

# LOOK AT THE STATE OF PALESTINE...



These maps demonstrate how, thanks to the onward march of Zionism, Palestinians have been marginalised in their own land over the past 70 years.

## 1946 Mandate Palestine

The first map illustrates the situation prior to the creation of the Israeli state in May 1948. Then Britain ruled Palestine under a mandate granted by the League of Nations in 1922. Until 1939, it had permitted unrestricted Jewish immigration into Palestine.

## 1947 UN Partition Plan

In 1947, Britain announced its intention to give up the mandate and to withdraw from Palestine on 15 May 1948. The newly formed UN set up a commission which recommended a partition scheme, which was endorsed by the UN General Assembly in resolution 181 passed in November 1947, despite the opposition of Palestinians and all Arab states.

The partition plan, which is illustrated in Map 2, divided Palestine into three parts. It was very generous to the Jews, allocating almost 56% of the land to a Jewish state, even though at the time Jews made up about a third of the population of mandate Palestine and owned less than 6% of the land. Palestinians were to have a state on 42% of the land and a small area around Jerusalem was to be under international control.

## 1949 to 1967

However, the Zionist movement was determined to acquire as much territory as possible for a Jewish state with as few Palestinians as possible living on it. To that end, Zionist forces expanded the UN-allocated territory to include more than 78% of mandate Palestine and expelled around

750,000 Palestinians into the rest of Palestine and the surrounding Arab states, where they and their descendants live today. Over 500 Arab villages were destroyed so that those expelled had no homes to come back to. This was the territory controlled by the state of Israel from 1948 to 1967 (see Map 3).

## **1967 to 2015**

The Zionist project did not stop there. Since the Six-Day War in June 1967, Israel has occupied the rest of mandate Palestine – the Gaza Strip and the West Bank, including East Jerusalem – and continued its colonising mission in these territories. Today, upwards of 600,000 Jewish settlers live there on confiscated Arab land. This transfer by Israel of its citizens into territory it occupies is a war crime under Article 8.2(b)(viii) of the Rome Statute of the International Criminal Court. Nevertheless, Israel has ignored repeated demands from the international community that it cease this illegal activity.

From June 1967 until after the Oslo Accords in the mid 90s, Israel had absolute control of every square inch of mandate Palestine. The Oslo Accords were supposed to lead to the gradual transfer of the territories occupied by Israel to Palestinian control and to the creation of a Palestinian state in those territories by 1999. The newly established Palestinian Authority did acquire a degree of control over small islands of territory (Area A and B) on the West Bank, and that remains the situation today (see Map 4). However, Israel security forces have always entered these areas at will.

## **Gaza**

As for Gaza, Israel withdrew its ground forces and settlers in 2005. But it continues to control almost everything and everybody that enters or leaves Gaza, plus the air space above it and the sea off its shore – and Israeli security forces do not hesitate to attack any person or anything within its boundaries.

## **The Balfour declaration 1917**

In the Balfour declaration of 1917, the British Government declared its support for “the establishment in Palestine of a national home for the Jewish people”. Without that declaration by the imperial power that was about to take control of Palestine from the Ottoman Empire, Israel would never have come into existence.

The Balfour declaration went on to promise that “nothing shall be done which may prejudice the civil and religious rights of existing non-Jewish communities in Palestine”. In the light of everything that has happened to the indigenous people of Palestine since (as illustrated by our maps), that is a sick joke.