

# Boycott, Divestment, Sanctions

Winning justice for the Palestinian people



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# Preface

**The catastrophe facing the Palestinian people is the defining global justice issue of our time. A third generation of Palestinian children is now being brought up in refugee camps inside and outside Palestine, living in chronic poverty and denied the right to return to their family homes. Hundreds of thousands more Palestinians suffer discrimination over access to public services, land rights and employment within Israel itself.**

For those living in the Occupied Palestinian Territories, the situation is critical. Israel's siege of Gaza has condemned its 1.5 million inhabitants to levels of poverty more commonly associated with sub-Saharan Africa – a humanitarian disaster with no end in sight. In the West Bank, the expansion of Israeli settlements, the continued construction of the Apartheid Wall, the military closure of the Jordan Valley and the annexation of East Jerusalem are creating an irreversible reality of permanent Occupation.

All the above actions are illegal under international law. Yet no Western government has been willing to call Israel to account for its crimes. Instead, the US, UK and other governments have consistently rewarded Israeli aggression with economic benefits and closer political ties. Support for 'our ally' in the Middle East has taken precedence over Palestinian rights at every turn.

This is why it is up to ordinary people around the world to take action. War on Want

supports the call from Palestinian civil society to build a global movement of boycott, divestment and sanctions against Israel until it complies with international law and meets the following three demands: an end to the Occupation; the right of return for Palestinian refugees; and equal rights for Palestinian citizens of Israel itself.

War on Want has worked in Palestine for over 30 years, building partnerships with popular movements and workers' organisations fighting for the rights of the Palestinian people. We have run hard-hitting campaigns to challenge UK and EU support for Israel's policies of aggression, and we have taken action to defend Palestinian human rights activists when they have been targeted for repression.

We call on all those who believe in human rights, justice and the rule of law to join us in this cause. Millions of ordinary people around the world took action to isolate the apartheid government in South Africa, and its brutal regime was defeated. War on Want believes that the global community has a similar duty to support the Palestinian people in the struggle for their rights.



**John Hilary**  
**Executive Director**  
**War on Want**

# Crisis in Palestine

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**Palestine is in crisis. Today Palestinians are subjected to daily human rights abuse and live in crushing poverty in refugee camps and under Israeli occupation. The United Nations estimates that 60% of the population of the Occupied Palestinian Territories lives in poverty, due in large part to the devastation of the Palestinian economy by Israeli policies of control and closure.<sup>1</sup>**

In the Gaza Strip, strangled by an Israeli military and economic siege, four out of five people are dependent on food aid.<sup>2</sup> In the Jordan Valley, Palestinians struggle on parched land, living in mud huts and under plastic tents facing daily battles for water to survive. Millions of Palestinian refugees and displaced people face a future of uncertainty and fear. Thousands of Palestinian political prisoners are languishing in Israeli jails, many of them held illegally under 'administrative detention' without any charge.<sup>3</sup>

At the same time, Israel is forcibly displacing thousands of Palestinians from their homes in the Naqab (Negev) desert, as well as developing settlement expansion programmes in East Jerusalem which will confiscate more Palestinian land. Those people who have risen up against such policies have been targeted for intimidation, arrest or worse. In particular, Israel is intensifying its repression against Palestinians who resist the continued building of the illegal Apartheid Wall in the West Bank.

The situation in Israel and Palestine is not an intractable conflict between two equal sides. It is an Occupation by a powerful military state, armed and supported by the West, against an impoverished, stateless and displaced people. This report outlines the key issues facing Palestinians today and provides practical examples of how ordinary people around the world can support the Palestinian struggle for justice.



## Palestinians face daily human rights abuses under the Occupation





**A boycott action in Waitrose organised by War on Want for the global day of BDS action in March 2010**

**03**

Photo: Jonathon Oppong-Wiafe



## **ACT NOW BOYCOTT, DIVESTMENT, SANCTIONS**

Palestinians have suffered from Israeli repression for over 60 years. Yet governments across the world have not only allowed Israel to act with impunity; they have actively rewarded Israeli aggression with economic benefits and closer political ties. The response from grassroots Palestinian civil society has been to call on people of conscience around the world to join them in a global boycott, divestment and sanctions (BDS) movement against Israel until it complies with international law.

Boycotts can be academic, cultural, sporting or focused on consumer goods. In the UK, the primary target of the boycott has been consumer goods produced in Israel, with a particular focus on goods from Israel's illegal West Bank settlements.

Divestment means identifying corporations which are complicit in the Occupation and ensuring universities, pensions and other public funds are not invested in such companies. Targets in the UK have included Caterpillar, which has supplied the Israeli military with

armoured bulldozers for the demolition of Palestinian homes, and Veolia, which is involved in the building of a tramway linking Jerusalem to illegal Israeli settlements.

Sanctions are a mechanism to express disapproval for a country's actions at a governmental level. Current campaigns have called for a suspension of EU trade preferences to Israel and an embargo on all arms deals between Israel and the UK.

Since its founding in 2005 by a coalition of over 170 Palestinian civil society organisations, the BDS movement has gone from strength to strength. It is now endorsed by trade unions, student unions, faith groups and prominent writers and artists all over the world. War on Want is a signatory to the BDS call and works in partnership with the Palestinian Boycott National Committee to mobilise action against companies complicit in Israel's crimes against the Palestinian people.

Palestinian BDS National Committee website: [www.bdsmovement.net](http://www.bdsmovement.net)

# Gaza: the world's largest prison

04

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***“Tragically, the international community largely ignores the cries for help, while the citizens of Gaza are treated more like animals than human beings... Never before in history has a large community been savaged by bombs and missiles and then deprived of the means to repair itself. The responsibility for this terrible human rights crime lies in Jerusalem, Cairo, Washington, and throughout the international community.”***

*Jimmy Carter, former US President, June 2009<sup>4</sup>*

The Gaza Strip is one of the most densely populated regions on earth. Approximately 1.5 million people live on a piece of land which is just 40km long and 9km wide.<sup>5</sup> Surrounded by a concrete and steel barrier built by Israel in the 1990s, Palestinians in

Gaza are trapped in the world's largest prison, with any movement of goods and people in and out of the strip severely restricted by Israel.

*“Everybody knows that we are not going to sort out the problem of the Middle East peace process while there is, effectively, a giant open prison in Gaza.” David Cameron, UK Prime Minister, June 2010<sup>6</sup>*

## **Under siege**

Since 2000, the Gaza Strip has been subject to a series of Israeli closure policies designed to isolate and restrict the movement of people and goods.<sup>7</sup> Israel imposed further economic restrictions on Gaza after Palestinians elected Hamas into government in 2006. When Hamas took



## **A Palestinian home in Gaza is reduced to rubble after the Israeli assault in 2008-09**





control in 2007, the Gaza Strip was placed under military siege by Israel – blockaded by land, sea and air.<sup>8</sup>

The siege of Gaza has been identified as a war crime and a crime against humanity, as it punishes innocent civilians for offences they have not committed. As Richard Falk, the UN Special Rapporteur for the Occupied Palestinian Territories, has stated: “Such a massive form of collective punishment is a crime against humanity, as well as a gross violation of the prohibition on collective punishment in Article 33 of the Fourth Geneva Convention.”<sup>9</sup>

### Humanitarian disaster

The siege of Gaza has created a humanitarian catastrophe, crushing its economy. Foreign trade with Gaza is banned by Israel, and food and medical supplies are restricted. The list of goods Israel allows into Gaza is so punitive that even basic goods such as pasta, lentils, nappies and schoolbooks have been denied. Essential medical equipment and medicines are severely restricted, as are construction materials such as cement, glass and wood.<sup>10</sup> Israeli authorities have been known to refuse seriously ill patients permission to leave Gaza to receive treatment in medical centres in the West Bank or Israel.<sup>11</sup>

The lack of materials to maintain essential infrastructure has resulted in over 90% of Gaza's water being unfit for human consumption, due to high levels of nitrates and sewage in the water system.<sup>12</sup> According to the United Nations Environment Programme, this has led to an increase in 'blue baby syndrome', with children born discoloured from a form of anaemia caused by the high levels of nitrates in the water supply.<sup>13</sup>

*"The blockade of Gaza by Israel has been unacceptable, unnecessary and counterproductive... It has worsened conditions of life for one and a half million*

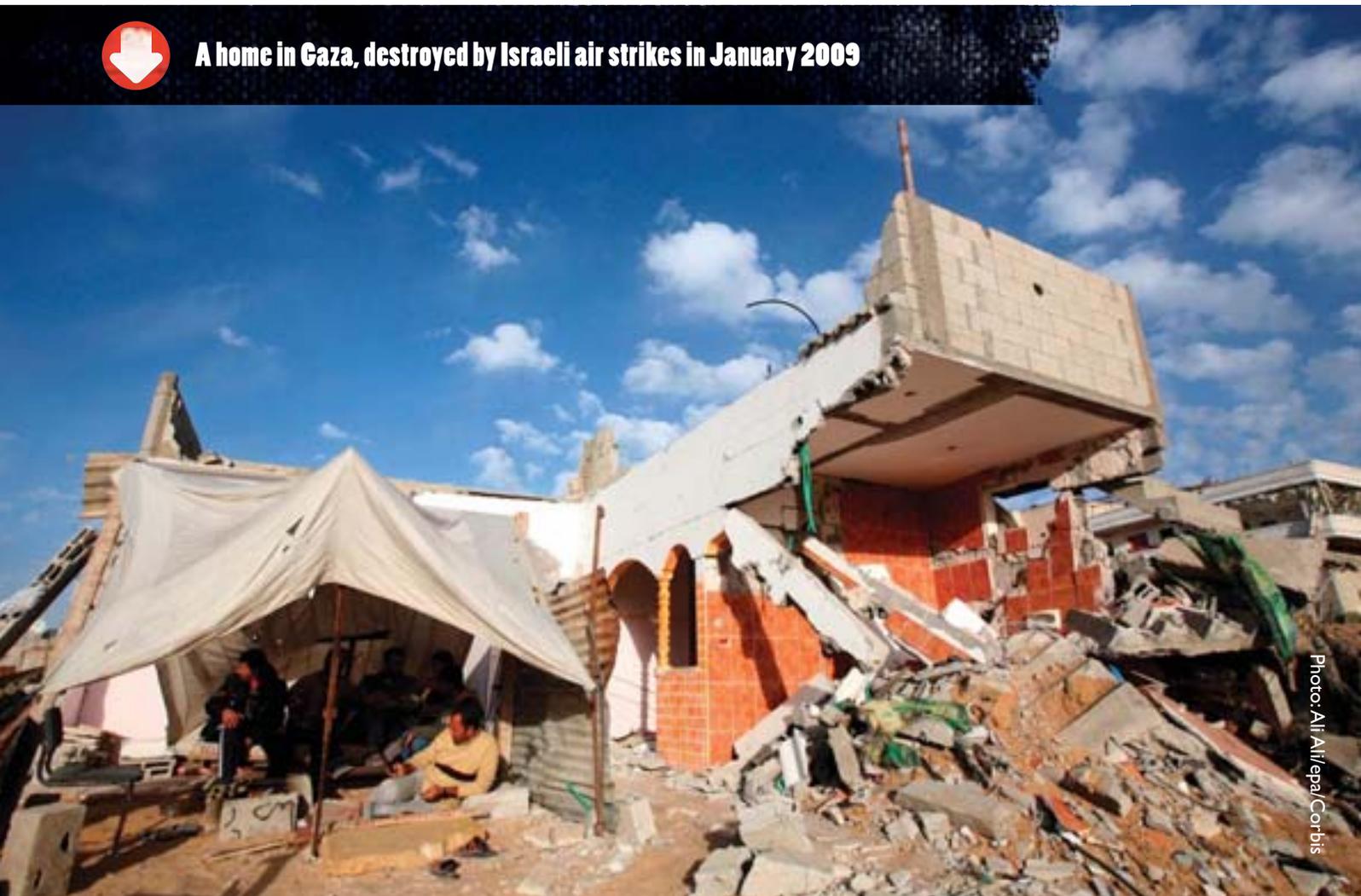
*Palestinians, deepened poverty and food insecurity, prevented reconstruction, and increased aid dependence by destroying livelihoods and economic activity."* John Holmes, UN Under-Secretary-General for Humanitarian Affairs and Emergency Relief Coordinator, May 2010<sup>14</sup>

### **War crimes**

Israel's war crimes in Gaza have not been limited to the siege. In December 2008, Israel embarked on a three-week assault on the people of Gaza codenamed Operation Cast Lead. The attack left over 1,400 Palestinians dead, including more than 300 children, and over 5,000 wounded.<sup>15</sup>



### **A home in Gaza, destroyed by Israeli air strikes in January 2009**



During the attack, vital infrastructure such as schools, hospitals and UN buildings were targeted. Public buildings were attacked, including the Palestinian Legislative Council, the Gaza Central Prison, government ministries and every police station in the Strip. Homes, farms, fields and orchards were bulldozed by missiles and anti-tank mines, and the Israeli military deliberately targeted densely populated areas.

According to the report of the United Nations Fact-Finding Mission led by Justice Richard Goldstone (former chief prosecutor of the international war crimes tribunals for Yugoslavia and Rwanda), Israeli

soldiers used Palestinian civilians as human shields.<sup>16</sup>

The Goldstone Report found evidence that both the Israeli military and Hamas committed war crimes and crimes against humanity during the three weeks of the assault. Yet Israel experienced no international sanctions in response to its atrocities. The British government refused to condemn Israel's actions during the assault on Gaza, and subsequently abstained from a crucial vote at the UN to endorse the Goldstone Report. Instead, the UK continues to sell arms to Israel, providing it with the materiel with which to carry out its acts of aggression.

## **ACT NOW END THE SIEGE OF GAZA**

The siege of Gaza is one of the most brutal manifestations of the Israeli Occupation.<sup>17</sup> Whilst governments around the world have failed to take action against the siege, in recent years there have been several attempts by international civil society groups – including the Viva Palestina convoys, the Gaza Freedom March and the Free Gaza Movement – to break the siege by delivering humanitarian aid and political support to the people of Gaza. The Israeli authorities have met these attempts with brutal force. In May 2010, Israeli commandos attacked a flotilla of ships from the Free Gaza Movement in international waters, killing at least nine humanitarian activists.

Despite Israel's violent response to these initiatives, civil society groups have

continued their efforts to break the siege, offering a lifeline of international solidarity to the people of Gaza. You can find out how to support these initiatives by visiting

[www.freegaza.org](http://www.freegaza.org) or  
[www.vivapalestina.org](http://www.vivapalestina.org)

The British government has taken no concrete action to break the siege of Gaza. You can write to the Foreign Secretary and demand action to cut economic and military ties with Israel until the siege is lifted. Write to the Foreign Secretary, Foreign and Commonwealth Office, King Charles Street, London SW1A 2AH or visit [www.waronwant.org/gaza](http://www.waronwant.org/gaza) to take action.

# The silenced majority

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Israel's illegal practices in the **Occupied Palestinian Territories of the West Bank and Gaza** are well known. However, most Palestinians now live outside the **Occupied Palestinian Territories** and face a denial of basic rights as a result of Israel's policies and practices. **Palestinian refugees are the largest refugee population in the world, while Palestinians living within Israel survive as second-class citizens.**

Figure 1:  
**Population of Palestinians by country**



Source: *Palestinian Central Bureau of Statistics*<sup>18</sup>

## Refugees

The first wave of Palestinian refugees was created when over 700,000 Palestinians were driven from their homes in 1948-49 during the process that led to the state of Israel being created.<sup>19</sup> This event is known to Palestinians as the 'Nakba', Arabic for 'catastrophe'. Israel displaced thousands more people in 1967 when it took military control of the Gaza Strip, the West Bank and the Syrian Golan Heights, areas it continues to occupy to this day.

Over 4.7 million Palestinian refugees are currently registered with the United Nations Relief and Works Agency for Palestinians (UNRWA).<sup>20</sup> Many more refugees are unregistered. Taking into consideration the number of unregistered refugees, as well as those Palestinians forcibly displaced, the total number of Palestinian refugees and internally displaced people (IDPs) is reported as being closer to seven million.<sup>21</sup> This represents almost two thirds of the total number of Palestinians worldwide.

Today Israel continues to pursue policies which both directly and indirectly lead to the forced displacement of Palestinians. Israel's construction of the Apartheid Wall in the West Bank is destroying the farmland and houses in its path, threatening nearly 500,000 Palestinians with displacement.<sup>22</sup> House demolitions, forced evictions and the revocation of residency rights in places such as East Jerusalem have uprooted thousands of Palestinian families, many of whom have lived there for generations. In the Naqab (Negev) desert, the Israeli government is currently planning to demolish scores of Palestinian Bedouin villages, which will displace over 70,000 people.<sup>23</sup> John Dugard, former UN Special Rapporteur on Human Rights in the Occupied Palestinian Territories, has likened these policies to ethnic cleansing.<sup>24</sup>

## Palestinians in Israel

Palestinian citizens of Israel comprise close to 20% of that country's total population.<sup>25</sup> These Palestinians remained in their homes during 1948-49, and have Israeli citizenship today. Yet in a state that defines itself as Jewish, they routinely face racism and discrimination over access to public services, land rights and employment.<sup>26</sup> More than half of the Palestinians living in Israel survive below the poverty line.<sup>27</sup>

Numerous discriminatory laws impact on Palestinians in Israel. Chief among them is the



Photo: War on Want

National Planning and Building Law (1965), which re-assessed Palestinian villages in Israel and classified many Palestinians as non-residents with no legal status. As a result, scores of 'unrecognised' Palestinian villages receive no government services, and residents are routinely denied building permission for homes or public buildings.<sup>28</sup>

Elected in 2009 under the leadership of Binyamin Netanyahu, the current Israeli government has proposed several laws which would further entrench discrimination against Palestinians. These include the extension of a law denying citizenship and residency to Palestinians from the West Bank and Gaza who marry Palestinian citizens of Israel, and an attempt to outlaw the commemoration of the Nakba. Israeli Foreign Secretary Avigdor Lieberman has introduced a proposal to make Palestinian citizens of Israel who do not perform military or national service pay an additional tax.<sup>29</sup>

As a result of the systematic discrimination faced by Palestinians in Israel, the Palestinian Boycott, Divestment and Sanctions campaign has made the equal treatment of Palestinians in Israel one of its key demands.

## **ACT NOW**

### **THE RIGHT OF RETURN**

The right of Palestinian refugees to return to their homes and be paid reparations for loss of their homes and land is enshrined in international law and affirmed by UN General Assembly Resolution 194.<sup>30</sup> Yet this UN resolution, like many others pertaining to Palestine, has been ignored by Israel. As a result, there are now several generations of Palestinian refugees who have only known life in refugee camps. Nearly 1.4 million Palestinian refugees live in 58 recognised refugee camps in Jordan, Lebanon, Syria, the Gaza Strip and the West Bank, including East Jerusalem.<sup>31</sup>

In the early 1990s, in response to the failure of world leaders to include the issue of Palestinian refugees in the Oslo peace accords, Palestinian refugees and IDPs initiated a community-based movement of resistance to campaign for the right of return and to raise awareness of Israel's current displacement policies.

War on Want supports the right of return for Palestinian refugees and supports the work of BADIL, a grassroots organisation which defends and promotes the rights of Palestinian refugees: [www.badil.org](http://www.badil.org)

# Entrenching the Occupation

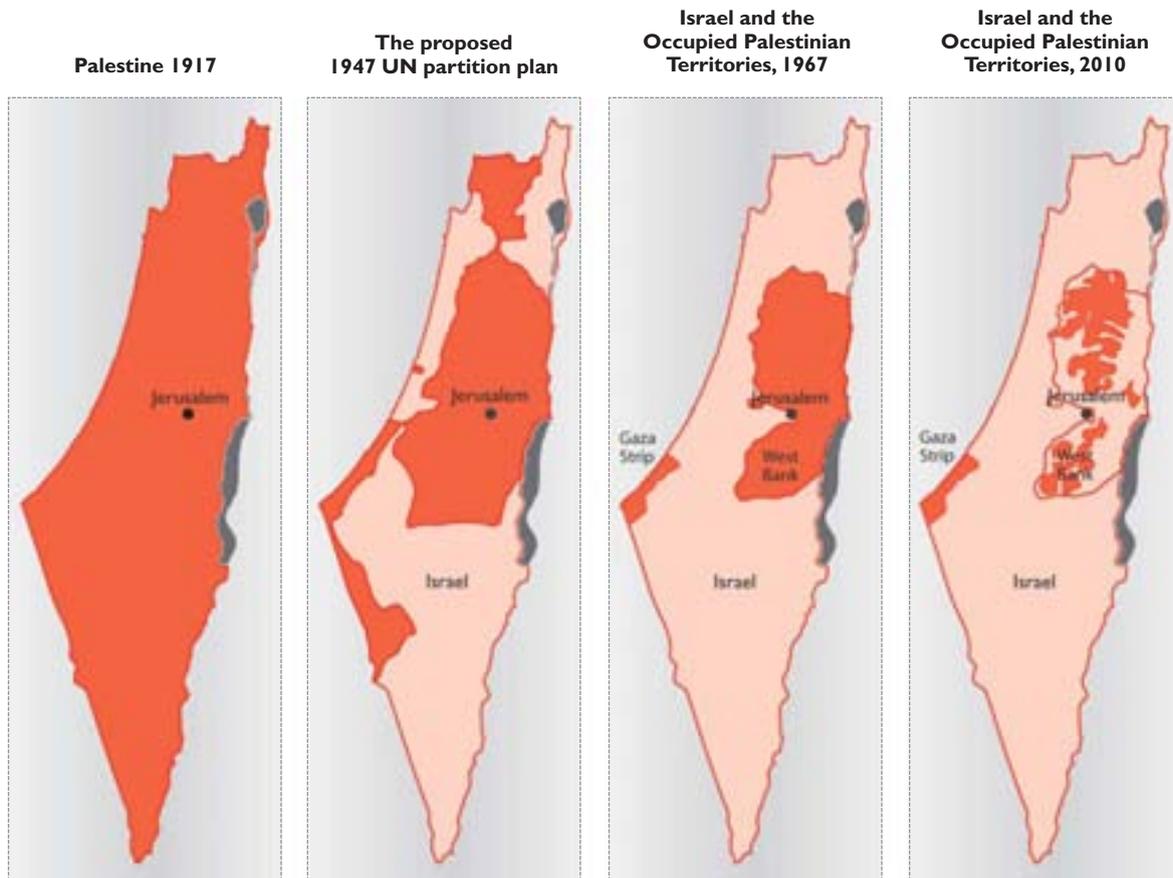
Since 1967 Israel has increasingly encroached on Palestinian land in the West Bank through settlement building programmes. Settlements are Israeli communities built on illegally occupied Palestinian land. They serve to create ‘facts on the ground’: physical manifestations of land-grabbing which make the Occupation into a seemingly irreversible reality.

Israel’s settlements are illegal under the Fourth Geneva Convention, which forbids population transfer into territory occupied in war. They are widely condemned as obstacles to peace by the international community, which has repeatedly called on Israel to halt its settlement expansion plan. Some settlements occupy large areas of Palestinian land and form cities with populations of over

30,000 people.<sup>32</sup> There are currently over 500,000 Israelis living in illegal settlements in the West Bank, including occupied East Jerusalem, and new settlements and settlement expansion plans continue to be approved by the Israeli government.<sup>33</sup>

Settlements are linked to each other by an apartheid-style network of roads which Palestinians are forbidden from using. The expansion of settlement infrastructure such as highways and tunnels and the closure of areas surrounding the settlements by the Israeli military mean that fully 40% of the West Bank is now controlled by settlements.<sup>34</sup> This has led to the fragmentation of the West Bank, isolating Palestinian communities and curtailing freedom of movement.

Figure 2: Palestinian loss of land, 1917-2010





## **ACT NOW FROM SETTLEMENT TO SHELF**

High street stores in the UK profit from Israel's military Occupation by selling goods produced in illegal Israeli settlements in the West Bank. As entities that violate international law, settlements must not be legitimised and made financially viable through trade with the West. Campaigners have long called for a total ban on the sale of Israeli settlement goods in the UK. These goods range from beauty products made by companies like Ahava to wine and grocery products found in many high street stores.

Agrexco is one of Israel's largest exporters of fresh agricultural produce to the UK. The company is also one of the biggest exporters of produce from illegal Israeli settlements, marketing

60-70% of agricultural produce grown in settlements.<sup>35</sup> The UK government has admitted that Israeli producers do not distinguish between settlement and non-settlement produce, meaning that goods labelled as coming from Israel may instead come from a settlement.<sup>36</sup> War on Want supports the call from Palestinian civil society to boycott all Israeli goods until Israel complies with international law.

War on Want is campaigning to stop UK supermarkets profiting from Palestinian suffering. Act now and tell your local store to stop stocking Israeli goods. [www.waronwant.org/boycottisraeligoods](http://www.waronwant.org/boycottisraeligoods)

In addition to the settlements, which Israel claims are legitimate despite being illegal under international law, there are around 100 'outposts' in the West Bank.<sup>37</sup> Outposts are settler communities built without the authorisation of the Israeli state, and are often home to more radical Israeli settlers. These groups often react to the dismantling of outposts by Israeli authorities by committing violence against Palestinians, a tactic that has become more

frequent in recent years. Settler violence also serves to depopulate whole areas of the West Bank, with entire Palestinian communities sometimes displaced. The United Nations has found that up to 250,000 Palestinians are vulnerable to settler violence, and that the shortage of law enforcement officials and lack of accountability allows settler gangs to act with impunity.<sup>38</sup>

# Apartheid walls

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**Israel uses concrete and metal walls to segregate, displace and exert control over Palestinians living in the Occupied Palestinian Territories. In the 1990s, Israel began erecting a wall around the Gaza Strip that facilitates today's blockade. On the Gazan side of the wall, the Israeli army demolished Palestinian homes, destroyed fields and uprooted orchards to make way for a buffer zone that flanks the wall along its entire length.<sup>39</sup>**

On a much larger scale, the Israeli government is currently constructing an Apartheid Wall in the West Bank that will similarly pen Palestinians into areas dictated by the Israeli state. In 2004 the International Court of Justice (ICJ) issued an advisory opinion declaring the construction of the Wall in the West Bank to be illegal. The ICJ opinion called for the Wall to be dismantled and for Palestinian communities affected by its path to receive reparations. Despite the ICJ ruling and international condemnation, the Wall continues to be built. It is now more than 60% complete.<sup>40</sup>

If finished, the Wall is set to measure over 700km long – the distance between London and Zurich, and more than four times as long as the Berlin Wall. The Apartheid Wall is twice as long as the Green Line, the international delineation of the Palestinian West Bank.<sup>41</sup> Almost 10% of the West Bank has been annexed by Israel through the erection of the Wall. While Israel claims its purpose is to provide security, the route of the Wall has been designated so that it encircles 80 Israeli settlements, indicating that its primary function is to incorporate these illegal communities into any future Israeli state.<sup>42</sup>

Almost 30,000 Palestinians are trapped between Israel and the Wall, cut off from friends and families and isolated from the economic and urban hubs of the West Bank. Around 28,000 more Palestinians are completely imprisoned by the Wall, connected to the rest of the West Bank only by a tunnel or gate controlled by the Israeli military. Another 126,000 Palestinians are surrounded by the Wall on three sides, their freedom of movement severely curtailed.<sup>43</sup>



**The Apartheid Wall runs through a village near Ramallah in the West Bank**





Photo: Ahmad Mesleh

Palestinians have opposed the building of the Wall through non-violent resistance in villages all across the West Bank. In recent years the Israeli authorities have increased their use of violent repression targeted at Palestinians protesting against the Wall. As Israel steps up its campaign

of intimidation against activists, the number of killings, injuries and arrests has grown markedly. Villages affected by the illegal Apartheid Wall such as Ni'lin, Al Ma'sara and Jayyous are subjected to regular raids by Israeli soldiers, who break into homes, fire teargas, smash windows and arbitrarily arrest and detain Palestinians. In Bil'in, which has a population of 1,779, over 1,300 injuries due to Israeli violence have been reported since 2005. Israeli forces have even targeted children with arrest.<sup>44</sup>

The targeted repression of anti-Wall activists has been widely condemned by the international community. UN Special Rapporteur Richard Falk has attacked Israel's policy of charging Palestinian activists for protesting against the Wall: "The manifest absurdity of such charges strongly suggests that Israeli intention is to demoralize the anti-wall campaign by criminalizing the non-violent human rights activism, a pattern that should be a matter of grave concern to the Human Rights Council."<sup>45</sup> The European Union has also criticised Israel for imprisoning human rights defenders engaged in non-violent protest against the Wall, with EU High Representative Catherine Ashton expressing concern that such action is intended to prevent Palestinians "from exercising their legitimate right to protest".<sup>46</sup>

## **ACT NOW**

### **STOP THE WALL**

**War on Want works in close partnership with Stop the Wall, the grassroots Palestinian Anti-Apartheid Wall Campaign. Stop the Wall coordinates the work of popular committees in West Bank villages that will be affected by the Wall. The group mobilises Palestinian communities to non-violent resistance, while also exposing the destruction and human rights violations caused by the Wall. As well as seeking to halt construction of the Wall and have it dismantled, Stop the Wall aims to secure compensation for the Palestinians who have been affected by its path.**

**Stop the Wall is one of the founding organisations of the Palestinian campaign for Boycott, Divestment and Sanctions, which seeks to apply economic and political pressure on Israel until it complies with international law. In recent years the group has won several significant victories, such as convincing Norway's Government Pension Fund, one of the largest pension funds in the world, to divest from Elbit Systems, an Israeli security company involved in the construction of the Wall.**

**Stop the Wall and its popular committees of human rights defenders have faced increasingly severe repression, including the imprisonment without charge of its coordinator and youth officer, the arrest of scores of grassroots activists and an office raid by the Israeli military. International pressure from War on Want supporters played a key part in securing the release of Stop the Wall staff, and helped raise awareness of Israel's crackdown on human rights defenders.**

[www.stopthewall.org](http://www.stopthewall.org)

# Apparatus of oppression

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***“I have been to the Occupied Palestinian Territory, and I have witnessed the racially segregated roads and housing that reminded me so much of the conditions we experienced in South Africa under the racist system of Apartheid. I have witnessed the humiliation of Palestinian men, women, and children made to wait hours at Israeli military checkpoints routinely when trying to make the most basic of trips to visit relatives or attend school or college, and this humiliation is familiar to me and the many black South Africans who were corralled and regularly insulted by the security forces of the Apartheid government.”***

*Archbishop Desmond Tutu, April 2010<sup>47</sup>*

In addition to using walls, Israel has enacted a series of measures to limit Palestinian freedom of movement and maintain control over the Occupied Palestinian Territories. There are over 650 physical obstacles to the freedom of movement in the West Bank alone.<sup>48</sup> Of these obstacles, 65 are checkpoints permanently manned by Israeli soldiers, while the remainder are temporarily manned checkpoints, roadblocks, earth mounds and trenches that bar access to roads, villages and cities. Israel also controls Palestinian movement with ad hoc ‘flying’ checkpoints which cause significant disruption due to their

unpredictability. The use of flying checkpoints has increased dramatically during 2010.<sup>49</sup>

Through a sophisticated system of administrative controls and physical boundaries, the Occupation affects every aspect of a Palestinian’s daily life. Cutting children off from school, preventing farmers from collecting water for their olive trees, or blocking pregnant mothers from getting to hospital, the Occupation has turned ordinary acts into extraordinary challenges.

According to the UN Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs, there was a steady increase in the number of physical barriers restricting movement in the West Bank from 2005 to 2009.<sup>50</sup> This includes passage into and out of the West Bank as well as movement within it. War on Want’s partner organisations on the ground report increased restrictions and harassment of Palestinian activists, including the imposition of travel bans on Palestinian human rights defenders.

*“Those restrictions on freedom of movement have in turn generated violations of a wide range of other human rights, such as the right to education, the right to work, the right to an adequate standard of living, the freedom of religion and the right to the highest attainable*



## A Palestinian waits at the checkpoint in Bethlehem, West Bank



standard of health.” Report of the United Nations Secretary-General, November 2009<sup>51</sup>

### **IDs and permits**

In addition to physical impediments, an ID and permit system also restrains Palestinian movement. The permit system curtails the ability of Palestinians to work, trade, participate in civic life and socialise with family and friends. Vast areas of land, including East Jerusalem, are out of bounds for Palestinians lacking the required permit Israel demands. The permit system effectively turns Palestinians into illegal aliens in their own territory, and in recent years Israel has pursued a policy of forcible transfer for Palestinians from the West Bank to Gaza based on permit requirements. Israeli settlers, by contrast, need no permit to reside in the West Bank, even though the settlements violate international law.<sup>52</sup>

In violation of its obligations under the Fourth Geneva Convention, Israel is making its permit system more restrictive and thereby further violating Palestinians’ human rights. Effective as of April 2010, a new Israeli military order defines Palestinians living in the West Bank without the appropriate permits as “infiltrators”, subject to deportation, transfer, criminal charges, fines and/or imprisonment. According to Israeli human rights organisation B’Tselem, this is the latest in a series of Israeli policies that aim to remove Palestinians from the West Bank by criminalising the mere fact of their presence in the territory.<sup>53</sup>

The Israeli government is also making it more difficult for foreign nationals to visit the West Bank, echoing restrictions which have long been in place in the Gaza Strip. The Israeli government is planning to introduce separate visas for foreigners visiting the West Bank, which will have a serious impact on thousands of Palestinians who are foreign passport holders or have spouses from another country.<sup>54</sup>

## **ACT NOW**

### **TELL BT TO DISCONNECT NOW**

**In January 2010, BT Group PLC (formally British Telecom) allowed the Israeli telecommunications company Bezeq International to join its exclusive BT Alliance programme, giving the company preferential access to BT’s products and services.<sup>55</sup>**

**A subsidiary of Israel’s largest telecommunications company Bezeq Group, Bezeq International provides telecommunications to illegal Israeli settlements, army bases and checkpoints in the West Bank.<sup>56</sup>**

**By allowing Bezeq International into the BT Alliance programme, BT is legitimising its operations in the Occupied Palestinian Territories and supporting the infrastructure which enables illegal Israeli settlements to function.**

**BT is a signatory to the UN Global Compact, which commits the company to ensuring that it is not complicit in human rights abuses.<sup>57</sup> The company’s internal business principles also include specific commitments to upholding human rights.<sup>58</sup> It is time for BT to put these commitments into practice and hang up on Bezeq International.**

**If you are a BT customer (or even if you’re not), contact BT and ask them to remove Bezeq International from the BT Alliance Programme. You can take action at [www.waronwant.org/bt](http://www.waronwant.org/bt). Alternatively, you can email Ian Livingston, BT’s Chief Executive, at [ian.livingston@bt.com](mailto:ian.livingston@bt.com) or write to him at BT Group plc, BT Centre, 81 Newgate Street, London EC1A 7AJ.**



# Water wars

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**The Jordan Valley comprises approximately one third of the West Bank's most fertile agricultural land. In a region short of fresh water supplies, the Jordan Valley is also home to a third of the West Bank's underground water reserves.<sup>59</sup>**

Since seizing the West Bank in 1967, Israel has closed off the Jordan Valley as a military zone, imposing stringent restrictions on movement in and out of the area. Today over 50% of the Jordan Valley is controlled by illegal Israeli settlements and a further 46% is classified as a closed military zone. This leaves just 4% of the Valley's fertile land accessible to Palestinians for agricultural and residential use.<sup>60</sup>

Shortly after Israel invaded the Jordan Valley in 1967, one of its first acts was to seize control of water resources and destroy Palestinian water pumps and irrigation ditches.<sup>61</sup> In the Jordan Valley, the Israeli military frequently cuts off Palestinian water supplies and diverts water from Palestinian communities to illegal Israeli settlement farms

cultivating agricultural produce for export to Europe.<sup>62</sup> Israel also regularly rejects applications for Palestinian water and sanitation plants, while simultaneously expanding water services to illegal settlements.<sup>63</sup>

The Israeli state-owned water company Mekorot controls 38 wells in the West Bank and supplies water to the illegal settler population. Mekorot also operates wells and pumping stations that have been confiscated from Palestinians, and then bills the Palestinian West Bank Water Department for the water it takes.<sup>64</sup> The company is, in effect, selling Palestinians back their own water. In the summer months, when water in the region is in short supply, the company has prioritised services to Israeli settlements over Palestinian communities, which often experience water shortages.<sup>65</sup>

Having documented the devastating impact of Israel's water wars in the Jordan Valley, the UN has repeatedly called on Israel to cease its appropriation of Palestine's water.<sup>66</sup>



## An abandoned Palestinian village in the Jordan Valley



Photo: Jo Meeson Scott



**Abu Zakar, a farmer, next to a demolished water tank in the Jordan Valley**

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Photo: War on Want

## **ACT NOW**

### **DON'T DRINK STOLEN WATER – STOP EDEN SPRINGS**

Eden Springs Ltd (also known as Mayanot Eden or Mey Eden) is an Israeli company that bottles, markets and distributes mineral water. In the UK, the company operates as Eden Springs UK Ltd and provides bottled and plumbed water coolers for offices, city council premises and universities.

Eden Springs profits from the Occupation by extracting water from the Salukia Spring in the Golan Heights, where the company also has a bottling plant, in Katzrin. The Golan Heights are Syrian territory illegally occupied by Israel since 1967.

Campaigners in Scotland have led the fight against Eden Springs in the UK, and numerous university campuses, the Scottish Trades Union Congress,

Scottish Council for Voluntary Organisations and Scottish UNISON have cancelled their contracts with Eden Springs.

If Eden Springs UK Ltd supplies water to your office, trade union, community group or university, organise to cancel the contract with them in favour of a more ethical water provider. Write to the CEO of Eden Springs to let him know you are cancelling the contract because of the company's complicity in the Israeli Occupation. The UK Director of Eden Springs is Jean-Marc Bolinger and can be contacted at Eden Springs UK Ltd, Unit B, 3 Livingstone Boulevard, Blantyre, Glasgow G72 0BP.

You can also take action at [www.waronwant.org/edensprings](http://www.waronwant.org/edensprings)



# Annexing East Jerusalem

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Boycott, Divestment, Sanctions **Winning justice for the Palestinian people**

Since 1967, Israel has occupied East Jerusalem, where it has pursued a series of policies such as forced displacement and border changes to ensure a Jewish majority in the city. The United Nations has repeatedly stated that Israel's annexation of East Jerusalem is in violation of international law.<sup>67</sup> According to the European Union's Heads of Mission, "Israel's actions in and around Jerusalem are one of the most acute challenges to Israeli-Palestinian peacemaking."<sup>68</sup>

Israel is accelerating its plans to forcibly displace Palestinians from East Jerusalem and to complete its annexation of the city. The removal of Palestinians from East Jerusalem is made possible through the creation of 'facts on the ground', including illegal settlements and the Apartheid Wall, which will trap the majority of Palestinians

with East Jerusalem residency cards between the Green Line and the Wall.<sup>69</sup> Israel is also pressing ahead with house demolitions and a restrictive permit regime which curtails where Palestinians can live, travel and work.<sup>70</sup>

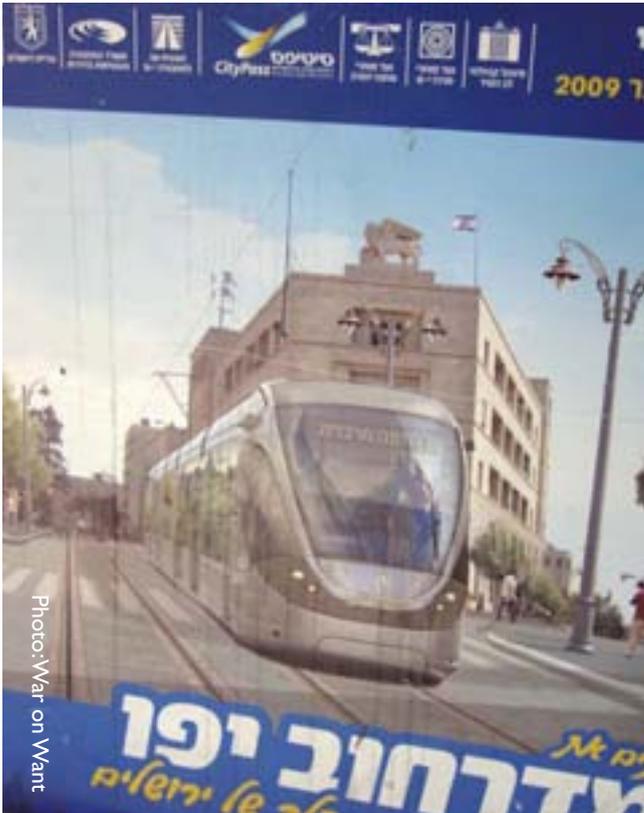
Israel has announced plans for mass demolitions of entire Palestinian neighbourhoods in East Jerusalem, such as Tel el Foul, Khalet el 'Ein, Al Abbasiya and Wadi Yasul, Sheikh Jarra and large areas of Silwan, threatening over 5,000 inhabitants.<sup>71</sup> Often house demolitions are carried out on the pretext of residents' lacking Israeli building permits. In fact, these demolitions are part of a broader strategy to drive out Palestinian families from East Jerusalem, many of whom have lived in the same homes for generations. Israel has also closed public institutions servicing Palestinian communities and limited access to basic public services to clear the city of Palestinians.<sup>72</sup>



**A Palestinian woman watches as her house in East Jerusalem is demolished by Israeli bulldozers**



Photo: Jo Merson Scott



House demolitions are also used as a form of collective punishment against families of Palestinians alleged to have carried out attacks on Israel, in order to deter those considered by Israel to be a threat.<sup>73</sup> Such actions violate international humanitarian law, and the United Nations Committee on Torture has expressed its concern over Israel's use of this form of collective punishment.<sup>74</sup>

As well as displacing Palestinians, Israel is encouraging the migration of its own citizens into East Jerusalem. Over a third of East Jerusalem has been designated by Israel for the construction of new settlements and housing projects.<sup>75</sup> This includes plans for a massive development for 100,000 Israeli settlers known as the E1 Plan. When finished, this settlement will sever East Jerusalem from the rest of the West Bank and also bisect the West Bank itself, severely restricting movement between its north and south halves.<sup>76</sup>

## ACT NOW DIVEST FROM VEOLIA

Veolia is a French multinational company that profits from Israel's illegal Occupation of Palestinian land. Known in the UK for collecting waste on behalf of local authorities and universities, Veolia is involved in a more deadly operation in Palestine. The company is a partner in the Jerusalem Light Rail project, which links West Jerusalem to illegal Israeli settlements in the West Bank, bypassing Palestinian villages and furthering the annexation of East Jerusalem. Veolia is also complicit in the Occupation by operating bus services in the West Bank which run on apartheid-style roads for settlers only. Through its subsidiary TMM, Veolia also collects waste from Israeli settlement farms deep in the Occupied Jordan Valley.<sup>77</sup>

Veolia's complicity in Israel's crimes has made it a target of international action. To date, the company has lost an estimated \$7 billion in contracts due to protests against its work in East Jerusalem. This includes Galway City Council in Ireland voting not to renew Veolia's contract to operate the city's underground transport system, as well as the loss of a \$4.5 billion contract to run the subway in Stockholm, Sweden.

In the UK, campaigners are targeting local authorities and universities to implement ethical contracting policies and break their waste management contracts with Veolia. Contact your local authority to find out if Veolia is contracted to carry out work in your area and, if so, demand the contract is cancelled until Veolia ends its complicity in Israel's crimes against the Palestinian people.

For more information, visit  
[www.waronwant.org/veolia](http://www.waronwant.org/veolia)

# Aiding the Occupation

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Boycott, Divestment, Sanctions **Winning justice for the Palestinian people**

Foreign aid has become a defining feature of the Palestinian economy – particularly in Gaza, where “the near hermetic closure... has generated almost blanket dependency on aid”.<sup>78</sup> Without aid, the misery and suffering of Palestinians would be more acute. Yet foreign aid also allows Israel to continue its Occupation of the West Bank and Gaza without bearing the financial consequences.

Under the Fourth Geneva Convention, Israel, as an occupying power, has obligations to fulfil with regards to the welfare of the Palestinians under its control. Instead, Israel has managed to shift those responsibilities onto the large number of foreign governments and international agencies which pump hundreds of millions of dollars

into the Occupied Palestinian Territories every year to rebuild the infrastructure destroyed by Israel. The European Union is the largest donor to the Occupied Palestinian Territories, sending 1.5 billion euros in aid over the three years of 2007-09.<sup>79</sup> The upshot is that Israel bears no cost for the damage it causes. Israel can destroy a Palestinian school or hospital safe in the knowledge that the international community will not only refrain from condemning its crimes, but will also pick up the tab.<sup>80</sup>

## Israel's special relationship

Despite its continuing breaches of international law and perpetration of human rights violations, Western governments continue to reward Israel with financial, military and diplomatic support. Indeed, the European Union has sought to develop even



**Binyamin Netanyahu, Israel's current Prime Minister, meets with David Cameron**





Photo: European Parliament/Pietro Naj-Oleari

closer political and economic ties with Israel, and in June 2008 announced a process to upgrade relations between the two.

The legal basis for these relations is the EU-Israel Association Agreement, which grants Israeli exports preferential access to EU markets. However, Article 2 makes the Association Agreement and all the trade preferences it bestows conditional upon respect for human rights by both sides.

Israel has continued to commit human rights violations since June 2008, when the process to upgrade EU relations began. Israel has tightened the Gaza blockade, accelerated the expansion of illegal settlements in the West Bank and increased the number of illegal checkpoints. In December 2008, Israel launched its murderous assault on Gaza, leading to the deaths of over 1,400 Palestinians, as described earlier in this report.

In the face of international outrage, the EU was forced to suspend the upgrading of its relations with Israel in 2009. However, a number of EU member states have since expressed their desire to continue with the process. In September 2010, Israel called on the EU to resume work on the upgrade, in

view of the holding of direct talks between Israel and the Palestinian Authority.<sup>81</sup> If the EU agrees to the upgrade of relations, it will send a clear signal to Israel that it can continue to violate Palestinian human rights with impunity.

## **ACT NOW** **SUSPEND THE EU-ISRAEL ASSOCIATION AGREEMENT**

**Instead of rewarding Israeli aggression with an upgrade in diplomatic and economic relations, the EU should take action to prevent Israel from committing crimes against Palestinians in future. War on Want is campaigning for the suspension of the EU-Israel Association Agreement on human rights grounds, and for no resumption of the upgrade in EU-Israel relations. You can contact your MP and demand a suspension of the EU-Israel Association Agreement until Israel complies with international law by visiting [www.waronwant.org/EU-Israel](http://www.waronwant.org/EU-Israel)**

# Arming insecurity

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Boycott, Divestment, Sanctions **Winning Justice for the Palestinian people**

**The military has always played a central role in Israeli society. Israel has developed an industry that is pivotal in the country's economy. Israel is the seventh largest exporter of arms in the world, accounting for \$900 million of the global trade in 2008.<sup>82</sup> It ranks third in the world in terms of military spending as a percentage of GDP.<sup>83</sup> Israel is also the only country with nuclear weapons in the Middle East, although it refuses to admit this or to become a signatory to non-proliferation treaties.**

Israel's arms industry generates \$6 billion in sales annually; Israel Aerospace Industries is one of the country's biggest private employers.<sup>84</sup> The Israeli arms industry is a global leader in military high technology, particularly electronics, security and surveillance technologies. In addition to being deployed extensively in the Occupied Palestinian Territories, surveillance technology

developed by the Israeli arms industry is exported throughout the world. This includes being used by London Underground, which has a contract with Israeli company Verint Systems for video surveillance, as well as the US government for its border fence with Mexico.<sup>85</sup> Israeli companies such as Israel Aerospace Industries, Israel Military Industries, Rafael and Elbit Systems have also profited from arms sales to regimes which other countries have refused to supply, such as South Africa during the Apartheid era and Burma today.<sup>86</sup>

The European market is important for Israeli companies, and the UK is no exception. The UK government uses Israeli military technology through the use of unmanned aerial vehicles (UAVs) or drones, which are increasingly being deployed in Pakistan and Afghanistan. The UK is developing its own drone in conjunction with the Israeli arms company Elbit Systems and the French company



**An Israeli tank at the Gaza border in January 2009**



Photo: Yin Bogu/Xinhua/Xinhua Press/Cortis



Thales. Israel's arms industry has also benefitted from preferential scientific research grants awarded under the EU-Israel Association Agreement.<sup>87</sup>

Despite Israel's documented human rights abuses, the UK continues to license the sale of arms to Israel. By authorising these sales, the UK government is in breach of its own arms export guidelines, which state that arms should not be sold to countries where they could be used for internal repression or external aggression.<sup>88</sup> On both points Israel is found wanting, yet in recent years the UK government has licensed the sale of combat aircraft, electronic warfare equipment, military aero-engines and surface-to-air missiles. The UK also approved the sale of components for Apaches and F-16s, which it admitted were likely to have been used during Operation Cast Lead.<sup>89</sup> By continuing to license the sale of arms to Israel, the UK government remains complicit in Israel's war crimes and human rights violations.

## **ACT NOW BUST ELBIT!**

Elbit Systems, Israel's largest private security and defence firm, specialises in drones, military electronics and surveillance systems. Elbit is also involved in the provision of surveillance and electronics systems along the Apartheid Wall in the West Bank and in surrounding settlements.

Elbit has factories in the UK where it makes components for weapons that are being used on Palestinians. At its Lichfield factory, Elbit manufactures engines for the Hermes 450 drones, which were used in the Operation Cast Lead assault on Gaza.<sup>90</sup> ParcAberporth, in Wales, is the testing ground for the UK's Watchkeeper drone, which is being developed jointly by Elbit and Thales at an estimated cost of £860 million.<sup>91</sup>

Elbit has become a target of activists around the globe. In September 2009, after years of campaigning by War on Want partner organisation Stop the Wall, the Norwegian government excluded Elbit from its state pension fund on ethical grounds.

War on Want is calling for a two-way arms embargo between the UK and Israel. This would see an end to all dealings with Elbit and other Israeli weapons companies, and an end to all licences for UK arms exports to Israel. Take action at [www.waronwant.org/stoparmingisrael](http://www.waronwant.org/stoparmingisrael)



# Bringing the Occupation home

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***“It’s time. Long past time. The best strategy to end the increasingly bloody occupation is for Israel to become the target of the kind of global movement that put an end to apartheid in South Africa... The relevance of the South African model is that it proves that BDS tactics can be effective when weaker measures (protests, petitions, backroom lobbying) fail.” Naomi Klein, January 2009<sup>92</sup>***

The failure of governments around the world to hold Israel to account has led to a grassroots Palestinian call for a strategic citizen’s response. In 2005, a coalition of over 170 Palestinian civil society groups, including War on Want partners such as Stop the Wall, called on global civil society to join them in a boycott, divestment and sanctions (BDS) movement against Israel until it complies with international law and the following three demands are met:

1. Israel ends its Occupation and dismantles the Wall;
2. Arab-Palestinian citizens of Israel are granted full equality;
3. The right of Palestinian refugees to return to their homes and properties is promoted and protected.

The BDS movement is now endorsed by trade unions, student unions, faith groups, prominent writers, artists and solidarity movements from all over the world. In recent years the campaign has won significant victories, including:

- The Church of England has divested its £2.2 million holding in Caterpillar, and the Methodist Church in the UK has voted to boycott Israeli settlement goods.
- Norway’s state pension fund and Denmark’s Danske Bank have divested from Israeli arms company Elbit Systems.
- The UK government has bowed to consumer pressure and introduced guidelines on the labelling of settlement goods.
- The UK government has also revoked five licences for the sale of military equipment to Israel, in response to the Israeli attack on Gaza in 2008/09.
- Trade unions confederations in the UK, Ireland and South Africa have endorsed the BDS call, mirroring the support given by hundreds of individual unions around the world. Dockworkers’ unions in particular have led the way in direct action by refusing to unload ships of Israeli goods in California, India and Sweden.
- Musicians such as Faithless, Gil Scot Heron, Elvis Costello and Massive Attack have refused to play in Israel.
- Veolia has lost a \$4.5 billion contract to run the subway in Stockholm, Sweden over its participation in the Jerusalem Light Rail project.

Most significantly, BDS is already having an impact within Israel itself. In March 2009, the Israeli Manufacturers’ Association reported that of the 90 Israeli exporters it had interviewed, 21% had experienced a drop in demand due to boycotts, mostly from the UK and Scandinavian countries.

Get involved in the global BDS movement.

Join War on Want and support our campaigns and partners in Palestine in their struggle for equality and justice.

[www.waronwant.org/palestine](http://www.waronwant.org/palestine)



**War on Want works in partnership with the following organisations in Palestine:**

**Palestinian BDS National Committee**

The broad Palestinian civil society coalition working for boycott, divestment and sanctions against Israel until it complies with international law.

[www.bdsmovement.net](http://www.bdsmovement.net)

**Stop the Wall**

A grassroots organisation resisting the building of the Apartheid Wall in the West Bank. [www.stophthewall.org](http://www.stophthewall.org)

**Zaytoun**

A cooperative linking olive farming communities in the West Bank with UK markets. [www.zaytoun.org](http://www.zaytoun.org)

**BADIL**

A resource centre and advocacy group for Palestinian residency and refugee rights.

[www.badil.org](http://www.badil.org)

**Al-Haq**

An independent Palestinian legal and campaigning organisation promoting and protecting human rights and the rule of law.

[www.alhaq.org](http://www.alhaq.org)

**Sawt El-Amel**

A grassroots organisation promoting the rights of Palestinian workers in Israel.

[www.laborers-voice.org](http://www.laborers-voice.org)

**Alternative Information Centre**

A joint Palestinian-Israeli activist organisation which undertakes research, political advocacy and grassroots activism against the Occupation. [www.alternativenews.org](http://www.alternativenews.org)

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**Published: November 2010**

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