat: 29 October 2014 briefing on the situation in Jerusalem.

³⁴ Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs, Humanitarian Bulletin Monthly Report, March 2015.

³⁵ Information received from United Nations Environment Programme (UNEP).

and 2014, 91.4 per cent of monitored cases were closed without any indictments of Israeli settlers (see [A/HRC/28/44](#), para. 51).

The West Bank barrier wall

52. In 2004, the International Court of Justice considered the construction of a wall in the West Bank illegal and “de facto annexation” (see [A/ES-10/273](#) and Corr.1). The Court also affirmed Israel’s obligation to cease its construction and dismantle constructed parts thereof, in addition to provide reparations, including restitution and compensation, to victims. Israel has so far failed to comply with the various components of the Court decision, and continues with the construction of the wall, with negative consequences for the Palestinian population (see [A/69/347](#), para. 27).

53. Approximately 445 km of the 712-km wall have been either completed or are currently under construction (28 km are under construction),³⁵ mostly inside the West Bank, along with related fences, ditches, razor wire, groomed sand paths, an electronic monitoring system, patrol roads and a buffer zone. Land for construction of the wall is requisitioned from Palestinian landowners by the Israeli Ministry of Defence through military orders.³⁶

54. The wall with its current planned route would isolate 9.4 per cent of the West Bank, including East Jerusalem, along with entire communities comprising approximately 11,000 Palestinians between the wall and the Green Line, an area labelled as the “seam zone”.³⁶

55. Palestinian farmers are obliged to obtain special permits to access their farming “seam zone”, which has been declared a “closed area”. In the past four years only half of such permit applications in the northern West Bank have been approved.³⁶

Mobility restrictions and closure policies

Gaza blockade and access-restricted areas

56. Israel has continued a blockade on the Gaza Strip imposed since 2007, “locking-in” over 1.8 million people in an area of land already recognized as one of the most densely populated in the world, which is experiencing worsening physical, economic and social living conditions.¹⁰ The blockade amounts to collective punishment of the civilian population, in violation of international law (see [A/69/347](#), para 30). The closure of the Rafah crossing with Egypt and the illegal smuggling tunnels further exacerbated these conditions.

57. The blockade restricts the access of people, including patients referred for medical treatment. The blockade also creates security-related delays and additional costs of transportation for imports of medical goods and equipment into Gaza.³⁷

58. In addition to overall restrictions on the movement of goods, the Israeli authorities define construction materials as “dual use items”, and consequently have severely restricted their import into the Gaza Strip since the imposition of the blockade. This has severely curtailed reconstruction and development efforts in

³⁶ Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs, 10 Years since the International Court of Justice Advisory Opinion, 2014.

³⁷ Information received from the World Health Organization (WHO).

Gaza, since imports of construction materials by United Nations agencies into Gaza remain subject to a lengthy and cumbersome approval process imposed by Israeli authorities.¹⁶

59. Although the temporary Gaza Reconstruction Mechanism³⁸ allowed approximately 71,000 families to purchase restricted building materials, those cases involved repairs of homes rather than reconstruction of destroyed ones. Delays in the clearance of projects through the Mechanism and other delays by the Palestinian Government compounded the slow pace of disbursement of pledges by donors, resulting in no housing reconstruction projects having been implemented as at the end of February 2015.¹³

60. After the Israeli 2014 summer offensive, the Israeli Government announced a relaxation on transfers of agricultural and fishery products from the Gaza Strip to the West Bank for the first time since 2007. Nevertheless, such a measure responds only partially to actual needs. (Non-agricultural commodities are still banned for transfer to the West Bank.)³⁹

61. In addition to the blockade, Israel continues to impose land and maritime access-restricted areas in the Gaza Strip. Following the end the summer offensive, the fishing zone was briefly expanded to six nautical miles from the coast and the “buffer zone” along the border was reduced from 300 to 100 metres.⁴⁰

62. However, in October 2014 Israel reverted to enforcing the access-restricted areas in the same manner as it had before the summer offensive, by using lethal force (see [A/HRC/28/45](#), para. 20).

Mobility restrictions in the West Bank

63. Obstacles facing Palestinian movement in the West Bank include physical and administrative restrictions.

64. In recent years, the Israeli authorities have gradually relaxed some of the movement restrictions within the West Bank. However, remaining restrictions continue to undermine livelihoods and access to basic services, hinder the ability of humanitarian organizations to deliver assistance and disrupt family and social life.¹⁴

65. “Barrier zones” surrounding the external boundaries of some of the settlements cover approximately 5,000 *dunams*,⁴¹ half of which encompass agricultural land privately owned by Palestinians. Palestinian farmers seeking to access their land need to have permits and coordinate their time of entry with the Israeli authorities.²

66. In general, access of Palestinians to East Jerusalem from other areas of the West Bank also remains subject to acquiring an Israeli permit.⁴² However, on

³⁸ The temporary mechanism is an agreement between the Israeli and Palestinian Governments, brokered by the United Nations in the aftermath of the Israeli offensive to enable reconstruction efforts in the Gaza Strip.

³⁹ Information received from the Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations (FAO).

⁴⁰ Gisha, *The Gaza Cheat Sheet*, January 2015.

⁴¹ 1 *dunam* = 1,000 m².

⁴² Information received from WHO citing Palestinian General Authority for Civilian Affairs office communication to WHO, 27 January 2015; WHO, “Crossing barriers to access health in the Occupied Palestinian Territory,” available at http://www.emro.who.int/images/stories/palestine/documents/WHORTH_crossing_barriers_to_access_health.pdf?ua=1, accessed 29 December 2014.

12 March 2015, the Israeli authorities announced that the entry of Palestinian men over the age of 55 and women over the age of 50 with West Bank identification cards would be allowed without a permit into East Jerusalem and Israel on a daily basis through two main checkpoints.³⁴

67. Israel also retains control over crossings from the West Bank into Jordan and, by extension, the outside world. Between 13 June and 13 August 2014, at least 3,393 Palestinians who tried to cross the Allenby Bridge into Jordan were turned away by the Israeli authorities on security grounds. This is compared to 1,266 Palestinians who were turned away at the bridge throughout 2013.⁴³

68. During 2014, UNRWA reported a total of 142 access-related incidents resulting in a loss to UNRWA of an estimated 240 workdays or 1,799 work-hours. For six months in 2014 (June to November), the Israeli authorities further restricted the movement of UNRWA staff members into the “seam zone”. From mid-September 2014, Israeli authorities changed access routes of United Nations and international organization trucks, further restricting and delaying the movement of humanitarian goods within the West Bank and to Gaza.¹⁶

Exploitation, endangerment and depletion of Palestinian natural resources

Impact of the 2014 summer offensive on Gaza

69. The summer Gaza conflict exacerbated already precarious environmental conditions. Insufficient investment for reconstruction and rehabilitation following the different military offensives that occurred in 2008, 2012 and 2014 has had a cumulative environmental impact, much of which poses direct risks to public health.³⁵

70. The water situation in Gaza was already alarming before the offensive. Over abstraction of Gaza’s only natural water source (the Coastal Aquifer Basin)⁴⁴ has led to, among other things, seawater infiltration. This, compounded with nitrate contamination and seepage of sewage, has left only 6.5 per cent of the water pumped from wells drinkable.¹⁴

71. During the Gaza conflict, 20 to 30 per cent of water and wastewater networks were damaged, affecting approximately 450,000 and 1 million people, respectively, whose access to related water and sanitation services was reduced as a result.⁴⁵

72. In addition, 202 wells, 57 km of main irrigation water carrier lines, 55 water reservoirs and 325 water collection ponds were destroyed along with 3,000 hectares of irrigation networks.³⁹

73. The Gaza conflict caused serious damage to Gaza’s main sewage treatment plant. This threatens to introduce diseases caused by poor sanitation, as well as an environmental disaster linked with the discharge of raw sewage into the environment. The entire sewerage and sewage system are on the verge of collapse,

⁴³ Hamoked, Report on Human Rights Violations Perpetrated by Israel in the Summer of 2014, January 2015.

⁴⁴ United Nations Economic and Social Commission for Western Asia (ESCWA); Bundesanstalt für Geowissenschaften und Rohstoffe). 2013. *Inventory of Shared Water Resources in Western Asia*. Beirut.

⁴⁵ United Nations Children’s Fund (UNICEF), State of Palestine Humanitarian Situation Report, 25 September 2015.

posing a severe threat to Gaza's groundwater resources. FAO has indicated that such damage will also make drinking water, which is already in short supply in Gaza, even more scarce.³⁵

74. Air pollution from fires resulting from the bombing and the remnants of explosive materials has a negative impact on health, alongside increased risks of contamination of water, air and soil. Children, older adults and those with heart or lung disease are most likely to be affected by this type of air pollution.³⁵

75. The heavy bombardment during the summer Gaza conflict resulted in the complete destruction of 1,035 hectares of fruit trees, 2,415 hectares of harvestable open field vegetables and 185 hectares of greenhouse vegetables. An additional 1,043 hectares of fruit trees, 447 hectares of harvestable open field vegetables and 390 hectares of harvestable protected vegetables were partially damaged. In addition, heavy soil damage was found in 3,450 hectares.³⁹

76. Forty per cent of poultry stock and 36 per cent of total productive livestock were destroyed. It is estimated that between 2010 and 2014, the number of sheep and goat herders fell by 22 per cent.³⁹

77. The tons of rubble, debris and pulverized building materials have potential adverse implications linked to the heavy metal impurities found in concrete, in addition to carcinogenic substances and other hazardous substances. It is estimated that 4 million tons of rubble were generated by the offensive and must be handled as hazardous waste.³⁵

Exploitation and endangerment in the West Bank

78. Palestinian public and private investments are forbidden in Area C in the West Bank, while Israeli settlers and corporations freely exploit natural resources in Area C, including marble, stone, building materials and Dead Sea minerals and salts.⁸

79. Israel retains nearly full control over water resources in the West Bank and utilizes discriminatory policies like the planning and zoning policies mentioned above. As an example, the daily share per capita of water consumption for Israelis reaches seven times that for Palestinians.⁴⁶ More than 70 Palestinian communities in Area C are not connected to the water network, and their residents rely on purchased water at vastly increased cost. The dire situation leads to water consumption rates in some of these communities as low as 20 litres per capita per day, one fifth of the 100 litres per capita per day recommended by the World Health Organization.⁴⁷

80. Since March 2014, tens of thousands of homes in Palestinian East Jerusalem neighbourhoods and refugee camps that are separated from the city by the wall have suffered from decreased water supply.⁴⁸

81. Mobility restrictions in the West Bank render an estimated 50 per cent of agricultural land therein inaccessible, hindering household and commercial production and decreasing jobs in this sector.²⁸

⁴⁶ See Palestinian Central Bureau of Statistics, available at www.pcbs.gov.ps/portals/_pcbs/PressRelease/Press_En_WWD2015E.pdf.

⁴⁷ Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs, Area C of the West Bank: Key Humanitarian Concerns Update August 2014.

⁴⁸ ACRI, Situation of Human Rights.

82. The Al-Minya landfill, a World Bank project built to meet 34 per cent of the West Bank's total Palestinian needs, has become a de facto landfill for waste generated by Israeli settlers, while Palestinians are prevented from using it.³⁵

83. The Gishori plant and other Israeli industrial installations in the Tulkarm area of the West Bank have raised environmental concerns, owing to the possibility that they may generate hazardous industrial pollution through the release of gas, liquid and solid emissions directly into the environment.³⁵

Socioeconomic conditions in the Occupied Palestinian Territory

Economic conditions

84. Even before the Gaza conflict last summer, the Palestinian economy was decelerating because of political uncertainty, continued fiscal problems of the Palestinian Government and the effects of the tunnel closure between Egypt and Gaza.⁴⁹

85. The pre-conflict situation in Gaza was particularly dire, with a humanitarian crisis gradually unfolding owing to the combined effects of recurring Israeli conflicts on top of the accumulated impact of an eight-year-long blockade. The closure of the Rafah crossing into Egypt, as well as the closing of the smuggling tunnels between Gaza and Egypt, exacerbated these dire conditions. Gaza's economy has been hollowed out not only by severe restrictions on exports and imports of raw materials and intermediate inputs, but also by the restrictions on cash transfers, which paralyze its banking sector.⁵⁰

86. As a result, real gross domestic product (GDP) in Gaza reached 2005 levels only in 2012, real GDP per capita remained below the 2005 levels even in 2014 and unemployment never fell below 25 per cent.⁴⁹

87. Fuel also became scarce, owing to insufficient storage capacity and the tunnel closures; the sole power plant in Gaza operates at half capacity. This has had an impact on the delivery of basic services, since many critical installations face power cuts of up to 18 hours daily.⁵¹ Along with the aforementioned deterioration in the water, sanitation and hygiene infrastructure and housing, living conditions in Gaza were at their worst since Israel occupied Gaza in 1967, which is why the impact of the military offensive was far more severe on the economy and the population in Gaza compared to all previous military developments.

88. As for the direct damage incurred during the Gaza conflict by economic institutions, the Palestinian Government reported that more than 20 per cent of Gaza's industrial enterprises and over 4,000 commercial and trade enterprises were destroyed or damaged.⁵² The total effect of the offensive on the agriculture sector was estimated at between \$450 million and \$550 million.⁵³

⁴⁹ International Monetary Fund, West Bank and Gaza: report to the Ad Hoc Liaison Committee, 12 September 2014.

⁵⁰ United Nations Centre for Trade and Development Trade and Development Board, Report on UNCTAD assistance to the Palestinian people: Developments in the economy of the Occupied Palestinian Territory. 7 July 2014.

⁵¹ See www.ochaopt.org/documents/ocha_opt_the_humanitarian_monitor_2014_02_25_english.pdf.

⁵² See The State of Palestine, The National Early Recovery and Reconstruction Plan for Gaza.

⁵³ Information received from FAO citing the Palestinian Ministry of Agriculture.

89. The international community pledged \$5.4 billion at a donor conference in October 2014 for the reconstruction and rehabilitation of Gaza. However, 30 international aid agencies issued a statement on 26 February 2015 warning that “little of the \$5.4 billion pledged in Cairo has reached Gaza”.⁵⁴ For example, in January 2015, UNRWA was forced to suspend its cash assistance programme in Gaza for repairs to 100,000 damaged and destroyed homes of Palestine refugees and for rental subsidies to the homeless.¹⁶

90. In the West Bank, economic development remains constrained by a multilayered system of movement and access restrictions,⁵⁵ including restricted access to Area C (see above).

91. The International Monetary Fund (IMF) forecasts that uncertainty will continue to restrain economic recovery in 2015, caused in particular by the stifling blockade, the slower than expected reconstruction of Gaza and the Israeli tax revenues freeze,⁵⁶ which represents around two thirds of net revenues and is essential to the budget of the Palestinian Government and the Palestinian economy.⁵⁷

92. The unemployment rate in the fourth quarter of 2014 stood at 42.8 per cent in the Gaza Strip and at 17.4 per cent in the West Bank (20.5 per cent among refugees), reflecting the unfolding recession and the impact of the Israeli offensive on Gaza.⁵⁸

93. The employment situation in Gaza can be described as “hyper-unemployment”, or consistently higher rates relative to neighbouring countries with similar cultural and demographic characteristics.⁵⁹

94. To make things worse, an estimated 17,200 persons lost their jobs because of the physical destruction of productive assets during the summer offensive against Gaza. That is equal to about 6.4 per cent of all employed persons and about 11.6 per cent of the private and non-governmental sectors’ employed workforce in 2013.⁵⁹

95. While the latest available data on poverty date back to 2011 (39 per cent in Gaza and 18 per cent in the West Bank), it is almost certain that stunted economic performance coupled with the summer Israeli offensive in Gaza has exacerbated the poverty situation and pushed additional Palestinian families into poverty, particularly in Gaza.⁶⁰

96. Israeli constraints in general and mobility restrictions in particular have had a disproportionately high impact on Palestinian women because women are more vulnerable to Israeli measures enforced at checkpoints, settler violence and prolonged commutes to work locations. Consequently, Palestinian women suffer higher unemployment rates, and their participation in the labour force is very low. Despite significant female educational achievements, the majority of employable

⁵⁴ Joint statement by 30 international aid agencies: “We must not fail in Gaza”, 26 February 2015.

⁵⁵ International Labour Organization, International Labour Conference, 103rd session, 2014, Report of the Director-General, Appendix, The situation of workers of the occupied Arab territories (Geneva, International Labour Office).

⁵⁶ Revenues collected by Israel on goods imported into the occupied West Bank and Gaza.

⁵⁷ IMF contribution, available at www.imf.org/external/np/sec/pr/2015/pr1524.htm.

⁵⁸ Palestinian Central Bureau of Statistics, press release on the results of the Labour Force Survey, (October-December, 2014).

⁵⁹ Information received from International Labour Organization (ILO).

⁶⁰ World Bank, Economic Monitoring Report to the Ad Hoc Liaison Committee, 22 September 2014.

Palestinian women (nearly 1.1 million) are outside the labour force. The situation of women in Gaza is particularly problematic, with women suffering from an unemployment rate of 59.3 per cent, reaching as high as 83.3 per cent among women between the ages of 15 and 29.⁶¹ In order to augment household income, many women have been forced to take unprotected, low-paying jobs close to home in the informal and unprotected sectors.⁸

Food security

97. Given the deteriorating economic situation, food insecurity in Palestine remained at very high levels in 2013, with one third of households (1.6 million people) considered food insecure and 16 per cent of households vulnerable to food insecurity.⁶²

98. Based on 2013 data, one year before the 2014 summer offensive, 57 per cent of Gazan households were food insecure, while 14 per cent of households (188,397 people) were vulnerable to food insecurity. In the West Bank, 19 per cent of households were food insecure; and in the refugee camps the level of food insecurity reached 29 per cent.⁶²

99. During the 2014 summer offensive, up to 71 per cent of the population in Gaza became food insecure, as prices of basic foodstuffs soared 40 and 179 per cent. In seven weeks, most Palestinians in Gaza could no longer meet their most basic needs.²⁸ Thus, UNRWA had to effectively support the entire population of the Gaza Strip.¹⁶

100. Almost 868,000 Palestine refugees depend on food aid from UNRWA. In 2000, less than 10 per cent (72,000 people) of the Gaza population relied on food assistance. The situation deteriorated rapidly with the inception of the blockade.¹⁶

Public health

101. Before the Gaza conflict, the health sector in Gaza was already in a dire situation. During the conflict itself, 17 hospitals and 56 clinics incurred damage;⁶³ 23 health workers were killed (16 while on duty); 83 were injured, the majority of whom were ambulance drivers; and 32 Palestinian Red Crescent Society ambulances were damaged or destroyed.⁶⁴ By March 2015, health services had only regained about two thirds of their functionality compared to the pre-offensive level.⁶⁵

102. On the eve of the Gaza conflict, drug and medical consumable shortages in Gaza reached over 28 per cent in essential drugs and 54 per cent of medical consumables were at zero stock.⁶⁶ A tracer study of 48 critical drugs showed that

⁶¹ Economic and Social Council for Western Asia, *Social and Economic Situation of Palestinian Women and Girls, July 2012-June 2014*, (2015).

⁶² See UNRWA, www.unrwa.org/newsroom/press-releases/food-insecurity-palestine-remains-high.

⁶³ Information received from WHO citing Health Cluster, *Gaza Strip: Joint Health Sector Assessment Report*, available at www.emro.who.int/images/stories/palestine/documents/Joint_Health_Sector_Assessment_Report_Gaza_Sept_2014-final.pdf?ua=1.

⁶⁴ International Committee of the Red Cross, *Disaster Relief Emergency Fund operation: Final Report, Occupied Palestinian Territory: Complex Emergency*.

⁶⁵ Information received from the United Nations Population Fund.

⁶⁶ See WHO, www.emro.who.int/images/stories/WHO_Gaza_donor_alert.pdf.

40 per cent were at zero stock at the district level and 46 per cent were at zero stock at the clinic level in June 2014.³⁷

103. Access to reproductive health services has also deteriorated as a result of the protracted blockade and the summer offensive on Gaza; 17 cases of maternal deaths have been recorded since July 2014, compared to 12 such cases throughout 2013.⁶⁵

104. The destruction of private homes, coupled with the inability to reconstruct some 5,000 housing units destroyed in previous military operations, has aggravated the severe shelter crisis in Gaza: some 100,000 people are currently displaced, with 12,000 of them hosted in UNRWA collective centres. Private shelters in the Gaza Strip are becoming increasingly overcrowded, particularly in refugee camps, where the highest population densities are reported. Compounded with substandard housing conditions and power cuts of up to 16 hours a day, overcrowding results in the deterioration of health and hygiene, which, in turn, heightens public health risks.¹⁶

105. Overall, the psychosocial stress caused by violence left 425,000 children in need of psychosocial support, including focused counselling in many cases.⁶⁷ An additional 60,000 children are in need of child protection services.⁶⁸

106. UNRWA school-based counsellors reported that refugee children in Gaza, especially boys, exhibit emotional and behavioural problems and academic underperformance, primarily as a result of psychosocial distress.¹⁶

107. In the West Bank, particularly in Area C, the ability of Palestinian institutions and their development partners suffer from the inability to construct basic health clinics. This forces communities to rely on expensive mobile clinic services for basic primary health care. Restrictions on the rehabilitation, repair and construction of basic water and sanitation infrastructure severely impede access to adequate water, sanitation and hygiene services in many communities, reducing their resilience and increasing their risk of displacement.³

108. The wall, checkpoints and settlement road networks hinder access to health care for the population in Area C, especially those in isolated communities. The entry of ambulances, mobile units and health personnel into restricted or marginalized areas is often obstructed or subject to permits and delays, jeopardizing patient health.⁴²

109. Refugee camps in the West Bank suffer from overcrowdedness and lack of adequate infrastructure. Out of 19 refugee camps in the West Bank, 5 camps show population densities of over 100,000 persons per km², and 6 camps have between 50,000 and 100,000 persons per square kilometre. Only half of them have an adequate sewerage network.¹⁶

⁶⁷ United Nations Children's Fund, Humanitarian Action for Children: State of Palestine, 2015, available at www.unicef.org/appeals/files/Final_2015_HAC_State_of_Palestine.pdf.

⁶⁸ UNICEF State of Palestine situation report, 21 August 2014.

Education

110. During the 51-day Gaza conflict, 26 schools were completely destroyed and 122 damaged,⁶⁹ 83 of which were UNRWA schools.¹⁶

111. UNRWA school buildings are being used as shelters and the continuously growing student population, about 87 per cent of the 252 UNRWA schools in the Gaza Strip, are operating on double or triple shifts (an increase from 71 per cent in 2013). As a result, refugee children in Gaza receive a severely truncated education and have little or no opportunity to engage in recreational or creative pursuits.¹⁶

112. In the West Bank restrictions on construction and rehabilitation permits have left the already insufficient number of Palestinian schools in a precarious state (see [A/69/81-E/2014/13](#), paras. 105-111).

113. Palestinians students continue to suffer from practices of the Israeli military and settler attacks. Incidents involving schools almost tripled in the West Bank, including East Jerusalem, from 2013 to 2014, affecting nearly 25,000 Palestinian children.⁷⁰

III. Occupied Syrian Golan

114. Since 1967, Israel has continued to occupy the Syrian Golan, despite numerous resolutions of various United Nations bodies, including Security Council resolution 497 (1981), in which the Council deemed Israel's decision to impose its laws, jurisdiction and administration on the occupied Syrian Golan null and void, and called upon Israel to desist from the establishment of settlements and altering the demographic composition of occupied territory. Nevertheless, by 2014 there were approximately 21,000 Israeli inhabitants in 33 settlements and 20,000 Syrian citizens in 6 villages (see [A/HRC/28/44](#), para. 54).

115. The role of the Israeli Government in supporting illegal settlement expansion in the occupied Syrian Golan is reflected in the funding from the State treasury of Israel through the Settlements Division of the World Zionist Organization. Approximately \$6.4 million of those funds were reportedly allocated to the northern district, which includes the occupied Syrian Golan (see [A/69/355](#), para. 93), at a time when Syrian construction in Syrian villages continues without permits, despite restrictions. Syrians are forced to construct vertically, instead of horizontally, as they are not able to acquire additional land.⁵⁵

116. Israeli settlers enjoy disproportionate benefits in terms of water and agricultural resources (see [A/69/355](#), para. 92), while Syrian residents continue to suffer from Israeli-imposed restrictions on access to such resources (see [CCPR/C/ISR/CO/4](#), para. 17).

117. Syrian farmers have been allowed 200 cubic metres of water for every *dunam*, a quantity that is considerably lower than the minimum 600 cubic metres needed. Syrian farmers usually receive one fourth of the allocation granted to Israeli settlers. Furthermore, although Israeli settlements in the Golan do not suffer from lack of

⁶⁹ United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization, Rapid Assessment of Higher Education Institutions in Gaza, citing the Multi-Cluster/Agency Initial Rapid Assessment.

⁷⁰ See Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs, press release, 26 February 2015.

water, the Israeli authorities informed Syrian farmers that there would be a 50 per cent reduction in their water allocation.⁵⁵

118. In 2014 Israel reportedly approved the development of 30,000 *dunums* of land in the occupied Syrian Golan, including the establishment of farming estates and investment in agricultural training, upgrades of water systems and landmine clearance, to the benefit of Israeli settlers (see [A/69/355](#), para. 92).

119. Israel's tight control of the labour force and entrepreneurial activity continues to frustrate any search for healthy economic and social interaction for Syrian workers. Neither workers nor entrepreneurs can engage in decent work, and full respect for fundamental principles and rights at work remains elusive.⁵⁵

120. In addition to land and water, Israel continues to exploit natural resources in the occupied Syrian Golan, including gas and oil (see [A/HRC/25/38](#), para. 48). Israel granted the United States-based company Genie Energy a licence early in 2013 to explore for oil and gas in a 153-square-mile radius in the southern part of the occupied Syrian Golan. The company continues prospecting for oil through a local subsidiary in the occupied territory (see [A/69/355](#), para. 94).

IV. Conclusion

121. Israel continues to employ measures and practices that entail violations of international humanitarian law and international human rights law. Concerns have been mounting regarding some of these measures and policies, particularly regarding the violations of the principle of non-discrimination and the right to self-determination.

122. Such policies include the illegal settlement enterprise, collective punishment and disregard for human life and dignity, which affect all aspects of Palestinian society and economy. They also undermine the prospects for peace and entail violations of international law.

123. Israel must end its occupation and comply with international law and legitimacy. There are no prospects for peace unless this happens. The failure of the international community to expedite this outcome will only increase the suffering.



General Assembly Economic and Social Council

Distr.: General
10 May 2016

Original: English

**General Assembly
Seventy-first session**

Item 60 of the preliminary list*

Permanent sovereignty of the Palestinian people in the Occupied Palestinian Territory, including East Jerusalem, and of the Arab population in the occupied Syrian Golan over their natural resources

**Economic and Social Council
2016 session**

24 July 2015-27 July 2016

Agenda item 16

Economic and social repercussions of the Israeli occupation on the living conditions of the Palestinian people in the Occupied Palestinian territory, including East Jerusalem, and the Arab population in the occupied Syrian Golan

Economic and social repercussions of the Israeli occupation on the living conditions of the Palestinian people in the Occupied Palestinian territory, including East Jerusalem, and the Arab population in the occupied Syrian Golan

Note by the Secretary-General

Summary

In its resolution 2015/17, the Economic and Social Council requested the Secretary-General to submit to the General Assembly at its seventieth session, through the Council, a report on the implementation of that resolution. The Assembly, in its resolution 70/225, also requested the Secretary-General to submit a report to it at its seventy-first session. The present report, which was prepared by the Economic and Social Commission for Western Asia, has been submitted in compliance with the resolutions of the Council and the Assembly.

The report covers persistent Israeli practices and policies, particularly those that are in violation of international humanitarian law and international human rights law and that affect the social and economic conditions of the people living under its military occupation. Israel employs discriminatory policies and practices, excessive use of force and mobility restrictions, including the blockade on Gaza, settlement expansion, property destruction and exploitation of natural resources in the Occupied Palestinian Territory and the occupied Syrian Golan. Impunity is afforded to Israeli security and military personnel and settlers. The cumulative impact of these policies and practices not only violates the rights of the population, but also exacerbates their social and economic conditions.

* A/71/50.



The Economic and Social Commission for Western Asia would like to express its appreciation for the substantive contributions of the United Nations Relief and Works Agency for Palestine Refugees in the Near East (UNRWA), the United Nations Environment Programme (UNEP), the International Labour Organization (ILO), the United Nations Conference on Trade and Development (UNCTAD), the Office of the High Commissioner for Human Rights (OHCHR), the League of Arab States (LAS), the Office of the Special Representative of the Secretary-General for Children and Armed Conflict, the Office for Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs, the United Nations Children's Fund (UNICEF) and the Office of the United Nations Special Coordinator for the Middle East Peace Process.

I. Introduction

1. The Economic and Social Council, in its resolution 2015/17, and the General Assembly, in its resolution 70/225, expressed concerns over the practices of Israel, the occupying Power, in the Occupied Palestinian Territory and the occupied Syrian Golan that were in violation of international humanitarian law. Those practices have ranged from causing death and injury to civilians, including children, women and peaceful demonstrators, all of whom must be protected in accordance with international humanitarian law, to violence by illegal armed Israeli settlers against Palestinian civilians and their properties, to the continued detention of thousands of Palestinians, including children and women, under harsh conditions. The Council and Assembly also expressed their concern regarding the continued expansion by Israel of settlements, the construction of the wall inside the Occupied Palestinian Territory, the exploitation of Palestinian natural resources, the increased demolition of homes, the state of economic institutions, agricultural lands and infrastructure, the revocation of residency rights of Palestinians in and around occupied East Jerusalem and the ongoing Israeli military operations throughout the Occupied Palestinian Territory, including East Jerusalem, as well as policies of closure and severe restrictions on the movement of persons and goods, including what in effect amounts to a blockade on the Gaza Strip. In the above-mentioned resolutions, the Council and Assembly also highlighted the detrimental impact of Israeli practices.

II. The Occupied Palestinian Territory

2. In spite of the 2004 advisory opinion of the International Court of Justice on the *Legal Consequences of the Construction of a Wall in the Occupied Palestinian Territory* (A/ES-10/273 and Corr.1), as well as other assertions (see General Assembly resolution 70/88 and A/69/711-S/2015/1), Israel continues to challenge the established fact that international humanitarian law, particularly the Fourth Geneva Convention, is applicable in the Occupied Palestinian Territory.¹ The recurrent violations by Israel of international human rights law and international humanitarian law have become entrenched through Israeli policies and practices, and the lack of accountability for the violations further deepens the Palestinians' sense of injustice (see A/70/392, paras. 14-15).

3. Israeli policies and practices undermine the right of the Palestinian people to self-determination and, since 1967, their cumulative effects have had a debilitating effect on the Palestinians (see A/HRC/31/43, para. 6, A/70/351, para. 79 and A/70/392, para. 86).

4. Tensions and violence erupted in the Occupied Palestinian Territory, particularly in the West Bank, including East Jerusalem, in October 2015, in the context of prolonged occupation, settlement expansion and settler violence² and in the aftermath of clashes at the Al-Aqsa Mosque, with Palestinians perceiving Israel as trying to change the status quo at the holy sites. On 26 January 2016, in his remarks to the Security Council on the situation in the Middle East, the Secretary-

¹ See resolution 70/88 and Alan Baker, "International humanitarian law, ICRC and Israel's status in the Territories", *International Review of the Red Cross*, vol. 94, No. 888 (Winter 2012).

² Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs, "2016 Humanitarian needs overview". Available from http://reliefweb.int/sites/reliefweb.int/files/resources/hno_december29_final.pdf.

General highlighted the growing frustration felt by Palestinians, linked to Israeli actions that were chipping away the viability of a Palestinian State and the ability of the Palestinian people to live in dignity; in a briefing to the Council on 22 October 2015, his deputy referred to the stifling and humiliating occupation that had lasted almost half a century.

Segregation and discrimination

5. The existence and expansion of illegal Israeli settlements on occupied Palestinian land lie at the heart of discriminatory Israeli policies and human rights violations, which include home demolitions and the resulting displacement, discriminatory allocation of water and provision of access to land, movement restrictions, and the discriminatory legal system (see [A/HRC/31/73](#), para. 32).

6. The settlers' presence increases tension, and the Israeli security forces and army are deployed to defend the settlements. Consequently, the security of Israeli settlers outplays that of Palestinians, undermining the equal application of the law (see [A/70/351](#), para. 80).

7. The dual justice system in the occupied territory appears to be pitted against the protected population (see [A/70/392](#), para. 85). While Palestinians lack access to civil justice, it is rare for Israeli settlers to be held accountable for acts of violence they commit against Palestinians, and Israeli army and security forces are also seldom held accountable for the violations they commit against Palestinians (see [A/70/82-E/2015/13](#), paras. 8, 9, 30 and 51).

8. The Israeli zoning and planning regime in the West Bank, including East Jerusalem, is restrictive and discriminatory and is incompatible with international law. The regime caters to the interests of Israeli settlements at the expense of the needs of the Palestinians. It makes it practically impossible for Palestinians living in Area C, which constitutes 62 per cent of the West Bank (see [A/70/82-E/2015/13](#), para. 16), to obtain building permits (see [A/HRC/31/43](#), para. 45). Palestinians in East Jerusalem suffer from the same difficulties. Even if they manage to find land on which to build, which is limited in the city, they often cannot afford the high prices of building permits (see [A/70/392](#), para. 65).

9. Discrimination in planning and zoning is reflected in the land available for construction in Area C, where Israeli authorities have permitted Palestinian construction on what amounts to approximately 0.4 per cent of Area C, compared to 20 per cent of the same area with approved plans for illegal Israeli settlements.³ Only 1.5 per cent of Palestinian permit applications are approved.⁴ Similarly in East Jerusalem, Palestinian construction is only allowed on 13 per cent of the municipal area of the city that is already built up, while 35 per cent of city area has been expropriated for Israeli settlements.⁵

³ See “‘One UN’ approach to spatial planning in ‘Area C’ of the occupied West Bank” (United Nations, September 2015).

⁴ Press release, Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs (17 February 2016). Available from <http://reliefweb.int/report/occupied-palestinian-territory/humanitarian-coordinator-calls-israel-halt-demolitions>.

⁵ See “2016 Humanitarian needs overview: Occupied Palestinian Territory” (Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs).

10. As of May 2015, an estimated 13,000 Palestinian structures in Area C⁶ and 20,000 homes in East Jerusalem⁷ lacked Israeli permits and were under threat of pending demolition orders. Little legal protection is afforded to Palestinians facing demolition orders, creating a coercive environment that eventually drives communities off the land they had inhabited for generations (A/HRC/31/43, para. 46, and A/70/392, para. 39).

11. Since 1967, the Government of Israel has sought to secure a Jewish majority and attain full control over East Jerusalem, through the construction of Israeli settlements, outposts, bypass roads and the wall. Those measures have been coupled with a set of discriminatory policies targeting Palestinians, including freezing the registration of land ownership in Jerusalem and its environs.⁸

12. The Special Rapporteur on the situation of human rights in the Palestinian territories occupied since 1967 expressed grave concern about Israeli policies that aim to achieve a particular demographic balance in East Jerusalem. Those policies work to stifle the natural growth of the Palestinian population in the city, preventing Palestinians from moving there and pressuring Palestinians to leave. The policies violate the rights of Palestinians to freedom of movement, adequate housing, access to education and health services, respect for family life and freedom from discrimination (see A/70/392, para. 68). The Special Rapporteur was also troubled by the fact the Israeli Local Outline Plan — Jerusalem 2000 does not mention Palestinians or East Jerusalem, but instead refers to “Arab residents in the eastern part of the city” (see A/70/392, paras. 62 and 68).

13. The above-mentioned policies and restrictions, coupled with the construction of the wall in the West Bank, have exacerbated the socioeconomic situation of the Palestinians of East Jerusalem. More than 75 per cent of them live under the poverty line, compared to 30.8 per cent of the residents of Israel (2013).⁷

14. In addition to the severe lack of services for and neglect of Palestinian neighbourhoods in East Jerusalem,⁷ and discriminatory budget allocation (see A/70/406 and Corr.1, para. 37), Palestinian residents of Jerusalem must contend with Israeli residency policies. Under one Israeli law, residencies of Palestinians who fail to continuously prove their residency in the city are withdrawn. Another law denies the children and spouses of Palestinian permanent residents automatic residency status in the city. As a result, several thousand Palestinian children are without residency status (see A/70/392, para. 63).

15. Israeli policies in the West Bank, including East Jerusalem, apparently have the common objective of forcible displacement and the fostering of a hostile environment that contributed to the expansion of settlements (see A/70/406 and Corr.1, para. 34).

Excessive use of force and arbitrary detention

16. The eruption of violence in October throughout the West Bank led to a sharp rise in casualties. Overall, during the reporting period, 212 Palestinians were killed

⁶ Ibid.

⁷ See Association for Civil Rights in Israel, “East Jerusalem 2015: facts and figures” (May 2015).

⁸ United Nations Human Settlements Programme (UN-Habitat), *Right to Develop: Planning Palestinian Communities in East Jerusalem* (East Jerusalem, 2015), p. 1.

by the Israeli army, security forces or settlers including 40 children. Another 16,333 were injured, including more than 2,600 children.⁹

17. Of the Palestinian casualties, 188 were killed and approximately 15,000 injured after October 2015, many of whom were killed while allegedly carrying out attacks against Israelis.¹⁰

18. During the reporting period, 29 Israelis were also killed, including 26 civilians, and 272 were injured, including 169 civilians.

19. In the West Bank, accountability is generally lacking in cases of excessive use of force by Israeli security forces (see [A/70/392](#), paras. 76-85). Serious concerns exist over the excessive use of force by Israeli security forces in the context of attacks and alleged attacks by Palestinians and during clashes, and ongoing settler violence (see [A/HRC/31/73](#), para. 5), including cases, some of which have been captured on video, strongly suggesting unlawful killings (see [A/HRC/31/40](#), para. 10, and [A/HRC/31/73](#), paras. 19 and 23) in some instances appearing to amount to extrajudicial killings and summary executions. One such example is the shooting of Abed al-Fatah al-Sharif on 24 March 2016, in Hebron, West Bank, by an Israeli soldier as he lay incapacitated following his alleged role in a knife attack.¹¹

20. The Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Human Rights expressed concern about reports of deaths attributed to a delay in the provision of medical assistance to wounded suspects, or owing to the intentional blocking of ambulances and first responders by Israeli security forces (see [A/HRC/31/40](#), para. 16).

21. Israeli security forces have continued to use live ammunition in law enforcement operations in the Occupied Palestinian Territory, particularly since September 2015, reportedly in an extensive and often unwarranted manner. This includes the use of firearms against demonstrators and persons attempting to evacuate the wounded (see [A/HRC/31/40](#), paras. 18-25).

22. In his report to the Human Rights Council on 11 January 2016, the Special Rapporteur on the situation of human rights in the Palestinian territories occupied since 1967 recalled the well-documented violations related to the Israeli occupation policies and saw a critical need for the international community to increase its protection of the Palestinian population (see [A/HRC/31/73](#), para. 67).

Detention and ill-treatment

23. According to Addameer Prisoner Support and Human Rights Association, since 1967, up to 20 per cent of the Palestinian population had at some point been detained by Israeli authorities (see [A/70/392](#), para. 73). By the end of January 2016,

⁹ ESCWA calculations, based on information obtained from “Humanitarian bulletin” (Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs, January 2016) and “Protection of civilians” (Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs, 22-28 March 2015).

¹⁰ Ibid.

¹¹ Press releases, Office of the High Commissioner for Human Rights: 16 November 2015, available from <http://www.ohchr.org/EN/NewsEvents/Pages/DisplayNews.aspx?NewsID=16759&LangID=E>; and 30 March 2016, available from <http://www.ohchr.org/EN/NewsEvents/Pages/DisplayNews.aspx?NewsID=18544&LangID=E#sthash.L0WRsNrv.dpuf>.

6,945 Palestinians were being held in Israeli prisons, including 568 administrative detainees.¹²

24. The number of Palestinian children in detention jumped from 193 in September 2015 to 415 in January 2016.¹³ This sharp increase raises concerns about meeting international law requirements that children be arrested and detained only as a last resort.¹⁴ In East Jerusalem, 860 Palestinian children were arrested, 136 of them between the ages of 7 and 11.¹⁵

25. A development of concern is the reinstatement of the administrative detention of children, which had not been in practice in East Jerusalem since 2000 and in the rest of the West Bank since 2011. Between October and December 2015, six children were placed in administrative detention by Israeli authorities.¹⁵

26. International humanitarian law¹⁶ prohibits the transfer of detainees outside the occupied territory. However, the majority of Palestinian detainees, including children, are held in Israeli prisons inside Israel (A/70/392, para. 73). This constitutes a grave breach of the Fourth Geneva Convention (A/HRC/31/40, para. 43).

27. The utilization of administrative detention by Israel is inconsistent with the exceptional nature of detention permitted under article 78 of the Fourth Geneva Convention. During the reporting period, a number of Palestinian administrative detainees resorted to hunger strikes to protest their detention without charges (see A/HRC/31/40, paras. 42 and 44).

28. On 30 July 2015 the Israeli Knesset passed a law that allows force-feeding detainees on hunger strike, in a move that does not comply with human rights standards and is tantamount to cruel, inhuman and degrading treatment, even if intended for their benefit.¹⁷ The Israeli Medical Association considers that forced feeding is equivalent to torture.¹⁸

29. According to B'tselem, ill-treatment, abuse and torture of Palestinian prisoners and detainees, particularly during interrogations, have continued with the backing of all State authorities.¹⁹ B'tselem and Hamoked concluded in 2015 that cruel, inhuman and degrading treatment of Palestinian detainees was inherent, institutionalized and implemented with full immunity.²⁰

30. The United Nations and partners continued to document cases of ill-treatment of children by Israeli security forces during their arrest and detention in the West Bank and East Jerusalem.¹⁵

¹² B'tselem, http://www.btselem.org/statistics/detainees_and_prisoners (accessed 29 March 2016).

¹³ Ibid.

¹⁴ Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs, "2016 Humanitarian needs overview". Available from http://reliefweb.int/sites/reliefweb.int/files/resources/hno_december29_final.pdf.

¹⁵ Information received from the United Nations Children's Fund.

¹⁶ Articles 47 and 76 of the Fourth Geneva Convention.

¹⁷ Press release, World Health Organization (WHO) (8 August 2015). Available from <http://www.emro.who.int/pse/palestine-news/un-joint-statement-on-new-israeli-law-on-force-feeding-of-detainees.html>.

¹⁸ Israeli Medical Association, "The physician's guide to treating the detainee/prisoner on a hunger strike" (June 2014).

¹⁹ B'tselem, "Abuse and torture of detainees are immoral and illegal measures" (15 December 2015).

²⁰ B'tselem and Hamoked, *Backed by the System: Abuse and Torture at the Shikma Interrogation Facility* (December 2015).

31. Medical negligence and lack of adequate medical care in the treatment of Palestinians in Israeli detention centres continue to be reported (A/70/406, para. 56).

32. On 20 July 2015, Israel amended its Penal Code regarding throwing stones, stipulating that anyone throwing stones or any other object at moving vehicles could be sentenced to 20 years of imprisonment. This has raised concerns since most of those charged with stone-throwing are Palestinian children (A/70/392, para. 71), and as of October 2015 the conviction rate for Palestinians arrested by Israeli security forces stood at a worrisome 99 per cent (see A/70/406, para. 53).

33. The Association for Civil Rights in Israel flagged a series of legislative changes and guidelines indicating that the central — and perhaps even the sole — consideration the authorities take into account is the deterrence of minors, and not their rehabilitation and return to normative conduct, which is contrary to the principles of the Convention on the Rights of the Child.²¹

Population displacement, property destruction and land confiscation

34. In the Gaza Strip, over 76,000 people remain displaced as a consequence of the 2014 Israeli summer offensive.²²

35. In the West Bank, the destruction of homes and livelihoods, forced evictions and relocation plans, settler violence, movement and access restrictions and, particularly in East Jerusalem, settler takeover of homes as well as laws regarding residency (see para. 14) have all contributed to the continued forced displacement of Palestinians.²

36. Home demolitions in the West Bank and East Jerusalem continue at an alarming rate, in violation of international humanitarian law, which prohibits the destruction of property in an occupied territory.²³

37. During 2015, mostly citing the lack of building permits, Israeli authorities demolished 544 structures in the West Bank, including 79 in East Jerusalem, displacing 757 Palestinians.²⁴ In the first two months of 2016, more than 321 structures, including 88 homes, were demolished.²³ In addition to demolitions, Palestinians also face the threat of settlers taking over their homes (see A/70/392, para. 66). Among the structures destroyed in the West Bank, one third (108) had been provided as humanitarian assistance by aid organizations.²²

38. In 2014, Israel resumed the practice of punitive home demolitions, whereby homes of the families of attackers or suspected attackers are demolished (see A/70/82-E/2015/13, para. 42). On 14 October 2015, the Government of Israel officially reinstated this policy, which includes sealing houses to render them uninhabitable.²⁵ Israeli authorities demolished or rendered uninhabitable 25 homes during 2015, and 4 during the first two months of 2016.²⁶

²¹ Nisreen Alyan and Maytal Russo, “Arrested childhood: the ramifications of Israel’s new strict policy toward minors suspected of involvement in stone throwing, security offenses, and disturbances” (Association for Civil Rights in Israel, February 2016).

²² Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs, “Humanitarian bulletin” (February 2016).

²³ Press Release, Humanitarian Coordinator calls on Israel to halt demolitions in the occupied West Bank immediately and to respect international law, 17 February 2016.

²⁴ Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs, “Humanitarian bulletin” (January 2016).

²⁵ Information received from UNRWA.

²⁶ See B’tselem, http://www.btselem.org/punitive_demolitions/statistics (accessed 29 March 2016).

39. Proposals by the Israeli Government to revoke the residency rights of family members of suspected attackers (see [A/HRC/31/40](#), para. 31) or to allow their deportation to Gaza are other causes for concern.²⁷ Such practices constitute a form of illegal collective punishment and violate the right of Palestinians to adequate housing, despite prohibitions of forced evictions.²⁸

40. In 2015, the Government of Israel took significant procedural and legal steps towards relocating some 50 Palestinian Bedouin communities in Area C. The relocation may amount to individual and mass forcible transfers, which are a breach of the Fourth Geneva Convention (see [A/HRC/31/43](#), para. 49). Such forcible transfers, which are apparently linked to Israeli settlement expansion (see [A/70/351](#), para. 20), threaten the culture, social fabric and livelihoods of Bedouin communities. This was the case with approximately 150 Bedouin families that were relocated in the 1990s to make way for settlement expansion.²⁹

41. Israel continues to confiscate and expropriate Palestinian land in the West Bank, including East Jerusalem. Those measures also appear to be linked to the expansion of illegal settlements, the construction of the wall in the West Bank and the establishment of bypass roads mainly for the sole use of settlers.³⁰

42. According to the Applied Research Institute — Jerusalem, in 2015 Israel confiscated 3,670.6 dunums³¹ of land in the West Bank and 615.2 dunums in East Jerusalem.³⁰ In the first three months of 2016, Israel also confiscated a total of 3,842 dunums in the West Bank.³² This is in addition to more than 1,010,000 dunums, which represents more than 20 per cent of the West Bank area, including East Jerusalem, that have been confiscated since 1967.³³

43. On 15 April 2015, the Supreme Court of Israel reaffirmed the application of the Absentees' Property Law, which allows the continued confiscation of property and assets in East Jerusalem whose owners reside in other parts of the West Bank or in Gaza (see [A/70/406](#), para. 48).

44. The Government of Israel continues to support and promote settler takeovers of land, through methods including building housing units, allocating agricultural lands for settlements, declaring sites as archaeological or national parks, and developing infrastructure on Palestinian land (see [A/HRC/31/43](#), para. 13).

Settlements and settler violence

45. Israeli settlements and their expansion lie at the root of a broad spectrum of human rights violations in the West Bank, including East Jerusalem (see

²⁷ Lahav Harkov, *Jerusalem Post*, "Broad support in Knesset for bill to deport terrorists' families to Gaza" (9 March 2016). Available from <http://www.jpost.com/Israel-News/Broad-support-for-bill-to-deport-terrorists-families-to-Gaza-447367>.

²⁸ [A/HRC/31/40](#), paras. 29 and 31; see also article 11 of the International Covenant on Economic, Social and Cultural Rights.

²⁹ Press release, Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs (19 January 2016), available from https://www.ochaopt.org/documents/hc_unrwa_joint_statement_abu_nuwar_final.pdf; and information received from UNRWA.

³⁰ Information received from UNEP.

³¹ 1 dunum = 1,000 square metres.

³² Peace Now, "The Government declares 2,342 dunums south of Jericho as State Land" (15 March 2016). Available from <http://peacenow.org.il/eng/JerichoDeclaration100316>.

³³ *Ibid.*

[A/HRC/31/43](#), para. 5). Israeli settlement policies also violate international humanitarian law and a number of Security Council resolutions (see [A/70/351](#), paras. 83 and 84). The policies of the Government of Israel towards the settlements, including retroactive legalization of unauthorized outposts (25 since 2011),³⁴ amount to the unlawful transfer of its own population into occupied territory (see [A/70/351](#), para. 83).

46. The settlements have led to the fragmentation of the West Bank, restricted Palestinian access to natural resources in the occupied territory and to the subsequent impediment to the Palestinian people's right to self-determination (see [A/HRC/31/43](#), paras. 5 and 6).

47. By the end of 2014, there were approximately 570,700 Israeli settlers in the Occupied Palestinian Territory (370,700 in the West Bank and 200,000 in East Jerusalem),³⁵ living in more than 150 settlements³⁶ and approximately 100 outposts.³⁷ The United Nations Environment Programme reported that the settler population in the West Bank may have reached 750,000.³⁰

Settler violence

48. Palestinians continue to suffer from settler violence, while settlers have been perceived as enjoying significant impunity for the attacks they perpetrate against Palestinians and their properties, notwithstanding a number of settler arrests in this context.³⁸

49. In 2015, 898 Israeli settler attacks on Palestinians and their property, fields and religious sites were reported,³⁰ and in the first three months of 2016, 30 incidents of settler attacks resulted in injuries to Palestinians or damage to property.³⁹

50. On 31 July 2015, settlers burned the Dawabsha family home in Duma, killing a toddler and his parents and badly injuring his four-year-old brother (see [A/70/392](#), para. 47). In January 2016, an Israeli settler and a minor were indicted for this murder. On 20 March 2016, the home of Ibrahim Dawabsheh, who was the sole witness to the first arson attack, was also the target of an arson attack.²⁵

Mobility restrictions and closure policies

51. Israel continues to impose disproportionate and discriminatory mobility restrictions on the Palestinian people, invoking security considerations, inconsistent with its obligations to ensure the right of Palestinians to freedom of movement and to public life (see [A/HRC/31/40](#), para. 35).

³⁴ The Rights Forum and Yesh Din, "Under the radar" (March 2015).

³⁵ Peace Now, "Settlement development data". Available from http://peacenow.org.il/eng/sites/default/files/Settlement_Development%20Data_241215.xls (accessed 10 March 2016).

³⁶ Press release, Palestinian Central Bureau of Statistics (17 September 2015). Available from http://www.pcbs.gov.ps/portals/_pcbs/PressRelease/Press_En_IsrSettlments2014E.pdf.

³⁷ Yesh Din, "From occupation to annexation: the silent adoption of the Levy report on retroactive authorization of illegal construction in the West Bank", position paper (Tel Aviv, February 2016).

³⁸ Information received from the Office of the United Nations Special Coordinator for the Middle East Peace Process, and [A/70/351](#), paras. 22 and 23.

³⁹ Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs, "Protection of civilians" (29 March-4 April 2016). Available from <http://www.ochaopt.org/poc29march-4april-2016.aspx>.

Gaza blockade, including access-restricted areas)

52. The ongoing Israeli blockade of the Gaza Strip amounts to collective punishment and is unlawful. Since its inception in 2007, the policy has deprived Palestinians of their economic, social and cultural rights (see [A/HRC/31/40](#), para. 36), including the rights to education, health, work, housing and freedom of movement (see [A/70/392](#), para. 21).

53. The infrastructure in the Gaza Strip has been devastated as a result of the blockade and three major military offensives in six years. Compounded with a chronic power deficit, the status of the infrastructure exacerbates the already vulnerable living conditions in Gaza.²

54. In 2015, the relative improvement in the entry of certain materials through the Gaza Reconstruction Mechanism was a positive development. However, those remained insufficient to respond to the overwhelming needs of the people of Gaza (see [A/HRC/31/40](#), para. 36), who continue to suffer and have become even more reliant on aid.²⁵ In addition, Israel continues to impose restrictions on the entry of materials that it identifies as having a dual use, through the non-transparent manner in which items are added and the broad nature of their description.⁴⁰

55. Those restrictions, coupled with the lack of donor funding, constitute key factors⁴¹ that hamper the reconstruction of the 18,000 homes destroyed during the 2014 summer offensive and the rehabilitation of infrastructure. The ban on the import of 23 items needed for water, sanitation and hygiene (WASH) projects also obstructs the delivery of services to the population.²

56. Prior to the 2014 Israeli summer offensive, the blockade had caused a shortage of over 75,000 housing units, which resulted in overcrowding, an increase in rental prices, inadequate accommodation and associated health and protection concerns.²

57. UNRWA reported that the lengthy period of time and complicated procedures required to import some of the dual use items had led to considerable delays and additional costs for construction projects.²⁵

58. The closure of the Rafah crossing by Egypt since October 2014 has exacerbated the humanitarian situation (see [A/HRC/31/40](#), para. 36).

59. The Israeli ban on exports from Gaza was relatively eased in 2015. However, the volume of exports amounts to only 10 per cent of their volume in the months preceding the blockade.²

60. As part of the blockade, Israel restricts access to land and maritime areas. The 300 to 1,000 metre-wide buffer zone along the border of the Gaza Strip has effectively prohibited farmers from using their agricultural land.⁴² Israel has also limited the fishing zone for Palestinians to three to six nautical miles, compared

⁴⁰ Office of the United Nations Special Coordinator for the Middle East Peace Process, "Report to the Ad Hoc Liaison Committee" (30 September 2015).

⁴¹ Information received from Office of the United Nations Special Coordinator for the Middle East Peace Process.

⁴² United Nations Conference on Trade and Development, "The besieged Palestinian agricultural sector (UNCTAD/GDS/APP/2015/1). Available from http://unctad.org/en/PublicationsLibrary/gdsapp2015d1_en.pdf.

with 20 nautical miles allowed under the Oslo Accords.⁴³ On 3 April 2015, Israel expanded the Palestinian fishing zone off the southern portion of the Gaza coast from six to nine nautical miles.⁴⁴

Mobility restrictions in the West Bank

61. A complex and multilayered system of administrative, bureaucratic and physical constraints impedes the movement of Palestinians within the West Bank, and is mainly linked to the settlements. The constraints are particularly severe for Palestinians who live in close proximity to Israeli settlements (A/HRC/31/44, paras. 12 and 22-23).

62. Since October 2015, Israel has further tightened mobility restrictions on Palestinians. The Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs reported that by the end of December 2015, 91 new physical obstacles, including checkpoints, roadblocks and earth mounds, had been deployed, adding to the hundreds of such existing obstacles that were already deployed across the West Bank.²⁴

63. The wall in the West Bank is the primary obstacle to the movement of Palestinians.⁴⁵ Israel continues its construction, even after the International Court of Justice ruled that all parts of the wall that were built inside the West Bank, rather than along the 1949 armistice line (the Green Line), were illegal (see A/ES-10/273 and Corr. 1). Of the current 712-kilometre planned route, 85 per cent lies within the West Bank. Consequently, the wall would de facto annex 9.4 per cent of the West Bank, including East Jerusalem, along with entire communities comprising approximately 11,000 Palestinians (see A/70/82-E/2015/13, paras. 52-54).

64. Access of Palestinian farmers to their land and water resources that lie in the “seam zone”⁴⁶ is restricted to specific gates and is subject to obtaining special permits.⁴⁷ East Jerusalem is largely cut off from the other parts of the West Bank. Permits to enter East Jerusalem, which are required for Palestinians residing in other parts of the West Bank, are very difficult to obtain.⁴⁸

65. According to UNRWA reports, Israeli restrictions impede access to Palestine refugee communities in the West Bank. Between March and December 2015, a total of 118 UNRWA access-related incidents were reported, resulting in a loss of an estimated 63 individual workdays or 472 work-hours, which negatively affected the delivery of education and health services as well as relief operations.²⁵

Exploitation, endangerment and depletion of Palestinian natural resources

66. In Gaza, the repercussions of the 2014 Israeli military offensive are still evident and are compounded by the blockade. More than 120,000 people are still

⁴³ Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs, “The Gaza Strip: the humanitarian impact of the blockade”, July 2015.

⁴⁴ Press release by the Secretary-General (SG/SM/17682-SC/12328).

⁴⁵ Office of the United Nations Special Coordinator for the Middle East Peace Process, “Report to the Ad Hoc Liaison Committee” (30 September 2015).

⁴⁶ The area that lies between the wall and the Green Line, declared by Israeli authorities as a closed area.

⁴⁷ Office of the United Nations Special Coordinator for the Middle East Peace Process, “Report to the Ad Hoc Liaison Committee” (30 September 2015).

⁴⁸ Information received from ILO.

disconnected from public water networks, and 23 per cent of Gaza is not connected to the sewage network.³⁰

67. Damage to the electricity gridlines and fuel and electricity shortages have resulted in a chronic electricity and fuel deficit affecting Gaza over the past nine years. The deficit has disrupted the delivery of basic water, sanitation and hygiene services, including more than 280 water and wastewater facilities in Gaza.¹⁵

68. As a result, there has been widespread sewage infiltration into the coastal aquifer. Owing to the deteriorated state of the infrastructure, up to 95 million litres of untreated or partially treated sewage are released into the Mediterranean every day or discharged into the environment.²

69. As of January 2016, Israel continued to designate over 70 per cent of the materials needed for water, sanitation and hygiene projects as dual use items, placing at least 30 water and wastewater projects in Gaza at risk of being suspended or cancelled.⁴⁹

70. The daily average water consumption in Gaza is 79 litres per capita per day, well below the rate of 100 litres per capita per day recommended by the World Health Organization. However, Gaza's coastal aquifer is contaminated, and 96 per cent of the water in the Gaza Strip is unsuitable for human consumption. Households must thus purchase drinking water from private companies at 10 times the price of public water.⁵⁰

71. In the West Bank, Israel allocates water discriminatorily and prevents Palestinians from developing water infrastructure. The resulting average domestic consumption rate among Palestinians is approximately 40 litres per capita per day and drops to 20 litres per capita per day in several communities in Area C,⁵¹ compared with 183 litres per capita per day for Israeli settlers.³⁰ Of the Palestinian communities in Area C, 70 per cent are not connected to a water network.²

72. Palestinians have to spend an average of 8 per cent of their monthly expenditure on purchasing water, compared to the world average of 3.5 per cent, and 0.9 per cent for Israelis living in illegal settlements. Families who have to rely on expensive tankered water spend as much as half of their monthly expenditure.¹⁵ This has a particularly crippling impact on Palestinian farmers.⁵²

73. In the West Bank, Israeli authorities continue to confiscate and demolish Palestinian water infrastructure. During 2015, 24 water supply units, 12 wells, two artesian wells, three pools, one water grid and six water tanks and trucks were demolished.³⁰

74. In East Jerusalem, only 64 per cent of Palestinian households are officially connected to the water infrastructure.⁷

75. Israeli restrictions prevent Palestinians from cultivating almost half a million dunums of land suitable for agriculture in Area C.²

⁴⁹ Emergency, Water, Sanitation and Hygiene Group (EWASH), "Thirsting for justice: 2015 in review" (January 2016).

⁵⁰ Ibid.

⁵¹ Ibid.

⁵² Human Rights Watch, "Occupation Inc.: how settlement businesses contribute to Israel's violations of Palestinian rights" (January 2016). Available from <https://www.hrw.org/report/2016/01/19/occupation-inc/how-settlement-businesses-contribute-israels-violations-palestinian>.

76. The Jordan Valley is among the most fertile areas in the West Bank and comprises 30 per cent thereof. Israel continues to expand its settlements there and to allocate agricultural lands to the 9,500 Israeli settlers while preventing 60,000 to 80,000 Palestinians from cultivating or herding on around 87 per cent of the land.⁵²

77. In 2015, the Israeli army destroyed 8,242 dunums of agricultural land by torching, spraying chemicals or dumping waste.³⁰ In the Gaza Strip, the Israeli army also damaged 420 acres of agricultural land by aerial herbicide in December 2015.⁵³

78. Around 1,000 Israeli factories operate in 16 to 20 Israeli industrial zones in the West Bank, which reportedly have become a pollution haven.⁵⁴ For example, the Ariel settlement and its associated industries dump chemical waste through its sewer system, contaminating nearby Palestinian agricultural land.⁵⁵ The Applied Research Institute – Jerusalem reports that sewage from Israeli settlements was pumped into 131 dunums of Palestinian land in 2015.³⁰

79. The 2014 Israeli offensive on Gaza has had a number of delayed environmental repercussions. Some areas may have sustained extensive soil damage, including the removal and destruction of topsoil, rendering much of the land infertile or significantly reducing the quantity and quality of yields. Air quality has also deteriorated in some areas, including particulate matter and lead air pollution significantly above acceptable WHO levels.³⁰

80. According to UNEP, the 2014 offensive may also have resulted in loss of wildlife and native plants.³⁰

81. As of 2015, Israeli stone quarries and crushers were expanding beyond the 3,522 dunums of Palestinian private lands they occupied in the West Bank.³⁰

82. Israel continues to prevent Palestinians from developing their natural gas resources off the coast of Gaza.³⁰

Socioeconomic conditions in the Occupied Palestinian Territory

83. The humanitarian situation in the Occupied Palestinian Territory is unique and directly tied to the impact of almost 50 years of occupation; one in two Palestinians (2.3 million people) will need some form of humanitarian assistance in 2016.²

Economic conditions

84. The Palestinian economy exists under prolonged occupation. Owing to long-standing Israeli restrictions on movement, access and trade, private sector activity has been severely constrained in the West Bank. Conditions are worse in Gaza, assailed by recurrent conflict and with an economy devastated by nine years of blockade that have significantly eroded the productive base and competitiveness of the private sector. The aid-driven growth of the Palestinian economy between 2007 and 2011 started to slow down in 2012, primarily as a result of a sharp drop in donor budget support. Although aid levels rose again in 2013, growth rates continued to decline, providing further evidence that the present growth model has

⁵³ Information received from UNEP; see also <http://972mag.com/idf-admits-spraying-herbicides-inside-the-gaza-strip/115290/>.

⁵⁴ Human Rights Watch, "Occupation Inc.: how settlement businesses contribute to Israel's violations of Palestinian rights" (January 2016).

⁵⁵ *Ibid.*; and information received from UNEP.

exhausted its potential.⁵⁶ The Palestinian economy cannot be put on a development path that is sustainable under the current paradigm and under conditions of recurrent major military operations, deliberate destruction of infrastructure and services, confiscation of land, expansion of illegal settlements and prolonged restrictions on movement and trade, including the Gaza blockade.

85. The Palestinian economy contracted by 0.2 per cent in 2014 and by 2.1 per cent year-on-year in the first quarter of 2015 before showing signs of recovery. Overall real gross domestic product (GDP) grew by 0.9 per cent year-on-year in the second quarter of 2015 and 9.6 per cent in the third quarter, owing to a rebound from a low base in Gaza in the third quarter of 2015 and a steady growth rate in West Bank.⁵⁷

86. The unemployment rate stood at 25.8 per cent in the third quarter of 2015 (38 per cent in Gaza and 18.7 per cent in the West Bank). Significantly, the rates were high among vulnerable groups: 41.7 per cent among youth aged 20 to 24 years; 29.8 per cent among Palestinians with 13 or more years of schooling; 39.9 per cent and 19.3 per cent, respectively, among refugees in Gaza and the West Bank; and 60.5 per cent and 30.5 per cent, respectively, among women in Gaza and the West Bank.⁵⁸

87. Severe import/export restrictions have been a major disincentive to private sector investment, forcing the economy to restructure inwards towards non-tradable goods and the service sector. Public administration and services account for the largest share of Gaza's GDP (32.6 per cent and 24.1 per cent, respectively).⁵⁹ The easing of export restrictions in 2015 had little tangible impact on the local economy.⁶⁰

88. Slow economic recovery is underway in Gaza. Real GDP increased from a low base by 33.3 per cent in the third quarter of 2015 when compared to the same quarter of 2014, after six quarters of yearly decline. The upturn was led mainly by a limited rebound in the construction sector, along with strong performance in the wholesale and retail trade sector in the aftermath of the 2014 Israeli offensive.

89. On the expenditure side, the recovery is mostly explained by positive trends in investment and private consumption. In spite of that, the consequences of the 2014 offensive linger: the level of real GDP per capita in Gaza in the first three quarters of 2015 (equal to less than half of the GDP per capita in the West Bank) was below its level for the same period in 2010, implying an important loss in the development indicators.⁶¹

90. After a slowdown in 2014-2015 caused by a four-month suspension in clearance revenue transfers by Israel, West Bank growth returned to an upward trend

⁵⁶ World Bank, "Economic monitoring report to the Ad Hoc Liaison Committee", 30 September 2015 (99646 V2).

⁵⁷ All figures are based on official quarterly national accounts published by the Palestinian Central Bureau of Statistics (accessed 9 March 2016). Note that figures for 2015 are preliminary.

⁵⁸ Palestinian Central Bureau of Statistics, "Labour force survey (October-December 2014) Round (Q4/2015).

⁵⁹ Palestinian Central Bureau of Statistics, "Estimates of National Accounts" (Q3 2015).

⁶⁰ Information received from UNRWA; and Palestine Trade Center (PalTrade). See also Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs, Occupied Palestinian Territory, Gaza Crossings database. Available from <http://www.ochaopt.org/>.

⁶¹ Palestinian Central Bureau of Statistics, "Estimates of National Accounts" (Q3 2015).

and registered growth of 3.2 per cent and 4.0 per cent in the second and third quarters of 2015 compared to the same quarters of the previous year. This was mostly attributed to private consumption and investment, in spite of a deceleration in consumption by the public sector. In terms of economic sectors, the recovery is mostly attributed to trade and private services, while public services, manufacturing and the primary sector reported declines during the first quarter of 2015 with respect to the same period of 2014.

91. Palestinians working in illegal settlements in the West Bank suffer from abuse, exploitation and work environments that pose risks to their health and safety. They do not receive the Israeli minimum wage, and child labour continues to be a serious problem, particularly in the Jordan Valley.⁶²

Food security

92. A total of 1.6 million Palestinians (28 per cent of households) suffer from severe food insecurity, while another 37 per cent of the population suffers from marginal or moderate food insecurity.²² Approximately half of the Palestinian population suffers from more than one micronutrient deficiency. Alarming, 72 per cent of female adolescents in Gaza suffer from a vitamin D deficiency, and 64 per cent suffer from a deficiency of vitamin A.²

93. In 2014, an estimated 47 per cent of households in Gaza were food insecure. A food security crisis has been averted only as a result of the large-scale provision of humanitarian assistance.²⁵ The situation has deteriorated in Gaza in 2015. According to a household survey on living conditions conducted by the Palestinian Central Bureau of Statistics, 51.5 per cent of households reported that they ate less food than needed because of unavailability, 40.2 per cent reported that they had fewer meals owing to insufficient food, and 64.5 per cent of households had to purchase food products on credit.⁶³

94. In the West Bank, 16 per cent of households are considered moderately or severely food insecure, with low purchasing power and limited resilience.² The rate is particularly high in West Bank refugee camps, at 29 per cent.²⁵

Public health

95. Almost half a century of Israeli occupation and practices, entailing humiliation and loss of control over daily life activities, has had a detrimental impact on the mental health and well-being of the Palestinian population (see [A/70/392](#), para. 60).

96. In Gaza, the repercussions of the 2014 conflict continue to unfold, with around 225,000 children requiring psychosocial support and child protection services.²

97. According to a 2015 household survey,⁶⁴ approximately one in three respondents reported a negative mental health status and more than a quarter of

⁶² International Labour Office, *The Situation of Workers in the Occupied Arab Territories*, International Labour Conference, 104th Session, 2015 (ILC.104/DG/APP).

⁶³ Economic and Social Commission for Western Asia calculations based on Palestinian Central Bureau of Statistics data.

⁶⁴ Press release, Palestinian Central Bureau of Statistics (October 2015). Available from http://www.pcbs.gov.ps/portals/_pcbs/PressRelease/Press_En_GazaWar2014E.pdf.

respondents reported moderate to high levels of distress.⁶⁵ Of the persons surveyed, 56 per cent reported that they felt deprived, with the majority citing the Israeli occupation, including the blockade, as the main cause of their deprivation. A total of 84 per cent considered suffering to be a part of their lives. In addition, 12 per cent of the respondents aged 30 years and over reported having from one to three chronic diseases (hypertension, diabetes mellitus and cardiovascular disease) diagnosed by a doctor.⁶⁶

98. The closures and aforementioned conflict have led to the severe deterioration of the health sector in Gaza in terms of availability and quality of services. The situation has further deteriorated as a result of the closure of the Rafah crossing since July 2013.²

99. The infant mortality rate in Gaza has risen for the first time in five decades, as hospitals continue to lack adequate physical infrastructure, drugs and supplies.⁶⁷

100. Overcrowded substandard houses have heightened the public health risks associated with improper disposal of solid waste at dumping sites and standing wastewater near refugee camps, where the average population density is nearly 40,000 persons per square kilometre.²⁵

101. In the West Bank, Israeli restrictions on movement and construction impede Palestinian access to health-care services (see [A/70/392](#), para. 56), including medical referral services.¹⁵ The permit regime, checkpoints and the wall impede access to the six East Jerusalem hospitals that provide specialized health services unavailable elsewhere in the Occupied Palestinian Territory. Among the most affected are Palestinians residing in Area C, areas affected by the wall and East Jerusalem peripheries. The access of those communities to basic health services is also restricted by the actions of Israeli security forces and settler violence.²

102. In 2015, 10 incidents of interference with health care were documented in the West Bank, including East Jerusalem. Incidents include the forced closure of clinics, undercover search and arrest operations and Israeli security forces entering hospitals to obtain files and interrogate medical staff. In addition, the Palestine Red Crescent Society reported that more than 131 paramedics and volunteers were wounded and 76 ambulances were damaged while undertaking their duties in the West Bank; access by medical teams to sick and wounded persons was denied or delayed by Israeli security forces on 70 different occasions.¹⁵

Education

103. UNRWA reports that 86 per cent of the schools operated in double shifts in 2015. Refugee children attending those schools thus had fewer opportunities to engage in recreational and creative pursuits than students who attended single shift schools.²⁵

104. In the West Bank, the education sector suffers from the discriminatory zoning and planning regime, settler violence and measures by the Israeli army, as well as an

⁶⁵ Using the 12-item General Health Questionnaire which is an international screening tool for the assessment of general mental health status and well-being.

⁶⁶ ESCWA and Birzeit University, "A people in danger: effects on health of the 2014 Israeli offensive on the Gaza Strip" (May 2016).

⁶⁷ Information received from UNRWA; see <http://www.unrwa.org/resources/reports/increasing-neonatal-mortality-among-palestine-refugees-gaza-strip>.

insufficient number of schools. In Area C, 50,000 students incur risks on their way to school. More than 1,700 children in 37 localities have to walk 5 kilometres or more to reach their schools. Around 2,500 children are forced to cross Israeli military checkpoints on a daily basis to reach school. A total of 10,000 children attend makeshift schools, in such structures as tents, caravans and tin shacks, that provide no protection against heat or cold.⁶⁸

105. In 2015, attacks on schools and protected personnel in the West Bank and a pervasive environment of violence, harassment and intimidation continued to have an impact upon children's access to education. Schools are subjected to shootings during law enforcement operations and clashes. Students and teachers are subjected to attacks and threats of violence by Israeli security forces and settlers. Closure of schools or arrest and detention of staff and students interfere with education.¹⁵

106. In Gaza, of the 262 schools and 274 kindergartens damaged or destroyed during the 2014 hostilities, 96 per cent of non-United Nations schools, all United Nations schools and 65 per cent of kindergartens have been repaired or rebuilt through the assistance of humanitarian organizations and donors.¹⁵

107. Israeli law stipulates that children who are residents of East Jerusalem are entitled to free education. However, Palestinian-run schools are overcrowded and have substandard facilities. Several of them, along with such facilities as playgrounds, are threatened with demolition. Restrictions on construction impede the construction of new schools (see [A/70/392](#), para. 67). Checkpoints and the wall hinder the access of Palestinian students and teachers to educational facilities in East Jerusalem.² Those conditions result in high dropout rates that reach 33 per cent in grade 12.⁶⁹

III. The occupied Syrian Golan

108. Since 1967, Israel has continued to occupy the Syrian Golan despite numerous resolutions adopted by various United Nations bodies, including the Security Council, which in its resolution 497 (1981) of 17 December 1981 decided that the decision by Israel to impose its laws, jurisdiction and administration in the occupied Syrian Golan Heights was null and void, and demanded that Israel, the occupying Power, should rescind forthwith its decision.

109. By 2015, 24,200 Syrian citizens lived in five villages, compared with 19,400 Israelis in 32 settlements.⁶² In October 2015, it was reported that Israel intended to add an additional 100,000 settlers to the occupied Golan over the next five years (see [A/HRC/31/43](#), para. 64).

110. The Government of Israel has promoted settlements in the Golan by providing financial incentives (see [A/HRC/31/43](#), para. 6). It has been reported that financial incentives of up to \$12,000 were offered to Israeli families that settled in Golan settlements for a minimum of five years (see [A/70/406](#), para. 12).

⁶⁸ Palestinian Central Bureau of Statistics, http://www.pcbs.gov.ps/portals/_pcbs/PressRelease/Press_En_IntChildDy2015E.pdf.

⁶⁹ See Association for Civil Rights in Israel, <http://www.acri.org.il/en/2016/02/01/5-year-grace-period-for-education-in-east-jerusalem-has-ended/>.

111. About 20 per cent of the structures in the Syrian villages were built within the villages municipal boundaries without building permits on Israeli-declared “State land”. Annual fines are imposed by the Israeli authorities on such construction. Recent considerable increases in the amount of the fines, from approximately \$2,594 to as much as approximately \$51,882, seriously threaten the livelihoods of many Syrian citizens in the occupied Syrian Golan.⁶²

112. While there had been no recent reported cases of major demolition of property in the occupied Syrian Golan, civil society representatives indicated that demolition orders for Syrian properties issued in the past were still in place (see [A/70/406](#), para. 12).

113. There are also reports that additional Israeli efforts to populate the occupied Syrian Golan involve the establishment of 750 new farms and the transfer of 150 families per year. Ninety Israeli families had already been transferred to settle on those farms in 2015. It was also reported that as part of the farms project, Israel had illegally diverted water to irrigate the farms, thereby depleting water resources and depriving Syrians of their use (see [A/70/406](#), para. 12).

114. Syrian citizens of the occupied Syrian Golan suffer from discriminatory policies, particularly related to land and water allocation. According to the Permanent Mission of the Syrian Arab Republic, Israel has restricted Syrian residents’ access to only 45,000 acres for farming in the occupied Syrian Golan, compared with 350,000 acres for Israeli settlers. Furthermore, the Government of the Syrian Arab Republic reported that Israeli authorities have prohibited Syrian farmers from shepherding and restricted their access to land for farming (see [A/HRC/31/41](#), para. 12).

115. Over the years, expanding settlements and their activity have reduced Syrian farmers’ access to water, while purchasing water has become more expensive. Discriminatory policies are also applicable for prices and fees. A Syrian has to pay one dollar per cubic metre of water, while a settler pays 30 cents for the same quantity. In addition, settlers are granted subsidized access to flood water, whereas Syrian farmers have been prevented from building new water reservoirs for nearly 30 years. Syrian farmers are allocated 200 cubic metres per dunum of land, which constitutes only a third of their farming needs. This is compared with 800 cubic metres per dunum allocated to settlers. Syrian farmers can thus produce 2.5 tons of apples per dunum while settlers produce an average of 6 to 8 tonnes.⁶²

116. Israeli and foreign-owned companies, such as Genie Energy and Afek, have continued to explore and exploit natural resources, including water, gas and oil resources, after receiving licences from the Israeli authorities.⁷⁰

117. The Permanent Mission of the Syrian Arab Republic reports that Syrians in the occupied Syrian Golan continued to be subjected to house arrest, arbitrary arrest, ill-treatment, unlawful detention and denial of family visits in Israeli prisons (see [A/HRC/31/41](#), para. 9).

⁷⁰ See Afek — Israel Oil and Gas, <http://afekoil.co.il/en/and> [A/HRC/31/41](#), para. 9.

IV. Conclusion

118. The inadmissibility of acquiring land by force is one of the main principles enshrined in the Charter of the United Nations. This principle was reasserted in numerous Security Council and General Assembly resolutions that address the Israeli occupation of Palestinian and Syrian territories. Israel, nevertheless, continues, undeterred, to implement practices and policies that violate this principle, including the illegal annexation of East Jerusalem and the occupied Syrian Golan, and the de facto annexation of West Bank lands by means of the wall and settlements.

119. Another principle enshrined in the Charter of the United Nations is non-discrimination. The present report and other United Nations reports clearly point to the discriminatory nature of many Israeli policies and practices.

120. Israeli practices and policies in the territories it occupies involve violations of international humanitarian law and international human rights law. Some of those practices may even amount to forcible displacement of the protected population, which would constitute a grave violation of the Fourth Geneva Convention.

121. The Israeli occupation of Palestinian and Syrian territories has entered its fiftieth year. Policies by the occupying Power highlighted in this report seem to be geared towards consolidating control over those territories and can be viewed as part of a three-tiered strategy: population displacement, land grab and suppression of any form of resistance thereto. The impact of the policies on the Palestinian people, society and economy is multilayered and has accumulated over decades of occupation to reach unimaginable levels.

122. The Israeli occupation and its practices have obstructed Palestinian social and economic development and at times reversed it, undermining the right of the Palestinian people to development and self-determination and the prospects of peace. In a statement to the Security Council on 26 January 2016, the Secretary-General asserted that it is human nature to react to occupation, which often serves as a potent incubator of hate and extremism.

123. The impunity Israel has enjoyed so far has only rendered the attainment of peace more difficult. International law in all its elements must be respected and enforced without exception, to ensure a just and lasting peace. It is the duty of the international community to work towards the attainment of such a peace.



General Assembly Economic and Social Council

Distr.: General
23 May 2017

Original: English

General Assembly

Seventy-second session

Item 64 of the preliminary list*

Permanent sovereignty of the Palestinian people in the Occupied Palestinian Territory, including East Jerusalem, and of the Arab population in the occupied Syrian Golan over their natural resources

Economic and Social Council 2017 session

28 July 2016-27 July 2017

Agenda item 16

Economic and social repercussions of the Israeli occupation on the living conditions of the Palestinian people in the Occupied Palestinian Territory, including East Jerusalem, and the Arab population in the occupied Syrian Golan

Economic and social repercussions of the Israeli occupation on the living conditions of the Palestinian people in the Occupied Palestinian Territory, including East Jerusalem, and of the Arab population in the occupied Syrian Golan

Note by the Secretary-General

Summary

In its resolution 2016/14, the Economic and Social Council requested the Secretary-General to submit to the General Assembly at its seventy-first session, through the Council, a report on the implementation of that resolution. The Assembly, in its resolution [71/247](#), also requested the Secretary-General to submit a report to it at its seventy-second session. The present report, which was prepared by the Economic and Social Commission for Western Asia (ESCWA), has been submitted in compliance with the resolutions of the Council and the Assembly.

The report covers Israeli practices and policies, in particular those that are in violation of international humanitarian law and international human rights law and that affect the social and economic conditions of the people living under its military occupation. Israel has employed discriminatory policies and practices, use of force that has at times been deemed excessive and restrictions on the freedom of movement, including the closures in Gaza, settlement expansion, destruction of property and the exploitation of natural resources in the Occupied Palestinian Territory and the occupied Syrian Golan. The cumulative impact of such policies and practices is not confined to violations of international law, including the rights of the population under occupation; it also exacerbates the social and economic conditions of that population.

* Reissued for technical reasons on 15 August 2017.

** [A/72/50](#).



ESCWA would like to express its appreciation for the contributions of the United Nations Relief and Works Agency for Palestine Refugees in the Near East, the United Nations Environment Programme, the United Nations Children's Fund, the United Nations Entity for Gender Equality and the Empowerment of Women, the Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations, the International Monetary Fund, the World Bank, the United Nations Development Programme, the International Labour Organization, the World Health Organization, the United Nations Conference on Trade and Development, the United Nations Human Settlements Programme, the Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Human Rights, the League of Arab States, the Office of the Special Representative of the Secretary-General for Children and Armed Conflict, the Office of the United Nations Special Coordinator for the Middle East Peace Process, the United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization, the United Nations Population Fund, the World Food Programme and the Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs of the Secretariat.

I. Introduction

1. The Economic and Social Council, in its resolution 2016/14, and the General Assembly, in its resolution 71/247, expressed concern about the economic and social repercussions of the Israeli occupation on the living conditions of the Palestinian people in the Occupied Palestinian Territory, including East Jerusalem, and of the Arab population in the occupied Syrian Golan, as well as the exploitation, destruction and degradation of natural resources in the Occupied Palestinian Territory, including East Jerusalem, and other Arab territories occupied by Israel since 1967.

2. In particular, the Council, in its resolution, calls for, inter alia, the full opening of the border crossings of the Gaza Strip and the full implementation of the Agreement on Movement and Access of 15 November 2005; stresses the need to preserve the territorial contiguity, unity and integrity of the Occupied Palestinian Territory, including East Jerusalem, and to guarantee the freedom of movement of persons and goods; demands compliance with the Protocol on Economic Relations between the Government of Israel and the Palestine Liberation Organization (the “Paris Protocol”); and calls upon Israel to respect the rules of international humanitarian law, refrain from violence against the civilian population, cease the destruction of homes and properties, economic institutions and agricultural lands and orchards, immediately end the exploitation of natural resources, cease settlement and settlement-related activity, account for the illegal actions perpetrated by Israeli settlers, pay urgent attention to the plight and the rights of Palestinian prisoners and detainees, comply with the provisions of the Geneva Convention relative to the Protection of Civilian Persons in Time of War and facilitate visits of the Syrian citizens of the occupied Syrian Golan whose family members reside in their mother homeland, the Syrian Arab Republic.

3. The present note provides information on relevant developments with regard to the foregoing.

II. Occupied Palestinian Territory

Israeli practices in the Occupied Palestinian Territory

4. Palestinians in the occupied territory are subject to a complex combination of Israeli and Palestinian legal systems. Lower human rights standards are applied to Palestinian suspects and defendants compared to Israeli suspects and defendants. Differences include the maximum period of detention before being brought before a judge, the duration for which a suspect can be prevented from meeting an attorney, protections for defendants during trial, maximum punishment and release before sentence completion. Furthermore, Israeli military law provides for additional offences that are not part of Israeli criminal law (A/HRC/34/38, paras. 38-39).

5. Since 1967, the Israeli authorities have implemented what have been deemed discriminatory planning policies with regard to Palestinian residents of East Jerusalem. Those policies include large-scale allocations of land for settlement building and the lack of adequate planning and investment in infrastructure for Palestinian neighbourhoods.¹

¹ Bimkom, “Trapped by planning: Israeli policy, planning and development in the Palestinian neighbourhoods of East Jerusalem”, 2014. Available from <http://bimkom.org/eng/wp-content/uploads/TrappedbyPlanning.pdf>.

6. Planning and zoning policy in Area C of the West Bank (which constitutes 60 per cent of the West Bank and where 5-10 per cent of the Palestinians in the West Bank reside), under full Israeli control, has been deemed restrictive, discriminatory and incompatible with international law (A/HRC.34/38, para. 25; see also para. 55 below). Palestinians living there are often faced with insurmountable Israeli obstacles when seeking to obtain construction permits, including high application fees and requirements that new housing be connected to often unavailable municipal works.² In East Jerusalem, although hundreds of small-scale plans were approved for Palestinians in recent years,¹ there is inadequate planning for future improvement on a large scale that is necessary to address public needs.

7. According to Israeli Civil Administration data, during the first six months of 2016, 391 of 428 (91 per cent) applications for building permits in Palestinian communities in Area C were rejected. The majority of applications approved were reportedly issued by the Israeli authorities for “relocation” sites planned for Bedouin communities.³

Violence and use of force

8. Serious concerns remain about the use of force and unlawful killings by Israeli security forces, including some cases which may have amounted to extrajudicial executions (A/HRC/34/38, para. 47). Several documented cases have raised the question as to whether those killed posed the level of threat that, according to international standards, would merit the use of deadly force (ibid., paras. 28 and 44).

9. Overall, 63 Palestinians, including 19 children, were killed from 1 April 2016 to 31 March 2017 by Israeli army and security forces in the West Bank, including East Jerusalem, and the Gaza Strip. Approximately 2,276 others were injured, including 562 children. At least 37 of the Palestinians killed were carrying out or suspected of carrying out attacks against Israelis.

10. During the reporting period, 12 Israelis, including 7 civilians, were killed in Israel and the Occupied Palestinian Territory; 162 Israelis were injured in attacks by Palestinians.⁴ Twelve rockets were fired into Israel by Hamas and extremist groups in Gaza, causing no casualties, to which Israel retaliated with over 50 airstrikes, resulting in at least one Palestinian civilian fatality and a number of injuries.

11. Palestinians who commit attacks against Israelis have been glorified, including by representatives of ruling parties. Continued terrorism and incitement violate Security Council resolutions, including resolution 2334 (2016), concerning the Occupied Palestinian Territory, in which the Council called for immediate steps to prevent all acts of violence against civilians, including acts of terror.

12. There were no Palestinian fatalities from unexploded ordnance during the reporting period, a fact that reflects a decline in recent years from 10 such fatalities in 2014, to 6 in 2015, to 1 in 2016.

² United States of America, Department of State, *Country Reports on Human Rights Practices for 2016: Israel and The Occupied Territories*, available from https://www.state.gov/j/drl/rls/hrrpt/humanrightsreport/index.htm?dynamic_load_id=265502&year=2016#wrapper; Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs, “Under threat: demolition orders in area C of the West Bank”, 2015; see A/70/82, para. 16.

³ Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs, “Record number of demolitions and displacements in the West Bank during 2016”, in *Humanitarian Bulletin: Occupied Palestinian Territory*, January 2017. Available from <https://www.ochaopt.org/content/record-number-demolitions-and-displacements-west-bank-during-2016>.

⁴ Economic and Social Commission for Western Asia (ESCWA) calculations based on information obtained from the *Humanitarian Bulletins of the Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs* from April 2016 to January 2017.

Settler-related violence

13. Palestinians continued to suffer from settler violence and harassment during the reporting period, despite a significant drop in the recorded number of such incidents during the past three years, which was due, in part, to preventive measures implemented by Israeli authorities (A/HRC/34/39, paras. 19 and 20).

14. From 4 April 2016 to 20 March 2017, there were 39 violent settler-related incidents that resulted in Palestinian casualties in the West Bank, including East Jerusalem. During the same period, 73 Israeli settler attacks resulted in damages to Palestinian properties.⁴

Withholding of bodies of Palestinians suspects

15. During the reporting period, the Israeli authorities continued the practice of delaying the return of the bodies of Palestinians who carried out, or were alleged to have carried out, attacks. Such practice could amount to a collective penalty against the families of the deceased and may be contrary to the Fourth Geneva Convention (A/71/364, para. 25).

Detention and-ill treatment

16. By January 2017, approximately 6,500 Palestinians were being held in Israeli prisons, including 300 children. A total of 536 Palestinians remain under administrative detention.⁵

17. According to the Palestinian Ministry of Detainees and Ex-Detainees Affairs, more than 15,000 Palestinian women have at some point been detained by Israeli authorities since 1967.⁶ The number of children in detention, including children under the age of 12, declined from 440 children in February 2016⁷ to 335 in February 2017.⁸

18. The United Nations Committee against Torture expressed concern about a number of Israeli practices towards Palestinian detainees, including minors. Such practices include deprivation of basic legal safeguards for administrative detainees, isolation and solitary confinement of detainees, including minors, punishment and ill-treatment of hunger strikers, torture or ill-treatment of Palestinian children and the hindering of visits of relatives for child prisoners. The Committee also expressed concern about information it received to the effect that there is no proper accountability for torture and ill-treatment (CAT/C/ISR/CO/5, paras. 22, 24, 26, 28 and 30). No criminal investigation was opened into more than 1,000 complaints of torture or ill-treatment filed since 2001.⁹

19. The resort to administrative detention by Israel must be consistent with human rights guarantees¹⁰ and with the exceptional nature of internment permitted under article 78 of the Fourth Geneva Convention. During the reporting period, a number of Palestinian administrative detainees resorted to hunger strikes to protest their detention without charge (see A/HRC/31/40, paras. 42 and 44).

⁵ Addameer, January 2017 database. Available from www.addameer.org/statistics (accessed 26 March 2017).

⁶ See <http://mod.gov.ps/wordpress/?p=1053>.

⁷ Defense for Children International-Palestine, Number of Palestinian Children (12-17) in Israeli military detention database. Available from www.dci-palestine.org/children_in_israeli_detention.

⁸ Information provided to the Office of the United Nations Special Coordinator for the Middle East Peace Process by the Israeli authorities in March 2017.

⁹ Amnesty International, *Amnesty International Report 2016/17: The State of the World's Human Rights* (London, 2017).

¹⁰ See International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights, art. 9.

20. Israeli security forces continue to arrest fishermen, including some who claim to have remained within the military-permitted fishing zone in Gaza. Throughout 2016, Israeli security forces reportedly detained over 100 fishermen, the highest annual figure since the United Nations started to track such detentions in 2009.¹¹ Israel has reported that militant groups in Gaza make continuous efforts to smuggle weapons and materials for weapons production through the sea, including by using fishing boats.

Destruction and confiscation of property and infrastructure

21. During the reporting period, from April 2016 to March 2017, Israeli authorities demolished 726 Palestinian-owned structures in the West Bank, including East Jerusalem. That number is slightly lower than the one in the previous reporting period (810 structures). However, both figures are high compared to previous years. From 2011 to 2015, the number of structures demolished each year was below 650, for an average of 590 structures each year.

22. During the reporting period, Israel intensified punitive demolitions of Palestinian family homes, a measure that may amount to collective punishment (A/HRC/34/36, para. 31, and A/71/364, para. 23). That policy, which targets the family homes of Palestinians convicted or suspected of carrying out attacks against Israelis, resumed in mid-2014 (A/70/82, para. 42). Under its provisions, Israeli authorities demolished or rendered uninhabitable 21 homes during the reporting period, displacing 103 Palestinians, including 38 children. Overall, from 2014 to mid-January 2017, Israel punitively demolished or sealed 42 homes in the West Bank, including East Jerusalem.¹²

23. The so-called Regularization Law was passed by the Israeli Knesset in February 2017. If implemented, it could enable the continued use of private Palestinian land in the West Bank for between 2,000 and 4,000 housing units, according to some estimates.¹³ Several petitions against the law are currently pending with Israel's High Court of Justice, and its implementation is likely to remain on hold until the Court rules on its legality.

24. Over one third of Area C is formally designated as public land (referred to as "State land" by Israel). The vast majority of "State land" declarations took place before the start of the Oslo peace process in the early 1990s. It is estimated that between 750 km² and 900 km² were declared "State land" by Israel from 1979 to 1992.¹⁴ "State land" has been allocated exclusively for use by Israel and its citizens, rather than for the benefit of the local population, as required under international law. In late March 2017, the Israeli authorities declared nearly 1 km² in the West Bank as "State land".

25. Archaeological excavations, the creation of national parks and the development of tourist activities are other methods employed by Israel to entrench its presence in the West Bank (see A/HRC/34/39, paras. 21-22).

¹¹ Office of the United Nations Special Coordinator for the Middle East Peace Process, "Report to the Ad Hoc Liaison Committee", September 2016.

¹² Hamoked, "Updated summary on punitive home demolitions from July 2014 to January 18, 2017", available from www.hamoked.org/Document.aspx?dID=Updates1828.

¹³ Peace Now, "The grand land robbery: the land implications of the regulation bill on the reality on the ground", 29 November 2016. Available from <http://peacenow.org.il/en/grand-land-robbery-implications-regulation-bill-reality-ground>.

¹⁴ Kerem Navot, "Blue and white make black: the work of the Blue Line Team in the West Bank", December 2016; and Nir Shalev and Alon Cohen-Lifshitz, "The prohibited zone: Israeli planning policy in the Palestinian villages in Area C" (Bimkom, 2008).

Population displacement

26. There is concern that the combination of State-sanctioned land seizures, retroactive legalization of outposts, demolition of Palestinian homes and livelihood structures, denial of Palestinian building permits, restrictions of movement and access to livelihoods, settler violence and a lack of accountability contribute to the creation of a coercive environment in areas under full Israeli control, propelling Palestinians to move out of certain parts of Area C and East Jerusalem (ibid., para. 41).

27. Involuntary displacement and relocation to alternative residential areas, as a result of such policies, may amount to forcible transfer if it is carried out without the free and informed consent of the individuals who relocate, in violation of Israel's obligations under international humanitarian and human rights law (A/HRC/34/38, paras. 27-28).

28. During the reporting period, 1,122 Palestinians were displaced as result of home demolitions. While that number is similar to the one of the previous reporting period (1,144), it still reflects a high rate of demolitions compared to previous years.¹⁵

29. Residents of Palestinian communities located in Area C face the risk of land confiscation, home demolitions and forced displacement.¹⁶ Hundreds of Palestinian families are at risk of forced eviction in East Jerusalem owing to the seizure of buildings by Israeli settlers in Silwan and the Old City, as well as to various parks and tourism sites being developed by the Israeli authorities. Bedouin communities in Area C are also at high risk of displacement owing to the policy of demolition of structures that Israel deems as "illegal".¹⁷

30. In Gaza, there has been significant progress in the reconstruction effort during the reporting period. The majority of the nearly 18,000 homes rendered uninhabitable during the conflict have been reconstructed or are in the process of being reconstructed. However, 39,000 persons continue to live in temporary shelters, given the funding gap of \$115 million required for the rebuilding of nearly 2,900 totally destroyed homes.

Israeli settlement activity

31. Israeli settlement policies violate Security Council resolutions, including resolution 2334 (2016), in which the Council reaffirmed that the establishment by Israel of settlements in the Palestinian territory occupied since 1967, including East Jerusalem, has no legal validity and constitutes a flagrant violation under international law and a major obstacle to the achievement of a lasting and comprehensive peace. The presence and continued expansion of Israeli settlements lie at the root of a broad spectrum of human rights violations in the West Bank, including East Jerusalem (see A/HRC/31/43, para. 5).

32. The Government of Israel continues to support population growth in the settlements by providing State-led public services, opening new economic activities, advancing housing plans and providing tax benefits to some of the settlements (A/71/355, para. 4).

¹⁵ Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs, Demolitions system database, available from <http://data.ochaopt.org/demolition-sys.aspx>.

¹⁶ United Nations Country Team, Occupied Palestinian Territory, "Common country analysis 2016: leave no one behind — a perspective on vulnerability and structural disadvantage in Palestine" (2016).

¹⁷ Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs, "Humanitarian needs overview 2017: Occupied Palestinian Territory" (2016).

33. The settler population in the West Bank, including East Jerusalem, has doubled since the Oslo Accords, reaching over 594,000 persons (including an estimated 208,000 persons in East Jerusalem) by the end of 2015, who live in some 130 settlements and 100 outposts (A/HRC/34/39, para. 11).

34. If implemented, the Regularization Law could retroactively legalize up to 4,000 settler residences in the West Bank that were built on land privately owned by Palestinians.¹⁸

35. According to data from the Israeli Central Bureau of Statistics, 2016 saw 2,630 housing construction starts in West Bank settlements, a 40 per cent increase compared to 2015 (1,901). The second quarter of 2016 saw construction starts for 1,102 housing units in Area C settlements, the highest quarterly figure in over seven years.¹⁹

36. Since the beginning of 2017, the Israeli authorities promoted some 6,000 housing units in the West Bank, all in Area C. Within a three-week period, plans for some 3,000 units were promoted in the planning process and plans for over 240 units reached the final approval stage. In addition, during the first three months of 2017, tenders for around 2,800 housing units were published. By comparison, during the whole of 2016, plans for about 3,000 units were advanced, 700 reached the final stage of approval and tenders were issued for only 42 units in Area C. The reporting period saw advancements of plans for around 1,600 housing units in East Jerusalem settlements, with none reaching the final stage of approval. In addition, tenders for 323 units were issued in July 2016.

Movement and access restrictions

Gaza closure, including access-restricted areas

37. The closures in Gaza, significantly tightened after Hamas took over the area in 2007, together with successive military confrontations since then, have exacerbated the humanitarian crisis in Gaza, which severely undermines any effort at development and results in recurrent violations of human rights (A/HRC/34/38, para. 66).

38. The closures have a negative impact on basic human rights and economic prospects, as well as the availability of essential services, which exacerbates poverty and aid dependency. Access to health, education and broader economic and social rights is restricted.

39. Throughout 2016, the Rafah crossing remained closed, with the exception of 44 days (compared to 33 days in 2015).²⁰

40. When rejecting requests by Palestinians from Gaza for permits to enter Israel, Israeli authorities tend to provide only general explanations, usually claiming that the request falls outside the criteria defined in the closure policy or that it was denied on security grounds. The approval rate for patients seeking to leave Gaza for medical treatment through Erez dropped from 77.5 per cent in 2015 to 62.1 per cent in 2016, the lowest since 2009.²¹ At the same time, the absolute number of patients

¹⁸ Knesset, “Knesset passes settlement regulation law”, press release, 7 February 2017. Available from https://www.knesset.gov.il/spokesman/eng/PR_eng.asp?PRID=13341.

¹⁹ See www.cbs.gov.il/hodaot2017n/04_17_083t3.pdf.

²⁰ Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs, Humanitarian Bulletin: Occupied Palestinian Territory, January 2017. Available from <https://www.ochaopt.org/content/record-number-demolitions-and-displacements-west-bank-during-2016>.

²¹ Information received from the World Health Organization (WHO).

from Gaza allowed to enter Israel has seen a steady and significant increase year by year, from 5,130 patients in 2009 to 17,665 patients in 2016.²²

41. From 3 April to 22 May 2016, Israel temporarily froze the entry of cement into Gaza, citing that significant portions of it were diverted, including for military use by Hamas. Despite the freeze, 2016 saw a 56 per cent increase in the import of cement over 2015. That trend continued during the first three months of 2017, when about 245,000 tons of cement entered Gaza, more than the total amounts for 2012, 2013 and 2014 combined.²³

42. The amounts and value of exports from Gaza remain low compared to their pre-2007 levels. The number of truckloads of goods that exited Gaza in March 2017 remained at only 36 per cent of the figure for 2007, despite a significant increase compared to previous years.²⁴

43. As part of its closure policy, Israel imposes restrictions on access to land and maritime areas, citing security concerns, including smuggling of weapons and digging of tunnels by Hamas and extremist groups in Gaza. The official access-restricted area extends 100 m from the fence between Israel and Gaza. In addition, for several hundred metres further from the fence, civilians face high risks of being shot by Israeli security forces.²⁵

44. In March 2016, Israel reportedly expanded the range in which Palestinians can fish from 6 to 9 nautical miles off the Gaza coast, before reducing it back to 6 miles in June that year.

Movement restrictions in the West Bank

45. Forty-four per cent of West Bank land is off-limits to Palestinian construction and development. The land is used for Israeli settlements, military zones, natural reserves and Israel's "barrier" in the West Bank, built in 2003 for the stated purpose of preventing Palestinians from carrying out attacks in Israel. Although not yet completed, the "barrier" effectively creates a reality in which access by most Palestinians to about 4 per cent of the West Bank, including East Jerusalem, can be achieved only with a permit from the Israeli authorities.¹⁶ The two main areas in the West Bank that most Palestinians cannot access without a permit are the area west of the "barrier", known as the "seam zone",²⁶ and East Jerusalem (see A/HRC/31/44).

46. The West Bank is divided into three categories. Areas A and B are under the civil control of the Palestinian Authority, cover 40 per cent of the West Bank and are home to about 90 per cent of its Palestinian population. Area C covers the rest of the area and includes all Israeli settlements. Area C separates Areas A and B into over

²² For 2009 figure, see, WHO, "Right to health: crossing barriers to access health in the Occupied Palestinian Territory 2014-2015" (2016). Available from www.emro.who.int/images/stories/palestine/documents/WHO_-_Access_Report_2014-15_-_Final.pdf. For 2016 figure, see WHO, "Health access for referral patients from the Gaza Strip", monthly report, December 2016. Available from www.emro.who.int/images/stories/palestine/WHO_monthly_Gaza_access_report-Dec_2016-Final.pdf.

²³ See grm.report.

²⁴ In March 2017, 372 truckloads of goods exited Gaza, 36 per cent of the monthly average during the first half of 2007 (1,040 truckloads), according to the Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs. During this reporting period, a total of 2,540 truckloads of goods exited Gaza, marking a significant increase compared to the previous reporting period (1,712 truckloads) and the one preceding it (388 truckloads). Information available from <http://data.ochaopt.org/gazacrossing/index.aspx?id=4>.

²⁵ Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs, "Gaza strip: access and movement fact sheet 2016", March 2017.

²⁶ The area that lies between the wall and the Armistice Line of 1949.

150 distinct areas of varying sizes, many of them separated by settlements and their related infrastructure.

47. By mid-December 2016, there were 472 obstacles to movement in the West Bank, including permanently and partially staffed checkpoints, earth mounds, roadblocks and road gates. Compared to a similar survey conducted in 2015, the cumulative number of obstacles rose by 5 per cent, although the number of permanently staffed checkpoints decreased by 25 per cent compared to 2015. In Hebron, by March 2017, 100 obstacles were deployed within the Israeli-controlled area of the city.²⁷

48. As noted in previous reports of the Secretary-General, following attacks against Israelis, the Israeli authorities have often employed measures that may amount to a collective penalty, which affect the members of the family or the community of the attackers or alleged attackers (A/HRC/34/38, para. 31). For example, on 1 July 2016, after a shooting attack in which one Israeli was killed, the Palestinian town of Yata, with a population of over 60,000 persons, was cordoned off. Severe restrictions remained in place through most of July (A/HRC/34/36, para. 34).

49. Israel continues to construct the “barrier” in the West Bank, contrary to the 2004 International Court of Justice advisory opinion, which states that “the construction of the wall being built by Israel, the occupying Power, in the Occupied Palestinian Territory, including in and around East Jerusalem, and its associated regime, [were] contrary to international law” (see A/ES-10/273 and Corr. 1). Of the current planned 712 km route, 85 per cent lies within the West Bank. In addition, if the construction of the “barrier” is completed, up to 25,000 Palestinians could be added to the 11,000 Palestinians already isolated in the “seam zone”.¹⁶

Exploitation, endangerment and depletion of Palestinian natural resources

50. The population of Gaza still suffers from the repercussions of the 2014 military conflict, in terms of access to water and sanitation infrastructure.¹⁷ Constraints on the rehabilitation of infrastructure have left 23 per cent of Gazans disconnected from the sewage network.¹⁶

51. Damage to electricity gridlines and fuel and electricity shortages have contributed to a chronic electricity and fuel deficit in Gaza over the past 10 years.¹⁷ During January 2017, in the middle of winter, the electricity crisis reached its peak, in large part owing to a dispute over payments between the Palestinian Authority in Ramallah and Hamas in Gaza. About 2 million Palestinians were left with three hours of electricity per day, as opposed to six and eight hours of electricity per day at other times.²⁸

52. The chronic electricity deficit further exacerbates the water crisis in Gaza, as it affects more than 300 water and wastewater facilities, which results in an inadequate and irregular water supply and in untreated sewage that overflows into the streets or into the sea.²⁸

53. The coastal aquifer remains the primary water source for the people of Gaza, yet 95 per cent of its water is no longer considered fit for human consumption. Forty per cent of Gaza’s population receives just five to eight hours of water supply every three days. An estimated 85 per cent of Gaza’s residents rely on drinking water from public or private producers, whose production, supply chain and household storage results in potential contamination.²⁸ The daily average water

²⁷ Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs, Humanitarian Bulletin: Occupied Palestinian Territory, March 2017.

²⁸ United Nations Relief and Works Agency for Palestine Refugees in the Near East (UNRWA), Gaza situation report, No. 178 (January 2017).

consumption in Gaza is thus 79 l per capita per day, well below the rate of 100 l recommended by the World Health Organization (WHO). As a result, 95 per cent of the population may now be at risk of water-borne diseases.¹⁶

54. In the West Bank, difficulties in obtaining Israeli permits for activities related to constructing or rehabilitating Palestinian water infrastructure²⁹ contribute to denying Palestinians their right to access water.³⁰

55. A total of 620,000 persons either are not connected to a water network or receive water only once a week or less. A total of 150,000 of them live in Area C, where Israel has full responsibility over water. Certain Area C communities face other restrictions regarding physical access to water supplies, in addition to continued demolitions of water, sanitation and hygiene (WASH) infrastructure.¹⁷

56. By June 2016, average water consumption by Palestinians in the West Bank stood at 73 l of water per capita per day, again well below the consumption of 100 l recommended by WHO and drastically lower than the 240 l to which Israelis have access.²⁹ In some areas, Palestinian water consumption was as low as 20 l per person per day, in particular in communities without water infrastructure.³¹

57. Palestinians are prevented from accessing the Jordan River and are only allocated 13 per cent of the mountain aquifer water. The rest is absorbed by Israel, which also has access to a wide range of other water resources. The scarcity of water resources for Palestinians in the West Bank leaves them dependent on the Israeli water company Mekorot for 18.5 per cent of their water needs (2014 data).²⁹ On average, 8 per cent of Palestinian monthly expenditure is for purchasing water, compared to the world average of 3.5 per cent.¹⁷

58. In East Jerusalem, decades of insufficient investment in infrastructure and the lack of building permits result in about 36 per cent of the population with vulnerable illegal connections to water networks and up to a third of the population lacking sewage connections.¹⁷

59. In the West Bank, farmers suffer from difficulties in accessing their lands. Those with farmland in the “seam zone” or in the vicinity of settlements require special Israeli permits or prior coordination arrangements in order to access them.¹⁷ Along similar lines, Israeli restrictions prevent Palestinians from benefiting from most land resources located in Area C.¹⁶

60. Israeli-imposed restrictions on fishing areas off Gaza have resulted in the deterioration of the Strip’s fishing sector. The shrinking fishing zone has led to overfishing in a small area, resulting in a decreased fish population and depletion of their breeding grounds.³²

61. Official Palestinian sources have claimed that practices by Israeli authorities and settlers, including the illegal transfer of hazardous waste to the West Bank and the allocation of parts of the Jordan Valley to an Israeli dumpsite devoted to industrial waste, have gravely damaged Palestinian agricultural land, health, animals and biodiversity.³³

²⁹ “EWASH concerned by water restrictions in the West Bank resulting from Israeli discriminatory policies”, press release, 21 June 2016. Available from <http://reliefweb.int/report/occupied-palestinian-territory/ewash-concerned-water-restrictions-west-bank-resulting-israeli>.

³⁰ See https://www.ochaopt.org/content/risk-settler-takeover-ein-fera-water-spring-hebron#_ftn5.

³¹ World Bank, “Water situation alarming in Gaza”, 22 November 2016.

³² See Office of the United Nations Special Coordinator for the Middle East Peace Process, “Report to the Ad Hoc Liaison Committee”, September 2016.

³³ See <http://www.pcbs.gov.ps/site/512/default.aspx?tabID=512&lang=en&ItemID=1627&mid=3171&wversion=Staging#>.

Socioeconomic conditions in the Occupied Palestinian Territory

62. The impact of the occupation ranges from humanitarian crises to obstruction of social and economic development, at times reversing the development trajectory.

*Economic conditions*³⁴

63. The economy of Palestine contracted sharply during the second half of 2014 and the beginning of 2015, in the aftermath of the last Gaza military conflict. Since then, the economy has continued to recover, with stable growth and subdued inflation. Constant-price gross domestic product increased by 5.1 per cent in the first three quarters of 2016 relative to the same period in 2015. The increase originated mainly in Gaza, where an average growth of 9.8 per cent was registered. Growth in the West Bank, while more moderate, remained stable at 3.7 per cent.

64. The growth in the West Bank was attributed mostly to robust performance in the manufacturing sector and some services activities, such as financial services and education. However, growth was restrained by modest declines in agriculture, construction and trade. On the expenditure side, the positive economic performance of the West Bank during 2016 can be attributed mainly to private consumption, while investment and, to a lesser extent, government expenditure, registered negative rates of growth. The high rates of growth in the Gaza Strip during the first three quarters of 2016 are due mainly to the continued improvement in the construction sector and public administration services. In terms of expenditure, growth in the Gaza Strip was led solely by gross capital formation, mirroring the positive performance of the construction sector described above, since both private consumption and the external sector contributed negatively to growth.

65. There are sharp differences in living conditions between Gaza and the rest of the Occupied Palestinian Territory. In spite of recent high growth rates in Gaza, the 2014 conflict exacerbated the divergence between that area and the West Bank. This fact can be explained by the cumulative impact of conflicts, closures and the Hamas takeover of Gaza, which have endured over the last years.

66. The unemployment rate in the fourth quarter of 2016 was 25.7 per cent (16.9 per cent in the West Bank and 40.6 per cent in the Gaza Strip), a slight decline of 0.4 per cent compared to the same period in 2015. At the same time, labour participation declined by 2.2 per cent, suggesting that many workers are leaving the labour force (the “discouraged worker” effect). Although unemployment among young Palestinians (from 15 to 29 years of age) showed modest improvement in the last quarter of the 2016, it increased by 1.5 per cent during all of 2016. This rate reached 45.4 per cent in the third quarter of 2016, its highest level since 2014. Unemployment among Palestine refugees also remained high at 31.6 per cent.

67. The persistently high unemployment rate in Gaza (the average for 2016 was 41.7 per cent) remained above its pre-2014 level, showing that the labour market is still struggling to recover from the fallout of the 2014 escalation.

68. The rate of female unemployment not only is higher than that of men (43.9 per cent compared to 21 per cent in the fourth quarter of 2016), but it has also increased for almost 10 consecutive years. Despite an encouraging recent increase in the female labour force participation rate, this figure stood at 18.9 per cent for ages 15

³⁴ Unless stated otherwise, this section is based on the analysis by ESCWA of figures from official national accounts, labour statistics and consumer price indices published by the Palestinian Central Bureau of Statistics, as well as from the quarterly bulletins of the Palestinian Monetary Authority. All data were accessed on 23 March 2017. Figures for 2016 are preliminary.

and above in the fourth quarter of 2016, still considerably below that for men (71.4 per cent).

69. National fiscal revenue saw some encouraging developments. Gross domestic revenue grew by 27.8 per cent in 2016, continuing an upward trend that has led to a more-than-doubling (208.7 per cent) since 2006 and achieving a record high in the third quarter of 2016. In 2016, earmarked tax collection increased by 48.6 per cent from its 2015 level. Such positive developments are combined with a strong dependency on clearance revenue (customs revenue directed and controlled by Israel), which still represents approximately two thirds of total domestic revenue. Israel deducted about \$120 million per month until May 2016 to cover electricity, water and wastewater bills due by the Palestinian Authority, as agreed by the parties to the Oslo agreements. That amount was 34 per cent less than the same one for 2015.³⁵ Public debt decreased slightly in the last quarter of 2016, which could lead to a welcome change to the long-standing upward trend, as the total public debt has already increased by 127.5 per cent since 2006.

Food security stop

70. Although improvements have been registered in recent years, food insecurity remains high in Palestine, with 26.8 per cent of households classified as food insecure in 2014.³⁶ Improvements originate only in the West Bank, where food insecurity fell from 22.1 per cent of households in 2013 to 16.3 per cent in 2014. The situation in Gaza remains dire, with food insecurity at a high level (46.7 per cent of households in 2014) and deteriorating (up from 44.5 per cent in 2013). In the West Bank, food insecurity is particularly high in refugee camps, at 29 per cent.³⁷

71. Food insecurity in the Occupied Palestinian Territory derives primarily from the lack of economic access to food that is intrinsically correlated with poverty. Food security is further hampered by the insufficient or unstable food supply, both in the Gaza Strip, where the decade-long closures and recurrent conflicts with Israel have affected productive capacity, and in the West Bank, where restrictions on the movement of persons and goods heavily impede livelihoods and economic activity.³⁸

72. Approximately half of the Palestinian population suffers from more than one micronutrient deficiency.³⁹ A food security crisis in Gaza has only been averted owing to large-scale humanitarian assistance.³⁹ More than 70 per cent of Gaza's residents receive some form of international aid, the bulk of which is food assistance.⁴⁰ The population that receives UNRWA food aid has grown more than tenfold from 2000 to 2016, rising from fewer than 80,000 to over 960,000 persons. In the West Bank, food insecurity in refugee households reached 22 per cent compared to 14 per cent for non-refugee households.

³⁵ Data from the Palestinian Ministry of Finance.

³⁶ Food insecure households are those classified as "severely food insecure" or "moderately food insecure" under the Socioeconomic and Food Security Survey methodology. For more information, see Palestine Food Security Sector and Palestinian Central Bureau of Statistics, "Socioeconomic and food security survey 2014: State of Palestine" (2016).

³⁷ Palestine Food Security Sector and Palestinian Central Bureau of Statistics, "Socioeconomic and food security survey 2014: State of Palestine" (2016).

³⁸ Ibid.

³⁹ Information received from UNRWA.

⁴⁰ Available from <https://www.ochaopt.org/content/gaza-strip-humanitarian-impact-blockade-november-2016>.

Education

73. In 2016, education-related grave violations continued to restrict the right of children to access education safely in the West Bank, including East Jerusalem.⁴¹

74. The planning and zoning regime applied by the Israeli authorities in Area C and East Jerusalem has created a shortage of school buildings. A total of 50,000 Palestinian children are enrolled in 183 schools in Area C. Over 1,700 children from 37 West Bank communities commute to schools more than 5 km away. Harassment and violence have also been reported as causes that complicate journeys to and from school.¹⁶

75. UNRWA reports that 75 per cent of schools in Gaza continued to operate on a double-shift basis in 2016. Refugee children have fewer opportunities to engage in recreational and creative pursuits than students attending single-shift schools.³⁹

76. In Gaza, all 252 schools that were damaged or destroyed during the 2014 hostilities have been repaired and are fully operational, the completely destroyed UNRWA school has been reconstructed and work is under way on the six remaining destroyed schools. Of the 14 higher education institutions affected by the hostilities, 4 have been repaired and work is ongoing on another 7 institutions. A total of 180 of the 274 damaged kindergartens have been repaired.⁴²

77. In Gaza, children's learning experiences are negatively affected by the short school days owing to double shifts and chronic overcrowding. Security-related incidents have also affected school infrastructure in Area C and areas close to settlements.⁴³

Public health

78. Gaza is one of the most densely populated areas in the world, with over 5,000 persons per km².⁴⁴ The situation is particularly challenging for 43 per cent of the refugees who live in camps where the average population density is nearly 40,000 persons per km².⁴⁵ Overcrowded living conditions and substandard housing have heightened public health risks associated with improper solid waste disposal at dumping sites and standing wastewater, especially near refugee camps.¹⁶

79. In Gaza, closures, the political divide⁴⁶ and recurrent conflict have severely affected the availability and quality of health services. Many patients are suffering from frustration, unnecessary pain and health risks associated with delayed care caused by, inter alia, shortages in skilled personnel, drugs and disposables, and electricity supply.⁴²

80. In the West Bank, Palestinians must obtain permits for each health appointment that requires travel to Jerusalem or neighbouring countries and are often delayed or denied such permits, often without being given a reason. Israeli restrictions on movement require ambulances that transport patients from the West Bank to Jerusalem hospitals to use a "back-to-back" procedure, where two vehicles meet and the patient is moved between them across the checkpoint or the wall.¹⁶

⁴¹ See http://www.dci-palestine.org/raids_tear_gas_and_a_burned_house_three_west_bank_school_days. See also United Nations Children's Fund (UNICEF), Humanitarian situation report: State of Palestine, January-March 2017.

⁴² See United Nations Country Team in the State of Palestine, "Gaza: two years after" (2016).

⁴³ UNICEF, Humanitarian situation report: State of Palestine, October-December 2016.

⁴⁴ Information received from the United Nations Environment Programme (UNEP) citing data from the Palestinian Central Bureau of Statistics and the National Population Committee.

⁴⁵ UNRWA, Gaza situation report No. 191, April 2017.

⁴⁶ Robert Piper, "The humanitarian impact of a divided government", 12 July 2016. Available from <https://www.ochaopt.org/content/humanitarian-impact-divided-government>.

III. Occupied Syrian Golan

81. In its resolution 497 (1981), the Security Council decided that the Israeli decision to impose its laws, jurisdiction and administration in the occupied Syrian Golan Heights is null and void and without international legal effect, and demanded that Israel, the occupying Power, should rescind forthwith its decision.

82. On 7 September 2016, Israeli authorities reportedly undertook the first home demolition in Majdal Shams, citing the lack of a necessary building permit (A/HRC/34/39, para. 59).⁴⁷ Land, housing and development policies established by Israel have made it difficult for Syrians to obtain building permits, which results in the reported overcrowded Syrian villages.⁴⁸ According to the Syrian Arab Republic, Israeli authorities restrict Syrian usage of land to 18,000 hectares, while Israeli settlers are allowed to utilize 140,000 hectares (A/HRC/34/37, para. 24).

83. The Special Committee to Investigate Israeli Practices Affecting the Human Rights of the Palestinian People and Other Arabs of the Occupied Territories cited allegations by civil society organizations that Israeli authorities seek to expropriate lands owned by the Syrian population by declaring them “green areas” in order to prevent their use by the Syrian population for construction, farming, grazing or other purposes. It was further alleged that such policies inhibited the improvement of road and sewage systems, the building of industrial infrastructure and the construction of educational, health and cultural institutions for the benefit of the Syrian population (A/71/352, para. 91).

84. The International Labour Organization (ILO) maintains that the allocation of water for Syrian farmers is limited to 200 m³ per 1,000 m², which is liable to be reduced owing to drought, while settlers receive between 600 and 800 m³ and in practice as much as they require. This has undermined agricultural work, rendering it a secondary activity for many Syrian farmers.⁴⁹

85. Meanwhile, settlement expansion by Israeli authorities in the occupied Syrian Golan continued during the reporting period in violation of international law (A/HRC/34/39, para. 58). In October 2016, the Government of Israel reportedly approved plans for the construction of 1,600 new homes in the settlement of Katzrin (A/HRC/34/39, para. 59) and according to ILO, the Government is offering young married Israeli couples the opportunity to rent the land of Syrians who left the area in 1967.⁵⁰

86. According to the Special Committee, Israeli and foreign-owned companies have continued to explore and exploit natural resources, including water, gas and oil resources, after receiving licences from the Israeli authorities (A/70/406, para. 25).

87. In recent years there has been increased investment by the Government of Israel in the development of the Syrian communities in the Golan, including through the adoption of a three-year plan for the period 2014-2017 that allocated nearly \$60 million, mainly for education and infrastructure development.

⁴⁷ See also <http://golan-marsad.org/press-release-israeli-authorities-demolish-home-in-majdal-shams-in-the-occupied-syrian-golan/>.

⁴⁸ See <http://golan-marsad.org/press-release-israeli-authorities-demolish-home-in-majdal-shams-in-the-occupied-syrian-golan/>.

⁴⁹ International Labour Organization (ILO), *The Situation of Workers of the Occupied Arab Territories* (Geneva, International Labour Office, 2016), para. 116.

⁵⁰ ILO, *The Situation of Workers of the Occupied Arab Territories* (Geneva, International Labour Office, 2016), para. 118.

88. On 17 April 2016, the Israeli Cabinet held its first meeting ever in the occupied Syrian Golan.⁵¹ At the opening of the meeting, the Prime Minister of Israel stated that “the Golan Heights will forever remain in Israel’s hands”, vowing that his Government will “continue to strengthen the residents, the communities, the industry and the agriculture however we can”. He further called upon the international community to “finally recognize that the Golan Heights will remain under Israel’s sovereignty permanently”.⁵²

IV. Conclusion

89. **Fifty years of occupation of Palestinian and Syrian lands have created severe limitations on social and economic development in the Occupied Palestinian Territory and the occupied Syrian Golan. The impact of Israeli policies and practices on the Palestinian people, society and economy, in particular, is multilayered and has accumulated over the decades of occupation.**

90. **Israeli practices and policies in the Occupied Palestinian Territory and the occupied Syrian Golan violate international humanitarian and human rights law, and some of them may be considered discriminatory. Certain Israeli practices may amount to a forcible transfer of protected persons, which could be a grave breach of the Fourth Geneva Convention.**

91. **Adherence to international law is imperative, ensuring that no party enjoys impunity and securing justice and peace for all the peoples in the region, including the Palestinian and Syrian populations under occupation.**

92. **The United Nations maintains its long-standing position that lasting and comprehensive peace can only be achieved through a negotiated two-State solution. The Secretary-General will continue to ensure that the United Nations works towards the establishment of an independent, democratic, contiguous and viable Palestinian State living side by side in peace with a secure Israel in the framework of a comprehensive regional settlement, consistent with relevant Security Council resolutions.**

⁵¹ Israel, Ministry of Foreign Affairs, communiqué, 17 April 2016. Available from <http://mfa.gov.il/MFA/PressRoom/2016/Pages/Cabinet-communique-17-April-2016.aspx>.

⁵² See <http://www.pmo.gov.il/english/mediacenter/secretaryannouncements/pages/govmes170416.aspx>.



General Assembly Economic and Social Council

Distr.: General
25 May 2018

Original: English

General Assembly
Seventy-third session
Item 65 of the preliminary list*
Permanent sovereignty of the Palestinian people in the Occupied Palestinian Territory, including East Jerusalem, and of the Arab population in the occupied Syrian Golan over their natural resources

Economic and Social Council
Substantive session of 2018
Agenda item 16
Economic and social repercussions of the Israeli occupation on the living conditions of the Palestinian people in the Occupied Palestinian Territory, including East Jerusalem, and the Arab population in the occupied Syrian Golan

Economic and social repercussions of the Israeli occupation on the living conditions of the Palestinian people in the Occupied Palestinian Territory, including East Jerusalem, and of the Arab population in the occupied Syrian Golan

Note by the Secretary-General

Summary

In its resolution [2017/30](#), entitled “Economic and social repercussions of the Israeli occupation on the living conditions of the Palestinian people in the Occupied Palestinian Territory, including East Jerusalem, and the Arab population in the occupied Syrian Golan”, the Economic and Social Council requested the Secretary-General to submit to the General Assembly at its seventy-second session, through the Council, a report on the implementation of that resolution. The Assembly, in resolution [72/240](#) entitled “Permanent sovereignty of the Palestinian people in the Occupied Palestinian Territory, including East Jerusalem, and of the Arab population in the occupied Syrian Golan over their natural resources”, also requested the Secretary-General to submit a report to it at its seventy-third session. The present report, which was prepared by the Economic and Social Commission for Western Asia, has been submitted in compliance with the above-mentioned resolutions of the Council and the Assembly.

The report covers persistent Israeli practices and policies, particularly those which are in violation of international humanitarian law and international human rights law and which affect the social and economic conditions of people living under its military occupation.

* [A/73/50](#).



The Economic and Social Commission for Western Asia would like to express its appreciation for the contributions from the Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations, the International Labour Organization, the Office of the Special Representative of the Secretary-General for Children and Armed Conflict, the United Nations Conference on Trade and Development, the United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization, the United Nations Population Fund, the United Nations Children's Fund, the United Nations Industrial Development Organization, the United Nations Relief and Works Agency for Palestine Refugees in the Near East, the Office of the United Nations Special Coordinator for the Middle East Peace Process, the World Food Programme, the Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs and the World Health Organization.

I. Introduction

1. The Economic and Social Council, in its resolution [2017/30](#), and the General Assembly, in its resolution [72/240](#), expressed concerns about the economic and social repercussions of the Israeli occupation on the living conditions of the Palestinian people in the Occupied Palestinian Territory, including East Jerusalem, and of the Arab population in the occupied Syrian Golan, as well as the exploitation, damage, loss or depletion or endangerment of natural resources by Israel in the Occupied Palestinian Territory, including East Jerusalem, and in the occupied Syrian Golan.
2. The present note provides information on relevant developments with regard to the foregoing.

II. Occupied Palestinian Territory

Israeli practices in the Occupied Palestinian Territory

3. Palestinians in the occupied territory are subject to a complex combination of Israeli and Palestinian legal systems. In the West Bank, Israeli domestic law is applied extraterritorially to Israeli settlers, while Palestinians are subject to Israeli military law in addition to the Palestinian legal system. The resulting differentiation is particularly problematic as regards criminal matters. Lower human rights standards are applied to Palestinian suspects and defendants compared with Israeli suspects and defendants. The application of two different legal systems in the same territory, on the sole basis of nationality or origin, is inherently discriminatory and also violates the principle of equality before the law, which is central to the right to fair trial. The application of Israeli domestic law to settlers and of Israeli military law to Palestinians in the West Bank also raises concerns as to the obligation of the occupying Power to respect the laws in force in the territory it occupies, unless it is absolutely prevented from doing so.

4. Israeli planning and zoning policies, especially in East Jerusalem and Area C, which constitutes 60 per cent of the West Bank and in which 5 to 10 per cent of Palestinians reside, under full Israeli control, has been deemed restrictive, discriminatory and incompatible with international law.¹ Palestinians can plan and build legally on only 13 per cent of East Jerusalem. After the allocation of land for settlements, the demarcation of closed military zones and the takeover of land for the “barrier”, only 30 per cent of Area C remains available for Palestinians. The Israeli Civil Administration permits construction by Palestinians on 0.4 per cent of Area C (see [A/72/564](#), para. 32). Palestinians living there are often faced with nearly insurmountable Israeli obstacles to obtaining construction permits. The rate of approval of building permit applications for Palestinians in Area C during the period 2007–2016 was less than 4 per cent.²

Excessive use of force and settler violence

5. Concerns persist regarding international standards, in particular for civilian demonstrators and stone throwers in the West Bank, and in access-restricted areas in the Gaza Strip. A general lack of accountability for violations by security and military

¹ See [A/HRC/34/38](#), paras. 24, 39 and 40; [A/72/90-E/2017/71](#), para. 4; [A/72/564](#), para. 32; and State of Palestine, Palestinian Central Bureau of Statistics, “Preliminary results of the population, housing and establishments census 2017” (Ramallah, 2018), available from www.pcbs.gov.ps/Downloads/book2364-1.pdf.

² Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs, “2018 humanitarian needs overview: Occupied Palestinian Territory” (November 2017), endnote 22.

personnel exacerbates the situation, especially given that several incidents strongly suggest unlawful killing.³ On 30 March 2018, 18 Palestinians were killed and more than 1,400 injured by the Israeli army, the majority during demonstrations close to the fence separating Gaza from Israel;⁴ approximately 800 of the injuries reportedly resulted from live ammunition.⁵

6. Between 1 April 2017 and 31 March 2018, 80 Palestinian civilians, including 3 women and 17 children, were killed by the Israeli army, the security apparatus or settlers, while 12,188 Palestinian civilians were injured, including 419 women and girls and 2,095 children.⁶ A number of the casualties had been involved or allegedly involved in attacks against Israelis. During the same period, 16 Israelis were killed and 119 were injured.

7. On 7 March 2018, the Israeli Knesset passed an amendment to the Counter-Terrorism Law granting police commanders the authority to withhold the bodies of Palestinians killed while committing an attack against Israelis, or suspected of doing so, and to set conditions for returning bodies for burial if it is determined that there is reason to fear that, as a result of the funeral, a terrorist attack might be committed, lives might be at risk or the funeral would be used as a platform to praise terror attacks.⁷

Settler-related violence

8. Palestinians continued to suffer from settler violence and harassment during the reporting period. Settler violence continued to impede the ability of Palestinian population affected to exercise numerous human rights (see [A/HRC/37/43](#), para. 23). After steadily declining since 2013, violent incidents between Israeli settlers in the West Bank and Palestinians sharply increased in 2017 compared with 2016. There were 180 attacks by settlers reported between 1 April 2017 and 31 March 2018.⁶

9. An increase was recorded in the indictment rate in files opened regarding settler violence between 2014 and 2017,⁸ driven at least in part by increased law enforcement and prosecution efforts. Nevertheless, Israel continued to fail to do its utmost to investigate cases of settler violence and prosecute perpetrators (see [A/HRC/37/43](#), para. 23).

10. Palestinians victims of crimes perpetrated by Israelis in the West Bank often choose not to file complaints with the Israeli Police; such offences are usually not investigated.⁹ Cases in which settlers attacked Palestinians and their property in the presence of, or even accompanied by, Israeli security forces continued to be documented (see [A/72/564](#), paras. 17–22).

³ See [A/72/565](#), paras. 6–16 and 51; see also Amnesty International, *Amnesty International Report 2017/18: The State of the World's Human Rights* (London, 2018), p. 207.

⁴ Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs, “Humanitarian bulletin: Occupied Palestinian Territory” (March 2018).

⁵ International Committee of the Red Cross, “The troubling (and rising) human toll in Gaza” (5 April 2018). Available from www.icrc.org/en/document/gaza-troubling-human-toll.

⁶ Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs, monthly figures database, available from www.ochaopt.org/content/monthly-figures (accessed on 17 March 2018).

⁷ Knesset, “Knesset passes law granting police the authority to hold terrorists’ bodies”, press release (8 March 2018). Available from www.knesset.gov.il/spokesman/eng/PR_eng.asp?PRID=13804.

⁸ Yesh Din, “Data sheet, December 2017: law enforcement on Israeli civilians in the West Bank—Yesh Din monitoring update 2005–2017”, p. 4. Available from www.yesh-din.org/en/data-sheet-december-2017-law-enforcement-israeli-civilians-west-bank; and “Increase in settler violence during the first half of 2017” in Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs, “Humanitarian bulletin: Occupied Palestinian Territory” (July 2017), available from www.ochaopt.org/content/increase-settler-violence-during-first-half-2017.

⁹ *Ibid.*, p. 2.

Detention and ill-treatment

11. As of the end of February 2018, at least 5,890 Palestinians were being held as “security detainees” or serving a sentence in Israeli prisons,¹⁰ including 356 children¹¹ and 61 women.¹² Grave concerns over the detention of Palestinian children remain, since such detention must be used as a last resort and for the shortest period possible.¹³

12. As of the end of February 2018, 427 Palestinians were being held in administrative detention, including 4 children.¹⁴ Between 1967 and 2014, the Israeli authorities issued more than 50,000 administrative detention orders. As of July 2017, there were at least 449 administrative detainees in Israeli prisons who were being held without charge or trial for an indefinite period of time.¹⁵ Resort to administrative detention must be consistent with the obligations of Israel under international human rights law and with the exceptional nature of internment permitted under article 78 of the Geneva Convention relative to the Protection of Civilian Persons in Time of War.

13. Most Palestinian prisoners and detainees are held in facilities outside the Occupied Palestinian Territory. International humanitarian law forbids the transfer of protected persons, including those accused of offences, to the territory of the occupying Power. This practice makes it difficult or impossible for families to visit the detainees (see [A/72/565](#), para. 38).

14. As stated last year in a note by the Secretary-General, the Committee against Torture expressed concern about a number of Israeli practices towards Palestinian detainees, including minors. Such practices include deprivation of basic legal safeguards for administrative detainees, isolation and solitary confinement of detainees, including minors, punishment and ill-treatment of hunger strikers, torture or ill-treatment of Palestinian children and the hindering of visits of relatives for child prisoners. The Committee also expressed concern about information it had received to the effect that there was no proper accountability for torture and ill-treatment (see [A/72/90-E/2017/71](#), para. 18; see also [CAT/C/ISR/CO/5](#), paras. 22, 24, 26, 28 and 30). No criminal investigations have been opened into the more than 1,000 complaints of torture and ill-treatment filed since 2001.¹⁶ Complaints of torture or ill-treatment involve the Israel Security Agency in particular. Although the number of complaints involving the Agency has quadrupled since June 2013, none has led to a criminal investigation (see [A/HRC/WG.6/29/ISR/2](#), para. 23; see also [A/HRC/31/40](#), paras. 47 and 48; [A/HRC/34/38](#), paras. 48–50; and [A/71/364](#), paras. 58–60). Nevertheless, five indictments were issued against Israeli soldiers suspected of having harmed Palestinian detainees while they were handcuffed and in custody.¹⁷

¹⁰ Excluding those held in military prisons.

¹¹ B’Tselem, statistics on Palestinians in the custody of the Israeli security forces database, available from www.btselem.org/index.php/statistics/detainees_and_prisoners (accessed on 3 April 2018).

¹² Addameer, Statistics database, available from www.addameer.org/statistics (accessed on 8 March 2018).

¹³ Information received from the United Nations Children’s Fund (UNICEF).

¹⁴ B’Tselem, statistics on administrative detention database, available from www.btselem.org/index.php/administrative_detention/statistics (accessed on 3 April 2018).

¹⁵ Addameer, “Ten facts on administrative detention” (12 February 2014). Available from www.addameer.org/publications/ten-facts-administrative-detention.

¹⁶ Amnesty International, *Amnesty International Report 2017/18*, p. 209; see also [A/HRC/37/42](#).

¹⁷ Yesh Din, “Data sheet, January 2017: law enforcement on Israeli soldiers suspected of harming Palestinians — figures for 2015”, p.11. Available from <https://s3-eu-west-1.amazonaws.com/files.yesh-din.org/2016+נתונים+מצה+דצמבר+2016+Data+1.17++English.pdf>.

Destruction and confiscation of property and infrastructure

15. Continued demolitions by Israel and the resulting forced evictions of Palestinians are key factors contributing to a coercive environment in the West Bank, including East Jerusalem, in which specific circumstances may leave no other choice to individuals or communities but to leave.¹⁸ Demolitions and the resulting forced evictions often constitute grave violations of human rights law (see [A/72/564](#), para. 49) and international humanitarian law, which prohibits the destruction or confiscation of private property (see [A/HRC/37/43](#), para. 33).

16. Between April 2017 and March 2018, the Israeli authorities demolished more than 310 Palestinian structures, a decline from the previous reporting period. The total number of demolished structures is 5,413 since 2009, including 2,009 residential and 917 donor-funded structures.¹⁹ 2017 witnessed the second largest number of Israeli demolitions of Palestinian structures in East Jerusalem since 2000, although lower than in 2016, when 190 demolitions were recorded.²⁰

17. Israeli authorities cite the lack of building permits, which are nearly impossible to obtain, to justify the demolition of Palestinian homes (see [A/72/564](#), paras. 23–25). By the end of 2017, there were more than 13,000 demolition orders pending against Palestinian property in Area C.²¹

18. During the reporting period, Israeli authorities carried out nine punitive demolitions¹⁹ of family homes of Palestinians suspected of having carried out attacks, a measure that may amount to collective punishment prohibited under international humanitarian law and international human rights law (see [A/72/565](#), paras. 18–27).

19. Furthermore, as of September 2017, 66 cases of demolitions and confiscation related to agricultural structures or assets, and 39 cases related to food assistance, had been recorded for 2017.²²

20. Confiscation of property by Israel as a punitive measure against neighbours of Palestinians suspected of having attacked Israelis may also amount to collective punishment (see [A/72/565](#), paras. 23–27). Over one third of Area C is formally designated as public land (referred to as “State land” by Israel). The vast majority of “State land” declarations took place before the start of the Oslo peace process in the early 1990s. It is estimated that between 750 km² and 900 km² were declared “State land” by Israel between 1979 and 1992. “State land” has been allocated exclusively for use by Israel and its citizens, rather than for the benefit of the local population.

Population displacement

21. There is continued concern that the combination of State-sanctioned land seizures, retroactive legalization of settler outposts, demolition of Palestinian homes and livelihood structures, denial of Palestinian building permits, restrictions on movement and access to livelihoods, and settler violence and a lack of accountability for such violence to contribute to the creation of a coercive environment in areas under full Israeli control, propelling Palestinians to move out of certain parts of Area C and East Jerusalem. Involuntary displacement and relocation to alternative

¹⁸ See [A/72/564](#), para. 27; see also Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs, “2018 humanitarian needs overview”, annex I (protection).

¹⁹ Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs, demolitions and displacement database. See www.ochaopt.org/page/demolition-system (accessed on 12 March 2018).

²⁰ Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs, “Humanitarian bulletin: Occupied Palestinian Territory” (December 2017).

²¹ Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs, “2018 humanitarian needs overview”, endnote 22.

²² *Ibid.*, p. 11.

residential areas, as a result of such policies, may amount to forcible transfer if it is carried out without the free and informed consent of the individuals who relocate, in violation of the obligations of Israel under international humanitarian and human rights law. Forcible transfer is a grave breach of the Fourth Geneva Convention and amounts to a war crime.²³

22. During the reporting period, 448 Palestinians were displaced after home demolitions in the West Bank, including East Jerusalem, marking a sharp decline compared to 1,263 and 1,162 people displaced during the two previous reporting periods, respectively. The total number of Palestinians displaced as a result of home demolitions since 2009 amounts to 8,681 people, including 4,528 children.¹⁹

23. As a result of the planning regime, at least one third of all Palestinian households in East Jerusalem lack a building permit issued by Israel, which places 100,000 residents at risk of displacement.²⁰

24. This and the strict residency regime for East Jerusalem and restrictions on family reunification involving residents of East Jerusalem and other parts of the Occupied Palestinian Territory contribute to the displacement of Jerusalemite Palestinians (see [A/HRC/37/43](#), paras. 55 and 63).

25. Between 1967 and May 2017, Israel revoked the Jerusalem residency status of 14,595 Palestinians.²⁴ On 7 March 2018, the Israeli Knesset passed an amendment to the Entry into Israel Law that allows the Interior Minister to revoke the permanent residency of Palestinians in East Jerusalem who have committed terrorist activities, treason or espionage, as defined under Israeli law, or “acts that constitute breach of trust against the State of Israel”.²⁵

26. Lawsuits based on a claim of previous Jewish ownership have also been a frequent strategy for settler organizations to acquire property in East Jerusalem. Since 2004, there has been an increase in settler takeover in neighbourhoods surrounding the Old City, through purchase and claims of prior ownership before 1948 (see [A/HRC/37/43](#), para. 40). With proceedings under way, 180 Palestinian families were at risk of eviction from their homes in East Jerusalem in 2017 as a result of legal action by settlers.²⁶

27. Displacement of Jerusalemite Palestinians is evidenced by the growing population of East Jerusalem neighbourhoods behind the “barrier” in the West Bank, where rent is lower and restrictions on housing expansion fewer. It is the only place where Palestinians with residency status in Jerusalem can live with spouses from the West Bank without losing their status. These neighbourhoods suffer from lack of essential services and basic infrastructure, however (see [A/HRC/37/43](#), para. 56). Palestinians living in those neighbourhoods also have to pass through Israeli checkpoints to enter Jerusalem.

28. An additional factor contributing to the creation of a coercive environment in Area C is the plan to evict and relocate Bedouin and herder communities, including approximately 7,500 persons belonging to 46 Bedouin communities, most of them

²³ See [A/72/564](#), paras. 27 and 36; see also [A/HRC/34/38](#), paras. 27–28; [A/HRC/31/43](#), paras. 44, 46 and 50–60; [A/HRC/24/30](#), paras. 28–29; [A/68/513](#), paras. 30–34; [A/HRC/25/38](#), paras. 11–20; [A/HRC/28/80](#), para. 24; and [A/69/348](#), para. 13.

²⁴ Association for Civil Rights in Israel, “East Jerusalem: facts and figures 2017” (21 May 2017).

²⁵ Knesset, “Knesset passes legislation authorizing interior minister to revoke permanent residency status over involvement in terrorism”, press release (7 March 2018). Available from www.knesset.gov.il/spokesman/eng/PR_eng.asp?PRID=13803.

²⁶ Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs, “2018 humanitarian needs overview”, pp. 9 and 10.

refugees, who are at particular risk (ibid., paras. 24 and 25; see also [A/72/564](#), para. 36).

29. In Gaza, by November 2017, approximately 23,500 Palestinians remained displaced as a result of the 2014 conflict owing to Israeli restrictions on the entry of reconstruction materials and limited reconstruction funding.²⁷

Israeli settlement activity

30. Israeli settlement activity in the Occupied Palestinian Territory violates a number of Security Council resolutions, including resolution [2334 \(2016\)](#), in which the Council reaffirmed that the establishment by Israel of settlements in the Palestinian territory occupied since 1967, including East Jerusalem, had no legal validity and constituted a flagrant violation under international law and a major obstacle to the achievement of the two-State solution and a just, lasting and comprehensive peace. Such settlements also have a serious impact on the human rights of the Palestinian people (see [A/72/564](#), para. 4).

31. The Israeli settler population has more than doubled since the Oslo Accords in 1993: by the end of 2016, there were almost 600,000 persons living in more than 227 settlements, 97 of which had been established without formal authorization by the Government of Israel and labelled as “outposts”.²⁸ Israeli settlements and areas associated with them cover 40 per cent of the total area of the West Bank.²⁹

32. In recent years, the growth rate of the Israeli settler population has surpassed that of both the overall population of Israel and the Palestinian population in the West Bank.³⁰ Policies of the Government of Israel support population growth in the settlements through State-led public services, incentives and preferential treatment (see [A/72/90-E/2017/71](#) and [A/71/86-E/2016/13](#)). The United Nations High Commissioner for Human Rights indicated that Israeli policies regarding the settlements amounted to the “transfer by Israel of its population into the Occupied Palestinian Territory, which is prohibited under international humanitarian law”.³¹

33. Israeli settlements remain one of the drivers of displacement and forced evictions. Measures that accompany the construction of settlements often can hinder the mobility of Palestinians, including access to their own agricultural lands. Palestinians living in the vicinity of settlements are subjected to an increase in tensions and violence in view of the presence of not only settlers, but also Israeli soldiers and security forces to ensure the safety of settlers. They may also suffer from the collective punishment imposed on them in response to any attack against Israelis (see [A/HRC/37/43](#), paras. 15 and 45–54).

34. In May 2017, Israeli authorities formally approved the establishment of a new settlement in Area C for the first time since 1992, notwithstanding the establishment of other settlements through the retroactive legalization of outposts. The new settlement in Area C was established for settlers evicted from outposts.³²

²⁷ Ibid., p. 7.

²⁸ B’Tselem, “Settlements” (11 November 2017), available from www.btselem.org/settlements; and Peace Now, “Settlement watch” database, available from <http://peacenow.org.il/en/settlements-watch/settlements-data> (accessed on 14 March 2018).

²⁹ B’Tselem, “Settlements”.

³⁰ Information received from the United Nations Conference on Trade and Development; and B’Tselem, “Settlements”.

³¹ See [A/HRC/37/43](#), para. 69; and Fourth Geneva Convention, art. 49 (6).

³² See [A/72/564](#), para. 6; see also Peace Now, “Jurisdiction of the new settlement ‘Amihai’ approved” (30 May 2017), available from <http://peacenow.org.il/en/jurisdiction-new-settlement-amihai-approved>; and [A/HRC/37/43](#), paras. 8 and 15–17.

35. On 8 February 2017, the Knesset adopted the Law for the Regularization of Settlement in Judea and Samaria, authorizing the continued use of privately owned Palestinian land previously confiscated for settlement purposes. It was the first time that the Knesset had extended its jurisdiction to matters concerning the private property of Palestinians living under Israeli military occupation (see [A/72/564](#), paras. 14 and 15).

Movement and access restrictions

Gaza closure

36. Nearly 2 million Palestinians in Gaza continue to suffer from the impact of successive military escalations, compounded by tightened closures following the takeover by Hamas of the Gaza Strip in 2007. The blockade may amount to collective punishment, which is prohibited by international law (see [A/72/565](#), para. 28). It continues to undermine the civil, political, economic, social and cultural rights of Palestinians in Gaza (see [A/HRC/34/38](#), para. 29; [A/71/364](#), paras. 28–29; [A/70/421](#), paras. 15–22; and [A/HRC/31/44](#), paras. 40 and 43).

37. Following the 2014 hostilities, Israel introduced measures that eased the movement of people and goods into and out of the Gaza Strip. Nevertheless, the requirement by Israel to coordinate and monitor the entry of crucial raw materials deemed as “dual-use” items, the temporary restrictions on the entry of cement and other materials needed for reconstruction, and the recurring interrogations and confiscations or withdrawals of permits for traders and merchants continue to have a detrimental effect on the economic, social and humanitarian situation in the Gaza Strip (*ibid.*).

38. In 2017, the number of exits through the Israeli-controlled Erez crossing dropped by almost 50 per cent compared with the previous year, reaching the lowest rate since 2014. Israeli authorities also required Gaza residents travelling abroad to sign a waiver pledging not to return using the same route for a year, i.e. they would therefore be able to return earlier only through the Rafah crossing. In some cases, travellers were detained at the crossing until they signed the commitment.

39. Moreover, the number of valid permits issued for traders as of December 2017 was 551, compared with between 3,500 and 3,700 in late 2015.^{30, 33}

40. The approval rate for medical patients allowed through the Erez crossing declined to 54 per cent in 2017, compared with 93 per cent in 2012.³⁴ In some instances, patients who had been granted permits to cross at Erez for medical treatment outside Gaza were reportedly stopped at the crossing if they did not cooperate when being stopped by Israeli security forces and asked to provide information about armed groups or relatives allegedly affiliated with armed groups in Gaza (see [A/72/565](#), para. 32).

41. The Rafah border crossing largely remained closed by the Egyptian authorities in 2017, except on limited occasions (*ibid.*, para. 29).

³³ Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs, “Gaza crossings: movement of people and goods” database, available from www.ochaopt.org/page/gaza-crossings-movement-people-and-goods; see also Gisha: Legal Center for Freedom of Movement, “2017: tightening of the closure — a round-up of 10 recent measures imposed by Israel further limiting movement of people to and from Gaza”, available from www.gisha.org/UserFiles/File/2017Tightening_of_the_closure.pdf; and Amira Hass, “Israel to let Gazans leave via West Bank — as long they don’t return for at least 12 months”, *Haaretz*, 10 March 2016, available from www.haaretz.com/israel-news/.premium-gaza-residents-allowed-to-travel-as-long-as-they-stay-away-1.5415467.

³⁴ Information received from the World Health Organization (WHO).

42. The Gaza Reconstruction Mechanism has played a crucial role in facilitating the import of construction materials into the Gaza Strip but has been less successful in facilitating the import of “dual-use” materials critical for public works projects.³⁵ Nevertheless, approvals of large projects and the import of dual-use items have increased in 2018.³⁶

43. Citing security concerns, the Israeli army has also enforced “access-restricted areas” along the border fence with Israel and at sea, significantly undermining the right of Palestinian fishermen and farmers to a livelihood (see [A/HRC/34/38](#), para. 29; [A/70/421](#), paras. 30–38; and [A/HRC/31/44](#), para. 43). Officially, the Israeli authorities impose a “no go” area of up to 100 m from the perimeter fence and up to 200 m for heavy machinery. Nevertheless, humanitarian organizations have reported that in practice up to 300 m from the perimeter fence is considered by most farmers as a “no go” area and up to 1,000 m is considered a “high risk” area.³⁷

44. While sea restrictions have varied, Israel, citing security concerns and attempts to smuggle weapons by sea and conduct attacks using boats,³⁸ imposes a fishing limit at 6 nautical miles, less than one third of the 20 nautical miles allocated for fishing under the Oslo Accords. The limit is expanded to 9 nautical miles during the sardine season.³⁹

Movement restrictions in the West Bank

45. Administrative, bureaucratic and physical constraints hamper the movement of Palestinians in the West Bank and undermine economic activity, access to basic services and the delivery of aid and relief, and undermine freedom of movement (see [A/HRC/31/44](#), paras. 12–21).

46. Israel continues to construct the “barrier” in the West Bank. About 65 per cent of its route has been completed. Approximately 85 per cent of the current 712 km planned route lies within the West Bank rather than along the 1949 Armistice Line (the Green Line),⁴⁰ contrary to the 2004 advisory opinion of the International Court of Justice, which states that “the construction of the wall being built by Israel, the occupying Power, in the Occupied Palestinian Territory, including in and around East Jerusalem, and its associated regime, are contrary to international law” (see [A/ES-10/273](#) and [A/ES-10/273/Corr.1](#)). Another 53 km (7.5 per cent) of the “barrier” is under construction. If construction is completed along the entire planned route, about 9.4 per cent of the West Bank would be isolated between the wall and the Green Line and up to 25,000 Palestinians could be added to the 11,000 Palestinians already isolated in the seam zone⁴¹ as of November 2017, many of whom are consequently encountering difficulties in accessing the rest of the West Bank.⁴²

47. According to an Israeli local government audit, 140,000 Palestinians live in the eight neighbourhoods within the borders of the Jerusalem municipality as defined by

³⁵ Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs, “2018 humanitarian needs overview”, p. 7.

³⁶ Information received from the Office of the Special Coordinator for the Middle East Peace Process.

³⁷ Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs, “2018 humanitarian needs overview”, p. 5.

³⁸ Judah Ari Gross, “Shin Bet, IDF thwart Islamic Jihad attack on navy boats off Gaza coast”, *Times of Israel*, 4 April 2018. Available from www.timesofisrael.com/shin-bet-idf-thwart-islamic-jihad-attack-on-navy-boats-off-gaza-coast.

³⁹ Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs, “Humanitarian bulletin: Occupied Palestinian Territory”, special edition, May–June 2017.

⁴⁰ Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs, “Occupied Palestinian Territory: humanitarian facts and figures” (December 2017), p. 10.

⁴¹ The area that lies between the wall and the Armistice Line of 1949.

⁴² B’Tselem, “The separation barrier” (11 November 2017). Available from www.btselem.org/separation_barrier.

the Israeli authorities but are separated from the rest of East Jerusalem by the “barrier”. These neighbourhoods suffer from a lack of basic infrastructure, municipal services and law enforcement, and from poor living conditions, although the communities themselves are under the authority of the municipality of Jerusalem and pay municipal taxes. The “barrier” also impedes freedom of movement and access to education and municipal services in these neighbourhoods (see [A/HRC/37/43](#), paras. 38 and 58).

48. Regarding the impact of the “barrier” on the health situation, in 2017, 12 per cent of patient applications and 18 per cent of patient companion applications from the West Bank to access East Jerusalem or Israel were denied. Direct access for ambulances remains problematic, with ambulances delayed for security checks. About 90 per cent of the 2,125 Palestinian Red Crescent Society ambulances entering Jerusalem from other parts of the West Bank every year are forced to transfer patients to another ambulance at checkpoints, which delays transit.⁴³

49. Moreover, by the end of January 2017 in a number of regions in the West Bank, about 60 km of West Bank roads were designated for exclusive, or near-exclusive, use by Israeli citizens and off limits to Palestinians.⁴⁴ Firing zones for military training purposes in the West Bank cover approximately 17.5 per cent of its total area and 29 per cent of Area C, also putting constraints on movement (see [A/72/564](#), para. 41).

50. Farmers in 90 Palestinian communities own land within or in close proximity to 56 Israeli settlements. Those farmers can access their land only by means of “prior coordination” with the Israeli authorities, which usually grant access for only a limited number of days during the harvest and ploughing seasons. During the 2017 olive harvest season, as in previous years, many Palestinian farmers reported that the time allocated was insufficient, or that the Israeli army did not arrive at the designated time to allow them to access their land, leaving farmers insecure and vulnerable to attacks by settlers.⁴⁵

51. Special permits or “prior coordination” is also required for Palestinian farmers to access farm land designated as “closed” in the seam zone. If they are granted approval, farmers must cross designated gates along the “barrier” or checkpoints in order to reach their land. During the 2017 olive harvest, 76 gates were designated for agricultural access, down from 84 gates the previous year (see paras. 68–72 below).⁴⁶

52. According to a 1997 agreement between Israel and the Palestine Liberation Organization, the Israeli army maintains control of more than 20 per cent of Hebron city, an area referred to as the H2 zone, which is home to approximately 40,000 Palestinians and a few hundred Israeli settlers living in five settlement compounds. Israelis cannot access H1 areas of Hebron.⁴⁷

53. Israel has implemented severe movement restrictions in the H2 zone and surrounding areas, citing security concerns and attacks by Palestinians. It has erected more than 100 obstacles, including 20 staffed checkpoints, and segregated the settlement area and its surroundings from the rest of the city. This has had an impact on the freedom of movement of the entire Palestinian population of the H2 zone, as well as of other residents of Hebron city. The resulting extraordinary economic, social

⁴³ Information received from WHO.

⁴⁴ Yesh Din, “Through the lens of Israel’s interests: the civil administration in the West Bank”, position paper (December 2017), p. 14; and [A/71/86-E/2016/13](#), para. 5.

⁴⁵ Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs, “Humanitarian bulletin: Occupied Palestinian Territory” (November 2017).

⁴⁶ Ibid.

⁴⁷ Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs, “The humanitarian impact of Israeli settlements in Hebron city” (February 2018).

and humanitarian challenges have created displacement pressures for Palestinians living there.⁴⁸ Movement restrictions, attacks and intimidation by Israeli settlers, and a lack of adequate law enforcement concerning violent settlers, have resulted in the displacement of Palestinians from their homes in Hebron city.⁴⁷ Between April 2017 and January 2018, 252 access-related incidents in the West Bank were reported by the United Nations Relief and Works Agency for Palestine Refugees in the Near East (UNRWA). Those incidents resulted in the loss of an estimated 1,222 individual workdays or 9,175 work-hours. This affects the delivery of education, health and relief services to the Palestine refugees.⁴⁹

Exploitation, endangerment and depletion of Palestinian natural resources

Water

54. Water shortages continue to disrupt daily life and impede development interventions in the West Bank and Gaza Strip. About 1.8 million Palestinians are in need of humanitarian water, sanitation and hygiene assistance.⁵⁰

55. Owing to the restrictive planning regime, communities in Area C have limited ability to repair, rehabilitate or construct basic water and sanitation infrastructure at the community or household level, resulting in insufficient water for drinking, domestic use and livestock consumption in many communities. Altogether, in Israeli-controlled Area C and Palestinian-controlled Areas A and B, and also as a result of the poor state of the pipelines linking Palestinian communities in the West Bank and of the water grids within Palestinian cities and villages, one third of all water supplied through the grid to the Palestinians is lost through leakage.⁵¹

56. Twenty-two per cent of the West Bank Palestinian population — 649,000 people — suffer from either lack of access to water or poor quality of water. Around 156,000 people are either not connected to a water network or receive water less than once a week.⁵²

57. In Area C, around 95,000 people receive less than 50 litres of water per capita per day, half of the minimum recommended by the World Health Organization (WHO).⁵³ Those include around 20,000 people living in Bedouin or herding communities in dwellings that the Israeli authorities consider “illegal” and who have access to only about 30 litres per day at a cost 10 times higher than through the network.⁵⁴

58. Palestinians are also forced to rely on pumping and storing water at exorbitant cost, as they are not allowed to use the water pipes that run in close proximity to their villages that supply the settlements.⁵⁵

59. Between January and November 2017, Israeli authorities demolished or seized 19 structures related to water, sanitation and hygiene in Area C of the West Bank,

⁴⁸ Office of the Special Coordinator for the Middle East Peace Process, “Report to the Ad Hoc Liaison Committee” (20 March 2018).

⁴⁹ Information received from UNRWA.

⁵⁰ Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs, “2018 humanitarian needs overview”, p. 27.

⁵¹ *Ibid.*, pp. 11 and 27.

⁵² *Ibid.*

⁵³ *Ibid.*, p. 29.

⁵⁴ Information received from UNICEF.

⁵⁵ Association for Civil Rights in Israel, “Between the green line and the red line”, in “50 years: a State without borders — people without human rights”, available from www.acri.org.il/campaigns/50years.

including cisterns, water pipes and mobile latrines, claiming that they had been installed without permits.⁵⁶

60. In East Jerusalem, only 59 per cent of Palestinian residents are connected legally to the water grid. Palestinians suffer from substandard water and sewage connections owing to the ongoing lack of proper planning and allocation of resources for their neighbourhoods.⁵⁷

61. Ongoing deficits in the water, sanitation and hygiene sector affect all 2 million people in the Gaza Strip.^{56,58} About 40 per cent of water supplied for domestic use is lost on the way to consumers owing to the poor condition of the infrastructure.⁵⁹

62. Wastewater contamination and overpumping has rendered more than 95 per cent of the water extracted from the Gaza coastal aquifer unfit for human consumption. At its present rate of deterioration, the damage to the aquifer is expected to be “irreversible” by 2020. Increased electricity cuts have exacerbated the situation. About 90 per cent of people in Gaza rely on purchasing desalinated water from private companies, which entails heavy financial burdens on already impoverished families and increases health risks owing to potential contamination.⁶⁰

63. Merely 10.4 per cent of the population in Gaza has access to improved drinking water sources,⁶¹ with less than 50 litres of water available per person per day, half the minimum international standard.⁶² No single person obtains the WHO recommended amount of water of 100 litres per capita per day.

64. According to 2016 figures from the Palestinian Water Authority, 98 million cubic metres of water were supplied for domestic use in Gaza, from different sources. Only 18 per cent of the water supplied from those sources was safe for drinking.⁶³

65. Recent efforts are being made to address some of the water challenges, notably the resumption of the meetings of the Joint Water Committee and the start of the North Gaza Emergency Sewage Treatment project for the West Bank and Gaza. Some progress has also been made on the Red Sea-Dead Sea Canal project.

Pollution

66. The deterioration in infrastructure and electricity supply to Gaza has had severe consequences for the operation of water treatment facilities, wastewater pumping stations and drinkable/piped water.⁶⁴ A quarter of the population is not connected to the sewage network and pollution levels are now four times higher than the

⁵⁶ Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs, “2018 humanitarian needs overview”, pp. 28 and 29. Water, sanitation and hygiene vulnerability is based on community needs assessment conducted by Action Against Hunger and Gruppo di Volontariato Civile, in cooperation with the Palestinian Water Authority and the Palestinian Hydrology Group.

⁵⁷ Association for Civil Rights in Israel, “East Jerusalem: facts and figures 2017”, pp. 4–5.

⁵⁸ United Nations, “Gaza ten years later: United Nations country team in the Occupied Palestinian Territory” (July 2017).

⁵⁹ B’Tselem, “Water crisis” (11 November 2017). Available from www.btselem.org/water.

⁶⁰ Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs, “2018 humanitarian needs overview”, pp. 8 and 27.

⁶¹ Economic and Social Commission for Western Asia (ESCWA), based on the 2014 multiple indicator cluster survey.

⁶² Information received from UNICEF.

⁶³ Information received from the Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations (FAO).

⁶⁴ Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs, “2018 humanitarian needs overview”, p. 28, based on Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs, “Gaza crisis: early warning indicators — June 2017, available from www.ochaopt.org/sites/default/files/gaza_indicators_final.pdf.

environmental health standard.⁶⁵ About 108 million litres of raw or poorly treated wastewater are discharged into the Mediterranean Sea from Gaza every day and 73 per cent of the shoreline is contaminated by sewage.⁵⁸

67. Official Palestinian sources have claimed that practices by Israeli authorities and settlers, including the illegal transfer of hazardous waste to the West Bank and the allocation of parts of the Jordan Valley to an Israeli dumpsite devoted to industrial waste, have gravely damaged Palestinian agricultural land, health, animals and biodiversity.⁶⁶

Access to agricultural land

68. The ability of Palestinians to access and utilize agricultural land is compromised by various factors, including movement restrictions, land confiscations and settler violence.

69. Restrictions hamper access by Palestinians to lands in the seam zone and in the vicinity of settlements, impeding essential year-round agricultural activities and affecting productivity and value in the olive sector. For example, the yield of olive trees in the seam zone was reduced by between 55 and 65 per cent over the past four years, compared with similar trees in areas that can be accessed all year round.⁴⁵

70. According to the Palestinian Ministry of Agriculture and Rural Development damage database, the uprooting, burning and destruction of trees and other crops, the demolition of the structures and the implementation of stop orders in 2017 resulted in almost \$2 million worth of damage.⁶⁷

71. During the 2017 olive harvest season alone (from mid-September until mid-November), a total of 5,582 Palestinian-owned olive trees were damaged by settlers, compared with 1,652 trees during the 2016 season. In one instance, Palestinian farmers reported that, when they were granted permission to visit their land, they found that the produce of 3,200 olive trees had been harvested and stolen.⁴⁵

72. The agricultural sector in Gaza, including farmers, herders, breeders and fishermen, continued to suffer in 2017 from reduced productive capacity and instability of income despite the slow increase in exports since the end of the 2014 hostilities.⁶⁸ The restoration of land, irrigation systems, greenhouses, soil fertility and fruit orchards has been slow, resulting in dependency on short-term assistance. Delays in and limitations on the import of products such as pipes and timber imposed under the dual-use regime also have a negative effect on agriculture.⁶⁹

Exploitation of mineral resources

73. Since the 1970s, Israeli companies and corporations have been granted permits to quarry natural resources in the Occupied Palestinian Territory. According to official Israeli data from 2010, eight Israeli-owned and eight Palestinian-owned quarries were

⁶⁵ Abeer Abu Shawish and Catherine Weibel, "Gaza children face acute water and sanitation crisis" (UNICEF, 1 September 2017). Available from www.unicef.org/wash/oPt_100684.html.

⁶⁶ See [A/72/90-E/2017/71](#), para. 61; and Adam Aloni, *Made in Israel: Exploiting Palestinian Land for Treatment of Israeli Waste* (B'Tselem, 2017), conclusions, available from www.btselem.org/publications/summaries/201712_made_in_israel.

⁶⁷ Information received from FAO based on data obtained January 2018 from the Palestinian Ministry of Agriculture and Rural Development.

⁶⁸ According to the Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs, in 2017 a total of 2,621 truckloads of goods were transferred out of Gaza compared with 2,132 truckloads in 2016. See Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs, "Gaza crossings: movement of people and goods" database.

⁶⁹ Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs, "2018 humanitarian needs overview", pp. 35 and 36.

then active in Area C of the West Bank, transferring 94 per cent and 80 per cent of their production to Israel, respectively.⁷⁰

74. According to the Union of Stone and Marble Producers in the West Bank, no new permits have been issued to Palestinian companies to open quarries in Area C since 1994, even though the Oslo Accords provided for this. Moreover, many previous permits have expired. Consequently, only a very small number of quarries are still operating in Area C. Quarry closures have been accompanied by equipment confiscation and fines.⁷¹

Socioeconomic conditions in the Occupied Palestinian Territory

75. Ending the occupation is the single most important factor in enabling Palestinians to chart a successful course to achieving the Sustainable Development Goals. Around 2.5 million Palestinians, half the population, need humanitarian assistance.⁷²

76. The United Nations country team in the Occupied Palestinian Territory has estimated that, owing to the closure, recurrent military operations and internal Palestinian divisions, Gaza will become unliveable by 2020. The team has also estimated that, without international aid and services provided by the United Nations, the Gaza Strip would have been deemed unliveable years ago. In any event, the downward trend remains clear.⁵⁸

77. About 80 per cent of Palestinians in Gaza receive aid, including food assistance that enables scarce cash resources to be spent on other essentials, preventing a further deterioration of food security and livelihood status and reducing the impact of negative coping mechanisms.⁷³

Economic performance

78. The economic situation in the Occupied Palestinian Territory deteriorated during 2017. The economy has long suffered from restrictions on movement, access and trade that have kept investment levels extremely low and resulted in an erosion of the productive base. Substantial amounts of financial assistance from the international community have helped mitigate the impact of the restrictions on growth by fuelling public and private consumption. The most recent data revealed growth of 2.4 per cent in 2017, led by the West Bank; in Gaza, it was a mere 0.5 per cent.⁷⁴

79. Estimates of constant-price GDP and GDP per capita for the West Bank in the fourth quarter of 2017 stood at 8.4 per cent and 6.0 per cent, respectively, higher than in the fourth quarter of 2016. For Gaza, however, they were 2.9 per cent and 6.9 per cent lower, respectively.⁷⁵ Deterioration of infrastructure, cuts in expenditure by the

⁷⁰ Yesh Din, “The great drain: Israeli quarries in the West Bank — high court sanctioned institutionalized theft”, position paper (September 2017), introduction.

⁷¹ World Bank, “Area C and the future of the Palestinian economy” (2 October 2013), paras. 30 and 31. Available from openknowledge.worldbank.org/bitstream/handle/10986/16686/AUS29220REPLAC0EVISION0January02014.pdf.

⁷² United Nations and State of Palestine, “United Nations Development Assistance Framework State of Palestine 2018–2022”, situation analysis; and Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs, “2018 humanitarian needs overview”, p. 17.

⁷³ Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs, “2018 humanitarian needs overview”, p. 8.

⁷⁴ World Bank, “Economic monitoring report to the Ad Hoc Liaison Committee: 19 March 2018”, chap. I.A.

⁷⁵ Information based on ESCWA calculations, based on Palestinian Central Bureau of Statistics data, available from www.pcbs.gov.ps/portals/_pcbs/PressRelease/Press_En_29-3-2018-qna-en.pdf.

Palestinian Authority, the continuing closure and internal Palestinian division have affected the growth performance of Gaza.⁷⁶

80. The rates of economic growth in the Occupied Palestinian Territory will be insufficient to remedy economic imbalances and meaningfully improve living standards in the coming years.⁷⁷ Post-2014 growth represents a reconstruction boom and catch-up rather than expansion into new economic sectors. The situation is worsened by low public and private investment.

81. Projections by the International Monetary Fund indicate that growth will be 3 per cent in 2018 (2.7 per cent for the West Bank and 4.0 per cent for Gaza),⁷⁸ as Israeli restrictions on the movement of goods, labour and persons affect the economy and the financial sector, and as aid inflows remain low. Liquidity constraints and fewer economic buffers are holding back consumption and investment, most acutely in Gaza.⁵⁸

82. Regarding fiscal performance, net revenues were up by 7.3 per cent in the first half of 2017 compared with the same period in 2016. Yet, a budget deficit of 8.4 per cent of GDP is still anticipated for 2017, with falling donor transfers putting further pressure on government finances.⁷⁹ Inflation is projected to be 1.2 per cent in 2017, following the deflation of 2016. Macroeconomic indicators are vulnerable to restrictive measures imposed by Israel and other risk factors.

83. Labour market conditions in the Occupied Palestinian Territory remain poor, reflecting demographic pressures, economic stagnation and barriers imposed in connection with the occupation. Across the four quarters of 2017, unemployment rose by 0.4 per cent, 2.1 per cent and 0.8 per cent, and then fell by 1.2 per cent,⁸⁰ compared with the same quarters in 2016, peaking at 29.2 per cent in the third quarter. As of the fourth quarter of 2017, the unemployment rate was 19.5 per cent for men, 43 per cent for women and 40.7 per cent for those aged 20–24 years.⁸¹ Unemployment in the West Bank stood at 13.7 per cent, compared with a staggering 42.7 per cent in Gaza. This figure reflects the severe conditions in Gaza and persistent limited opportunities there. Furthermore, workers from Gaza have continued to be prevented from accessing work in Israel since 2007.

84. The poverty rate measured by the national poverty line increased from 26 per cent in 2011 to 29 per cent in 2017 in the Occupied Palestinian Territory. In Gaza, the rate was very high, at 54 per cent.⁸²

85. According to the multidimensional child poverty analysis developed by the United Nations Children's Fund (UNICEF), 65.7 per cent of children are counted as deprived with regard to two or more indicators in the Occupied Palestinian Territory, with all children in Gaza deprived with regard to at least two dimensions (see [E/ESCWA/EDID/2017/2](#)).

⁷⁶ International Monetary Fund, "West Bank and Gaza: report to the Ad Hoc Liaison Committee" (31 August 2017).

⁷⁷ Ibid.

⁷⁸ Ibid.

⁷⁹ Ibid.

⁸⁰ Information based on ESCWA calculations, based on Palestinian Central Bureau of Statistics data.

⁸¹ State of Palestine, Palestinian Central Bureau of Statistics, "Labour force survey results fourth quarter (October–December, 2017) round main results", press release (13 February 2018). Available from www.pcbs.gov.ps/site/512/default.aspx?lang=en&ItemID=3050.

⁸² Preliminary data provided by Palestinian Central Bureau of Statistics.

Food security

86. Common drivers of food vulnerability in the Occupied Palestinian Territory include restrictions imposed by Israel on the movement of goods and people; a stunted economy that results in a persistently high unemployment rate, especially in the Gaza Strip; restrictions on accessing available natural resources; and the inability of the Palestinian Authority to play a regulatory role in locations outside Areas A and B, which constitute the majority of the Occupied Palestinian Territory.⁸³ Poor food utilization as a result of the poor quality of water, sanitation and hygiene, limited access to health care and the declining quality of diets also contribute to food insecurity.

87. Approximately 1.6 million Palestinians (31.5 per cent of the population) are considered food insecure. The prevalence is particularly high in the Gaza Strip, with 40 per cent of households found to be food insecure, more than three times the rate in the West Bank (13 per cent).⁸⁴ A food security crisis in the Gaza Strip has been averted only by large-scale humanitarian assistance. More than 70 per cent of residents received international aid in 2016, the bulk of which was food assistance. Yet, approximately half of the Palestinian population suffered from more than one micronutrient deficiency.⁸⁵

88. Palestinian refugees have higher levels of severe and moderate food insecurity than non-refugees. Refugee camps have the highest prevalence of food insecurity. Two in every five households (35.9 per cent) in refugee camps were food insecure in 2016.⁸⁶ The food insecurity rate for refugees in the West Bank stood at 15.1 per cent, and 41.3 per cent in the Gaza Strip.⁸⁷

89. The population receiving UNRWA food aid increased from approximately 80,000 people in 2000 to more than 993,000 in 2017. Since March 2017, monthly salaries of Palestinian public employees based in Gaza have been cut by between 30 and 40 per cent, forcing additional families to apply for already stretched UNRWA relief services.⁸⁸

90. The prevalence of food insecurity among female-headed households is higher than among male-headed households. In the Gaza Strip, 46 per cent of female-headed households are severely and moderately insecure, while for male headed households the rate stands at 39 per cent. In the West Bank, these figures are 31 per cent and 11 per cent, respectively.⁸⁹

91. The food insecurity level among Bedouins and herding communities in Area C worsened between 2012 and 2016, with the rate increasing to 61 per cent from 55 per cent. The percentage of food secure households dropped from 20 per cent to 6 per cent during the same period.⁹⁰

⁸³ Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs, “2018 humanitarian needs overview”, p. 37.

⁸⁴ Information received from FAO; and Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs, “2018 humanitarian needs overview”, p. 3.

⁸⁵ Information received from the World Food Programme (WFP). See also WFP, “Nutrition awareness sessions in Palestine” (November 2016). Available from <http://documents.wfp.org/stellent/groups/public/documents/communications/wfp288670.pdf>.

⁸⁶ Information received from FAO.

⁸⁷ Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs, “2018 humanitarian needs overview”, p. 34; and information received from WFP.

⁸⁸ Information received from UNRWA.

⁸⁹ Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs, “2018 humanitarian needs overview”, pp. 34–35; and information received from FAO.

⁹⁰ Information received from WFP.

Education

92. An estimated 490,145 schoolchildren (of which 249,147 were girls) across the Occupied Palestinian Territory face challenges in accessing quality education in a safe, child-friendly environment.⁹¹

93. A coercive environment prevails for students in the West Bank, caused by violence and harassment and intimidation by Israeli military and security forces, as well as settlers, including attacks and threats against schools, students and teachers.⁹² Families resort to leaving their homes to ensure safe access to education for their children elsewhere.⁹³

94. In the first half of 2017, there were incidents reported in which Israeli forces fired tear gas and rubber bullets at students and made incursions onto school grounds. An increased number of attacks on schools was recorded in the first half of 2017 in Area C, the Hebron H2 area and East Jerusalem. In the West Bank, children are often subjected to bag and body searches, and at times harassment and detention, notably as they pass through checkpoints. In particular, in some areas students also faced risks of intimidation and violence from settlers while walking past settlements. Students often must walk up to 10 km to get to and from school, putting their safety at risk. Girls in particular have been reported to face a high risk of school dropout owing to the fear of parents for their safety during the school commute. The lack of accountability for the perpetrators of such violations exacerbates these conditions, and the trend of attacks against education is increasing across the West Bank.⁹⁴

95. In East Jerusalem, nearly 2,000 new classrooms are needed to address the needs of the Palestinian population, according to official Israeli data. Local education is impaired by inadequate infrastructure owing to the discriminatory and restrictive planning and zoning regime and by a lack of qualified teachers and other staff, owing to the difficulty for those living in the West Bank of obtaining a permit to access East Jerusalem. Palestinian children attending schools in East Jerusalem have to study a version of the Palestinian curriculum modified by Israel with the reported aim of censoring “incitement”.⁹⁵

96. Forty-four Palestinian schools (36 in Area C and 8 in East Jerusalem) serving about 5,000 children are at risk of demolition or seizure because of a lack of Israeli building permits.⁹⁶

97. In the Gaza Strip, two thirds of schools currently operate on double or triple shifts in order to accommodate the number of students. Consequently, the number of learning hours per school day has been reduced to 4.5 (compared with 5.5 in the West Bank).⁹⁷

98. Owing to funding shortfalls and a lack of suitable land to build schools, UNRWA reports that 70.2 per cent of its schools, and their 271,000 students, continue to operate on a double-shift basis, which deprives refugee children of opportunities to engage in the recreational and creative pursuits enjoyed by students of single-shift schools.⁹⁸

⁹¹ Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs, “2018 humanitarian needs overview”, p. 38.

⁹² Information received from UNICEF; and Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs, “2018 humanitarian needs overview”, p. 39.

⁹³ Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs, “2018 humanitarian needs overview”, p. 39.

⁹⁴ *Ibid.*, pp. 38–39.

⁹⁵ Information received from UNICEF.

⁹⁶ Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs, “Humanitarian bulletin: Occupied Palestinian Territory” (February 2018).

⁹⁷ Information received from UNICEF.

⁹⁸ Information received from UNRWA.

99. The unprecedented financial shortfall of UNRWA could have a severe impact on its ability to deliver primary education and schooling services to Palestine refugee students in the Occupied Palestinian Territory. Shrinking funding also limits the capacity of the United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization (UNESCO) to support quality education in Gaza.⁹⁹

Public health

100. The closure in Gaza coupled with intra-Palestinian division continues to present major challenges to the availability and quality of health care in the Gaza Strip, and to access to health care for patients and health workers residing outside Gaza. Living conditions in Gaza, especially overcrowded and substandard housing, further heighten public health risks associated with the deteriorating water, sanitation and hygiene conditions. The situation is particularly precarious for refugees in camps where the average population density is nearly 40,000 persons per km².¹⁰⁰ Nearly 300,000 Palestinian children in Gaza require some form of mental health support or psychosocial intervention.¹⁰¹

101. Shortages of medical supplies, machines, drugs and disposables owing to funding shortages, as well as a lack of staff, place 10,000 newborns at risk and contribute to the stagnant 14 per 1,000 neonatal mortality rate. An estimated 140,000 children under the age of 5 in Gaza are suffering from chronic malnutrition and stunting.¹⁰²

102. The energy crisis in Gaza has undermined basic services and compounded serious public health concerns. Hospitals have had to postpone surgeries, discharge patients prematurely and reduce the cleaning of medical facilities.¹⁰³ The Beit Hanoun hospital, which normally serves more than 300,000 people in northern Gaza, halted medical services at the end of January 2018 because of a lack of fuel reserves.⁹⁶

103. During 2017, a monthly average of 38 per cent of items on the list of essential medicines and 31 per cent of items of the list of essential medical disposables were reported to be at less than a month's supply in Gaza. Lack of facilities for essential treatments and of adequate investigation technologies drive a reliance on medical referral outside Gaza, especially for oncology. Patients referred out of Gaza are dependent on access via the Erez crossing to facilities in East Jerusalem (53 per cent), Israel (22 per cent) and the West Bank (17 per cent).¹⁰⁴

104. Health workers are eligible to apply for permits to enter and leave Gaza. In practice, staff face substantial access barriers; and only 61 per cent of those applying for permits to exit or enter Gaza for humanitarian purposes through WHO obtained access in 2017.¹⁰⁵

105. The fragmentation of the West Bank undermines the right of Palestinians to health. Over 260,000 Palestinians living in Area C, the Hebron H2 area and the seam zone are dependent on humanitarian health care, including approximately 64,000 women of reproductive age, more than 34,000 children under the age of 5 and more

⁹⁹ Information received from UNESCO.

¹⁰⁰ Information received from UNRWA.

¹⁰¹ Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs, "2018 humanitarian needs overview", p. 7.

¹⁰² *Ibid.*, p. 31.

¹⁰³ Information received from UNICEF.

¹⁰⁴ Information received from WHO.

¹⁰⁵ *Ibid.*, citing its monthly report on referral of patients from the Gaza Strip for December 2017, available from www.emro.who.int/pse/publications-who/monthly-referral-reports.html.

than 85,000 children aged 5–19 years. Other vulnerable groups include disabled and elderly people.¹⁰⁶

106. Approximately 17 per cent of Palestinians in Area C are served by mobile clinics,¹⁰⁷ whose services are affected by road closures and adverse weather events. About 12 per cent of residents in Area C live in communities situated more than 30 km from a primary health-care clinic and without access to any mobile health clinic.¹⁰⁸

107. About 30 per cent of refugees living in West Bank camps, where the average population density is around 40,000 persons per km², but can reach 130,000-180,000 per km² in some camps, face health risks as a result of severe overcrowding and inadequate sewage and water networks.¹⁰⁹

108. West Bank health facilities also face shortages of medical supplies, notably as a result of funding shortages, with an average of 23 per cent of essential medicines and 19 per cent of essential medical disposables out of stock in West Bank central drug facilities in 2017.¹¹⁰

109. Areas of East Jerusalem beyond the “barrier” suffer in view of the unwillingness of Israeli ambulances to service them without police escort, citing security incidents, while Palestinian ambulances are not allowed to cross the “barrier” (see [A/HRC/37/43](#), para. 58). There are pockets of acutely vulnerable communities in East Jerusalem, with approximately 119,000 people suffering from mental health conditions and a lack of essential health and emergency care.¹¹¹

110. A recently published study by the United Nations Population Fund (UNFPA), in cooperation with the Palestinian Ministry of Health, found that around 60 per cent (643 women) of the breast cancer patients who died in 2016 died prematurely owing to various factors, including delayed diagnosis and treatment in the Occupied Palestinian Territory. The study found that in such cases restrictions on access to the West Bank and Israel were a major factor for Palestinian patients, including patients in Gaza.¹¹²

III. Occupied Syrian Golan

111. In its resolution [497 \(1981\)](#), the Security Council decided that the Israeli decision to impose its laws, jurisdiction and administration on the occupied Syrian Golan was null and void and without international legal effect, and demanded that Israel, the occupying Power, should rescind forthwith its decision. It determined that all the provisions of the Fourth Geneva Convention continued to apply to the Syrian territory occupied by Israel since June 1967.

112. An estimated 23,000 Israeli settlers live in 34 illegal settlements in the occupied Syrian Golan. The Government of Israel supports settlement activity through financial incentives (see [A/72/564](#), para. 60). According to the Syrian Arab Republic, 150 Israeli families settle in the Golan each year (see [A/HRC/37/40](#), para. 11), as part of

¹⁰⁶ Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs, “2018 humanitarian needs overview”, p. 32, based on its health cluster data for 2017 and Vulnerability Profile of Palestinian Communities in Area C project.

¹⁰⁷ See <https://public.tableau.com/profile/ocha.opt#!/vizhome/Health-VPP/Dashhealth>; and information received from WHO.

¹⁰⁸ Information received from WHO.

¹⁰⁹ Information received from UNRWA.

¹¹⁰ Information received from WHO.

¹¹¹ Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs, “2018 humanitarian needs overview”, p. 30.

¹¹² UNFPA, *Pathway to Survival: The Story of Breast Cancer in Palestine* (January 2018), available from http://palestine.unfpa.org/sites/default/files/pub-pdf/Breast%20Cancer%20Report%20Final_0.pdf.

attempts to foster the overall integration of the occupied Syrian Golan into Israel and delink it from the Syrian Arab Republic.¹¹³

113. An estimated 25,000 Syrians reside in five villages and face significant challenges in terms of growth and development, owing in part to restricted access to land and resources (see [A/72/564](#), para. 60). The majority of the native Syrian population reportedly reject Israeli citizenship, hold a form of permanent residency and are considered by the Israeli authorities as having an “undefined” nationality. They are provided with only an Israeli “laissez-passer” if they wish to travel.¹¹⁴

114. Permanent residents can apply for full Israeli citizenship but they can also have their permanent residency status revoked following travel and residency abroad for study or work. Around 100 Syrian residents of the occupied Syrian Golan have had their permanent residency status revoked since 1982.¹¹⁵

115. Israeli settlers and the army control 95 per cent of the land in the occupied Syrian Golan, leaving only 5 per cent to the Syrian population.¹¹⁶ The Syrian Arab Republic has reported confiscation by Israel of approximately 28 per cent of the agricultural lands (see [A/HRC/37/40](#), para. 17).

116. Syrians in the occupied Syrian Golan face land, housing and development policies established by the Israeli authorities that render it nearly impossible for them to obtain building permits, resulting in overcrowded Syrian villages with strained infrastructure and limited resources (see [A/72/564](#), para. 61). These conditions reportedly force Syrians to build homes without building permits and place them at risk of full or partial demolition and large fines (\$55-\$85 per m²).¹¹⁷

117. The Syrian Arab Republic reports that Israeli authorities impose disproportionately high taxes on Syrians for requests for utility services (see [A/HRC/37/40](#), para. 14). Furthermore, obstacles to construction hinder the ability of Syrian citizens to benefit from tourism.¹¹⁸

118. Israeli settlers also benefit from a disproportionately larger allocation of natural resources, such as clean water (see [A/72/564](#), para. 60; see also [A/HRC/28/44](#), para. 54; and [A/HRC/31/43](#), para. 64).

119. Discriminatory water allocation policies exacerbate the challenges faced by Syrian farmers, including competition from Israeli settlers.¹¹⁹ Access to the water supply is limited for Syrian farmers owing to the Israeli prohibition on building new wells. Half of the water needed for farming therefore has to be purchased from the Israeli water company.¹¹³

120. Syrians tend to avoid abandoning agriculture, as there is reportedly a risk that the authorities would confiscate their unused land.¹²⁰ Furthermore, according to the Syrian Arab Republic, Israeli authorities restrict Syrian usage of land for farming to 45,000 acres of land, while Israeli settlers are allowed to utilize 350,000 acres of land.

¹¹³ International Labour Office, *The Situation of Workers of the Occupied Arab Territories* (Geneva, 2017), paras. 121–127.

¹¹⁴ Al-Marsad, the Arab Centre for Human Rights in the Golan Heights, “Human rights violations committed by the State of Israel in the Occupied Syrian Golan”, submission to the United Nations universal periodic review of Israel, June 2017, para. 21.

¹¹⁵ *Ibid.*, para. 22.

¹¹⁶ Al-Marsad, the Arab Centre for Human Rights in the Golan Heights, “50 years of the occupation of the Syrian Golan”, press release (8 June 2017).

¹¹⁷ Al-Marsad, the Arab Centre for Human Rights in the Golan Heights, “Human rights violations committed by the State of Israel in the Occupied Syrian Golan”, para. 7.

¹¹⁸ Information received from the International Labour Organization (ILO).

¹¹⁹ Information received from ILO.

¹²⁰ *Ibid.*

The Syrian Arab Republic further stated that the right of Syrians to work was restricted in the occupied Syrian Golan (see [A/HRC/34/37](#), para. 24).

121. Israeli efforts to clear mines are reported to prioritize areas around Israeli settlements and agricultural land over Syrian residential and agricultural zones, despite the concentration of landmines in the latter.¹²¹

122. In July 2017, the Ministry of the Interior of Israel announced that, for the first time since 1967, elections would be held on 30 October 2018 in four towns: Buq‘ata, Mas‘adah, Majdal Shams and Ayn Quniyah.¹²²

IV. Conclusion

123. The 51-year Israeli occupation has had a detrimental effect on the social and economic development of the people in the Occupied Palestinian Territory and the occupied Syrian Golan. The impact of the prolonged occupation and the policies and practices of Israel on the Palestinian people, society and economy is multilayered and has accumulated negative effects over the years. The funding crisis that UNRWA is facing is another factor that only exacerbates the conditions of hundreds of thousands of Palestinians who already live in harsh conditions.

124. A number of Israeli practices and measures in the Occupied Palestinian Territory and the occupied Syrian Golan are contrary to the relevant Security Council resolutions, international humanitarian law and international human rights law. Some of them may be considered discriminatory. Certain practices may amount to forcible transfer of protected persons, which could amount to a grave breach of the Fourth Geneva Convention, and others could amount to collective punishment.

125. Adherence to international law is an absolute imperative, ensuring that no party enjoys impunity and securing justice and peace for all those living in the region, including those Palestinians and Syrians living under occupation.

126. Humanitarian and development efforts are key to alleviating the suffering of the Palestinians and Syrians under occupation. Nevertheless, cycles of violence will not end until the roots of such violence are addressed. The United Nations maintains its long-standing position that a lasting and comprehensive peace can be achieved only through a negotiated two-State solution. The Secretary-General will continue to work towards the attainment of this just and lasting peace. It is only by realizing the vision of two States living side-by-side in peace, security and mutual recognition, with Jerusalem as the capital of Israel and Palestine, and all final status issues resolved permanently through negotiations, that the legitimate aspirations of both peoples will be achieved.

¹²¹ Al-Marsad, the Arab Centre for Human Rights in the Golan Heights, “Human rights violations committed by the State of Israel in the Occupied Syrian Golan”, para. 13.

¹²² Noa Shpigel, “In first since 1967, Druze villages in Israeli Golan Heights to hold democratic elections”, *Haaretz*, 8 July 2017. Available from www.haaretz.com/israel-news/.premium-in-first-since-1967-israeli-druze-to-hold-democratic-elections-1.5492306.



General Assembly Economic and Social Council

Distr.: General
13 May 2019

Original: English

General Assembly
Seventy-fourth session
Item 62 of the preliminary list*
Permanent sovereignty of the Palestinian people in the Occupied Palestinian Territory, including East Jerusalem, and of the Arab population in the occupied Syrian Golan over their natural resources

Economic and Social Council
Substantive session of 2019
Agenda item 16
Economic and social repercussions of the Israeli occupation on the living conditions of the Palestinian people in the Occupied Palestinian Territory, including East Jerusalem, and the Arab population in the occupied Syrian Golan

Economic and social repercussions of the Israeli occupation on the living conditions of the Palestinian people in the Occupied Palestinian Territory, including East Jerusalem, and of the Arab population in the occupied Syrian Golan

Note by the Secretary-General

Summary

In its resolution [2018/20](#), entitled “Economic and social repercussions of the Israeli occupation on the living conditions of the Palestinian people in the Occupied Palestinian Territory, including East Jerusalem, and the Arab population in the occupied Syrian Golan”, the Economic and Social Council requested the Secretary-General to submit to the General Assembly at its seventy-third session, through the Council, a report on the implementation of that resolution. The Assembly, in its resolution [73/255](#), entitled “Permanent sovereignty of the Palestinian people in the Occupied Palestinian Territory, including East Jerusalem, and of the Arab population in the occupied Syrian Golan over their natural resources”, also requested the Secretary-General to submit a report to it at its seventy-fourth session. The present report, which was prepared by the Economic and Social Commission for Western Asia (ESCWA), has been submitted in compliance with these resolutions of the Council and the Assembly.

The report covers persistent Israeli practices and policies, in particular those that may be in violation of international humanitarian law and international human rights law and that affect the social and economic conditions of people living under its military occupation.

* [A/74/50](#).



ESCWA would like to express its appreciation for the contributions of the Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs of the Secretariat, the International Monetary Fund, the United Nations Entity for Gender Equality and the Empowerment of Women, the International Labour Organization, the United Nations Industrial Development Organization, the World Food Programme, the United Nations Conference on Trade and Development, the Office of the United Nations Special Coordinator for the Middle East Peace Process, the United Nations Relief and Works Agency for Palestine Refugees in the Near East and the World Health Organization.

I. Introduction

1. The Economic and Social Council, in its resolution 2018/20, expressed concerns about the economic and social repercussions of the Israeli occupation on the living conditions of the Palestinian people in the Occupied Palestinian Territory, including East Jerusalem, and of the Arab population in the occupied Syrian Golan. The General Assembly, in its resolution 73/255, demanded that Israel, the occupying power, cease the exploitation, damage, cause of loss or depletion and endangerment of natural resources in the Occupied Palestinian Territory, including East Jerusalem, and in the occupied Syrian Golan. The present note provides information on relevant developments with regard to the foregoing.

II. Occupied Palestinian Territory

Israeli practices in the Occupied Palestinian Territory

Israeli legislation affecting the Occupied Palestinian Territory

2. In the past two years, members of the Knesset, the main legislative body of Israel, have proposed several legislative initiatives aimed at advancing the retroactive legalization of settlements. This was coupled with an expansion in illegal Israeli settlement (see A/73/410, para. 58),¹ following decades of practices on the ground that entrenched the occupation and Israeli control over lands in the Occupied Palestinian Territory, in particular in the West Bank, including East Jerusalem.²

3. The Regulation Law, which was adopted in February 2017, remains unimplemented pending the ruling of the High Court of Justice on its legality (see *ibid.*, para. 12). If implemented, it could enable the continued use of private Palestinian land in the West Bank for between 2,000 and 4,000 housing units, according to some estimates (see A/73/87-E/2018/69, para. 35, and A/72/90-E/2017/71, para. 23).

4. An amendment to the Basic Law: Jerusalem, Capital of Israel, adopted in January 2018, requires a super majority of 80 votes in the Knesset for the approval of territorial concessions in Jerusalem to “a foreign entity”, while lowering the threshold required to change the municipal boundaries of the city (see A/73/410, para.9).³

5. An amendment to the Council for Higher Education Law, adopted on 12 February 2018, applies the jurisdiction of the Council for Higher Education of Israel to Israeli settlers in the West Bank and retroactively recognizes higher education institutions in settlements previously recognized by the military authorities (see *ibid.*, para. 10).

6. An amendment to the Administrative Courts Law, adopted in July 2018, provided that petitions relating to the West Bank in four areas, namely, planning and construction, the Freedom of Information Law, entry to and exit from the West Bank, and military restraining and supervision orders, will be referred to the Administrative Affairs Court of Jerusalem instead of the High Court of Justice. The law would further limit access to justice for Palestinians and, in extending the competence of an Israeli

¹ See also Peace Now, “Construction starts in settlements by year”, Construction database, available at <http://peacenow.org.il/en/settlements-watch/settlements-data/construction>; and Palestinian Central Bureau of Statistics, press release, 28 March 2019, available at www.pcbs.gov.ps/portals/_pcbs/PressRelease/Press_En_28-3-2019-land-en.pdf.

² See previous reports and TD/B/65(2)/3, paras. 22–25.

³ See also Knesset, “Knesset passes law requiring 8-MK majority for giving up Israeli sovereignty over any part of Jerusalem”, 2 January 2018.

administrative court to the West Bank, would also constitute an additional step towards a blurring of the distinction between Israel and the Occupied Palestinian Territory (*ibid.*).⁴

7. Palestinians in the occupied territory continue to be subject to a complex combination of Israeli and Palestinian legal systems. In the West Bank, Israeli domestic law is applied extraterritorially to Israeli settlers, while Palestinians are subject to Israeli military law in addition to the Palestinian legal system. As a result, lower human rights standards are applied to Palestinian suspects and defendants compared with Israeli suspects and defendants. The application of two different legal systems in the same territory on the sole basis of nationality or origin is inherently discriminatory and violates the principle of equality before the law, which is central to the right to fair trial. The application of Israeli domestic law to settlers and of Israeli military law to Palestinians in the West Bank also raises concerns as to the obligation of the occupying Power to respect the laws in force in the territory it occupies, unless it is absolutely prevented from doing so (see [A/73/87-E/2018/69](#), para. 3; [A/72/90-E/2017/71](#), para. 4; and [A/71/86-E/2016/13](#), para.7).

Access to services and justice

8. As a result of Israeli restrictions and other administrative and security measures, Palestinians living in different areas of the Occupied Palestinian Territory have differential access to health-care services and different levels of freedom of movement. Since the annexation of East Jerusalem by Israel in 1967, Palestinians living there are given a “permanent residency” which grants them, *inter alia*, access to Israeli social benefits and health-care services but is revocable and dependent on them continuing to reside or work in Jerusalem.

9. The Knesset has adopted several laws over the years exempting Israel from civil liabilities for any wrongful act committed by the Israeli military towards Palestinians in Gaza, which it defines as an “enemy territory” (see [A/73/420](#), para. 63), thereby impeding the right of Gazan victims to equal access to reparation (see [A/HRC/40/74](#), para. 112).

10. The independent international commission of inquiry on the protests in the Occupied Palestinian Territory⁵ reports that it is not aware of any alternative mechanism employed by Israel to compensate Gazan victims for damage caused unlawfully by the security forces (*ibid.*).

Discriminatory zoning and planning policies

11. As noted previously, the Israeli zoning and planning policies in Area C and East Jerusalem are discriminatory and considered incompatible with requirements under international law (see [A/73/410](#), para. 32).

12. The Israeli Civil Administration permits construction by Palestinians within approved outline plans covering only 0.4 per cent of Area C (see [A/73/87-E/2018/64](#), para. 4). For Palestinians to obtain a building permit outside those plans, Israeli authorities must approve a local outline plan for the area, after which a permit must be requested through a lengthy and costly process that often results in rejection. This makes it almost impossible for Palestinians to obtain building permits, leaving them

⁴ See also Association of Civil Rights in Israel, “2018: A bad year for democracy – human rights in Israel”, 2018 situation report.

⁵ Established pursuant to Human Rights Council resolution [S-28/1](#) to “investigate all alleged violations and abuses of international humanitarian law and international human rights law in the Occupied Palestinian Territory, [...] particularly in the occupied Gaza Strip, in the context of the military assaults on the large-scale civilian protests that began on 30 March 2018”.

no choice but to build without permits and expose themselves to the risk of demolitions and displacement. To enhance the ability of Palestinians to obtain building permits, since 2011, Palestinian and international stakeholders have submitted 102 local outline plans to the Israeli Civil Administration for communities in the entirety of Area C. Only five plans were approved (see *ibid.*, para. 31).

Violence and the use of force

13. As the occupying Power, Israel has the obligation to take all the measures in its power to restore and ensure, as far as possible, public order and life in the Occupied Palestinian Territory and to protect the Palestinian population from all acts of violence, in all circumstances (see *ibid.*, para. 17).⁶ Practices of the Israeli security and military forces continue to raise concerns. Of particular concern was the response of the Israeli military to the weekly Great March of Return protests along the Gaza border fence.

14. In its report, the independent international commission of inquiry on the protests in the Occupied Palestinian Territory found reasonable grounds to believe that some violations by the Israeli security forces constituted serious international crimes, including possible war crimes and crimes against humanity (see [A/HRC/40/74](#), paras. 94, 97, 101, 102, 114 and 115), in particular through unlawful, excessive and disproportionate use of force (see *ibid.*, paras. 99 and 101) and the intentional targeting of civilian demonstrators in Gaza by Israeli snipers, including children and persons with disabilities, as well as health workers and journalists (see *ibid.*, paras. 68, 71, 74, 76 and 94).

15. Between 1 April 2018 and 31 March 2019, 299 Palestinians, including 60 children and 4 women, were killed and another 32,696, including 6,713 children and 1,812 women, were injured by Israeli military and security forces or settlers. At least 199 of the fatalities and 30,200 of the injuries were incurred during the Great March of Return in Gaza as at 31 March. A quarter of the injuries resulted from live ammunition.⁷

16. The year 2018 was the deadliest single year for Palestinians since the 2014 conflict in Gaza, with the highest number of injuries since 2005. The massive rise in Palestinian casualties has been one of the key factors behind the deterioration of the humanitarian situation in 2018. There were 14 Israeli fatalities and 137 injured in 2018.⁸

17. Despite the relatively low proportion of injuries among females compared with males during events related to the Great March of Return, the consequences of injury can have specific negative side effects for women, in particularly when the injured person is a mother.⁹

18. During 2018, 363 verified incidents of attacks by Israeli security forces against Palestinian health-care workers and facilities were recorded in Gaza. As a result, three

⁶ See also Hague Regulations, arts. 43 and 46; Geneva Convention relative to the Protection of Civilian Persons in Time of War, art. 27.

⁷ United Nations, Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs, Casualties database, available at www.ochaopt.org/data/casualties (accessed on 31 March 2019); and “Humanitarian coordinator for the Occupied Palestinian Territory, Mr. Jaime McGoldrick, calls for action to prevent further loss of life and injury in the Gaza Strip”, 29 March 2019; and Humanitarian Bulletin: Occupied Palestinian Territory, March 2019.

⁸ United Nations, Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs, Humanitarian Bulletin: Occupied Palestinian Territory, December 2018; see also the Casualties database.

⁹ United Nations Entity for Gender Equality and the Empowerment of Women (UN-Women) input and United Nations Population Fund (UNFPA), “Impact of the ‘Great March of Return’ on gender-based violence”, 8 June 2018.

health-care workers were killed and 565 injured, with 85 ambulances and five other forms of health transport as well as three health-care facilities sustaining damage. In the West Bank, the World Health Organization (WHO) verified 60 incidents of attacks on health-care workers and facilities, in which 16 health-care staff were injured, 17 ambulances were attacked and 12 clinics and one hospital were affected. There were 35 incidents that involved the prevention or delay of ambulance access. In addition, a number of incidents monitored by the Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Human Rights (OHCHR) indicate neglect by soldiers to provide or facilitate the provision of medical aid to Palestinians critically or fatally injured in the wake of alleged attacks.¹⁰

19. More than four years after the most recent escalation of hostilities in Gaza, serious concerns persist about the lack of accountability for alleged violations of international humanitarian law committed by all parties to the conflict. It also persists in the context of Israel's control over and policing of Palestinians in the West Bank. In the past seven years, during which reportedly 114 criminal investigations were opened across the Occupied Palestinian Territory and almost 700 Palestinian civilians were killed by Israeli security forces, only four indictments have been issued against soldiers for the killing of unarmed Palestinians: three for killings in the West Bank and one for a killing in Gaza (see [A/HRC/40/43](#), paras. 14–18).

Settler violence

20. Palestinians continued to suffer from settler violence and harassment during the reporting period. Settler violence resulting in Palestinian casualties or damage to property increased during 2018: more than 280 incidents in which Israeli settlers killed or injured Palestinians or damaged Palestinian property were recorded, marking a 77 per cent increase compared with 2017. As a result, one Palestinian woman was killed and 115 Palestinians were injured. Another two Palestinian suspected perpetrators of attacks were killed by Israeli settlers. Palestinian property vandalized by settlers includes some 8,000 trees and about 620 vehicles. Seven Israelis were killed by Palestinians in these incidents in 2018, compared with four in 2017. There were at least 181 incidents in which Palestinians killed or injured settlers and other Israeli civilians in the West Bank or damaged Israeli property, a 28 per cent decline compared with the previous year.¹¹

21. Settler attacks included stone-throwing, vandalism and physical attacks and occurred largely in Palestinian communities close to settlements (see [A/73/499](#), para. 18). A total of 350,000 Palestinians live in 67 such communities.¹²

22. While efforts by the authorities to prevent and investigate settler-related violence are being made, further measures need to be taken to prevent or investigate cases of settler violence and prosecute perpetrators.

23. The Government of Israel decided not to renew the mandate of the Temporary International Presence in Hebron beyond 31 January 2019. Combined with intensified harassment and restrictions against residents and the remaining protective presence actors in the area, the non-renewal of the Temporary International Presence in Hebron increases the protection risks faced by the population, in particular schoolchildren.¹³

¹⁰ WHO input.

¹¹ United Nations, Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs, “2018: More casualties and food insecurity, less funding for humanitarian aid”, 27 December 2018.

¹² United Nations, Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs, “Occupied Palestinian Territory: 2019 Humanitarian needs overview”, December 2018. All data in the overview are up to November 2018.)

¹³ United Nations, Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs, Humanitarian Bulletin: Occupied Palestinian Territory, February 2019.

24. Israeli settler violence and the ongoing occupation also affect the lives of Palestinian women. Settler violence, which takes place in the streets and communities, has an impact on the safety of women in their own communities, resulting in curbs to their day-to-day rights, and reinforces the stereotype that women are in constant need of protection and supervision.¹⁴

Detention and ill-treatment

25. As at the end of February 2019, 5,248 Palestinians security detainees and prisoners were being held in Israeli prisons, including 205 children, 48 women¹⁵ and 7 members of the Palestinian Legislative Council.¹⁶

26. The Special Committee to Investigate Israeli Practices Affecting the Human Rights of the Palestinian People and Other Arabs of the Occupied Territories noted that a wide range of serious concerns had been raised with the Committee, including the continued use of administrative detention, arrest and the detention of children and lack of access to proper medical care. Palestinian officials and civil society organizations drew attention to the detention of thousands of Palestinians, including children, and raised concern about the number of Palestinian detainees held in 22 prisons, military camps and detention centres inside Israel, in violation of international humanitarian law (see *ibid.*, paras. 64–65).

27. Concerns had also been expressed about Israel's continued policy of ad hoc and arbitrary administrative detention, whereby detainees are held without trial or charge on indefinitely renewable six-month administrative detention orders, often on the basis of secret information to which the detainee was neither given access nor the opportunity to challenge (see *ibid.*, para. 65). At the end of February 2019, 495 Palestinians, including 2 children, were being held under administrative detention.¹⁷

28. Also of concern are the continuous reports documenting cases of ill-treatment and torture of Palestinian detainees, including children.¹⁸ The Special Committee was informed that 75 per cent of children arrested reported having been exposed to physical or psychological ill-treatment (see *ibid.*, para. 70).

29. Since 2000, at least 8,000 Palestinian children have reportedly been arrested and prosecuted in the Israeli military justice system.¹⁹ The arrest of children is often conducted during night raids, with security forces entering the home and waking up the family in order to arrest the children. This practice has been condemned by human rights groups, given the fear and anxiety that it causes both to the children and to the families. In many cases, families are not told why the children are being arrested. Children report being subjected to violence and humiliation during transport to the detention facility. In many cases, children are reportedly interrogated without a parent or guardian present, and there are serious concerns about the possibility of forced confessions. The Special Committee noted with great concern reports about the practice of plea-bargaining, in which detained children plead guilty in exchange for a reduced sentence. There are concerns that this practice pressures children to plead

¹⁴ UN-Women input.

¹⁵ Data from B'tselem, Detainees and prisoners database, available at www.btselem.org/statistics/detainees_and_prisoners and www.btselem.org/statistics/minors_in_custody (accessed on 31 March 2019). See also data from Addameer Prisoner Support and Human Rights Association, available at www.addameer.org/statistics (accessed on 24 April 2019).

¹⁶ Data from Addameer Prisoner Support and Human Rights Association, www.addameer.org/statistics (accessed on 20 March 2019).

¹⁷ Data from B'tselem, Detainees and prisoners database (accessed on 31 March 2019).

¹⁸ Addameer Prisoner Support and Human Rights Association, "I've been there: a study of torture and inhumane treatment in Al-Moscobiyeh Interrogation Centre", 2018. Available at www.addameer.org/sites/default/files/publications/al_moscobiyeh_report_0.pdf.

¹⁹ See www.dci-palestine.org/issues_military_detention.

guilty in cases in which they may be innocent, in particular when they are interrogated without the presence of a parent or guardian (see *ibid.*, paras. 64, 65 and 70).

30. In 2018, Defense for Children International – Palestine documented 120 child detention cases from the West Bank, the majority of which included verbal abuse, threats, humiliation or intimidation and up to 30 days of isolation, in addition to physical abuse.²⁰

31. Palestinian mothers detained in the Al-Moscobiyyeh Interrogation Centre are reportedly subjected to threats of harm to their children in order to obtain a confession. Women detainees also suffer from sexual harassment, through sexual suggestions and gestures, or close-range interrogation.²¹

Population displacement

32. There is continued concern that the combination of State-sanctioned land seizures, retroactive legalization of settler outposts, demolition of Palestinian homes and livelihood structures, denial of Palestinian building permits, restrictions on movement and access to livelihoods, and settler violence and a lack of accountability for such violence contributes to the creation of a coercive environment in areas under full Israeli control, propelling Palestinians to move out of certain parts of Area C and East Jerusalem. Involuntary displacement and relocation to alternative residential areas as a result of such policies may amount to forcible transfer if it is carried out without the free and informed consent of the individuals who relocate, in violation of the obligations of Israel under international humanitarian and human rights law. Forcible transfer is a grave breach of the Fourth Geneva Convention and amounts to a war crime (see [A/73/410](#), paras. 2, 57, 58 and 64; and [A/73/87-E/2018/69](#), para. 21).

33. Palestinians living in East Jerusalem, Area C and the H2 zone of Hebron are most affected by the coercive environment and face the risk of displacement and forcible transfer (see [A/73/410](#), para. 66).²² More than 10,000 people, 62 per cent of whom are refugees, live in 63 communities in Area C of the West Bank at a heightened risk of forcible transfer. Dozens of Palestinian Bedouin communities, the majority of whom are refugees, are also at risk of forcible transfer in the central West Bank; 18 of these communities are located in or near the area designated by Israel for the E1 settlement plan that seeks to connect the Ma`ale Adummim settlement bloc with East Jerusalem.²³

34. Since 2009, approximately 9,260 Palestinians, including 1,972 women and 4,853 children, have been displaced owing to demolitions, including 593 who were displaced between 1 April 2018 and 31 March 2019.²⁴

35. Israel also resorts to administrative and legal measures to revoke the residency status of Palestinians in East Jerusalem. Residency status was revoked in cases in which Palestinians were considered by Israeli authorities to have “transferred their centre of life” from the West Bank abroad for seven or more years.²⁵

²⁰ Defense for Children – Palestine, “Year-in-review: 2018 rained deadly force on Palestinian children”, 31 December 2018.

²¹ Addameer Prisoner Support and Human Rights Association, “[I’ve been there](#)”.

²² See also United Nations, Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs, “2019 Humanitarian needs overview”.

²³ *Ibid.*

²⁴ See United Nations, Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs, Demolition and displacement in the West Bank database, available at www.ochaopt.org/data/demolition (accessed on 31 March 2019).

²⁵ See Al-Haq, “Engineering community: family unification, entry restrictions and other Israeli policies of fragmenting Palestinians”, February 2019.

36. In December 2018, the Knesset passed the preliminary reading of a bill that would allow the Israeli army to expel family members of a terrorist from their home by removing them from their town or city or demarcating an area that they are not allowed to enter.²⁶

37. The fear of living under constant threat of displacement has increased the insecurity of women and girls. This is in addition to the increase in caregiving responsibilities of children, who often face psychological trauma because of demolitions and the loss of their homes. When displaced, Palestinian women find themselves further constrained in their access to public spaces and livelihood opportunities against a backdrop of increasing food insecurity and vulnerability. There is also the possibility of increases in domestic violence and the use of early marriage as a negative coping mechanism. Furthermore, displaced girls lose time in school, which has a severe impact on their psychological well-being, resulting in emotional and behavioural problems that have a negative impact on their educational achievement and retention.²⁷

38. By November 2018, 14,600 Palestinians remained internally displaced in Gaza as a result of the 2014 conflict, owing to lack of funding for reconstruction. Some 19,700 Palestinians currently inhabit housing units that are beyond repair, and another 24,000 need urgent shelter assistance.²⁸

Destruction and confiscation of property and infrastructure

39. Overall, 2018 witnessed a 10 per cent increase in the demolition or seizure of Palestinian-owned structures in the West Bank compared with 2017.²⁹

40. Between 1 April 2018 and 31 March 2019, 500 Palestinian-owned structures were demolished, including 132 inhabited homes and 65 donor-funded structures, affecting more than 32,000 people. The total number of structures demolished by the Israeli authorities since 2009 reached 5,942, including 1,704 inhabited homes and 981 donor-funded structures.³⁰

41. Israel continued punitive demolitions of the family homes of Palestinians suspected of killing Israelis, a measure that may amount to collective punishment. Between 1 April 2018 and 31 March 2019, the Israeli authorities carried out seven such demolitions.³¹

42. There are currently more than 13,000 Palestinian-owned structures for which demolition orders have been issued in Area C of the West Bank.³² At least one third of Palestinian homes in East Jerusalem lacked building permits, potentially placing 100,000 residents at risk of demolition-induced displacement.³³

²⁶ Knesset, “Bill to deport families of terrorists approved in preliminary reading”, 19 December 2018.

²⁷ UN-Women input; UN-Women, “Gender alert: needs of women and girls in humanitarian action in the Occupied Palestinian Territory” (2018).

²⁸ United Nations, Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs, “2019 Humanitarian needs overview”. Based on Shelter Cluster Palestine, “Inter-agency shelter survey on substandard housing conditions in Gaza”, June 2018.

²⁹ United Nations, Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs, “West Bank demolitions and displacement: an overview”, December 2018.

³⁰ United Nations, Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs, Demolition and displacement in the West Bank database (accessed on 31 March 2019).

³¹ Ibid.

³² United Nations, Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs, “2019 Humanitarian needs overview”.

³³ United Nations, Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs, [Humanitarian Bulletin: Occupied Palestinian Territory, December 2017](#).

43. Over one third of Area C is formally designated as public land, referred to as “State land” by Israel. The vast majority of “State land” declarations took place before the start of the Oslo peace process in the early 1990s. It is estimated that between 750 km² and 900 km² were declared “State land” by Israel between 1979 and 1992. “State land” has been allocated exclusively for use by Israel and its citizens, rather than for the benefit of the local population (see [A/73/87-E/2018/69](#), para. 20). A recent report by Kerem Navot revealed that, using military orders, Israel seized more than 101,380 dunams in the West Bank between 1967 and 2014, 67 per cent of which are privately owned by Palestinian residents of the West Bank.³⁴

44. During 2018 and the first two months of 2019, the United Nations Relief and Works Agency for Palestine Refugees (UNRWA) recorded 39 Israeli military orders confiscating 2.8 dunams of land owned by Palestinians in the West Bank.

Israeli settlement activity

45. The General Assembly, in its resolution [73/255](#), stressed that the wall and the settlements being constructed by Israel in the Occupied Palestinian Territory, including in and around East Jerusalem, are contrary to international law. This is confirmed in other resolutions, such as Security Council resolution [2334 \(2016\)](#), in which the Council reaffirmed that the establishment by Israel of settlements in the Palestinian territory occupied since 1967, including East Jerusalem, has no legal validity and constitutes a flagrant violation under international law and a major obstacle to the achievement of a lasting and comprehensive peace.

46. Settlement expansion, involving expropriation, evictions and demolitions, together with a planning and zoning regime, impedes the development, employment and livelihoods of Palestinians, as well as their full enjoyment of their socioeconomic rights.³⁵

47. Successive Israeli governments have supported population growth in the settlements by providing State-led public services, opening new economic activities, advancing housing plans and providing tax benefits to some of the settlements (see [A/71/355](#), para. 4). Areas surrounding the settlements are usually declared off-limits to Palestinians, citing “security reasons”; they are defined officially as part of the jurisdictional areas of the settlements and are eventually annexed to them (see [A/71/86-E/2016/13](#), para. 5).³⁶ Combined with the settlements themselves, these areas comprise 9.6 per cent of the West Bank.³⁷

48. There are currently approximately 215,000 Israelis living in East Jerusalem, and the settler population in Area C in the occupied West Bank, excluding East Jerusalem, is some 413,000. This brings the settler population to approximately 630,000 Israeli settlers in 143 settlement locations in the West Bank (132), including East Jerusalem (11), and 106 outposts.³⁸

49. From January to September 2018, actual construction of 1,456 housing units began in West Bank settlements, excluding East Jerusalem, compared with 1,213

³⁴ See Kerem Navot, *Seize the Moral Low Ground: Land Seizures for “Security Needs” in the West Bank* (2018).

³⁵ International Labour Organization (ILO) input.

³⁶ See also Din, “[Through the lens of Israel’s interests: the civil administration in the West Bank](#)”, position paper, December 2017).

³⁷ Palestinian Central Bureau of Statistics, press release, 28 March 2019.

³⁸ Office of the European Union Representative, “Six-month report on Israeli settlements in the occupied West Bank, including East Jerusalem (reporting period July–December 2018)”, 4 February 2019.

construction starts from January to September 2017, which represents a 20 per cent increase.³⁹

Movement and access restrictions

50. As freedom of movement is a prerequisite to the exercise of other human rights, such as the rights to family, health and education, the closures and related practices imposed by the Israeli authorities, in particular restrictions on movement, have had a devastating impact on the lives of Palestinians, in particular on families. About a third of Gaza residents have relatives in the West Bank, including East Jerusalem. As family visits are not one of the criteria for travel, many families remain separated for years (see [A/73/420](#), para. 25).

Gaza closures

51. Imposed on Gaza since June 2007, following the takeover by Hamas, the closures in Gaza, which entail severe restrictions on the movement of goods and people, continue to undermine the civil, political, economic, social and cultural rights of Palestinians in Gaza (see [A/HRC/34/38](#), para. 29; [A/71/364](#), paras. 28–29; [A/70/421](#), paras. 15–22; and [A/HRC/31/44](#), paras. 40 and 43). The blockade may amount to collective punishment, which is prohibited under international law (see [A/73/420](#), paras. 7, 9 and 65, and [A/72/565](#), para. 28).

52. The closures continue to severely erode the productive base of the economy of Gaza, and restrictions on the entry of raw materials, essential equipment and spare parts have consistently delayed efforts to reconstruct Gaza and to strengthen basic public services (see [A/73/420](#), paras. 32 and 64).

53. As a general rule, every Palestinian in Gaza who needs to travel through Israel through Beit Hanoun (Erez) crossing can do so only with an Israeli-issued permit.

54. Permit approval rates for patients seeking medical treatment that is unavailable in Gaza continue to decline, from 92.5 per cent in 2012 to 62.1 per cent in 2016 and 59 per cent in the first half of 2018. Between 30 March and 27 August, only 23 per cent of 270 people injured in the mass demonstrations during the Great March of Return who applied for permits for Erez were approved, with 37 per cent denied and the remaining pending.⁴⁰

55. According to data collected by WHO, 15 per cent of applications on behalf of health partners in Gaza were approved for exit in 2018. The World Food Programme (WFP) reports that 27 per cent of permits requested in 2018 for its national staff from Gaza were rejected for undefined “security reasons”.

56. In practice, the permit regime is characterized by lack of transparency. Countless Palestinians, including terminally ill patients, wait with continued uncertainty about the status of their applications. Furthermore, there is generally little or no communication by the Israeli authorities to inform or advise the affected population when new measures are introduced and existing procedures amended (see *ibid.*, paras. 15 and 24).

57. Israeli authorities regularly request that Palestinians go through a security interview at the Beit Hanoun crossing as a precondition to obtaining a permit. Palestinians have reported being subjected to degrading treatment and intimidation

³⁹ *Ibid.*

⁴⁰ World Health Organization (WHO), Occupied Palestinian Territory, “Monthly report: December 2018”, 29 January 2019; and United Nations, Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs, “2019 Humanitarian needs overview”.

during such interviews. There have also been reports of pressure on applicants to provide security-related information about Gaza (see *ibid.*, para. 18).

58. In 2018, the Rafah crossing was open for 198 days during daytime, compared with 36 days in 2017.⁴¹

59. The import into Gaza of goods deemed by Israel to have dual civilian and military use is prohibited unless an Israeli-issued licence to import can be acquired (see *ibid.*, para. 29). Traders have reported that the Israeli authorities may deem nearly any item dual-use, even if it was previously allowed in with no special controls.⁴²

60. Although the volume of imports to Gaza gradually increased over the years, it declined to 106,171 truckloads in 2018, including in view of the dire economic situation and the security context, compared with 118,509 in 2017,⁴³ and is still not sufficient for the needs of the population of Gaza (see [E/ESCWA/30/5](#)).

61. The severe restrictions on exports from Gaza remain in place, albeit with some easing as at 2014. In 2018, 693 truckloads⁴⁴ were allowed to exit, compared with 651 in 2017; however, this is still a fraction of the pre-closures levels, with 9,324 truckloads having exited the Gaza Strip in 2005 alone (*ibid.*).

62. The temporary Gaza Reconstruction Mechanism, established in 2014, has facilitated the entry of large quantities of construction material, otherwise restricted by Israel, into Gaza. Nearly 100,000 people were displaced owing to the destruction or severe damage of their homes during the 2014 conflict. More than 85 per cent of these homes were rebuilt by the end of 2018. There was a decline in cement imports in 2018, however, owing to the general economic decline in Gaza, reduced donor funding and the fact that the reconstruction process is drawing to an end.⁴⁵ Israel and the Palestinian Authority, together with the United Nations, conducted a joint review of the Gaza Reconstruction Mechanism towards the end of 2018 and agreed on a number of measures to increase its functionality, transparency and predictability.

63. In addition to the access restrictions, Israeli security forces enforce buffer zones by land and sea as “access- restricted areas”. While Israeli authorities have declared that up to 100 metres from the perimeter fence is a “no-go” area for individuals and up to 200 metres there is no access for heavy machinery, humanitarian partners in the field have reported that in practice, up to 300 metres from the perimeter fence is considered by most farmers as a no-go area and up to 1,000 metres a “high-risk” area. By sea, while varying and at times increased to 12 to 15 nautical miles, the restricted area is generally 6 nautical miles, less than a third of the 20 nautical miles agreed under the Oslo Accords.⁴⁶

⁴¹ United Nations, Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs, “Gaza crossings’ operations status: monthly update – December 2018”, 14 January 2019.

⁴² World Bank, “Economic monitoring report to the Ad Hoc Liaison Committee”, 18 September 2017.

⁴³ United Nations, Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs, Gaza crossings: movement of people and goods database, available at www.ochaopt.org/data/crossings (accessed on 24 March 2019).

⁴⁴ United Nations, Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs, Gaza crossings: movement of people and goods database (accessed on 24 March 2019).

⁴⁵ United Nations, Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs, Humanitarian Bulletin: Occupied Palestinian Territory, February 2019; and Office of the United Nations Special Coordinator for the Middle East Peace Process, “Report of the Ad Hoc Liaison Committee”, 27 September 2018.

⁴⁶ United Nations, Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs, “2019 Humanitarian needs overview”.

Movement restrictions in the West Bank

64. The movement of Palestinians within the West Bank, including to and from East Jerusalem, is subject to physical and administrative obstacles, impeding access to services as well as economic and social activity. In this regard, as at 2018, there had been a total of 705 road closures⁴⁷ and physical obstacles that exacerbate the ability of Palestinians to move freely in the West Bank.

65. Palestinians living in Area C, in particular, have to contend with the restrictions on movement and access as well as harassment from the Israeli military and settler violence.⁴⁸

66. Israel continues to construct the “barrier” in the West Bank, of which at least 465 km have been completed. Some 85 per cent of its 712 km-long planned route runs inside the West Bank rather than along the 1949 Armistice Line (Green Line),⁴⁹ even after the International Court of Justice concluded that the wall built by Israel, the occupying Power, in the Occupied Palestinian Territory, including in and around East Jerusalem, and its associated regime, were contrary to international law.⁵⁰ Once construction is completed along the planned route, about 9.4 per cent of the West Bank will be severed from the rest of the West Bank.⁵¹

67. As at November 2017, some 11,000 Palestinians were living in the seam zone, the area located between the wall and the Green Line, which was declared a closed military area. Many of them are unable to gain access to the rest of the West Bank.⁵² They, as well as other Palestinians who need to enter the seam zone, must apply for a special permit from the Israeli military authorities. By November 2018, the approval rates for permits for landowners and agricultural workers had decreased from 76 per cent in 2014 to 28 per cent and from 70 per cent to 50 per cent, respectively.⁵³

68. In East Jerusalem, access by communities to health care is also challenged by the route of the “barrier”, given that certain communities find themselves on the West Bank side and need to cross checkpoints to access the health-care services to which they are entitled as residents of Jerusalem.⁵⁴ The majority of other West Bank patients must apply for permits to access East Jerusalem hospitals.⁵⁵

69. Access to East Jerusalem also remains problematic for Palestinian ambulances, which are stopped and delayed for security checks. In 2018, according to the Palestinian Red Crescent Society, 84 per cent of the 1,462 recorded journeys by ambulances requiring entry to Jerusalem from other parts of the West Bank had to transfer patients to another ambulance at checkpoints, which delayed transit.⁵⁶

70. Israeli restrictions continue to hinder access by UNRWA to refugee communities in the West Bank. Between April 2018 and January 2019, UNRWA reported 59 access-

⁴⁷ Ibid.

⁴⁸ UN-Women input.

⁴⁹ United Nations, Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs, “Occupied Palestinian Territory: humanitarian facts and figures”, December 2017.

⁵⁰ *Legal Consequences of the Construction of a Wall in the Occupied Palestinian Territory, Advisory Opinion, I.C.J. Reports 2004.*

⁵¹ B’Tselem, “The separation barrier”, 11 November 2017.

⁵² Ibid.

⁵³ According to data obtained from Israeli authorities by the non-governmental organization, HaMoked, on the basis of the Freedom of Information Act. See United Nations, Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs, “Humanitarian Bulletin: Occupied Palestinian Territory, February 2019”.

⁵⁴ United Nations, Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs, “2019 Humanitarian needs overview”.

⁵⁵ WHO input.

⁵⁶ Ibid.

related incidents, which negatively affected the delivery of services. UNRWA also recorded another 33 access incidents at East Jerusalem checkpoints.

Exploitation, endangerment and depletion of Palestinian natural resources

71. Area C of the West Bank continues to be almost entirely off-limits for the Government of Palestine, producers and investors, even though it contains the most valuable natural resources (see TD/B/65(2)/3, para. 25).

Water

72. Israeli restrictions on the drilling and rehabilitation of wells in the West Bank exacerbate water shortages and continue to disrupt daily life and impede development interventions in the West Bank and the Gaza Strip. The resulting shortage in water supplies for the Palestinian population of the West Bank prompts the Government of Palestine to regularly purchase water from Israel,⁵⁷ in particular from the Israeli water company Mekorot.⁵⁸ Israeli settlements and discriminatory policies in the West Bank regarding water allocation further exacerbate the situation (see [A/HRC/40/73](#)).⁵⁹

73. Approximately 22 per cent of the estimated total population suffers from lack of access to water and poor water quality. Owing to Israeli restrictions, some 294,000 people are either not connected to a water network or receive water only once a week or less, mainly through unsecure water resources and/or tankered water. About 95,000 Palestinians in Area C receive less than 50 litres of water per capita per day and more than 83,000 people receive bad-quality drinking water.⁶⁰ According to a recent estimate, residents of Israel and Israeli settlers consume approximately three times as much water per person per day (250 litres) as West Bank Palestinians (84 litres) (see [A/HRC/40/73](#), para. 51).⁶¹

74. Palestinian communities in East Jerusalem also suffer from inadequate water, sanitation and hygiene services, with only 59 per cent of residents connected legally and properly to the water grid.⁶²

75. The Israeli Civil Administration has built seven dams in the West Bank, which will reportedly allow Israel to control a significant amount of surface water and to divert an estimated 260,000 to 1 million m³ of surface water annually to settlement agricultural areas.⁶³

76. In Gaza, the coastal aquifer, which is the sole natural water source, has been virtually depleted by over-extraction and the intrusion of seawater, rendering more than 97 per cent of its water unfit for human consumption.⁶⁴ Only 10.5 per cent of Palestinians in Gaza have access to safe drinking water through the public water

⁵⁷ Association for Civil Rights in Israel, “Water provision and drillings in the West Bank 2010–2016”, 5 June 2018.

⁵⁸ See data in Palestinian Central Bureau of Statistics, press release, 21 March 2019, available at www.pcbs.gov.ps/portals/_pcbs/PressRelease/Press_En_21-3-2019-water-en.pdf.

⁵⁹ B’tselem, “Water crisis”, 11 November 2017; and European Parliamentary Research Service, “Water in the Israeli-Palestinian conflict”, briefing, January 2016.

⁶⁰ United Nations, Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs, “2019 Humanitarian needs overview”, according to Palestinian Central Bureau of Statistics census.

⁶¹ B’tselem, “Water crisis”; and European Parliamentary Research Service, “Water in the Israeli-Palestinian conflict”.

⁶² United Nations, Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs, “2019 Humanitarian needs overview”, according to Palestinian Central Bureau of Statistics national census in 2018.

⁶³ According to information received by the Special Committee to Investigate Israeli Practices Affecting the Human Rights of the Palestinian People and Other Arabs of the Occupied Territories. See [A/73/499](#), para. 34.

⁶⁴ See data in Palestinian Central Bureau of Statistics, press release, 21 March 2019.

network, down from 98.3 per cent in 2000. Reliance on the much more expensive, unregulated and unreliable water tanks, containers and bottled water rose from 1.4 per cent to 89.6 per cent during the same period.⁶⁵

77. By 2018, the whole population of Gaza had been negatively affected by ongoing deficits and needs in the water, sanitation and hygiene sector. This includes 983,623 women and 991,428 children who are exposed to public health risks associated with poor water quality, poor wastewater collection and treatment, lack of storm water infrastructure and lack of proper hygiene practices.⁶⁶

78. A failure to continue programmes supported by the United Nations in Gaza, such as the emergency fuel programme for generators, would reduce the average water quota from 80 litres per capita per day to 45 litres per capita per day; water production from 280 domestic water wells and 30 water reservoirs would be reduced from 220,000 m³ to 40,000 m³ a day; and drinking water from 48 public desalination plants would be reduced by 80 per cent, generating only 4,000 m³ per day of the plants' nominal capacities of 20,000 m³ per day. In addition, 55 sewage lifting and collection pumping stations in heavily populated areas would be at risk of flooding, with raw sewage overflowing in the streets during cut-off hours. The performance of the five existing wastewater treatment plants would decrease by 50 per cent, adding to the more than 116 million litres of raw untreated sewage that enters the Mediterranean Sea every day.⁶⁷

Pollution

79. In addition to the pollution caused by inadequate infrastructure, the reduction in the income of municipalities owing to the inability of Gaza residents to pay the monthly cost of services has led to further deterioration in municipal services. This is exemplified by the announcement by the head of the Gaza City municipality that large areas along the beach have been closed because, owing to the lack of fuel and electricity, most of the treatment plants have stopped working and untreated sewage is being pumped directly into the sea, thereby contaminating these areas.⁶⁸

80. There are 15 waste treatment facilities or waste dumps in the West Bank which are, in some cases, close to Palestinian towns or villages and in which proper precautions to protect the land and nearby residents from pollution and possible hazardous materials are not taken. These facilities or dumps are managed by Israel and at least six of them handle hazardous waste (see A/73/499, para. 31).

Agricultural resources

81. Area C in the West Bank contains the majority of its agricultural lands. Access and mobility restrictions, in particular in the seam zone and areas close to settlements, as well as discriminatory water allocation policies, curtail the ability of Palestinians to farm and cultivate their lands. For example, data collected over the past four years

⁶⁵ United Nations, Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs, "2019 Humanitarian needs overview", according to the WHO/UNICEF Joint Monitoring Programme for Water Supply, Sanitation and Hygiene in 2018. See <https://washdata.org>.

⁶⁶ United Nations, Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs, "2019 Humanitarian needs overview".

⁶⁷ United Nations, Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs, "2019 Humanitarian needs overview", according to the Water Supply, Sanitation and Hygiene Cluster and the Coastal Municipalities Water Utility; and January sewage dump data in United Nations, Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs, "Gaza Strip: early warning indicators – January 2019", February 2019.

⁶⁸ Norwegian Refugee Council, "Assessment report: Gaza internally displaced persons – assessment of the vulnerability situation for IDPs in Gaza, three years after the 2014 conflict", June 2018.

show that, as at November 2017, olive tree yields in the seam zone had reduced by 55 per cent to -65 per cent compared with yields in areas that can be accessed all year round.⁶⁹

82. Furthermore, since 1967, more than two thirds of grazing land and more than 2.5 million productive trees have been destroyed under the occupation (see [A/73/201](#), para. 6, and [TD/B/63/3](#), para. 42 (d)).

83. In Gaza, land and maritime access-restricted areas imposed by Israel render 85 per cent of fishery resources inaccessible to Palestinian fishermen, and half of the cultivable area remains unreachable for producers (see [A/73/201](#), para. 7).

84. The Israeli practice of spraying herbicides along the border fence areas, allegedly for a better sight line into Gaza, is also reportedly responsible for damaging agricultural production. This affects crops up to at least 1,000 metres from the border fence (see [A/73/420](#), para. 44).

Exploitation of mineral resources

85. Ten Israeli-owned quarries (the number of quarries fluctuated between 7 and 11 over the years) are active in Area C of the West Bank, located for the most part in Israeli-declared State land. Israeli firms do not face the limitations placed on their Palestinian counterparts and continue to acquire permits to quarry and extract in the Occupied Palestinian Territory (see [A/73/87-E/2018/69](#), para. 73).⁷⁰

86. The Israeli authorities have not issued new permits for Palestinian companies to quarry in Area C since 1994, even though the Oslo agreements provided for this. Area C has an estimated 20,000 dunums of quarriable land and potential mineral reserves worth an estimated \$30 billion (see [E/ESCWA/30/5](#)).⁷¹ According to the Palestinian Union of Stone and Marble, existing licences have not been renewed. This has caused several Palestinian quarries in Area C to cease operations or shut down. Quarry closures have been accompanied by equipment confiscation and fines.⁷²

Social and economic conditions in the Occupied Palestinian Territory

87. The physical fragmentation of the Occupied Palestinian Territory caused by a system of complex restrictions on movement and access imposed by the Israeli military has resulted in the emergence of different economies in the Gaza Strip and the West Bank, including East Jerusalem. This not only significantly damages peace and development prospects, but has led to the deterioration of the living conditions of the Palestinians.

88. The deterioration is exacerbated by significant shortfalls in donor support for the Government of Palestine, UNRWA and humanitarian operations in general and by intra-Palestinian division. This is undermining the ability of the international community to effectively respond to increasing needs, with some 2.5 million

⁶⁹ United Nations, Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs, Humanitarian Bulletin: Occupied Palestinian Territory, November 2017.

⁷⁰ See also Yesh Din, “The great drain: Israeli quarries in the West Bank — High Court sanctioned institutionalized theft”, position paper, September 2017.

⁷¹ See also World Bank, *West Bank and Gaza: Area C and the Future of the Palestinian Economy*, report No. AUS2922 (2013).

⁷² Yesh Din, “The great drain”; Human Rights Watch, *Occupation, Inc.: How Settlement Businesses Contribute to Israel’s Violations of Palestinian Rights* (2016); and World Bank, *West Bank and Gaza: Area C and the Future of the Palestinian Economy*.

Palestinians across the Occupied Palestinian Territory, or nearly half of the population, identified as in need of humanitarian assistance and protection.⁷³

Economic conditions

89. The economy of the Occupied Palestinian Territory continues to suffer from occupation-related measures, including restrictions on movement and access to resources and trade combined with almost 12 years of closures in the Gaza Strip. As a result, investment in the Palestinian economy has remained low, leading to a process of de-industrialization. According to preliminary data by the Palestinian Central Bureau of Statistics, real growth in the gross domestic product (GDP) of the Occupied Palestinian Territory slowed to 0.9 per cent in 2018, significantly down from 3.1 per cent in 2017.

90. The overall decline in growth for the Occupied Palestinian Territory is weighed down by a slower growth rate in the West Bank and declining activity in Gaza, the latter mainly owing to Israeli policies and practices and the closures. This is exacerbated by internal Palestinian divisions, which have resulted in a decline in transfers from the budget of the Government of Palestine, among other measures, and decreased funding for UNRWA.

91. In this context, Gaza continues its trajectory of de-development. Its GDP further contracted by 6.5 per cent in 2018 after contracting by 12.5 per cent in 2017. Significantly, the contribution by Gaza to the Palestinian economy declined to 19.6 per cent in 2018 from nearly 31 per cent in 2000.⁷⁴

92. On 17 February, the Government of Israel began implementing the law adopted by the Knesset in July 2018 obliging the Government of Israel to freeze, from the clearance revenues it collects on behalf of and transfers to the Palestinian Authority, an amount equal to the sums paid by the Palestinian Authority “directly or indirectly” to Palestinians or to the families of Palestinians convicted by Israeli courts of involvement in alleged “terrorist activities” or other security-related offences, as defined by Israeli law, or who were killed while carrying out such activities (see [S/2019/251](#), paras. 42–43).⁷⁵ Accordingly, on 17 February, Israel announced that it would freeze approximately \$139 million from the clearance revenues of the Palestinian Authority over the course of 2019, amounting to a little over 6 per cent of the total amount of revenue transfers in 2018. On 21 February, the Palestinian Authority informed the Government of Israel of its rejection of this unilateral decision, stating that under the Protocol on Economic Relations between the Government of the State of Israel and the Palestine Liberation Organization (Paris Protocol), no amount may be deducted without the consent of both parties, and that it will not cease its social welfare payments to the families of prisoners. The Palestinian Authority has since refused to accept any clearance revenue transfers from Israel, noting that it will accept the revenue only if the full amount payable is transferred. Clearance revenues from Israel constitute up to 65 per cent of the total revenues of the Government of Palestine. This decision has prompted the Government of Palestine to take severe austerity measures (see [S/2019/251](#), para. 42). The situation is expected to result in a further increase in financing gaps and to lower growth prospects and employment opportunities.

⁷³ United Nations, Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs, “2019 Humanitarian needs overview”.

⁷⁴ ESCWA calculations based on data from the Palestinian Central Bureau of Statistics. Growth rates are calculated as the year-on-year percentage change for each quarter.

⁷⁵ See also Noa Landau and Jack Khoury, “Israel freezes transfer of 500 million shekels of Palestinian Authority taxes”, *Haaretz*, 17 February 2019.

93. Even before February 2019, the Palestinian Ministry of Finance had reported that at least \$350 million per year was being lost in fiscal leakages owing to Israeli policies regarding the implementation of the Paris Protocol arrangements. According to the Government of Palestine, some sources of fiscal leakage include handling fees (3 per cent deduction from the clearance revenue); taxes and fees on fuel purchases; the value-added tax clearance mechanism; indirect imports; passenger exit fees; and taxes on Israeli commercial activity in Area C and the rest of the West Bank.⁷⁶

94. In Gaza, if transfers through the budget of the Government of Palestine continue to decline and the financial gap of UNRWA is not offset, there will be serious negative consequences for economic activity and social conditions and a further deepening of the humanitarian crisis.

95. Given that economic opportunities remain scarce, labour force participation in the Occupied Palestinian Territory in 2018 was 46 per cent; 21 per cent for women and 72 per cent for men. The unemployment rate in the Territory remained high and continued to increase, reaching 31 per cent in 2018 compared with 28 per cent in 2017. Unemployment was much worse in Gaza, registering 52 per cent in 2018 compared with 44 per cent in 2017.⁷⁷ Almost 7 out of 10 young Gazans, and 49.6 per cent of Gazans with 13 or more years of schooling, were unemployed.

96. Living conditions have worsened in recent years, driven by a significantly deteriorating humanitarian situation in Gaza. Poverty remains severe and is becoming more entrenched. The 2017 household survey by the Palestinian Central Bureau of Statistics revealed that 53 per cent of Gazans were living below the national poverty line (the poverty line translates to an expenditure of \$692 per month for a family of two adults and three children), compared with 38.8 per cent in 2011. Moreover, the incidence of deep poverty increased in Gaza from 21.1 per cent in 2011 to a high of 33.8 per cent in 2017 (deep poverty is defined as being unable to meet the minimum required for food, clothing and housing).⁷⁸

Food security

97. Food insecurity affects nearly a third of the population, or some 1.56 million people, and is driven by high poverty and unemployment rates. Food prices are driven by Israeli markets, in which the average purchasing power per capita is six times higher than in the Occupied Palestinian Territory. Food is thus unaffordable for poor Palestinian families.⁷⁹

98. According to a 2018 food security survey, food insecurity in the Occupied Palestinian Territory remains at very high levels, with a third of households (32.7 per cent) being food insecure. In the Gaza Strip, food insecurity levels in 2018 reached the highest rate in the past 20 years, at 68.5 per cent.⁸⁰

99. The deterioration in food security in Gaza is caused by many factors, including the continuously deteriorating economic situation, the closures, continued intra-Palestinian divisions, the shortage of UNRWA funding and salary cuts and late pay for government employees.

⁷⁶ For details, see State of Palestine, “Stopping fiscal leakages: the Government of Palestine’s report to the Ad Hoc Liaison Committee meeting”, September 2018.

⁷⁷ Palestinian Central Bureau of Statistics, press release, 30 April 2019, available at www.pcbs.gov.ps/portals/_pcbs/PressRelease/Press_En_30-4-2019-labour-en.pdf.

⁷⁸ Palestinian Central Bureau of Statistics data, available at www.pcbs.gov.ps/Portals/_Rainbow/Documents/Levels%20of%20living_pov_2017_02e.htm.

⁷⁹ World Food Programme (WFP), “WFP Palestine Country Brief”, January 2019.

⁸⁰ WFP and Palestinian Central Bureau of Statistics data.

100. The level of food insecurity reached 61 per cent among Bedouin and herding communities in Area C, where 40 per cent have poor to borderline food dietary intake. This increases their reliance on WFP and UNRWA assistance to meet their basic food needs.⁸¹

Education

101. Approximately 505,285 children (249,327 boys and 255,958 girls) across the Occupied Palestinian Territory face challenges in accessing quality education in a safe, child-friendly environment. Some 13,973 teachers (5,942 men and 8,031 women) are in need of support.⁸²

102. In the West Bank, including East Jerusalem, access to education is heavily compromised, affecting 39,245 students and teachers. This includes 26,387 in Area C, 11,481 in East Jerusalem and 1,377 in other areas of the West Bank.⁸³

103. In addition, 46 schools are under threat of full or partial demolition in East Jerusalem and Area C, following the issuance of demolition orders. This is likely to affect more than 5,000 children.⁸⁴

104. Palestinian children in East Jerusalem face obstacles in accessing inclusive, quality education in the city. For example, children living on the West Bank side of the wall face long and, at times, insecure commutes to schools located on the other side of the wall. They also face the threat of arrest and detention by Israeli authorities.⁸⁵

105. Compared with the previous school year, the student population in the UNRWA schools in Gaza increased by some 7,000 children. The average class size has increased from 39 to 41 students per class.⁸⁶ The shortage of schools, unpaid teacher salaries and lack of school budgets in Gaza has led 70 per cent of UNRWA schools and 63 per cent of Ministry of Education schools to operate on double- or triple-shift systems.⁸⁷

106. The ability of university students from Gaza to attend universities in the West Bank has been severely curtailed owing to Israeli restrictions since the outbreak of the second Intifada, in 2000. While they represented 35 per cent of the West Bank student population at one point, they are currently almost absent from its universities (see [A/73/420](#), para. 26).

Health

107. Approximately 1,163,618 people in the West Bank and Gaza need assistance in accessing quality and affordable essential health-care services.⁸⁸ There are also pockets of acutely vulnerable people in East Jerusalem, who are isolated from

⁸¹ WFP input.

⁸² United Nations, Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs, “2019 Humanitarian needs overview”, Education Cluster estimate.

⁸³ United Nations, Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs, “2019 Humanitarian needs overview”.

⁸⁴ United Nations, Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs, “2019 Humanitarian needs overview”, Education Cluster estimate.

⁸⁵ UNICEF, *State of Palestine: Country Report on Out-of-School Children* (East Jerusalem, 2018).

⁸⁶ UNRWA input.

⁸⁷ United Nations, Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs, “2019 Humanitarian needs overview”.

⁸⁸ United Nations, Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs, “2018–2020 Humanitarian response strategy – January–December 2019 humanitarian response plan”, December 2018.

services in Jerusalem and the West Bank, with approximately 140,000 people, including some 40,000 refugees, in need of health assistance.⁸⁹

108. The health-care system in Gaza is on the verge of collapse following years of closures and de-development and is now overburdened with massive casualties from the ongoing Great March of Return demonstrations.⁹⁰

109. The prevalence of stunting was estimated at 10 per cent during 2018 in Gaza and was highest among children from refugee and low-income families; 92,430 children under the age of five are particularly vulnerable, with 10,000 cases of rickets, and approximately 36,000 suffer from watery or bloody diarrhoea owing to the sewage crisis and deteriorating access to safe drinking water.⁹¹

110. The limited and unpredictable electricity supply to the Gaza Strip has severe implications for the health sector, putting the lives of patients in hospitals and clinics at risk. This includes patients on life support machines in intensive care units, vulnerable newborn babies in incubators and patients requiring emergency life-saving surgeries.⁹²

111. The mass influx of casualties during the Great March of Return has further strained an already fragile health-care system and has had an impact on the capacity of the wider health sector to deliver services to the population. In the hospitals, trauma patients are prematurely discharged to make room for new patients.⁹³

112. In addition to the estimated 210,000 people who are already acutely vulnerable and who suffer from severe or moderate mental health disorders, developments in Gaza have had mental health and psychosocial consequences, with approximately 52,098 people, including 26,049 children, in need of mental health and psychosocial support.⁹⁴

113. The legislative and physical fragmentation of the West Bank creates barriers to the right to health for Palestinians, in particular those living in vulnerable communities such as Area C, the seam zone and H2 in Hebron. One third of the population of these areas has limited access to primary health care. A total of 135 communities are served by mobile clinics. Efforts to establish more permanent facilities for some communities are hampered by restrictive planning policies.⁹⁵

III. Occupied Syrian Golan

114. The Secretary-General continues to reaffirm the validity of Security Council resolution 497 (1981), in which the Council decided that the Israeli decision to impose its laws, jurisdiction and administration in the occupied Syrian Golan Heights was null and void and without international legal effect.

115. The Economic and Social Council, in its resolution 2018/20, reaffirmed that the construction and expansion of Israeli settlements and related infrastructure in the Occupied Palestinian Territory, including East Jerusalem, and the occupied Syrian Golan, were illegal and constituted a major obstacle to economic and social

⁸⁹ United Nations, Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs, “2019 Humanitarian needs overview”.

⁹⁰ Ibid.

⁹¹ WHO input.

⁹² WHO input.

⁹³ WHO input; and WHO Regional Office for the Eastern Mediterranean, “Gaza: waiting for treatment”, 21 November 2018.

⁹⁴ United Nations, Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs, “2019 Humanitarian needs overview”.

⁹⁵ WHO input.

development. The continued establishment and expansion of Israeli settlements in the Occupied Palestinian Territory and the occupied Syrian Golan amount to the transfer by Israel of its own civilian population into the territory it occupies, which is prohibited under international humanitarian law (see [A/73/410](#), para.63).

116. Ninety-five per cent of the Syrian population of the Golan was displaced or expelled and 340 communities were razed following the occupation by Israel of the 1,159 km² territory in 1967.⁹⁶ There are currently almost as many Israelis as Syrians in the occupied Syrian Golan, yet the Syrian population is restricted to a very small portion of the land. As at April 2018, 26,261 Israeli settlers lived in 34 Israeli settlements throughout the occupied Syrian Golan and controlled, together with the army, 95 per cent of the land, whereas 26,600 Syrians lived in five villages (see [A/73/499](#), para. 83). Israeli settlers are supported by the Government of Israel through financial incentives that reach up to \$12,000 per family as well as by the development of residential and industrial areas.⁹⁷

117. Concern persists regarding the situation in the occupied Syrian Golan, with Syrian residents facing ongoing problems owing to discriminatory land, housing and development policies established by the Israeli authorities (see [A/73/410](#), para. 60).

118. Israeli zoning and planning policies make it almost impossible for Syrians to obtain building permits. This has resulted in increasingly overcrowded villages and limited opportunities for development, as well as constraints to the expansion of the villages to accommodate the growing population.⁹⁸ In this context, the Israeli authorities have issued more than 1,570 demolition orders for Syrian structures since 1983.⁹⁹

119. Israeli law allows settlements comprised of 400 houses or less to discriminate against Syrian Arabs through the 2011 Amendment to the Cooperative Societies Ordinance, which authorizes admission committees to decide on an applicant's eligibility to reside in the community based on "compatibility with the social-cultural fabric" or the "[u]nique characteristics of the community town".¹⁰⁰

120. With severely limited access to job opportunities in their country, young Syrians in the Golan are increasingly seeking work in Israel or abroad, which further pressures them into obtaining Israeli citizenship. There are concerns that this will lead to further intensification and entrenchment of the occupation.¹⁰¹

121. Only 43 per cent of working-age persons were employed in 2016. Regardless of the strong attachment that the Syrians have to the land, the agriculture sector has been in decline owing to discriminatory policies relating to water and land access rights. Such policies have led to a deterioration in the quality of crops and, consequently, in their marketability.

⁹⁶ Al-Marsad, "Parallel report to the United Nations Committee on Economic, Social and Cultural Rights: Israel", 14 January 2019.

⁹⁷ Al-Marsad, "Observations and topics to be included in the list of issues: on the occasion of the Human Rights Committee's 2018 review of the State of Israel's implementation of the International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights", 11 April 2018; see also Israel, Law to Amend the Cooperative Societies Ordinance (No. 8), 5771–2011.

⁹⁸ ILO input.

⁹⁹ Al-Marsad, "Parallel report to the United Nations Committee on Economic, Social and Cultural Rights: Israel", 14 January 2019.

¹⁰⁰ Al-Marsad, "Observations and topics to be included in the list of issues: on the occasion of the Human Rights Committee's 2018 review of the State of Israel's implementation of the International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights", 11 April 2018; see also Israel, Law to Amend the Cooperative Societies Ordinance (No. 8), 5771–2011.

¹⁰¹ ILO input.

122. When Syrians do find work, they tend to settle for low-paying jobs for which they are massively overqualified, owing to the lack of prospects for other employment.¹⁰² Settlements in the Golan tend to use contractors who hire Syrian workers because they do not have to secure full employee privileges for their workers. Many of these contracting companies do not provide proper benefits for workers and pay extremely low wages. Syrians in the Golan are offered few alternatives to this structure (see [A/73/499](#)).¹⁰³

IV. Conclusion

123. The protracted Israeli occupation of the Palestinian territory and the Syrian Golan continues to have a detrimental effect on the living conditions of the Palestinian and Syrian populations, as well as on social and economic development in the occupied territories. The negative impact of the occupation and the Israeli policies and practices is multilayered, and their cumulative repercussions affect the future of the populations living under occupation.

124. Current social and economic trends in the Occupied Palestinian Territory indicate that the attainment of the Sustainable Development Goals will be almost impossible if there are no drastic positive changes to the existing conditions. Israeli-imposed restrictions, expansion of the illegal settlements and other practices not only prevent development in the occupied territories, but also cause humanitarian crises that necessitate the diversion of national and international efforts from development to immediate relief.

125. The funding crisis facing UNRWA is another factor that only exacerbates the conditions of hundreds of thousands of Palestinians who already live in harsh conditions. The Secretary-General reiterates his appeal to the international community to guarantee that the vital support for the rights of the Palestinian refugees is upheld and to maintain the same level of financing for UNRWA in 2019.

126. The closures imposed on Gaza, other restrictive Israeli measures, recurrent escalations and declining donor funding have created a severe situation in Gaza that requires further and immediate action by the international community.

127. Israel continues to employ policies and practices that are contrary to relevant Security Council resolutions, international humanitarian law and international human rights law. Some of these practices may be considered discriminatory and others may amount to the forcible transfer or collective punishment of protected persons, which would be a grave breach of the Fourth Geneva Convention and is prohibited under international law.

128. Adherence to international law is imperative, ensuring that no party enjoys impunity and securing justice and peace for all the people living in the region, including Palestinians and Syrians living under occupation.

129. The United Nations maintains its long-standing position that lasting and comprehensive peace can be achieved only through a negotiated two-State solution. The Secretary-General will continue to ensure that the United Nations works towards the establishment of an independent, democratic, contiguous and viable Palestinian State, living side by side in peace with a secure Israel, with Jerusalem as the capital of both States, consistent with relevant Security Council resolutions and international law.

¹⁰² Al-Marsad, "Parallel report to the United Nations Committee on Economic, Social and Cultural Rights: Israel", 14 January 2019, para. 22.

¹⁰³ Ibid., para. 25.



General Assembly Economic and Social Council

Distr.: General
27 May 2020

Original: English

General Assembly Seventy-fifth session

Item 62 of the preliminary list*

Permanent sovereignty of the Palestinian people in the Occupied Palestinian Territory, including East Jerusalem, and of the Arab population in the occupied Syrian Golan over their natural resources

Economic and Social Council Substantive session of 2020

Agenda item 16

Economic and social repercussions of the Israeli occupation on the living conditions of the Palestinian people in the Occupied Palestinian Territory, including East Jerusalem, and the Arab population in the occupied Syrian Golan

Economic and social repercussions of the Israeli occupation on the living conditions of the Palestinian people in the Occupied Palestinian Territory, including East Jerusalem, and of the Arab population in the occupied Syrian Golan

Note by the Secretary-General

Summary

In its resolution [2019/29](#), entitled “Economic and social repercussions of the Israeli occupation on the living conditions of the Palestinian people in the Occupied Palestinian Territory, including East Jerusalem, and the Arab population in the occupied Syrian Golan”, the Economic and Social Council requested the Secretary-General to submit to the General Assembly at its seventy-fourth session, through the Council, a report on the implementation of that resolution. The Assembly, in its resolution [74/243](#) entitled “Permanent sovereignty of the Palestinian people in the Occupied Palestinian Territory, including East Jerusalem, and of the Arab population in the occupied Syrian Golan over their natural resources”, requested the Secretary-General to report to it at its seventy-fifth session on the implementation of that resolution. The present report, which was prepared by the Economic and Social Commission for Western Asia, has been submitted in compliance with the resolutions of the Economic and Social Council and the General Assembly.

The report covers persistent Israeli practices and policies, particularly those that are in violation of international humanitarian law and international human rights law and that affect the social and economic conditions of the people living under its military occupation.

* [A/75/50](#).



I. Introduction

1. The Economic and Social Council, in its resolution [2019/29](#), expressed concern about the economic and social repercussions of the Israeli occupation on the living conditions of the Palestinian people in the Occupied Palestinian Territory, including East Jerusalem, and of the Arab population in the occupied Syrian Golan. The General Assembly, in its resolution [74/243](#), demanded that Israel, the occupying Power, cease the exploitation, damage, cause of loss or depletion and endangerment of the natural resources in the Occupied Palestinian Territory, including East Jerusalem, and in the occupied Syrian Golan. The present note provides information on relevant developments with regard to the foregoing.

II. Occupied Palestinian Territory

Israeli practices in the Occupied Palestinian Territory

2. As previously reported, the Israeli zoning and planning policies in Area C, which constitutes 60 per cent of the West Bank, and East Jerusalem, are discriminatory and are considered incompatible with requirements under international law. While allocating land almost exclusively to Israeli settlements or to the military and facilitating the growth of Israeli settlements, these policies make it almost impossible for Palestinians to obtain building permits.¹ The average rate of approval of Palestinian applications for building permits in Area C during the 2010s stood at 3 to 4 per cent.² As a result, many Palestinians are compelled to build without a permit, risking eviction, house demolition and displacement.³

3. The operational environment in Gaza and the West Bank, including East Jerusalem, continues to be characterized by territorial fragmentation and systematic limitation to the future expansion and connectivity of Palestinian communities, particularly in Area C.⁴

4. Israeli policies and practices also entail discrimination in service provision. For example, Palestinians constitute 30 per cent of the population in Jerusalem. They pay 40 per cent of the total value in taxes that the Israeli municipality collects, yet, the municipality only allocates 8 per cent of tax revenues to the services provided to the Palestinians.⁵

5. Palestinians in the occupied territory continue to be subject to a complex combination of Israeli and Palestinian legal systems. In the West Bank, Israeli domestic law is applied extraterritorially to Israeli settlers, while Palestinians are subject to Israeli military law in addition to the Palestinian legal system. As a result, lower human rights standards are applied to Palestinian suspects and defendants compared with Israeli suspects and defendants. The application of two different legal systems in the same territory on the sole basis of nationality or origin is inherently discriminatory and violates the principle of equality before the law, which is central to the right to a fair trial. The application of Israeli domestic law to settlers and of Israeli military law to Palestinians in the West Bank also raises concerns as to the

¹ See [A/HRC/43/67](#), para. 30.

² United Nations, Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs (OCHA), “West Bank: Area C – key humanitarian concerns”, fact sheet, 21 December 2017.

³ United Nations Human Settlements Programme (UN-Habitat) input.

⁴ UN-Habitat input.

⁵ State of Palestine, Palestinian Central Bureau of Statistics, “H.E. Dr. Awad, highlights the forty four annual commemoration of Land Day in statistical figures”, 29 March 2020.

obligation of the occupying Power to respect the laws in force in the territory it occupies, unless it is absolutely prevented from doing so.⁶

6. In September 2019, settlers established a new outpost, Keidar East, east of Jerusalem. In protest, Palestinians set up a tent a dozen metres from the outpost. In a seemingly discriminatory enforcement of Israeli law, Israeli authorities demolished the tent two days later, but did not dismantle the outpost. Even when demolition orders targeting Palestinian and settler populations are comparable in percentages, Palestinians seem to be disproportionately affected given the discrepancy in the amount of land allocated to Palestinian and settlement construction.⁷

Violence and the use of force

7. As the occupying Power, Israel has the obligation to take all the measures in its power to restore and ensure, as far as possible, public order and life in the Occupied Palestinian Territory and to protect the Palestinian population from all acts of violence, in all circumstances (see [A/74/357](#), para. 26).⁸

8. Practices of the military and security forces of Israel continue to raise concerns, especially with respect to the excessive use of force and, in some cases, unwarranted force amounting to arbitrary deprivation of life.⁹

9. Of particular and grave concern is the recurrent use by Israeli security forces of crowd control means against children inside and near schools close to settlements. Documented cases reveal the unwarranted use of force and violations of the right to physical and mental integrity of Palestinian children.¹⁰

10. Between 1 April 2019 and 31 March 2020, 113 Palestinians, including 21 children (20 boys and 1 girl) and 7 women, were killed, while another 10,764 Palestinians, including 413 women and 4,247 children (4,106 boy and 141 girls) were injured by the Israeli military, by Israeli security forces or by Israeli settlers. During the previous reporting period, 299 people were killed and 32,696 were injured. At least 18 of the fatalities, including 6 children, and 7,605 injuries, including 2,784 children (2,714 boys and 70 girls), occurred during demonstrations, mostly related to the Great March of Return protests in Gaza.¹¹ The high incidence of severe injuries during demonstrations continues to put a strain on an already overburdened health sector.¹²

11. Since the start of the Great March of Return protests in Gaza on 30 March 2018, the World Health Organization (WHO) has recorded 565 incidents involving health-care workers, transportation and facilities in Gaza. Three health-care workers wearing clear markings were killed and 844 were injured. A total of 118 ambulances, 10 other forms of medical transport were damaged, as were 1 hospital and 6 other health-care facilities. A total of 68 incidents involving health-care workers in the West Bank were recorded in 2019, including 33 physical attacks against health-care staff and 9 incidents of obstruction of medical teams. A 17-year-old first responder was shot

⁶ See [A/71/86-E/2016/13](#), para. 7; [A/72/90-E/2017/71](#), para. 4; and [A/73/87-E/2018/69](#), para. 3; see also [A/HRC/43/67](#), para. 29.

⁷ See [A/HRC/43/67](#), paras. 11 and 12.

⁸ See the Regulations annexed to the Hague Convention IV of 1907, arts. 43 and 46; and the Geneva Convention relative to the Protection of Civilian Persons in Time of War, art. 27.

⁹ See [A/74/468](#), para. 10. See also the Hague Regulations, arts. 43 and 46; Geneva Convention relative to the Protection of Civilian Persons in Time of War, art. 27.

¹⁰ See [A/74/357](#), para. 68.

¹¹ OCHA in the Occupied Palestinian Territory, "Data on casualties". Available at www.ochaopt.org/data/casualties (accessed on 31 March 2020).

¹² World Health Organization (WHO) input.

and killed in Dheisheh refugee camp while providing medical assistance during an Israeli army raid.¹³

12. The Special Committee to Investigate Israeli Practices Affecting the Human Rights of the Palestinian People and Other Arabs of the Occupied Territories has expressed serious concern over the prevailing culture of impunity, in particular in cases pertaining to the apparent excessive use of force by Israeli security forces in both the West Bank and Gaza.¹⁴

13. Israel had announced the launching of investigations into the killings of Palestinians, including of two children. However, out of 226 cases, only 55 were examined and 10 criminal investigations were launched by the military, in addition to another 3 launched by the police. Media reports indicate that a number of investigations previously opened have been closed with no indictments. Only one soldier was sentenced to one month in prison, to be served through military-related labour, for unlawfully shooting a 15-year-old teenage protester. Similarly, the Military Advocate General has stated that out of 360 cases of possible violations of international humanitarian law along the Gaza border fence, 189 had been closed as at August 2018 without criminal charges being brought or any further action taken, except in relation to three soldiers who were convicted on theft and looting charges.¹⁵

Settler violence

14. Settler violence adversely affects the rights of Palestinian people, including the rights to security of person, freedom of movement, privacy, family life, an adequate standard of living, work and education.¹⁶ Combined with the failure of the Israeli authorities to protect the Palestinian population and to hold perpetrators of violence accountable, settler violence is an important factor of the coercive environment that may leave some Palestinians no other choice than to leave their places of residence. Involuntary moves of that nature could amount to forcible transfer.¹⁷

15. The Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs (OCHA) recorded 340 attacks resulting in Palestinian casualties or damage to their property, up 21 per cent compared with 2018 and 116 per cent compared with 2017. Seven Palestinian girls and 54 boys were injured in such attacks between 1 April 2019 and 31 March 2020.¹⁸

16. While efforts by the authorities to prevent and investigate settler-related violence are being made, further measures need to be taken to prevent or investigate cases of settler violence and prosecute perpetrators. In a report issued in August 2019, the Ministry of Justice of Israel listed 118 investigations into alleged crimes by settlers against Palestinians for the period from January 2017 to June 2019. While 11 indictments were filed, including for cases opened in previous years, and two cases reached trial, none resulted in a conviction.¹⁹

17. It also remains common, as previously documented, for the Israeli security forces not to prevent attacks or to fail to react to attacks occurring in their presence. Moreover, in some cases, Israeli security forces appeared to aid settlers in carrying out attacks and appeared to have used force against the protected population instead of protecting it. Several incidents in the H2 zone of Hebron occurred in the presence

¹³ WHO input.

¹⁴ See [A/74/356](#), para. 46.

¹⁵ See [A/74/468](#), paras. 12 and 13; Israel Defense Forces, "Operation Protective Edge legal updates", available at www.idf.il; Judah Ari Gross, "In first, soldier convicted over killing of Gaza rioter, gets one-month sentence", *Times of Israel*, 29 October 2019.

¹⁶ See [A/HRC/40/42](#), para. 24.

¹⁷ See [A/74/357](#), para. 38.

¹⁸ OCHA in the Occupied Palestinian Territory, "Data on casualties" (accessed on 31 March 2020).

¹⁹ See [A/HRC/43/67](#), para. 27.

of Israeli security forces, at times with their direct participation, or were followed by measures and operations against Palestinians.²⁰

18. In the weeks following the outbreak of the coronavirus disease (COVID-19) in Israel and the Occupied Palestinian Territory, between 1 March and 13 April, there were 53 settler attacks resulting in injuries or property damage, an 80 per cent increase when compared with January and February 2020.²¹

Detention and ill-treatment

19. By 31 March 2020, 4,488 Palestinian “security detainees” and prisoners were being held in Israeli prisons, including 194 children, 43 women and 7 members of the Palestinian Legislative Council. A total of 424 Palestinians, including 3 women and at least 2 minors, were being held in administrative detention.²²

20. Most Palestinian prisoners continued to be held in Israel, which, in many cases, restricted their right to family visits from the West Bank and Gaza.²³

21. Concerns about possible arbitrary detention by Israeli authorities, including administrative detention without charge, persisted. Administrative detainees are held without trial or charge, often on the basis of secret information that is not shared with the suspects or their lawyers. It is a renewable six-month detention that is usually renewed. It is governed by orders signed by a military authority (i.e., a non-judicial authority).²⁴

22. Also of concern are the continuous reports of ill-treatment and torture of Palestinian detainees, including women and children, older persons, and persons with disabilities, which persist. Women and girls are reportedly subject to sexual harassment, verbal abuse and physical assault. They are incarcerated in prisons with facilities that do not meet gender-specific needs or provide gender-sensitive social services.²⁵

23. In November 2018, the High Court of Justice of Israel issued a ruling upholding the legality of “special interrogation methods” in particular circumstances, potentially setting a precedent for other cases in which the Israeli security agencies can resort to physical and psychological coercion.²⁶

24. Children have reported ill-treatment during arrest, transfer and detention, including breaches of due process, by Israeli military, police and security apparatuses, as well as the Israel Prison Service.²⁷ This reinforces serious concerns about such practices with regard to Palestinian children’s rights, particularly during the phase of arrest, including practices aimed at extracting confessions.²⁸

²⁰ See A/74/357, paras. 50, 54, 55 and 75; see also see B’Tselem – Israeli Information Center for Human Rights in the Occupied Territories, *Playing the Security Card: Israeli Policy in Hebron as a Means to Effect forcible Transfer of Local Palestinians* (Jerusalem, 2019).

²¹ OCHA, “Protection of civilians, Occupied Palestinian Territory”, 17–30 March 2020. Available at www.ochaopt.org/sites/default/files/protection_of_civilians_17_30_march_2020.pdf.

²² B’Tselem, “Statistics on Palestinians in the custody of the Israeli security forces” (accessed on 11 May 2020); Addameer Prisoner Support and Human Rights Association, “Statistics” (accessed on 11 May 2020).

²³ See A/74/468, para. 16.

²⁴ See A/74/356, para. 32 and A/74/468, para. 16.

²⁵ E/ESCWA/ECW/2019/TP.2.

²⁶ See A/74/468, para. 16.

²⁷ United Nations Children’s Fund (UNICEF) input.

²⁸ See A/74/468, para. 18.

25. Since 2000, at least 8,000 Palestinian children have reportedly been arrested and prosecuted in the Israeli military justice system.²⁹

26. The United Nations Relief and Works Agency for Palestine Refugees in the Near East (UNRWA) has documented a number of arrests of children occurring during the night, in addition to a number of cases in which the parents or guardians were unable to accompany the arrested child following their detention.³⁰

27. Testimonies of 641 Palestinian children detained and prosecuted by the Israeli military between 2015 and 2019 showed that 72 per cent had experienced physical violence; 94 per cent had been hand-tied; 85 per cent had been blindfolded; 54 per cent had been arrested from their homes in the middle of the night; 61 per cent had suffered verbal abuse, humiliation, or intimidation; 97 per cent had been interrogated without the presence of a family member; 22 per cent had been subjected to stress positions; and 56 per cent had signed documents in Hebrew, which most Palestinian children do not understand.³¹

28. Arrest operations, particularly in East Jerusalem, have continued, even after the COVID-19 pandemic had broken out in Israel and the Occupied Palestinian Territory. Such arrests included volunteer health-care workers distributing communication materials about pandemic-related risks.³²

Population displacement

29. There is continued concern that a combination of Israeli policies and practices in Area C, East Jerusalem and the city of Hebron, including the demolition of homes and schools and the destruction of livelihoods, or threat thereof; the denial of service infrastructure; the restriction of access to farming and grazing land; settler violence and poor law enforcement in response thereto; and the revocation of residency rights have created a coercive environment.³³

30. Involuntary displacement and relocation to alternative residential areas as a result of such policies may amount to forcible transfer if it is carried out without the free and informed consent of the individuals who relocate, in violation of the obligations of Israel under international humanitarian and human rights law. Forcible transfer is a grave breach of the Geneva Convention relative to the Protection of Civilian Persons in Time of War and amounts to a war crime.³⁴

31. The increase in the number of demolitions and settler attacks in 2019 intensified the coercive environment.³⁵ Between 1 April 2019 and 31 March 2020, demolitions of structures by Israel resulted in the displacement of 849 Palestinians, the majority of whom were women (221) and children (435, including 189 girls), and negatively affected the livelihoods and service provision for thousands of others.³⁶

32. Israel has facilitated the takeover by settlers of properties in the heart of Palestinian neighbourhoods in East Jerusalem and Hebron, which has often resulted

²⁹ See A/73/499, para. 69.

³⁰ United Nations Relief and Works Agency for Palestine Refugees in the Near East (UNRWA) input.

³¹ Defense for Children International – Palestine and American Friends Service Committee, “Palestinian children in the Israeli military detention system”, 5 March 2020. Available at <https://nowaytotreatachild.org>.

³² WHO input.

³³ OCHA, *Humanitarian Needs Overview 2020: Occupied Palestinian Territory*, December 2019, available at https://www.ochaopt.org/sites/default/files/hno_2020-final.pdf.

³⁴ See A/74/88-E/2019/72 para 32.

³⁵ OCHA, *Humanitarian Needs Overview 2020*.

³⁶ OCHA, “Occupied Palestinian Territory: Data on demolition and displacement in the West Bank”. Available at www.ochaopt.org/data/demolition (accessed on 31 March 2020).

in the eviction of Palestinian families. By the end of 2019, some 877 Palestinians in East Jerusalem were at risk of eviction as settler organizations sought to gain control of their properties.³⁷

33. The publicly stated intention of the Government of Israel to relocate thousands of Palestinians residing in Area C remains a key concern. Some 18 communities in and around East Jerusalem are at particular risk of forced eviction.³⁸

Destruction and confiscation of property and infrastructure

34. In 2019, demolitions and the resulting displacement were at their highest levels since the peak year of 2016 (which, in turn, was the highest year on record since the United Nations had started to systematically collect data).³⁹ April 2019 had the highest number of demolitions in East Jerusalem in a single month since OCHA had begun the systematic recording of such data in 2009.⁴⁰ That month also had the highest single-day total of demolitions in East Jerusalem since 2009, with 31 structures demolished in one day.⁴¹

35. Between 1 April 2019 and 31 March 2020, Israeli authorities demolished 608 structures owned by Palestinians, including 257 homes.⁴² In three instances, the owners were not allowed an opportunity to evacuate their belongings from their homes before the demolitions were carried out.⁴³

36. Between the declaration of the state of emergency in the Occupied Palestinian Territory owing to COVID-19, on 5 March, and 31 March, Israeli authorities enforced the demolition, self-demolition or seizure of 40 structures, displacing 26 Palestinians and otherwise affecting over 260 others.⁴⁴

37. Between 2006 and 2019, Israel demolished at least 1,537 Palestinian residential units in the West Bank (excluding East Jerusalem), rendering 6,732 people homeless, including at least 3,382 children.⁴⁵ Moreover, since the onset of the occupation, Israel has completely demolished around 50,000 residential units and partially destroyed more than 100,000.⁴⁶

38. For the vast majority of demolitions, Israeli authorities cite a lack of building permits, which are virtually impossible for Palestinians to obtain in Area C and East Jerusalem. As a result, over 12,500 demolition orders against Palestinian properties for lacking such permits have been issued and are pending. At least a third of all Palestinian homes in East Jerusalem lack building permits issued by Israel.⁴⁷

³⁷ See A/HRC/43/67, para. 33.

³⁸ Ibid.; see also OCHA, "Occupied Palestinian Territory, Protection of civilians report, 7–20 January 2020", available at <https://www.ochaopt.org/poc/7-20-january-2020>; and Marya Farah, *Occupying Jerusalem's Old City: Israeli Policies of Isolation, Intimidation and Transformation* (Ramallah, Al-Haq, 2019).

³⁹ UNRWA input.

⁴⁰ OCHA, *Humanitarian Needs Overview 2020*.

⁴¹ Office of the Special Coordinator for the Middle East Peace Process, Report to the Ad Hoc Liaison Committee, 26 September 2019.

⁴² OCHA, "Occupied Palestinian Territory: Data on demolition and displacement in the West Bank" (accessed on 31 March 2020).

⁴³ Al-Haq, "Al-Haq field report on human rights violations in October 2019", 16 December 2019.

⁴⁴ OCHA, "Protection of civilians, Occupied Palestinian Territory", 17–30 March 2020.

⁴⁵ B'Tselem, "Statistics on demolition of houses built without permits in the West Bank (not including East Jerusalem)" (accessed on 15 March 2020).

⁴⁶ Palestinian Central Bureau of Statistics, "H.E. Dr. Awad, highlights the forty four annual commemoration of Land Day in statistical figures".

⁴⁷ OCHA input.

39. In April 2019, the High Court of Israel upheld military order 1797, which allows the demolition or seizure of unlicensed structures deemed new within 96 hours after the issuance of a removal notice.⁴⁸ Moreover, an amendment to the planning and building law came into effect in October 2019, enabling expedited demolitions in East Jerusalem. These measures raise serious concern about accelerated demolitions on the basis of the discriminatory Israeli zoning and planning regime, and further limit opportunities for legal recourse for Palestinians.⁴⁹

40. Israeli authorities continued punitive demolitions of the family homes of Palestinians suspected of killing Israelis at a measure that may amount to collective punishment.⁵⁰ Between 1 April 2019 and 31 March 2020, Israel carried out eight such demolitions in the West Bank and East Jerusalem and destroyed 15 structures.⁵¹

41. Israeli authorities seized and destroyed 127 structures provided to vulnerable communities in Area C and East Jerusalem as humanitarian assistance, claiming a lack of coordination.⁵² It was reported that Israel has intended to auction goods seized from Palestinian communities, including seven donor-funded humanitarian structures, in particular school structures, tents and metal sheds.⁵³

42. In 2019, UNRWA recorded the issuance of 51 orders to confiscate 17,494 dunums⁵⁴ of land owned by Palestinians in the West Bank.⁵⁵

43. As a result of military operations against Gaza, between 1 April 2019 and 31 December 2019, around 144 shelters were totally demolished and around 1,482 shelters were partially damaged, according to the Palestinian Ministry of Public Works and Housing.⁵⁶

Israeli settlement activity

44. In its resolution [73/255](#), the General Assembly stressed that the wall and the settlements being constructed by Israel in the Occupied Palestinian Territory, including in and around East Jerusalem, were contrary to international law. This has been confirmed in other resolutions, such as Security Council resolution [2334 \(2016\)](#), in which the Council reaffirmed that the establishment by Israel of settlements in the Palestinian territory occupied since 1967, including East Jerusalem, had no legal validity and constituted a flagrant violation under international law and a major obstacle to the achievement of a lasting and comprehensive peace.

45. The establishment and expansion of Israeli settlements in the Occupied Palestinian Territory amounts to the transfer by Israel of its own civilian population into the territory it occupies, which is prohibited under international humanitarian law.⁵⁷

⁴⁸ See European Union, Office of the European Union Representative (West Bank and Gaza Strip, UNRWA), “Six-month report on demolitions and seizures in the West Bank, including East Jerusalem, reporting period: 1 January–30 June 2019”; see also [A/74/468](#), para. 4.

⁴⁹ See [A/HRC/43/67](#), para. 32.

⁵⁰ See [A/74/468](#), para. 22.

⁵¹ OCHA, “Occupied Palestinian Territory: Data on demolition and displacement in the West Bank” (accessed on 31 March 2020).

⁵² OCHA input.

⁵³ See [A/74/356](#), para. 28.

⁵⁴ One dunum equals 1,000 m².

⁵⁵ UNRWA input.

⁵⁶ UNRWA input.

⁵⁷ See [A/74/357](#), para. 74.

46. Settlements obstruct the ability of Palestinians to exercise their rights, and impede development, employment and livelihoods.⁵⁸

47. By the end of 2018, approximately 671,007 Israeli settlers resided in the West Bank (228,614 in East Jerusalem) in 150 settlements (including 13 in East Jerusalem) and 26 inhabited outposts designated as settlement neighbourhoods, in addition to 128 settlement outposts.⁵⁹

48. In 2019, there was a significant increase in the pace of construction and expansion of the Israeli settlements in the West Bank. Israeli settlement expansion more than doubled in Area C of the occupied West Bank during the reporting period. The Israeli authorities advanced plans for 13,700 settlement units, 4,000 of which reached the final stage of approval, and announced tenders for 2,400 units. In the previous reporting period, 5,500 units were advanced and 3,300 tenders were announced. In occupied East Jerusalem settlements, 1,300 units were advanced, compared with 2,100 in the previous reporting period. Tenders for 2,100 housing units were announced, including 1,077 units in the Giv'at Homa settlement located between the Palestinian neighbourhood of Bayt Safafa in East Jerusalem and Bethlehem, impeding the former's connection with a future Palestinian State. Moreover, the announcement made by Israel on 25 February that it would advance two plans (3,500 units) in the E1 area, if implemented, would expand the settlement of Ma'ale Adummim towards Jerusalem, severing the connection between the northern and southern West Bank, and severely undermining the possibility of a viable and contiguous Palestinian State. Overall, about 30 per cent of the units advanced, approved or tendered are to be built in outlying locations, deep inside the occupied West Bank.⁶⁰

49. Eleven new outposts were established, while at least another 35 were in the process of being legalized.⁶¹ The establishment of outposts appears to be part of an official policy whereby the Israeli authorities encourage the takeover of land by settlers through agricultural projects.⁶²

Movement and access restrictions

50. As freedom of movement is a prerequisite to the exercise of other human rights, such as the rights to family, health and education, the closures and related practices imposed by the Israeli authorities, in particular the restrictions on movement, have had a devastating impact on the lives of Palestinians, in particular on families,^{63,64} and have a compounded effect on women and girls.⁶⁵

51. The restrictions have fragmented the Palestinian landscape, including the separation of Gaza from the West Bank. They have created isolated communities, undermined social cohesion, ruptured a common identity and reduced economic activity within and among the fractured Palestinian population.⁶⁶ About a third of Gaza residents have relatives in the West Bank, including East Jerusalem. As family visits are not one of the criteria for travel, many families remain separated for years.

⁵⁸ International Labour Organization (ILO) input; see also [A/74/357](#).

⁵⁹ Palestinian Central Bureau of Statistics, "H.E. Dr. Awad, highlights the forty four annual commemoration of Land Day in statistical figures".

⁶⁰ See [A/75/84-E/2020/61](#).

⁶¹ Peace Now, "Population". Available at <https://peacenow.org.il/en/settlements-watch/settlements-data/population> (accessed on 31 March 2020).

⁶² See [A/HRC/43/67](#), para. 10.

⁶³ See [A/74/468](#), para. 26.

⁶⁴ See [A/74/88-E/2019/72](#), para. 50.

⁶⁵ UN-Women input.

⁶⁶ UNICEF input.

Gaza closure

52. Imposed since June 2007, following the takeover by Hamas, the closures in Gaza, which affect the movement of goods and people, continue to undermine the civil, political, economic, social and cultural rights of Palestinians in Gaza and continue to affect all areas of Palestinian life. The blockade may amount to collective punishment, which is prohibited under international law. The closure⁶⁷ remains a major impediment to combating the COVID-19 epidemic.

53. Israel intermittently changes the measures comprising the closure, citing, as it has on several occasions, violence and rocket fire towards civilian populations launched from Gaza as a reason for these steps. In view of their punitive aspect with regard to persons who have not committed the violence referred to, in particular the severe human rights impact on the entire population of Gaza, those measures may amount to collective punishment.⁶⁸

54. Only certain categories of people, mainly patients, merchants and staff of international organizations, are eligible to apply for exit permits through Israel. In February, an additional 2,000 permits for traders were approved, many of whom were reported to be labourers employed in Israel.⁶⁹ The rate of approval of permit applications lodged by patients in Gaza in 2019 reached 65 per cent, with 9 per cent being denied and 26 per cent delayed with their application unanswered by the time of the medical appointment for which the permit had been requested. WHO has found that patients whose applications were initially delayed or denied between 2015 and 2017 were 1.45 times less likely to survive than those initially approved permits to exit.⁷⁰

55. Only 38 per cent of the permit applications lodged by parents to accompany their children travelling from Gaza to receive medical treatment were approved. Children are thus forced to travel with a more distant relative or an appointed guardian. The approval rate for permits for those injured during demonstrations is, on average, significantly lower than the overall approval rate for patient applications to exit Gaza, at only 18 per cent in May 2019.⁷¹

56. The Rafah pedestrian crossing with Egypt has been regularly open since May 2018.

57. In 2019, approximately 103,161 truckloads of goods (excluding fuel) entered Gaza through Israel, a decline from 2018 (106,171 truckloads). The entry of a wide range of goods defined by Israel as dual-use items, i.e., items that could be used for either civilian or military purposes (including basic construction materials, equipment and electronics), has remained either prohibited or subject to a complex approval procedure.⁷²

58. Restrictions on exports from Gaza remain in place, albeit with some easing. During 2019, a total of 3,146 truckloads were permitted to exit Gaza through Kerem Shalom, the largest such figure in a decade. Nevertheless, that volume is only one quarter of that recorded in the first half of 2007, before the imposition of the closure.⁷³

⁶⁷ See [A/74/356](#), para. 38, and [A/74/88-E/2019/72](#).

⁶⁸ See [A/74/468](#), para. 22.

⁶⁹ OCHA input.

⁷⁰ WHO input.

⁷¹ WHO input.

⁷² OCHA input.

⁷³ OCHA, "Gaza blockade: Restrictions eased but most people still 'locked in'", 12 February 2020; OCHA input.

59. In addition to the access restrictions, Israeli security forces enforce buffer zones by land and sea as access-restricted areas. Israeli authorities have declared that up to 100 metres from the perimeter fence is a “no-go” area for individuals and up to 200 metres there is no access for heavy machinery, although humanitarian partners in the field have reported that, in practice, up to 300 metres from the perimeter fence is considered by most farmers as a no-go area and up to 1,000 metres a high-risk area. At sea, the restricted area is generally 6 nautical miles, although that distance varies and is at times increased to 12 to 15 nautical miles, less than a third of the 20 nautical miles agreed under the Oslo Accords. Israel enforces the restrictions through regular military incursions, the levelling of land and causing of damage to property, shootings along the fence and at sea, and arrests and detentions.⁷⁴

60. Restrictions imposed by Israel have had an impact on humanitarian personnel in Gaza. Until October 2019, most national staff working for the United Nations and international non-governmental organizations were not permitted to exit Gaza for the West Bank, including East Jerusalem. Following intensive advocacy by the United Nations, international non-governmental organizations and Member States, the Israeli authorities eased that restriction in October 2019, giving approximately 50 per cent of affected staff to access permits again. However, more than 160 staff members of the United Nations and international non-governmental organizations are still not permitted to travel to the West Bank, including East Jerusalem.⁷⁵

Movement restrictions in the West Bank

61. The movement of Palestinians within the West Bank, including to and from East Jerusalem, is subject to physical and administrative obstacles impeding economic and social activity, and access to services. The movement of Palestinians is restricted through a complex system of checkpoints, permits, military roadblocks, settlements and the West Bank barrier.⁷⁶

62. Over 700 physical obstacles, including checkpoints and iron gates at the entrances to the cities and villages, have fragmented the West Bank into more than 100 cantons and hinder interaction between Palestinian communities. In addition, Israel has allocated more than 40 km of roads for the exclusive use of Israeli citizens, imposing partial restrictions on Palestinian use of another 20 km of roads within the West Bank.⁷⁷

63. The municipal boundaries of settlements enclose more than 10 per cent of the West Bank,⁷⁸ while another 18 per cent has been designated for military purposes by Israel. All those areas are off limits to Palestinians.⁷⁹ Once completed, the barrier being constructed in the West Bank by Israel will isolate around 9.4 per cent of the West Bank, further obstructing the movement of 11,000 Palestinians living in the area between the wall and the Green Line already isolated in the seam zone since November 2017.⁸⁰

⁷⁴ OCHA, *Humanitarian Needs Overview 2020*; OCHA, “Occupied Palestinian Territory, Protection of civilians report”, 16 March–8 April 2019, available at www.ochaopt.org/content/protection-civilians-report-26-march-8-april-2019.

⁷⁵ Office of the Special Coordinator for the Middle East Peace Process, “Report to the Ad Hoc Liaison Committee”, 26 September 2019; OCHA, *Humanitarian Needs Overview 2020*, p. 14.

⁷⁶ See A/74/468, para. 26.

⁷⁷ Palestinian Central Bureau of Statistics, “H.E. Dr. Awad, highlights the forty four annual commemoration of Land Day in statistical figures”.

⁷⁸ OCHA input.

⁷⁹ Palestinian Central Bureau of Statistics, “H.E. Dr. Awad, highlights the forty four annual commemoration of Land Day in statistical figures”.

⁸⁰ See A/74/88-E/2019/72, para. 66–67.

64. Palestinian farming access remains severely restrictive around and within settlements, and in the seam zone, where prior coordination or special permits are required.⁸¹

65. In the H2 zone in Hebron, as of February 2020, there were 120 physical obstacles and 21 permanently staffed checkpoints in an area of approximately 4 km². Approximately 6,200 Palestinians cannot reach their home by vehicle and 5,600 must cross one of the checkpoints on foot to reach their homes.⁸²

66. The World Food programme, UNRWA and WHO report facing Israeli restrictions that hinder the movements of their staff, as well as access to vulnerable communities and the delivery of services to them, including education, health and relief services.⁸³

Exploitation, endangerment and depletion of Palestinian natural resources

67. Area C continues to be almost entirely off limits for the Government of Palestine, as well as for producers and investors, even though it contains the most valuable natural resources.⁸⁴ Palestinian institutions must seek permission from Israeli authorities before constructing new infrastructure in Area C. Closures, particularly in Gaza, limit Palestinian access to materials and technologies.⁸⁵

68. Approximately 3.7 million Palestinians are negatively affected by a lack of access to safe water, sanitation and hygiene services. Almost the whole population in Gaza is exposed to public health risks associated with poor water quality, poor wastewater collection and treatment, a lack of storm water infrastructure and lack of proper hygiene practices.⁸⁶

69. There is continuity in the landscape of humanitarian needs, due to the continuing Israeli control and exploitation of Palestinian natural freshwater resources, as well as severe restrictions on access to water for Palestinians. Around 300,000 Palestinians in Area C are directly affected by Israeli restrictions and practices, including demolition of water, sanitation and hygiene infrastructure, such as water and sanitation networks.⁸⁷

70. Palestinians suffer from inadequate access to water from the mountain aquifers, even though 85 per cent of those lie within the Occupied Palestinian Territory.⁸⁸ While all Israeli settlements in the West Bank are linked to the water system of Israel and receive high-quality water for all purposes, at least 180 Palestinian communities in the area have no connection to a water network and rely on low-quality, high-cost alternatives.⁸⁹ Similarly, only 44 per cent of residents in Palestinian communities in East Jerusalem are connected legally and properly to the water grid.⁹⁰

71. One alternative is purchasing water from the Israeli water company Mekorot. In 2018, a total of 83 million m³ was purchased, which represented 22 per cent of the

⁸¹ ILO input.

⁸² OCHA, "Occupied Palestinian Territory: Dignity denied: Life in the settlement area of Hebron City", 20 February 2020; [A/HRC/43/67](#), para. 50.

⁸³ World Food Programme (WFP), UNRWA and WHO input.

⁸⁴ See [TD/B/65\(2\)/3](#), para. 25.

⁸⁵ United Nations Environment Programme (UNEP) input.

⁸⁶ UNICEF input.

⁸⁷ OCHA, *Humanitarian Needs Overview 2020*, p. 43; UNICEF input.

⁸⁸ WFP input.

⁸⁹ United Nations Conference on Trade and Development (UNCTAD) input.

⁹⁰ Association for Civil Rights in Israel, "East Jerusalem: facts and figures 2019 – May 2019". Available at https://fef8066e-8343-457a-8902-ae89f366476d.filesusr.com/ugd/01368b_20dc66c3a088465286ce4c6d5a87c56c.pdf.

total amount of water available for Palestinian consumption.⁹¹ The cost of water is also a concern for the approximately 130,000 Palestinians living in Areas A, B and C, with a price of up to 60 new Israeli shekels per m³ for unsafe tankered water.⁹²

72. The average Palestinian in the West Bank consumes only 87 litres of water per day, which is less than the minimum 100 litres per person per day recommended by WHO. Around 95,000 people in Area C receive less than 50 litres per person per day, while over 83,000 people consume bad-quality drinking water, as they are mainly dependent on tankered water from unsecured sources, harvested rainwater or good-quality water stored in contaminated storage facilities, or they may follow unsafe hygiene practices at the household level, given the lack of sanitation and/or handwashing facilities.⁹³

73. The coastal aquifer in Gaza has become contaminated by saline intrusion, agricultural pesticides and sewage. This contamination presents particular risks to children and pregnant women.⁹⁴

74. As 96 per cent of water resources are unfit for use by Gaza's 2 million inhabitants, only 1 per cent of households have access to an improved drinking water source.⁹⁵

75. The greater provision of electricity improved the operation of water facilities. Yet, the average volume of piped water supplied during the first half of 2019 was 77.5 litres per person per day, compared with the recommendations of WHO and the UNICEF Water, Sanitation and Hygiene for All (WASH) initiative.⁹⁶ Furthermore, piped water is unfit for human consumption and has an average loss of 36 per cent due to network leaks.⁹⁷

76. Sanitation remains a primary concern in the Occupied Palestinian Territory. Only 73 per cent of households in Gaza and only 32 per cent of households in the West Bank have access to a sewerage network and a large fraction of sewage is disposed of with only partial treatment or no treatment at all.⁹⁸

77. Sewage pollution and water shortage are causing a serious emergency in Gaza and pose a threat to 2 million people, their health and the environment.⁹⁹ The improved power supply in Gaza has enhanced the operation of the five wastewater treatment plants. This has, in turn, reduced the pollution levels in the approximately 179 million litres of wastewater discharged into the Mediterranean every day during the first six months of 2019 by 23 and 32.5 per cent compared with 2018 and 2017, respectively. The reduction has enabled the rehabilitation of some additional beaches

⁹¹ Palestinian Central Bureau of Statistics, "The Palestinian Central Bureau of Statistics, the Palestinian Water Authority and the Palestinian Meteorological Department issue a press release on the occasion of World Water Day and World Meteorological Day, March 22th–23th, 2020". Available in Arabic at http://www.pcbs.gov.ps/portals/_pcbs/PressRelease/Press_Ar_19-3-2020-water.pdf and, in a slightly abridged form, in English at <http://www.pcbs.gov.ps/post.aspx?lang=en&ItemID=3690#>.

⁹² OCHA, *Humanitarian Needs Overview 2020*, p. 43.

⁹³ UNICEF input; OCHA, *Humanitarian Needs Overview 2020*, p.24.

⁹⁴ UNEP input.

⁹⁵ World Bank, "Assistance strategy FY 18-21 for the West Bank and Gaza", report No. 115201-GZ, 6 November 2017.

⁹⁶ UN-Water Decade Programme on Advocacy and Communication, "The human right to water and sanitation", media brief, n.d.

⁹⁷ UNICEF input; OCHA, *Humanitarian Needs Overview 2020*.

⁹⁸ World Bank, "Assistance strategy FY 18-21 for the West Bank and Gaza".

⁹⁹ World Bank, "Wastewater management project mitigates health and environmental threats in the West Bank and Gaza", 9 October 2019.

for swimming and a reduction of the health risks associated with untreated or partially treated wastewater effluent entering the Mediterranean.¹⁰⁰

78. In the West Bank, untreated waste continues to issue from both Palestinian towns and Israeli settlements. It pollutes agricultural land and infiltrates the groundwater of the mountain aquifer, affecting its quality.¹⁰¹

79. The total area of land classified as being of high or medium agricultural value in the West Bank is 2,072,000 dunums, which constitutes about 37 per cent of the West Bank. Palestinians can only use less than half of that area, mainly owing to land confiscation and the restriction of Palestinian farmers' access to water and land.¹⁰² Palestinian farmers, for example can cultivate only 4 per cent of the land in the Jordan Valley.¹⁰³ Furthermore, they have to buy either water from Israel or desalinated water from private suppliers at a high cost, thereby reducing their competitiveness in the market.¹⁰⁴

80. The agricultural potential of Gaza has been undermined by the closure, as some 35 per cent of farmland falls within restricted areas enforced by Israel. Furthermore, Israel has damaged Palestinian farmland in Gaza by aerially spraying the land with herbicides.¹⁰⁵

81. The strict limitations on fishable waters, which have been reduced at certain times to as little as 3 nautical miles, have severely hampered the livelihoods of Gaza's fishermen. Although the maritime restrictions have recently been relaxed to 12 nautical miles, they remain subject to frequent changes, which causes uncertainty.¹⁰⁶

82. The exploiting of mineral resources in the Occupied Palestinian Territory remains limited. Israeli firms do not face the limitations placed on their Palestinian counterparts.¹⁰⁷

Social and economic conditions in the Occupied Palestinian Territory

83. The COVID-19 crisis emerged at a time when the social and economic conditions in the Occupied Palestinian Territory were precarious, particularly in Gaza. The United Nations country team had previously projected that by 2020, Gaza would become an unlivable place.¹⁰⁸ In addition to the health implications of the pandemic, the negative shock to the Israeli and Palestinian economies will have profound socioeconomic implications. Coupled with the effects of the protracted occupation and the matrix of Israeli policies and practices, the social outlook in the Occupied Palestinian Territory seems bleak.

84. The physical fragmentation of the Occupied Palestinian Territory, caused by a system of complex restrictions on movement and access imposed by the Israeli military, has resulted in the emergence of different economies in Gaza and the West Bank, including East Jerusalem. This is exacerbated by intra-Palestinian divisions.

¹⁰⁰ UNCTAD input; *Humanitarian Needs Overview 2020*, p. 42; Office of the United Nations Special Coordinator for the Middle East Peace Process, "Report to the Ad Hoc Liaison Committee", 26 September 2019.

¹⁰¹ UNEP input.

¹⁰² Palestinian Central Bureau of Statistics, "H.E. Ms. Awad highlights the 43rd annual commemoration of Land Day in statistical figures", 28 March 2019.

¹⁰³ ILO input.

¹⁰⁴ WFP input.

¹⁰⁵ See [A/HRC/40/73](#) para. 12.

¹⁰⁶ *Ibid.*, para 11.

¹⁰⁷ See [A/74/88-E/2019/72](#), paras. 85 and 86.

¹⁰⁸ United Nations country team in the Occupied Palestinian Territory, "Gaza ten years later", July 2017.

85. The severe financial crisis facing the Palestinian Government has exacerbated the humanitarian situation. The Government's ability to continue to provide basic services remains at risk and serious concerns endure over upholding governance functions.¹⁰⁹

86. Before the outbreak of the COVID-19 crisis, half the Palestinian population (2.4 million) were in need of humanitarian assistance and protection, including some 1.1 million children and 600,000 women. Funding continues its downward trend, adding constraints for humanitarian agencies.¹¹⁰

87. Economic and political uncertainty increase domestic strain and the risk of social unrest. Youth are the most detrimentally affected and experience very high unemployment rates. They may undergo a psychological impact that later contributes to heightened levels of violence.¹¹¹ The COVID-19 pandemic is expected to exacerbate these conditions.

Economic conditions

88. The long-term economic repercussions of practices, policies and measures applied by Israel have entailed low investments in the Palestinian economy, which has led to a process of de-industrialization, the erosion of the Palestinian productive sectors and to de-development, specifically in Gaza.¹¹² This has entrenched the dependency of the Palestinian economy on Israel and on foreign aid.

89. In 2019, the Palestinian economy continued to encounter numerous challenges that restrained its ability to improve the sluggish performance of 2018. Estimates in constant prices showed an increase of 2.6 per cent in gross domestic product (GDP) during the fourth quarter of 2019 compared with the third quarter of 2019. This increase was driven mainly by the release by Israel of Palestinian clearance revenues in August 2019, otherwise the economy would have fallen into recession.¹¹³

90. However, at constant 2015 prices, real GDP contracted by 1.8 per cent in the fourth quarter of 2019 compared with the fourth quarter of 2018, and by 0.6 per cent in the third quarter of 2019 compared with the third quarter of 2018. Decreases were noted in household consumption, government spending and fixed investment. On the other hand, exports grew by 0.9 per cent in the fourth quarter, while imports decreased by 8 per cent.¹¹⁴

91. The decline in GDP per capita further highlights the precarious situation of the Palestinian economy, whose growth in 2019 was insufficient to keep pace with the population growth rate of 2.5 per cent.¹¹⁵ As a result, GDP per capita saw a 5.5 per cent decrease, from \$898.6 in constant prices in the fourth quarter of 2018 to \$848.8 in the fourth quarter of 2019.¹¹⁶

92. In March 2019, the Palestinian Government started to implement emergency financial measures to address the loss of nearly two thirds of its revenue resulting from the standoff with Israel over the unilateral deductions by Israel from Palestinian

¹⁰⁹ UNICEF, "State of Palestine, humanitarian situation report", July–September 2019.

¹¹⁰ OCHA input.

¹¹¹ United Nations Population Fund (UNFPA) input.

¹¹² *The Economic Costs of the Israeli Occupation for the Palestinian People: The Unrealized Oil and Natural Gas Potential* (United Nations publication, Sales No. E.19.II.D.10).

¹¹³ Portland Trust. "Palestinian economic bulletin", No. 160, January 2020.

¹¹⁴ Data from the Palestinian Central Bureau of Statistics.

¹¹⁵ Palestinian Central Bureau of Statistics, "Indicators: Household budget". Available at www.pcbs.gov.ps/site/881/default.aspx.

¹¹⁶ Data from the Palestinian Central Bureau of Statistics.

clearance revenues. The release by Israel of some clearance revenues enabled the Palestinian Government to cope with the financial strain for a few additional months.¹¹⁷

93. The lack of economic prospects, particularly in Gaza, strains people's livelihoods and limits their access to decent work. This is reflected in the anaemic labour market, whose labour force participation declined by the fourth quarter of 2019, with a mere 44.4 per cent of working-age Palestinians participating in the labour market.¹¹⁸

94. The unemployment rate in the Occupied Palestinian Territory stood at 24 per cent¹¹⁹ among labour force participants of 15 years and older in the fourth quarter of 2019. Total labour underutilization stood at 33 per cent. Unemployment in Gaza remained alarmingly high, at 45 per cent. Notable discrepancies remained in unemployment figures between males (21 per cent) and females (41 per cent), and in labour force participation for males (7 out of 10) and females (2 out of 10). Also alarming was the unemployment rate of 52 per cent among youth graduates (19–29 years of age) who held an associate diploma and above (68 per cent for females; 35 per cent for males).¹²⁰

95. According to the World Bank, the latest available poverty data are for 2016/17. Therefore, they do not reflect the current conditions or the impact of the ongoing fiscal crisis.¹²¹ The 2017 data revealed that 53 per cent of Gazans were living below the national poverty line¹²² (the poverty line translates to an expenditure of \$692 per month for a family of two adults and three children), while the incidence of deep poverty stood at 33.8 per cent (deep poverty is defined as being unable to meet the minimum required for food, clothing and housing).

96. Following the fiscal crisis of 2019, the Palestinian economy was projected to slowly recover in 2020. However, the COVID-19 outbreak seems to be largely weighing on economic activity. Living conditions are difficult, with a quarter of the labour force unemployed and 24 per cent of Palestinians living with less than \$5.5 a day (2011 purchasing power parity), even prior to the outbreak. A larger than expected decline in aid and a further spread of the virus causing COVID-19 pose significant downside risks.

97. Measures put in place by the Government since early March 2020 to halt the spread of COVID-19, while effective in limiting the spread of the virus, seem to have resulted in disruptions in economic activity, especially in the West Bank. As a result, the economy is expected to contract by 2.5 per cent in 2020.¹²³ Private sector representatives have also announced plans to cut pay by 50 per cent.

98. As a result of the COVID-19 pandemic and the measures to combat it, the Palestinian Central Bureau of Statistics projects that a shutdown would lead to a contraction in GDP of 5.1 per cent if it lasts three months and 7.1 per cent if it lasts six months, with a significant attendant rise in poverty. The capacity of the Palestinian Government to address this crisis remains constrained, as Israel controls the conventional fiscal and monetary tools needed.¹²⁴

¹¹⁷ World Bank, "Economic monitoring report to the Ad Hoc Liaison Committee", 26 September 2019.

¹¹⁸ ILO input.

¹¹⁹ Based on the latest revised ILO standards adopted at the nineteenth International Conference of Labour Statisticians.

¹²⁰ Palestinian Central Bureau of Statistics, "The labour force survey results 2019", n.d.

¹²¹ World Bank, "Economic monitoring report to the Ad Hoc Liaison Committee", 26 September 2019.

¹²² World Bank, "Economic monitoring report to the Ad Hoc Liaison Committee", 27 September 2018.

¹²³ World Bank, "Palestinian Territories", economic update, April 2020. Available at <http://pubdocs.worldbank.org/en/394981554825501362/mpo-pse.pdf>.

¹²⁴ Office of the United Nations Special Coordinator for the Middle East Peace Process, "Statement by United Nations Special Coordinator Nickolay Mladenov on the socioeconomic impact of the COVID-19 impact in the Occupied Palestinian Territory", 12 April 2020.

99. The negative outlook was present before the COVID-19 pandemic came to pose dire challenges to the whole world. Its economic fallout remains uncertain, yet it can be expected that the direct economic, social and humanitarian impact in the Occupied Palestinian Territory will only be multiplied because of an anticipated further decrease in foreign aid. This would entail further deterioration in the social, economic and living conditions of Palestinians who are already suffering from hyperunemployment and poverty, with a disproportionate impact on vulnerable groups, including women and children.

Food security

100. Poverty resulting from the high levels of unemployment is the root cause behind food insecurity. A total of 1.7 million Palestinians, including approximately 900,000 refugees, equivalent to 33 per cent of the population, are considered food-insecure. During 2019, a total of 76 per cent of the beneficiaries receiving World Food Programme food assistance supplemented their food purchases by taking on debt.¹²⁵

101. Food insecurity is higher in households headed by females than in those headed by males. The prevalence of food-insecure households in Area C is three times higher than in the West Bank overall, despite the food assistance and other forms of social transfers from Palestinian governmental bodies or international organizations. In Gaza, food insecurity remains alarmingly high and is increasing, with an estimated 62 per cent of households being severely or moderately food-insecure.¹²⁶

102. During the first half of 2019, 18 per cent of pregnant women and 14 per cent of lactating mothers were malnourished, and only 14 per cent of children under five years of age had a minimum acceptable diet. Among 3,000 children under five, 82 had to be treated for severe acute malnutrition and 237 for moderate acute malnutrition.¹²⁷

Health

103. The most vulnerable populations in the face of the COVID-19 crisis are those that have been suffering the consequences of violence and conflict.¹²⁸ The protracted occupation and the policies and measures associated with it have significantly impaired Palestinian institutions, particularly in Gaza.¹²⁹

104. As at 5 May 2020, there were 532 confirmed cases of COVID-19 among Palestinians (345 in the West Bank, 170 in East Jerusalem and 17 in Gaza), and 4 associated deaths.¹³⁰ Palestinians in refugee camps and other poor, densely populated areas across the Occupied Palestinian Territory face a higher risk of contagion due to overcrowding and inadequate sanitation. The capacity of the Palestinian health-care system to cope with the expected increase in COVID-19 patients remains severely impaired by long-standing challenges and critical shortages, particularly in the Gaza Strip.¹³¹

105. Since the onset of the outbreak, the Palestinian Authority and Israel have coordinated efforts and taken far-reaching measures to try and contain the pandemic. Technical cooperation between the parties has been effective. However, areas of

¹²⁵ WFP input.

¹²⁶ OCHA, *Humanitarian Needs Overview 2020*.

¹²⁷ UNICEF, "State of Palestine, humanitarian situation report", January–June 2019.

¹²⁸ See United Nations, "Shared responsibility, global solidarity: Responding to the socioeconomic impacts of COVID-19", March 2020, p. 5.

¹²⁹ WHO input.

¹³⁰ OCHA in the Occupied Palestinian Territory, "COVID-19 emergency situation report", No. 7, 28 April–4 May 2020.

¹³¹ OCHA in the Occupied Palestinian Territory, "COVID-19 emergency situation report", No. 2, 24–31 March 2020.

tension remain, including in East Jerusalem and Hebron, that could undermine efforts to combat the spread of the virus. The number of Palestinian patients with COVID-19 in East Jerusalem remains unconfirmed. Israeli authorities did not open testing stations in the city until the end of March 2020.¹³²

106. In addition, factors restricting hygiene measures, including inadequate water and sanitation, overcrowding, and limitations on accessing health information, contribute to increased susceptibility of the Occupied Palestinian Territory and hamper effective emergency preparedness and response.¹³³

107. Gaza's health infrastructure has been eroded. It is overstretched and on the verge of collapse owing to the Israeli closure and the damage sustained during recurrent military operations.¹³⁴ There were only 2,500 available beds,¹³⁵ and in February 2020, less than a month's supply ("zero stock") remained for 39 per cent of essential medicines in Gaza. Health officials repeatedly announced shortages and the depletion of COVID-19 testing kits, as well as shortages of other medical supplies.¹³⁶

108. Throughout the reporting period, the movement of essential medical equipment and supplies to Gaza remained restricted. Owing to the lack of specialized medical care and chronic shortages of medicines, doctors have often referred patients to hospitals located primarily in the West Bank, Israel and, to a lesser extent, Egypt.¹³⁷ Israeli authorities have delayed or refused applications for exit permits to Palestinian patients with referrals for treatment abroad, which has resulted in premature deaths on several occasions.¹³⁸

109. In 2019, a total of 124 laboratory-confirmed cases of measles, including two deaths, were reported in Gaza. Of those, 46 per cent had not been vaccinated. Previously, between 2009 and 2018, Gaza had recorded a vaccination coverage of 97 per cent for measles, but the socioeconomic decline, the closure, the conflict and other constraints have disrupted that coverage.¹³⁹

110. Access reproductive services is a special constraint facing Palestinian women and girls. It is estimated that in Gaza, 150,000 women, out of a total of 500,000, are "acutely vulnerable owing to critical challenges in delivering health care".¹⁴⁰ The maternal mortality ratio has more than doubled in Gaza, from 8.6 per 100,000 in 2017 to 19.1 per 100,000 live births in 2019.¹⁴¹

111. In the West Bank, health-care services continue to face major challenges, especially as access to some of the most vulnerable communities is hampered by discriminatory zoning and increased protection concerns. Some 165 communities, with a total population of 162,663, have limited or no access to basic primary health-care services, while 33,000 people are in critical need of emergency care.¹⁴²

112. In areas such as the H2 zone of Hebron, the seam zone and Area C, health services, if available, are of poor quality and often limited to basic care. For all facilities in the West Bank outside East Jerusalem, there is a critical shortage of certain treatment and diagnostic options, and patients in need of advanced care are

¹³² Ibid.

¹³³ WHO input.

¹³⁴ WHO input.

¹³⁵ International Crisis Group, "The Gaza Strip and COVID-19: Preparing for the worst", Crisis Group Middle East briefing No. 75, 1 April 2020.

¹³⁶ WHO input.

¹³⁷ See [A/74/468](#), para. 28.

¹³⁸ See [E/ESCWA/ECW/2019/TP.2](#).

¹³⁹ WHO, "Measles – Gaza Strip", disease outbreak news, 9 January 2020.

¹⁴⁰ UN-Women, September 2019.

¹⁴¹ UNFPA input.

¹⁴² OCHA, *Humanitarian Needs Overview 2020*.

thus dependent on referrals to East Jerusalem or Israel, and therefore require security permits from the Israeli authorities.¹⁴³

113. Approximately 50,000 Palestinian workers returning to the West Bank from Israel, where the prevalence of COVID-19 has been higher, present a major risk of increasing the transfer of COVID-19 and of overwhelming the testing and quarantine capacities of the Palestinian Government. Incidents of symptomatic workers being left at checkpoints after being returned by Israel to Palestinian-controlled areas, without coordination with Palestinian authorities, are of concern.¹⁴⁴

Education

114. Israeli policies and practices continue to render access to education in a safe learning environment a critical and long-standing challenge. In Area C, over one third of residential communities lack primary schools. Children are forced to travel long distances, sometimes on foot, to reach the nearest school, for which they often have to cross one or two checkpoints. Most children (88 per cent) living in the H2 zone of Hebron must cross a military checkpoint and/or are exposed to harassment by Israeli settlers on their way to school.¹⁴⁵

115. In 2019, a total of 328 education-related incidents affecting approximately 20,000 students were documented. While the shortage of classrooms in the West Bank persist, 51 schools in Area C and East Jerusalem face demolition orders, and others are subjected to stop-work orders. In the West Bank, including East Jerusalem, access to education is heavily compromised by education-related violations facing students and teachers. Children are exposed to conflict-related violence and movement restrictions, which can lead to increased school dropout rates. Access to safe education is compromised by violence and armed search operations in schools; harassment, intimidation and violence towards students and teachers on the way to and from school; a severe shortage of classrooms; and demolition or stop-work orders on school buildings. In East Jerusalem, the increase in security operations in the city and, particularly, the almost daily clashes in Isawiyah have led to several arrests, including of children.¹⁴⁶

116. In Gaza, the closure and the multiple military escalations have resulted in repeated damage and destruction to an already fragile education infrastructure. Severe electricity shortages, increased poverty, and protection concerns only exacerbate the situation.¹⁴⁷

117. Other factors are compounding the situation, forcing around 70 per cent of UNRWA schools and 63 per cent of those run by the Palestinian Ministry of Education to operate on a double- or triple-shift system, which results in crowded classrooms.¹⁴⁸

118. An estimated 4.9 per cent of 10- to 15-year-olds and 25 per cent of 16- to 17-year-olds in the Occupied Palestinian Territory are out of school. Girls who drop out are at high risk of early marriage, while boys are at high risk of child labour or life-threatening activities.¹⁴⁹

The gendered impact of the occupation on women and girls

119. Laws, policies and practices imposed by the Israeli authorities affect Palestinian women and girls in specific ways. Women are often the first to be affected by curbs

¹⁴³ UN-Women, September 2019.

¹⁴⁴ WHO input.

¹⁴⁵ UNICEF input.

¹⁴⁶ UNICEF, "State of Palestine, humanitarian situation report", July–September 2019.

¹⁴⁷ UNICEF input.

¹⁴⁸ UNRWA input; OCHA, *Humanitarian Needs Overview 2020*.

¹⁴⁹ OCHA, *Humanitarian Needs Overview 2020*.

on residency and family unification because they traditionally move away from their own families and communities, upon marriage, and, at times, find themselves stranded and without resources.¹⁵⁰

120. Palestinian women and girls continue to be exposed to violence by Israeli settlers and Israeli security forces.¹⁵¹ Women's organizations have found that the fear of not knowing when the Israeli occupying forces will raid houses makes them wear the hijab at all times, even when sleeping.¹⁵² Some women report that the frequent or permanent presence of settlers, soldiers or male residents around the house affected their privacy and freedom of movement.¹⁵³

121. House demolitions and forced evictions adversely affect women's right to adequate housing and the quality of their family life, and have a serious impact on Palestinian women and girls' emotional welfare. Women, particularly mothers, must deal with the burden of ensuring the well-being of the family, including by securing a new place to live and providing physical and emotional support to loved ones.¹⁵⁴ Living with extended family may result in tensions within families and increases vulnerability to domestic violence or child abuse.¹⁵⁵ That situation has been exacerbated by the COVID-19 pandemic and the measures taken to contain it.

122. Service providers report an increasing demand for psychosocial assistance due to domestic violence against women and children amid a chronic lack of safe places and recreational areas. The rise in domestic violence is attributed to fear and anxiety stemming from the situation, which includes economic stress and overcrowded households.¹⁵⁶

123. Some reports of violence and sexual harassment at checkpoints mean that parents are hesitant to allow their daughters to cross the checkpoints to attend school, thus impeding their access to education.¹⁵⁷

124. Of the women who were injured during the Great March of Return protests, 12.5 per cent were unable to return to their work. They also suffered from increased exposure to physical and sexual abuse. Women and girls were also subjected to forced or early marriage to men who were injured or maimed.¹⁵⁸

125. Women employed in Area C are often unremunerated or receive low wages. They work mainly in agriculture (primarily performing unpaid family labour) or in Israeli settlements. This further increases the poverty for households headed by women in Area C.¹⁵⁹

126. Multiple factors, including the occupation, Israeli practices and the COVID-19 pandemic, disproportionately affect Palestinian women and girls in several areas.

¹⁵⁰ UN-Women input.

¹⁵¹ See [A/74/357](#), para. 42.

¹⁵² Women's Centre for Legal Aid and Counselling (WCLAC), "WCLAC's shadow report for the Committee on Economic, Social and Cultural Rights, 66th session – Israel review", 2019.

¹⁵³ See [A/74/357](#), para. 53.

¹⁵⁴ WCLAC, "Punitive Measures: the gendered impact on Palestinian women", submission to the Special Rapporteur on the situation of human rights in the Palestinian territories occupied since 1967, December 2019.

¹⁵⁵ [E/ESCWA/ECW/2019/TP.2](#).

¹⁵⁶ OCHA in the Occupied Palestinian Territory, "COVID-19 emergency situation report", No. 4, 7–13 April 2020.

¹⁵⁷ WCLAC, "WCLAC's shadow report".

¹⁵⁸ UN-Women input.

¹⁵⁹ Rema Hammami and others, "Addressing the needs of Palestinian households in Area C of the West Bank: A summary of the findings of the first comprehensive household survey" (Oxfam, Birzeit University, Nairobi/Bi'r Zayt, State of Palestine, January 2019).

Those impacts risk reversing the women's rights gains made in past decades and can exacerbate pre-existing inequalities.¹⁶⁰

III. Occupied Syrian Golan

127. The Secretary-General continues to reaffirm the validity of Security Council resolution 497 (1981), in which the Council decided that the Israeli decision to impose its laws, jurisdiction and administration in the occupied Syrian Golan Heights was null and void and without international legal effect.

128. Approximately 50,000 people live in the occupied Syrian Golan, about half of whom are Israeli settlers living in 34 illegal settlements. The Syrian population of nearly 27,000 lives in five villages that form approximately 5 per cent of the territory of the occupied Syrian Golan.¹⁶¹

129. The Economic and Social Council, in its resolution 2018/20, reaffirmed that the construction and expansion of Israeli settlements and related infrastructure in the Occupied Palestinian Territory, including East Jerusalem, and the occupied Syrian Golan, were illegal and constituted a major obstacle to economic and social development. The continued establishment and expansion of Israeli settlements in the Occupied Palestinian Territory and the occupied Syrian Golan amount to the transfer by Israel of its own civilian population into the territory it occupies, which is prohibited under international humanitarian law.¹⁶²

130. An Israeli media outlet reported on a government plan to expand settlements in the occupied Syrian Golan and to increase the settler population in the area to 250,000 by 2048. The plan reportedly envisions the construction of 30,000 new housing units and two new settlements.

131. The Syrian population of the occupied Syrian Golan faces significant discriminatory building restrictions imposed by Israel, which leads to strained infrastructure and overcrowded conditions.

132. Israel continues to maintain extremely restrictive zoning and building policies, which has an impact on the Syrian population. Those include the issuance of demolition orders and a recent process aimed at zoning some of the rare land usable for the expansion of Syrian villages as a national park.¹⁶³

133. Israel is changing its land registration system. The change carries the risk of disadvantaging Syrian citizens who have insufficient proof of ownership, and could provide a basis for Israeli appropriation.¹⁶⁴

134. The Syrian Arab Republic has stressed that Israel has been consolidating its control over land and natural resources, including water. Israel has done so through, among other things, the recent confiscation of land in the Syrian village of Jubbata al-Khashab, which lies within the demilitarized zone established by the United Nations in 1974, with the aim of building trenches close to Syrian territory, a step that had led to the isolation of tens of dunums of land belonging to the village.¹⁶⁵

135. The Israeli company Energix Renewable Energies Ltd. has a project through which it seeks to build 31 wind turbines in close proximity to Syrian population centres. It is estimated that the project as a whole will occupy about 4,300 dunums of land, almost a

¹⁶⁰ UN-Women input.

¹⁶¹ See A/74/357, para. 71.

¹⁶² Ibid., para. 74.

¹⁶³ See A/HRC/43/67, para. 61.

¹⁶⁴ ILO input.

¹⁶⁵ See A/HRC/43/69, para. 20.

quarter of the limited agricultural land remaining in the possession of Syrians. In addition to the environmental aspects and the impact on their health, Syrians are also concerned about the risk the project poses to their cultural life in the Golan.¹⁶⁶

136. At the same time, Syrians in the Golan are unable to develop their own gas and oil industries.¹⁶⁷

137. Information has been received on continued discriminatory policies, particularly with regard to access to land and water, to the benefit of settlers who already enjoy tax incentives and subsidies granted by the Israeli Government.¹⁶⁸

138. Discriminatory pricing and distribution of utilities in the occupied Golan has subsidized illegal Israeli settlement businesses while suffocating Syrian industries, particularly in the agricultural sector.¹⁶⁹ While the majority of Syrian households in the Golan have agricultural roots, only a small number of workers are primarily employed in farming. It has been difficult for small-scale Syrian farmers to compete with the often more industrial agriculture of the settlements, forcing many farmers to turn to other occupations.¹⁷⁰

139. The Syrian Arab Republic has reported that Israel continues its attempts to impose Israeli citizenship on the Syrian residents of the occupied Syrian Golan.

IV. Conclusion

140. The protracted Israeli occupation of the Occupied Palestinian Territory and the occupied Syrian Golan continues to have a detrimental effect on the living conditions of the Palestinian and Syrian populations, as well as on social and economic development in the occupied territories. The negative impact of the occupation and the Israeli policies and practices is multilayered and the cumulative repercussions affect the future of the populations living under occupation.

141. The unprecedented challenges posed by the COVID-19 crisis heightens the vulnerability of Palestinians, in particular the population of Gaza, and exposes them to more risk. Palestine refugees and youth, whose social and economic conditions were already precarious, stand to suffer disproportionately both from the pandemic and its aftermath. Measures that limit testing and treatment in the context of the pandemic should be halted immediately and more resources should be provided to aid the Palestinians in facing the COVID-19 crisis.

142. Current social and economic trends in the Occupied Palestinian Territory indicate that the attainment of the Sustainable Development Goals will be out of reach if there are no drastic positive changes to the existing conditions. Israeli-imposed restrictions, the expansion of the illegal settlements and other practices not only prevent development in the occupied territories, but also cause humanitarian crises that necessitate the diversion of national and international efforts from development to immediate relief.

143. The funding crisis facing UNRWA and the decline in donor aid are other factors that only exacerbate the already precarious conditions of hundreds of thousands of

¹⁶⁶ Al-Haq, "Joint parallel report on Israel's violations of the International Covenant on Economic, Social and Cultural Rights on the occasion of the United Nations Committee on Economic, Social and Cultural Rights' review of the fourth periodic report of Israel", 6 September 2019.

¹⁶⁷ Ibid.

¹⁶⁸ ILO, "The situation of workers of the occupied Arab territories" (document No. ILC.108/DG/APP, 2019), para. 147.

¹⁶⁹ Al-Haq, "Joint parallel report", para 9.

¹⁷⁰ ILO, "The situation of workers of the occupied Arab territories", para 146.

Palestinians. The Secretary-General reiterates his appeal to the international community to guarantee that the vital support for the rights of the Palestine refugees is upheld and to ensure adequate financing for UNRWA. The unfolding COVID-19 pandemic and its economic fallout is likely to further compound the economic difficulties and could result in more adverse living conditions for Palestinians.

144. The closure imposed on Gaza, other restrictive Israeli measures, recurrent escalations and declining donor funding have created a severe situation in Gaza that requires immediate action by the international community. This is particularly alarming in the context of the COVID-19 pandemic, with the health-care system in Gaza on the verge of collapse as that crisis unfolds.

145. Israel continues to employ policies and practices that are contrary to relevant Security Council resolutions, international humanitarian law and international human rights law. Some of these practices may be considered discriminatory and others may amount to the forcible transfer or collective punishment of protected persons, which would be a grave breach of the Fourth Geneva Convention and is prohibited under international law.

146. Adherence to international law is imperative, ensuring that no party enjoys impunity and securing justice and peace for all those living in the region, including Palestinians and Syrians living under occupation. The United Nations maintains its long-standing position that lasting and comprehensive peace can be achieved only through a negotiated two-State solution. The Secretary-General will continue to ensure that the United Nations works towards the establishment of an independent, democratic, contiguous and viable Palestinian State, living side by side in peace with a secure Israel, with Jerusalem as the capital of both States, consistent with relevant Security Council resolutions and international law.



General Assembly Economic and Social Council

Distr.: General
24 June 2021

Original: English

**General Assembly
Seventy-sixth session
Item 65 of the preliminary list***
**Permanent sovereignty of the Palestinian people in the
Occupied Palestinian Territory, including East
Jerusalem, and of the Arab population in the occupied
Syrian Golan over their natural resources**

**Economic and Social Council
Substantive session of 2021
Agenda item 16
Economic and social repercussions of the
Israeli occupation on the living conditions of
the Palestinian people in the Occupied
Palestinian Territory, including East
Jerusalem, and the Arab population in the
occupied Syrian Golan**

Economic and social repercussions of the Israeli occupation on the living conditions of the Palestinian people in the Occupied Palestinian Territory, including East Jerusalem, and of the Arab population in the occupied Syrian Golan

Note by the Secretary-General**

Summary

In its resolution [2021/4](#), entitled “Economic and social repercussions of the Israeli occupation on the living conditions of the Palestinian people in the Occupied Palestinian Territory, including East Jerusalem, and the Arab population in the occupied Syrian Golan”, the Economic and Social Council requested the Secretary-General to submit to the General Assembly at its seventy-fifth session, through the Economic and Social Council, a report on the implementation of that resolution. The Assembly, in its resolution [75/236](#), entitled “Permanent sovereignty of the Palestinian people in the Occupied Palestinian Territory, including East Jerusalem, and of the Arab population in the occupied Syrian Golan over their natural resources”, requested the Secretary-General to submit a report to it at its seventy-sixth session. The present report, which was prepared by the Economic and Social Commission for Western Asia (ESCWA), has been submitted in compliance with these resolutions.

The report covers persistent Israeli practices and policies, particularly those that are in violation of international humanitarian law and international human rights law and that affect the social and economic conditions of the people living under its military occupation.

* [A/76/50](#).

** The present report was submitted after the deadline so as to include the most recent information.



ESCWA would like to express its appreciation for the contributions of the International Fund for Agricultural Development, the Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Human Rights, the Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs, the United Nations Entity for Gender Equality and the Empowerment of Women (UN-Women), the United Nations Conference on Trade and Development, the United Nations Population Fund, the United Nations Human Settlements Programme, the Office of the Special Coordinator for the Middle East Peace Process, the United Nations Children's Fund, the United Nations Industrial Development Organization, the United Nations Relief and Works Agency for Palestine Refugees in the Near East, the United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization and the World Health Organization.

I. Introduction

1. The Economic and Social Council, in its resolution [2021/4](#), expressed concerns about the economic and social repercussions of the Israeli occupation on the living conditions of the Palestinian people in the Occupied Palestinian Territory, including East Jerusalem, and of the Arab population in the occupied Syrian Golan. The General Assembly, in its resolution [75/236](#), demanded that Israel, the occupying Power, cease the exploitation, damage, cause of loss or depletion and endangerment of natural resources in the Occupied Palestinian Territory, including East Jerusalem, and in the occupied Syrian Golan.
2. The present report provides information on relevant developments in this regard during the period from 1 April 2020 to 31 March 2021.

II. Occupied Palestinian Territory

Israeli practices in the Occupied Palestinian Territory

3. The reporting period was characterized by the coronavirus disease (COVID-19) pandemic and efforts to combat it. During the period, Israel continued such policies and practices as settlement expansion, the demolition of Palestinian structures and homes, closures, access and movement restrictions, and other aspects of its protracted occupation that have had a severe humanitarian, economic, social and political impact on Palestinians and their ability to exercise their fundamental human rights.¹
4. As previously reported, the Israeli zoning and planning policies in Area C, which constitutes 60 per cent of the West Bank, and East Jerusalem, are discriminatory and are considered incompatible with requirements under international law. Policies that allocate land almost exclusively to Israeli settlements or to the military and that facilitate the growth of Israeli settlements make it almost impossible for Palestinians to obtain building permits. The average rate of approval of Palestinian applications for building permits in Area C during the 2010s stood at 3 to 4 per cent. As a result, many Palestinians are compelled to build without a permit, risking eviction, house demolition and displacement.²
5. Palestinians in the occupied territory continue to be subject to a complex combination of Israeli and Palestinian legal systems. In the West Bank, Israeli domestic law is applied extraterritorially to Israeli settlers, while Palestinians are subject to Israeli military law in addition to the Palestinian legal system. As a result, lower human rights standards are applied to Palestinian suspects and defendants compared with Israeli suspects and defendants. The application of two different legal systems in the same territory on the sole basis of nationality or origin is inherently discriminatory and violates the principle of equality before the law, which is central to the right to a fair trial. The application of Israeli domestic law to settlers and of Israeli military law to Palestinians in the West Bank also raises concerns as to the obligation of the occupying Power to respect the laws in force in the territory it occupies, unless it is absolutely prevented from doing so.³
6. The Committee on the Elimination of Racial Discrimination expressed its concern “at the consequences of policies and practices that amount to segregation”.⁴

¹ [A/75/84-E/2020/61](#), para. 152.

² See [A/75/86-E/2020/62](#), para. 2; and United Nations, Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs, *Humanitarian Needs Overview 2021: OPT* (2020), p. 39.

³ See [A/75/86-E/2020/62](#), para. 5; [A/71/86-E/2016/13](#), para. 7; [A/72/90-E/2017/71](#), para. 4; and [A/73/87-E/2018/69](#), para. 3; see also [A/HRC/43/67](#), para. 29.

⁴ [CERD/C/ISR/CO/17-19](#), para. 22.

The Committee cited in this regard the two separate legal systems and the unequal use of roads and infrastructure or access to basic services, lands and water resources. The Committee also pointed to several laws that discriminate against Palestinians in the Occupied Palestinian Territory, and that create differences among them, with regard to their civil status, legal protection, access to social and economic benefits, or right to land and property.⁵

Violence and the use of force

7. As the occupying Power, Israel has the obligation to take all the measures in its power to restore and ensure, as far as possible, public order and life in the Occupied Palestinian Territory, and to protect the Palestinian population from all acts of violence in all circumstances.⁶

8. Israeli security forces and military continued to employ measures and practices that raise serious concerns about excessive use of force, in some cases possibly amounting to arbitrary deprivation of life, including extrajudicial execution.⁷

9. Of particular and grave concern is the recurrent use by Israeli security forces of crowd control measures against children inside and near schools close to settlements. Documented cases reveal the unwarranted use of force and violations of the right to physical and mental integrity of Palestinian children.⁸

10. During the reporting period, Israeli military and security forces killed 21 Palestinians, including 6 boys, and injured another 1,662 Palestinians, including 185 children (7 girls and 178 boys) and 21 women.⁹

11. Lack of accountability for excessive use of force and other violations by Israeli security forces remained pervasive.¹⁰ An Israeli non-governmental organization (NGO), Yesh Din, concluded that permissive rules of engagement with regard to firing at unarmed protestors, coupled with a law enforcement system that does not allow genuine and effective investigations, results in the loss of many lives.¹¹ The Special Committee to Investigate Israeli Practices Affecting the Human Rights of the Palestinian People and Other Arabs of the Occupied Territories has expressed serious concern over the prevailing culture of impunity, in particular in cases alleging excessive use of force by Israeli security forces in both the West Bank and Gaza.¹²

12. In March 2021, the Prosecutor of the International Criminal Court confirmed the initiation by her Office of an investigation regarding the situation in Palestine. The investigation will cover crimes within the jurisdiction of the Court that are alleged to have been committed since 13 June 2014, the date to which reference was made in the referral of the situation to her Office.¹³

⁵ Ibid., para. 13.

⁶ [A/74/357](#), para. 26.

⁷ [A/75/336](#), para. 4.

⁸ [A/74/357](#), para. 68.

⁹ United Nations, Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs in the Occupied Palestinian Territory, Data on Casualties database. Available at www.ochaopt.org/data/casualties (accessed on 31 March 2021).

¹⁰ [A/75/336](#), paras. 4–9.

¹¹ Yesh Din, “Killing time: the slow processing of complaints regarding Gaza Great March of Return casualties and the use of the fact-finding assessment mechanism to thwart prosecution of soldiers”, 22 November 2020.

¹² [A/75/199](#), para. 22.

¹³ International Criminal Court, *Prosecution Request Pursuant to Article 19(3) for a Ruling on the Court’s Territorial Jurisdiction in Palestine*, Case No. ICC-01/18-12, 22 January 2020; and Fatou Bensouda, Prosecutor, International Criminal Court, statement respecting an investigation of the Situation in Palestine, 3 March 2021.

Detention and ill-treatment

13. Israel has continued the use of administrative detention for inordinately lengthy periods, which contributes to perpetuating the arbitrary detention of Palestinians. The Committee against Torture has expressed concern that administrative detention does not conform to article 16 of the Convention against Torture and Other Cruel, Inhuman or Degrading Treatment or Punishment because, among other reasons, it is used for “inordinately lengthy periods”. Administrative detention thus deprives detainees of basic safeguards, including the right to challenge the evidence that is the basis for the detention.¹⁴ The practice by Israel of administrative detention against journalists and human rights defenders, as well as children, continued. Israeli authorities intensified the arrest and detention of Palestinian political figures in Jerusalem.¹⁵

14. By 31 March 2021, 4,450 Palestinians were held as “security prisoners” in Israeli prisons, including 140 children, 37 women and 10 members of the Palestinian Legislative Council, while by 30 September 2020, 376 Palestinians, including 2 children, were held in administrative detention.¹⁶ The Israeli Prison Service has stopped releasing monthly comprehensive and disaggregated figures on Palestinian “security detainees”, previously released in response to freedom of information requests from Israeli NGOs.¹⁷

15. Israeli authorities continue to hold most Palestinian detainees inside Israel, in violation of international humanitarian law. This has a negative impact on the right of detainees to receive visitors and family members who reside in the Occupied Palestinian Territory.¹⁸ As of September 2020, nearly two thirds of detained children had been transferred from the West Bank and were held in facilities inside Israel.¹⁹

16. It has been reported that Palestinians were systematically subjected to ill-treatment in detention. “Special interrogation methods” were reportedly used by the Internal Security Agency, based on internal guidelines previously approved by the Attorney General and upheld by the High Court of Justice. In many cases, detainees were kept in incommunicado detention and not allowed to meet with their lawyers. The Palestinian Prisoners’ Commission and the Palestinian Prisoners’ Club raised concerns about medical negligence by the Israeli authorities and reported that punitive measures were enforced by the Israel Prison Service to pressure detainees who were protesting their detention through a hunger strike.²⁰ Female Palestinian detainees have been reportedly subjected to intrusive body searches, beatings, insults, threats and sexual harassment, sometimes as punitive measures.²¹

17. Israeli authorities have reportedly arrested and detained family members of Palestinian detainees, including women, as a form of pressure or punitive measure.²²

18. Patterns of ill-treatment of children in detention also have been indicated by testimonies from 81 children held in Israeli detention,²³ including beatings and harsh

¹⁴ CAT/C/ISR/CO/4, para. 17; and CAT/C/ISR/CO/5, paras. 22 and 23.

¹⁵ A/75/336, para. 48.

¹⁶ Addameer, Statistics database, available at www.addameer.org/statistics; and B’Tselem, Statistics on Administrative Detention database. Available at www.btselem.org/administrative_detention/statistics (accessed on 1 April 2021).

¹⁷ Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Human Rights input.

¹⁸ A/75/336, para. 10.

¹⁹ United Nations Children’s Fund (UNICEF) input citing Israel Prison Services data.

²⁰ A/75/336, paras. 12–14.

²¹ A/75/199, para. 51.

²² A/75/336, para. 19.

²³ Ibid., para. 20.

disciplinary measures that included solitary confinement and the deprivation of family visits when the children protested against being moved.²⁴

19. The inadequate conditions under which children have been detained in Israeli prisons are reported to include lack of access to proper food, hygiene and ventilation, and exposure to cold weather and humidity. Those who complained reportedly faced a severe response by the prison administration, including night raids in cells, beatings, subjection to stress positions, solitary confinement and the denial of family visits for prolonged periods of time.²⁵

20. Interrogation techniques used against detained children are often mentally and physically coercive and incorporate intimidation, threats, verbal abuse and physical violence to obtain confessions. In addition, cases in which Israeli authorities attempt to recruit Palestinian children as informants during interrogations have been documented.²⁶

21. Of some 1,300 complaints of torture involving the Israel Security Agency that have been submitted to the Israeli Ministry of Justice since 2001, only 1 has resulted in a criminal investigation, with no indictments.²⁷

Destruction and confiscation of property and infrastructure

22. The demolition of structures and related forced evictions by Israel of Palestinians entail numerous human rights violations, exacerbate the coercive environment and raise concerns about the risk of forcible transfer.²⁸ The extensive destruction of property, as well as the forcible transfer of protected people, are considered grave breaches of the Geneva Convention relative to the Protection of Civilian Persons in Time of War and may amount to war crimes.²⁹ In addition, confiscations under the Absentee Property Law and the Legal and Administrative Matters Law in East Jerusalem are carried out solely on the basis of the nationality or origin of the owner, rendering them inherently discriminatory.³⁰

23. The year 2020 witnessed the highest number of demolitions and people displaced by the Israeli authorities in recent years.³¹ Israel mainly cites the lack of building permits in this regard, which are nearly impossible for Palestinians to obtain, as the Israeli authorities continued its ordered moratorium on the approval of master plans prepared and submitted by the Palestinian communities in Area C of the West Bank.³²

24. During the first two months of 2021 alone, the Israeli authorities had demolished or seized at least 227 Palestinian-owned structures, including 93 donor-funded structures. This represents an increase of almost 185 per cent in structures targeted

²⁴ UNICEF input.

²⁵ UNICEF input and [A/75/336](#), paras. 20 and 21.

²⁶ Defence for Children International Palestine, *Isolated and Alone: Palestinian Children Held in Solitary Confinement by Israeli Authorities for Interrogation* (2020), p. 12.

²⁷ Public Committee against Torture in Israel, *Torture in Israel 2020: Situation Report*, p.1.

Available at <https://stoptorture.org.il/wp-content/uploads/2021/06/%D7%90%D7%A0%D7%92%D7%9C%D7%99%D7%AA.pdf>.

²⁸ [A/75/376](#), para. 34.

²⁹ Geneva Convention Relative to the Protection of Civilian Persons in Times of War, arts. 53 and 147; see also [A/73/410](#).

³⁰ [A/75/376](#), para. 54.

³¹ United Nations, Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs in the Occupied Palestinian Territory, “Peak in demolitions and confiscations amidst increasing denial of the right to justice”, Humanitarian Bulletin, October–December 2020.

³² United Nations Human Settlements Programme input.

and a nearly 450 per cent increase in donor-funded structures targeted, compared with the equivalent period in 2020.³³

25. Recent years have seen a steady increase in the seizure of structures targeted as a result of a lack of building permits in Area C. The percentage of structures seized, out of all structures targeted (demolished and seized), increased from 8 per cent in 2016 to 30 per cent in 2020.³⁴ During the first two months of 2021, it increased to 59.5 per cent.³⁵

26. Since 2009, Israeli authorities have demolished 1,343 donor-funded structures.³⁶ Since 2016, international donors have requested that the Israeli authorities return more than 210 seized humanitarian aid structures to Palestinian beneficiaries. None of these structures have so far been recovered.³⁷

27. During the reporting period, Israeli authorities demolished 1,015 Palestinian-owned structures, including 223 homes,³⁸ and 233 structures owned by Palestine refugees. Demolitions more than tripled during Ramadan in 2020, compared with the same period in 2019.³⁹

28. Demolitions in East Jerusalem can be seen in the context of expanding settlements in the E1 area, which when completed would disrupt the geographical contiguity with the West Bank and divide it into two disconnected enclaves.⁴⁰ Israeli authorities had announced or advanced the expansion of the settlements ring around East Jerusalem in areas that continue to witness high rates of demolitions, particularly in East Jerusalem and Bethlehem.⁴¹

29. The acceleration in the number of demolitions was coupled with the increased use of legislation and measures that limited the ability of Palestinians to challenge the targeting of their homes and sources of livelihood in Israeli courts, including military orders permitting expedited demolitions and confiscations in Area C.⁴²

30. The introduction of greater punitive measures against unauthorized construction in East Jerusalem has led to an increase in self-demolitions. In addition to fines that may reach up to 300,000 new Israeli shekels, the owners of an illegal structure may be charged extra fines for any additional day's use of such a structure, as well as the cost of the demolition itself, if it was carried out by the municipality. The proportion of self-demolitions in 2020 reached 47 per cent, up from an average of 21 per cent from 2016 to 2019.⁴³ In East Jerusalem, in addition to those living in homes at risk of

³³ United Nations, Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs in the Occupied Palestinian Territory, "Humsa-Al Bqai'a", Flash Update, No. 5, 25 February 2021.

³⁴ United Nations, Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs in the Occupied Palestinian Territory, "Peak in demolitions and confiscations".

³⁵ United Nations, Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs in the Occupied Palestinian Territory, "COVID-19 emergency situation report, No. 28", February 2021.

³⁶ Palestinian Central Bureau of Statistics, "The confiscation of land is the reason for Land Day", 30 March 2021.

³⁷ United Nations, Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs in the Occupied Palestinian Territory, "Peak in demolitions and confiscations".

³⁸ United Nations, Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs in the Occupied Palestinian Territory, West Bank Demolition and Displacement database. Available at www.ochaopt.org/data/demolition (accessed on 31 March 2021).

³⁹ A/75/376, para. 35.

⁴⁰ A/75/199, para. 27.

⁴¹ A/75/376, para. 47.

⁴² United Nations, Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs, *Humanitarian Needs Overview 2021*, p. 26.

⁴³ United Nations, Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs in the Occupied Palestinian Territory, "Peak in demolitions and confiscations".

demolition, some 218 Palestinian households were at risk of eviction, primarily as a result of court cases filed mainly by Israeli settler organizations.⁴⁴

31. Israeli authorities continued to target the relatives of Palestinians suspected of attacks against Israelis. Israeli authorities also continued punitive demolitions of the family homes of Palestinians suspected of killing Israelis in a measure that may amount to collective punishment.⁴⁵

32. Between July 2014 and May 2020, at least 68 Palestinian homes were demolished or sealed, while only eight orders were revoked by the High Court of Justice. Punitive demolitions have never been used against Israeli Jewish civilians who have committed “nationalist” crimes similar to those for which Palestinian homes have been destroyed.⁴⁶

Israeli settlement activity and settler violence

33. In its resolution [75/236](#), the General Assembly stressed that the wall and the settlements being constructed by Israel in the Occupied Palestinian Territory, including in and around East Jerusalem, were contrary to international law. This has been confirmed in other resolutions, such as Security Council resolution [2334 \(2016\)](#), in which the Council reaffirmed that the establishment by Israel of settlements in the Palestinian territory occupied since 1967, including East Jerusalem, had no legal validity and constituted a flagrant violation under international law and a major obstacle to the achievement of a lasting and comprehensive peace.

34. The establishment and expansion of Israeli settlements in the Occupied Palestinian Territory amounts to the transfer by Israel of its own civilian population into the territory it occupies, which is prohibited under international humanitarian law.

35. By the end of 2020, more than 630,000 Israeli settlers lived in the West Bank, including East Jerusalem, in some 250 settlements and settlement outposts that directly control approximately 10 per cent of the West Bank.⁴⁷

36. Settlement expansion projects currently under way threaten to further encroach onto Palestinian land, increase fragmentation and heighten the risk of displacement.⁴⁸ The advancement of the E1 settlement project to the east of East Jerusalem, if implemented, would intensify the coercive environment for 18 Palestinian Bedouin communities located in the area,⁴⁹ further separate East Jerusalem from the remainder of the West Bank, and effectively divide the West Bank into two disconnected enclaves.⁵⁰

37. Israeli authorities continue to encourage Israelis to move to settlements and develop financial ventures in and around them. Benefits and incentives are provided to settlers and settlements in this regard, through both official and unofficial channels, including housing benefits, significant tax benefits, discounted land fees and employment subsidies for industrial zones. These drive consistent growth in the

⁴⁴ United Nations, Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs, *Humanitarian Needs Overview 2021*, p. 39; and United Nations, Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs in the Occupied Palestinian Territory, “Palestinian family evicted from its home in East Jerusalem”, Humanitarian Bulletin, October–December 2020.

⁴⁵ [A/75/336](#), para. 33.

⁴⁶ [A/HRC/44/60](#), paras. 50 and 51.

⁴⁷ United Nations, Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs, *Humanitarian Needs Overview 2021*, p. 17.

⁴⁸ *Ibid.*, p. 26.

⁴⁹ *Ibid.*, p. 17.

⁵⁰ [A/75/199](#), paras. 16 and 27.

number of settlers and factories there. Israel also encourages Israelis to set up new outposts, which operate as agricultural farms and enable extensive takeovers of Palestinian farmland and pastureland. Forty such farms have been established in the past decade, effectively taking over tens of thousands of dunams.⁵¹

38. During 2020, according to Israeli NGO Peace Now, four outposts were regularized retroactively and plans to similarly regularize three others east of Jerusalem were deposited.⁵² It should be noted that between 2007 and 2017 an average of 1.7 outposts were established each year.⁵³

Settler violence

39. Settler violence against Palestinians and damage to their property remained high during the reporting period, as 2 Palestinians were killed and 138 were injured by Israeli settlers.⁵⁴ The United Nations Relief and Works Agency for Palestine Refugees in the Near East (UNRWA) recorded at least 960 incidents involving Israeli settlers in which over 10,000 productive trees were destroyed.⁵⁵

40. Despite efforts made by the Israeli authorities in recent years, accountability for settler violence against Palestinians remained an issue.⁵⁶ The resulting distrust in the Israeli legal system and fears of reprisal prompted Palestinians to submit fewer complaints.⁵⁷

41. Settler violence has facilitated the takeover of Palestinian land and the establishment of settlement outposts, many of which are subsequently “legalized” (regularized) under Israeli legislation.⁵⁸ Repeated and apparently organized settler violence, coupled with other coercive factors, has forced Palestinian families to leave their homes in a number of areas.⁵⁹ Such violence includes, most notably, shooting at Palestinians, burning and uprooting trees, and physical attacks.⁶⁰

42. There were reported cases of settlers spitting on Palestinians during attacks, causing fear of exposure to the COVID-19 virus and prompting victims to go into quarantine or self-isolation. In several incidents, settlers appeared to attempt to take over Palestinian land, taking advantage of the restricted movement of Palestinians owing to the state of emergency.⁶¹

43. On numerous occasions, Israeli security forces did not prevent such attacks and instead accompanied and protected settlers even at times when movement restrictions applied to all in the context of the pandemic.⁶² Attempts by settlers to enter and/or attack Palestinian communities continued to cause friction between Israeli security forces and Palestinians. Israeli security forces killed 1 Palestinian and injured 230 in such contexts. Settlers also attacked Palestinians and their property in response to

⁵¹ Eyal Hareuveni and Dror Etkes, *This Is Ours: And This, Too – Israel’s Settlement Policy in the West Bank* (B’Tselem and Kerem Navot, 2021).

⁵² A/75/376, para. 16.

⁵³ Ibid., para. 10.

⁵⁴ United Nations, Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs in the Occupied Palestinian Territory, Data on Casualties database. Available at www.ochaopt.org/data/casualties (accessed on 15 May 2021).

⁵⁵ UNRWA West Bank Protection and Neutrality Department.

⁵⁶ A/75/376, para. 63.

⁵⁷ Ibid., para. 33.

⁵⁸ A/HRC/43/67, paras. 10 and 15.

⁵⁹ A/75/376, paras. 18 and 23.

⁶⁰ A/75/199, para. 23.

⁶¹ A/75/376, para. 24.

⁶² A/75/199, para. 13.

measures taken by the Israeli authorities against them, leaving messages suggesting that those attacks were acts of retribution.⁶³

Coercive environment and population displacement

44. There is continued concern that a combination of Israeli policies and practices in Area C, East Jerusalem and the city of Hebron, such as the demolition and threat of demolition of homes and schools and the destruction of livelihoods; the denial of service infrastructure; the restriction of access to farming and grazing land; settler violence and poor law enforcement in response thereto; and the revocation of residency rights, among other things, have created a coercive environment,⁶⁴ which may force Palestinians to leave their places of residence.

45. Involuntary displacement and relocation to alternative residential areas as a result of such policies may amount to forcible transfer if it is carried out without the free and informed consent of the individuals who relocate, in violation of the obligations of Israel under international humanitarian and human rights law. Forcible transfer is a grave breach of the Geneva Convention relative to the Protection of Civilian Persons in Time of War and amounts to a war crime.

46. Forced evictions and demolitions are a key factor in the creation of a coercive environment and increase the risk of forcible transfer. The transfer of property pursuant to utilizing legal means in East Jerusalem also facilitates the transfer of its population into the occupied territory.⁶⁵

47. During the reporting period, demolition and confiscation of structures by Israel resulted in the displacement of 1,255 Palestinians, the majority of whom were women (296) and children (666, including 305 girls). Demolitions also negatively affected another 6,055 Palestinians.⁶⁶

48. The stated intention of the Government of Israel to relocate thousands of Palestinians residing in Area C remains a key concern and contributes to a coercive environment. Some 18 communities in and around East Jerusalem, including the Sheikh Jarrah neighbourhood, are at particular risk of forced eviction.⁶⁷

49. Israel continued to use its control over the movement of people to maintain the separation between Gaza and the West Bank. The policy effectively prevents most Palestinians from Gaza from reaching the West Bank, with dramatic consequences for families, given that around a third of Gaza residents have relatives in the West Bank, including East Jerusalem, and that family visits do not represent an accepted criterion for obtaining an exit permit from Gaza.⁶⁸ Some 2.1 million Palestinians are estimated to be affected by problems related to displacement and a lack of protection.⁶⁹

50. The implementation of the policy has also increased pressure on West Bank residents to move to Gaza. West Bank residents requesting to temporarily relocate to

⁶³ A/75/376, paras. 17–22.

⁶⁴ United Nations, Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs, *Humanitarian Needs Overview 2021*, p. 16.

⁶⁵ A/75/376, para. 64.

⁶⁶ United Nations, Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs in the Occupied Palestinian Territory, West Bank Demolition and Displacement database. Available at www.ochaopt.org/data/demolition (accessed on 31 March 2021).

⁶⁷ A/75/376, para. 39. See also United Nations, Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs, “Protection of civilians: Occupied Palestinian Territory”, 7–20 January 2020; and Marya Farah, *Occupying Jerusalem’s Old City: Israeli Policies of Isolation, Intimidation and Transformation* (Ramallah, Al-Haq, 2019).

⁶⁸ A/75/336, para. 27.

⁶⁹ United Nations, Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs, *Humanitarian Needs Overview 2021*, p. 19.

Gaza for family purposes have been required to waive their right to return to the West Bank. Refusing to allow West Bank residents living in Gaza to return to their homes may amount to their forcible transfer.⁷⁰

51. Palestinians in the West Bank are constantly vulnerable to arbitrary invasion of their homes by Israeli security forces and the harm that may result. Home invasions deprive individuals, families and communities of the fundamental security of their own homes. Military law in the West Bank does not require a judicial warrant to invade the private domain. Of all invasions documented by Yesh Din, 88 per cent took place between midnight and 5 a.m.⁷¹

52. There are also concerns that Israeli security forces occupy the rooftops of private Palestinian homes in Hebron, forcing families to leave their front doors open for soldiers to enter.⁷²

53. Another major factor contributing to the coercive environment is the progressive deterioration of the living conditions of Palestinians, namely in Area C and East Jerusalem. Depriving communities of essential services or sources of livelihoods is another tool employed in escalating the coercive environment in specific areas. Frequent and prolonged security operations have caused such a deterioration among the entire population of the neighbourhood of Isawiyah, East Jerusalem. The recurrence, scale and modalities of Israeli operations raise concerns that they may amount to a form of collective punishment of the population.⁷³

54. The Palestinian herding community of Humsa Al Bqai'a is one such example. It is located in Area C in the northern Jordan Valley, mostly in an area designated as a "firing zone" for Israeli military training, where Palestinian residency or access is prohibited. Designated firing zones, which cover nearly 30 per cent of Area C, are home to 38 Palestinian Bedouin and herding communities with a population of 6,200. On 22 February 2021, Israeli authorities confiscated 18 residential and animal structures, food parcels, unassembled structures and all the water tanks. Most of the structures had been provided as a humanitarian response following incidents on 3 and 8 February 2021, in which 37 structures were demolished or confiscated. Ten households, comprising more than 60 people, including 36 children, were again displaced and are at heightened risk of forcible transfer.⁷⁴ The first demolition of the community was in November 2020, when 76 structures were demolished, more than in any other single demolition in the past decade.⁷⁵

55. Bedouin communities are among the most economically vulnerable. The repeated destruction and confiscation of their homes and property, including structures and other forms of assistance provided by the humanitarian community, is having a devastating economic, social and traumatic impact.⁷⁶ A recent assessment identified at least 3,200 residential shelters in Palestinian Bedouin and herding

⁷⁰ [A/75/336](#), para. 28.

⁷¹ Miryam Wijler and others, *A Life Exposed: Military Invasions of Palestinian Homes in the West Bank* (Yesh Din and Physicians for Human Rights Israel and Breaking the Silence, 2020), p. 17.

⁷² United States, Department of State, *Country Reports on Human Rights Practices for 2020* (2021), p. 88.

⁷³ [A/75/336](#), para. 32.

⁷⁴ United Nations, Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs in the Occupied Palestinian Territory, "Humsa-Al Bqai'a".

⁷⁵ United Nations, "Dozens displaced in largest demolition in years in the West Bank, reports UN relief office", 5 November 2020.

⁷⁶ United Nations, Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs in the Occupied Palestinian Territory, "Humsa-Al Bqai'a".

communities in Area C, including tents, metal shacks and caves, as being substandard and in need of urgent rehabilitation.⁷⁷

56. An estimated 11,000 Palestinians who hold West Bank identification cards are stranded in the “seam zone”. Most of these communities lack health centres, schools and shops, obliging residents to pass through checkpoints in order to reach workplaces and essential education and medical services and maintain family and social relations in the remainder of the West Bank.⁷⁸

57. In Gaza, as of April 2020, approximately 350 families had yet to start rebuilding their destroyed shelters. Due to funding gaps, UNRWA was unable to resume transitional shelter cash assistance payments for those in need, owing to a suspension of the programme in June 2018.⁷⁹

58. A 2020 assessment found that 28,500 existing housing units across Gaza were substandard and did not meet the minimum requirements of living space per person, weather protection, hygiene facilities and privacy. Of these, 7,000 were assessed as being beyond repair, thus requiring complete reconstruction, while the other 21,500 required different degrees of rehabilitation. In addition, it is estimated that some 9,500 families in Gaza living in rented accommodation were at risk of eviction owing to their inability to pay rental costs. This figure is expected to increase over the coming year as a result of the increase in unemployment, poverty and the spread of COVID-19.⁸⁰

Movement and access restrictions

59. Israeli authorities continued to restrict the freedom of movement of Palestinians across the Occupied Palestinian Territory, primarily through the permit regime regulating passage between Gaza and the West Bank, including East Jerusalem, and abroad.⁸¹ As freedom of movement is a prerequisite to the exercise of other human rights, such as the rights to family, health and education, the closures and related practices imposed by the Israeli authorities, in particular the restrictions on movement, have had a devastating impact on the lives of Palestinians, in particular on families, and have a compounded effect on women and girls. During the COVID-19 pandemic in the Occupied Palestinian Territory, Israel continued the implementation of its permit regime, with patients, their companions and health-care workers comprising categories of persons eligible to apply for Israeli-issued permits to travel.⁸²

Gaza closure

60. Imposed since June 2007, following the takeover by Hamas, the closures in Gaza, which affect the movement of goods and people, continue to undermine the civil, political, economic, social and cultural rights of Palestinians in Gaza and continue to affect all areas of Palestinian life. The blockade may amount to collective punishment, which is prohibited under international law. The closure remains a major impediment to combating the COVID-19 epidemic.

⁷⁷ United Nations, Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs, *Humanitarian Needs Overview 2021*, pp. 39–40.

⁷⁸ United Nations, Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs in the Occupied Palestinian Territory, “16 years after the International Court of Justice Advisory Opinion, some 11,000 Palestinians are still isolated by the Barrier”, *Humanitarian Bulletin*, August–September 2020.

⁷⁹ UNRWA input.

⁸⁰ United Nations, Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs, *Humanitarian Needs Overview 2021*, p. 39.

⁸¹ [A/75/336](#), paras. 36–38.

⁸² World Health Organization (WHO) input.

61. The closure imposed on Gaza continues to severely restrict the movement of persons and goods to and from Gaza, and has affected every aspect of Palestinians' rights, including freedom of movement, the right to life, the right to health, the right to an adequate standard of living and the right to food.⁸³

62. Israeli authorities continued to adopt measures that aggravated the suffering of civilians, including intermittently reducing or entirely closing the fishing zone and closing the crossings, which severely limited the movement of people, fuel, gas and other essential supplies into and out of Gaza.⁸⁴

63. In response to escalations in hostilities, the Israeli authorities reduced the permissible fishing zone and halted the entry of most goods to Gaza, including fuel, leading to the shutdown of the Gaza power plant and triggering power cuts for up to 20 hours a day.⁸⁵ On several occasions, Israeli officials expressly cited violence emanating from Gaza as a reason for imposing such measures. In view of their punitive effect on persons who did not commit violence, and the severe human rights impact on the entire population of Gaza, these measures may amount to collective punishment.⁸⁶

64. The prolonged closure of Gaza and the ensuing severe restrictions have virtually eliminated its export sector. The volume of exports from Gaza witnessed a slight increase in 2020 compared with 2019, yet remained at only a quarter of the level seen in the first half of 2007, before the imposition of the closure. The sector is also constrained by lack of access to raw materials and agricultural inputs and technology, power shortages and uncertainty. Conservative estimates suggest that without Israeli restrictions, Palestinian exports could be twice their current levels, given the Occupied Palestinian Territory's proximity to large regional markets.⁸⁷

65. Along the Gaza coast, the Israeli navy continued to enforce unilaterally imposed access restrictions, aiming live ammunition, rubber-coated bullets and water cannons towards Gaza fishers while conducting arrest and seizure operations, often within the authorized fishing zones. In several cases monitored by the Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Human Rights, fishers were subjected to excessive force and degrading treatment during arrest operations, such as being handcuffed, blindfolded and forced to undress and jump into the water.⁸⁸

66. Israel also unilaterally declared a restricted area inside the territory of Gaza along the perimeter fence. Though Israel has officially designated up to 200 m from the fence as "no go" area for heavy machinery, most Palestinian farmers report that, in practice, up to 300 m from the perimeter fence is a "no go" area and up to 1,000 m is designated a "high risk" area.

Movement restrictions in the West Bank

67. The movement of Palestinians in the West Bank, including East Jerusalem, is restricted through a complex system of checkpoints, permits, military roadblocks, settlements, a bypass road system, parallel legal regimes and the West Bank barrier.

⁸³ A/75/199, para. 31.

⁸⁴ A/75/336, para. 24.

⁸⁵ United Nations, Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs in the Occupied Palestinian Territory, "Gaza strip: snapshot", August 2020.

⁸⁶ A/75/336, paras. 25 and 26.

⁸⁷ United Nations Conference on Trade and Development (UNCTAD) input and United Nations, Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs in the Occupied Palestinian Territory, Gaza crossings: movement of people and goods database. Available at www.ochaopt.org/data/crossings.

⁸⁸ A/75/336, para. 38.

Such measures disrupt Palestinians' daily life, with an impact on a range of rights, such as access to education and health care, work and an adequate standard of living.⁸⁹

68. Within the West Bank, Israeli authorities manage or obstruct the movements of Palestinians by employing more than 590 fixed permanent obstacles, such as checkpoints, earth mounds and road gates, as well as the frequent use of flying or temporary checkpoints. Current restrictions remain particularly obtrusive in Hebron and in regions affected by the barrier.⁹⁰

69. The area controlled by the regional council of Israeli settlements in the West Bank (including closed areas allocated for expanding those settlements) was about 542 km² by the end of 2020, representing about 10 per cent of the total area of the West Bank. The confiscated areas for the purposes of military bases and military training locations represent about 18 per cent of the West Bank area. All those areas are off limits to Palestinians.⁹¹

70. The principal obstacle to movement within the West Bank, including East Jerusalem, is the wall that has been deemed illegal by the International Court of Justice, 85 per cent of which is located within the occupied territory,⁹² isolating 10 per cent of the West Bank.

71. Palestinians in the seam zone are obliged to pass through checkpoints to reach other parts of the West Bank. In turn, the entry of goods such as dairy products, meat and eggs, as well as the entry of service providers, is restricted and requires Israeli-issued permits or verbal approval from the Israeli authorities. Family members and friends face similar restrictions on entering, with the result that social and religious functions must be held on the "West Bank side" of the barrier.⁹³

72. Palestinian access to and within the central part of the H2 zone, physically segregated from the rest of the city of Hebron by multiple checkpoints and barriers, is still permitted only to those registered as residents of that area.⁹⁴

73. During the reporting period, UNRWA continued to report access-related incidents in the West Bank which negatively affected the delivery of education, health and relief services to Palestine refugees.⁹⁵

Deprivation of access to natural resources

74. Area C continues to be almost entirely off limits to the Government of Palestine, as well as to producers and investors, even though it contains the most valuable natural resources. Closures, particularly in Gaza, limit Palestinian access to materials and technologies that could promote the efficient use of energy, water and other natural resources.⁹⁶

75. Water resources in the region continue to be extremely limited and are projected to decrease further as climate change drives temperature rise and precipitation declines. In the West Bank, severe water shortages continue to be reported as Israel retains full control of the distribution and extraction of most water resources, including aquifers. More than 77 per cent of the water resources used by Palestinians

⁸⁹ A/74/468, para. 26.

⁹⁰ A/HRC/44/60, para. 78.

⁹¹ Palestinian Central Bureau of Statistics, "The confiscation of land is the reason for Land Day".

⁹² A/HRC/44/60, para. 79.

⁹³ United Nations, Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs in the Occupied Palestinian Territory, "16 years after the International Court of Justice Advisory Opinion".

⁹⁴ United Nations, Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs, *Humanitarian Needs Overview 2021*, p. 17.

⁹⁵ UNRWA input.

⁹⁶ United Nations Environment Programme input.

are extracted from the ground. Palestinians continue to be prevented by Israel from accessing and extracting water from the Jordan River.⁹⁷

76. In Gaza, more than 97 per cent of the water pumped from the coastal aquifer does not meet the water quality standards of WHO, leading to the depletion of groundwater reserves.⁹⁸

77. More than 43 per cent of the land in the West Bank is not available to Palestinians for agricultural use as a result of Israeli settlements. In addition, and because of the regulatory framework applied to land tenure, idle and/or unused lands can be seized from farmers who are unable to bring the land to production.⁹⁹

78. In September 2019, Israeli authorities tightened the access permit regulations, restricting the number of days that farmers are allowed to enter the seam zone. The new regulation seems to redefine the purpose of an agricultural permit and to modify the entire purpose of the permit regime in relation to landowners, denying the right of landowners to freely reach their plots of land.¹⁰⁰

79. The restricted access area that Israel imposes along the perimeter fence surrounding Gaza comprises approximately 35 per cent of its agricultural lands.¹⁰¹ The Israeli military's use of warning fire, land levelling and the spraying of herbicides has inhibited agricultural development in that area.¹⁰²

80. The ability of 4,000 families to access their fishing livelihoods continues to be disrupted by Israeli restrictions on access to the sea off the Gaza coast.¹⁰³ The Oslo Accords entitled Palestinians to fish within 20 nautical miles of the shore, but the reality over much of the past 10 years has been a constricted fishing zone of 3 to 6 nautical miles.¹⁰⁴

81. In addition to exploiting mineral resources in the Occupied Palestinian Territory while simultaneously preventing Palestinians from doing so, Israel has prevented Palestinians from developing their natural gas fields. Natural gas fields in Palestinian waters off-shore of Gaza are estimated to encompass reserves of 1 trillion cubic feet of good quality natural gas. With the closure imposed by Israel on the Gaza Strip since 2007, any access to the gas fields, and the billions of dollars they represent, has become even more difficult.¹⁰⁵

Social and economic conditions in the Occupied Palestinian Territory

82. Israeli policies and practices have led to the physical fragmentation of the Occupied Palestinian Territory and stifled social and economic activity, resulting in the emergence of different economies in the Gaza Strip and the West Bank, including East Jerusalem. The impact of the COVID-19 pandemic has damaged development prospects and led to the further deterioration of the living conditions of the

⁹⁷ Palestinian Central Bureau of Statistics and Palestinian Water Authority, "Joint press release on the occasion of World Water Day", 22 March 2021.

⁹⁸ Ibid.

⁹⁹ International Fund for Agricultural Development (IFAD) input.

¹⁰⁰ A/75/336, para. 39.

¹⁰¹ A/HRC/44/60, para. 64.

¹⁰² United Nations, Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs, *Humanitarian Needs Overview 2021*, p. 33.

¹⁰³ Ibid., p. 15.

¹⁰⁴ A/HRC/44/60, para. 63.

¹⁰⁵ *The Economic Costs of the Israeli Occupation for the Palestinian People: The Unrealized Oil and Natural Gas Potential* (United Nations publication, 2019), p. 18.

Palestinians. There is little doubt that the events of 2020 will negatively shape Palestinian development trajectories for many years to come.¹⁰⁶

83. Approximately 2.45 million Palestinians will require some form of humanitarian assistance (1.57 million in Gaza and 880,000 in the West Bank, including East Jerusalem). Among them, more than 1.5 million Palestinians are affected by problems related to their limited access to basic services.¹⁰⁷

Economic conditions

84. COVID-19 struck a weakened Palestinian economy and compounded the dire economic conditions in the Occupied Palestinian Territory. After three years of economic slowdown and decline in real gross domestic product (GDP) per capita, 2020 was one of the worst years for the Palestinian economy since the recession of 2002, with persistent fiscal deficits, high poverty and unemployment.

85. Customs tax, value added tax and excise tax collected by Israel for the Palestinian Authority represent 65 to 75 per cent of the Palestinian Authority's revenues.¹⁰⁸ The fiscal standoff with Israel over clearance revenues weighed heavily on the Palestinian economy. The impact of this fiscal loss was compounded by the continuously declining levels of international support and the increasing funding needs stemming from the pandemic.

86. Economic activity and livelihoods in Gaza have been further slowed by, among other things, the blockade, internal quarantines and safety measures, aid shortages, a lack of demand for goods and services and a liquidity crunch. The situation was compounded by military escalations in August and September 2020, and by periodic restrictions on the entry of critical materials, including donor-purchased fuel necessary for the operation of Gaza's only power plant.¹⁰⁹

87. In this context, the Palestinian economy witnessed a sharp decline in activity and contracted by 11.5 per cent in 2020 (11.3 per cent in the West Bank and 12.3 per cent in the Gaza Strip).¹¹⁰ This drop in GDP, coupled with the increasing population, yielded a 13.7 per cent decline in per capita GDP (13.4 per cent in the West Bank and 14.8 per cent in the Gaza Strip) compared with 2019, in 2015 prices.¹¹¹

88. The World Bank estimates a growth in the GDP of the Palestinian economy of 3.5 per cent in 2021, reflecting in part the effect from the sharp contraction in 2020 and the uncertainty about the roll-out of COVID-19 vaccinations.¹¹²

89. As a result of the pandemic, compared with the second quarter of 2019, estimates in constant prices showed a 19.5 per cent decline in GDP (20.4 per cent in the West Bank and 15.4 per cent in Gaza), a 21.6 per cent decline in GDP per capita (22.3 per cent in the West Bank and 17.8 per cent in Gaza), a decline in private

¹⁰⁶ Office of the Special Coordinator for the Middle East Peace Process, "Report to the Ad-Hoc Liaison Committee", 23 February 2021, p. 4.

¹⁰⁷ United Nations, Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs, *Humanitarian Needs Overview 2021*, p. 20.

¹⁰⁸ Office of the Special Coordinator for the Middle East Peace Process, "Report to the Ad Hoc Liaison Committee", p. 6.

¹⁰⁹ Office of the Special Coordinator for the Middle East Peace Process, "Socioeconomic report", 10 November 2020, p. 9.

¹¹⁰ Economic and Social Commission for Western Asia (ESCWA) calculations from the Palestinian Central Bureau of Statistics.

¹¹¹ *Ibid.*

¹¹² World Bank, "Economic monitoring report to the Ad Hoc Liaison Committee", 23 February, 2021, para. 23.

consumption of 19.8 per cent and in capital investment of 37.1 per cent, and a decline in the trade deficit of 33.2 per cent.¹¹³

90. GDP rebounded in the third quarter but declined again in the fourth quarter of 2020 by 12.2 per cent compared with the fourth quarter of 2019 (11.8 per cent in the West Bank and 14.1 per cent in Gaza).¹¹⁴

91. The labour force participation rate decreased to 41 per cent in 2020 compared with 44 per cent in 2019 (from 46 to 44 per cent in the West Bank and from 41 to 35 per cent in Gaza), which explains why unemployment rates did not increase significantly during 2020 during the same period. In this context, unemployment increased in 2020 to 26 per cent (16 per cent in the West Bank and 47 per cent in Gaza) from 25 per cent in 2019. Of the total number employed in the Occupied Palestinian Territory, some 14 per cent were absent from their jobs in 2020 as a result of the pandemic.¹¹⁵ Despite the partial easing of pandemic-related restrictions in the third quarter, unemployment continued to rise until it began to decline in the fourth quarter.¹¹⁶

92. Throughout 2020, unemployment was highest among youth (19 to 29 years) who held an associate diploma and above (54 per cent: 69 per cent for women; 39 per cent for men). Around half of wage employees, who comprised 72 per cent of total employment in 2020, were classified under informal employment.

93. Projections by the World Bank based on GDP per capita growth suggest that the poverty rate has been steadily increasing since 2016, reaching 28.9 per cent in 2020, representing approximately 1.4 million Palestinians.¹¹⁷

94. In the West Bank, limited market transactions disrupted food value chains during the first wave of the pandemic. In the Gaza Strip, the lack of agricultural inputs for farmers, herders and fishers have been a major constraint for food production.¹¹⁸ The decline in output prices owing to low demand, coupled with the increase in the price of inputs for agricultural production, prompted farmers and traders to limit production.¹¹⁹

Food security

95. A total of 1.4 million Palestinians in Gaza and another 560,000 in the West Bank, including East Jerusalem, suffer from food insecurity, primarily as a result of high unemployment and poverty.¹²⁰ The erosion of resilience and the capacity to cope with shocks resulted in a net increase of approximately 300,000 newly food-insecure people since 2019. Furthermore, more than 217,000 people, previously considered moderately food-insecure, have become severely food-insecure.¹²¹

96. During the reporting period, UNRWA played a critical role in ensuring that a food security crisis was averted through the provision of in-kind food and cash assistance to over 1.1 million Palestinians, most of whom are refugees in Gaza.¹²²

¹¹³ ESCWA calculations from the Palestinian Central Bureau of Statistics.

¹¹⁴ Ibid.

¹¹⁵ Palestinian Central Bureau of Statistics, "The Labour Force Survey results 2020", February 2021.

¹¹⁶ Palestinian Central Bureau of Statistics, "The Labour Force Survey: (October–December 2020) round (Q4/2020)", February 2021.

¹¹⁷ World Bank, "Economic monitoring report", para. 21.

¹¹⁸ Palestine Food Security Sector, "FSS COVID-19 Crisis Sitrep-05", 19 April 2020.

¹¹⁹ Palestine Economic Policy Research Institute, *Food Security Bulletin*, Issue 22–23 (Winter 2021).

¹²⁰ United Nations, Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs, *Humanitarian Needs Overview 2021*, pp. 32–33.

¹²¹ Ibid., p. 21.

¹²² UNRWA input.

97. As a coping mechanism to ensure basic needs, 67 per cent of families in Gaza and 31 per cent in the West Bank consumed food of less quality or that was less preferred, whereas 57 per cent of families in Gaza and 36 per cent in the West Bank purchased food on credit.¹²³

Water, sanitation and hygiene

98. The water, sanitation and hygiene sector has suffered from chronic vulnerability, mainly as a result of Israeli restrictions on developing the sector's infrastructure, compounded by climate change, and limitations facing the Palestinian Government and local authorities.¹²⁴

99. It is estimated that more than 1.6 million Palestinians are suffering from insufficient access to water, sanitation and hygiene services and will need related humanitarian assistance in 2021.¹²⁵ Some one third of household members in the Occupied Palestinian Territory (excluding East Jerusalem) have access to safely managed water (66.2 per cent access in the West Bank and 4.3 per cent in Gaza).¹²⁶

100. Israeli authorities have prevented Palestinian communities in Area C from connecting to water and sewage networks, and from deploying rain-harvesting cisterns; water, sanitation and hygiene facilities in institutions; and mobile latrines. Increased demolition and confiscation targeting water, sanitation and hygiene structures compounds the vulnerability of affected communities and the coercive environment for their residents.¹²⁷

101. Restrictions on access to water and the depletion of the coastal aquifer make the Palestinian population among the most water-stressed in the world, and the situation is exacerbated by climate change.¹²⁸ Palestinian water consumption per capita doesn't meet the minimum standard of WHO of 100 litres per day.

102. Palestinians must purchase water from the Israeli water company Mekorot, which is allowed to extract water from the West Bank,¹²⁹ and prioritizes its delivery to Israeli settlements.¹³⁰

103. Intensive Israeli monitoring of the Palestinian communities in Area C prevents them from rehabilitating or developing the public and household structures and assets needed to ensure the basic services that satisfy their humanitarian needs.¹³¹

104. Poor water quality further undermines the ability of families to meet basic hygiene needs, which are critical to preventing the transmission of COVID-19.¹³²

105. In Gaza, most water management and desalination systems are non-functioning owing to a lack of equipment and spare parts, since as part of the closure of Gaza imposed by Israel, materials considered as falling under the category of "dual use"

¹²³ World Food Programme (WFP), "WFP Palestine country brief", January 2021, p. 2.

¹²⁴ WASH Cluster-State of Palestine, "The West Bank WASH contingency plan: the West Bank-State of Palestine", February 2021, p. 4.

¹²⁵ United Nations, Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs, *Humanitarian Needs Overview 2021*, p. 37.

¹²⁶ Palestinian Central Bureau of Statistics and Palestinian Water Authority, "Joint press release on the occasion of World Water Day", 22 March 2021.

¹²⁷ WASH Cluster-State of Palestine, "The West Bank WASH contingency plan", pp. 9–10.

¹²⁸ IFAD input.

¹²⁹ Palestinian Central Bureau of Statistics and Palestinian Water Authority, "Joint press release on the occasion of World Water Day".

¹³⁰ WASH Cluster-State of Palestine, "The West Bank WASH contingency plan", p. 11.

¹³¹ *Ibid.*, p. 9.

¹³² United Nations, Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs, *Humanitarian Needs Overview 2021*, p. 37.

have been banned from entering Gaza. Such materials include cement and iron, which are essential to repairing water and sanitation infrastructure. As a result, the water infrastructure in Gaza is on the brink of collapse. Moreover, over 96 per cent of the water from the coastal aquifer – the only natural source of drinking water – is unfit for human consumption because of seawater and sewage contamination.¹³³ As a result, only 10 per cent of Gazans have access to safe drinking water through the public network (down from 98 per cent in 2000).¹³⁴

106. Allocation of water for domestic purposes averages 81.9 litres per person per day in the Occupied Palestinian Territory (85.6 litres in the West Bank and 77.0 litres in Gaza), with a decrease of about 6.0 litres compared with 2019. It is estimated that the per capita share of fresh water is only 22.4 litres per day.¹³⁵

107. Regarding access to sanitation services, nearly 440,000 households in the Occupied Palestinian Territory are not connected to any sewerage system. Approximately 3,700 households therefore discharge untreated sewage into adjacent streams and open areas, creating health and environmental hazards for downstream communities. About 90 per cent of these households are in the West Bank.¹³⁶

108. As a result of power shortages and poor infrastructure, the quality of the treated wastewater produced in the Gaza Strip, and discharged into the Mediterranean Sea, is well below international standards. As a result, more than three quarters of Gaza's beaches are polluted and swimming there is prohibited, while the coastal aquifer is further polluted by poorly treated sewage percolation.¹³⁷

109. Almost 29,000 households across the Occupied Palestinian Territory lack adequate solid waste collection services or are located near unregulated dumping sites. This exposes people to health and environmental hazards, including the mixing of dangerous medical and electronic waste and ordinary household trash. Accumulated trash also attracts animals that are possible vectors of disease and contaminates groundwater resources and agricultural land.¹³⁸

110. At least 144 schools in the West Bank and 34 in Gaza lack sufficient water, sanitation and hygiene facilities (primarily toilets, drinking and handwashing stations) to meet official standards. The same applies to 132 health-care units in the West Bank and 140 in Gaza. The consequent overcrowding of existing facilities has undermined the hygiene practices required to combat the pandemic. In this context, at least seven quarantine centres in Gaza have poor access to potable water and sewage disposal systems.¹³⁹

Health

111. Palestinians living under occupation are exposed to high levels of violence and insecurity, affecting physical and mental health and well-being. Large numbers of injuries resulting from the use of force by Israel against participants in the Great March of Return demonstrations in Gaza during previous years have had a cumulative impact on the health system. This has created long-term needs and disabilities, while

¹³³ A/75/199, para. 30.

¹³⁴ A/HRC/44/60, para. 68.

¹³⁵ Palestinian Central Bureau of Statistics and Palestinian Water Authority, "Joint press release on the occasion of World Water Day".

¹³⁶ United Nations, Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs, *Humanitarian Needs Overview 2021*, p. 38.

¹³⁷ *Ibid.*

¹³⁸ *Ibid.*

¹³⁹ *Ibid.*

the lack of control and the unpredictability of many aspects of life under occupation contribute to stress and anxiety.¹⁴⁰

112. The first confirmed cases of COVID-19 emerged in the Occupied Palestinian Territory in March 2020. The Palestinian Authority imposed severe lockdown restriction and slowed the spread of the virus. It eased the restrictions in June 2020. Consequently, the number of confirmed cases jumped from 19,594 in August 2020 to 270,878 in March 2021, with 2,881 deaths.¹⁴¹

113. Even as the number of infections exceeded the capacity of Palestinians hospitals in March 2021, and though Israel is ranked first globally in per capita vaccinations, Palestinians' access to COVID-19 vaccines has remained limited. Only 8,687 out of 3 million adults were fully vaccinated by the end of March 2021 and 78,379 had had their first shots. Israel has vaccinated Palestinians in East Jerusalem and 120,000 Palestinians working in Israel.¹⁴²

114. In February 2021, a number of international humanitarian organizations stated:

The Palestinian health system has been undermined to such an extent that it lacks the necessary financial or material resources to independently sustain an effective COVID-19 response. Gaza's health system, in particular, is on the brink of collapse. Over 53 years of Israeli military occupation of Palestinian territory, including Israel's prohibitive land closure and blockade of the Gaza Strip, severing the coastal enclave from the West Bank, have all helped produce the Palestinian health system's current ailing condition.¹⁴³

115. The drain of medical staff leaving Gaza to seek better living conditions also compromised the health-care system well before the arrival of the COVID-19 pandemic.¹⁴⁴ Limited health-care resources in Gaza are mainly deployed to sustain basic, but critical, health services. Essential maternal and reproductive health care are underprioritized and inadequately funded, which increases the risk of morbidity and mortality. Compounded stressors, including the blockade, the COVID-19 pandemic and loss of income, led to further deterioration in the humanitarian situation, resulting in a dire psychological impact¹⁴⁵ in which some 198,000 children suffer from severe and moderate mental health conditions.¹⁴⁶

116. Discriminatory planning and zoning policies deter Palestinian communities in East Jerusalem, the H2 zone of Hebron and Area C from establishing health facilities. High-standard East Jerusalem hospitals are isolated from the rest of the West Bank, and patients face unpredictable access and arbitrary restrictions as a result of permit delays and denials.¹⁴⁷

¹⁴⁰ WHO input.

¹⁴¹ United Nations, Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs in the Occupied Palestinian Territory, "COVID-19 emergency situation report, No. 28"; and WHO, Coronavirus Disease 2019 (COVID-19) in the Occupied Palestinian Territory database, available at <https://app.powerbi.com/view?r=eyJrIjojODJlYWM1YTEtNDIxZS00OTFILThkZjktNDIxODY2OGQ3NGJkIiwidCI6ImY2MTBjMG13LWJkMjQtNGIzOS04MTBiLTNkYzI4MGFmYjU5MCIslmMiOjhh9>.

¹⁴² Our World in Data, Coronavirus (COVID-19) Vaccinations database, available at <https://ourworldindata.org/covid-vaccinations?country=PSE>.

¹⁴³ Oxfam and others, "Free and equitable access and distribution of COVID-19 vaccine in OPT", joint letter on vaccine roll-out for Palestinians, 18 February 2021.

¹⁴⁴ UNCTAD input.

¹⁴⁵ United Nations Population Fund (UNFPA) input.

¹⁴⁶ United Nations, Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs, *Humanitarian Needs Overview 2021*, p. 27.

¹⁴⁷ WHO input.

117. The fragile state of the health system has necessitated the transfer of patients to Israel, Jordan and Egypt. Such transfers were repeatedly suspended for various reasons during the reporting period, including the outbreak of COVID-19 and the suspension of coordination between the Palestinian Authority and Israel.¹⁴⁸

118. During the COVID-19 pandemic, Israel continued to impose its permits regime on Palestinian patients, their companions and health-care workers. During the fourth quarter of 2020, 71 per cent of patients who applied for Gaza permits were approved, 27 per cent of applications were approved after the date of hospital appointment and 2 per cent of permit requests were denied. Only 44 per cent of patient companion permit applications were approved.¹⁴⁹

119. Attacks against health care continued in the Occupied Palestinian Territory. WHO recorded 59 such attacks in 2020. These attacks included obstruction of the delivery of health-care services, including 12 incidents of obstruction of access of ambulance crews to persons who had been fatally wounded. Thirty-six incidents involved physical violence against health workers, ambulances and health facilities, and six incidents involved the detention and/or arrest of health-care workers, ambulance crews, patients and patient companions, including the arrest of paramedics for distributing COVID-19 awareness materials.¹⁵⁰

120. On 15 April 2020, Israeli security forces raided and closed a testing clinic in the densely populated neighbourhood of Silwan under the pretext that testing kits were provided by the Palestinian Authority. The delay in ensuring an adequate response to the spread of the pandemic suggests discriminatory treatment of Palestinian communities in East Jerusalem.¹⁵¹

Education

121. Education in the Occupied Palestinian Territory had been in a critical state prior to the pandemic, largely as a result of occupation-related policies and practices, including restrictions on access to education, attacks on students and staff and the destruction of education infrastructure.¹⁵² The COVID-19 pandemic further exacerbated this situation, increasing the number of children in need of education assistance from 416,000 at the end of 2019 to 504,000 at the end of 2020.¹⁵³

122. As the pandemic prompted the closures of schools and universities, the Palestinian Ministry of Education launched an e-learning portal, while universities independently developed their own portals and resources for e-learning. Obstacles to e-learning mainly involve infrastructure, weak Internet networks, power outages (especially in Gaza) and insufficient awareness among students and their families of the importance of e-learning,¹⁵⁴ as well as a lack of 3G mobile data service access in Gaza.

123. Moreover, online material and equipment for students, especially those in Gaza, East Jerusalem and Area C, are inaccessible to students in these areas. Only 30 per cent of households in Gaza have a computer.¹⁵⁵ These challenges are further

¹⁴⁸ World Bank, "Economic monitoring report", para. 9.

¹⁴⁹ ESCWA calculation based on data from WHO, Health Cluster Bulletin: Occupied Palestinian Territory, December 2020.

¹⁵⁰ WHO input.

¹⁵¹ A/75/199, para. 14.

¹⁵² UNICEF input.

¹⁵³ United Nations, Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs, *Humanitarian Needs Overview 2021*, p. 34.

¹⁵⁴ United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization (UNESCO), "COVID-19 in Palestine: how distance learning will help student continue education", 12 April 2020.

¹⁵⁵ Gisha, "Remote learning", 13 October 2020.

exacerbated by the need to reach students with special needs and to provide psychosocial support to students affected by COVID-19.¹⁵⁶

124. In 2020, the United Nations Children’s Fund’s Education Cluster recorded 119 education-related incidents affecting some 7,000 students, including the firing of tear gas canisters on school premises and/or students while commuting to schools in Area C and the H2 zone. Children most affected are those who must walk long distances to reach their schools, and often have to cross one or two checkpoints.¹⁵⁷

125. During the reporting period, UNRWA documented six separate incidents in which live ammunition, plastic-coated metal bullets, tear gas canisters or other weapons landed in its schools in the West Bank. One of these incidents occurred at the girls’ school in the Jalazone camp during the school day, affecting 300 students.¹⁵⁸

The gendered impact of the occupation on women and girls

126. The 54-year occupation and 14-year closure in Gaza have specifically gendered impacts, resulting in unique harms. The vulnerabilities of and gender-specific risks and harms to women and girls are augmented by sociocultural norms and practices and exacerbated by overlapping factors stemming from the COVID-19 pandemic and its ensuing lockdowns.¹⁵⁹

127. The pervasive protection crisis created by the prolonged occupation for Palestinian women and girls is coupled with and compounded by gender inequality and gender-based violence, including child and forced marriage,¹⁶⁰ intimate partner violence, curbs on accessing the public sphere, limitations on decision-making power and an inability to access basic social services.¹⁶¹ For example, early marriage is commonly used by families as a coping mechanism to reduce expenses, and is the most significant cause of school dropout among girls, followed by concerns related to incidents with Israeli forces and settlers.¹⁶²

128. The COVID-19 pandemic has increased these protection concerns, as violence against women and girls in the private and online spheres has increased but access to protective or supportive services remains limited.¹⁶³ Notably, while the Palestinian authorities reported a decrease in cases related to domestic violence, civil society organizations confirm that incidents increased throughout the Occupied Palestinian Territory.¹⁶⁴ This may be attributed to the limited ability of women to report abuse owing to lockdown-related movement restrictions.¹⁶⁵

129. Palestinian women and girls suffer from use of force and abuse, including physical, verbal and psychological violence and harassment, by Israeli security forces

¹⁵⁶ UNESCO input.

¹⁵⁷ UNICEF input.

¹⁵⁸ UNRWA input.

¹⁵⁹ United Nations Entity for Gender Equality and the Empowerment of Women (UN-Women) input.

¹⁶⁰ UNFPA, “Child marriage in the occupied Palestinian territory”, November 2016.

¹⁶¹ Eileen Kuttab and Brian Heilman, *Understanding Masculinities: Results from the Men and Gender Equality Survey (IMAGES)-Middle East and North Africa – Palestine* (Institute of Women’s Studies, UN-Women and Promundo, 2017).

¹⁶² United Nations, Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs, *Humanitarian Needs Overview 2021*, p. 35.

¹⁶³ UN-Women input.

¹⁶⁴ Women’s Centre for Legal Aid and Counselling, “COVID-19 and women’s rights in Palestine”, 2020; Zeudi Liew, *COVID-19 Protection Needs Identification and Analysis in the State of Palestine* (UNICEF, 2020); and United Nations, Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs in the Occupied Palestinian Territory, “A crisis within a crisis: fighting gender-based violence during COVID-19”, *Humanitarian Bulletin*, March–May 2020.

¹⁶⁵ UN-Women input.

and settlers.¹⁶⁶ A number of cases illustrate that Palestinian women are particularly targeted by settler violence in their homes during the day, when men are usually absent. Pregnant women and women who have recently given birth may suffer additional injury or other consequences from such attacks.¹⁶⁷

130. Night raids and arrests by Israeli soldiers have continued during the pandemic, causing added stress for women. Women are reported as spending a significant amount of time sanitizing their homes after raids, and worrying about the health and risk of exposure of family members to COVID-19, owing to a lack of hygiene protocols by the Israeli soldiers.¹⁶⁸

131. Women's employment had been severely affected amid the pandemic. This has been especially true for the agriculture sector, where Palestinian women are disproportionately represented.¹⁶⁹ However, women with disabilities are the most affected, in both the formal and informal sectors, owing to the rising rate of unemployment, which hinders their ability to meet their basic needs.¹⁷⁰

132. The pandemic, combined with existing gender norms, increased demands on women and girls to care for the sick and the elderly, increased housework obligations and added the increased burden of having to homeschool children.¹⁷¹ The pandemic has also exacerbated risks for pregnant and lactating women, who are now less likely to attend routine appointments owing to the lockdowns and fear of infection.¹⁷²

133. Women's access to life-saving health care has been negatively affected by Israeli policies during the pandemic. Access to medical care was restricted to Jerusalemites, and commuting to the West Bank was not allowed.¹⁷³

III. Occupied Syrian Golan

134. The Secretary-General continues to reaffirm the validity of Security Council resolution 497 (1981), in which the Council decided that the Israeli decision to impose its laws, jurisdiction and administration in the occupied Syrian Golan Heights was null and void and without international legal effect.

135. Approximately 50,000 people live in the occupied Syrian Golan, about half of whom are Israeli settlers living in 34 illegal settlements. The Syrian population of nearly 27,000 lives in five villages that form approximately 5 per cent of the territory of the occupied Syrian Golan. Moreover, they face significant discriminatory building restrictions imposed by Israel, which leads to strained infrastructure and overcrowded conditions.¹⁷⁴

136. The Economic and Social Council, in its resolution 2021/4, reaffirmed that the construction and expansion of Israeli settlements and related infrastructure in the Occupied Palestinian Territory, including East Jerusalem, and the occupied Syrian

¹⁶⁶ A/75/199, para. 42.

¹⁶⁷ A/75/376, para. 21.

¹⁶⁸ Women's Centre for Legal Aid and Counselling, "COVID-19 and women's rights in Palestine", p. 18.

¹⁶⁹ Ibid., "The culture of impunity: Israel's ongoing violations against Palestinian women during COVID-19", May 2020, p. 9.

¹⁷⁰ UN-Women input.

¹⁷¹ UNFPA and others, "Impact of the COVID-19 outbreak and lockdown on family dynamics and domestic violence in Palestine", June 2020, p. 6.

¹⁷² United Nations, Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs, *Humanitarian Needs Overview 2021*, p. 28.

¹⁷³ Women's Centre for Legal Aid and Counselling, "The culture of impunity", p. 2.

¹⁷⁴ A/74/357, para. 71.

Golan, were illegal and constituted a major obstacle to economic and social development. The continued establishment and expansion of Israeli settlements in the Occupied Palestinian Territory and the occupied Syrian Golan amount to the transfer by Israel of its own civilian population into the territory it occupies, which is prohibited under international humanitarian law.

137. On 14 June 2020, Israel approved the building of a new settlement in the occupied Syrian Golan, which, once built, will accommodate 300 families. Earlier reports by an Israeli media outlet noted that the Government of Israel was planning to settle 250,000 Israeli settlers in the occupied Syrian Golan over the next 30 years by building thousands of housing units, along with transport and tourism projects.¹⁷⁵

138. Israel continued to employ discriminatory practices against Syrians in the occupied Syrian Golan, particularly in terms of access to land and water. Financial incentives are provided to Israeli settlers to facilitate access to housing, while the Syrians face increasing difficulties in obtaining building permits. The new Israeli land registration system imposed new regulations that require specific documentation to prove ownership. Most Syrians have old ownership documents that do not conform to the new system and face the prospect of not being able to prove ownership of their land.¹⁷⁶

139. The Government of the Syrian Arab Republic reported that residents had been threatened with the expropriation of their land if they did not accept property documents issued by the Israeli Land Registry.¹⁷⁷

140. Serious concerns are arising from a wind turbine project that will be implemented by an Israeli energy company on farming land in three Syrian villages. According to the Government of the Syrian Arab Republic, the project will be built on 6,000 dunums of agricultural land belonging to Syrian citizens. The project would physically surround Syrian villages, limiting their ability to expand, and would have a serious detrimental effect on the environment and health of those living nearby.¹⁷⁸ The Syrian Arab Republic also noted that Israeli authorities had arrested individuals who had protested the installation of the wind turbines and that some had been targeted with legal action.¹⁷⁹

141. Changes to the curricula currently taught in schools in the occupied Syrian Golan are perceived to aim at influencing young students and detaching them from their Syrian identity, and imposing a new ideology that is inconsistent with their local culture. It is also meant to facilitate their integration into Israeli society, including serving in the Israeli army.¹⁸⁰

142. The importance of agricultural employment has been declining over the last decade, constrained by the loss of the Syrian market, which can no longer buy apples and other produce from the occupied Syrian Golan. Most households, however, have kept a foothold in small-scale farming, often as a secondary activity. The cultural attachment to land and agriculture reportedly remains high. One in five Syrian citizens in the occupied Syrian Golan now works in construction. Many are employed in Israeli settlements and in Israel, sometimes on a seasonal basis.¹⁸¹

¹⁷⁵ [A/75/199](#), para. 70.

¹⁷⁶ *Ibid.*, para. 71.

¹⁷⁷ [A/75/328](#), para. 11.

¹⁷⁸ [A/75/199](#), para. 72.

¹⁷⁹ [A/75/328](#), para. 16.

¹⁸⁰ [A/75/199](#), para. 73.

¹⁸¹ International Labour Office, document ILC.109/DG/APP, paras. 148 and 149.

IV. Conclusion

143. The protracted Israeli occupation of the Palestinian territory and the occupied Syrian Golan continues to have a detrimental effect on the living conditions of the Palestinian and Syrian populations, as well as on social and economic development in the occupied territories. The negative impact of the occupation and the Israeli policies and practices is multilayered, and their cumulative repercussions affect the future of the populations living under occupation.

144. Current social and economic trends in the Occupied Palestinian Territory indicate that the attainment of the Sustainable Development Goals will be out of reach if there are no drastic positive changes to the existing conditions. Israeli-imposed restrictions, the expansion of the illegal settlements and other practices not only prevent development in the occupied territories and hamper efforts to combat the COVID-19 pandemic, but also cause humanitarian crises that necessitate the diversion of scarce national and international resources from development to immediate relief. The Palestinian financial crisis and the fragmentation of the Palestinian territory have resulted in a fragmented economy that is dependent on Israel and foreign aid.

145. Moreover, the COVID-19 pandemic and its economic fallout have compounded the social and economic situation and resulted in more adverse living conditions for Palestinians. Its effects on the Palestinian people are multiplied as a result of long-standing Israeli policies and practices. The Palestinian health system had already been on the brink of collapse, particularly in Gaza, before the pandemic.

146. The closure imposed on Gaza, other restrictive Israeli measures, recurrent escalations and declining donor funding have created a severe situation in Gaza that requires immediate action by the international community.

147. Prospects for the Palestinian economy are negative, should the current status quo persist. The funding crisis facing UNRWA and the decline in donor aid is another factor that only exacerbates the already precarious conditions of hundreds of thousands of Palestinians.

148. Israel continues to employ policies and practices that are contrary to relevant Security Council resolutions, international humanitarian law and international human rights law. Some of these practices may be considered discriminatory and others may amount to the forcible transfer or collective punishment of protected persons, which would be a grave breach of the Fourth Geneva Convention and is prohibited under international law.

149. Adherence to international law is imperative, ensuring that no party enjoys impunity and securing justice and peace for all those living in the region, including Palestinians and Syrians living under occupation. The United Nations maintains its long-standing position that lasting and comprehensive peace can be achieved only through a negotiated two-State solution. The Secretary-General will continue to ensure that the United Nations works towards the establishment of an independent, democratic, contiguous and viable Palestinian State, living side by side in peace with a secure Israel, with Jerusalem as the capital of both States, consistent with relevant Security Council resolutions and international law.



General Assembly Economic and Social Council

Distr.: General
8 June 2022

Original: English

General Assembly

Seventy-seventh session

Item 58 of the preliminary list*

Permanent sovereignty of the Palestinian people in the Occupied Palestinian Territory, including East Jerusalem, and of the Arab population in the occupied Syrian Golan over their natural resources

Economic and Social Council

Substantive session of 2022

Agenda item 16

Economic and social repercussions of the Israeli occupation on the living conditions of the Palestinian people in the Occupied Palestinian Territory, including East Jerusalem, and the Arab population in the occupied Syrian Golan

Economic and social repercussions of the Israeli occupation on the living conditions of the Palestinian people in the Occupied Palestinian Territory, including East Jerusalem, and of the Arab population in the occupied Syrian Golan

Note by the Secretary-General

Summary

In its resolution [2021/4](#), entitled “Economic and social repercussions of the Israeli occupation on the living conditions of the Palestinian people in the Occupied Palestinian Territory, including East Jerusalem, and the Arab population in the occupied Syrian Golan”, the Economic and Social Council requested the Secretary-General to submit to the General Assembly at its seventy-fifth session, through the Economic and Social Council, a report on the implementation of that resolution. In addition, through its resolution [2021/5](#) entitled “Situation of and assistance to Palestinian women”, the Council requested the Secretary-General to include information on the gender-specific impact of the occupation and the progress made in the implementation of that resolution in that report. The Assembly, in its resolution [76/225](#) entitled “Permanent sovereignty of the Palestinian people in the Occupied Palestinian Territory, including East Jerusalem, and of the Arab population in the occupied Syrian Golan over their natural resources”, also requested the Secretary-General to submit a report to it, through the Council, at its seventy-sixth and seventy-seventh sessions. The present report, which was prepared by the Economic and Social Commission for Western Asia (ESCWA), has been submitted in compliance with these resolutions.

* [A/77/50](#).



The report covers persistent Israeli practices and policies, particularly those that are in violation of international humanitarian law and international human rights law and that affect the social and economic conditions of the people living under its military occupation, including the gendered impact of the occupation.

ESCWA would like to express its appreciation for the contributions from the Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations, the International Labour Organization, the Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs, the United Nations Conference on Trade and Development, the United Nations Environment Programme, the United Nations Human Settlements Programme, the United Nations Industrial Development Organization, the United Nations Office on Drugs and Crime, the United Nations Register of Damage Caused by the Construction of the Wall in the Occupied Palestinian Territory, the United Nations Relief and Works Agency for Palestine Refugees in the Near East, the Office of the Special Coordinator for the Middle East Peace Process, the United Nations Entity for Gender Equality and the Empowerment of Women (UN-Women), the World Food Programme and the World Health Organization.

I. Introduction

1. The Economic and Social Council, in its resolution [2021/4](#), expressed concerns about the economic and social repercussions of the Israeli occupation on the living conditions of the Palestinian people in the Occupied Palestinian Territory, including East Jerusalem, and of the Arab population in the occupied Syrian Golan. The Council's resolution [2021/5](#) highlighted the gender-specific repercussions in this regard. The General Assembly, in its resolution [76/225](#), demanded that Israel, the occupying Power, cease the exploitation, damage, cause of loss or depletion and endangerment of natural resources in the Occupied Palestinian Territory, including East Jerusalem, and in the occupied Syrian Golan.

2. The present note provides information on relevant developments in this regard during the reporting period from 1 April 2021 to 31 March 2022.

II. Occupied Palestinian Territory

Israeli practices and policies in the Occupied Palestinian Territory

3. During the reporting period, Israel continued policies and practices such as settlement expansion, the demolition of Palestinian structures and homes, closures, access and movement restrictions, actions that have raised concerns over the possible disproportionate use of force, and other aspects of its protracted occupation that have had a severe humanitarian, economic, social and political impact on Palestinians and their ability to exercise their fundamental human rights.

4. There continue to be concerns with regard to the compliance of these policies and practices with obligations of Israel under international humanitarian law and international human rights law.¹

5. Throughout 2021, Israel intensified its repression of Palestinians expressing dissent against the occupation and settlement expansion in particular, raising concerns with regard to respect for Palestinians' right to life and physical integrity as well as their other civil and political rights. Civil society actors and organizations documenting and seeking accountability for Israeli violations of international law, accusing Israel of apartheid and advocating for international sanctions continued to be targeted by Israeli authorities with arbitrary arrest and detention, as well as movement and other restrictions.²

6. Israeli military orders in the West Bank allow the army authorities to declare as "unlawful", "hostile" or "terrorist" virtually any association and to detain for incitement anyone showing "sympathy" or "support" for such "unlawful" entities, including the singing of slogans. These broad restrictions carry a significant risk of criminalizing the lawful exercise of freedom of expression, peaceful assembly and association. As of March 2020, Israel had banned as "unlawful" 430 organizations, including all major political parties, such as the ruling group Fatah.³

7. In a concerning development, in July 2021, two organizations learned that the Israeli military commander for the West Bank had declared them as "unlawful associations". On 19 October 2021, the Minister for Defense of Israel designated six Palestinian human rights and humanitarian organizations, namely the Addameer Prisoner Support and Human Rights Association, Al-Haq, the Bisan Center for Research and Development, Defense for Children International – Palestine Section,

¹ See [E/2021/73](#), [A/76/333](#), [A/76/336](#) and [A/HRC/49/85](#).

² [A/76/333](#), paras. 5 and 22.

³ *Ibid.*, para. 18.

the Union of Agricultural Work Committees and the Union of Palestinian Women's Committees, as "terrorist organizations" under the Counter-Terrorism Law of 2016. The organizations have worked for decades to promote human rights and provide critical humanitarian assistance in the Occupied Palestinian Territory and are key partners of the United Nations. Some reasonings for the designations referred to entirely peaceful and legitimate human rights activities. The decisions, which were amended after some weeks, state that the organizations are linked to the Popular Front for the Liberation of Palestine and that they had obtained financial resources that reached the latter. As of the end of the reporting period, the Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Human Rights (OHCHR) was not aware of any credible evidence to support these accusations.⁴

8. On 27 May 2021, the Human Rights Council decided to establish an ongoing independent international commission of inquiry mandated to investigate in the Occupied Palestinian Territory, including East Jerusalem, and in Israel all alleged violations of international humanitarian law and all alleged violations and abuses of international human rights law leading up to and since 13 April 2021, and all underlying root causes of recurrent tensions, instability and protraction of conflict, including systematic discrimination and repression based on national, ethnic, racial or religious identity.⁵

Use of force

9. Despite its obligations under international law to protect Palestinian civilians, Israeli security forces⁶ continued to employ measures and practices that raised serious concerns about excessive use of force, in some cases possibly amounting to arbitrary deprivation of life, including extrajudicial execution. International human rights law and international humanitarian law are concurrently applicable in the Occupied Palestinian Territory, namely, Gaza and the West Bank, including East Jerusalem and the occupied Syrian Golan. This includes the application of the Geneva Convention relative to the Protection of Civilian Persons in Time of War (Fourth Geneva Convention), which is binding upon Israel as the occupying Power.⁷

10. During the reporting period, Israeli military and security forces killed 351 Palestinians, including 22 girls, 64 boys and 46 women, and injured another 20,772 Palestinians, including 519 women and 3,432 children (312 of them girls).⁸

11. A three-fold increase in fatalities in the West Bank, including East Jerusalem, a five-fold increase in injuries and a seven-fold increase in live ammunition injuries were recorded in 2021 compared with 2020.⁹

12. The reporting period also witnessed a sharp increase in apparent excessive use of force by Israeli security forces in the context of demonstrations, especially during the escalation of hostilities in May 2021. Israeli security forces used live ammunition to suppress mass demonstrations held across the West Bank in solidarity with Palestinians in East Jerusalem and Gaza.¹⁰ OHCHR documented numerous instances of possible unwarranted or disproportionate use of force against Palestinian men,

⁴ [A/HRC/49/25](#), para. 36.

⁵ [A/HRC/RES/S-30/1](#).

⁶ The term "Israeli security forces" encompasses all security and military institutions of Israel.

⁷ [A/75/336](#), para. 4, and [A/76/333](#), para. 11.

⁸ United Nations, Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs in the Occupied Palestinian Territory, Data on Casualties database, available at www.ochaopt.org/data/casualties (accessed 31 March 2022).

⁹ United Nations Relief and Works Agency for Palestine Refugees in the Near East (UNRWA) input; UNRWA, Protection and Neutrality Department Database, 2021.

¹⁰ [A/76/333](#), para. 13.

women and children gathering to pray or protest or chant, or who merely raised the Palestinian flag in different areas of East Jerusalem, and against journalists covering the events.¹¹

13. In many cases, the use of force by the Israeli security forces in response to attacks or alleged attacks by Palestinians against Israelis did not appear to comply with the requirements of legality, necessity and proportionality, resulting in unlawful killings, including possible extrajudicial executions.¹² In at least three instances in which Israeli security forces alleged that they had shot and killed Palestinians in response to an attack or an alleged attack, OHCHR reported that there was no indication that an attack had been carried out or even attempted, and available evidence pointed to an unwarranted use of lethal force resulting in killing.¹³

14. Lack of accountability for the unlawful use of force remained pervasive. Amid a lack of transparency on the opening, status and closure of investigations concerning the killings of Palestinians, according to the Human Rights Committee, investigations have appeared not to meet the minimum standards of transparency, independence, promptness, thoroughness and credibility.¹⁴

15. The period from 10 to 21 May 2021 saw the gravest escalation of armed hostilities between Israel and Palestinian armed groups in Gaza since 2014, during which 281 Palestinians were killed, including 71 children, and 10,000 Palestinians were injured, including 548 children and 491 women. As in previous escalations, many of the injuries may lead to permanent or long-term disabilities. Nine Israelis, including two children, four women and one soldier, and three foreign nationals, were killed, and hundreds of Israelis were injured during the hostilities.¹⁵

16. Although the Israeli security forces stated that they had targeted members of armed groups and their military infrastructure, and at times had adopted precautions, including warnings, Israeli attacks resulted in extensive civilian deaths and injuries as well as large-scale destruction and damage to civilian objects and civilian infrastructure. While Israel claims that many of the structures were hosting armed groups or being used for military purposes, OHCHR reported that no evidence in that regard was seen.¹⁶ This raises concerns about compliance by Israel with the principles of distinction and proportionality under international humanitarian law.¹⁷

Detention and ill-treatment

17. Since 1967, the Israeli authorities have detained more than 800,000 Palestinians, bringing many of them before military courts where the vast majority of cases end in conviction.¹⁸

18. Most Palestinian detainees and prisoners continue to be held inside Israel. The transfer of protected persons, including those accused of offences, to the territory of the occupying Power is prohibited by international humanitarian law.¹⁹

¹¹ Ibid., para. 15.

¹² Ibid., para. 11.

¹³ Ibid.

¹⁴ A/76/333, para. 16.

¹⁵ United Nations, Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs, *Humanitarian Needs Overview 2022: OPT* (2021), p. 13; and United Nations, Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs in the Occupied Palestinian Territory, Data on Casualties database, available at www.ochaopt.org/data/casualties (accessed 31 March 2022).

¹⁶ A/76/333, para. 7.

¹⁷ A/76/299-S/2021/749, para. 41.

¹⁸ A/76/94-E/2021/73.

¹⁹ A/76/333, para. 26.

19. According to UNRWA, in 2021, the number of Palestinian detentions (5,648) increased by 23 per cent from 2020 (4,582), marking the third-highest year on record.²⁰

20. On 10 March 2022, 4,400 Palestinians were held as “security prisoners” in Israeli prisons, including 160 children and 33 women. Included among them were 490 Palestinians held under administrative detention by Israeli authorities without charge or trial.²¹

21. The practice of administrative detention by Israeli authorities remains of serious concern. According to the Committee against Torture, administrative detention for inordinately long periods may amount to a form of ill-treatment.²²

22. There are also serious concerns that there has not been genuine accountability regarding reported cases of possible torture and ill-treatment of Palestinians in Israeli detention.²³ According to the Public Committee against Torture in Israel, of the more than 1,300 torture complaints submitted to the Ministry of Justice of Israel since 2001, only two criminal investigations have been opened. Both were closed during the reporting period. Furthermore, the validation by the Attorney General of Israel of methods of interrogation used by the Israel Security Agency raises concerns about its disregard for the absolute and non-derogable prohibition of torture under international human rights law.²⁴

23. Documented cases of arbitrary arrest and ill-treatment in detention, as well as the administrative detention of children, remain of serious concern. Testimonies from 64 children held in Israeli military detention indicated the persistence of patterns of ill-treatment during initial arrest, transfer, interrogation and detention, and that most children were denied access to a lawyer or parent before and during their interrogation, were compelled to sign documents in Hebrew (a language many do not understand), and were not adequately informed about their rights.²⁵

24. Palestinian women were subjected to various forms of physical and psychological ill-treatment throughout the detention process, including humiliating interrogation techniques, prolonged stress positions and sleep deprivation, and/or were held under severe conditions.²⁶

Destruction and confiscation of property and infrastructure

25. Demolitions and forced evictions as referred to below entail numerous human rights violations, exacerbate the coercive environment and raise concerns about the risk of forcible transfer. They also continue to raise concern about compliance with international humanitarian law provisions that are binding on the occupying Power, including the prohibition of the destruction of property and institutions dedicated to education.

26. Israeli zoning and planning policies in East Jerusalem and Area C, which constitute 60 per cent of the West Bank, are restrictive, discriminatory and considered incompatible with requirements under international law. Policies that allocate land almost exclusively to Israeli settlements or to the military and that facilitate the growth of Israeli settlements make it virtually impossible for Palestinians to obtain

²⁰ UNRWA input; UNRWA Protection and Neutrality Department Database, 2021.

²¹ Addameer, Statistics database, available at www.addameer.org/index.php/statistics/2022/03 (accessed on 31 March 2022).

²² CAT/C/ISR/CO/4, para. 17, and CAT/C/ISR/CO/5, paras. 22–23.

²³ A/76/333, para. 30.

²⁴ A/HRC/49/25, para. 30.

²⁵ A/76/333, paras. 32–33.

²⁶ United Nations Entity for Gender Equality and the Empowerment of Women (UN-Women) input.

building permits, compelling many to build without them, thereby risking eviction, house demolition and displacement.

27. On 28 October and 1 November 2021, Israeli authorities advanced plans for some 6,000 housing units for Palestinians in the occupied East Jerusalem neighbourhood of Isawiyah and some 1,300 housing units for Palestinians in Area C.²⁷

28. In Area C alone, there are over 15,500 pending demolition orders against Palestinian structures.²⁸ In occupied East Jerusalem, at least a third of all Palestinian homes lack Israeli-issued building permits, potentially placing more than 100,000 residents at risk of displacement.²⁹

29. During the reporting period, Israeli authorities demolished 813 structures, including 273 homes and 145 donor-funded structures, and confiscated 222 structures, including 48 donor-funded structures.³⁰

30. In 2021, a total of 140 donor-funded structures, including residential and livelihood structures, were demolished or seized, marking a 30 per cent increase compared with 2020.³¹ A total of 673 structures funded by the European Union were demolished or seized by Israeli authorities between 2016 and 2021.³²

31. Amendment 116 to the Planning and Building Law of Israel resulted in forcing homeowners to demolish their own property to avoid paying fines of NIS 300,000 (roughly \$95,000) if they failed to do so, a sum far beyond the means of a typical Palestinian household.³³ The number of structures that were demolished by their owners in East Jerusalem in 2021 constituted 55 per cent of the total demolitions, compared with 23 per cent in 2017.³⁴

32. Furthermore, 53 per cent of structures were demolished or seized without prior warning compared with an average of 30 per cent during the period 2018–2020, and 10 per cent during the period 2016–2017.³⁵

33. Some 16,250 housing and commercial units sustained some degree of damage in Gaza during the May 2021 escalation of hostilities.³⁶ This included the destruction of 1,663 housing units, which aggravated the chronic and increasing shortage in housing units to meet population growth in one of the most densely populated areas in the world.³⁷

²⁷ Office of the United Nations Special Coordinator for the Middle East Peace Process, “Security Council briefing on the situation in the Middle East, including the Palestinian question (as delivered by UN Special Coordinator Wennesland)”, 30 November 2021.

²⁸ See A/75/86-E/2020/62, para. 2; and United Nations, Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs, *Humanitarian Needs Overview 2022*, p. 51.

²⁹ United Nations, Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs in the Occupied Palestinian Territory, “High numbers of demolitions: the ongoing threats of demolition for Palestinian residents of East Jerusalem”, *Humanitarian Bulletin*, December 2017.

³⁰ United Nations, Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs in the Occupied Palestinian Territory, *Data on Demolition and Displacement in the West Bank* database, available at www.ochaopt.org/data/demolition (accessed on 31 March 2021).

³¹ United Nations, Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs, *Humanitarian Needs Overview 2022*, p. 14.

³² *Ibid.*; and European Union, “One year report on demolitions and seizures in the West Bank, including East Jerusalem”, 14 February 2021, pp. 6–7.

³³ UNRWA input.

³⁴ European Union, “One year report on demolitions and seizures”, p. 8.

³⁵ *Ibid.*, p. 9.

³⁶ Economic and Social Commission for Western Asia (ESCWA) estimations; and United Nations, Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs in the Occupied Palestinian Territory, “Response to the escalation in the oPt: situation report, No. 2”, 28 May–3 June 2021.

³⁷ United Nations, Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs, *Humanitarian Needs Overview 2022*, pp. 13 and 55.

34. In October, Israeli bulldozers and tanks entered Gaza and levelled at least 13 dunums of land, resulting in the destruction of crops and agricultural infrastructure.³⁸

Settlement activities and settler violence

35. The establishment and expansion of Israeli settlements in the Occupied Palestinian Territory have a severe impact on the rights of Palestinians and amount to the transfer by Israel of its own civilian population into the territory it occupies, which is prohibited under international humanitarian law.³⁹

36. It is estimated that there are 678,800 Israeli settlers in the West Bank living in 170 settlements and 146 outposts, of which 227,100 are in East Jerusalem.⁴⁰

37. Israel continues to unlawfully consolidate settlement blocs with networks of bypass roads and the wall, endangering the viability of a two-State solution and resulting in a severe impact on the rights of Palestinians.⁴¹

Settler violence

38. Continuing attacks and intimidation by Israeli settlers, carried out with impunity, are concerning components of the coercive environment that places Palestinians at further risk of forced displacement.⁴²

39. During the reporting period, settler violence reached its highest level since 2017. There were 502 incidents of settler violence in the West Bank, including East Jerusalem, compared with 339 incidents in the previous period. The severity of attacks also intensified: of particular concern were incidents of armed settlers carrying out attacks inside Palestinian communities, sometimes in the proximity of Israeli security forces, and of security forces attacking Palestinians alongside settlers.⁴³ Concern has also been expressed by human rights organizations that there is a “policy of tacit support” for settler violence against Palestinians.⁴⁴

40. During the reporting period, 4 Palestinians were killed and 1,722 were injured as a result of settler violence. Between 2008 and March 2022, settler attacks resulted in the deaths of 226 Palestinians and the injury of 5,252.⁴⁵

41. By September 2021, settlers had burned 338 olive trees and had cut, uprooted or vandalized another 149.⁴⁶

³⁸ A/76/333, para. 46.

³⁹ A/76/94, para. 34.

⁴⁰ European Union, “Six-month report on Israeli settlements in the occupied West Bank, including East Jerusalem”, 22 November 2021.

⁴¹ A/HRC/49/85.

⁴² United Nations, Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs, *Humanitarian Needs Overview 2022*, p. 14

⁴³ A/HRC/49/85.

⁴⁴ Yesh Din, “The impact of Israeli settlements in the West Bank on the human rights of Palestinians”, April 2021, pp. 8–9.

⁴⁵ United Nations, Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs in the Occupied Palestinian Territory, Database, available at www.ochaopt.org/data (accessed on 31 March 2022).

⁴⁶ Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations (FAO) input; and Premiere Urgence, “How settler violence and access restrictions jeopardize the Palestinian olive harvest in 2021”, 21 December 2021.

Coercive environment and population displacement

42. There is continued concern that a combination of Israeli policies and practices in Area C, East Jerusalem and the city of Hebron, such as the demolition and threat of demolition of homes and schools and the destruction of livelihoods, the denial of service infrastructure, the restriction of access to farming and grazing land, settler violence and poor law enforcement in response thereto and the revocation of residency rights, among other things, have created a coercive environment, which may force Palestinians to leave their places of residence, placing them at risk of forcible transfer.⁴⁷

43. During the reporting period, 728 Palestinians were displaced in the West Bank, including 365 children and 182 women, due to demolitions.⁴⁸

44. Revoking residency is another measure used by the Government of Israel to reduce the Palestinian population in the city. Specifically, since 1967, more than 14,500 Palestinians have had their Jerusalem residency revoked by the Israeli authorities.⁴⁹

45. Approximately 18 per cent of the West Bank has been designated by Israel as closed “military firing zones” for the purpose of military training. Palestinian communities in such areas are among the most vulnerable, their rights gravely restricted, and continue to face frequent demolitions and confiscation of their property and livestock. Documented cases of transfers of land from firing zones to settlements exacerbate these concerns.⁵⁰

Movement and access restrictions and closures

46. Israel continued to restrict freedom of movement across the Occupied Palestinian Territory, primarily through the permit regime regulating passage between Gaza and the West Bank, including East Jerusalem, and abroad, in addition to movement within the West Bank itself. Such restrictions continued to disrupt the daily life of Palestinians, profoundly affecting other rights, including the rights to work, to an adequate standard of living, to education and to health.⁵¹

Gaza closures

47. Since June 2007, the closures in Gaza, which affect the movement of goods and people, have continued to undermine the civil, political, economic, social and cultural rights of Palestinians in Gaza and affect all areas of Palestinian life, and have further exacerbated the dire humanitarian situation and collapsing infrastructure.⁵²

48. Israeli officials have expressly cited hostile acts from Gaza as grounds for imposing such measures. In view of their punitive nature in respect of persons who have not committed any offence, the blockade, which has entered its fifteenth year, may amount to collective punishment,⁵³ which is prohibited under international law⁵⁴

⁴⁷ [A/76/336](#), para. 37.

⁴⁸ United Nations, Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs in the Occupied Palestinian Territory, Database, available at www.ochaopt.org/data.

⁴⁹ United Nations Human Settlements Programme (UN-Habitat) input; and United Nations, Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs in the Occupied Palestinian Territory, “High numbers of demolitions”.

⁵⁰ [A/76/336](#), paras. 38 and 57.

⁵¹ [A/76/333](#), para. 43.

⁵² [A/76/360](#), para. 16.

⁵³ See, for example, [A/76/333](#), para. 38.

⁵⁴ [A/75/199](#), para. 31.

and has continued to have an extremely harmful impact on the rights of the entire civilian population.

49. Until late summer and fall 2021, apart from humanitarian and medical cases, virtually no Palestinians were allowed through Bayt Hanun (Erez) crossing. However, restrictions were eased during the last part of the year and the number of transits increased dramatically. The Rafah crossing has remained open since the most recent ceasefire, barring three days in late August.⁵⁵

50. Inside Gaza, Israeli authorities continued to unilaterally enforce a restricted area along the fence. Common practices used by the Israeli security forces to enforce the restrictions include the use of live ammunition against Palestinian farmers, the levelling of farmland and damage to property with bulldozers.⁵⁶

51. Along the coast, the Israeli Navy continued to enforce unilaterally imposed access restrictions, including through the use of live ammunition against Gaza fishers, while conducting patrol operations, often within authorized fishing zones. Boats have been confiscated and a number of boats and fishing equipment have been damaged.⁵⁷

Movement restrictions in the West Bank

52. The complex system of movement restrictions applied by Israeli authorities has effectively fragmented the West Bank and turned it into an archipelago of isolated islands. It has increased the travel time between all major Palestinian population centres by a median of 51 per cent.⁵⁸ The movement of Palestinians in the West Bank, including East Jerusalem, is restricted through a complex system of checkpoints, permits, military roadblocks, settlements, a bypass road system, parallel legal regimes and the West Bank “barrier”. Approximately 85 per cent of the current 712 km planned route of the barrier lies within the West Bank rather than along the 1949 Armistice Line (the Green Line), isolating 10 per cent of the West Bank, contrary to the 2004 advisory opinion of the International Court of Justice, which states that “the construction of the wall being built by Israel, the occupying Power, in the Occupied Palestinian Territory, including in and around East Jerusalem, and its associated regime, are contrary to international law”.⁵⁹

53. This route, which separates some Palestinian communities and farming land from the rest of the West Bank, contributes to the fragmentation of the Occupied Palestinian Territory and adds a layer of distress to the livelihoods of farmers, fishers, small business owners and daily workers.

54. Movement restrictions are often imposed on Palestinians living nearby in connection with settlements. The area controlled by the regional council of Israeli settlements in the West Bank (including closed areas allocated for expanding those settlements) was about 542 km² by the end of 2020, representing about 10 per cent of the total area of the West Bank. The confiscated areas for the purposes of military bases and military training locations represent about 18 per cent of the West Bank area. All those areas are off limits to Palestinians.⁶⁰ The barrier and the attendant permit regime also restrict Palestinians who hold West Bank identification cards from

⁵⁵ UNRWA input.

⁵⁶ [A/76/333](#), para. 46.

⁵⁷ *Ibid.*, para. 47.

⁵⁸ United Nations Conference on Trade and Development (UNCTAD) input.

⁵⁹ See [A/ES-10/273](#) and [A/ES-10/273/Corr.1](#).

⁶⁰ Yesh Din, “The impact of Israeli settlements in the West Bank”, p. 24.

accessing specialized services at the main Palestinian referral hospitals in East Jerusalem.⁶¹

55. UNRWA reported 31 access-related incidents between April and December 2021 owing to Israeli restrictions on access to Palestine refugee communities in the West Bank.⁶²

Depletion, endangerment and exploitation of natural resources

56. Area C constitutes more than 60 per cent of the area of the West Bank and is the richest in terms of the availability of natural resources. However, Palestinians face severe restrictions on planning, building and access to natural resources in this area and any investment or economic activity requires Israeli permits. The Gaza blockade and closures limit Palestinian access to materials and technologies that could promote the efficient use of energy, water and other natural resources.

Water

57. Palestinians face an acute water problem, which has become more intensified as a result of population growth and restrictions imposed by Israel on Palestinians' access to water resources in the Occupied Palestinian Territory.

58. Since 1967, Israel has placed all water resources in the Occupied Palestinian Territory under its military control and prohibited Palestinians from constructing new water installations or maintaining existing installations without a military permit.⁶³

59. Water resources in the region continue to be extremely limited and are projected to decrease further as climate change drives increases in temperature and precipitation declines. In the West Bank, severe water shortages continue to be reported, as Israel retains full control of the distribution and extraction of most water resources, including aquifers. More than 77 per cent of the water resources used by Palestinians are extracted from the ground. Palestinians continue to be prevented by Israel from accessing and extracting water from the Jordan River.

60. In addition, Israeli authorities treat Israeli settlers and Palestinians residing in the West Bank unequally with regard to their access to water. Israeli settlements have had a significant impact on Palestinians' access to their natural resources, especially as a result of the diversion of water resources, including the seizure of water wells by Israeli settlers. Israeli settlements have taken over, destroyed or blocked Palestinian access to natural water resources. Israeli settlements have also appropriated dozens of Palestinian water springs, assisted by the Israeli military.⁶⁴

61. The coastal aquifer remains the only source of ground water in Gaza. Its yearly sustainable yield is estimated to be up to 450 million m³ in Israel and a mere 55 million m³ in Gaza. The aquifer has been depleted by overextraction and contaminated by sewage and seawater infiltration.

Agriculture

62. Agriculture has been an integral driver of the Palestinian economy, and Area C has been considered the West Bank's green basket. Nevertheless, land confiscation; the demolition of homes and productive assets; restrictions on the movement,

⁶¹ United Nations, Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs, *Humanitarian Needs Overview 2022*, p. 17; and World Health Organization (WHO), "Right to health barriers 2021", 2021.

⁶² UNRWA input.

⁶³ A/HRC/48/43; and Jerusalem Media and Communication Centre, *Israeli Military Orders in the Occupied Palestinian West Bank: 1967–1992*, 2nd ed. (1993).

⁶⁴ A/HRC/48/43, para. 31.

maintenance and rehabilitation of productive assets; and Israeli control over water resources have undermined this sector.⁶⁵

63. Access by Palestinians to over two thirds of their agricultural resources in the West Bank remains severely restricted. The construction of the barrier has caused the destruction of a large part of Palestinian fertile agricultural land and has limited access to about 170,000 dunums of that land (i.e. about 10 per cent of the total cultivated area in the West Bank).⁶⁶

64. Israeli military orders have rendered approximately 40 km² of land used for olive cultivation in the “seam zone” between the barrier and the Green Line as closed areas, and another 18 km² adjacent to settlements and outposts as “prior coordination areas”.⁶⁷

65. On average, olive farmers are granted access to their groves during the harvest and ploughing season for a period lasting from 1 to 7 days, whereas it is estimated that 133 days of work per year are necessary to adequately maintain an olive grove. This undermines olive and olive oil production, and negatively affects both the quality and quantity of harvests.⁶⁸

66. Palestinians are only allowed to use 621,000 out of 2.02 million dunums of pasture areas in the West Bank for the grazing of ruminants, increasing pressure and overgrazing in accessible areas.⁶⁹

67. The Israeli-imposed “buffer zone” in Gaza renders 35 per cent of agricultural land off-limits to Palestinians. Moreover, more than 27,000 dunums of orchards, vegetable crops and greenhouses, and more than 450 livestock and poultry farms, were fully or partially destroyed during the escalation of hostilities in May 2021,⁷⁰ at an estimated cost of \$40 million to \$45 million.⁷¹

Minerals

68. Israel continues to exploit the mineral resources of the West Bank and has not issued quarrying permits for Palestinian companies in Area C, where mineral reserves are estimated to be worth \$30 billion, since 1994.⁷²

69. Around 86 per cent of the mineral-rich Jordan Valley and the Dead Sea lies under the de facto jurisdiction of the regional councils of 37 Israeli settlements, of which 6 are allowed to exploit Palestinian fertile lands and extract minerals for agriculture and tourism in that area.⁷³

Energy

70. Israel severely limits the access of Palestinians in the Occupied Palestinian Territory to energy reserves located within their land and coastal waters. This includes

⁶⁵ FAO input; information provided to ESCWA.

⁶⁶ Information provided to ESCWA; and the Palestinian agricultural sectoral strategy, available at <https://www.moa.pna.ps/uploads/STRATEGIES/16326559770.pdf> (in Arabic).

⁶⁷ FAO input.

⁶⁸ FAO input; Premiere Urgence, “How settler violence and access restrictions”.

⁶⁹ FAO input citing the Palestinian agricultural sectoral strategy.

⁷⁰ United Nations, Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs, *Humanitarian Needs Overview 2022*.

⁷¹ FAO input; and World Bank, *Gaza Rapid Damage and Needs Assessment: June 2021* (Washington, D.C., 2021).

⁷² Orhan Niksic, Nur Nasser Eddin and Massimiliano Cali, *Area C and the Future of the Palestinian Economy* (Washington, D.C., World Bank, 2014), p. 13.

⁷³ A/HRC/22/63, para. 36.

oil reserves in Area C of the West Bank estimated at about 1.525 billion barrels and natural gas off the Gaza coast worth an estimated \$2.57 billion.⁷⁴

Fisheries

71. The Gaza fisheries sector has been suffering from access restrictions and depleted fish stocks. In addition, the sector has suffered from water pollution due to the release of untreated sewage water into the sea from the facilities damaged during the recent escalation and due to a lack of electricity for treatment plants, though improvement has been reported in this regard.⁷⁵

72. In 2021, the total fish catch decreased by 7 per cent compared with 2020, as Israel prevented all maritime access for a total of 20 days in April and May, after which it allowed limited access. Fish farming, which had improved over the past six years, was also negatively affected by the shortage of fish feed stemming from the closure of all Gaza crossings during the military escalation in May 2021.⁷⁶

Social and economic conditions in the Occupied Palestinian Territory

73. In 2022, an estimated 2.1 million Palestinians, including 933,994 children, in the Occupied Palestinian Territory are in need of humanitarian assistance; 2.4 per cent are people with disabilities. The situation remains one of a protracted protection crisis, exacerbated by the May 2021 escalation, the closures imposed on Gaza, the coronavirus disease (COVID-19) pandemic and a deepening financial and fiscal crisis within the Palestinian economy.⁷⁷

Economic situation

74. The Palestinian economy has been suffering from the cumulative effects of the occupation, and witnessed a steep decline in 2020 as a result of COVID-19 pandemic and other global economic turbulence.

75. The system of restrictive policies imposed by Israel on Palestinian economic activity, resources and land since 1967 has systematically stripped the Palestinian economy of many elements that are vital for its healthy operation, rendering it highly vulnerable to internal and external shocks. The multilayered restrictive system continues to deny Palestinian control over natural resources and egress, which constrains access to regional and international markets and limits policy space. The Palestinian economy thus continued to operate well below its full potential during the reporting period, with high dependence on Israel and external transfers.

76. The productive base of the Palestinian economy continues to shrink. The combined size of the manufacturing and agriculture sectors fell from 24.1 per cent of gross domestic product (GDP) in 2008 to 18.6 per cent in 2021.⁷⁸ Aid and remittances have become almost the exclusive source of foreign exchange inflows that stimulate consumption in Gaza, particularly in the light of limited exports and weak investment activity. It can be safely assumed that the Palestinian Government and the expenditures of UNRWA in Gaza, in addition to informal flows to the de facto

⁷⁴ *The Economic Costs of the Israeli Occupation for the Palestinian People: The Unrealized Oil and Natural Gas Potential* (United Nations publication, 2019).

⁷⁵ FAO input. Damage is estimated as the replacement value of totally or partially damaged physical assets.

⁷⁶ FAO input; and Department of Fisheries in Ministry of Agriculture, Gaza.

⁷⁷ United Nations, Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs, *Humanitarian Needs Overview 2022*, pp. 6 and 12; and United Nations Children's Fund (UNICEF), "Humanitarian action for children: State of Palestine", 2022, p. 1.

⁷⁸ ESCWA calculations taken from State of Palestine, Palestinian Central Bureau of Statistics, "Press report: preliminary estimates of quarterly national accounts (fourth quarter 2021)", March 2022.

authorities, amounted to almost 100 per cent of Gaza's GDP at certain points, which kept its economy relatively afloat despite restrictions.⁷⁹

77. The Palestinian economy witnessed a rebound, but did not recover fully, after the relaxation of COVID-19-related measures. The economy grew by 7 per cent in 2021, but remained below its pre-pandemic level in 2019.⁸⁰

78. While this partial rebound reflected in part the sharp contraction in 2020 (11.3 per cent), it was mainly driven by the West Bank's economy (7.8 per cent) while Gaza's economy increased by 3.4 per cent in 2021 following a contraction of 12.6 per cent in the preceding year. Gaza's contribution to the overall Palestinian economy fell from 23 per cent in 2005 to 17 per cent in 2021. Its GDP per capita remained 52 per cent lower than it had been in 2005.⁸¹

79. The relative growth was driven by an increase in total consumption by 77.3 per cent, a 14.2 per cent increase in investments,⁸² and an increase in the number of Palestinians working in Israel and the settlements from 125,000 in 2020 to 146,000 in second quarter of 2021.⁸³

80. The construction sector recorded the highest value-added growth at 8 per cent. Industry activity grew by 7 per cent and services activity by 4 per cent during 2021. In contrast, agricultural activity witnessed a decrease of 3 per cent.⁸⁴

81. The May 2021 escalation resulted in the destruction of about 2 per cent of Gaza's capital stock,⁸⁵ an estimated \$290 million to \$380 million in direct damages, and \$105 million to \$190 million in economic losses.⁸⁶ A rapid damage needs assessment indicated that approximately 8,000 households would fall into poverty in the ensuing months.⁸⁷

82. Unemployment rates among labour force participants in the Occupied Palestinian Territory remained high at 26 per cent in 2021, and total labour underutilization reached 34 per cent. The unemployment rate for women reached 43 per cent compared with 22 per cent for men. The disparity in unemployment rates between the West Bank (16 per cent) and Gaza (47 per cent) reflects the particularly difficult economic situation in the latter due to the 15-year closure of Gaza and recurrent Israeli military escalations.⁸⁸

83. It should be noted that, without employment in Israel and the settlements, unemployment in the West Bank would increase by about 16 percentage points, closer to current levels in Gaza.⁸⁹

84. Projections based on GDP per capita growth suggest that the poverty rate has been constantly increasing since 2016, reaching 28.9 per cent in 2020. This represents approximately 1.4 million people living in poverty in 2020. The World Bank estimates

⁷⁹ World Bank, "Economic monitoring report to the Ad Hoc Liaison Committee", 17 November 2021, p. 17.

⁸⁰ State of Palestine, Palestinian Central Bureau of Statistics, "Press report: preliminary estimates of quarterly national accounts".

⁸¹ Ibid.

⁸² Ibid.

⁸³ Ibid.

⁸⁴ State of Palestine, Palestinian Central Bureau of Statistics, "Press report on economic forecasts for 2022", 29 December 2021, p. 2.

⁸⁵ World Bank, "Palestinian territories economic update", October 2021.

⁸⁶ World Bank, *Gaza Rapid Damage and Needs Assessment*.

⁸⁷ UNICEF, "Humanitarian action for children", p. 2.

⁸⁸ State of Palestine, Palestinian Bureau of Statistics, "Press release on the results of the Labor Force Survey 2021", 2021, p. 1.

⁸⁹ TD/B/EX (71)/2, para. 7.

that the May 2021 escalation pushed poverty in Gaza to 59.3 per cent in 2021, 2.3 per cent higher than the COVID-19-induced peak in 2020 and 16.3 per cent higher than in 2016–2017.⁹⁰

Food security

85. Poverty and unemployment are two key drivers of food insecurity in the Occupied Palestinian Territory.⁹¹ Some 1.75 million Palestinians need food assistance, 1.3 million of whom are in Gaza.⁹² The closure of Gaza, as well as the increase in unemployment and poverty, have had a negative impact on the status of food security in Gaza.⁹³

86. Prior to the May 2021 escalation, the number of food-insecure people had increased from 1.7 million in 2018 to 2.0 million people across the Occupied Palestinian Territory in early 2021.⁹⁴ Some 62 per cent of the population of Gaza (or 1.4 million people) were food insecure in May 2021 following the escalation.⁹⁵

87. Despite the divergence between the West Bank and Gaza, where 40 per cent and 60 per cent, respectively, were moderately or severely food insecure in 2020,⁹⁶ food security in both regions has been deteriorating, with nearly 2 in 10 people suffering from severe food insecurity in 2020.⁹⁷

88. The war in Ukraine has had an impact on commodity prices and the food supply chain in the Occupied Palestinian Territory and will result in the further deterioration of an already difficult situation. The scale and scope of this impact will depend greatly on further developments in the crisis.⁹⁸

Water, sanitation and hygiene

89. More than 1.35 million Palestinians across the Occupied Palestinian Territory face public health risks associated with insufficient access to water, sanitation and hygiene services and are in immediate need of humanitarian assistance. During the reporting period, Israeli authorities demolished 42 water, sanitation and hygiene structures in the West Bank.⁹⁹

90. The average consumption of water by Palestinians in the Occupied Palestinian Territory is around 70 litres a day per person. Approximately 420,000 Palestinians in the West Bank consume 50 litres a day, less than a quarter of the average Israeli consumption of about 300 litres per person.¹⁰⁰ Some 42.3 per cent of households rely

⁹⁰ World Bank, “Economic monitoring report”, p. 8.

⁹¹ World Food Programme (WFP) input.

⁹² United Nations, Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs, *Humanitarian Needs Overview 2022*, p. 39.

⁹³ WFP, “Gaza emergency food security assessment: following the escalation of hostilities and unrest in the State of Palestine in May 2021”, June 2021, p. 6.

⁹⁴ Ibid.

⁹⁵ World Bank, *Gaza Rapid Damage and Needs Assessment*, p. 50.

⁹⁶ Palestine Economic Policy Research Institute, “Socioeconomic and Food Security Survey 2020: State of Palestine”, 2020.

⁹⁷ WFP input; and Palestine Economic Policy Research Institute, “Socioeconomic and Food Security Survey 2020”.

⁹⁸ WFP input.

⁹⁹ West Bank Protection Consortium, “Palestinian access to water and attacks on wash structures in Area C”, April 2021; and United Nations, Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs in the Occupied Palestinian Territory, Data on Demolition and Displacement in the West Bank database, available at www.ochaopt.org/data/demolition.

¹⁰⁰ A/HRC/48/43.

on previously stored drinking water and 10.7 per cent of households receive water on credit or borrow funds to afford water.¹⁰¹

91. In Gaza, recurrent military escalations, the closure of Gaza and restrictions of the imports of water, sanitation and hygiene items have had negative effects on infrastructure and delivery. Moreover, the coastal aquifer, which is the main water source in Gaza, is virtually depleted, with more than 97 per cent of its water unfit for human consumption.¹⁰²

92. Around 90 per cent of households in Gaza have to buy water from purification or desalination plants, which costs between 10 to 30 times more than piped water. Some 40 per cent rely on previously stored drinking water and 34 per cent receive water on credit or borrow funds.¹⁰³ Less than 4.3 per cent of households in Gaza have improved drinking water on the premises that is free of *E. coli* and available when needed.¹⁰⁴ During the May escalation, 400,000 people were affected by irregular access to piped water.¹⁰⁵

93. A total of 28.4 per cent of households in the West Bank reported waste accumulation for more than three days in their area, compared with 10.2 per cent in Gaza.¹⁰⁶

94. In addition, 79.1 per cent of households in the West Bank and 90.6 per cent of households in Gaza reported that their daily activities had been affected by flooding, resulting in damages to their shelters. Most of the Palestine refugee camps have dilapidated sewage and water networks and poor storm water drainage that pose public health risks for camp residents.¹⁰⁷

Health

95. Approximately 1.5 million Palestinians, including some 1.0 million in Gaza, require health-related humanitarian assistance in 2022.¹⁰⁸

96. When the COVID-19 epidemic broke out, the Palestinian health-care system was already fragile, disconnected, undergoing de-development and lacking human, financial and material resources as a result of the occupation, fragmentation and the closure.¹⁰⁹ The diversion of resources in response to the pandemic and the number of

¹⁰¹ United Nations, Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs in the Occupied Palestinian Territory, 2021 Multi-Sectoral Needs Assessment database, available at www.ochaopt.org/data/2021/msna.

¹⁰² United Nations, Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs, *Humanitarian Needs Overview 2022*, p. 47.

¹⁰³ United Nations, Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs in the Occupied Palestinian Territory, 2021 Multi-Sectoral Needs Assessment database, available at www.ochaopt.org/data/2021/msna.

¹⁰⁴ UNICEF, “State of Palestine 2019/2020”, Multiple Indicator Cluster Survey database. Available at <https://mics.unicef.org/surveys>.

¹⁰⁵ ESCWA estimations; and United Nations, Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs in the Occupied Palestinian Territory, “Response to the escalation in the oPt: situation report, No. 2”.

¹⁰⁶ United Nations, Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs in the Occupied Palestinian Territory, 2021 Multi-Sectoral Needs Assessment database, available at www.ochaopt.org/data/2021/msna.

¹⁰⁷ Ibid.

¹⁰⁸ United Nations, Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs, *Humanitarian Needs Overview 2022*, p. 35.

¹⁰⁹ WHO, document A74/22 **Error! Hyperlink reference not valid.**; Medical Aid for Palestinians, “Dealing with death and distress: the impact of COVID-19 on the mental health of Palestinian healthcare workers”, July 2021, pp. 1–3.

injuries requiring treatment in the West Bank and Gaza in May 2021 further increased strained scarce health-care resources.¹¹⁰

97. Moreover, in 2021, WHO recorded 233 attacks on the health-care sector across the Occupied Palestinian Territory, including during the May escalation of hostilities. A total of 106 health-care workers were injured, and 57 ambulances and 123 facilities were damaged.

98. During the May 2021 escalation, one primary care facility was destroyed and 12 per cent of primary care facilities and 30 per cent of hospitals sustained damages.¹¹¹

99. Gaza continues to suffer from a lack of essential medical technology such as radiotherapy facilities and nuclear medicine scanning (e.g. PET scanning), in addition to a long-standing shortage of drugs and supplies. Over the course of 2021, 41 per cent of essential medicines and 27 per cent of essential medical disposables had less than a month of supplies remaining.¹¹²

100. In terms of human resources, insufficiencies exist for several medical specialties, whereas the density of nurses and midwives, 2.4 per 1,000 people, falls below the WHO suggested threshold of 3.0.¹¹³

101. This forces thousands of Gazans to seek essential health-care outside the Strip, which is hindered by the Israeli permit regime. During 2021, 36 per cent of applicants for permits experienced delays, and had received no definitive response by the date of their appointments. Of these permits, 27 per cent were for children under the age of 18 years and 47 per cent were for female patients. With regard to patient companions, only 40.4 per cent of applications were approved.¹¹⁴

102. Palestinians in the rest of the West Bank are also subjected to a permit regime to access health services in East Jerusalem. In 2021, more than 10 per cent of total patient applications and 16 per cent of total companion applications were denied.¹¹⁵

103. Resources in the West Bank are depleted as a result of the need to duplicate services, which have to be scattered across as wide a geographical distribution as possible to provide health care to as many Palestinians as possible, owing to restrictions on freedom of movement.¹¹⁶

104. Stunting among Palestinian children under the age of 5 has been increasing. In 2019/20, 8.7 per cent were significantly below average height for their age, compared with 7.4 per cent in 2014. The level of severe acute malnutrition rose from 1.8 per cent of children under 5 in 2014 to 2.4 per cent in 2019/20. Similarly, global acute malnutrition has increased among children aged 1 to 2 years old. For children aged 12 to 17 months, the rate increased from 7.8 per cent in 2014 to 10.5 per cent in 2019/20, whereas the rates for children aged 18 to 23 months rose from 8.2 per cent to 12.4 per cent. Of children aged 2 to 17, 12.3 per cent (14.6 per cent of boys and 9.8 per cent of girls) have at least one functional challenge.¹¹⁷

¹¹⁰ WHO input.

¹¹¹ Ibid.

¹¹² Ibid.

¹¹³ WHO input citing information provided by the Palestinian Ministry of Health and the Palestinian National Institute of Public Health (2020).

¹¹⁴ WHO input.

¹¹⁵ Ibid.

¹¹⁶ Yotam Rosner and Ghada Majadli, *Responsibility Shirked: Israel and the Right to Health in the Occupied West Bank during COVID-19* (Physicians for Human Rights, 2021), p. 27.

¹¹⁷ UNICEF, "State of Palestine 2019/2020", Multiple Indicator Cluster Survey database, p. 16.

105. High levels of exposure to violence and insecurity for Palestinians living under occupation affects their physical and mental health and well-being. Severe injuries have a cumulative impact on long-term needs and disabilities, while the lack of control and the unpredictability of many aspects of life under occupation contribute to increasing stress and anxiety.¹¹⁸

106. In this context, children are particularly vulnerable to experiencing high rates of mental distress, and have significant risks of post-traumatic stress disorder, depression, anxiety, behavioural problems and attention deficit hyperactivity disorder, as well as functional impairment. Notably, 82 per cent of adolescents aged 13 to 19 in Gaza reported overall poor to very poor levels of mental well-being,¹¹⁹ and 63 per cent of persons with disabilities lacked accessibility to mental health and psychosocial support services.¹²⁰

Education

107. In 2022, 600,000 Palestinians might miss access to education and need humanitarian assistance. Of those, 74 per cent live in Gaza, 56 per cent are women and some 13,400 are children with disabilities.¹²¹

108. Households in the West Bank reported safety concerns in relation to their children's education, such as travelling to or studying in education facilities. Concerns include the firing of tear gas on schools and students, the detention of students at school by Israeli security forces, delays at checkpoints and military presences around schools, in addition to violence and harassment while travelling to school.¹²²

109. Between 1 April and 31 December 2021, UNRWA documented five separate incidents in which live ammunition, plastic-coated metal bullets, tear gas canisters or other weapons landed in its schools in the West Bank.¹²³

110. More than 50 schools in the West Bank face the risk of demolition, which, if such a risk materialized, would jeopardize the learning process for more than 5,000 Palestinian children attending these institutions.¹²⁴

111. In Gaza, 331 educational facilities were damaged during the May 2021 escalation with an estimated cost of \$3.5 million.¹²⁵

112. School closures due to COVID-19 and the May 2021 escalation resulted in an early end to the school year for 1.3 million children, who ended up losing at least three months of education.¹²⁶

113. The frequent and long electricity outages also have a major impact on the school performance of children, who are enrolled in both online and in-person learning

¹¹⁸ WHO input.

¹¹⁹ United Nations, Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs, *Humanitarian Needs Overview 2022*, p. 30.

¹²⁰ WHO input.

¹²¹ United Nations, Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs, *Humanitarian Needs Overview 2022*, p. 18.

¹²² UNRWA input.

¹²³ UNRWA input.

¹²⁴ Save the Children, "Number of displaced Palestinian children at a four-year high as demolitions in West Bank continue", 3 February 2021.

¹²⁵ United Nations, Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs, *Humanitarian Needs Overview 2022*, p. 13.

¹²⁶ *Ibid.*, p. 18.

systems in Gaza.¹²⁷ This is compounded by Internet outages and damage to streets and school infrastructures.¹²⁸

114. In the 2020/21 academic year, the student per class rate was 41.20, 39.56 and 21.65 at UNRWA, public and private schools, respectively. This high-density rate (in view of the overcrowded classes) affected the efficiency and quality of education in Gaza. The digital gap between Gaza and the world, particularly with the adoption of the online learning modality in schools, was increased by Israeli restrictions on the import of technological devices to Gaza, limiting the ability of Palestinians to shift to online learning.¹²⁹

115. In Gaza, the non-attendance rate for basic education is 2.8 per cent and increases to 21.5 per cent in secondary classes.¹³⁰ Economic conditions constitute the main obstacle for children to attending school, followed by the educational environment and reasons related to security.¹³¹

Impact of the occupation on women and girls

116. Women and girls across the Occupied Palestinian Territory continued to disproportionately suffer during the reporting period. During 2021, 48 Palestinian women were killed by Israeli forces across the Territory.¹³²

117. Women and girls in Gaza experienced several forms of harm and deprivation during the May 2021 escalation, increasing their vulnerabilities. Shelters and UNRWA schools were not well equipped to serve as shelters and receive those who were displaced or to address the unique needs of women and girls.¹³³

118. Instances of gender-based violence and violence against children were exacerbated by increasing family/household tensions, the limited availability of basic necessities, forced displacement and a lack of safe shelter. Local service providers faced several obstacles in providing necessary services and placed their own lives at risk.¹³⁴ Three gender-related killings were reported within the month following the end of the escalation.¹³⁵

119. During the May escalation, elderly women and those with disabilities, as well as prisoners, those with serious illnesses and pregnant and lactating women were at particularly high risk and they did not have access to emergency shelters or services.

120. In the aftermath of the escalation, a minority of women reported to ESCWA that they had access to humanitarian assistance (food parcels, dignity kits and hygiene supplies, financial assistance and in-kind aid), and many stated that aid agencies had not consulted with them about their needs.¹³⁶

121. During the reporting period, house demolitions in the West Bank resulted in the displacement of 302 girls, 275 women, 275 men and 353 boys.¹³⁷ House demolitions

¹²⁷ Al Mezan Center for Human Rights, "Fact sheet on obstacles to accessing education in the Gaza Strip", 2021, p. 6.

¹²⁸ Occupied Palestinian Territory Education Cluster, "Report on damage in educational facilities: Gaza Strip", July 2021, p. 4.

¹²⁹ Al Mezan Center for Human Rights, "Fact sheet on obstacles", p. 7.

¹³⁰ UNICEF, "State of Palestine 2019/2020", Multiple Indicator Cluster Survey database, p. 9.

¹³¹ Al Mezan Center for Human Rights, "Fact sheet on obstacles", p. 8.

¹³² State of Palestine, Palestinian Bureau of Statistics, "H.E. Dr. Awad, highlights the reality of the Palestinian women on the eve of International Women's Day", 7 March 2022.

¹³³ *Gendered Needs during the May 2021 Conflict in the Gaza Strip (E/ESCWA/CL2.GPID/2021/TP.6)*.

¹³⁴ Ibid.

¹³⁵ Global Protection Cluster, "Occupied Palestinian Territory protection analysis update", August 2021.

¹³⁶ *Gendered Needs during the May 2021 Conflict in the Gaza Strip (E/ESCWA/CL2.GPID/2021/TP.6)*.

¹³⁷ European Union, "One year report on demolitions and seizures", p. 6.

further burden women and girls who have traditional gender norms by exacerbating their role as caretakers and persons in charge of domestic responsibilities. Internal data collected by UNRWA in the West Bank show that home incursions and demolitions have a disproportionate impact on women and girls, with female- and child-headed households experiencing greater protection risks, and families with pregnant women, infants and young children, elderly persons, and persons with disabilities are in need of greater mental health and psychosocial support as a result of exposure to violence and trauma.¹³⁸

122. According to the Palestinian Central Bureau for Statistics, in 2021, 184 women¹³⁹ were detained or arrested by Israeli forces, including prominent activists and human rights defenders.¹⁴⁰ The occupation continues to hamper the work of Palestinian civil society, including women's rights organizations, some of which were raided or labelled as "terrorist organizations" during the reporting period.¹⁴¹

123. Increasing insecurity has had a negative impact on the rights of Palestinian women and girls to freedom of movement and security of the person. For example, some 7,500 nuclear families across the Occupied Palestinian Territory (12 per cent and 47 per cent of women and girls in Gaza and the West Bank, respectively), reported that they intentionally avoided areas near settlements, checkpoints and restricted areas because they felt unsafe.¹⁴²

III. Occupied Syrian Golan

124. The Secretary-General continues to reaffirm the validity of Security Council resolution 497 (1981), in which the Council decided that the Israeli decision to impose its laws, jurisdiction and administration in the occupied Syrian Golan Heights was null and void and without international legal effect.

125. In 2020, 26,300 Syrian citizens lived in five villages comprising approximately 5 per cent of the territory of the occupied Syrian Golan, while the same number of Israeli settlers are spread over 35 settlements.¹⁴³ The Syrian population, of which more than 80 per cent have refused to accept Israeli citizenship, continue to suffer its discriminatory policies and practices.¹⁴⁴

126. Consecutive Israeli Governments have sought to significantly increase the number of settlers living in the occupied Syrian Golan by offering incentives for Israelis to reside there, including granting tracts of land for housing and commercial agricultural development and offering financial incentives that may reach \$12,000. The settler population has thus steadily increased in recent years.¹⁴⁵

¹³⁸ UNRWA input.

¹³⁹ State of Palestine, Palestinian Bureau of Statistics, "H.E. Dr. Awad, highlights the forty-sixth annual commemoration of Land Day in statistical figures", 30 March 2022.

¹⁴⁰ Global Protection Cluster, "Occupied Palestinian Territory protection analysis update" **Error! Hyperlink reference not valid.**; A/76/333, paras. 21 and 28; and OHCHR, "Israel must safeguard human rights defenders in Occupied Palestinian Territory and within its borders – UN expert", 11 August 2021.

¹⁴¹ A/76/333, para. 25, and A/HRC/49/25, para. 36.

¹⁴² United Nations, Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs in the Occupied Palestinian Territory, "OPT MSNA key analysis findings". Available at <https://docs.google.com/presentation/d/18fuv35AMjhtliZpAQkUZBNcBb56d5N8D/edit#slide=id.p26>.

¹⁴³ International Labour Organization (ILO), document ILC.109/DG/APP/2021, para. 135

¹⁴⁴ Al-Marsad, "Report on Israel's violations of the International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights", 31 January 2022, p. 3

¹⁴⁵ Ibid., p. 4.

127. A plan to add 7,000 housing units to the town of Katzrin by 2026 is reportedly currently being prepared as part of a programme seeking to double the settler population by the end of the decade. The plan also calls for the creation of two new settlements in current open spaces, new solar energy projects and industrial, commercial and tourism zones.¹⁴⁶

128. Israeli settlements in the occupied Syrian Golan are illegal under international law. Furthermore, settlement expansion and Israeli commercial activity have negative impacts on the health, environment and agriculture of Syrian citizens in the area.¹⁴⁷

129. A total of 95 per cent of the land is occupied by Israeli settlers, military and the authorities, leaving only 5 per cent for the Syrian population.¹⁴⁸

130. The Government of the Syrian Arab Republic reports that Israel employs several methods to confiscate land and natural resources in the occupied Syrian Golan, including the expropriation of land owned by Syrian Arabs who have been displaced; the expropriation of land in close proximity to the ceasefire line for the laying of landmines; the confiscation of land for military purposes; the expropriation of land for the building of settlements and agricultural and industrial facilities; and the fencing off of areas, under the pretext of placing them at the disposal of the Israel Nature and Parks Authority.¹⁴⁹

131. For example, by 2021, Israel had declared approximately 370,000 dunams in the occupied Syrian Golan as nature reserves and national parks. The ratio of nature reserves in the occupied Syrian Golan is double (0.04) that inside Israel (0.02). Furthermore, most nature reserves in the occupied Syrian Golan have been established atop the ruins of 145 Syrian villages that were destroyed during and after the 1967 war. In addition, the approximately 11,000 dunams of these natural reserves are part of the 58,000 dunams that comprise the municipal boundaries of the five Syrian villages in the occupied Syrian Golan, effectively removing this area from the control of the Syrian municipalities.¹⁵⁰

132. Israel continues to implement a multi-year plan to develop and strengthen agriculture in Israeli settlements in the occupied Syrian Golan, including those under development. In this context, Israeli settlers have seized and exploited large areas for agricultural purposes, imposing a further economic burden on the Syrian population.¹⁵¹

133. Israel has continued to take steps to implement a wind turbine project during the reporting period. The 45 turbines are being erected over an area of 6,000 acres of agricultural land adjacent to Syrian villages and belonging to Syrians. This project would limit the expansion of villages, have an impact on the livelihoods of the Syrian population and expose them to health and environmental risks.¹⁵²

134. Syrians in the occupied Syrian Golan continue to suffer from discriminatory practices with regard to access to land and water and from restrictive zoning and building policies.¹⁵³ It is almost impossible for Syrians to obtain building permits in the occupied Syrian Golan. This restricts the expansion of their towns and villages

¹⁴⁶ Zafrir Rinat, “Bennett advances Golan Heights construction plan in bid to double population”, 11 December 2021.

¹⁴⁷ A/76/336, para. 58.

¹⁴⁸ Al-Marsad, “Report on Israel’s violations of the International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights”, p. 10.

¹⁴⁹ A/HRC/49/84, para. 34.

¹⁵⁰ Al-Marsad, “Nature reserves in the Occupied Golan”, November 2021, pp. 1, 6 and 10.

¹⁵¹ A/76/360, para. 64.

¹⁵² Ibid., para. 63.

¹⁵³ ILO, document ILC.109/DG/APP/2021, para. 139.

despite population growth, forcing many Syrians to build without permits, thereby risking demolitions, displacement, the incurring of heavy fines or even imprisonment. The Israeli authorities have issued more than 1,500 demolition orders since 1973, along with steep fines and prison sentences for unpermitted construction.¹⁵⁴

135. In 1973, the number of livestock in the five villages of the occupied Syrian Golan reached 20,820 heads. Today, the number of livestock does not exceed a few hundred, due to the confiscation of grazing lands for the benefit of nature reserves and for the purposes of military activities conducted by the occupying army. In addition, these reserves deprive inhabitants from access to wild plants that form an important part of Golani cuisine culture.¹⁵⁵

136. Discriminatory practices with regard to access to water and land reportedly continue to impede the efforts of Syrian citizens of the occupied Syrian Golan to keep a foothold in agriculture.¹⁵⁶

137. Labour force participation rates of the Syrian citizens of the occupied Syrian Golan steadily increased until 2017, when they reached a peak of 51 per cent; however, they declined thereafter, dropping to 40 per cent in 2020. About one quarter (25.4 per cent) of Syrian women of working age took part in the labour force in 2000.¹⁵⁷

138. The Syrian Arab Republic has expressed concerns about the imposition of fees and taxes by Israel, in particular on Syrian Arab workers, especially in agriculture. These include taxes on the output of daily or regular work, ranging from 15 to 35 per cent; income taxes at 25 per cent; general taxes of up to 60 per cent of wages; and a 30 per cent tax on storage refrigerators for apples. In addition, Israel refused to pay for the hospitalization of Syrian Arab workers with permanent or partial injuries sustained during work, given that they were not covered by the compensation law, and have undertaken measures to force them to join Israeli syndicates.¹⁵⁸

IV. Conclusions and observations

139. The protracted Israeli occupation of the Palestinian territory and the occupied Syrian Golan continues to have a detrimental effect on the living conditions of the Palestinian and Syrian populations, as well as on social and economic development in the occupied territories. These effects have had a different and disproportionate impact on women and girls. The negative impact of the occupation and the Israeli policies and practices is multilayered, and their cumulative repercussions affect the future of the populations living under occupation.

140. Israeli-imposed restrictions, the expansion of the illegal settlements and other practices not only prevent development in the occupied territories and hamper efforts to combat the COVID-19 pandemic, but also cause humanitarian crises that necessitate the diversion of scarce national and international resources from development to immediate relief. The Palestinian financial crisis and the fragmentation of the Palestinian Territory have also resulted in a fragmented economy that is dependent on Israel and foreign aid.

141. Moreover, the COVID-19 pandemic and its economic fallout have compounded the social and economic situation and have resulted in more adverse living conditions

¹⁵⁴ Al-Marsad, “Report on Israel’s violations of the International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights”, pp. 11–12.

¹⁵⁵ Al-Marsad, “Nature reserves in the Occupied Golan”, p. 7.

¹⁵⁶ ILO, document ILC.109/DG/APP/2021, para. 146.

¹⁵⁷ *Ibid.*, para. 136.

¹⁵⁸ [A/HRC/49/84](#), para. 38.

for Palestinians. Its effects on the Palestinian people are multiplied as a result of long-standing Israeli policies and practices. The Palestinian health system had already been on the brink of collapse, particularly in Gaza, before the pandemic.

142. The May 2021 escalation in hostilities between Israel and armed groups in Gaza compounded the severe situation in Gaza, which was created by the closures imposed on Gaza, other restrictive Israeli measures and recurrent escalations, in addition to declining donor funding. This requires the urgent attention of the international community.

143. Prospects for the Palestinian economy are negative, should the current status quo persist. The funding crisis facing UNRWA and the decline in donor aid is another factor that only exacerbates the already precarious conditions of hundreds of thousands of Palestinians.

144. Israel continues to employ policies and practices that are contrary to relevant Security Council resolutions, international humanitarian law and international human rights law. Some of these practices may be considered discriminatory and others may amount to the forcible transfer or collective punishment of protected persons, which would be a grave breach of the Fourth Geneva Convention and is prohibited under international law.

145. Adherence to international law is imperative, ensuring that no party enjoys impunity and securing justice and peace for all those living in the region, including Palestinians and Syrians living under occupation. The United Nations maintains its long-standing position that lasting and comprehensive peace can be achieved only through a negotiated two-State solution. The Secretary-General will continue to ensure that the United Nations works towards the establishment of an independent, democratic, contiguous and viable Palestinian State, living side by side in peace with a secure Israel, with Jerusalem as the capital of both States, consistent with relevant Security Council resolutions and international law.



General Assembly Economic and Social Council

Distr.: General
30 June 2023

Original: English

General Assembly

Seventy-eighth session

Item 61 of the preliminary list*

Permanent sovereignty of the Palestinian people in the Occupied Palestinian Territory, including East Jerusalem, and of the Arab population in the occupied Syrian Golan over their natural resources

Economic and Social Council

2023 session

25 July 2022–26 July 2023

Agenda item 16

Economic and social repercussions of the Israeli occupation on the living conditions of the Palestinian people in the Occupied Palestinian Territory, including East Jerusalem, and the Arab population in the occupied Syrian Golan

Economic and social repercussions of the Israeli occupation on the living conditions of the Palestinian people in the Occupied Palestinian Territory, including East Jerusalem, and of the Arab population in the occupied Syrian Golan

Note by the Secretary-General**

Summary

In its resolution [2022/22](#), entitled “Economic and social repercussions of the Israeli occupation on the living conditions of the Palestinian people in the Occupied Palestinian Territory, including East Jerusalem, and the Arab population in the occupied Syrian Golan”, the Economic and Social Council requested the Secretary-General to submit to the General Assembly at its seventy-eighth session, through the Economic and Social Council, a report on the implementation of that resolution. The Council, in its resolution [2022/23](#), entitled “Situation of and assistance to Palestinian women”, also requested the Secretary-General to include information on the gender-specific impact of the occupation and the progress made in the implementation of that resolution in that report. The Assembly, in its resolution [77/187](#), entitled “Permanent sovereignty of the Palestinian people in the Occupied Palestinian Territory, including East Jerusalem, and of the Arab population in the occupied Syrian Golan over their natural resources”, also requested the Secretary-General to report to it at its seventy-eighth session. The present document, which was prepared by the Economic and Social Commission for Western Asia, has been submitted in compliance with these resolutions.

* [A/78/50](#).

** The present document was submitted for processing after the deadline for technical reasons beyond the control of the submitting office.



The report covers persistent Israeli practices and policies, in particular those that are in violation of international humanitarian law and international human rights law and that affect the social and economic conditions of the people living under its military occupation, including the gendered impact of the occupation.

The Economic and Social Commission for Western Asia would like to express its appreciation for the contributions from the Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations, the International Labour Organization, the Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Human Rights, the United Nations Conference on Trade and Development, the Programme of Assistance to the Palestinian People of the United Nations Development Programme, the United Nations Population Fund, the United Nations Human Settlements Programme (UN-Habitat), the United Nations Children's Fund, the United Nations Industrial Development Organization, the Mine Action Service of the Secretariat, the United Nations Office on Drugs and Crime, the United Nations Relief and Works Agency for Palestine Refugees in the Near East, the Office of the Special Coordinator for the Middle East Peace Process, the United Nations Entity for Gender Equality and the Empowerment of Women (UN-Women) and the World Health Organization.

I. Introduction

1. The Economic and Social Council, in its resolution [2022/22](#), expressed concerns about the economic and social repercussions of the Israeli occupation on the living conditions of the Palestinian people in the Occupied Palestinian Territory, including East Jerusalem, and of the Arab population in the occupied Syrian Golan. The Council's resolution [2022/23](#) highlighted the gender-specific repercussions in this regard. The General Assembly, in its resolution [77/187](#), demanded that Israel, the occupying Power, cease the exploitation, damage, cause of loss or depletion and endangerment of natural resources in the Occupied Palestinian Territory, including East Jerusalem, and in the occupied Syrian Golan.

2. The present document provides information on relevant developments in this regard during the reporting period from 1 April 2022 to 31 March 2023.

II. Occupied Palestinian Territory

3. The reporting period witnessed a deterioration in the already fragile political and security situation in the occupied West Bank, including East Jerusalem, in addition to another military escalation in Gaza in August 2022, further compounding the living conditions of Palestinians in the Occupied Palestinian Territory.

Israeli practices in the Occupied Palestinian Territory

4. During the reporting period, Israel continued to employ policies and practices inconsistent with its obligations under international humanitarian law and international human rights law. Many of the violations disproportionately affect Palestinians,¹ including Palestinian women and girls, who are affected differently. Such policies and practices as settlement expansion, the demolition of Palestinian structures and homes, closures, access and movement restrictions have had a severe humanitarian, economic, social and political impact on Palestinians and their ability to exercise their fundamental human rights.²

5. Palestinians in the West Bank are subject to more than 1,800 Israeli military orders issued since 1967, covering issues from security to land planning and zoning, natural resources and the administration of justice.³ None of the orders specifically provide for the protection of Palestinians or reference Palestinian rights but focus on Israeli settlers. Across the Occupied Palestinian Territory, Israeli authorities methodically privileged Jewish Israelis and discriminated against Palestinians.⁴

6. Palestinians in the occupied territory are subject to a complex combination of Israeli and Palestinian legal systems. In the West Bank, Israeli domestic law is applied extraterritorially to Israeli settlers, while Palestinians are subject to Israeli military law in addition to the Palestinian legal system. This raises concerns as to the obligation of the occupying Power to respect the laws in force in the territory that it occupies, unless it is absolutely prevented from doing so.

7. The application of two different legal systems in the same territory, on the sole basis of nationality or origin, is inherently discriminatory and also violates the principle of equality before the law, which is central to the right to a fair trial. The resulting dual legal system provides greater enjoyment of human rights for Israelis than for Palestinians.

¹ United States, Department of State, *West Bank and Gaza Strip 2022 Human Rights Report*, p. 4.

² See [S/2022/945](#), [A/77/493](#) and [A/HRC/52/76](#).

³ [A/77/501](#), para. 30.

⁴ United States, Department of State, *West Bank and Gaza Strip*, p. 75.

8. In this context, the Government of Israel, under an agreement between the Minister of Defence and the newly established Additional Minister in the Ministry of Defence,⁵ transferred effective supervision of the Civil Administration to the Additional Minister. In accordance with the agreement, the Prime Minister on 2 February 2023 also appointed the head of the new “Settlement Administration” within the Ministry of Defence,⁶ which has been tasked with implementing an “equal citizenship reform” aimed at “improving and increasing efficiency of services” provided to Israeli settlers in the West Bank, inter alia, through government ministries.⁷

9. The Independent International Commission of Inquiry on the Occupied Palestinian Territory, including East Jerusalem, and Israel found that Israeli policies that cited security as a pretext, including settler-only roads, closures, restrictions on the freedom of movement and punitive home demolitions, were based on discriminatory and otherwise unlawful measures and appeared to constitute collective punishment against an entire population, and that security was often used to justify territorial expansion.⁸

10. The Commission also found that there were reasonable grounds to conclude that the Israeli occupation of Palestinian territory had become unlawful under international law owing to its permanence and to actions undertaken by Israel to annex parts of the land de facto and de jure. It also found that Israeli actions that were intended to create irreversible facts on the ground and expand its control over territory were reflections as well as drivers of its permanent occupation, and that the settlement enterprise was the principal means by which those results were achieved.⁹

Violence and the use of force

11. Israeli security forces continued to employ measures and practices that raise serious concerns about excessive use of force and unlawful killing, in some cases possibly amounting to arbitrary deprivation of life, including extrajudicial executions.

12. During the reporting period, 257 Palestinians, including 9 women and 56 children (53 boys and 3 girls), were killed by Israeli security forces and settlers in the Occupied Palestinian Territory, and another 10,560 Palestinian were injured, including 313 women and 1,040 children (963 boys and 77 girls).¹⁰ One of the victims of Israeli use of force was notable veteran journalist Shireen Abu Akleh, who was shot dead while covering a military raid on the Jenin refugee camp on 11 May 2022.

13. Concurrently, Israel withheld the bodies of 386 killed Palestinians, in what may constitute collective punishment.¹¹

14. In Gaza, during the August escalation between Israel and Palestinian armed groups, 49 Palestinians were killed, at least 26 of whom were civilians, including 4 women and 17 children. According to the Ministry of Health in Gaza, 360 Palestinians were injured, including 151 children and 58 women. Israeli officials

⁵ See Israeli Law Professors’ Forum for Democracy, “Implications of the agreement subordinating the Civil Administration to the Additional Minister in the Ministry of Defense”, Position Paper No. 24 (2023), available at www.lawprofssforum.org/post/pp24-e.

⁶ Decision No. 168 of 23 February 2023, available at www.gov.il/he/departments/policies/dec168-2023.

⁷ Input from the Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Human Rights (OHCHR).

⁸ A/77/328, paras. 79 and 80.

⁹ Ibid., para. 75.

¹⁰ United Nations, Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs, “Data on casualties”, Protection of Civilians database. Available at <https://ochaopt.org/data/casualties> (accessed on 7 April 2023).

¹¹ OHCHR input.

reported 2 Israelis moderately injured and at least 62 lightly injured, including 9 children.

15. The indiscriminate launching of rockets by Palestinian armed groups from highly populated neighbourhoods in Gaza into civilian population centres in Israel, which also resulted in casualties and violates international humanitarian law, puts the lives of civilians at risk.

Accountability

16. Lack of accountability for excessive use of force and other violations by Israeli security forces remained pervasive. There continues to be an almost total failure to ensure accountability for apparent unlawful killing of Palestinians, including in instances that raise concerns of extrajudicial executions and wilful killing. This is indicative of the climate of impunity which prevails with respect to the excessive use of force against Palestinians, including in the contexts of settlement.¹²

17. More than a year after the May 2021 escalation in Gaza, the Israeli army had, according to the non-governmental organization Yesh Din, opened just 1 investigation out of 84 that were flagged for assessment by its internal mechanisms.¹³

18. Similarly, the non-governmental organization found that, in 2019–2020, the Israeli Military Advocate General’s Corps opened criminal investigations in only 22 out of the 273 complaints that it had received for actions and violations committed by the Israeli security forces against Palestinians and their property during that period.¹⁴

Detention and ill-treatment

19. The Israeli military legal system in the West Bank applies to Palestinians, but not Israeli settlers, and is presided over by Israeli military judges. Trials are conducted in Hebrew (which many Palestinian detainees do not speak, in particular child detainees) without adequate translation or interpretation. Few procedural and substantive legal protections are provided. Suspects’ and detainees’ lawyers are significantly restricted in their access to evidence.¹⁵ Furthermore, no Palestinian entity is allowed to provide any services to Palestinians in Israeli prisons, making them exceptionally vulnerable to abuses which may amount to human rights violations.¹⁶

20. At least 6,085 Palestinians, including 452 children, were arrested by Israel in 2022, the highest number of detainees since 2008. The number of those held under administrative detention has more than doubled in the past two years.¹⁷ As at the end of March 2023, 4,900 Palestinians were detained, defined as “security prisoners” by

¹² A/77/493, para. 74.

¹³ Yesh Din, “Investigating themselves: results of the military law enforcement system’s examination of incidents of Palestinians killed and wounded in the Gaza Strip during ‘Operation Guardian of the Walls’”, May 2022, pp. 10 and 11.

¹⁴ Yesh Din, “Law enforcement on soldiers suspected of harming Palestinians and their property”, data sheet, March 2022, p. 9.

¹⁵ A/77/501, para. 30. See also Military Court Watch, “Military legal system”, available at www.militarycourtwatch.org/page.php?id=6a06ck7Rnqa26628AAapuBpjuFE; and Addameer Prisoner Support and Human Rights Association, campaign paper entitled “In the case of *The Palestinian People vs. Military Courts*”, 2021, available at www.addameer.org/sites/default/files/campaigns/campaign%20Paper_0.pdf.

¹⁶ Input from the United Nations Office on Drugs and Crime (UNODC).

¹⁷ S/2022/945, para. 76.

Israel, including 1,016 administrative detainees, 160 child prisoners and 30 female prisoners.¹⁸

21. On average, 150 Palestinian children were in custody at any given time, 100 of them in pretrial detention.¹⁹

22. Israeli security forces arrest hundreds of Palestinian children every year in pre-planned arrests from their home in the middle of the night, with rarely any summons beforehand. Between 2014 and 2021, only 1–9 per cent of families that had a child arrested received a summons to bring the child in for questioning. However, according to HaMoked – Centre for the Defence of the Individual and Military Court Watch, not a single family reported that it had received a summons before the arrest during 2022.²⁰

23. Palestinian detainees continue to be subjected to ill-treatment at detention centres and reportedly exposed to several torture methods, instances of cruel, inhuman or degrading treatment by the Israel police and the Israel Prison Service. Based on cases handled by the Public Committee against Torture in Israel, out of 1,400 complaints of torture since 2001 submitted to the Ministry of Justice in Israel, only 3 criminal investigations were opened, and there were no indictments.²¹

24. In 2022, the Special Committee to Investigate Israeli Practices Affecting the Human Rights of the Palestinian People and Other Arabs of the Occupied Territories was briefed that women are often subjected to gender-based violence during the arrest process, including unwarranted body searches and threats of sexual violence, and that mothers are often threatened with the detention of their children if they do not comply.²²

25. Extensive legislative plans aimed at punishing Palestinian “security prisoners” have been approved by the Knesset since the most recent Israeli elections. This includes a law allowing the revocation of Israeli citizenship for Palestinian citizens of Israel convicted of what Israel claims are terror-related offences and those who receive financial support from the Palestinian Authority. Two bills that passed the preliminary reading allow the Israeli authorities to deny security and political prisoners access to health services “that improve their quality of life”; and introduce the death penalty for offences defined by Israel as terrorist in a discriminatory manner that targets Palestinians.²³

Destruction and confiscation of property and infrastructure

26. Demolitions and forced evictions exacerbate the coercive environment and raise concerns about the risk of forcible transfer. They also continue to raise concern about compliance with international humanitarian law provisions that are binding on the occupying Power, including the prohibition of the destruction of property and institutions dedicated to education.

¹⁸ Addameer Prisoner Support and Human Rights Association, Statistics database. Available at www.addameer.org/statistics (accessed on 1 April 2023).

¹⁹ A/77/501, para. 43.

²⁰ HaMoked, “On flimsy grounds: Israel’s pervasive night arrests of Palestinian children”, January 2023; and Military Court Watch, “Comparative graph – issues of concern”, available at www.militarycourtwatch.org/page.php?id=MmNuAkpGrsa613395AWw2bO0pT3K.

²¹ Public Committee against Torture in Israel, “Torture in Israel: situation report 2022”, December 2022, p. 1.

²² A/77/501, para. 43; and United States, Department of State, *West Bank and Gaza Strip*, p. 10.

²³ See <https://main.knesset.gov.il/EN/Pages/default.aspx>.

27. The Israeli authorities issued almost 20,000 demolition orders in Area C between 1988 and 2020. By September 2022, more than 8,500 structures had been demolished across the Occupied Palestinian Territory.²⁴

28. Israeli authorities demolished 954 structures (including 517 homes and 140 donor-funded structures) in 2022, compared with 911 in 2021. The first quarter of 2023 witnessed a 47 per cent increase in such demolitions (290) compared with the same period in 2022. The number of punitive demolitions (17) carried out by the Israeli authorities against the family homes of Palestinians suspected of attacking Israelis, in what may amount to collective punishment, more than tripled during the reporting period compared with the preceding one (5).²⁵

29. According to the Special Committee to Investigate Israeli Practices Affecting the Human Rights of the Palestinian People and Other Arabs of the Occupied Territories, over 80 per cent of demolitions across the Occupied Palestinian Territory occurred within 3 km of existing settlements, connecting existing settlements and undermining the contiguity of Palestinian territory.²⁶

30. Israel has used military and other justifications to expropriate more than a third (2 million dunums) of the West Bank since 1967 for a variety of purposes that serve mostly settlers in the occupied territory. This includes much of the land declared as closed military zones (over half of Area C, or 1.765 million dunums) and used for settlement construction, industrial zones, farming and grazing land for settlers.²⁷

31. The wall has isolated more than 10 per cent of the area of the West Bank, affecting more than 219 Palestinian localities. Furthermore, since 1967, the Israeli authorities have confiscated about 353,000 dunums of Palestinian lands and classified them as natural reserves.²⁸

32. Settlement of titles constitutes an irreversible act of sovereignty by a permanent regime and subverts the principle that occupation is inherently temporary. Ongoing action in this regard in the occupied West Bank, including East Jerusalem, is illegal under international law and increases the risk of illegal appropriation of property and of possible forcible transfer. Concerns have also been raised that the title-settlement procedure was being implemented without transparency and without the knowledge of affected Palestinian residents, effectively denying them the opportunity to file claims.²⁹

33. Overall, in occupied East Jerusalem, at least 218 Palestinian households comprising 970 people, including 420 children, are facing eviction cases in Israeli courts. Most cases were initiated by Israeli settler organizations and are based on the application of Israeli laws that allow for properties in East Jerusalem that were owned by Jews prior to 1948 to be reclaimed. No similar law allows Palestinians to reclaim their property in Israel.³⁰

34. The military escalation against Gaza in August 2022 resulted in 10 houses in Gaza being completely destroyed and 48 severely damaged and rendered

²⁴ A/77/328, para. 60.

²⁵ United Nations, Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs, "Data on demolition and displacement in the West Bank". Available at www.ochaopt.org/data/demolition (accessed on 21 March 2023).

²⁶ A/77/501, para. 33.

²⁷ A/77/328, paras. 31 and 39.

²⁸ State of Palestine, Palestinian Central Bureau of Statistics, press release on the forty-seventh annual commemoration of Land Day, 30 March 2023. Available at www.pcbs.gov.ps/portals/_pcbs/PressRelease/Press_En_LandPalDay47E.pdf.

²⁹ A/77/493, paras. 12 and 72.

³⁰ S/2022/945, para. 10.

uninhabitable. According to the authorities in Gaza, over 600 housing units were damaged, displacing 84 families.³¹

Coercive environment and population displacement

35. A combination of Israeli policies and practices in Area C, East Jerusalem and the city of Hebron, such as the demolition and threat of demolition of homes and schools and the destruction of livelihoods, the denial of service infrastructure, the restriction of access to farming and grazing land, settler violence and poor law enforcement in response thereto and the revocation of residency rights, among other things, has created a coercive environment, which may force Palestinians to leave their places of residence, placing them at risk of forcible transfer, a grave breach of the Geneva Convention relative to the Protection of Civilian Persons in Time of War.³² Palestinian communities in Area C, East Jerusalem and the Israeli-controlled part of Hebron (H2) are particularly affected.³³

36. These processes of forced evictions and mass³⁴ and individual displacement intensify the coercive environment pressuring Palestinians to leave their homes, raising concerns of the forcible transfer of Palestinians, and occur largely in areas often slated for settlement expansion. In its response to a petition, the Government of Israel noted that it intended to displace the residents of Abu Nuwwar village to allow for the expansion of the Ma'ale Adummim settlement. The community has been subjected to harsh coercive conditions aimed at encouraging their non-consensual displacement.³⁵

37. In another instance, on 4 May 2022, the Israeli High Court of Justice rejected a petition against eviction orders issued to 1,144 Palestinian residents of 12 herding communities in Masafer Yatta (282 men, 293 women, 299 boys and 270 girls) after Israeli military designated the area as a firing zone. The judgment is inconsistent with international law and puts the residents at imminent risk of forced evictions and forcible transfer.³⁶

38. Palestinians in East Jerusalem also continue to suffer owing to the expanding Israeli settlements and measures and policies employed by Israel that may coerce them to leave their homes.³⁷ By mid-November 2022, the Israeli authorities had revoked 66 residency permits for Palestinians in East Jerusalem, citing a regulation that allowed revocation for individuals who stayed outside of Israel for more than seven years or acquired citizenship or permanent residence status elsewhere.³⁸

Israeli settlement activity and settler violence

39. Settlements have no legal validity and constitute a flagrant violation of international law and United Nations resolutions. The establishment and expansion of Israeli settlements in the Occupied Palestinian Territory have a severe impact on the rights of Palestinians and amount to the transfer by Israel of its own civilian population into the territory it occupies, which is prohibited under international humanitarian law, as consistently confirmed by the competent United Nations organs,

³¹ [S/PV.9139](#), p. 3.

³² OHCHR input; see also [A/HRC/52/75](#), para. 15.

³³ United Nations, Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs, "Humanitarian Response Plan 2023", January 2023, p. 8.

³⁴ See e.g. the Masafer Yatta case in para. 37.

³⁵ Education cluster, "Education in emergency: protecting education under attack – special focus: Abu Nuwar", 30 December 2022, p. 2.

³⁶ [A/77/493](#), para. 19, and [A/77/328](#), para. 81.

³⁷ OHCHR input; see also [A/HRC/52/76](#), para. 15.

³⁸ United States, Department of State, *West Bank and Gaza Strip*, p. 61.

including the International Court of Justice.³⁹ They further entrench the military occupation by Israel of Palestinian territory, undermine the legitimate rights of the Palestinian people to self-determination and sovereignty, encroach on Palestinian land and natural resources, and hamper the free movement of the Palestinian population. They undermine the prospect of establishing a contiguous, independent, sovereign and viable Palestinian State.⁴⁰

40. In 2022, the Israeli authorities approved about 70 plans to construct more than 10,000 settlement units in Jerusalem. Overall, during the year, in Area C, some 4,800 units were advanced, compared with some 5,400 in 2021, while tenders decreased, from 1,800 in 2021 to 150 in 2022. However, in occupied East Jerusalem the number of housing units that were advanced tripled from the previous year, from some 900 units in 2021 to some 3,100 units in 2022, with tenders also doubling, from 200 to 400.⁴¹

41. Palestinian land has also been used for industrial and economic activity linked to Israeli settlements throughout the West Bank, mainly through the establishment of industrial zones. Israel has encouraged companies to move their operations to those zones by providing financial incentives, permits and licences that are rarely granted to Palestinians.⁴²

Settler violence

42. There has been a steady increase in violence by settlers with the acquiescence and support of Israeli security forces, with continuing impunity for settler violence. Growing instances of Israeli security forces using force in the context of settler attacks against Palestinians, or jointly using force, including firearms, in the same incident is making distinction in violence increasingly difficult to discern.⁴³

43. The level of settler violence against Palestinians during 2022 was the highest recorded since the Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs started documenting in 2005. Compared with 2021, there has been close to a 40 per cent increase in the monthly average of settler violence incidents resulting in either Palestinian casualties or property damage, or both, and a 96 per cent increase compared with 2020.⁴⁴

44. During the reporting period, 20 Palestinians were killed in settler-related violence. Settlers are rarely held accountable for such attacks, increasing the level of threat to Palestinians and their property.⁴⁵

45. On 26 February, Israeli settlers, escorted by Israeli forces, physically assaulted Palestinian residents and their property in Huwwarah town and nearby villages. At least 10 Palestinians were injured by settlers, including 1 child and 1 woman. Settlers also caused extensive damage to Palestinian property. At least 37 inhabited houses sustained damage, including some set on fire; at least eight commercial structures were burned, along with 55 Palestinian privately owned vehicles and 1,200 scrapped

³⁹ [A/77/493](#), para. 71.

⁴⁰ OHCHR input; see also [A/HRC/52/76](#), paras. 7–11.

⁴¹ See [S/2022/945](#).

⁴² [A/77/328](#), para 36.

⁴³ [A/77/493](#), para. 73.

⁴⁴ United Nations, Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs, “Humanitarian needs overview: Occupied Palestinian Territory”, January 2023, p. 15.

⁴⁵ [S/2022/945](#), para. 73.

vehicles. In addition, settlers attacked a fire truck, preventing it from entering the town.⁴⁶

46. The increase in settler violence has also resulted in damage to Palestinian olive trees. Between January and October 2022, 1,400 trees were vandalized, and Palestinians reported 1,000 trees harvested, probably by Israeli settlers.⁴⁷

47. With regard to settler actions against Palestinians, there has been ineffective prevention, few police investigations, a low indictment rate, and lenient sentences for convicted offenders.⁴⁸

48. Yesh Din found that the police had failed in the investigation of 81.5 per cent of cases opened into “ideologically motivated offences” against Palestinians since 2005 (1,208 of 1,481 files). Of the closed files, 1,172 were closed on the grounds that the offender was unknown or because of insufficient evidence.⁴⁹ In 2021, only 87 investigations were opened against Israeli suspects, while the Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs documented 585 incidents of settler violence. By 31 October 2022, 49 of those cases remained under investigation, while 38 had been closed, including 19 indictments reportedly filed.⁵⁰

49. Israeli police data confirm that charges were filed in under 4 per cent of settler violence cases in the period from 2018 to 2020. In contrast, between 2018 and April 2021, 96 per cent of investigations of Palestinian violence by the military prosecution ended with a conviction, with 99.6 per cent based on plea deals.⁵¹

Movement and access restrictions

50. Palestinians’ rights to freedom of movement and access to services and livelihoods continue to be systematically infringed, including as a result of discriminatory restrictions on accessing key roads for which Israeli authorities cite security reasons.⁵²

51. Movement and access restrictions and closures exacerbate human trafficking, with a particularly negative impact on women and girls. Situations of vulnerability include Palestinians facing difficulties while trying to cross Israeli checkpoints to exit Gaza, or from the West Bank to Jerusalem and Israel, in addition to those leaving Gaza by sea. To facilitate their movement, individuals may seek the aid of smugglers and then fall victim to traffickers along the route.⁵³

Gaza closures

52. The blockade and closures by Israel of Gaza, one of the most densely populated areas in the world, since 2007 following the takeover by Hamas of the Gaza Strip the same year may amount to collective punishment, which is prohibited by international law. It has affected every area of Palestinian life and continues to undermine freedom of movement and the enjoyment of economic, social and cultural rights, such as the

⁴⁶ United Nations, Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs, “Protection of civilians: Occupied Palestinian Territory”, 14–27 February 2023, pp. 2 and 3.

⁴⁷ Input from the Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations (FAO).

⁴⁸ Yesh Din, “Law enforcement on Israeli civilians in the West Bank (settler violence)”, December 2022, p. 1.

⁴⁹ *Ibid.*, p. 10.

⁵⁰ [A/HRC/52/76](#), para. 47.

⁵¹ *Ibid.*, para. 48.

⁵² [A/77/501](#), para. 28.

⁵³ UNODC input.

rights to an adequate standard of living, health, education, work and family life of Palestinians in Gaza.⁵⁴

53. In 2022, Israel gradually eased restrictions on the movement of people and exports. Exports from Gaza in 2022 through Kerem Shalom, including to the West Bank, were 43 per cent higher than in 2021, while imports decreased by almost 8 per cent.⁵⁵

54. The number of commercial trucks entering Gaza was almost 30 per cent below the monthly average for the first half of 2007, while the population grew by more than 50 per cent during the same period.⁵⁶

55. The 2022 monthly average of exit of Palestinians from Gaza to Israel remained at about 8 per cent of the monthly average of exits in 2000. Some 88 per cent of exits were by Palestinians with permits under the traders and economic needs categories, whereas 6 per cent were by patients referred for treatment in West Bank or Israel.⁵⁷

56. As part of the closures, Israel declared access-restricted areas on the coastal and land areas around Gaza. The lack of clear information regarding these areas creates risks for Palestinians who live or work either on the coast or near the perimeter fence. No official signage exists for the line of demarcation, and official policy changes frequently.⁵⁸

Movement restrictions in the West Bank

57. The movement of Palestinians within the West Bank, including East Jerusalem, is restricted through a complex system of checkpoints, permits, military roadblocks, settlements, a bypass road system, parallel legal regimes and the West Bank “barrier”, effectively fragmenting the territory into an archipelago of isolated islands.

58. The continued consolidation by Israel of settlement blocs in the West Bank with networks of bypass roads and the wall east of Jerusalem includes a new “eastern ring road”. This road will reportedly not be accessible to Palestinians.⁵⁹ Israeli authorities have restricted or prohibited Palestinian travel on 29 roads and sections of roads totalling approximately 36 miles throughout the West Bank, including many of the main traffic arteries.⁶⁰

59. In Hebron, citing a need to protect several hundred Israeli settlers residing in the H2 sector of the city, Israeli military authorities continued to restrict Palestinian vehicular and foot traffic and access to homes and businesses of approximately 22,000 Palestinians who reside there.⁶¹

60. In 2022, there was a significant increase in closures and other access restrictions imposed by Israel compared with preceding years, hindering the operations of United Nations organizations, including the United Nations Relief and Works Agency for Palestine Refugees in the Near East (UNRWA). From 1 April to 31 December 2022,

⁵⁴ OHCHR input; see also [A/HRC/52/75](#), para. 13.

⁵⁵ United Nations, Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs, “Humanitarian needs overview”, p. 11.

⁵⁶ United Nations Relief and Works Agency for Palestine Refugees in the Near East (UNRWA), “Occupied Palestinian Territory emergency appeal 2023”, January 2023, p. 12.

⁵⁷ United Nations, Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs, “Movement in and out of Gaza: update covering January 2023”, 27 February 2023.

⁵⁸ United States, Department of State, *West Bank and Gaza Strip*, p. 56.

⁵⁹ [A/77/501](#), para. 28.

⁶⁰ United States, Department of State, *West Bank and Gaza Strip*, p. 58.

⁶¹ *Ibid.*, pp. 55–58.

a total of 166 UNRWA access-related incidents negatively affected its ability to deliver services to the Palestine refugee community.⁶²

Depletion, endangerment and exploitation of natural resources

61. Area C constitutes more than 60 per cent of the area of the West Bank and is the richest in terms of the availability of natural resources. However, Palestinians face severe restrictions on planning, building and access to natural resources in this area. Any investment or economic activity requires Israeli permits. Decades of discriminatory allocation of resources by Israeli authorities, including limitations of Palestinian access to and use of farmland, water and other natural resources, for the benefit of Israelis compound inequalities and lead to the deterioration of living conditions of Palestinians.⁶³ The Gaza closures limit Palestinian access to materials and technologies that could promote the efficient use of energy, water and other natural resources.

62. Palestinians face an acute water problem, which has become more intensified as a result of population growth and restrictions imposed by Israel on Palestinians' access to water resources in the Occupied Palestinian Territory. Since 1967, Israel has placed all water resources in the Occupied Palestinian Territory under its military control and prohibited Palestinians from constructing new water installations or maintaining existing installations without a military permit. At the same time, Israel has developed its own water infrastructure for its settlements and has done the same in Israel.⁶⁴

63. In the West Bank, severe water shortages continue to be reported as Israel retains full control of the distribution and extraction of most water resources, including aquifers. More than 77 per cent of the water resources used by Palestinians are extracted from the ground. Palestinians continue to be prevented by Israel from gaining access to and extracting water from the Jordan River.⁶⁵

64. Israeli settlements limit Palestinian exploitation of 13,696 agricultural holdings in the West Bank, while the "barrier" limits the utilization of 6,945 holdings, closed Israeli military areas limit the utilization of 6,463 holdings, and checkpoints limit the utilization of another 8,317. The imposition of access-restricted areas in Gaza limits the utilization of 1,106 holdings. Other Israeli measures limit the utilization of a further 15,794 holdings.⁶⁶

65. Destruction of productive trees belonging to Palestinians continued in 2022 in the West Bank, with 10,721 destroyed from 1 April to 31 December 2022. Nablus was the most affected governorate with 3,725 trees destroyed.⁶⁷

66. The military escalation in August 2022 damaged or destroyed agricultural lands, greenhouses, livestock and poultry farms, causing damages and losses estimated at \$1 million.⁶⁸

⁶² UNRWA input.

⁶³ A/77/501, para. 46.

⁶⁴ A/77/328, para. 35.

⁶⁵ State of Palestine, Palestinian Central Bureau of Statistics and Palestinian Water Authority, joint press release on World Water Day, 21 March 2023. Available at www.pcbs.gov.ps/portals/_pcbs/PressRelease/Press_En_WWD2023E.pdf.

⁶⁶ State of Palestine, Palestinian Central Bureau of Statistics and Ministry of Agriculture, *Agriculture Census 2021: Final Results – Palestine* (2023), table 44.

⁶⁷ UNRWA input.

⁶⁸ United Nations, Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs, "Humanitarian needs overview", p. 46.

67. Israel continues to exploit the mineral resources of the West Bank and has not issued quarrying permits for Palestinian companies in Area C, where mineral reserves are estimated to be worth \$30 billion, since 1994.

Social and economic conditions in the Occupied Palestinian Territory

68. In 2023, roughly 2.1 million Palestinians (800,000 in the West Bank and 1.3 million in Gaza) are in need of humanitarian assistance, half of them children.⁶⁹

69. Some 38 per cent of Palestinian households were determined to be in a state of “catastrophic”, “extreme” or “severe” conditions in 2022. The situation was particularly dire in Gaza, where 29 per cent of households were classified as living in “catastrophic” or “extreme” conditions.⁷⁰

Economic conditions

70. The system of restrictive policies imposed by Israel on Palestinian economic activity, resources and land since 1967 has systematically hollowed the Palestinian economy of many elements that are vital for its healthy operation, rendering it highly vulnerable to internal and external shocks and highly dependent on Israel and external transfers.

71. The current regime of internal and external closures and prevailing climate of political and economic uncertainty, combined with the fragmentation of the economy, constrains private sector growth and brings about a heavy reliance of the economy on non-tradable sectors such as services, construction, the financial sector and the public sector. This distortion continues as the contribution of productive sectors (manufacturing and agriculture) to gross domestic product (GDP) dropped from 34 per cent in 2021 to 16.3 per cent in 2022, affecting economic growth, employment and trade. Between 2000 and 2022, the agricultural sector’s contribution to GDP decreased by 26 per cent, the manufacturing sector’s by 4 per cent, and the construction sector’s by 33 per cent. Moreover, the challenges facing the Palestinian economy were exacerbated by the effects of the coronavirus disease (COVID-19) pandemic and global geopolitical dynamics. In addition, decreasing external budgetary support and the deductions by Israel of approximately \$30 million from the tax revenues that it collects on behalf of the Palestinian Authority, based on a law on withholding payments to cover attacks against Israelis,⁷¹ caused a sizeable economic slowdown and reduced real growth to about 4 per cent, with growth reaching only 2 per cent (year on year) in the fourth quarter of 2022.⁷²

72. Similarly, despite some growth in 2021 (1 per cent) and 2022 (4.4 per cent), not only did GDP per capita fail to recover to its 2019 level, but it remained below its 2011 level.⁷³

73. The contribution of Gaza to the economy of the Occupied Palestinian Territory remained low at 17.4 per cent of real GDP in 2022, compared with 36 per cent in

⁶⁹ United Nations, Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs, “Humanitarian needs overview: OPT summary”, 25 January 2023. Available at www.ochaopt.org/content/humanitarian-needs-overview-and-humanitarian-response-plan-2023-dashboard.

⁷⁰ United Nations, Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs, “Humanitarian needs overview”, p. 9.

⁷¹ S/PV.9290, p. 4.

⁷² State of Palestine, Palestinian Central Bureau of Statistics, “Press report, quarterly national accounts (fourth quarter 2022)”, March 2023.

⁷³ Palestinian Central Bureau of Statistics values, Economic and Social Commission for Western Asia (ESCWA) calculations, and State of Palestine, Palestinian Central Bureau of Statistics and Palestine Monetary Authority, “The performance of the Palestinian economy in 2022, and economic forecasts for 2023”, press release, 28 December 2022.

1994, owing mainly to the severe economic and movement restrictions and the recurrent military escalations against the strip.⁷⁴ The deterioration of the textile and garment sector is illustrative of the destruction of productive sectors. Before 2000, this industry was the second largest employer after construction in Gaza, with around 1,000 establishments employing around 40,000 workers. Currently, only 226 enterprises are active in this sector, employing around 6,000 workers, of whom only 150 are women.⁷⁵

74. International aid to the budget continues to dwindle (from 27 per cent of GDP in 2008 to 1.8 per cent in 2022),⁷⁶ compounding the financial shortages of the Palestinian Authority and rendering it unable to pay, except partial wages to public sector employees. This was among the main drivers of the Palestinian teachers' strike ongoing since February 2023.⁷⁷

75. While the Palestinian economy remains reliant on trade with Israel, the Palestinian trade deficit rose by 35.4 per cent from 2021 to 2022, accounting for -47.8 per cent of GDP in 2022.⁷⁸ Furthermore, customs tax, value added tax and excise tax collected by Israel for the Palestinian Authority represent 65–75 per cent of its revenues. The Authority is required under the Paris Protocol on Economic Relations existing trade regime to conform to Israeli customs regulations for the majority of imports, which are designed to benefit the Israeli economy.⁷⁹

76. During the reporting period, a quarter of the Palestinian workforce (25.6 per cent) was unemployed (13 per cent in West Bank and 45 per cent in Gaza). Youth unemployment was high at 34.9 per cent, with figures exceeding 20 per cent in the West Bank and a startling 61.1 per cent in Gaza. Furthermore, the unemployment rate for educated young people in Gaza reached 73.9 per cent.⁸⁰

77. The unemployment rate for graduates aged 19–29 years stands at 48.3 per cent (28.6 per cent in the West Bank and 73.9 per cent in Gaza), with women facing a particularly high rate (61.3 per cent) compared with men (34.3 per cent).⁸¹

78. Some 22 per cent of Palestinians lived below the \$5.50 (2011 purchasing power parity) a day poverty line in 2016/17. Estimates based on GDP per capita growth indicate that in 2020 the poverty rate spiked to 29.7 per cent and is estimated to have declined to 27.3 per cent in 2021.⁸² The situation in Gaza is particularly concerning, as around 80 per cent of the population is dependent on aid.⁸³ By 2023, 53 per cent of

⁷⁴ Palestinian Central Bureau of Statistics values and ESCWA calculations; see also ESCWA, *Palestine under Occupation III: Mapping Israel's Policies and Practices and Their Economic Repercussions in the Occupied Palestinian Territory* (2022), pp. 22–40.

⁷⁵ UNIDO input.

⁷⁶ World Bank, "Economic monitoring report to the Ad Hoc Liaison Committee", 22 September 2022, p. 36.

⁷⁷ Euro-Med Human Rights Monitor, "Palestinian Territory: meeting teachers' demands is crucial for students' exercise of right to education", 21 March 2023. Available at <https://reliefweb.int/report/occupied-palestinian-territory/palestinian-territory-meeting-teachers-demands-crucial-students-exercise-right-education>.

⁷⁸ State of Palestine, Palestinian Central Bureau of Statistics, "Press report, quarterly national accounts (fourth quarter 2022)", table 3–1, and ESCWA calculations.

⁷⁹ World Bank, "Economic monitoring report", p. 33.

⁸⁰ State of Palestine, Palestinian Central Bureau of Statistics, "Palestinian Central Bureau of Statistics (PCBS) presents the main findings of labour force survey in 2022", 15 February 2023.

⁸¹ Ibid.

⁸² World Bank, "Economic monitoring report", p. 10.

⁸³ See www.unrwa.org/where-we-work/gaza-strip.

the population was living below the poverty line and 34 per cent below the deep poverty line.⁸⁴

Food security

79. The rate of Palestinian households experiencing severe or moderate food insecurity rose to 64.4 per cent in 2022,⁸⁵ increasing from 9 per cent to 23 per cent in the West Bank and from 50 per cent to 53 per cent in Gaza.⁸⁶

80. While food is available, it is not affordable for most Palestinian households. More than half of Palestinian households' expenditures (56 per cent in Gaza and 50 per cent in the West Bank and East Jerusalem) was on food.⁸⁷

81. The State of Palestine has the second highest food import dependency ratio in the region, with food imports accounting for about 34 per cent of total imports, especially for wheat (91 per cent) and vegetable oil (95 per cent). The war in Ukraine posed additional challenges to the already vulnerable food system, due in particular to price volatility and uncertainty and delays in shipping.⁸⁸

82. Inflation increased by 3.74 per cent from 2021 to 2022, while the food consumer price index rose by 6.74 per cent.⁸⁹ This has had a significant impact on households' capacity to meet basic needs, as price levels in the Occupied Palestinian Territory were already high in comparison to income levels prior to the war in Ukraine.⁹⁰

83. Amid the high level of food insecurity in Gaza, cases of stunting, wasting and underweight children are reported. Some 70 per cent of 1-year-olds and 40 per cent of pregnant women in Gaza are anaemic.⁹¹

Water, sanitation and hygiene

84. The key challenges and vulnerabilities related to the water, sanitation and hygiene sector in the West Bank are posed mainly by the restrictions on construction in Area C, coupled with demolition of water, sanitation and hygiene structures and barriers to access to existing water sources. The closures in Gaza and recurrent military escalation have had negative impacts on the water, sanitation and hygiene infrastructure in Gaza.⁹²

85. Most Gaza Strip households have piped water, yet only 3.2 per cent use it for drinking. In the West Bank, households have to revert to other strategies to overcome the lack of sufficient drinking water. In total, 1.4 million Palestinians are in need of humanitarian support to improve access to safe drinking water.⁹³

86. The daily allocation per capita of consumed water for domestic purposes was 86.3 litres (89.0 litres in the West Bank and 82.7 litres in Gaza) in 2021. The Israeli

⁸⁴ United Nations, Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs, "Humanitarian needs overview", p. 46.

⁸⁵ UNRWA, "Occupied Palestinian Territory emergency appeal 2023", p. 10.

⁸⁶ TD/B/EX(72)/2 and TD/B/EX(72)/2/Corr.1, para. 2.

⁸⁷ Input from the World Food Programme (WFP).

⁸⁸ FAO input.

⁸⁹ State of Palestine, Palestinian Central Bureau of Statistics, "Monthly consumer price index numbers by major groups of expenditure and region for January–December 2022 and percent changes from January–December 2021", 12 January 2023. Available at www.pcbs.gov.ps/statisticsIndicatorsTables.aspx?lang=en&table_id=1628.

⁹⁰ World Bank, "Economic monitoring report", p. 33.

⁹¹ UNRWA input.

⁹² United Nations, Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs, "Humanitarian needs overview", pp. 56 and 57.

⁹³ United Nations Children's Fund (UNICEF), "Humanitarian action for children 2023: State of Palestine", December 2022, p. 2.

daily allocation per capita is three times higher, at about 300 litres, and more than seven times higher for Israeli settlers.⁹⁴

87. As 96 per cent of the water from Gaza's sole aquifer is unfit for human consumption, the preferred strategic solution to provide its citizens with safe, clean water is the desalination of seawater. However, maintaining the equipment used for the desalination process is a big concern, as the water, sanitation and hygiene sector faces challenges with delays in the delivery of essential materials for repair work and the rehabilitation of water networks, including as a result of the closures in Gaza.⁹⁵

88. Delays in delivering fuel to the Gaza Strip during the August escalation brought about a power supply shortage that decreased water production and distribution by more than 50 per cent. The operation capacity of wastewater treatment plants was also affected, which resulted in more than 130,000 m³ of raw or poorly treated wastewater being discharged to the sea daily.⁹⁶

Health

89. Essential health-care needs among Palestinians are high, driven by the high cost of services, access restrictions and lack of availability of treatment and medicine, particularly in Gaza, affecting 1.6 million people, including 809,000 children.⁹⁷

90. In addition to the 187 attacks on health care in the Occupied Palestinian Territory in 2022 recorded by the World Health Organization (WHO) Surveillance System for Attacks on Health Care,⁹⁸ the application of the dual legal and political system governing the Occupied Palestinian Territory contributes to continued health inequities. This has resulted in a weakened Palestinian health-care system, which is suffering from major shortages in specialized personnel, specialized facilities and available drugs. Israeli restrictions obstruct the ability of Palestinians to gain access to essential health services, including primary health care.⁹⁹

91. Challenges and vulnerabilities also extend to sexual and reproductive health and rights, including services for gender-based violence survivors; maternal and child health, including nutrition; and the ability to monitor and document barriers to access to health services for Palestinians.¹⁰⁰

92. The health sector in Gaza is obstructed by closures and other measures that prevent its normal operation, affecting the ability to deliver basic health services.¹⁰¹ Health personnel in Gaza are not commonly exposed to new methods, best practices and medical technology, as their colleagues are elsewhere in the world, which makes it difficult to exchange and access knowledge.¹⁰²

93. The closures in Gaza include restrictions on access to specialized life-saving medical care not available in Gaza. To receive such care, patients require an Israeli exit permit, whose issuance is often delayed or denied. In 2022, 33 per cent of permit applications for patients and 62 per cent of permit applications for patients' companions were not approved in time for patients to reach their hospital

⁹⁴ State of Palestine, Palestinian Central Bureau of Statistics and Palestinian Water Authority, joint press release on World Water Day.

⁹⁵ UNICEF, "WASH: water, sanitation and hygiene – providing clean water to children in the State of Palestine".

⁹⁶ UNICEF, "State of Palestine: flash update – the situation in the Gaza Strip", 10 August 2022, p. 1.

⁹⁷ UNICEF, "Humanitarian action for children", p. 2.

⁹⁸ WHO input.

⁹⁹ United Nations, Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs, "Humanitarian needs overview", pp. 17 and 53.

¹⁰⁰ Ibid., p. 52.

¹⁰¹ UNRWA input.

¹⁰² Ibid.

appointments.¹⁰³ Between January and October 2022, the Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Human Rights documented the death of 11 Palestinians (5 men, 4 boys, 1 woman and 1 girl) while waiting for exit permits,¹⁰⁴ including a 19-month-old girl, Fatma al-Misri, who died while awaiting the outcome of her third permit application to reach a hospital appointment to undergo surgery for a treatable condition. She died on 22 March 2022.¹⁰⁵

94. In the West Bank, over 13,000 patient permits and over 20,000 companion permits were denied by Israeli authorities during 2022. The Palestine Red Crescent Society reported that 93 per cent of ambulances needing entry into Jerusalem from the rest of the West Bank were prevented passage at Israeli checkpoints, requiring the transfer of patients to an Israeli-registered ambulance.¹⁰⁶

95. An estimated total of 498,776 adults and children are suffering from mild, moderate and severe psychosocial distress and mental disorders in the Occupied Palestinian Territory. Around 299,979 children (50 per cent girls and 50 per cent boys) are suffering from severe, moderate (9.1 per cent) and mild disorders (13 per cent), and 198,797 adults (45 per cent women and 55 per cent men) from moderate or severe mental health disorders. The mental health suffering of Palestinians is affected by exposure to violence and widespread human rights violations as a result of the occupation.¹⁰⁷

96. A total of 324,143 children in Gaza under the age of 5 also have micronutrient deficiencies. In addition to these challenges, the health-care system is not prepared to adequately support children with developmental delays and disabilities.¹⁰⁸

97. Lack of materials and financial resources to sustain the health system negatively affects people who use drugs and people with drug use disorders. The health system in Gaza has limited resources to provide drug demand reduction and treatment for at least 10,500 people with drug use disorders and in need of treatment. At the only drug treatment and rehabilitation centre in Bethlehem, the professional team reported that Israeli-imposed restrictions on travel curbed the ability to build capacities in broader drug treatment and rehabilitation fields.¹⁰⁹

Education

98. Attacks on the right to education contribute to a prevailing coercive environment that gives rise to forcible transfer of communities from their homes and lands, in violation of international humanitarian and human rights law.¹¹⁰ A total of 608,500 people, 96 per cent of them children, will need education support in 2023.¹¹¹

99. Dropout rates in the West Bank are estimated at 19 per cent.¹¹² Of those, 55 per cent of boys and 36 per cent of girls dropped out owing to conflict-related protection risks on the way to and from school. Almost 24 per cent of households reported children feeling unsafe or very unsafe when travelling to and from schools, and when

¹⁰³ WHO input.

¹⁰⁴ OHCHR input; see also [A/HRC/52/75](#), para. 13.

¹⁰⁵ See www.emro.who.int/opt/news/gaza-child-dies-following-repeated-permit-delays-by-israel.html.

¹⁰⁶ WHO input.

¹⁰⁷ Input from the United Nations Population Fund (UNFPA).

¹⁰⁸ United Nations, Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs, "Humanitarian needs overview", p. 26.

¹⁰⁹ UNODC input.

¹¹⁰ Education Cluster, "Education in emergency", p. 2.

¹¹¹ UNICEF, "Humanitarian action for children", p. 2.

¹¹² United Nations, Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs, "Humanitarian needs overview", p. 38.

in school.¹¹³ In Gaza, around 5.7 per cent of school-age children dropped out of school during the 2021/22 academic year, mainly for financial reasons or owing to schools not being inclusive.¹¹⁴

100. In total, 56 schools with an estimated 6,550 students in Area C and East Jerusalem are currently facing stop-work or demolition orders, owing to a lack of building permits. These schools face the risk of demolition, in breach of the occupying Power obligations prohibiting the destruction of institutions dedicated to education.¹¹⁵

101. Moreover, Palestinian schools in East Jerusalem remain chronically underfunded. The lack of space and the inability to obtain construction permits have translated into a chronic shortage of classrooms, leading to overcrowding and hindering the delivery of quality education.¹¹⁶

102. In July 2022, the Israeli Ministry of Education suspended the licences of six East Jerusalem schools and gave them a one-year notice to amend their curriculum or have their licences revoked entirely because they continued to use textbooks from the Palestinian Authority instead of those approved by Israeli authorities. In September 2022, around 150 schools in East Jerusalem went on strike against Israeli attempts to impose the Israeli curriculum.¹¹⁷

103. Some 33 per cent of children with disabilities aged 6–9 years are out of school, compared with less than 1 per cent of their peers without disabilities.¹¹⁸

Gender-specific impact of the occupation on women and girls

104. The closures and recurrent military escalations in Gaza and the coercive environment in the West Bank exacerbate instances of sexual and gender-based violence and curtail the availability of life-saving services and access thereto.

105. According to the violence survey in July 2022, 59.3 per cent of married or previously married women between the ages of 15 and 64 experienced violence in the 12 months preceding the survey (70.4 per cent in Gaza and 52.3 per cent in the West Bank). Of those, 57.2 per cent experienced psychological violence, 18.5 per cent physical violence, and 9.4 per cent sexual violence, while 9.6 per cent experienced cyberviolence.¹¹⁹ The August 2022 escalation in Gaza exacerbated the already elevated risk of sexual and gender-based violence against women and girls, especially among displaced families and those with dead or injured family members.¹²⁰

106. During the reporting period, 68,000 female-headed households reported damages and/or defects at their shelters, with 11,000 living in conditions that do not meet any minimum standards of habitability.¹²¹ Such households were also more

¹¹³ Ibid., pp. 50 and 51.

¹¹⁴ UNICEF, “Humanitarian action for children”, p. 2.

¹¹⁵ OHCHR input; see also [A/HRC/52/76](#), para. 26.

¹¹⁶ Input from the Programme of Assistance to the Palestinian People of the United Nations Development Programme.

¹¹⁷ Ibid., citing Hadas Gold and Abeer Salman, “How a debate over textbooks closed 150 schools in East Jerusalem”, CNN, 30 September 2022.

¹¹⁸ World Vision, “Education programmes 2019–2022”, fact sheet, p. 5.

¹¹⁹ UNFPA input.

¹²⁰ United Nations, Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs, “Humanitarian impact in Gaza of escalation of hostilities: immediate needs and funding requirements”, August 2022, available at www.ochaopt.org/content/humanitarian-impact-gaza-escalation-hostilities-immediate-needs-and-funding-requirements-august-2022; and input from the United Nations Entity for Gender Equality and the Empowerment of Women (UN-Women).

¹²¹ United Nations, Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs, “Humanitarian needs overview”, p. 35.

likely to take on debt for basic household expenditures in both the West Bank and Gaza. In Gaza, they were also more likely to report taking on debt for food.¹²²

107. Despite high levels of education, women and girls in the Occupied Palestinian Territory face record levels of unemployment. During the reporting period, 18.6 per cent of women participated in the labour force, compared with 70.7 per cent of men, whereas the female unemployment rate reached 40 per cent, compared with the 20 per cent male unemployment rate. Among young people (19–29 years) holding an intermediate diploma or higher, the female unemployment rate reached 61.3 per cent, compared with 34.3 per cent for males.¹²³

108. Women and girls continue to face barriers in gaining access to health services with permits to travel to the West Bank, including East Jerusalem, for necessary specialized treatment. In October 2022, 48 per cent of patient permit applications from the Gaza Strip were for female patients, whereas 52 per cent of patient permit applications from the West Bank were for female patients for treatment in East Jerusalem or Israel.¹²⁴

109. Home incursions and demolitions place a unique gender-specific burden on women and girls when considering traditional gender norms. Female- and child-headed households experience greater protection risks, and families with pregnant women, infants and young children, elderly persons, and persons with disabilities are in need of greater mental health and psychosocial support owing to exposure to violence and trauma.¹²⁵

110. In the West Bank, 12.3 per cent of households (15.3 per cent refugees and 11.3 per cent non-refugees) expressed concern about the safety and security of girls and women.¹²⁶ In 2022, 172 women were detained or arrested by Israeli forces. By the end of 2022, 29 women were in Israeli prisons, including 2 female minors.¹²⁷

111. In an open letter to the Secretary-General on the Security Council open debate on women and peace and security, the Palestinian Women's Civil Coalition highlighted the lack of concrete measures for the advancement of the women and peace and security agenda in the Occupied Palestinian Territory, and that Palestinian women seeking to implement resolution 1325 (2000) faced enormous obstacles due to the prolonged Israeli military occupation. The Coalition noted that the lack of implementation of Security Council resolutions relating to the question of Palestine curtailed the implementation of resolution 1325 (2000) in the Occupied Palestinian Territory and the rest of the region.¹²⁸

III. Occupied Syrian Golan

112. The Secretary-General continues to reaffirm the validity of Security Council resolution 497 (1981), in which the Council decided that the Israeli decision to impose its laws, jurisdiction and administration in the occupied Syrian Golan Heights was null and void and without international legal effect.

¹²² WFP input.

¹²³ State of Palestine, Palestinian Central Bureau of Statistics, "Palestinian Central Bureau of Statistics (PCBS) presents the main findings of labour force survey in 2022".

¹²⁴ See www.emro.who.int/images/stories/palestine/Oct_2022_Monthly.pdf?ua=1.

¹²⁵ UNRWA input.

¹²⁶ Ibid.

¹²⁷ See www.pcbs.gov.ps/site/512/default.aspx?lang=en&ItemID=4458.

¹²⁸ See www.miftah.org/PrinterF.cfm?DocId=26811; see also <https://ardd-jo.org/news/letter-to-the-joint-donors-to-womens-peace-and-humanitarian-fund-and-jonap-pooled-fund-call-to-activate-the-united-nations-security-council-resolution-1325-2000-on-women-peace-and-security/>.

113. In 2021, there were approximately 52,000 people living in the occupied Syrian Golan. The population was roughly split between Israeli settlers and Syrians, with Syrians mainly residing in five villages that form approximately 5 per cent of the territory of the occupied Syrian Golan near the United Nations-maintained area of separation, separating the Syrian Arab Republic and the Golan. In contrast, Israeli settlers were distributed among 35 different settlements.¹²⁹

114. On 1 June 1967, approximately 90,000 Syrians were living in the Golan. The population growth rate in the Syrian Golan was 3.7 per cent when Israel occupied the Syrian Golan in 1967. By 2009, it had dropped to 1.7 per cent, and then to 1.4 per cent in 2018, lower than that of Israeli settlements (1.7 per cent).¹³⁰ The Syrian population is projected to become a minority and comprise only one third of the population by 2025.¹³¹

115. Since the 1967 occupation, Israel has annexed 11,000 dunums of land within its administrative borders to adjacent nature reserves, which it established after the occupation. As a result, the potential for these natural areas to be utilized for the development and benefit of the indigenous population has been stripped away.¹³²

116. In December 2021, the Government of Israel approved a plan to add 7,300 housing units in the Golan over the following five years to double the number of residents there, as well as to establish two new settlements.¹³³

117. Settlements in the occupied Syrian Golan violate international law, and Israeli policies therein amount to the transfer of its own population into an occupied territory, which is also in violation of international humanitarian law.

118. Discrimination between settlers and residents of Syrian villages in terms of building permits has been an ongoing trend. In 2012, the residents of Syrian villages, whose number was around 1.15 times more than that of settlers, received less than one third of the building permits received by settlers. In 2021, the number of residents of Syrian villages became approximately equal to that of Israelis in settlements, yet settlers obtained almost double the number of building permits.¹³⁴

119. In 2020, the total area of zones designated for construction in all Israeli settlements amounted to 42,755 dunums, equivalent to 1.6 dunums per person, compared with 0.25 dunum per person in all Syrian villages. This has compounded the population density in the Syrian villages, which reached six times the population density of Israeli settlements, directly congruent with the inequitable distribution of land.¹³⁵

120. Overcrowding in Syrian villages has been worsened by the confiscation by Israel of over 80,000 dunums extending from north of Majdal Shams to Ayn Qinya.¹³⁶

121. This has led to the increased urbanization of Syrian villages, but without the availability of the necessary facilities, amenities, local services, infrastructure or sustainable economic structures. Before the occupation, the Syrian population in five villages owned over 100,000 dunums of land. However, in the four decades since

¹²⁹ International Labour Organization (ILO), document ILC.110/DG/APP, para. 136.

¹³⁰ Al-Marsad – The Arab Centre for Human Rights in the Golan Heights, “Ethnic planning: a comparison between Israel’s ethnic spatial planning policies in Israeli Jewish settlements and Syrian villages in the Occupied Syrian Golan”, June 2022, p. 12.

¹³¹ ILO input.

¹³² Al-Marsad, “Ethnic planning”, p. 17.

¹³³ [A/77/328](#), para. 18, and [A/77/493](#), para. 68.

¹³⁴ Al-Marsad, “Ethnic planning”, p. 11.

¹³⁵ *Ibid.*, p. 16.

¹³⁶ [A/77/520](#), para. 20.

then, the Israeli authorities have confiscated 56 per cent of this land for military and settlement activities.¹³⁷

122. Confiscation of grazing lands and restrictions on livestock breeding led to the crumbling of the livestock sector. Landmines on agricultural land have also had a negative impact on agriculture and farming. Agriculture and livestock rearing were the primary sources of livelihood for the indigenous people, with over 90 per cent of the population working in these sectors before the occupation. Currently, settlers utilize approximately five times more dunums of land for agriculture than the indigenous population.¹³⁸

123. As a result, agriculture, mainly apple farming, has lost its significance, and competition with Israeli industrialized agriculture has made it more challenging for Syrian farmers to survive. Consequently, some households that were solely reliant on agriculture have turned to agritourism as a supplementary source of income.¹³⁹

124. The Special Committee to Investigate Israeli Practices Affecting the Human Rights of the Palestinian People and Other Arabs of the Occupied Territories was briefed on the discriminatory allocation of drinking and irrigation water, as well as discriminatory access to work and health care, in the occupied Syrian Golan, which favoured Israeli settlers over the local population.¹⁴⁰

125. The Israeli-owned Mekorot Company is also active in groundwater extraction in the Golan, drilling more than 40 artesian wells in 17 sites across the Golan, 5 of which are located on Syrian farmers' land. The amount of extracted water is estimated to reach tens of millions of cubic metres per year.¹⁴¹

126. Israeli discriminatory water allocations among Israeli and Syrian farmers persist. An Israeli farmer receives 750–800 cups of water per dunum of agricultural land, compared with 250 cups per dunum received by a Syrian farmer. Syrian farmer water associations are compelled to purchase water at high prices from the Mekorot Company and have to cover the cost of delivery, which results in a total expense that is three times higher than that paid by Israeli farmers in the settlements, who are exempt from infrastructure fees.¹⁴²

127. Syrians in the occupied Golan who reject Israeli nationality are reported to have their nationality labelled as “undefined” in travel documents, hindering their travel abroad.¹⁴³

128. Most Syrian workers in the occupied Golan seek employment in Israel or settlements owing to a lack of opportunities. The construction sector employs 21.8 per cent of Syrian citizens, followed by education, which employs 19.5 per cent, and wholesale and retail trade, at 13.7 per cent.¹⁴⁴ Syrians earn less than Israelis, with an average income of 6,002 new shekels, which is only 57.3 per cent of the Israeli average and 72.6 per cent of the Jewish settler average.¹⁴⁵

¹³⁷ Al-Marsad, “Ethnic planning”, pp. 10–16.

¹³⁸ *Ibid.*, p. 23.

¹³⁹ ILO input.

¹⁴⁰ [A/77/501](#), para. 58.

¹⁴¹ Al-Marsad, “Ethnic planning”, p. 23.

¹⁴² *Ibid.*, pp. 23 and 24.

¹⁴³ [A/77/501](#), para. 60.

¹⁴⁴ ILO input.

¹⁴⁵ Al-Marsad, “Ethnic planning”, p. 20.

IV. Conclusion

129. The protracted Israeli occupation of the Palestinian territory and the Syrian Golan continues to have a detrimental effect on the living conditions of the Palestinian and Syrian populations, as well as on social and economic development in the occupied territories.

130. Israeli-imposed restrictions, expansion of the illegal settlements and other practices not only prevent development but have also exacerbated the fragmentation of the Palestinian territory. These policies and practices have had a severe humanitarian, economic, social and political impact on Palestinians and their ability to exercise their fundamental human rights. Their repercussions have had a cumulative, multilayered and intergenerational impact on the Palestinian society, economy and environment and have caused the deterioration of the living conditions of the Palestinians, their forced displacement, “de-development” of the Occupied Palestinian Territory, entrenchment of the Palestinian economy’s asymmetric dependence on Israel, and exacerbation of Palestinian institutional dependence on foreign aid.

131. Prospects for the Palestinian economy are negative, should the current situation persist. The funding crisis facing UNRWA and the decline in donor aid is another factor that only exacerbates the already precarious conditions of hundreds of thousands of Palestinians.

132. The occupation has a different and disproportionate impact on women and girls, especially from home demolitions, destruction and incursions. The closures and military escalations in Gaza and the coercive environment in the West Bank exacerbate instances of sexual and gender-based violence and obstruct the access of women and girls to education and health care. Moreover, despite greater female attendance at school across all ages, women continue to be underrepresented in the labour force and female-headed households are more likely to have to take on debt to provide for basic needs. Female-headed households rely on support from family and friends as a primary source of income, compared with 7 per cent of male-headed households.¹⁴⁶

133. The August 2022 escalation between Israel and armed groups in Gaza compounded the severe situation, which was created by the closures imposed on Gaza, other restrictive Israeli measures and recurrent escalations, in addition to declining donor funding. This requires the urgent attention of the international community.

134. The alarming escalation in tension and violence during the first part of 2023 demonstrates the urgent need to address the root causes of the conflict. Israel continues to employ policies and practices that are contrary to relevant Security Council resolutions, international humanitarian law and international human rights law. Some of these practices may be considered discriminatory, and others may amount to the forcible transfer or collective punishment of protected persons, a grave breach of the Fourth Geneva Convention and prohibited under international law. Adherence to international law is imperative, ensuring that no party enjoys impunity and securing justice and peace for all those living in the region, including Palestinians and Syrians living under occupation. Furthermore, lack of implementation of Security Council resolutions pertaining to the question of Palestine undermines the prospects of the implementation of

¹⁴⁶ United Nations, Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs, “Occupied Palestinian Territory multi-sectoral needs assessment: gender and inclusion”, brief, July 2022. Available at www.ochaopt.org/msna/2022/OPT2201_MSNA_2022_Gender_Brief-2.pdf.

internationally agreed frameworks in the Occupied Palestinian Territory and across the region, including the women and peace and security agenda and the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development.

135. The United Nations maintains its long-standing position that lasting and comprehensive peace can be achieved only through a negotiated two-State solution. The Secretary-General will continue to ensure that the United Nations works towards the establishment of an independent, democratic, contiguous and viable Palestinian State, living side by side in peace with a secure Israel, with Jerusalem as the capital of both States, consistent with relevant Security Council resolutions and international law.



General Assembly Economic and Social Council

Distr.: General
18 July 2024

Original: English

General Assembly Seventy-ninth session

Item 59 of the provisional agenda*

Permanent sovereignty of the Palestinian people in the Occupied Palestinian Territory, including East Jerusalem, and of the Arab population in the occupied Syrian Golan over their natural resources

Economic and Social Council 2024 session

27 July 2023–24 July 2024

Agenda item 16

Economic and social repercussions of the Israeli occupation on the living conditions of the Palestinian people in the Occupied Palestinian Territory, including East Jerusalem, and the Arab population in the occupied Syrian Golan

Economic and social repercussions of the Israeli occupation on the living conditions of the Palestinian people in the Occupied Palestinian Territory, including East Jerusalem, and of the Arab population in the occupied Syrian Golan**

Note by the Secretary-General

Summary

In its resolution [2023/34](#), entitled “Economic and social repercussions of the Israeli occupation on the living conditions of the Palestinian people in the Occupied Palestinian Territory, including East Jerusalem, and the Arab population in the occupied Syrian Golan”, the Economic and Social Council requested the Secretary-General to submit to the General Assembly at its seventy-ninth session, through the Council, a report on the implementation of that resolution. In addition, the Council, in its resolution [2023/35](#), entitled “Situation of and assistance to Palestinian women”, requested the Secretary-General to include information on the gender-specific impact of the occupation and the progress made in the implementation of that resolution in that report. The Assembly, in its resolution [78/170](#), entitled “Permanent sovereignty of the Palestinian people in the Occupied Palestinian Territory, including East Jerusalem, and of the Arab population in the occupied Syrian Golan over their natural resources”, requested the Secretary-General to report to the Assembly at its seventy-ninth session. The present report, prepared by the Economic and Social Commission for Western Asia (ESCWA), has been submitted in response to those resolutions.

* [A/79/150](#).

** The present report was submitted late owing to the complexities of attaining precise information under the current circumstances in the Occupied Palestinian Territory.



The report covers persistent Israeli practices and policies, including those that may amount to violations of international humanitarian law and international human rights law, that affect the social and economic conditions of the people living under the Israeli military occupation. It also covers the gendered impact of the occupation.

ESCWA would like to express its appreciation for the contributions from the Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations, the International Labour Organization, the International Trade Centre, the Mine Action Service, the Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs, the Office of the Special Coordinator for the Middle East Peace Process, the Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Human Rights, the United Nations Children's Fund, the United Nations Conference on Trade and Development, the United Nations Development Programme (UNDP)/Programme of Assistance to the Palestinian People, the United Nations Entity for Gender Equality and the Empowerment of Women (UN-Women), the United Nations Environment Programme, the United Nations Industrial Development Organization, the United Nations Office on Drugs and Crime, the United Nations Population Fund, the United Nations Relief and Works Agency for Palestine Refugees in the Near East (UNRWA) and the World Health Organization (WHO).

I. Introduction

1. The Economic and Social Council, in its resolution 2023/34, expressed concerns about the economic and social repercussions of the Israeli occupation on the living conditions of the Palestinian people in the Occupied Palestinian Territory, including East Jerusalem, and of the Arab population in the occupied Syrian Golan. In its resolution 2023/35, the Council highlighted the gender-specific repercussions in that regard. The General Assembly, in its resolution 78/170, demanded that Israel, the occupying Power, cease the exploitation, damage, cause of loss or depletion and endangerment of natural resources in the Occupied Palestinian Territory, including East Jerusalem, and in the occupied Syrian Golan.

2. The present report, submitted in response to those resolutions, provides information on relevant developments from 1 April 2023 to 31 March 2024. It was written as the war in Gaza continued and therefore does not capture the full repercussions on the social and economic conditions of the Palestinian people.

II. Occupied Palestinian Territory

3. The year 2023 was already on track to record the highest number of Palestinian fatalities, including children, since the Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs began recording casualties in 2005. The number of casualties, already elevated before 7 October 2023, saw a major increase thereafter.¹

4. On the morning of 7 October, during the Jewish holiday of Simchat Torah, Hamas and other Palestinian armed groups launched large-scale attacks on Israel. The attacks, which included numerous acts of terror, saw an estimated 3,000 Hamas and Palestinian Islamic Jihad militants from Gaza infiltrate some 20 communities and military facilities in southern Israel, in the Gaza periphery, by land, sea and air, while thousands of rockets were launched towards population centres in Israel, including Tel Aviv and Jerusalem. Since 7 October, Israeli sources have reported that more than 1,500 Israelis and foreign nationals were killed in that context, including at least 338 women, 38 children and 690 members of the security forces. Around 6,200 Israelis and foreigners were injured, according to official Israeli sources. Also, 33 attacks on Israeli medical facilities and personnel were recorded. In addition, some 250 people, including Israelis and foreign nationals, approximately 65 of whom were women and 34 children, were abducted and taken to Gaza, with some released in November. The Special Representative of the Secretary-General on Sexual Violence in Conflict released findings that there are reasonable grounds to believe that conflict-related sexual violence occurred in multiple locations during the attacks, that there was clear and convincing information that sexual violence was committed against hostages and that there were reasonable grounds to believe that such violence may be ongoing against those still in captivity.

5. By the end of the reporting period, the Israeli military response and the war had resulted in a catastrophic situation for the 2.3 million inhabitants of Gaza – who were already living in dire social and economic conditions in view of 57 years of occupation and 17 years of closures of Gaza – and rendered much of Gaza uninhabitable, with tens of thousands losing their lives, the majority of whom reportedly women and children, and 1.7 million Palestinians displaced. According to the Integrated Food Security Phase Classification report of March 2024, famine was projected and imminent in the North Gaza and Gaza Governorates from mid-March

¹ United Nations entities input and S/2023/988, para. 59. See also www.pcbs.gov.ps/post.aspx?lang=en&ItemID=4676.

to May 2024.² From 9 to 21 October, the Israeli authorities ordered a full closure of Gaza, including shutting off Israeli-supplied water and electricity, as well as restricting the entry of all imports, including food and fuel. The sole power plant in Gaza stopped working on 11 October. Thereafter, the entry of humanitarian supplies resumed but has been wholly inadequate, far below what is required to meet the massive needs of the people in Gaza.³

6. The scale of damage and destruction in Gaza is qualitatively different from any previous escalation. The effects of extensive loss of life and displacement increase exponentially when coupled with the destruction of homes, livelihoods, natural resources, the health system and infrastructure, as well as institutional capacities. This impact is also systemic, as Gaza is left without what could be described as an “economy” and with barely any means of production, self-sustainment, employment or capacity for trade. As such, Gaza will be dependent on international/foreign assistance on a scale not seen since 1948 and on access to goods brought in through Israel.⁴

Israeli practices in the Occupied Palestinian Territory

7. The situation in the Occupied Palestinian Territory was dire even before 7 October, given the protracted military occupation and closures of Gaza, the high level of violence by the security forces and settler violence against Palestinians in the West Bank, settlement expansion and attacks by Palestinians against Israelis, as well as the long-standing discriminatory systems of control over Palestinians.⁵

8. On 29 December 2023, South Africa instituted proceedings against Israel before the International Court of Justice concerning alleged violations in the Gaza Strip of Israeli obligations under the Convention on the Prevention and Punishment of the Crime of Genocide.⁶

Violence and use of force

9. The reporting period was the deadliest for Israelis and Palestinians in the history of the conflict, marked by unprecedented and ongoing war in Gaza between Israel and Hamas and other armed Palestinian groups, alongside a surge in violence in the West Bank.

10. The Israeli security forces continue to employ measures and practices that raise serious concerns about excessive use of force and unlawful killing, in some cases possibly amounting to arbitrary deprivation of life, including extrajudicial executions, and that may have constituted violations of international humanitarian law and international human rights law.

11. Monitoring by the Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Human Rights of incidents during the war in Gaza indicated extensive disregard for international humanitarian law by all parties.⁷

12. Between 7 October 2023 and 31 March 2024, at least 32,782 Palestinians died in the Gaza Strip, the vast majority of whom (around 70 per cent) women and children, according to the Gaza Ministry of Health. Another 75,298 Palestinians were

² See www.un.org/unispal/wp-content/uploads/2024/03/IPC_Famine_Committee_Review_Report_Gaza_Strip_Acute_Food_Insecurity_Feb_July2024_Special_Brief.pdf.

³ A/HRC/55/28, paras. 18 and 19.

⁴ E/ESCWA/31/9, para. 33.

⁵ A/HRC/55/28, para. 86.

⁶ *Application of the Convention on the Prevention and Punishment of the Crime of Genocide in the Gaza Strip (South Africa v. Israel)*.

⁷ A/HRC/55/28, para. 10.

injured, again according to the Ministry,⁸ with many injuries that may result in long-term disability.⁹ In other words, approximately 5 per cent of the 2.3 million population of Gaza has been either killed or injured or gone missing since 7 October.¹⁰

13. The Secretary-General, in remarks to the Security Council and referencing his annual reports on children and armed conflict, indicated that, “in a matter of weeks, a far greater number of children have been killed by Israeli military operations in Gaza than the total number of children killed during any year, by any party to a conflict since [his term started]”.¹¹

14. As of the end of March 2024, at least 224 aid workers had died in Gaza since October 2023, nearly three times the toll recorded in any other single conflict in a year. This figure includes 179 United Nations staff members, from UNRWA (176), WHO (1), UNDP (1) and the United Nations Office for Project Services (1). This is the highest toll among the Organization’s staff in any conflict in its history.¹²

15. Across the occupied West Bank, including East Jerusalem, amid increasing violence, and throughout the reporting period, but especially after 7 October, Israel escalated the use of lethal force against Palestinians, often in situations where it may have been unnecessary or disproportionate and that may in some cases have possibly amounted to arbitrary deprivation of life, including extrajudicial execution and wilful killing.¹³ Most of the Palestinians died owing to operations by Israeli security forces in the context of Israeli operations in Area A, including during subsequent exchanges of fire with armed Palestinians. After 7 October, Israeli forces intensified the use of air strikes and other heavy weaponry in refugee camps and other densely populated areas during operations in the West Bank, resulting in high numbers of Palestinian fatalities, including children, and extensive infrastructural damage.¹⁴

16. During the reporting period, 553 Palestinians, including at least 134 children and 4 women, died as a result of operations by Israeli military and security forces, or settlers in the West Bank, including East Jerusalem. A total of 22 Israelis, among them 4 women, 4 children and 5 security and military personnel, died in the occupied West Bank and Israel, while another 183 were injured in Palestinian attacks and other incidents.¹⁵

Detention and ill-treatment

17. According to Physicians for Human Rights, the reporting period had witnessed the deliberate deterioration of incarceration conditions for Palestinians even before the events of 7 October.¹⁶ On 1 February 2023, the Israeli Minister of National

⁸ United Nations entities input.

⁹ See https://reliefweb.int/attachments/d2f3eb84-975e-4fe0-ae70-10c158251716/Needs%20Assessment_February_2024_1.pdf, as well as the flash appeal for the Occupied Palestinian Territory published by the Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs.

¹⁰ ESCWA calculations based on data from the Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs and the Palestinian Central Bureau of Statistics.

¹¹ See <https://news.un.org/en/story/2024/03/1147512> and www.un.org/sg/en/content/sg/statement/2023-11-29/secretary-generals-remarks-the-security-council-the-middle-east-delivered.

¹² See www.ochaopt.org/content/hostilities-gaza-strip-and-israel-reported-impact-day-180 and www.ochaopt.org/content/statement-humanitarian-coordinator-mr-jamie-mcgoldrick.

¹³ A/HRC/55/28, paras. 57 and 62–65.

¹⁴ Database on casualties maintained by the Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs.

¹⁵ See www.ochaopt.org/content/hostilities-gaza-strip-and-israel-flash-update-149-mapbox. See also www.unrwa.org/resources/reports/unrwa-situation-report-97-situation-gaza-strip-and-west-bank-including-east-Jerusalem.

¹⁶ See www.phr.org.il/wp-content/uploads/2024/02/5845_Imprisoned_Paper_Eng.pdf and www.timesofisrael.com/ben-gvir-moves-to-overcrowd-prison-living-conditions-in-response-to-gaza-war/.

Security had announced measures to worsen detention conditions for Palestinians, including women and girls. According to Physicians for Human Rights, protests against those measures led to harsh reprisals.¹⁷

18. After 7 October, Israel further restricted detainees' access to food, water, sanitation, electricity, medical treatment, media and information, family visits and the right to consult legal representatives. Many detainees, including children, older persons and women, were subjected to violence that in some cases may have amounted to torture or other acts of cruel, inhuman or degrading treatment or punishment.¹⁸ In that context, 40 Palestinian prisoners reportedly died during the reporting period while in Israeli custody,¹⁹ including, reportedly, at least 27 from Gaza detained by the army and 13 arrested from the West Bank and detained by the Israeli Prison Service.²⁰

19. The number of Palestinians in detention increased significantly. As of March 2024, a record number of 9,077 people were being held in Israeli security prisons – of those, 39 per cent (3,558) are administrative detainees, 29 per cent (2,656) are being held as remand detainees in pretrial incarceration and 23 per cent (2,070) are actually serving sentences after conviction, as well as 793 prisoners from Gaza considered “unlawful combatants”,²¹ who continue to be protected under international humanitarian law and international human rights law.²²

20. Concerns have been raised that Palestinian detainees, women and men alike, have been subjected to beatings, abuse and sexual and gender-based violence in detention, including reportedly unnecessary and humiliating strip searches, forced nudity, beating on their genitals and threats of rape in retaliation for the attacks of 7 October.²³ Reports of rape and other forms of sexual violence against women and girls in detention continue to emerge.²⁴

Destruction and confiscation of property and infrastructure

21. Gaza witnessed an unprecedented scale and number of attacks affecting residential buildings, hospitals, religious and cultural sites, schools and government buildings. Israel repeatedly accused Hamas and other armed groups of using civilian infrastructure, such as hospitals and shelters, or tunnels underneath them, to conduct military operations.

¹⁷ A/78/502, para. 39, cited from www.phr.org.il/en/prisoners-rights/.

¹⁸ A/HRC/55/28, para. 78, sourced from www.phr.org.il/en/prisoners-rights/; see also www.israelnationalnews.com/news/367420; www.haaretz.com/israel-news/2023-02-02/ty-article/.premium/trolling-palestinian-prisoners-ben-gvir-could-drag-israel-into-another-gaza-war/00000186-0eb5-df4f-a787-1fb5e5090000; and www.jpost.com/israel-news/article-731670.

¹⁹ See <https://cda.gov.ps/index.php/ar/ar-prisoner-movement-2/2017-06-01-06-53-33/16388-31-3-2027>.

²⁰ See www.haaretz.com/israel-news/2024-03-07/ty-article/.premium/27-gaza-detainees-died-in-custody-at-israeli-army-facilities-since-the-start-of-the-war/0000018e-1322-d950-a18e-f3bbaa370000.

²¹ See <https://hamoked.org/prisoners-charts.php>.

²² See www.icrc.org/en/doc/assets/files/other/irrc_849_dorman.pdf; <https://hamoked.org/prisoners-charts.php>; and [https://hrdf.org.il/october-2023-newsletter-copy/#:~:text=According%20to%20statistics%20from%20Israeli,only%2023%25%20\(2%2C070\)%20are](https://hrdf.org.il/october-2023-newsletter-copy/#:~:text=According%20to%20statistics%20from%20Israeli,only%2023%25%20(2%2C070)%20are).

²³ See www.ohchr.org/sites/default/files/documents/countries/palestine/2023-12-27-Flash-Report.pdf and www.addameer.org/sites/default/files/publications/Full%20Report%20on%20the%20situation%20after%20October%207th.pdf.

²⁴ See www.ohchr.org/en/press-releases/2024/02/israelopt-un-experts-appalled-reported-human-rights-violations-against; <https://news.un.org/en/story/2024/02/1146667>; and www.un.org/sexualviolenceinconflict/wp-content/uploads/2024/03/report/mission-report-official-visit-of-the-office-of-the-srsg-svc-to-israel-and-the-occupied-west-bank-29-january-14-february-2024/20240304-Israel-oWB-CRSV-report.pdf.

22. As of March 2024, according to satellite imagery analysis, the United Nations Satellite Centre had identified 34,115 destroyed structures, 17,055 severely damaged structures, 42,659 moderately damaged structures and 29,877 possibly damaged structures, for a total of 123,706 structures, corresponding to around 50 per cent of the total structures in the Gaza Strip, and a total of 128,904 estimated damaged housing units.²⁵

23. Military operations and prolonged restrictions on the movement of people and goods by Israeli forces had left 26 out of 36 hospitals out of service by the end of March 2024. The second raid on the Shifa' medical complex in Gaza City from 18 March to 1 April left the largest hospital in complete ruins.²⁶

24. About 63 per cent of all sites with significant heritage value sustained damage, of which 31 per cent were destroyed, with the cost estimated at \$319 million as an initial assessment at the end of January 2024.²⁷

25. Given that the average pace of reconstruction after the escalations of 2014 and 2021 was 992 housing units per year, it would take approximately 80 years to reconstruct only those housing units that were fully destroyed. Even with an optimistic scenario of a five-fold increase in construction material, it would take until 2040 to reconstruct the units.²⁸

26. In the West Bank, the Israeli authorities continued to implement eviction and demolition orders against Palestinians based on discriminatory planning policies, laws and practices, including on the basis that properties lacked building permits.²⁹

27. Furthermore, the demolition and seizure of Palestinian structures in the West Bank, including internationally funded humanitarian projects, may have entailed numerous human rights violations and raise concerns about the risk of forcible transfer.³⁰

28. Demolition incidents were scaled up by more than 37 per cent in the fourth quarter of 2023 compared with the same period in 2022.³¹ The incidents included punitive demolitions of 21 family homes of alleged Palestinian attackers in the West Bank, including East Jerusalem.

29. Between December 2023 and January 2024, more than 2,500 shelters in the Jenin camp were reportedly affected by Israeli operations. Severe damage was also recorded in the Nur Shams and Tulkarm camps, where over 2,100 shelters were damaged, with a reported 60 per cent gap in the damage repair response.³² Furthermore, during its operations in Palestinian cities in the West Bank, including in densely populated refugee camps, Israeli forces destroyed civilian infrastructure such as roads, major water pipes, sewage and the electricity network, as well as hospitals.³³

²⁵ See <https://unosat.org/products/3824>.

²⁶ United Nations entities input.

²⁷ See <https://thedocs.worldbank.org/en/doc/14e309cd34e04e40b90eb19afa7b5d15-0280012024/original/Gaza-Interim-Damage-Assessment-032924-Final.pdf>.

²⁸ See www.unescwa.org/sites/default/files/pubs/pdf/gaza-war-socioeconomic-impacts-palestine-english.pdf.

²⁹ A/HRC/55/72, para. 34.

³⁰ See https://unsco.unmissions.org/sites/default/files/security_council_briefing_-_26_march_2334_scr_2334.pdf.

³¹ See <https://sheltercluster.org/palestine/documents/shelter-cluster-west-bank-snapshot-12-mar-2024> and www.ochaopt.org/data/demolition.

³² A/HRC/55/28, paras. 54 and 55; see also <https://sheltercluster.org/palestine/documents/shelter-cluster-west-bank-snapshot-12-mar-2024> and www.ochaopt.org/content/humanitarian-activities-implemented-following-israeli-forces-operation-jenin.

³³ A/78/502, para. 26; and A/HRC/55/28, paras. 54 and 55. See also www.ochaopt.org/content/israeli-forces-operation-jenin-situation-report-1.

30. Persons with disabilities are facing significantly disproportionate impacts from the war in Gaza. The absence of advance warning and information in accessible formats about relocation and the destruction of communication networks have rendered evacuation almost impossible. The scale of destruction of housing and civil infrastructure, and the resulting rubble, limits possibilities for movement and accessibility essential for persons with disabilities to escape, evacuate and seek protection. Physical barriers to distribution points prevent access to humanitarian assistance.

Coercive environment and population displacement

31. Displacement in Gaza and the West Bank continued. In Gaza, as at 30 March, up to 1.7 million Palestinians (over 75 per cent of the population) had been displaced, most on multiple occasions as families sought safety. UN-Women estimates that nearly 1 million women and girls have been displaced.³⁴ Most of the displaced have sought shelter in emergency UNRWA and public shelters, informal sites or in the vicinity of UNRWA shelters and distribution sites and within host communities.

32. Displacement also continued in the West Bank, in particular in Area C, with demolitions and threats of demolition of homes, destruction of livelihoods and restriction of access to farming and grazing land. Overall, during 2023, around 4,000 Palestinians in the West Bank, including East Jerusalem, were displaced by such actions.³⁵ Since October 2023, a monthly average of some 280 Palestinians have been displaced compared with 128 in the first nine months of 2023.

Israeli settlement activity and settler violence

33. The expansion of Israeli settlements in the occupied West Bank, including East Jerusalem, impedes access by Palestinians to their land and resources and threatens the viability of a future independent Palestinian State. The competent principal organs of the United Nations have stated that the establishment by Israel of settlements in the Palestinian territory occupied since 1967, including East Jerusalem, has no legal validity and constitutes a flagrant violation of international law.³⁶

34. Israeli settlement expansion increased throughout the occupied West Bank, including East Jerusalem, where settlement activity rose to 7,920 settlement housing units advanced or approved, compared with 5,000 in the previous reporting period. In Area C, 13,150 settlement housing units were advanced or approved, compared with 12,860 in the previous reporting period. On 18 June, the Government of Israel removed the requirement for ministerial approval at interim stages of settlement planning and delegated that authority to the additional minister in the Ministry of Defence.

35. During the reporting period, the number of Israeli settler outposts increased to 191, with 26 established during 2023 and 9 during the first quarter of 2024.

36. The Israeli authorities continued to expand roads and infrastructure connecting suburban settlements in the West Bank, including East Jerusalem. The Custodian of the State's property in the Israeli Civil Administration declared approximately 8,000 dunums in the occupied West Bank as State land, the largest State land declaration in decades.

³⁴ See www.unwomen.org/en/digital-library/publications/2024/01/gender-alert-the-gendered-impact-of-the-crisis-in-gaza. According to the Palestinian Central Bureau of Statistics, 49.3 per cent of the population in Gaza is female. With a reported displacement of 1.9 million as at 15 January 2024, according to UNRWA, the approximate number of female individuals in the population would be close to 1 million.

³⁵ See www.ochaopt.org/content/about-4000-palestinians-displaced-west-bank-2023.

³⁶ Security Council resolution 2334 (2016). See also General Assembly resolution 78/78 and *Legal Consequences of the Construction of a Wall in the Occupied Palestinian Territory, Advisory Opinion, I.C.J. Reports 2004*, p. 136. See also [A/HRC/55/72](https://www.unhcr.org/refugees/55/72), paras. 9–22.

Settler violence

37. During the reporting period, the intensity, severity and frequency and scope of Israeli settler violence against Palestinians dramatically increased. The first nine months of 2023 saw a daily average of three settler attacks, the highest on record, compared with an average of two per day in 2022.³⁷ During the last three months of 2023, the rate of settler attacks almost doubled.

38. Between 7 October 2023 and 31 March 2024, 704 Israeli settler attacks against Palestinians and their property were recorded. They resulted in the deaths of 17 Palestinians and injuries to around 400 others, in addition to the vandalization of nearly 40 houses and at least 9,900 trees.³⁸

39. Since 7 October, settlers have taken over an additional 4,000 dunums and fenced off the areas that they took over before 7 October. In some instances, they also set up roadblocks to deny Palestinians access to agricultural roads that they had used in the past and installed fences around some of their farms.³⁹

Movement and access restrictions

40. Allegations of violations of Palestinians' rights to freedom of movement and access to services and livelihoods have persisted, including in the context of possibly discriminatory restrictions on access to key roads for which the Israeli authorities cite security reasons. Furthermore, closures and movement restrictions across the Occupied Palestinian Territory have had an impact on access to protection, justice, basic services and employment opportunities and disrupted the Palestinian court system.⁴⁰

Gaza closures

41. Between 8 and 21 October 2023, Israel completely closed all crossings into Gaza and prevented the entry of humanitarian aid, commercial goods, food, fuel and electricity, allowing only a small supply of water to enter. Thereafter, overall, the level of essential goods, including humanitarian assistance, allowed into Gaza has been wholly inadequate. That severe deprivation of the rights of Palestinians in Gaza to water, food, health and other basic necessities, compounded by attacks striking essential civilian infrastructure, such as hospitals, bakeries and water wells, resulted in a preventable, human-caused and unprecedented humanitarian crisis in Gaza. These developments came on top of the closures by Israel of Gaza since the 2007 takeover by Hamas of the Gaza Strip, in one of the most densely populated areas in the world, which may amount to collective punishment, prohibited under international law.⁴¹

42. The Erez crossing remained closed up to 31 March 2024, while the Kerem Shalom/Karem Abu Salim crossing was partially opened in mid-December 2023 for the screening and entry of aid. This situation led to severe constraints on humanitarian access and was compounded by severe restrictions on movement within the Gaza Strip, in particular to the north of Wadi Gaza.⁴² Vital materials, including life-saving medical equipment and parts critical for the repair of water facilities and

³⁷ A/HRC/55/72, paras. 16 and 17.

³⁸ United Nations entities input; see also www.unocha.org/publications/report/occupied-palestinian-territory/hostilities-gaza-strip-and-israel-flash-update-149.

³⁹ See www.btselem.org/press_releases/20240318_since_october_7_israel_has_ramped_up_efforts_to_drive_palestinian_shepherding_communities_out_of_the_jordan_valley.

⁴⁰ United Nations entities input.

⁴¹ A/78/502, para. 33; A/76/333, para. 36; and A/HRC/55/28, para. 18.

⁴² United Nations entities input.

infrastructure, were often denied access with little or no explanation, disrupting the flow of critical supplies and the resumption of basic services.⁴³

43. Damage to the transport sector in Gaza amounts to around \$358 million, affecting 62 per cent of roads, including 92 per cent of primary roads, and a significant proportion of vehicles. This situation has a profound effect, not only on the mobility of the population, but also on the ability of relief aid and necessary social services to reach vulnerable populations.⁴⁴

Movement restrictions in the West Bank

44. The movement of Palestinians within the West Bank, including East Jerusalem, is restricted through a complex system of checkpoints, permits, military roadblocks, settlements, a bypass road system, parallel legal regimes and the West Bank wall, effectively fragmenting the territory into an archipelago of isolated islands.

45. In early 2023, the Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs documented 565 movement obstacles in the West Bank, including East Jerusalem, in addition to 80 obstacles, including 28 constantly staffed checkpoints, that segregated part of the Israeli-controlled area of Hebron (H2) from the remainder of the city.

46. Those measures separate communities from main roads and places of work,⁴⁵ further disconnect cities, villages and vulnerable communities from one another and disrupt access to basic services and the delivery of humanitarian aid.⁴⁶

47. After 7 October, Israel increased restrictions on the movement of Palestinians across the West Bank, including East Jerusalem⁴⁷. The access of Palestinians from the West Bank to East Jerusalem, including hospitals and the Aqsa Mosque compound, has been restricted. The access of national humanitarian workers to East Jerusalem has been restricted. Some 7,000 Palestinians residing in the enclosed H2/Hebron area have been subject to a stringent curfew, limiting access through main checkpoints every other day.⁴⁸

48. Initial results of a new closure survey by the Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs show that some 114 new closures have been erected throughout the West Bank, including East Jerusalem, since 7 October. The closures, which include checkpoints, earth mounds, roadblocks and road gates, have further disrupted Palestinians' access to basic services, workplaces and markets, as well as movement by aid workers to carry out assessments or deliver assistance. Intensified checks and more stringent access measures have also been reported since 7 October.⁴⁹

Deprivation of access to natural resources

49. Even before 7 October, Palestinians living in Gaza faced major challenges relating to the environment and natural resources, with the closures of Gaza and cycles of escalation.⁵⁰

⁴³ See www.un.org/sg/en/content/sg/speeches/2024-01-15/secretary-generals-statement-the-press-the-middle-east; see also www.humanitarianoutcomes.org/sites/default/files/publications/score_gaza_2024.pdf.

⁴⁴ See <https://thedocs.worldbank.org/en/doc/14e309cd34e04e40b90eb19afa7b5d15-0280012024/original/Gaza-Interim-Damage-Assessment-032924-Final.pdf>.

⁴⁵ United Nations entities input.

⁴⁶ Ibid.

⁴⁷ A/HRC/55/28, para. 56.

⁴⁸ See www.ochaopt.org/content/west-bank-snapshot-december-2023.

⁴⁹ See www.ochaopt.org/content/hostilities-gaza-strip-and-israel-flash-update-152.

⁵⁰ See www.unescwa.org/sites/default/files/pubs/pdf/war-gaza-weaponizing-access-water-energy-food-land-english.pdf.

50. The primary source of domestic and agricultural water is the coastal aquifer, which provided 81 per cent of water consumed in Gaza. Overextraction, pollution, combined with sea level rise, and restrictions on the entry of materials needed to protect and use the water supply had rendered 96 per cent of the water unsafe for drinking or irrigation purposes.⁵¹

51. By January 2024, the environmental damage in Gaza resulting from the war was estimated at \$411 million, including effects on physical assets such as coastal areas, water, soil, agricultural fields and the Wadi Gaza nature reserve, along with vital ecosystem services.⁵²

52. Munitions and chemicals severely pollute the soil, air and water, with implications for human health, agriculture and food safety. They also further contaminate the scarce water resources. The bombardments generated an estimated 26 million tons of debris. Some destroyed facilities leaked petrol and other hazardous materials, adding to the high levels of air, water and land pollution to which people in Gaza are now exposed.⁵³

53. The agriculture sector in Gaza has been devastated, with physical damage amounting to more than three-and-a-half-fold the total value added generated by the entire sector in 2023.⁵⁴ The lack of access to land and the destruction of crops are compounded by the limited access to essential agriculture inputs. Most livestock have been abandoned, with the remaining animals slaughtered or sold owing to the lack of fodder and water. Fishing activities have largely stopped in the light of the damage to port infrastructure and boats, lack of fuel and restricted access to fishing areas.⁵⁵ Agricultural infrastructure has been heavily damaged, including more than 20 per cent of greenhouses, animal shelters and agricultural wells and about 15 per cent of agricultural warehouses.⁵⁶

54. As at 31 December 2023, 27.5 per cent of all cropland in the Gaza Strip had been damaged.⁵⁷ This includes the degradation of the top productive layer. The destruction of vegetation cover will make the land vulnerable to desertification and accelerate soil erosion during rainfall.⁵⁸

55. In the West Bank, settler farms now control a vast area that Palestinian pastoral communities have used as pastureland for decades, both before and after the occupation of the West Bank in 1967. Parts of this sprawling area were declared firing zones or nature reserves by Israel at some time between the late 1960s and 1980s. The proliferation of settler farms has effectively completely closed off valuable land to Palestinian shepherds and cowherders, whose livelihoods have been jeopardized as a result.⁵⁹

56. In the aftermath of 7 October, the Israeli authorities decided to keep all gates on the wall closed, cutting off access to agricultural lands in the seam zone along the West Bank. In addition, Palestinian farmers report that Israeli forces prevented them

⁵¹ United Nations entities input and www.unescwa.org/sites/default/files/pubs/pdf/war-gaza-weaponizing-access-water-energy-food-land-english.pdf.

⁵² See <https://thedocs.worldbank.org/en/doc/14e309cd34e04e40b90eb19afa7b5d15-0280012024/original/Gaza-Interim-Damage-Assessment-032924-Final.pdf>.

⁵³ Ibid.

⁵⁴ Ibid.

⁵⁵ See www.ipcinfo.org/fileadmin/user_upload/ipcinfo/docs/IPC_Gaza_Strip_Acute_Food_Insecurity_Feb_July2024_Special_Brief.pdf.

⁵⁶ See <https://doi.org/10.4060/cc9556en>.

⁵⁷ United Nations entities input.

⁵⁸ Ibid.

⁵⁹ See www.btselem.org/press_releases/20240318_since_october_7_israel_has_ramped_up_efforts_to_drive_palestinian_shepherding_communities_out_of_the_jordan_valley.

from gaining access to olive-cultivated lands that are not isolated by the wall but are within about 150 metres of the West Bank side. Monitoring by the Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs in the northern West Bank shows that the 2023 olive yield in the area isolated by the wall was 93 per cent lower than the yield in accessible areas. The Office estimates that, overall in 2023, more than 10,000 Palestinian-owned olive trees were vandalized, presumably by settlers, across the West Bank.⁶⁰

Social and economic conditions in the Occupied Palestinian Territory

57. Before 7 October, the occupation, the closure and repeated military escalations had hollowed the Gazan economy. The 2.3 million inhabitants had been suffering from inadequate access to clean water, living without consistent electricity or a proper sewage system. On 6 October, two thirds of the population lived in poverty, with 80 per cent dependent on international aid.⁶¹

58. The ability to ensure access to high-quality basic services, including health services, was already significantly constrained before 7 October. The unprecedented destruction of public service infrastructure, accounting for 19 per cent of all damaged buildings,⁶² coupled with severe constraints on the access of humanitarian aid, has led to severe disruptions – if not total collapse – across all essential services.⁶³

59. ESCWA and UNDP estimated that the six months of war in Gaza since 7 October and the linked deterioration of the situation in the West Bank have set human development for the Occupied Palestinian Territory back to pre-2007 levels, with the potential to slip below 2004 levels – the earliest available human development index data – if the war persisted for nine months.⁶⁴

60. Economic and social instability, including high rates of poverty and unemployment, has left many more vulnerable to trafficking in persons, including forced prostitution, forced marriage, forced labour and forced begging.⁶⁵

Economic conditions

61. Nearly three decades since its signing, and a quarter of a century after its presumptive ending in 1999, the Paris Protocol remains the framework that shapes the Palestinian economic reality. The customs union, de facto monetary union and fiscal arrangements in the Protocol tie the Palestinian economy to that of Israel, cultivating conditions of significant dependency and vulnerability.⁶⁶

62. Events since 7 October have exacerbated the unfavourable situation of the Palestinian economy, which is already heavily dependent on non-tradable and low-productive sectors and international aid, as well as on the Israeli economy. The latest data show that the contribution of productive sectors (manufacturing and agriculture) to the gross domestic product (GDP) dropped from 34 per cent in 2021 to 16.3 per cent in 2022 and to 15.8 per cent in 2023.⁶⁷

⁶⁰ See www.ochaopt.org/content/olive-harvest-2023-hindered-access-afflicts-palestinian-farmers-west-bank.

⁶¹ United Nations entities input.

⁶² See <https://thedocs.worldbank.org/en/doc/14e309cd34e04e40b90eb19afa7b5d15-0280012024/original/Gaza-Interim-Damage-Assessment-032924-Final.pdf>.

⁶³ United Nations entities input. See also www.unescwa.org/sites/default/files/pubs/pdf/war-gaza-weaponizing-access-water-energy-food-land-english.pdf.

⁶⁴ See www.unescwa.org/sites/default/files/pubs/pdf/gaza-war-socioeconomic-impacts-palestine-english.pdf.

⁶⁵ United Nations entities input.

⁶⁶ Ibid.

⁶⁷ Palestinian Central Bureau of Statistics values, ESCWA calculations.

63. GDP decreased by about 5.5 per cent in 2023 compared with 2022. Comparing the fourth quarter of 2023 to that of 2022, GDP saw an even sharper decrease, of 29.5 per cent. The contribution of Gaza to the Palestinian economy fell in 2023 to 14.2 per cent of real GDP, compared with 36 per cent in 1994,⁶⁸ mainly owing to the dramatic impact of the war since 7 October, the closures of Gaza and previous military escalations.⁶⁹

64. GDP per capita for the State of Palestine was \$554 during the fourth quarter of 2023, marking a decrease of 31 per cent compared with that of 2022. As to that of the West Bank, it showed a decrease of 21 per cent compared with the fourth quarter of 2022, while that of the Gaza Strip showed a decrease of 82 per cent. Some economic growth in 2021 (1 per cent) and 2022 (4.4 per cent) notwithstanding, not only did GDP per capita fail to recover to its 2019 level, but also it remained below the levels of the 2010s.⁷⁰ If the same trend observed in the last quarter of 2023 continues for the following three quarters of 2024, Gaza will record less than 50 per cent of the values recorded in 2000.⁷¹

65. In January 2024, the United Nations Conference on Trade and Development estimated that, had the Israeli military operation ended then, with reconstruction starting immediately, and if the 2007–2022 growth trends were to persist at an average growth rate of 0.4 per cent, it would take Gaza until 2092 just to restore the GDP levels of 2022, with GDP per capita and socioeconomic conditions continuously declining. However, even with the most optimistic scenario, namely that GDP could grow at 10 per cent annually, it would still take until 2035 for GDP per capita in Gaza to return to its 2006 level.⁷²

66. All economic activities recorded a sharp decline in value added, with large losses in the West Bank in manufacturing and construction and in Gaza in all sectors, with losses of more than 90 per cent compared with the previous quarters.⁷³

67. While the Palestinian economy remains reliant on trade with Israel, the trade deficit slightly increased, by 5.75 per cent, from 2022 to 2023. The last quarter of 2023 witnessed a sharp decrease in trade, both import and export, compared with the previous quarter (30 per cent and 24 per cent) and with the last quarter of 2022 (34 per cent and 25 per cent).⁷⁴

68. After 7 October, Israel suspended the transfer of clearance revenues (customs tax, value added tax, including petroleum excise, and income tax) collected by Israel to the Palestinian Authority. Such revenues represent around 75 per cent of the Authority's revenues.⁷⁵ On 2 November, the Israeli Security Cabinet announced that it would deduct all funds designated for the Gaza Strip, some \$73 million or approximately 32.5 per cent, from the clearance revenues that Israel transfers on a monthly basis to the Palestinian Authority. This deduction is in addition to others, including those based on Israeli legislation. The resumption of partial transfers during

⁶⁸ Ibid. The earliest available data on GDP date back to 1994, the year that the Palestinian Central Bureau of Statistics began compiling and publishing economic statistics. This coincided with the signing of the Oslo Accords in September 1993 and the establishment of the Palestinian National Authority.

⁶⁹ See www.pcbs.gov.ps/post.aspx?lang=en&ItemID=4725.

⁷⁰ Palestinian Central Bureau of Statistics values, ESCWA calculations.

⁷¹ Ibid.

⁷² United Nations entities input; see also https://unctad.org/publication/preliminary-assessment-economic-impact-destruction-gaza-and-prospects-economic-recovery?fbclid=IwAR1QG-hQiCVq46-gaer0iTU-FUnHcUBtzj6SkLvGKpQvC_XFpWH_mQ_fs0Q.

⁷³ Palestinian Central Bureau of Statistics values, ESCWA calculations.

⁷⁴ Ibid.

⁷⁵ See www.elibrary.imf.org/downloadpdf/view/journals/002/2023/326/article-A001-en.pdf.

the reporting period notwithstanding, the fiscal situation of the Palestinian Authority is expected to worsen during 2024.^{76,77}

69. For most imports, the Palestinian Authority is required under the existing trade regime of the Paris Protocol to conform to Israeli customs regulations, which are designed to benefit the Israeli economy.⁷⁸ Israeli restrictions on Palestinian economic activity, movement and trade inflate costs and serve as significant non-tariff barriers, with the average trade cost per transaction for a Palestinian firm nearly three times as high as for an Israeli firm and the import process taking on average four times as long. This has undermined external trade and created an uneven dependency on Israel as the dominant trading partner.⁷⁹

70. Before 7 October, the fragility of the labour market was marked by an unemployment rate of 24.1 per cent in the third quarter of 2023.⁸⁰ During the fourth quarter, unemployment reached 33 per cent (74 per cent in the Gaza Strip and 29 per cent in the West Bank).⁸¹

71. The International Labour Organization estimated that, as at 31 January 2024, 507,000 jobs had been lost across the Occupied Palestinian Territory, including 201,000 in the Gaza Strip, with an estimated loss of \$21.7 million in daily labour income. This loss increases to \$25.5 million per day when combined with income losses stemming from the partial payment of wages to civil servants and the reduced incomes of workers in the private sector.⁸²

72. ESCWA and UNDP estimated that the unemployment rate across the Occupied Palestinian Territory had risen to 46.1 per cent six months after the events of 7 October and would increase by one point for each additional month.⁸³

73. An overall \$18.5 billion is the estimate at the end of the reporting period of the war's physical damage since 7 October.⁸⁴ This amounts to 97 per cent of Palestinian GDP and more than five and a half times Gaza Strip GDP in 2022.⁸⁵

74. The hostilities in Gaza have led to a severe cash shortage, intensifying the hardships faced by residents in what is a cash-based economy. The situation has been exacerbated by destruction and damage to bank infrastructure, coupled with limited Internet access and unequal access to mobile phones hindering cashless banking. This situation has hampered humanitarian operations and complicated the delivery of aid.⁸⁶ At the end of the reporting period, fewer than 10 per cent of bank branches and automated teller machines were operational – mainly in Rafah – compared with the period before October 2023.⁸⁷ External inflows of cash – transfers and remittances – are estimated to be not sufficient or regular enough to cover the current gap in

⁷⁶ In March 2024, the Palestinian Authority received through Norway between 40 and 50 per cent of Palestinian Authority clearance revenues for the West Bank share.

⁷⁷ See <https://palestine.fes.de/e/israeli-cuts-to-palestinian-tax-revenues-may-put-the-pa-on-the-brink-of-collapse.html>.

⁷⁸ See <https://documents1.worldbank.org/en/publication/documents-reports/documentdetail/099638209132320721>.

⁷⁹ United Nations entities input.

⁸⁰ See www.pcbs.gov.ps/post.aspx?lang=en&ItemID=4622.

⁸¹ See www.pcbs.gov.ps/default.aspx.

⁸² See www.ilo.org/media/520196/download.

⁸³ See www.undp.org/arab-states/publications/gaza-war-expected-socio-economic-impacts-state-palestine-0.

⁸⁴ See <https://thedocs.worldbank.org/en/doc/14e309cd34e04e40b90eb19afa7b5d15-0280012024/original/Gaza-Interim-Damage-Assessment-032924-Final.pdf>.

⁸⁵ Palestinian Central Bureau of Statistics and World Bank values, ESCWA calculations.

⁸⁶ See www.nrc.no/resources/briefing-notes/gazas-cash-liquidity-crisis/.

⁸⁷ See <https://reliefweb.int/report/occupied-palestinian-territory/cash-working-group-gaza-strip-cash-work-gaza-may-2024>.

household incomes.⁸⁸ The situation has led to an increased use of bartering to exchange goods and services without cash, for example for access to food.⁸⁹

Food security

75. According to the Integrated Food Security Phase Classification report of March 2024, famine was projected and imminent in the North Gaza and Gaza Governorates and expected to become manifest during the projection period from mid-March to May 2024.⁹⁰ The situation of hunger, starvation and famine is a result of the extensive Israeli restrictions on the entry and distribution of humanitarian aid and commercial goods, the displacement of most of the population and the destruction of crucial civilian infrastructure.⁹¹

76. Between 2012 and 2022, the growth of per capita net food imports in the Occupied Palestinian Territory had markedly exceeded that of comparable groups, indicating a growing reliance on imports to ensure food availability.⁹²

77. In contrast, the imports of agricultural goods in the West Bank have remained consistently around 6 per cent of total imports from 2000 to 2018. This comparison underscores the heightened reliance of Gaza on imported food supplies compared with the West Bank.⁹³

78. As at 16 January 2024, people in the Gaza Strip accounted for more than 80 per cent of all people facing catastrophic hunger worldwide, marking an unparalleled humanitarian crisis amid continued bombardment and severe restrictions on humanitarian aid: every single person in Gaza was hungry, with a quarter of the population starving and struggling to find food and drinkable water.⁹⁴

79. Data indicate that an estimated 2.13 million people across the Gaza Strip faced high levels of acute food insecurity. This figure includes 1.11 million people suffering from “catastrophic” food insecurity (phase 5), the highest number of people facing catastrophic hunger ever recorded by the Integrated Food Security Phase Classification system anywhere, at any time.⁹⁵ The intensity of the violence and severity of the humanitarian conditions in Gaza stand out amid other recent hard-to-access aid contexts for the disparity between the scale of needs and the size of the response.⁹⁶ According to the United Nations High Commissioner for Human Rights, “the extent of Israel’s continued restrictions on the entry of aid into Gaza, together with the manner in which it continues to conduct hostilities, may amount to the use of starvation as a method of war, which is a war crime”.⁹⁷

⁸⁸ See www.un.org/unispal/document/ipc-famine-third-review-report-25jun24/#:~:text=The%20first%20analysis%2C%20conducted%20in,humanitarian%20access%20persisted%20or%20worsened.

⁸⁹ See <https://reliefweb.int/report/occupied-palestinian-territory/wfp-palestine-gaza-market-monitoring-flash-update-6-2-february-2024>.

⁹⁰ See https://www.un.org/unispal/wp-content/uploads/2024/03/IPC_Famine_Committee_Review_Report_Gaza_Strip_Acute_Food_Insecurity_Feb_July2024_Special_Brief.pdf.

⁹¹ See www.unescwa.org/sites/default/files/pubs/pdf/war-gaza-weaponizing-access-water-energy-food-land-english.pdf; see also www.ohchr.org/en/statements-and-speeches/2024/03/comment-un-high-commissioner-human-rights-volker-turk-risk-famine#:~:text=The%20projected%20imminent%20famine%20in,made%20and%20was%20entirely%20preventable.

⁹² Disaggregated data have been made available from 2000 to 2018 only. More recent analysis relies on data from the International Trade Centre Trade Map.

⁹³ United Nations entities input.

⁹⁴ See www.ohchr.org/en/press-releases/2024/01/over-one-hundred-days-war-israel-destroying-gazas-food-system-and.

⁹⁵ See <https://news.un.org/en/story/2024/03/1147656>.

⁹⁶ See www.humanitarianoutcomes.org/sites/default/files/publications/score_gaza_2024.pdf.

⁹⁷ See www.ohchr.org/en/statements-and-speeches/2024/03/comment-un-high-commissioner-human-rights-volker-turk-risk-famine#:~:text=The%20projected%20imminent%20famine%20in,made%20and%20was%20entirely%20preventable.

80. Children in Gaza face the triple threat of conflict, disease and malnutrition. Nearly 10 per cent of the children under 5 years of age are acutely malnourished, and all 335,000 of them are at high risk of severe malnutrition and preventable death. Increasing cases of diarrhoea and rising food poverty among children increase the risk of death. Up to 90 per cent of children under 2 years of age are subject to severe food poverty,⁹⁸ namely consuming two or fewer food groups. Dietary diversity for pregnant and breastfeeding women is also severely compromised: 25 per cent of those surveyed consumed one food type the day before, and almost 65 per cent only two.⁹⁹ The lack of adequate nutrition and health care puts the lives of pregnant women at risk.¹⁰⁰

81. According to the Gaza Ministry of Health, at least 727 children in northern Gaza had died from malnutrition and dehydration by March 2024, adding to the mounting toll of children who have died in the Strip during the war since 7 October. Nutrition screenings conducted by the United Nations Children's Fund and partners in the north in February 2024 found that 4.5 per cent of the children in shelters and health centres were suffering from severe wasting, the most life-threatening form of malnutrition. They also showed a near-doubling of acute malnutrition among children compared with January: from 16 to 31 per cent among children under 2 years of age in northern Gaza; from 13 to 25 per cent among children under 5 years of age in northern Gaza; and from 5 to 10 per cent among children under 2 years of age in Rafah.

82. As of February 2024, 81 per cent of households lacked safe and clean water, with average household access at less than 1 litre per person per day. This number is far below the absolute minimum standard of 15 litres per person per day and of particular concern for babies being fed infant formula.¹⁰¹ Almost 80 per cent of households are resorting to burning firewood and wood residue, and 10 per cent employ solid waste.¹⁰²

83. Food from domestic production, as well as individual, organizational or shop stocks, can be considered nearly exhausted. Field reports have been received of people scavenging in building rubble in search of food or consuming animal feed, but these sources of food are also being exhausted. Air-drop attempts have proved ineffective in delivering the quantities required and involved a high risk to beneficiaries. Deliveries are taking place in a context of desperation. The residual food sources coming from looting and scavenging are finite resources, and it is unknown at what point even this strategy will be exhausted. In total, from 5 February to 5 March 2024, from 10 to 15 food trucks were allowed into the Gaza Governorate to feed about 300,000 people.

84. Humanitarian operations are subjected to crippling restrictions owing to ongoing hostilities and insecurity and deteriorating law and order, in part as a result of Israeli attacks on law enforcement. Should these trends continue, a complete breakdown of public order is imminent. The ensuing security vacuum will impose additional restrictions on an already severely constrained humanitarian operation, ultimately condemning an increasing number of people to famine. The impact on these affected populations could be irreversible in terms of health and future socioeconomic prospects. They will be in poverty traps that could stretch for decades.

⁹⁸ See <https://data.unicef.org/wp-content/uploads/2022/10/Child-Food-Poverty-Report-2022.pdf>.

⁹⁹ United Nations entities input.

¹⁰⁰ See https://reliefweb.int/attachments/d2f3eb84-975e-4fe0-ae70-10c158251716/Needs%20Assessment_February_2024_1.pdf.

¹⁰¹ See <https://reliefweb.int/report/occupied-palestinian-territory/nutrition-vulnerability-and-situation-analysis-gaza-february-2024>.

¹⁰² See www.un.org/unispal/wp-content/uploads/2024/03/IPC_Famine_Committee_Review_Report_Gaza_Strip_Acute_Food_Insecurity_Feb_July2024_Special_Brief.pdf.

Water, sanitation and hygiene

85. Even before 7 October, the average per capita water consumption in Gaza was approximately 84.6 litres per day, less than the 100 litres per capita per day recommended by WHO.¹⁰³

86. Since 7 October, this figure has dropped dramatically to between 3 and 15 litres per capita per day.¹⁰⁴ In some UNRWA-run shelters, potable water had to be rationed to only 1 litre of water per person per day, whereas the minimum international daily standard for extreme emergencies is 15 litres.¹⁰⁵

87. Israeli military operations have had a disastrous effect on water infrastructure, water networks and water supply sources in general, with about 40 per cent of the water networks in Gaza destroyed and the main pumps broken owing to bombardments or having run out of fuel.¹⁰⁶ On 22 January, WHO reported no access to clean water in the northern governorates of Gaza and that heavy rainfall had led to flooding in various locations, raising concerns about potential sewage contamination in the floodwaters.¹⁰⁷

88. Fighting since 7 October has also had a major impact on systems for the disposal of wastewater and solid waste, given the mass displacement of people, power outages and damage to or destruction of critical infrastructure. About 270,000 tons of solid waste have accumulated across the Gaza Strip, creating an environmental and public health catastrophe, according to the Union of Gaza Strip Municipalities.¹⁰⁸

89. Public shelters and informal sites are extremely overcrowded and unsanitary. On average, 340 people share a toilet and 1,290 share a shower.¹⁰⁹ The overcrowded conditions and lack of adequate sanitation and access to clean water have resulted in outbreaks of infectious diseases, without even limited health services to manage outbreaks and treat cases.¹¹⁰ This is particularly alarming for pregnant and lactating women and girls.¹¹¹

90. In the West Bank, some 70 Palestinian communities, numbering more than 100,000 people in total, have no running water. Their water consumption is similar to that in disaster zones: about 26 litres per capita per day.¹¹²

91. Only 36 per cent of Palestinians in the West Bank have daily access to running water all year long. Another 47 per cent receive running water for less than 10 days every month.¹¹³

Health

92. The health system in Gaza, already overstretched from 17 years of closures, is now overwhelmed by the injuries and deaths from the fighting since 7 October, the shortage of personnel and fuel and the increased demand for medicines and supplies and mental health and psychosocial support services. More than 500,000 children

¹⁰³ See www.pcbs.gov.ps/portals/_pcbs/PressRelease/Press_En_WorldWaterDay2024E.pdf.

¹⁰⁴ Ibid.

¹⁰⁵ United Nations entities input.

¹⁰⁶ See www.pcbs.gov.ps/portals/_pcbs/PressRelease/Press_En_WorldWaterDay2024E.pdf.

¹⁰⁷ United Nations entities input.

¹⁰⁸ See www.unocha.org/publications/report/occupied-palestinian-territory/hostilities-gaza-strip-and-israel-flash-update-155.

¹⁰⁹ See www.unicef.org/sop/reports/unicef-state-palestine-escalation-humanitarian-situation-report-no19.

¹¹⁰ United Nations entities input.

¹¹¹ Ibid.

¹¹² See www.btselem.org/publications/202305_parched.

¹¹³ Ibid.

were already considered in need of mental health and psychosocial support services in the Gaza Strip before 7 October, whereas by March 2024 it was estimated that all of the more than 1 million children needed such support.¹¹⁴

93. Since 7 October, Israeli attacks on health facilities, destruction of infrastructure, obstruction of the importation and distribution of medical supplies and restrictions on the movement of patients and staff have persisted.¹¹⁵

94. The destruction of health facilities and a lack of medical supplies, food, water and fuel have virtually depleted the already underresourced health-care system. Hospitals have been operating far beyond capacity owing to the rising number of patients and displaced civilians seeking shelter.¹¹⁶ As at 14 March 2024, nearly 84 per cent of health facility buildings had been destroyed or damaged and those remaining lacked access to medicines, ambulances, basic life-saving treatments, electricity and water.¹¹⁷ The destruction of hospitals has cut off access to essential services, including medical care and medication required by persons with disabilities. Many have lost their assistive devices or have no access to them or support.

95. As at 1 April 2024 and since November 2023, 20 security incidents had had an impact on emergency medical teams, resulting in nine fatalities and 18 injuries, redeployments and suspension of operations in Gaza. In addition, emergency medical teams are not provided with the protection, space and materials to deliver services and save lives.¹¹⁸

96. Conditions to implement basic public health measures to prevent and control disease outbreaks are minimal.¹¹⁹ Gaza thus faces a public health catastrophe, in the wake of large-scale displacement, overcrowding and inadequate shelter, food, water and sanitation. By February 2024, most internally displaced persons were living in tents, of which at least 40 per cent were inadequate to protect against adverse weather.¹²⁰

97. Capacities – including laboratory capacities – for surveillance of infectious diseases have been insufficient since 7 October, amid outbreaks of acute respiratory infections, diarrheal illnesses, chickenpox, acute jaundice and hepatitis A, skin infestations and rashes, as well as epidemic signals of meningitis. Water, sanitation and hygiene and shelter infrastructure are insufficient to implement basic public health measures, while a lack of food and inadequate nutrition are detrimentally affecting immunity and the ability of the population to fight diseases. Malnutrition will have lasting impacts on the general health of affected populations throughout their lives. Children are not being vaccinated, with infants having missed one or more doses of essential vaccines, which poses a further risk for outbreaks as well as preventable morbidity and mortality.¹²¹

98. Since 7 October, Israel has prevented any exit of persons, including patients and their companions, from the Gaza Strip to the rest of the Occupied Palestinian Territory. Up to 10 March 2024, of 9,303 patients who applied for medical evacuation

¹¹⁴ United Nations entities input.

¹¹⁵ See www.un.org/unispal/wp-content/uploads/2024/03/IPC_Famine_Committee_Review_Report_Gaza_Strip_Acute_Food_Insecurity_Feb_July2024_Special_Brief.pdf.

¹¹⁶ United Nations entities input.

¹¹⁷ See <https://thedocs.worldbank.org/en/doc/14e309cd34e04e40b90eb19afa7b5d15-0280012024/original/Gaza-Interim-Damage-Assessment-032924-Final.pdf>.

¹¹⁸ United Nations entities input.

¹¹⁹ Ibid.

¹²⁰ See <https://sheltercluster.org/palestine/documents/gaza-shelter-cluster-snapshot-7-february-2024>.

¹²¹ United Nations entities input.

through the Rafah crossing to Egypt, 4,093 (44 per cent) were approved by Egypt and Israel to travel and 3,541 (38 per cent) were eventually able to exit.¹²²

99. The situation is compounded by the communications blackouts that have affected the coordination of supplies and staff movements and the arranging of ambulances for patients. UNRWA and other humanitarian partners have lost critical cold-chain facilities, which complicates the safe storage and administration of vaccines and other life-saving medications.¹²³

100. In the West Bank, the fragmentation of territory and discriminatory zoning and planning policies and procedures implemented by Israel affect the delivery of health care, particularly for more vulnerable communities in Area C, H2 of Hebron and the seam zone.¹²⁴ There are 172 communities in Area C that depend on receiving primary health-care services through mobile clinics, of which 120 are currently covered and receiving such services. At the end of April, mobile clinic funding for 67 communities was expected to end, leaving them without access to basic health services.¹²⁵

101. WHO documented 422 attacks on health care in the West Bank from 7 October 2023 to 6 April 2024. Attacks after 7 October have left 11 people dead and 87 injured and affected 86 health facilities, including 250 medical transports.¹²⁶

Education

102. A reported 342 school buildings have sustained damage in the Gaza Strip, and about 80 per cent of all school buildings are damaged, destroyed or being used as shelters for internally displaced persons. As of March 2024, all of the 625,000 school-aged children were out of school.¹²⁷

103. For students in Gaza, this year marks the third year out of the last four that their education has been severely disrupted and/or completely interrupted, leaving school-age children to miss critical instructional hours and foundational skills essential to achieve better livelihoods in the future. The education system will take years to operate even at pre-7 October levels. Surviving students and teachers are experiencing psychosocial trauma with varying levels of severity.¹²⁸

104. In the first half of 2023, the education cluster recorded 423 education-related incidents in the Occupied Palestinian Territory, affecting 179 schools (54,608 students, including 26,000 females, in addition to 2,624 teachers) and 21 kindergartens (2,466 students, including 1,259 females, in addition to 152 teachers). The number of incidents was higher than in previous years owing to an increase in Israeli military operations, including into Palestinian villages in Areas A and B, and the extensive movement restrictions on Palestinians imposed by the Israeli authorities, limiting access to basic services, including education. The period also saw an increase in the severity and frequency of settler violence in the West Bank, including East Jerusalem, affecting education.¹²⁹

¹²² Ibid.

¹²³ Ibid.

¹²⁴ Ibid.

¹²⁵ Ibid.

¹²⁶ Ibid.

¹²⁷ Ibid.

¹²⁸ See <https://thedocs.worldbank.org/en/doc/14e309cd34e04e40b90eb19afa7b5d15-0280012024/original/Gaza-Interim-Damage-Assessment-032924-Final.pdf>; see also www.unescwa.org/sites/default/files/pubs/pdf/war-gaza-unprecedented-devastating-impact-english_2.pdf.

¹²⁹ See <https://reliefweb.int/report/occupied-palestinian-territory/education-related-incidents-opt-semi-annual-report-january-june-2023>.

105. The heightened security situation and movement restrictions also affected the delivery of education services, resulting in school closures. Israeli security and military operations and armed confrontations with Palestinians, resulting in the widespread destruction of road, sewage and water infrastructure, have an impact on children socially and psychologically and affect academic performance.¹³⁰

106. In the West Bank, children enrolled in 55 schools are attending online classes as they cannot reach their schools owing to security issues.¹³¹

Gendered impact of the occupation on women and girls

107. The war in Gaza since 7 October has increased the insecurity and vulnerability of all Palestinians in gender-specific ways, with levels of destruction that have marred any development gains, however minor, and that will impede recovery in the Occupied Palestinian Territory, particularly in Gaza, in a sustainable and timely manner.

108. The impact of the fighting on women and girls in Gaza has been multifaceted.¹³² Some 84 per cent of women report that their family eats half or less of the food that they used to before 7 October, with mothers and other adult women tasked with sourcing food, including scavenging for food under rubble or in dumpsters, and eating last, least and less than everyone else.¹³³ Female heads of household, older women and women with disabilities also face security and protection obstacles when attempting to access food distribution sites.¹³⁴

109. An estimated 52,000 pregnant women have been caught in the fighting that has taken place in Gaza since 7 October, with approximately 180 deliveries every day.¹³⁵ For women who have given birth in Gaza, accessing adequate health care has become an unimaginable challenge. By March 2024, only two maternity hospitals remained, but were overwhelmed with patients with life-threatening conditions.¹³⁶ As such, women have had to go through labour and delivery without medical assistance in shelters, tents, their homes and the streets, amid rubble, without toilets and with the help of untrained women, or have had to give birth in overwhelmed health-care facilities, with some being subjected to caesarean sections without anaesthesia.¹³⁷ It is estimated that 37 mothers die every day.¹³⁸

110. With food insecurity levels at acute and unprecedented levels, women and girls are expected to be hit the hardest, as women tend to vastly deprioritize their food intake when access to food is restricted.¹³⁹

¹³⁰ United Nations entities input.

¹³¹ See [www.unicef.org/media/151126/file/State-of-Palestine-Humanitarian-Situation-Report-No.15-\(Escalation\)-17-January-2024.pdf](http://www.unicef.org/media/151126/file/State-of-Palestine-Humanitarian-Situation-Report-No.15-(Escalation)-17-January-2024.pdf).

¹³² See www.emro.who.int/opt/news/famine-in-gaza-is-imminent-with-immediate-and-long-term-health-consequences.html.

¹³³ UN-Women primary data collection, done as a rapid assessment with 120 women from 8 to 11 February in Gaza.

¹³⁴ See www.unwomen.org/sites/default/files/2024-01/Gender%20Alert%20The%20Gendered%20Impact%20of%20the%20Crisis%20in%20Gaza.pdf.

¹³⁵ See www.un.org/unispal/document/gaza-is-at-breaking-point-unfpa-14mar24/.

¹³⁶ United Nations entities input; see also www.unfpa.org/news/%E2%80%9Cgaza-breaking-point%E2%80%9D-health-workers-and-patients-describe-unfolding-catastrophe-rafah.

¹³⁷ See www.ippf.org/media-center/forced-closure-hospitals-midwives-are-lifeline-pregnant-women-gaza.

¹³⁸ See www.unwomen.org/en/news-stories/press-release/2024/03/press-release-9000-women-have-been-killed-in-gaza-since-early-october#_ftnref2.

¹³⁹ See www.unwomen.org/sites/default/files/2024-01/Gender%20Alert%20The%20Gendered%20Impact%20of%20the%20Crisis%20in%20Gaza.pdf.

111. In the light of the scarcity of food and water, pregnant and lactating women have been at risk of severe malnutrition, increasing their susceptibility to contracting maternal nutrition-related illnesses such as anaemia, preeclampsia and haemorrhage, increasing the risk of maternal and child mortality.¹⁴⁰ Poor maternal diets can also lead to stillbirth, low birthweight, wasting and developmental delays for children, while the trauma of war can directly affect newborns.¹⁴¹ Nearly 10 per cent of Gazan children under 5 years of age are acutely malnourished.¹⁴²

112. Some 690,000 women and girls of reproductive age in severely overcrowded shelters and host communities are left with limited access to menstrual hygiene products in addition to inadequate water, hygiene and access to toilets and privacy,¹⁴³ including separate showers.¹⁴⁴ Some women have resorted to cutting up baby diapers to use as makeshift pads during their menstrual periods, while others are using pieces of cloth. In other cases, women have opted to use period-delaying pills or share contraceptives.¹⁴⁵

113. In February 2024, the United Nations Children's Fund estimated that about 17,000 children – 1 per cent of the displaced population – in Gaza were unaccompanied or separated from their families.¹⁴⁶ Medical professionals are utilizing the term “wounded child, no surviving family” to describe unaccompanied children at hospitals.

114. Movement restrictions continue to impede access to health and social services, the transfer of ambulances and the delivery of humanitarian assistance, and women and girls, particularly those with disabilities, are further disadvantaged by inequality in access to supplies, services and resources.¹⁴⁷ Internally displaced women voice profound fears for their safety and that of their families, citing a loss of protective spaces and separation from support networks amid the Israeli military presence. Notably, at least 3,000 women may have become widows or heads of household.¹⁴⁸

115. Overcrowded shelters, inadequate facilities and critical shortages of necessities exacerbate negative coping mechanisms and heighten risks of gender-based violence, including child protection concerns and sexual exploitation.¹⁴⁹ In terms of essential emergency response services, 10 out of 12 women's organizations surveyed by UN-Women in Gaza reported being only partly operational in January 2024. Furthermore, the only two women's shelters in Gaza have been closed, and telecommunications and electricity blackouts are severely restricting remote gender-based violence service provision.¹⁵⁰

¹⁴⁰ United Nations entities input.

¹⁴¹ Ibid.; see also www.unescwa.org/sites/default/files/pubs/pdf/gaza-strip-everyone-left-behind-english_1.pdf.

¹⁴² See www.ipcinfo.org/fileadmin/user_upload/ipcinfo/docs/IPC_Gaza_Strip_Acute_Food_Insecurity_Feb_July2024_Special_Brief.pdf.

¹⁴³ United Nations entities input; see also www.unfpa.org/resources/unfpa-palestine-situation-report-7-6-april-2024.

¹⁴⁴ See www.ipcinfo.org/fileadmin/user_upload/ipcinfo/docs/IPC_Gaza_Strip_Acute_Food_Insecurity_Feb_July2024_Special_Brief.pdf.

¹⁴⁵ See www.ippf.org/media-center/dire-lack-sexual-and-reproductive-health-supplies-disease-outbreak-gaza-shelters and www.ippf.org/stories/their-own-words-people-providing-sexual-and-reproductive-health-care-under-bombardment-gaza.

¹⁴⁶ See www.unicef.org/press-releases/stories-loss-and-grief-least-17000-children-are-estimated-be-unaccompanied-or#:~:text=GENEVA%2C%20%20February%202024%20%E2%80%93%20%22,displaced%20population%20%2D%201.7%20million%20people.

¹⁴⁷ See www.unwomen.org/en/digital-library/publications/2024/01/gender-alert-the-gendered-impact-of-the-crisis-in-gaza.

¹⁴⁸ Ibid.

¹⁴⁹ See <https://palestine.unfpa.org/en/GBV-Update-March24>.

¹⁵⁰ United Nations entities input.

116. The deterioration of the situation in the West Bank, including East Jerusalem, worsened a pre-existing protection crisis and increased protection needs for single women, female heads of household, adolescent girls, women with disabilities and older women. The continued destruction of public infrastructure, schools, hospitals and housing, movement and access restrictions and the revocation of Israeli work permits have had a significant impact on the livelihoods of Palestinians in the West Bank and increased the vulnerabilities of female-headed households and single mothers.

117. Movement restrictions, which have been increased since 7 October, notably impede the continuity of sexual and reproductive health services for the more than 73,000 pregnant women in the West Bank, of whom 8,100 are expected to give birth within any 30-day period.¹⁵¹

118. Work permits for all Palestinian workers in Israeli territory have been suspended since 7 October. This primarily affects men, as the percentage of women from the West Bank working in Israel or settlements is very low, at 1.4 per cent.¹⁵² Initial estimates indicate that around 24 per cent of employment has been lost, equivalent to 208,000 jobs.¹⁵³ Given women's low economic participation, and the single income earner model, these job losses are expected to have significant implications for families' income and stress levels, with an associated risk of tension and violence in the home.

III. Occupied Syrian Golan

119. The Secretary-General continues to reaffirm the validity of Security Council resolution 497 (1981), in which the Council decided that the Israeli decision to impose its laws, jurisdiction and administration in the occupied Syrian Golan Heights was null and void and without international legal effect.

120. In 2022, 26,900 Syrian citizens and 24,800 Israeli settlers resided in the occupied Syrian Golan. Over the past 15 years, the number of Israeli settlers has increased by 43.4 per cent, twice the rate of the Syrian population.¹⁵⁴ The number of Syrian citizens, particularly young people, accepting Israeli citizenship has increased in the past year owing to travel convenience and educational opportunities.¹⁵⁵

121. The plan to double the settler population in the Syrian Golan by 2027¹⁵⁶ – in terms of an increase in the number of Israeli settlements in the occupied Syrian Golan and in the size of the settler population – is ongoing. Today, Israeli settlers are distributed among 35 settlements.¹⁵⁷

122. The plan by the Government of Israel to develop the occupied area, which included an investment of 1 billion shekels, was contested for not adequately addressing the socioeconomic development of Syrian villages. The Ministry of Agriculture of Israel reported that the budget for those villages was less than 1 per cent of the planned amount.¹⁵⁸

¹⁵¹ Ibid.

¹⁵² See www.pcbs.gov.ps/Downloads/book2586.pdf.

¹⁵³ See www.ilo.org/sites/default/files/wcmstp5/groups/public/@arabstates/@ro-beirut/documents/publication/wcms_901136.pdf.

¹⁵⁴ ILC.111/DG/APP, para. 158.

¹⁵⁵ United Nations entities input.

¹⁵⁶ A/78/127-E/2023/95, para. 116.

¹⁵⁷ A/HRC/55/72, para. 47.

¹⁵⁸ United Nations entities input.

123. Besides settlement expansion, commercial activity, such as a project for the construction of wind turbines, has been approved. This may further worsen the overall human rights situation and continue to limit the access of the Syrian population to land and water. The turbine project's impact on the right to adequate housing through land grabbing risks the further potential displacement of Syrian communities in the Golan.¹⁵⁹

124. On 20 June 2023, Israel commenced work on a wind turbine project near the towns of Majdal Shams and Mas'adah in the occupied Syrian Golan. Israeli police provided on-site protection for works reportedly carried out by an Israeli company, Energix. As a result, clashes erupted between Syrians protesting against the construction and Israeli police officers, reportedly resulting in minor injuries to three protesters and three officers. Consequently, by July 2023, the Prime Minister of Israel had postponed the project, acknowledging its unfeasibility given the opposition from Arab villagers.¹⁶⁰

125. In 2022, the labour force participation rate of Syrian citizens in the occupied Syrian Golan was 43.1 per cent, with a 7.1 per cent unemployment rate. The construction sector is the most common sector among employed Syrians, with education and public administration accounting for 10 per cent, and wholesale and retail trade, transport and storage, and accommodation and food service for 8 per cent.¹⁶¹

126. Discrimination between settlers and residents of Syrian villages in terms of building permits remains a trend. In 2012, the residents of Syrian villages, whose number was around 1.15 times more than that of settlers, received less than one third of the building permits received by settlers. In 2021, the number of residents of Syrian villages became approximately equal to that of Israelis in settlements, yet settlers obtained almost double the number of building permits.¹⁶²

127. Syrian farmers further face discrimination in gaining access to resources such as water and agricultural lands, while competing with the subsidized industrialized agricultural production of settlements, which has led to a decline in the importance of agriculture in occupied Syrian Golan. Furthermore, Syrian farmers' access to land near planned wind turbines will be limited, potentially affecting their ability to harvest produce.¹⁶³

IV. Conclusion

128. I again strongly condemn the horrific attacks by Hamas and other Palestinian armed groups in Israel on 7 October and the continued holding of hostages in Gaza. Nothing can justify these acts of terror. I reiterate my call for all hostages to be released immediately and unconditionally. In the interim, they must be treated humanely and allowed to receive visits and assistance from the International Committee of the Red Cross.

129. The scope of death and destruction in Gaza as a result of the war has been catastrophic, unprecedented and horrifying. The Israeli use of explosive weapons with wide-area effects in densely populated areas has caused the wholesale destruction of neighbourhoods and the destruction of, or damage to, hospitals and other civilian infrastructure, schools, mosques and United Nations premises.

¹⁵⁹ A/HRC/55/72, para. 48.

¹⁶⁰ Ibid., para. 49.

¹⁶¹ United Nations entities input.

¹⁶² See <https://golan-marsad.org/wp-content/uploads/2022/09/Ehnic-Planinng-Research-1.pdf>.

¹⁶³ ILC.111/DG/APP, para. 161.

I unequivocally condemn the widespread killing and maiming of civilians, including women and children, in Gaza.

130. Civilians throughout Gaza face grave danger. A humanitarian ceasefire is needed immediately. The manner in which hostilities are conducted continues to leave me deeply alarmed at what may be violations of international humanitarian law by both parties to the conflict, including possible non-compliance with the principles of distinction, proportionality and precautions in attack. International humanitarian law applies to all parties to a conflict at all times, and its application does not depend on reciprocity. The protection of civilians is paramount in any armed conflict.

131. Overall, the level of essential goods, including humanitarian assistance, allowed into Gaza is wholly inadequate to meet the overwhelming needs of the population. I call upon the parties to the conflict to allow and facilitate the rapid and unimpeded passage of humanitarian relief for civilians in need, which is impartial in character and conducted without any adverse distinction, in accordance with international humanitarian law. All parties must protect humanitarian workers at all times.

132. The protracted military occupation of Palestinian territory and the Syrian Golan continues to have a detrimental effect on the living conditions of the Palestinian and Syrian populations, as well as on social and economic development in the occupied territories.

133. The scope and scale of damage and destruction in Gaza are unprecedented. The effects of extensive crowding, coupled with loss of homes, the health-care system, livelihoods, natural resources, infrastructure and institutional capacities, will increase impacts exponentially. This disproportionately affects the most vulnerable populations, including women and girls and persons with disabilities.

134. The disproportionate impact of the war in Gaza on persons with disabilities has heightened their vulnerability to risks of dying or acquiring further impairments. The protection of persons with disabilities, especially women and children, requires ensuring accessibility of information, evacuation, essential services, humanitarian assistance and access to required medication and assistive devices. Peacebuilding, recovery and reconstruction of Gaza must be disability-responsive, ensuring the active involvement of persons with disabilities and their representative organizations.

135. The prospects for the Palestinian economy are alarmingly negative. Projections indicate that every additional day that the war continues exacts huge and compounding costs for Palestinians in Gaza, with repercussions for coming generations. For recovery efforts to be effective, they will have to address not only the unprecedented repercussions of the fighting that has taken place in Gaza since 7 October and those of decades of conflict, but also the cumulative effects of the Israeli occupation, closures and recurrent military operations.

136. UNRWA serves as the key lifeline for millions of Palestine refugees, including the majority of the population of Gaza, amid a complete humanitarian catastrophe. The Agency also delivers essential services for refugees in the West Bank amid record-breaking violence, and in the wider region amid simmering tensions and socioeconomic problems. This critical role notwithstanding, UNRWA continues to suffer from chronic underfunding. It is essential that it receive strong political and financial support from Member States to find solutions for a sustainable model with predictable and sufficient income.

137. The increasing tensions in the occupied West Bank, including East Jerusalem, are reaching a boiling point. Israel continues to employ policies and

practices that may be contrary to relevant Security Council resolutions, international humanitarian law and international human rights law. Some of these practices may be discriminatory, while others may amount to the forcible transfer or collective punishment of protected persons, which are prohibited under international law. The ever-expanding settlement footprint, including outposts, further entrenches the occupation, while, as the competent organs of the United Nations have said, severely impeding the exercise by the Palestinian people of its right to self-determination.¹⁶⁴

138. Furthermore, the limited implementation of Security Council resolutions pertaining to the question of Palestine undermines the prospects of the implementation of internationally agreed frameworks in the Occupied Palestinian Territory and across the region, including the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development and the women and peace and security agenda.

139. Adherence to international law is imperative, ensuring that no party enjoys impunity and securing justice and peace for all those living in the region, including Palestinians and Syrians living under occupation. The United Nations will continue to coordinate and deliver humanitarian and development assistance, throughout the Occupied Palestinian Territory, including for the early recovery and reconstruction of Gaza, while working towards the realization of a just, lasting, and comprehensive peace in the Middle East on the basis of relevant United Nations resolutions, including Security Council resolutions [242 \(1967\)](#), [338 \(1973\)](#), [1397 \(2002\)](#), [1515 \(2003\)](#), [1850 \(2008\)](#), [1860 \(2009\)](#) and [2334 \(2016\)](#), to end the occupation that began in 1967, and for the establishment of an independent, sovereign, democratic, viable and contiguous Palestinian State, existing side by side with Israel in peace, within secure and recognized borders and with Jerusalem as the capital of both States.

¹⁶⁴ *Legal Consequences of the Construction of a Wall in the Occupied Palestinian Territory*, Advisory Opinion, I.C.J. Reports 2004, p. 136; see also General Assembly resolution [78/192](#).