

## Life in Occupied Palestine: Eyewitness Stories & Photos

*Facts, Sources, and Ways You Can Help*

AnnaInTheMiddleEast.com

### FACTS:

**Killed** in the conflict in 2007: **13 Israelis, 373 Palestinians**; in 2006: **31 Israelis, 633 Palestinians**

Since Sept 2000: **1061 Israelis, 5143 Palestinians**, [MEPC Jun 2008: [www.mepc.org/resources/mrates.asp](http://www.mepc.org/resources/mrates.asp)].

**Checkpoints:** Barriers manned by Israeli soldiers &/or border police used to monitor &/or prevent Palestinian movement. Most checkpoints are not on the Green Line (between Israel & the 1967 Occupied Palestinian Territories [OPT]), but **mainly between Palestinian towns & villages**, hindering teachers, doctors, farmers, schoolchildren, etc. Most checkpoints are closed overnight, blocking sick or pregnant villagers from getting to the hospital in emergencies.

**Roadblocks:** Concrete barriers or earth mounds to prevent Palestinians from using their vehicles on their roads—housing & transport within the OPT are **segregated**—disabling the Palestinian economy & civilian movement.

**Settlements:** Jewish-only colonies on internationally-recognized Palestinian land.

- There are currently about **500,000 settlers** living illegally on Palestinian land (**275,000** in the West Bank & **225,000** in East Jerusalem). In 2005, **8,000 settlers were evacuated** from Gaza, while **13,000 new settlers** moved into new or expanding settlements in the West Bank & East Jerusalem [B'tselem].
- **International law prohibits** an occupying power from transferring citizens from its own territory to the occupied territory [Fourth Geneva Convention, Article 49]. Yet Israel spends more than **\$400 million/year** encouraging Jewish citizens & businesses to move from Israel into the OPT by offering **financial benefits** such as **government tax breaks & real estate subsidies** [Mother Jones magazine].
- **80%** of settlers would be **willing to leave** the OPT if offered compensation but remain because the Israeli government is paying them to be there [Peace Now: Settlement Watch]. The remaining **20%**, known as **ideological settlers**, are often armed & protected even after killing Palestinians or poisoning animals & fields.

### **The Wall:**

- **More than 80%** doesn't touch the Green Line, rather it weaves through the West Bank, trapping people between the Wall & the 1967 border, **completely surrounding 50+** communities, & separating everyday Palestinians from their hospitals, schools, jobs, livelihoods, and from each other [UN OCHA].
- **1,000,000+** Palestinian fruiting trees have been uprooted for the Wall & other expansion [MIFTAH].

**Imprisonment:** About **10,000 Palestinian political prisoners** are being held in Israeli prisons; roughly **10%** are administrative detainees, meaning they can be held **without charge or trial, indefinitely**. About **40%** of adult male Palestinians in the OPT have spent time in Israeli detention [Mandela Institute for Human Rights].

**Torture, brutalization, & humiliation** of Palestinian prisoners are widespread & systematic [Amnesty Int'l].

**Israel is the highest recipient of US Foreign Aid: \$15 million/day** including gifts & loans (IfAmericansKnew.org). It's the only country not held accountable for how its aid is spent, even though it has violated more UN Resolutions than Iraq, Iran, or any other country in the UN. **As Americans, it is our right & responsibility to speak out against violations of human rights & international law carried out with our own tax dollars.** (See ideas on [taking action](#).)

**Recommended:** Read the 1973 UN International Convention on **Apartheid**. In short, "apartheid" is defined as *systematic oppression, segregation, & discrimination to maintain domination by one racial group—'demographic group,' in Israeli parlance—over another, as through denial of basic human rights & freedoms, including the right to work, education, movement, & nationality; torture or inhuman treatment; arbitrary arrest & illegal imprisonment; & "any measures designed to divide the population along racial lines by the creation of separate reserves & ghettos... the expropriation of landed property belonging to a racial group... or to members thereof"*

### LITTLE KNOWN HISTORY about the origins of the Occupation & conflict:

**1870** - 7,000 Jews in Palestine (**2%** of population). Large-scale Zionist immigration begins in early 20<sup>th</sup> century.

**1930-40s** - Jews fleeing Nazis seek haven in Palestine. By 1946, **land ownership is 92% Palestinian, 8% Jewish.**

**1947-1949**- UN Partition Plan proposes **54%** of the land for a Jewish state though the majority of the people there aren't Jewish. Zionist forces expel **750,000+ Palestinians (75% of the native population)** in a premeditated effort to achieve a new Jewish majority & expand to 78% of historic Palestine. **Six months into the expulsions**, Israel declares independence & soldiers from surrounding Arab countries enter the areas breached by Israel that had been designated to be an Arab state. Israel triumphs & bans Palestinian refugees (7 million+ today), keeping the land for Jews only.\*\*

**1967** - Israel occupies **all** remaining Palestinian lands in Six-Day War. The Occupation has continued for 40+ years.

**1994** - First Palestinian suicide bomber. Palestinian resistance, mostly **nonviolent**, sometimes **violent**, continues.

\*\*Jews worldwide are invited by Israel to live on the refugees' land solely on the basis of their religion & ethnicity.

## **SOURCES of Facts and More Information:**

**AIC**, Alternative Information Center: [www.alternativenews.org](http://www.alternativenews.org)

**Amnesty International**, International Human Rights Protection: [www.amnesty.org](http://www.amnesty.org)

**B'tselem**, Israeli Information Center for Human Rights in the Occupied Territories: [www.btselem.org](http://www.btselem.org)

**Badil**, Resource Center for Palestinian Residency & Refugee Rights: [www.badil.org](http://www.badil.org)

**Breaking the Silence**: Testimonies of former Israeli soldiers: [www.breakingthesilence.org.il](http://www.breakingthesilence.org.il)

**Electronic Intifada**, Leading Palestinian Portal for News and Analysis: [www.electronicintifada.net](http://www.electronicintifada.net)

**Gush Shalom**, the Israeli Peace Bloc: [www.gush-shalom.org/english](http://www.gush-shalom.org/english)

**Haaretz**, Left-Mainstream Israeli Daily Newspaper: [www.haaretz.com](http://www.haaretz.com)

**ICAHN**, Israeli Committee Against House Demolitions: [www.icahd.org](http://www.icahd.org)

**If Americans Knew**, What Every American needs to know about Israel/Palestine: [www.ifamericansknew.org](http://www.ifamericansknew.org)

**Mandela**, Institute for Human Rights: [www.mandela-palestine.org](http://www.mandela-palestine.org)

**MIFTAH**, Palestinian Initiative for the Promotion of Global Dialogue & Democracy: [www.miftah.org](http://www.miftah.org)

**Palestine Monitor**, News from Palestinian Civil Society: [www.palestinemonitor.org](http://www.palestinemonitor.org)

**Palestine Remembered**, al-Nakba 1948 : [www.palestineremembered.com](http://www.palestineremembered.com)

**Passia**, Palestinian Academic Society for the Study of International Affairs: [www.passia.org](http://www.passia.org)

**Settlement Watch**, a project of Peace Now: [www.peacenow.org.il/site/en/peace.asp?pi=51](http://www.peacenow.org.il/site/en/peace.asp?pi=51)

**Stop the Wall**, by PENGON (Palestinian Environmental NGO Network): [www.stopthewall.org](http://www.stopthewall.org)

**UN OCHA**, UN Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs: [www.reliefweb.int/hic-opt](http://www.reliefweb.int/hic-opt)

**Recommended reading on the history of the conflict** (by Jewish & Palestinian scholars):

- Tanya Reinhart, *Israel/Palestine: How to End the War of 1948*, NY: Seven Stories Press, 2002.
- Just about anything by Ilan Pappé, Noam Chomsky, Edward Said, or Norman Finkelstein on the subject.

## **SILENCE IS COMPLICITY. What can YOU do to help bring peace & justice to the people of Palestine & Israel?**

1. **Do Your Own Research** – See above sources or even consider going to Palestine to see for yourself! Some ways:

- Holy Land Trust (HLT): <http://hltravel.org> (Christian Palestinian-led tours)
- Global Exchange: [www.globalexchange.org/tours](http://www.globalexchange.org/tours); MECA: [www.mecaforpeace.org/DelegationIntro.html](http://www.mecaforpeace.org/DelegationIntro.html)
- Birthright Unplugged: [www.birthrightunplugged.org](http://www.birthrightunplugged.org) (Jewish American-led tours + BDS tours)
- Faculty for Israeli-Palestinian Peace: [www.ffipp.org/delegations.html](http://www.ffipp.org/delegations.html) (for faculty & students)
- Israeli Committee Against House Demolitions (ICAHN): [www.icahd.org](http://www.icahd.org) (Israeli-led tours)

2. **Join the Five for Palestine campaign** to unify pressure on Washington

- Take 5 minutes to learn about the campaign at [www.FiveForPalestine.org](http://www.FiveForPalestine.org) & consider joining
- Give \$5 per month to keep the campaign going
- Contact your representative 5 times per year (find them at [www.congress.org](http://www.congress.org) or call 202-224-3121)
- Get 5 people you know to join.

Organize grassroots efforts like **Boycott, Divestment, and Sanctions (BDS)**, a nonviolent way to mobilize & put pressure on Israel in a style similar to that used against South Africa to help end Apartheid there.

**Learn more at [www.bds-palestine.net](http://www.bds-palestine.net)** (The campaign is just starting and needs you!) US and Israeli companies profiting off the Occupation are listed at [InterfaithPeaceInitiative.com/ProfitingFromOccupation.htm](http://InterfaithPeaceInitiative.com/ProfitingFromOccupation.htm)

3. **Get involved locally** – Air Anna's DVD on your local **Public Access TV** channel! Join a local group—many are listed on [www.endtheoccupation.org](http://www.endtheoccupation.org) & [www.unitedforpeace.org](http://www.unitedforpeace.org). Write a letter to **local press** to protest US-funded atrocities &/or biased reporting (Local media are listed on [www.congress.org/congressorg/dbq/media](http://www.congress.org/congressorg/dbq/media)).

4. **Work in Palestine** - Document human rights abuses & support Palestinian-led nonviolent resistance with:

- **International Women's Peace Service (IWPS)** – [www.iwps.info](http://www.iwps.info)
- **International Solidarity Movement (ISM)** – [www.palsolidarity.org](http://www.palsolidarity.org)
- **Christian Peacemaker Teams (CPT)** – [www.cpt.org/hebron/hebron.php](http://www.cpt.org/hebron/hebron.php)
- **Michigan Peace Team** – [www.michiganpeaceteam.org](http://www.michiganpeaceteam.org) (for people from any state, religion, gender)

5. **Talk to your friends and families** – You have the power to affect others in your community—use it!

**\*\*\*Highly recommended:** Global Exchange's Activist Toolkits give **excellent** step-by-step instructions & tips for all the above actions & many others (town hall meetings, demonstrations, teach-ins, etc). Call (800) 497-1994 ext. 251 to order one (\$5) or download a free copy at [GlobalExchange.org/Countries/Mideast/Palestine/Toolkits.html](http://GlobalExchange.org/Countries/Mideast/Palestine/Toolkits.html)

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**Anna's Website** (get more stories & photos, sign-up to receive Anna's eyewitness accounts from Palestine, purchase her book Witness in Palestine or a DVD of the talk, invite her to present, etc): [www.AnnaInTheMiddleEast.com](http://www.AnnaInTheMiddleEast.com)