

**PRESS RELEASE**  
**Issued by the Mission of Palestine, Dublin**  
**30<sup>th</sup> March 2011**  
**On the Occasion of Land Day**

The 30<sup>th</sup> of March marked the 35<sup>th</sup> anniversary of Land Day. On this day in 1976 a Palestinian uprising broke out in Israel against the confiscation of 21 thousand dunums of the Palestinians' land in Galilee, Al-Muthalath, and Negev. The uprising was violently suppressed by the Israeli military forces and led to the death of six young demonstrators. This calamity is remembered every year by all Palestinians wherever they are. More importantly this event raised the awareness of Palestinians to the ongoing process of land grab by the Israelis.

**Jewish Control more than 85% of the land of Historical Palestine**

The area of historical Palestine (Israel and Palestine) is 27,000 Km<sup>2</sup>. At the end of 2009, this area was inhabited by 11.5 million people. The Jewish population constitutes around 49.4% of those and utilize more than 85% of the total area. In comparison, during the British Mandate the Jews utilized not more than 1,682 km<sup>2</sup>, equivalent to 6.2%.

20.7% of the land of historical Palestine is cultivated areas, while forest and jungles constitute 9.7%. The built up areas comprise about 5.7%, but the largest proportion which constitutes 63.9% of the area is an open area and most of it is used and controlled by the Israeli army.

**13% of the West Bank is Isolated and Confiscated by Expansion and the Annexation wall**

In order to construct the separation wall against the ruling of the International court of Justice which deemed it illegal, Israel, the occupying power confiscated hundreds of thousands dunums of the Palestinian occupied territories. Data showed that the isolated and confiscated area between the wall and the green line (armistice line) amounted to almost 733 km<sup>2</sup>, which represents about 13.0% of the occupied Palestinian West Bank area. 348 km<sup>2</sup> of these confiscated lands are agricultural, 250 km<sup>2</sup> are forests and open area and 25 km<sup>2</sup> are Palestinian built-up area.

Israeli occupation authorities have continued their policy of land confiscation under various pretexts. The goal of Israeli authorities is to deprive Palestinians of their lands.

In 2010 about 1,496 dunums have been confiscated to construct the Separation Wall and also to expand their illegal settlements. In addition, about 2,000 orders have been issued by Israeli authorities during 2009 to evacuate Palestinian houses in preparation for demolition, as was the case in the Bustan neighbourhood in Silwan, Shu'fat, and others. During 2010, 31 houses inhabited by 224 Palestinians, of whom 115 were children were demolished by the Israeli authorities

The construction of settlements in 2010 was a race against time, where construction increased by 4 times compared with 2009. The number of settlements and military bases in the West Bank was 470. During the same year, 2010, 7 new outposts were constructed; around 141 settlements were expanded. The highest concentration of settlements is in the occupied East Jerusalem. 6,764 new units were constructed on Palestinian occupied lands.

At the end of 2009, the number of settlers in the West Bank including occupied East Jerusalem reached 517,774. 51.6% of them live in the occupied East Jerusalem.

These Israeli blatant breaches of International law - creating tangible changes on the occupied Palestinian territories - explain why negotiations on a future peace settlement have been totally drained of any meaningful value by Israel. These kinds of violations by the Israeli occupying power make the materialization of a two state solution a mission impossible.

Ends.