

## PALESTINE/ISRAEL BACKGROUND

### **Who is UNJPPI?**

UNJPPI (United Network for Justice and Peace in Palestine/Israel) is a network of United Church members and adherents, and other friends, which has been established to respond to the requests from leaders of Palestinian churches outlined in the Kairos Palestine Document (KPD). The Document eloquently describes the long-standing and worsening conditions faced by Palestinians living under the illegal Israeli occupation of the West Bank and Gaza. The Palestinian Christians urgently call on churches worldwide to come to the aid of Palestinians. It says that doing nothing is not an option and asks for action. UNJPPI is working with the GC office to implement the actions approved by GC41.

UNJPPI Website: [www.unjppi.org](http://www.unjppi.org)

To join the network and subscribe to a mailing list, go to: <http://www.unjppi.org/join-us.html>

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### **What are the Issues?**

#### ***Occupation***

Since the creation of the state of Israel in 1948, the Israeli military has occupied Palestinian land and taken over Palestinian farms, homes and communities, creating a large number of refugees, many of whom are still in refugee camps.

Since the 6-day war against Egypt in 1969, Israel has occupied the area known as the West Bank, which includes East Jerusalem. The occupation is considered by the UN as illegal. Israel has not annexed the West Bank, but it has exercised a high degree of control over the land, water, property, social services and economic activity. It has created a huge wall/barrier around the West Bank, and in places the wall has been built inside the Green Line (border between the West Bank and Israel.)

#### ***Barrier***



#### ***Check Points***

Approximately 540 internal checkpoints, roadblocks and other physical obstacles impede Palestinian movement within the West Bank; these obstacles exist primarily to protect settlers and facilitate their movement, including to and from Israel.” (UN OCHA Fact Sheet) These obstacles take up considerable time out of a Palestinian’s day when things run smoothly, can totally impede Palestinian movement when things are not running smoothly, can be a health hazard when Palestinians are stopped at checkpoints from pursuing medical treatment, and are a source of ongoing frustration for Palestinians as they attempt to go about their daily affairs.

#### ***Demolition of Palestinian Houses***

Palestinian homes and communities are demolished to expand the settlements.



## ***Settlements and Settlers***

Israeli settlements are communities of Israeli citizens that are located in occupied Palestinian territory, in either the West Bank or in East Jerusalem, and settlers are the Israeli citizens who live in the settlements. During the occupation, (ie since 1967) “with the political, military and financial support of the Israeli government, settlers have built settlements in the occupied Palestinian territory. These lands were seized or expropriated from Palestinians by military orders....The settlements were recognized by the Israeli Ministry of Interior even though they are illegal under international law ” ( pg 39, A Basic Background Resource to the Current Context of Israel and Palestine: an Historical, Political and Human Rights Review, EAPPI 2010)

As settlement growth continues, there is mounting concern about the increasing fragmentation of the West Bank. In particular, plans to add 3000 housing units, located east of East Jerusalem, are raising particular concerns. The primary north south access route between the north and south West Bank passes through this area. The settlement take more and more Palestinian resources and create more and more hardship for the Palestinian people.

See [A Mosaic for Peace](http://amosaicforpeace.wordpress.com/author/amosaicforpeace)

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## ***Water***

Inequitable water distribution is another significant issue. While the average Palestinian level of water consumption is approximately 70L/day, well below the World Health Organization’s recommended 100 L/day (Thirsting for Justice, Palestinian rights to water and sanitation, <http://www.thirstingforjustice.org>), Israeli settlers in the West Bank consume approximately six times the water used by Palestinians in the West Bank.(UN OCHA Fact Sheet)

## ***Unequal Application of Law***

Settler violence, apparent settler impunity, and the unequal application of law, creates other serious problems. The failure to respect international law, along with the lack of adequate law enforcement vis-à-vis settler violence and takeover of land has led to a state of (settler) impunity, which encourages further violence and undermines the physical security and livelihoods of Palestinians. Those (Palestinians) demonstrating against settlement expansion or access restrictions imposed for the benefit of settlements (including the Barrier) are regularly subject to arrest or injury by Israeli forces.” (UN OCHA Fact Sheet)

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## **RESOURCES:**

**EAPPI** web site ([www.eappi.org](http://www.eappi.org))

An important resource for daily reports from Palestine.

**CJPME** ([www.cjpme.org](http://www.cjpme.org)) A rich resource of information on boycotts and other actions.

**CFOS** ([www.sabeel.ca](http://www.sabeel.ca)) Canadian Friends of Sabeel is a Canadian network of Palestinians and Canadians supporting Sabeel, a Palestine Liberation Theology Centre in Bethlehem. Provides authentic Palestinian perspective.

[UN Office of the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs in Occupied Palestinian Territory](http://www.unocha.org/occupied-palestine)

## **ACTION**

Write Letters to Conference General Council Reps and General Council Executive in support of GC41 decision, in particular for the economic action/boycott.