



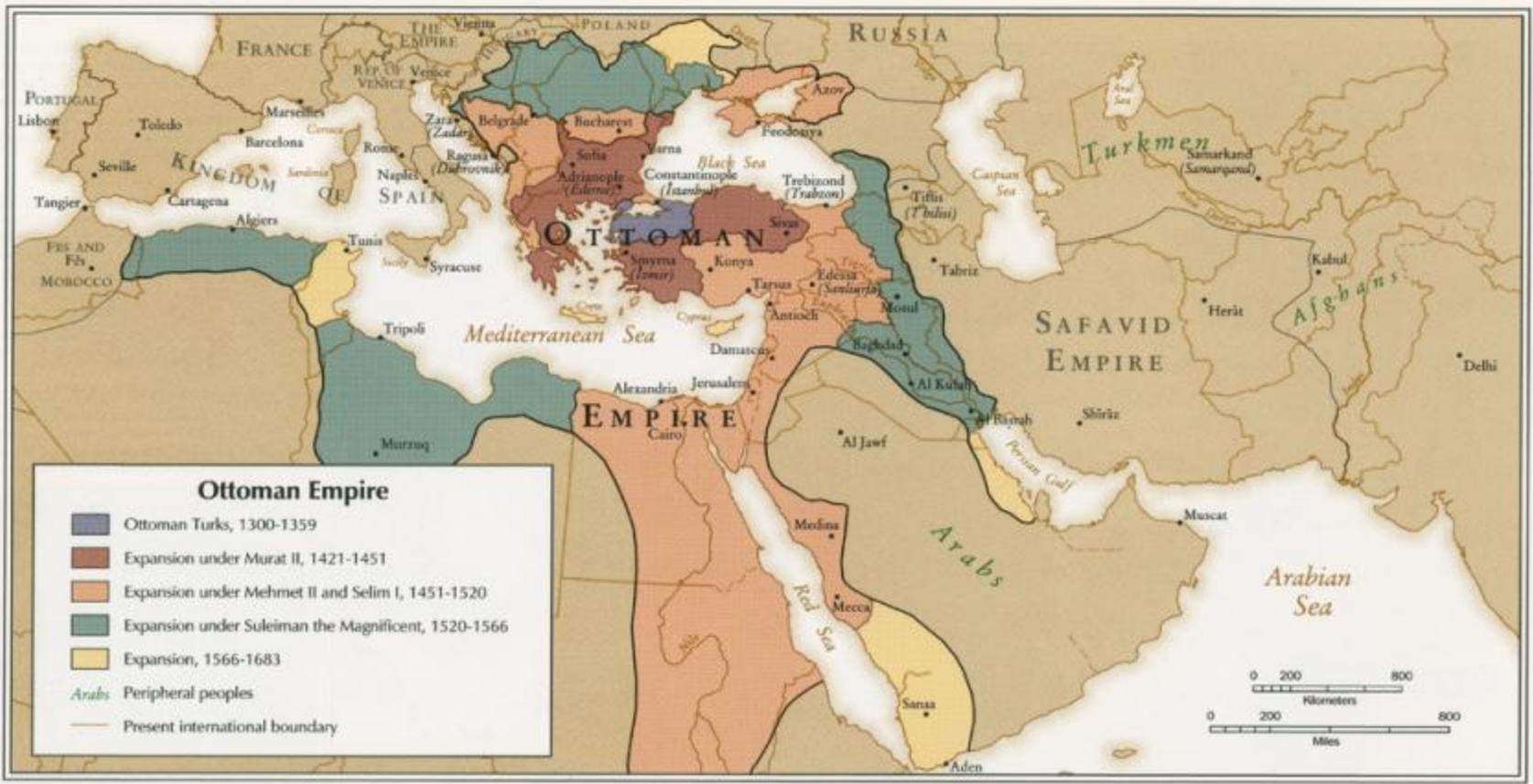
# What Future for Palestine? A Geopolitical Perspective

Dr. Ahmed Ghodieh  
An-Najah National University  
Nablus, Palestine

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## Historical Background

- In 19<sup>th</sup> Century Palestine was a province of the Ottoman Empire.
- In 1850 the population was around 4% Jewish, 8% Christian, and the rest Muslims 88% .
- There was no conflict between the communities.
- In Europe Jews faced anti-Semitism and pogroms.
- In the 1880s over 200,000 Jews were murdered in state organised Russian pogroms.





- Theodor Herzl was the founder of modern Zionism. He advocated mass Jewish immigration to Palestine. Herzl initially did not consider the indigenous people.

“A land without a people for a people without a land”

# The Balfour Declaration

Foreign Office,  
November 2nd, 1917.

Dear Lord Rothschild,

I have much pleasure in conveying to you, on behalf of His Majesty's Government, the following declaration of sympathy with Jewish Zionist aspirations which has been submitted to, and approved by, the Cabinet

"His Majesty's Government view with favour the establishment in Palestine of a national home for the Jewish people, and will use their best endeavours to facilitate the achievement of this object, it being clearly understood that nothing shall be done which may prejudice the civil and religious rights of existing non-Jewish communities in Palestine, or the rights and political status enjoyed by Jews in any other country"

I should be grateful if you would bring this declaration to the knowledge of the Zionist Federation.



Arthur James Balfour

- In 1917, Britain agreed to sponsor the creation of a Jewish homeland in Palestine.
- Palestinians were not consulted, Lord Balfour wrote:

“in Palestine we do not propose even to go through the form of consulting the wishes of the present inhabitants of the country. The Four Great Powers are committed to Zionism. And Zionism, be it right or wrong, good or bad, is rooted in age-long traditions, in present needs, in future hopes, of far profounder import than the desires and prejudices of the 700,000 Arabs who inhabit that ancient land... In short so far as Palestine is concerned, the powers have made no statement of fact which is not admittedly wrong, and no declaration of policy which, at least in the letter, they have not always intended to violate.”

## Zionist immigration

- After Britain took control of Palestine in 1918 a whole new wave of Zionist immigration began.
- These immigrants with British support set up their own exclusive institutions, used their own language and generally ignored the fact that another people was already living in Palestine.
- They would establish modern farming communities.

## Tensions and Violence

- Palestinians demanded representative self-government but Britain ignored their calls.
- Tensions between the Palestinians and the new immigrants rose throughout the 1920s and 30s as *Palestinians feared for their future.*
- Violence broke out in 1920, 1921 and 1929.

## The Nazis Role

- In 1933 the Nazis came to power in Germany.
- Jews sought to escape Europe.
- Between 1933 and 1936 140,000 new immigrants arrived.
- The Palestinians believed they were being swamped.

# The Palestinian Revolution

- In April 1936 the Palestinians rebelled.
- Their demands were representative government leading to independence and an end to unlimited immigration.
- The revolt continued until 1939 before the British eventually managed to crush it. Around 5,000 Palestinians were killed.

## Zionist Terrorism

- A number of Jewish paramilitary groups also became active during the Arab Revolt – these were the **Stern Gang, the Irgun and the Haganah.**
- These groups sought to protect the Jewish colonial settlements but they also engaged in terrorism – the speciality of the Irgun being the placing of bombs in Arab marketplaces for maximum casualties.

# The Peel Partition Plan

Peel Commission Partition Plan, 1937



Source: Palestine Royal Commission Report (Peel) July 1937, London: HMSO

Palestinian Academic Society for the Study of International Affairs (PASSIA)

- In 1937 the British Peel Report investigated the reasons behind the outbreak of violence, it recorded, “the Arabs have been driven into a state verging on despair; and present unrest is no more than expression of that despair.”
- Nevertheless it recommended partitioning Palestine, a solution that was completely unacceptable to the Palestinians. The Zionist leadership however accepted the principle but not the actual size to be granted to the Jewish state.
- In the face of Palestinian resistance the partition plan was dropped.

# The 1939 White Paper

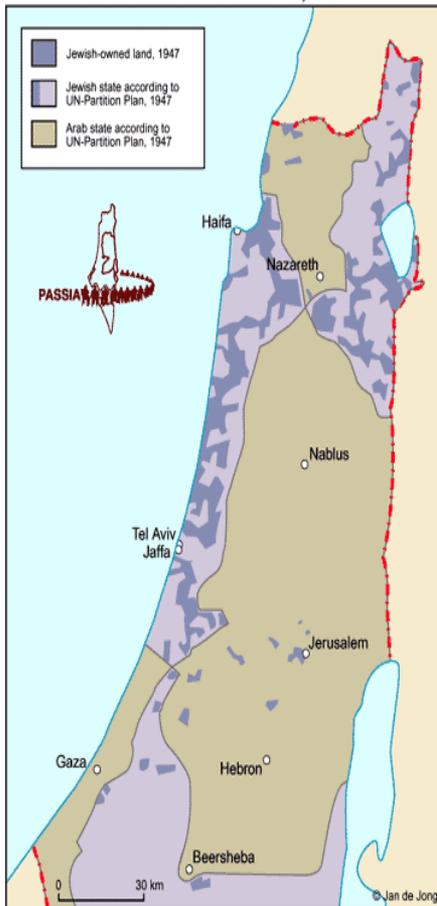
- In 1939 Britain, fearing war with Germany, reversed its policy regarding Palestine.
- It agreed to grant Palestine independence within 10 years and to limit Jewish immigration to 15,000 a year for the next five years after which it would be at the discretion of the Palestinians whether it would continue.
- David Ben Gurion said, “We shall fight the white paper as if there were no Hitler and we shall fight Hitler as if there were no white paper.”

## Jewish against Britain

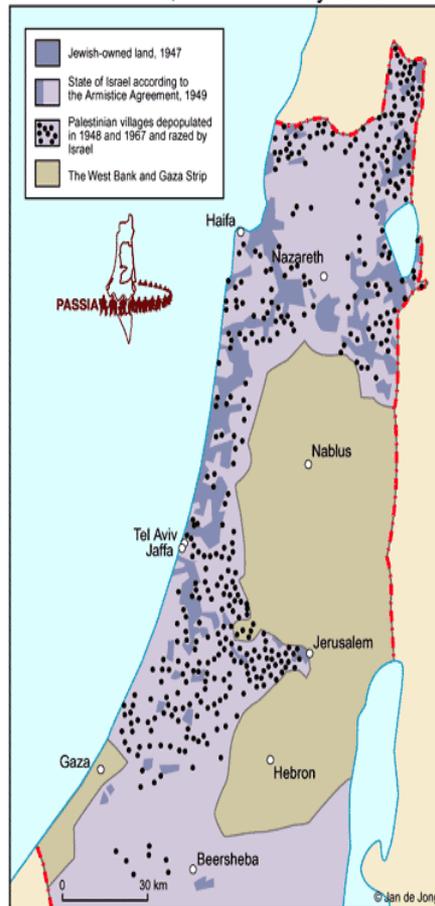
- In Palestine Jewish paramilitaries waged a war to drive the British out.
- Notorious incidents were the blowing up of the King David Hotel and the hanging of two British soldiers.
- Britain decided to hand over the problem of Palestine to the UN.

# The UN Partition Plan

Landownership in Palestine and the UN Partition Plan, 1947



Palestinian Villages Depopulated in 1948 and 1967, and Razed by Israel



- In November 1947 the UN voted to partition Palestine.
- The Jewish State was to have 54% of the land, including the best land, even though:
- the Jewish Agency only owned between 6 -8% of the land;
- the Jewish population of Palestine was only just a third of the total population;
- the proposed Jewish State would only just have a bare majority of 15,000 over its non-Jewish inhabitants.
- The Zionist Agency again accepted the principle of partition, though not its borders. The Palestinians rejected it outright. Violence began the next day.

## Deir Yassin massacre

- In April 1948 Zionist/Israeli forces unleashed Plan Dalet to remove 'hostile' populations from around their communication routes.
- On the 9 April the peaceful village of Deir Yassin was overrun and its population massacred. News of the massacre led to panic and widespread flight amongst the Palestinian community.
- In other areas where the community refused to flee they were forced out; in Jaffa, Haifa and Acre literally pushed into the sea

# Nakba (The Catastrophe)

- Over half of the Palestinian refugees had already been forced out before Israel declared its independence.
- Even after this, despite promises of equal citizenship, Palestinians continued to be expelled.

# Nakba

- *Nakba statistics:*
- Approximately 750,000 Palestinians expelled;
- 400 villages completely destroyed;
- All the major cities in what became Israel ethnically cleansed;
- 78% of Palestine incorporated into Israel

# Divergent Narratives: Nakba and Redemption

- For Israelis the creation of the Jewish State and the successful conclusion of the first Arab-Israeli War meant redemption and a country free of persecution for Jews world wide.
- Chaim Weizmann called the Palestinian expulsion: “A miraculous clearing of the land.”
- David Ben Gurion said of the refugees: “The old will die the young will forget.”
- For Palestinians it meant dispersion, dispossession and homelessness.

# Nakba

- UN General Assembly Resolution 194 affirmed the Palestinians right of return. A right also affirmed in Article 13 of the Universal Declaration of Human Rights: “Everyone has the right to leave any country, including his own, and to return to his own country.”
- Today there are 7.2 million Palestinian refugees, 4.7 million of them still living as registered refugees in camps.

# The Right of Return

- The Right of Return remains the central demand of the Palestinian people. A right Israel absolutely refuses to acknowledge.
- Speaking before the UN General Assembly, PLO Chairman Yasser Arafat put the Nakba and the refugees at the heart of the conflict. In 1948, he explained, the Israelis “occupied 524 Arab towns and villages, of which they destroyed 385, completely obliterating them in the process. Having done so, they built their own settlements and colonies on the ruins of our farms and our groves. The roots of the Palestine question lie here. Its causes do not stem from any conflict between two religions or two nationalisms. Neither is it a border conflict between neighbouring States. It is the cause of people deprived of its homeland, dispersed and uprooted, and living mostly in exile and in refugee camps.”

# Fighters for Return



- In the early 1950s many Palestinians attempted to return to their homes.
- Israel classified all these people as infiltrators/terrorists; up to 1956 between 2,700 and 5,000 were killed - the vast majority civilians.

# The Six Day War

- In 1967, Israel occupied all of Palestine, the Syrian Golan Heights and the Egyptian Sinai Peninsula.

# UNSC RESOLUTION 242



- Following the 1967 war the UNSC passed resolution 242 which reaffirmed *“the inadmissibility of the acquisition of territory by war.”*
- Israel ignored the resolution and began settling the occupied territories, and went on to annex the Syrian Golan Heights and East Jerusalem.
- Israel’s refusal to return captured territory led to the 1969-70 War of Attrition and the 1973 Yom Kippur War.
- Moshe Dayan, confident in Israel’s military prowess announced, “There is no more Palestine. Finished!”

# Peace

- Following Israel's near defeat in the 1973 Yom Kippur War Israel became much more amenable to peace.
- In 1979 Egypt and Israel made peace. Israel agreed to withdraw from Egyptian territory and allow Palestinians in the occupied West Bank and Gaza self-rule leading to a free vote on the future status of these territories.
- Israel implemented the first part of this agreement and completely ignored the second part. Instead it chose to build illegal colonies – settlements – today 500,000 Israelis live illegally in Palestinian territory.

# Israeli Invasion of Lebanon in 1982

- In June 1982, Israel invaded Lebanon in an attempt to destroy the PLO. It feared the diplomatic progress the PLO was making through maintaining the peace.
- During the war 20,000 Palestinians, Lebanese and Syrians died - around 17,000 civilians.
- Israel remained in occupation of part of Lebanon until 2000. To fight this occupation a new resistance group, the *Hezbollah*, came into existence.

# Sabra and Shatilla Massacre

- The worst massacre of the Lebanon War came in September 1982.
- Approximately 1,700 Palestinian civilians were murdered in the Sabra and Shatilla Refugee Camps after Ariel Sharon, despite warnings, introduced the Lebanese Christian militia, the Phalangists, into the camps.
- Israeli soldiers watched the three day massacre; lit up the camp at night; bussed in Phalangist reinforcements; prevented civilians from fleeing and even provided bulldozers to cover up the dead.
- The UN condemned the massacre as “an act of genocide.” Israeli PM Menachem Begin denied any responsibility: “Goyim are killing goyim and the whole world is trying to hang Jews for the crime.”

# The Intifada

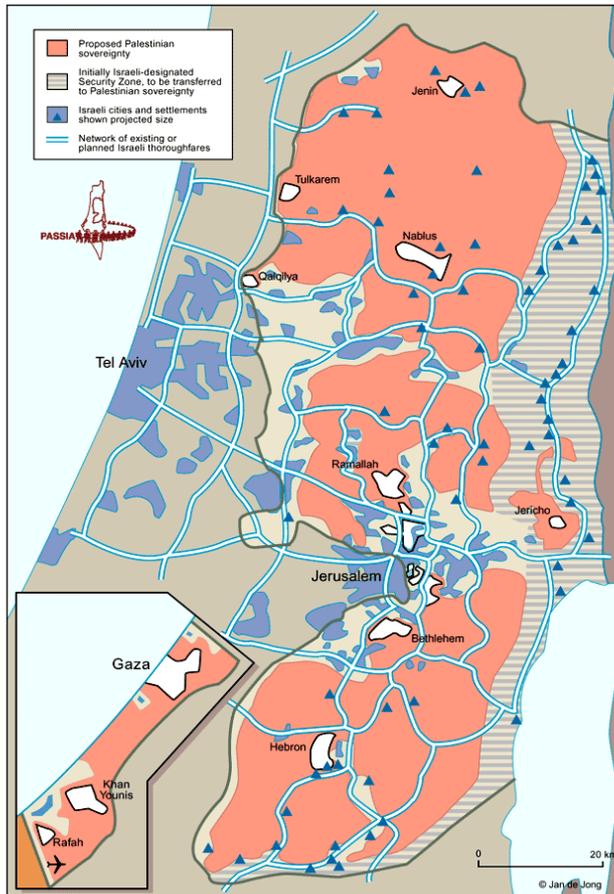
- In December 1987 the Palestinians of the West Bank and Gaza rose in revolt.
- The uprising was unarmed and took the form of civil disobedience, tax strikes, boycotts and non co-operation with collaborators.
- Up to mid 1991 Israel had exiled 69 Palestinian leaders, shot and killed over 600 demonstrators and by 1990 imprisoned 40,000 Palestinians including many children.

# Peace

- In 1993 Israel and the PLO agreed to embark on a peace process.
- The PLO renounced terrorism and agreed to recognise Israeli sovereignty over 78% of historic Palestine.
- In return the PLO believed that Israel would end its occupation and that the remaining 22% of historic Palestine would become the state of Palestine. However, Israel gave no guarantees and **with the murder of Rabin the peace process effectively died.**

# Camp David Proposal

Projection of the West Bank Final Status Map presented by Israel, Camp David, July 2000

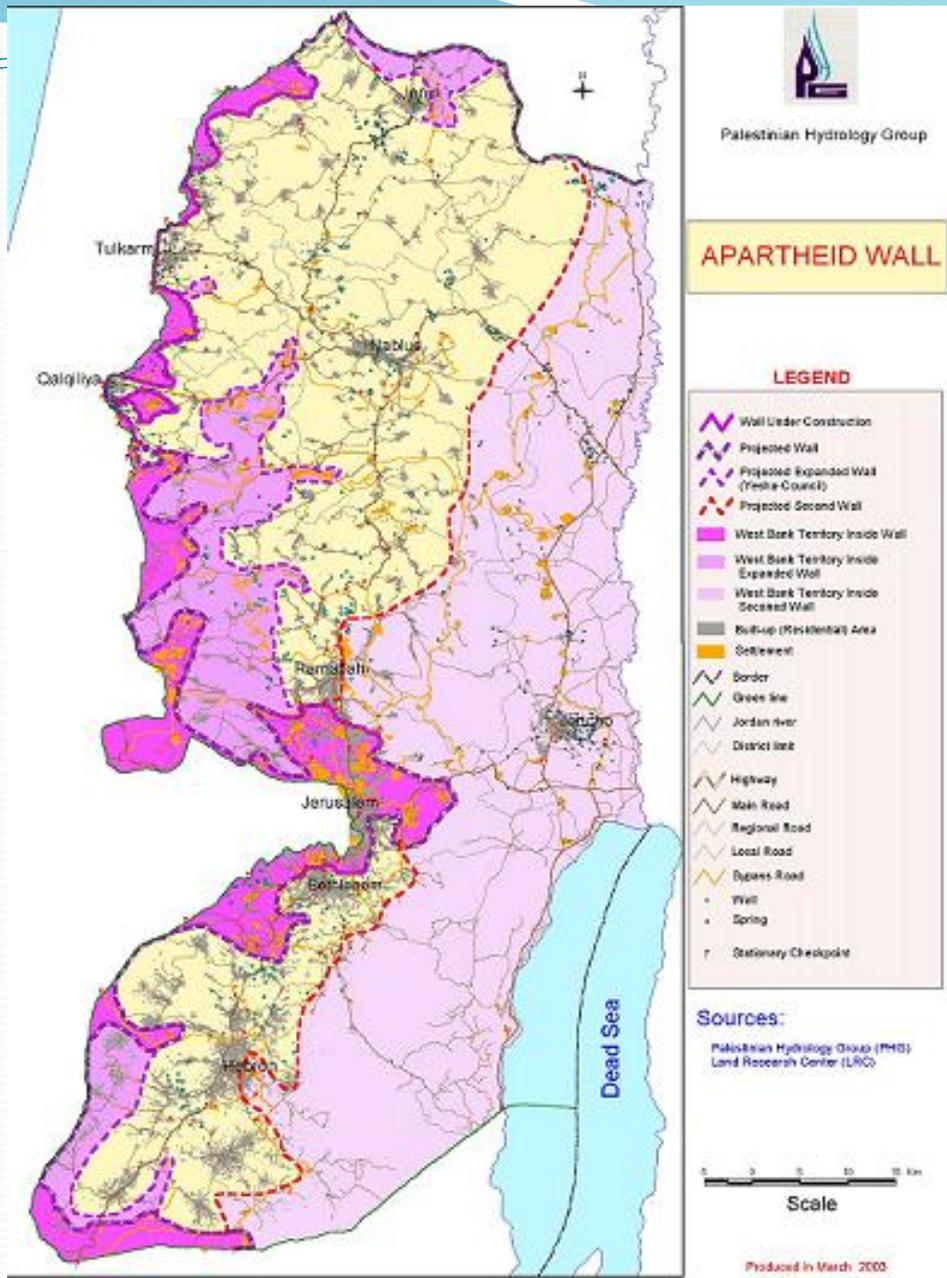


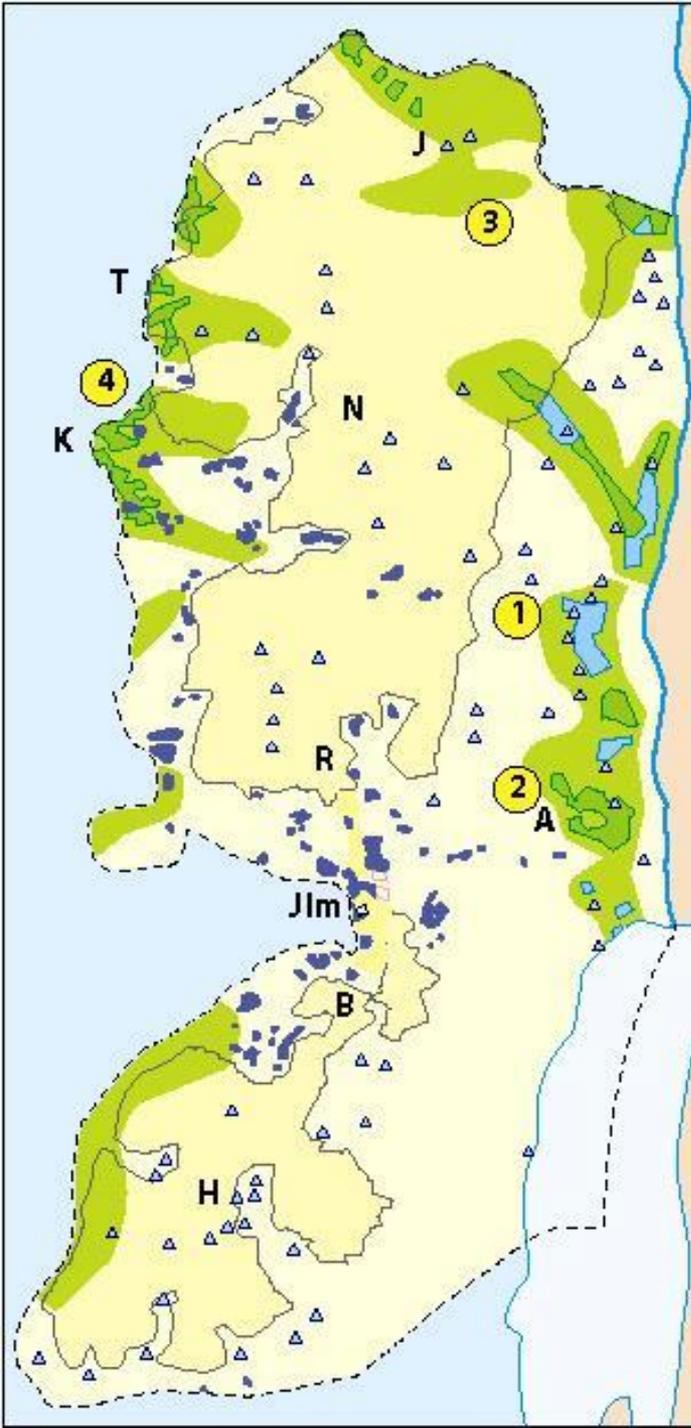
Palestinian Academic Society for the Study of International Affairs (PASSIA)

- In August 2000 Israeli PM Ehud Barak and PLO Chairman Yasser Arafat met to discuss a final settlement to the conflict.
- Israel's offer was:
- around 73% of the West Bank; maybe rising to 90% in 15-25 years;
- maybe a suburb of East Jerusalem as the Palestinian capital;
- 80% of Israeli settlers to stay complete with their Israeli only roads carving the West Bank into three discrete areas;
- Israel to maintain control of 'independent' Palestine's borders;
- no right of return for the refugees.
- President Jimmy Carter said, "There was no possibility any Palestinian leader could accept such terms and survive."



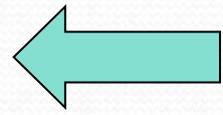
# The Confiscation Wall



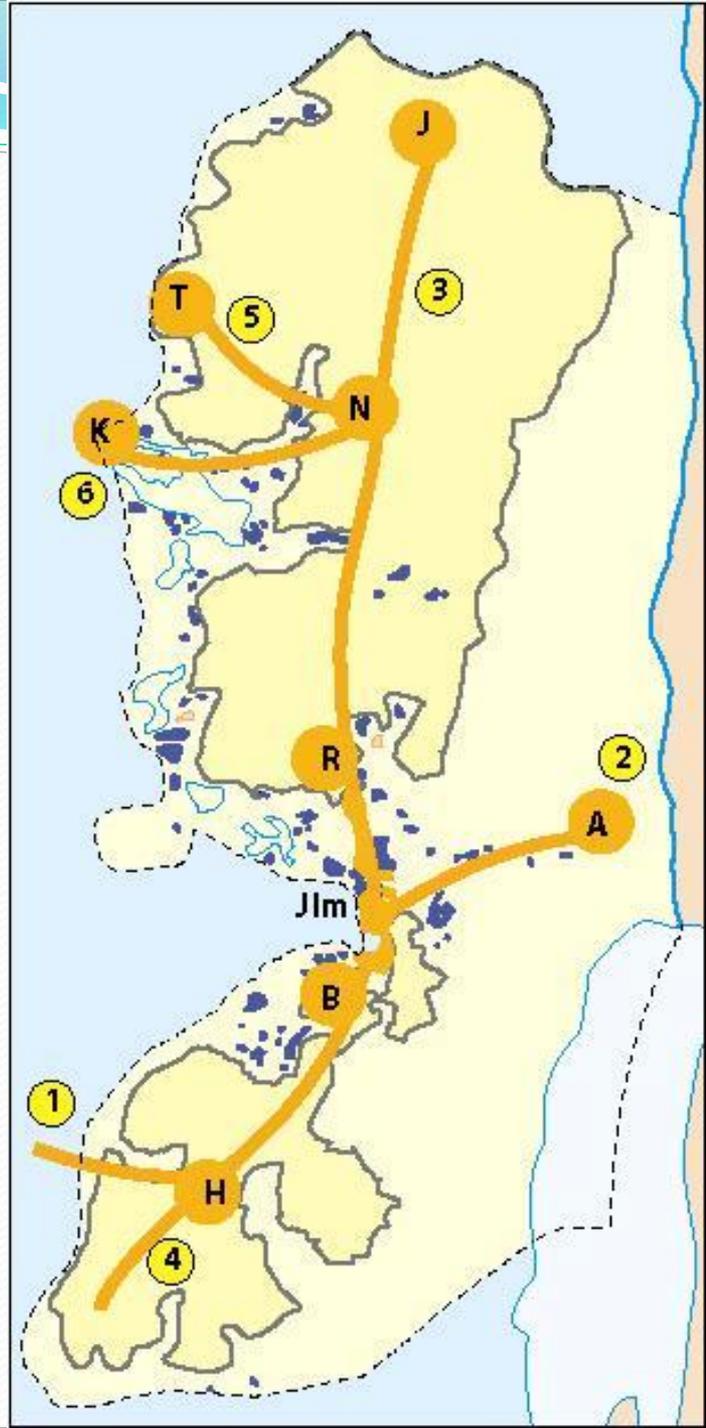
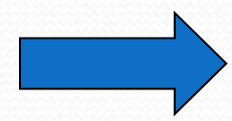


*National  
Impacts:*

*Rural Palestinian  
Potential*



*Urban  
Potential*



# The Second Intifada

- In September 2000 after a provocative visit by Ariel Sharon to the tunnels under the Al-Asqa Mosque serious rioting broke out that soon turned into another uprising.
- Israel again responded with massive and overpowering force.
- In the first five days of the uprising 47 Palestinians had been shot dead and 1885 injured.
- From September 2000 to the end of the year 91 Palestinian children were killed – no Israeli children died during the same period.

# The Second Intifada

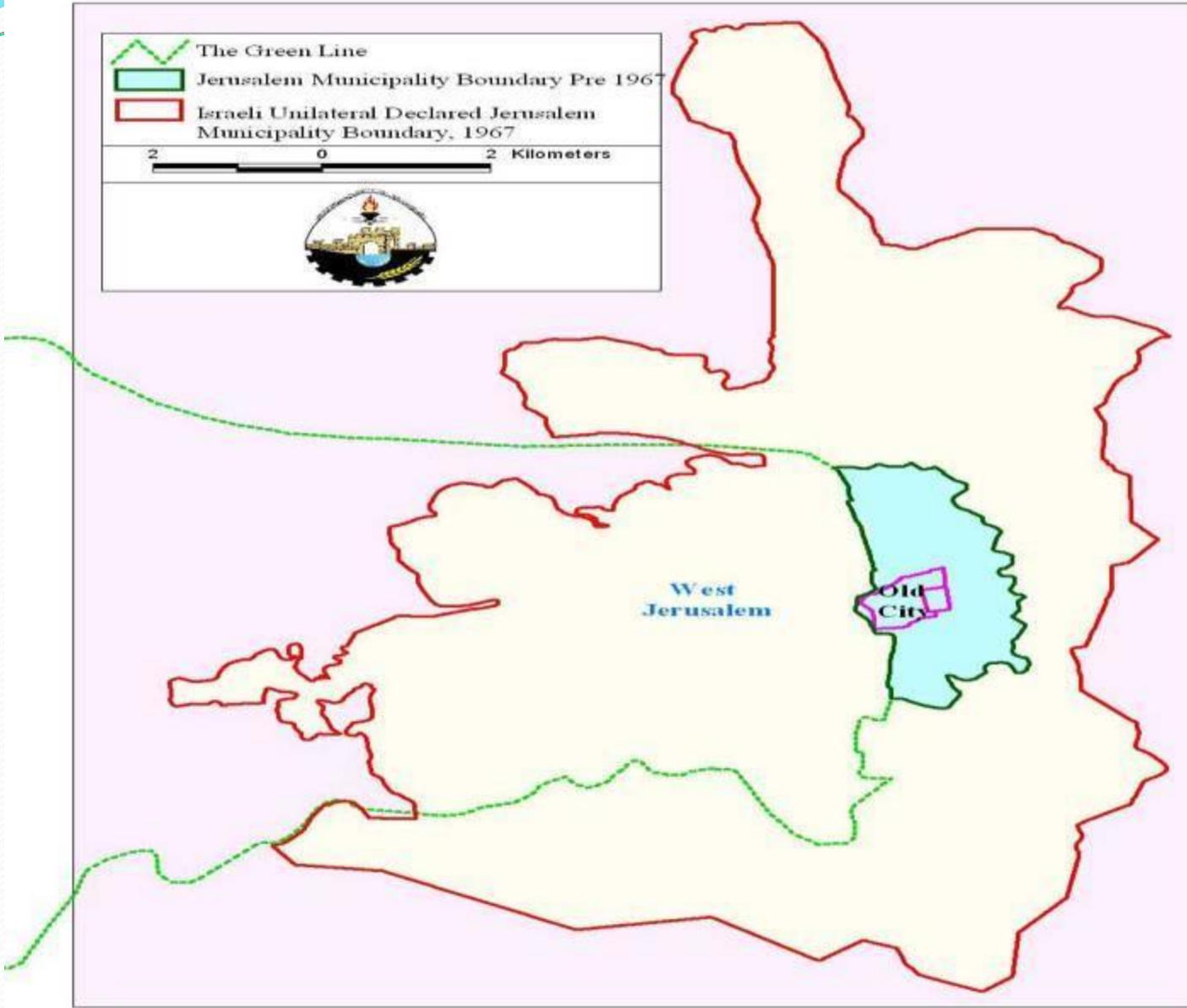
- In the west the dominant image of the Second Intifada is of suicide bombings.
- The first lethal suicide bombing came in March 2001, six months after the Intifada had begun.
- In total there were 140 suicide bombings which killed 542 people.

 The Green Line

 Jerusalem Municipality Boundary Pre 1967

 Israeli Unilateral Declared Jerusalem Municipality Boundary, 1967

2 0 2 Kilometers



# The Second Intifada

- From the 29 September 2000 until 30 April 2008 – 1053 Israelis and 4,789 Palestinians were killed. Whilst between 2000 until 2010 127 Israeli children and 1,435 Palestinian children were killed.
- In addition tens of thousands of Palestinians were imprisoned and thousands of homes demolished.

# Disengagement

- In 2005 Israel withdrew its 8,000 illegal settlers from Gaza, without any arrangements with the PA, so that there will not be a political process with the Palestinians.

# Gaza

- Even before the disengagement Gaza was under a partial siege, since the capture of Israeli soldier, Gilad Shalit and Hamas' winning of elections this siege became near total with only 40 products consisting of basic foodstuffs and detergents allowed in.
- The UN, the ICRC and all human rights and aid agencies have declared the siege an illegal collective punishment - it continues regardless.
- UN Special Rapporteur for Human Rights, John Dugard said, "Gaza is a prison and Israel appears to have thrown away the key."
- Save The Children UK, before the attack on Gaza of December 2008 stated, "50,000 children were malnourished, and 70% had vitamin A deficiency and almost half of children under age two were anaemic due to the border blockade."
- B'Tselem reports that 12% of child deaths in Gaza are due to diarrhea.

# Gaza Violence

- It is well known that since 2000 Palestinian militants have fired approximately 10,000 mortars and rockets at Israel.
- Up to 17 January 2009 Palestinian rocket fire had killed 20 Israeli civilians, two soldiers, a foreign worker and five Palestinians.
- Less well known is that Israel has fired tens of thousands of shells into Gaza. For example, well before the latest war between 27 June 2006 and August 2006 Israel fired over 3,500 shells and launched 190 air strikes.
- According to B'Tselem, between 2000 and the start of Israel's December 2008 attack on Gaza, Israeli forces had killed 3000 people in the Gaza Strip, including 635 children.

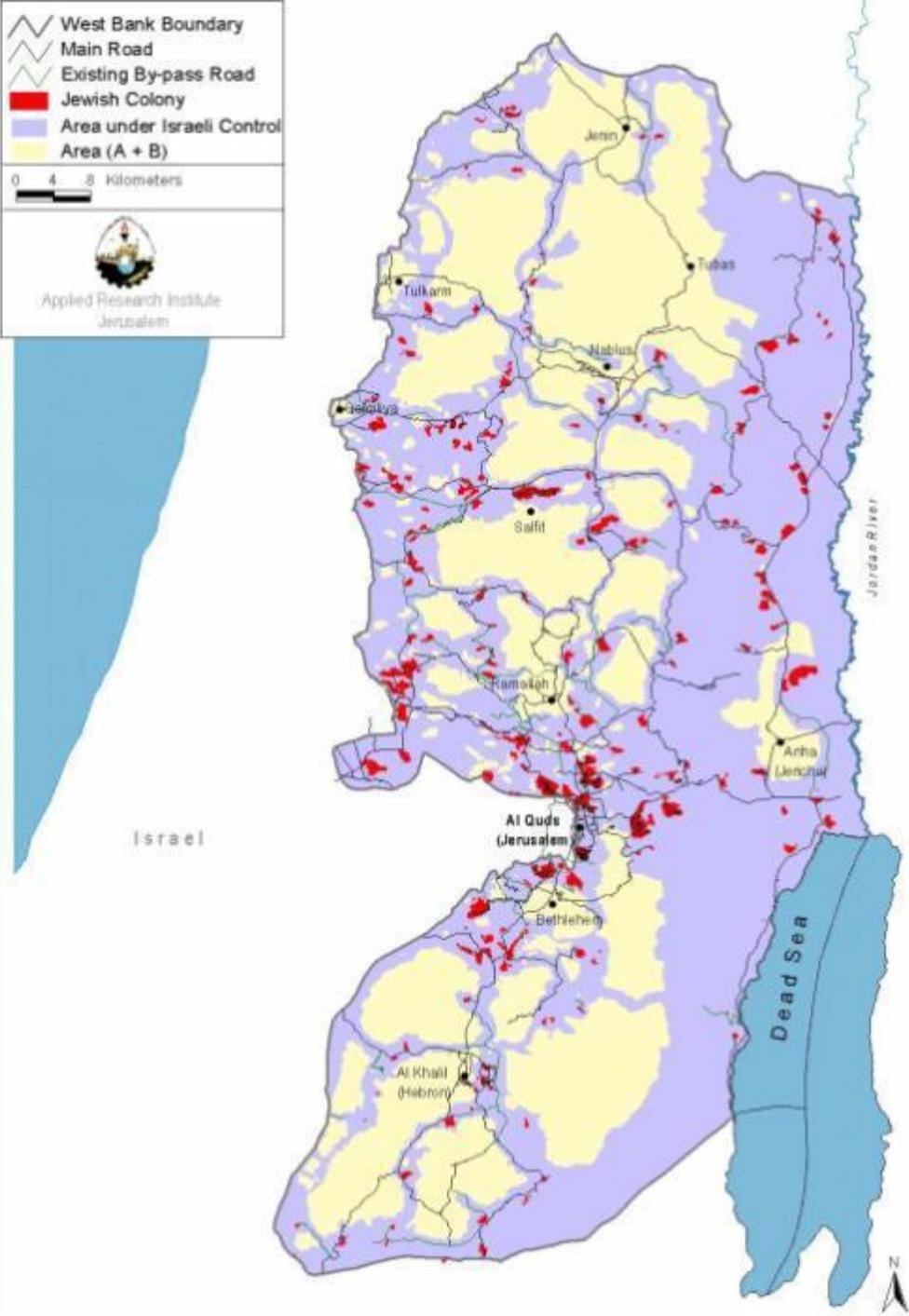
# Operation Cast Lead: Aftermath

- 1,324 Palestinians killed, including 437 children. 1,890 Children were also wounded. (PMoH) The number of Palestinian fighters amongst the dead is estimated at between 250 and 500.
- 13 Israelis were killed, including 4 civilians. No Israeli children were killed.
- In Gaza over 3,000 homes were completely destroyed and 20,000 more damaged. Nearly all government buildings and ministries destroyed. Hospitals, clinics, schools, universities and mosques bombed. Between 600-700 factories, workshops and businesses destroyed or damaged. Between 35% and 60% of agriculture wrecked.
- The UN Goldstone Report concluded: “While the Israeli government has sought to portray its operation as essentially a response to rocket attacks in exercise of its right to self-defence, the Mission considers the plan to have been directed, at least in part, at a different target: the people of Gaza as a whole.”

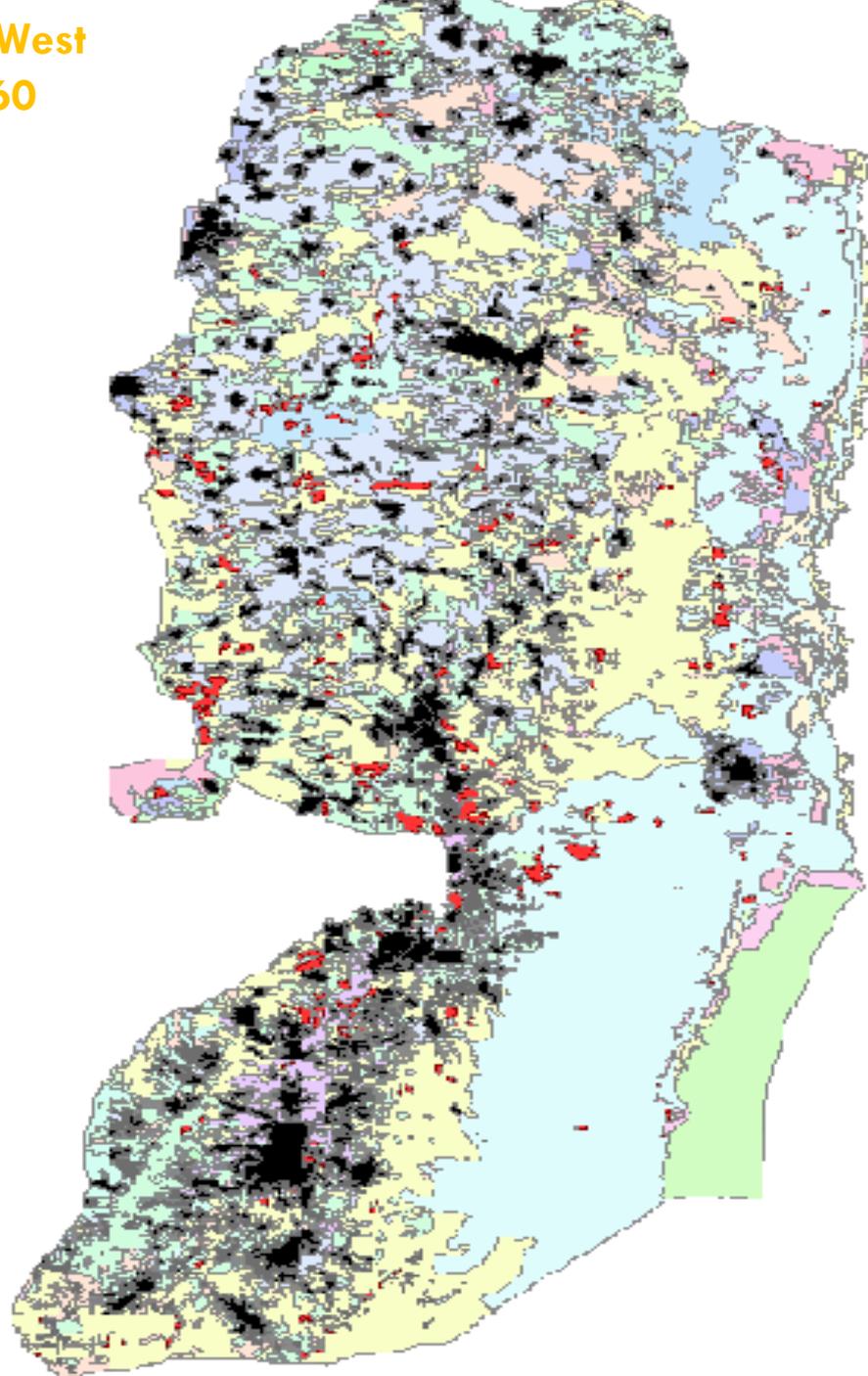
# Ongoing Occupation Issues

- The Right to Self-Determination;
- The Illegal Settlements;
- The Siege of Gaza;
- The Right to Water;
- The Right of Return;
- The Cleansing of East Jerusalem;
- The Prisoners;
- The Right to Freedom of Movement;
- The Right to Health;
- The Wall;
- House Demolition;
- The Confiscation of Land.

# Israeli Settlements

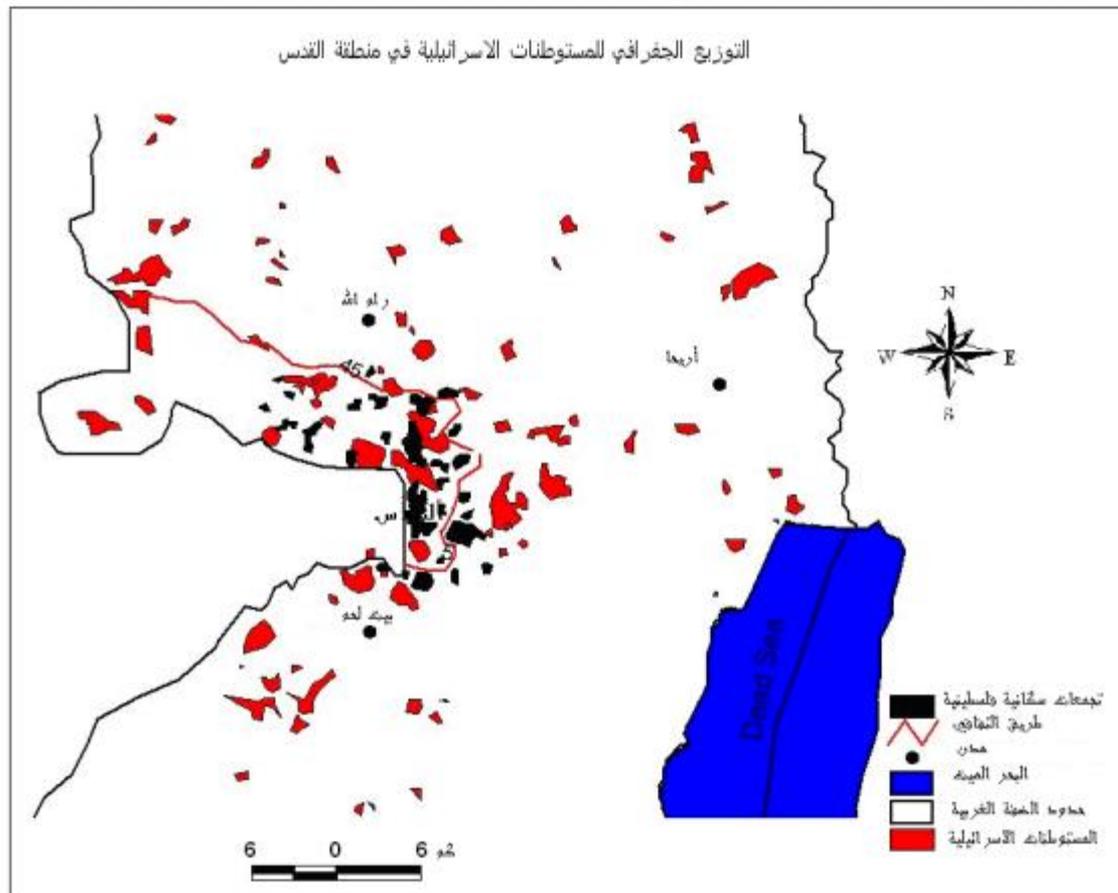


**Israeli Colonies in the West  
Bank: 145 Colonies, 560  
major Palestinian  
Communities**

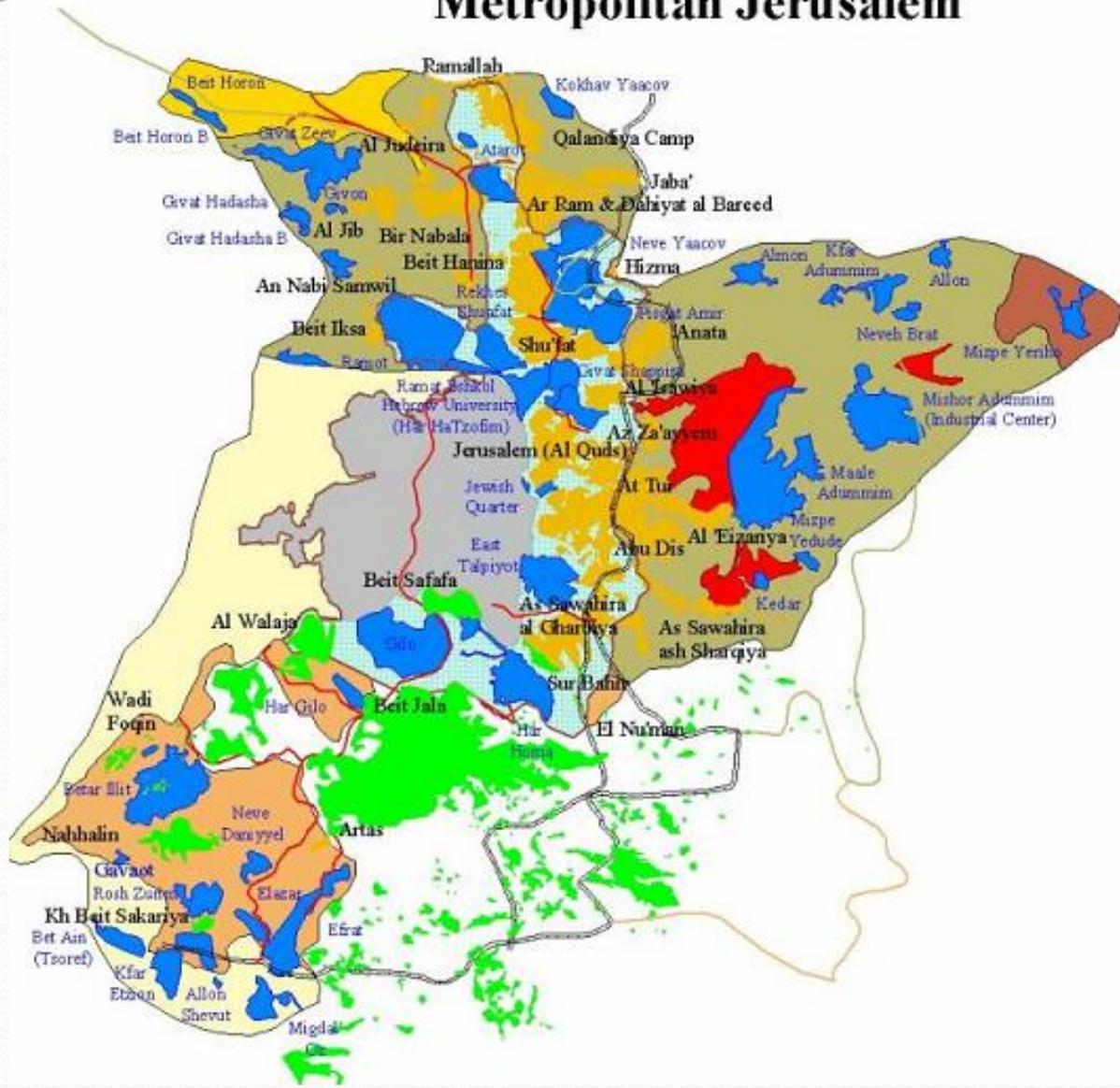




# There are 17 Colonies around Jerusalem, 240000 settlers



# Metropolitan Jerusalem



Israeli Bypass Roads	
	Existing
	Planned
	Road45
	Road80
	Bethlehem Builtup Areas
	Palestinian Built up Area
	Israeli Colony
	E1 plan
	West Jerusalem
	Municipality Border
Great-merge-dist.shp	
	Jericho
	Ramallah
	Jerusalem
	Bethlehem
	Great Jerusalem boundary

# Water Crisis

- Renewable water resources in the West Bank is about 750mm<sup>3</sup>.
- The Palestinians get only 15% of these resources.
- Israeli's get 85% of the Palestinian water.
- Palestinians need to get permission from Israel to dig new wells.
- The Palestinian individuals average daily allowance is 73 litres, while that of Israeli settlers is 350 litres.
- The situation in Gaza is worse than that in the West Bank (salty water).

# Self-Determination

- “...all peoples have the right of self-determination. The right of self-determination is of particular importance because its realization is an essential condition for the effective guarantee and observance of individual human rights and for the promotion and strengthening of those rights. It is for that reason that States set forth the right of self-determination in a provision of positive law in both Covenants and placed this provision as article 1 apart from and before all of the other rights in the two Covenants.”

Office of the High Commissioner for Human Rights, General Comment 12, 1984.



In such situation:

What future for Palestine?

Is it possible to build an independent Palestinian state?

How could geography contribute to a solution?