Dr. Ola Awad, President of the PCBS, reviews the conditions of the Palestinian people via statistical figures and findings, on the eve of the 71th Commemoration of the Palestinian Nakba.

On the 71st Annual Commemoration of the Palestinian Nakba
The number of Palestinians worldwide has doubled about nine-times

Dr. Ola Awad, President of the Palestinian Central Bureau of Statistics (PCBS), via figures, historical and current data, reviewed the geographical, demographical and economic situation of the Palestinian People on the eve of the 71th Commemoration of the Palestinian Nakba, which occur takes place on May, 15th; and those figures and data run as the following:

The Nakba: Ethnic cleansing, displacement of Palestinians and settler colonializm

Nakba in Palestine describes a process of ethnic cleansing in which an unarmed nation was destroyed and its population displaced systematically by gangs and individuals from all over the world. The *Nakba* resulted in the displacement of 800 thousand out of the 1.4 million Palestinians who lived in historical Palestine in 1948 in 1,300 villages and towns. The majority of the displaced Palestinians ended up in neighboring Arab countries and in the West Bank and Gaza Strip and other countries in the world. Furthermore, thousands of Palestinians – who stayed in the area controlled by the Israeli occupation in 1948 – were driven out of their homes and lands, which were seized by the occupation.

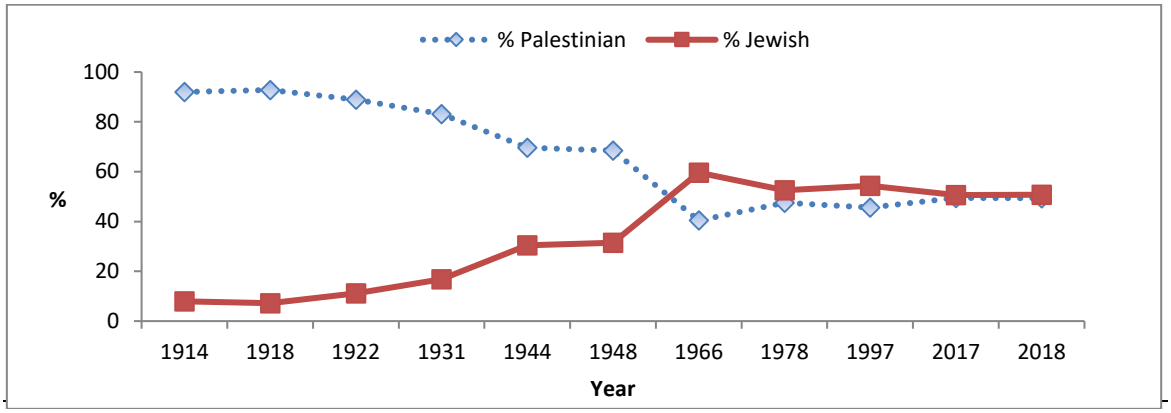
According to documentary evidence, the Israelis controlled 774 towns and villages and destroyed 531 Palestinian towns and villages during the *Nakba*. The atrocities of Zionist forces also included more than 70 massacres in which more than 15 thousand Palestinians were martyred.

The Demographic Reality: Palestinian population has doubled nine times since the Nakba 1948

The population of Palestine in 1914 was around 690 thousands of whom only 8% were Jewish. In 1948, the number of Palestinians in Palestine exceeded 2 million, 31.5% of them were Jews, while the number of Jews doubled more than six times during this period. Between 1932 and 1939, the largest number of Jewish immigrants to Palestine reached 225 thousand Jews. Between 1940 and 1947, more than 93 thousand Jews poured into Palestine. Palestine received around 318 thousand Jews Between 1932 and 1947 and 540 thousand from 1948 to 1975.

Despite the displacement of more than 800 thousand Palestinians in 1948, and the displacement of more than 200 thousand Palestinians (majority of them to Jordan) after the 1967 war, the Palestinian world population totaled 13.1 million by the end of 2018, which means that the number of Palestinians in the world has doubled more than 9 times since the events of the Nakba of 1948, more than half of them live in historic Palestine by the end of 2018 where their number reached 6.48 million, (1.57 million in the occupied territories in 1948), population estimates indicate that the number of population end of 2018 in the West Bank, including Jerusalem, was 2.95 million, and around 1.96 million in Gaza Strip, and with regard to the population of Jerusalem Governorate, it was about 447 thousand people of which approximately 65% (about 281 thousand people) live in those parts of Jerusalem which were annexed by Israeli occupation in 1967 (J1), the data show that Palestinians represent 49% of the population living in historic Palestine, while Jews constitute 51% at the end of 2018. The Israeli occupation continues its control over 85% of the area of historical Palestine, which amounts to 27 thousand square kilometer (km^2), while the remaining areas continue to endure further attempts of usurpation and control. It should be noted that Jewish under the British Mandate used only 1,682 km^2 of historic land of Palestine which represents 6.2%.

Percentage of Palestinians and Jewish in Historic Palestine, Various Years



Palestinian Refugees Status

Records of the United Nations Relief and Work Agency (UNRWA) reported on 1st January 2018 that the total number of Palestinian refugees was 6.02 million, 28.4% of whom live in 58 camps (10 in Jordan, 9 in Syria, 12 in Lebanon, 19 in the West Bank and 8 in Gaza Strip). Estimates, however, indicate that this is the minimum number of refugees since many of them are not registered. This number does not include the Palestinians displaced in the period from 1949 till the six-day war in June 1967. The UNRWA definition of refugees does not cover the Palestinians who migrated or who were displaced after 1967 because of the war and who were not registered refugees. On the other hand, the Population, Housing and Establishments Census 2017 showed that refugees represented 43% of the population of the State of Palestine.

Population Density: Gaza Strip has one of the highest population densities in the world

The population density in State of Palestine at the end of 2018 was 816 individuals per square kilometer (km^2): 522 individuals/km^2 in the West Bank and 5,375 individuals/km^2 in Gaza Strip, noting that 66% of the total population of Gaza Strip are refugees. The flux of refugees turned Gaza Strip into one of the highest population densities in the world. Despite the small area of Gaza Strip, the Israeli occupation set up a buffer zone over more than 1,500 meter along the Eastern border of Gaza Strip. Consequently, the Israeli occupation controls about 24% of the total area of Gaza Strip (365 km^2).

Continuous Siege on Gaza Strip

The continuous Siege on Gaza Strip, which is one of the most densely populated areas in the world, led to a sharp rise in unemployment in Gaza Strip, where the unemployment rate reached 52%, around 72% of youth aged 15-24 years are unemployed. The siege also shakes the economy of Gaza Strip and turns over half of its population into poor 53%, and 11% of households use an improved drinking water source in Gaza Strip due to the deterioration in the quality of water extracted from the coastal basin.

More than 100 Thousand Martyrs since the Nakba 1948

The number of Palestinian and Arab martyrs since the Nakba in 1948 up to the present day (inside and outside Palestine) has reached about 100,000 martyrs[1]. The number of martyrs killed between September 29th, 2000 and May 7th, 2019 was 10,853. The bloodiest year was 2014 with 2,240 Palestinian martyrs, of whom 2,181 were from Gaza Strip. The number of Palestinian martyrs reached 312 persons during the year 2018, out of them 57 children and 3 women. The Israeli occupation also detained the bodies of 15 martyrs.

Around 17 Thousand Wounded since the Start of the Marches of Return

The number of wounded Palestinians during the year 2018 reached about 29,600 persons, while data from the Ministry of Health indicated that the number of wounded in Gaza Strip has reached 16,800 since the beginning of the marches of return on the occasion of Land Day on March 30 2018. It is noteworthy that 136 citizens were amputated as a result of the Israeli occupation forces aggression against the Palestinians in the march of return and breaking the siege East of Gaza Strip, while the number of martyrs 272 citizens, among the martyrs 54 children and 6 women and elderly, and confirmed the martyrdom of 4 paramedics and 3 journalists.

[1] Various sources

About 1 Million detentions since 1967

The Israeli occupation arrested around 5,700 Palestinians, end of March 2019, of them 250 were children, 47 were women. Since the beginning of 2018, the Israeli occupation has arrested 6,500 Palestinians (including 1,063 Children and 140 women). In addition, the Israeli occupation imposed house arrest on 300 children in Jerusalem since October 2015. Around 36 children are still under house arrest. Most of those children have been arrested after the end of the period of a house arrest, which ranged from six months to one year.

Israeli Occupation: Continuous Expansion of Settlements

There were 435 Israeli occupation settlements and military bases in the West Bank (including 150 settlements and 116 outposts) by the end of 2017. Data indicated that the total number of settlers in the West Bank was 653,621 by the end of 2017, 306,529 (47%), of them lived in Jerusalem Governorate, including 225,335 of them lived in Jerusalem J1[2]. In demographic terms, the proportion of settlers to the Palestinian population in the West Bank is around 23 settlers per 100 Palestinians compared with 70 settlers per 100 Palestinians in Jerusalem Governorate.

The Expansion and Annexation Wall isolates more than 12% of the West Bank area, this imposed restrictions on 1.9 million people living in areas close to the wall and / or settlements, around 400 thousand people live in Area "C". In addition to the expansion and annexation wall that surrounds the city of Jerusalem with the length of 93 km isolating about 84 km^2 of the area of Jerusalem Governorate, while the incomplete part of the wall which is about 46 km will isolate about 68 km^2 of the area of Jerusalem Governorate.

The Jurisdiction Area of the Israeli occupation settlements in the West Bank reached 541.5 km^2 as at end of year 2018, representing about 10% of the West Bank, while the confiscated areas for the purposes of military bases and military training are about 18% of the West Bank, which deprives the Palestinian farmers and herders of access to their farms and pastures. The Israeli occupation places all obstacles to tightening the siege and restricting the urban expansion of the Palestinians, especially in Jerusalem and Area (C), in the West Bank, which are still under full Israeli occupation control**.**

Theft of Agricultural Land

The total area of land classified as high or medium agricultural value in the West Bank is 2,072 thousand dunums, constituting about 37% of the West Bank. The Palestinians use only 931.5 thousand dunums which constitute about 17% of the West Bank area.

The reason for the non-exploitation of agricultural land in the West Bank is the fact that Area (C) constitutes about 60% of the area of the West Bank, which is still under full Israeli occupation control that deprived many farmers from accessing their land and cultivation or taking care of cultivated areas which led to the destruction of most of the crops in those areas, in addition to bulldozing and uprooting 7,122 trees during 2018 by the Israeli occupation forces, bringing the number of trees uprooted more than one million trees since 2000 until the end of 2018. Thousands of dunums were confiscated by settlers, to be cultivated, where the area planted in the Israeli settlements in the year 2018 reached about 110 thousand dunums, the majority were of irrigated agriculture.

Continuous Confiscation of Land

The Israeli occupation used the land classification according to the Oslo Agreement (A, B, C) to tighten control of the Palestinian land, especially in areas classified as (C) [3] with an area of 3,375 thousand dunums. About 2,642 thousand dunums, constituting 76% of the total area classified (C) is exploited by the Israeli occupation directly. The area classified (A)[4] is about one million dunums, and the area classified (B)[5] is 1,035 thousand dunums, and the area classified "Others" is 250 thousand dunums includes (Natural Reserves, and J1 in East Jerusalem, and H2[6] in Hebron, and unclassified areas). In 2018, the Israeli occupation confiscated 508 dunums of the Palestinian land, in addition to confiscating hundreds of dunums

[2] includes those parts of Jerusalem which were annexed by Israeli occupation in 1967.

[3] Area C: Includes the parts which are under full Israeli control (security, planning and construction).

[4] Area A: Includes the parts which are under full Palestinian civil and security control.

[5] Area B: Includes the parts which are under full Palestinian civil control and joint Israeli-Palestinian security control.

[6] (H2): Includes the parts which are under full Palestinian civil control and full Israeli security control in Hebron city.

of the Palestinians through the expansion of Israeli checkpoints and establishments of military checkpoints to protect the settlers.

Jerusalem: Intensive and Systematic Judaization

At the time that the Israeli occupation forces demolish Palestinian buildings, and put obstacles and impediments to the issuance of building permits, the Israeli occupation issued deportation orders for 12 Bedouin communities in East Jerusalem, comprising about 1,400 people, in the effort to Judaize the city of Jerusalem. During the year 2018, the Israeli occupation approved the building permits for 5,820 settlement units. The Israeli occupation demolished 215 buildings in Jerusalem Governorate, leading to the forced displacement of 217 people, including 110 children.

The violations of the Israeli occupation against the Palestinians continue, in terms of demolishing buildings (housing units and establishments) and forced displacement of residents. Israeli occupation demolished 471 buildings in 2018 (houses and establishments), of which about 46% were in the city of Jerusalem with 215 demolitions. The demolished buildings were divided into 157 residential buildings and 314 establishments. In the year 2018, the Israeli occupation issued orders to demolish 546 buildings in the West Bank and Jerusalem, at a time when the needs of housing units for Palestinians increase. In figures and according to the data of the Housing Conditions Survey 2015, about 61% of households in Palestine need to build new housing units over the next decade.

A Bitter Reality for Water in Palestine, 22% of Available Water in Palestine Purchased from Israeli Water Company "Mekorot"

The Israeli measures contribute to limiting the ability of the Palestinians to exploit their natural resources, especially water, and to forcing them to compensate for the shortage of water through purchasing the needed amount from the Israeli water company "Mekorot". The quantity of water purchased for domestic use reached 83 million cubic meters (MCM) in 2017, which constitutes 22% amounting to 375 (MCM), in addition to 23.5 (MCM) of water flowing from Palestinian springs, 264.5 (MCM) flowing from underground wells, and 4.0 (MCM) of desalinated drinking water.

77% of Available Water is from Surface and Ground Water

Data showed that the percentage of the exploitation of surface and ground water from available water in the year 2017 was high, with an average of 77%. It should be noted that the Palestinians have been denied access to extraction from the Jordan River since 1967, which was estimated about 250 million cubic meters (MCM). On the other hand, the quantity of Water Pumped from Palestinian Wells in the West Bank in 2017 was 86 MCM from Eastern aquifer, Western aquifer and North-Eastern aquifer.

The amount of water extracted from the coastal aquifer for domestic use was 178.7 (MCM) in Gaza Strip in 2017, but this quantity is obtained via unsafe pumping that jeopardizes sustainability of the source knowing that the basin sustainable yield should not exceed 50-60 MCM a year. More than 97% of the water pumped from the coastal aquifer in Gaza Strip does not meet the water quality standards of the World Health Organization, this leads to the depletion of groundwater reserves, where the groundwater level in the coastal aquifer reached 19 meters below sea level.

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