

Editor  
Mohd Nazari Ismail

# Ending Settler- Colonialism in Palestine

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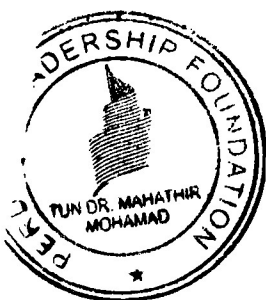
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# Ending Settler- Colonialism in Palestine

**Editor**  
**Mohd Nazari Ismail**



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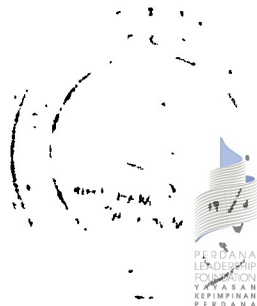
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# Foreword

As I write this, it has been almost 100 days since the genocide of Gaza began, following a surprise attack by Hamas fighters on Israel .

However unlike what Israel and their supporters would like us to believe, the conflict did not start on Oct 7th. Attacks on Palestinians have been ongoing for 75 years since the colonisation of Palestine by Zionist settlers .

“Settler colonialism is a form of colonialism in which settlers create societies that are distinct from the indigenous population and seek to control the land and resources and establish their own economy and system of governance” (Source : bdsmovement.net)

On the following pages you will read about various aspects of settler colonialism imposed on the Palestinians since 1948.

Four of the presenters- Dr Yousef Al Jamal, Dr Raed Qaddoura, Dr Hani Thraya and Dr Hassan Al-Najjar are from Gaza where the siege is a form of settler-colonialism , restricting freedom of movement of people and goods, costing academics like themselves opportunities in scholarships and learning.

Attacks on Gaza, a large concentration camp from which the people can't escape , has cost thousands of lives and in the current genocide Dr Raed Qaddoura who contributed chapter 9 of this book, was tragically killed

with 54 members of his family when the Israeli Occupation Army dropped a missile on their home on 20th November 2024.

Israel's settler-colonial project is incomplete unlike the ones in the US and Australia. Now that the ugly face of settler-colonialism has been exposed to the world through live recordings of the genocide on social media, we hope that right-thinking governments and people with a conscience will strive to put an end to settler-colonialism in Palestine.

January 12th, 2024

# Chapter One

# Introduction

Mohd Nazari Ismail

Injustice in Palestine is worsening by the day. In January of 2023 alone, Israeli occupation forces murdered more than 30 Palestinians. The victims included women and children. In addition, they demolished numerous Palestinian homes and confiscated more of their land.

Thousands of Palestinians are languishing in Israeli jails. They are all political prisoners, with some having been jailed for decades now for the simple crime of fighting for freedom and self-determination against the decades-old colonisation of their country by foreigners, mostly European Jews. The situation is worse in the West Bank and East Jerusalem, which the international community has designated since 1948 as the areas for establishing the state of Palestine. Israel has occupied them since 1967. Moreover, Israel has announced that it will build more settlements there as part of a plan to annex all these areas.

In the meantime, the world powers still pretend to believe that Israel is serious about peace and continue to harp on the two-state solution. In the case of the United States, its policy is to blame the victims. In early February, Anthony Blinken, the US secretary of state, visited Palestine and again reiterated the US's unconditional support for the Zionist regime. In a meeting with Palestinian Authority (PA) President Mahmoud Abbas, instead of blaming Israel's policies for the killings, he placed the responsibility on the PA for its inability to control the Palestinian armed resistance. Blinken

even failed to mention the case of Shreen Akleh, the AlJazeera journalist assassinated by Israel in 2022, even though she was a US citizen.

The world needs to realise that the two-state solution will never come to fruition because Israel will never accept it, and the US has never displayed any political will to force Israel to change its stance. The two-state solution is unacceptable to Israel because it is anathema to the very objective of Zionism set by its early founders and adherents when they decided to pursue the Zionist settler-colonialism project in Palestine.

The world also needs to realise that the Zionist project in Palestine was not merely a colonial project but a settler-colonialist project, which requires the state's demographics to be entirely or predominantly Jewish.

As a result, Zionist leaders have always perceived the indigenous Palestinian population as a significant obstacle to the project. Zionists see Palestinians as 'aliens' in their lands, whom they must remove. After all, in 1947, Jews constituted only one-third of the population of Palestine. Moreover, most came from Europe to Palestine only three years before. The relatively minor number of Jews compared to Palestinians, therefore, was a problem that needed to be solved.

The UN decided to partition the land and gave almost 50% to the Jews, although they were the minority. This decision fitted nicely into their strategy. It helped ensure that Jews were still in control, besides also protecting the image of the Jews as being interested in implementing a democratic system of governance there.

Nevertheless, to advance the project further, a more ruthless step was needed, hence the 1948 murderous attacks on Palestinian villages by Jewish paramilitary gangs. As a result, more than 750,000 terrified Palestinians had to flee their homeland.

However, the Zionists were clear that their settler-colonial project to establish a Jewish state stretching from the Jordan River to the Mediterranean Sea was incomplete. They carried out another deliberate attack on the Arab armies in 1967. The outcome of the 1967 war enabled Israel to control East Jerusalem and the West Bank.

However, this presented another complication for Israel because the large number of 'aliens' there who did not flee the land has re-created the 'demographics problem.' The Zionists wanted the land of Palestine but not the people, and they could not possibly expel them from it.

The solution was to keep the Palestinians under continuous occupation. For the Zionists, Arabs can exist, but their existence in the West Bank is in the form of lesser human beings, confined to some bantustans or enclaves. In this way, Palestinians can never obtain their rights as citizens of Israel, thereby preserving the favourable demographics.

In the meantime, Israel continued to expand the number of settlements in the West Bank, which was the policy of all the governments of Israel, whether they were on the left or right of the political spectrum. Every Israeli government since 1967 has built new settlements, which they always termed 'Judea and Samaria' and which they consider an essential part of 'Eretz Israel.'

Even the government of Yitzhak Rabin, the left-leaning prime minister and co-signatory to the Oslo peace plan, which emphasised the importance of the two-state solution, also accelerated the number of settlements, which tripled during his leadership, even though settlement-building was against international law.

In 1995, the Rabin government also spent US\$600 million on paved roads connecting settlements in the West Bank, which predictably were off-limits to Palestinians. If Rabin was serious about letting Palestinians control the West Bank under the so-called two-state solution, why did he spend so much money on the new roads?

The fact is that after the Oslo Accords, Israel has not made any meaningful offer to the Palestinians. The 'Palestinian state' that Israel offered to Palestinians did not possess contiguous lands. Moreover, under the terms of the offer, Israel was supposed to be able to keep all the settlements intact in the West Bank.

These encircle East Jerusalem, cutting it off from the rest of the West Bank. These settlements are located on water aquifers, thereby denying Palestinian control over the water resources in the land that is supposed to be their state. In addition, Israel also insisted on total control of the Jordan Valley and a complete demilitarisation of the proposed state of Palestine.

Finally, Israel wanted complete control over the new state's air space and borders. Since the terms of the agreement to them were utterly unacceptable, it is unsurprising that the Palestinians seek help from the international community.

Unfortunately, the international community has not done anything over the last five decades to make the two-state option a reality, not even after the Oslo Accords were signed in 1993. Even now, the international community has not pressured Israel to withdraw from the West Bank.

In short, the settler-colonial project means Israel was never interested in the two-state solution. It pretended to be interested in it during the 1991 Madrid conference and during the 1993 Oslo Accords 1993 to hoodwink the international community into believing it was interested in peace with the Palestinians. The recent actions of the current Israeli government, which consists of fascists and criminals, have exposed further the settler-colonialist nature of the Zionist project in Palestine.

Intending to create awareness among people of conscience around the world and the need for them to insist their governments highlight the apartheid nature of the Zionist settler-colonialist project, the Hashim Sani Centre for Palestine Studies at the University of Malaya organised a conference in late November 2022. The theme of the conference was ‘Ending Settler Colonialism in Palestine’.

This book is a compendium of the papers presented at the conference. In chapter two, Dr Hatem Yousef Abu Zaydeh analysed the nature of the Jerusalem and West Bank settlement project. It is a highly detailed analysis comprising both quantitative and qualitative data. The analysis aims to present the viability of the hoped-for Palestinian State, which the international community has harped on as an integral part of the “Two-State” solution. Dr Zaydeh utilises the survey analytical approach as his research methodology to analyse a large quantity of settlement data and confiscation of lands in the West Bank and Jerusalem and frame it temporally and geographically in line with the consecutive Israeli occupation governments. He then analyses the finding in terms of how they will impact the viability of achieving the goal of the “Two-State” solution. He concluded that establishing a Palestinian State is now impossible due to the settlement projects that turned Palestinian cities and villages into disparate and scattered islands in a sea of colonial settlements.

In Chapter Three, Sukrita Lahiri argues that neoliberal processes have significantly influenced the principles and practices of the Palestinian national liberation movement involving the Palestinian Authority (PA). One of the main factors is the role of organisations such as the World Bank and the International Monetary Fund. These are the prominent donors to the Palestinians in the Occupied Palestinian Territories (OPT). As a result, the classic logic of neoliberalism dominates the situation there, prioritising private interests over public ones, protecting private property, controlling information and data, and enforcing security structures to ensure each of these measures. This worldview dictates the operations of Western donors in the OPT. Lahiri highlights that the dominant experiences of neoliberal economic policies have demonstrated an over-emphasis on the service sector, where finance becomes the commodity. According to her, the Fatah-led Palestinian Authority (PA) becomes the conduit for these neoliberal power structures and the Palestinian big capitalists, creating more misery for the Palestinian masses. Fortunately, this has not broken the spirit of the Palestinian resistance, which continues to fight against the increased settler colonial Israeli repression and the PA’s authoritarian tendencies.

In Chapter Four, Dr Yousef AlJamal describes the difficulties faced by Palestinians as a result of Israel’s imposition of travel restrictions. The outcome for many Palestinians is that this makes it nearly impossible for them to move freely, including Palestinian movement between the West Bank and the Gaza Strip and entry into and exit from the West Bank and the Gaza Strip. Israel designs the travel restrictions as a tool to control Palestinians to restrict their space and freedom and make it easier for the Israeli authorities to monitor and control their lives. These travel restrictions blackmail the Palestinian people and push them to collaborate with the Israeli authorities as part of Israel’s settler colonial rule. The destruction of the Gaza International Airport, the erection of checkpoints around the Gaza Strip, into and within the West Bank, and the lack of independent Palestinian health infrastructure all contribute to the same end of controlling the movement of Palestinians and giving Israel the final say over their movements. Dr AlJamal concludes that granting the Palestinians their freedom of movement is the first step to ending this Israeli system of control and permits, which violates international law and fundamental human rights, including the right to free movement and travel.

In Chapter Five, Dr Ashutosh Singh discusses the uncertainties of life running parallel to death in the case of Palestinians—the main factor is the colonisation of their country by Zionist settlers. According to him, the dispossession of land and life in exile for Palestinians has created complexities in their experience of time and death. He writes, “Life is a phenomenon that takes place in time, and the Palestinian time is being continuously massacred by colonisers,” creating a unique dimension where the certainty of death lurking results in hope, resistance, and joyfulness. The craving for a homeland and freedom from the forces of settler colonialism has given new reference points to Palestinian arts and literature and their identity. However, the uncertainty creates spaces for continual hope for Palestinians. Ashutosh observes that the monotony in the life of Palestinians is not in terms of how time passes but, instead, them passing when time passes. The absence of life in a dead body does not amount to the total absence of the body; instead, it narrates the intrinsic relationship of hope with life and death. For Palestinians, mourning for the dead has also become a phenomenon in Palestine as every such act is a reminder that Nakba is not just a matter of the past but is ongoing, and the present is the sum of massacred past and possibilities of the future.

In Chapter Six, Dr Zakaria Sinwar takes a historical view in his study of how a number of factors combined to contribute to the success of the Zionist settlement in Palestine from the beginning of Jewish immigration

in 1882 until the announcement of the establishment of the Zionist entity on 78% of Palestine lands in 1948. Those factors include Palestine's climate and natural terrain, the role of early thinkers in promoting the idea of settlement in Palestine, the adoption of settlement by the Zionist movement, the exploitation of public and private Zionist capital, the establishment of several pro-settlement economic institutes, and the creation of scientific research centres. However, Dr Sinwar also highlighted the influence of other external factors that contributed to the success of the Zionist settlement in Palestine, namely the mismanagement of the Ottoman administration, the European consuls who served the Zionists in the purchase of land, the British occupation's bias in favour of the Zionists, and the British oppression of the Palestinians. Moreover, the British Mandate enacted several legislations and laws that promoted settlement, facilitated Zionist control over large areas of land, and granted that "legitimacy." Also, the Mandate authorities armed the settlers to confront Arab rebels. In other words, the early success of the settler-colonialist project was due to a complex interplay of internal and external factors that eventually allowed the Zionists to establish the Zionist entity called Israel, which then applied the worst forms of ethnic cleansing against the Palestinian Arab society.

In Chapter Seven, Hani Thuraya investigates the impact of the Israeli settler colonialism siege or blockade of the Gaza Strip. His study focuses on three sectors: the social sector, including demography, education, health, poverty, and housing; the economic sector, including employment, unemployment, and agriculture and; the environmental sector, including energy and water. The indicators for each sector are presented in detail to highlight the siege's severe impact on the Gaza Strip's humanitarian situation. For example, his data on the situation regarding poverty shows that 69% (1,595,869 people) are below the poverty line, 33.7% (779,431 people) face extreme poverty, and 80% of households depend on aid. In addition, he also presents data on health, housing, education, employment, water, and the energy situation in Gaza, which are each extremely dire.

In Chapter Eight, Hasan al Najjar describes how Israel unjustly controls the management and distribution of Palestine's water resources to achieve its settler colonial project. Since the West Bank is under military rule, Israel uses Military Order 158 to prohibit Palestinians from developing new water installations, extracting water from any resources, or developing any water infrastructure without obtaining permits from Israel. However, in reality, the permit is almost impossible to obtain. Even though the administration of water resources is part of the Israeli-Palestinian Interim Agreement of the Oslo Accord, Israel manipulates the situation on the ground to victimise

Palestinians. Hasan explains how the Israeli authorities repeatedly stopped negotiations for permanent water status so that the water obtained daily by Palestinians is around 15-20 litres less per person than the minimum standards set by the World Health Organization. Israel can do this because it controls 85% of the natural water resources in Palestine. In the case of Gaza, the only source of water that Palestinians have access to is the coastal aquifer, which is being over-pumped by deep Israeli wells upstream and is, therefore, severely over-exploited and contaminated by these Israeli wells.

In Chapter Nine, Dr Raed Qaddoura focuses on Israeli military aggressions against Palestinians living in the Gaza Strip between 2008–2022. According to Qaddoura, the attacks and the blockades continue the Israeli settler-colonialism in Palestine. The aggression started in June 2007, following the victory of Hamas in the Palestinian Legislative Council (PLC) elections. Israel decided to impose a land, sea, and air blockade on the Gaza Strip, which led to the isolation of more than 2.3 million people in a geographical area of 360 square km. The situation in Gaza was so dire that the United Nations said Gaza would be unliveable by 2020; however, Israel not only imposed a siege on the coastal enclave for more than 15 years but launched six attacks on the Palestinians living there, killing more than 5,418 Palestinian civilians during this period, and injuring more than 23,000 others. Qaddoura argues that the Israeli offensives on the Gaza Strip have a specific aim: to displace Palestinians internally as part of Israel's settler colonial policy against them and to push them to leave.

The common thread among the chapters is that the gross injustice perpetrated against the Palestinians has an underlying objective – to ensure the success of the settler-colonialist project in Palestine. The writers approach the subject matter from different angles due to their backgrounds. However, they have succeeded in presenting the sufferings of the Palestinians for more than seven decades under the occupation of an illegal Zionist regime, under the full view of the international community.

We hope this book will contribute to the cause of freedom, justice, and equality for Palestinians, even if small.



## Chapter Two

# Colonial Settlement in West Bank and Jerusalem and The Future Prospect of the Palestinian State

Hatem Yousef Abu Zaydeh<sup>1</sup>

### Introduction

Historically, the Zionist settlement acquired several dimensions in line with the nature of the settlement project and its development over different historical phases. Despite the apparent biblical religious dimension in all phases of settlement, there are political, economic, social and historical dimensions that might be more important than religion, which the Zionist Movement sometimes used as a cover for its political colonial objectives despite the movement's secular nature. With the development of the Palestinian National Movement after the 1967 Israeli War, the occupation of the West Bank, Jerusalem and Gaza, and the launch of the settlement projects after the Ramadan War (1973), the settlements dominated the occupied Palestinian lands before any political solutions and imposed a fait accompli against Palestinian national ambitions for which the Palestinian State is the priority. This was mentioned by Moshe Sneh, Haganah commander in 1943, when he said, "settlement itself is not only a goal, but also a means for political domination over Palestine. Thus, we must seek to create Hebrew settlements either in the middle of the political and economic centres of Palestine, near them, around them or in the sites that

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<sup>1</sup> PALM Strategic Initiative Center

might be used as honorable typographic sites or main centres in terms of the military domination over the country and the ability to defend it, even if its economic importance was slight.” (Al-Ayla & Shaheen, 2010).

The settlement projects, with their geographical and demographic characteristics in the West Bank and Jerusalem, have always collided and conflicted with the phased objective of the Palestinian State, which is the hope of every Palestinian in light of the regional and international balances of power that do not work in favor of the Palestinian people, nor do they fit the international vision on the “Two-State” solution. However, is the objective of the Palestinian State still possible with the accelerated construction of settlements in the West Bank and Jerusalem, the settlers and Israeli army’s control over Al-Aghwar in the eastern West Bank, and the security and military strategic areas based on the Israeli claims, which constitute over 60% of the West Bank area by the end of the second quarter of 2022?

The Zionist settlement, a feature of the conflict since the establishment of the first one in the 1910s, had a quantitative upsurge after the launch of the settlement project and the signature of the Oslo Accords in 1993. Consequently, the topic of settlements gained academic interest in discussions, studies and conferences, which all concentrated on settlements in terms of their development, geographical distribution, effect on the daily life of the Palestinians, legal implications, and international human rights law as a crime of racial discrimination. Yet, few studies addressed the political dimension of settlements, their impact on the objective of the Palestinian State, the prospects for the establishment of the Palestinian State amid the current settlement reality in the West Bank and Jerusalem, and the extent to which Palestinian citizens believed in the Palestinian State project in light of the number of the Zionist settlements already in existence by the second decade of the 21<sup>st</sup> century. Thus, the study sheds light on the current settlement reality, its relation to the Palestinian State project, prospects for its establishment, and opinions from the street in this regard.

## Literature Review

The Zionist settlement has historically been associated with the land of Palestine since the end of the 19<sup>th</sup> century with multiple motives that have varied in their implications from one phase to another, aligned with the development of the Zionist project and its ideological and political premises in Palestine. The most prominent and attended of those factors are the biblical religious, political, economic, and colonial factors. Nevertheless, the religious factor has intersected with those other factors, especially with

the segments attached to the Haredi religious mainstreams and religious Zionism. The first wave of settlement emerged before the 1917 Balfour Declaration and Britain's occupation of Palestine, as a physical embodiment of the Zionist ideology based on nationalism covered by biblical visions, religious narratives and historic claims for thousands of years.

During Al-Nakba and the establishment of Israel in 1948, settlements have sought to evict the land of its owners by using weapons, committing massacres, demolishing villages and cities, and bringing colonial settlers to cities, colonies and kibbutzims as the primary imperative to the creation of the Hebrew state on the historic land of Palestine.

After the 1967 aggression and the occupation of the Sinai Peninsula, Golan Heights, and the West Bank, Jerusalem, which was under the Jordanian administration, and Gaza, which was under Egyptian administration, there has been a transformation in the settlement goals in these regions, especially the West Bank and Jerusalem. Religious, security and economic reasons were used to move to the next phase based on imposing control over the largest possible size of the Palestinian lowest-density areas, compressing the Palestinians in residential compounds on the tightest possible space, separating the 1967 occupied lands from their Arab base and the settlements' urban extensions in the lands occupied in 1948. Furthermore, Palestinian residential communities, especially in West Bank and Jerusalem, were separated by a wide network of bypass roads for settlements, military areas and nature reserves, which Palestinians are prohibited from taking advantage of. These actions were aimed at preventing the formation of a Palestinian entity; this goal was developed after the Oslo Accords of 1993 and the subsequent establishment of the Palestinian National Authority over parts of the West Bank and Jerusalem to prevent the creation of a livable Palestinian state, as hoped for by the Palestinian Authority to crown the process of negotiations.

### ***Settlements after 1967 and the Palestinian State***

If the purpose of settlements before 1967 was expulsion, replacement, and the establishment of the so-called state of "Israel" based on biblical claims and historical benefits, then settlements after the 1967 war, especially in Jerusalem and the West Bank, acquired political dimensions in the following stage. Such dimensions concern the political settlement and bargaining with Arab countries, which had parts of their land occupied, the political solution with the Palestinians, and opportunities for establishing the Palestinian state within the borders that were occupied in 1967. In a related context,

these borders did not remain the same, as the settlement projects and the apartheid wall reshaped them on the geographical map, in line with the political visions and security attitudes of consecutive Israeli governments until now.

The settlement projects and their gradual development in the West Bank and Jerusalem since 1967 have reflected numerous settlement strategies set by expert officials, Israeli ministers, or even official committees. These are accumulated plans, as each plan builds on the previous ones despite the apparently differing natures of political leadership or government programmes, whether right-wing (Likud, religious parties and Zionist Religious parties) or left-wing (Israeli Labor Party and Meretz). This indicates that such plans were the point where all Zionist parties concurred and received the Zionist agreement. The most common of those plans are Allon's project in 1967, the Religious Gush Emunim Movement in 1974, Matityahu Drobis in 1979, Ari'el Sharon's project "The Seven Stars" in 1993, and Allon's adjusted project in 1997.

#### **First: Yigal Ayalon project in 1967**

This project was prepared by Justice Minister Yigal Ayalon from the Labor Party government after the 1967 war, within the context of consolidating the Israeli occupation's status and creating facts on the ground in harmony with the long-term security vision. Ayalon raised a slogan of "no matter where settlements are established, there are Jewish presence and control" (Khamasa, 1999).

The following were the project's goals: (Abu Esba & Nofal, 2011)

1. Identifying and clarifying the range of available settlement options.
2. Ensuring the security axes with the Arab neighbours of "Israel."
3. Creating a settlement presence that benefits the Zionist project as a whole.

The Ayalon project was based on the following steps:

1. Avoiding the inclusion of the Arab population in the state of "Israel" as much as possible, even if this would lead to the repetition of the option of Palestinian displacement in 1948.
2. Making Palestinian autonomy in the West Bank in areas not belonging to "Israel."
3. Solving the refugee issue in the context of regional cooperation with international assistance, provided that "Israel" establishes model villages for refugees, whether in the West Bank or the Sinai.

4. Determining the eastern borders of “Israel” with Jordan, with the Jordan River and a line that crosses the Dead Sea in its middle.
5. Annexing the areas of the Jordan Valley and the Dead Sea, with a width up to 15 kilometers, and establishing a group of settlements with colonial compounds in the eastern West Bank.

Ayalon called for avoiding heavily populated Palestinian areas and specified areas in the West Bank and Jerusalem to establish settlements and military bases, according to security requirements in eastern Jerusalem and the Old City.

According to this plan, 34 settlements were built in the ten years to 1977, with 12 in Jerusalem. The first of these settlements were Kfar Etzion in 1967 and Kiryat Arba in the centre of Hebron. Also, a road called “Alon Street” was built to separate the Jordan Valley from the Palestinian communities and to keep a narrow path for Palestinians to reach Jordan (Gazit, 2001).

## **Second: Plan of the Five Fists and Economic Peace in 1968**

Moshe Dayan, Defense Minister in Levi Eshkol’s government in 1967, initiated a plan with military-security dimensions based on military control over the mountains of the West Bank and the establishment of Israeli army camps over them, which would lead to establishing civilian and agricultural settlements. As a result, 20,000 dunams were confiscated to establish five Israeli camps along the West Bank; Gush Etzion in the Bethlehem area, Adorim south of Hebron, Baal Hatzor in Kafr Malik near Ramallah, Hawara near Nablus, and Bezeq near Jenin (Alhindi, 2012).

In developing the “Five Fists” plan, Dayan presented the “economic peace” plan in 1968 to strengthen settlements in the West Bank and link the Palestinian economy to the Israeli economy, which led to the establishment of three civilian settlement blocs. These blocs are Ariel southwest of Nablus on an area of no less than 15,000 dunams, the Ma’ale Adumim settlement east of Jerusalem city on an estimated area of 50,000 dunams, equivalent to 1% of the West Bank’s lands, in addition to developing Gush Etzion in Bethlehem and turning it into a settlement complex on an area of 280,000 dunams (Shaul & Sfarid, 2010).

### **Third: The Gush Emunim Plan (Established as an official organisation in 1974)**

The religious national Gush Emunim group was formed after the 1973 war as a movement that sees nothing in Palestine but Israeli historical land and that settlements must be implemented on every inch. This plan aimed to settle the areas excluded by past settlement projects to fill the gaps in other projects and fulfill the following security purposes (Baloom, 2020):

1. To control the West Bank mountain ranges.
2. To maintain the real depth of the country, extending from the Jordan River until the coastal plain.
3. To improve a comprehensive road system to link settlements.

After the Likud Party took office in 1977, the group's activities escalated and they managed to implement part of the plan by building new settlements such as the Kdumim and Ofra settlements located in the northern West Bank (Baloom, 2020).

### **Fourth: The Droblis Settlement Enterprise in 1978.**

As a supplement to the settlement plan of Ayalon and based on its real achievements, Mattihuo Drobles (the head of the Zionism department at the World Zionist Organization) set an evolutionary colonial plan aiming to establish 70 civilian settlements in the West Bank from 1979-1993 at a rate of 12 to 15 settlements per year. This project is based on a group of principles (Wafa Agency, 2009):

4. Settlements on the land of "Israel" is an inherent right for Jews and a long-term security assurance.
5. Distribution of settlements to colonial blocs interlinked with the development of co-production services and methods.
6. The distribution of settlements should not be only around the Palestinian blocs but inside them as well.

### **Fifth: Sharon's Project (Head of the High Ministerial Committee for Settlement)**

This project aimed to establish a colonial sector to separate the northern West Bank from its south and concentrate settlement in western areas (western slopes) to support the coastal areas. Additionally, it aimed to set up a series of settlement projects inside "Israel" that expanded to the east

while the eastern settlements were expanded towards the west, constituting blocks crossing the Green Line. Thus, with the “Seven Stars” settlement project, along the Green Line, which begins from the North (Umm al-Fahm) to the South (Latrun), a new borderline is formed. This plan has been almost fulfilled, so a new phase of the final solution began with expected border adjustments (Saleh, 2021).

Ayalon’s plan enforced an external military settlement leashed along the West Bank borders, isolating it from its Islamic and Arabic environments. However, Sharon’s plan and the adjustments following it enforced a leash of internal settlements with long and wide streets bypassing all Palestinian population centres, turning them into isolated, separated cantons without any geographical connection between them (Alhindi, 2012).

### **Sixth: Netanyahu’s project and Ayalon’s adjusted project (1997)**

Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu announced a plan on March 21, 1997, after assuming office in the 1996 elections (Al-Tafakaji, 2004).

The following are the plan’s general points:

1. To give the Palestinians 45–50% of the “Judea and Samaria Area” land without affecting the vital areas of Al-Aghwar, Gush Etzion, Greater Jerusalem, the line of contact sector, and the majority of the settlements, according to the security interests map the army presented to the government.
2. To dismantle parts of settlements that are remote points whose existence turns them into enclaves within the Palestinian Authority.
3. To maintain complete control over Al Quds.

### **Seventh: Neftali Bennett’s Plan (2016)**

This plan stems from the general Zionist vision of including broad parts of the West Bank—the less dense in terms of the number of Palestinians—and consolidating the reality of separation between the West Bank and Gaza. The plan includes the following points: (Anadolu Agency, 2017)

1. To grant autonomy to the Palestinian Authority in areas A and B, making up 40% of the West Bank.
2. To annex 60% of the West Bank to Israel. This is area C, according to the Oslo Accords.
3. To grant 50.000 Palestinians living in area C with Israeli identity.
4. To invest more in infrastructure, including a land port in Jenin connected to Haifa’s seaport and a tourist zone connecting Nazareth city with Nablus and Jerusalem.

5. To prevent any Palestinian refugee from returning to the West Bank.
6. To completely separate the West Bank from Gaza.

### **Eighth: Jerusalem Project (2020)**

Despite the accelerated measures in Jerusalem after its occupation in 1967, by the start of the 1990s, the number of Arab residents reached 39% of the grand total in Jerusalem. Yet Zionist research centres expected the number of Palestinians would rise to 55% in 2040 (Al-Tafakaji, 1997).

Thus, the Zionist government formed a specialised team of 40 representatives of Jerusalem Municipality and experts in different fields to formulate the Jerusalem Plan 2020, aiming to develop Jerusalem city and turn it into the economic, social, political and demographic capital of the Hebrew state. The following are the plan's main objectives (Khattab, 2017):

1. Reducing the number of Arab citizens to 10-12% of the total population in Eastern and Western Jerusalem.
2. Expanding Jerusalem's area to 10% (600 km<sup>2</sup>) of the total area of the West Bank.
3. Connecting Jerusalem (capital of the Jewish nation) to the coast, centres of "Israel" and West Bank settlement by a transportation network.

In accordance with such schemes, the Zionist settlement policy passed through four main phases. The first phase extended from the occupation of Jerusalem in 1967 up to the rising of the Likud Party in 1977; the second up to the Oslo Accords in 1993; the third up to the Al-Aqsa Intifada in 2000; while the fourth is up to the present. It is noted that the Zionist settlements seriously increased in the third phase (Karbaj et al., 2015) after the signing of the Oslo Agreement, the formation of the Palestinian Authority in 1994, and the talk about a Palestinian State, its space, borders and capital. This completely contradicts the central goal of a Palestinian State.

### ***Current Reality in the West Bank and Jerusalem***

Since 1967, successive Israeli governments have cumulatively translated the settlement plans and strategies into reality, increasing the number of colonial settlers, dismembering the West Bank, and besieging the Palestinians in Jerusalem.

According to the Palestinian Central Bureau of Statistics (2022), the number of colonial settlers in the West Bank and Jerusalem in 1972 was

about 12,000. The number rose to 112,000 in 1992, 360,000 in 2021, and 713,000 in 2020 (Table 1).

Regarding the number of colonial settlements in the West Bank and Jerusalem, it did not exceed 23 in 1972. It rose to 154 in 1992, 151 in West Bank, and 15 in Jerusalem in 2020 (PCBS, 2020).

In 2022, the number of Palestinians in the West Bank was 3.188 million, according to the Palestinian Central Bureau of Statistics (PCBS, 2022), while the number of colonial settlers reached 475,000 distributed in 128 settlements. In Jerusalem, the number of Palestinians reached 350,000, while settlers were 213,000 distributed in 17 colonial settlements (United Nation, 2021).

The Israeli occupation controls about 62% of the West Bank, 39% of settlements, and 20% of army camps, known as Area C according to the Oslo Accords, which are areas the Palestinians cannot enter or even approach. Furthermore, 13% of its space was allocated for the establishment of nature reserves (Palestinian Liberation Organization, 2016).

Whereas colonial settlements enjoy integrated connections through a network of roads, bridges and tunnels, the Palestinian communities in the West Bank are separated by bypass roads, colonies and military posts. Colonial clusters constitute a state inside the West Bank, separated from the Palestinian areas by 60 military gates; some open daily and others weekly (Figure 1).

In the West Bank, there are six huge colonial clusters (regional councils as described by Israel):

1. Gush Etzion Regional Council in Bethlehem and Jerusalem (middle of the West Bank).
2. Ha-Hebron Regional Council in Hebron (south of the West Bank).
3. Megilot Regional Council in the Dead Sea (east of the West Bank).
4. Mateh Binyamin Regional Council in Ramallah and Jerusalem (middle of the West Bank).
5. Jordan Valley Regional Council in Jericho and Tubas (east of the West Bank).
6. Shomron Regional Council in Nablus, Jenin, Tulkarm and Salfit (north of the West Bank).

The Jordan Valley was the most prominent of these clusters, as the Israeli occupation controlled it directly after 1967 and announced most of this geographical space as closed military zones. According to Khalil Tafikji, the Zionist leadership settled the issue of the Jordan Valley early by controlling most of its space in order to confiscate the Eastern Aquifer, prevent the

**T**he injustice in Palestine is getting worse by the day. In the three months between October 2023 and early January 2024, Israeli occupation forces murdered more than 23,000 Palestinians in Gaza and bombed almost all of Gaza to turn it into a wasteland.

Thousands of Palestinians are languishing in Israeli jails. Their crime is fighting for freedom and self-determination against the decades-old colonization of their country by foreigners, mostly European Jews.

In the meantime, the US and some European countries continue to assist Israel in committing the crime of genocide against the Palestinians.

This book explains the fact that Israel is a settler-colonial project, which means that it was never interested in the two-state solution. It pretended to be interested in it during the 1991 Madrid conference and during the 1993 Oslo Accords 1993 to hoodwink the international community into believing it was interested in peace with the Palestinians. The recent actions of the current Israeli government, which consists of fascists and criminals, have exposed further the settler-colonialist nature of the Zionist project in Palestine.

The chapters in this book will create awareness among people of conscience around the world of the need for them to insist their governments highlight the apartheid nature of the Zionist settler-colonialist project. Only a total boycott of Israel will force it to give freedom, justice and equality to Palestinians.



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