Jerusalem entrenched in the crucible of settlement
and Israel's judaization plans

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1. Introduction

Several researchers and politicians have competed in recent years to present their insights about the future of Jerusalem by raising a number of initiatives to solve the problem of the City. The main focus of these initiatives is to adapt with the current status quo and consider Jerusalem the unified capital for both the Israeli and Palestinian states. Maps were developed to clarify the different range of perceptions, however all these raised opinions clashed with the real situation on the grounds, given the absence of a common factor that is dividing between the Israeli covets and Palestinian aspirations. In the final status talks that were held during the tenure of Issac government, Jerusalem stood as a controversial issue between the two parties, however the state of prohibition that was imposed inside the Israeli community to discuss the issue of Jerusalem and offering compromises was lifted and new voices were loudely heard calling for a solution to the problem of the City, otherwise peace is unlikely to happen for the Palestinian people or for both the Arab and Islamic world. However, Israel did not so far develop an official position that should be accepted by the Palestinian people, and there still remains a wide gap between the Israeli position on one hand and the Palestinian standpoint backed by Arabs and most of the world countries and resolutions of international legitimacy, which could not be bridged during the latest Camp David and Taba negotiations. Perhaps what was raised lately by Israel, that is “what we have is ours, and what is yours shall be to us and to you”, stands so blatant here, which means that west Jerusalem shall be to Israel whereas the Arab provinces in East Jerusalem would be to the Palestinians, and the Jewish provinces to the Israelis, and as for the old city it shall be divided to neighborhoods predominated by the so-called Jewish quarter, part of the Armenian square, the wailing wall, and the holy basin. It is so clear that this kind of proposal is not serious and shall not be welcomed by the Palestinians.

The other proposal that was made is the idea of having a co-sovereignty, and the joint administration of people’s affairs, besides others that time is short here to discuss in detail. As a matter of fact all the initiatives presented by the Palestinians are but their request to acknowledge the status quo and accept the procedures which Israel unilaterally adopted in defiance of the resolutions of international legitimacy.

Since the launch of the peace process Israel has been attempting persistently to entrench its own approaches and impose its visions on the Palestinian side. It refused the formation of an official working group on Jerusalem in light of the multilateral talks and has always objected to the involvement of Jerusalemites in the official negotiations, despite the headquarters of the Palestinian team of the peace conference is based in the house of the east that was closed by the occupation forces since 2001, which hosted the technical secretariat that was mandated to offer the assistance and advise needed by the team. Although these remises were acknowledged to be the official venue of the Palestinian peace team in which a number of meetings took place with several foreign ministers and official envoys, however, the situation started to change after this particularly following the restraints on Palestinians entering Israel, which ensued the gradual insignificance of the house of east as well as the role of Jerusalem as being an economic and cultural hub for the Palestinian people, yet after all the physical and spiritual linkages to Jerusalem would still remain unchanged.

2. Against this backdrop, the true solution to the issue of Jerusalem lies in turning east Jerusalem, which was occupied in 1967, the capital of Palestine that enjoys the sovereignty of the Palestinian State, whilst west Jerusalem becomes the capital of Israel. Also there need to be some interchanged arrangements between the Palestinian and Israeli States in order to ensure all believers free access to places of worship.

The administrative borders of Jerusalem during modern history

The governorate of Jerusalem, by Palestinian definition, lies in the central part of the West Bank, with an area of 353.68 km² and its population is around 407,459 (according to the Palestinian Statistics Office census data in 2007). The City of Jerusalem is a capital and core of the Palestinian State, and one of the holiest world cities which enshrines, inter alia, the Qasa Mosque, the Dome of the Rock, Church of the Holy Sepulchre, the Via Dolorosa (known as the path of pains), and several other locations with an ancient Jerusalem-like features that turned the Old City to a Mecca to millions of pilgrims coming thereto from every corner on earth. (see Map 1)
During the period 1948 – 1967 Jerusalem was supposed to stay as a separate body "corpus separatum" administered under an internationalized regime. In October 1947 the UN General Assembly passed its resolution # 181, which called for the partition of Palestine to two states: a Jewish state and an Arab state. However the Arab Palestinians rejected this resolution which in their opinion would allow the Jews 52.5% of the territories that were under their possession during the British mandate. While the Palestinians used to own 94% of the lands they now only obtained 44.5%, while in turn the share of the Jews is now 55.5% after 6%. And as a consequence of the 1948 war Israel managed to acquire 78% of the lands of Palestine that were administered under the British mandate after the demolition of 419 Palestinian villages and deportation of its inhabitants who have exceeded 500,000 refugees.

Consequently, this war led to changing the borders of the City one more time, where it was partitioned to two sections: an eastern half controlled by Jordan and a western half under Israeli sovereignty. Following the 1967 war Israel occupied the remainder of the West Bank and Jerusalem, and despite it did not declare that it would annex the lands locate din the West Bank, yet it rushed to annex East Jerusalem and announce the unification of the two halves. In the year 1980 the Israeli Knesset declared its decision to have the unified Jerusalem an eternal capital the State of Israel, and largest Israeli city, where this annexation led to the expansion of the city from 6.5 km2 including the town to reach 112km2.

The unilaterally adopted administrative borders of the city of Jerusalem which are declared by Jerusalem Municipality were not based on landscaping considerations, but rather on political and settling ones to ensure a Jewish demographic hegemony in the Holy City. According to Cohen (1993) these objectives were obviously announced pointing out that the key objective out of the suggested borderlines was to seize the biggest portion of land with the least percentage of indigenous Palestinian inhabitants.

Therefore, the new proposed borders have excluded the Palestinian population gatherings (population rather than land) in the north, an example is house of Eisa and Nebala well and have annexed lands with the which are not or slightly densely populated in the southern parts such as Bethlehem, Beitgala and Beitshooor.

The Israeli authorities later on in the year 1993 undertook a new expansion in the Holy City, whereby its area was close to 130km2, while in 2005 the City planning committee and Jerusalem Municipality adopted the structural landscape of Jerusalem 2000 – 2020 which would lead to expanding the western fringes of the city by around 40%. According to the sketch more than half of the eastern section of Jerusalem was classified as building areas, and about 24.4% as a landscape and public spaces, on where construction is not allowed by Palestinians. (Arifdatabase, 2009).

These classifications for land uses would definitely change to cope with Israeli needs, as the authorities there tended to declare many of the eastern sections as natural green zones and public space with the purpose of their confiscation, to be bale afterwards to reclassify and turn them over to residential sites to Jewish settlers who live in the city. The clearest example that could be cited here was what happened in Jebel Abu Ghoneim which Israelis changed its classification from a landscape to Harhoma settlement. These Israeli practices remind us of the theory of Louis Salmon, the famous sociologist, that is "fear of space". We could deduce quite clearly that these strategic and organized practices are not merely based on the division of land, but more on the elimination of the Palestinian identity.

In September 2008 a new chapter of the Israeli imperialist policies applied in Jerusalem revealed another plot orchestrated for the Province of Jerusalem, a one that emphasizes the realization of the Zionist dream of a Jewish Israeli state with Greater Jerusalem its capital. The way the Israeli geographer, Om Yatzikhail (2005) put on the case was no applicable, these practices have no regard whatsoever to the one or two-state solution. Contrarily, this policy is a kind of a "creeping apartheid". This plan comes after five decades of the first regional scheme for Jerusalem, that was developed by the British scientist, Kendall under the name RJ5. It is worthy to note that this scheme is currently on the database of the encyclopedia of geography at the Hebrew University since the year 1977.

The subsequent Israeli governments after their seizure of the western half of the city of Jerusalem started to grab the Palestinian acquisitions, which were estimated to be about 40% of the total area of the city
(Hallber 2000), under the Absentee Property Law, 1950. However the paradox here lies in the fact the government retrieved to the Jews their properties in East Jerusalem, which were impossible to obtain back during the period (1948 – 1967), since they were then under the control of Jordan. After 1967 the colonial Israeli troops re-operationalized the ordinances of the British mandate that are related to the lands in order to acquiesce 85% of the occupied lands in eastern Jerusalem (Ishaq & Abdel Lateef, 2007), leaving Palestinians without any space that should be needed to accommodate their natural growth.

Map #2: Changes in the borders of Jerusalem between 1947 – 2008
3. The old city and its environs

Once a cease fire was reached in June 1967 Israel started ever since to impose on East Jerusalem a new status quo, through the destruction of the Moroccan quarter, that is adjacent to the wailing wall and the courtyard of the mosque, after confiscating it and kicking out 900 families that were living there. Then it paved its mad and turned it to a spacious area for Jews to perform their prayers and celebrate their own religious occasions. Special utilities were established for the worshippers and visitors, using modern architectural designs that are not in harmony with the archaeological features of the city. The total area of lands that were expropriated in the old city were 116 dunums including more than 700 houses, stores, 5 mosques and 4 schools.

Israel had also removed the Sharaf quarter in order to construct more houses for the Jewish inhabitants, and intended to obliterate the indigenous spirit of this neighborhood, by replacing it with new designs. Hence the Jewish quarter stretched out over 130 dunums after taking parts of the adjacent quarters, whereas its original area used to be 7 dunums only, let alone the seizure of houses and shops in other quarters and turn them to settlement locations that enable them to take control of the whole country. To achieve this end, Israel sought expedients and beating around the bushes to snatch the property, like for instance:

1. Confiscation of the building / real estate and evicting its occupants under a pretext that it was under Jewish possession before the 1948 war, as what happened in the Qarmi quarter, where ten households were kicked out, and also in Aqaba El-Khaldeya where five households evicted.

2. Seizure of real estate that used to be under the control of the property keeper of the enemy under the Jordanian government after the 1948 war, for this reason 11 houses were surrendered in 1982 in Aqaba El-Khaldeya.

3. Seizure of realities for the establishment / security centers, as what happened in Al-Waad quarter, and Bab Al-Selsela region, leading to the evacuation of 103 persons, and in 1991 part of this property was delivered to Jewish settlers.

4. Fraudulent and forged seizure, or use of harassment and aggression as in 1983 when the occupiers murdered a woman, her name was Fatimah Abu Mayallah, after confiscating her home.

5. Seizure of houses whose owners are absent for a period of time. Indeed, the old city runs short in a property registration system, given that actual residence is the proof to ownership of realty. This situation has helped the occupiers to stay still in waiting for some owners to leave their realities for some time and then seize the opportunity and snatch the property. The house of Fakhry Rosuas is a case in point here, when this tenant came back from Amman after some time he found his home already taken.

6. Seizure of houses whose owners do not carry Jerusalem ID's, like the house of Adnan Khamees Qersh in AL-Saadeya lane.

7. Seizure by means of breaking in and stay by force: when there is a problem with regards to the ownership of a certain property the occupying forces would break into it and dwell, sanctioned by the Israeli court until the case is resolved, which sometimes may stay for years in court. The example here is Abu Seneneya house in Aqaba El-Khaldeya.

8. Seizure by means of harming the property; one of the twisted machinations used by Jews is to start digging through the building under the pretext that they are maintaining it and provide it with services, and during these operations they would do harm to the adjacent Arab buildings, jeopardizing these houses and stores because of these diggings.

However, the occupation forces do not allow the property owners to restore them, so the Jewish groups come to these persons and propose to them the possibility that they start doing the restoration for them, provided they let Jews to dwell in part of them, or transfer the land ownership to them. This happened in Enrat street in the Armenian quarter.

By using these twisted methods the Jews were enabled to take under their grip 47 real estate in the old city, and the occupiers intended to change the nature of these buildings for the purpose of obliterating their Arab identity, let alone that they constantly harass the residents in adjacent houses, in a bid to deport them too. Soon have these locations turned to a continuous source of tensions and provocation in the old city. The inhabitants of the city put up with all these harassments with great patience and composure,
knowing that any reaction on their part will be used against them by the Israeli authorities, as in this case the judge and the culprit are just one! And the authorities rely on those colonists to find the pretext to perpetrate the most atrocious violations.

4. Israelization and Judaization of Jerusalem

The ethnic cleansing operations committed by the Israelis in Jerusalem and its environs for the sake of Judaizing the city during the 1948 war and after were only but a beginning, and Israel continued these moves immediately after the 1967 war. Following its occupation of East Jerusalem in 1967 the government pursued some policies that were covering up their greed to seize the holy city, and these policies stimulated the Israeli presence in the City, and also attempted to curb and shackle the Palestinian demographic growth and coerce the Palestinian citizens into migrating out of the city. The following policies were applied:

First: Constraints on land use:

The subsequent Israeli governments tended to place impediments on the use of lands, by enacting laws which specify the type and means of their utilization in such a way to enable an Israeli hegemony over Jerusalem, attempting to wipe out its Palestinian characteristics. The land uses were therefore broken down into the following:

a. Residential premises: according to the definition of the governorate Jerusalem borders before the 1967 war there are 31 Palestinian groupings, and when Israel re-demarcated the borders of the city it excluded 31 groupings, and annexed 20 with an area of 3540 dunums and most of the gatherings that were annexed are spread in the central heights of the governorate, while less than 29% of the groupings exist in the eastern region. These Israeli schemes aiming at confining the Palestinian localities at the center of the governorate without providing them with a sufficient space for urbanization would purposefully lead to the migration of inhabitants in search for housing after squeezing their land, besides all these groupings are subject to Israeli laws which limit their expansion, as shown below:-

- The law that prohibit inhabitants from raising the buildings in Jerusalem over two floors.
- The law that requires a Palestinian who owns a piece of land with an area that exceeds 1 dunum to divide it further to sections each of no more than an dunum, in order to be permitted to build over this land.

As for the settlements in Jerusalem which occupy an area close to 44,000 dunums, the law sanctions to build up to 8 storey houses.

b. Public Roads: Israeli authorities resorted to digging new roads and streets in the city with the intention to re-demarcate the frontiers of the governorate, and reduce the communication between the Palestinian inhabited locations, and link together settlements and outposts. A stark example to this case is street # 20 which cuts through Haneena and divides it into two parts, whereas it connects two settlements, i.e. Besghat Zaaef and Ramoot.

c. Closed military zones and military bases: Today there are 12 military bases and closed zones in East Jerusalem which were taken over by the Israeli occupation forces by virtue of the Israeli law, which gives the government total freedom to expropriate any piece of land and declare it a closed military zone. The government may later change the use of said land and turn it to a residential location for settlements under the logo of getting rid of the housing problem facing the city.

d. Forests and natural reserves (green zones): There are 15 forests in the governorate of Jerusalem with a total area of 9020 dunums, in addition to two natural reserves totaling 8680 dunums. Overall, the total area of natural protectorates and forests stands at 5% of the area of the governorate. However, the Israeli forces devised an innovative tool to get rid of these forests for the sake of ensuring a Jewish existence in these regions. Palestinian lands were seized under the
pretext that they will be transferred to natural reserves (green zones) or forests, and once they are under their control that they change the land usage and start the establishment of settlements. In Abu Ghoneim forest, which is stretched over 2204 dunums, trees were cut down and the land became a settlement, now known as “Harhoma settlement”, established in 1997. Another example is Ramoon forest, with an area of 13980 dunums, was expropriated by the forces from its legitimate Palestinian owners, claiming it is a green zone then its trees were uprooted trees and the forest transferred to Rekhs Shaafaat settlement in 1991.

In West Jerusalem the situation is far different, as in 2008 the Israeli occupation forces cancelled the Safdy scheme which calls for the construction in the green zones in western Jerusalem, but was rejected to maintain these natural green zones. Based on the Jerusalem province scheme (September 2008) confirmed this by declaring that about 40% of the area of this province shall be a green zone and forests, which in turn definitely means that the Jewish urbanization would be towards the east, i.e. East Jerusalem. Table 1 shows the Palestinian territory that was confiscated and jeopardized in the past 9 years.

Map 3: land use and geopolitical classification in Jerusalem
Second: The policy of the demolition of Palestinian houses

The demolition policy is one of the systemic policies to put pressure on the local residents in Jerusalem to resort to migration. The evidence to this was quoted by an employee she used to work at Jerusalem Municipality in the construction department, her name was Sarah Keminkar, and she was quoted as saying:

"In the past, there were about two operations of destroying the Arab houses would take place every month, but the policy which is adopted now by the new mayor became tangible on the grounds, and the rate of demolitions raised to 5 houses in the last month. She added: the trap in which Arabs fell became so obvious, and the thing is not only denying them building permits, but it is more than this, as due to the absence of the structural maps some land areas were colored in green (in which construction is totally prohibited), and they are forced to solve the housing crunch by resorting to some illegal means, and now there are hundreds of Arab housing units that are awaiting orders of destruction".

She also noted in her report that the building rates for Arabs are ranging between 15 to 75% of the land area, while the Jews can have up to 300%. On the other hand, the Arabs have to preserve the "pristine" characteristics of Jerusalem and so they are not permitted to build houses which are above two floors, whereas the Jews can have housing units that are over 8 floors or more. For these reasons, the demolition policy is envisaged to be one of the most effective ways used by the subsequent Israeli governments as the key for blocking the demographic growth in the governorate, and force the citizens to look for other remote places that are not under the jurisdiction of Jerusalem Municipality. Table 8.1

<table>
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<tr>
<td>2009</td>
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Third: Migration policy

The policy of disseminating settlements around Jerusalem that aimed to increase the number of Israeli inhabitants was accompanied by a policy that imposes pressures on the Palestinians to migrate which Israel succeeded in applying as shown by the given statistics. A study showed that between the years 1967 and 1993 there were at least 50,000 Palestinian citizens migrated or were deported out of Jerusalem, and those deportees were classified as follows:

1. 16,197 migrated their homeland,
2. 12,060 were forced as a result of the harsh conditions and impediments placed by Israel to search for places to live in at the fringes of Jerusalem Municipality,
3. 12,500 citizens are living in East Jerusalem, and it is a region that is considered outside the borders of Jerusalem Municipality,
4. 7,630 persons were outside Jerusalem during the 1967 war, and they were denied the right to live inside the City,
5. The rest forfeited their right in their Jerusalem identity in light of the Israeli policy, in addition to 6,000 Palestinians who were dispossessed the right to live in Jerusalem as a consequence of the destruction of their homes in Morocean quarter, just few days after the 1967 war. (Dr. Wallid Mustafa, 1997).

Perhaps the weirdest way of arbitrary deportation pursued by Israel is exemplified in the confiscation of the identity cards from Jerusalemites, which is one type of ethnic cleansing that is singled out by the Zionist establishment. More than 2,800 ID's were withdrawn from the years 1967 and 1996. In 1996 there were 689 cards were ripped off and their holders were denied their full rights, and 398 cards were taken in 1997. This number, however, does not include the 10,000 births who were rejected by Jerusalem Municipality to be added on the ID's of their parents. A similar policy to what was going on in Jerusalem was applied with the inhabitants of the West Bank and Gaza Strip who departed their homeland, whether for the purpose of education or in search for a better job opportunity abroad. Currently Israel refuses to allow more than 92,000 Palestinians who live abroad from returning back home, and considered them as displaced from their native land. (Haartz 17 March, 1997).

The Israeli government desired to legalize its policy and rested on article # 11 of the Regulations of Entrance into Israel of 1974, which enumerate the cases in which it is admissible to withdraw the identity card from the citizens in three cases:

1. If the person lives outside Israel for seven years at least,
2. In the case that the person obtains the citizenship of another country by means of naturalization,
3. In case the person obtains residence in another country.

Based on this law, the office of interior in Jerusalem prosecutes and withdraw the identity cards from those who reside in West Bank cities, which are surrounding the city of Jerusalem, given that these environs are outside Israel. But if the Jerusalem card holder is a Jewish who lives in another country he/she will be entitled to maintain the Jerusalem identity. The following table outlines the number of ID's which were withdrawn from the citizens of Jerusalem between the years 1967 and 2010.
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Fourth: Policy of changing names:

Every since the occupation of the West Bank and Gaza Strip in 1967, Israel started to change the names of the Palestinian communities and attach to them Canaanite names, alleging they are Hebrew names. The Government Names Committee, a branch of the prime minister's office, was in charge of changing the names of East Jerusalem through a systematic methodology that is aiming at giving the community a Jewish nature. Both Jerusalem Municipality and the committee gave Hebrew names to settlements in Jerusalem, with their streets and schools, in an attempt to make the Jewish religious citizens identify with the Holy City and turn it to an eternal capital of the Jewish people. For example, the former mayor of Israeli Jerusalem, Teddy Kollek, on a high school in Pegot Zalév settlement, also the name of Moshe Dayan, ex-minister of defense who occupied Jerusalem in 1967 was given to a street in Pegot Zalév. Other places whose Arabic names changed to Hebrew were Valley of Helwa, now called R. David, Silwan district, now called Per David (city of David), Ein el Louza district, now called high arvon (peace heights), The Aqsa Mosque which has become known as Har Habir (Temple Mount), and Sheikh Jaraah quarter, now known as Sham'on Hadasik, and Al-Sharaf lane, now known as the Jewish quarter.

Fifth: Building Israeli settlements around the city of Jerusalem

After Israel had illegally annexed East Jerusalem in 1967, it initiated unilaterally to declare Jerusalem with its two halves a unified eternal capital of the state of Israel, whereby it extends its prevalence and hegemony on Palestinian citizens who live in East Jerusalem and on their territory. Not only was this Israel's move but it also took a number of steps on the ground for the sake of reinforcing the presence of Israeli settlers in the occupied city, and reduce as possible the Palestinian presence there, by adopting decisions and policies that were so influential to the existence of Palestinians in the City. Foremost among those was the establishment of illegitimate settlements, which Israelis call “residence places”, where the first of these settlements in East Jerusalem was established on the wreckage and ruins of the Moroccan quarter enveloped inside the old city in the wake of the Israeli occupation of the city in 1967. With the passage of years Israeli settlements spread in the City on the account of the Palestinian territories in East Jerusalem. Administratively speaking the Israeli settlements can be classified into two sections:

The first section: the settlements located within the borders of Jerusalem Municipality, which are 18 in number, with a total area of 19,834 dunums, inhabited by about 200,000 settlers. Most of these settlements were constructed inside the Arab quarters of Jerusalem.

The second section: Israeli settlements which are located outside the borders of Jerusalem Municipality and inside the governorate borders, according to the administrative division that applied before 1967. There are 17 settlements there that occupy an area of 24,000 dunums, with 89,000 settlers, this is in addition to 18 outposts that were established in the period 1996 to 2008, with the aim to create a Jewish entity at the heart of the Arab neighborhoods.

The subsequent Israeli governments tended to build roads that would connect settlements and outposts, this led to the confiscation of thousands of dunums of Palestinian territories in East Jerusalem. The total length of these ring roads is 91.3km, i.e. they occupy an area of 363 dunums, whereas the roads that were built outside the borders of the Municipality reach 64.164km, i.e. they occupy around 1100 dunums. (applied research institute database, Jerusalem, Arij 2009).

4. The geopolitical status of Jerusalem after Oslo Accord:

In 1993 the Israeli occupying forces expanded anew the borders of Jerusalem Municipality, increasing its area from 112km² (the area that was expanded in 1967 in the aftermath of Israel's occupation of Palestinian territories) to 130km², to involve some parts located in the western half of the City. The city planning committee and Jerusalem Municipality in 2005 approved the new Master Plan 2000-2020 for Jerusalem, which is aimed at expanding the western borders of the city by 40%. According to this Plan also more than half of the eastern part of Jerusalem was classified as urban areas, and around 24.4 as green zones and open aisles.
Jerusalem in the Palestinian – Israeli reconciliatory agreements:

A group of agreements were reached between the Palestinian and Israeli sides over ten years between the years 1993 and 2008, where we find the major outcomes of these agreements with regards to the situation of the City of Jerusalem were as follows:

The Oslo Accords which were signed during 1993 – 1998, since the signing of Oslo I, officially called “the Declaration of Principles on Interim Self-Government Arrangements”, (Washington 1993), until the signing of the Wye River memorandum in the United States of America in October 1998.

Camp David II negotiations in the United States of America and the American proposals that were negotiated in this meantime in July 2000.

The Geneva Initiative for Peace in the Middle East, which was signed by the Palestinian Authority early December 2003 with some unofficial parties forming the leftist Israeli wing.

Jerusalem under Oslo Accord:

The Oslo Accord I, or “the Declaration of Principles on Interim Self-Government Arrangements”, signed in Washington in 1993, was a milestone on the Palestinian-Israeli settlement path, and a legal and political foundation for the rest of agreements and memoranda that ensued between both sides. The Accord was signed by Mr. Mahmoud Abbas, the then secretary of the PLO executive committee, for the Palestinian people, and Mr. Shimon Perez, former foreign minister in the Rabin government, for Israel, and was attended by former U.S. Secretary of State, Warren Christopher, and former Russian foreign minister, Andrei Kozyrev.

On the Jerusalem file, article 6 of this Accord stated that a five-year interim period shall start immediately after the Israeli pullout from Gaza Strip and Jericho, and the final status negotiations between the Hebrew government and representatives of the Palestinian people would commence in the nearest time possible, provided they do not wait until after the beginning of the third year interim period. This article also clarified that said negotiations shall cover a number of issues and controversial matters between the two sides, particularly, “Jerusalem, refugees, settlements, security arrangements, borders, relations and cooperation with other neighbors, what is called “other means of common interest”. In this framework, this Article emphasized the mutually reached agreement to not let the interim accords violate nor prejudice the outcome of the final status negotiations. Paragraph (1) of the first annex to the Accord, entitled, “conditions of Palestinian elections”, stated that Palestinians who are living in Jerusalem have the right to take part in the electoral process, according to an agreement between both parties.

5. The racist Separation Wall that encompasses the City of Jerusalem:

Jerusalem is one of the most important regions that was encompassed by the separation barrier which will cause the isolation of the city from the West Bank. To cover up the term separation, the occupation forces rather call it “Apartheid”, or “Annexation Wall”. It is extended over more than 133km, besieging the whole city from the east, north and west sides, and it means that 170,000 Palestinians will be isolated from the West Bank.

In the governorate itself the Wall isolated about 151,974 dunums, approximating 43% of the area of the governorate – most of which harbors the largest outposts, such as Maleya Adomin, Jefe'at Zaa'ev, and Josh Etseyon, which were annexed to Israel. By turn, the Wall isolated a number of Palestinian villages and blocs from East Jerusalem, which previously centered in the city and considered it their means of livelihood and source of existence. Al-Ram, Bareed suburb, Zaatem, Abu Dees, Hezma, Anatah, Shefat camp, Kelendia camp, east Sawahra, Sheikh Sand, Ayyazediah, Kafr Aaq and Meckmas, which are generally inhabited by 120,000 citizens, are areas that were most affected by this separating wall.

Thus, the colonial forces were able, through the construction of this Wall, were able to annex over 250,000 settlers to Jerusalem (table # 1), and isolate more than 120,000 of its Palestinian inhabitants from their
livelhoods (Arij 2009). This information shows clearly that the goal of building this Wall is for demographic rather than security reasons, as alleged by the forces.

**Demography determines geography: the Separation Wall:**

In early 1980's all the efforts of the settlement movement were concerted with the aim of expanding the Israeli settlements in the occupied Palestinian territory in general, as well as in Jerusalem and its environs in particular, attempting to seclude Jerusalem region from the West Bank and enhance the number of Jewish residents there. These expansions were part of “Greater Jerusalem” scheme, one of the most detrimental and precarious Israeli plans, to the extent that some people epitomized the occupation in this plan (Jeff Halber 2000), as it involves over 65% of the West Bank settlers (Arij database, 2009). In the very same token, in the year 1995 Isaac Rabin announced the E1 plan as an expansion of Ma'alea Adomim settlement, whose area is 6,100 dunums, and which will involve the schemes to build 3,500 new settlement units with a view to connect the largest outpost in Jerusalem and rid the Palestinians of their dream to form a geographically connected state, and one that possesses the fundamentals of sustainable development.

In the middle of the year 2003 the Israeli occupation forces launched the implementation of its unilateral separation scheme in Jerusalem region, which was intended to preserve the man-made provisions which formulate the political situation in the City and transfer it to the everlasting capital of the Jewish people. The first draft of this Plan was even acknowledged by the Knesset in mid 2008. the Separation Wall and its route in Jerusalem stresses the content of “Greater Jerusalem” scheme, since the declared route involves three of the largest settlement blocs in the West Bank, these are: Jef‘a‘at Zer‘ev in north Jerusalem, Gosh Etseyon south west of Jerusalem, Ma'alea Adomim, in its east. (map p. 4).
Against the previous backdrop, it becomes so obvious that the Israeli occupation forces re-demarcated the city’s borders on demographic bases in order to retain geographic divisions that enable them to realize their political objectives, i.e. annexation of Jerusalem once and for all to the State of Israel. This, indeed, would put the barrier in front of establishing a connected and viable Palestinian state with Al-Quds Al-Sharif its capital. The cornerstone of the current conflict is demographic, through which Israel seeks to evacuate the city of its Palestinian residents by virtue of the previously noted policies, while it reinforces the Jewish presence there. The forces shall isolate more than 130,000 Palestinians in East Jerusalem via the construction of the racial Separation Wall, while at the same time annexes more than 250,000 settlers to the east part of the city, which would necessarily mean creating a Jewish majority in the East, that is difficult to disregard in future. In addition to this, it continues to pursue a policy of house demolition, leading to the migration of Palestinians inhabitants out of the City. Table #3

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Before completion</th>
<th>Before construction of the wall (in thousands)</th>
<th>After completion</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Palestinians</td>
<td>278</td>
<td>35</td>
<td>164</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Jews</td>
<td>517</td>
<td>65</td>
<td>266</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Another policy pursued by the Israeli occupation authorities for the destabilization of the demographic balance in the City is one of civil planning and development aspect that prevents construction and urbanization to take place in the Palestinian territory. So, the shrinking of the areas in which construction is allowed after the confiscation of one third of the territories in East Jerusalem for the sake of settlement establishment and considering 60% of the remaining land to be affected as green zones and asises. This would merely leave 13% of the area of East Jerusalem for the Arab urbanization (Ishaq, 2004), which led to a high population density in the Arab regions, in East Jerusalem, that reached 13,500 person / km², whilst the density in West Jerusalem became 8,300 person/km², and 5,000 settlers / km² in the settlements in East Jerusalem.

**Israeli Armona Tax**

The tax which is called (Armona) is an Israeli tax fee that is imposed on real estate and shops in West Jerusalem of an Israeli majority, which enjoys a multitude of services, privileges and tax exemptions, and it is as well imposed on East Jerusalem, with its Arab majority, that is suffering hardships, and difficult bottlenecks and their pursuit for a livelihood and services which are so scarce to obtain. The people of East Jerusalem suffer the burden of taxes, which does not consider the disparities in the level of income, size of the household or any other factor.

Practically, a Palestinian citizen living in Jerusalem would pay taxes that are fourfold what is being paid by an Israeli. The intention is to impose further pressures and curb Jerusalemites to be coerced to leave their city, or close their businesses, particularly that huge duties are imposed on owners of the shops and businesses which far go beyond the general income value of these businesses. This drives the owners to close their business, which would all be seized later on by the authorities in turn of the tax account due. This way a lot of shops and businesses were leased to the Israeli settlers in the old city in Jerusalem.

6. **The Infrastructure war**

The Israeli policies which are channeled towards a suspension of development in the Palestinian communities in Jerusalem were not restricted to the social tools, i.e. the unjust demographic engineering, but were extended to include some physical tools called “infrastructure warfare”, (Joabory 2007). This war
was represented in the shortage of infrastructure in terms of quantity and quality. The infrastructural landscape plays a very pivotal role in connecting and facilitating the movement of citizens at the local level, has become silently targeted by the colonial powers to destabilize the fundamentals of livelihood and coerce the indigenous citizens into succumbing and giving up (see Graham, 2002). In addition, infrastructure is the foundation that provides for opportunities and threats to the growth of population communities (Jahory 2007).

The occupied Jerusalem city serves as a boisterous and echoing example in this regard, especially that it is governed by the Israeli regime in Jerusalem Municipality, not by the military rule, which became a modus operandi of the colonial powers in the West Bank and Gaza Strip. This is noted in numerous studies of researchers (Fellah & Newman, 1993; Hallber, 2000). Hence, infrastructure in addition to its being a means of connecting people, is also used as a tool of racial separation, as is the case in Jerusalem. This led lots of academic researchers to define this exceptional case of colonial hegemony as “de-development” (Roy 1987), and forced de-modernization, (Graham, 2002), and politics of creative destruction, (Jahory, 2007). Such policies were extremely detrimental to the housing situation, for example as shown by the field survey that was conducted by Sommer Bagheeyen (2004) of the physical conditions of the old city, it was found that 49.3% of the establishments and facilities are scored to be average or poor, including occupancy, ventilation, natural lighting and overall conditions.

Although the Arab inhabitants account for 36% of the total rate of population in Jerusalem, however, the budgetary allocation for them by the Municipality is estimated at 12% of total expenditures. Almost 67% of Jerusalemites are living under poverty lines, whereas in West Jerusalem the poverty is less than 29%. The budgetary appropriations were reflected on the provision of services by the Municipality to the Palestinian communities in East Jerusalem. For instance, there is 1 km of roads paved for every 710 persons in West Jerusalem, whereas in East Jerusalem the 1km serves 2,448 persons. The same is true for the public spaces, namely in West Jerusalem there is a public park for every 447 persons, while in East Jerusalem there is a public park for every 7,362 persons (Ishaq, 2008).

7. **The Greater Jerusalem Master Plan**

Israel's actions in the West Bank and its establishment of the separating wall and racial segregation on the Palestinian territories, which in most part happen at the environs of Jerusalem and expediting the settling activity and encompassing the city with a series of Israeli settlements and building of border crossings around the city, all fall in the framework of "Greater Jerusalem", which Israel is implementing in a step to impose a painful reality on the Palestinian territory. The Greater Jerusalem scheme became underway in early 1970s, when the Israeli government launched the first step of its plan, by expanding the area of the settlements, which are located outside the borders of Jerusalem Municipality, to create a sort of inter-communication between the Israeli settlements in Jerusalem, and in the meantime sever the Palestinian communities which lie in East Jerusalem from the city itself, and deny them the right to live in the City. The Greater Jerusalem scheme involves four Israeli settlement communities, out of 6, which Israel is seeking to annex through its indefinite plans in the occupied territories, such as Ma'aleh Adumim, and Jafa'at Za'ev, Gosh Etseyon, Mode'eyen Elit (Keryat Sever).

The **historic basin (Holy Basin) and demolition of Bostan quarter**

The Bostan quarter lies at the center of Bostan suburb, in the southeast part of old Jerusalem, and as per the classification of the British mandate the ownership of all the real estate and lands of this quarter, which totals about 70 dunums, is a pure Palestinian Jerusalem neighborhood. Since the occupation if East Jerusalem in 1967 the city fell under an attack by the Israeli government and by Jewish organizations as well, such as Ataraat Kohanein and El A'ad, which was established in 1986 with the aim of establishing the so-called David City in the same place on which the inhabitants of Silwan lived. On 21 February 2009 Jerusalem Municipality handed over 134 Jerusalem families who consist of 1,500 persons live in 88 real estate In the Bostan quarter, in Silwan suburb, south of Al-Aqsa Mosque, ordinances to evacuate their homes, paving the way for their demolition, for the construction of a public garden, called King David Garden. The beginning of sufferings and grievances of the inhabitants of Bostan in 2004 was when Jerusalem Municipality issued a decree to demolish all the Bostan buildings in order to construct this archaeological garden and connect it to King David's city, however the occupational government backed
off its decision and froze it in late 2005, as a result of the international pressures and also when Bostan inhabitants lodged an appeal of protest to the Judicial advisor of the occupation government, demanding to bring the decision of demolition into halt. In August 2008 Jerusalem Municipality announced that it would go forward in applying its plan to construct a national park in the neighborhood, and proposed to the people to evacuate their homes voluntarily in return for compensation or relocation in Jerusalem. This decision followed the scheme submitted by the inhabitants of Bostan to obtain licenses for the houses located there. The demolition plan of Bostan quarter in Silwan is part of the project to Judaize the region, which the occupation forces call "the holy basin", that was proposed in the 1990s, by Jerusalem Municipality. This targeted region includes the whole old city in Jerusalem and big parts of its surrounding quarters, such as Sheikh Jarrah and Valley of Al-Goza in the north, El-Tour suburb in the east, Silwan suburb (Bostan quarter) in the south (Map 5).

The Judaization project includes the construction of an archaeological city that is in line with the Torah description of Holy Jerusalem, below the Aqsa Mosque and in Silwan and parts of the Islamic neighborhood in the old city.

Replacing Arab Palestinian inhabitants by Jewish residents, starting from the old city and until the Valley of El Goza and Sheikh Jarrah and El-01Tour and Silwan and Rab Al AMood. The Judaization project of the Holy Basin is not only confined to the territory, but political, cultural, demographic and religious aspects. This can be summed up as follows:

- Eradication of Arab identity of the city of Jerusalem and replace it with a Jewish identity.
- Deportation the largest number of the Jerusalemites to places that are farther from the holy basin, and the old city, or even kicking them away outside Jerusalem.
- Severing the holy basin from Arab Palestinian quarters in Jerusalem
- Completing the geographic connection plan between the outposts in the old city and its environs and the existing settlements on the fringes of Jerusalem, such as the French Hill (talla ferensia) settlement in the north, and El settlement bloc in the east, and Tall Beyoot el sharqueya in the south.

8. **Israeli crossings around Jerusalem**

The barriers or crossings are only but synonymous for Israeli objectives that aim at tightening the grip on the mobility of the Palestinian people in the West Bank, Gaza, and severing Jerusalem from the West Bank. The Israeli crossings are a main cornerstone in the separation wall scheme since its commencement, since the Israelis are seeking, through the Wall, to demarcate the borders of the Hebrew state, proportionately with their supreme and high needs, starting by the route of the wall going through the crossings which mainly aim at serving the Israeli interests and control the crossing of Palestinians at the length of the Wall, and create a new status quo in the Palestinian territory, given that the decision of the Israeli government, i.e., building these crossings as unilateral, which intend to entrench the path or line of the wall as a political borderline between Israel and occupied Palestinian territories. The Israeli crossings around the City of Jerusalem key milestones between the city itself and the rest of the West Bank governorates, which come in the framework of the Judaization of Jerusalem and isolating it from the West Bank, after the completion of the Wall. These crossings are: Beitunia, north of Jerusalem, Dome of Rachel (Gilo 300), Al-Khass and Noa’am man (mazmouria), south of Jerusalem, Sh’fat and Za’eeem, Ataroot, Klandya in Jerusalem (Map #6).

**Map #6: The Israeli borderline crossings around Jerusalem.**

9. **Religious violations**

The Israeli officials are so daring to declare that Jerusalem never witnessed an environment featured by freedom of religion and observance of religious sanctities, like during the era of Israeli rule in the city. They dwell on their citation of the law on the preservation of sacred sites, issued in 1967, which claims that it ensures the free access to religious places, as well as the preservation and protection of these sanctities. However, history beats witness to the contrary of this allegation: in the year 1969, an extremist Israeli set
fire into the Aqsa Mosque, and the Israeli authorities belated sending firefighters, which causes the damage of huge parts of the Mosque, as well as the destruction of the well-known Salah El-Din platform.

In 1982 an Israeli soldier assaulted the Dome of the Rock and killed two Palestinians, while in 1984 the guards of Al-Aqsa succeeded in thwarting an attempt of the destruction of the Mosque by Jewish extremists (88, Mena), the aggressions continued against the religious places over the years, while the UNESCO repeatedly objected the excavations which are undertaken by the Israeli forces around these sites, and the consequent damage to the universal heritage. Latest of these assaults was the digging of tunnels below Al-Haram Al-Sharif.

It is noteworthy here that the pretexts and allegations of the Jews that their temple is located inside the Holy Shrine of the Mosque, which give them a false reason for the several violations, refuted by archaeologists. Indeed, all studies have emphasized that there is no trace whatsoever of this alleged temple in the Holy Shrine of the mosque. One of the well-known and popular studies is the fact finding report that was issued by the Nations League, which was formed in the wake of the 1929 events, to investigate the possession of the walling wall (the western wall called by the Jews as the bewailing wall). The report indicated that the walling wall is an integral part of the Holy Shrine of Al-Aqsa, accordingly it is considered an Islamic endowment, who is a public possession to all Muslims. However, the Israelis continue to provoke Arabs and Muslims and claim that their religious and cultural rights are being violated in Jerusalem. The objective of this hyperbolic talk of the religious and emotional position of Jerusalem for Jews has a proclivity to leave the impression on the world that the issue of Jerusalem is an intricately sensitive and highly complicated and non-negotiable on the part of Israelis. The amount of delusions and exaggeration in this regard was too much to the extent that some western circles were ignorant or sometimes even skeptical about the Arab history of Jerusalem (Hanan Ashrawy, Ghada Karany, Ghassan Al-Khatieeb, in the law conference).

Changing the aspects and characteristics of the holy city: Since the commencement of its occupation of Jerusalem, Israel initiated to change the identity and characteristics of the holy city and impose a new status quo, by resorting to the use of religious pretexts. The city was from Moroccan quarter, which runs parallel to the walling wall and the courtyard of the Holy Shrine of Al-Aqsa, which was totally demolished after being confiscated, and expelling 900 Arab families which used to inhabit there, and transferring the quarter to a spacious place for the Jewish worshipers and commemorating religious occasions. Equally this happened in Al-Haram quarter for the establishment of more housing units for the Jews and expanding the area of the Jewish quarter, to be extended over 130 dunums, setting parts of adjacent quarters, although its original area used to be 7 dunums only (Ishaq & Salman, 2001).

Within a wider framework, the Israeli occupational forces sought by all its means, and arms: the army, ministry of interior, Jerusalem Municipality, ministry of agriculture, etc.) to apply a dangerous Zionist scheme known as (the Holy Basin), with the aim of annexing the old city and its environs. This project is extended from the wailing wall to Bab Al-Zahera in the old city, and includes the seizure of so many lands that were intended for Islamic endowments in the region, such as Western quarter in Silwan, which the Jerusalem Municipality seeks to implement a certain project called the City of David in this quarter, since 2004 Jerusalem Municipality declared its plans to build a national park on the ruins of the houses of Jerusalem. In early 2009 134 Jerusalem families, reside in 88 houses, received notices of the demolition of their houses, under the claim that they were not licensed. In context, the Jerusalem Municipality endeavors to change and distort the characteristics of the holy city by closing Bab Al-Amood in front of vehicles, and transfer it to a parking lot for the (the Israeli Egyptian company) buses. This includes the closure of so many Palestinian shops in the area. It is planned to transfer the entrance of the old city to Bab Al-Khalil and link it to (Ma'mila compound). Such practices would definitely distort the nature of the city and marginalize the Islamic and Christian neighborhoods therein.

I-1 The legal status of Jerusalem

The decision taken by the Israeli government to annex East Jerusalem and apply the Israeli law thereon had a great influence on the international community, as the international conventions and norms were drafted to prevent the happening of these matters, particularly after the lessons learnt from the two awe-striking world wars. The U.N. Charter states in its fundamental principles that states should be
committed to use force or threaten to use it for the resolution of disputes. The Hague agreement in 1907 stated the inadmissibility of the confiscation of private property and considering the occupying state as an agent that administers the real estate in its occupied territories. The fourth Geneva convention states the inadmissibility of transferring a portion of the citizens of the occupied state to the territories which it occupies. As typical of them, Israelis held onto so different pretexts to justify their violations and breaches. The Israeli officials used to declare that their aggression in the 1967 war was (a preemptive war), which made some believe that Israel does not have colonial covets in Jerusalem. Then came the decision of the Israeli government to annex the City, which is met with blatant refusal at the United Nations and other international fora. Israel returned back to its defusive policy, its then foreign minister (Abu Ayyan), notified the U.N. in writing that the Israeli measures taken in the City do not represent an annexation, but rather some measures for administrative merger. However, in reality, Israeli legal experts and the High Court agreed that East Jerusalem has already become an integral part of the State of Israel, by virtue of these measures (Ruth Lapidoth).

12. The Security Council Resolutions on Jerusalem

- Resolution # 251: The Security Council issued the Resolution # 251, in May 2nd, 1968, and the Text of this Resolution is: the security council, having noticed the report of the Secretary General dated 26 April, and his report dated 2 May, where the resolution # 251 states and expresses regret for holding the military parade in Jerusalem on the 2nd of May 1968, in flagrant defiance from Israel of the resolution adopted unanimously on 27 April 1967.

- Resolution # 252: on 21 May 1968 the Security Council issued the resolution # 252, with the following text: "The Security Council takes note of the decisions of the General Assembly # 2253 issued on 4 July 1967, and 2254 issued on 14 July 1967, and after reviewing the letter of Jordan's permanent representative with regards to the situation in Jerusalem, as well as the Secretary General's report, and after having listened to the data presented at the Security Council session, and noting that "Israel" since the adoption of the above-mentioned resolutions took further measures and steps which run counter to these resolutions, and noting the need to work for the sake of establishing a lasting and just peace, and continuing drew on its rejection of the seizure of territories by means of military invasion:"
  - Denounces Israel's failure to comply with the General Assembly's resolutions.
  - Considers that all the administrative and legislative measure, and all the actions taken by "Israel", including the confiscation of lands and property would in turn lead to changing the legal status of Jerusalem.
  - Persistently calls Israel to annul these measures, and to immediately desist from undertaking any further action, which would change the status of Jerusalem.
  - Requests the Secretary General to submit a report to the Security Council on the implementation of this resolution, given this report was gained approval of thirteen members, and there were two abstentions: USSR and Canada.

- Resolution # 267: The Security Council issued its resolution # 267, and text of the resolution is: "Noting Confirming the principle of the inadmissibility of seizing lands under military conquest:"
  - Stresses its previous resolution # 252 issued in 1968.
  - Regrets "Israel's" failure to show any respect of the resolutions adopted by the Security Council and General Assembly.
  - Strongly condemns all the measures taken to change the status of Jerusalem.
  - Considers that all the legislative and administrative measures and steps taken by "Israel" for the sake of changing the status of Jerusalem including the confiscation of territories and property are invalid and can never change the status of Jerusalem.
  - Urgently calls "Israel" anew to annul all the measures leading to changing the status of the city of Jerusalem, and refrain from any similar measures in future.
  - Requests Israel to notify the Security Council of any delay on the implementation of the clauses of this resolution.
  - Decides that if "Israel" responded to the reportive, or did not give any response, the Security Council shall reconvene without any delay, in order to review the steps that could be taken in this regard.
Requests the Secretary General to submit a report to the Security Council on the implementation of this Resolution. The Security Council adopted this Resolution unanimously, namely the whole world is against the forced seizure of territories by the military power, and regrets that “Israel” did not respect the Security Council’s resolutions, and condemns the procedures taken by “Israel” to change the status of Jerusalem, and that all these changes are invalid.

Resolution # 271

- Acknowledges that any destruction or sacrilege of the holy sites, buildings, or religious places in Jerusalem, and that any encouragement or collusion on this undertaking can threaten international peace and security.
- Decides that the despicable sacrilege of the Aqsa Mosque affirms the urgent need that Israel should refrain from breaching the above-mentioned resolutions, and that all the measures and actions taken to change the status of Jerusalem are considered invalid.
- Calls Israel to abide precisely by the terms of the Geneva conventions, and the international law, and refrain from impeding the Supreme Islamic Council in Jerusalem from undertaking its mandate, including any cooperation requested by this Council with countries the majority of their citizens are Moslems or come from Moslem communities with regards to its plans to maintain and repair the holy sites in Jerusalem.
- Condemns “Israel” reluctance to commit to the above-mentioned resolutions and calls Israel to implement the texts of these resolutions.
- Repeats the confirmation of the seventh executive paragraph of the resolution # 267 of 1969 stating that in case Israel responds in a timely order does not respond at all the Security Council shall reconvene without any impediment to review the steps that could be taken in this regard.
- The Security Council is requested to follow up closely the implementation of this resolution, and submit a resolution to the Security Council in the nearest time possible.
- Every time the Security Council issues a new resolution and denounces the hostile acts of Israel and announces that it will take preventive steps, yet if does not do so, and it only suffices itself by re-denouncing and adds to its condemnation just another one, while “Israel” goes further in its violations of the Geneva conventions, and the international law, and all other international resolutions, because of the Security Council and the General Assembly, since they are not serious in their resolutions.

Resolution # 298: Once again, the Security Council convened on 25 September 1971, and adopted its resolution # 298, which stated the following: “The Security Council noting that Israel took some measures with the purpose of changing the status of Jerusalem”.

- Regrets that Israel did not respect the previous resolutions of the UN, with regards to procedures and actions which influence the status of Jerusalem.
- Affirms with the clearest terms possible that all the legislative and administrative actions committed by Israel to change the status of Jerusalem, including the confiscation of lands and property and transfer of residents, and the legislation aiming to annex the occupied strip.

13. General Recommendations

In addition to the planning of Jerusalem as a capital to the Palestinian State, and the other sub-objectives calling for the revelation of the discriminatory policies practiced by Israel against Palestinian inhabitants in Jerusalem, and in support of their perseverance and resilience in face of these policies, through some urban, economic and social standards.

In this context, and to achieve these objectives, the forthcoming future planning strategies can be formulated as follows:
First Strategy: Prepare detailed structural urban plans in some selected places in East Jerusalem, through the following initiatives:
- Prepare detailed structural spatial plans for East Jerusalem. This initiative intends to help the Palestinians to obtain permits for the buildings considered by Israel as "illegal", and "threatened to be demolished" in order to prevent their demolition by Israeli institutions. It also aims to expand the space of the areas in which Palestinian urban expansion is allowed in future, accordingly ensure the protection of the Palestinian territories in East Jerusalem from confiscating and transferring them to Israeli settlements. Hence, it recommends to establish a specialized center in one of the national Palestinian universities, say Jerusalem University for example, Abu Dees, and the ministries of higher education, planning and administrative development would provide the required assistance for its inception.

Second Strategy: Develop Palestinian plans for Jerusalem, being capital to the State of Palestine, through the following initiatives:
- Operationalize the Palestinian Urban Center in East Jerusalem. This initiative aims to enhance cultural and economic development in East Jerusalem, to act as a cultural center that encompasses all the Palestinian citizens, workers, and tourists. Therefore, it recommends that some Palestinian ministries including national economy, tourism and antiquities, local government, to provide the necessary assistance to the activist Palestinian institutions in East Jerusalem by the activation of this Center.
- Develop a planning agenda and a vision for Jerusalem, being capital to the State of Palestine, hence it is suggested that the PA and its active institutions should mobilize and create a federation of civil society organizations, and academic institutions, which need to support the general objective, namely having Jerusalem as the capital to the Palestinians.
- Respond to the housing needs. Therefore, the Palestinian ministries of public works and housing, as well as the Palestinian government Council for Development and reconstruction should provide the needed assistance in the planning of the housing needs in East Jerusalem, especially the long and medium term strategies.
- Reconstruct and restore the selected sites. Therefore, it recommends that the Palestinian ministry of tourism and antiquities, joint with the ministry of local government should facilitate the determination of the sites that would be selected in East Jerusalem for restoration. Consequently, the content and level of required intervention should be specified in collaboration with Palestinian and international institutions such as: UNESCO.
- Restoration of the old city.
- Develop an economic and social "profile" based on Palestinian communities. Hence, it is recommended that the Palestinian ministry of environmental affairs, jointly with the national think tanks should work together in order to develop detailed and thorough socio-economic and environmental maps that cover the Palestinian communities in Jerusalem.

Third Strategy: Lobbying for and work for the recognition of an alternative Palestinian planning agenda, through the following:
- Alternative planning for the so-called "West Bank" region. It is recommended that Jerusalem unite at the Palestinian presidium in order to give all assistance possible to the task forces of planning and legal teams which are endeavoring to counter the Israeli schemes in the region.

Fourth Strategy: Networking and sharing of experiences in terms of relevant legal and planning affairs (including enumerating the legal and documenting the violations). Through:
- Stage an advocacy campaign. It is therefore suggested that the Palestinian ministry of information jointly with the foreign ministry set up a campaign for advocacy and lobbying for the sake of defending the rights of Palestinians, and unfolding the Israeli practices.
- Technical capacity building.
List of References:

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