Between August 25 and September 9 2014, the Israeli civil administration published plans to build a new settlement “Ramat Nu’eimeh” in Inweimeh near Jericho in order to house about 12,500 Palestinian Bedouin from the Jahalin, Kaabneh and Rashaida tribes that are to be expelled from their homes and lands in the Jordan Valley and the E1 area east of Jerusalem. The area slated for the township is owned by Palestinian villages and comprises 1,460 dunams. Two other ‘relocation’ townships are to be built: one in the area of Abu Dis, close to the Jerusalem rubbish dump where already some x Bedouin have been expelled to in 1997 and 2012, the other one in the northern Jordan Valley.

Expulsion starts with 20 communities, comprising some 2,300 people, to be uprooted from the area slated for the expansion of the illegal Ma’ale Adummim settlement (E1 area) and then forcibly transferred to the site next to the Abu Dis garbage dump.

 Asked if Israeli authorities plan to put the communities on trucks to ‘relocate’ them (as happened in 1997) Yuval Turgeman, the director of Bedouin affairs of the Civil Administration answers: “We won’t put them on trucks. But we’ll take immediate action to demolish their residences and agricultural buildings, because there is an alternative here.”

Israel is planning to forcibly relocate some 27,000 Bedouin living in 46 communities in Area C in the occupied West Bank to three 'relocation' townships in order to prepare Area C (over 60% of the West Bank) for final annexation.
What is the background?

- **As a result of the Oslo Agreement in 1993** the occupied West Bank has been classified into Area A (Palestinian civil control), Area B (mixed control) and Area C (full Israeli control). Area C comprises over 60% of the West Bank and much of non-residential and agricultural lands and water resources. Since then, Israel has acted as if Area C was de facto annexed land, expanded settlements and military zones on the area and developed uncountable measures to expel the communities residing there from their lands and homes.

- **Bedouin living in Area C east of Jerusalem** have been forcibly removed from the lands they have been living on since the start of the construction of the illegal settlement of Ma’ale Adumim in 1975. In 1995, 1997 and 1998 dozens of Jahalin Bedouin families living in the E1 area have been forcibly transferred to a site approximately 150 meters from the garbage dump in Abu Dis. In 2007 Israel displaced another 300 Bedouin families from the E1 area to the township in Abu Dis.

- **Already in late 2011 the Civil Administration informed UN agencies about a plan to evict** further 2,300 residents of 20 Bedouin communities in the Jerusalem district to a second site, approximately 300 metres from the Jerusalem municipal garbage dump. The plan included for the first time officially the provision of ‘a permanent solution for the residence for the Bedouin population’ (i.e. townships) and outlined as well expulsion plans of the Bedouin communities in the Jordan Valley.

"If there are no Bedouin in this area, in between Jerusalem and Ma’ale Adumin and all the way to Jericho, I swear that no Palestinian will be able to cross or enter this area without Israeli permission", says Abu Imad from the Jahaleen.
Resistance of the Palestinian communities

• **The Popular Council to Protect the Jordan Valley:** In order to provide coordination and a unified voice for the people in the Jordan Valley, over the last two years the Jordan Valley Council has been created. It works to organize and represent the communities in the area.

• **The 'Gate to Jerusalem' protest camp:** Stop the Wall Campaign, the Popular Resistance Committees and the Popular Council of the Jordan Valley have during February arranged a protest camp in Abu Dis, where the new relocation township is to be built. Israeli military has demolished their camp eleven times, fifteen people have been arrested, and thirty-six have been injured. The Israeli soldiers have finally succeeded in re-occupying the area but the people are determined to continue the struggle.

• **Rebuilding destroyed communities:** Many of the communities that are now to be transferred into the townships have suffered repeated large scale demolitions in their communities or of their entire community. However, people organize the reconstruction of their communities on the same spot – sometimes within weeks.

• **Resilience in the face of constant attack:** Communities remain steadfast in their lands even if they have to suffer firing exercises by the military, settler attacks, confiscation of water or destruction of their services.

• **Campaign to end corporate complicity:** Stop the Wall Campaign, the Popular Resistance Committees and the Popular Council of the Jordan Valley have successfully campaigned to ensure Palestinian business contracted to build the township in Inweimeh has pulled out of the operation. Sustained pressure needs to be put on any company directly or indirectly involved in this ethnic cleansing scheme.

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Who is affected?

• **The Palestinian Bedouin are an integral part of the Palestinian people.** Today, the majority of them live in the Naqab (Negev desert), Area C of the occupied Palestinian West Bank or as refugees in Jordan.

• **Around 27,500 Palestinian Bedouins** are living in Area ‘C’ of the West Bank. 60 percent (15,000 Bedouins) live in the Jordan Valley in Area ‘C’. In total there are only 18,357 Palestinian Area C residents in the Jordan Valley.

• **Around 2,800 Bedouins** reside in 18 residential areas in the hills to the east of Jerusalem. More than 85 per cent of them are refugees.

• **The large majority of the Palestinian Bedouin currently residing in the occupied West Bank** are refugees that have been expelled between 1948-1951 from the Naqab. Many of them have been forcibly transferred a second time after the 1967 occupation of the West Bank.

• **Of the over 200 families** that were re-located to the township close to the Jerusalem garbage dump in the 1990s, more than 85 per cent report they had to abandon their traditional livelihoods.
How does forced transfer work?

Among the measures undertaken by the Israeli authorities and complicit entities and corporations are:

- **Demolitions of homes, structures and entire communities**: Between 1988 and 2013, the Israel issued 12,570 demolition orders on homes and buildings in Area C. Entire villages have been razed several times: The Bedouin village Hamsa was razed twice in 2007, and al-Hadidiya has suffered large scale demolitions 14 times since 2006.

- **Denial of access to water and land**: In 2013, 217 kilometers of irrigation pipes have been confiscated and seven rainwater collection ponds destroyed in Area C. Some 50,000 Palestinians in 151 communities live on less than 20 lpcd (WHO minimum amount for “short-term survival” in emergency and disaster situations). The International Fact-Finding Mission on Settlements concluded that “[t]he denial of water is used to trigger displacement, particularly in areas slated for settlement expansion, especially since these [Palestinian] communities are mostly farmers and herders who depend on water for their livelihoods.”

- **Military ‘Firing zones’**: 3,400 Bedouin in the Jordan Valley reside in the 18% of West Bank land that Israel has defined as military zones for training, or ‘firing zone’ (little more than the size of Area A, 17.7 %). 78 of the 88 communities affected by the ‘firing zones’ depend on herding and farming for their livelihood. Amira Haas quotes Col. Einav Shalev, operations officer of Central Command, as telling a Knesset meeting in 2014 that preventing ‘illegal’ [Palestinian] construction is one of the main reasons the Israeli army has recently increased its training in the Jordan Valley. (Haaretz, 21.05.14)

- **Denial of access to basic services and humanitarian aid**: Schools, clinics and other essential social services are regularly demolished by Israeli occupation forces in order to push the residents of Area C out of their homes. Electricity services are forbidden. Even humanitarian aid is being confiscated. Col. Einav Shalev, operations officer of Central Command of the IOF, explained in the Knesset that this serves as "a punch in the right places. When you confiscate 10 large, white and expensive tents, it’s not easy. It’s not simple to recover.” (ibid.)

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**Bantustanization**

The political significance of the expulsion of Palestinian communities from Area C

The ‘relocation’ plan is another Nakba, a full scale disaster for the Palestinian quest for self-determination.

- In 1967 there were 350,000 Palestinians living in what is now Area C. Today there are only 150,000 left. Some Israeli politicians consider this number ‘acceptable to integrate into the Jewish state’. Yet, the large and geopolitically strategic areas inhabited by the Palestinian Bedouin have to be ethnically cleansed.

- In 2002 Israel started to institutionalize and literally cement the lines of annexation of Area C on the ground by building the Apartheid Wall around Areas A and B, slating the rest for settlement expansion and transfer of the existing communities.

- In 2005, Israel started the ‘disengagement plan’, which affects all the Palestinian territories occupied in 1967. Gaza was transformed into an open-air prison and the first of the Bantustans. The laboratory for the West Bank. At the same time, the infrastructure construction to build the West Bank Bantustans was accelerated as well as the expulsion of the Palestinian population from area C and the settlement expansion in these areas.

- The ‘relocation plan’ or massive evacuation of area C is combined with the closing the road from Jericho to Jerusalem for Palestinians. This will isolate the south of the West Bank from the center-north. Similarly, in Salfit district, the illegal settlement of Ariel is expanding across the West Bank. In this way, Israel completes the construction of three isolated Bantustans in the West Bank and the reduction of the Palestinians in the West Bank to some 30% of the West Bank land or 13% of historic Palestine.
International law and the international community

• The forcible and arbitrary transfer of populations has been defined in the International Criminal Court statute as a crime against humanity when committed as part of a widespread or systematic attack against a civilian population. The crime of forcible transfer of populations can be carried out through a large range of 'coercive pressures' on people to flee their homes, including destruction of their homes or denying the community access to schools and services.

• Displacement of individuals when undertaken on discriminatory grounds may amount to persecution, another crime against humanity.

• Transfer of population as implemented by Israel is a core part of the policies that constitute the crime of apartheid, another crime against humanity. According to the UN Convention, apartheid policies include ‘any measures including legislative measures, designed to divide the population along racial lines by the creation of separate reserves and ghettos for the members of a racial group or groups’ as well as ‘the deliberate creation of conditions preventing the full development of such a group or groups, in particular by denying to members of a racial group or groups basic human rights and freedoms, including [...] the right to freedom of movement and residence’.

• Article 49 of the IV Geneva Convention prohibits “[i]ndividual or mass forcible transfers... regardless of their motive”. Article 53 prohibits destruction of property not justified by military necessity. According to Article 147, unlawful transfer and extensive destruction or appropriation of property carried out unlawfully and wantonly are grave breaches of the Convention, and hence war crimes.

• International legal obligations: Members of organizations and agents that commit, participate in, directly incite or inspire, directly abet, encourage or cooperate in the commission of the crime of apartheid are subject to criminal prosecution (Article III, 1976 anti-Apartheid Convention). All states are obliged to condemn, suppress and punish those involved in the crime of apartheid. All states are obliged not to aid or assist and to implement individually or collectively effective measures in order stop Israel from committing grave breaches of the IV Geneva Convention.

• In 2012, the UN Secretary-General has stated that the implementation of the proposed ‘relocation’ would amount to individual and mass forcible transfers and forced evictions, prohibited under international humanitarian law and human rights law. Two years later, determined international action is needed to stop Israel from implementing its ‘relocation’ plan.
What you can do?

There are many different ways in which you can join the effort to stop Israel’s ‘relocation' plan. Among them are:

✓ **Spread the information** among your friends and the organizations you are active in. We have listed you links for further reading below.

Work with the institutions, organizations and local authority to:

✓ Send a **factfinding mission** and 'local ambassadors' to the communities.

✓ Organize **speaking tours** for representatives of the Popular Council for the Protection of the Jordan Valley, host **photo exhibits** and **panel discussions**.

✓ Ask your local authorities to **pass motions** in defense of the rights of the local communities to exist and committing to 'responsible investment' and not to contract or otherwise support corporations or institutions complicit in Israeli war crimes and violations of international law.

✓ Ask your parliamentary representative to **question government** what they are doing to follow through with their obligation under international law to act in order to effectively stop Israel from continuing forced population transfer.

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**Land Defense Coalition – Stop the Wall Campaign: Contact Us!**
Web: www.stopthewall.org - email: global@stopthewall.org - Phone: +970-2971505
Facebook: https://www.facebook.com/stop.the.wall.campaign - Twitter: StoptheWall

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**Further documentation:**

**Stop the Wall:**

**Texts:**
- About the Gate to Jerusalem protest camp (with various videos)
- Case Study on Abu Imad, from the Jahalin tribe, with video)
- Analysis of the relocation plan by Jamal Juma’, StoptheWall.
- Letter by Palestinian business refusing to build the Bedouin townships
- Oral history on the Jahalin

**Videos:**
- 40mins video on the history of the Jahalin
- 5mins video on the ethnic cleansing in the Jordan Valley
- 5mins video on the Gate to Jerusalem protest camp

**Other Palestinian organizations:**
- ‘Water for one people only’ (alHaq)
- Statement on the Right to

**United Nations:**
- UNDP: Bedouin in the OPT
- Submission to the UN Permannt Forum on Indigenous Issues
- UNOCHA factsheet on Area C vulnerability
- UNOCHA mapping of Area C