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Israel and the Fencing Policy: A Barrier On Every Seam Line

Said Saddiki | June 2015

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Series: Research Paper

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Introduction

Since its inception in 1948, Israel has established barriers of varying structures and effectiveness between populations of Jewish Israelis, and its Arab neighbors. This policy has been a constant element of Israel's security doctrine, rooted in Zionist thought from the beginning.¹ Writing of Palestine, the father of modern political Zionism Theodor Herzl, wrote in his book *A Jewish State*,² that "we should there form a portion of the rampart of Europe against Asia, an outpost of civilization as opposed to barbarism."³ Uri Avnery, an Israeli peace activist and journalist, argues that more than a hundred years later, Ariel Sharon's wall expresses exactly the same outlook; separating 'civilization' from its 'others.'⁴ The idea of building a separation wall in Palestine dates back to 1923, when Ze'ev Jabotinsky, one of the most influential Zionist leaders and the ideological father of today's Likud Party, published two essays entitled "The Iron Wall: Israel and the Arab World"⁵ and "The Ethics of the Iron Wall"⁶ in which he defended the idea of establishing a metaphorical, and in many ways physical, 'iron wall, between the populations, declaring that "Settlement can only develop under the protection of a force that is not dependent on the local population, behind an iron wall which they will be powerless to break down..." At the time, Jabotinsky's 'Iron Wall' doctrine was not

¹ See for example Uri Avnery's critical articles on Israeli separation walls.

² Also translated as "The State of the Jews" published 1896, Leipzig and Vienna.

³ Theodor Herzl, *A Jewish State* (New York: Maccabean Publishing Co., 1904), p.28.

⁴ Uri Avnery, "First of All - the Wall must Fall", *Gush Shalom*, August 30, 2003.

⁵ It was originally published in Russian in *Rassvyet*, Berlin (November 4, 1923), and later translated and published in English in *The Jewish Herald*, South Africa (November 26, 1937).

⁶ Originally published in Russian in *Rassvyet*, Paris (November 11, 1923), and later translated and published in English in *The Jewish Standard*, London (September 5, 1941).

adopted by a Zionist movement which instead sought a solution through the expulsion and displacement of native Arab Palestinians.

Though each modern Israeli barrier has been built in its own specific context, the goals of each project of separation overlap, and in fact form part of a policy of Israeli walls and fences derived from a single Zionist philosophy. This has translated into a state with perpetual security concerns, a lasting occupation, and the annexation of more Palestinian lands. Regardless of international resolutions recognizing the existence of the "Jewish state" within the so-called 1949 Armistice lines, the way and the context in which Israel was created and expanded has left it in an abnormal and hostile situation. Even if most Arab countries recognize, at least implicitly, the State of Israel, their peoples have never accepted a normalization of relations with the "Jewish State" as an embodiment of principals that include a continuation of practices that are at root separating 'civilization' from its 'others.' So much at the root of the state and its hostile predicament, it can be said that the separation barrier policy reflects to some extent the constant fear in which Israel lives.

This paper analyzes the multiple aspects of Israel's policy of separation, and evaluates the effectiveness of its contemporary methods in order to determine whether or not such a policy makes Israel more secure. It begins by identifying three categories of barriers based on their geographic location: separation barriers in the occupied Palestinian territories (barriers separating Israelis from Palestinians and barriers separating Palestinians from each other); barriers as *de facto* borders between Israel and Arab countries; and Israeli military barriers in other occupied Arab territories (in Egypt's Sinai Peninsula and the Syrian Golan Heights).

Separation Barriers in the Occupied Palestinian Territories (OPT): Dispersion of Population and Annexation of Territory

Israel has made the occupied Palestinian territories (oPt) a zone of separation barriers, and surrounded itself by fortified walls and fences on every boundary line. Barriers that separate Palestinians from each other, mainly the West Bank wall, are the most painful, not only because they are seen as major Israeli land-grabs, but also because they affect vital aspects of Palestinian lives, especially of those who live in areas adjacent to the barriers.

The West Bank Wall

In 1995, then-prime minister Yitzhak Rabin proposed building a separation wall⁷ along the entire length of the West Bank including east Jerusalem, but the project was not pursued for fear of the reaction of Jewish settlers who saw the idea as a retreat from the project of absorbing the West Bank into a "Greater Israel." In March 1996, the Israeli government decided to establish checkpoints along the de-facto borders of the West Bank, similar to the Erez checkpoint that controls the movement of people in and out of the Gaza Strip. In November 2000, the government of Ehud Barak approved a plan to establish a "barrier to prevent the passage of motor vehicles" from the northwest end of the West Bank to the Latrun area in the center. On July 18, 2001, the Israeli Ministerial Committee for Security Matters approved the recommendations of a steering committee established the previous month by then-Prime Minister Ariel Sharon, to adopt a series of measures aimed at preventing Palestinians from infiltrating into Israel across what became known as the seam area. In April 2002, after a surge in attacks by Palestinian groups, the Israeli cabinet decided to construct a long barrier composed of fences and walls in three areas of the West Bank deemed to be the most vulnerable to penetration by armed Palestinians: the Umm El-Fahm region and the villages divided between Israel and the area (Baka and Barta'a), the Qalqilya-Tulkarm

⁷ Different terms are used to denote the Israeli separation wall in the West Bank. Israeli officials and journalists generally use two terms "separation fence" and "security fence" while Palestinians use mainly "apartheid wall" or "racial separation wall" (in Arabic *jidar al-fasl al-unsuri*). The International Court of Justice in its advisory opinion used the term "separation wall". In this article, I prefer to use the term "separation wall" in accordance with the ICJ advisory opinion.

region, and the Greater Jerusalem region. In June 2002, the Israeli government began building the separation wall. On February 20, 2005, after several amendments made over the previous three years, the Israeli government published a new map marking the Wall's route throughout the West Bank.⁸

The construction of the separation wall is marked by Samer Alatout into the third period of Israel's occupation of the West Bank and Gaza since 1967. He has shown how each period of occupation was guided by a distinct government own regime: the 1967-1994 period, marked by its initial occupation and subsequent establishment of intensive control over territory and population; the 1994-2002 period, when Israeli authorities adopted a new policy of cantonization through intensive use of roadblocks, checkpoints, and bypass roads; and the current phase, which started in 2002,⁹ when the construction of the separation wall began. These three phases, however, are not disconnected but rather overlap each other. For example, elements of the two previous phases, such as occupation, control, and cantonization, form an integral part of the new Israeli separation policy. The construction of the separation wall in the West Bank obviously reflected a new phase of the Israeli policy towards the oPt. However, based, in addition to the annexation of some parts of West Bank territory to Israel, on the unilateral separation of Israel from other occupied Palestinian lands, it is a clear continuation of what came before.

Map and Structure of the Wall

⁸ This brief chronology of the construction of the West Bank wall is based on the Yehezkel Lein's article "Behind the Barrier: Human Rights Violations as a Result of Israel's Separation Barrier," Position Paper, Translated by Zvi Shulman (*B'Tselem*, April 2003). See also United Nations, "Humanitarian Impact of the West Bank Barrier," A report to the Humanitarian Emergency Policy Group (HEPG), compiled by the United Nations Office for Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs (OCHA) and the United Nations Relief and Works Agency for Palestine Refugees (UNRWA) in the occupied Palestinian territory, No.6, January 2006.

⁹ Samer Alatout, "Walls as Technologies of Government: The Double Construction of Geographies of Peace and Conflict in Israeli Politics, 2002-Present," *Annals of the Association of American Geographers*, Vol. 99, No. 5 (2009), p.960.

Close to 90% of the total route of the wall is inside the West Bank¹⁰ chewing up lands to the East of the Green Line, the pre-1967 border between Israel and what was then a Jordanian-administered West Bank. Effectively, the separation wall does not only separate Palestinians from Israel, but Palestinians from their land, hence Palestinians' contention that one of the major goals in erecting the West Bank wall is to annex more Palestinian lands to nearby Israeli settlements, and thus to Israel. The total length of the separation wall extends approximately 750 kilometers, more than twice the length of the 320 kilometer-long Green Line (1949 Armistice Line), since it zigzags into the West Bank up to 22 kilometers at points to ensure settlements fall on its western edge. The wall has an average width of 60-80 meters, which includes a system of barbed wire, ditches, large trace paths and tank patrol lanes on each side, as well as additional buffer zones/no-go areas of varying depths.¹¹

The separation wall is a fully integrated military system of walls, fences (including electronic and barbed-wire fences), barriers, trenches, censors, watchtowers, sandy routes, concrete slabs up to 8m (26ft) high, thermal imaging, video cameras, aerial drones and other security measures. Amos Yaron, former director of Israel's Ministry of Defense, described the West Bank separation wall as "is the largest project ever undertaken in Israel. Every day, over 500 heavy machinery moves, from one place to another, a million cubic meters of earth."¹² Although the structure of the separation wall takes various physical forms, it can be summarized in the following points:

- Barbed wire, to obstruct access.
- A trench 4 meters wide and 5 meters deep, dug behind the barbed wires.
- A paved road 12 meters wide, which is a military road for surveillance and reconnaissance.
- A sand road 4 meters wide located right behind the military road, to trace infiltrators. This road is combed twice daily, in the morning and evening.

¹⁰ Amnesty International, "Israel and the Occupied Territories: The place of the fence/wall in international law," February 19, 2004.

¹¹ Ibid.

¹² Felix Frisch, "Israel Plans: Tax to be imposed on Palestinians who enter Israel," *Y-net*, March 6, 2003.

- The separation wall is situated right after the sand road. It is a 1 meter cement wall and right over it there is a 3-meter electronic fence, where alarms, surveillance cameras, lights, and other security apparatus are placed.
- After the wall, there is a sand road, a paved road, a trench, and barbed wires, like the ones located before the wall.¹³

The construction of the separation wall in the West Bank is estimated to cost somewhere between NIS 10 million ((\$2.8 million) to NIS 15 million (\$4.3 million) per kilometer¹⁴ in addition to extra costs and those associated with 24-hour human and electronic surveillance. This puts the total cost of the 750 kilometer Israeli separation wall at somewhere between \$2.1 and \$3.2 billion.

The land area in the West Bank located between the separation wall and the Green Line has been designated by the Israeli government as a "seam zone," and declared a "closed zone" where "no person will enter the seam area and no one will remain there," by the Israeli military on October 2, 2003 (Declaration of Closing an Area No. S/20/03). This order, however, does not apply to Israelis or those who have the right to immigrate to Israel according to the country's Law of Return.¹⁵ The Palestinians who live near the area are allowed to remain in their homes and on their lands only if they possess a written permit authorizing permanent residence. It is expected that, when the separation wall is finished as planned, approximately 65,000 Palestinians will require permits to cross the wall *into* the West Bank where they legally reside, and some 270,000 Palestinians living in these areas will be trapped in closed military areas

¹³ The information on the barrier's structure is extracted from a report published by Palestinian National Authority, The State Information Center, "The Israeli Racist Separation Wall: Consequences and Violations," October 10, 2003, http://www.ipc.gov.ps/ipc_e/ipc_e-1/e_News%20Reports/2003/reports-033.html. This information is consistent with what is reported in the Response of the Israeli State Attorney to the High Court of Justice in HCJ 7784/02, Sa' al 'Awani 'Abd al Hadi et al. v. Commander of IDF Forces in the West Bank, sec. 23.

¹⁴ Amos Harel, "Cost of fence could rise to NIS 15 million per kilometer," *Haaretz*. April 8, 2004; Felix Frisch, "Israel Plans: Tax to be imposed on Palestinians who enter Israel," op.cit.

¹⁵ Article 4, Israeli Law of Return.

between the wall and the Green Line or in enclaves encircled by the wall.¹⁶ That these confiscated lands in the “seam area” include the West Bank’s most valuable agricultural land and water resources measuring 73,000 dunums, a vital source of income for the Palestinians in the region, is another source of concern for a failing Palestinian economy.

Goals of Israel’s West Bank Separation Wall

The sole stated purpose of the separation wall, as repeatedly declared by the Israeli government, is as a temporary structure providing security¹⁷ by preventing or at least reducing attacks carried out by Palestinian militant groups against Israelis inside the Green Line. The decision to build the wall was taken after the outbreak of the Second Palestinian Uprising (Al-Aqsa Intifada) on September 29, 2000, when the former Likud leader Ariel Sharon, accompanied by thousands of Israeli security forces, visited the *Haram Ash-Sharif*, known to Jews as the Temple Mount, in al-Quds (Jerusalem). The Palestinians saw Sharon’s visit as a provocation, and a new uprising quickly spread throughout the West Bank and Gaza Strip. From this point, the Arab-Israeli conflict entered a new phase, characterized by the escalation of bombing attacks inside Israel. In 2001 and 2002, Palestinian armed groups¹⁸ carried out 87 bombings against Israeli targets, causing 299 fatalities.¹⁹

Palestinians reject Israel’s justification of the construction of the wall based on a security argument and maintain that the wall was built for political reasons: to protect and perpetuate Israel’s occupation, illegal colonies, and ongoing colonization of the Palestinian land. Even if the decision to build the separation wall in 2000 was made in the context of a wave of attacks inside Israel, large numbers of the Palestinian

¹⁶ Amnesty International, “Israel and the Occupied Territories,” op.cit.

¹⁷ See, for example, the Israeli Government decision of July 23, 2001 cited in the website of Israel Seam Zone Authority, <http://www.seamzone.mod.gov.il/Pages/ENG/default.htm> (accessed December 28, 2012)

¹⁸ These attacks were carried out in particular by those affiliated with Hamas, Palestinian Islamic Jihad (PIJ), Fatah, and Popular Front for the Liberation of Palestine (PFLP).

¹⁹ Efraim Benmelech and Claude Berrebi, “Human Capital and the Productivity of Suicide Bombers,” *Journal of Economic Perspectives*, Vol. 21, No. 3 (Summer 2007), p.226.

attackers who carried out these operations passed through Israeli military checkpoints not through the porous border between Israel and the oPt.²⁰ The Palestine Liberation Organization (PLO) argues that if Israel truly wanted to protect its citizens, it should “do one or both of the following: withdraw completely from all of the territories it occupied in 1967 or place additional security on its internationally-recognized border, rather than in the Occupied Palestinian Territories.”²¹

For the Palestinians, one of the main goals of the Israeli separation wall is seen to be the annexation of more Palestinian land to Israel under the guise of security.²² Since the wall was not built on the Green Line, it will result in the *de facto* annexation of 10% to 15% of the occupied West Bank. This is in large part because of the relationship between the Israeli settlements in the West Bank, which are also a land grab, and contravene international law.²³ As of 2004, some 54 Israeli settlements in the West Bank and 12 in East Jerusalem were located on Palestinian land that is being cut off from the rest of the West Bank by the wall and being *de facto* annexed to Israel. In total, more than 320,000 Israeli settlers, some 80% of the settlers living in the oPt, will be living on the western side of the wall and will thus enjoy more direct territorial contiguity with Israel.²⁴ In contrast, around 67 Palestinian villages are separated from Palestinian communities, including their means of livelihood and access to government services. Some 210,000 are barred in isolated enclaves, in severe violation of their

²⁰ Palestinian Centre for Human Rights, “Securing the Wall from International Law: an Initial Response to the Israeli State Attorney,” Position Paper (Palestinian Centre for Human Rights, April 2005).

²¹ PLO Negotiations Affairs Department, “Bad Fences Make Bad Neighbors,” *The Palestine-Israel Journal*, Vol.9 No.3 (2002).

²² Former Palestinian President Yasser Arafat, accused Israel of “building the new Berlin Wall in order to partition the Palestinian territories.” cited in Arnon Regular, “Press in Conflict/Railing at the Fence – It’s a Palpable Result,” *Ha’aretz*, August 4, 2003.

²³ Amnesty International, “Israel and the Occupied Territories: The issue of settlements must be addressed according to international law,” September 8, 2003 (AI Index: MDE 15/085/2003).

²⁴ Amnesty International, “Israel and the Occupied Territories,” op.cit., p.4.

rights under international law.²⁵ Through the construction of its separation wall, then, Israel is drawing a new de facto map and unilaterally redefining its borders.

Some argue that if it was only about a temporary security measure, Israel could construct a barbed-wire fence that would perform the same function and could easily be dismantled or destroyed, instead of a steel-reinforced concrete wall. Indeed, its cost and route both seem to disprove claims that it is a “temporary security measure.”

Effects of Israel’s Separation Wall

The Social Impact

According to international law, Israel, as an occupying power, is obliged to respect the fundamental rights of the occupied Palestinian population at all times, and administer the Palestinian territory without making changes which could have far-reaching effects on the population or territory. The separation wall undoubtedly has a high human cost, one that is deepening still further the suffering of the Palestinian people. Since the construction of the wall began in 2002, human rights organizations have documented the immediate human impact of the wall. Reported effects, which present serious violations of both international human rights and international humanitarian law, affect various aspects of the Palestinians’ economic and social activities, including restrictions on movement, as well as the destruction and seizure of land. Amnesty International, for example, has repeatedly asserted that the wall cannot be considered a necessary or proportionate security measure, and does not benefit the local Palestinian population. On the contrary, it is regarded as an act of collective punishment, which is forbidden by international humanitarian law (Article 33 of the Fourth Geneva Convention, and the restrictions allowed by Article 64 of the same Convention). Moreover, the wall has severely negative consequences for hundreds of thousands of Palestinians, including unprecedented, disproportionate, and discriminatory restrictions on their movements within the oPt, as well as other violations of their fundamental rights, including the right to work, to food, to medical care, to education, and to an adequate standard of living.²⁶

²⁵ Yehezkel Lein, “Behind The Barrier: Human Rights Violations as a Result of Israel’s Separation Barrier,” op.cit., p.4, 9.

²⁶ Amnesty International, “Israel and the Occupied Territories: The place of the fence/wall in international law,” op.cit., p.6.

Thousands of Palestinians living inside the Green Line and near the separation wall find themselves separated not only from their agricultural lands but also from their nearby communities.

A report issued by the UN Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs (OCHA) in June 2007 summarized the significant humanitarian and social effects of the separation wall on Palestinian life in the following findings:

- Palestinians from the West Bank require permits to visit the six specialist hospitals inside Jerusalem. The resulting time and difficulty this entails has meant an up to 50% drop in the number of patients visiting these hospitals.
- Entire families have been divided by the wall. Husbands and wives are separated from each other, their children, and other relatives.
- Palestinian Muslims and Christians can no longer freely visit religious sites in Jerusalem. Permits are needed and are increasingly difficult to obtain.
- School and university students struggle each day through checkpoints to reach institutions that are located on the other side of the wall.
- Entire communities, such as the 15,000 people in the villages of the Bir Nabala enclave, are totally surrounded by the wall. Movement in and out is through a tunnel to Ramallah which passes under a motorway restricted for Israeli vehicles only.²⁷

Economic Effects

When construction of the wall began, studies by humanitarian organizations expected its immediate economic effects to include "a) the destruction of agricultural land and assets and water resources; b) inaccessibility to agricultural land and assets; c) added limitations on the mobility of people and goods, and therefore higher transactions costs; and d) uncertainty about the future and a consequent dampening of investment in

²⁷ Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs (OCHA) United Nations Relief and Works Agency for Palestine Refugees in the Near East (UNRWA), "The Humanitarian Impact of the West Bank Barrier on Palestinian Communities," Report No. 7, June 2007, p.4.

economic activities including agriculture."²⁸This was indeed the case. The Palestinian governorates adjacent to the separation wall, especially Jenin, Tulkarm, and Qalqiliya, are the most directly affected by the construction of the wall. The economic impact of the wall on these regions is among the most prominent effects recorded immediately after its construction, due principally to restrictions on farming and access to lands cut off from their owners. These areas, once known as the breadbasket of Palestine, are home to 37 percent of all the agricultural land in the West Bank.

Movement restrictions have proved fatal for many whose livelihoods are made in agriculture, and have seen increased unemployment rates in areas close to the wall.²⁹ Furthermore, it is very difficult for many Palestinians to obtain a permit to enter the seam area/closed zones. Even if some Palestinian farmers can get a permit to enter, they are not guaranteed regular access to their land for several reasons, including:

- Restrictions on the opening time limits the period of time a farmer can be in the closed areas.
- The Israeli army's control of the gates is so erratic that this is as much a problem as the permit regime itself.
- Agricultural gates are open three times a day, generally for 20 minutes to an hour.
- Following a security incident, the gates can be closed for several days or more.
- Tractors and other farm vehicles are frequently not permitted to cross the gate. Farmers must either walk or use a donkey to reach their land and bring out produce.

²⁸ The Humanitarian and Emergency Policy Group (HEPG) and the Local Aid Coordination Committee (LACC), *The Impact of Israel's Separation Barrier on Affected West Bank Communities*, (May 04, 2003), p.11.

²⁹ United Nations, "Humanitarian Impact of the West Bank Barrier," *op.cit.*, No. 6, p.8.

- Each permit is valid for a particular gate. Some farmers have the wrong gate numbers on their permits, leaving access for the farmer reliant on a soldier's discretion.³⁰

In addition to the effects of the wall on agricultural activity, cutting off Palestinian communities from their primary income streams both within the West Bank and Israel has deepened the isolation of the regions adjacent to the wall. For while the wall separates Palestinians from their farmland and water sources, and impedes their movement to market their produce in other areas of the West Bank, it also makes it difficult for tens of thousands of Palestinians to access work in Israel, mainly as day laborers on farms or construction sites, a primary source of income for many. The danger is that serious economic and social effects of the wall will likely push some Palestinians to move, a form of indirect forced displacement and ethnic cleansing.

It is worth mentioning that the construction of the wall does not only affect Palestinians living in the oPt, but also thousands of Palestinians living in the Green Line near the separation wall find themselves cut off from their agricultural lands and their nearby compatriots both in the West Bank and across the Green Line.

The Environmental Cost

Vital environmental resources in the "seam area/buffer zone" of the separation wall are destroyed by the wall. From the confiscation of water wells, demolition of homes and greenhouses, and the uprooting of hundreds of thousands of trees and crops, the effects are devastating. Palestinians argue that Israel, through the wall and its associated regime, will dominate all the strategic sites of fresh water in the region, especially in Jenin, Qalqilya, and Tulkarm. The Palestinian Authority has accused Israel of planning to gain control over the most important Palestinian water resources when it

³⁰ Ibid., p.9.

set out the route of the wall.³¹ Palestinians therefore fear that the situation will further weaken the Palestinian position in any future negotiations over water.³²

The Effect on Jerusalem

Jerusalem, which remains the thorniest issue when it comes to the resolution of the Arab-Israeli conflict, will be deeply affected by the construction of the separation wall. The largest part of east Jerusalem will be swallowed and absorbed by the separation wall into Israel.³³ Palestinians assert that one of the hidden goals is separating east Jerusalem from the West Bank and controlling the movement of Palestinians from and to the city, thereby forcing Palestinians living there to move eastwards and out of the Palestinian capital. This would cause a dramatic change in the demographic balance of Jerusalem in favor of its Jewish population. This is part of a documented program that began in the 1970s, according to many Palestinian studies, whereby Israel has worked to uproot Palestinians in the holy city and separate Jerusalem from its geographical and historical connections, as one of the ways to try and Judaize the city.

The International Legal Status of the Israeli Separation Wall in the West Bank

On December 8, 2003, the UN General Assembly requested an advisory opinion from the International Court of Justice (ICJ) on the legal consequences of the construction of the Israeli separation wall, considering the rules and principles of international law, including the fourth Geneva Convention of 1949, and relevant Security Council and General Assembly resolutions. On July 9, 2004, the ICJ issued its advisory opinion on the matter, and stated that the construction of the wall and its associated régime creates a "fait accompli" on the ground that could well become permanent, in which

³¹ Palestinian National Authority and PWA, *The Israeli Apartheid Separation Wall 'To Control The Palestinian Water Resources'*, prepared by the PWA in cooperation with Sustainable Management of the West Bank and Gaza Aquifer, February 5, 2003, p. 2.

³² Palestinian National Authority, State Information Center, "The Israeli Racist Separation Wall," op.cit.

³³ Peter Lagerquist, "Fencing the Last Sky: Excavating Palestine after Israel's 'Separation Wall'," *Journal of Palestine Studies*, Vol. 33, No. 2 (winter, 2004), p.15.

case, and notwithstanding the formal characterization of the wall by Israel, it would be tantamount to *de facto* annexation (para. 121).

The court rejected Israel's security argument since the route of the wall and its associated régime gravely infringe a number of rights of Palestinians residing in the territory occupied by Israel, and the infringements resulting from that route cannot be justified by military exigencies or by the requirements of national security or public order (para. 137). The court also called on Israel to comply with its obligation to respect the right of the Palestinian people to self-determination and its obligations under international humanitarian law and international human rights law (para.149).

The advisory opinion of the ICJ included five main findings (para. 163):

- 1- The construction of the wall is contrary to international law;
- 2- Israel is under an obligation to terminate its breaches of international law; it is under an obligation to cease forthwith the works of construction of the wall, to dismantle forthwith the structure therein situated, and to repeal or render ineffective forthwith all legislative and regulatory acts relating thereto;
- 3- Israel is under an obligation to make reparation for all damage caused by the construction of the wall;
- 4- All States are under an obligation not to recognize the illegal situation resulting from the construction of the wall and not to render aid or assistance in maintaining the situation created by such construction; all States parties to the Fourth Geneva Convention relative to the Protection of Civilian Persons in Time of War of August 12, 1949 have in addition the obligation, while respecting the United Nations Charter and international law, to ensure compliance by Israel with international humanitarian law as embodied in that Convention;
- 5- The United Nations should consider what further action is required to bring to an end the illegal situation resulting from the construction of the wall and the associated regime.

These findings were adopted almost unanimously by the fifteen participating judges of the ICJ, with exception of Judge Buergenthal, who voted against the five findings, and Judge Kooijmans, who voted for the advisory opinion except the fourth finding. Given the complexity of the case and the huge levels of Israeli lobbying that came ahead of the decision, this remarkable consensus on the legal consequences of the Israeli

separation wall is likely to give the opinion a significant and enduring place in the jurisprudence of the ICJ.³⁴

Gaza Fences

Gaza has been under Israeli military occupation since the Six Day War in 1967, even though UN Resolution 242, passed on November 22 1967 in the aftermath of the war, called for Israel to withdraw “from territories occupied in the recent conflict,” including Gaza. Israel declared the Gaza Strip a closed military zone—a declaration that was in place until 2005— so Palestinians in Gaza had to obtain permission from Israel whenever they wanted to travel out of the closed zone. Despite Israel’s unilateral withdrawal from Gaza in 2005 and the transfer of the management of the Gaza/Egypt border crossing at Rafah to the European Union Border Assistance Mission Rafah (EUBAM), Israel continued to exercise remote control of the crossing via closed-circuit cameras until 2007. This was following Hamas’ landslide victory in the Palestinian parliamentary election of 2006, and subsequent struggle for control between Hamas and Fatah, which saw Hamas take over the Gaza Strip in 2007. Israel’s blockade on the Gaza Strip was part of the state’s reaction to a loss of control inside the enclave, but the blockade has only been possible with the acquiescence of Egypt and its leaders.

In October 1994, after a string of attacks carried by Palestinian militant groups in the coastal city of Tel Aviv, Israeli Prime Minister Yitzhak Rabin called for the construction of a fence around the Gaza Strip. The aim was both to separate Israelis from Palestinians and to cut off Gaza’s Palestinian residents from the rest of the world. Rabin based his proposal on a philosophy of separation rooted in Zionist thought by stating, “We have to decide on separation as a philosophy. There has to be a clear border. Without a

³⁴ Richard A. Falk, “Toward Authoritativeness: The ICJ Ruling on Israel’s Security Wall,” *The American Journal of International Law*, Vol. 99, No. 1 (January 2005), p.43.

border demarcating the lines, whoever wants to swallow 1.8 million Arabs will just bring greater support for Hamas."³⁵ Israel has built two metal barriers around the Gaza Strip, one between Israel and Gaza and the other along the border of Gaza with Egypt. The structure is 51-kilometer's (32-mile) long and was constructed from 1994-1996 mostly of barbed wire and corrugated sheet metal. At the beginning of the 2000 al-Aqsa Intifada, Palestinian activists dismantled much of the barrier, which was rebuilt by the Israeli military between December 2000 and June 2001, with the addition of observation posts, each of which enabled soldiers to monitor an area of roughly six kilometers round-the-clock.³⁶ When Israel found that the direct military occupation of the Gaza Strip was more costly, it decided to withdraw from the Strip and maintain complete control from outside its borders, ultimately turning Gaza into a big prison.

On the other side, and further separating Gaza from its environs, Israel constructed a fence along Gaza's land border with Egypt in 2004-2005, this came in parallel with the "unilateral withdrawal" of settlers from Gaza, and the end of internal Israeli control. Israel still exercises almost complete control over Gaza's land borders, territorial waters, and airspace, and prevents its population from significant contact with the outside world. The fence between Israel and Gaza is 11 kilometers (6.8 mile) long and 7-9 meters (about 20-30 feet) high, with several openings that allow the Israeli army to move through it under special circumstances. In order to detect underground tunnels used by Palestinians since the blockade began to smuggle items such as food and weapons from Egypt, the Israeli army equipped the fence with sophisticated technology and sensors that can locate tunnels, and aid in their destruction.³⁷ The underground

³⁵ David Makovsky, "How to Build a Fence," *Foreign Affairs*, Vol. 83, No. 2 (March - April 2004), p. 52.

³⁶ Doron Almog, "Lessons of the Gaza Security Fence for the West Bank," *Jerusalem Issue Brief*, *Jerusalem Center for Public Affairs*, Vol. 4, No. 12 (December 23, 2004).

³⁷ Hanan Greenberg "Army building new Gaza barrier," *Ynet News*, April 04, 2005.

<http://www.ynetnews.com/articles/0,7340,L-3072620,00.html> (accessed December 28, 2012)

smuggling tunnels in Rafah on Gaza-Egypt border evade total Israeli control, however, despite the army's attempts to destroy them by aerial bombardment.

The Israeli fence along Gaza's perimeter has three main crossings through which Palestinians and their goods can enter and leave the territory: Beit Hanoun (Erez) in the north, for those going to and from Israel, imposes stringent restrictions on the movement of Palestinians; al-Montar (Karni) crossing to the east, which handles cargo and has been closed since the beginning of the al-Aqsa Intifada; and the Rafah crossing to the south, on the Egyptian border, which was monitored by the Israel Airports Authority until Israel withdrew from Gaza on September 11, 2005 as part of Israel's unilateral disengagement plan, and it has subsequently been managed by the EUBAM until Hamas Movement took over the Gaza Strip in 2007.

Evidence of the ineffectiveness of the separation fences to stop attacks emanating from Gaza can perhaps best be seen in the constant wars waged by Israel on the Strip. Despite the separation fences, regular military invasions, aerial bombings, targeted assassinations, land confiscations are carried out.³⁸ From 2006, three large-scale attacks have been waged on Gaza, the second of which, from December 2008-January 2009, killed approximately 1,417 Palestinians. The construction of the fence along the perimeter of the Gaza Strip has not stopped the attacks of Palestinian militant groups, since the organizations have adopted new means to fight Israel, including the use of surface-to-surface missiles and rockets that can reach Israeli cities on the other side of the barrier.

The barrier has failed to ensure Israeli security, and undermined Palestinian territorial contiguity, as well as causing harm to the civilian population there.

³⁸ Palestinian Centre for Human Rights, "Securing the Wall from International Law" op.cit.

De Facto Borders: Similar Purposes and Different Contexts

Lebanon- Israel Border Fences

During the British Mandate in Palestine, double and triple barbed-wire fences along the Palestine-Lebanon border were constructed between May and June 1938 in an attempt to seal off the border against incursions from the north of Palestine. The barrier was dismantled during the 1936-1939 Arab uprisings in Palestine. At the same time, the British Mandate authorities erected a new barbed wire called Tergart's wall on the northern border of Palestine to prevent Arab militants from Syria and Lebanon from joining the 1936-1939 revolt. Tergart's wall was abandoned and dismantled during World War II.

With the end of the British Mandate (after the establishment of the State of Israel), the Israeli government built new fences running the length of the Palestine-Lebanon border. In 1976, the government adopted a security policy toward southern Lebanon called "the Good Fence," aimed at providing some services to southern Lebanese, especially the Maronites, including passage into Israel for work, access to medical treatment, Israeli goods, relief support, water and food supplies,³⁹ and even military assistance and training for "those seeking to defend their community".⁴⁰ This policy was intended to support the South Lebanon Army (Maronite Militia) in its battle against the PLO during the Lebanese civil war which broke out in 1976. The "Good Fence" policy

³⁹ Augustus Richard Norton and Jillian Schwedler, "(In) security Zones in South Lebanon," *Journal of Palestine Studies*, Vol. 23, No. 1 (Autumn 1993), p. 63.

⁴⁰ Clive H. Schofield, "Elusive Security: The Military and Political Geography of South Lebanon," *GeoJournal*, Vol. 31, No. 2 (1993), p. 155.

ceased to exist with the sudden withdrawal of Israeli troops from southern Lebanon in 2000.

In the 1970s, Israel built a fence without respecting the exact lines of the border inherited from the Mandate period.⁴¹ After the 1983–84 withdrawal of Israeli troops from most of Lebanon except for the "security zone" in the south, Israel built a sophisticated defense complex along the border, consisting of electrified fences, anti-personnel minefields, patrol roads and barbed wire obstacles.⁴² In March 1985, after a truck bombing in southern Lebanon killed 12 Israeli soldiers, Israel extended and moved the border fence to the northwest. The modern fence on the Israel-Lebanon border is considered the backbone of Israel's passive defense on its northern border. The fence consists of barbed wire, movement sensors, infra-red, radio, television and electronic monitors at strategic points that can locate any intrusion within 500 meters, routine road patrols along the security road, and fine sand that allows detection of footprints.⁴³

Though equipped with the latest technology making infiltration nearly impossible, the fence failed on July 12, 2006 to prevent Hezbollah fighters from penetrating into Israel, killing five soldiers and taking the bodies of two of them back north into Lebanon. The

⁴¹ Joseph Algazy, "Soiled Hands, spoiled Lands," *Haaretz*, December 24, 1999. cited in Julie Trottier, "A wall, water and power: the Israeli 'separation fence'," *Review of International Studies*, Vol. 33, No.1 (2007), p.108.

⁴² David Eshel, "The Israel-Lebanon Border Enigma," *IBRU Boundary and Security Bulletin* 8, No. 4 (Winter 2000-2001), p. 80.

⁴³ See for example, Al J. Venter, "Israel Last Line of Defense," *Jane's International Defense Review*, Vol. 29 No. 11 (November 1996), p. 61.; David Eshel, "Counter-guerrilla Warfare in South Lebanon," *Marine Corps Gazette*, No. 1 (July 1997), p. 42; Julie Trottier, "A wall, water and power: the Israeli 'separation fence'," *op.cit*, p.108.

event led to the outbreak of a 34-day war between Israel and Hezbollah. Even during periods of calm, the *de facto* Israeli-Lebanon border remains a battlefield.

Egypt's Underground Wall

In early December 2009, Egypt started, under the pretext of national security, to construct an underground steel wall that reached down 35 meters (115ft) and extends approximately 12 kilometers along its border with the Gaza Strip. The stated aim of the wall was to block Palestinians tunnels, which have been in operation since at least 1982, when Palestinian families divided between Israeli-occupied Gaza and Egyptian-controlled Rafah in that year's Egyptian-Israeli peace treaty began to construct underground tunnels linking Gaza and Egypt as a means of communication amongst extended family members.⁴⁴

The underground wall is made of steel sheets and sensors, and connected to pipes that can saturate the ground along the border with pumped-in seawater to collapse tunnels dug into the sandy earth.⁴⁵ NGOs warned of an environmental disaster if the seawater pumped under the barrier leaked into the only underground freshwater wells that the local population depend on for drinking and agriculture purposes. The wall makes tunnel digging even more dangerous than it already was.

It has been widely reported that the underground wall was built in response US and Israeli pressure, including Washington's threat to cut military aid to Egypt over concern about arms smuggling through the tunnels. The Consolidated Appropriations Act of

⁴⁴ Jeremy Sharp, "The Egypt-Gaza Border and its Effect on Israeli-Egyptian Relations," Congressional Research Service, Rep. no. RL34346 (Library of Congress, February 1, 2008. February 1, 2008), <http://www.fas.org/sqp/crs/mideast/RL34346.pdf> (accessed December 28, 2012)

⁴⁵ Ursula Lindsey, "Egypt's Wall," *Middle East Research and Information Project*, February 1, 2010, <http://www.merip.org/mero/mero020110> (accessed December 20, 2012)

2008, signed into law on December 26, 2007, would have withheld \$100 million in Foreign Military Financing from Egypt until then-Secretary of State Condoleezza Rice reported that Cairo had taken concrete steps to detect and destroy the smuggling tunnels leading from Egypt to Gaza.⁴⁶ The US military designed the wall and gave significant technical and financial assistance to the Egyptian government for its construction. In 2008, as a response to pressure from the US, Egypt agreed to spend \$23 million in US military aid on robots and other advanced technology to detect smuggling tunnels and accepted an American offer to send experts from the Army Corps of Engineers to train Egyptian border guards in the technology.⁴⁷

However, smuggling across the Egypt-Gaza border does not pose a threat to Egyptian national security. Rather, it alleviates the suffering of the Palestinian population caused by the Israeli-imposed blockade. Egypt's underground wall does not protect Egypt, but is rather Cairo protecting its own interests, which means protecting the interests of the United States, and through them Israel. The wall, then, serves to strangle the only lifeline available to the Palestinians in Gaza. This has resulted in a humanitarian disaster.

Many human rights organizations have strongly condemned the construction of the underground wall, labeling it collective punishment and therefore prohibited under international humanitarian law in all circumstances. The UK-based Arab Organization for Human Rights (AOHR) considers the barrier a crime against humanity, noting that the

⁴⁶ Carol Migdalovitz, "Israel: Background and Relations with the United States," *Congressional Research Service*, April 2, 2009, p.19; Tally Helfont, "Egypt's Wall with Gaza & the Emergence of a New Middle East Alignment," in: *ORBIS*, Vo. 54, No. 3 (summer 2010), p.434.

⁴⁷ Ellen Knickmeyer, "Egypt to Bolster Gaza Border; U.S. Aid Will Help in Detecting Tunnels, Congressman Says," *Washington Post*, January 7, 2008.

wall aims to tighten the noose around the people of Gaza, to break their will and impose agendas which are hostile to the Palestinians' rights to freedom and self-determination.⁴⁸ Although any state has the right to build and to protect its national security, international law restricts this right to avoid damage to neighboring countries. Therefore, Egypt, because of its status as the only gateway on the other side of Gaza, is obliged under international law to cease the construction of the barrier and dismantle what is already built, as well as to open the Rafah crossing to save the Gaza population from the Israeli blockade.

Sinai Fence

In 2010, following the smuggling of tens of thousands of African migrants, coming mainly from Sudan, Ethiopia, and Eritrea, across the Sinai Peninsula and into Israel, the Israel government prepared plans for the construction of a border fence along its Sinai border with Egypt. The aim was to prevent African 'infiltrators' (the stigmatizing term used by Israelis), and arms smugglers and "secure Israel's Jewish and democratic character" because the growth of the non-Jewish population could undermine the "Jewish character" of Israel and destroy the Zionist dream.

The Israeli Ministry of Defense initially declared that by the end of 2011, the fence would cover the 240 kilometer, porous border with Egypt.⁴⁹ The main section of the

⁴⁸ Arab Organization for Human Rights in The UK (AOHR), "Special Report- Egyptian Government infected by Mad Israeli Wall Disease," December 30, 2009.

⁴⁹ Ben Hartman, "First Permanent Section of Sinai Border Fence Completed," *The Jerusalem Post*, June 2, 2011.

fence was completed in early 2013,⁵⁰ and once complete is expected to have cost about NIS 1.5 billion (US\$ 395 million).⁵¹ It is constructed of barbed wire, and will include high-tech surveillance cameras and radar equipment that will alert the military to intruders.

Even if infiltration of the border by African migrants has dropped significantly since the construction of the fence began in November 2010, as Israeli officials have declared, the system will likely increase the number of those migrants who die trying to cross into Israel through more remote desert areas in the Sinai Peninsula.

Jordan-Israel Border Fence

Until 1994, Jordan's recognized border with Israel was based on the armistice line⁵² agreed to in April 1949 by Israel and what was then Transjordan, following negotiations facilitated by the UN.⁵³ Today, the international boundary between Israel and Jordan is delimited by the Peace Treaty signed between the two sides in 1994, based on principles contained in UN Security Council resolutions 242 of 1967 and 338 of 1973, making Jordan the second Arab country after Egypt to normalize relations with Israel. The Treaty delineated the international border between Israel and Jordan with reference to the boundary definition under the British Mandate (Article 3).

⁵⁰ Joshua Mitnick, "Israel Finishes Most of Fence on Sinai Border," *The Wall Street Journal*, January 2, 2013. <http://online.wsj.com/article/SB10001424127887324374004578217720772159626.html> (accessed October 13, 2013).

⁵¹ Barak Ravid, "Israel to build NIS 1.5b fence along Egypt border," *Haaretz*, October 1, 2010.

⁵² The 1949 Armistice Agreements are a set of agreements signed during the year 1949 between Israel and its immediate neighbors, Egypt, Lebanon, Jordan and Syria.

⁵³ Colonel Mazen Qojas, "Cooperative Border Security Assessment and Options," Occasional Papers (Cooperative Monitoring Center, March 1999,) p.20.

Although the Israeli-Jordan border remains the least turbulent of Israel's frontiers it is marked by a barbed wire fence separating from the Dead Sea to the Red Sea. Israel has not fenced its entire 238 kilometers (149 mile) boundary with Jordan, however, since the segment along the shore of the Dead Sea is not fenced, though much of the remaining border is lined with a double fence with a patrol road between the fences.⁵⁴ Some segments of the fence were taken down following the 1994 treaty.

In March 2011, Israeli Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu said he had instructed the military to begin planning the construction of a fence along the border with Jordan. Israel gives great importance to the project because, according to Netanyahu, once the fence with Egypt is erected, the smugglers and infiltrators will look for alternate routes and seek to enter Israel from the east.⁵⁵ These plans are an indication of a perpetual panic and fear, with threats and insecurity in a region whose people have never trusted Israel and its policies.

Israeli Military Barriers in the Occupied Arab Territories

Bar Lev Line: The Fall of a Myth

After capturing the Sinai Peninsula from Egypt during the 1967 Six Day War, Israel built a sand barrier, called the Bar-Lev Line, along the eastern bank of the Suez Canal for a distance of 170 kilometers. Israel sought to achieve three key goals through the Bar-Lev Line; first, maintaining the military gains and geo-strategic position resulting from the 1967 war; second, preventing any major Egyptian attack across the canal with a sand wall that made reaching the other side of the canal it impossible for any

⁵⁴ Clyde R. Mark, "Israel's Security Fences, Separating Israel from the Palestinians," CRS Report for Congress, August 1, 2003, CRS-2.

⁵⁵ Jerusalem Post, March 15, 2011.

amphibious vehicle (without destroying the barrier); and third, monitoring Egyptian military activities on the western bank of the Canal.

The Bar-Lev line, which Moshe Dayan, former Israeli Minister of Defense, once referred to as "one of the best anti-tank ditches in the world,"⁵⁶ was in fact a complete military system composed of 31 complex, multi-leveled strong-points, each fortification with several reinforced concrete bunkers providing for all round firing positions.⁵⁷ The complement of each fortress was more than 50 soldiers, armed with anti-tank weapons, mortars, tanks and heavy machine guns.⁵⁸ The sand wall was also equipped by wire entanglements, and mine fields surrounded each strong point and extended to a depth of 800 meters. Some points were equipped with napalm tanks giving the ability to cover the Canal locally with fuel, which would produce a sheet of flames one meter in height and raise the temperature of the water to boiling point.⁵⁹ The construction of the Bar-Lev Line, in addition to the maintenance expenses, cost nearly \$300 million.

The major dilemma faced by the Egyptian forces, when they decided to recover the Sinai Peninsula, was how to destroy the Bar-Lev Line. In 1971, a young Egyptian engineer officer suggested a simple, yet ingenious, solution: open gaps in the sand wall by using water pumps. The Egyptian Corps of Engineers combined special British and German pumps and improved them so as to make gaps in the wall over a three-five

⁵⁶ Cited by George W. Gawrych, "The 1973 Arab-Israeli War: The Albatross of Decisive," Leavenworth Papers, no. 21 (the US Army Center of Military History, Washington, 1996), p.16.

⁵⁷ Riad Ashkar, "The Syrian and Egyptian Campaigns," *Journal of Palestine Studies*, Vol. 3, No. 2 (winter 1974), p.20.

⁵⁸ Ibid.

⁵⁹ H. El-Badri, T. El-Magdoub and M. Dia El-Din Zohdy, *The Ramadan War 1973* (Dunn Loring VA: T. N. Dupuy Associates, Inc., 1973), p.7.

hour period. During the October 1973 war,⁶⁰ Egyptian forces surprised Israeli forces by making sixty huge gaps in the sand wall, and overrunning the Bar-Lev Line. Instead of controlling Egyptian forces and preventing them from crossing the Suez Canal, the wall prevented Israeli forces from seeing the Egyptian attack.⁶¹ Most military analysts agree that the surprise attack launched by Egypt using new warfare tactics, and Israel's miscalculation regarding the effectiveness of the sand wall, were the key elements that allowed Egyptian forces to destroy the myth of the Bar-Lev Line.

Golan Heights Fence

On its de facto border with Syria, Israel built a military barrier after its occupation of the Golan Heights in 1967. This was done to separate the Golan from the rest of Syria, but was completed as impenetrable fence enhanced by minefields only in 1975.⁶² In addition to its military goals, Israel aimed through this barrier to increase its presence in the Golan Heights by establishing its first settlement in the region immediately after its occupation began. When Palestinian and Syrian protesters broke through the barrier and crossed the cease-fire line on the 2011 day of commemoration of the *Nakba*⁶³ as a

⁶⁰ The October War, also known by Arabs as the Ramadan War and by Israeli as the Yom Kippur War, launched by Egypt and Syria against Israel on October 6, 1973 to recover Sinai Peninsula and Golan Heights, which had been captured and occupied by Israel since the 1967 Six-Day War.

⁶¹ For more information about how Egyptians destroyed the bar-Lev Line see: George W. Gawrych, "The 1973 Arab-Israeli War," op.cit.; Sa'ad Din Shazli, "How the Egyptians Crossed the Canal," interview with Lt. General Shazli, *Journal of Palestine Studies*, Vol. 3, No. 2 (Winter, 1974), pp. 163-168.

⁶² Tayseer Mara'i and Usama R. Halabi, "Life under Occupation in the Golan Heights," *Journal of Palestine Studies*, Vol. 22, No. 1 (autumn 1992), p.81.

⁶³ *Nakba* means "Catastrophe" in Arabic. It refers to the destruction of Palestinian society and the creation of Israel in 1948 when ten thousand Palestinians were killed and 750,000 were forced into exile.

symbolic return to their homeland the Israeli reaction was violent; soldiers shot at the protesters, killing 35.

After this, Israel planned to construct a new barbed-wire fence east of the village of Majd al-Shams to prevent Palestinian and Syrian protestors from crossing the cease-fire line in the future. The resulting fence is eight meters high, and four kilometers long on the side of Majd al-Shams and extends to Quneitra. According to Israeli officials, the Israeli military has deployed new mine fields along the *de facto* border with Syria since many had failed during incidents that took place on days commemorating *Naqba* and *Naksa* (previous wars with the Arab countries).⁶⁴ Syria accused Israel of harming the residents of Majd al-Shams and taking over their lands in order to build a "racist separation fence" separating the Syrian-Druze population of the Golan Heights from their Syrian motherland.⁶⁵ In addition, the Syrian government claimed that Israel tried to create new political and security facts on the ground in order to affect future negotiation on the future of the Israeli-occupied Golan Heights.⁶⁶

The construction of the fence was regarded at that time as a pro-active move by Israel ahead of an anticipated UN vote on Palestinian statehood in October 2011, to prevent any new storming of the cease-fire line by Palestinian and Syrian demonstrators. During the Syrian uprising that began in mid-March 2011, Israel repaired some parts of the Golan fences.

⁶⁴ See letter of Syria's ambassador to the United Nations, Bashar Ja'afari, to UN Secretary-General and the permanent members of the UN Security Council on August 8, 2011. Cited in Barak Ravid, "Syria calls on UN to thwart Israel's 'separation fence' on Golan Heights," *Haaretz*, August 15, 2011.

⁶⁵ Ibid

⁶⁶ Ibid

Conclusion

The separation barrier strategy has been a key element in the construction of the Israeli state. The fencing and heavy militarization of Israel's fault lines, the creating of security and buffer zones with Arab nations, whether in Gaza, the West Bank, Egypt, Lebanon, Syria, or Jordan, are intended to perpetuate occupation and control "the other side." This is all in order to guarantee the security of a "Jewish state" and to protect its "Jewish character". It also seeks the annexation of more Palestinian land, to define unilaterally the borders of a future Palestinian State, continuing the ethnic cleansing of Palestinians from the oPt and diminishing the possibility of the creation of an independent and sovereign Palestinian state in the West Bank and Gaza by interrupting its territorial contiguity.

Despite the enormous efforts and the huge amounts of money spent on constructing these separation barriers, Israel has not achieved security. Israel is still living in a region whose peoples, whether in Palestine or neighboring countries, reject its existence and have shown over time that they cannot coexist or normalize their relations with the "Jewish state." In fact, the policy of separation not only surrounds and disperses Palestinians; it also places Israel itself in a cage of its own making.

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