

Sur Bahir & Umm Tuba Town Profile



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Background

This report is part of a series of booklets, which contain compiled information about each city, village, and town in the Jerusalem Governorate. These booklets came as a result of a comprehensive study of all villages in Jerusalem Governorate, which aims at depicting the overall living conditions in the governorate and presenting developmental plans to assist in developing the livelihood of the population in the area. It was accomplished through the "Village Profiles and Needs Assessment," the project funded by the Spanish Agency for International Cooperation for Development (AECID).

The "Village Profiles and Needs Assessment" was designed to study, investigate, analyze and document the socio-economic conditions and the needed programs and activities to mitigate the impact of the current unsecure political, economic and social conditions in the Jerusalem Governorate.

The project's objectives are to survey, analyze, and document the available natural, human, socioeconomic and environmental resources, and the existing limitations and needs assessment for the development of the rural and marginalized areas in the Jerusalem Governorate. In addition, the project aims at preparing strategic developmental programs and activities to mitigate the impact of the current political, social, and economic instability with the focus on the agricultural sector.

All village profiles in Arabic and English are available online at <http://vprofile.arij.org>.

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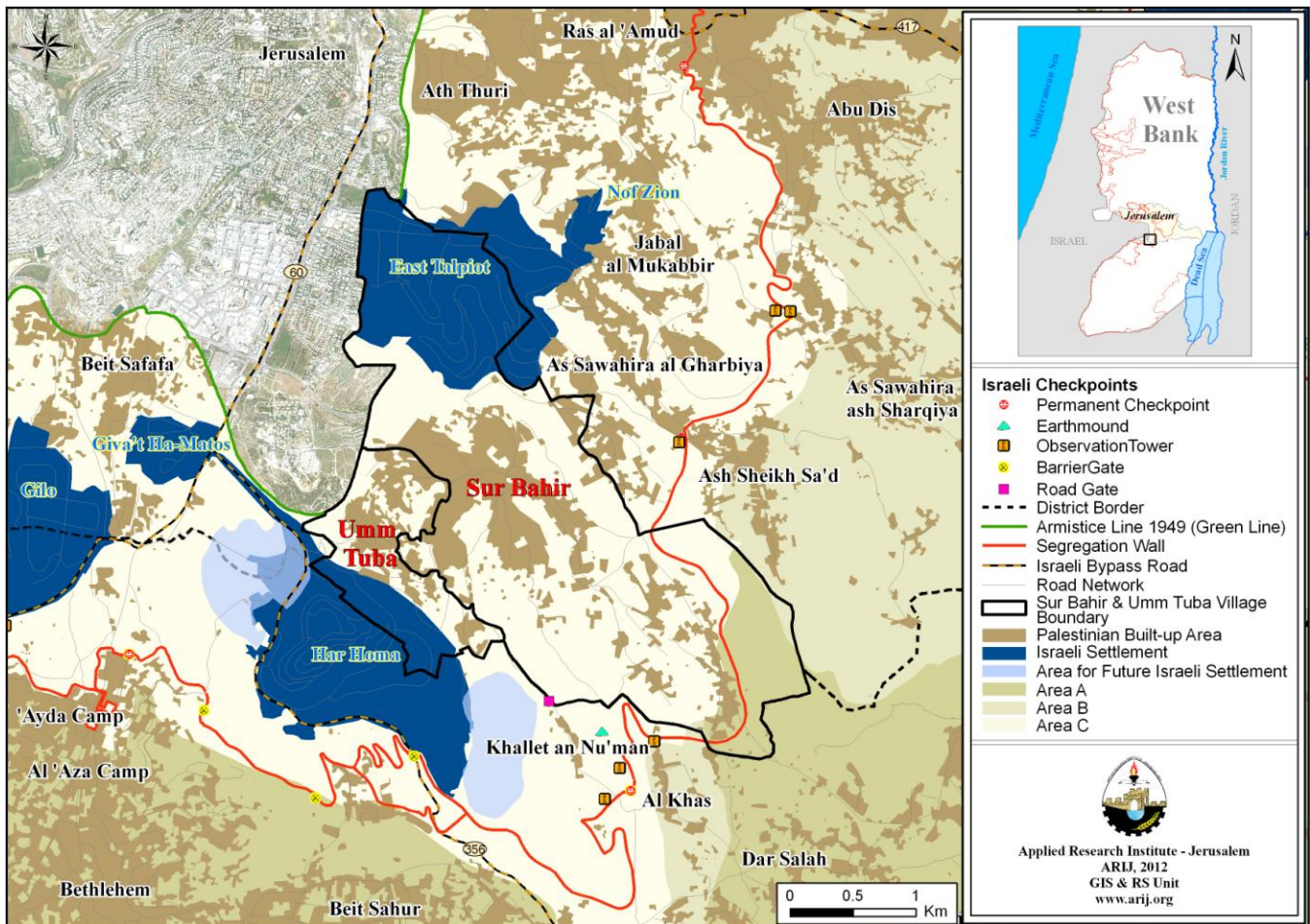
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Sur Bahir & Umm Tuba Town Profile

Location and physical characteristics

Sur Bahir & Umm Tuba are Palestinian towns in Jerusalem Governorate located, where Sur Bahir is located 4.62km from Jerusalem City and Umm Tuba 5.3km from Jerusalem City, south of Jerusalem City. They are bordered by As Sawahira al Gharbiya and Ash Sheikh Sa'd to the east, Ath Thuri land and Jabal al Mukabbir to the north, Western Jerusalem and Beit Safafa to the west, and the territories of Al Khas, An Nu'man and Beit Sahour (in Bethlehem Governorate) to the south (ARIJ-GIS Unit, 2012) (see map 1).

Map 1: Sur Bahir & Umm Tuba location and borders



Source: ARIJ - GIS Unit, 2012

Sur Bahir is located at an altitude of 742m above sea level with a mean annual rainfall of 407.7mm. The average annual temperature is 17°C and the average annual humidity is approximately 60% (ARIJ-GIS Unit, 2012).

Umm Tuba is located at an altitude of 707m above sea level with a mean annual rainfall of 431.8mm. The average annual temperature is 17°C and the average annual humidity is approximately 60% (ARIJ-GIS Unit, 2012).

All services are provided by the Israeli Municipality of Jerusalem (Sur Bahir Mayor, 2012).

History

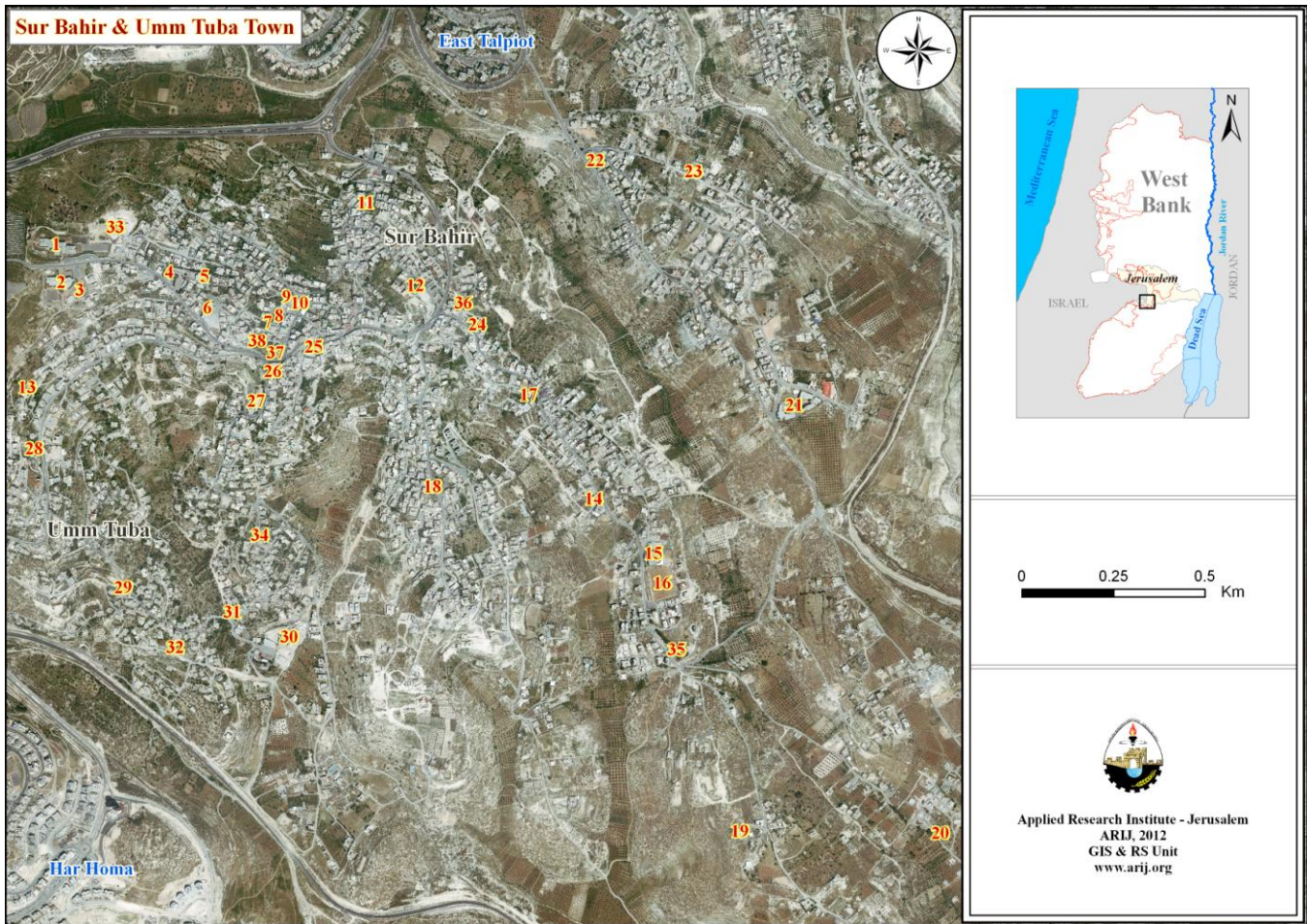
An ancient story claims that Omar Ben al Khattab held a secret meeting in the area with his army leaders before he entered Jerusalem, and the town was therefore originally named 'As Sir al Bahir' ('the impressive secret'), which later became Sur Bahir (Sur Bahir Mayor, 2012).

The town was established over 1000 years ago, and its original residents were from the Arabian Peninsula and Yemen (Sur Bahir Mayor, 2012).

Religious and archaeological sites

There are 3 mosques in the town, Al Muhajireen, Al Murabiteen and Al 'Omari mosques. There are no sites of archaeological interest in the town (Sur Bahir Mayor, 2012) (see map 2).

Map 2: Main locations in Sur Bahir & Umm Tuba town



Source: ARIJ - GIS Unit, 2012

Population

Unfortunately, no census has been conducted by the Palestinian Central Bureau of Statistics (PCBS) to ascertain population numbers and housing statistics in Sur Bahir & Umm Tuba town. However, the Israeli Central Bureau of Statistics indicates that the population of Sur Bahir & Umm Tuba was approximately 18,137 in 2011 (The Jerusalem Institute for Israel Studies, 2012).

700 dunums of land have been confiscated from the towns for the construction of the Segregation Wall. 90% of Sur Bahir & Umm Tuba towns' population holds Jerusalem identity papers, and 10% carry Israeli passports (Sur Bahir Mayor, 2012).

Families

Sur Bahir & Umm Tuba residents are from several families, mainly the Dabesh, Duwayyat, Nimer, 'Elayyan, 'Omeira, Hamadah, Abu Kafer, Bkeirat, Jboor, Abu Jamed, Jad Allah and Al 'Atrash families (Sur Bahir Mayor, 2012).

Education

There are 7 schools in the town: 6 governmental schools run by the Ministry of Education and Higher Education (MoEHE), and one school run by UNRWA, but there are no local kindergartens run by the Ministry of Education (Directorate of Education in Jerusalem, 2011). There are 4 schools in the town run by Jerusalem Municipality (see table 1). The illiteracy rate amongst the Sur Bahir & Umm Tuba population in 2012 is approximately 18% (Sur Bahir Mayor, 2012).

Table 1: Schools in Sur Bahir & Umm Tuba by name, stage, sex and supervising authority

School name	Supervising authority	Sex
Banat Omar ben Abd al Aziz School	Government	Mixed
Ali ben Abi Taleb Boys' School	Government	Male
Abu Bakr as Siddiq Girls' School	Government	Female
Othman ben 'Affan Girls' School	Government	Female
Omar ben al Khattab Boys' School	Government	Male
Umm Tuba Boys' High School	Government	Male
Sur Bahir Girls' Elementary School	UNRWA	Female
Umm Tuba Co-educated Preparatory School	Jerusalem Municipality	Mixed
Sur Bahir Girls' Preparatory School	Jerusalem Municipality	Female
Sur Bahir Boys' Primary School	Jerusalem Municipality	Male
Sur Bahir Girls' High School	Jerusalem Municipality	Female

Source: Sur Bahir Mayor, 2012 & Directorate of Education – Jerusalem, 2011

In the town there are 5,163 students and 184 classes (Directorate of Education in Jerusalem, 2011). The average number of students per class is approximately 28 (Directorate of Education in Jerusalem, 2011).

Due to the lack of some levels of education in Sur Bahir & Umm Tuba, students attend schools in neighboring villages, including Ar Rashidiya Boys' School in East Jerusalem (Bab as Sahira neighborhood), the Orphans Islamic Boys' High School in the old city, Al Fatat al Laji'a Girls' High School in East Jerusalem (Bab as Sahira neighborhood), and Al Ma'muniya Girls' School in East Jerusalem (Wad al Jozz neighborhood). Each of these schools is 4-6km from the towns. To complete their vocational and technical studies, some students go to Sakhneen 'Atarot School or the Lutheran School in Beit Hanina (Sur Bahir Mayor, 2012).

The educational sector in Sur Bahir & Umm Tuba towns faces some obstacles, primarily (Sur Bahir Mayor, 2012):

1. The lack of means of transportation.
2. The distortion of curriculums by the Israeli government.
3. The weak educational level of students.

Health status

There are some health centers available in Sur Bahir & Umm Tuba towns, 5 of which are run by Israeli insurance companies such as Maccabi, Clalit and Meuhedet. These include general physicians and specialized physicians in most fields, a motherhood and childcare center, a medical laboratory, a radiology center and a physiotherapy center. There are also 5 private dental clinics in the town, 2 plastic surgery centers and 3 pharmacies. In the absence of required health services or in emergencies, residents of Sur Bahir & Umm Tuba go to hospitals in East and West Jerusalem, including Hadasa (Al 'Isawiya and 'Ein Karem), Al Muttala', Ad Dajani, the Red Crescent, Al Maqasid and Al Faransawi hospitals. These hospitals are between 8 and 22km from the towns (Sur Bahir Mayor, 2012).

The health sector in Sur Bahir & Umm Tuba towns faces some obstacles, primarily (Sur Bahir Mayor, 2012):

1. The lack of an ambulance.
2. The lack of a nearby hospital.
3. The existence of flying/partial checkpoints.

Economic activities

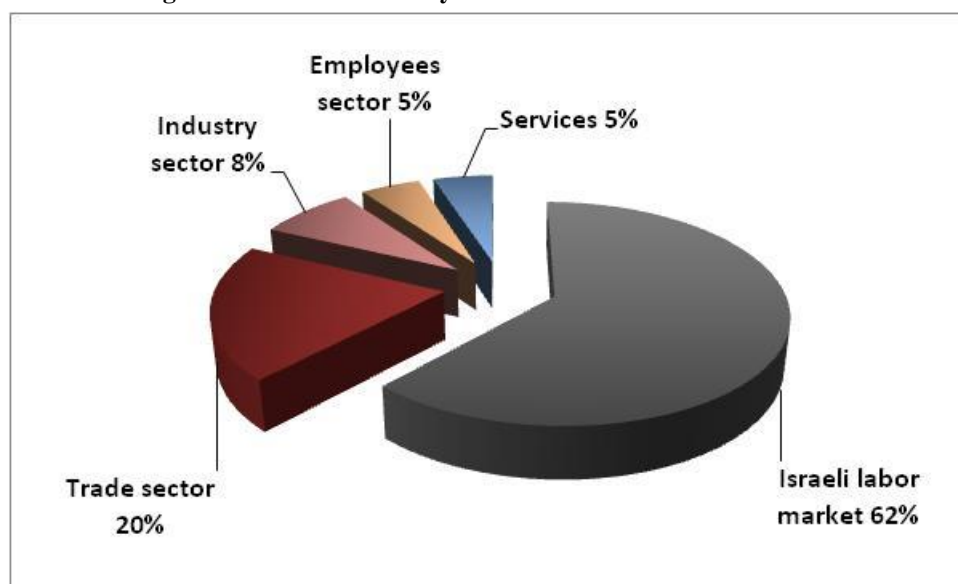
The economy in Sur Bahir & Umm Tuba is dependent on several economic sectors, mainly the Israeli labor market, which absorbs 62% of the workforce (Sur Bahir Mayor, 2012) (see figure 1).

A field survey conducted by ARIJ in 2012 showed that the distribution of labor by economic activity in Sur Bahir & Umm Tuba is as follows:

- Israeli labor market (62%)
- Trade sector (20%)
- Industry (8%)
- Government or private employees sector (5%)
- Services sector (5%)

In terms of commercial and industrial production in Sur Bahir & Umm Tuba towns, there are 50 grocery stores, 7 bakeries, 3 butchers, 15 fruit and vegetable stores, 10 different service stores and 21 different professional workshops (blacksmith, carpentry, etc.), in addition to an olive oil press (Sur Bahir Mayor, 2012).

Figure 1: Economic activity in Sur Bahir & Umm Tuba towns



Source: Sur Bahir Mayor, 2012

The unemployment rate in Sur Bahir & Umm Tuba in 2012 reached approximately 25%, and it was found that the social groups most affected in the towns as a result of Israeli restrictions and procedures are (Sur Bahir Mayor, 2012):

1. Workers in the agriculture sector.
2. Workers in industry.
3. Workers in the trade sector.
4. Workers in the services sector.
5. Workers in the tourism sector.

Agricultural sector

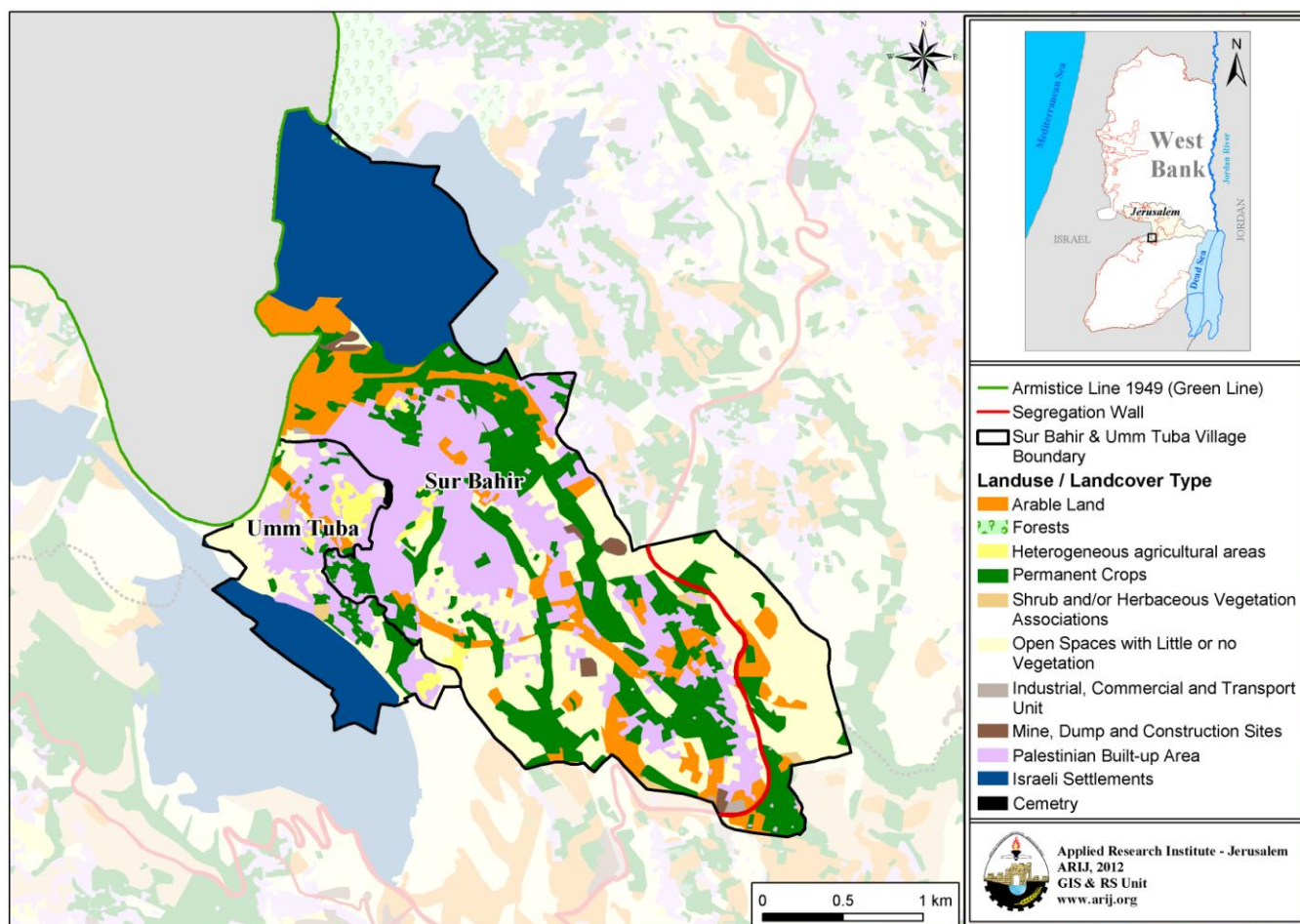
Sur Bahir & Umm Tuba has a total area of around 8,245 dunums of which 2,652 are considered ‘arable’ land and 1,853 dunums are registered as ‘residential’ (see table 2 and map 3).

Table 2: Land use and land cover in Sur Bahir & Umm Tuba towns in 2010 (area in dunums)

Total area	Built up area	Agricultural area (2,652)				Inland water	Forests	Open spaces	Area of industrial, commercial & transport unit	Area of settlements, military bases & Wall zone
		Permanent crops	Greenhouses	Rangelands	Arable lands					
8,245	1,853	1,763	0	41	848	0	5	1,902	74	1,758

Source: ARIJ – GIS Unit, 2012

Map 3: Land use/land cover in Sur Bahir & Umm Tuba towns



Source: ARIJ - GIS Unit, 2012

Table 3 shows the different types of fruit trees planted in the area. The towns are known for the cultivation of olives; there are 121 dunums of land cultivated with olive trees in the towns.

Table 3: Total area of fruit and olive trees in Sur Bahir & Umm Tuba towns (dunums)

Fruit trees	Rain-fed (dunum)	Irrigated (dunum)
Olives	121	0
Citrus	0	0
Stone fruits	151	0
Pome fruits	45	0
Nuts	7	0
Other fruits	5	0
Total area	329	0

Source: Palestinian Ministry of Agriculture - Jerusalem, 2010

The difference between the two sets of results obtained from the Ministry of Agriculture and by ARIJ's GIS Unit in size of agricultural areas is explained by the fact that the Ministry of Agriculture and the Palestinian Central Bureau of Statistics (2010) conducted a survey which used a definition of

agricultural areas based on land ownership. Therefore, the areas included in the survey were those of actual holdings of agricultural areas instead of seasonal ones. The survey did not consider fragmented and small seasonal cultivated areas in residential and agricultural areas. ARIJ's survey, however, indicated the existence of a high proportion of small and fragmented holdings (home gardens) throughout the occupied Palestinian territories, thus accounting for the larger area of agricultural holdings calculated by ARIJ.

ARIJ's field survey also shows that 15% of the residents in Sur Bahir & Umm Tuba rear and keep domestic animals, such as sheep, goats, and bees (Sur Bahir Mayor, 2012) (see table 4).

Table 4: Livestock in Sur Bahir & Umm Tuba towns

Cows*	Sheep	Goats	Camels	Horses	Donkeys	Mules	Broilers	Layers	Bee hives
0	300	300	0	0	0	0	0	0	35

*Including cows, bull calves, heifer calves and bulls

Source: Palestinian Ministry of Agriculture - Jerusalem, 2010

There are no agricultural roads in the towns (Sur Bahir Mayor, 2012). The agricultural sector is one of the sectors most affected by the Israeli occupation, as all agricultural lands have been confiscated; currently there is a very small commercial growing sector. Israeli Occupation Forces immediately demolish any barracks constructed in the area. It is worth mentioning that Sur Bahir & Umm Tuba were previously amongst the most productive wheat and barley growing areas, but the occupation practices have led to the almost complete disappearance of this sector (Sur Bahir Mayor, 2012).

Institutions and services

Sur Bahir & Umm Tuba towns have very few governmental institutions. There is a post office and a few local institutions and associations that provide services to various sectors of society. These include (Sur Bahir Mayor, 2012):

- **Sur Bahir Youth Club:** A sports center founded through support and contributions from town residents. The club provides cultural, sports, and artistic activities.
- **The Islamic Club:** A sports center founded through support and contributions from town residents. The club provides cultural, sports, and artistic activities.
- **Endowments Zakat Fund Committee:** Provides religious services, consultancies and cultural services.

Infrastructure and natural resources

Electricity and telecommunication services

Sur Bahir & Umm Tuba have been connected to a public electricity network since 1950. They are served by Jerusalem Electricity Company, which is the main source of electricity in the towns. Approximately 100% of the housing units in the town are connected to this network (Sur Bahir Mayor, 2012).

Sur Bahir & Umm Tuba are connected to a telecommunication network through Jerusalem Municipality and approximately 90% of the housing units within the towns' boundaries are connected to phone lines (Sur Bahir Mayor, 2012).

Transportation services

Sur Bahir & Umm Tuba have 35 public buses (Al Muwahhad Company), which are the main means of transportation in the towns (Sur Bahir Mayor, 2012)

Water resources

Sur Bahir & Umm Tuba are provided with water by Jihon (an Israeli company) through the public water network established in 1972, and approximately 100% of the housing units are connected to this network (Sur Bahir Mayor, 2012).

Sanitation

Sur Bahir & Umm Tuba have public sewerage networks; about 50% of the towns' housing units use the sewage networks as the main means of wastewater disposal, while the rest (50%) use cesspits and endocrines (Sur Bahir Mayor, 2012).

Solid waste management

Jerusalem Municipality is the official body responsible for managing the collection and disposal of solid waste generated by citizens and establishments in the town. No specific fees are charged to the population served by domestic solid waste collection and transportation services; citizens pay the 'Arnona' taxes to Jerusalem Municipality which range between 3,000 and 10,000 NIS per year depending on household size. This tax covers all services provided by Jerusalem Municipality to the towns' residents, including solid waste services (Sur Bahir Mayor, 2012).

Most of the population in Sur Bahir & Umm Tuba benefit from the solid waste services, whereby waste is collected from households, institutions, shops and public squares in plastic bags and then transferred to containers distributed throughout the towns. Jerusalem Municipality collects the solid waste and then

transports it using a waste vehicle to El 'Eizariya dumping site, where it is usually buried and sometimes burnt (Sur Bahir Mayor, 2012).

The daily per capita rate of solid waste production in Sur Bahir & Umm Tuba is 1.05kg. Therefore, the estimated amount of solid waste produced per day from Sur Bahir & Umm Tuba residents is nearly 16 tons, or 5,873 tons per year (ARIJ-WERU, 2012).

The towns' residents suffer from the poor collection and disposal services of solid waste; typically, waste accumulates in the streets for several days before it is collected (Sur Bahir Mayor, 2012).

Geopolitical status of Sur Bahir & Umm Tuba town

The majority of Sur Bahir & Umm Tuba towns, covering an area of 8,245 dunums is located under the control of Jerusalem Israeli Municipality, which was declared illegally and unilaterally in 1967 after the occupation of the West Bank including East Jerusalem, in addition to the Gaza Strip and other Arab lands. Jerusalem Governorate was divided into two main regions; J1 and J2. J1 area is located inside the borders and under the control of Jerusalem Municipality, and includes many Palestinian communities from the Old Town and Jerusalem City (Beit Al Maqdis), in addition to Sur Bahir & Umm Tuba towns which are located in J1's southern area. The other region is J2, which is located outside the borders and control of Jerusalem Municipality. The eastern and western parts are under the control of Palestinian Authority's whilst the central part of the Governorate remains under Israeli control.

The area under the control of Jerusalem Municipality (inside J1) within Sur Bahir & Umm Tuba towns covers approximately 6,476 dunums (78.5% of the towns' total area), while the area outside of Municipality control (J2) is nearly 1,769 dunums (21.5% of the towns' total area). Three quarters of Sur Bahir & Umm Tuba towns' population is located in J1, whilst a small percentage is located outside the Municipality borders in J2.

According to the Oslo II Interim Agreement signed between the Palestinian Liberation Organization (PLO) and Israel on 28th September 1995, the West Bank was classified into areas "A," "B" and "C." The towns of Sur Bahir & Umm Tuba were not subjected to this classification, but remained as they were before this agreement under the control of Jerusalem Israeli Municipality, except for an estimated area of 1,769 dunums (21.5% of the towns' total area) located near Al Khas village in Bethlehem Governorate.

One should note that a small proportion of Sur Bahir & Umm Tuba lands extend outside the borders of Jerusalem Municipality and the Israeli Segregation Wall. These lands were subjected to Oslo II Interim Agreement land classification system. This part was divided into areas "A", "B" and "C". Approximately 705 dunums (40% of the J2 area in Sur Bahir & Umm Tuba) were classified as area A where the Palestinian National Authority (PNA) has responsibility for internal security and public order. 55 dunums (3% of the J2 area in Sur Bahir & Umm Tuba) were classified as area B, where the Palestinian National Authority has complete control over civil matters but Israel continues to have overriding responsibility for security. An area constituting 1,009 dunums (57% of the J2 area in Sur Bahir & Umm Tuba) were classified as area C, where Israel retains full control over security and administration related to the territory (see table 5). In area C, Palestinian building and land management

is prohibited without prior consent or authorization from the Israeli Civil Administration. It is worth mentioning that most of lands lying within area C in Sur Bahir and Umm Tuba are classified as Palestinian built-up areas, agricultural areas and open spaces.

Table 5: The geopolitical divisions of the J2 area in Sur Bahir & Umm Tuba towns according to Oslo II Agreement 1995 – Jerusalem Governorate

Classification	Area in dunums	Percentage of total town area
Area A	705	40
Area B	55	3
Area C	1,009	57
Nature reserve	0	0
Total	1,769	100

Source: ARIJ-GIS, 2012

The effect of Israeli occupation practices on Sur Bahir & Umm Tuba towns

Sur Bahir & Umm Tuba towns have been subjected to a number of Israeli confiscations for the benefit of various Israeli aims, represented in the construction of Israeli settlements and bypass roads on the towns' territories and their surroundings, in addition to the construction of the Israeli Segregation Wall. That which follows is a breakdown of the Israeli confiscations of Sur Bahir & Umm Tuba town territories:

During the Israeli Occupation of the Palestinian territory, the Israeli government confiscated 1,697 dunums in Sur Bahir & Umm Tuba towns (21% of the towns' total area) to establish two Israeli settlements, 'East Talpiot' settlement to the north and 'Har Homa' to the south west. These two settlements are inhabited by 34,800 Israeli settlers (see table 6).

Table 6: Israeli settlements constructed on Sur Bahir & Umm Tuba lands

Settlement name	Year of construction	Area confiscated from Sur Bahir & Umm Tuba (dunums)	Population of settlers (2009)
East Talpiot	1973	1,343	14,800
Jabal Abu Ghneim (Har Homa)	1997	354	20,000
Total		1,697	34,800

Source: ARIJ-GIS Unit, 2012

Israeli Occupation Forces have also confiscated lands in Sur Bahir & Umm Tuba towns to construct Israeli bypass road no.398 to connect Israeli settlements surrounding Jerusalem city. It is noted that the real threat of bypass roads lies in the buffer zone formed by the Israeli Occupation Forces (IOF) along these roads, extending to approximately 75m on each side.

The Segregation Wall's impact on Sur Bahir & Umm Tuba towns

The construction of the Israeli Segregation Wall has had a negative impact on Sur Bahir & Umm Tuba towns. According to the last amendment of the plan that was published on the webpage of the Israeli Defense Ministry (30th April 2007), the Segregation Wall, which extends for more than 2km on the towns' territories, isolates Sur Bahir & Umm Tuba lands from the remaining Palestinian territory in the West Bank. A total area of 7,398 dunums (90% of the towns' total area) has been isolated inside Jerusalem city by the Segregation Wall. The isolated lands contain Palestinian residential areas in the town, agricultural areas, open spaces and illegal settlements constructed on the towns' lands amongst others (see table 7).

Table 7: Land classification of areas isolated west of the segregation wall in Sur Bahir & Umm Tuba towns - Jerusalem Governorate

No.	Land classification	Area (dunums)
1	Agricultural areas	2,367
2	Palestinian built-up areas	1,873
3	Israeli settlements	1,696
4	Open spaces	1,302
5	Wall zone	61
6	Construction sites	54
7	Shrub and/or herbaceous vegetation	40
8	Forests	5
Total		7,398

Source: ARIJ-GIS Unit, 2012

The Segregation Wall causes suffering to Sur Bahir & Umm Tuba towns' residents

Since the outbreak of the Second Intifada in September 2000, citizens of Sur Bahir & Umm Tuba have lost their link to Bethlehem and other Palestinian cities in the West Bank. The Segregation Wall was constructed to isolate Sur Bahir & Umm Tuba and many other Jerusalemite neighboring towns from the rest of Palestine. However, citizens of Jerusalem who hold Jerusalemite identity (blue identity card) can enter the West Bank areas through Israeli terminals. The crossing points are often subject to huge congestion and inspection from Israeli soldiers, causing restrictions to Palestinian freedom of movement.

On the other hand, Palestinian citizens of the West Bank who hold Palestinian identity (green identity card) are prohibited by the Segregation Wall from entering the city of Jerusalem and its surrounding towns. This completely cuts off West Bank residents from Jerusalem and from health, education, social and economic services. They are prevented from accessing hospitals, schools and medical centers and are isolated from their places of work in Jerusalem. Access to the city is only allowed for those with special Israeli permits that are rarely issued and citizens must pass through military checkpoints where they are inspected on a daily basis. This causes suffering to Palestinians by restricting their movement and damaging family ties and social interaction. It has also caused the dispersal of many Palestinian families, especially couples in which one partner holds a Palestinian identity (green), and the other holds

Jerusalemite identity (blue). The Segregation Wall has also prevented Palestinians from reaching places of worship in the Holy City and thus has deprived them from practicing religious rituals in Jerusalem.

As a result of the Segregation Wall plan published on the webpage of the Israeli Defense Ministry in 2007, the lands of Sur Bahir & Umm Tuba town became isolated from neighboring Palestinian towns and villages. The Segregation Wall, along with the settlement belt around Jerusalem City, has isolated East Jerusalem from the rest of the West Bank. Parallel to the establishment of the Segregation Wall, the Israeli Occupation Authorities constructed a settlement belt around Sur Bahir & Umm Tuba and around Jerusalem City, which aims to create an isolation area and prevent urban expansion in the Palestinian towns of Jerusalem. The Israeli Authorities have constructed these settlements close to urbanized areas in Jerusalemite towns, which has led to an increase in the total area confiscated from these towns and has minimized the area available for future urban expansion. This move has created a new reality for the towns' residents that will be difficult to reverse. These Israeli policies and plans, particularly in Jerusalem and the remaining Palestinian Territory, have led to the creation of high population densities as a result of the lack of lands available for urban expansion, forcing residents to adopt internal and vertical expansion. Thus, the city of Jerusalem and its surrounding towns are considered to have some of the highest population densities in the world. The population density in the Palestinian neighborhoods of East Jerusalem is approximately 13,500 people per km² compared to 9,000 people per km² in settlements of East Jerusalem and 8,300 people per km² in West Jerusalem.

The dilemma of land and building licenses in Sur Bahir & Umm Tuba towns

1. Inside Jerusalem Municipality boundaries

The problems associated with land and building licenses is considered to be one of the most difficult problems in Sur Bahir & Umm Tuba towns. The reason for this is two-fold; the high prices of land, and the very high cost of licenses for construction in Sur Bahir & Umm Tuba due to their strategic proximity to the Old City and Al-Aqsa Mosque. This has made it an important target for Judaization and colonization, in addition to restrictions related to building licenses imposed by the Israeli Occupation Forces.

According to citizens of Jerusalem, land prices in East Jerusalem, particularly land located within the borders of the Jerusalem municipality (which is rarely available), are significantly higher than those for land located outside the borders of the municipality, and are even doubled in areas closer to the city center.

The Israeli Occupation Authorities have used money as an effective instrument to buy Palestinian lands in Jerusalem for high prices and 'Judaize' these lands by implanting Jewish settlers in the city. Israeli forces offer Palestinians unlimited prices for such lands and houses, especially in the city center and its neighborhoods. Anyone in Jerusalem who has land and wants to build a house or additional land has to apply for authorization and permission from the Municipality of Jerusalem. This puts obstacles in the way of Palestinians who want to get a construction license, as it is an attempt to expel Palestinians out of Jerusalem city and change the demographic balance for the benefit of the Jews, thus making Palestinians in Jerusalem a minority.

One of the main obstacles that prevents Palestinians from obtaining a building license is that one has to prove ownership of the land. The Israeli Occupation Authorities demand that Palestinians seeking to build a house or structure, must prove their ownership of the land, which is considered to be a political problem relating to the occupation which has been ongoing since 1967.

According to a report prepared by Bimkom Organization (Planners for Planning Rights), approximately 50% of East Jerusalem lands are unregistered in the archive of ownership, such as those in the town of Kafr 'Aqab and the area extending from Al 'Isawiya town in the north to Sur Bahir in the south. Additionally, 25% of the lands in East Jerusalem are in the process of survey and registration (such as Beit Hanina and Shu'fat towns); and only 25% of the lands in East Jerusalem are officially registered, including parts of Al Bireh, Qalandiya, Beit Hanina, Hizma and 'Anata, Ash Sheikh Jarrah and Beit Safafa (Bimkom, 2004).

According to the testimonies of Palestinians in the towns of Sur Baher and Um Tuba, the licensing procedure for Palestinians is lengthy (sometimes lasting years) and carries a very high cost ranging between NIS 150,000-300,000, depending on the land area and type of building. Thus, due to the high costs imposed on Palestinians to acquire building permits and the lengthy licensing procedures, Palestinians often build without waiting for the license approval in order to meet their housing needs. Because of the political problem of land registration and ownership, the unreasonable prices of licenses and the length of time it takes to secure licenses, many citizens resort to building without licenses due to their humanitarian needs and natural family growth. In these instances, the Israeli Occupation Authorities usually demolish the property and force the Palestinian owner to pay for his own demolition and submit a new building application, incurring new fees and more time. On top of this, the majority of Palestinian people in Jerusalem are living in difficult conditions because of high poverty rates, which is a consequence of the Israeli Occupation closures which restrict their movement and prevent them from reaching their work places. These Israeli restrictions and harassments against the Palestinians in East Jerusalem, along with the housing problems, lack of land available for building and increased unemployment rate, force many Jerusalemites to migrate outside the borders of the Municipality towards the West Bank or even travel abroad in search of better living standards.

According to the 'Civic Coalition for Defending Palestinian Rights' in Jerusalem, (CCDPRJ, 2009), the Israeli Authorities have adopted many policies which aim to enact pressure on Jerusalemites. An example of this is the case of the demographic status and urban growth in Jerusalem, as the area that is allocated for the development of Palestinian neighborhoods in East Jerusalem falls under the jurisdiction of the Jerusalem Municipality and is estimated at approximately 9,200 dunums - only 13% of the total area of East Jerusalem. Meanwhile, the remaining area of East Jerusalem which is under the jurisdiction of the Jerusalem Municipality is classified as Israeli settlements, green areas (which cannot be used for Palestinian urban growth), public buildings, roads and other uses.

Furthermore, the Israeli Authorities often do not prepare the necessary master plans for the Palestinian neighborhoods in East Jerusalem which are required for the urban planning process. In cases when the Israeli Authorities do prepare master plans for Palestinian neighborhoods in East Jerusalem, they usually restrict areas designated for Palestinian urban expansion to limited percentages which are below the necessary percentages for natural urban growth (between 25% and 75%). If one compares these percentages with the percentage of lands used for Israeli settlements, it is found that urban growth varies between 75%-120%. In Sur Baher and Um Tuba towns for example, the Israeli Authorities determined

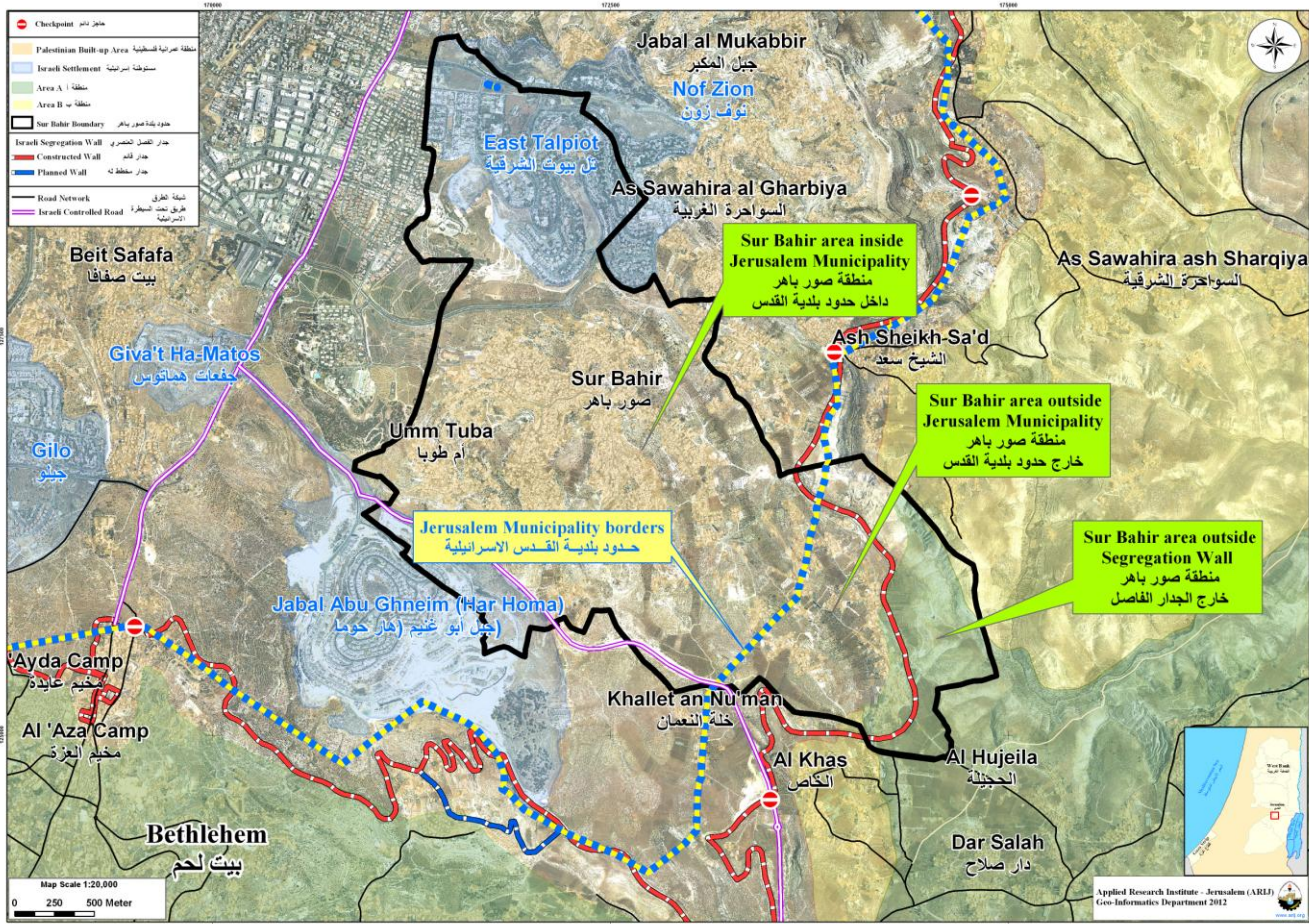
the urban growth percentage to be 35%-50%, whereas the neighboring settlement of Har Homa (Jabal Abu Ghneim) which was illegally constructed on the part of the land of Sur Baher and Um Tuba towns, covers a percentage of 90%-120% (CCJ, 2009).

It should be noted that the Israeli Jerusalem Municipality has classified some areas within its boundaries (including areas in Sur Bahir & Umm Tuba) as 'green areas.' The Israeli Occupation Authorities (IOA) have used this classification as a way of controlling and confiscating more Palestinian lands in the towns. Moreover, the IOA demolished houses in Jerusalem under the pretext that these houses were built on 'green areas', as seen in the ethnic cleansing process in 'Al Bustan neighborhood' in Silwan. The targeting of Al Bustan came after the Israeli Municipality of Jerusalem announced a plan on February 20th 2009 to relocate more than 1,500 Palestinian citizens living in the 88 houses comprising Al Bustan neighborhood to an alternative location. The Municipality plans to demolish the 88 houses to establish the 'King David Garden' as part of the 'Biblical Gardens' around the Holy City. Also under the name of 'Green Areas', the Israeli Authorities have built many settlements in Jerusalem, such as Rechesh Shu'fat (Ramat Shlomo) in the north and Jabal Abu Ghneim (Har Homa) in the south. One must also note that some areas within Sur Bahir & Umm Tuba towns which are classified as 'green areas,' will become part of the future Israeli settlement plans in Jerusalem city and its surroundings.

2. "Area C" classifications (Oslo II Agreement)

An estimated 1,769 dunums (21.5% of the towns' total area) of Sur Bahir & Um towns are located outside the boundary of Jerusalem Municipality (J2) and are subjected to the Oslo II Agreement classification system. 1,009 dunums (57% of the total area) have been classified as area C outside the Municipality, which includes most of the towns' citizens who are living outside the Municipality borders. This area faces the same problem of obtaining licenses for construction from the Israeli Civil Administration in 'Beit El' settlement in Ramallah Governorate.

However, for the area which is not under the control of Jerusalem Municipality the cost of construction licenses are lower than the Municipality controlled areas within Sur Bahir & Umm Tuba. According to the testimonies of citizens, this cost can reach up to approximately 10,000 NIS. However obtaining a license is still a complicated procedure, and the Israeli Civil Administration puts obstacles in the way of those wishing to obtain a license. This is due to Israeli Occupation Forces' aims to Judaize Jerusalem city and put restrictions on the population in a way that forces people to leave (see map 1).



3. Areas under Palestinian Authority control (A & B):

The Segregation Wall has isolated 90% of Sur Bahir & Umm Tuba lands inside Jerusalem city, leaving an area of 850 dunums (10% of town’s total area) outside of the segregated area, within the West Bank. This area is near to Al Khas village in Bethlehem Governorate. An estimated 760 dunums of this area is located under Palestinian Authority control which includes rugged areas, open spaces, and a small agricultural area, but there are no Palestinian built up areas because of the difficult topography.

Sur Bahir & Umm Tuba represent a rare case in the Palestinian segregation plan, as the segregated area is classified as area A (Oslo Accords II), whereas the Israeli Authorities usually annex areas that are under their control or partial control (areas B and C). This segregated region covers an estimated area of 125 dunums. According to both the Oslo Agreement, which was signed between the PLO and Israel, and the laws of building licenses currently in force in West Bank areas, this area is under the Palestinian Authority’s (PA) administrative and security control. Consequently, the PA has the responsibility of authorizing licenses for building in this area. However, despite this legally binding agreement, the Israeli Occupation Authorities do not recognize this authorization, as demonstrated by the demolition orders that they have recently issued for some buildings within this area, as a result of their proximity to the

Segregation Wall. Palestinian residents who have been notified of these orders are in the process of defending their legal rights before the Israeli judiciary, in order to stop the Israeli demolition orders.

The right of adequate housing is considered one of the most prominent rights asserted in charters and international treaties and in international humanitarian law, which call for the respect of human dignity and the right to adequate housing. However, the Israeli state, through their aggression against the human rights of Palestinians, classifies itself to be above such laws and standards.

Dangerous Israeli escalations in Jerusalem housing demolitions

During recent years, the Israeli Occupation Authorities have escalated their attacks against houses of Palestinians living in Jerusalem by targeting them through housing and other building demolitions. These demolitions are normally carried out under the pretext of ‘unlicensed construction.’ An estimation conducted by the UN Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs shows that since 1967, the Israeli Occupation has demolished approximately 2,000 houses in Jerusalem, in addition to thousands of other constructions (OCHA, 2009). According to Al Maqdese Organization for Society Development, approximately 1,059 houses and constructions were demolished in East Jerusalem between 2000 and 2011, resulting in the displacement of 4,865 Palestinians from Jerusalem, of whom 1,290 were women and 2,537 were children (Al Maqdese, 2012). That which follows is a description of some of the demolition orders recently issued in Sur Bahir & Umm Tuba:

- In February 2008, the Israeli Occupation Authorities issued a demolition order for Al Omari Mosque in Umm Tuba town under the pretext of ‘unlicensed construction.’ One should note that this mosque has historical value and was built approximately 700 years ago, long before Israel’s occupation of Palestine. The mosque was rehabilitated in 1963 during the Jordanian rule and recently the people of Umm Tuba started a new rehabilitation process to expand this old mosque in order to include the increasing number of worshippers, as it is difficult to build a new larger mosque in the area due to Israeli policies on construction (Al-Aqsa Online, 2012).
- In December 2010, the Israeli Authorities forced citizen Maryam ‘Arraq from Sur Bahir to demolish her house after issuing an order from the Municipality. They also imposed a fine of 50,000 NIS on her small home of 80m² (Palestine Remembered, 2012).
- In December 2010, the Israeli Authorities forced citizen Khalil Ramadan Dabash and his sons from Sur Bahir to demolish their house which consisted of two apartments with an area of 160m² each. This residence was over 30 years old and was home to a family of 25 people. They were forced to demolish the house under the pretext of a phantom road construction. The family tried to object to the order through the Israeli courts but they did not succeed. Thus they were forced to execute this order by themselves and demolish their own house to avoid huge sums of money and fines to the Municipality for demolition (Palestine Remembered, 2012).
- In December 2010, the Israeli Authorities also forced citizen Sharif Muhammad Suleiman ‘Atton from Sur Bahir to demolish his house consisting of one floor with an area of 85m². This residence was home to a family of 8. The reason provided by the Israeli Authorities for the demolition of this home was that it represented an ‘unlicensed building.’ At the same time, the Israeli Authorities demolished for the second time the house of citizen Ahmad abu Sarhan covering an area of 100m² (Palestine Remembered, 2012).

- In October 2009, the Israeli Authorities demolished the house of citizen Nimr Ali Nimr from Sur Bahir which consisted of two floors including four apartments with an area of 600m², which was home to a family of 50 (Ma'an, 2012).

It is important to note that dozens of houses in Sur Bahir & Umm Tuba are threatened with demolition under the pretext of 'unlicensed construction', despite the fact that the residents fulfill the necessary procedures for licenses. However, the Municipality of Jerusalem usually refuses the requests under unspecified pretexts.

The Municipal tax (Arnona) has a negative impact on the living status and economic situation of Palestinians in Jerusalem

The Municipal tax, ('Arnona' in Hebrew), is imposed by the Jerusalem Municipality on the owners of buildings and land in Jerusalem. This tax is considered to be one of the greatest burdens on Palestinian residents of the city, including the residents of Sur Bahir & Umm Tuba towns. The Israeli Authorities use this tax as an instrument to put pressure on Palestinians and force them to leave the city.

The 'Arnona' tax is calculated based on certain criteria which take in to consideration the classification of the area and the land use classification of the Jerusalem master plan (residential areas, commercial, industrial, agricultural, public buildings, parking etc.). They also take in to consideration the zone type, the type of use and the area of building or land (Jerusalem Municipality, 2012). Regarding the residential areas, they classify these into four categories (A, B, C and D), and based on this zoning, along with the area of building, they determine and calculate the amount of tax that must be paid to the Municipality. For example, the tax tariff in the residential areas varies in the four zones between 35-98 NIS per m² which is equivalent to approximately 10-25 US\$ per m². This means that a small house (or apartment) with an area of 100-150 m² will cost the owner 3,000-10,000 NIS a year in tax, equivalent to approximately 800-3,000 US\$. For commercial shops, the tax imposed by the municipality is folded, which affects the economic activity as these taxes force the merchants to increase their prices. The tax rate for the commercial shops varies between 309-319 NIS per m² depending on the area of the shop, which is equivalent to approximately 80 US\$ per m². In addition to the taxation of residential and commercial areas, the Municipality also imposes taxes on places of worship, agricultural areas, schools, kindergartens, elderly homes and other facilities.

The segregation plan has had a significant negative impact on the economic situation of the Palestinians living in Jerusalem in general and on the commercial sector in particular, as it has also suffered from the global recession. Much of the trade in Jerusalem is largely dependent on the Palestinian visitors to the Holy City from the West Bank, the Gaza Strip and those from the occupied lands of 1948, but Israeli closure of the city has negatively affected this trade and the economic situation of the city and its residents. Despite these difficulties, the Occupation Authorities continue to impose taxes without taking into consideration the situation of the Jerusalemites, who represent the poorer class in the Holy City. In fact, just last year (2012), the Municipality decided to increase the 'Arnona' by approximately 3%, increasing still further the burden on the Palestinians of Jerusalem.

It is also important to note that in the case of Jerusalem, the Palestinians are forced to pay these taxes just to maintain their presence in the city without even receiving a decent level of Municipal services in return. The planning process in the Municipality of Jerusalem focuses on the political-demographic

dimension that aims to Judaize the city rather than planning for the purposes of prosperity and well-being of its citizens. Furthermore, Palestinian neighborhoods and communities in Jerusalem are deliberately neglected in the provision of services. For instance, the Municipality rarely carries out the necessary maintenance for the infrastructure of Arab neighborhoods, including roads, water and waste water networks, solid waste and other services. The most obvious problem that the people of Jerusalem suffer from is the lack of a cleaning service and the accumulation of solid waste, despite their commitment to paying their taxes to the Municipality. This injustice can be clearly seen if we compare the situation of the Palestinians in Jerusalem with that of the illegal settlers living in the city who have all of their facilities and services provided for them in order to encourage them to stay in the Holy City.

Mazmuria terminal near Sur Bahir & Umm Tuba

At the southern entrance of Sur Bahir & Umm Tuba, the Israeli Occupation Forces established Mazmuria trade terminal (An Nu'man checkpoint) which was constructed on lands of the Al Khas and An Nu'man villages in the Bethlehem Governorate, nearby to Sur Bahir and Umm Tuba. This terminal completed the Israeli segregation plan to separate Jerusalem towns (including Sur Bahir & Umm Tuba) from Bethlehem. After the construction of the Segregation Wall and these barriers, interaction between this town and Bethlehem city became difficult, especially for people holding the Palestinian identity card (green) who cannot reach the isolated towns within Jerusalem city.

Mazmuria terminal is one of six main trade passages in the West Bank which have been installed by the Israeli Authorities to organize the movement of goods between the West Bank and the occupied Palestinian territory in 1948. At these trade passages,, goods are unloaded from Israeli trucks and then loaded on to Palestinian ones, and vice versa.

The establishment of this terminal dates back to 2003, when the Israeli Occupation Authorities published a detailed map of the terminal to be established in the area, in addition to a military base to protect the terminal and the Segregation Wall. The terminal occupies an area of 84 dunums of land isolated behind the wall. The map also showed an Israeli bypass road near the wall, intended to connect the terminal and the military base with settlements in Jerusalem and those to the east and north of the city. When Israeli bulldozers attacked the villages and started the implementation of the plan, residents of the two villages submitted objections to the Israeli High Court of Justice, which obstructed the implementation of the project until the first quarter of 2005. On 3rd September 2005, Israeli Occupation Forces handed residents of Al Khas and An Nu'man four further Israeli military orders holding numbers 156/05/T, 155/05/T, 154/05/T and 52/05. These orders informed residents that 43 dunums of An Nu'man and Beit Sahour lands in Bethlehem Governorate would be confiscated to construct a trade passage. Later, in 2007, the Israeli Occupation Forces issued more military orders holding numbers 31/07/T and 02/07/S to confiscate 25 dunums from Beit Sahour and Bethlehem for military purposes and for the expansion of the terminal.

Israeli military orders issued in Sur Bahir & Umm Tuba towns

Israeli Occupation Authorities have issued a set of military orders to confiscate lands in Sur Bahir & Umm Tuba towns for different military purposes. The following are some of the key orders issued:

1. Israeli military order no. 22/03/T: Issued on the 12th August 2003 to confiscate 173.4 dunums of land from Sur Bahir & Umm Tuba, Ash Shayyah and As Sawahira al Gharbiya, for the construction of the Segregation Wall.
2. Israeli military order no. 23/03/T: Issued on the 24th August 2003 to confiscate 19 dunums of land from Sur Bahir & Umm Tuba for the construction of the Segregation Wall.
3. Israeli military order no. 47/03/T: Issued on the 22nd July 2003 to confiscate 1.5 dunums of land from Sur Bahir & Umm Tuba for undisclosed military purposes.

Development plans and projects

Implemented projects

Wadi Hilweh Information Center has implemented several development projects in Sur Bahir & Umm Tuba during the past five years (see table 8).

Table 8: Development projects implemented in Sur Bahir & Umm Tuba during the last five years

Name of the project	Type	Year	Donor
Establishing Ibn Rasheed Elementary School	Educational	2008	Jerusalem Municipality
Establishing two schools in Umm Layasoon area	Educational	2008	Jerusalem Municipality
Establishing Sur Bahir soccer field	Public services	2010	NGOs inside the Green Line

Source: Sur Bahir Mayor, 2012

Proposed projects

Sur Bahir & Umm Tuba Development Committee, in cooperation with the civil society organizations in the towns and the towns' residents, hopes to implement several projects in the coming years. The project ideas were developed during the PRA workshop conducted by ARIJ staff in the towns. The projects are as follows, in order of priority from the perspectives of the participants in the workshop:

1. Rehabilitating Umm Tuba spring.
2. Rehabilitating five Roman cisterns.
3. Establishing two kindergartens.
4. Constructing a school.

Town development priorities and needs

Sur Bahir & Umm Tuba suffer from a significant shortage of infrastructure and services. Table 9 shows the development priorities and needs in the town according to the Development Committee's feedback (Sur Bahir Mayor, 2012).

Table 9: Development priorities and needs in Sur Bahir & Umm Tuba

No.	Sector	Strongly needed	Needed	Not a priority	Notes
Infrastructural needs					
1	Constructing and paving roads			*	
2	Rehabilitating of old water networks			*	
3	Extending the water network to cover new built up areas			*	
4	Constructing new water networks			*	
5	Rehabilitating/constructing of new wells or springs	*			Rehabilitating Umm Tuba spring
6	Constructing of water reservoirs			*	
7	Constructing a sewage disposal network			*	
8	Constructing a new electricity network			*	
9	Providing containers for solid waste collection			*	
10	Providing vehicles for collecting solid waste			*	
11	Providing a sanitary landfill			*	
Health needs					
1	Building new clinics or health care centres			*	
2	Rehabilitating old clinics or health care centres			*	
3	Purchasing medical equipment and tools			*	
Educational needs					
1	Building new schools		*		Constructing a school
2	Rehabilitating old schools		*		Rehabilitating a school
3	Purchasing new equipment for schools			*	
Agriculture needs					
1	Rehabilitation of agricultural lands			*	
2	Building rainwater harvesting cisterns			*	
3	Construction of barracks for livestock			*	
4	Veterinary services			*	
5	Seeds and hay for animals			*	
6	Construction of new greenhouses			*	
7	Rehabilitation of greenhouses			*	
8	Field crop seeds			*	
9	Plants and agricultural supplies			*	

Source: Sur Bahir Mayor, 2012

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