

## Monthly report on Israeli violations in Abu Dis, December 2007.

The Israeli violations on the people in Abu Dis continued during last December. During this month, there were seven people arrested from Abu Dis: four school students from Abu Dis Boys' School, two shopkeepers and a young man who had been freed last February. Invasions of shops and trapping their owners inside them happened repeatedly. In this report, we will give details about the Israeli violations in November, as follows.



### Building the Wall & confiscating land

Work continued on the building of the eastern section of the Separation Wall in the east part of Abu Dis and also on the land that is to be taken away under the confiscation order 17/T/07 issued in October (last month), although the Israeli authorities have not given a date for the appeal hearing against the confiscation decision and the people have not had a chance to have a formal tour of the land to show them what is to be taken. The lawyer Bassam Bahar said that there was no progress on the case that the Abu Dis local council is making against the confiscation orders.

On the same theme, the end of 2007 saw a great deal of work on the hotel area belonging to the settlement of Maale Adumim, despite all the commitments and promises that Israel made about stopping work on the settlements. During last month people saw a lot of building work on settlements next to Maale Adumim. They saw new roads opened leading to the area around the police station that was put last year on hills in the area between Maale Adumim and occupied Jerusalem - and this is part of the Israeli project known as E1.

- There is more information about the E1 project on the website <http://www.camdenabudis.net/settlements.html>
- There is further detail about recent land confiscations in the CADFA press releases on the website

<http://www.camdenabudis.net/docs/CADFA%20Press%20Release%2014-10-07.doc>

- There is more information about the current situation of Jerusalem in a useful UN report “The Humanitarian Impact on Palestinians of Israeli Settlements and Other Infrastructure in the West Bank” (July 2007)  
[http://www.ochaopt.org/?module=displaysection&section\\_id=1&format=html](http://www.ochaopt.org/?module=displaysection&section_id=1&format=html)

### **The economic situation in Abu Dis**

Last month was Eid al-Adha, and it was an extremely difficult situation because there was no way for many families to celebrate the religious holidays because of they were very short of money. There continued to be great inflation in the price of basic commodities with no clear reason. In the government schools there were strikes for three days during the last month.

### **Israeli violations at the checkpoints round Abu Dis**

Since the Israelis started to build the Separation Wall around Jerusalem they have worked to seal off Jerusalem very thoroughly from its suburb, and they have made special "terminals\*" for people to go through to get into the city. For the towns on the east of Jerusalem, the Israeli authorities built a terminal in a place between the Mount of Olives and the town of Aizariyeh to allow people carrying West Bank passes and who have also got a permit, following very long and complicated procedures, specially now they use finger prints as well as permits. And at al-Zayem on the Jerusalem road leading to the settlement of Maale Adumim, they have put a checkpoint that can only be used by people with Jerusalem passes. In this part of the report we will record the Israeli violations at the the checkpoints in the Wall in the area round East Jerusalem.

(\*Note - The Palestinians are now using the word “mua’bar” (translated into “terminal”) to describe the huge checkpoints, like international frontiers, that are the ways through the Wall. )

- On Thursday 11<sup>th</sup> December, an Israeli military force consisting of five jeeps and a group of soliders came into the town of Abu Dis at eight o’clock in the evening, and the soldiers attacked people and shops. Eye witnesses said that the soldiers broke the front glass of the Eriqat store at the crossroad leading to the Israeli military camp, and another group of soldiers attacked the Beatles Café and destroyed some of the things inside it. And the soldiers then went to the Al Quds University crossroads and invaded a shop and beat the owners and broke the glass, and then they arrested the shop owners Abdullah Dawood Awwad and Ahmed Radhy Eriqat. The attack continued; a shopkeeper from the Al Quds University Street said that the soldiers forced them to shut their shops and attacked the Yaffa Cafe in the same street and destroyed its contents. Dozens of young people were forced to stand

next to the wall for a long time – soldiers said that they had to check their IDs.

Note that the Camden Abu Dis Friendship Association was alerted to this attack by several people in Abu Dis who were very worried about what had happened and in particular about what would happen to the shopkeepers, who had been badly hurt. They sent some pictures of them being beaten in the street. A report compiled from these eye-witness reports is on the website: <http://www.camdenabudis.net/docs/Report%20on%2011th%20Dec%2007.doc>

CADFA has written to the Israeli Embassy asking the two who were arrested and asking for an enquiry.

- On Wednesday 19<sup>th</sup> December, on the the day of Eid al-Adha, the Israeli authorities stopped hundreds of people going to Jerusalem for morning Eid prayers in the Aqsa Mosque. The Israelis also increased the procedures at the checkpoints and terminals in the Wall. They refused to allow Palestinian people to go to the city to meet with their families from whom they are divided by the Separation Wall.
- On Saturday 22<sup>nd</sup> December, the occupation authorities enforced a closure of the Container checkpoint which is between the town of Abu Dis and Bethlehem. The closure started in the early morning and lasted until the following morning. People report an immense tailback of traffic and it was impossible to get to or from Bethlehem.
- On Sunday 23<sup>rd</sup> December in the evening, an Israeli force closed shops in the Al Quds University Street and attacked people who passed by and forced people in the dafes on that street to come out in to the street and stand up for a long time, on the excuse that they were examining their IDs. Eye witnesses reported that the soldiers beat a young man Ahmed Emad Ayyad whose body was badly hurt.
- Friday 28<sup>th</sup> December, once again, Israeli soldiers forced the owners of the shops in the university street to close their shops early in the evening. One of the shop owners said that the soldiers make problems on purpose just to stop the traders from doing their work and as a collective punishment for the inhabitants of the town. He said that the soldiers usually come without any warning in an angry way; they close the doors of the shops themselves and do not even give the shopowners any chance to go out of the shops, which traps them inside for a long time.
- On Monday 31<sup>st</sup> December, a taxi driver from Abu Dis said that while he was at Al Ram on his way to Ramallah together with other drivers working between Abu Dis and Ramallah, Israeli soldiers had taken the keys of his car, and that he had had to wait for more than two hours till the Israeli jeep returned with his key.

### **Arresting and invading houses**

During this month the Israeli authorities continued the policy of invading houses and arresting people. Israeli soldiers together with the intelligence

forces invaded houses during the night, searched and damaged things, and made several arrests during the last month.

- On Thursday 5th December, the Israeli forces entered three Abu Dis houses at a late hour in the night and arrested
- Ayman Saqr Saleh aged 16, Ra'fat Hassan Awwad also 16 and Tha'er Ali Halabiyeh 16 - all of them are students at Abu Dis Boys' School.
- On Tuesday 11th December, a unit of the Israeli border police invaded a petrol station and two shops at eight o'clock in the evening. The army arrested Ahmed Radi Eriqat and Abdullah Dawood Awwad after attacking and beating them inside the shops which are near the university crossroads in Abu Dis. They took both of them to the police station in the Maale Adumim settlement and presented them with charges and took them to the interrogation centre in the Atsion settlement near to Bethlehem.
- On Wednesday 19th December, the evening of the Eid al Adha festival an Israeli military force broke into the house of Abd Alrazaq Ayyad in the Al Quds University Street. The soldiers searched the house without giving any reason. Note that there was an old lady in the house on her own
- On the 19th December, an Israeli force arrested a young man, Ismail Ahmed Khalaf after invading his home at a late hour of the night. Ismail had spent two years and a half in Israeli prisons and was released last February.
- On Thursday the 27th December, late in the night, an Israeli military unit invaded the house of Ahmed Ateah Halabeyah. The army searched the house before arresting his son Mohammed who is 16 years old and a student at Abu Dis Boys' School.

### **Prisoners' affairs**

During the years of the Occupation, hundreds of people from Abu Dis have been arrested, usually for peaceful resistance against the Occupation, such as demonstrations, just as in the rest of Palestine. Among these there have been many children.

There was international publicity this month about Israeli releases of prisoners after the Annapolis talks, but it should be pointed out that the Abu Dis prisoners who were released had all finished their sentences anyway, and at the same time there were, as usual, many new arrests

At the end of December 2007, there were 67 prisoners from Abu Dis in Israeli jails. Among them there were 22 children. Many of these people have suffered bad treatment, torture, forced confessions, imprisonment without trial. There is further information on Abu Dis prisoners at <http://www.camdenabudis.net/prisoners.html>

- On Tuesday, 3rd December, the Israeli authorities released Mohannad Fawzi Salah after he had completed his sentence of 6 years, Mohammed Abu Ali after spending four years in Israeli prisons,

Mohammed Salah Ariqat after spending eight months, Abed Mohammed Abed Aldeek after a period of a year, Omar Yousef Abu Hilal after a period of four years and Ferouq Halabiyeh after a period of eight months. .

- On Wednesday the 4th December, the lawyer Abed Mahmoud Rabeyah was released after paying 25 000 shekels bail. Abed was imprisoned last month after his house had been invaded twice
- On Wednesday the 5th December the military court at Awfar gave a period in prison of 6 months to the student Ahmed Husni Awwad aged 16 who was imprisoned last month accused of throwing stones.
- On Thursday 6th December, the teacher Hamad Yousef Aleyan was released after being in administrative detention\* for a period of four months. Note that Hamad is a maths teacher in the Arab Institute School and he has been arrested several times in the past.
- On Thursday 13th December, the Israeli forces in the interrogation centre of Atsion refused to allow the families of the two prisoners Ahmed Eriqat and Abdullah Awwad deliver them clothes and belongings to them after the lawyer of the two prisoners had got in touch with them and they had brought the clothes to the interrogation centre.
- On Thursday 13th December, the young man Ali Jamos was released after a period of administrative detention that lasted four months.
- On Sunday the 16th December, the Red Cross committee got in touch with the families of the prisoners Ahmed Eriqat and Abdullah Awwad that a representative of the Red Cross had visited the prisoners in the Atsion interrogation centre and found that the prisoners were suffering from the effects of beating and injuries caused by it. Ahmed Eriqat is suffering from pain in one of his legs as a result of the beating he went through during and after his arrest at the hands of some of the Israeli border police
- On Monday 17th December, the Israeli authorities released Ibrahim Hussein Jaffal and Ibraheem Jamal Mohsen after 23 months of imprisonment and the young man Atheer Mohammad Alayan after a period of 13 months in the Occupation prisons.
- On Thursday 20th December, Imran Worad Halabeeyeh was released after a period of four months of administrative detention\*
- On Thursday 27th December, a young man Ismail Ahmed Khilaf was released after being arrested and kept for nine days in the interrogation centre in Atsion
- On Sunday 30th December, the Israeli military court gave a life sentence to Ibraheem Mohammad Ayyad. Ibraheem was imprisoned in 2004. Amer Mohammed Eid Bahr who was imprisoned at the same time as Ibraheem was sentenced to 12 years.
- The administration of the prison asked the family of the prisoner Mohammed Saleh Mohsen to pay 80 thousand shekels to the hospital for treatment and he is still being treated. Note that Mohammed's family have not had any report or details about the illness of Mohammed and have not been able to visit him since last August

\* Administrative detention – means that there is no trial

## **Abu Dis Boys' School**

We haven't received any response or information from the Israeli side about reopening the investigation in the case since the Abu Dis School Head teacher asked for the enquiry to be reopened in the middle of last May. The Israeli Human Rights Centre ACRI is still working on the case.

Details of the attack by Israeli Border Police on boys inside Abu Dis Boys' School on 14<sup>th</sup> February and the follow-up to this are available on the CADFA website [www.camdenabudis.net](http://www.camdenabudis.net)

## **Conclusions and recommendations**

There is helpful information on human rights and international humanitarian law at the following United Nations site:

<http://www.ochr.org/EN/ProfessionalInterest/Pages/InternationalLaw.aspx>

Some important agreements and decisions which the Israeli occupying power are violating in their treatment of the Palestinian people are:

### **1. The Wall**

The International Court of Justice asked Israel to stop work on the Separation Wall in the Palestinian occupied territories including East Jerusalem and the area around it, to destroy all the bits that are already built and to delete all the laws and decisions which the Israeli government had made in creating it (Hague decisions paragraph 133, 152 and 153 – Advisory Opinion of the ICJ, 9th July 2004)

### **2. Torture and the mistreatment of prisoners**

There are many international agreements against torture and mistreatment of prisoners. Article 7 of the International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights (1976) reads: No one shall be subjected to torture or to cruel, inhuman or degrading treatment or punishment." The UN Convention against Torture was signed in 1984.

### **3. Confiscation of lands**

According to The Hague agreement signed in 1907 paragraph 152, occupation forces must not confiscate lands or properties from the people under occupation.

### **4. Equal treatment of people (note the unequal treatment of people through the permit system and pressure on people around Jerusalem)**

Israel is a signatory to the undertaking "to respect and to ensure to all individuals within its territory and subject to its jurisdiction the rights

recognized in the present Covenant, without distinction of any kind, such as race, colour, sex, language, religion, political or other opinion, national or social origin, property, birth or other status.” (International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights, article 2, paragraph 1, signed 1966, in effect from 1976)

### **5. Right to family life**

The same international agreement states that “No one shall be subjected to arbitrary or unlawful interference with his privacy, family, home or correspondence, nor to unlawful attacks on his honour and reputation... Everyone has the right to the protection of the law against such interference or attacks”

This month’s report shows that the people of Abu Dis are suffering regular violations of all of these agreements and decisions. We call on the international community and all the supporters of the rights of the Palestinians to make some pressure on Israel as an occupying force to stop the violations and to guarantee their human rights and their rights under international humanitarian law.