



THE CENTRAL COMMITTEE ON:

● President Ramaphosa ● Rolling back state capture ● 15% VAT

March 2018

Voice of the South African Communist Party

# Umsebenzi

Special Issue

## Israeli Apartheid

Behind the  
mask of the  
Zionist state



### CENTRAL COMMITTEE

# A new dawn – and the start of a long & challenging march

*The SACP Central Committee met on 23 and 24 February and issued this statement*

The Central Committee (CC) meeting occurred against the immediate backdrop of significant, rapid developments in our country – notably the forced resignation of President Zuma on 12 February in the face of an imminent parliamentary vote of no confidence, and the election of Deputy President Cyril Ramaphosa as President of the Republic three days later.

Notwithstanding the rapidity of these and many other related developments, the orderly manner in which they have unfolded are a testament both to the strength of our post-apartheid constitutional order and to the determined wave of popular and patriotic isolation of those involved in corporate capture and looting of strategic state institutions.

The CC noted the important role the SACP has played over an extended period, initially as the only organised formation within the ANC-headed alliance, in identifying and naming “state capture”, and in demanding the ANC recall of President Zuma. It was the SACP that first called for a judicial commission of inquiry into “state capture”. In May last year the SACP convened a National Imbizo (Consultative Conference) that drew together participants from, among others, the Congress of South African Trade Unions (Cosatu), the South African National Civics Organisation (Sanco), the African National Congress (ANC) stalwarts and veterans, Business Leadership South Africa, Save South Africa, and various community and faith-based formations.

The National Imbizo adopted a minimum platform of action. The CC noted that, without exception, all of the issues highlighted in this platform have either been met or steps towards implementation have been taken. They include the appointment of an independent judicial commission; the dissolution of the Eskom

Board and the reversal of the irregular re-appointment of the Eskom CEO; moves to end the factional abuse of the criminal justice system; growing parliamentary activism; and President Ramaphosa’s commitment to set up an inquiry into the South African Revenue Service (SARS), and to initiate lifestyle audits for politicians in the executive. There are also clear indications that an unaffordable and unneeded nuclear deal will not go ahead. Of course, ongoing vigilance on all of these fronts is still required.

Areas that require specific attention include the intelligence services, broader security cluster and SARS. The SACP urges the President to establish the announced commission on SARS as soon as possible. Among the issues it should investigate are SARS management’s handling of the allegations against Jonas Makwakwa and Kelly-Ann Elskie and the disbandment of the SARS High Risk Investigations Unit. The exodus of senior staff should also be examined.

The SACP commends President Ramaphosa for the leadership role he has now openly assumed in driving the anti-state capture agenda with energy and focus. The parasitic networks are off balance and some leading figures are, literally, on the run. Now is the time to press ahead unsparingly.

However, it is no secret that, while Pres-

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**All ‘state capture’ issues highlighted by the SACP national imbizo have been met or steps towards implementation have been taken**

ident Ramaphosa’s election as ANC president in December has been a key factor in tilting the balance, that election was won with the slimmest of margins. Key levers of public power and leadership structures at various levels are still loaded with personalities historically implicated in “state capture” networks. A reconstructed and revitalised criminal justice system must be allowed to pursue its responsibilities. A false closing of ranks, a phony ceasefire in the name of ANC “unity” ahead of the 2019 general elections will betray our struggle and will, in fact, be rejected at a popular level, not least by the ANC’s own historical support base.

It is in this context that the SACP has called for a reconfiguration of the ANC-headed Alliance. Without the support of its Alliance partners, the progressive energies for renewal now evident will be compromised and stymied from inside of the ANC itself. There are organisational practices and emerging class forces that have allowed this 106-year liberation organisation, our ANC, to become the entry-point for the parasitic looting of public resources. These practices and forces have not disappeared. The SACP intends to actively engage the ANC and our other allies on interventions that must now be urgently undertaken to address systemic problems at both the national and sub-national levels, within our movement and within the state.

Overall, the CC concluded that while welcoming and fully supporting the now intensified offensive against “state capture”, we must also ensure that we do not imagine that a return to a pre-2009, pre-Zuma era is either possible or desirable. We must use the momentum of struggle against parasitic looting to press ahead with real (not demagogic) radical structural transformation of our economy and society. We need to be forward looking,



Chief Justice Mogoeng Mogoeng swears in Cyril Ramaphosa as fifth president

move decisively ahead and boldly implement a second, more radical phase of the National Democratic Revolution, by also nudging all progressive forces in this direction.

As the SACP's 14th National Congress in July last year resolved, driving these imperatives will now require, among other things, the consolidation of a networked left progressive front of formations. The building of a popular left front and reconfiguration of the Alliance form the central tenets of the Congress' resolution on state and popular power, and the SACP is forging ahead with its implementation. To this end the SACP will be deepening consultation and engagements with our allies, worker and other progressive formations. ●

## Hamba Kahle, eNgcobo Six

**T**he CC condemned in the strongest terms possible the criminal attack on and killing of police officers at eNgcobo police station in the Eastern Cape on 23 February, and expressed serious concern about what seems to be a trend of increasing lawlessness in some parts of our country.

The SACP conveys its heartfelt condolences to the families of the five members of the police service, Constables Sibongiseni Sandlana,

Kuhle Mathetha, Nkosiphendulo Pongco and Zuko Ntshoku, warrant officer Zuko Mbini, and the soldier Mbuzeni Freddy Mpandeni. Our heartfelt condolences also go to the Police and Prisons Civil Rights Union to which all the members of the police belonged, and to the police fraternity as a whole.

The SACP calls on communities to mobilise and work together with the police to fight against the scourge of crime. ●

CENTRAL COMMITTEE

# Second Nedlac Financial Sector Summit

**A**s a lead formation in spurring the convening of the first the National Economic Development and Labour Council (Nedlac) Financial Sector Summit in 2002, the SACP welcomes the announcement that the much delayed second summit will now convene in the coming months. The 2002 Summit and the resulting 2004 Financial Sector Charter paved the way for important advances in terms of debt relief, and greater transparency and regulatory control over the credit bureaus.

However, many other agreements have not been seriously implemented, notably commitments to community reinvestment measures. Meanwhile, campaigns and court judgments have uncovered serious abuses in the issuing of garnishee orders, in housing evictions, and the abuse of grant recipients by Cash Paymaster Services and others. There is a general crisis of unsustainable indebtedness among the working poor and middle strata as a result of predatory credit offers by retailers and others. The implosion of Steinhoff is also not unrelated to attempts to disguise the true state of its local debt book through off-shoring and



The summit must address retailers' predatory credit offers

foreign acquisitions.

Working with our allies, the SACP will use the summit, among other things, to press for a thorough review of implementation of agreements embodied in the Financial Sector Charter, for interest rate caps for industrial credit and the gap housing market. We will also call for the more effective consolidation of devel-

opment finance institutions (DFIs), not least a string of provincial DFIs including the Eastern Cape Development Corporation, Free State Development Corporation, Limpopo Economic Development Enterprise and Ithala (in KZN). The Postbank must be effectively launched and its role in social grants disbursement consolidated. ●

# Beginning to answer the land question

**O**n the land question, the SACP welcomes what we believe to be the real intent behind the ANC's December conference resolution on "expropriation without compensation" as one lever to achieve land reform. We do not believe that the existing constitutional requirement of paying just and equitable (not market) compensation has remotely been an impediment to serious land reform – in fact, the constitutional right to expropriate



Our constitutional right to public interest land expropriation has never been used

in the public interest has never been used for land restitution! Nonetheless, the opening up of this issue presents an important opportunity to move land reform in post-apartheid South Africa out of its current confused and spineless dead-end.

In general, the SACP aligns itself with the findings and recommendations of the High Level Panel chaired by former President Kgalema Motlanthe on the land question. There has not been serious budgeting for effective and productive

land reform. The focus has been on necessary but limited land restitution, at the expense of forward-looking land redistribution and security of tenure, especially for those (mainly women) often living under patriarchal, arbitrary subjection in the former bantustans, and farm workers on commercial farms. The land question has also tended to be focused on rural areas with the critical challenge of radical transformation in urban areas not being given

enough attention – although the urban property market now reproduces and exacerbates apartheid space with as much cruelty as forced removals and the old Group Areas legislation once did. ●

CENTRAL COMMITTEE

# On Sona and the Budget

The CC reaffirmed the perspectives contained in the Party's response to the 21st February Budget. The SACP acknowledges that this budget occurs within a very challenging situation, not least a nearly R50-billion fiscal deficit, and a public debt that is simply unsustainable over the medium term. It is a debt that threatens to undermine any latitude for sovereign developmental policy implementation. Demagogic and populist responses to the budget should, therefore, be avoided.

Much (by some estimates around half) of the deficit is directly attributable to the parasitic looting of public resources by the state capture phenomenon. South Africans, particularly the working class and the poor are having to bear the brunt of austerity measures precipitated by this parasitic looting.

In particular, the SACP is extremely unhappy with the increase of VAT. It marks the possible beginnings of regressive creep. While some basic foodstuffs are zero rated, the working class and poor do not live on bread and pap alone. It is simply untrue to argue, as the Minister of Finance did, that the 20% poorest will be unaffected by the VAT hike. What is more, other indirect taxes, like the increase in the fuel levy, will further impact on the cost of living especially for the poor.

Overall, the macro-economic impact of the VAT increase will dampen demand, impact on GDP growth, and have negative implications for employment creation.

We note the above-inflation increases



## We will campaign to reverse the VAT increase

in social grants, which were announced as a compensatory measure. Apart from the extremely modest impact these increases will actually have, there is a deeper, longer-term structural concern.

In essence, the Budget is reaching for a social compact with the poor – increased social grant payments in exchange for increased VAT. This runs counter to the underlying logic of President Ramaphosa's State of the Nation Address (Sona) address in which stimulating the productive economy – whether through industrialisation, infrastructure development, land

reform or leveraging investment into job creating activity – is the critical point of emphasis. The implicit logic of the social grant for VAT deal is the perpetuation of a welfarist and not active developmental approach.

The SACP will be campaigning to ensure that by the time of the next budget, the VAT increase will be rolled back and other measures found to address the deficit including active recovery of billions of stolen capital, rigorous measures to address tax base erosion and illegal capital flight, and a wealth tax. While the current budget may buy us some relief from further ratings downgrades, there is little in it that places us on a sustained trajectory to address the real structural problems in our society.

The SACP welcomes the Sona announcements of three major real economy points of focus – a Jobs Summit, stakeholder consultations focused on driving serious land reform, and a Financial Sector Summit. The real macro-economic crisis in our economy is sustained crisis-levels of unemployment, close to 40% and well over 50% in the case of youth. Which is why the Jobs Summit cannot just focus on micro-economic interventions, an effective alignment of macro-economic policies with the objective of achieving inclusive, job-creating growth is imperative. South Africa needs increased investment in the productive sector of the economy as opposed to a financial sector that is fuelling and supporting consumption and consumerism. ●

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Israeli occupation troops confront Palestinian protesters in Bethlehem last December

# Speak the only language apartheid understands!

Boycotts, divestment and sanctions backed by a popular global movement were powerful weapons against South African apartheid – and are vital in ending Israeli apartheid

One of the main differences between Israeli apartheid and the South African version is not about the difference in their respective levels of oppression or racist brutality, although ANC veteran and Palestinian solidarity activist Ronnie Kasrils believes the Israeli version “is far worse than the apartheid we knew”. It is that South African apartheid was quickly branded racist and evil – and South Africa was repudiated, until our democratic breakthrough, as the “skunk of the world”. The United Nations declared South African apartheid a crime against humanity, and there were powerful trade, sports, and cultural boycotts in place that reflected the level of global soli-

arity for freedom in South Africa.

Israeli apartheid is not subject to anything close to the same level of censure. It is wholly at ease in its oppression of Palestinians, whereas apartheid South Africa – labelled criminal by the international community – constantly sought to justify its oppression of the black majority as “separate development”. Israel aims to eradicate Palestine and Palestinians, whereas South Africa regarded the black population as an essential labour reserve.

Israel has powerful backers and trade partners in the world, principally the US, its main supplier of arms. In its sophisticated and fierce propaganda war against its critics, Israel disingenuously but very

effectively manipulates the imperative of opposition to anti-Semitism and universal loathing of the crimes committed against Jewish communities in the 20th century – notably the Nazi Holocaust – into support for its own repression of Palestinians. Israeli propaganda equates criticism of Israeli apartheid with supporting the Holocaust and anti-Semitic persecution generally.

Solidarity with Palestine has to break through this wall of deception.

One facet of it is rooted in myth. The thrust of Zionism (which is Judaism mutated into an extreme nationalist ideology) since the 1800s for the creation of a Jewish homeland in Palestine is, in the



words of Israel's founding leader David Ben-Gurion, that "God promised it to us".

The Hebrew Bible (effectively the Old Testament of the Christian Bible) declares that the Jewish people are the "chosen people," promised by Yahweh a part of the land of Canaan, the ancient land of Palestine, the area west of the River Jordan. This was the Promised Land, the bounteous "land of milk and honey".

The other tack in the Zionist narrative is that Jews are a separate race from the people who lived in Palestine. This hinges on the pseudo-scientific notion that "race" is not a social construct, but an objective measure of the supposed differences between – and thus the superiority or inferiority of – people possessing slightly different physical, cultural or other acquired characteristics. Such racism was useful in Europe's colonisation of much of the world. And it nurtured, and now sustains, Zionist ideological suppositions and justifications for colonising and occupying Palestine and for treating Palestinians as inferior beings.

Zionism ignores the all too evident similar character of Semitic peoples, who comprise Jews and Arabs – all of the Middle East, in fact, and much of northeast Africa. Israel's creation as a national entity at the bloody expense of and to supplant Palestinians interwove the myths of divine ordinance and racial distinction. But the Old Testament Bible is an assertion of faith, not a study in history, as archaeological, etymological and genetic studies have demonstrated. Its use to politically justify the giant land grab in Palestine since 1948 is deeply suspect – much like the pseudo-theological logic used by racist Afrikaner ideology to rationalise apartheid oppression.

The crime of apartheid has a much broader definition than its past South African context. In 1973, UN General Assembly adopted the Convention on the Suppression and Punishment of the Crime of Apartheid. This described what this crime consisted of, and it listed a variety of "inhuman acts" that defined apartheid:

- Denying the right to life and liberty by bodily and mental harm, infringement of freedom or dignity, or by using torture, cruel, inhuman or degrading punishment;

- Preventing participation in the political, social, economic and cultural life of the country, including the right to leave and return to their country, and the right to freedom of movement and residence;

- Dividing people along racial lines,

**Continued on Page 8**

## Leading the global struggle against Israeli Apartheid!

The Boycott, Divestment and Sanctions Movement (BDS Movement) was launched by more than 170 Palestinian NGOs in July 2005, drawing on the experiences and success of the global Anti-Apartheid Movement that campaigned to end South African apartheid.

BDS – nominated last month for the Nobel Peace Prize by Norwegian MP and socialism Red Party leader Bjørnar Moxnes – seeks to mobilise international support for "a non-violent campaign of boycott, divestment and sanctions (BDS) against Israel until Israel complies with international law and respects human rights". Key objectives are:

- Withdrawal from the occupied territories,
- Removal of the West Bank separation barrier (the Wall of Separation);
- Full equality for Arab-Palestinian citizens of Israel; and
- promotion of the right of return of Palestinian refugees.

BDS is Palestinian led (it is headquartered in Ramallah in occupied Palestine), with chapters in 20 countries – including Botswana and South Africa, where BDS South Africa is the driving force behind the Israeli Apartheid Week happening this month (12-18 March), with support of more than 110 South African organisations, among them the SACP, YCLSA, Cosatu, ANC, Sanco, Sanco and the South African Council of Churches.

Cosatu was among the first labour federations worldwide to endorse BDS, and was key to getting the 20-million-member world federation of public sector workers, Public Services International, to adopt the BDS strategy.

An early BDS South Africa's win was the University of Johan-



nesburg decision in 2011 to end its partnership with Israel's Ben-Gurion University. The Tshwane University Of Technology followed soon afterwards, stating it would "not to enter into partnerships with any Israeli institutions until Israel ends its illegal occupation of Palestinian territory". Late last year, after engagement by BDS South Africa chapter, several academics pulled out of a conference on genocide in Israel. Among them was UCT associate history professor Mohamed Adhikari – vice president of the International Network of Genocide Scholars.

Two years ago BDS South Africa scored a major victory, when representatives of the 500 000 members of United Congregational Church of South Africa adopted the BDS boycott of Israel, hard on the heels of a decision by the General Council of the World Communion of Reformed Churches, representing 80-million Christians, to take action in support of the Palestinians

Israel and its local lobbyists have worked hard to retain its South African ties – and to block links with Palestine. In 2015 it banned SACP General Secretary Blade Nzimande from visiting Palestine as Minister for Higher Education and Training.

The ANC's 54th National Conference voted unanimously to "immediately and unconditionally" downgrade in Tel Aviv embassy to a liaison office. ●

Contact BDS South Africa via spokesperson Kwara Kekana at [Kkekana@bds-southafrica.com](mailto:Kkekana@bds-southafrica.com), or on Facebook (BDS South Africa) or Twitter (@BDSsouthafrica)  
Global BDS website: <https://bdsmovement.net/>



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confining them to reserves and ghettos, and expropriating their landed property.

The state of Israel declared in 1948, had as its foundation the violent destruction of Palestinian villages and towns and massacre or expulsion of the population. In 1967 Israel occupied remaining Palestinian territories (the Occupied Palestinian Territories, OPTs).

Israel has since eroded and fragmented what is left of Palestine. It seizes land, expands its colonies (Jewish settlements), imposes separate roads, maintains the “Separation Wall”, and severely restricts Palestinians’ access to water and sources of livelihood. It uses arbitrary arrests, “administrative” detention, and prison sentences to clamp down on Palestinian resistance. And it has routinely bombarded and invaded Palestinian areas, killing thousands.

Most (6-million) Palestinians live outside Palestine in a global diaspora. About 4-million live in the OPTs. The right of return of Palestinian refugees is a cornerstone of the Palestinian struggle and is enshrined in international law. Israel says the right of return will never happen. It considers the Palestinians a “demographic threat” to its 8,5-million citizens.

The Palestinian-led global movement Boycott, Divestment, Sanctions (BDS) draws on the experience of the struggle against apartheid in urging a universal isolation of Israel.

The Israeli government is under pressure as BDS gains support and momentum. In January, Israel demonstrated its alarm by banning 20 foreign charities and other organisations – including the US-based Jewish Voice for Peace – from entering Israel because of their support for BDS.

A clear sign that the BDS call is biting is growing criticism from eminent think tanks, among them the Washington-based Brookings Institution. They argue – as they did in the 1970s and 1980s for South Africa – that sanctions don’t work, are counterproductive, and are not the



Israeli Merkava tanks mass outside the the Gaza Strip in August 2014

## Israel’s iron fist

Israel’s military strength – most of it aimed at southern Lebanon and the Palestinian territories since Israel’s 1979 treaty with Egypt – is among the most powerful forces in the world.

The Israeli Defence Force (IDF) could comfortably fit more than seven SANDFs into its ranks – and that doesn’t take into account the thousands of troops in the paramilitary Magav border guard. Plus it has a nuclear arsenal of between 80 and 400 weapons.

Israel’s annual “defence” budget is \$17-billion (R203-billion) – four times that of South Africa. And it is

offset by massive military aid grants from the US: before leaving office President Barack Obama upped the grant by 27%, to \$3,8-billion a year. Its annual military spending is equivalent to US\$1 900 for each Israeli (compared to South Africa’s \$83 per person). Even the IDF “spokesperson’s unit” is massive – according to Jerusalem’s *Ha’aretz* newspaper it qualifies as the biggest PR firm in the Middle East.

Ranged against this, the Palestinian National Security Forces have about 15 000 members, no aircraft, no tanks and a budget less than 1% of the IDF. ●

way to go about achieving “worthy aims”. Quite why they don’t work against apartheid but are useful against Iraq, North Korea etc is not clear.

Heavenly promises notwithstanding, Israel’s policy has transformed its surrounding region into one of permanent, violent crisis and conflict – another echo of the South African experience. In the Middle East this is exacerbated by imperialism’s drive to control access to oil. There

remains a very real danger of a wider regional war breaking out, one in which Israel would be prepared to use nuclear weapons. A solution to the Palestine-Israeli conflict would not only bring freedom to Palestinians, but would massively decrease tensions in the region. ●

1. See, for example: <https://www.brookings.edu/blog/order-from-chaos/2018/01/26/how-much-does-bds-threaten-israels-economy/>

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## Palestine & its diaspora

With a global Palestinian population of about 12-million, with three out of five Palestinians living outside of their homeland. Even in Palestine itself, 44% of Palestinians are registered as refugees – Israel has forceably removed them to the Gaza Strip or the West Bank. About

2 930 000 live in West Bank (with 28% registered as refugees) and 1 880 000 in the Gaza Strip (where 70% are refugees). Other Palestinian concentrations are: Jordan (2 144 233); Israel (1 750 000); Syria (560 000); Chile (500 000); Lebanon (458 369); Saudi Arabia (400 000); Qatar (295 000);

United States (255 000); and with diaspora populations (between 100 000 and 4 000): Algeria, Australia, Brazil, Canada, Colombia, Egypt, El Salvador, Germany, Honduras, Iraq, Kuwait, Libya, Mexico, Netherlands, Pakistan, Peru, Sweden, United Arab Emirates, Britain, Yemen (source: Wikipedia.org) ●



Israeli peace activist Sahar Vardi: "Our education ensures we are always terrified"

## 'Fear is a huge part of our identity'

Sahar Vardi, 27, is an Israeli peace activist who was jailed for eight months for her 2008 decision to defy her conscription to the Israeli Defence Force.

Asked recently by Al Jazeera TV why so many Israelis ignored the oppression in the occupied Palestinian territories, she said: "For the ideological right, it's about taking over the Holy Land. From a more mainstream political perspective, a lot of it is about resources – cheap land, water, man power, that allows for a successful economy. Most settlers don't move to a settlement for ideological reasons – they move because it's far cheaper ... or because that is the only place they can afford to live.

"Others justify all this with the need for security. They think occupation keeps them safe.

"It has a lot to do with how Israelis are educated and how fear is a huge part of our identity. And there's a lot of political interest in keeping it that way. You can't continue such a level of militarisation in a society without fear. You can't ignore what happened in 1948 without it. You can't continue maintaining an occupation without it. Our education system is built to make sure that we're terrified."

Sahar's father, Amiel, an academic authority on Latin literature, was also jailed, during the First Intifada, for refusing to respond to an IDF call-up. He is a Palestinian rights activist – and has been repeatedly arrested for working to block illegal land grabs of Palestinian grazing land south of Jerusalem. He heads an NGO that clears Palestinian pastoral land of poisonous pellets seeded by settlers to kill Palestinian flocks. ●

## Security Council resolution 242 (1967) of 22 November 1967

The Security Council,  
Expressing its continuing concern with the grave situation in the Middle East,  
Emphasising the inadmissibility of the acquisition of territory by war and the need to work for a just and lasting peace in which every State in the area can live in security,

Emphasising further that all Member States in their acceptance of the Charter of the United Nations have undertaken a commitment to act in accordance with Article 2 of the Charter,

1. Affirms that the fulfillment of Charter principles requires the establishment of a just and lasting peace in the Middle East which should include the application of both the following principles:

(i) Withdrawal of Israel armed forces from territories occupied in the recent conflict;

(ii) Termination of all claims or states of belligerency and respect for and acknowledgment of the sovereignty, territorial integrity and political independence of every State in the area and their right to live in peace within secure and recognised boundaries free from threats or acts of force;

2. Affirms further the necessity

(a) For guaranteeing freedom of navigation through international waterways in the area;

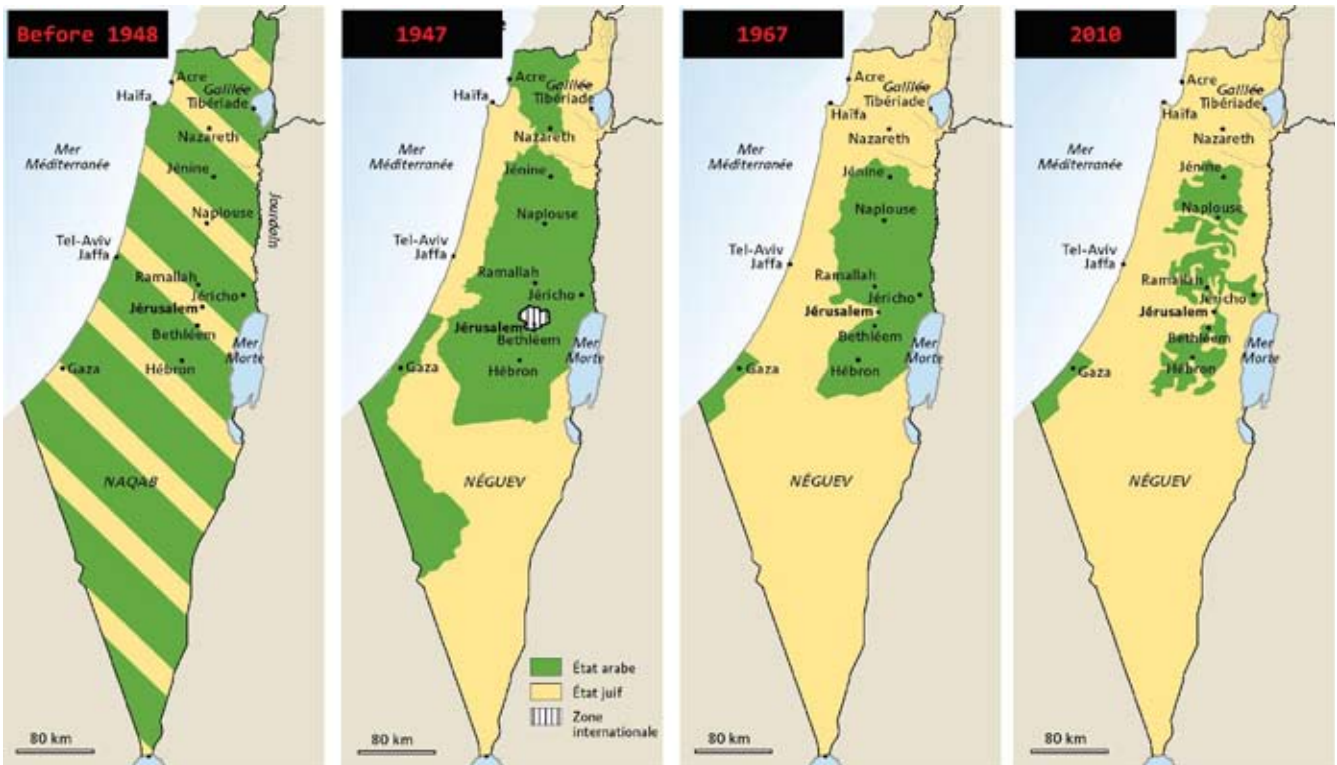
(b) For achieving a just settlement of the refugee problem;

(c) For guaranteeing the territorial inviolability and political independence of every State in the area, through measures including the establishment of demilitarised zones;

3. Requests the Secretary-General to designate a Special Representative to proceed to the Middle East to establish and maintain contacts with the States concerned in order to promote agreement and assist efforts to achieve a peaceful and accepted settlement in accordance with the provisions and principles in this resolution;

4. Requests the Secretary-General to report to the Security Council on the progress of the efforts of the Special Representative as soon as possible.

Adopted unanimously at the 1382nd meeting of the UN Security Council. ●



The incredible shrinking country: From Palestine under the British colonial mandate (left to right), through Israel's founding conquests ('Palestine' in dark grey), the Six-Day War land grab to today's Palestinian 'islands'

# Destroying Palestine I: land

Colonisation and land seizures by Zionists and the Israeli government have gradually eroded what used to be Palestine into two fragments – the West Bank and the Gaza Strip, known as the Occupied Palestinian Territories.

The aim is clear: put an end to Palestine as a geographical entity and make remaining Palestinians a subject population confined to cramped areas from which they are allowed out to work for Israelis – making them, as Sol Plaatjie said of South Africa's majority in 1913, “pariahs in the land of their birth”.

Land acquisition of one for or another has always been the cornerstone of Zionist designs on Palestine. The Zionist movement established in the late 19th century had set about buying up Palestinian land to further colonisation, and the first Zionist colony, Petah Tikva, was established in 1878.

The Balfour Declaration of 1917 pledged British support for a Jewish national home in Palestine – an announcement British author and journalist Arthur Koestler described as: “One nation solemnly promising to a second nation the country of a third.” Britain administered

Palestine after World War I. The creation in 1919 of the Haganah, the first Zionist paramilitary organisation, was accompanied by calls from leading Zionists for the forcible occupation of Palestine.

By 1935, 17% of the 1-million population of Palestine was Jewish. Zionist paramilitaries began stockpiling weapons in Palestine in preparation for their planned takeover of the area.

The Jewish population increased to 31% by the end of World War II (1945), with the mass exodus of Jews to Palestine in the wake of the Nazi Holocaust. The UN proposed dividing up Palestine into a bigger Jewish state and smaller Palestinian one, and an international zone around Jerusalem.

But Zionist militias had other plans and were paving the way for the creation of the Israeli state by invading Palestinian towns and villages and expelling the occupants.

A “Jewish People's Council” met in 1948 to declare establishment of the state of Israel, and Zionist paramilitaries set about seizing Palestinian villages and towns. Egyptian, Lebanese and Syrian troops fought Zionist forces in an effort

to retake villages colonised by the Zionists. Armistice agreements between Israel and these countries consolidated Israeli control of 78% of Palestine. More than 700 000 Palestinians were forced out of their homes and the land they had occupied for hundreds of years.

The Zionist militia not only took over Palestinian communities, they simply destroyed many – of 476 villages and towns, 418 were depopulated, and 385 totally destroyed. In the 1950s Israel passed laws to make it impossible for greater numbers of Palestinians to hold on to or return to their property and land. In 1967 Israel occupied the remaining Palestinian territories – the West Bank, Gaza, and Palestinian areas on the Golan Heights and Sinai Strip.

By mid-2017 600 000 Jewish settlers had moved into the West Bank, including East Jerusalem. Israel took over 50% of the land of the West Bank to build communities in which only Jewish Israelis are allowed to live. Land seizures are continuing, carried out as confiscations, appropriations of land for settlements, bypass roads around Jewish settlements and the land used for the infamous “Wall of Separation”.



Israeli airstrike on Gaza City in 2015 - the first of six in 24 hours

## Destroying Palestine II: economy & infrastructure

If land seizures are one method Israel uses to erode and eliminate Palestine, the other is the destruction of the economy and infrastructure.

Between 1967 and 2015 Israel bulldozed 48 488 Palestinian homes and other structures – including schools, power plants and factories. House demolitions are usually done without prior warning. Israel says that demolitions are for “security purposes”, to stop “terrorists” using the buildings.

But most demolitions are to make it impossible for Palestinians to remain in their areas, which are then taken over by the Israeli state. In August 2017, Israel destroyed Palestinian school buildings and confiscated educational materials in the West Bank village of Jub-Ad-Dhib, a day before the start of term. The Israeli Defence Force then declared the site a military zone.

Reports by the United Nations Con-

ference on Trade and Development (UNCTAD) have been scathing about the impact of occupation on the Palestinian economy, condemning Israel for hollowing out Palestinian industry and agriculture. The occupation is blamed for halving the growth potential of the Palestinian economy and boosting unemployment in the OPTs.

But the destruction of the economy isn't a side effect of the occupation; it is a key Israeli objective. Israel has destroyed thousands of hectares of orchards, crops and agricultural land. It has also destroyed more than 1-million olive trees on Palestinian lands. Olive oil production is a crucial agroindustry for Palestine. On the West Bank alone, the livelihoods of 80 000 Palestinian families (about 20% of the West Bank population) have been ruined. Most olive tree destruction is due to Israeli settlers' land grabs. Israel also prevents access by Palestinian farmers

to fertilizers and irrigation to tighten its stranglehold on Palestinian food security.

Control over water is major Israeli weapon. In 1967 Israel seized control of all water resources in the OPTs. Palestinians are allotted less water – below the internationally recommended norm – per person per day than Israelis, who enjoy unlimited and uninterrupted water supply.

Palestinian natural water sources have either been razed, or, where Israeli settlers use them, have been made off-limits to Palestinians. Residents in the Palestinian West Bank city of Nablus lack sufficient water throughout the year. Israel forbids the digging of new wells and refuses to sell more water to the city. The point is to keep Palestinians in a situation of permanent water scarcity.

Israel also controls about 95% of occupied Palestine's electricity supply – after its 1967 occupation, it blocked the cross-border electricity feed from Jordan. ●



# Freedom and The SACP stands with in their long str





# and Justice for Palestine

with the Palestinian people  
struggle for freedom





# Israel's 'pass laws'

South Africa's apartheid era pass laws were intended to restrict the free movement of the black majority. Apartheid Israel's matrix of checkpoints, permits and identity cards, bypass roads, trenches and the Separation Wall serve the same purpose but with a more sinister intent.

The restrictions on Palestinians' freedom of movement are not designed to channel Palestinian labour to where Israeli exploiters need it. Rather, they are designed to encumber, block, slow down, and obscure Palestinian mobility throughout the OPTs.

Israeli academic and one-time deputy major of East Jerusalem Meron Benvenisti wrote in 2002 that the function of the system of checkpoints "is to send a

message of force and authority, to inspire fear, and to symbolize the downtrodden nature and inferiority of those under the occupation".

Palestinians in East Jerusalem are not Israeli citizens but live under Israeli law. They are allowed the right of residency, which can be revoked – like that of non-naturalised foreigners. Their existence in this sectioned area of their land is tenuous and insecure, and the point is to maintain a hair-trigger pretext to expel them.

In 2004, Israel released plans for an apartheid road network criss-crossing the West Bank, keeping Palestinians away from the roads linking Israeli settlements to one another and to Israel itself. The plan was, as Guardian correspondent Conal Ruquart put it, to render Palestine "a



**Palestinian normal: Israeli occupation troops frisk youths in Hebron**

state of enclaves, surrounded by walls, and linked by tunnels and special roads."

Israeli policy on Palestinian movement is another piece in Israel's total strategy policy puzzle, which taken as a whole is designed to eliminate the physical presence of Palestinians and the remnants of their country. ●



## The Apartheid Wall

Israelis call it a "security fence" – although much of the 500km (and eventually 700km) barrier looks suspiciously like an ugly, two-storey concrete wall, topped with gun turrets, sealing off occupied Palestinian West Bank.

Palestinians call it what it is: "the apartheid wall".

In 2004 the International Court of Justice ruled that it is a "wall" (not a "barrier" or a "fence") and a violation of international law.

But the wall is also a cover for a new round of annexations of Palestinian land by Israel: The Israeli "Peace Now" NGO warns that the wall's purpose is twofold: "to destroy all chances of a future peace settlement with the Palestinians and to annex as much land as possible from the West Bank".

The wall's land grab is achieved by building on the Palestinian side – frequently up to 20km on the Palestinian side – of the "Green Line" (the demarcation boundary set out in peace treaties between Israel, Egypt, Jordan, Syria and Lebanon after the 1967 war – although the treaties insist the Green Line is "not to be construed as a territorial boundary ... as regards settlement of the Palestine



**The wall surrounds new Israeli settlements outside East Jerusalem**

question").

Israeli premier minister Yitzhak Rabin first raised the idea of the wall in 1992, stating: "We have to decide on separation as a philosophy ... This path must lead to a separation ... We want to reach a separation between us and them" (a statement that could have been penned by one of Henrik Verwoerd's speech writer).

Construction began two years later, accelerated during the Second Intifada, and was 70% complete by 2012. Construction continues. It has taken about 500km<sup>2</sup> of the West Bank's 5 600 km<sup>2</sup>, opening the way for 300 000 Israeli settlers. Israeli settlers have built 100 more

illegal settlements – not recognised by Israel, but supplied with electricity, water and road infrastructure.

On the other side of the wall, 140 000 Palestinians have lost their homes (about 5% of the West Bank population), and the Palestinian city of Qalqilyah has lost a third of its water supply. In the West Bank's northern areas, the UN estimates 80% of Palestinians who own land on the other side of the wall cannot cross to cultivate their fields because Israel refuses them permits.

Ten of thousands of Palestinians queue for hours to cross the wall to get to work, to get to their mosques and, in some cases, even to shop. ●



# A century of struggle against triple oppression!

The violence unleashed against the Palestinian people, and the patriarchy within both Palestinian and Israeli society, have resulted in diverse forms of action and organisation by Palestinian women.

Palestinian women's history of activism and political involvement dates back to the 1800s when, living under the Turkish Ottoman Empire, women first protested alongside men against the first Zionist settlements in Palestine.

Palestinian women consistently took a strong stand against repeated colonial and imperialist decision making that has prevented the realisation of self-determination of the Palestinian people. When Britain announced its 1917 support for a "national home for the Jewish people" in Palestine, Palestinian women took part in demonstrations, and later formed a 14-member delegation demanding the revoking of the decision and an end to Jewish immigration.

Palestinian women have also been involved in the intifadas or uprising. The objective of the uprisings, as and of the women mobilised into them, remains the liberation of the Palestinian people from imposed colonial solutions, occupation of their land and the systemic violence and oppression of the Israeli government and its security forces.

The sustainability of the first Intifada (1987 – 1993) was facilitated by the resourcefulness of Palestinian women who took a leading role in the 1987 boycott campaign against Israel products in the Gaza Strip and West Bank. The lack of indigenous Palestinian industry meant that alternative sources of income and products for people had to be created. Palestinian women established industries such as cheese making, jam making, bread baking and community gardens. This not only encouraged and enabled the boycott campaign, but also developed an infrastructure-base for a Palestinian economy.

Palestinian women sewed Palestinian flags in secret under the noses of Israeli security forces, itself an act of resistance. The power of the visibility of the Pales-



A Palestinian protester at the start of the the Second Intifada in 2000

tinian flag in the intifada was profound,

When the Israeli army closed schools, Palestinian mothers established underground community schools for their children. Women took to the streets directly confronting occupational forces, defending children arrested by the Israeli soldiers, coming out in large numbers to demand the release of the child, all claiming that the child was their own. Israeli soldiers confronted by dozens of women demanding the return of their 'own child', often buckled and released the child.

The Oslo Accords brought hope of a Palestinian state through a massive mobilisation of Western NGO interest in the Occupied Territories that were dominated by a liberal paradigm. This has been particularly pronounced with international women's NGOs funding programmes to promote Palestinian women's rights and gender equality. Donors force a de-

linking between feminist struggles and national struggles of Palestinian women by not funding those women's organisations that identify the link between patriarchy and the occupation. This has led to a depoliticising of the Palestinian women's movement.

Women under the occupation experience abuse and violence from security forces, from men in the society, and the increasing use of surveillance by the security forces makes women very vulnerable. The night raids leave women and children traumatised, while mothers bear the anguish of the arrests of their children. Demolitions of Palestinian housing by the Israeli army – 168 housing units in the first six months of 2016 – leaving 740 people (384 of them children) homeless – makes Palestinian women and girls particularly vulnerable.

Palestinian women are often the sole  
**Continued on Page 16**



## A century of struggle against triple oppression! (continued)

source of income for their families, as many Palestinian men have been murdered, disabled or imprisoned by the Israeli forces (40% of the Palestinian men have been detained or imprisoned). They are exploited for the development of the colonial power through their recruitment within the Palestinian Occupied Territories by Israeli middle men and work in Israeli factories or farms being forced to cross over through checkpoints on a daily basis. This work is both seasonal and contractual. As we know from our South African experience, this lends itself to ex-

plorative working conditions, often being the lowest paid group of workers (Israeli minimum wage regulations don't apply to Palestinian workers on Israeli farms). These women can be denied the right to return to their homeland to live, to organise their labour or participate in unions.

The presence of Palestinian women in universities is dropping as female students are forced to cross checkpoints to reach the institutions. Women from the rural areas have to cross numerous checkpoints to reach urban schools and universities – denying them their right to education.

Besides having their freedom of movement curtailed, women crossing checkpoints are often subject to sexual harassment and intimidation by Israeli soldiers. Many families do not want to allow their daughters to leave the home for fear of their safety.

According to Palestine's Minister of Women's Affairs Rabiha Diab (the ministry was established in 2003 to promote empowerment of Palestinian women), Israeli occupation is the central factor inhibiting the advancement of women's rights in Palestine. ●



Billboard in Bridgeport, USA, draws comparisons between apartheid in Israel and the former apartheid regime in South Africa. (Photo: Palestine Advocacy Project)

## Fighting to free Ahed Tamimi!

**A**hed Tamimi, 16, has become the visible face of the 350 children in Israeli detention centres and prisons. She was arrested after repeatedly slapping and remonstrating with two armed Israeli soldiers wearing protective gear, 15 December 2017. The incident was caught on video that subsequently went viral.

Earlier that day she had been with her parents, both well-known Palestine liberation activists, demonstrating against US President Trump's decision to recognise Jerusalem as the capital of Israel. Ahed's 14-year-old cousin Mohammed was shot

in the head by an Israeli soldier firing rubber-coated bullets. The boy required extensive surgery and had to have part of his skull removed to dislodge the bullet.

Ahed's confrontation with the Israeli soldiers took place in her front yard shortly afterwards – she was clearly distraught at what had happened to her cousin. It was equally clear that she did not pose a serious threat to the soldiers.

Four days later, a squad of Israeli soldiers arrested Ahed in a night raid on her home. She was interrogated harshly and had threats made against her family. She was then charged with aggravated as-

sault, and now could face up to 10 years in an Israeli prison. Her trial is being held behind closed doors. She is being held in detention with her mother.

Israeli Defence Minister Avigdor Lieberman vowed to arrest and punish the Palestinian child and all those who appeared with her in the video – her mother and her cousin.

Several international petitions demanding Ahed's release have been launched – the biggest, organised through activist website Avaaz.com, has collected more than 1,7-million signatures so far. ●

Watch Ahed – and the slap for which she faces 10 years' imprisonment: [https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=yV1HwG1\\_phs](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=yV1HwG1_phs)



# Detention and military 'courts' to crush Palestine's spirit

Israel uses detention without trial and military courts to try to break opposition to the occupation of Palestine and the persecution of Palestinians in the OPTs and in Israel.

By February 2018 there were 6 119 Palestinian political prisoners and 450 administrative detainees held in Israeli prisons run in the OPTs and in Israel. Since the start of the occupation in 1967, Israeli forces have arrested more than 800 000 Palestinians – nearly 20% of the Palestinian population. The numbers of detainees have fluctuated greatly, with thousands being held during the intifadas.

“Administrative detention” is used to hold individuals indefinitely on secret information without charge or trial. Some detainees have been held for up to 14 years. According to the Palestinian prisoner and support NGO Addameer (Arabic for conscience), administrative detention is used as a method of collective punishment. In February this year, the NGO announced that detainees had started a hunger strike to protest their treatment.

Every year, thousands of Palestinians are brought before military courts on charges including entering Israel without a permit, stone-throwing, membership in illegal association, violence, firearms-related offenses and even traffic violations.

Fahd Abu Al-Hajj, director of the Abu Jihad Centre for Prisoner Affairs at the University of Jerusalem, said in 2014 there are 70 methods of interrogation that use torture considered to be the “most popular” in Israeli jails. “Nothing evidences this more than the repeated death of prisoners under interrogation”, he said. Israeli human rights organisation B’Tselem has identified 105 torture methods used against Palestinian detainees that are considered violations of human rights.

The military courts maintain a façade of propriety, with everything couched in legal language and citing numerous laws, statutes, and regulations. But according to the Israeli Information Centre for Human Rights in the Occupied Territories, Palestinians are always viewed as either suspects or defendants, and are almost always convicted. Their rights to defence are limited, and despite the pretence of



**Israeli snatch-squad disguised as Palestinians detains a Palestinian protester in Ramallah, 2015**

decency, the military courts are not impartial arbitrators. They are central systems maintaining Israel's control over the Palestinian people.

In the run-up to International Women's Day this March, the head of the Palestinian Commission for Detainees Issa Qaraqi said since 1967, 15 000 Palestinian women had been arrested and detained



**'Most Palestinian women prisoners and detainees are subjected to psychological torture & to various forms of sexual violence, beatings and insults'**

by Israel. He said that at present there are 62 female prisoners, of whom eight have gunshot injuries, and 17 are mothers. Three women are being held under administrative detention without charge.

According to Addameer “the majority of Palestinian women prisoners are subjected to some form of psychological torture and ill-treatment throughout the process of their arrest and detention, including various forms of sexual violence that occur such as beatings, insults, threats, body searches, and sexually explicit harassment.”

Palestinian female prisoners are mainly held in prisons located inside Israel, HaSharon and Damon, in violation of the Geneva Convention regulating the detention of prisoners which stipulates that prisoners must not be removed from the occupied territory in which they live. ●



# Targeting Palestine's future

Young people have been consistently targeted for arrest by the Israeli military since the first Intifada in 1987. Between 2000, the start of the second Intifada, and 2017, about 12 000 Palestinian youngsters were detained by the military. Israel is the only country in the world that automatically prosecutes children in military courts. A child who throws a stone at an armed Israeli soldier, who may be firing live rounds or tear gas, can expect to spend up to 20 years in prison.

In 2015, Human Rights Watch found that Israeli security forces used unnecessary force to arrest or detain Palestinian

children as young as 11 in East Jerusalem and the West Bank, and have choked, beaten, threatened, and interrogated children in custody without parents or lawyers present.

During the first Intifada, Israeli Defence Minister Yitzhak Rabin suggested that Israeli soldiers should break the bones of young protestors. The practice became the norm until news footage of beatings sparked international condemnation. The aim was the same as the use of mass detentions now: to incapacitate young Palestinians and remove them from the scene.

The Israeli military nowadays put

more emphasis on interrogating young detainees to get information on resistance activities in the occupied territories. The use of solitary confinement against young people as part of the interrogation process was reported in 2013 by Defence for Children International, and the practice has since increased.

The numbers of young people being arrested and imprisoned are also rising. In December 2017, the Palestinian Commission of Detainees and Ex-Detainees Affairs revealed that 95% of new Palestinian prisoners in Israeli military jails are youth. Of the over 6 000 Palestinians held in Israeli prisons, 300 are minors. ●



## An IDF soldier remembers ...

Last August a video of a masked Israeli soldier choking a 12-year-old Palestinian boy outside the West Bank Nabi Saleh village went viral on social media, prompting an anonymous former Israeli soldier to recall his feelings, as part of the occupation force in 2003, in an article for the Quartz news website. These are extracts from that article

Israel's military rule – perhaps any military rule – is a regime sustained through instability. Israel's rule in the West Bank and Gaza is not a rule of law. It is the institution of war as a way of life ...

As IDF soldiers, our commanders constantly reminded us that the millions of Palestinians surrounding us did not want us there. Any rule or order can and will be disobeyed if we only give them the chance, our commanders told us. No one can be assumed to be innocent, they said: a worried mother is not just a worried mother; a crying child is not just a crying child. And yet, there were moments in which we knew, reluctantly but clearly, that a child is just a child ....

Some argue that the video is typical of Israel's occupation, in which control is achieved through fear rather than consent. But, common as such incidents are, on the video we see the failure of control by force: We see a boy, a girl and two grown women eventually overrun an armed soldier.



**Chokehold:** Screenshot from last August's video

Military occupation is inherently volatile: no matter how much force is threatened, anyone can act contrary to your orders. Such rule by force is driven by the occupier's fear of what the occupied might do. Over time, the occupier's fear accumulates, because no amount of force can guarantee the compliance of

the occupied. As a result, the occupier uses more force and the occupied has stronger reason to resist.

This is the reality of occupied Palestine, where an armed Israeli soldier can be as terrified of a little boy as the boy is of him. ●

**Read the full account on:** <https://qz.com/>



Israeli border guards arrest journalist Shadi Hatem and confiscate to pictures

## For Israel, no news IS good news

Israel's censorship laws are rooted in 1945 British emergency regulations for its Palestine Mandate – the regulations were adapted in full by Israel when it was established in 1948. Israeli laws authorising secret trials of Palestinians by military tribunals, house demolitions, indefinite “administrative” detention, were inherited directly from Britain. Censorship laws apply to Palestinian and Israeli media, and to foreign media reports from or through Israel.

But while Israeli state control and influence over Israeli media operates with a veneer of “media freedom” (much as the apartheid state did during the 1986-1990 state of emergency), the treatment of Palestinian media is direct. When Israel objected to West Bank Palestinian radio stations, its military engineers simply destroyed their broadcast towers, forcing Palestinians to listen to Israeli state radio's Arabic service.

Last year Israeli forces raided West Bank TV companies, ordered them to shut down for six months, arrested several executives and seized most of their equipment. The seizure of equipment probably

translates into permanent closure – the companies won't have the resources to operate when the ban expires. And because the three provided news videos to many Turkish, Middle Eastern and European TV channels (including the BBC), their closure limits millions more viewers to the official Israeli version of events.

In Israeli itself, control is less direct, although military influence is significant (the country's biggest radio station is run by the IDF) and military censorship “creates a general climate of anxiety that can lead to self-censorship”, warns Karin Karlekar, director of PEN America's Free Expression at Risk Programme. In the 25 years since Israel last closed an Israeli newspaper (although it closed Al Jazeera's Jerusalem office just last year), its censorship has grown more sophisticated. As in pre-1990 South Africa, all journalists must register to get an Israeli press card, which the censor – directly controlled by the Directorate of Military Intelligence – can revoke at will (an inducement to personal self-censorship).

But Karlekar points to “a disturbing trend toward increased political interfer-

ence in the media”, particularly under Israel's current Premier Benjamin Netanyahu. Not only have the number of “gag orders” (prohibition of publication of specific stories) risen steadily, but Netanyahu has spearheaded “an effort by the political establishment to increase their control over traditional media, or to circumvent it”.

Netanyahu has not only publicly verbally abused critical journalists and used the courts to sue journalists for libel and defamation. He has also encouraged and supported media uncritical of his Likud party – notably the free daily newspaper Israel Hayom, which has in consequence taken just 10 years to become Israel's most widely-read daily. This trend, Karlekar warns, has had “a chilling effect on the Israeli media ... which must (now) weigh any critical coverage against the possibility of lost credentials and crippling personal lawsuits”.

Globally Israel and its lobbyists have successfully pressured social media platforms – notably Facebook and Pinterest – to censor or block content critical of the Israelis or sympathetic to Palestine. ●



# A 'promise' that justifies anything

The standard justification Israel and its lobbyists give for seizing Palestinian land in 1948, and steadily grabbing more ever since, is: “God promised it to us”.

Israel's founding prime minister, David Ben-Gurion, said so. And early this month US Senate Minority leader Chuck Schumer told a conference of the leading US Israeli lobby group, Aipac: “Of course it's our land, the Torah says so ...”

But most archeological evidence indicates that the Israelite-Yahweh deal was, like the covenant South Africa's Afrikaner nationalists claimed to have made with their deity, a convenient myth to justify a massive landgrab and (in the case of modern Israel and apartheid South Africa) decades of brutal suppression of anyone who resisted.

Archaeological evidence indicates the Israelites of 2000-1200 BCE (before the current era) were Canaanites – Semitic speaking people like most in the Middle East, Africa down to Ethiopia, and Arabia – and that their religion was, like other Canaanites', polytheistic (belief in many gods, with one dominant). The idea of a single god (with the others demoted to angels) evolved during the Babylonian exile (from 587 BCE), as did the narratives strengthening the idea of a “god of Israel” – and, with them, the rationalisation of Yahweh's covenant: worship in exchange for unchallengeable title to a “promised land”.

Linguistically, Hebrew is a Semitic language and the only surviving Canaanite dialect. Arabic is today the most widely spoken Semitic language (including by Palestinians, after about 1 000 years of occupations by successive Arabic and Arab-speaking overlords).

Genetically most studies (of genetics, DNA and mitochondrial DNA – passed on only from mother to daughter) dem-



**Gold statue of El (1 200 BCE), dominant god in the Canaanite pantheon and one of the role models for the biblical Yahweh**

onstrate that most Jewish ethnic sub-groups, Palestinians and Lebanese “cluster near one another”, according to “The genome-wide structure of the Jewish people” in Nature magazine.

The “covenant” justification for Israel's land-hunger thus has little basis in fact, while genetics and language indicate more unites Israelis and Palestinians than divides them. Unlike physical apartheid era differences, Israelis and Palestinians even look similar – in Iron Age Canaanite Middle East, they were literally kissing cousins.

There are more practical, materialist motivations – most obviously Israel's role as pointman for US Middle East interests. But for individual Israelis, in addition to the material benefits flowing from employment as America's pointman, there is real and psychological motives, rooted in the skillfully embedded and endlessly reinforced fear of “them” – Arabs generally and Palestinians specifically: much like pre-1990 South Africa when the (white) myth was used to rationalise dehumanising and savagely controlling the (black dominance) “threat”. ●



Israeli immigration officers attempt to break up a protest by African asylum seekers in the Negev Desert, June 2014

# 'It's okay to be racist in Israel'

**R**acism is not only deeply embedded in Israeli society, it is also entrenched systemically and structurally – in law, in institutional policies, education, immigration rights and housing.

And not only anti-Arab racism. Ashkenazi (European-originating) Jewish Israelis discriminate against Jews with roots in Ethiopia, India and in Muslim majority countries.

**Education:** Israel spends on average six times less a year on each Arab student than it does on Jewish students. Arab communities have a 5 000-classroom shortage. There is no shortage for Jewish communities.

**Land Ownership:** The 13% of Israeli land owned by the Jewish National Fund bars ownership or occupation by Arabs. And while residence in Israeli settlements (particularly in occupied Palestine) is theoretically non-discriminatory, in practice “settlement admission com-

mittees” can, and routinely do, freely exclude Arab applicants.

**Military service:** Arab Israeli men and women are automatically exempted from two years’ compulsory military service, and even the Druze and Circassian (Sunni Muslim) minorities serve only in the racially exclusive Unit 300 or other segregated units.

The situation for the 53 646 African immigrants in Israel (most of them war refugees from Eritrea and Sudan) is arguably worse. Openly addressed as “Kushi” (“nigger”) and described by Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu as “infiltrators”; they have no possibility to permanent refuge. Netanyahu plans to forcibly – and illegally – send them home in April or May.

Repeated polls conclude that Israeli racism is getting worse, not better. A poll by the prestigious Association for Civil Rights in Israel found that more than two-thirds Israeli teens believe Arabs are

less intelligent, uncultured and violent. More than half of Jewish Israelis will not befriend Arabs or let Arabs into their homes. Another found more than half believe that marrying an Arab is “national treason”, and 55% want to introduce segregated entertainment sites (cinemas etc).

Israeli activist Sahar Vardi (see also page 9) explains: “It’s okay to be racist in Israel today. Israeli racism is partially based on Zionism – a nationalist movement of the Jewish people by definition prefers Jews over non-Jews.”

On Israeli military brutalisation of Palestinians, Sahar (jailed repeatedly for refusing to serve the Israeli military), said: “You dehumanise them just so you can say no at a checkpoint. So the next time you’re in a situation where you have to push them, it’ll be easy enough to push them. And then when you have to shoot them, it’ll be easy for you to shoot them.” ●



# TIMELINE OF ISR

**1834**

– Palestinian peasants revolt against Egyptian military conscription & taxes

**1878**

– First Zionist colony is established in Palestine at Peta Tikva

**1882**

– First Aliyah – 35 000 Jewish immigrants to Palestine

**1891**

– Jewish Colonisation Association founded

**1897**

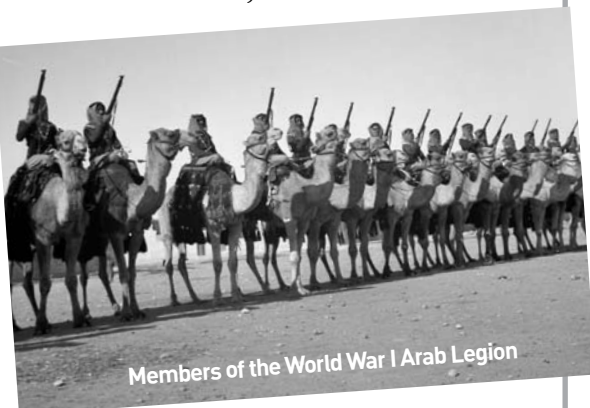
– First Zionist Congress issues colonisation plan for Palestine & establishes World Zionist Organisation (WZO)

**1916**

– Britain & France agree to divide up Arab part of Ottoman empire (which sides with Germany in World War I). Britain to get Palestine as 'mandate'

**1917**

– British Foreign Secretary Arthur Balfour pledges support for Jewish national home in Palestine (Balfour Declaration)



Members of the World War I Arab Legion

**1919**

– First Palestinian National Congress in Jerusalem demands Palestinian independence

**1921**

– Zionist paramilitary Haganah founded



Yasser Arafat, chair of the PLO and founding president of the PNA

**1931**

– British census: of 1 035 154 Palestinians: 73,4% Muslim 16,9% Jewish, 8,6% Christian

**1933**

– General strike in Palestine over – British sponsorship of Zionist mass immigration

**1940-45**

– German forces occupy large parts of Europe & systematically murder 6-million Jews. Jewish immigration to Palestine increases Jewish population to 31%

**1945**

– American Zionists pledge David Ben-Gurion funds to purchase US military equipment for Haganah

**1947**

– UN proposes two-state solution of 'British Mandate Palestine' – a Jewish state, an Arab state (Palestine), multi-lateral control of Jerusalem  
– Haganah occupies strategic positions. Arab League responds by forming Arab Liberation Army (ALA)  
– 'Jewish People's Council' in Tel Aviv declares state of Israel

**1948**

– Haganah begins expelling Palestinian civilians, forcing hundreds of thousands into exile  
– ALA responds by attacking Zionist forces

**1949**

– Israel peace agreements with

Egypt, Jordan & Syria gives it 78% of Palestine. Egypt gets Gaza (1,5% of Palestine), Jordan get West Bank (21,5%)

– Two out of three Palestinians are homeless

**1950**

– New Israeli law authorising theft of Palestinian property

**1952**

– New Israeli law turns Palestinians under Israeli occupation into 'foreigners' in Palestine

**1956**

– Egypt nationalises Suez Canal. Israel, backed by Britain & France, invades Sinai Peninsula & occupies Gaza

**1964**

– Palestine Liberation Organisation (PLO) founded

**1967**

– Six Day War. Israel occupies West Bank, Gaza, Sinai & Golan Heights

**1973**

– Third Arab-Israeli War. Egypt (successfully) & Syria (unsuccessfully) attempt to regain territory lost in 1967.

**1974**

– UN General Assembly resolution 3210 recognises PLO as the representative of the Palestinian people.

**1975**

– UN General Assembly resolution 3379 defines Zionism as a form of racism  
– Arab League accepts Palestine as full member

**1978**

– Israeli invades South Lebanon, devastating scores of Lebanese villages & killing 700 Lebanese & Palestinians

**1979**

– UN Security Council resolution 446 calls on Israel to dismantle settlements in the occupied Palestinian, including Jerusalem



# ISRAELI APARTHEID

## 1982

– 100 000 Israeli troops invade Lebanon.  
– Israeli-backed Lebanese Phalangist militia massacre 4 000 Palestinian civilians in Sabra & Shatila refugee camps.

## 1983

– Israel expels 34 West Bank academics for refusal to sign pledge not to support PLO  
– Syria expels PLO's Arafat

## 1985

– Israel bombs PLO HQ in Tunis, killing more than 70

## 1986

– Jordanian Government closes all PLO offices & expels PLO leader Khalil al-Wazir  
– Israeli nuclear technician exposes Israeli nuclear arms build-up

## 1987

– Israeli authorities attempt to confiscate land from West Bank villages.  
– First Intifada  
– Islamic resistance movement Hamas founded

## 1988

– Palestinian National Convention in Algiers declares Palestinian independence

## 1991

– Madrid peace conference – at Israel's insistence Palestinian delegates integrated into Jordanian delegation (and include only Palestinians without known PLO links)

## 1993

– Oslo accords affirm Palestinian right of self-government. Jerusalem, Palestinian refugees, Israeli settlements, security & borders remain unaddressed

## 1994

– Interim Palestinian National



Aftermath of the massacre of 4 000 refugees at Sabra & Shatila

Authority (PNA) established

## 2000

Israeli forces attack Palestinians at Al-Aqsa Mosque, killing five & injuring 160. Violence erupts across the West Bank & Gaza  
– Second Intifada

## 2002

– Israel builds 700km 'Wall of Separation' in occupied West Bank

## 2003

– EU, UN, Russia & US issue 'road map' aiming to resolve outstanding issues

## 2003

– Israeli says for the 'road map' to proceed, Palestinians must drop

the 'right of return'

## 2004

– International Court of Justice rules separation wall violates international law & must be dismantled

## 2005

– Sharon & Palestinian President Mahmoud Abbas announce ceasefire  
– Israel dismantles settlements in Gaza, but maintains control

## 2006

– Abbas dissolves unity

government – Fatah effectively in charge of West Bank, & Hamas in control of Gaza

EU & US cut aid to Gaza government. Israel seals off Gaza. Hamas calls off 16-month truce

## 2007

– Israel & Egypt blockade Gaza, ending all exports & slashing GDP in half

## 2008

– Israeli-Hamas cease-fire  
Israel attacks Gaza, killing 1 400 & wounding thousands, mainly civilians

## 2009

– Israel attacks Gaza, beginning with mass artillery barrage. Israeli missiles hit the UN storehouse, destroying tons of food supplies

## 2010

– International Red Cross (ICRC) acknowledges blockade of Gaza violates international law

## 2012

– UN General Assembly upgrades Palestine's status to 'non-member observer state' – de facto recognition of Palestinian state

## 2014

– Fatah-Hamas unity government  
Israeli air attacks on Gaza

## 2015

– Vatican recognises Palestinian statehood

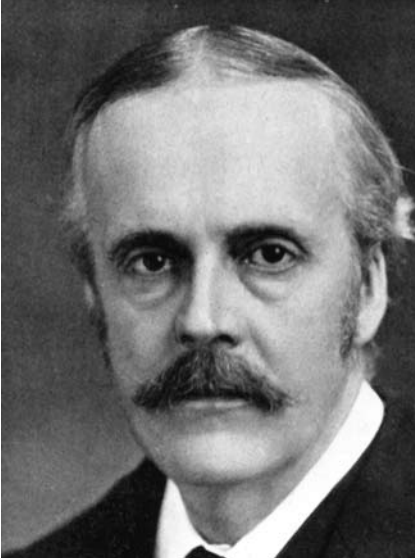
## 2017

– Israel unveils plans for underground barrier around Gaza  
– Donald Trump recognises Jerusalem as Israeli capital





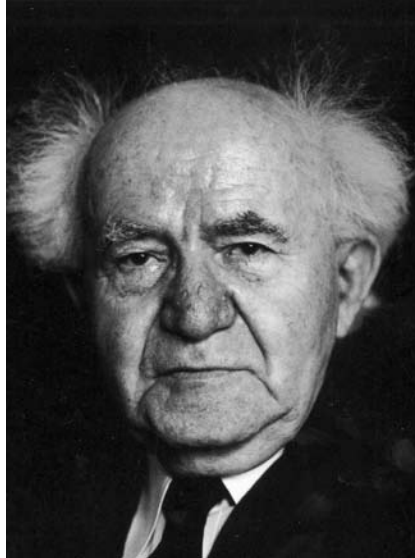
# Speaking of Palestine



**LORD ARTHUR BALFOUR**

British Foreign Secretary, 1919

"In Palestine we do not propose ... to go through the form of consulting the wishes of the present inhabitants of the country... Zionism, be it right or wrong, is more important than the wishes of 700 000 Arabs " (at the time Arabs made up 94% of the population of Palestine, Christians about 2% and Jews 3-4%)



**DAVID BEN-GURION, 1956**

Founding prime minister of Israel in 1948

"(As a Palesitnian), I would wage perpetual war against Israel. Sure, God promised it to us, but what does that matter to them (Pal-estinians)? We have come here and stolen their country."



**GOLDA MEIR**

Israeli Prime Minister 1969-1974

"It was not as if there was a Palestinian people in Palestine and we came and threw them out and took their country away from them. They did not exist."



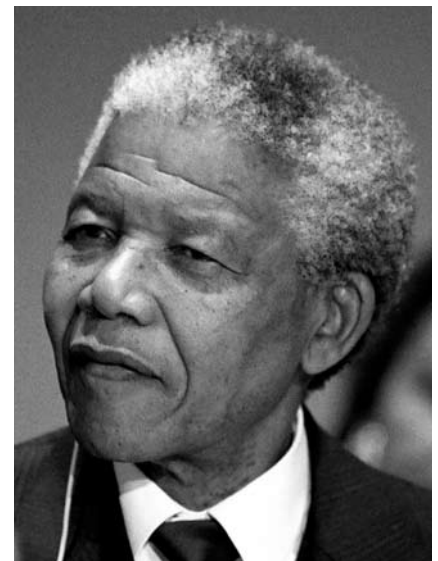
**JOE SLOVO, 1994**

"The horrors of the Holocaust became the rationalisation for acts of genocide by Zionists against the people of Palestine. Those of us who raised our voices against the violent apartheid of the Israeli state were vilified by the pro-Israeli press."



**OLIVER TAMBO, 1992**

"I reaffirm the principled solidarity of the African National Congress and the people of South Africa with the struggle of the Palestinian people."



**NELSON MANDELA, 1992**

"Our freedom will not be complete until our brothers the Palestinians, who fought with us and supported us, achieve their freedom."