

Urgent Appeal

Immediate Action Needed in BEIT JALA City – Bethlehem District – Palestine.

This is an urgent appeal from the Municipal Council of Beit Jala city on behalf of the citizens of Beit Jala and its organizations to the whole international community, human rights organization and solidarity movements, to support our protest against the continuous illegal act facing the Palestinian community in Beit Jala city, caused by the construction of the Apartheid Wall.

On Tuesday 27th of June 2006, the Israeli Occupation bulldozers guarded with armed occupation forces started cutting and uprooting olive trees in the Cremisan area in preparation for the construction of the Apartheid Wall. Cremisan area has the only remaining forest in the city, and the most fertilized agricultural land. The Olive Trees standing there are the main source of income to many farmers in the city, and aged to the times of the Romans they represent a living testimony of our culture, heritage and existence.

Cremisan area is also one of the very few recreational sites in the city, where many citizens used to go during weekends or holidays. In addition, the area hosts the only winery in Palestine, two monasteries and a kindergarten.

Constructing the Apartheid Wall in this area will separate the city and its citizens from its northern part, and separate the entire Bethlehem district from its capital Jerusalem; two cities that have historical, social, economical and religious connections.

Furthermore, the Wall will slay all our fertile agricultural lands and destroy the beautiful environment of the area. It will severely affect us directly or indirectly and cause destruction to our private and public properties. With swallowing up all the left open spaces, this Apartheid Wall will strangulate the built-up areas where we live depriving the right of our citizens to use their lands and deprive the city from any possibility for future urban expansion and development.

The Wall is a collective punishment and an outrageous human rights violation; with constructing this wall the Israeli Occupation Authorities oppose all international laws and UN resolutions. It forces facts on the ground that makes it harder for justice to prevail and for our Palestinian people to gain their freedom, independence and legal human rights.

Therefore, we ask our friends, supporters, and the International community to immediately intervene and stop these Israeli activities in Beit Jala city, that has suffered from the continuous land confiscation; leaving it with only 4500 dunums from an original area of 14500 dunums.

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