



# haringey justice for palestinians

Newsletter 57: 16 – 31 January 2017

## “Palestine is the barometer of Western integrity”

Don't call me a Palestinian of the Palestinian Territories because it is called Palestine.  
 Don't give me a fraction of my homeland and call it a solution.  
 Don't give me oppression and call it peace.  
 Don't give me a Bantustan and call it a home.  
 Don't give me a prison and call it freedom.  
 Don't draw the borders of my existence according to your whims and interests and call it a state.  
 My Palestine is the home that is mine since the dawn of history till the end of history.

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### Reports .....

#### From London/UK

##### 1. The legal value of UN Security Council resolution 2334

On 23 December 2016, the UN Security Council reaffirmed the illegality of Israeli settlements in resolution 2334. The passing of this resolution does not break new legal ground, but nonetheless has legal value for a variety of important reasons. The reaffirmation of the illegality of Israel's settlements in itself has legal value at a time when the settlements issue is reaching a critical juncture. It further appears to have legal relevance in regard to practical actions that have already been taken, and additional actions that may in the future be taken, by the international community to differentiate between the territory of the

state of Israel proper and the Palestinian territory that it occupies. Finally, it can have distinct legal significance for the current preliminary examination on Palestine being undertaken by the Office of the Prosecutor for the International Criminal Court. These factors can best be examined after observing the constitutive elements of the resolution.

#### The preamble and operative parts of the resolution

An overriding observation of resolution 2334 is that its substance and language on settlements is firmly grounded in basic principles of international humanitarian law. In its preamble, the resolution reaffirms “the inadmissibility of the acquisition of territory by force”, and “the obligation of Israel, the occupying Power, to abide scrupulously by its legal obligations and responsibilities under the Fourth Geneva Convention.” It recalls the International Court of Justice’s 2004 advisory opinion on the legal consequences of the construction of a Wall in the occupied Palestinian territory (which found, inter alia, that the combination of Israeli settlements and the barrier’s construction alters the demographic composition of the occupied Palestinian territory and impedes the Palestinians’ right to self-determination).

The preamble then, “condemns all measures aimed at altering the demographic composition, character and status of the Palestinian Territory occupied since 1967, including East Jerusalem, including, inter alia, the construction and expansion of settlements, transfer of Israeli settlers, confiscation of land, demolition of homes and displacement of Palestinian civilians, in violation of international humanitarian law and relevant resolutions.” It further expresses “grave concern” that Israeli settlement activities undermine the viability of a two state solution based on the 1967 lines, and recalls “the obligation under the Quartet Roadmap, endorsed by its resolution 1515 (2003), for a freeze by Israel of all settlement activity, including “natural growth”, and the dismantlement of all settlement outposts erected since March 2001.”

In the operative part of the resolution, it (with excerpts placed in bolded italics by me for particular emphasis):

1. Reaffirms 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 the two-State solution and a just, lasting and comprehensive peace;
2. Reiterates its **demand that Israel immediately and completely cease all settlement activities in the occupied Palestinian territory, including East Jerusalem**, and that it fully respect all of its legal obligations in this regard;
3. Underlines that it will not recognize any changes to the 4 June 1967 lines, including with regard to Jerusalem, other than those agreed by the parties through negotiations;
4. Stresses that the cessation of all Israeli settlement activities is essential for salvaging the two-State solution, and calls for affirmative steps to be taken immediately to reverse the negative trends on the ground that are imperilling the two-State solution;
5. Calls upon **all States, bearing in mind paragraph 1 of this resolution, to distinguish, in their relevant dealings, between the territory of the State of Israel and the territories occupied since 1967**;
6. Calls for immediate steps to prevent all acts of violence against civilians, including acts of terror, as well as all acts of provocation and destruction, **calls for accountability in this regard** [...];
7. Calls upon both parties to act on the basis of international law, including international humanitarian law [...];  
[...]
9. Urges [...] the intensification and acceleration of international and regional diplomatic efforts and support aimed at achieving, without delay a comprehensive, just and lasting peace in the Middle East on the basis of the relevant United Nations resolutions [...];  
[...]
12. Requests the Secretary-General to report to the Council every three months on the implementation of the provisions of the present resolution;

#### Unpacking the legal value of resolution 2334

There was already no question that Israel’s settlements were unlawful, and in this regard it may be questioned whether resolution 2334 has any real legal significance. A number of important factors however might illuminate that the resolution can be assessed as possessing a legal value that is not negligible. As noted above, these are: i) the resolution reinforces the legal impermissibility of settlements and does so at a critical time; ii) the resolution’s call on all states to differentiate between the territory of the state of Israel and the territories it has occupied since 1967; and iii) the influence the resolution may have on the Office of the Prosecutor of the International Criminal Court. It should also be noted that the overarching theme that runs through these factors is the paramount need to protect and promote Palestinian human rights, including the fundamental right to self-determination, which are heavily compromised by Israel’s vast settlement enterprise.

The resolution’s reaffirmation that “settlements have no legal validity and constitutes a flagrant violation of international law” coupled with its “demand that Israel immediately and completely cease all settlements activities”, is compelling additional legal authority that Israeli settlements in the occupied Palestinian territory are indeed illegal. The language of “have no legal validity” is taken verbatim from the last resolution (resolution 465 in 1980) that focused on settlements. The international community’s explicit reliance on legal reasoning to buttress its position on Israeli settlements speaks to the value of international humanitarian law when addressing urgent issues of justice, peace and security.

The timing of this legal reaffirmation is also significant. The strong message sent by resolution 2334 that there can be no recognition that settlements have any legal validity, comes at a critical time when there is the disturbing confluence of the following:

- continuous expansion of illegal Israeli settlements in the occupied West Bank and East Jerusalem;
- escalating statements from the Israeli political leadership expressing its resolute commitment to the settlement enterprise;
- the proposed settlement regularisation law currently being considered by the Israeli Knesset; and
- troubling signals being transmitted by the imminent Trump administration vis-a-vis Israel’s settlements policy.

The resolution also has potential legal value in reinforcing the implementation of the legal principle that third states have legal duties not to recognise, nor aid or assist Israeli settlements because they impede Palestinians from being able to exercise their fundamental right to self-determination. This principle appears to be implicit in operative paragraph 5 of the resolution, which calls on all states in its relevant dealings to distinguish between the territory of Israel proper and the occupied Palestinian territory. The resolution’s provision of this clear delineation is valuable authority to counter any current and possible future attempts to unacceptably conflate the state of Israel proper with the Palestinian territory that it occupies. This conflation has relevance in the evolving area of business and human rights, where involvement by business enterprises in settlements activities in the occupied Palestinian territory which adversely impact Palestinian human rights is an ongoing concern. In this specific regard, it provides further legitimacy to the pending business and human rights database on companies involved in settlements activities, which is currently being developed by the Office of the High Commissioner for Human Rights. It is also

relevant to further legitimising steps that have been taken by some states, including the UK, to distinguish between trade that emanates from Israeli settlements as opposed to Israel proper. And, potentially in the future, it can assist to legitimise significant possible moves from states to withhold incoming and outgoing trade with Israeli settlements in accordance with its legal duties not to recognise, nor aid or assist them.

Finally, the resolution is additional material evidence for the ICC prosecutor to consider in her ongoing preliminary examination into Israel's actions in the occupied Palestinian territory. A significant aspect of her examination is on the issue of settlements. The Security Council's clear reaffirmation of the illegality of settlements, plus the reference in operative paragraph 6 to a "call for accountability", may factor into her decision-making when determining whether or not to open a full criminal investigation.

#### **Summary**

The potential legal value of resolution 2334 should not be understated. The safeguarding and promotion of Palestinian human rights, including the fundamental right to self-determination, is heavily dependent on the legal substance of resolution 2334 being observed and acted upon by all relevant international actors.

**Source:** Tareq Shrourou, Director, Lawyers for Palestinian Human Rights, 06.01.2017 [www.lphr.org.uk](http://www.lphr.org.uk)

## **2. Israeli diplomat caught on camera plotting to 'take down' British MPs - the transcript in full**

An Israeli diplomat has said there are MPs he would like to "take down" in undercover footage filmed covertly during a conversation with a civil servant. Shai Masot's remarks to Maria Strizzolo, who is Conservative MP Robert Halfon's former chief of staff, were caught on camera by Al Jazeera's investigations unit. Mr Masot discusses how to "take down" pro-Palestinian MPs including Foreign Office minister Sir Alan Duncan. Sir Alan sparked criticism from prominent pro-Israel groups in 2014, when he described settlement building in the Occupied Palestinian Territories as an "ever-deepening stain on the face of the globe". The former International Development Secretary also equated the situation in the divided West Bank city of Hebron to "apartheid".

Mr Johnson has been less critical of Israel than Sir Alan, dismissing supporters of the Boycott, Divestment, Sanctions (BDS) movement as "snaggle-toothed lefty academics" in 2015, causing Palestinian charities to cancel a string of planned meetings as the then London Mayor toured Israel and the West Bank.

Partial transcript of the meeting which took place in Kensington, London in October 2016

Shai Masot : Can I give you some MPs that I would suggest you would take down?

Maria Strizzolo : Well, you know that if you look hard enough I'm sure that there is something that they're trying to hide

Shai Masot : Well, you know. I have some MPs.

Maria Strizzolo : Well, let's talk about it.

Undercover reporter: Yeah

Shai Masot : (To the reporter) No, she know which MPs I want to take down

Maria Strizzolo : Yeah it's good to remind me

Shai Masot : The deputy foreign minister

Maria Strizzolo : You still want to?

Shai Masot : It doesn't matter.

Maria Strizzolo : You still want to go for it?

Shai Masot : No, he's doing – a lot of problems. It sounds like a conspiracy!

Maria Strizzolo : I thought we had, you know neutralised him, just a little bit, no?

Shai Masot : No

Maria Strizzolo : Ah, Boris is good

Shai Masot : Boris? He is basically good.

Maria Strizzolo : He is solid on Israel.

Shai Masot : Yeah, he just don't care. He is busy with everything else. Boris is busy. You know he is an idiot, Yeah he just don't care. So far, You know he is an idiot but so far he has become the minister of foreign affairs without any responsibility so technically if something real happened it won't be his fault.

Maria Strizzolo : Rob was writing articles. He was doing everything, asking questions in Parliament about the terrorist salaries ... And when he (Duncan) was a minister in DFID (Department for International Development) ... Yeah, and after a while though Rob was doing it and Alan Duncan took him like I think but I don't remember exactly where ... but he took him to one side and threatened him, "if you don't stop this I'm going to ruin you I'm going to destroy you" and all of that shit. But he took him to one side and threatened him. And Rob told the whips and the whips just told him to calm down.

Shai Masot : Never say never

Maria Strizzolo : Yeah, you know, never say never. Anyway please don't tell anyone about our meeting

Shai Masot : To who would we tell?

The third person at the table in October was a man known as "Robin", who posed as a representative of the Labour Friends of Israel group while working as an undercover reporter.

The Israeli ambassador, Mark Regev, has spoken with Sir Alan to apologise for the "completely unacceptable" comments. The embassy sought to play down the incident as the footage was broadcast on Saturday night, describing Mr Masot as a "junior embassy employee", who is not a diplomat. His business card describes him as "a senior political officer", while his LinkedIn page lists him as having worked for the embassy since November 2014.

Mr Masot says he was Israeli Defence Forces (IDF) major between 2004 and 2011 and describes himself as the chief point of contact between the embassy and MPs, liaising with ministers and officials at the Foreign Office. "The Embassy of Israel rejects the remarks concerning Minister Duncan, which are completely unacceptable; the comments were made by a junior embassy employee who is not an Israeli diplomat, and who will be ending his term of employment with the embassy shortly," said a statement from the embassy's spokesman. "Ambassador Regev on Friday spoke with Minister Duncan, apologised for the comments and made clear that the embassy considered the remarks to be completely unacceptable."

**Source:** EuroPal Forum/The Independent , 10.01.2017

### 3. UK's key role in brokering UN resolution on Israeli settlements confirmed

Britain played a key behind-the-scenes role in brokering the [UN resolution condemning Israel for violating international law](#) with its policy of building settlements on occupied Palestinian territory, it has been confirmed. The UK helped draft some of the key wording to ensure it met US concerns. The UK role, first highlighted by Israeli diplomatic sources, leaves the UK on a collision course not just with Israel, but at odds with Donald Trump, the US president-elect and a strong opponent of the UN resolution, the first to be passed that is critical of [Israel](#) for seven years.

The UK has never hidden its support for the UN resolution, voting for its terms, and subsequently both UK ministers and diplomats have publicly justified its wording. It is also usual for the UK to play a key brokering role on UN resolutions, especially on the Middle East. It has been confirmed the UK helped with drafts of the resolution with Egypt and the Palestinians in a bid to ensure that it met with the concerns of the US president, Barack Obama. The US said it did not veto the resolution because it was balanced, condemning violence and incitement, as well as illegal settlements. The US has insisted it did not draft the text, and did not even tell other delegations how it intended to vote in the key consultations process.

Formally the Foreign Office did not deny it had been involved in the drafting process. It stressed "the resolution was proposed and drafted by the Egyptian delegation", adding that the UK, as one of the five permanent members of the security council, "engaged with" the text "as we do with all security council texts". Israel claims the UK's diplomatic activity in New York, conducted in liaison with the French and the US, took place behind its back. It is dubious that the US played a hands-off role. Israel's ambassador to the US, Ron Dermer, speaking to the US media this week, said: "This is not a text that was formulated by the Palestinians or Egypt, but by a western power." It was not clear if this was a reference to the US or the UK. In particular the UK is thought to have played a major role in mediating between the Palestinians and the Americans to ensure the text eventually put forward by New Zealand, and not Egypt, met the concerns of both sides. The UK in conjunction with Gulf states said the resolution should go ahead even when Egypt decided not to sponsor it.

A last-minute glitch came up when Russia's ambassador to the [United Nations](#), Vitaly Churkin, proposed postponing the vote until after Christmas, according to an interview the deputy Russian ambassador to Israel gave on Israel Army Radio. This reportedly followed a phone call between the Israeli prime minister, Benjamin Netanyahu, and the Russian president, Vladimir Putin. The other security council ambassadors refused to wait, however. The UK Foreign Office minister Tobias Ellwood welcomed the UN resolution on Twitter, and the UK ambassador to the UN, Matthew Rycroft, also highlighted the UK support for the resolution. The British foreign secretary, Boris Johnson, has not so far issued any public statement either way, but it is not claimed this is significant.

The UK support for the UN resolution has already led to reports that a tentatively planned meeting between Theresa May, and Netanyahu scheduled for Davos international summit this month [has been cancelled](#). The UK role has divided opinion inside the Conservative party. Conservative Friends of Israel's parliamentary chairman, Sir Eric Pickles, said: "CFI is disappointed by the UK's decision to support the controversial UN security council resolution, which legitimises the Palestinian Authority's attempts to internationalise the issue and avoid the necessary direct peace talks. "In addition, the resolution will embolden the hardline BDS movement and the ramifications for Jerusalem and Judaism's holiest site – the Western Wall – are seriously troubling."

By contrast the Conservative Middle East council said the resolution affirmed 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 the two-state solution". The UK is also backing the French-hosted Middle East conference on 15 January, where more than 70 countries may endorse an international framework, including a two-state solution for peace between Israel and the Palestinians. Israel has long vowed not to attend, with the Israeli defence minister, Avigdor Lieberman, comparing the summit to "a modern version of the Dreyfus trial" at a meeting of his party's deputies. Israel says it will only hold bilateral talks with the Palestinians.

Source: EuroPal Forum/The Guardian, 29.12.2016

### 4. Live feed from JBD meeting

Very long but interesting video of Board Meeting of the Jewish Board of Deputies. Some excerpts.

- 25.47mins - Lawrence Brass "**this Board must not be an extension of the Israeli Embassy.**"

- 1,19,15 - ""**There are groups in our community who are coming to campuses, who have got nothing to do with students [applause], who are interfering with what's going on at campus and putting our Jewish students at risk of their own safety - and that must stop! [applause] I'm now going to ask the President to intervene with those groups - one of which I know is funded from Israel, and I was told while I was in Israel, they're doing these things to make sure they can justify the funding they get from Israel, to try and make a point. It's an utter, utter disgrace...There was a provocation, by [pro-Israel] infiltrators who have got nothing to do with campuses, who should never have been on the campuses, allowed on the campuses, and should be banned in future.**"

-1.16.44 Jonathan ??reference to The Lobby

- 1.19 Ella Rose.

There was anger directed at Yachad. Also someone haranguing the meeting, re settlements, along lines of - *do you want the 2 state solution to become an impossibility, so have one Israeli state which, because of demographics could not survive as Jewish state..*

Surprised at the criticism of the Chair /board.

## 5. Please sign and share.

[Petition: Inquiry into Israel influencing British political democracy.](#)

## 6. Urgent Action-Settlements debate in Parliament

PSC would like to ask you all to **please circulate the action about the settlement debate in Parliament, taking place next week, to all your contacts and networks.**

Ask your MP to take part in a parliamentary debate on the 9th of February

This is the link to the action: <https://www.palestinecampaign.org/urgent-action-settlements-debate-parliament-9th-february/>

And <https://palestinecampaign.iparlsetup.com/lobby/settlementsdebate>

See the text below, you can use it to **circulate to your email lists.** Please **share the link widely and on social media** (Facebook/Twitter etc.) in the coming week. This is a **fantastic opportunity** to raise the issue of illegal Israeli settlements and their impact on Palestinians lives in Parliament.

Many thanks and best wishes.  
Palestine Solidarity Campaign

*Dear Supporters,*

***On Thursday 9th of February, MPs have a chance to take part in a parliamentary debate about Israel's illegal and immoral settlements.***

*We need to make sure as many MPs as possible speak out about the stark impact of settlement building on Palestinian lives and ask the government to take concrete steps to cease all trade and financial ties with settlements.*

***Please, [write to your MP](#) urging them to take part in this debate.***

***[Write to your MP](#)***

*In December 2016, the **UN Security Council passed Resolution 2334** demanding that "Israel immediately and completely cease all settlement activities in the occupied Palestinian territory, including East Jerusalem" whilst also reaffirming the illegality of the settlements and their existence as a barrier to peace.*

*This position corresponds with the longstanding UK Government policy regarding settlements. Despite this, however, the **UK Government continues to permit substantial trade with and financial support to settlements.***

*We know that **settlements are not a victimless crime, and that their construction has dire consequences for Palestinians** who face severe restrictions on their movement, ability to earn a living and residency rights. Palestinians living next to settlements often have their lands confiscated, homes demolished and face the constant threat of attacks by settlers; this oppressive status quo exists alongside restrictive planning laws that force Palestinians into ever-shrinking ghettos. All this brings incredible suffering to the lives of Palestinians and makes any hopes for a just peace ever more remote.*

***Please, [write to your MP today to ensure that action is taken by this government to end UK support for settlements.](#)***

## From Europe/America

### 1. French supermarket labels Israeli settlement products

Yediot Ahronot Hebrew newspaper revealed Friday that a French supermarket has labeled Israeli settlement products for the first time as "Made in Israeli Settlements." The signs were first seen at the Auchan supermarket chain in the Kremlin Bicetre suburb of Paris, the paper added. The incident is known to the Israeli Embassy in France, who then turned to French Jewish organizations to ask the chain to take down the "offending" signs, according to the sources. The manager of the supermarket said that it was a localized initiative to put up the sign, and that he had nothing to do with it. Nevertheless, he replaced the sign the next day to a sign which simply read "Israel."

Israel claims that this is the French government's "revenge" for Israel refusing to attend the upcoming Paris Peace Conference on January 15. However, the Israeli Embassy officials said that this seems to be the initiative of a pro-Palestinian employee of the supermarket. Last November, French authorities instituted a policy of labelling Israeli products grown or manufactured in the West Bank, East Jerusalem, and the Golan Heights as settlement products. The Israeli Foreign Ministry sent a harsh response to the event, saying they "condemn the French government's decision to implement the EU Commission guidelines regarding marking Israeli products originating from beyond the 1967 lines."

Source: EuroPal Forum/Palestine News Network, 10.01.2017

### 2. 2016 round-up: Pressure rises against EU funding for Israel's military and security complex

2016 has been another year of mobilising and lobbying against EU complicity with Israeli violations of international law and human rights, in particular through its Research and Development funding cycle Horizon2020. The European Commission feels the heat of pressure to stop European funding to Israel under HORIZON2020, yet more action is needed, especially in view of the 2017 review of the funding cycle. The greatest achievement has been the withdrawal of Portugal from the LAWTRAIN project, a Horizon2020 funded effort to link Israeli police and related institutions with European governments and law enforcement forces. It was the first time a government withdrew from an EU funded project after civil society pressure in support of Palestinian rights. This victory has galvanised more campaigns and efforts. Let's make the 2017 review of Horizon2020 a step in the right direction by pressuring the EU to exclude Israeli military and security companies and institutions linked to Israel's military and prison complex from receiving EU tax money through Horizon2020!

## BACKGROUND

HORIZON 2020 is the funding programme of the European Union for projects of research and technology, comprising the budget 2014-2020. So far, Israel is participating in [310 signed agreements](#) involving 369 participations for which they will receive a total of €203,875 million. Already in the previous funding cycle, FP7, the European Union had funded [projects](#) of research involving companies such as Elbit Systems, which had later used the technologies developed during the project during the attack on Gaza in 2014. The exclusion of Israeli security and defence companies as possible beneficiaries of the European funding programme is a central demand of Palestinian and European civil society. However, several other human rights controversies arise from the partnership between Israel and the European Union and run counter to Article 2 of the EU-Israel Association Agreement that bases the cooperation treaty on respect of human rights and democratic principles. Financing projects involving Israeli security and defence companies is yet another instance in which the EU exposes an open conflict with its own guidelines and principles.

Starting lobbying and campaigning in 2010, one of the first major victories Palestinian and European civil societies organisations and movements had in terms of influencing EU policies, was the issuing of the [2013 guidelines](#) on eligibility of Israeli participants in EU funding and financial instruments. The guidelines ostensibly aimed at excluding projects implemented and companies located in the OPT from EU funding. A step in the right direction, the guidelines show several flaws and hence still do not even end EU support for the Israeli settlement project, let alone other instances of Israeli violation of international law. In fact, the EU with its support to Israeli companies and institutions flouts as well [other guidelines](#), such as the prohibition of the development of dual use technologies, i.e. technology that could later be applied for military reasons, and regulations against misuse and malevolent use of technology developed with EU funding. It soon became clear that the guidelines may serve more as a justification for continued Israeli participation under HORIZON 2020 than as a tool to end EU complicity with Israeli violations of international law.

In 2015, Stop the Wall released a report "[Supporting Israeli apartheid: EU funding for Elbit Systems](#)" warning how the EU's relationship with Elbit Systems would be a clear example of EU complicity with Israeli violations of human rights. This was followed up by a [letter from Palestinian civil society](#) to Federica Mogherini. In July 2015, [73 MEP submitted a letter](#) to the EU High Commissioner of Foreign Affairs and Security Policy, Federica Mogherini, calling for an end to funding and support of Israeli military and security companies, as:

- Funding technological development and research to such companies would infringe EU's policy against funding dual use technology
- EU public money should be spent on projects that contradict the values and principles of the European Union
- Any relation with such companies would make Europe complicit with Israel's violations of international law

A number of parliamentary questions followed. Some of them can be found [here](#). In November 2015, ECCP - a coalition of 42 European organisations from 19 European countries - [sent a letter](#) to the EU, endorsing the call from Palestinian civil society for a military embargo to be imposed on Israel and that the EU and its member states:

- End all military relations with Israel,
- Implement a moratorium on any further projects involving Israeli military companies from being approved
- Conduct transparent review of the activities of Israeli participants in Horizon 2020 that are linked to Israel's violations of international law in consultation with civil society actors.

## FURTHER STEPS IN 2016

2016 has seen not only lobbying efforts targeting the European Union but concrete campaigns focusing on projects that highlight EU complicity in a particular blatant manner.

- March 1, 2016: The ECCP held a [public hearing](#) in the European Parliament that was sponsored jointly by MEPs from Alliance of Liberals and Democrats for Europe, the European People's Party, and the Socialists and Democrats, a coalition unprecedented on the question of Palestine. Following previously published [research](#) by ECCP on the question of Israeli military entities receiving funding from the European Union through the funding programme Horizon 2020, MEPs and experts discussed the issue and agreed on follow up actions. It was exposed that two Israeli arms companies have circumvented European regulations on participation in the Horizon 2020 project by introducing military research, and by including products which have been tested in the Occupied Palestinian Territory (OPT).
- March 2016: ECCP publishes a [detailed research](#) on the amount of funding and projects under FP7 and Horizon2020 that aid and assist Israeli violations under international law.
- March 2016: Stop the Wall publishes the briefing '[FLYSEC – Securing Apartheid in Palestine and beyond](#)', targeting one of the EU projects funded under Horizon2020 including the Israeli military company, Elbit Systems.
- April 2016: Stop the Wall publishes the briefing '[LAWTRAIN - European Licence for Torture](#)', targeting this project aiming at developing technology that will unify methodology for police questioning. It is coordinated from Israel and included at the time the participation of the Israeli Ministry of Public Security/Israeli National Police, the Ministry of Justice of Portugal/Judiciary Police, the Federal Public Service of Justice of Belgium and the Ministry of Interior of Spain/Guardia Civil.
- May 2016: Stop the Wall publishes two briefings on the complicity of the European Union with Israeli violation of International Human Rights Law and contradictions with its own guidelines when accepting Israeli companies such as Elbit, Motorola, Technicon, and Israel Aerospace Industries.

- June 2016: [MEP Miguel Viegas \(GUE/NGL\)](#) questions the EU on LAW TRAIN and on the participation of Israeli military and security companies in Horizon2020.
- August 2016: after lobby and BDS pressure, the [Portuguese government decided to withdraw](#) the participation of the Portuguese national police and the ministry of Justice from LAWTRAIN.
- September 2016: a letter and lobby activity was done by ECCP members targeting MEPs, EUROPOL, EEAS, Ministries of Foreign Affairs of EU Member States and their Permanent Representatives in Brussels after the call from LAW TRAIN for the constitution of an advisory board. The ECCP and members asked EU member states to ensure non-participation in the project. They cautioned governments that any participation entails complicity with violations of human rights and that the project involves entities, such as the Israeli National Police, which is headquartered in the Occupied Palestinian Territories. With this it is almost impossible to exclude that no activity related to the project is being carried out in the OPT and this brings the project in clear violation with the 2013 guidelines. In their replies to the letters from ECCP members, Austria, Ireland and Finland officially distanced themselves from the participation in the project. So far, LAW TRAIN has been able to get only three individuals - Ms. Dr. Claire Nee, Portsmouth University, UK – Ethics Advisor, Ms. Jo Taylor, College of Policing, UK, Mr. William Finn, College of Policing, UK - and Ms. Cornelia Geldermans, National Public Prosecutor's Office, Netherlands to participate in this '[advisory board](#)'. Such a meagre result shows the impact of the lobbying but another effort is needed to convince and pressure the participants to withdraw from the board.
- September 2016: The campaign against LAW TRAIN and Belgium participation in the project starts. The campaign comprises a large alliance of civil society organizations and solidarity groups. At the end of September 2016 [students from KU Leuven organised a direct action in a protest against the involvement of their University in Law Train](#). In addition the coalition of Belgian civil society organisations in cooperation with OMCT (World Organisation Against Torture) and FIDH sent a [letter to the European Commission](#) with a demand to end the Law Train project. In October 2016 Belgian Campaign for Cultural and Academic Boycott of Israel [published a full dossier](#) denouncing the Law Train project.
- September 2016: Press Conference on the visit of Premier of Luxembourg in Israel, 11-14 September 'The Hidden Sides of a Premier's Visit in Israel', exposing the cooperation of Luxembourg in the FLYSEC project.
- October/November 2016 questions by MEP [Bart Staes \(Verts/ALE\)](#) and [Ana Gomes \(S&D\)](#) questioning the EU on the LAW TRAIN project.
- The first conference of the European Trade Union Initiative for Justice in Palestine, gathering over 100 trade union delegates, representing twenty nine unions and three million members from all over Europe, [underlined](#) the call for an end to EU complicity, such as the current funding through Horizon 2020. Participants discussed concrete steps on the issues in the workshops.
- November 2016: ECCP has held its lobby days, focusing on the complicity of EU institutions arising from the EU-Israel Association Agreement and the participation of the Israeli companies and institutions in Horizon 2020.

## 2017: THE WAY FORWARD

Despite the great victory of having Portugal withdrawing from the project, LAW TRAIN continues its activities. It is time to stop this project, which will create a common platform of interrogation and operation among EU and Israeli police, once and for all. The project legitimises Israeli illegal policies of interrogation, including torture and ill-treatment as well as the entire repressive Israeli institutional set up. Further, the EU has still not been able to answer the simple question whether they can ensure that none of the activities related to the project are carried out in the OPT, considering that the Israeli police headquarters are located in an illegal settlement in East Jerusalem.

LAW TRAIN has tried to make up the withdrawal of the Portuguese government with the creation of an advisory board. So far this attempt has given only meagre results: until now only two individuals - Ms. Dr. Claire Nee, Portsmouth University, UK – Ethics Advisor, Ms. Jo Taylor, College of Policing, UK, Mr. William Finn, College of Policing, UK - and Ms. Cornelia Geldermans, National Public Prosecutor's Office, Netherlands have agreed to participate in this board of complicity. Let's ask these individuals and/or entities to withdraw their support! Further, ECCP has created an excellent [database on Horizon2020](#) projects that involve Israeli companies and institutions and EU complicity with Israeli violations of international law and human rights. It is important to check that there is no institution in your reach involved in such projects.

While the European Parliament and EU Commission are working on the review of Horizon2020 in 2017, it is important to ensure they continue to feel the pressure - through national campaigns against specific project and campaigning and lobbying at EU level. It is high time that the EU stops using European tax money to support Israeli apartheid.

**Source: EuroPal Forum/Stop the Wall, 21.12.2016**

### 3. Is Trump really Netanyahu's 'dream president'?

When he served as prime minister for the Likud, Ariel Sharon was often pressured by his own party to reject US demands to rein in construction in the settlements and move forward in the negotiations with the Palestinians. Yet Sharon knew exactly how to derive political and diplomatic advantage from this pressure. The angrier people were at him, the better excuse he had for the White House as to why his hands were tied in his dealings with the Palestinians. Washington would then turn a blind eye to any continued construction in the West Bank.

Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu also has taken advantage of this dynamic ever since returning to power in 2009. Whenever the Obama administration applied pressure on him, he cited his political constraints at home to show that he had limited space to manoeuvre politically. The more extreme the Likud Party grew, the more he could use this as an excuse. This benefited Netanyahu in another way, too. It allowed him to present himself before Likud supporters as the one person standing up to the pressures of a hostile US administration. His [troubled relationship](#) with President Barack Obama, which only deteriorated over the years, helped Netanyahu considerably in all of his recent election campaigns and whenever he found himself entangled in some political crisis.

Paradoxically, it is the Trump administration that presents Netanyahu with an unusually complex political and diplomatic challenge. Ostensibly, Netanyahu was just given the "president of his dreams" on a platter. He could now fulfill all the deepest

desires of the Israeli right. But since the Trump inauguration Jan. 20, Netanyahu has instead found himself trying to ward off a barrage of pressure from the right. Spearheading that campaign is Netanyahu rival Naftali Bennett, the education minister who claims that the new US administration offers Israel a historic opportunity to [annex the settlements](#). Suddenly, Netanyahu found himself in a position that he is not used to, one that could cause him serious harm among his power base on the right. He must now be the voice of moderation in his government and block any initiatives proposed by its more right-wing members. Netanyahu is well aware that HaBayit HaYehudi leader Bennett is scoring political points at the prime minister's expense, but nonetheless, his hands are tied. He cannot burn all his bridges with the international community. Furthermore, Trump is unpredictable, and Netanyahu does not know what his policy will be. For instance, will he really [move the US Embassy](#) to Jerusalem, or will he [renege on his promise](#)?

Netanyahu's first test came less than two days after Trump's inauguration. Bennett started waving about his [Law for the Annexation](#) of the settlement town of Maale Adumim in every possible forum, announcing that he would submit it for a vote before the Ministerial Committee for Legislation. He and the No. 2 person in his party, Justice Minister Ayelet Shaked, presented a determined vision in contrast to Netanyahu's efforts to postpone the discussion of the law until after his first visit to the White House, planned for next month. Bennett [used Twitter](#) to lash out at the prime minister about this sensitive subject. On Jan. 21 he posted, "We have entered a new political era. For the first time in 50 years, the decision lies with the prime minister: sovereignty or Palestine. Continuing the Bar-Ilan/Palestine approach will lead to generations of tears. We will work to attain sovereignty." [Bar-Ilan](#) was a 2009 speech by Netanyahu on the two-state solution.

As if that was not enough, various plans popping up in the Likud have also pushed Netanyahu into a corner. These include [one put forward](#) by Yisrael Katz, who serves as both transportation minister and intelligence minister. Over the weekend he announced that he plans on presenting his own "Israeli Initiative Program" for discussion by the Cabinet. This plan calls for the annexation of the settlements surrounding Jerusalem, including Maale Adumim, Givat Ze'ev, Gush Etzion and Beitar Illit. Katz wants them incorporated into what he calls "Metropolitan Greater Jerusalem," though they would remain independent municipal entities. As the minister wrote on [his Facebook page](#), "This is the first necessary political step in the Trump era."

Jan. 22 should have been an important milestone for the Israeli right at the start of the Trump era. All of the annexation initiatives should have been discussed at the Security Cabinet in order to update the coalition's policy in accordance with anticipated changes in Israel's relationship with the new US administration. However, Netanyahu managed to postpone the Security Cabinet trap at least until after his February meeting with Trump. Netanyahu expected a phone call with the new president just a few hours after the Cabinet meeting. The prime minister told the Cabinet members that the Americans had begged him not to surprise Trump with any diplomatic moves that were not coordinated with the new president first. HaBayit HaYehudi did not really buy into Netanyahu's explanation about messages from the White House. Shaked went so far as to mock Netanyahu's claim in an [interview with Army Radio](#). "I did not receive a message from Trump's office either way. It is important to realize that the rules of the game have changed, and that we must stop playing by the old rules. The message we are getting from the United States is, 'Come tell us what you want.'"

While blocking these attempts at annexation, Netanyahu is also trying to adjust himself to this new era and a renewed struggle to win votes from the right. And so he went out of his way to explain that he shares the vision of applying Israeli sovereignty over all the settlements, and announced at a meeting of the Security Cabinet that all restrictions on construction in Jerusalem would be lifted and that construction would be expanded in the settlement blocs. The prime minister said, "The city [of Maale Adumim] will be [under Israeli sovereignty](#), but now is not the right time to take new steps without coordinating with the US government." That evening, Netanyahu indeed spoke with Trump on the phone. Both sides reported that it was a good conversation, but anyone looking for a green light for the right's initiatives came away disappointed. Apart from some general talk about security cooperation, the international war against terror and negotiations with the Palestinians, nothing of substance was apparently said.

The question now is where things are headed in terms of the new administration's policies. Furthermore, how long will Netanyahu be able to manoeuvre between the various diplomatic constraints and his personal struggle against his rivals, both in general and in the Likud? This latter question is especially important now that the prime minister has a new rival in the coalition, the leader of Yisrael Beiteinu, Defence Minister Avigdor Liberman. Liberman is trying to insert himself into the position of the [pragmatic, moderate right](#). What this means in practice is that he opposes annexation, at least at this stage. He has also come out against Bennett, which is something that Netanyahu cannot allow himself to do right now. Caught between these pincer movements, with the criminal investigations into his dealings bearing down even harder on him, Netanyahu is vulnerable from every possible political angle. If his hard-core voting bloc starts trickling toward Bennett, he could find himself dragged toward extreme political initiatives, regardless of their ramifications in the international arena.

Source: [Mazal Mualem](#), [AI Monitor](#), 23.01.2017

#### 4. Does Trump's 'America First' approach bode ill for Israel?

"He used [every considerable means](#) and influence of the United States to help us. We owe him a special measure of gratitude. This attests to the strong alliance between Israel and the United States. This alliance between Israel and the United States is especially important in these times of political storms and upheavals in the Middle East." Guess who made these comments and to whom they were directed.

Hard to believe, but these warm words of gratitude were uttered by Israeli Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu. They were directed at Barack Obama, the same American president who, on the day he vacated the Oval Office for Donald Trump, elicited a [huge sigh of relief](#) from Netanyahu. The prime minister had expressed his heartfelt thanks to Obama on Sept. 10, 2011, a day after an enraged mob stormed the Israeli Embassy in Cairo. "I asked for his help," Netanyahu declared at the time. "This was a decisive and fateful moment." Obama, he went on to say, promised he would do everything in his power to save the six besieged embassy staff, "and he did." A senior Israeli official involved in managing the crisis said [Obama's personal intervention](#) had a significant impact on the Egyptians' quick response to extricate the Israelis, "because we were just minutes away from tragedy."

True, Obama did not relocate the US Embassy from Tel Aviv to Jerusalem — and at the moment, [Trump isn't rushing](#) to make good on his promise to do so, either — and Obama did not [lash out at Muslims](#). He understood that when, to quote Netanyahu, "political storms and upheavals" are shaking the Middle East, a responsible American president is not entitled to sit around doing nothing. Unfortunately (but in the eyes of Jewish and Muslim rejecters of peace fortunately), Obama's efforts to bring about an end to the Israeli-Palestinian conflict did not yield results. Admittedly, Obama did not, like Trump, name an



enthusiastic advocate of Israel's West Bank [settlement enterprise](#) such as David Friedman to [represent the United States](#) in Tel Aviv. Instead, he only sent Israel an aid package worth [billions of dollars](#) to fund sophisticated defense equipment. Granted, Obama did not follow Netanyahu's orders to tighten sanctions on Iran, but in professional circles, including in Israel, there is broad agreement that the nuclear deal with Tehran is proving to be successful.

Netanyahu will have to work hard to convince Trump that confronting Tehran — rejecting the deal the United States reached together with Russia, the United Kingdom, France, China and Germany and in the process losing out on lucrative opportunities for American business — is indeed a US interest. Trump's executive order abandoning the multinational [Trans-Pacific Partnership](#), turning his back on such important allies as Australia, New Zealand and Canada, could signal that his egocentrism and isolationism are being translated into US foreign policy. If this move reflects Trump's so-called America First approach, Israel should hope that he considers engagement in the Middle East an integral part of this policy. Either way, awareness is taking root that the United States is being led by a businessman who is alienated by anything he does not perceive as serving his country's economic interests. Israel and some of its neighbours in the region — with Egypt and Jordan at the forefront — have good reason for concern.

For almost the entirety of Israel's existence, since President Harry Truman recognized it upon its declaration as a state in 1948, Jerusalem has been perceived in the eyes of the Arab world as a necessary station on the road to Washington. On the other hand, the 1956 Sinai War between Israel and Egypt showed Arab states the power of quite moderate US pressure, when President Dwight Eisenhower crushed in one fell swoop Prime Minister David Ben-Gurion's dream of a "Third Kingdom of Israel" and forced Israel to withdraw from the territories it had occupied. The arms airlift dispatched by President Richard Nixon to Israel during the 1973 Arab-Israeli War attested to the US commitment to Israel's security, and the speed with which Yitzhak Rabin's first government signed the disengagement agreement with Egypt and Syria in the mid-1970s showed the neighbours what happens when Washington threatens to reassess its relationship with Israel.

Boutros Boutros-Ghali, the Egyptian minister of state under President Anwar Sadat, told me a few years ago that the main driver behind Sadat's reaching a peace agreement with Israel was his desire to get closer to the United States and obtain economic aid to extricate his country from its economic straits. Indeed, President Jimmy Carter, bringing to bear the full weight and prestige of the presidency to get Sadat and Prime Minister Menachem Begin to Camp David to talk peace, rewarded Egypt generously. Since signing the peace agreement with Israel in 1979, Egypt has been receiving some [\\$1.5 billion](#) annually (more than \$50 billion in total) from the United States. The agreement stood Israel in good stead even in its darkest periods, contending with two military campaigns in Lebanon and two intifadas. Fear that the United States would [punish Egypt](#) for violating the peace agreement contributed to the hands-off policy toward the pact by the Islamist government of President Mohammed Morsi.

The energetic involvement of the Ronald Reagan administration was behind the Palestinian National Council's [historic decision](#) on Nov. 15, 1988, to halt armed struggle against Israel, to recognize UN Security Council Resolution 242 and to adopt the two-state approach. Retired US diplomat Robert Pelletreau, who conducted contacts with the Palestine Liberation Organization at the time, told me in 2005 that he is convinced the Palestinian desire to get into the United States' good graces is what motivated PLO Chairman Yasser Arafat to push through the decision. The Palestinians began reaping the dividends after signing the Oslo Accord with Israel in the 1990s.

The conference of donor states organized by President Bill Clinton funnels to the Palestinian Authority's dwindling coffers about 30% of its annual budget. The United States alone has so far [contributed in this way](#) more than \$5 billion to Palestinian autonomy. The Palestinians are not walking away from their agreements with Israel, despite the diplomatic freeze and Israeli settlement construction, for fear that the United States will turn off the cash faucet, among other things. The United States also played an important role in contacts on peace with Jordan. A promise by Rabin that he would ask Clinton to forgive the Hashemite kingdom's [\\$700 million debt](#) to the United States motivated King Hussein to sign the 1994 peace agreement with Israel. Indeed, the pact resulted in an increase of US aid to Jordan, up to \$1 billion annually.

Before Netanyahu heads to Washington in February, he would do well to imagine what Israel would have looked like today without US involvement in the conflict with its neighbours. Maybe this will convince him to implore his host at the White House not to leave us alone.

Source: [Akiva Eldar](#), *AI Monitor*, 26.01.2017

## 5. Appeal to prevent attempts to move the US embassy from Tel Aviv to Jerusalem

Respected media outlets and journalists, you are all familiar with the situation in Jerusalem and the colonisation and Judaisation measures and policies to which it is being subjected by the Israeli government, including attacks on its Arab, Muslim and Christian landmarks. There are also continuous attempts to displace and expel Palestinians living in Jerusalem by means of harassment, especially in the form of revoking their residency permits, prohibiting them from living in the city and banning them from all forms of construction, including rebuilding and renovating their homes and places of worship. The Israeli occupation authorities have also refused to issue permits to educational, medical and services institutions, all the while continuing to implement policies aiming to change the Arab identity of this holy city. In this same context, and in conjunction with these policies and violations, the extremist Israeli government led by Benjamin Netanyahu is seeking to pressure the new US administration to issue a presidential decree to move the US embassy from Tel Aviv to Jerusalem. The Israeli occupation government's success in obtaining such a decree poses a danger to the future of the Palestinian cause, because it would mean that the US, and the major power it represents in international politics, is blatantly in favour of Israel's unilateral, illegal annexation of Jerusalem. It is also a rejection of the international resolutions relating to this, including UN Resolution 242, and the first step towards allowing Israel to disregard the Palestinians' right to a state with Jerusalem as its capital.

We at the Palestine International Forum for Media and Communication (Tawasul), in recognition of the danger posed by such a move on the Palestinian cause and on our Arab and Muslim nation, invite all media organisations and our esteemed journalists and colleagues to take a strong and clear position on this. We also call on them to make a qualitative and intensive effort against this distinctly pro-Israel move, in defence of religious, political and civil rights guaranteed to the Palestinians under the relevant international resolutions, laws and conventions. In this context, we present to our colleagues and fellow organisations some ideas for media content and policies that we suggest should be adopted when addressing this issue. We have also included a fact and information sheet on the topic. We look forward to your cooperation and working together in support of the justice of the Palestinian cause.

Yours in humanity,  
Hisham Qasem, Director-General, Palestine International Forum for Media and Communication

#### **Media policies**

- Focus on the Arab and Muslim aspects of Jerusalem, as this is a cause that goes beyond the borders of historic Palestine in its symbolism and significance.
- Encourage public opinion, political parties and civil society to take action on all levels to defend Jerusalem.
- Utilise our media discourse to push Arab governments, the Arab League, the Organisation of Islamic Cooperation and Al-Quds Committee to bear their responsibility to put pressure on the Trump administration to prevent the issuance of a decree to move the US embassy from Tel Aviv to Jerusalem.
- Use our various media relations to activate the cause among foreign and supportive elites, by informing them of the sensitivity of this issue and the importance of them urging their governments to use their influence to stop any US measures in this regard.
- Adopt a progressive media policy as a pre-emptive priority for the current phase by creating experiences and programmes in order to create an interactive media, civil and official reality with Jerusalem.

#### **Media discourse content**

- Emphasise that Jerusalem is a part of our religion and a symbol of our civilisation and identity, and that any harm to it will be considered a direct attack on our Arab and Muslim nations.
- We, as Muslims and Christians, are united in trying to prevent this step, as it is a blatant violation of our religious, human and civilisational rights.
- Any US measure of this kind is considered a flagrant violation of all related international charters and resolutions and a rebellion against the foundations upon which the UN and international relations are supposed to be built.
- If Washington does this, it will further complicate the regional scene and will result in negative reactions from numerous and varied parties. The US will bear the lion's share of the responsibility for this.
- Justice and fairness dictates that Washington reconsiders its biased position in favour of the Israeli occupation and its Judaising policies practiced in Jerusalem, instead of encouraging Israel to commit more crimes and violations against the Palestinian people and the Muslim and Christian sanctities.
- The Palestinian cause requires effort and cooperation on everyone's part in order to bring to an end the last discriminatory colonial occupation, which is a disgrace to the entire free world.

#### **Facts and information on moving the US embassy from Tel Aviv to Jerusalem**

##### **Foreword**

Given the fact that the Israeli occupation authorities announced the establishment of their state on Palestinian land in 1948 and confiscated large parts of Jerusalem (84.1 per cent of its area at the time), this city has entered a new phase of religious and political conflict with the Palestinians and Arabs on one side and Israel and its allies on the other. The June 1967 War was a major turning point in this conflict. After the Israelis occupied the eastern part of Jerusalem, Jewish demands to declare Jerusalem to be the "undivided, eternal capital of the Jewish people" emerged. This was approved formally by the Knesset (Israeli parliament) in 1980, a move that the international community and UN refused to recognise.

The current dispute regarding Jerusalem's standing is a critical issue in the Palestine-Israel conflict, as the Palestinians consider it the capital of their state, as noted in the Palestinian Declaration of Independence (issued in Algeria on 15 November 1988). The Palestinian Authority has also called for the declaration of occupied East Jerusalem as the state capital of an independent Palestine, while the Israelis regard the city as their undivided capital and act accordingly. The UN recognises the east part of Jerusalem as an occupied territory subject to the clauses of the Fourth Geneva Convention and refuses to recognise Israeli sovereignty over it. The same goes for the US, which officially refuses, along with the rest of the world, to recognise Israel's annexation of East Jerusalem since 1967.

##### **Trump's promise**

Since the late 1960s, America's positions on the Palestine-Israel conflict included providing great support to the latter that would guarantee its military superiority and distinction in the Middle East. This has occurred regardless of who the US president has been. After Donald Trump won the presidential election in November last year, a number of fears emerged from within Palestinian circles, especially regarding the new US president's promises to make serious changes in his country's policy regarding the Palestine-Israel conflict. He has made these promises after his repeated statements regarding his intention to move the US embassy in Israel from its current location in Tel Aviv (in the Palestinian territories occupied in 1948) to Jerusalem. His statements regarding the embassy move began during his election campaign, specifically on 21 March 2016, when Trump promised in his speech before AIPAC, one of the strongest pro-Israel Lobby groups putting pressure on the US Congress, to move Washington's embassy to what he called "the eternal capital of the Jewish people". Israeli officials are now calling for this promise to be fulfilled and have asked Trump to change the status quo in Jerusalem.

##### **Dates**

- The US recognised Israel in 1948, but it did not recognise Jerusalem as the capital of Israel when Israel declared this in 1950.
- On 23 October 1995, the US Congress passed a law known as the Jerusalem Embassy Act of 1995, which was passed for the purposes of initiating and funding the relocation of the Embassy of the United States in Israel from Tel Aviv to Jerusalem, no later than May 31, 1999.
- The American president at the time, Bill Clinton, issued a presidential waiver thus semi-annually suspending the implementation of the law based on national security concerns, as have his successors to-date.

- The US abstained from voting on resolution 478 issued by the UN Security Council in 1980 with the approval of 14 countries. This resolution considers Israel's annexation of Jerusalem to be a violation of international law.
- After the aforementioned Security Council resolution 478 was passed, 13 countries, the majority of which were Latin American, moved their embassies from Jerusalem to Tel Aviv.
- 25 September 2016: US Presidential candidate Donald Trump pledged to recognise Jerusalem as Israel's "undivided" capital.
- 30 September 2016: The White House left out "Israel" when listing Jerusalem in Obama's eulogy to ex-President Shimon Peres.
- 22 January 2017: The White House announced the beginning of discussions regarding moving the US embassy from Tel Aviv to Jerusalem and studying all the consequences of this on various levels.
- 23 January 2017: The White House said that President Trump has not yet made a decision regarding moving the US embassy in Israel from Tel Aviv to Jerusalem.

### **Israeli applause, Palestinian warning and international concern**

Trump's promise pleased the Israeli occupation authorities, who considered this to be a harsh blow, not only to the Palestinians, but also to the Israeli left who refuse to recognise Jerusalem as the undivided capital of Israel. Trump's repeated statements regarding the embassy move have led Israeli Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu to describe this move as "great". However, the US promise was met with Palestinian rejection on all official, popular and factional levels. Palestinians see it as an attempt to further ignite the area and as a violation of international resolutions and charters that regard East Jerusalem to be occupied territory and reject its annexation under Israeli sovereignty. The danger of this issue lies in the fact that it is basically a final recognition of Jerusalem as the capital of Israel. This could ultimately end the peace process and have destructive effects on the security and stability of the region, according to official Palestinian narratives.

The PA and PLO (the legitimate representative of the Palestinian people) have expressed on numerous occasions their rejection of moving the US embassy to Jerusalem. This is because such a move would "eliminate any hope of reaching a peace agreement to resolve the conflict." The PA has also reiterated its intention to intensify its efforts on the diplomatic level, in conjunction with popular movements on the ground, in order to put pressure on the Trump administration to back down from its decision.

### **US reactions to the promise of moving the embassy**

Trump's promise did not receive praise or encouragement from his predecessor, Barack Obama, who believed moving the embassy to Jerusalem could have "explosive" results. Obama also expressed his concern that the chances of a two-state solution were dimming. During his last press conference as President of the United States, on 19 January 2017, Obama said, "When sudden unilateral moves are made that speak to some of the core issues and sensitivities of either side, that can be explosive."

### **Arab and international reactions to the promise of moving the embassy**

The US effort provoked angry international reactions. While French Foreign Minister Jean-Marc Ayrault spoke on behalf of the ministry (15 January 2017), and described the suggestion to move the US embassy to Jerusalem as a "provocation", Arab circles warned against the "adverse consequences" of Trump going through with his promises. Other parties have refrained from commenting on the issue as a form of failing to dignify it, believing, it is claimed, that Trump would not go through with his threats that were just part of his plan to win the elections.

### **Jerusalem and foreign diplomacy**

On 30 July 1980, the Knesset passed the "Jerusalem Law" that made the Israeli declaration of Jerusalem as its capital city and the annexation of its eastern half under Israeli sovereignty a basic law, i.e. a constitutional principle. After this date, most of the foreign embassies relocated from Jerusalem to other Palestinian cities, such as Tel Aviv, in protest against the law; the exceptions were El Salvador and Costa Rica. Since then, the US embassy has remained in Tel Aviv. The US has nothing in Jerusalem other than a consulate headed by diplomat Donald Blome. This consulate does not deal with the Israeli government, but rather with the PA, and it receives its orders from the US Department of State in Washington, and not from the embassy in Tel Aviv. This is to prevent any hint at all of America's de facto recognition of Jerusalem as Israel's capital.

### **Jerusalem in UN resolutions**

The following are some resolutions concerning Jerusalem, issued by the UN General Assembly and Security Council:

- General Assembly Resolution 181 of 20 November 1947, which stipulated the end of the British Mandate in Palestine and its separation into two states with economic union between the two. It also stipulated that Jerusalem and its surrounding suburbs shall be established as a corpus separatum under a special international regime and shall be administered by the United Nations.
- General Assembly Resolution 273 of 11 May 1949, which stipulated Israel's acceptance as a member of the UN.
- General Assembly Resolution 303 of 9 December 1949, which restates that Jerusalem should be placed under a permanent international regime.
- General Assembly Resolution 2253 of 4 July 1967, which calls upon Israel to rescind all measures already taken to change the status of the Jerusalem, and to refrain from taking such action in the future.
- General Assembly Resolution 2254 of 14 July 1967, which expresses deep regret and concern of the non-compliance by Israel with resolution 2253 and the measures it has taken to change the status of Jerusalem.
- General Assembly Resolution 2851 of 20 December 1971, which calls upon Israel to rescind all measures and to desist from all policies and practices such as the annexation of any part of the occupied Arab territories or the establishment of settlements on those territories.

- General Assembly Resolution 2949 of 8 December 1972, which reiterates the UN's grave concern at the continuation of the Israeli occupation of Arab territories since 5 June 1967, and calls upon all states not to recognise any changes and measures carried out by Israel in the occupied Arab territories and invites them to avoid actions, including actions in the field of aid, that could constitute recognition of that occupation.
- General Assembly Resolution 35/207 of 16 December 1980, which strongly condemns Israel's aggression against Lebanon and the Palestinian people and reaffirms its strong rejection of Israel's decision to annex Jerusalem.
- Security Council Resolution 250 of 27 April 1968 that calls upon Israel to refrain from holding a military parade in Jerusalem.
- Security Council Resolution 251 of 2 May 1968 which deeply deplores the holding by Israel of the said military parade in Jerusalem.
- Security Council Resolution 252 of 21 May 1968, which urgently calls upon Israel to rescind all such measures already taken and to desist forthwith from taking any further action which tends to change the status of Jerusalem.
- Security Council Resolution 267 of 3 July 1969 which, once again, urgently calls upon Israel to rescind all measures it has taken which may tend to change the status of Jerusalem and to refrain from doing so in the future.
- Security Council Resolution 271 of 15 September 1969 which condemns Israel's desecration and profanation of the Holy Al-Aqsa Mosque and calls on Israel to rescind all measures and actions taken by it designed to alter the status of Jerusalem.
- Security Council Resolution 298 of 25 September 1971, which deplores the failure of Israel to respect the previous resolutions adopted by the UN concerning measures and actions by Israel purporting to affect the status of the City of Jerusalem.
- Security Council Resolution 465 of 1 March 1980, which includes urging Israel to dismantle the existing settlements and to cease the establishment, construction and planning of settlements in the Arab territories occupied since 1967, including Jerusalem.
- Security Council Resolution 476 of 30 June 1980, which declares that all legislative and administrative measures and actions taken by Israel that purport to alter the character and status of the Holy City of Jerusalem have no legal validity.
- Security Council Resolution 478 of 20 August 1980, which decides not to recognise the Jerusalem "basic law" and calls upon all Members of the UN to withdraw diplomatic missions from Jerusalem.

Source: **Middle East Monitor. 27.01.2017**

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## From Palestine/Israel

### 1. IOF demolition of structures in Area C causes great losses to the EU

The European Union (EU) has estimated the losses caused by the Israeli policy of demolishing Palestinians' homes in Area C at 242725 Euros over just the six past months. There is a remarkable unprecedented increase in the number of destruction orders. A report of the EU showed that the financial losses formed 2.4% of the annual humanitarian aid in the West Bank (in comparison with 1:32% in 2015 and 0.58% in 2014).

The EU warned of the seriousness of the escalation of demolition operations in 2017 saying that the policy of razing Palestinians' homes targets the weak people who are threatened with forcible deportation in southern al-Khalil, Jordan Valley and the Eastern area (E1) in Occupied Jerusalem.

Source: **EuroPal Forum/Palestine Information Centre, 06.01.2017**

### 2. Israel's global standing continues to sink, top strategists say

Israel's global standing is continuing to deteriorate, a new report from some of the country's top strategists concludes. "Israel's image in Western countries continues to decline, a trend that enhances the ability of hostile groups to engage in actions aimed at depriving Israel of moral and political legitimacy and launch boycotts," the Institute for National Security Studies (INSS) at Tel Aviv University states in its [2016-2017 Strategic Survey for Israel](#).

The 275-page report, authored by a who's who of figures from Israel's political, intelligence and military establishment, was presented on Monday to Israeli President Reuven Rivlin by INSS director Amos Yadlin, a former air force general and head of Israeli military intelligence. It notes in particular that "the international campaign to delegitimize Israel continues, as reflected in the BDS movement," a reference to the growing Palestinian-led boycott, divestment and sanctions campaign. Israel habitually describes advocacy for full rights for Palestinians, or criticism of its abuses, as "[delegitimization](#)." The report says that Israel's "current right-wing government has contributed to this deterioration," as have "anti-democratic legislative initiatives," as well as international concerns about Israel's "overreaction" to what it terms a "wave of terrorist attacks" by Palestinians.

#### No substitute for US

According to the report, Israel's efforts to compensate for its deteriorating relations with its traditional supporters, by bolstering ties with "non-democratic countries, especially Russia and China, are looked down upon in the international arena." There is "no sign that [such countries] are willing to give Israel the political, scientific, technological and military support it receives from other countries, mainly the United States and some European countries," the report states. This is particularly worrying for Israel given that the "status of the United States in the Middle East continues to weaken" as does its commitment to maintaining its hegemony in the Middle East, an alliance Israel relies on for ensuring its "power and deterrence."

"Despite good relations between Moscow and Jerusalem, Russia is not a substitute for security, political and economic support by the United States and the West," the report concludes. While Israeli leaders expect close relations with the United States under President Donald Trump, the report warns that his administration is expected to "reinforce isolationist trends." It also notes [trends within the United States](#) that threaten long-term support for Israel. During President Barack Obama's term, "the notion that the two nations have 'shared values,' appears to have eroded with the perceived weakening of Israel's democratic ethos." Similarly, the report finds an "erosion" of the identification Jewish Americans feel with Israel, which is also "bound to have harmful repercussions for Israel."

There is also polarization: conservative support for Israel remains strong, while liberals are increasingly ambivalent, displaying a “greater inclination to view the Palestinian plight as analogous to apartheid.” This sentiment, the report adds, is helping fuel the BDS movement, which is “now widespread on American campuses” and could affect US-Israel relations in the future.

#### **Israel and al-Qaida in Syria**

The Israeli strategists are clear that in terms of the conventional balance of forces in the region, “Israel’s military power is undisputed” – there is no threat from the armies of Egypt, Syria or Jordan. But they continue to view the Lebanese resistance movement Hizballah as a major threat. Despite the fact that Hizballah is currently embroiled in Syria’s civil war, the report sees the group emerging with enhanced support from Iran, hardened battlefield experience and “long-range fire capabilities endowed with great destructive power and ever-improving accuracy.”

An expanded and prolonged Russian military presence in the region, a consequence of Moscow’s intervention in Syria that has turned the tide in favour of the government of President Bashar al-Assad, would also restrict Israel’s freedom of military action. “From Israel’s perspective,” the report states, “the best scenario is the disappearance of the Assad regime, along with the removal of Iran and Hizballah from Syria on the one hand, and the defeat of the Islamic State [also known as ISIS or ISIL] and the establishment of a moderate Sunni regime in Syria on the other.”

Interestingly, the report claims that “this model has materialized in limited form in the Golan Heights, where moderate Sunni rebels are successfully combating both the Assad regime and the Islamic State.” The INSS report does not name the “moderate Sunni rebels,” but it is notable that Israel has long [provided aid and support](#) in the Golan Heights to [Jabhat al-Nusra, al-Qaida’s](#) franchise in Syria.

[Moshe Yaalon](#), one of the report’s authors, [publicly acknowledged](#) the Israeli assistance to Jabhat al-Nusra fighters in 2015, when he was Israel’s defence minister. Last year, Jabhat al-Nusra nominally cut its ties to al-Qaida, renamed itself Jabhat Fateh al-Sham and [launched a major rebranding effort](#) with the assistance of Western media. INSS too appears ready to soft sell the organization. “Jabhat al-Nusra’s freeing itself from affiliating with al-Qaida [has] made Jabhat Fateh al-Sham a force that can cooperate with other organizations that are not Salafi jihadist, and even receive external assistance,” the report suggests. It adds that Jabhat al-Nusra is “organized and funded (by Saudi Arabia), well-equipped, and with far better performance levels than other rebel groups.”

This comparatively benign view echoes the sentiments expressed by Efraim Halevy, the former head of Israel’s Mossad spy agency, who defended Israel’s provision of medical care to Jabhat al-Nusra fighters, in an [interview](#) with Al Jazeera last May. By contrast, Halevy said he would never advocate the treatment of wounded Hizballah fighters because Israel has been targeted by Hizballah, but “not specifically targeted by al-Qaida.” The fact that al-Qaida is credited with the 9/11 mega-attacks that killed nearly 3,000 people on the soil of Israel’s closest ally apparently does not figure into Israel’s calculations. Israel’s cooperation with Jabhat al-Nusra, and its interest in seeing a Sunni sectarian regime installed in Damascus, underscores a major theme of the INSS report: Israel’s growing ties with so-called Sunni Arab states, led by Saudi Arabia, out of a shared enmity towards predominantly Shia Iran. The report mentions, for instance, the [visit of Saudi general Anwar Eskhi to Israel](#) last summer. Eskhi told his hosts that the “Palestinian-Israeli conflict serves as a breeding ground for the growth of Iranian ideology” in the region, according to the report.

#### **Streamlining colonial rule**

Israel’s top strategists recognize that the stalemate with the Palestinians is a major contributor to the deterioration of Israel’s global standing. It is also an obstacle to fostering closer and more public ties with sectarian dictatorships like Saudi Arabia, whose publics still strongly support the Palestinian cause. While the INSS reports sees no realistic possibility of movement toward a two-state solution in the foreseeable future, its authors fear a continuing slide down a “slope leading toward a one-state reality” – a [warning](#) similar to that given by outgoing US Secretary of State John Kerry last month.

But INSS has no new ideas for how to get Israel out of its predicament. Indeed the report tries to revive the concept of “unilateral separation” that was proposed by the governments of Ariel Sharon and Ehud Olmert more than a decade ago. The idea is to consolidate Israeli settlements in large parts of the occupied West Bank, pacify the Palestinian population through improved economic conditions and strengthen the Israeli-backed Palestinian Authority police-state regime to keep Palestinians under tight control. The separation would be cosmetic, however, since at all times Israel’s occupation forces and Shin Bet secret police would maintain “complete freedom of action” throughout the West Bank. Eventually, Israel might recognize a “Palestinian state within provisional borders” in up to 65 percent of the West Bank, while it effectively annexes large areas it has settled west of the separation wall it has built in the occupied territory.

The report acknowledges that “a severe humanitarian crisis already prevails in the Gaza Strip,” which has been under a decade-long Israeli blockade, supported by Egypt’s military rulers. This will inevitably lead to another major escalation of violence, unless something is done to alleviate the situation, the authors warn. That too could further erode Israel’s position. The INSS proposes such measures as building a port in Gaza and improving the infrastructure. These are palliatives aimed at pacifying the population, but that do nothing to address Israel’s underlying denial of basic rights to the two million Palestinians corralled into the besieged territory.

These plans represent minor tinkering with the proposals for a Palestinian [bantustan](#) that Israelis have debated amongst themselves for decades. Yet the authors of the INSS report see the arrival of the Trump administration as an opportunity to market these discredited notions as “innovative ideas.” Should they gain traction, it will be up to advocates for Palestinian rights to expose them for what they are: an effort to consolidate and rebrand Israel’s regime of occupation, settler-colonialism and apartheid, to stem the deterioration in Israel’s international standing.

**Source: Ali Abunimah, EuroPal Forum / Electronic Intifada, 04.01.2017**

### **3. Israel issued 1,658 administrative detention orders in 2016**

The Palestine center for prisoners studies has recently issued a report saying that Israeli Occupation Authorities have issued nearly 1,658 administrative detention orders against Palestinian prisoners during 2016. The center also affirmed that administrative detention orders have increased by 30% during 2016 in comparison with 2015. The detention orders, without

charge or trial, included 588 new orders ranging between two and six months and 1,070 renewed orders. The sources pointed out that 20 administrative detention orders were issued against Palestinian children during 2016, 16 of whom were from the West Bank and four from occupied Jerusalem.

Three Palestinian children are still held in Israeli jails under administrative detention.  
7,000 Palestinian prisoners are currently held in Israeli jails including 700 administrative detainees.

Administrative detention is the imprisonment of Palestinians without charge or trial and on the basis of secret evidence for up to six month periods, indefinitely renewable by Israeli military courts. Palestinian detainees have continuously resorted to open-ended hunger strikes as a way to protest their administrative detentions.

**Source: EuroPal Forum/Palestine News Network, 05.01.2017**

#### **4. Israeli demolitions of Palestinian homes reach record high in 2016**

Israel demolished more Palestinian homes in the occupied territory in 2016 than in any year since the United Nations began documenting demolitions in 2009, while Israel also increased restrictions on the movement of Palestinians in the occupied territory in 2016. The unprecedented demolition campaign left some 1,593 Palestinians homeless and affected the livelihoods of another 7,101, according to preliminary analysis of data collected by the United Nations Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs (OCHA). The UN agency's documentation encompassed the occupied West Bank as well as East Jerusalem, where Israeli authorities demolished or seized 1,089 Palestinian-owned structures since the beginning of 2016 until Dec. 28. The "vast majority" of the Palestinian structures were destroyed or seized for lacking Israeli-issued building permits, according to the report.

Israel rarely grants Palestinians permits to build in the occupied Palestinian territory, including East Jerusalem, forcing most Palestinians to build illegally. However the 550,000 Jewish settlers residing in illegal Israeli settlements scattered across Palestinian territory are more easily given building permits and allowed to expand their homes and properties.

OCHA's newly released records of home demolitions came as Israel has come under [increasing international pressure to cease building illegal settlements](#) on Palestinian land in the occupied territory, with the [UN Security Council passing a resolution condemning the Israeli policy](#) earlier this week.

**Source: EuroPal Forum/MAAN News, 30.12.2016**

#### **5. Palestinians face deep budget cuts as foreign donations run dry**

Foreign financial support to the Palestinian authority is running at about half the forecast level, the Palestinian prime minister told local media on Tuesday, meaning deep cuts will have to be made to the budget this year. At its cabinet meeting, the government said it expected to run a budget deficit in 2017 of \$1.06bn, approaching 15 percent of gross domestic product. "We had expected to get \$1.2bn in (external) support and offers but we have only received \$640m so far," Prime Minister Rami Al-Hamdallah told al-Quds newspaper.

Saudi Arabia has in the past been a reliable supporter of the Palestinians, as have the United Arab Emirates and Turkey, but Riyadh has cut back its contributions sharply in recent months. Normally Saudi pays about \$20m a month into the budget, but it stopped making regular contributions last April, in part to apply pressure on President Mahmoud Abbas to implement political changes. The European Union and the United States have also reduced direct budget support, preferring instead to fund development programmes that target specific areas.

The cabinet statement said the total shortfall in foreign funding was forecast to be \$765 million in 2017, which will put pressure on government departments to cut costs. "Such a decline compels us to adopt an austerity policy in all fields," the statement said. More than half of all spending - 55 percent - goes on wages for the Palestinian Authority's 156,000 state employees, from teachers and doctors to police and public security staff, according to the finance ministry's 2016 budget.

The economy in the Israeli-occupied West Bank and Gaza grew by about 1.5 percent in 2015, the last full figures available. However, unemployment stood at 27.4 percent overall - 18.7 percent in the West Bank and 42.7 percent in Gaza, the ministry said.

**Source: EuroPal/Middle East Eye, 03.01.2017**

#### **6. Discriminatory laws in Israel**

[Discriminatory Laws in Israel - Adalah](#)

##### **Discriminatory Laws in Israel - Adalah**

Adalah (Justice in Arabic) is the first non-profit, non- sectarian Palestinian-run legal center in Israel. Estab...

