

**Arab Thought Forum**



# Democratic Formation in Palestine

**Report on the status of democracy in Palestine for 2006**

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This report is the outcome of teamwork.

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## **Democratic Formation in Palestine (9)**

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## Important Dates

**4/1/2006:** The Israel Prime Minister, Ariel Sharon, falls into a coma after experiencing severe hemorrhage due to a blood clot on the brain. He has not regained consciousness to date.

**16/1/2006:** Closing of the tenth round of the Palestinian Legislative Council (PLC) after a 10 year term. That is, the final day of work of the first elected Palestinian Parliament within the Palestinian territories.

**25/1/2006:** Palestinian legislative elections were held for the second time since the establishment of the Palestinian Authority and after 10 years had elapsed without elections.

**26/1/2006:** The Central Elections Committee announces a landslide victory for the Islamic Resistance Movement “ Hamas ” with a majority within the parliament reaching 76 out of 132 seats.

**16/2/2006:** The new Legislative Council holds its first session.

**17/2/2006:** The USA requests that the Palestinian Authority return USAID funds in light of the results of the elections.

**21/2/2006:** President Mahmoud Abbass presents Ismael Haniyyeh with an official letter appointing him as the next Prime Minister.

**2/3/2006:** The Interim Palestinian government returns 30 million dollars worth of aid to the USA within the framework of a review of aid to the Palestinians carried out by Washington since the “ Hamas ” victory in the legislative elections.

**3/3/2006:** An attack was carried out by three Israeli extremists in The Church of Annunciation in Nazareth during a religious service celebrating the beginning of Lent (the Christian fasting season).

**6/3/2006:** Israeli sources exposed a plan and prepared recommendations by the Israeli security authorities to enter into conflicts with and to isolate the new Palestinian government which will be composed by “ Hamas ”.

**6/3/2006:** The Fatah Movement Bloc within the PLC resorted to the Palestinian High Court of Justice in order to rescind the PLC decision taken despite the Fateh Bloc’s opposition and withdrawal, and which calls for revoking the resolutions made by the previous PLC.

**14/3/2006:** The Israeli army raids Jericho prison after the withdrawal of the British guards and kidnaps Ahmad Sa'adat, Secretary General of the Popular Front for the Liberation of Palestine (PFLP) and five of his comrades.

**28/3/2006:** " Hamas" forms the tenth Palestinian government after failure of negotiations for the creation of a national coalition government. The PLC grants the new government under the leadership of Ismael Haniyyah a full majority vote of confidence.

**31/3/2006:** The USA decides to suspend all communications with the Palestinian government lead by " Hamas".

**7/4/2006:** The USA and countries within the EU declare their decision to stop direct aid to the new Palestinian government lead by " Hamas".

**12/4/2006:** The Company developing the Jewish Quarter in the Old City of Jerusalem issues a tender for contractors to establish a new settlement including houses, shops and tourist sites next to the Wailing Wall.

**17/4/2006:** Nine Israelis are killed after an explosion in Tel Aviv. (The Islamic Jihad Movement declares its responsibility).

**18/4/2006:** Jordan refuses to receive the Palestinian Minister of Foreign Affairs, Mahmoud al-Zahhar, under the pretext that weapons were discovered, which authorities in Amman declared that " Hamas" had tried to smuggle into Jordan.

**15/5/2006:** A PLO Consular Bureau is opened in Beirut.

**17/5/2006:** The " Hamas"-run Executive Force composed of 3000 military elements under direct supervision of the Minister of Interior start functioning. Fateh repudiate the formation of this force and consider it illegal.

**23/5/2006:** The American Congress endorses a new law under the name of " Palestinian Anti-Terror Act" to prevent the presentation of aid to the Palestinian government.

**25/5/2006:** A dialogue starts between the Palestinian factions, government and presidency concerning the document signed by Palestinian prisoners in order to adopt it as the basis for a national agenda.

**9/6/2006:** Ten citizens are martyred due to attacks by Israeli military marine vessels that perpetrated a massacre against innocent civilians on an outing at Gaza beach.

**11/6/2006:** President Mahmoud Abbas issues a presidential decree ordering the performance of a popular poll concerning the Prisoners' Document on National Conciliation. However, the Palestinian government and " Hamas" considered the decree an illegal measure.

**25/6/2006:** The Palestinian resistance carries out an impressive high quality operation at an Israeli military base near Karm Abu Salem Crossing South of the Gaza Strip and

calls the operation “Disappearing Illusion”. The operation results in the capture of an Israeli soldier and the killing of two others, while two of the attacking forces were martyred. The Palestinian resistance forces have bound the soldier’s freedom with the release of Palestinian prisoners and especially female and child prisoners, in addition to those with long prison terms.

**27/6/2006:** Destruction of the Electricity Plant and a number of bridges in Gaza due to Israeli bombing.

**28/6/2006:** Initiation of the Israeli military operation in the Gaza Strip, named “Summer Rain” after conclusion of the warning period arranged for the Palestinian Authority to return the captured Israeli soldier.

**29/6/2006:** The Israeli occupying forces capture 60 Palestinian dignitaries among which 8 are ministers and 24 are PLC members from the “Hamas” Bloc in the PLC.

**10/7/2006:** The Palestinian Ministry of Health confirms the Israeli occupying forces’ use of a new type of bombs which cause amputations and complete body burns to Palestinian citizens exposed to injury by their shrapnel during the Israeli military campaign on Gaza.

**12/7/2006:** The Israeli army acknowledges the death of 8 Israeli soldiers during two raids by Hizballah on a border patrol and Israeli vehicles within Lebanese territory after Hizballah was able to capture two Israeli soldiers.

**12/7/2006:** The Israeli army launches its war against Lebanon and Hizballah which lasts for 23 days.

**13/7/2006:** The US uses its right to “veto” against a proposed resolution calling upon the Israeli government to stop its attacks against Gaza.

**15/7/2006:** The Bethlehem Municipality issues a statement expressing its disappointment at a proposed resolution presented to the Congress to denounce what it described as the oppression of Palestinian Christians by the Palestinian Authority. The statement declared that the proposed resolution had been based on defective and misleading information and that it was drafted without any reference to the concerned parties.

**6/8/2006:** The Israeli occupying forces captured the Head of the PLC – ‘Aziz Dweik.

**7/8/2006:** The Palestinian Prime Minister, Ismael Haniyyeh accuses the Israeli government of attempting to assassinate him by chemical material in a package posted from Tel Aviv. Seven of his assistants are injured after inhaling toxins found in the package.

**6/9/2006:** The ministries and schools in the occupied territories are paralyzed due to a strike in protest against lack of salaries.

**22/9/2006:** Hamas declares that it will not recognize the Israeli entity and suggests a ten year truce (Hudna) to stop violence against the Hebrew state which immediately refused Hamas' offer.

**1/10/2006:** Nine Palestinians are killed and more than 100 are injured in armed clashes between the Hamas-run Executive Forces and security forces elements belonging to the presidency.

**11/10/2006:** Head of the UN Coordination Office declares that the number of checkpoints and roadblocks in the West Bank have reached 528 , that is a 40% increase in comparison with last year.

**15/10/2006:** Interrogators in the Israeli Police recommend directing accusations of sexual harassment, rape and phone tapping against the Israeli president, Moshe Katzav.

**1/11/2006:** Launching of the Israeli military campaign "Autumn Clouds" against Beit Hanoun in the north of the Gaza Strip.

**5/11/2006:** Hanging of the overthrown Iraqi president Saddam Hussein.

**11/11/2006:** The Palestinian presidency and government denounce the USA's use of its right to veto against a Security Council Resolution deploring the Israeli authorities' massacre in Beit Hanoun.

**11/12/2006:** The Israeli Prime Minister discloses Israeli's possession of nuclear weapons after publicly implying that the Hebrew state owns the only nuclear arsenal in the Middle East.

**14/12/2006:** A failed attempt to assassinate Haniyyeh after a gunfire attack directed by armed elements against his convoy at the Rafah crossing during his return from an external expedition. The attack resulted in the killing of one of his escorts and the injury of his son and personal advisor.

**15/12/2006:** The UN General Assembly agrees by overriding consensus to a plan to establish a UN Bureau to process the compensation requests for damages incurred by the Israeli authorities' building of the Separation Wall in the West Bank.

**16/12/2006:** President Mahmoud Abbas calls for conducting early presidential and legislative elections in order to end the controversy between the presidency and the government, without issuing a decree or setting a date for the proposed elections. Hamas refuses this suggestion.

**19/12/2006:** The Palestinian High Court decides to consider the resolutions that were issued during the first sessions of the present PLC on 6/3/2006 as unconstitutional and incongruous with the Palestinian Basic Law.

**19/12/2006:** Six Palestinians are killed due to clashes between elements from the security forces affiliated to Fatah and Hamas in the Gaza Strip.

**30/12/2006:** The Israeli author, Uri Dan, accuses his friend the previous Israeli prime-minister, Ariel Sharon of poisoning the Palestinian president Yaser Arafat in his book.

## **Introduction**

This is the ninth annual report on the state of democracy in Palestine. It coincides with ongoing Palestinian uprising against the Israeli occupation. In fact, the Israeli government still determines to pursue a policy of enforcing unilateral agenda involving combination of acts including the unilateral partial withdrawal, the apartheid wall, the closure and the assassinations. The aim of this policy is to force the Palestinians to alter internationally approved resolutions concerning Palestine and reaching unilateral settlement that would legitimize the occupation and perpetrate the colonization of Palestinian areas and exert political, economic and military control forcing the PA to become just a local administration to deal with daily affairs of the population.

The Arab Thought Forum (ATF) was keen to issue previous annual reports concerning the state of democracy at a time when addressing such issues seemed a futile luxury. It looked as if the priority should be focused on fulfilling national liberation and dealing with economic and security matters. In fact the calls for reform were not only a precondition for moving on but true steps have been taken in this respect responding to calls that were there since several years.

While the ATF recognizes the importance of reform and developing democratic practices, it is aware that this is not possible without fulfilling sovereignty. In fact such calls are nothing but an Israeli attempt to extend the occupation. However, the issue of reform remains on the top of Palestinian priorities. It is not merely temporary



tactical measures or submission to external pressures but binding principles that need to be addressed as a matter of Palestinian concern.

The ATF is keen to grab the opportunity to move forward but is apprehensive to attempts to externally impose a leadership. Democratic formation needs to pass through legitimate tools through frameworks determined by the people. Attempts for external intervention are bound to cause a polarization within the Palestinian society that could shift the focus off from the need for reform. This is particularly true in light of the Israeli right-wing government's drive to perpetrate occupation and deny Palestinian rights.

For the international role to be effective there is a need to assist the local community to develop the democratic formation through providing the tools and means that are necessary for such course of action. The ATF is aware of official Israeli intentions and thus defends the Palestinian legitimate leadership without losing sight of problematic areas that need to be addressed. This process is bound to speed up the process of establishing an independent Palestinian democratic state.

Consistently, the ATF stressed that it neither seeks to flatter or condemn but to objectively diagnose strengths and weaknesses with the purpose of rectifying matters. In other words, the ATF is not in a position to take sides other than the ultimate interest of the Palestinian people with a deep understanding for the prevailing interests and sensitivities.

Our target in this report is not to point fingers but to uncover and take note of problem areas with the purpose of treatment. Accumulation of errors could undermine the process of moving on. More than ever, the current conditions require strengthening the inner front and treating ailments as part of the overall nation-building that Palestinians are yearning for.

## **Methodology**

This 8th annual report is a summary of three periodic reports and twelve monthly reports issued by the ATF in the period between January and December 2006. These reports cover the process of democratic formation. Each report differs in its methodology of addressing targeted topics. The monthly reports are a monitor of current events and issues. The quarterly reports are a description and analysis of main events indicating democratic formation and draw specific conclusions concerning the period under study. The general report seeks to analyze all the afore-mentioned aspects; underlining weaknesses and strengths in light of steps forward or backward and following up the daily course of events during the given year. In addition, it analyzes and summarizes issues tackled by the annual report.

The series of reports (whether monthly, quarterly or this annual report), seek to underline elements, supportive or disruptive, of the process of democratic formation. This report is a by-product of the systematic monitoring of events drawn out from the press, information issued by government or non-government sources as well as reports by international institutions operating in Palestine. It also includes public opinion polls conducted by local institutions.

From an analytical point of view, the activities of the Arab Thought Forum and the Citizens' Rights Center play an important role in crystallizing various opinions and analyses. Such activities include a wide array of opinion articulated in the meetings of the ATF, and involve a broad spectrum of participants from the Palestinian political and intellectual leadership.

As for the style of exposing topics, the Arab Thought Forum has chosen to approach the issues addressed in a way that considers both the horizontal and vertical relations between Palestinian society and its institutions. Additionally, the ATF sought as much as possible, to take into consideration views made by participants in discussion sessions about the previous general reports. This formed an integral part of the preparation of the current report.

It should also be noted that the quality and conclusions of the general report are largely affected by information and reports supplied by relevant parties. The more official departments come up with reports; the more possible it would be to assess performance in democratic formation. This will become clearer to the reader as we proceed.

In light of the absence of clear, endorsed, integrated measurement tools to assess democratic formation quantitatively and qualitatively, this report has limitations to the monitoring of democratic formation. To compensate for that, the report contains statistical tables to indicate impact trends.

The importance of producing such graphs and tables has also to do with linking the process of democratic formation to the level and quality of services provided by public institutions. As such, the ATF is not merely interested in tracing traditional, academic and democratic transformation, but also in concrete results and services provided to the public. The motive for that is that democracy is not an end in itself but a means to secure better services to the public.

In this respect, the ATF in its reports does not deal with the issue of democracy in an abstract manner or as a pure academic exercise, but sees a clear connection between theory and practice as well as justice, social welfare and services that are provided. This emanates from the view that all of the above are integrated and interdependent. Otherwise, democracy becomes a futile exercise and void of its content with no qualitative relevance to the public. Not less important, the report also sees the connection between the status of democracy and the general political situation. In the conclusions, one cannot ignore that the country is still struggling against the occupation and is in a process of national liberation. During the successive years of issuing this report, there has been an obvious escalation of oppressive measures by the Israeli occupation. This has become especially a reflection of the return of direct Israeli rule to most Palestinian areas.

The ATF acknowledges the efforts of some specialized institutions that have provided valuable quantitative information included in this report and is indebted to members of the Board of Trustees and concerned friends whose meticulous comments have enriched the report.

## General Outlook

The developments which occurred in 2006 thrust the Palestinian Authority into an unprecedented state of crisis and forced it to face many challenges. As despite the implementation of the legislative elections on time, notwithstanding many doubts that this would be achieved, and the fact that they were free, fair and democratic elections, Hamas' landslide victory within the Legislative Council brought about a surprised uproar that stirred fears. However, things went relatively well and there were no significant reactions. It seemed that most Palestinians had accepted the results dictated by the ballot box. Authority was thus exchanged by peaceful transition of official institutions.

However, the situation changed immediately after the formation of the tenth Palestinian government composed solely of Hamas elements after failure of negotiations for the formation of a coalition, whereby the worst possible event looming on the horizon occurred. The "International Community" led by the USA orchestrated by Israeli directions put their threats into operation by placing the new Palestinian government under siege and issuing a parcel of declarations threatening to cut off all ties and aid to the new Palestinian government unless it declares its recognition of the legality of the Israeli entity and its revocation of "terrorism" and resistance.

It has become widely known that the legislative elections were carried out due to pressures placed by the American government, which had reached a solution to the "complications" of implementing such elections within Jerusalem; and despite all that it employed all its threats against the new Palestinian government halting its aid and retrieving 30 million dollars of aid on 2/3/ 2006, previously granted to the Palestinians. The US government also issued instructions to its embassies and ministries to refuse the reception of any members of the new government, while suspending all forms of communication with it. Moreover, it threatened all banks dealing with the new Palestinian government with punitive measures. Thus the Palestinians were placed under twofold siege, the siege imposed by the racist concrete Wall being built by the Israeli government in contradiction with international legality and resolutions and another siege inflicted by a political and monetary Wall that is incongruous with all principles of democracy.

The US government continued its obdurate stands against the Palestinian government. These stands included lack of recognition or the inclination to deal with any Palestinian government including even only one member from Hamas, unless this government and Hamas make an unequivocal and explicit declaration within their program of their recognition of the Israeli entity and their denunciation of "violence", in addition to their commitment to agreements previously signed with the Israelis, regardless of the Palestinian Prisoners' Document accepted by the various Palestinian factions. The US government also continued to cover up the Israeli occupying forces' war crimes in Gaza and Lebanon and as was expected it aborted a Security Council resolution forcing the Israeli authorities to stop their aggression against the Gaza Strip with yet another utilization of the veto. Nonetheless, the US administration has probably become convinced that the Israeli entity has lost its distinctive quality as a US reprisal arm in the area. The US administration also continued to issue threats

towards Palestinian, Arab and international Banks and monetary exchanges against entering funds to support the PA. In addition, what was worse than was expected was the fact that the US Congress endorsed a law preventing the provision of aid to the PA in an attempt to drive the Palestinians towards reversing their democratic choice.

The media exposed the existence of an American campaign to help Hamas' opponents, including the allocation of 42 million dollars for this purpose. Within this framework the USA took a step that has been difficult to comprehend, it declared its total refusal to allow Qatar to pay the salaries of Palestinian employees working in the Ministry of Education, the Ministry of Higher Education and the Ministry of Health considering this payment as a breach of "International Agreements"!! The US president also endorsed the law passed by the US Congress intending to continue sanctions against Hamas in order to isolate it through preventing any support from reaching any PA institution supervised by the movement. The American administration utilized its right to veto yet again to prevent the passing of another UN Security Council Resolution denouncing the Israeli government due to its perpetration of a new massacre in Beit Hanoun, which resulted in the killing of 21 Palestinian civilians while they were asleep. On the other hand, and despite American failures on a worldwide level and the US involvement in the Iraqi quagmire and in light of the Baker-Hamilton Report which could pose as an exit strategy for the US in the event of its adoption by the American administration, this administration has attempted to take pre-emptive measures by declaring that it intends to revive the peace process in the Middle East, in view of the fact that the Baker-Hamilton Report had made a connection between the Iraqi and Palestinian problems.

Following the footsteps of the Americans, the European Council demanded that Hamas and the new government recognize the state of Israel and denounce terrorist acts as a price for the continued flow of funds. However, there were two European stands that were in distinct contrast with those of the Americans – an attempt by the French President to break the closely imposed siege through initiating a proposal to establish an "International Bank" through which funds could be delivered to the Palestinians accompanied by guarantees, however this initiative was never implemented. The second stand was taken by the Russians who opened up an early dialogue with Hamas and received the Palestinian Minister of Foreign Affairs; however the Palestinian government did not follow up on this initiative or reap any benefits from it. The European stance towards Israel was also distinctive due to the fact that it requested the Israeli government to stop its widely aggressive campaign against Gaza in the framework of its military operation called "Summer Rain". The Europeans saw this campaign as unwarranted and were especially critical of the destruction of infrastructure including bridges, roads, ministries, universities and the bombing of the electricity plant which placed more than half a million Palestinians in utter darkness. The European Union also endorsed a contingency plan for the establishment of a Temporary International Mechanism (TIM) for transfer of aid to the PA but without placing these funds at the disposal of the Palestinian government.<sup>1</sup>

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<sup>1</sup> A noteworthy incident is the Israeli stance against the Spanish prime minister due to his wearing a Palestinian headdress on his shoulders and his accusation of the Israeli entity of using extreme force. The Israeli government threatened to prevent Spain from participating in peace efforts in the region. In addition, the Venezuelan government withdrew its ambassador from Tel Aviv in protest against Israeli policies.

The European Union declared that it had presented aid reaching up to 339 million euros in 2006 in comparison with 250 million euros in 2005, which raises questions concerning the deteriorating economic situation in the country despite the increase in the amount of aid.

As for the financial situation some parties have donated amounts to the Arab League however these funds remained frozen within the League's accounts under the pretext that there were no mechanisms in place for their transfer due to banks' reluctance to be involved in fear of possible consequences.

Despite the fact that the siege against the Palestinian people and their government was not imposed by a resolution by an international institution, but essentially due to an American-Israeli decision, the Arab countries followed suit voluntarily. Furthermore, some Arab regimes pressured the Palestinian government to recognize the Arab Peace Initiative. Another indication of an obvious crisis was the fact that the Arab summit was ignored by the Palestinian man in the street after the absence of 8 leaders, which imposed an air of doubtful dejection upon it.

In addition, deteriorating relations between the Jordanian government and Hamas culminated on 25/4/2006 in a declaration by the former that it discovered a cache of weapons. The Jordanian authorities subsequently arrested Hamas elements who admitted, according to the Jordanians, that they had orders to target Jordanian government centers and attack Jordanian officials. Hamas negated these allegations entirely and relations are still strained and the situation is ambiguous.

As for the situation on the Palestinian arena, since the formation of the tenth government losses continue to be incurred and attempts at breaking the siege and the fence isolating the government have failed. Unfortunately the situation has not stopped at the level of starving the Palestinians and the lack of salaries for PA employees but has also deteriorated to the extent that Palestinian in-fighting has become perceptible. The fighting factions have made the struggle seem as if it is over power and authority. Moreover, it is being practiced through the means of chaos and unruly behavior by the security forces in addition to armed internal fighting and a tug of war between the presidency and the government accompanied by withdrawal of each others' authorities. Thus, the situation has deteriorated abysmally to an extent that the Palestinian social fabric is being threatened as a result of in-fighting due to sharp polarization within Palestinian society between Fatah and the presidency on one side and Hamas and the government on the other. Chaotic trends are on the rise and lack of security has reached unprecedented levels threatening to rip Palestinian social fabric apart at the seams. Attempts to form a national coalition government or a national unity government have failed despite the launching of a national dialogue on the basis of the Prisoners' document which was named the "National Conciliation Document" after being adopted by various parties.

The Palestinian situation deteriorated to a great extent by the end of the year after the failure of attempts to carry out a national dialogue between the two poles – Fateh and Hamas to create a national unity government. It became evident that the power struggle between the two over authority would eventually lead to internal fighting and that the Palestinian political project had reached a point beyond the crossroad and entered into a path that would scatter all achievements and sacrifices blowing them

into the wind: as the authority became disconnected with the government and vice versa and Palestinian citizens were paying the price of chaos and internal conspiracies in an environment deprived of the rule of law.

On their part, the Israeli society and government in turn entered into a sharp crisis in light of three armed operations carried out by Palestinian groups – the operation named “Disappearing Illusion” carried out on June 25<sup>th</sup> 2006, which resulted in the capture of a soldier and the killing of two others while two Palestinians from the group implementing the operation were martyred. The second and more painful blow came with the success of Hizballah in capturing 2 Israeli soldiers and killing another 8, followed by a show of epic steadfastness in the face of a grueling war which lasted for 33 days during which the Israeli settlements and military bases were showered with thousands of missiles. This uprooted the myth of the “invincible Israeli army” on a number of levels – intelligence, ground warfare, tactics etc. which resulted in tarnishing the Israeli army’s long sung praises of its defensive abilities and placed the Israeli government in an unprecedented and extremely awkward situation.

With the war on Lebanon, the situation today is more dangerous, as in comparison with the criticisms that followed the October 1973 war (Yom Kippur war), which were more related to issues that preceded the war, this time there is a greater rift in Israelis’ belief in their authorities’ ability to perform. Thus the given information is of greater importance.<sup>2</sup>

After the Israeli war on Lebanon and the recurring failures of the military, which are still taking their toll in light of the disillusionment, due to the shattering of most conventions of Israeli security principles, the Israeli government and people are still unable to comprehend the nature of recent developments and are still in a state of shock. It is expected that leading elements within the military establishment as well as the political system will be deposed, especially since many politicians are up to their ears in cases of corruption and sexual harassment to an extent that any observer would deduce that it is a scene from the third world due to the apparently exposed security and behavioral issues which are indicative of the fragility of this state.

As for the political situation, winds have been blowing to the Israeli government’s advantage, as it has been preparing a unilateral plan to withdraw from the West Bank while keeping its settlement blocs and annexing the Jordan valley areas as a preamble to declaring the borders of their state since they have taken up the presumption that there is no Palestinian partner to negotiate with. The new “Kadima” party entered the Israeli elections on the 28<sup>th</sup> of March on the basis of “Olmert’s Unilateral Plan” and he won the elections and formed a new Israeli government. Thus the Israelis were gradually able to regain control through intensive campaigns to accuse the new Palestinian government as “terrorist” and to show up the weaknesses of the Palestinian presidency.

Despite the complicated situation and party contention and in addition to Sharon’s absence, the Israeli government appeared as if it were in a strong position especially in light of their ability to guarantee the support of the Americans to place a siege on

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<sup>2</sup> Professor Efraim Ya’ir, head of the “Evans program for Conflict Resolution” at Tel Aviv University, the seventh Hertzlia Conference on “Israeli National Security and the Immunity Balance” which was organized by “The strategy and Policy Institute” and “The Lauder School for Governance, Diplomacy and Strategy” January 2007.

the Palestinian people and government and to stop monetary transfers due to the Palestinians. In addition, the flaunting and provocative attack on Jericho and the “pirating” operation on 14/2 /2006 resulted in the kidnapping of the Secretary General of the Popular Front for the Liberation of Palestine and his comrades. The Israeli government also continued implementation of its settlement plan alongside the continuous war crimes, illegal assassinations and arrest campaigns and the unrelenting building of the Apartheid Wall.

The Israeli government, which is acting like a bunch of criminals and a summary lynching court, continues to perpetrate war crimes. Likewise, many members of the Knesset have made purely racist declarations calling for the complete annihilation of Gaza under the pretext that the primitive Palestinian made missiles launched from Gaza were posing a “genuine nightmare”, what is more Lieberman’s entering the government raised the dose of extremism. All these developments placed Olmert, the Israeli prime minister, in an unenviable position after he was unable to move forward with his unilateral project. However, the Israelis and Palestinians were able to reach at a fragile period of calmness on 26/11/2006. This did not last for long due to the continued terrorist operations organized by the Israeli state against the Palestinians after Israel refused that the “Hudna” should include the West Bank, while restraining it only to the Gaza Strip.

Israel continued its policies of ethnic cleansing against the Palestinians through demolishing houses in Jerusalem, dispersing families, preventing Palestinians with foreign passports from remaining in the country and placing fines on dignitaries from Jerusalem who had nominated themselves for the recent Palestinian elections.

The Israeli government continues to perpetrate all types of war crimes that could possibly be imagined to the extent that targeting civilians has become the norm and not the exception. This has resulted in the annihilation of whole families in front of T.V. cameras for the whole world to see. Israel continues to boast, gang fashion, about these killings and the prime minister Ehud Olmert has emphasized that “liquidation of terrorists” will continue even though the price would be loss of innocent Palestinian lives. In addition, he has launched vicious campaigns against the Palestinian government aiming at its complete destruction. One of these campaigns was the arrest of almost one third of the members of the cabinet and 40 Palestinian Legislative Council members in an evident act of piracy. Another significant fact is that Olmert’s convergence plan has somehow been written off the Israeli agenda.

Finally, however, the UN has come to life with the declaration by its Secretary General on the establishment of a Damages Register for the Palestinians who incurred losses due to the Apartheid Wall in an attempt to put the ICJ position into action. In compliance with this decision, the General Assembly has approved plans for the establishment of an office for this purpose in order to begin registering the damages and processing compensation applications. Nonetheless, compensation of the Palestinians for damages while the Wall remains in place could pose as a circuitous path around the Criminal Court decision and dissipate Palestinians’ rights due to acquiescence to the status quo and its exchange for a meager handful of dollars, that is, if the compensation program is carried through.

Thus the year's "harvest" is that the Palestinians are completely immersed in exchanged accusations between the two poles, while there are evident indications of in-fighting on the horizon and each party is holding the other responsible. The Palestinian question, it seems is being discussed on every possible arena apart from the Palestinian Legislative Council itself which did not hold even one session during the last three months of this year. One can only say that 2006 was a year of chaos, with an absence of the Rule of Law; it has been a year of brutal torture and humiliation for the Palestinian prisoners in Israeli jails and one in which our guns have lost their guidance. In addition, there has been a lack of ability to stop internal fighting and the Hamas movement did not disappear neither has the government it formed collapsed.

### **"Summer Rain" and "Autumn Clouds" – Excerpts from the Israeli Press**

During the withdrawal from Gaza, an Israeli leader courageously stood up and said the following words: "We have no strength for war any more, we are tired of playing the role of a hero and are dissatisfied with victory against our enemies. We aspire to build a very different relationship with them, one of friendship, partnership and neighborliness". He then concluded with the following emotional remarks - "This is not a dream, if we behave with wisdom and courage and if we are ready to take risks and if we convince our Palestinian partners to take the same path we are convinced that we can together build relations based on trust and mutual understanding". The speaker was Ehud Olmert, who was then the acting Prime Minister.

A year later, but this time in Jerusalem, Olmert addressed a Jewish audience saying: "We consider the Palestinian Authority along with Mahmoud Abbas as president, a party responsible for "terrorist" acts and anyone representing this Authority is also partly responsible, thus we will not grant immunity to any of them." During a session of the political and Security Council Olmert reiterated: "We are totally fed up with the Palestinians and our reactions have been constrained so far, however things will change".

Suddenly dissatisfaction with wars has evaporated and wisdom has been replaced with heroism whilst a language of threats has replaced that of partnership. Is it possible that a seasoned politician could change positions so quickly in concurrence with the tribulations of gang launching missiles? And could it occur to anyone that a leader would retreat from his dream due to a military error resulting in the death of two soldiers and the capture of a third: Have we not learnt yet that force can never pose as a solution to the problem in our relationship with our neighbors? <sup>3</sup> . The "Summer Rains" on Gaza campaign has not only been useless but is above all, blatantly illegal. It is not illegitimate to cut off the electrical power supply for 750,000 civilians, nor is it legal to destroy bridges and infra-structure, nor to request 20,000 people to leave their homes quickly and turn their city into a ghost city. Nor is it legal to kidnap half the members of the Palestinians' cabinet and a quarter of their parliament. A state that takes such steps cannot differentiate between itself and a

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<sup>3</sup> June 29, 2006, Akiva Eldar, Haaretz.



terrorist faction. The more such steps are intensified and transformed into major and imprudent operations, the greater the risk for the state's loss of the ethical foundations upon which it is built and the consolidation of the impression that the Israeli government has lost its judgment.

The Israeli soldiers' entry into Gaza was not an ordinary or accidental step, but was part of a previously prepared greater plan, but it was executed at a time, earlier than was previously allocated, on the backdrop of the soldiers' capture. The decision to bomb the centers and institutions was taken by the Minister of Defense. During the evening of the Israeli air raids, strikes were off the target, which was "Salah al-Din Street" in Gaza and eight civilians were killed. A few days later the Israeli raids also hit Palestinian civilians and the Israeli army started to systematically destroy parts of the infra-structure in the city – bridges, electricity transformers, etc., in order to place the Hamas government in a weak position and portray it as unable to cope or do anything in favor of the Palestinians.<sup>4</sup>

The continuous Israeli military operations in the Gaza Strip were part of a series of bloody operations implemented by the Israeli army in the Gaza Strip and that were dispassionately and degradingly called "Autumn Clouds". And since the beginning of the operation last July thousands of Palestinians have been killed, most of them unarmed civilians who were not involved in any way in military operations against the Hebrew State. What is noteworthy is the fact that the intensive attack against the Gaza Strip and the great number of innocent victims did not attract the attention of the international media, and it seemed as if Western media was calling upon world opinion to become accustomed with these Israeli operations, considering them ordinary occurrences that do not deserve even reaching the world. It also seems as if the Palestinians' destiny does not seem to interest anyone on the international arena any more, despite the violence perpetrated against them by a vicious military machine that does not differentiate between child and adult. Even the great powers do not claim to seek any resolution of the conflict or the achievement of peace according to UN and international legitimacy resolutions.<sup>5</sup>

For those who do not know Avigdor Liebermann, who recently joined the Israeli government, according to the distinguished Israeli historian, Zeev Stohrnhill the professor at the Hebrew University, he is "the most dangerous Israeli politician yet in Israeli history"; as he threatened, in 2001 to shell Beit Jala, Tehran and Cairo, and even the Aswan dam if the Palestinians implement any attacks against the Hebrew State. In 2003 he was quoted concerning thousands of Palestinian prisoners in the Israeli jails, as saying: "It would be best to drown these prisoners in the Dead Sea because it is the lowest point on earth". What is more, Liebermann who is nicknamed "The Rasputin Caesar" because of his Slav origin, called upon the Israeli army to implement the same measures the Russian army utilizes in Chechnya.<sup>6</sup>

Knesset member Zahava Gal, head of the parliamentary bloc for the leftist Meretz Party (5 out of 120 members), stated that 2006 has seen the completion of the 39<sup>th</sup> year since the six day war, resulting in "victory" and occupation, which has exposed Israel's existence and future to danger for four decades. She called upon the

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<sup>4</sup> 3<sup>rd</sup> July, 2006, Ha'aretz, Gideon Levi.

<sup>5</sup> Alex Fishmann, Yediot, 30<sup>th</sup> Sept. 2006

<sup>6</sup> al-Ayyam, 23<sup>rd</sup> Nov. 2006, Pascal Yuwenfas

<sup>7</sup> Yael Gvirtz, al-Ayyam, 17/5/2006.

government to agree to the implementation of an “international investigation” to discover the cause of the explosion which occurred on the 9<sup>th</sup> of June causing the massacre of eight Palestinian civilians on Gaza beach. Palestinians had brought to light that this attack had been perpetrated by the Israelis, despite declarations that the Israeli army was innocent. The Israeli KM declared: “I am not convinced by the Israeli report, since if it were true there would not be so many contradictions between the army’s report and information collected by non-governmental organizations like Human Rights Watch, which emphasized the fact that the victims were hit by Israeli missiles.” She added “If the Israeli authorities were not responsible for this tragedy then we would have nothing to hide or be afraid of concerning the conclusions of any international investigation.”<sup>7</sup>

In the face of all this information, however, the Israeli Defense Minister, ‘Amir Peretz, during a meeting with the soldiers who had implemented this attack on Gaza declared: “Israeli soldiers and their officers are managing a war, while maintaining ethical standards like no other army in the world”?!

## **1. Institutions of the Palestinian National Authority**

### **1.1 The Executive Authority**

#### **1.1.1 The Presidency**

The thunderous victory achieved by Hamas superceded all expectations during the legislative elections which took place on 25/1/2006. The presidency had to absorb the shock of this political earthquake and manage the crisis which had hit the Palestinian political system. The first action taken by President Mahmoud Abbas on 27/1/2006 was a decision taken by the Secretarial Bureau of the Revolutionary Council to issue implement severance measures against all those who had nominated themselves during the legislative elections in violation of the decision by the same council and against Party decisions. Six Fateh party members were cut from the Movement even though they were members of the Revolutionary Council. The President also had to become involved in a process of comprehensive rehabilitation of both the Fateh Movement on the one hand and strengthening of the Presidency as an institution on the other in preparation for the elections. All this occurred to an accompaniment of threats by the West to implement their aid embargo against the Palestinians in light of the results of the Palestinian elections.

The presidency was in an extremely awkward and sensitive position, it was stuck between the stone of the Hamas victory and the elections' upshot on the one hand and the hard place of the international community's position on the other hand. However, Hamas condoned President Mahmoud Abbas' emphasis upon the necessity for Hamas to join the elections and his efforts to convince the American administration in addition to his pressuring the Israeli government which tried to prevent the elections from taking place within Jerusalem. In all events, the showdown between the presidency and Hamas was inevitable due to their conflicting political and social agendas the fact that the presidency was appointed as the party to receive external aid and manage it, which made the government a mere façade.

The first session of the new Legislative Council was held on the 18<sup>th</sup> of February 2006 whereby the president emphasized in front of the Legislative Council that he insisted on the track of negotiation with the Israeli government calling at the same time for the development of tools for "peaceful resistance" and requesting Hamas, since it was the majority in parliament, to form the new government. Thus, in effect, the president handed Ismael Haniyyeh his official letter of assignment as prime minister on 21/2/2006 requesting him to form the new government

The sultry atmosphere led to practical contradictions on the ground between the two parties, despite the President's approval on 25/3/2006 and his presentation of the configuration of the new government to the Legislative Council notwithstanding attempts to obstruct this action by presenting the configuration to the PLO Executive Committee which was considered illegal. Later, the president indicated within a letter addressed to the new Prime Minister the necessity for rectifying the government's agenda reminding the Prime Minister and warning him that he would execute his powers and legal responsibilities and that he would use the powers placed in his hands by the people and his constitutional rights to defend Palestinian higher national interests.

Exchanged statements paved the way for an increase in the tension, since a relationship of controversy and contention and a battle for authorities or their retraction had started between the presidency and the government since April, that is, a few days after the formation of the new government. This could be discerned from the President's decision on 5/4 to issue a decree calling for the submission of the Borders and Terminals Administration directly to the Presidency and not to the Ministry of Interior. And after rumors concerning the government's insistence to form an "Executive Security Force" through the Ministry of Interior including elements from the "Izeldin al-Qassam " forces , the president issued a decree on 21/4 revoking the Minister of Interior's decision to form this new security force. Another clash occurred over authorities when the president appointed an internal security director, whereas the prime minister considered internal security to be the prerogative of the Minister of Interior and interpreted the move as removal of part of the government's authorities. This represented a clear picture of the nature of coming events between the two parties, as while each party carries out whatever it wants the other party starts to oppose and accuse the other as having taken an illegal procedure.

On the level of the financial crisis resulting due to the international siege and isolation the presidency received some international aid, apart from requesting the international community to interfere and guarantee to administer the expenditure of funds. This probably made the presidency gain ground at the expense of the government as is evident from the government's criticism of the European plan to override and marginalize the government in addition to overruling its authorities as a prelude to deposing it. The issue of money transfers also created a new crisis between the presidency and the government. The first occasion on which the crisis flared up was when the Hamas spokesperson entered a sum of money through the Rafah terminal into Gaza, however, the presidential security forces refused to let him bring the sum in which was a cause of aggravation to the Izzeldin al-Qassam forces who set out to save their spokesperson and the money he was carrying. The president then issued instructions to Fateh to open an investigation in order to find out the sources of the funds and the amount in addition to the mechanism of expenditure which recurred several times with other Hamas officials in high ministerial and governmental positions, which meant the outbreak of crises at each attempt. It seems contradictory as on the one hand it was necessary to go in a roundabout way around the siege to enter the money and on the other hand it was necessary to guarantee transparency and honesty while distributing the funds in order to keep things in check, which was not possible due to the circumstances of the occupation.

However, the issue which caused the greatest amount of tension and anxiety was the security problem. The President issued his instructions to the security forces to disperse in all locations in Gaza in order to keep the peace and prevent any individual or party to take over this responsibility. This was evidently due to the formation of the Hamas-run Executive Force established by the Ministry of Interior. The government's reaction to the President's move was to insist upon its positions declaring that it would not retract from circulating its executive force. As a result of this tension and obdurate positions there were actual clashes between the security forces affiliated to the presidency and the executive force in which civilians and elements from both forces fell victim. What is more, the situation almost blew up due to the fact that the President's decision to revoke a decision issued by the Minister of Interior placing all security forces on high alert and declaring a state of emergency in order to face the

Israeli aggression in July. In addition, the President requested the forces to stop launching missiles from the Gaza Strip towards the Israeli settlements nearby.

The scope of contention between the Presidency and the government continued to expand and deepen. Voices were raised calling for the necessity to carry out a comprehensive national dialogue and the formation of a national unity government in order to overcome the siege. The Palestinian prisoners' intervention was an excellent and meaningful development – they were able to draw up a document including 18 items.<sup>8</sup> The document suggested the formation of a national unity government as a way out of the crisis. President 'Abbas received the document on 11/May, but the national dialogue sessions between the factions outside Israeli prisons had been delayed several times in order to reach a draft that could pull them out of the dilemma. Finally, however, the national unity dialogue was held and concluded by the signature of participants on a statement on 26/5/2006, which emphasized the fact that Palestinians should not spill each others' blood. In addition, a Palestinian Code of Honour was placed binding the factions to solve their internal contention peacefully and without in-fighting, and the Prisoners' Document was adopted and became known as the "National Reconciliation Document".

However, just as the national dialogue started indications of its failure appeared as there were requests that Hamas dissolve the government so that a government of technocrats and experts, or a national unity government or a national coalition government would take its place. It seemed as if the aim of the dialogue was not to reach an agreement but to embarrass the Hamas government and oust it. It also seems as though the dialogue was used as a tool by both poles within the heated political struggle over authority.

The Presidency was faced with numerous and entangled issues whilst seeking to organize itself internally and despite the explosion of the security situation between the Israelis and the Palestinians due to the "Disappearing Illusion" operation and the capture of the Israeli soldier, the Israeli occupying authorities carried out a wide campaign of arrests apprehending approximately 75 citizens amongst whom were 8 Palestinian ministers, 24 parliamentarians, lawyers and mayors all from Hamas on 29<sup>th</sup> June in a step attempting at destroying the Palestinian government. People all over the country were astounded by these measures which were taken by the Israeli authorities for the first time on such a large scale since the establishment of the Palestinian Authority in 1994.

In light of the new developments, president 'Abbas threatened to carry out a national referendum concerning the Prisoners' Document and set the date for it on the 26<sup>th</sup> of July 2006, while keeping the door open for its suspension in case there was progress concerning the formation of a national unity government. It seems that the presidency and Fateh used the Prisoners' Document as a toll to place pressure on Hamas. Thus,

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<sup>8</sup> The document was signed in the name of the Fateh Movement by its representative PLC member Marwan Barghouthi, and by Hamas by its representative sheikh Abdul Khaleq al-Natsheh member of the Higher Leading Body of the Movement and by the Islamic Jihad movement represented by sheikh Bassam al-Sa'adi in addition to the Popular Front for the Liberation of Palestine and the Popular Democratic Front for the Liberation of Palestine represented by Abdul Rahim Mallouh and Mustafa Badarneh. The Islamic Jihad Movement, however, had reservations concerning the item related to negotiations.

the response to the presidential decree including the call for a referendum received rejection from 5 factions; they even withdrew their support and their signatures from the Prisoners' Document itself. Both the Palestinian government and the Hamas movement refused the Referendum and considered it illegal and a toll for its deposition and they accused the presidency of creating a doppelganger government. The government had placed its reservations and conditions concerning the formation of a national unity government during the dialogue sessions, some of these conditions being the release of ministers and members of parliament imprisoned in Israeli jails, lifting the siege on the Palestinian people and government in addition to having the prime minister from Hamas which was the majority bloc in parliament. The president finally froze the decree concerning the referendum on 12/7 since an agreement was almost reached at, and in effect this is what took place on 16/8 when serious deliberations were held in which President 'Abbas took part in order to form a national unity government on the basis of the Prisoners' Document.

However, no sooner had one hole been patched than another ensued. President 'Abbas issued an exacerbating decision to appoint Farouq al-Qaddoumi as Palestinian Minister of Foreign Affairs as he represented Palestine abroad and in international fora in a step to keep the government in check and especially the Ministry of Foreign Affairs. Another step which aggravated the situation was the fact that the president received a delegation of employees who were on strike and he emphasized the legality of their strike while indicating the government's opposition to the strike and its portrayal as illegal and even as a plot to overthrow the government.

Even whilst the Palestinians were engrossed in their internal affairs due to polarization and militarization, the presidency tried to attract the attention of the international community and the Security Council to the benefit of the victims who were falling daily at the hands of the criminal Israeli war machine. Calls were renewed from the presidency and the government to revive the truce and demand a ceasefire. However, since attempts to allow the Palestinians stuck at the Rafah Crossing failed armed elements carried out an operation blasting down the Wall next to the Crossing to make a hole through which people could return to the Gaza Strip.

President 'Abbas attempted to declare his readiness to negotiate with the Israeli Prime Minister in any form whether secretly or openly and on 22/6 they met in Petra accompanied by the King of Jordan and international dignitaries; and this was the first meeting between the two since Olmert was elected. Despite the fact that this resulted in a wide criticism campaign against President 'Abbas due to Israeli killings, war crimes and aggressions against the Palestinians, the meeting failed to produce anything substantial and it seemed that Olmert only wanted to appear as if he was talking to 'Abbas and did not want to negotiate with him which was proved by his orders to the Israeli army to intensify

Their aggression and carry out increased assassinations against the Palestinians.

The President decided, in mid-September, to freeze the formation of the national unity government explaining that the reason behind this step was the increase of what he considered to be negative and contradictory statements by a number of Hamas movement leaders. The President wanted to attend the UN General Assembly meetings on 17/9 and then a meeting with the US President three days later in order to convey a political proposition based on the Palestinian agreement (between the Fateh

and Hamas movements) to form a national unity government and to promote its political program to the Americans and get their approval. However, the Palestinian president came back from Washington without achieving anything after the negotiations for forming a national unit government with Hamas had returned to square one.

The president's tone became more and more severe as the atmosphere became more intense on the ground and there were limited outbursts of clashes between the two poles. On 4/10 the president agreed with the US Secretary of State that it was necessary to form a Palestinian government that would respect the demands of the international community and the signed agreements and the President reiterated that the US presidency should offer a quick solution or exit out of the current impasse as the situation in Palestine was unbearable and could not be ignored any longer. He added that people could not be left without salaries any longer after nine months since the elections and seven months since the formation of the government. New life was breathed into the national dialogue in a last attempt to form a national unity government in mid November through talks held between the presidency and the government. It seemed as if things were on their way towards a solution as president 'Abbas and prime-minister Haniyyah were in deep consultation after deliberations concerning the new prime minister. However, things quickly returned to square one and both sides started exchanging accusations.

On 29/11 President 'Abbas called upon the international community and the UN to hold an international conference to end the Arab-Israeli conflict on all tracks in preparation for a visit by the US Secretary of State and he declared during a meeting with her that the deliberations aiming at the formation of a national unity government had culminated in a standoff. This statement was congruous with the lack of trust and the animosity between the two poles which was reflected in a number of exchanged campaigns and press conferences with each side accusing the other of carrying the responsibility for lack of progress. This lay down the basis for each party's eventual resort to exchange of fire, killings, assassinations and kidnappings.

On the backdrop of the abhorrent crime resulting in the death of three brothers in addition to a fourth child and the injury of 14 others in Gaza, the President issued instructions to his security forces to spread out to impose security, which led to clashes with the "Executive Force" and contributed towards a dangerous deterioration of the situation on the internal front. In addition, events within mid-December became even worse, and it became too late to consider the option of the formation of a national unity government, especially since the prime-minister's convoy was exposed on 14/12 to an intense attack by fire-arms at the Rafah crossing resulting in the death of his personal escort and the injury of others in his entourage. Hamas accused high ranking Fateh officials (from what they called the 'rebellious' elements within Fateh) of planning this attack and claimed that it was a planned ambush and an attempt at the prime minister's assassination. The government decided to reject the call for ministers to attend the President's speech in protest against this attempted assassination. Clashes then erupted and they were described as the most violent between both poles. They resulted in the killing of 6 Palestinians in Gaza town and after intensive efforts to contain the crisis and prevent its exacerbation a ceasefire agreement was reached at between the two sides and the President issued orders on 19/12 to withdraw all security forces from the streets and they were told to return to their bases whilst the

police forces took their place in the streets and took over the responsibility of keeping the peace.

On 16/12 President 'Abbas presented a speech in which the most important statement was concerning the President's decision to hold early national elections for both the presidency and the Palestinian National Council. The Prime Minister refused the President's call for national elections, however, and considered it unconstitutional whilst requesting the President not to expedite the election process due to the fact that not even one year had passed since the formation of the current government. Observers generally considered the President's speech as a warning and a method of applying political pressure or even as a last resort to defuse the crisis without necessarily holding the elections in the case of Hamas' retreat from its stands and its implementation of previous agreements with the presidency.

On 25/11 a cease-fire agreement was declared between the Israelis and Palestinians starting from 26/11 after President 'Abbas had agreed with Prime-Minister Haniyyah and all other factions to calming down relations within the Gaza Strip in addition to a cease-fire of Palestinian missiles aimed at Israeli settlements in return for the Israeli authorities' withdrawal of its forces from the Gaza Strip. President 'Abbas held a meeting with the Israeli Prime-Minister on 23/12 in which both sides agreed to form a number of committees to implement issues which had been agreed upon and amongst which were the expansion of the calming down of relations to include the West Bank and the formation of bilateral committees in order to discuss pending issues. The next day, the Israeli government released 100 million dollars of the Palestinian tax revenues and transferred them to President 'Abbas' offices in addition to removing some barriers and checkpoints and declared procedures facilitating movement for Palestinians on checkpoints, however it eventually became evident that there were no facilitation procedures in effect on the ground.

During this period also, the President issued decrees and decisions including appointments of high ranking officials including the endorsement of the PLC Law after it was endorsed by the Legislative Council after the third reading. He also emphasized the fact that the file on the death of the late President 'Arafat should be kept open until investigators could reach the truth. Uri Dan, Sharon's confidante, had published a book in which he mentioned that Sharon had assassinated President 'Arafat by poisoning him. Egypt played a noteworthy "security" role, as it intensified its efforts and pressure on the parties and especially Hamas to recognize the state of Israel in order to close a deal for the release of the Israeli captive.

One of other issues which the President protested against was the publication of offensive cartoons by a Danish newspaper against the prophet Mohammad and Islam and he called for guaranteeing the security of all Europeans in the Palestinian areas as there were widespread protests against these cartoons. Within the same time period, the President stopped the implementation of a previous decision to endorse freezing the salaries of 65 employees at the radio and television corporation. However, the President was widely criticized when he declared that a Palestinian bombing operation which took place on 17/4 was despicable and in direct contradiction with higher Palestinian interests, since the operation resulted in the killing of 9 Israelis and the injury of 70 others in Tel Aviv. The operation was adopted by the Islamic Jihad movement in reaction to the Israeli massacres and after the bloody month of March



within which 28 Palestinian martyrs and 195 injured had fallen due to the Israeli occupation army's crimes.

The President issued a series of decrees including one calling for the dispense of a monthly amount of 1500 Shekels to the pensioners fund for those who had served in the offices of the PLO or one of its factions. He also issued a decree concerning promotions and appointments within the judicial system and decisions to transfer a number of governors. On the other hand, the President's office refused a number of appointments which the secretary of the ministerial council had put forward to the President so that he would issue decrees concerning them. However, it was expected that this would happen within the process of extreme polarization and the struggle between the presidency and the government.

President 'Abbas declared, on the second anniversary of the death of President 'Arafat, the establishment of a charitable institution called "Martyr Yaser 'Arafat Charitable Foundation" in commemoration of the late President. This institution will be responsible for gathering his heritage in addition to carrying out charitable work in the fields of construction, education and culture. The President also emphasized on this occasion that the file on the causes of the illness and martyrdom of this emblematic President should be left open until the details of his illness are exposed.

#### **Strengths:**

1. The President indicated a high ability to continue in his quest on both the internal and external levels to carry out the legislative elections and it is doubtful whether these elections will take place without a stern position by the President concerning this issue.
2. The President has stood firm concerning his positions and his elections program despite the Hamas victory and has proven his ability to lead even within this framework.
3. The Presidency has been able to make a positive contribution and to reduce the suffering of the Palestinians as a result of the siege which was imposed on it by certain international forces by bearing the responsibility of receiving funds allocated to the Palestinian public despite the fact that this is not one of its original tasks.
4. The President's adoption of the Prisoners' Document is considered a violation which eventually led to laying the ground for national dialogue.

#### **Weaknesses:**

1. The President did not contribute with enough perseverance to changing the realities of the election process within Jerusalem and it took place barely along

the lines of the 1996 elections and according to Israeli conditions.

- 2.** One can only place part of the blame on the presidency for its allowing the security situation to deteriorate; and in this sphere the presidency's leadership can only be doubted.
- 3.** It was expected that the President would take a firm and solid stand concerning two crucial issues, however he did not do so: The Israeli authorities' capture of Palestinian ministers and members of Parliament and the second issue was the Israeli kidnapping of the Palestinian prisoners in Jericho prison. Weak presidential stands on these issues contributed to the degradation of the Presidency's respectability and authority and to weakening the Palestinians' situation in general.
- 4.** The President did not seem as if he represented all the Palestinians on some occasions, especially when dealing with internal issues and within his public speeches and because he was accompanied by people who of no concern whilst delivering his speeches.
- 5.** It was not known whether the President's call for a public referendum and later for general elections was a ploy or a political tactic or whether it constituted a breach of constitutional regulations that should have not been committed.

### 1.1.2 The Government

The government was considered an interim government that had the task of offering services until the new government was in place, and the Prime Minister declared during the fifty sixth Cabinet Meeting held on the 27<sup>th</sup> of March that the ninth government's term had ended. He mentioned that the US had informed the Palestinian Authority and the Israeli Government that the US administration wanted to carry out the Palestinian elections on time and without any delay. Sources indicated that the coordinator had informed both parties that the US President insisted upon the accomplishment of democratic elections all over the Middle East and that the Palestinian Territories were no different according to the American point of view from Afghanistan, Egypt or Iraq.<sup>9</sup>

Eleven electoral lists participated in these elections and they were allowed to spend 11 million dollars during their electoral campaigns according to the law. However, it is estimated that they spent approximately 32 million in effect despite the fact that the elections law had limited the highest level of spending for each candidate to 60,000 US dollars and for each list to one million dollars.

The political lists which were nominated for the elections included:

- Al-Badil List, which was allocated the electoral number “one” and included a coalition between the Democratic Front for the Liberation of Palestine, the Palestinian People’s Party, FIDA and some independent candidates. The Head of the Badil List was Qais Abdel Karim Abu Leila. The List includes 40 candidates amongst which 8 were women.
- Independent Palestine List “Mustafa Barghouthi and Independents” electoral number “two”.
- Martyr Abu Ali Mustafa List, electoral number “three”, their logo is the PFLP slogan and the list is the PFLP list including 50 candidates (18 from the Gaza Strip and 32 from the West Bank) including 11 women. The Head of the List is the General Secretary of the Popular Front for the Liberation of Palestine – Ahmad Sa’adat.
- Martyr Abu ‘Abbas List, electoral number “four”, it is a list representing the Palestinian Liberation Front and nominated 11 personalities amongst whom two were women . The Secretary General of the Front, Omar Shibli (Abu Ahmad Halab), headed the list and his deputy Dr. Wasel Abu Yousef was the second name on the list.
- Freedom and Social Justice List, electoral number “five” and electoral symbol (n) was the list representing the Palestinian Popular Struggle Front and others. It nominated 13 personalities amongst which three were women. Dr. Ahmad Majdalani, member of the Polit Bureau, headed the list.
- Change and Reform List, electoral number “six” and electoral symbol – green crescent – is a list representing the Islamic Resistance Movement Hamas. They nominated 59 candidates (27 from the Gaza Strip and 32 from the West Bank) amongst which 13 were women. Ismael Haniyyah, member of the political leadership headed the list.

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<sup>9</sup> Al-Quds Newspaper, 25/12/2005.

- The National Coalition for Justice and Democracy List , electoral number “seven”, symbol “Wa’ad”, is a list representing a group of veteran members of the struggle, headed by Ghazi Abu Jiyab . It nominated 12 personalities the most distinguished of whom is Dr. Iyad Sarraj and the journalist Majida Batsh.
- Third Way List, electoral number “eight” headed by the previous Finance Minister, Salam Fayyad nominated 28 personalities amongst which there were 6 women, the most prominent of whom was Dr. Hanan ‘Ashrawi.
- Freedom and Independence List, electoral number “nine”, symbol “S”. This list represents the Arab Palestinian Front and it nominated 10 personalities (8 from the West Bank, 2 from the Gaza Strip amongst whom, 2 are women). The Head of this list is Salim Bardini the previous Director of the Palestinian Police Force.
- Palestinian Justice List “ten” , symbol – the Scales of Justice – which is a list representing the Palestinian Justice Party which was established by Osama Tawfiq Salim Muhammad and he is the sixth candidate within a list of eight candidates all from the West Bank. The list includes 2 women.
- Fateh Movement List, electoral number 11 and electoral symbol the Hurricane, the list represents the Fateh Movement, the largest faction within the Palestinian Liberation Organization. It nominated 49 personalities headed by Marwan Barghouthi after overcoming difficulties which obstructed the process of combining the Fateh and Mustaqbal lists into one.

These elections were better than the previous ones which were held in 1996 as they produced a new condition of pluralism within the Palestinian arena and created effective political participation between most of the Palestinian factions. The Palestinian security forces did not remain far from the electoral arena whereby approximately 13000 of its elements were deployed within the election centers. No major violations were registered except those that were mentioned by the Head of the Central Elections Committee. On the whole, the international observer delegations praised the Palestinians’ performance and found that the elections were fair and transparent and superior to those held in neighboring countries despite the difficult conditions and the infringement that the Israeli occupation attempted to impose on the Palestinians during the day of the elections. Within the same framework the Head of the Central Elections Committee noted that the primary reports of the international observers during the early hours of balloting indicated that the regulations utilized were most efficient and that the information that was provided by the electoral registration lists was extremely accurate and that the registered number of individuals who had the right to vote reached 350,000.

As soon as he received a letter of appointment from the President, Ismael Haniyyah carried out negotiations with the national and Islamic factions in order to deliberate the possibilities for the formation of a national unity government. The period of negotiation and deliberations continued between the factions for a period close to 40 days and there were wide criticisms of the parliamentary blocs and the Palestinian political parties concerning declarations made by responsible people from Hamas stating that there were pressures laid down by the Americans upon the factions preventing them from participating in a government headed by Hamas.

In general it seemed as if the whole world was participating in the formation of the tenth government. At the end, the prime minister presented the formation on the 27<sup>th</sup>

of March to the Legislative Council which included 24 ministers 14 of whom were from the West Bank and the rest from the Gaza Strip. As for the members of the new government they are as follows:-

1. Ismail Haniyyah – Prime Minister and Acting Minister of Youth and Sports
2. Mahmoud al-Zahhar – Foreign Minister.
3. Sa’eed Siyam – Minister of Interior and Civil Affairs.
4. Omar Abdel Razeq – Ministry of Finance.
5. Basem Nai’eem – Ministry of Health.
6. ‘Ala’ al-Din al-‘Araj.
7. Fakhri Turkman – Ministry of Social Affairs.
8. Naser ‘Abdel Jawad – Ministry of Prisoners and Released Prisoners’ Affairs.
9. Naser el-Din al-Sha’er – Ministry of Education and Higher Education and Deputy Prime Minister.
10. Yousef Rizqa – Ministry of Information.
11. Maryam Saleh – Ministry of Women’s Affairs.
12. Ahmad Khalidi – Ministry of Justice.
13. Jamal Naji al-Khudari – Ministry of Communications, Technology and Information.
14. ‘Abdel Rahman Zeydan – Ministry of Transport and Communication.
15. Tony Abu ‘Eita – Ministry of Tourism.
16. ‘Atallah Abu Subuh – Ministry of Culture.
17. Ziad Thatha – Ministry of Public Works and Housing.
18. Nayef al-Rujoub – Ministry of Waqf.
19. Muhammad Ramadan al-Agha – Ministry of Agriculture.
20. Samir Abu ‘Aisheh – Ministry of Planning.
21. Khaled Abu ‘Arafah – Ministry of Jerusalem Affairs.
22. ‘Isa al-Ja’bari – Ministry of Local Governance.
23. Muhammad ‘Awad – Director General of the Cabinet.
24. ‘Atef Udwan – Minister of State.

**Table 1: Palestinian Population for the Year 2006<sup>10</sup>** (Estimated in million)

Region	Number	Percentage
Palestinian Territories (West Bank, East Jerusalem and Gaza)	3.95 million	39.2
Israélien region	1,1 million	11.2
Jordan	2,8 million	27.7
Other Arab Countries	1,6 million	16.2
Other Foreign Countries	573 thousand	5.7
<b>Total</b>	<b>10,1</b>	<b>100</b>

The Prime Minister presented the political program of the government to the legislative council and emphasized the fact that his government would consider the agreements signed by the PLO and the PA with a high level of national responsibility and in a manner contributing to the interests of the Palestinian people. As was

<sup>10</sup> Numbers are based on the Palestinian Central Authority Concerning the West Bank and Jerusalem.

expected, the council granted its confidence to the new government and its political statement with a majority vote reaching 71 to 36 opposition votes and the abstention of only two members from voting. Fateh and the Third Way Party moved for a vote of no confidence, whereas al-Badil and Independent Palestine abstained and the Abu 'Ali Mustafa List granted its confidence. The cabinet statement was described as full of promises and lacking in political depth. After that a session was held on 29/3 in so that the government could be sworn in and could thus start its performance despite the atmosphere which was lacking political stability, due to the looming siege and interruption of aid> The first session of the tenth government was held on 5/4 whereby the new prime minister gave the green light for the members of his government to contact the Israelis to deal with the daily issues affecting Palestinians' livelihood.

Another decision was taken within the same session, and which constituted a bone of contention with the previous government and the Fateh Movement especially when the cabinet suspended the appointments and promotions issued since 20/11/2005 and until 30/3/2006 by the previous government and pushed its cadres towards confrontation warning that there would be no harmony or cooperation in all ministries which could mean a total paralysis of the government.

It was clear that the new government would face the danger of inability to guarantee the salaries of approximately 160 thousand employees in the public sector even partially and even after it received aid from Qatar due to the fact that all the Palestinian banks' refusal to deal with this file which reflected the depth of the financial crisis and the extent to which the siege and boycott imposed upon the government had succeeded. All this was an attempt by the unholy Western alliance at making it fail. The new government thus failed in its attempts to find a bank that was ready to extend its financial credit which raised serious doubts in the government's ability to pay salaries to its employees or to receive external aid.

It became evident that the new government was facing three major challenges that could lead the whole Palestinian political system into a status of paralysis or inability to function due to its isolation by the international community and the lack of internal security and Israeli military aggravation, apart from the empty treasury which it was handed. This left the new government with no other serious choice than to attempt to evade its responsibilities by leaving the task of negotiation to the PLO.

The Palestinian government entered into a huge crisis not only because of the siege and the continued isolation but also because the Israeli occupation targeted and arrested one third of the government in reaction to the operation "Disappearing Illusion" in which the Izzeldin al-Qassam Brigades played an important role. Despite the fact that all the ministers and members of parliament who were abducted by the Israeli authorities refused to accept the measures of the Israeli courts or their legality and especially since they are ministers and members of parliament who should have protection, the occupation has continued its court procedures and investigations without granting any importance to their status as ministers or members of parliament. The tasks of the abducted ministers were relegated to other ministers in the government – the local government and labor portfolios were handed over to the Minister of Transport and Communications and the Prisoners and Jerusalem Affairs

Portfolios to the Minister of Refugee Affairs and the Social Affairs portfolio to the Minister of Health etc.

While the government's agreement with the local banks failed at the beginning of June and it was unable to dispense salaries for approximately 40,000 employees the government declared its surprise from the changes in the banks' position, which instigated people to direct their wrath against them as they were considered the cause for the obstruction of payment of their salaries. Along the same lines, the government continued to work towards obtaining money through external visits by its members and it also raised the strength of its declarations and comments on the employees' strikes and started to adopt the policy of replacing the strikers with elements from Hamas and especially in high ranking positions. The animosity between the government along with Hamas and Fateh was aggravated due to the cancellation of the visits of several members of the government to Jordan that had been previously scheduled especially after the Jordanian television showed pictures of detainees who were suspected to be members of Hamas and who had admitted to an attempt at assassinating a Jordanian intelligence officer and stashing weapons in Jordan.

Whilst dealing with this political crisis, declarations issued by members of the government and the Hamas movement agreed to a Palestinian State within the boundaries of 1967 and to a long term truce or a short-term truce (5-15 years) in an attempt to find an opening or as a tactic to relieve the pressures imposed on the government. However, some observers found that it was a significant and radical change within Hamas positions.

Deliberations were held in September in order to form a national unity government and the ministers placed their portfolios at the disposal of the prime minister in an indication of their serious commitment to such an alternative. The Israeli occupying government attempted to assassinate the Prime Minister's by sending poisonous material in a package to the Prime Minister's offices in Ramallah and which led after its opening to the injury of 7 employees who lost consciousness and were hospitalized.

The Prime Minister emphasized the fact that the government was going to open a corruption file and that the tumultuous media would not deter it nor would the attempts at political and economic pressure however nothing of the sort has taken place till now. The Cabinet decided to stop paying for transportation and gasoline for the striking employees and the Prime Minister emphasized that conclusion of the captive Israeli soldier's file in Gaza was dependent upon the extent of the Israeli side's response to Palestinian demands. The Prime Minister's Offices fervently criticized the Constitutional Court's decision concerning the decisions and measures taken by the Palestinian Legislative Council during its first session held on 6/3 and which described the court decision as biased towards the presidency.

The ministerial council made around 10,600 new appointments since it commenced its duties, thus overstepping the boundaries that had been placed at filling 4284 vacant positions only, and the report indicated that the ministerial council had held 26 sessions in which it issued no less than 300 decisions most of which were

distinguished by an administrative nature whereas the political decisions constituted not more than 6% of the total number of decisions taken.<sup>11</sup>

By the end of 2005 the estimated number of Palestinians worldwide reached 10.1 million; 3.8 million in the Palestinian occupied territories, 2.4 million in the West Bank and Jerusalem and 1.4 million in Gaza and the 1.1 million Palestinians living within the Green Line in addition to 3 million in Jordan and approximately 462 thousand in Syria and the rest distributed all over the world. The Palestinian Central Bureau of Statistics emphasized that the number of individuals whose age is less than 18 during the same period reached approximately 2 million children i.e. at a rate of 52% of the total population in the Palestinian territories distributed as approximately one million males and 987 thousand females which emphasizes the fact that the Palestinian population is a young one. As for the estimated number of Palestinian youth abroad it reached approximately 5.1 million at the end of 2005, and 42.5% of the population in the West Bank and Gaza are refugees. As for the estimated numbers of the population in 2006 in the Palestinian territories it reached 3.9 million, 2 million of whom are male and 1.9 million female distributed as 2.5 million in the West Bank and 1.4 million in the Gaza Strip.<sup>12</sup>

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<sup>11</sup> Report issued by the Good Governance Forum, 2006.

<sup>12</sup> Report issued by the Palestinian Central Bureau of Statistics, 2006.



**Strengths:**

1. The process of handing over and receiving authorities was carried out peacefully and in a civilized manner even though this was not the case after the official process.
2. Despite the lack of experience and the weak political dialogue, the strong attack against it and the blockade imposed upon it in addition to the imprisonment of its members of parliament, the government was able to remain steadfast and to continue its work even though it did so at the lowest outcome.
3. On the political level, the government's positions returned the struggle with the Israeli government to square number one and it emphasized the basics related to Palestinian rights to the land and to return reminding the whole world of the realities of the Palestinian problem and the discriminatory facet that targets the Palestinian people, however it is unclear how these stands can be translated into practical transformations.
4. There was no news of corruption within the government offices on the higher levels, and it is unknown whether this is related to the level of personal ethics of individuals within the new government or whether it is due to the fact that the employees are new to their public office. It is hoped that the former is nearer to the truth.

**Weaknesses:**

1. The Hamas movement was unable to initiate the formation of a national unity government since the beginning. If it had been able to do so it would have saved itself and the Palestinians a great deal of suffering, thus it proved its lack of astuteness or ability to maneuver on the political level.
2. From the beginning the government faced the big problem of being unable to guarantee the salaries of the public service and it did not have the right to blame others despite the fact that the blockade was imposed by countries lacking in ethical and political integrity.
3. Even though Hamas won the elections under the slogan of Reform and Change they did not, in effect, bring about any reforms or changes of importance especially concerning the lack of security, the economic situation and political alternatives.

## **Activities of the Ministries**

The ministers of the tenth government received their posts at the beginning of April. A new ministry was established – the Ministry of Refugee Affairs and the Ministry of Labor was split once again from the Ministry of Social Affairs in the new government after they had become joint in the previous government. The performance and productivity of the ministries during the year was limited, but there were a number of activities that could be mentioned: -

### **First: Public Health and Safety**

The number of martyrs in the fifth year of the Intifada reached 534, the number of injured individuals 3088, and the number of prisoners 4298. The number of injured since the beginning of the Aqsa Intifada reached 46,353 since the number of Israeli crimes, which can be categorized as crimes against humanity and organized state crimes were on the increase. Human rights organizations were active on the level of issuing statements condemning such actions. The number of those martyred since 25/6 when the Israeli authorities launched their operation “Summer Rains” and “Autumn Clouds” reached 505 Palestinians, 290 of whom were children and the Palestinian Center for Human Rights declared that 49 children were martyred and nearly 200 were injured from 25/6 till 4/8/2006. The number of Palestinians martyred reached 135 whilst 452 were injured amongst whom 210 were children less than 16 years old since the operation “Disappearing Illusion” and the soldier was taken captive (25/6 till 20/7) that is only during 25 days,<sup>13</sup> with the knowledge that some sources stated that the Israeli violations during the same period caused 234 martyrs to fall 213 of whom were in Gaza and the rest in the West Bank whilst 1276 were injured 822 of whom were in Gaza.<sup>14</sup> And Children’s Defense International blamed the Israeli army for killing 755 Palestinian children during the past five years between 28/9/2000 and 21/6/2006.

During this period the activities of the Israeli Human Rights Associations were evident and they emphasized the great deterioration of the status of human rights in the occupied territories during 2006, whereby these associations stated that the Israeli authorities had killed 660 Palestinians during the year, thus the number of Palestinian martyrs during this year since the eruption of the Intifada in the autumn of 2000 to 4005 whilst 17 Israelis were killed in 2006 making the total number of Israelis killed since the beginning of the Intifada reach 701 Israelis.

The Ministry of Health launched an appeal to save the lives of hundreds of sick Palestinians whose lives were threatened due to the lack of electricity in the hospitals in Gaza due to the Israeli occupation’s bombing of the main electricity generator and its destruction, in addition to lack of fuel to run the hospital generators for long periods of time. The Ministry continued to launch appeals and send out calls and warnings concerning the possible occurrence of a health epidemic or an environmental disaster in the Gaza Strip and in particular due to the continued Israeli blockade and aggression and especially since large amounts of medicines and vaccines had expired and there were 112 thousand people facing the danger of lack of

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<sup>13</sup> Report by the Palestinian Ministry of Health, 22/11/2006

<sup>14</sup> Ibid.

ability to access the necessary treatment for their chronic illnesses, while there were 21 thousand children under 5 who were deprived of their right to go to Kindergarten or summer camps in addition to the fact that 70 thousand families in the Gaza Strip suffer from an extremely bad economic situation.<sup>15</sup>

The year 2006 constituted a major and dangerous curve in the number of internal security breaches due to in-fighting incidents on the backdrop of the bloody political dissonance between the Hamas and Fateh movements and which were mainly concentrated in the Gaza Strip.

In general, a total of 74 Palestinians fell amongst dead and injured due to family feuds or the breach of security since the beginning of 2006 in addition to the occurrence of tens of aggressions against public and private institutions and personal property in addition to tens of kidnappings. There was a lack of official and judicial measures that should have been taken against these actions within the framework of dealing with the various incidents that had taken place. On the contrary, these institutions were a major factor in this deterioration as they participated in the clashes, which emphasize the continuous state of weak national authority efforts in adopting policies and taking effective measures on the ground to stop the continuous and exacerbated status of lack of security.<sup>16</sup>

The government employed doctors in the Gaza Strip had started an open strike in all departments, hospitals and clinics and health centers of the Ministry of Health on 9/9/2006 in protest for not receiving their salaries for the seventh month in a row at the time, however the strike was suspended in the Health sector after 110 days on 9/12/2006 after the Health Workers Union had signed an agreement that commits the government to provide salaries and the benefits of the health workers. More than 1000 specialized doctors threatened to emigrate from the country unless their higher certificates were recognized and they were given the necessary license to practice medicine.

Foreign agencies also made attempts at supporting Palestinian institutions with millions of dollars in an attempt to create an alternative for the Ministry of Health and in order to transfer the administration of this sector away from the government. Some sources claimed that the Americans offered some civil institutions the chance to run the health sector without any interference by the ministry of health; however these institutions refused to do so. Within the same context, sources in the health ministry said they refused the interference of some foreign institutions considering these as acts of political piracy that is inadmissible. The Ministry also emphasized the fact that the European Union had promised to pay the salaries of the past six retroactively in addition to those of the next 6 months to the health sector workers.

Some Palestinian personalities launched a campaign against the Ministry due to the specialized treatment file, or treatment abroad, whereby the Ministry was charged with reducing transfers at the citizen's expense in order to slate a reduction in its expenses which would be considered a triumph for it. The Ministry responded to these allegations by increasing the number of transfers abroad for the ill by 24 % in 2006 in comparison with the same period in 2005.

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<sup>15</sup> Report by the General Information Bureau, March 2006.

<sup>16</sup> Report by the Palestinian Independent Commission for Citizens' Rights, al-Ayyam 29/12/2006.

The Ministry of Health also emphasized over and over again that bird flu had not arrived, but when there were actual cases the Ministry emphasized that there were enough materials necessary for conducting a delicate test for the illness and that the repercussions of the panic created by the illness is more dangerous than the flu itself.

### **How are assassinations carried out in Gaza?**

Forty targeted assassinations were carried out in 2005, the year in which the army was no longer in Gaza which constituted 5 times the annual average. Here are some other statistics for comparison: In the first half of 2006 the air force killed more than 70 individuals, which defied the concept on which targeted killings were built in the first place. When such actions took place en masse and under the pressure of continuous implementation and the completion of successful missions, mistakes were made in the targets and the price was paid by the Palestinians as a result. The Israeli air force in fact fell victim to its own successes which resulted in the killing of 16 innocent Palestinians amongst whom there were a number of children from Jabalya. A “centrally targeted” missile harvested the lives of three children who were playing and only one week before eight civilians were killed in Salah el-Din Street in the middle of Gaza. As for the incident that instigated the bloody month, it took place on the 20<sup>th</sup> of May when a missile hit a car carrying innocent civilians, a grandmother and a mother and her 5 year old son who were all slaughtered. Targeted termination from the air is the main and almost only form of fighting that enabled the army to show its ‘Achievements’ in Gaza. The Israeli air-force is under tremendous pressure on both the political and military levels to intensify the assassinations. It is on the one hand hooked on the task allocated to it, but this method was transformed from a “surgical tool” against certain targets (tactical bombs) to a mass destruction weapon.

The chosen team sitting around the table of the air force commander and who work as if they are a summary court that is outside the framework of the law are the most experienced group in the whole world in the field of targeted assassinations from the air. Each one of these individuals had supervised tens or even hundreds of targeted assassination operations. They are all officers with a rank of brigadier general who were hand picked by the Head of the Israeli air-force to be the leaders of a control cell within the air-force which receives its confidential information from the “Shabak” or the headquarters of the southern region through the various branches of military intelligence and from the moment the target is found and permission to exterminate is received the officer supervising the operation remains at the screen and monitors the target until conditions are most appropriate for extermination. When the responsible officer decides that the time is appropriate the pilot receives a green light to use his attacking weapons and if the appropriate moment does not come up the control cell leader has the authority to call off the operation.<sup>17</sup>

Since the 24<sup>th</sup> of December 2006, the day that Ehud Olmert appeared as acting Prime Minister, the army returned to the routine targeted assassinations and the targeted assassinations that he was very enthusiastic about and could not give up. Hamas kept

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<sup>17</sup> Alex Fishman, Yediot, 23 June, 2006.

the cease-fire with great particularity and no missiles were launched except by the Islamic Jihad in failed attempts to take revenge for assassination of its elements. Operations continued along the same lines and no week passed without extermination and assassinations in addition to some fatal mistakes. The Qassam missiles caused two or three minor injuries only on the Israeli side and to a few psychological shocks. As for the Palestinians, tens of bodies piled up in the aftermath and in June alone 31 civilians fell victim of the assassination policy 11 of whom were children while Hamas did not launch even one missile. Only on the 6<sup>th</sup> of July did the army declare since more than one year, that a Hamas element had launched a missile at his own responsibility and without orders from a higher authority. What do these small and vicious people who govern us think? That they can bombard families every other day – women and small children, infants, old people and young people, and then claim artificially that the pilot did not see them enter the target zone or that the air-force had not launched any missiles that day? And that that is all it will come to? The Israeli radio had transmitted a program called “ Samia’s Day of Inspection” about the previous Israeli military ruler of Gaza who said that the Israelis should have raided Gaza, razed Beit Hanoun to the ground in order to eradicate it completely off the face of the map if need be so that it would become an example to all of what Israeli force is capable of doing.

### **The Policy of Oppression**

Aisha Abu Msallem is the mother of three children, she did not relies that looking out of the window during an ordinary dawn would cost her, her life in an extraordinary manner and leave her brain scattered all over her child’s bedroom; as in Balata Camp the Israeli army does not really need an excuse to kill, and a mere look out of the window of a house allows them to shoot when a soldier is in search of a victim. Hanadi, 20 years old, who is the eldest daughter and who seemed in a state of shock: “I woke up because of the thud my mother’s body made when she fell to the ground in the room I looked at her and her head had been transformed into a fountain of blood. The martyr, Aisha, 47 years old, had just finished preparing her husband’s breakfast. He was used to leaving with his brother at five o’clock in the morning to go to his work, which was to transport vegetables in his friend’s truck.

The martyred child - Ikbar’s, family mentioned that she was only 8 years old on 17/3/2006 and was on her way to a clinic when a surge of gunfire by the Israeli army caused her immediate death.

The occupying authorities killed ‘Itaf Zalat (41 years old) during an incursion into the Dthanaba neighborhood in Tulkarem and they injured her two daughters due to the intensive fire whilst barricading a residential building.<sup>18</sup> Settlers also take part in these aggressions as for example, a Palestinian was attacked near the village of Za’atara where the settlers had set up a checkpoint that stopped Palestinian cars and they burnt some of these cars after ordering the people in them to leave them.<sup>19</sup>

The Israeli organization – Betsalem stated that the Israeli army had killed 157

<sup>18</sup> Al-Hayat al-Jadida, 2/5/2006.

<sup>19</sup> Al-Quds, 27/2/2006.

Palestinians during arrest operations in the West Bank during the period since the beginning of 2004 and up till May 2006. It also stated that its inquiries had proved that at least 35 of those killed were civilians and 54 were known as “wanted” but they had not attempted to use their weapons against the security forces when they were shot and that the circumstances surrounding the killing of Mrs Zalat indicate that the Israeli army had behaved as if it were conducting an assassination operation and not one of arrest, thus violating the regulations of International Humanitarian Law.<sup>20</sup>

The Israeli occupying forces decided at the beginning of the year that it would bomb any car moving at night within the buffer zone in the North of Gaza.<sup>21</sup> The instructions concerning firing are as follows: “Firing at anyone who is moving on the street aiming to kill” without giving any importance to whether he is carrying a gun or any other weapon. For a period of time, soldiers also shot to kill from the Wall at anyone they saw in the area even if he were relatively far away. “We did this without thinking, as if we were a machine and almost every day an innocent person would be killed. Everyone would start shooting once they heard the first shot. We would also shoot at the water tanks and the windows of the houses; we shot with aim and without aim.” This affidavit was given by an Israeli soldier from the parachute’s division in front of members of the “Let’s Break the Silence” movement and was published in a booklet of affidavits on firing instructions which were compiled by the movement.<sup>22</sup>

Avi Dichter, the previous head of intelligence (Shabak) threatened yesterday to turn Palestinians lives into hell if the Israeli land and air missiles falling onto the Palestinian territories are not sufficient to stop the missiles onto Israeli territory.<sup>23</sup>

When the two young Palestinian men – Muhammad ‘Asakra and ‘Ala’ Ubeiyat refused to comply to the Israeli soldiers’ orders to the to dance in the middle of the street in front of thousands of Palestinians waiting in their cars to pass at the “Container” checkpoint to the north east of Bethlehem, they started to beat them brutally to the extent that a soldier started parading around with Muhammad ‘Asakre’s finger in a pair of pliers used for cutting iron.” The soldiers continued to relentlessly beat up the two young Palestinians who were headed towards Jericho where they work until they almost lost consciousness due to the ruthless battering.

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<sup>20</sup> Al-Ayyam, 17/4/2006

<sup>21</sup> Al-Hayat al-Jadida, 1/2/2006.

<sup>22</sup> Gideon Levi, al-Ayyam Newspaper, 1/5/2006

<sup>23</sup> Al-Ayyam, 1/1/2006.

## Human Shield

Using Palestinian civilians is a method utilized methodically during the Israeli operations and incursions in violation of all international and humanitarian laws. These practices have resulted in many victims falling even though they have no part in what is going on. Due to the criticism the Israeli High Court issued a decision in November 2005 demanding that the Israeli army terminate the use of these measures, however the Israeli forces ignored this decision by the Israeli high court and continued to violate the high court decision ordering the termination of these practices. New detailed affidavits were given by Palestinian civilians and a soldier who had recently completed his military service and had participated in a number of military operations aiming at arresting Palestinians. The soldier mentioned in his affidavit that using Palestinian civilians during these operations as human shields was a widespread phenomenon and he emphasized the fact that the civilians were obliged to go out with the soldiers and were used as human shields against their will and after being threatened making it evident that during a conversation with his responsible officer the latter informed him that he should not hesitate to use Palestinian civilians as human shields against their will.<sup>24</sup>

Whilst persisting in its violations against humanity, the Israeli army submitted an official request to the Israeli high court to review its decision preventing the use of Palestinian civilians in the occupied territories as human shields through the Israeli Defense Minister, Shaul Mofaz. The Israeli high court refused this plea but despite that the occupying authorities continued to perpetrate these crimes against humanity and even the Israeli law itself, which was taken by a wide judicial committee in the decision issued by the high court which prevents the Israeli army from using the Palestinians as human shields

**Table 2: Palestinian Victims for the year 2006**

	<b>West Bank</b>	<b>Gaza</b>	<b>Total</b>
<b>Martyrs</b>	<b>110</b>	<b>526</b>	<b>636</b>
<b>Wounded</b>	-	-	<b>3.126</b>
<b>Females</b>	-	-	<b>33</b>
<b>Children</b>	-	-	<b>119</b>

**Table 3a: Palestinian victims as a result of Israeli attacks from September 29,2000- December 31, 2006<sup>25</sup>**

<b>Year</b>	<b>West Bank</b>	<b>Gaza</b>	<b>Total</b>
2000	191	127	318
2001	342	249	591
2002	751	497	1248
2003	263	393	656
2004	254	709	963

<sup>24</sup> The Legal Answer Adalah Center, al-Quds Newspaper, 15/4/2006

<sup>25</sup> Numbers are from the Health Department's Information Committee.

2005	75	111	186
2006	110	526	663
<b>Total Victims</b>	<b>1986</b>	<b>2612</b>	<b>4625</b>
<b>Total Injuries</b>	<b>-</b>	<b>-</b>	<b>49760</b>

**Table 3b: Victims by Nationality**

<b>Nationality</b>	<b>No.</b>
Palestinians	4625
Arab Israel	18
Egyptians	2
Lebanese	2
Americans	1
British	2
<b>Total</b>	<b>4650</b>

**Table 4: Final Figures of the victims and martyrs during the Intifada until December 31, 2006<sup>26</sup>**

Martyrs <sup>27</sup>	5050
Wounded <sup>28</sup>	49608
Children	934
Females	350
National Forces	344
Educators and Students	848
Medical Sets	36
Journalists	9
Athletes	220
Shelling Results	732
Assassinations	481
Checkpoints	150
Settlers	66

<sup>26</sup> Source: Information Committee's National Census.

<sup>27</sup> Excludes 88 Martyrs that have not been reported due to Israeli formalities.

<sup>28</sup> Excludes 8435 wounded that received informal medical attention.



**Table 5: Israeli casualties from September 29, 2000 until December 31, 2006**

Civilians and Settlers	Inside the Green Line	Inside the occupied territories	Total
	444	223	667
Children (until 18 years old)	79	37	116
Army	86	216	302
<b>Total</b>	<b>609</b>	<b>476</b>	<b>1085</b>

\* Source: Palestinian Human Rights Monitoring Group

**Table 7: Number of Hospitals in Palestine For the year 2005**

West Bank	Governmental	UNRWA	Private	Non-governmental	Total
	12	1	17	14	44
<b>Gaza Strip</b>	14	0	1	8	23
<b>Jerusalem</b>	0	0	4	6	10
<b>Total</b>	<b>26</b>	<b>1</b>	<b>22</b>	<b>28</b>	<b>77</b>

## Second: Education

The total number of Palestinian students in the West Bank and Gaza Strip is 1,067,489 students and the number of teachers is 48,282 in 2277 schools of which 1659 are government schools and 400 are new schools built since the establishment of the Palestinian authority. The Ministry is currently building 23 new schools with funding from the Islamic Bank for Development at the cost of 14 million dollars and they have signed a contract with the German Bank for Development for 15 million euros to build and renovate schools.

In order to save the school year approximately 40 thousand school teachers and others working in the teaching profession ended their strike on 7/11/2006 almost two months had passed after an agreement was signed between the Ministry and the General Teachers' Union. The Ministry declared the beginning of the practical implementation of electronic teaching which was launched in June 2006 and which had a fund established to support it.

The Public Secondary School Certificate Examinations were held starting on 7/6/2006, and approximately 79 thousand students sat for the exam 43 thousand of which were from the West Bank and 35 thousand from the Gaza Strip and they were distributed in the Arts and Sciences streams at 59 thousand and 16 thousand respectively. Amongst the 3360 prisoners who sat for the exam, 1292 succeeded to pass, that is a percentage of more than 38.5 %. As for Jerusalem, the number of schools in the City, without counting Kindergartens and schools run by the

Municipality, is 186 schools and the number of students reached 60 thousand and the number of classes reached 2,182 during the 2005/2006 scholastic year.

The results of the first survey on violence against children in West Bank schools pointed toward the existence of worrying indicators showing that this is a widespread phenomenon and that beating was used by teachers in the schools as follows : rarely 20,5%, sometimes 14.6%, most of the time 17.5% and always 16.1%,<sup>29</sup>

**Table 8: Number of schools**

Schools		Students	Employees
Public	1725	757,615	35,018
UNRWA	279	254,552	8,477
Private	272	66,321	5,184
Kindergarten/Daycare	946	77,500	3,400

**Table 9: Number of schools, teachers and students for the years 2005-2006<sup>30</sup>**

Gender	Schools	Students	Teachers
Male	802	536,752	22,700
Female	786	541,736	25,974
Co-ed	688	-- ----	-----
<b>Total</b>	<b>2276</b>	<b>1078488</b>	<b>48674</b>

**Table 10: Growth in the number of students, schools, and teachers in private schools between 1994-2006<sup>31</sup>**

Year	Schools	Students	Teachers
1994/95	1,084	418,807	14,938
1995/96	1,070	447,822	16,810
1996/97	1,113	481,678	18,858
1997/98	1,175	516,160	21,186
1998/99	1,230	549,404	22,690
1999/2000	1,289	586,777	24,318
2000/2001	1,343	621,285	26,173
2001/2002	1,406	653,650	28,015
2002/2003	1,490	686,507	29,930
2003/2004	1,577	711,541	31,858
2004/2005	1,659	733,735	33,398
2005/2006	1,725	757,615	35,013

<sup>29</sup> Survey prepared by the Center for the Rehabilitation of Torture Victims, al-Ayyam Newspaper, 3/5/2006.

<sup>30</sup> Ministry of Education's reports on the Internet.

<sup>31</sup> Ministry of Education's reports on the Internet.

**Table 11: Average number of students according to the responsible parties for the year 2005/2006**

<b>Responsible Party</b>	<b>Primary School</b>	<b>Secondary School</b>	<b>Total</b>
Public	637,172	120,443	<b>757,615</b>
UNRWA	254,552	-----	<b>254,552</b>
Private	61,897	4,424	<b>66,321</b>
<b>Total</b>	<b>953,621</b>	<b>124,867</b>	<b>1,078,488</b>

**Table 12: The impact of Israeli attacks on Palestinian education until December 31, 2006<sup>32</sup> -  
Losses and Human Suffering**

Student and teacher martyrs	848
Shot students and teachers	4,792
Detained teachers and employees	106
Detained high school and college students	1,175
Detained children	330
Military forced closures of schools and universities	12
Disruption of education in schools	1,125
Shelled educational organizations/facilities	316
Schools converted into military bases	43

**Table 13: Material Losses**

Incidents of school and university closures	12
Converting schools to military premises	43
Incidents of disrupting education	1,125

**Table 14: Secondary School Exams - Tawjihi results in 2006**

<b>Stream</b>	<b>Attended</b>	<b>Graduated</b>	<b>Graduation %</b>
Scientific	14308	13232	92.48 %
Art	40830	28371	70.26 %
Vocational	2681	1982	73.93%
Private	21506	11740	54.59%
<b>Total</b>	<b>78875</b>	<b>55325</b>	<b>70.14%</b>

<sup>32</sup> Source: Information Committee.

### University Education

The number of M.A. and other higher studies programs exceeded the number of B.A. specializations and the number of students applying for higher studies was greater than could be absorbed in most programs at the various universities. The issue of transforming the al-Quds Open University from a governmental to a private university raised a discussion within the legislative council and it was decided that the issue would be discussed by the Minister of Education and the President of the University, the issue of graduate students and the time they should spend at university was also discussed. The issue of normalization and al-Quds University's relations was also discussed widely by students. In addition the issue of university grants presented by the Ministry of Education and Higher Education was also discussed, whereby it was emphasized that the grants would be given to students with high grades and that they would be divided equally between both parts of the country. And in light of the stifling economic crisis the Ministry of Education and Higher Education signed an agreement to support needy students at Palestinian universities with the UNESCO for the value of 2.2 million dollars.

On the other hand the Israeli authorities released Naser el-Din al-Shaer the Minister of Education and Higher Education on 27/9/ 2006 as they did not have enough evidence to indict him after detaining him for a number of weeks. April 2006 saw the martyrdom of three teachers and a student and the injury of 15 other students in addition to 32 arrests by the Israeli occupying forces, which clearly indicates the fact that the occupation was targeting schools in a methodical and purposeful manner.

**Table 15: Student appropriation in higher education according to sex and the degree earned for the year 2005-2006**

Degree	Diploma		Bachelor		Masters		Total		G.Total
	Male	Female	Male	Female	Male	Female	Male	Female	
Open University	108	121	24777	27908			24885	28029	52914
Universities	177	406	34233	40698	2690	1673	37100	42777	79878
Colleges	1737	1971	731	1346			2468	3317	5785
Mid- level Colleges	6294	4753					6294	4753	11047
<b>Total</b>	<b>8361</b>	<b>7251</b>	<b>59741</b>	<b>69952</b>	<b>2690</b>	<b>1673</b>	<b>70747</b>	<b>78876</b>	<b>149624</b>

### Third: Infra-Structure and Housing

Repairing the damages caused by the Israeli occupation forces to the houses and road networks requires more than 450 million, 15-20 million of which were losses incurred to the Palestinian electricity generation plant in Gaza which served 750 thousand Palestinians. And the cost of rebuilding the devastated town of Beit Hanoun after the Israeli incursions in November reaches 50 million dollars.

**Table 17: Road conditions for the year 2005<sup>33</sup> (Same as previous year)**

Type of Road	Length of Road /km	Good Roads	Satisfactory Roads	Bad Roads
Main	600	13%	31%	56%
Regional	750	22%	40%	38%
Paved	1,350	40%	25%	35%
Unpaved	800			
Total	3,500			

**Table 18: Israeli aggression's impact on the Palestinian infrastructure until December 31, 2006<sup>34</sup>**

Total home destruction	30871 homes, including 4,785 in Gaza Strip till 31/10/2006
Partial destruction	64,693 homes, including 23,622 in Gaza Strip till 31/10/2006
Bulldozed lands	80712 Dunum till 31/7/2006
Tree uprooting	Trees in west bank and Gaza till 13572896 31/10/2006
Land confiscated for the wall	247291 Dunum
Settlements	165 <sup>35</sup>
Settlers	440,415 settler
Shelling neighborhoods	36,724 times
Destruction of arrogation	33792 meters
Destruction of Rural Infrastructure	631182 meters
Number of public building & security establishments.	645 government & security establishments
Cows & farm animals killed	12151 cows in West Bank including 19 in Gaza strip till 31/8/2006
Destroying bees cells	16549 bees cell in West Bank & Gaza strip till 31/8/2006
Complete destroying water well and their attachments	425 in West Bank including 22 in Gaza strip till 31/7/2006
Number of Damaged farmers	16195 farmers

### Housing

Within the framework of providing housing for Palestinians whose houses had been destroyed by the Israeli occupying forces, a memorandum of understanding was

<sup>33</sup> Excludes Detours that equal 670.5 km in length.

<sup>34</sup> General Information Committee and the Palestinian Census Center.

<sup>35</sup> Excluding what's referred to as "scattered" settlements.

signed to implement the project of the Sheikh Khalifa Bin Zayed town. The cost of building this town, which will include 3 thousand housing units, will be approximately 100 million dollars and it will absorb more than 20,000 Palestinians. One hundred housing units will also be built for poor women in Hebron at a cost of 6.3 million dollars and the program funded by the Saudi Committee for the Relief of Palestinians will train women so that they can find job opportunities.<sup>36</sup>

It is important to note here, the dangerous method applied by the Israeli occupation forces of warning Palestinians over the phone that their house will be shelled giving them only a few minutes notice and thus “absolving” themselves of the responsibility of shelling and destroying these houses.

The Jerusalem municipality continues to demolish Palestinians’ houses with the excuse that they have no licenses while the same municipality obstructs issuance of these licenses creating a severe housing crisis, as the average number of rooms in a Jerusalem house reach 3.1 rooms, at an average density of 1.8 individuals to each room while 12% of families live in houses with a density of less than 1 individual to a room, 43% live in houses with a density between one and less than two individuals and 44% of families live in houses with a density of two or more individuals in one room.

The Jerusalem municipality demolished during the past five years approximately 450 houses which housed whole families and the Jerusalem municipality implemented approximately 95% of the demolition orders it had issued for 2005 in East Jerusalem whereas only 65% of the demolition orders for West Jerusalem were carried out. During 2005 the Jerusalem municipality had issued nearly 80 demolition orders in East Jerusalem and 40 in West Jerusalem, which can be considered yet another form of discrimination against the population of East Jerusalem. As for the planned “green band” around the walls of the Old City, it incorporates the secret aim of preventing possible Arab building in the area which is the most sensitive in Jerusalem, and it is evident that the Israeli authorities had started implementing the plan for the area surrounding the walls of the Old City since the 1967 war.

### **Transport and Communications**

Both international and Palestinian humanitarian organizations emphasized the fact that there was a 25% rise in the number of physical obstructions and checkpoints which had been set up by the Israeli army on the roads of the West Bank in comparison with the last year stressing that the closure system in the West Bank consists of 471 obstructions and checkpoints set up by the Israeli army on the roads to control Palestinians’ movement and limit their movement and that of their vehicles in comparison with 376 obstructions recorded in 2005.

A report issued by the National Information Center stated that the number of road accidents in the Palestinian authority areas in 2004 had reached 4722 accidents 2936 of which were in the West Bank resulting in 163 deaths.

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<sup>36</sup> Al-Quds newspaper, 12/9/2006.

The Ministry of Transport prepared a proposed project for amending the executive regulations of the Palestinian transport law number 5 for the year 2000 and presented a bylaw to the Cabinet to regulate the use of government vehicles. It also issued a decision to form a technical committee to follow up the file on vehicles without registration, however 20 armed gunmen raided the Cabinet headquarters the Ministry and the Offices of the Legislative Council in mid April to demand that the Ministry return their taxi numbers that had been cancelled.

### **Crossings**

The crossings were transformed into international crossings in light of the Apartheid Separation Wall and the Israeli Ministry of Foreign Affairs tried to promote the “Interim Walled State”, whereby the Apartheid Separation Wall would become the “temporary border” or the permanent border of the Palestinian state.

The Rafah Crossing constitutes an address for suffering after being transformed into an instrument of torture for the Palestinians, as when the European and international monitors or the Israeli occupying authorities decide that they want to close the crossing, the result is that thousands of Palestinians are prevented from traveling abroad through Egyptian territory or vice-versa. Some cases that can be registered are the closure of the Rafah crossing for more than two months continuously since 25/6 and then opening it for limited periods of time afterwards in the wake of the operation “Disappearing Illusion’ during which the Israeli soldier was captured. As a result thousands of Palestinians were stuck on the border for days in very bad conditions.

It is important to note here that the Crossing agreement stipulates that the Palestinians are not allowed to open the crossing without the presence of the international monitors. The excuses that the international monitors make for closing the Crossing like the threats or the smuggling of funds by the by Palestinian officials is not important, what is relevant however is the fact that the Sinai desert witnesses the humiliation of thousands of Palestinians who have to wait for days under the scorching desert sun and in the sand and dust of the desert without being offered any services by any party , which has caused the death of a number of children, old and sick people who were buried in the desert after their relatives were prevented from entering their bodies into Gaza in order to bury them in their homeland.

As for the Jericho Crossing which is full of bribery and corruption a ministerial committee was set up for the purposes of follow up. The crisis has been reduced after implementing the recommendations resulting from a gap analysis conducted some of which were increasing the number of buses working at the crossing to 20. Currently there is a conditioned Departures Hall and a special vehicle for transporting luggage, in addition everything taking place at the terminal is monitored closely. The number of daily flow is 2600 travelers. The Cabinet had taken the decision to hand the Jericho Crossing over to the Palestinian Police Directorate in Jericho since 1/6/2006.

## The Wall and Checkpoints

The Israeli occupying authorities continue to tighten their hold on Palestinians and this includes the continued building of the Separation Wall in the West Bank and the increased number of military checkpoints and concrete blocs in addition to conditions imposed on the issuance of permits. The Israeli withdrawal has purged Gaza from the internal closures and checkpoints, which has improved the situation, however the continued Israeli control over the external Crossings is still extremely harsh and Palestinians have incurred colossal losses in various sectors one of which is the project of the Palestinian Company for Economic Development which was assigned to implement the management and development of the agricultural lands which were liberated and which incurred a loss of 6.2 million dollars during the 57 days of repeated closure of the Mintar Crossing.<sup>37</sup>

As for the West Bank, the closure system is composed of 505 physical barriers in comparison with 376 in August 2005, and 471 at the end of 2005, which were spread by the Israeli army in the streets to control and limit the movement of Palestinian vehicles. The methods of impediment used are permanent military checkpoints, concrete blocks and closing roads and entrances to cities and villages with piles of earth and rocks in addition to trenches etc.<sup>38</sup> Moreover, the number of manned checkpoints has remained relatively stable and they pose the greater threat on the Palestinian economy. There were 62 manned checkpoints in November 2004, 52 in August 2005 and 55 in November 2005 and 85 at the end of 2006. After completion of approximately 336 kilometers ( 45% of the complete length of the Wall, which is 790 km. ) of the Apartheid Separation Wall in the West bank , the picture which has crystallized now is that the West Bank is divided into 3 separate areas : north, center and south.<sup>39</sup> The Israelis declared that it will take them at least another year to complete its construction, thus it is expected that the impediments in the way of Palestinians' movement will be exacerbated.<sup>40</sup> Moreover, despite the few cases where the Israelis have dismantled some small settlement outposts with the purpose of misguiding the Americans, the real settlements are being expanded and increased day after day.<sup>41</sup> The Israeli occupying authorities have decided to expand four settlements in the west Bank according to a decision issued by the military commander of the area Dani Naveh according to recommendations by the Cabinet Committee on Settlements which is headed by the Minister of Justice, Haiyim Ramon, and the Minister of Defense ' Amir Peretz in addition to the Minister of Foreign Affairs Tzipi Livni.<sup>42</sup>

Since November 2005, 243 km. have been completed (36.3%) of the Wall while there are 166 km. under construction (24.8%).<sup>43</sup>

<sup>37</sup> Salam Fayyad, Head of the Board of Directors of the Management and Development Project of the Liberated Agricultural Lands, al-Ayyam newspaper, 22/3/2006.

<sup>38</sup> UN OCHA, The World Bank, al-Quds newspaper, 4/5/2006.

<sup>39</sup> Report by OCHA, March 2006.

<sup>40</sup> Yediot, Ya'el Gvirtz, translated in al-Hayat newspaper, 19/5/2006.

<sup>41</sup> Al-Quds newspaper, 25/4/2006.

<sup>42</sup> Yediot, Yaron London, 18/5/2006.

<sup>43</sup> OCHA, al-Quds Newspaper, 22/3/2006.



## Water

184 communities in the West Bank remain without a public water network, which constitutes 31% of the communities including a population of at least 220,000. Whereas, 109 communities in the West Bank are connected to the public network through the Water Department in the West Bank and 117 communities receive their water supplies through the Mekorot Company, which is Israeli. As for Gaza, the largest number of communities, which is composed of 24, relies on wells as a major source of water, whereas four communities rely on Mekorot, 27.4% of which is bought from the Israeli water company with the knowledge that 7% of families in the Palestinian territories purchase their water supplies from water tanks (trucks).

The amount of water provided for household consumption in the Palestinian areas from all sources reaches 153 million cubic meters and the Palestinian individual's quota of water reaches 111 liters daily for household consumption. In the West Bank it is 86 liters of r each individual daily whereas in the Gaza Strip it reaches 145 per individual daily. In comparison, the amount of water for household consumption for Israelis reaches approximately 815 cubic meters, that is the quota for Israeli individuals reaches 331 liters daily including the water used to irrigate public gardens and for public consumption within households, with the knowledge that the World Health Organization recommends that an individuals daily consumption should be not less than 100 liters of potable water. The deputy head of the Water authority warned that donors should not freeze funds allocated for the projects in the water sector, which more than one international party had previously committed to supporting. He also indicated that the water lines that the USAID had pledged to support according to an agreement signed with the PA to build the first phase at a cost of 62 million dollars is still suspended.

The number of wells in the Palestinian territories is 4,392; of which 287 are in the West Bank and 4,150 are in the Gaza Strip. The amount of water pumped from them for household and agricultural use is approximately 196 million cubic meters. And the annual production of springs in the West Bank reached 53.64 million cubic meters in 2005. The amount of water purchased from the Mekorot Company reaches 46.22 million cubic meters.

The results of the household environment survey of 2005 indicated that 90.5% of the families in the Palestinian territories are connected to public water networks (86.7% of families in the West Bank in comparison with 97.9% of families in the Gaza Strip) , in addition the water authority declared that the laboratory bacterial tests which included 98 springs and 107 wells used for drinking purposes indicate that the water is exposed to bacterial pollution as a result of the sporadic infiltration of untreated sewage and especially from cesspits and their intermixing with drinking water. The water authority emphasized the fact that it had made a number of achievements some of which were the elevation of the level of water provision services concerning both quantity and quality at a rate of 45% along with an improvement in waste water treatment services through a series of new projects at a value of 2.5 million dollars.

## Lands

The Israeli occupation targeted Palestinian lands and grabbed a great deal through a number of strategies starting from the Israeli military orders that were issued since 1967 and accordingly all land registration procedures were stopped in the West Bank and Gaza. Only at a late stage was the PA given the limited authority to register land in some areas of the West Bank and Gaza according to the Oslo accords signed in 1993. The Israeli government retains the responsibility of land administration issues within approximately 50% of the West Bank including the responsibility for land zoning and planning.<sup>44</sup> As a result land confiscation continued and eventually the Apartheid Separation Wall was added and concentration continued on targeting Jerusalem and continuing the process of its Judaization. These practices limited the Palestinians' population and urban expansion within narrow spaces outside of which they are forbidden to build.

And as opposed to the direct expropriation in various ways the land laundering in the West Bank does not only include estates agents, settler societies, building companies, the civil administration and the Ministry of Justice but the official documents that carry the title "top secret" indicate that the Israeli government also knows that state institutions use laundering procedures for illegitimate land deals. Reserve colonel Sha'ul Arieli says in this concern "This does not have any security implications, it will in effect cause damage and the true purpose is to separate the population in order to gradually take over areas of land and annex them in the future."<sup>45</sup>

What is more important is what happened to the land evacuated by the occupation and the settlers in the Gaza Strip during this year concerning two issues: - The first is the debris and the waste water that the settlements left behind estimated at 1.2 million tons. There was an agreement between the Israeli government, the special envoy of the Quartet and the Palestinian National Authority to get rid of the debris from the demolished settlements in the Gaza Strip at the cost of 24.7 million dollars however this was not achieved even by the end of the year.

The second issue was the continued transgressions by some individuals of public property in the liberated areas. There are still some daily acts of vandalism such as the theft of sand, cutting of trees and destruction of wells, in addition to taking control over thousands of dumdots of land by people taking advantage of the breach in security and the lack of a deterrent force that can prevent the continuation of such illicit actions. The procedures taken by the government to stop these dangerous violations that the liberated lands are being exposed to are still indistinct and ineffective.

In addition, the Israeli settlements are burying thousands of tons of poisonous waste in West Bank areas and are using wide areas as land fills in an illegal fashion thus polluting the environment and affecting the health of the population.

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<sup>44</sup> World Bank Report, 3/5/2006.

<sup>45</sup> Ofer Shelah, Yediot Aharanot, 28/2/2006

## **Communications and Information Technology**

The Kuwaiti National Communications Company won in the tender for a strategic partner in the second mobile phone network in the Palestinian territories for a total of 355 million dollars after opening a call for tenders. Its share of the new company will be 40% while 30% will be owned by the Palestinian Investment Fund and 30% will be offered in the market as shares to be bought by the Palestinian public. Palestine succeeded in registering 245 radio stations and digital T.V. stations within the regional plan and the international registry of wavelengths in the International Communications Union.

## **Energy**

The Palestinian electricity company and the Egyptian electricity company discussed the technical possibilities of providing the Gaza Strip with its needs in electrical power through connecting the Gaza electricity grid with that of Egypt within a project connecting seven Arab countries including Egypt, Libya, Jordan, Syria, Lebanon, Iraq and Turkey. The Arab League allocated a million dollars for the purchase of new electricity generators.<sup>46</sup> Two agreements were signed with the Norwegian government, the National Electricity Company in Jordan and the Islamic Bank for Development for a value of 6 million dollars to connect the Jericho governorate with the Jordanian electricity grid. .

It is known that the electricity grids in the West Bank and Gaza are connected to the Israeli grid, which is a status quo due to the occupation. The Palestinians will not be able to rid themselves of this relationship before they rehabilitate and develop their own network. It should be noted here that the Egyptian grid reaches al -‘Arish, which is only 50 km away from the border with Gaza. The Egyptians will cover the cost of the grid reaching the Palestinian borders within the project at a cost of approximately 10 million dollars and the authority will convey electricity from the borders to the relay stations near the Gaza airport and the establishment of these stations alone will cost 20 million dollars.<sup>47</sup>

The most prominent issue during the year was the loss of electricity by approximately 200,000 families (750 thousand Palestinians) due to the destruction of the electricity power station in Gaza by the occupation authorities despite the guarantees not to damage the plant because it is a privately owned company in which an American company owns 30% of the shares. It is expected that the American shareholder will sue the Israeli government as it bombed an American investment and according to the agreements it is forbidden that the Israeli government should tamper with any American investments. The losses due to the shelling are estimated to be between 10 - 15 million dollars and with the addition of the process of rebuilding the plant the amount doubles. In addition, the estimated time needed to rebuild it is 3-6 months if new equipment is available.

On the other hand, work is being done on the gas export project; the Palestinian Authority had given the British Gas Company a license to implement this project in

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<sup>46</sup> The Energy and Natural Resources Authority.

<sup>47</sup> Survey by the Palestinian Central Bureau of Statistics.

Gaza and this project will constitute an important source of income in the future over the extent of ten years. This project will help solve a number of problems amongst which is the electricity problem as the bill paid for Israeli petrol to run the electricity company at the moment reaches approximately 10 million dollars monthly.

The petrol crisis in the PA territories was declared over when the Israeli “Dor” Company which provides PA areas with fuel resumed its provision. The company declared that the total bill for fuel reaches 80 million dollars and it is expected to be paid according to a timetable after the money is collected from the gas stations. The amount of fuel provided to the Gaza Strip through this mechanism was estimated at 3 million liters, thus it is estimated that the need for fuel reaches 15-20 million due to the need for electricity generation after the electricity plant was hit in the Gaza Strip.

### **Fifth: The Prisoners**

The occupying authorities have imprisoned approximately 700 thousand Palestinians since 1967 and 19/9 2006, which constitutes around 25% of the total population living in the Palestinian territories and they have imprisoned more than 50 thousand since the eruption of the Aqsa Intifada and they have detained more than 9850 prisoners amongst which there are 40 members of the Legislative Council (Parliament), and seven Ministers from the current government.<sup>48</sup> A report issued by the Prisoners’ Media Center exposed the fact that the number of prisoners in Israeli jails and detention camps reached 9200 whereas they had been 3368 in 2005<sup>49</sup>, distributed over 28 prisons and detainment centers. The percentage of prisoners from Jerusalem and the 1948 areas and the Arab prisoners reaches 6.2%. It should be noted here that there are 810 prisoners who were not accused of anything but were being kept in prison according to what is known as administrative detention in addition to 3,908 prisoners who have been detained without having been taken to court.

The Israeli raid on Jericho prison constituted a form of piracy and new type of aggression against the Palestinians, which aimed at complicating the situation and bargaining with the following prisoners’ lives – MP Ahmad Sa’adat the Secretary General of the Popular Front for The Liberation of Palestine, Fuad Shobaki, the member of the Fateh Movement’s Revolutionary Council and others. Some Palestinian circles considered this unethical action was due to an American, Israeli and British plot and the Negotiations Affairs Department had previously uncovered a proposal submitted by the PA to move the Secretary General of the Popular Front for the Liberation of Palestine and his comrades who were being held in Jericho prison to the PA Headquarters in Ramallah so that they would be under the supervision of President ‘Abbas without the international observers emphasizing that the Israeli government refused this proposition and went ahead with implementing the raid against Jericho prison. Previously a responsible source from the Popular Front for the Liberation of Palestine had called for the implementation of the sentence issued by the Palestinian High Court on 3/6/2002 which stipulated the immediate release of the Secretary General of the Front who had been imprisoned since 15/1/2002 and who was moved to Jericho prison with his four comrades, in addition to Fuad Shobaki as a

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<sup>48</sup> Statistical Report issued by the Ministry for Prisoners Affairs.7/4/2006.

<sup>49</sup> According to “Mandella” institution in its annual report concerning the situation of Palestinian and Arab prisoners in Israeli jails it is stated that 10,600 prisoners are in Israeli jails 112 of whom are women and more than 700 administrative detainees.

result of a deal with the PA at the time in order to lift the siege off the PA Headquarters during the Israeli incursion into Ramallah at the end of March 2002.

The Israeli occupying authorities intensified their random arrest operations and various sources indicated that prisoners were living in extremely dire circumstances that were deteriorating daily within the prisons in the light of the outrageous breaches by the Israeli prison authorities against Palestinian prisoners and their families that violate every single international convention and human dignity. Continuous warnings were issued that an explosion could erupt at any moment within the prisons due to these practices; and it was indicated that the deteriorating health conditions of the prisoners was the most dangerous of violations since they did not receive any treatment and the prison authorities followed a policy of procrastination, delay and lack of attention towards the prisoners' ailments.

Concerning the women prisoners, the Israeli authorities have imprisoned approximately 10,000 women since 1967, 500 of whom were imprisoned during the Aqsa Intifada. There are still 120 currently in prison and they constitute 1.3% of the total number of prisoners and five of them are younger than 18 years old. The women prisoners at Telmond held an open hunger strike and the news from the prison indicated that the 123 women were living in a "tomb for the living". There are 18 Palestinian mothers in the Israeli prison cells, while being denied the right to care for their children and a number of them are prevented from being visited as well. Some of the women prisoners have been under strict guard and security procedures, one of them being Samar Sbeih who gave birth to her first son Bara' under such procedures in addition to 3 other women prisoners who gave birth while in jail. They are: - Merval Tahawho gave birth to her son Wa'el and Manal Ghanem who gave birth to her son Nour and he is still in prison with her.<sup>50</sup>

Concerning the child prisoners, there are more than four thousand children who were imprisoned since the beginning of the Aqsa Intifada, and 330 children are still in prison, which constitutes 3.5% of the total number of prisoners. There are 348 children in various Israeli prisons and detention centers amongst whom there are five girl child prisoners, with the knowledge that 2% of the child prisoners are under administrative detention without any particular accusations while 63.5% are detained 33% are sentenced and 61% are detained in prisons inside Israel. 8% of the Palestinian child prisoners are female, 20% of who suffer from various illnesses. More than 600 Palestinian women and five thousand children were incarcerated during the Aqsa Intifada.<sup>51</sup>

News of the prisoners' extreme suffering and continuous humiliation and huge neglect at the desert "al-Naqab" prison has been arriving lately where there are poisonous insects and reptiles which have been causing the prisoners even greater suffering, with the knowledge that al-Naqab prison alone has more than 2400 prisoners in it, who carried out a hunger strike for two days on 15/7 in protest against the intensified punitive measures taken against them. Another strike was held on 16/8 against the inspection measures during which the prisoners' visitors were stripped naked.

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<sup>50</sup> Al-Quds Newspaper, 1/5/2006.

<sup>51</sup> Report issued by the Ministry of Prisoners' Affairs, April 2006

## **Torture in Israeli Prisons**

The number of martyrs amongst the prisoners reached 183 since 1967 due to torture or assassination after arrest or due to medical neglect. 72 prisoners were martyred due to direct assassinations after arrest and 69 fell due to torture practices in the dungeons of Israeli jails and vicious methods of interrogation, whilst 42 died due to medical neglect and lack of the necessary treatment.<sup>52</sup>

After seven years of the High Court of Justice decision which placed restrictions on torture it seems that the security apparatuses have continued along their old procedures and have even added new methods of torture. The interrogators use methods starting from keeping the prisoners hanging in the air from their chained hands or feet and ending with methods such as tearing out their beards or inserting objects in their anuses as was claimed within the “Public Committee against Torture” according to more than 40 complaints submitted by Palestinians who were interrogated within the past year only. The person who looks into the complaints is an Israeli intelligence “Shabak” officer who is under the jurisdiction of the public prosecutor. It seems none of the cases presented to him and which he examined qualified for the opening of a criminal investigation file with the interrogators. The “Shabak’s” answer was that “interrogations were held according to the High Court of Justice decisions with compliance to legal regulations and the supervision of the Ministry of Justice and Courts”.<sup>53</sup>

There are 165 methods of physical and psychological torture practiced by the Israeli forces against Palestinian prisoners and detainees, 111 of which are physical torture practices including beating to death, hanging from the feet, putting out cigarettes on prisoners’ flesh, placing prisoners in refrigerators, removing nails, violent shaking, placing pressure on the genitals, and placing salt or chemicals on the prisoners’ bodies.<sup>54</sup>

The Israeli Human Rights Information Center (Betsalem) refutes Israeli claims concerning the circumstances in which the martyr Hamada Ishtewi (18 years old) from the village of Kufr Kaddoum was executed, while emphasizing that according to a field investigation by the Center the Israeli forces had executed the young man in cold blood after arresting him on 26/7. The same Center also uncovered an ugly tyrannizing operation implemented by Israeli soldiers in a cruel fashion against Tha’er Muhsen after they detained him on 26/8 whereby the soldiers had videoed their actions on the young Palestinians mobile phone camera.

The Palestinian prisoner Baha’ Ahmad ‘Arameen (23 years old) from al-‘Ayzariyyah , who was arrested on 8/12/2005 stated that he was exposed to horrific torture since the first moment of his arrest from his home and during his period of interrogation at al-Makobiyya prison in Jerusalem, whereby the Israeli soldiers forced him to take off his clothes in the street during extremely cold weather, and after that he was blindfolded

<sup>52</sup> Report issued by the Ministry of Prisoners’ Affairs.

<sup>53</sup> Ha’aretz, Nir Hassoun, 8/11/2006.

<sup>54</sup> Study by the Documentation and Studies Center of the Released Prisoners’ Society.

and placed in the military vehicle with his hands bound behind his back after he was completely stripped of his clothes. One of the soldiers hit him on his sides with the butt of his gun and pulled his hair a number of times and used foul language injuring his honor. The soldiers then took him to the prison and photographed him while he was completely naked then they took pictures alongside him while he was blindfolded and with his hands bound towards his back. The prisoner said : “Each soldier did what he wanted, one placed his gun at my head and took a picture whilst the other on my neck and another on my back and another on my genitals, and all this was accompanied by cursing and personal derision. He was also raped during interrogation while his hands were bound towards his back with iron chains and they threatened him with the arrest of his father and indeed, his father was brought to al-Maskobiyya prison. Then the interrogators said “We will also bring your mother and sisters and do whatever we want with them in front of your eyes if you do not confess quickly”.<sup>55</sup>

Legal sources also uncovered that the interrogators at “Atzion” prison near Bethlehem use cruel methods of interrogation against the prisoners and that they let rabid dogs loose at them in order to terrorize them and extricate confessions by force. Most of the prisoners who were exposed to this kind of torture are children and most were forced to sign confessions which they had not submitted to even during the “ordinary” interrogation period. Ibrahim Husein Jaffal , 18 years old from Abu Dis said that he had confessed to throwing stones too after he was exposed to the bites of a vicious dog that the interrogators had let loose on him.<sup>56</sup> In April 2006 no less than 10 prisoners were severely injured while others were moderately and slightly injured and others choked due to the wide and vicious oppressive measures they were exposed to in Nafha prison after their rooms were raided. Ansar al-Sajeen Society announced that approximately 5000 soldiers participated in the raid and the oppressive measures that were concentrated in three departments of the prison.<sup>57</sup>

The Ministry of Prisoners’ Affairs emphasized on 7/4 that medical neglect is one of the weapons utilized by the Israeli prison administration to place pressures on the prisoners indicating that approximately 1100 prisoners are ill and are dying a slow death in the Israeli prisons.

## **Sixth: Commerce and Economy**

Preliminary results showed that the Palestinian balance of payments for 2004 indicated the existence of a deficit of 1.282 billion dollars at a percentage of 27.5% of the GDP. And the Monetary Authority expected at least a 15 % shrinking of the economy during 2006 and that the economy would be unable to revive itself unless the siege and blockade were lifted. The Palestine Capital Market Authority declared that it would not interfere with the Palestinian stock market as long as it remained under the dynamics of supply and demand even if the price of stocks kept falling, as the stability of monetary systems’ “capital and reserve deposits” is at a value of approximately 5.5 billion dollars since the end of last year and has not increased during the last years (the average growth per year should be between 8-15%) , which reflects the stagnant economic situation. As for the Authorities debts from Banks, the

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<sup>55</sup> Al-Ayyam, 27/4/2006.

<sup>56</sup> Al-Quds, 27/2/2006.

<sup>57</sup> al-Quds, 3/5/2006.

monetary authority has attempted to reduce its effects. The debts reached 620 million dollars last December and then receded to 480 million dollars after part of the debts were paid, which means that this amount will not constitute any threat to the security of the monetary system.

**Table 19: The main economic indicators in Palestine (in million Dollars) <sup>58</sup>**

Indicator	1994	1995	1996	1997	1998	1999	2000	2001	2002	2003	2004	2005	2006
Population no (in million)	2.36	2.45	2.55	2.84	2.95	2.08	3.22	3.38	3.47	3.64	3.82	3.82	3.63
GDP	2.83	3.50	3.88	4.18	4.46	4.95	4.58	4.40	3.78	4.22	4.46	4.46	4.19
GNP	3.22	4.06	4.55	4.91	5.62	6.13	5.47	4.91	4.16	4.76	4.95		4.54
GDP/capita	1.22	1.41	1.47	1.50	1.54	1.64	1.48	1.30	1.09	1.16	1.65	1.27	1.15
GNP/capita	1.388	1.63	1.73	1.77	1.94	2.03	1.77	1.45	1.19	1.30	1.29		1.25
Consumption	3.76	4.13	5.01	5.30	5.43	5.92	6.09	5.29	5.07	5.58	5.89		5.95
Private	3.18	3.64	4.23	4.15	4.23	4.65	4.87	3.97	3.81	4.46	4.72		4.75
Government	577	485	780	1.15	1.21	1.27	1.22	1.32	1.27	1.12	1.18		1.19
Unemployment%	25	18	24	20	14	12	14	25	31.3	25.6	26.9	23.5	2.41
Inflation%	14	11	8	8	5	5	3	1	5.7	4.4	3.0	2.8	3.76
Public Revenues	400	549	928	1.19	1.822	1.136	1.364	1.308	743	1.219	1.308	1.943	4.85
Domestic	268	411	684	816	922	901	964	581	335	701	947	1.208	2.25
Donations	132	138	244	306	330	235	400	765	408	519	361	735	2.60
Public expenditure	383	635	928	1.11	1.193	1.194	1.364	1.239	1.237	1.494	1.354	1.925	8.35
Current	297	501	710	790	819	927	940	1.016	1.025	1.231	897	1.036	832.9
Capital costs	85	134	218	323	375	267	424	222	212	263	457	614.4	2.24

<sup>58</sup> Source: Monetary Authority.



Deficit/surplus before donation or grants	114-	223-	243-	465-	439-	293-	400-	952-	-902	-792	-407	-717.1	-609.6
Total Deficit / surplus	17	-86	0	-159	-109	-58	0	-186	-493	-274	-46	17.8	
Goods and services exports	561	668	739	767	887	891	868	626	572	518	547		379.6
Goods and services imports	2·334	2·500	2·871	3·028	3·320	3·804	3·404	2·779	2·553	2·873	3·037		3105.1
No. of workers (in Thousands)	328	347	354	402	435	461	489	481	435	546	560	570	587

However, in the final analysis, the economic situation has deteriorated and approximately 1.4 million Palestinians entered the circles of poverty during the third quarter of 2006, whereby the numbers of the poor reached 1.3 million in 2005 and have risen to 2.7 million in the fourth quarter of 2006, who live under the poverty line at two dollars per day. The General Union of Palestinian Workers declared on 31/10 that workers had incurred great losses since the med of 2000 which reached more than 4 billion dollars. And the Deputy Secretary General of the Palestinian Industries mentioned that more than 2000 industries had closed down completely during this year and that the owners of 20 factories had moved them to other countries thus raising the number of immigrating industries to 40 factories during the past four years.

<sup>59</sup>

The Ministry of Economy has declared that the Palestinian economy is in a critical and dangerous situation due to the closure and siege imposed by the Israeli government; they also declared that the percentage of unemployment in Gaza has reached beyond 50% and that 74% of families, i.e. one million in the Gaza Strip live under the poverty line. The Ministry blamed the international community and especially the European Union for part of the responsibility for the deteriorating Palestinian economy due to its discontinued aid to a number of projects. The Ministry of Commerce and Economy also announced that since the outbreak of the second Intifada in September of 2000 the losses incurred had reached approximately 15 billion dollars. The Palestinian Economic Council and Development and Reconstruction (PECDAR) emphasized that the losses incurred by the Palestinian economy since the capture of the Israeli soldier are estimated to reach approximately 500 million dollars and PECDAR also estimated that the total amount of losses due to the closure and embargo imposed on the Palestinian territories since September 2000 to be more than 20 billion dollars in foreseen and unforeseen losses.

<sup>59</sup> Press Release, Palestinian Central Bureau of Statistics, 27/9/ 2006

Jordan. The Palestinian Authority and the Israeli Authorities declared on 12/10 the initiation of a feasibility study for the implementation of a project to transport water from the Red Sea to the Dead Sea to save the latter from recession and it was noted that France, Japan, Holland, and the US would fund the study at a value of 15 million dollars under the auspices of the World Bank.

## **Agriculture**

The Ministry officially received a project for agricultural greenhouses in the Gaza Strip from the Palestinian Company for Economic Development and also received aid from FAO in March to combat the bird flu epidemic , in addition the World Bank allocated 2 million dollars to compensate farmers who had to exterminate their fowl which were infected with bird flu. The Ministry also declared that it had completed the preparation of its guidance work plan for 2006 for the development of agricultural production.

The Ministry of Agriculture requested that the value of compensation allocated for the strawberry farmers are reconsidered due to the destruction and razing of their lands by the Israeli authorities, which was estimated at 50 dollars per durum, whereby the total area of lands that were razed reached approximately 19 thousand dumdums. Preparations are being made for the second phase of financial compensation whereby 7000 farmers will benefit from these amounts.<sup>60</sup> The losses of the agricultural sector due to the Israeli aggression on the West Bank and Gaza in July were estimated to reach 1.8 billion dollars.

The agricultural sector does not receive more than a mere 1% of the national budget which is an unwieldy percentage. The Ministry intends to establish a fund for agricultural development in Palestine with a capital depending on national budgets in addition to aid and grants from international and Arab development funds. The aims of the fund focus on preparing studies and presenting aid and funding some projects in the private sector in addition to supervision and fund management which is allocated to the support of farmers and providing seasonal and small loans for farmers.<sup>61</sup>

## **Tourism**

The Ministry of Tourism declared the fact that it has adopted the Palestinian document concerning the culture of tourism which was set by the Arab Ministerial Council for Tourism; and the Ministry has started an evaluation campaign of the Hotels and tourist facilities in addition to participating in archaeological and other scientific conferences. In addition it emphasized the government's decision to spend 50,000 dollars to decorate Bethlehem during the Christmas season. The Palestinian Central Bureau of Statistics also declared the results of the survey on local and foreign tourism in the Palestinian territories during the year, which indicated that 34% of Palestinian families went on local trips and that 11% of families received visitors from outside the Palestinian territories.

## **Industry**

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<sup>60</sup> Al-Ayyam, 9/5/2006.

<sup>61</sup> Al Ayyam, 22/2/2006.

More than 200 industrial establishments were closed down completely and the owners of 20 factories moved them to other countries during the year, so the number of migrant factories rose to 40 during the past four years,<sup>62</sup> with the knowledge that the total direct losses which the industrial sector incurred reached approximately 60 million dollars due to the repeated closures of the Mintar or Karni commercial Crossing which is the main venue for the entire commercial and industrial activity and movement. The Crossing was closed down 128 times during the year, 73 days of which it was totally closed pertaining to both exports and imports and 55 days of which it was closed to exports. This closure towards exporting goods resulted in losses estimated to be 80% of the total daily losses incurred related to the total closure of the Crossing. In addition, there are obstacles that the industrial sector faced due to the rise in prices of raw materials and the costs of transport, which reached at some points, 30 thousand NIS to transport a container from Ashdod port to the Crossing and the average of trailers moving exports daily during the year reached 15 trailers compared to an average of 80 trailers per day during the previous year (2005). As for the number of trailers importing goods they reached 175 compared to 400 trailers during the same period of comparison.<sup>63</sup> Factory owners additionally incurred losses due to having to store their goods at the ports until they were able to transfer them through the Crossing. The value of imports trapped in the store rooms inside and outside Ashdod port was estimated at 600 million dollars. This being in addition to indirect losses the industrial sector incurred due to lost opportunities and the inability of business owners to stand by their commitments towards contracting parties. Moreover there were losses due to a rise in the cost of running factories on generators after the Israeli occupying forces bombarded the Gaza electricity plant.

The Karni Crossing represents a dangerous material obstacle for Palestinian trade which causes unnecessary delays and causes damage to goods in addition to severely limiting the amount of incoming and outgoing goods at the Crossing. A World Bank report indicated that the Crossing actually acts as major non-tariff impediment for trade and that the Crossing has led to ineffective results on the financial level on both sides of the border due to lack of clear and predictable procedures. It seems that plans by the Israeli government to set up new Crossings in the West Bank like the Tulkarem Crossing which operates according to back to back loading as is implemented at the moment will pose a true impediment for the competitive movement of goods.<sup>64</sup>

### **Seventh: The Proposed Public Budget and Financial Situation**

The Ministry of Finance was handed over an empty Treasury with a debt of 1.772 billion dollars and external debts at the value of 1.061 billion in addition to the interest and installments reaching 66 million dollars and overdrawn accounts at the Banks at a value of 650 million in addition to 95 million for miscellaneous expenses. The present government has therefore laid the responsibility on its predecessor for the empty treasury and the immense load of debt, until the Minister of Finance from the previous government Salam Fayyad confronted these allegations in a detailed article which was published in the local newspapers.

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<sup>62</sup> Deputy Secretary General of the Palestinian Industries Union

<sup>63</sup> According to an Analytical Study issued recently by The Palestinian Trade Center (PALTRADE) on the performance of the Crossing.

<sup>64</sup> Al-Hayat newspaper, 23/12/2005 according to a study prepared by the World Bank.

**Table 20: The General summary budget for the year 2006<sup>65</sup>**

Expenditure		Income	
Local Income	289.15	<b>Running Cost</b>	
Transaction Income (clearing)	68.68	Salaries	1.181.00
Tax Income	205.68	Running Cost & others	384.14
Un Tax Income	83.89	Capitalist Cost	
Net Income	351.60	Public expenditure	1.573.62
External Fund	721.71	Net Credit	154.42
		Development Cost	8.48
		<b>Total public cost and net credit</b>	<b>1.728.04</b>
<b>Deficit</b>	-		

**Table 21: The General summary budget for the year 1998-2005 in million dollars**

Statement	1997	1998	1999	2000	2001	2002	2003	2004	2005	2006
General Income	1195	1822	1604	1364	1308	1148	531	806	1.058	-
Local income	684	754	901	964	581	581	205	298	396	289
Grants and assistance	369	330	235	400	117	578	747	650	1.171	-
Public expenditure	1213	1194	1194	1364	1677	1476	1278	1694	1.822	1.573
Running costs	818	853	953	940	1089	1096	1040	1444	1.952	384
Developmental costs	393	341	241	423	550	380	239	250	268	8.48
Deficit	159	109	58	Zero	526	328	747	888	-1,162	-

**Table 22: Financing**

External Fund	<b>721.71</b>
Other fund resources	<b>588.74</b>
Fund from merchant banks	<b>100.30-</b>
Net change in defrwert	<b>493.75</b>
Palestinian Investment Fund	<b>184.24</b>
Investment Fund / Monetary Insurances	<b>11.05</b>

The Ministry concentrated its efforts to find the funds necessary for covering part of the employees' salaries and on 5/4 it was declared that the government expected to

<sup>65</sup> Ministry of Finance. 2004 General Budget Proposal.

receive 80 million dollars from Saudi Arabia, Kuwait and the Emirates in aid in order to pay employees' salaries for March. A few days later the government declared that it was facing an International and Israeli boycott, which was the reason for the obstructed advent of Arab aid and prevented Arab countries from standing by their commitments. Recently, the dominant feeling is one of imminent economic collapse if the Arab countries do not interfere to stop an exacerbation of the crisis. An indication towards the depth of the crisis and the tightened siege is the fact that the government declared that it would not contradict the fact that the President would receive and manage the expenditure of international aid. The Minister of Finance suggested towards the end of May, that the government get rid of thousands of workers and employees in the government and that it sells some bonds in order to avoid a financial collapse; and the government declared that it had begun to pay 300 dollars to approximately 90 thousand employees, whose pay checks were between 1500 to 2500 NIS.

At a later stage the Higher Council for the Aqsa Fund in addition to the Islamic Bank for Development and in cooperation with the Palestinian Ministry of Finance presented a package of projects at a value of 100 million dollars to support the Palestinian people. In addition, Iran declared that it would offer to cover the salaries of employees in the various sectors for six months at a value of 120 million dollars. However, it was evident that there were severe obstacles in the way of Arab Banks' transfer of Arab funds that were allocated by the Sudan summit to the PA. Thus the problem became not one of collecting funds but of the methods of transferring them to the Palestinians due to the threats received by Arab Banks "from known parties" to place sanctions on them or to freeze these funds at some point during their transfer within the Palestinian territories. This has required that funds be transferred physically in cash and the Ministry has defended the fact that funds transferred by government Ministers and Hamas members of Parliament to the Gaza Strip via the Rafah Crossing is a legal and legitimate process as it has been done to prevent the starvation of the people.

The Finance Ministry expected that the Arab financial funds and projects would be implemented starting from September according to the decision by the meeting of the Arab Development Bank for Development which was held in April 2006 and which stipulated the dedication of 15% of the pure profits of the funds to the support of the Palestinian people whereby these percentages were estimated to reach approximately 64 million dollars. The Ministry submitted applications to the meeting of the Arab Ministers of Economy which was held on the 23<sup>rd</sup> of March 2006 for the support of the Authority with a sum of 60 million dollars per month. As for the support from the European Union, it reached 329 million dollars within a mechanism of temporary expenditure which does not go through the official government channels. Other reports have mentioned that the amount of European aid during 2006 was 865 million dollars, that is it increased by 27% in comparison with 2005, however without contributing towards salaries and thus towards the standard of living which has continued to plummet.<sup>66</sup>

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<sup>66</sup> Implementation of General Assembly Resolution 60/251 of 15 March 2006 entitled "Human Rights Council Report of the Special Rapporteur on the Situation of Human Rights in the Palestinian Territories occupied since 1967, John Dugard, and 29 January 2007.

The Ministry also declared that it formed a special committee to research the possibility of placing an independent tariff in order to face any new developments concerning the breaking of ties between the Palestinian and Israeli economies. The minister of Economy also declared the establishment of a Palestinian / Israeli coordination office with the aim of coordinating tasks for export and import operations into the Palestinian territories emphasizing that the office would work according to certain priorities and market needs. The Ministry also carried out inspection campaigns to protect consumer rights and guarantee a relative stability in prices. The Ministry placed responsibility on the security forces controlling the Sofia Crossing for allowing the trailer carrying expired wheat into the territories since this Crossing is allocated for the entrance of construction and not nutrition materials.

After tightening the closure the Israeli occupying forces carried out a systematic the largest raid of its kind on 20/9/2006 and confiscated approximately 6 million dollars when it raided financial institutions, jewelers and money changers in Ramallah, Nablus, Jenin and Tulkarem. These raids were accompanied by thefts and destruction of the premises of Banks causing sever losses that summed up to beyond a million dollars.<sup>67</sup> The finance Authority expressed its condemnation of these raids emphasizing that such behavior is in direct contradiction with the most basic principles of professionalism and international standards and conventions. The Ministry also indicated that the Authority is in the process of making an exact assessment of the financial amounts and checks that were seized. The fiscal Authority is seeking, in this respect, to finding a working procedure that would guarantee continuity of fiscal transactions while keeping contact with external fiscal bodies abroad in order to maintain the security of the fiscal system thus reassuring Palestinians and others concerned with the safety of finances deposited within the fiscal system.<sup>68</sup> An Israeli military spokesperson stated that approximately 5 million NIS (1.15 million dollars) and 170 thousand Jordanian Dinars and 240 thousand dollars were confiscated in addition to documents and computers during a series of raids that were implemented before dawn and in a synchronized fashion in various areas. The Banks strongly contradicted allegations by the Israelis that the funds that were confiscated were used for acts of hostility.

It should be noted that the Investment Fund played an important role in supporting the Public Treasury of the PA by transferring more than 300 million dollars to the Ministry of Finance during the past seven months only, in addition to presenting loan guarantees for the PA at a value 550 million dollars. In addition 144 million dollars were paid to the PA according to an interest distribution system mentioned in the Bylaws of the Fund for the years 2003-2005.

The Minister of Planning also declared that the average of what was paid to PA civil and military employees reached approximately 59% of the total sum of their pay checks due until November, which constitutes 5 full months of pay and he also emphasized that the amount of aid that reached the Palestinians since the formation of the current government was 318 million dollars of which 3 million were left with the Arab League and will be used to cover expenses for external medication. He also

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54 al-Quds newspaper , 14/9/2006

<sup>68</sup> al-Quds newspaper 21/9/ 2006

stated that the amount of aid that had been allocated through ministers or public figures reached 60.5 million dollars all of which had entered the Palestinian Treasury.

### **The Monetary Authority**

The Minister of Finance requested that the Monetary Authority grant him a loan of 100 million dollars according to article 36 of the Monetary Authority Law but the request was impeded by a number of legal conditions which culminated in its refusal. The Banks Association of Palestine had indicated that the Banks functioning in Palestine understood the size of the problem faced by the Palestinian Authority and the suffering that the employees are being exposed to due to the international blockade however, at the same time they understand it to be a political crisis that cannot under any circumstances be concluded at the expense of the Banks as they cannot take the place of the PA treasury by providing for the employees' salaries as this is not the role required of them in the first place.

In an indication of defense of the monetary system the Monetary Authority emphasized the fact that the main role of the Banks in Palestine is to develop economic sectors through their effective contribution of providing facilities to these sectors through transferring the savings of customers and reinvesting them, with the knowledge that the data of the Monetary Authority indicate that the amounts of Bank funding to the private sector had dropped.

**Table 24: Number of Banks and its Branches in Palestine <sup>69</sup>**

<b>Year</b>	<b>No. of Banks</b>			<b>No. of Branches</b>		
	National	International	Total	National	International	Total
<b>1995</b>	3	11	14	14	43	57
<b>1996</b>	4	13	17	20	51	71
<b>1997</b>	8	13	21	29	60	89
<b>1998</b>	9	14	23	40	65	105
<b>1999</b>	9	14	23	48	67	115
<b>2000</b>	9	13	22	52	68	120
<b>2001</b>	10	13	23	58	68	126
<b>2002</b>	10	11	21	59	68	127
<b>2003</b>	10	12	22	60	73	133
<b>2004</b>	10	12	22	62	73	135
<b>2005</b>	10	11	21	71	71	142
<b>2006</b>	<b>11</b>	<b>11</b>	<b>22</b>	<b>79</b>	<b>74</b>	<b>153</b>

<sup>69</sup> Monetary Authority.

**Table No.25: United Budget for the Banks Working in Palestine (Million Dollars)<sup>70</sup>**

	1996	1997	1998	1999	2000	2001	2002	2003	2004	2005	2006
Deposits	1707	2067	2390	2832	3470	3350	3275	3559	3869	4106	<b>4,112</b>
Facilities	424	613	822	992	1328	1198	937	1041	1384	1727	<b>1,822</b>
Outside assets	1393	1640	1775	2148	2316	2365	2509	2538	2619	2337	<b>2,431</b>

The Monetary Authority emphasized the fact that it had completed the formulation of a plan for the development of its tasks by issuing its regulations for the supervision of monetary policies that would guarantee fiscal and monetary stability. Emanating from these regulations was another declaration by the Monetary Authority that it would seek to gradually dispose of dealings in the Shekel in the medium term in preparation for complete discarding of dealings in this currency that will eventually be replaced by the Jordanian Dinar. The Monetary Authority database also indicated that the total amount of deposits in the Bank sector had diminished at the end of last year; the total amount of deposits had diminished from 4205 million to 4190 million at the end of December 2006, whereas there had been a notable increase in the value of capital paid to the Banks functioning within the Palestinian territories from 278 to 474 million. Some banks transferred part of their profits to be invested into their capital which consolidated the solidity of the Banking system.

The net total number of Bank branches reached 152 and the most that could happen in this aspect is the lack of further expansion in Bank activities concerning the opening of new branches. The accumulated value of profits by the Banks reached 120 million dollars by the end of last year and the value of property rights 530 reached million by the end of May which constitutes 10% of the total amount of credit , with the knowledge that Bank credit reached 5.6 billion , of which 4.6 billion are the total amount of deposits by customers , as for the amount of loans and credit provided to government employees , they had risen to over 320 million dollars and the facilities provided by the Bank system amounted to a sum total of 1.9 billion dollars in loans , one billion of which were provided to the private sector and 800 million to the Palestinian National Authority and its employees.<sup>71</sup>

In the same context, the Monetary Authority also disclosed a pending agreement between Banks functioning in the Palestinian territories and Israeli Banks which stipulates that the latter should work with local Banks and delay the obstruction of their monetary transactions in the Shekel for another few months.

### **Eighth: Justice**

There are still continuous problems between the Higher Council of Justice and the Ministry of Justice and this is manifested in the lack of supervisory limits and mechanisms in addition to the fact that the Judicial Authority's budget is submitted directly to the Ministry of Finance by the Higher Council of Justice without being transferred to the Minister of Justice first for review and all this apart from the lack of

<sup>70</sup> Monetary Authority.

<sup>71</sup> Statement by the Monetary Authority Director, al-Ayyam 29/7/2006



coded internal regulations concerning promotion or employment in judicial vacancies. The official papers published on 19<sup>th</sup> October 2006 decision no.1 by the Higher Judicial Council concerning the Basis for the Council's operation within its specialties however, the Council has not placed internal; bylaws or regulations that delineate the basis for its functions of the method of its practicing its specialties stipulated within the decision. Furthermore, there are still no internal monitoring procedures due to the lack of ratification of the working regulations of the Judicial Monitoring Department and the total number that should be issued by the Higher Judicial Council is estimated to be around 20 executive regulations.

Court proceedings and dealing with cases have been conspicuously slow and this is due to the fact that judicial bodies are not really complete and that there is a deficiency especially in judges in the Courts of Magistrates, First Instance and Appeals. Delay in dealing with cases also occurs due to the Israeli occupation's measures that impede the movement of judges and their arrival to their places of employment. The most prominent results of this situation were the emergence of customary and tribal law to the forefront and the activation of reconciliation committees in addition to a weakening of people's trust in the Judicial Authority.

The Head of the Higher Judicial Council refuted the allegations that President 'Abbas had anything to do with the release of the Head of the Public Petrol authority who was accused of embezzling millions of dollars, as the decision to release the accused raised widespread concern especially after the attorney general declared that he was not responsible for the decision to release the accused. In addition, it should be noted that the government refused this decision which it considered a precedent for allowing the accused to leave the country illegally. The Head of the Higher Judicial Council clarified the fact that the attorney general had taken up the investigation into the issue and that it was bound for court.

### **Ninth: Labor, Youth and Women's Issues**

The Ministry of Labor has discussed issues and challenges with the General Union of Palestinian Workers and the Minister of Labor declared that the government had renewed the contracts of 759 employees who were registered as unemployed within the program for the unemployed. The Ministry also signed a contract with the Islamic Bank for Development at a value of half a million dollars in favor of orphans, the elderly and the disabled. The Israeli authorities had released the Minister of Labor, Mohammad Barguthi, after having detained him for more than 48 days during which he was exposed to a brutal investigation in the cells of al-Mascobiyya prison in Jerusalem, after which he had to be admitted into hospital after deterioration of his health. The Ministry continued to pay the registered needy families subsidies in addition to new families who had registered as social cases due to the Israeli siege and closures 6000 families of which had registered in July alone. In May the Ministry had declared the resumption of work within the unemployment project according to standards guaranteeing a service to the public. At the end of April a rise in the percentage of unemployment in the Palestinian territories was announced. Percentages had reached 30% in Gaza and 20% in the West Bank in addition to conditions of tight financial and living standards.

The Ministry of Women's Affairs was concerned with concentrating its policies on activating the laws that support equality and equal opportunities between men and women in addition to stopping violence against women and finding methods for dealing with its reasons. However, disagreements continued between the Minister and the Deputy Minister as the former belongs to Hamas party and the latter to Fateh and the disagreements reached the press which complicated matters and was accompanied by a case of slander and an exchanged demand for apology which poisoned the environment in the Ministry and left it preoccupied with internal affairs.

### **Tenth: Freedom of Opinion and Expression**

The number of cultural institutions in the Palestinian territories reached almost 300 in 2005 distributed in the following manner – 216 in the West Bank, in comparison with 84 in Gaza and it is important to indicate that 127 cultural institutions were closed or have stopped their work 92 of which are in the West Bank.<sup>72</sup> In a new development the president and the prime minister agreed that the president present a proposal for the formation of a Higher Council for the Media, however, no practical procedure has been noted in this respect. It should also be noted that the Arab Council of Ministers of Culture agreed to the proposal presented by the Palestinian Ministry of Culture that Jerusalem be the Arab Cultural Capital in 2009, which requires a great deal of efforts at an early stage so that the event can be implemented appropriately. The Ministry also sent Palestinian youth delegations to Egypt so that they can attend training courses in cultural subjects. The Ministry had also established a Children's literature project in collaboration with the Ministry of Education & Higher Education and the Ministry of Information had announced the organization of a competition for the best documentary film under the title "Mondial 2006 and the Children of Palestine" which manifests the daily suffering of Palestinian children due to the Israeli practices.

**Table 26: Freedom of Expression Indicators<sup>73</sup>**

	<b>West Bank</b>	<b>Gaza</b>	<b>Total</b>	<b>Closed</b>
Newspapers	9	4	13	
Magazines	14	3	17	
Broadcast stations	16	5	21	13
TV. Stations	22	0	22	
Culture centers	122	52	174	39
Theaters	7	7	14	1
Cinemas	4	-	4	
Mosques	1246	545	1791	
Churches	320	10	330	
Museums	4	1	5	8
Public Libraries	20	11	31	9
Publishing houses	23	8	31	57

<sup>72</sup> Palestinian Central Bureau of Statistics

<sup>73</sup> Source: Census Bureau, 2005.

The Ministry of Information also called upon the International Journalists Union and the Human Rights defense organizations to show their solidarity with Palestinian journalists and to condemn the continuous Israeli violations. This came as a result of the martyrdom of 11 Palestinian journalists and the injury of 360 others since the outbreak of the Aqsa Intifada in autumn of 2000. An investigation carried out in London came to the conclusion that the shooting incident by an Israeli soldier at a British T.V. cameraman in the Gaza Strip was a murder crime as the Israeli soldier had shot James Miller in May 2003 in Rafah refugee camp while he was shooting a documentary film about Palestinian children who had fallen as a result of Israeli violence.<sup>74</sup> The spokesperson for the jury of the forensic court in London stated that according to the available evidence the jury had agreed by consensus that the shooting was illegal and had intended to kill James Miller.<sup>75</sup>

It should also be noted that the report by the International Human Right Solidarity Association on the violations against Palestinian journalists had registered a number of Israeli violations against the journalists, the most prominent of which were: -

- On 4/3/2006, the soldiers at the Jbara checkpoint south of Tulkarem attacked a number of journalists who had arrived to cover a demonstration against the Apartheid Wall.
- On 11/3/2006 the journalist Yusri al-Jamal who works at the Reuters news agency was injured in his foot due to an attempt at running him over with a military jeep while he was covering the Israeli army's incursion into a-Shyoukh town.
- On 12/3/2006 the settlers from "Yitzhar" attacked the car of the journalist 'Abdel Rahim al-Qusini, who is a Reuter's cameraman.
- On 16/3/2006 the Israeli soldiers attacked a number of journalists near Kalandia checkpoint while they were covering a demonstration on the occasion of the anniversary of the murder of "Rachel Corrie" the American activist who came to Palestine in solidarity.
- On 17/3 2006 the Israeli soldiers threw a tear gas bomb at a car belonging to the Reuters news agency while it was covering the demonstration against the Apartheid Wall in the village of Bil'in.

As for the internal aggressions against the media, some of the incidents registered were – shooting at a photo journalist in Ramallah, and a raid by armed gunmen on 23/3/2006 into a private T.V. station in Bethlehem and the destruction of its broadcasting equipment in addition to the computers and cameras. The Palestinian journalists union also mentioned that a number of Palestinian journalists received death threats in their e-mail or over the phone or fax due to their critical coverage of the Islamic Hamas movement activities since their government took over in March, an the spokesperson of Hamas denied these allegations that the movement had threatened journalists and that they were a malicious attempt at "blemishing Hamas' image".<sup>76</sup>

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<sup>74</sup> al-Hayat al-Jadida newspaper, 4/5/2006

<sup>75</sup> al-Quds newspaper, 7/4/2006

<sup>76</sup> al-Quds newspaper, 2/5/2006

## **Eleventh: The Ministry of Interior and Civil Affairs**

The Ministry of Interior's decision to form a special force directly affiliated to the Minister of Interior in order to support the police forces was the most problematic move that it took as it led to the outbreak of armed clashes between it and the other security forces and in particular the preventive and general intelligence forces in addition to the presidential guard. These clashes resulted in casualties and the burning of public property and the situation became critical to a point of preventing the Prime Minister's entourage from passing. This incident recurred in May when a checkpoint set up by the preventive security forces prevented a Hamas member of parliament and the prime minister's consultant from passing. They were beaten and their car was shot at. In addition, the deputy prime minister's entourage was exposed to gun fire on 10/12/ 2006 however, he was not harmed.

The Ministry also emphasized the fact that it had stood in the way of many cases of administrative and financial corruption and that it had sought to control expenditure in addition to forming investigation committees to expose those who murdered some officers working in the security organizations and those who participated in the aggression against public property , whereby they declared the arrest of individuals accused of murdering the military intelligence commander in the northern Gaza Strip. However, the Ministry announced the dissolution of the investigation committee which had been formed to expose the details of the murder of the five intelligence officers amongst whom was a brigadier general after the deputy general intelligence bureau commander in the West Bank accused the Ministry of hiding the evidence against the perpetrators in addition to neglecting and postponing the investigation.

The Ministry transferred the case of the head of the Public Services Employees Union to the attorney general so that he could take legal procedures against him after it became evident that this unionist body was illegal and did not have a license from the Ministry of Interior. It is relevant to indicate here that despite the fact that the preventative security forces referred to the Minister of Interior, they were in effect not cooperating at all with the Minister.

Due to the lack of security control it became evident that there was a security plan aiming at protecting health institutions and hospitals as there had been increased incidents of aggression against these institutions and their work teams. Also due to the increased incidence of the kidnapping of foreign journalists the Ministry declared the formation of a foreign journalists' protection department and the Minister of interior issued a decision on 22/11/ 2006 to expel any element from his security forces who is proven to have taken part in the kidnapping of any foreigners in the Gaza Strip and the Ministry of Interior also decided to implement strict security measures to protect Banks and in order to pursue the perpetrators of a raid against the Arab Bank Branch in Gaza.

The Civil Defense Force also implemented a series of investigation operations in order to make sure that gas distributors follow public safety procedures; this force covers its expenses and need for equipment etc. from grants by donor countries through participating in international conferences related to civil defense and through its other cultural and social ventures. In mid September an individual in Gaza burned

in front of the eyes of hundreds of citizens but the fire truck arrived after 35 minutes and after the man had lost his life.

The Ministry of Interior, on another instance, refused security coordination with the Israeli side considering this to be a rejected stand from the national point of view. In July, the Israeli occupying forces destroyed the Headquarters and premises of the Ministry of Interior in Nablus and destroyed all the registers and files of citizens; and the Israeli occupation's bulldozers continued to raze the headquarters over a number of hours. It is important to note here that more than 54 thousand Palestinians do not have any personal identification card which poses a sever problem; only a few of them were not registered since birth and the rest carry foreign nationalities and reside in the country on visitors' visas.

### **Twelfth: Foreign Affairs, Planning Refugees and Negotiation Affairs**

The Syrian government has officially agreed to allow 350 Palestinian refugees from Iraq to enter its borders as they had been trapped on the Syrian – Lebanese border since the beginning of the Israeli aggression against Lebanon. Then on 6/8/2006 the Syrians allowed 400 more refugees in. Swedish parliamentarians met with the Minister of Refugee Affairs in Stockholm which represented a precedent explained by the Ministry as an attempt to break the siege imposed on the government.

The Ministry of Planning finished preparing an emergency development plan in April for the next nine months including projects and emergency programs which will cost 1.95 billion dollars. High ranking sources at the Ministry warned that there was an increasing rate of immigration by Palestinians due to the crisis within the Palestinian arena and the lack of salaries.

### **Thirteenth: Jerusalem**

The number of the Israeli occupation's checkpoints within Jerusalem and its entrances has increased greatly in addition to the permanent "terminals" that separate the West Bank from Jerusalem. These checkpoints are being used as snares to catch Jerusalemites accused by Israeli departments of avoiding the payment of taxes imposed on them or those accused of avoiding Israeli courts. The length of the Jerusalem border (which extended in 1997 from Beit Iksa to Gilo – i.e. 36km) has now become 194 km. As for the length of the Israeli Separation Wall it reaches double the length of the armistice lines of 1949 which is 315 km.

At least 17% of Jerusalemites have changed their place of residence since 200, as they have been forced to do so due to the effects of the Wall on their life and the loss of their right to freedom of movement, which is mainly violated due to the construction of the Apartheid Separation Wall in their areas which has deprived them of their basic rights such as education and health services.<sup>77</sup>

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<sup>77</sup> Study on the effects of construction of the Separation Wall in the West Bank , The Palestinian Center for Citizens' Rights, "Refugees Due to the Wall" (Badil, Dec. 2006)

An important judicial precedent was the Central Court's issuance of a decision in Jerusalem, which cancels the consideration of the property of Palestinians from the West Bank and Gaza Strip in East Jerusalem as submitting to what is called the Israeli "Absentee Properties' Custodian". This decision is considered an important legal victory as it preserves the property of Palestinians living outside Jerusalem from being confiscated by the "Absentee Properties' Custodian". The judge emphasized the fact that the Israeli government could not use decisions that would snatch away property from its rightful owners who are under Israeli occupation in the West Bank while considering them absentees. The judge used the term Israeli military occupation for the first time in his decision and he said that the Palestinians in the West Bank who are under Israeli occupation cannot be placed under special laws by the Israeli government for their properties while it uses others for the rest of the property owners elsewhere or the implementation of a military law on the inhabitants and another law on property. He also expressed his incredulity at the fact that the Israeli General Prosecutor had stated that the West Bankers should submit to the Absentee Property Owners' Law and that they are governed by an enemy Arab state. Legally, this decision by the Central Court is considered an annulment of the forceful "unification" of the two sides of Jerusalem, the Eastern and Western sides, and it prohibits the consideration of property of owners of lands in Jerusalem who are from the West Bank and Gaza Strip, as Absentee Property.<sup>78</sup>

The number of Jerusalemites' ID cards confiscated between 1967-2004 was a total of 6,684 and the number of houses demolished in 2005 (within the Israeli Municipal Boundaries) of the Jerusalem governorate was 94 houses. The number of families that were dislocated due to the construction of the Wall was 1,635 families due to the building of the Separation Wall and the number of displaced persons in the governorate reached 9,609 individuals, and the area of expropriated land 11,100 dunums. The population of Jerusalem at the end of 2005 reached approximately 402,000 distributed as follows: - 251,000 in the areas of (the boundaries of the Israeli municipality), which includes the lands annexed by the Israelis after 1967 and 152,000 in the (Jerusalem governorate) including the rest of the areas of the governorate and the population constitutes 10.5% of the total population in the Palestinian territories.

The Ministry of Islamic Waqf warned of the Israeli authorities' plan to cancel the Maghariba Gate in Jerusalem and to remove the hill leading up to it upon the pretext of searching for archaeological ruins, in order to change the status quo within the Wailing Wall plaza which will threaten the foundations of the al-Aqsa Mosque. The Israeli mayor explained that they would not tear down al-Maghariba Gate which leads to al-Aqsa Mosque and his justification for the works being undertaken was that pylons and a bridge were being placed in order to make access from al-Maghariba Gate into the al-Aqsa Mosque easier since the mound on which there is a path leading into the Mosque was affected by the 2004 earthquake and snow and has gaps in it. The Jerusalem Affairs Ministry had hardly started its work when the occupation authorities perpetrated a crime against the rights of the Minister for Jerusalem Affairs and the four parliamentarians from Jerusalem (Khaled Abu 'Arafah, Muhammad Abu Ter, Muhammad Totah and Ahmad 'Atwan), their blue ID cards were confiscated and a decision was taken to force them to leave Jerusalem. The Minister and the three

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<sup>78</sup> Al-Quds newspaper, 25/1/2006, Att. Muhannad Jbara, Expert on Land and Property.

parliamentarians presented a plea on 22/8 to the Central Court in Jerusalem against the decision to exile them from the City, thus the Minister was abducted and imprisoned.

### **The Palestinian Central Bureau of Statistics (PCBS)**

The PCBS declared the estimated number of Palestinians in the world at the end of 2005 and it issued a statistical report on the situation of the Palestinian people on the occasion of the anniversary of al-Nakba – the Catastrophe of 1948. The PCBS implemented a number of surveys and activities some of which were – a survey of cultural institutions in 2005, data on the occasion of the international water day, results of the surveys on local and foreign tourism, electricity, and the number of children registered in Kindergartens and summer camps.

It should be noted that a presidential decree was issued ordering the formation of a consultative council for the Bureau including representatives of the various government ministries in addition to representatives of civil society.

### **The Judaization of Jerusalem**

The City of Jerusalem has been exposed during this period to intensive Judaization and settlement campaigns , the most important of which was the deal between the Israeli government and settler organizations to grant the latter the big building which housed a police station in the Ras al-‘Amoud neighborhood in Jerusalem. Various sources also exposed that the Jerusalem Municipality had allocated a budget to cover the expenses of demolishing houses owned by Palestinians under the pretext that they were not licensed. In addition, the Jewish Neighborhood in the Old City of Jerusalem Development Company advertised a tender for contractors to establish a settlement near the Wailing Wall.

Settlement is expanding at an alarming rate according to a methodology aiming at exploiting the international community’s disregard of Israeli violations. The number of settlements in Jerusalem has reached 34, 16 of which are within municipal boundaries and there are another 18 within the Jerusalem governorate boundaries. The occupying authorities confiscated 71 thousand dunums from the beginning of the second Intifada till autumn 2006 for the benefit of the expansion of Israeli settlements in Jerusalem and the building of the Apartheid Separation Wall.<sup>79</sup> Rightist groups are administering a wide purchasing campaign for the largest amount of lands in East Jerusalem in order to populate the largest number of Jews within the heart of Palestinian neighborhoods. Two societies are taking a central role in finding property , they are - “Gil’ad” society which mainly works in the Silwan area where it owns around 30 buildings in which there are 40 Jewish families; and – “Ateret Kohanim” which is mainly concerned with buying buildings in the Islamic quarter in Jerusalem and it now owns 31 buildings within the Old City.<sup>80</sup>

The occupying authorities have prepared a plan to establish a city that can constitute a regional extension between Jerusalem and Maale Adumim and the construction of a

<sup>79</sup> Study published by Arij Institute on Israeli Settlement

<sup>80</sup> al-Quds newspaper, 18/5/2006.

Wall around it which will lead to its annexation to Jerusalem along with the areas surrounding it. It is assumed that the aim of the Israeli government is to sever the area upon which the Palestinian state is planned to be built into two sections that are totally non contiguous.<sup>81</sup>

In addition they have set up a military base for the border police forces called “Mitzodat Adumim” and this constitutes a dangerous step as it can be only interpreted as if they have implanted a wedge in the area that will result in isolating Jerusalem from the neighboring West Bank areas and the severing of all communication with them. In a rare precedent, the Israeli High Court of Justice acknowledged the legality of amending the citizenship law which prohibits preventing West Bankers from the right to permanent residency in Jerusalem within a framework of family unification procedures, as the law does not explicitly acknowledge human dignity or freedom or equality and the right to marry apart from freedom of expression as a constitutional right, and this decision could lead to the revocation of the law. Despite the fact that most of the judges in the court stated that the law is harmful with regards to legal rights, each law that does not take the humanitarian aspect into consideration should be added to the series of implacable laws that remove the Israeli state light years away from the basic principles declared in the document declaring the state and transform it from an enlightened state to one that is discriminatory and that persecutes foreigners and minorities.<sup>82</sup> At the same time, during its fifty eighth year of independence, this state is still incapable of placing borders for itself or for its nature.

Moreover, Israel is continuing its aggressive measures against the historical Islamic cemetery in Jerusalem called “Ma’man Allah” which is approximately 220 dumdots and which has been encroached upon by the Israeli authorities until its area was reduced to a mere 20 dumdots. The Israeli authorities now plan to build what they call the “Tolerance Museum” on the lands of the cemetery and they have collected a sum of \$250 million for this project from the States.<sup>83</sup>

It is important to note here that there are decreasing numbers of Christians in Jerusalem; the number in 1944 was approximately 130,000 whereas at the moment it hardly reaches 10 thousand constituting only 4% of the total number of Jerusalemites. The number of Christians in Palestine has also decreased since 1967 till now by at least two thirds until their number does not reach beyond 2% of the whole population.<sup>84</sup>

Within the same context, the Israeli forces have placed strict restrictions and obstacles in the way of members of the various Christian denominations during Easter, who cannot reach Jerusalem in order to participate in Easter celebrations.<sup>85</sup> Some Christian monks and people praying were injured due to an attack by the Israeli occupation forces in the vicinity of the Holy Sepulcher, after the soldiers and policemen tried to prevent them from participating in the “Light Saturday” celebrations. The Head of the Christian National Congress explained that the soldiers

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<sup>81</sup> Amir Schwan, Yerushalayim newspaper, 12/5/2006.

<sup>82</sup> Yael Gvirtz, Yediot 15/5/2006.

<sup>83</sup> Al-Quds newspaper, 22/3/2006.

<sup>84</sup> Al-Sabil Conference on Christian Presence within the Palestinian Territories.

<sup>85</sup> Al-Quds newspaper, 1/2/2006.

<sup>86</sup> Al-Quds newspaper, 26/4/2006.

<sup>87</sup> Al-Ayyam newspaper, 8/2/2006, Meir Margalite.



started beating up the monks and people who had congregated around the Holy Sepulcher and they injured a number of them during attempts at preventing them from entering the church.<sup>86</sup>

The Roman Orthodox patriarchate in Jerusalem disclosed the fact that there was an Israeli plan to weaken the church and Christian presence in Jerusalem and they condemned the smear campaigns against their legitimate Patriarch emphasizing the fact that the occupation authorities were behind these campaigns in an attempt to pressure him into giving up the Church's property and trusts. The Patriarchate also emphasized that it would take legal action to stop these campaigns against the Patriarchate and the Church.<sup>87</sup>

### **Strengths:**

1. Despite the obstacles and impediments responsible parties continue to achieve success in making contact by telephone.
2. The criminal Israeli destruction of the electricity plant and generators in the Gaza Strip ended a success story abruptly and this issue should be followed up despite the obstacles.
3. The agreements concerning the Red Sea/ Dead Sea Canal are considered a positive development, however it is urgently necessary to review the items of the agreement in order to emphasize that Palestine will gain its just share of benefits from this project.
4. The agricultural greenhouse project established in the liberated lands in Gaza is still considered a success despite the fact that it has been aborted due to the Israeli policies of siege and closures.

### **Weaknesses:**

1. The long term strike by the employees in the public sector has constituted a sever blow to the credibility of the government and its status, as it has been portrayed as incapable of coping with the humanitarian crisis even though this strike is categorized within a political environment that has targeted the government.
2. The file for transfers abroad for treatment is still drawing a great deal of criticism , and the main comment is that it would be much better to upgrade one or more hospitals locally so that they can absorb patients and offer treatment of these cases . The economic feasibility of such a project is much better on a national scale than transferring patients abroad. It would also be useful to mention the necessity for the establishment of a complete system of health insurance which would rationalize health expenditure.

- 3.** The government has not done enough to treat the violence phenomenon and especially violence within schools whether by teachers towards their students or by students towards society. There is no doubt that stopping violence within schools is the basis for stopping the rising violence within Palestinian society. In addition, there has been no true revision of the curricula and they have not been modernized enough neither have the teaching methods which have been utilized since decades.
- 4.** Concerning university education, there does not seem to be a plan that takes the needs and abilities of students into consideration and this is applicable to individuals, specializations and levels.
- 5.** Accidents and victims due to road accidents are considered of a high rate. In addition, drivers behave aggressively and violate driving regulations – thus the pertinent question is: Does the Ministry of Transport take the necessary measures concerning raising awareness of the dangers of irresponsible driving and inform citizens of the penalties in order to keep this phenomenon in check?
- 6.** Half of the Palestinian communities are still without water networks and one third is without sewage systems. Efforts should thus be made within a planned timeframe to deal with this situation.
- 7.** The cases of encroachment on government lands and especially within the Gaza Strip have reached an outrageous scale and the government should not deal with this situation with leniency as it has ethical, economic, social and legal repercussions. In addition, the land departments in the various governorates have not taken effective measures to prevent fraud and encroachments on the land sector in general including private property, which has left the arena open for solving contention over land by violence and forgery.
- 8.** The prisoners' issue is still being dealt with as if it is an issue of numbers and it has not been dealt with according to a methodology of resistance to Israeli practices by depending on demonstrating the repugnance of criminal Israeli measures against them.
- 9.** Neither the Ministry of Finance, nor the fiscal authority or the Ministry of Foreign Affairs or the government have taken any measures on an international scale to stop Israeli piracy against the Banks and monetary exchange institutions or against their appropriation of Palestinian money without any justified reason.
- 10.** Palestinian intervention in Jerusalem is always belated in contrast with Israeli measures, which has left the arena open for the Israelis to Judaize the City at an accelerated rate, whether on the level of citizen's rights or their properties or at the level of holy sites which have lately been targeted more than at any other time.

### 1.1.3 The Security Forces

There is no doubt that the last third of the year 2006 should be considered a period of violence and chaos and one in which there was a lack of Rule of Law. In addition, it was a year characterized by lack of security, internal strife, aggression against private and public property, chaos and kidnappings. One of the indicators of this deteriorated situation is the registration of 27 cases of aggression against journalists throughout the year. December 2006 represented a dangerous turning point in the number of incidents indicating loss of control over security in the West Bank and Gaza within the background of the bloody political struggle between Fateh and Hamas<sup>88</sup> and especially those related to kidnappings, aggression and murder, which involved 34 citizens> In 2006 on the whole 322 citizens fell as a result of lack of control over security, 41 incidents within which individuals were murdered due to contention of a political nature and a number of cases were “honor killings”<sup>89</sup>.

It was evident that the most important arena of conflict and disagreement would be over the security forces due to the polarization which had started to take place since the beginning of the year. This was not only due to the security forces’ importance in bolstering both sides and consolidating their standing but also due to the big security vacuum which was the most important feature characterizing the internal situation. Thus it was natural for a new term to enter the Palestinian political dictionary – “armed men” who kidnap, shoot, burn and destroy public and private institutions. An example of this is the participation of over 20 armed men in the closing down of the European Union’s office in Gaza in protest against the publications of derogatory caricatures against the prophet Muhammad, demanding that the European governments apologize for this offensiveness. Another group declared its responsibility for kidnapping the military consultant at the Egyptian Ministry of Foreign Affairs, and another armed faction raided the premises of the legislative council and destroyed the furniture and contents of the building in protest against the lack of salaries. Due to the murder of the leader of the popular resistance committees in Gaza and the occurrence of armed clashes resulting in the loss of lives, the spokesperson for the Salah ul-Din brigades accused leading personalities of their involvement in the killing and the accused responded that the accusations were directed towards the instigation of turmoil. An investigation committee was formed and armed men were taken off the streets after a meeting on 1/4/ 2006 including the Minister of Interior and the various security forces.

The most important blow however, that the Palestinian security forces and the PA experienced in general was the raiding of the prison in Jericho and the kidnapping of Ahmad Sa’adat, the Secretary General of the PFLP and his comrades, in addition to a group of other prisoners and prison guards after the occupying forces tore down the prison with bulldozers. What is more, a humiliating scene was broadcast on all satellite channels in which individuals from the Palestinian police force were shown in their underwear after the occupying forces had forced them to take off their uniforms. The collusion between the European and the British guards and the occupation forces aroused Palestinian anger, as the guards had withdrawn quietly after coordinating with the Israelis so that the latter could carry out their pirate raid. The

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<sup>88</sup> Report prepared by the PICCR.

<sup>89</sup> PICCR statistics.

repercussions of this raid shattered what had remained of the Palestinian security forces' dignity and the PA in general as they showed up the illusion of the PA. Immediately afterwards armed men in Gaza carried out 9 kidnappings targeting foreigners from various nationalities in protest against the raiding of Jericho prison, however they were all released later.

Circumstances within the internal arena continued to deteriorate drastically towards the unknown. And on 22/5 an employee at the Jordanian Embassy was killed and others were wounded during armed clashes in the streets of Gaza between factions with various affiliations. Before this incidents several others had taken place in the form of open armed clashes resulting in 3 victims on 8/5/2006; the head of the intelligence forces was heavily injured and one of his escorts was killed in addition to the injury of 10 others in an explosion that shook the building housing the intelligence department. On 4/6 four victims fell as a result of armed clashes between the two sides. An officer in the preventive security forces was also shot and another had his bones broken after he was kidnapped by armed men. In addition, Muhammad Dahlan's nephew, who is an intelligence officer, was killed by armed men in Gaza and the head of military intelligence in the northern section of Gaza was killed by unknown armed men.

Kidnapping of journalists and foreigners continued; in mid August two journalists working with the American news agency Fox News were kidnapped by masked gunmen in Gaza City. Attempts at reaching a solution concerning the issue of infighting between security forces affiliated to the President and the executive force affiliated to the Minister of Interior failed, and the accompanying state of chaos continued including theft and transgression against private and public property such as a raid by armed men against a car carrying money for al-Quds Bank in Bethlehem. The worst incident was the explosion of a bomb in front of the Prosecutor General's home in Gaza. On 4/8 a masked armed group wearing military attire raided the intelligence department jail in Jericho and killed 6 prisoners on the background of a family feud, which forewarns and indicates the degree of severe deterioration within the security situation and especially since the judiciary does not move to conclude vengeance issues. And on 14/9 unidentified gunmen murdered 5 cadres of the general intelligence forces. On 1/10 as a result of the worst clashes between the two poles and their security forces 9 individuals were killed and 90 were injured. A day later 3 innocent citizens were killed due to a resumption of clashes, which were followed by liquidations on 12/10 and 18/10. The developments indicated that the atmosphere was becoming increasingly tense and on 11/12 a horrible crime was perpetrated against four children, three of whom were the children of a colonel in the intelligence forces and the assassination of an employee at the Islamic jurisprudence court in Gaza. In addition, the incidence of home sieges and the launching of missiles and mortars increased, apart from shootings at the houses of activists from both sides without any consideration to the civilians being injured. The only good thing was that this type of incidents did not occur in the West Bank except for a few cases. Within the same context, many incidents of family revenge occurred as people took advantage of the chaotic situation and cases of mass kidnapping also took place due to the internal strife and some were based on family feuds or financial disputes.

The deputy director of the general intelligence forces in the West Bank declared that a gang of swindlers who had operated under the cover of a fake charitable society was caught. In addition, the security forces had monitored cases in Ramallah of citizens being exposed to regular blackmailing by gangs and individuals seeking to gain exorbitant amounts of money after threatening citizens with insinuation at their personal security or by threatening the security of their families or by threatening their dignity or honor. They also revealed the fact that some collaborators had phoned owners of houses telling them that their house was about to be shelled and this vindictive trick had affected approximately 65 individuals. After continuous efforts, the criminal investigations department was able to arrest a con man who had masqueraded as the ambassador of Palestine in Australia. In addition, the general intelligence forces revealed the details of a murder crime, the victim of which was a 35 year old woman from Nablus and her 37 year old husband admitted to committing the crime. The same forces also arrested a number of individuals accused of being involved in cases of theft, fraud and the sale of expired foodstuffs. Additionally, the same forces revealed a theft incident which took place at the Dura municipality where the archives department was set on fire.

#### **Strengths:**

1. Despite all the disadvantages and faults within the security system, it was able on the social level, to achieve important steps forward by revealing a number of armed robberies or by arresting gangs involved in swindling, fraud or blackmail.
2. The security forces also succeeded in following up on and revealing cases of collaboration with the Israeli authorities and have thwarted Israeli attempts at ensnaring simple citizens into spying for them.
3. In general, the security forces remained outside the framework of factional strife and sustained their restraint and continued to serve society in a regular and professional way, despite the many wrong doings of marginal stray sectors that had influence . The security forces still have to purify their ranks of such elements and to isolate them so that they can carry out their honorable national duty.

#### **Weaknesses:**

1. There is no doubt that the year 2006 and especially the last third of the year was one of violence and chaos manifested in lack of security, in-fighting, transgression against private and public property and lack of freedom of expression, killings, murders and kidnappings. It was the year in which Palestinian ethics were targeted and it overshadowed the historic struggle for the Palestinians and the history of the whole struggling nation.
2. Everyone should take responsibility for this and it is a great responsibility

without doubt as it is one of leaders who were unable to practice their leadership properly and of elements who perpetrated violence whilst transgressing all laws and regulations and even ordinary individuals who were not provided by others with a good example to follow.

3. Allowing the country and society to reach to the brink of internal strife and its practice in effect, whilst the occupation is in its turn becoming even more viciously aggressive, is not only considered a violation of Palestinian blood and its sanctity, but should also be considered weak leadership of the first count. This responsibility should be shouldered by the leadership no matter what their color or rank. A true leadership should never allow a situation to come to this and it should provide the elements that prevent reaching such a situation no matter how intense external interventions are in favor or against one side or the other.

4. The attacks against private or public property such as the PLC building or the prime minister's office, the ministries and public security institutions are all extremely negative phenomena that have no excuse whatsoever; and this lack of restraint and maintenance of regulations only leads to damaging Palestinians' image and their cause. Moreover, the escape of these elements from any form of punishment can only be considered equivalent to the legalization of such actions.

5. Allowing the Israeli occupying forces to surround Jericho prison and kidnap Palestinian leaders and humiliate their guards left an indelible mark of shame, even though the greater shame should be laid on those who perpetrated this crime and those who collaborated with them and especially the international guards who carry the legal responsibility for the prisoners.

6. The phenomenon of kidnapping foreigners indicates the low level these futile practices have reached and that they do not achieve anything other than damaging the Palestinian people's image, ethics and struggle.

**Table 27a: Deaths in Palestinian Detention Centers according to 1994 – 2005<sup>90</sup>**

Year	Gaza	West Bank	Total	Percentage
1994	1	0	1	3.2 %
1995	4	5	9	29 %
1996	1	2	3	9.7 %
1997	2	4	6	19.4 %
1998	0	2	2	6.4 %
1999	0	1	1	3.2 %
2000	0	1	1	3.2 %
2001	3	2	5	16.1 %
2002	3		3	9.6%
2003	0	0	0	0
2004	0	0	0	0
2005	0	0	0	0

<sup>90</sup> Palestinian Human Rights Monitoring Group and Other sources; List of Deaths in Palestinian Detention Centers.

<b>2006</b>	0	0	0	0
<b>Total</b>	<b>14</b>	<b>17</b>	<b>31</b>	<b>100%</b>

**Table 27b: Deaths by Palestinians and Palestinian security forces from September 29, 2005 -December 31, 2005**

<b>Way of Death</b>	<b>Number of Deaths</b>
<b>Killed while in detention</b>	<b>6</b>
<b>Executed</b>	<b>2</b>
<b>Accidental killings</b>	<b>121</b>
<b>Palestinians and Palestinian security forces</b>	<b>28</b>
<b>Total</b>	<b>157</b>

**Table 28: Deaths in Palestinian prisons according to the Security Apparatus 1994-2005**

<b>Apparatus</b>	<b>Gaza</b>	<b>West Bank</b>	<b>Total</b>	<b>Percentage</b>
<b>General Intelligence</b>	5	11	16	%51
<b>Preventive Security</b>	2	6	8	25.8 %
<b>Military Intelligence</b>	3	3	6	19.4 %
<b>Crime Police</b>	3	2	5	15.5 %
<b>Naval Police</b>	0	1	1	3.1 %
<b>Force 17</b>	1	0	1	3.1 %
<b>Total</b>	<b>14</b>	<b>17</b>	<b>31</b>	<b>100 %</b>

#### 1.1.4 The Local Government

The local authorities suffer from badly deteriorating economic conditions and a fiscal crisis that is threatening the continuity of some of these authorities whilst others have stopped offering services which has caused environmental and health problems. At the same time, municipal employees are clamoring for their salaries and there have been continuous cases of aggression against mayors and heads of local councils and their houses or properties on political grounds at times and due to protests against decisions made by the councils at others. The employees at Ramallah municipality suspended their services in protest against a shooting incident at the municipality building and at the mayor's car and the house of one of its employees at dawn on 20/1/2006. This also recurred at the Bireh municipality and at the Qalqilya and Birzeit municipalities. On the other hand, it was declared that local councils in the West Bank and Gaza received emergency aid at a value of 9 million shekels in order to pay employees' salaries.

The issue of carrying out the continuation of the elections for the local councils that did not have any local elections yet is still pending and the Central Elections Committee has declared that it began to prepare for the fifth and final stage of the local elections in 62 communities in the West Bank and Gaza.

On the other hand, the Local Governance Ministry has published a directory of the heads and members of the Palestinian local councils and authorities and many local councils have signed a code of conduct for heads and members of the local councils and authorities and their employees.<sup>91</sup>

A number of local councils have declared that the Israeli authorities buried tens of thousands of poultry infested with a contagious disease (80,000 birds - it is suspected that it is bird flu) within the Palestinian territories.

#### **Strengths:**

1. The local councils were not exempted from the policy of international punishment against their democratic choice and aid was withdrawn from them. However, these public institutions have continued to present their services to the Palestinians within the means available to them.
2. Despite the fact that most of the members of the local councils and municipalities are new and held responsibility for the first time after the municipal elections, municipal affairs are being dealt with in a regular and expected fashion considering the emergency situation which Palestinian society is experiencing.
3. As a result of the elections it has been noted that a higher number of women have achieved membership in the local councils and some of them have become

<sup>91</sup> This is an effort carried out by the Arab Thought Forum as part of the "Aman" coalition projects.



mayors.

**Weaknesses:**

1. The Lack of security has resulted in the delay of completing the final phase of the municipal elections which was supposed to be carried out at the beginning of the year. This phase will be carried out once the security situation is more appropriate.
2. There is no doubt that the international impediments which have reached the level of preventing the provision of drinking water to hundreds of thousands of ordinary Palestinians and the collection of refuse, is an indication of levels that international policies can reach in their denial of human rights. On the other hand, the heads of local councils and mayors and their employees have signed a code of conduct expressing their commitment to serving their people with integrity.
3. The local councils and mayors have also been affected by the lack of security and have been exposed to raids, damage and their heads and members have been exposed to acts of aggression against their person and property.

### **5.1.1 The Financial and Administrative Monitoring Bureau**

Efforts are currently being made to build the structure and teams of the Financial and Administrative Monitoring Bureau and to formulate its activities and fields of work. President 'Abbas had assigned the head of the administrative and financial monitoring bureau to carry out the financial auditing on all institutions that were subject to his monitoring and the final report by the bureau was completed , however it has still not been published.

In light of the new law related to the Financial and administrative Monitoring Bureau which was ratified in 2004 the Bureau has the authority to audit the income and expenses of a whole range of institutions beginning with presidential institutions and extending to the public employee and legislative, executive and judicial institutions in addition to institutions and companies in which the authority is a partner; and local authority institutions, security institutions , societies , trade unions and general unions in addition to all institutions that administer public finances or quasi-public finances such as universities and colleges. The Bureau will also supervise the loans and grants presented to the PA and will monitor the institutions and non-governmental organizations, the security forces and local government through a ratified action plan. However, with the existence of only 97 employees within the Bureau in Gaza and 30 others in the West Bank , the Bureau will not be able to move forward as its plan requires at least 370 employees to be implemented properly.

Dr. Mahmoud Abu el-Rub , Head of the Administrative and Financial Monitoring Bureau emphasized the fact that he had presented a recommendation to the President requesting him to issue a decree calling for the reduction or cancellation of many unnecessary expenses related to rental for houses, apartments and cars or treatment for illness abroad and many other issues. The Bureau requested the President to begin implementing the Law on Illegal Gain starting from the presidency by making every employee in public service commit to it. This law includes a documented declaration of fiscal holdings and properties owned by the employee and his wife and children. It should be noted that approximately 90% of the PLC members have completed their financial declarations to the Legislative Executive, which will in its own turn present them to the High Court of Justice, where they will be kept. It was considered by the Bureau that the lack of ratification of the 2006 budget and even the 2007 forecast budget which should be ratified by the end of the year as one of the factors that have increased the Bureau's load of work.

On the other hand, the President declared the establishment of the Illegitimate Gain Authority according to the law of illegitimate gain, which has already been ratified. This has antagonized the Monitoring Bureau as the formation of such an authority will create unclear boundaries between this authority and the monitoring Bureau, as the illegitimate gain law and the law for the establishment of the Administrative and /financial Monitoring Bureau are considered two faces of the same coin. As to the cases of corruption dealt with by the Bureau including the files on the violation of public finances, they have all been presented to the presidency and the legislative council and most have been transferred to the Prosecutor General.

In addition, the deputy Minister of Finance commented on the Prosecutor General's declarations concerning the embezzlements which had reached approximately 700

million dollars by saying a large part of these amounts is related to the tax bills and that a distinction should be made between “losing money from the treasury” and “stealing money from the treasury” indicating that the money the Prosecutor General was speaking about was outside the scope of the treasury.<sup>92</sup> The Prosecutor General declared that his office was investigating 50 cases of financial and administrative corruption and that the embezzled amounts reached more than 700 million dollars amongst which was a case involving an amount of 300 million dollars, indicating that the issue is related to top officials, some of whom have been detained for questioning by the Prosecutor General and that the number of detainees on account of various corruption cases was 25 individuals up to the present. In addition, there are tens of others involved and they are wanted by the police, but are outside Palestine and are being sought by the Interpol.

Sources from the Prosecutor General’s office mentioned that an investigation had been completed into 27 of the 50 files and that procedures will be taken through the courts. Investigations are still being made in some files either by interrogating the accused or by listening to the declarations of witnesses. The Prosecutor General presented the details of some files which are undergoing investigation such as the file on the Middle East Pipes Factory, which was transferred by the Legislative Council and which involves the embezzlement of approximately 6 million dollars, two million of which are for the PA and 4 million for an Italian company. Investigation is also being made in other cases involving embezzlement, corrupt use of power, swindling, fraud and forging of official papers concerning high ranking officials and they reached up to more than 20 cases. The indictment orders have been placed at the appropriate courts , whilst others are pending awaiting the completion of interrogation procedures.

In addition, the file on the Forensic Medicine Institute in Abu Dis and on the Citizen’s Protection Society and on the General Authority of Radio and Television and the Palestinian Satellite Station, which had 20 million dollars embezzled from it and the file of the Licensing Department including inappropriate use of a higher official’s authorities. Other files on corruption include those against those involved in selling state owned land to a foreign country, the file on the Palestinian Children’s Theater, on al-Zir Contractors and against the General Petroleum Commission and the General Tobacco Commission, the file on lands bought by the state in the northern governorates, the file on the previous Head of Police concerning licensing cars and guarding houses , the file on the Center for Humanities Research and Development, the file on the financial and administrative violations made by the Social Affairs Ministry and the file on spoilage of the passport archives, the file on the Charitable Society for the Support of Palestinian Students, the file on the tax bills and on the cars of the returnees that are tax-exempt, the file on the Health Ministry’s purchases, the file on al-Quds al-Arabi newspaper owned by the PLO and the file on the ‘Asakra land bought with forged documents.<sup>93</sup>

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<sup>92</sup> Al-Ayyam newspaper, 8/2/2006.

<sup>93</sup> Al-Ayyam Newspaper, 6/2/2006.

**Strengths:**

1. The Bureau's investigations into cases of corruption has taken an objective form and are exact in nature, which will contribute to the limitation of the size of corruption and result in eliminating the phenomenon of exaggeration and rumors which have contributed to the formation of negative and untrue impressions of Palestine.
2. The cases of corruption and files on violation of public property found at the Bureau and that were presented to the Presidency and the Legislative Council were mostly transferred to the Prosecutor General's office and are considered an example of the objective method of dealing with such cases.
3. The presentation of financial files by most of the members of the Legislative Council and many top officials is considered a positive development that should be applied in general to all those who have the authority to deal with public finances on both the official and civil levels.
4. The Bureau's ability to implement its plan depends on the resources that will be available, as it needs many more employees.

**Weaknesses:**

1. The formation of the Illegitimate Gain Commission will create unclear boundaries between its authorities and those of the Monitoring Bureau, so they should be clarified and legislated.
2. The preparation of the annual report of the Bureau has been completed , however it has not been published yet. It should be finalized soon to be presented to the concerned parties.

### 1.1.5 The Legislative Authority

The Head of the Legislative Council, Rawhi Fattouh, declared the end of the tenth term of the Council on 16/1/1005, and the end of the first elected Palestinian parliament since 10 years. The new year started with the completion of procedures for the organization of the public elections process with a decree issued by the President, Mahmoud Abbas concerning the amendment of article 73 of the Public Elections Law no 9 of the year 2005 concerning pre-casting of ballots by the security forces after opening elections centers within their barracks, which was accompanied by a great deal of criticism especially by the Central Elections Committee which refused to allow security personnel to cast their ballot in their barracks and submitted a letter to the President requesting that he relieve them of their duties and appoint a different committee. So the Presidency responded to their demands.

The Electoral process took place on 25/1/2006 and was highly charged, but was carried out in a transparent manner by all standards according to the reports submitted by the local and international monitors, who included more than 850 international monitors. Both the Fateh and Hamas movements agreed not to appear with weapons on the day of the elections according to the terms of the Code of Conduct they had committed to, and field organization committees were formed according to the mechanisms set by the Code in order to help the police to keep the peace and protect the electoral process. These committees were extremely successful despite a few incidents and especially the one on 18/1/2006 when a Palestinian was killed due to a stray bullet shot by an armed person in Rafah within an electoral gathering. It should be noted here that the Code of Conduct regulating the electoral process which was signed by all the Palestinian parties was a great achievement. In addition, a higher national committee was formed with 16 branch committees in order to follow up on any violations of this Code of Conduct; this participated to a large extent in securing the success of the electoral process and the Head of the Elections Committee ascribed the success of the elections to this Electoral Code of Conduct.<sup>94</sup>

The Central Elections Committee declared the official election results on 29/1/2006, whereby Hamas had won by gaining 74 seats while Fatah gained only 45 seats. As for the Martyr Abu Ali Mustafa List (The Popular Front for the Liberation of Palestine) it gained three seats in comparison with two seats each for the Badil List (The Alliance between the Palestinian People's Party and the Democratic Front for the Liberation of Palestine) and the Third Way Party (Hanan Ashrawi and Salam Fayyad) and Independent Palestine, as for the independent candidates, they won four seats and most received support from Hamas. Both the Palestinian Democratic Union and the Popular Struggle Front could not reach the required percentage to gain seats.

The new members of parliament, at the beginning expressed their concern to establish a true legislative authority; however their high spirits and intentions soon clashed with the surrounding environment full of lack of security, chaos and polarization between

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<sup>94</sup> The Arab Thought Forum took the initiative to coordinate efforts to prepare this Code and commitment to the implementation of its articles.

the two main parties (Fateh and Hamas). These circumstances bridled the Council's performance, in addition to that of other components of Palestinian society, especially since the legislative council did not meet even once within the last three months of 2006. The faded performance of the Council was evident as it did not play a mentionable role concerning internal developments and its other roles of monitoring and legislation were also hampered. Thus the Council was unable to issue any laws of legislations and its work was restricted to the direction of some queries to the Ministers without registering any interrogations, in addition it did not ratify any laws issued by presidential decree other than the one concerning the voting by the security forces. On 31/8/2006 the Council ratified three loan agreements between the Authority and the Islamic Development Bank.

The most positive development is the fact that there are now 17 female members of the Palestinian Legislative Council, six of whom are Hamas movement members. In addition, Samira Halayka, a female member of the Council representing Hamas declared that the movement was not going to impose the "Hijab" "because it believes that it is not permissible to use violence in order to impose the principles of Islamic Jurisprudence – (Shari'a)."

#### **Withdrawing the IDs of Jerusalem Members of Parliament**

The Council discussed the Israeli Interior Affairs Ministry's decision to withdraw the Jerusalemite Palestinian Legislative Council Members' IDs. PLC member, Attoun said that the threat to expel them for Jerusalem together with the pursuits and harassment they experienced during the election campaign is part and parcel of the Israeli policy to Judaize Jerusalem.

Attoun also mentioned that they were summoned to al-Masqobieh prison where after a few hours of waiting they were forced to choose between resigning from the Council and losing their IDs. Thereafter the police read them a draft resolution of the Interior Ministry offers the representatives 30 days to decide. Mr. Attoun called upon the parliament to protest to the world's parliaments, the Security Council and Kofi Anan personally, with the possibility of also approaching the international Court of Justice.

The Council agreed by complete consensus on supporting its members from Jerusalem and considered the decision a violation of international laws and rights and the Israeli – Palestinian agreements which permitted the holding of elections in Jerusalem, requesting all the world's parliaments, Human rights institutions and NGOs to force Israel to withdraw this decision which some of the PLC members, Mohammad Abu Tair, Mohammad Totah and Ahmad Attoun along with Khaled Abu Arafah, the Minister of Jerusalem Affairs had pleaded before the Central Court Against the decision to deprive them of their Jerusalem IDs.

The plea opposes the Jurisdictions of the Interior Minister to issue such a decree. Jerusalem according to international law is an occupied city – thus only international law and Charters of the fourth Geneva Convention are applicable and not Israeli law. The fourth Geneva convention bans the occupying country from deporting citizens

from their original place of abode, neither should the Israeli government deport the Ministers and the three members of the PLC for their membership in the Legislative Council, as Israel itself allowed Palestinian elections to take place in east Jerusalem, and did not prevent the afore-mentioned to participate in the elections.

This decision also came in contradiction to the position of the Israeli government's legal advisor, who more than often denied the Israeli Interior Ministers' quest to cancel the citizenship of Israelis, especially since this jurisdiction is too dangerous to be used unless the case is very crucial and due to the absence of such a law in any other democracies .

### **2.1.1 The Legislative Council:**

In the former Council's farewell session held on 13/2/2006, there was a call for discussing a number of issues, primarily amending the Constitutional Court law which grants the President of the national authority the Jurisdiction to appoint the Court's legislature without referring to the Legislative Council.

The former Council also came out with the following restrictions in the second session held on Feb, 3, 2006:

- Emphasizing the separation of the political and the executive levels of the council's functions as well as the resolutions and recommendations of the special committee for the reform process in the Council.
- The Council Secretary General should take over all the authorities of the Secretary stipulated within the Bylaws and certify all appointments to high ranking administrative positions supporting the Secretary General.
- The endorsement of appointing Mahmoud Abu Al-Rub as Chief of the Office of Administrative and Financial Monitoring and the appointment of Jihad Hamdan as Head of the General Employees Bureau and the appointment of Farouq Al- Efrangi as head of the Palestinian Retirement Body.
- Passing the amendments proposed by the President concerning the Draft Law for the Higher Constitutional Court.
- Passing the amendments of article 1 of the law on military service for the year 2006
- Passing the amendment on the Elections Law for the year 2005.

It is evident that passing these laws was an attempt by "Fateh" representatives to gain jurisdiction from the Council in favor of the Presidency, however the Council failed in its extraordinary session to complete the draft of an amending law to the primary amended law of 2003 due to the incomplete quorum.

On holding the newly elected PLC on Feb, 18<sup>th</sup>, the Council bodies were elected and Aziz Dweik became the Chairman, Ahmad Bader the First Deputy, Hassan Khreishah ( Hamas affiliation) The Second Deputy, and with Mahmoud Al-Ramahy as Secretary. With this the new round the PLC had given up a national tradition which called for a Christian Palestinian to be one of two deputies, the fact which aroused wide national discontent.

On the other hand, Hamas concluded that all resolutions recently taken by the old Council were inadequate and required revision. The very first session were very noisy and members hardly reached agreement over anything, many interruptions happened during sessions and finally all resolutions taken by the former Legislative Council on Feb 13, 2006, were rejected. On its part, Fateh Movement took upon itself the Council's resolutions taken on March, 3<sup>rd</sup>, 2006.

In its second session the council decided to form a fact – finding parliamentary committee which included representatives from all parliament bodies to specify the responsible parties and the facts related to the raiding of Jericho prison and the Israeli piracy which culminated in abducting Ahmad Sa'adat, Fuad Shobaki, and others. And, in an attempt to elicit the representatives' serious intentions, the new PLC asserted that they would not falter or hesitate to question the accountability of any Minister including the Premier.

Furthermore female Hamas representatives tried to calm PLC members down by declaring that the Islamic veil is not obligatory and encouraged paving the way for female employment. The council also decreed a law allowing the finance Ministry to go on collecting pay offs and spending on a monthly basis, for 1/12 of the previous budget for three months, concentrating on the continuation of payment of detainees salaries inside Israeli prisons.

**Table 30: Distribution of Legislative Council Sessions On parliamentary periods**  
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	Session 1	Session 2	Session 3	Session 4	Session 5	Session 6	Session 7	Session 8	Session 9	Session 10	Session1 in the second PLC
<b>Ordinary Meeting</b>	38	30	21	14	19	8	7	14	19	23	9
<b>Extraordinary Meeting</b>	4	4	11	8	3	2	4	12	6	11	1
<b>Secret Meeting</b>	1	2	2	1	1	–	–	0	0	1	-
<b>Meeting</b>	–	–	–	–	–	–	–	–	3	-	6
<b>Total</b>	<b>43</b>	<b>36</b>	<b>34</b>	<b>23</b>	<b>23</b>	<b>10</b>	<b>11</b>	<b>26</b>	<b>28</b>	<b>35</b>	<b>16</b>

### 2.1.1. Legislation and Laws

**Table 31: Establishing Laws while Negotiating during 2005<sup>96</sup>**

#	Law Proposal	Issue
1	Issued by the President	3
2	Referred to the President	2

<sup>95</sup> Based on the laws and proposals mentioned in this report's appendix until 9/2/2005.

<sup>96</sup> Palestinian Legislative Council's documents.



3	General Budget Proposal by the Committee	Zero
4	Second Reading and Returned to the Cabinet	Zero
5	Second Reading	Zero
6	Third Reading	Zero
7	First Reading	1
8	Accepted By the General Discussion	1
9	Referred to special Opinion Committees	Zero
10	Merged	Zero
11	Laws Published in the Official Gazette	5

### 1. Laws Proposed by the PLC and Issued by the President

Law Number	Law	Issue Date
220/2005/E	Amended 2005 National Elections Law	3/1/2006
200/2005/MO	Palestinian Products Union and Specialized Union	21/1/2006
51/99/E	Palestinian Medical council	18/1/2006

### 2. Proposed Laws in the Palestinian Legislative Council Accepted for the General Discussion

Proposal #	Law	Public Discussion
217/2005/MO	Amended 1998 Encouraging Investment in Palestine Law	8/1/2006

### 3- Proposed Laws by the PLC that were referred to the President and Not Signed

Proposal #	Law	Date
198/2005/E	Amended Retirement Law	2/1/2006
120/2003/MO	Industrial and Commerce Chambers	15/1/2006

On April, 19<sup>th</sup> the council asserted the need for a national dialogue including the presidency, the government and faction leaders. The second deputy ascertained that 90% of the council members had finished presenting their financial statuses to the Council's executive body that will in turn deliver them to the High Court of Justice to be preserved which is a better way.

On June 12<sup>th</sup>, the Finance Minister was granted more time till the end of 2006 to submit that year's budget, provided that he submits a monthly financial report and a detailed one every three months. Then again, the Council reversed the issued and the government was excused from submitting the 2006 budget and was asked to follow

the principle of twenty months spending till the end of 2006, due to their being unable to produce the draft of the General Budget Law in the beginning of September, the date agreed upon.

### **The Congress Resolution to combat so called “Palestinian Terrorism”.**

This was discussed by the PLC and a special declaration was issued harshly condemning the Congress resolution. The PLC emphasized that such a law confirms America’s blind prejudice towards Israel and the subordination of American institutions to the dictates of the Israeli Lobby aside from supporting Israeli occupation and aggression. The PLC rejected this announcement as the USA does not have the right to classify people and states and describe resistance as terrorism. The Congress resolution is nothing but a rude intervention in Palestinian domestic affairs and an aggression against Palestinian democracy and the people’s choice. All this reveals the false American allegations of encouraging the extension of democracy in the region. The PLC called upon the Arab and Islamic Parliaments to denounce the American position against the Palestinians and requested that pressure be exercised on the American Administration to halt the law immediately in addition to stopping their prejudiced policy towards the Palestinian people and recognizing the just Palestinian issues - chiefly the right of return, self-determination and the establishment of the Palestinian State with Jerusalem as its capital. On the other hand some representatives called for boycotting the American goods as a response to this unjust resolution as it came against the people’s will and choice and international charters which legitimize resistance against occupation. Other representatives voted for sending a message to all the World’s parliaments to agree on a special term for the meaning of terrorism.

On his part, PLC member Bernard Sabella protested strongly against his colleague’s vocal terms such as the war of the Crusades and others, emphasizing that our case is a national rather than a religious one, pointing out that Islam and Christianity are innocent of such a resolution and that the American resolution targets all citizens both Moslem and Christian.

Following all this, the PLC dealt with the Israeli atrocities and called upon the international community and the concerned NGOs to shoulder their responsibility and move quickly to halt the series of slaughters committed against Palestinian civilians and to provide international protection to unarmed Palestinians through spreading temporary forces in the West Bank and Gaza Strip.

The PLC also emphasized the importance of bringing Israel’s military and political war criminals to court for their crimes against unarmed civilians.

The Fateh parliamentary Bloc was an accused of opportunism by the Hamas Movement when the Head of the former openly announced the existence of a legal gap after Israel had arrested several PLC members and Ministers. According to Hamas, this required declaring a state of emergency, and Hamas rejected the mere declaration of a legal void. However, after negotiation and a good intentions initiative the PLC members agreed that the Council should reconcile instead of voting on decisions with a call for not holding any sessions due to the gap resulting from the

arrest of many of Hamas' representatives, which would give the government a security network. On September 19, 2006, the Fateh Bloc threatened to bring down the government if Hamas did not resign and pave the way for a new government., Hassan Khreshah, the second deputy of the PLC threatened to suspend his membership because of the paralyzed state of the PLC, and perhaps resign if the Council did not perform its roles, and he accused some members of hindering the Council from performing its duties.

In an unprecedented case, the Hamas Bloc failed on August 30<sup>th</sup> to pass a proposal calling for suspension of the employees' strike to be started on September 2<sup>nd</sup> for two or three weeks, so that there would be enough time for the Council to debate and come out with a solution for the salary crisis lurking since March 2006. On the contrary, the Council refused postponement and decided to summon the prime minister for a cross examination about the salaries. Perhaps the arrest of forty Hamas Parliament members made it inconvenient for Hamas to pass the proposal.

On the other hand, the PLC building and members were subjected to acts of aggression such as setting fire to the building on 8<sup>th</sup> May, and the storming of the hall by furious employees in Ramallah on June the fourteenth during a session held to discuss the issue of the salaries. Moreover, on 2<sup>nd</sup> March shots were fired by Shuhada' Al- Aqsa militants in the diameter of PLC as a protest against the new Head of the PLC's resolution to freeze Fateh employees' appointments in the PLC. Furthermore, the legislative office in 'Arraba had been broken into and its contents destroyed, a Hamas office in Salfit had been burned in addition to a shooting incident on a PLC member's vehicle in Gaza, not to mention that the PLC had postponed an emergency session to follow up the crisis in the Palestinian territories as a result of clashes between strikers and the prime minister's guards.

### **2.1.2. The Council Committees**

The PLC now includes fourteen committees after introducing three new ones, they are: - the Domestic Governance Committee, Social and Health Affairs Committee and the Detainees Committee, and it also concluded the formation of the other thirteen committees, they were distributed as follows: six committees chaired by Hamas, four by Fateh, two by the Popular Front and one committee for the Third Way Party, besides raising the number of members of each from 17 to 25.

#### **The Economic Committee**

This Committee put forward a proposal suggesting taking a percentage of the public sector employees' salaries who receive more than 3500 NIS in a proportional ratio with the salary. The committee held a discussion on reducing the expenditure of using public vehicles.

#### **The Budget and Monetary Affairs Committee**

The Committee discussed the financial problems and the proposed solutions in addition to preparing for the Draft Public Budget Law and the underlying spending mechanisms as this should all be achieved before passing the Budget Law. It also

discussed the reasons behind the government's failure to present the Budget Law for the year 2006, especially since the Council had already granted the government a delay till September 1<sup>st</sup> to submit the draft budget, discuss it within the PLC and then vote on it. The Committee tackled a number of public sector employees, their job descriptions and their placements as well as the current status of the Palestinian investment Fund. It also dealt with the project of the National Fund Law for Higher Education and held a hearing with the Minister of Planning and the acting Minister of Finance, who informed the Committee that it should stop working according to previous contracts with the retired, had signed with the Finance Ministry. The Committee then held a second hearing with the acting Finance Minister to survey the financial policies and status of the Authority and the condition of foreign aid after the Kuwaiti government had sent \$30 million in aid to the Palestinians and how this amount should be spent.

### **The Interior and Security Affairs Committee**

The Committee discussed the objectives and tasks related to monitoring the existing political system on the basis of the Rule of Law, guaranteeing public freedoms and respecting political pluralism. The Committee also held meetings to tackle urgent internal security issues such as the government's jurisdiction, the national dialogue and the mechanisms of the relationship between the Presidency and the Cabinet. The Committee also talked over the issue of security and demanded that members cease dealing with security afforded according to political or organizational affiliation and to have security defined according to clear and specific criteria for everyone. The Committee also discussed the issue of the searches that PLC members have to undergo at the Rafah Border Crossing and called for assessing the related agreement and presenting the necessary recommendations.

The Committee also tackled the collaborators file and their danger to society. The PLC members stressed the importance of activating anti-espionage units within the security systems and the placement of a comprehensive plan to stand up to these collaborators provided that it is preventive and to preserve youth from being involved in collaboration.

An agreement was concluded between the President and the Prime Minister granting the Minister of Interior all jurisdictions concerning security systems, whereby he presents a security plan and a coordinative relation that includes a strategy for the Ministry of Interior.

### **The Jerusalem Committee**

The Committee talked the leakage of Jerusalem estates to the occupation, the Apartheid Separation Wall and its effects on Jerusalem and the digging carried out by the occupation around al-Aqsa Mosque and beneath it. The Committee demanded full documentation of what is happening in Jerusalem and proposed the formation of a special committee on the leakage issue setting up an emergency committee to deal with the matter.

### **The Education and Social Issues Committee**

The Committee revised the question of transforming al-Quds Open University from a government run university into a private one. It was agreed to deal with this issue with the Minister of Education and Higher Education and the university President himself, it also discussed higher education students. Several projects presented by Ministers were discussed and the Committee took upon itself the task of finding the easiest way to procure essential medication for the sick. The Committee also assessed past achievements and discussed draft laws such as the draft Forensic Medicine Law and resolved to prepare the draft Drugs Law for the first reading after presenting a legal study on it. The Committee listened to a report by the Head of the Red Crescent Society on the reconciliation memo which it had signed with the Red David's Star due to the latter's violation of international laws through acting in settlements. The Committee also discussed the issue of university scholarships and held a workshop to discuss the draft law of general guilds.

### **The Political Committee**

The Committee emphasized the importance of initiating national dialogue sessions besides looking into the tense political, economic and security conditions.

### **The Natural Resources Committee**

The Committee dealt with the proposals placed for the draft Palestinian Water Law in the presence of the Head of the Water Authority and the formation of a Water National Council was suggested.

### **The Local Governance Committee**

The Committee held a meeting with the Local Governance Minister to tackle the conditions of local bodies and within the Ministry.

### **The Legal Committee**

The Committee discussed its plan to review draft laws and it was agreed to hold intensive sessions to cover 12 draft laws. The Committee finished studying all articles regarding the draft Judicial Authority Law after six continuous hearings, in addition to studying several draft laws decreed by the president himself like: the resolution regarding the independent body for the telecommunications sector law and amending the companies' law. The Committee recommended swift presentation of a number of draft laws to the council for general revision as a step forward towards amendment. A workshop was also organized to discuss the Palestinian passport fees Law in order to set the value of the fees and guarantee justice. The Committee finally tackled the question of the engineers' guild elections.

### **The Public Monitoring, Human Rights and Public Freedoms Committee**

The Committee called for raising a lawsuit against the Israeli occupation's war crimes in international courts in addition to forming a specialized committee to document the occupation's measures. The Committee held a hearing which was attended by the Attorney General, who replied to inquiries put forward by the committee members on current corruption cases like tax evasion, the Radio and Television General Bureau

file, the License Department file, and the measures the prosecutor had already taken concerning investigation and arrests, so that the defect in the proposed plan could be dealt with. The Committee emphasized the need to stand up to all cases of bribery and corruption and asserted the fact that it was following up cases under question at the Attorney General's Office.

In addition, the Committee studied cases related to security breaches and the Attorney General gave an account of the number of crimes, abduction acts due to drug cases in the Palestinian territories. He also mentioned the obstacles which prevent the police from playing its role such as the lack of cooperation by the Minister of Interior Affairs and the Police General Manager with the Attorney General. The Committee also discussed the issue of bugging people's phone calls.

### **The Detainees' Committee**

The committee decided to send a letter to the Head of the Lebanese parliament asking him to unify the negotiation tracks related to exchanging the Lebanese and Palestinian detainees with the captured Israeli soldiers.

#### **2.1.3. Parliamentary Monitoring**

No doubt the sweeping Hamas victory within the PLC has provided it with a sufficient margin for maneuvering and acting on its own and implementing whatever it wants. This is the reverse of the position within the former Council when Fateh was the leading faction. However, although Fateh may be incapable of canceling a law or causing the government to fall, it can still, along with the other forces, escalate the processes of monitoring, investigation, and accountability within the government. Thus, and upon indications of both movements' failure to form a unified government, Fateh made it obvious that the resolutions of President 'Abbas as chairman of the PLO will be within the Basic Law and will be concurrent with the regulations applied within the Palestinian Authority.

As for the Council's monitoring role and its holding the government accountable for its performance and the follow up of the executive authority's actions, the Council discussed ten reports, mainly the one presented by the Public Budget Committee on Monetary Affairs not to mention that the committee sessions had mostly included a monitoring role which could be built upon.

On the other hand, the Fateh parliamentary Bloc emphasized that the Palestinian High Court had constitutionally decided to cancel the resolutions taken by the new PLC in its session on March 6<sup>th</sup>, 2006, the matter which required that the Council's presidency assert the Court's verdict which had stated that the resolutions and measures taken by that session were unconstitutional and illegal, and demand from the Council to rectify these resolutions instead of canceling them.

#### **2.1.4 Legislations and Laws**

Apart from the Council's problematic resolution in its extraordinary session concerning endorsing amendments on the Constitutional Court Law, the issue of legislation remained at a standstill due to the fact that the PLC was still new and

inexperienced. The PLC, however, rejected and with an absolute majority, three decrees issued by the President and they are:

- Law no. 2 for the year 2006, regarding amendment of the Companies' Law no.12 of 1964

- Law for the establishment of a Palestinian commission to organize the telecommunications sector. This was the first precedence of registration by the new PLC and this precedent rekindled the continuous debate over the president's program and his authorities on the one hand and the government's agenda and authorities on the other hand, in addition to the relationship with the Legislative Council.

Within the session held on 28/8 the Council also discussed ten bills of laws subject to different readings, and it also postponed the referendum issue and its legality and constitutionality but it did not succeed in issuing even one law during this whole period.

**Strengths:**

1. The Palestinian Legislative elections represented a democratic national event which was extremely significant due to the diversity in participation and the election's integrity. All this constituted an achievement which made all participants proud, and especially the authorities concerned such as the Central Elections' Committee, the political parties, and the civil society organizations involved and which contributed to the integrity and smoothness of the elections.
2. Seventeen women succeeded in occupying 13% of the parliamentary seats, which is regarded as a significant development even by international standards.
3. The agreement between PLC members to reconcile instead of voting in the aftermath of Israel's abduction of a number of PLC members is a wise and positive step that was nationally appreciated.

**Weaknesses:**

1. Although the elections process was described as a democratic wedding, the days which followed can only be described as an open battle which was aggravated by all parties internally and externally.
2. It is difficult to judge the work of the PLC negatively as it was targeted by the occupation forces and a number of its members were arrested, which affected the democratic process itself as it was impossible to achieve a quorum of members or even for taking decisions, which in effect paralyzed the Council, an act which is in total contradiction with all principles of politic, legality and diplomacy.
3. Mainly due to the above the performance of the PLC was pallid and insignificant in its attempts to legislate, monitor and keep up with the internal political developments and challenges.
4. It was inappropriate for the former PLC to exploit its last session for passing crucial issues which would influence the next Council. The former Council ought to have made such changes during its ten years in action and not at the last moment despite the fact that the measures it took were constitutional.
5. The style of taking over through clashes with which the new PLC started its work was unseemly and it should have been more patient during the take over despite its constitutionality.



### 1.3 The Judicial Authority

The Judicial Authority continued its shallow performance; incapable of straightening out the security breaches or dealing with the corruption issues in order to terminate them. The role of this authority was overridden as it did not play the role that was expected of it especially since the power struggle over authority had reached the stage of armed conflict; however it seems that the judicial authority had left matters to be determined far from the realm of the Rule of Law. The cessation of functioning by the Palestinian courts within the last three and a half months added to the paralysis of the Judicial Authority. Then the Court holidays began on the 15<sup>th</sup> of July followed by the employees' strike. It is worth mentioning that about 49,000 crime cases remained unsolved due to the stoppage of the Courts' work. According to statistics compiled by the Higher Judicial Council the total number of cases filed in 2003 at the Reconciliation Court reached 48,961 cases in 2004, while those cases for the year 2004 itself reached 31,161. In total 40, 611 cases were dealt with thus leaving 39,511 suspended cases.

**Table 32: 2006 Accomplishments of the Palestinian Judicial Authority**

Area	Number of Judges				
	Courts of First Instance	Magistrate's Court	Court of Appeals	Court of Cassation	Supreme Court
West Bank	35	41	5	10	10
Gaza	20	10	7	12	12
Total	55	51	12	22	22

Area	Number of Courts					
	Courts of First Instance	Magistrate's Court	Court of Appeals	Court of Cassation	Supreme Court	Court of Appeals for Income Tax
	8	13	1	1	1	1
West Bank	3	5	1	1	1	1
Gaza	11	18	2	2	2	2

Table 33: Number of Judges for the Year 2006<sup>97</sup>

Area	Number of Judges			
	Courts of First Instance	Magistrate Court	Court of Appeals	Supreme Court
West Bank	35	41	5	10

<sup>97</sup> Documents of the high judiciary's committee.

Gaza	20	10	7	12
Total	55	51	12	22

In the light of the Palestinian High Court verdicts as it is the Constitutional Court, regarding the PLC resolutions, charges have been made indicating that the court is biased towards one of the two parties, which made the Head of the Higher Judicial Council criticize what was published about the Cabinet presidency's regarding the Constitutional Court's decision as extremely dangerous, and he emphasized that the Palestinian Judiciary system is neutral, independent and unbiased.

The continuous disputes between the Higher Judicial Council and the Justice Ministry are still negatively influencing the whole judicial system and it has thus become questionable whether the judges have the standard of shouldering the responsibilities expected of them. Another issue that remains questionable is the standard of the salaries of the judges and the extent to which this standard affects the integrity required from the judges. Moreover, the accumulation of cases or the slow tackling of these cases creates unlimited damage and contributes to cases of social violence. Therefore, there is an urgent need to activate the Judiciary system so that it can handle people's cases with higher efficiency and speed.

### 1.3.1 The Attorney General

The Attorney General stated that an investigation is being carried out into fifty managerial and financial corruption cases, whereby the money lost or embezzled may reach to over 700 million dollars, amongst which one case involves 300 million dollars. The Attorney General indicated that this case involves high ranking officials and influential people and 25 of them were detained for interrogation. In March the Attorney's office revealed that a number of those involved in these corruption files had returned into the country of their own will in answer to their receiving orders to appear before the Attorney General via the embassies. This came after they had been accused of fleeing abroad. Furthermore, the Attorney General announced setting up a special corruption and crimes' unit. They also added that 4500 subpoenas had been sent to people convicted with crimes and illegal acts, which was unprecedented by the police, security forces, or the executive force of the Ministry of Interior; the Attorney General referred to these measures as applicable only to weak.

The Attorney General issued a resolution to establish a general management office for pursuing war criminals in international courts in step with the National Authority's instructions. The PNA had taken upon itself the task of activating crime cases against the Israeli occupation and a number of its leaders, who commit such crimes, as well as submitting these cases before the specialized international courts of law.

In this respect the lawyers tried to play a role in view of the Israeli assaults and war crimes committed by the occupation forces. They also called for enforcing the opinion of the International Court of Justice on the Separation Wall. The Palestinian Lawyers' Guild had started to document slaughters such as Beit Hanoun using T.V. photos and eye-witnesses so that they can bring Israeli war criminals to justice before the international crime courts.

**Strengths:**

1. The Attorney General is investigating the corruption cases and arresting suspects in addition to issuing a resolution to set up a specialized office to look into corruption cases, which is considered a significantly positive measure and such a development, will place the correct basis for fighting corruption.
2. The continuation of judges' practices despite the hard financial and vocational conditions is worth paying tribute to.

**Weaknesses:**

1. Relations between the Higher Judiciary Council and the Justice Ministry are still very stressful and are influencing the whole system, to the extent that one has to wonder whether the judicial system's level is up to the standard of shouldering the responsibilities it is expected to carry.
2. Another issue that remains questionable is the standard of the judges' salaries and the extent to which this standard affects the integrity required from the judges. In order to maintain a sound Judiciary system the judges should be fortified against bribery and affiliation.
3. The accumulation of cases creates unlimited damage and increases social violence. There should be a means to activate the Judiciary system so that it can serve people quickly and effectively.
4. Lack of issuing subpoenas for criminals indicates that the law is only applicable to the weak and does not conform to the principles of equality for all.

## **2. Civil Society Organizations**

The cases which required the intervention of civil society institutions were highly dangerous and especially the Palestinian in-fighting and bloodshed the continued polarization and the emergence of prospective in-fighting and a paralysis of the political system in addition to lack of security, and the torture and humiliation of Palestinian prisoners in Israeli prisons. Civil society organizations also undertook the task of preparing for the election rush and dealt with the stages of propaganda, monitoring and even participation by some of its members in them. Civil society organizations were also able to make breakthroughs concerning issues like the detainees, the national dialogue and taking part in the internal political arena. Their role regarding the legislative elections was very distinguished whether at the level of preparatory tasks of during the propaganda process and on the day of the elections. No doubt the Elections Code of Conduct depicts their contribution clearly. The involvement of the whole political spectrum within the legislative elections can also be regarded as a significant democratic and national development which is expected to add to the development of the Palestinian political system and upgrade the emerging Palestinian democracy.

The distribution of forces within civil society on the political map will add to a specific change. The private sector is participating in general politics through a memo sent to the executive authority. This sector raised and established a fund in support of the Palestinian people for 200 million dollars. It announced its political vision and how to promote economic programs in addition to assuring partnerships in attempts of national dialogue, as if requesting a role alongside the existing Palestinian forces.

Within a different framework, donors have recently attempted to impose their agendas on civil society institutions provided that the aid they give them is not spent on any of the Palestinian constitutional organizations' activities like the government and the Legislative Council. No doubt such policies should not only be considered an intervention in Palestinians' internal affairs but also contribute to the fragmentation of the Palestinians, forcing the needy institutions to give up principles they have always held , especially when things have to do with democratic principles and human rights.

It is doubtless that the strike carried out by public service employees express an organized ability that can restore the prestige of the workers ' union and form an element of pressure in defending its members as long as this is not related to a factional agenda.

## **2.1 Political Parties**

The Fateh movement has still not recovered from the shock that resulted from the legislative elections, as after expelling the independent candidates the movement started an internal debate over its fate and structure and how to regain power. This shock was seemingly needed as people's reaction was harsher than Fateh had expected. All political parties are still facing a great crisis, an existentialist one, and matters are not restricted to the two polarities especially concerning internal reactions. The national political parties called upon Hamas to respect the secular rhythm of the political system and benefit from regional experiences. Fateh continued to show opposition to Hamas' governmental program as it did not meet the criteria set within the letter of appointment.

However, the Head of the Hamas Polit Bureau accused the presidency of seeking to make the Hamas government fail through imposing a parallel government system and imposing a siege around the legitimate government. He described its performance as a conspiracy to arouse internal tensions. Fateh described his speech as sedition within the Palestinian arena. Later, Fateh and Hamas agreed to put an end to the state of tension which prevailed in the aftermath of the Misha'al declaration. Six other national and Islamic factions signed, on March 19<sup>th</sup>, a Charter of Honor to give up using the weapons of resistance in internal struggle and agreed to incriminate anyone who would not comply.

### **2.1.1 The Islamic Parties**

Despite the transfer of Hamas from an opposition party to authority and its forming a government, the Palestinian political system remained unilateral. The attitudes of Hamas were placed under inspection because it succeeded in the elections not only due to people's punishment of Fateh and their laying the blame on it for the corruption of the political system and its bringing them to a stalemate, but also due to its resistance program. Upon this background, the Hamas movement or government's recognition of the occupation or the confiscation of its arms or the condemnation of its resistance will constitute a mercy bullet targeting its popular base and people's support for it. Thus, Hamas' leaders emphasized since the beginning that they would not budge an inch concerning the issue of recognition of the Israeli entity. Nevertheless, Hamas tended to later maneuver this stand through its call to the Quartet or for the formation of a national unity government based on the political program of the PLO or by accepting the letter of appointment from President 'Abbas without objecting to its contents in public.

The extent to which Hamas remained true to its principles and especially those within its covenant which was declared in 1988 became highly questionable, this can be discerned from a number of declarations issued by responsible people within the movement on a number of occasions on the fact that Hamas was not against the principle of negotiation with Israelis if they won the elections. One can only say that Hamas is on the brink of huge internal reactions that may affect its structure due to heavy internal conflict and a choking international siege that may influence its policy.

The Hamas movement continued to deal with the conditions placed by the Quartet and the pressures and political terms imposed by Fateh with an obscure policy in an

attempt to cling to its position while at the same time maneuvering to achieve success and keep its popular base.

Upon this basis, the Hamas movement expressed its willingness on September 28<sup>th</sup> 2006, to recognize and accept the agreements signed by the Palestinians and the Israelis without recognition of the state of Israel at this stage, although Hamas had implicitly recognized it through the agreements. Hamas' tendency to soften its political expressions by using "implicit recognition" and "at this stage" set up the grounds for future consent. Anyway, many changes have taken place and Hamas opened channels with Iran, as a top official stated on Feb 28<sup>th</sup> that Iran will supply the Palestinian Authority under the leadership of Hamas with sufficient money essential to make up for the deficit in foreign aid.

The Islamic Jihad movement became more active not only by bombing the Israeli settlements with three hundred missiles in 5 months but also by playing an active role in mediating between Hamas and Fateh and releasing those abducted after 18/12/2006.

As for the Left parties, they achieved an important but limited breakthrough, as the Popular Front for the Liberation of Palestine managed not only to occupy three seats in the parliament but it was also able to penetrate the traditional rejection barrier through directly participating in the elections for the first time since 1996, which came as a characteristic movement forward in its attitude.

The Peoples' Party and the Democratic Front for the Liberation of Palestine were also able to make a breakthrough by winning a seat for each through the triple alliance with which they entered the elections. However, these cannot be considered great victories as other new movements like the Third Way and the Palestinian Initiative achieved the same results. Thus altogether these parties won nine seats out of 132. Although these results were disappointing they may be considered a starting point for improving the position of middle parties through forming a third power which may enjoy credibility and effective political influence.

On the other hand, the Islamic Jihad movement remained outside the ruling parties' circles, as it announced from the beginning that it would not participate in the elections because it opposes the Oslo agreement and its structure. They almost remained alone in a state of war with the Israeli occupation, which attacks all Palestinians regardless of their attitudes.

The Islamic Liberation party suddenly became more active but in a traditional way, while the other Islamic and national parties were indulged in meetings and dialogues over the detainees' Charter and the national unity and rushed to settle the disputes and clashes among Palestinians. Moreover, in a letter to the American Secretary of State, sent in July by 54 professional and academic Palestinians, they recommended the deployment or the presence of international forces in the Palestinian territories as a first step towards a political solution, such a call has always been ignored by the U.S although it agreed to it in other parts of the world, the last of which was in the case of Sudan as a solution to the Darfur problem. However, the Palestinians' pleas for the deployment of international forces have not been heeded despite our long years of appeal.

### 2.1.2 The Opposition Parties

The urgent mission after the elections was to reform the Fateh movement from various dimensions after a state of chaos had taken over, not to mention the conflict between the strongmen in the party and the absence of a political dialogue and the lack of commitment to rank and file within the party. Fateh supporters waited patiently for the promised reforms and a Fateh court was formed and presided over by Rafiq al-Natsheh. This court wasn't an alternative to the legal courts. The first case of this court was to look into the dismissal of every candidate who was nominated outside the Fateh list and who did not abide by its resolutions. A committee was also formed to assess the movement's properties, headed by Farouq al-Qaddoumi and Ahmad Qurei'. However, the more important stage was the meeting of the movement's central committee for three consecutive days in Jordan last August with the expectation that this will be the salvation measure for reorganization of the party. But, the final proclamation ignored the decisions taken by the revolutionary Council held in Ramallah, before that of the Central committee. The majority of Fateh supporters were disappointed by the committee's decisions and its failure to restore reform and upgrade the movement. Quite the contrary, the crisis remained unsolved and instead they went into discussing the question of the national unity government.

Fateh officials threatened to hold a meeting for the revolutionary Council that has a wide popular base due to the condemnation which followed the last Central Committee meeting where the decisions resounded as shallow and routine.

After issuing its statement on October 14<sup>th</sup>, the Islamic national forces of the Higher Follow up Committee had been shaken as it demanded the withdrawal of the executive force from the streets and it's joining the security systems and making the police the only party in charge of internal security. This fact made Hamas boycott the Committee and accuse it of supporting the Fateh movement.

At the same time, the Popular Front declared that its 250 men within the executive force will not take part in any clashes and they will be neutral. The Popular Front was criticized for its attitude as it refused to join the Hamas government after it had announced that it would.

Due to the absence of the left, and their limited role and in an attempt to move forward into the public arena, six left factions announced on November 22<sup>nd</sup> the placement of a plan to move politically and publicly in objection to the second dialogue between Fateh and Hamas for the formation of a national unity government devoid of any other factions.

**Strengths:**

1. The Local Councils were not exempt from the international punishment against the democratic choice of the Palestinian people, as they were denied aid. However, despite this fact these civil society institutions continued to offer their services to the people within their capabilities.
2. Despite the fact that most mayors and Town Council members who had taken responsibility after the municipal elections were quiet and gullible the municipalities' concerns have been going along systematically despite the emergency situation the Palestinian society is passing through.
3. As a result of the elections, there were a notably higher number of women within the local councils and some of them became mayors.

**Weaknesses:**

1. The lack of security led to a regression in the process of completing the municipal elections, which had been scheduled for the beginning of the year. These elections have to be completed once there are appropriate security conditions.
2. There is no doubt that the fact that international sanctions have reached a level of depriving normal Palestinian citizens of water for sanitary use indicates the level that international policies can stoop to while they are attempting to ignore human rights. As an expression of the mayors' and Council members' commitment to their duties and public responsibilities many of them signed a Code of Conduct especially to prove their integrity and straightforwardness.
3. The local Councils and their Heads did not escape the wave of security breaches as the Councils' premises were exposed to raiding and trashing and even mayors and Council members were attacked and their private property was violated due to individual agendas that attempted to override the law.



## **2.2 Civil Society**

### **2.2.1 Societies and Civil Organizations**

Several elections took place in a number of civil organizations, one of which was the Palestinian Non-Governmental Organizations Network in which the elections resulted in the formation of a new coordinating body with the presence of the historical members of previous bodies and the entry of new members. On the other hand, legislative elections and their actual results rendered a big blow to many civil organizations which expected different results in the elections.

A group of politicians and academics together with representatives agreed to set out a campaign aiming at recruiting people and institutions to call upon the Palestinian people and the leadership of Fateh and Hamas for the formation of a transition government to run the affairs for a year in case neither Hamas nor Fateh were able to form a unity government based on the detainees' document. On the other hand, the civil society organizations working in Jerusalem sent a condemnation memo to a number of regional and international parties (the UN, the Arab League, the Islamic Conference Organization, and other international organizations), informing them of Israeli atrocities and the terrible massacre in Cana in South Lebanon, where many civil organizations arranged for sit in conferences and rallies and called for ending the internal war and sedition , chaos and violations of security.

The Arab Thought Forum developed the Code of Conduct among the political parties regarding the elections, and it includes the formation of a national committee to see to the compliance by the political parties to the articles of this code of Conduct. This had the greatest impact on guaranteeing integral elections, free of violence. The Arab thought Forum has recently been able to gather all the Palestinian parties on a round table, where the status quo was discussed and recommendations placed.

What is noticeable is that the political parties entrusted the Arab Thought Forum to follow up findings at its convenience and reveal the depth of the current political crisis, On the other hand, a study on Israeli settlements done by Areej Institute revealed that settlements are growing due to international unawareness and Arab and Islamic\c weakness.

Al-Sabil institution also organized a conference on the Christian presence in the Holy Land indicating the sharp reduction in the number of Christians.

In a step full of doubt, the ministry announced that it will transfer about 70 civil institutions in Gaza to the Attorney General because if disorder in its financial conditions during the past two years.

Regarding the spread of drug abuse, the highest national corps reported that the phenomenon of drug abuse has increased greatly in recent times, affirming that the percentage of drugs confiscated does not surpass 10% of the actual quantities found within society. The committee added that 130 deaths from drugs have taken place within the past two years either because of an overdose or due to crimes related to drug abuse.

### **2.2.2 Human Rights Organizations**

Israeli and Palestinian legal sources reported that fifty four of the one hundred and ninety seven Palestinian martyrs who fell in 2005 were children and that 118 of them didn't fight with the Israelis and only seventy three fell in combat.

The Palestinian Independent Commission for Civil Rights confirmed the killing of one seventy six Palestinians during the 2005 security breaches and the falling of 199 victims from the beginning of 2006 till June.

On the other hand, the American Human Rights Watch organization confirmed that the shell which killed seven members of Huda Ghalia's family (parents and five siblings) was part of an Israeli bombardment and not a land mine as Israel tried to claim. Again the American organization brought in new evidence which indicated that the Israelis bombed the area, which led to that terrible massacre and said that the investigation carried out by the Israeli army has little credibility.

The significant development in the question of criminal justice is the step that Moshe Ya'alon, the Israeli Army Chief of Staff had taken by escaping a law suit raised against him for targeting Salah Shehadeh. Ya'alon's choice to stay in New Zealand during the planned security business visit is a reminder of what Almog has done when he stayed on board el-Al plane at Heathrow airport as there was a warrant waiting for him issued by the British police based on a legal complaint raised against him for committing war crimes against Palestinians. The Palestinian Human Rights Center feared that suspending the trial of Moshe Ya'alon by New Zealand is an act of prejudice and political interests have played a role in this.

A glorious point to remember however is when the hundreds of Palestinian women broke the Israeli army's siege of a mosque in the middle of Beit Hanoun in the Gaza Strip where tens of Palestinian families and resistance fighters took refuge on 3/11/2006. The women managed to secure the escape of the people in the mosque while the Israelis were demolishing part of it. The incident ended with two women being martyred.

Due to the messy interior security conditions and the disorder, legal organizations interfered and many outstanding figures emphasized the importance of adopting decisive legal measures to punish the opportunists and exploiters pointing out that such crimes have appeared because of the absence of the Rule of Law and order. Meanwhile the civil campaign for the right to visit the occupied Palestinian lands organized a meeting where Israeli and Palestinian legal institutions declared raising a lawsuit at the Israeli High Court on behalf of 120 thousand people who had applied for a family reunion permit since 1994 but have seen no progress in their files since the beginning of the second Intifada in 2000.

### **2.2.3 Unions and Guilds**

The public service employees guild continued representing and speaking on behalf of the employees as well as criticizing mercilessly the government, which led to an open strike by about 165,000 government employees, in protest against not receiving their salaries for six consecutive months. As a result most ministries, institutions and public facilities were paralyzed. Several unions and guilds supported the open strike and the journalists' guild asked for an investigation into the shooting in the direction of cameraman Osama al-Silwadi and criticized the phenomenon of firing shots during rallies and processions.

As a result of the shocking economic crisis, the unemployment rate rise and the termination of foreign aid in addition to the stoppage of foreign funded development projects, the unions and the guilds have not been able to face the challenge. The secretariat, the teachers' union and the committees representing the Ministry of Education employees announced the decision of escalating the protest steps to reach a general open strike and refusing to start the scholastic year, which was due to open on the 2<sup>nd</sup> of September unless the teachers are fully paid. The decision also included that no school personnel should go to work without having their demands met, which paralyzed the academic process and delayed school opening.

Besides, the teachers tried to hire foreign and Arab lawyers to represent them in the Israeli court of justice against the Israeli authorities which are keeping the Palestinian tax payers' money.

**Strengths:**

1. The role played by civil society in the legislative elections was quite distinguished whether at its preparatory phase or during the propaganda stage or during the day of the elections. The best example is the Code of Conduct signed by all the Palestinian parties.
2. The private sector contributed to solving pre-elections problems, a development which doubled the vitality of civil society.
3. The involvement of all political parties in the elections is regarded as a significant democratic and national development that can enhance the Palestinian political system and develop a growing democracy.
4. The strike carried out by public service employees was legitimate and formed an element of pressure on all parties. The strike was characterized by unity and continuity and it indicated the extent of suffering caused by the siege, especially by the poor.

**Weaknesses:**

1. The continued membership of some NGOs within the Palestinian NGO Network's coordination committee cannot be considered proper despite the experience that these institutions have and it would be better to keep the scope open for wider participation.
2. Some donors have recently started imposing their political agendas due to the aid presented to civil institutions and they have stipulated that funds should not be utilized for any governmental or legislative activities.
3. These policies are not only interference in Palestinians' domestic affairs but they also add to more division among the Palestinian people and make the needy institutions divert from their democratic attitudes and human rights concerns.
4. Although several international supportive organizations do not place terms, there should be broad social campaigns against those who do place terms so that all the sublime principles of civil society do not contradict the principles of neutrality and democracy.
5. The formal attempts to break up the strike were unjustifiable and at the same time, the difficulty of providing salaries is not enough of an excuse for the strikers to exploit the strike for political purposes.

## **Conclusions:**

1. For the Palestinians 2006 was the year of change, with regard to democratic change and other issues. If elections represent the epitome of democratic change then all that followed was fully devoid of democracy and human rights and those who mainly participated in this was the international community that has always sung the praises of democracy and human rights. However, in Palestine they ignored the principles of democracy and chose to punish the Palestinian people for their choice.
2. The bitter question one has to put forward is: Is it legitimate to confiscate the people's choice when foreigners reject it; and who gave the president or the prime minister of a certain state the power to say who should or should not govern and if things were to be run in such a fashion then why have the elections in the first place? And if confiscating people's right to vote is not considered a crime then what exactly are human rights?
3. The year 2006 also witnessed organized official Israeli terrorism against innocent children and the elderly utilizing all means of destruction such as aircrafts and tanks to kill hundreds of Palestinians especially in the Gaza Strip after targeting civilians had become the norm and not the exception. After each crime the Israeli army makes the excuse that it was a mistake, until the mistakes have become the basis of Israeli army practices which is described by its government as the most advanced army in the world.
4. The Israeli aggression against Lebanon completed the circle, and it seems that the policy of wild destruction is the Israeli army's point of departure, however this time the Israeli army came out of the war with a deep wound to its dignity and credibility which was hit at the core as the Israeli army lost its clout to threaten and was only left with the ability to destroy.
5. President Mahmoud 'Abbas showed a great capability to persist and maneuver on both the local and international levels in order to carry out the legislative elections. His stand was firm concerning his viewpoints and electoral program and he accepted the adoption of the detainees' document which came about as a logical development which presented a way out of the crisis created by the widely differing programs submitted by the presidency and the government.
6. On the other hand, the president did not take the same firm stand concerning the interior security question, which gradually became worse and worse; nor did he deal with illegal Israeli government measures against civilians, the infra-structure, the abduction of ministers and representatives and the Jericho prison incident.
7. Normally the process of handing over government ministries happens smoothly and in a refined manner, but the stages which followed the elections were not proper. The losing party tried to cling on to the sources of power in their institutions, while the winning party took advantage of all pretexts to eliminate and neutralize the centers of power which intensified stress inside the ministries. Handing over processes are not mere acts of

appearance but are a practical translation of the principles of peaceful exchange of authority.

8. Contrary to all expectations and the extent of external and internal pressures the Hamas government has not shown any indications of succumbing and has continued persistently in practicing its tasks even though at minimum capacity.
9. Even though Hamas concentrated during its elections campaign on the motto “Reformation and Change” it did not actually make any significant changes or reforms in fields like security, the economic situation, standards of living or political currents or even in the fight against corruption; nothing was achieved whether in the old or new files and all that remains to be said is that serious efforts should be made to deal with the issue of corruption.
10. Instead of becoming a source of investment, growth and national income the liberated lands in the Gaza Strip have become an issue of dispute and consumption of public institutions and the security forces’ energy. There should be a serious move to plan and innovate so that these lands can develop the Palestinian situation.
11. The prolonged strike by public sector employees was an important experience in the process of democratic change. This should lead to a democratic process of a constructive nature and not a vengeful one between factions.
12. The lack of security should not be regarded as a legally technical issue only but within the context of the phenomenon of violence which is becoming widespread various sectors and segments of society , as violence is being manifested in social violence between families and individuals, in addition to the violence in schools and all these problems need treatment on the level of the values and educational system and should be dealt with in a civilized manner that aims at rendering violence an unacceptable phenomenon within Palestinian society.
13. It is no more possible for hundreds of communities to stay without drinking water and sewage systems, this issue should be given priority within future projects and within a complete five year development plan, which will raise people’s living standards and accomplish equality and justice.
14. The question of the Palestinian detainees within the Israeli prisons is not merely one of a large number of prisoners but is one filled with humanitarian cases as many detainees have been suffering in Israeli prisons for years without trials or charges and many of them are adolescents
15. The plans for the Judaization of Jerusalem have been moving instep with the building of the Separation Wall and the implications on the Palestinians within Jerusalem have intensified, which calls for international intervention that can force Israeli to comply with the legitimate resolutions on Jerusalem.
16. The investigations carried out by the Administrative and monetary monitoring office into the corruption cases is becoming more objective which is helping in the elimination of gossip and exaggeration concerning these issues. The transfer of corruption and embezzlement cases to the Presidency, the PLC and the Attorney General’s offices is a positive

development as they are objective enough to deal with such cases and the rapid submission of annual reports has increased the office's credibility.

17. The provision of details on the PLC member's properties and monetary situation in addition to those of senior officials is a positive development that should be generalized. The emergence of the monetary and administrative monitoring office requires support and facilities so that it may execute its plans. Moreover, we should clarify the relationship between the illegal profits committee and the monitoring office to cancel out negative interaction between their authorities.
18. Despite all the shortcomings and mistakes in the field of internal security, the security system remained outside group conflicts and carried out its duties professionally and properly with the purpose of serving society, although some marginal groups damaged this institution's reputation. Thus it is necessary for the security institution to purify its ranks of these derogatory elements.
19. There is no doubt that the year 2006, and especially its last third was full of violence, chaos and an absence of the Rule of Law. It can also be described as the year of disorder, internal fighting and aggressions against public and private properties in addition to being the year of censorship against freedom of speech, assassination and kidnapping. It was a year that witnessed a decline in Palestinian ethics and morality and has thrown a dark shadow upon the long history of Palestinian struggle changing the image of Palestinians from a people who have struggled for years to one of a people without civilization or ethics. All parties should be held responsible for that and particularly the leaders who were in effect unable to lead properly and the groups that practiced violence neglecting the laws and controls and spoiling average individuals' lives.
20. The storming of public properties like the PLC, ministries and security and public institutions are very negative phenomena. They are irrational and unjustifiable, causing harm to none other than the Palestinians themselves. These people are known and leaving them unpunished legitimizes their mean actions and so they should not be forgiven on the official level as they have done harm to the Palestinian cause.
21. Despite the fact that they did not escape the policy of international penalties for their democratic choice, the elected Councils and bodies continued to present their services to their constituencies according to the available means. Those which escaped the sanctions were told to place ads expressing their gratitude in the newspapers, so even human emotions have become politicized and within the same framework one should remind of the necessity for completing the municipal electoral process as the final stage was not completed due to the state of chaos and lack of security.
22. It is difficult to pass a negative judgment on the performance of the PLC as it was targeted by the occupying forces and many of its members were arrested, which had a negative effect on its legal performance and even its ability to reach a quorum. Therefore the PLC was unable to do much especially when trying to monitor, pass legislation or keep abreast with internal political issues. In light of all these circumstances innovative mechanisms should have been adopted to allow the PLC to deal with these matters positively.

23. It is worth mentioning that female representation within this Council reached 13% in comparison with 6% in the latter Council.
24. The tense relations between the Higher Judiciary Council and the Ministry of Justice affected everything to do with the judicial system negatively and raised the question of whether the level of the system is appropriate. Another question in this concern is the level of the judges' salaries and whether they can guarantee their desired integrity.
25. . Moreover, the accumulation of cases or the slow tackling of these cases creates unlimited damage and contributes to cases of social violence. Therefore, there is an urgent need to activate the Judiciary system so that it can handle people's cases with higher efficiency and speed.
26. The role of civil society relating to the legislative elections is considered quite distinguished and the Code of Conduct is proof enough. In addition, the private sector tried to contribute to resolving the internal political disputes. These two dimensions express the vitality and the size of participation that civil society can offer.
27. It is evident that there is an increase in intervention by some international donors as they attempt to impose their political agendas and place conditions demanding that civil society institutions play a prejudiced political role depending on boycotting specific political parties according to the political stands of the donors. Such a negative development will not only affect civil society's vitality but also the nature of its role and can contribute to causing wide gaps amongst sectors of Palestinian society. Donations in such an environment can constitute a broad entry point into administrative and financial corruption on the part of civil society organizations benefiting from these donations.
28. Although many international donors do not adopt political terms and act professionally and at the highest levels in an appreciated manner, there is still a need for a civil society campaign against political stipulations if civil society organizations are to continue playing a vital role without becoming political tools practicing separation and serving others' political interests.



# Appendixes

## Appendix #1

### Executive Committee of the PLO

Name	Position	Telephone	Fax
Ahmad Abbas	Chairman of Executive Committee	-2822365	- 2822366
Mouq Kaddumi	Political Section	2161-230105	2161-233816
Muhammad Abed Rabbo	Information Department	-2954042	-2954043
Muhammad Al Agha	Regional & International Department	-2821388	-2824428
Muhammad Nashashibi	Economic Department	-2826188	-2820696
Muhammad Ghosheh	Member	-2986292	-2964989
Muhammad Ishaq	Member	-2988797	-2958797
Muhammad Isma'eel	Member	-2846944	-2828271
Muhammad Jarjou'i	Member	-2741540	-2766401
Muhammad Al Khudari	Member	-2837772	8-2823180
Muhammad Abdel Rahim Mallouh <sup>98</sup>	Member	-2959767	-2959768

<sup>98</sup> Mr. Abdel Raheem Mallouh has been arrested by the Israeli Army since 11/6/2002

Yassan Shak'a	Member	-2379313	-2374690
Yuseer Khaled	Member	-2385577	-2385577
Yilm Al Za'noun	Palestinian National Council Chairman	-2829153	-2826325

## Appendix #2 Council of Ministers of the PNA

Ministry	1 <sup>st</sup> Cabinet Mar.2006
Prime Minister	Ismaiel Haniyeh
Finance	Ismail Faiad
Higher Education	Yasser Eldeen Alshaer
Culture	Abdallah Abu Alsubuh
Labor	Mohammad Barghouthi
Local Affairs	Abdulkhri Turukman
Tourism and Archaeology	
Planning	Abdameer Addallah Abu Aisha
Internal Affairs	Abdalmoud Alzahar
Jerusalem	Abdallah Abu Arafeh
Health	Abdusem Naiem
Justice	Abdumad Alkhaldi
Local Government	Abdassa Aljabari
Shariq and Religious Affairs	Abdullah Alrjoub
Economy	Abdalla' Aldeen Alaraj
Agriculture	Mohammad Agha
Transportation & Communication	Abdelrahman Zedan
Public works ***	Abdullah Thatha
Interior	Abdullah Siam
Telecommunications and Informations	Abdumal Alkhudari
Youth and Sports *	Ismaeil Haniyeh
Prisoner Affairs	Abd Wasfi Kabha
Minister of State	Abdullah Odwan
Secretary- General of the Council of Ministries	Mohammad Awad
Vice Prime Minister Vice Prime Minister	Yasser Eldeen Alshaer
Foreign Affairs °	Abdullah Ariam Saleh

Mini

\*\*\* Imerged with housing ministry.

° New Ministry stry First Council (April94 -Jun96)

Second Council (Jun96-March98)

### Appendix #3

## Official Palestinian Departments and Institutions

Palestine Legislative Council	Rawhi Fatooh	02-2958893	
Palestinian Economic Council for Development & Reconstruction (PECDAR)	Mohammad Shtayeh	02-2362300	02-2347041
Palestinian Geographic Center	Yunis Al Qawaasmi	02-2404711	02-2404712
National Center for Public Administration and Human Resource Development	Mohammad Naja	08-2829260	08-2824090
National Center for Studies and Documentation	Abdullah AlHorani	08-2865716	08-2822028
Palestinian Red Crescent Society	Yunis Khatib	02-2406515	02-2406518
Palestinian Central Bureau of Statistics	Luay Shabaneh	02-2406340	02-2406343
Negotiations Affairs Department	Saeb Uraiqat	02-2963741	02-2963740
Dar Al Fatwa	Mohammad Husein	02-6285082	02-6285082
Diwan Al Fatwa and Legislation	Ibrahim Al Daghmeh	08-2829197	08-2829197
Personnel Department	Mohammad Abu Sharee'a	02-2980640	02-2987793
Palestinian Petrol Authority	Mujahed Salameh	02-2404988	02-2404003
Palestinian Environment Authority	Sufian Sultan	02-2929269	022929279
Palestinian Tobacco Authority	Ahmad Al Agha	02-2987561	02-2987507
Palestinian Energy and Natural Resources Authority	Omar Kitaneh	02-2986192	02-2986191
Palestinian Energy Authority	Nabil Tineh	02-2341804	02-2341388
Palestinian Water Authority	Fadel Ka'oush	08-2822696	08-2822697
Palestinian Monetary Authority	George Al-abad	02-2959920	02-2959922
Martyrs Families & Prisoners' Institution	Youssef Jubran	02-29858507	02-2986268
Civil Aviation Authority	Suleiman Abu-Halib	08-2821309	08-2821309
Palestine Standards Institution	Mazen Abu Shri'a	02-2964433	02-2965191
Political Guidance Commission	Othman Abu Gharbiyyeh	02-2987618	02-2987619
Palestinian National Archives Center	Mohammad Bheis	02-2345413	02-2345413
Government Computer Center	Ghassan Kaddah	08-2829262	08-2863900
Palestinian Curriculum Development Center	Salah Yassin	02-2406174	02-2401550
Radio & TV Authority	Radwan Abu Ayyash	02-2959890	022959893
General Control Bureau	Jarrar Al Qudweh	08-2827337	08-2821703
"Wafa" Palestinian News Agency	Ziad Abdel Fattah	08-2824036	08-2824046
Environment Authority	Yousef Abu Safieh	02-2403495	02-2403494
Non Governmental Organization Department	Hassan Asfour	02-2401370	02-2401371
Refugee Affairs Department	Mahmoud Abbas	02-2961132	02-2961313
Land Authority	Fraih Abu Median	02-2321336-4	02-2321336-4
Committee of Insurance and Salaries	Majed Al Helo	02-2966042	
High Committee of Fund and Investment	Jafar Hadeeb	02-2988791	02-2988793
Committee of Industrial Towns	Ismail Abu Shhadeh	02- 2801028	02-2801034
National Association Office	Samir Shhadeh	02- 2986623	02-2986322
Higher Learning, Science and Education Association	Jihad Qirashuli	02-2401080	02-2406333
Higher Judge Council	Tayseer al Tamimi	02-2965868	02-2965868
Harbors Authority	Ali Shaath	08-2826737	08-2826747

#### Appendix #4 Palestinian Security Establishments

General Security	Jamal Kayed	08-2822803	08-2829479
<b>General Leader for Police</b>	Ala' Husni	08-2829425	08-2822335
Military Intelligence	Merged with National Security		
Preventive Security-W.B.	Ziad Hab Al Reeh	02-2901801	02-2901807
Preventive Security- Gaza	Yousef Issa	08-2825415	08-2825044
Force 17	Misbah Albheis	08-2829323	08-2829324
Naval Police	Abu Nader Tarawiyeh	08-2833610	08-2833620
Border Crossing Security	Nathmi Muhanna	08-6713684	08-6713685
Palestinian Security Council		02-2981371	08-2981372

#### Appendix #5 PNA Governorates

District	Governor	Telephone	Fax
Jerusalem	Jamil Othman Nasser	02-2799074	02-2799074
Ramallah & Al Bireh	Said Abu Ali	02-2958588	02-2986569
Hebron	Areef Al Jabari	02-2290771	02-2290770
Bethlehem	Salah Al Ta'mari	02-2741667	02-2741666
Jericho & Jordan Valley	Sami Muslim	02-2321242	02-2321291
Nablus	Faisal Mohammad Alsheikh Yousef	09-2383046	09-2389913
Qalqilia	Mustafa Khundaqji	09-2942922	09-2942922
Jenin	Cadora Musa	04-2503220	04-2503222
Tulkarem	Izildeen AlShareef	09-2673334	09-2673334
Gaza	Mohammad AlQudweh	08-2828694	08-2828684
North Gaza	Sakher Bseiso	08-2477131	08-2477130
Khan Younis	Husnie Zuorb	08-2054888	08-2054845
Rafah	Abed Al Mageed Al Agha	08-2136875	08-2136875
Central	Abdalla Abu Samhadaneh	08-2539330	08- 2539334

## Appendix #6

### (a) Higher Judicial Council

Head high court - Chief Judge	Head
Supreme Court Judge	Deputy
Supreme Court Judge	Member
Judge, High Court	Member
Deputy Justice Minister	Member
Head, Court of Appeals	Member
Head, Court of Appeals	Member
Attorney General	Member
Attorney General	Member

## Appendix #6

### (b) Palestinian Judiciary System

<b>Position</b>
Head, High Court
Head, Court of Appeals /Gaza
Head, Court of Appeals /Ramallah
Attorney General
Grand Mufti
Mufti of the Security Forces
Chief Religious Court

## Appendix #7

### (a) The Speaker's Council

<b>Speaker:</b>	<b>Aziz Dweik</b>
<b>1st Deputy:</b>	<b>Ahmad Bahar</b>
<b>2nd Deputy:</b>	<b>Hasan Khreisha</b>
<b>Council Secretary:</b>	<b>Mahmoud Alramahi</b>

### (b) Committee Council

<b>Committee Council</b>		
<b>No.</b>	<b>Name</b>	<b>Position</b>
1.	<b>Aziz Dweik</b>	<b>Chairman</b>
2.	<b>Ahmad Bahar</b>	<b>1<sup>st</sup> Vice-president</b>
3.	<b>Hasan Khreisha</b>	<b>2<sup>nd</sup> Vice-president</b>
4.	<b>Mahmoud Alramahi</b>	<b>Secretary Council</b>
5.	<b>Khalil Alhayyeh</b>	<b>Member</b>

6.	<b>Basem Alzaareer</b>	<b>Member</b>
7.	<b>Anwar Zboun</b>	<b>Member</b>
8.	<b>Mahmoud Musleh</b>	<b>Member</b>
9.	<b>Fathi Hammad</b>	<b>Member</b>
10.	<b>Jamileh Alshanti</b>	<b>Member</b>
11.	<b>Bassam Alsalhi</b>	<b>Member</b>
12.	<b>Mustafa Albargouthi</b>	<b>Member</b>
13.	<b>Hanan Ashrawi</b>	<b>Member</b>
14.	<b>Khilda Jarar</b>	<b>Member</b>
15.	<b>Ziad Abu Amro</b>	<b>Member</b>
16.	<b>Husam Altaweel</b>	<b>Member</b>
17.	<b>Azzam Al Ahmad</b>	<b>Member</b>
18.	<b>Majed Abu Shmaleh</b>	<b>Member</b>
19.	<b>Najat Al Astal</b>	<b>Member</b>
20.	<b>Jehad Abu Zneid</b>	<b>Member</b>

**(b) PLC Committees – 10<sup>th</sup> session**

Jerusalem Committee		Budget and Finance Committee	
Name	Position	Name	Position
Ibrahim Abu Salem	Chairman	Salam Faiad	Chairman
Ahmad Abu Halabieh	Reporter	Ibrahim Dahbour	Reporter
Ahmad Attoun	Member	Ismael Alashkar	Member
Emil Jarju'i	Member	Intisar Alwazeer	Member
Bernard Sabilla	Member	Basem Za'arir	Member
Abdallah Abdallah	Member	Jamal Saleh	Member
Jehad Abu Zneid	Member	Khalil Ruba'i	Member
Mohammad Abu Teir	Member	Dawood Abu Seir	Member
Mohammad Totah	Member	Rawya Alshawa	Member
Yousef Alsharafi	Member	Riyad Amli	Member
<b>Refugees Committee</b>		Sufian Alagha	Member
Jameel Majdalawi	Chairman	Abed Aljaber Fuqaha'	Member
Ahmad Mubarak	Reporter	Ala' Aldein Yaghi	Member
Ahmad Ahmad	Member	Fu'ad Kokali	Member
Jehad Abu Zneid	Member	Feisal Abu Shahla	Member
Jehad Tameila	Member	Qais Abedalkareem	Member
Abedalfattah Dukhan	Member	Mohammad Hijazi	Member

Fathi Hammad	Member	Mohammad Totah	Member
Mohammad Allaham	Member	Mostafa Albarghouthi	Member
Jamal Altirawi	Member	Yehia Alabadsah	Member
Husam Altaweel	Member		
<b>Land and Settlement Confrontation Committee</b>			
Waleed Assaf	Chairman	Mohammad Altil	Member
Imad Nofal	Reporter	Mohammad Allaham	Member
Khaled Abu Tous	Member	Mostafa Albarghouthi	Member
Naser Abed Aljawaad	Member	Muheeb Salameh	Member
		Na'ima Alsheikh	Member
<b>Economics Committee</b>			
Ibrahim Dahbour	Chairman	Jamal Skeik	Member
Jamal Saleh	Reporter	Sufian Alagha	Member
Khalil Ruba'i	Member	Siham Thabet	Member
Dawood Abu Seir	Member	Abedaljaber Fuquha'	Member
Abdelraheem Burham	Member	Azzam Alahmad	Member
Ahmad Abu Holi	Member	Ala' Aldeen Yaghi	Member
Jameel Majdalawi	Member	Fathi Hammad	Member
Salem Salameh	Member	Nabeel Sha'th	Member
		Nabeel Alsalhi	Member
<b>Legal Committee</b>			
Name	Position	Name	Position
Mohammad Alghoul	Chairman	Fadel Hamdan	Member
Mohammad Bader	Reporter	Mohammad Shhab	Member
Ahmad Abu Halabiyeh	Member	Mahmoud Alkhateeb	Member
Bernard sabella	Member	Musher Almasri	Member
Bassam Alsalhi	Member	Huda Alqrinawi	Member
Hamed Khdeir	Member	Wael Abelrahman	Member
Hanan Ashrawi	Member	Younis Alastal	Member
Rabeeha Thiab	Member	Abdelraheem Barham	Member
Sa'eb Irekat	Member		
<b>Political Committee</b>		<b>Energy and Natural Resources Committee</b>	
Abdullah Abdullah	Chairman	Ayman Daraghmeh	Chairman
Salah Albaradweel	Reporter	Ibrahim Almusader	Reporter
Anwar Zboun	Member	Khaled Abu Tous	Member
Jamilah Alshanti	Member	Khamis Alnajar	Member
Husam Altaweel	Member	Salam Faiad	Member
Hanan Ashrawi	Member	Ali Romanin	Member
Khaled Abu Hasan	Member	Fayez Alsaqa	Member
Radwan Alakhras	Member	<b>Monitoring and Human Rights Committee</b>	
Riyad Radad	Member	Faisal Abu Shahla	Chairman
Ziad Abu Amro	Member	Marwan Abu Ras	Reporter
Salem Salameh	Member	Ahmad Shreim	Member
Sayed Abu Musameh	Member	Ahmad Mubarak	Member
Sa'eb Irekat	Member	Ashraf Jama'	Member
Azzam Alahmad	Member	Akram Alhimouni	Member
Fu'ab Kokali	Member	Intisar Alwazeer	Member
Fayez Alsaqa	Member	Ayman Daraghmah	Member
Mohammad Alghoul	Member	Husni Yaseen	Member
Mahmoud Alaloul	Member	Khalida Jarar	Member
Mustafa Albarghouthi	Member	Khalil Alhayyeh	Member



Muna Mansour	Member	Raja'i Barakeh	Member
Nabil Shath	Member	Sameer Alqadi	Member
Najat abu Baker	Member	Sameer Halayqa	Member
Abdelfattah Dukhan	Member	Sayed Abu Musameh	Member
Sahar Alqawasmi	Member	Shami Shami	Member
Local Government Committee		Salah Albaradweel	Member
Riyad Alamleh	Chairman	Abedlrahman Aljamal	Member
Rabeeha Thiab	Reporter	Issa Qaraqia'	Member
Yaser Mansour	Member	Fadel Hamdan	Member
Jamal Skeik	Member	Mohammad Hijazi	Member
Basem Zaa'rir	Member	Mohammad Dahlan	Member
Najat Alastal	Member	Mahmoud Ala'loul	Member
Ahmad Abu Holi	Member	Mahmoud Musleh	Member
Social Issues Committee		Na'ima Alsheikh Ali	Member
Qais Abdelkareem	Chairman	Yaser Mansour	Member
Khamis Alnajar	Reporter	Yehya Ala'badseh	Member
Sahar Alqawasmi	Member	Younis Alastal	Member
Sameer Alqadi	Member	Huda Qrinawi	Member
Mohammad Altil	Member	Internal and Security Committee	
Najat Abu Baker	Member	Mohammad Dahlan	Chairman
Naser Abdeljawwad	Member	Isma'el Alashkar	Reporter
Ali Romanin	Member	Ahmad Ahmad	Member
Ibrahim Almusader	Member	Ahmad Attoun	Member
Ahmad Abu Holi	Member	Ashraf Joma'	Member
Radwan Alakhras	Member	Anwar Zboun	Member
High Education Committee		Jamal abu Alrub	Member
Khaled Yehya	Chairman	Jamal Altirawi	Member
Rajaei Baraka	Reporter	Jehad Tamliyeh	Member
Ibrahim abu Salem	Member	Khaled Yehya	Member
Jameela Alshanti	Member	Khalil Alhayyeh	Member
Hamed khdeir	Member	Shami Shami	Member
Husni Yaseen	Member	Abdelhameed Alaila	Member
Khaled abu Hasan	Member	Majed Abu Shamaleh	Member
Riyad Radad	Member	Mohammad Abu Teir	Member
Siham Thabet	Member	Mahmoud Musleh	Member
Abdelrahman aljamal	Member	Marwan Abu Ras	Member
Imad Nofal	Member	Muheeb Salameh	Member
Mohammad Bader	Member	Naser Khalil	Member
Muna Mansour	Member	Wa'el Abdelrahman	Member
Yousef Alsharafi	Member	Waleed Assaf	Member
Martyrs ,Prisoners, wounded			
Khalida Jarar	Chairman		
Aisa Qaraqia'	Reporter		
Mariam Farhat	Member		
Ahmad Shreim	Member		
Jamal Abu Alrub	Member		
Sameera Halaiqa	Member		
Majed Abu Shamaleh	Member		
Naser Khalil	Member		
Mohammad Shihab	Member		

Appendex # 8

(a) Table of bills presented to the PLC

Bill	Presenting Party	Date	Date Presented	Referred to Sub-committees	General Discussion	1 <sup>st</sup> Reading	2 <sup>nd</sup> Reading	3 <sup>rd</sup> Reading	Referred to President
Law	Minister of Justice/ Freih Abu Mdein	5/5/96	8/5/96	8/5/96	10/7/96	1/9/96	17/9/97	2/10/97	4/10/97
Empowering Palestinian local councils	Cabinet	20/3/96			22/8/96	10/10/96	1/12/96		
Service	Cabinet	8/5/96	8/5/96	8/5/96	7/11/96	29/1/97	3/6/97		4/6/97
Palestinian Local Councils	Cabinet				4/2/97	12/2/97	2/7/97	14/7/97	21/7/97
Budget	Cabinet	15/3/97	15/3/97	15/3/97	27/5/97				
Metary Authority	Cabinet	7/5/96	7/5/96	7/5/96	27/3/97	11/4/97	30/6/97		15/12/97
Estate Ownership in Palestine by Foreigners	Legal Committee	16/6/97	16/6/97	16/6/97	16/6/97	30/6/97	30/9/97		4/10/97
Palestinian General Petroleum Authority	Cabinet	19/4/97			15/7/97	18/9/97	25/11/97		7/12/97
Regulating the Law of Emission	Legal Committee	9/7/97	10/7/97	10/7/97	14/7/97 Postponed 28/7/98	1/12/98	6/1/99	6/4/99	19/4/99
Regulating General Budget and Financial Affairs	Budget Committee	30/4/97	9/3/98	19/3/98	19/3/98	2/4/98	14/4/98		20/4/98
Protection of Animal Resources	Cabinet	11/4/97	30/9/97	30/9/97	13/10/97	14/10/97	10/12/97		9/3/98
Political Parties	Cabinet	24/1/97	30/9/97	30/9/97	10/11/97				
Rehabilitation and Quarantine Centers (Prisons)	Control Bureau Committee	20/11/97			25/11/97	2/4/98	28/4/98		2/5/98
Special Authority	Legal Committee	8/6/97			12/11/97	25/6/98	2/9/98	25/11/98	5/12/98
Central Institutions Development Bank	Cabinet	11/4/97	30/9/97	30/9/97	30/9/97 postponed—Pending Banking Law approval				
Trinarians	Cabinet	27/3/97	30/9/97	30/9/97	30/9/97 postponed—Pending Trade Union Law approval				
Defense	Cabinet	11/4/97	30/9/97	30/9/97	25/11/97	8/1/98	31/3/98		20/4/98
Arms and ammunition	Cabinet	19/4/97	30/9/97	30/9/97	25/11/97	7/1/98	2/4/98		20/4/98
Charitable Societies and Organizations	Members	13/10/97	13/10/97	13/10/97	9/12/97	30/5/98	30/7/98	25/5/99	12/8/99
Encouraging Investing in Palestine	Members	10/11/97	10/11/97	10/11/97	9/12/97	19/3/98	14/4/98		20/4/98
Regulating Work of Commercial Agents	Members	10/11/97	10/11/97	10/11/97	9/12/97	7/1/99	20/4/99	24/6/99	15/7/99
Establishing The Palestinian Center for Social Development	Cabinet	19/4/97	30/9/97	30/9/97	18/8/98 Returned to PLO				
Program for supporting martyr families, prisoners and wounded	Members		30/9/97	30/9/97	28/7/98	19/8/98 Presented for 1 <sup>st</sup> reading and referred to sub-committee for review			
Public rallies	Cabinet	27/3/97	30/9/97	30/9/97	28/4/98	20/8/98	25/11/98		19/12/98
Monitoring and Checking Dangerous Mines	Cabinet	17/3/97	30/9/97	30/9/97	25/11/97	9/12/97	17/3/98		24/3/98
Appointing "Mukhtars"	Cabinet	11/4/97			2/7/97 Rejected				
Protecting Gaza's natural resources	Cabinet	19/4/97	30/9/97	30/9/97	30/9/97 returned to PNA				
Personal Services	Member/Azmi Al Shu'eibi	31/8/97	19/3/98	19/3/98	27/5/98				
Regulating Contracts and	Cabinet	13/7/97	19/3/98	19/3/98	27/5/98	Has been split into 1. General supplies 2. Public works			
General Supplies	Cabinet	13/7/97	19/3/98	19/3/98	27/5/98	14/7/98	18/8/98		14/9/98
Supplies for public works	Cabinet	13/7/97	19/3/98	19/3/98	27/5/98	1/9/98	25/11/98	9/6/99	27/6/99
Human Resources	Cabinet	24/1/98	19/3/98	19/3/98	28/4/98	18/8/98	5/11/98		5/12/98
General Statistics	Cabinet	24/1/98	17/3/98	17/3/98	17/3/98	29/3/98	2/5/2000	7/6/2000	17/6/2000
Industrial towns and free zones	Cabinet	24/1/98	17/3/98	17/3/98	17/3/98	29/7/98	18/8/98		9/9/98
Construction and rehabilitation of handicapped	Member/ Azmi Al Shu'eibi	10/3/98	19/3/98	19/3/98	18/8/98 was incorporated with the bill suitability of public sites to form the handicapped				
PNA General Budget	Cabinet	27/1/98	31/3/98	31/3/98	28/4/98	Decided on 29/6/98			

Affairs	Cabinet	25/7/98	29/7/98	29/7/98	11/11/98	12/11/98	8/12/98	21/4/99	10/5/99
Environment	Cabinet	16/5/98	17/5/98	17/5/98	18/8/98	27/5/99	6/7/99		5/8/99
Lebanese Higher Education	Cabinet	16/5/98	17/5/98	17/5/98	27/5/98	13/7/98	30/7/98		19/8/98
Lebanese Labor	Education Committee	8/3/98	10/3/98	10/3/98	27/5/98	24/12/98	27/10/98	29/3/2000	2/4/2000
Public Health Insurance	Education Committee	20/5/98			27/5/98	5/11/98 Postponed to be incorporated as a part of the General Health bill			
Disabled Rights	Members	16/3/98	19/3/98	19/3/98	27/5/98 5/11/98 postponed	6/1/99	16/3/99	25/5/99	2/6/99
Lebanese Income tax	Budget Committee	18/10/98	5/11/98	5/11/98	21/12/98	17/8/2000	11/3/2001		23/5/2001
Control of Citrus fruit	Cabinet	25/10/98	5/11/98	5/11/98	8/12/98 postponed				
Exports	Cabinet	25/10/98	5/11/98	5/11/98	8/12/98	10/3/2001	24/6/2001	15/9/2001	20/9/2001
Administrative Reforms	Cabinet	4/11/98	10/11/98	10/11/98	8/12/98	3/11/99	13/3/2000		9/4/2000
Electricity	Cabinet	4/11/98	10/11/98	10/11/98	1/12/99				
Copyrights and Patent's	Member/ Azmi Al Shu'eibi	1/3/99	16/3/99	16/3/99	1/12/99				
Media and Publications	Member/ Azmi Al Shu'eibi	13/3/99	16/3/99	16/3/99	25/5/99 rejected due to the issuance of President's decree published in the official gazette				
UNRWA General Budget	Cabinet	5/4/99	5/4/99	5/4/99	The president recuperated the budget on June 9, 1999				
Electricity	Cabinet	19/4/99	20/4/99	20/4/99	23/6/99	16/12/99	15/2/2000	8/6/2000	17/6/2000
Enforcement of Branding and controlling precious metals law	Cabinet	19/4/99	20/4/99	20/4/99	The law was recuperated on 27/9/1999				
Lebanese Medical Council	<b>Member/ Dr. Mu'awiya Al Masri</b>	<b>25/4/99</b>	<b>11/5/99</b>	<b>11/5/99</b>	<b>18/10/05</b>	<b>24/11/05</b>	8/12/05		
Regulating the sale and distribution of pesticides	Cabinet	16/6/99	24/6/99	24/6/99	1/12/99	18/5/00 Delayed			
Education	Cabinet	16/6/99	24/6/99	24/6/99	6/7/99	23/11/99	3/2/00		22/2/00
General budget	Cabinet	13/7/99	14/7/99	14/7/99	Declared on 12/8/99				
Standards and Measurements	Members	21/7/99	14/10/99	14/10/99	1/12/99	16/2/00	12/4/00	28/6/00	1/7/00
Administrative Procedures	Cabinet	22/7/99	14/10/99	14/10/99	27/10/99	15/2/00	28/6/00		23/7/00
Workers compensation for natural disasters	Cabinet	3/8/99	14/10/99	14/10/99	1/12/99				
Consular Fees	Cabinet	3/8/99	14/10/99	14/10/99	1/12/99	17/5/00	8/6/00		24/6/00
Electricity	Cabinet	31/8/99	14/10/99	14/10/99	1/12/99	28/9/00	8/8/01	18/2/02	28/2/02
General Budget	Cabinet	7/11/99	17/11/99	17/11/99	26/1/00				
Amended Law to regulate the practice of Regular Courts	Member/ Freih Abu Mdein	18/11/99	18/11/99	18/11/99	25/11/99				27/11/99
Amendment of Regular Courts	Cabinet	2/12/99	14/12/99	14/12/99	15/12/99	12/3/00	13/3/00	17/5/00	18/5/00
Public Health Insurance	Cabinet	1/12/99	14/12/99	14/12/99	28/9/00	11/3/01	24/6/01		29/7/01
Prevention of torture of detainees and prisoners	Control Bureau Committee	19/12/99	30/12/99	30/12/99	17/5/00 Rejected				
General Health	Cabinet	26/1/00	3/2/00	3/2/00	12/3/00	3/12/00	1/6/04	22/12/04	
Administrative and Commercial Procedures	Cabinet	26/1/00	3/2/00	3/2/00	3/2/00	19/9/00	28/9/00		23/10/00
Amended Judicial Authority	Cabinet	26/1/00	3/2/00	3/2/00	3/2/00	3/2/00	3/2/00		5/2/00
Estate and Housing	Cabinet	4/4/00	3/5/00	3/5/00	3/5/00				
Aviation	Cabinet	14/9/00	3/5/00	3/5/00	3/5/00	8/8/00	16/8/00	5/4/01	16/4/01

Illegal Profit	Member/ Abdel Fattah Hamayel	20/5/00	19/9/00	19/9/00	28/9/00	17/9/03	14/4/04	6/1/05	6/1/05
Statements of content in civil and commercial items	Cabinet	6/6/00	7/6/00	7/6/00	28/6/00	9/8/00	16/8/00		18/8/00
Jerusalem as the Capital	Member/ Azmi Al Shu'eibi	7/6/00	8/6/00	8/6/00	8/6/00	19/7/00	20/7/00	28/9/00	29/9/00
The Palestinian Nursing and Midwives Council	Cabinet	27/6/00	20/7/00	20/7/00	1/8/00				
Combating Smoking	Member/ Marwan Al Barghouthi	8/8/00	19/9/00	19/9/00	10/3/01	6/7/04	25/11/04	5/1/05	2/1/05 ref cab
Industry	Cabinet	29/3/00	19/9/00	19/9/00	28/9/00				
Regulating professional unions (engineers)	Cabinet	27/8/00	19/9/00	19/9/00	10/3/01				
Regulating professional public school teachers	Member/ Abdel Fattah Hamayel	2/9/00	19/9/00	19/9/00	10/3/01				
Amendment of Local Council election law of 1996	Cabinet	6/9/00	19/9/00	19/9/00	10/3/01	30/6/04	1/7/04	30/8/04	25/8/04
Amendment of Civil Affairs Law #2 of 1999	Interior Committee	6/9/00	19/9/00	19/9/00	28/9/00	5/4/01	24/6/01		30/6/01
Agriculture	Cabinet	11/11/00	21/12/00	21/12/00	10/3/01	18/2/02	15/4/03		31/3/03
Management of Orphan Property Association	Cabinet	24/1/01	14/2/01	14/2/01	10/3/01	12/5/05	21/7/05	20/9/05	26/9/05
Securities	Budget Committee	11/2/01	14/2/01	14/2/01	10/3/01	14/4/04	30/6/04	5/10/04	7/10/04
Palestinian Capital Market Committee	Budget Committee	11/2/01	14/2/01	14/2/01	10/3/01	16/1/02	6/10/02		22/10/02
Social Insurance Fund	Member	13/2/01	14/2/01	14/2/01	10/3/01				
2001 General Budget	Cabinet	10/3/01	10/3/01	10/3/01	Decided on 4/4/01				
Amended Local Institutions Law	Cabinet	13/11/00	24/6/01	24/6/01					
Unemployment Insurance	Member/ Azmi Al Shu'eibi	13/2/01	8/8/01	8/8/01	10/5/05				
Dealing with Fireworks	Member/ Abdel Fattah Hamayel	21/5/01	24/6/01	24/6/01	15/1/02				
Jerusalem Municipality	Interior Committee	10/6/01	24/6/01	24/6/01	15/1/02	21/7/03	5/5/04		
Fees of Civil Courts	Cabinet	16/6/01	24/6/01	24/6/01	8/8/01	16/10/01	16/1/02	15/4/03	28/4/03
Profession of Auditing	Cabinet	26/6/01	8/8/01	8/8/01	8/8/01	16/1/02	6/10/02		8/10/02
Execution	Cabinet	28/6/01	8/8/01	8/8/01	8/8/01	14/3/05	25/8/05	23/11/05	19/11/05
Punishment	Cabinet	6/9/01	15/9/01	15/9/01	16/10/01	14/4/03			
Amended Judicial Authority	Legal Committee				15/1/02	15/1/02	14/2/02		
Amended Rehabilitation & Reformatory Centers	Abdel Fattah Hamayel	16/2/02	6/10/02	6/10/02	24/11/04	25/11/04	8/12/04		11/12/04
Public and Governmental Employees Work Injuries	Cabinet	16/2/02	6/10/02	6/10/02					
Palestinian Child Elections	Cabinet	16/3/02	6/10/02	6/10/02	6/10/02	28/5/03	19/8/03		
PLC Members' Duties and Rights	Member/ Azmi Al Shu'eibi	1/9/02	15/5/02	15/5/02	24/11/04	3/2/05	20/4/05	18/5/05	22/5/05
Amended Budget Regulations	Legal Committee	6/10/02	4/11/02	4/11/02	4/11/02	12/12/02	13/1/03		2/2/03
Amended Industrial Towns	Member/ Azmi Al Shu'eibi	30/10/02	12/12/02	12/12/02					
Amended Monetary Authority	Member/ Azmi Al Shu'eibi	30/10/02	12/12/02	12/12/02	12/12/02	6/2/03	28/5/03		17/5/03
Amended General Supplies	Member/ Azmi Al Shu'eibi	30/10/02	12/12/02	12/12/02	12/12/02	13/1/03	28/5/03		17/5/03
Amended Encouraging Investments	Azmi Al Shu'eibi	30/10/02	12/12/02	12/12/02	12/12/02	6/2/03	28/5/03		2/6/03
Amended Standards	Budget Committee	26/11/02	12/12/02	12/12/02	12/12/02	13/1/03	28/5/03		17/5/03

and Regulations									
Compensation Fund to Alleviate Israeli Aggression	Azmi Al Shu'eibi	21/12/02	6/2/03	6/2/03	1/7/03	27/5/04	27/5/04		5/6/05
Finance and Economy Monitoring Bureau	Budget Committee	28/12/02	13/1/03	13/1/03	16/12/03	24/1/04	14/4/04		27/5/05
General Budget 2003	Cabinet	31/12/02			Decided on 1/2/03				
Organ Transplants	Cabinet	16/1/03	6/2/03	6/2/03					
Social Care Fund	Cabinet	6/2/03	14/4/03	14/4/03	1/4/04	7/7/04	30/1/05	7/4/05	12/1/06
Amended Basic Law	Cabinet	10/3/03	10/3/03	10/3/03	10/3/03	10/3/03	10/3/03	18/3/03	18/3/03
Electricity	Member/ Abdel Rahman Hamad	5/4/03	14/4/03	14/4/03	28/5/03 Rejected on 6/7/05				
Amended Judicial Authority 2002	Legal committee	14/4/03	14/4/03	14/4/03	1/2/05	10/3/05	21/7/05	5/10/05	9/1/06
Professional Associations	Abdel Fattah Hamayel	15/4/03	1/7/03	1/7/03	14/3/05				
Palestinian Youth	Mufeed Abed Rabbu	10/6/03	1/7/03	1/7/03	6/1/05				
Prisoners and Liberated	Abd Al Jawad Saleh	13/7/03	20/7/03	20/7/03	1/4/04	17/4/04	6/7/04	22/12/04	19/1/05
Arafat Fund for Social Care	Cabinet	14/7/03	20/7/03	20/7/03	Based on the Education Committee's decision it was incorporated with the Social Care Fund				
2000 Amended Standards and Regulations #6	Cabinet	14/7/03	20/7/03	20/7/03					
Amended for the Amended Industrial Towns	Cabinet	14/7/03	20/7/03	20/7/03	Halted based on Dr. Azmi Al Shu'eibi's request				
Agriculture, Industrial, and Commerce Chambers	Cabinet	8/7/03	18/8/03	18/8/03	1/4/04	30/11/05	7/12/05		12/1/06
Drugs and Brain Stimulants	Cabinet	3/8/03	18/8/03	18/8/03	10/12/03				
Insurance	Economic Committee	11/8/03	18/8/03	18/8/03	1/4/04	26/4/05	13/8/05	5/10/05	11/1/06
Encouraging Competition and Preventing Monopoly	Economic Committee	11/8/03	18/8/03	18/8/03	1/4/04				
Industrial Ownership	Economic Committee	11/8/03	18/8/03	18/8/03					
Trade	Economic Committee	11/8/03	18/8/03	18/8/03					
1998 Amended Civil Services #4	Cabinet	8/7/03	19/8/03	19/8/03	28/8/04	1/9/04	24/11/04		13/1/05
2000 Amended Charities and Civil Organizations	Cabinet	12/7/03	18/8/03	18/8/03	18/8/03	19/8/03			
Insurance and Salaries for Security Forces	Budget and Interior Committees	17/9/03	2/12/03	2/12/03	13/4/04	1/7/04	1/9/04	1/12/04	7/1/05
Old Archeology Validity No.51, 1966	Cabinet	30/10/03	2/12/03	2/12/03					
Post Office	Cabinet	30/10/03	2/12/03	2/12/03					
Forensic Medicine	Cabinet	30/10/03	2/12/03	2/12/03	6/1/05				
Notary	Cabinet	30/10/03	2/12/03	2/12/03	30/12/03				
High Constitutional Court	Cabinet	30/10/03	2/12/03	2/12/03	30/12/03	23/11/05	7/12/05		14/1/06
2004 General Budget	Cabinet	3/12/03	3/12/03	3/12/03	15/1/04	Decided on 15/1/04			
Saving Public Documents	Member/ Hatem Abdel Qader	21/12/03	30/12/03	30/12/03					
Consumer Protection	Cabinet	29/2/04	10/3/03	10/3/03	23/6/05	28/7/05	21/9/05	27/10/05	30/1/06
Public Debt	Cabinet	29/2/04	10/3/04	10/3/04	23/6/05	6/7/05	13/8/05	9/11/05	16/1/06
Land	Cabinet	2/3/04	10/3/04	10/3/04	5/4/04				
Insurance Supervisory	Cabinet	27/3/04							
Compulsory Insurance	Cabinet	27/3/04							
Planning and Construction	Cabinet	27/3/04	1/4/04	1/4/04	30/6/04				
Regulating Electronic Signatures	Cabinet	27/3/04	1/4/04	1/4/04					
Trade Unions	Cabinet	27/3/04	1/4/04	1/4/04	14/3/05				
Exchange and E-commerce	Cabinet	27/3/04	1/4/04	1/4/04					
Regulation of expert witnesses in courts	Cabinet	27/3/04	1/4/04	1/4/04	30/6/04				
Regulating Advertisements	Cabinet	27/3/04	1/4/04	1/4/04					
Amended Judicial	Cabinet	27/3/04	1/4/04	1/4/04					

Authority											
PLC Cabinet and Governors Compensations	Sa'di Al Karnaz	27/3/04	1/4/04	1/4/04	1/4/04	14/4/04	5/5/04			15/	
1976 Civil Status Amended	Azmi Al Shu'eibi	10/4/04	13/4/04	13/4/04							
2004 General Statistics Amended	Abdel Fattah Hamayel	13/4/04	5/5/04	5/5/04							
Palestinian Capital Market Committee—Amended	Budget Committee	24/5/04	27/5/04	27/5/04	27/5/04	1/9/04	5/10/04	24/11/04		14/	
Amended Palestinian Income Tax	Budget Committee	24/5/04	27/5/04	27/5/04	27/5/04	31/8/04	5/10/04	24/11/04		14/	
Amended Social Insurance	Cabinet	26/5/04	30/6/04 returned to the Cabinet								
Work Injuries for Public Officers	Suleiman Al Rumi	1/7/04	6/7/04	6/7/04	5/10/04						
Amended Local Councils Elections Law	Interior Committee	7/7/04	7/7/04	7/7/04	7/7/04	31/8/04	31/8/04	21/10/04 1/12/04		1/1	
Palestinian Legal Institution	Cabinet	17/7/04	30/8/04	30/8/04	5/10/04						
2001 Amended Civil and Commercial Court Law	Cabinet	17/7/04	30/8/04	30/8/04	24/11/04	25/11/04	8/12/04	30/1/05		5/2	
2003 Amended Social Insurance	Cabinet	19/7/04	28/8/04	28/8/04	28/8/04	31/8/04					
Unemployment Welfare	Member/ Suleiman Al Rumi	21/7/04	30/8/04	30/8/04	Merged with the Social Insurance Law based on the cabinet's decision issued						
Pharmacists Association	Cabinet	24/7/04	30/8/04	30/8/04							
Industry and Crafts	Cabinet	24/7/04	30/8/04	30/8/04							
Public Retirement	Cabinet	24/7/04	30/8/04	30/8/04	5/10/04	31/1/05	8/3/05	7/4/05		11/	
Survey and Surveyors	Cabinet	24/7/04	30/8/04	30/8/04							
Palestinians in Israeli Prisons' Support	Sa'di Al Karnaz	17/8/04	28/8/04	28/8/04	28/8/04	28/8/04	28/8/04	24/11/04		13/	
2002 Amended Judicial Authority Law No. 1	Budget Committee	6/10/04	6/10/04	6/10/04		8/12/04	6/1/05	3/2/05			
Martyrs Fund	Members	26/10/04	24/11/04	24/11/04	29/1/05	18/6/05	18/6/05	20/6/05		6/9	
Amended 2001 Civil Court Creation	Azmi Al Shu'eibi	23/11/04	24/11/04	24/11/04	24/11/04	30/11/04	1/12/04	5/1/05		5/1	
Amended 1995 General Elections law	Members	30/11/04	30/11/04	30/11/04	30/11/04	30/11/04	30/11/04	30/11/04		30/	
Military Service Regulation	Members	22/12/04	22/12/04	22/12/04	6/1/05	5/4/05	7/4/05	11/5/05		14/	
(preference)	Abdel Fattah Hamayel	27/12/04	4/1/05	4/1/05	22/11/05						
Religious Court	Cabinet	29/12/04	4/1/05	4/1/05	Returned on 15/2/05						
Companies	Cabinet	29/12/04	4/1/05	4/1/05	Returned to the Cabinet on 5/4//05						
Amended 2000 Palestinian Labor Law	Education Committee	30/12/04	4/1/05	4/1/05	29/1/05						
Graduates	Suleiman Al Rumi	30/12/04	4/1/05	4/1/05	29/1/05 postponed						
Amended 2002 Water Law	Cabinet	21/9/04	4/1/05	4/1/05	15/2/05						
Amended 2002 Agricultural Law	Cabinet	3/6/04	4/1/05	4/1/05	10/3/05	15/3/05	11/5/05			29/	
Amended 1998 General Supplies Law	Cabinet	26/10/04	4/1/05	4/1/05							
National Security Committee	Cabinet	5/1/05	5/1/05	5/1/05							
Veterinarian Association	Cabinet	17/1/05	29/1/05	29/1/05							
Intelligence	Cabinet	1/2/05	15/2/05	15/2/05	25/4/05	6/7/05	13/8/05	21/9/05		28/	
Palestinian Police	Cabinet	1/2/05	15/2/05	15/2/05							
National Security	Cabinet	1/2/05	15/2/05	15/2/05							
PNA's President's Compensations	Budget Committee	5/3/05	9/3/05	9/3/05	22/11/05	23/11/05	23/11/05			28/	
Palestinian Citizens' Rights Independent Organizations	Member/ Azmi Al Shu'eibi	5/3/05	9/3/05	9/3/05	10/5/05						
2005 General Budget	Cabinet	16/3/05	16/3/05	16/3/05	31/3/05	31/3/05					

Amended 2004 PLC's Rights and Duties	Legal Committee	3/4/05								
Amended PLC's compensation and salaries	Legal Committee	3/4/05								
Right to receive information	Member/ Abdel Fattah Hamayel	5/4/05	5/4/05	5/4/05	5/4/05					
Journalism	Member/ Sa'di Al Karnaz	9/4/05	25/4/05	25/4/05						
Palestinian Flag desecration	Member/ Abdel Karim Abu Salah	9/5/05	26/5/05	26/5/05	26/5/05	20/9/05	18/10/05	23/11/05	19/	
Diplomatic Relations	Cabinet	12/5/05	26/5/05	26/5/05	26/5/05	24/8/05	25/8/05		12/	
Amended 2003 Basic Law	Legal Committee	19/7/05	20/7/05	20/7/05	20/7/05	27/7/05	27/7/05		10/	
Amended 1996 Local Elections law	Members	25/6/05	20/7/05	20/7/05	27/7/05	11/8/05	13/8/05		14/	
Areas that Israeli Forces will withdraw From	Cabinet	21/7/05	21/9/05 returned to Cabinet due to an executive order							
Social Workers' Regulation	Member/ Salah Al Ta'mari	27/7/05	23/8/05	23/8/05						
Amended 2004 Palestinian Security's insurance and welfare law	Member/ Mahmoud Da'as	2/8/05	23/8/05	23/8/05	21/9/05	21/9/05	21/9/05			
Amended 1929 No. 5 Law and 1966 No. 51 Law for ancient monuments	Cabinet	2/8/05	23/8/05	23/8/05					16/	
<b>Amended Retirement Law</b>	<b>Member Sa'di Al Karnaz</b>	<b>16/8/05</b>	<b>23/8/05</b>	<b>23/8/05</b>	<b>9/11/05</b>	<b>24/11/05</b>	<b>30/11/05</b>		3/1/	
Amended 1996 Local Elections Law	Legal Committee	25/8/05	25/8/05	25/8/05	25/8/05	27/8/05	27/8/05		28/	
<b>Palestinian Products' union and Specialized unions</b>	<b>Cabinet</b>	<b>20/8/05</b>	<b>19/9/05</b>	<b>19/9/05</b>	<b>18/10/05</b>	<b>24/11/05</b>	<b>7/12/05</b>			
Military Punitive Courts	Member/ Suleiman Al Rumi	19/9/05	19/9/05	Was merged with Military law to create Military Courts						
Military Law	Member/ Suleiman Al Rumi	19/9/05	19/9/05	Was merged with Military law to create Military Courts						
Higher Education	Cabinet	15/9/05	5/10/05	5/10/05	18/10/05					
Palestinian Commercial Institute	Cabinet	15/9/05	5/10/05	5/10/05	18/10/05	30/11/05 Returned to Cabinet				
Increase Legal Age for Islamic Scholars	Cabinet	15/10/05	27/10/05	27/10/05	9/11/05					
	Cabinet	15/10/05	27/10/05	27/10/05	9/11/05					
Social Work	Cabinet	23/10/05	9/11/05	9/11/05						
Palestinian Security	Cabinet	7/11/05	9/11/05	9/11/05	22/11/05					
Commercial Agents	Cabinet	7/11/05	9/11/05	9/11/05						
Highest Criminal Court	Member/ Ziad Abu Ziad	19/11/05	22/11/05	22/11/05	8/12/05	Returned to the Legal Committee				
Palestinian Preventive Security	Interior Committee	21/11/05	22/11/05	22/11/05	22/11/05					
Islamic Institutions	Cabinet	19/11/05	22/11/05	22/11/05						
Amended 2005 General Elections	Member/ Sa'di Al Karnaz	3/11/05	22/11/05	22/11/05						
<b>Amended Local Elections Law</b>	<b>Member/ Suleiman Al Rumi</b>	<b>20/11/05</b>	<b>22/11/05</b>	<b>22/11/05</b>	<b>8/12/05</b>					
Care of the Wounded	Member/ Jamal Al Shati	4/10/05	27/11/05	27/11/05						
<b>Amended 1998 Encouraging Investment in Palestine Law</b>	<b>Cabinet</b>	<b>23/11/05</b>	<b>27/11/05</b>	<b>27/11/05</b>						
Information and the	Cabinet	24/11/05	27/11/05	27/11/05						



Internet									
Electing National, Student, Union and non-profit associations	Member/ Suleiman Al Rumi	22/11/05	27/11/05	27/11/05	8/12/05	Returned to Legal Committee			
Amended 2005 National Elections Law No. 9	Member/ Rawhi Fattooh	7/12/2005	7/12/05	7/12/05	7/12/05	7/12/05	7/12/05	8/12/05	8/12/05

Committee members presented 60 potential laws  
 Committees presented 34 potential laws  
 Cabinets presented 125 potential law

**Appendix 9: Resolutions Published in the Official Gazette until the End of December 31, 2006**

#	Decree	Gazette #	Page	Publication Date
*	1996 Elections' Law for Local Organizations No. 5	16	6	30/1/1997
*	1997 Local Organizations' Law No. 1	20	5	29/11/1997
*	1997 Monetary Authority Law No. 2	21	5	31/1/1998
*	1998 Encouraging Investments Law No. 1	23	5	8/6/1998
*	1998 Fireworks and Ammunition Law No. 2	23	28	8/6/1998
*	1998 Civil Security Law No. 3	24	5	1/7/1998
*	1998 Civil Service Law No. 4	24	20	1/7/1998
*	1998 Branding and Control of Precious Ores Law No. 5	24	72	1/7/1998
*	1998 Rehabilitation Law No. 8	24	87	1/7/1998
*	1998 General Budget Law No. 7	25		24/9/1998
*	1998 Protection of Animal Resources Law No. 8	26		26/11/1998
*	1998 General Supplies Law No. 9	26		16/11/1998
*	1998 Industrial and Free Zones Law No. 10	27	5	8/12/1998
*	1998 Higher Education Law No. 10	27	28	8/12/1998
*	1998 Social Gatherings Law No. 12	28	6	13/3/1999
*	1999 Natural Resources Law No. 1	28	10	13/3/1999
*	1999 Social Status Law No. 2	29	6	17/7/1999
*	1999 Regulating the Law Profession Law No. 3	30	5	10/10/1999
*	1999 Handicapped Rights Law No. 4	30	36	10/10/1999
*	An outline of Law No.1 for the year 1999 to Amend 1998's No. 5 Law for Branding and Control of Precious Ores	30	48	10/11/1999
*	1999 No. 5 Law that Amends 1999's No. 3 Law Regulating the Law Profession	32	5	29/2/2000
*	1999 Governmental Grants Law No. 6	32	9	29/2/2000
*	1999 Environmental Law No. 7	32	38	29/2/2000
*	2000 Charities and non-profit Organizations Law No.1	32	71	29/2/2000
*	2000 Commercial Agents' Regulating Law No. 2	32	92	29/2/2000
*	2000 Judicial Law No. 3	33	5	30/6/2000
*	2000 Census Law No. 4	34		30/9/2000
*	2000 Traffic Law No. 5	36		19/3/2001
*	2000 Standards and Measurements Law No. 6	36		19/3/2001
*	2001 Consulate Fees Law No. 1	37		31/5/2001
*	2001 Civil and Commercial Contracts Law No. 2	38	5	5/9/2001
*	2001 Punitive Procedure Law No. 3	38	94	5/9/2001
*	2001 Civil and Commercial Statements Law No. 4	38	226	5/9/2001
*	2001 Creation of Legal Courts Law No. 4	38	279	5/9/2001
*	2000 Labor Law No. 7 with Work Illnesses' Appendix	39	7	25/11/2001
*	2002 Judicial Authority Law No. 1	40		18/5/2002
*	Amendment Law (1999 Civil Status	40		18/5/2002

	Law No. 2 and 2001 No. 6)			
*	2002 Banking Law No. 2	41		6/6/2002
*	2002 Water Law No. 3	43		5/9/2002
*	2002 Basic Law			7/7/2002
*	2003 Amended Basic Law			-/3/2003
*	PLC's Interior Regime	46	16	16/8/2003
*	Jerusalem	44		31/3/2003
*	2003 Legal Courts' Fees Law No. 1	47	7	30/10/2003
*	2003 Agricultural Law No. 2	47	23	30/10/2003
*	2003 Social Insurance Law No. 3	48	7	29/1/2004
*	2004 Amendment Law No. 1 (Amending 1998's Industrial Towns Law No. 10)	49	10	17/6/2004
*	2004 Amendment Law No. 2 (Amending 1998's Encouraging Investments Law No. 2)	49	13	17/6/2004
*	2004 Amendment Law No. 3 (Amending 2000's Standards and Measurements Law No. 6)	49	17	17/6/2004
*	2004 Amendment Law No. 6 (Amending 1998's General Supplies Law No. 9)	52	11	18/1/2005
*	2004 Palestinian Child Law No. 7	52	13	18/1/2005
*	2004 Creation of a Compensation Fund to Alleviate Israeli Aggression Law No. 8	52	34	18/1/2005
*	2004 Auditing Law No. 9	52	38	18/1/2005
*	2004 Duties and Rights of PLC's members Law No. 10	52	50	18/1/2005
*	2004 PLC's Salaries and Compensations Law No. 11	52	58	18/1/2005
*	2004 Money Notes Law No. 12	53	10	28/2/2005
*	2004 Capital Market Law No. 13	53	60	28/2/2005
*	2004 Prisoners' Support Law No. 14	53	73	28/2/2005
*	2004 Financial and Administrative Law No. 15	53	75	28/2/2005
*	2004 Security's Insurance and Salaries Law No. 16	53	94	28/2/2005
*	2004 Income Tax Law No. 17	53	122	28/2/2005
*	2005 Illegal Profit Law No. 1	53	154	28/2/2005
*	2004 Amendment Law No. 18 (Amending 1997's Monetary Authority Law No. 2)	54	8	23/4/2005
*	2004 Detainees and Liberated Law No. 19	54	10	23/4/2005
*	2004 Comprehensive Insurance Law No. 20	54	14	
*	2005 Amendment Law No. 2 (Amending Creation of Judicial Regimes Law)	54	35	23/4/2005
*	2005 Amendment Law No. 3 (Amending 1998's Rehabilitation and Prisons' Law No. 6)	54	37	23/4/2005
*	2005 Amendment Law No. 4 (Amending 1998's Civil Services Law No. 4)	54	39	23/4/2005
*	2005 Amendment Law No. 5 (Amending 2001's Civil and Commercial Contracts' Law No. 2)	55	8	27/6/2005

*	2005 Welfare Fund Law No. 6	55	10	27/6/2005
*	2005 Retirement Law No. 7	55	16	27/6/2005
*	2005 Serving in Palestinian Security Forces No. 8	56	4	28/6/2005
*	2005 Basic Law Amending 2003's Basic Law	57	5	18/8/2005
*	2005 Elections Law No. 9	57	8	18/8/2005
*	2005 Local Committees' Elections Law No. 10	57	79	18/8/2005
*	2005 Amendment Law No. 11 (Amending 2003's Agricultural Law No. 2)	58	8	8/9/2005
*	2005 Amendment Law No. 12 (Amending 2005's Local Committees' Elections Law No. 10)	58	10	8/9/2005
*	2005 Diplomatic Relations Law No. 13	60	5	9/11/2005
*	2005 Management of Orphan Property Association Law No. 14	60	22	9/11/2005
*	2005 Judicial Authority Law No. 15	60	33	9/11/2005
*	2005 Amendment Law No. 16 (Amending 2004's Palestinian Security's Insurance and Salaries Law No. 16)	60	82	9/11/2005
*	2005 Intelligence Law No. 17	60	84	9/11/2005
*	2005 PNA's President's Compensations for Law No (18)	61	9	18/3/2006
*	2005 Insurance No 20 Law	62	93	25/3/2006
*	قانون المحكمة الدستورية العليا رقم 3 لسنة 2006	62	93	25/3/2006
*	قانون رقم 5 لسنة 2006 بتعديل بعض احكام قانون حرمة العلم الفلسطيني رقم 22 لسنة 2005	64	27	2006/5/31
*	قانون رقم 19 لسنة 2005 بتعديل المادة 73 من قانون الانتخابات رقم 9 لسنة 2005	61	12	18/3/2006

#### Appendix 10: Names and Addresses of Palestinian Human Rights Organizations

Name of Organization	Telephone	Fax	E-mail
Citizens' Rights Center/ Arab Thought Forum	2347129	2347674	atfrc@multaqa.org
Alhaq	2954903	2954646	haq@alhaq.org
Addameer	2960447	2960446	addameer@planet.edu
World Coalition to Defend Children	2407530	2407018	dcipal@dcipal.org
Mandela	2955756	2956468	madela@mandela-palestine.org
Palestinian Human Rights Monitoring Group	5823372	5823385	admin@phrmg.org
Independent Palestinian Coalition for Citizens' Rights	2986958	2987211	piccr@palnet.com
Democratic Workers Rights Center	2952608	2952985	info@dwrc.org
Jerusalem Legal Aid Center	6272982	6264770	jlac@palnet.com
Women Center for Legal Counseling	2347438	2342172	wclac@palnet.com
Land Research Center	2217239	2217239	lrc@palnet.com
Muwatin	2951108	2960258	muwatin@muwatin.org
Palestinian Center for Judicial Independence/ Musawa	2952004	2950957	musawa@palnet.com
Palestinian Prisoner Organization	2777151	2747555	info@ppsmo.org
Law College/Bir Zeit University	2982009	2982137	law@law.birzeit.edu

Jerusalem Center for Democracy and Human Rights	2791610	2791611	<a href="mailto:info@jcdhr.org">info@jcdhr.org</a>
Jerusalem Human Rights Center	5826744	5826744	<a href="mailto:jchr@shabaka.net">jchr@shabaka.net</a>
Jerusalem Center for Social and Economical Rights	6271776	6273516	<a href="mailto:info@jcsr.org">info@jcsr.org</a>
Ramallah Center for Human Rights Studies	2961180	2961181	<a href="mailto:rchr@palnet.com">rchr@palnet.com</a>
Palestinian Lawyers for Human Rights	08-2868860	08-2868860	-----
Support Institution	09-2382279	09-2338420	<a href="mailto:sihr@zaytona.com">sihr@zaytona.com</a>
Palestinian Center for Human Rights	08-2824776	08-2825893	<a href="mailto:pchr@pchrgaza.org">pchr@pchrgaza.org</a>
Al Mezan Center for Human Rights	08-2453554	08-2453554	<a href="mailto:mezan@palnet.com">mezan@palnet.com</a>

#### Appendix 11: The Palestinian Coalition for Accountability and Integrity – AMAN

Name	Address	Email	Telephone	Fax
MIFTAH	Jerusalem	<a href="mailto:info@miftah.org">info@miftah.org</a>	02-5851842	02-5851842
Al Mezan Center for Human Rights	Jabalya	<a href="mailto:Mezan@hally.net">Mezan@hally.net</a>	08-2453555	08-2453554
Palestinian Council for Foreign Relations	Gaza	<a href="mailto:Cfr-pal@hally.net">Cfr-pal@hally.net</a>	08-2836617	08-2836627
Paltrade	Ramallah	<a href="mailto:info@paltrade.org">info@paltrade.org</a>	02-2959447	02-2959449
Arab Thought Forum	Jerusalem	<a href="mailto:info@multaqa.org">info@multaqa.org</a>	02-6289126	02-6264338
Muwatin	Albireh	<a href="mailto:muwatin@muwatin.org">muwatin@muwatin.org</a>	02-2951108	02-2960285
Secretary of AMAN	Ramallah	<a href="mailto:aman@aman-palestinian.org">aman@aman-palestinian.org</a>	02-2989506	02-2989492

#### Appendix 12: Names and Addresses of the Organizing Committees for Palestinian Civil Committees

Name	Address	E-mail	Telephone	Fax
Medical Aid Union	Ramallah	<a href="mailto:hdip@hdip.org">hdip@hdip.org</a>	2980550	2985917
Palestinian Counseling Center	Jerusalem	<a href="mailto:pcc@palnet.com">pcc@palnet.com</a>	6562272	6562271
Addameer	Ramallah	<a href="mailto:addameer@palnet.edu">addameer@palnet.edu</a>	2960446	2960447
Union of Health Workers Coalition	Ramallah	<a href="mailto:uhwc@palnet.com">uhwc@palnet.com</a>	2407518	2407517
Muwatin	Ramallah	<a href="mailto:muwatin@muwatin.org">muwatin@muwatin.org</a>	2951108	2960285
Education and Journalism Center	Ramallah	<a href="mailto:Ednwt@palnet.com">Ednwt@palnet.com</a>	2958460	2958460
Arab Thought Forum	Jerusalem	<a href="mailto:info@multaqa.org">info@multaqa.org</a>	6289126	6264338
Sirreyeh	Ramallah	<a href="mailto:sirreyeh@palnet.com">sirreyeh@palnet.com</a>	2952706	2980583
Alhaq	Albireh	<a href="mailto:haq@al-haq.org">haq@al-haq.org</a>	2956421	2954903
Palestinian Hydrologists' Group	Ramallah	<a href="mailto:phgtamimi@hotmail.com">phgtamimi@hotmail.com</a>	2966315/6/7	2966319
Bisan Center	Jerusalem	<a href="mailto:bisanrd@palnet.com">bisanrd@palnet.com</a>	2407837/8/9	2405777
Secretary of the Committee	Ramallah	<a href="mailto:Pngonet@p-ol.com">Pngonet@p-ol.com</a>	02-2963847	02-2963848

**Appendix 13: Civil Committee for Monitoring of Elections**

Name	Email	Telephone	Fax
Palestinian Center for Peace and Democracy	<a href="mailto:pcpd@palnet.com">pcpd@palnet.com</a>	2965981	2965983
Women Center for Legal Counseling		2347438	2342172
Muwatin	<a href="mailto:talebawad@muwatin.org">talebawad@muwatin.org</a>	2407721	2407730
PARC	<a href="mailto:mansour@pal-arc.org">mansour@pal-arc.org</a>	2963840	2963850
General Union of Palestinian Women	<a href="mailto:jupw@palnet.com">jupw@palnet.com</a>	2407696	2401093
Arab Studies Society		2343352	2343354
PANORAMA	<a href="mailto:panorama@panoramacenter.co">panorama@panoramacenter.co</a>	2959618	2981824
The Civil Forum	<a href="mailto:aref@cfip.org">aref@cfip.org</a>	2971273	
Arab Thought Forum	<a href="mailto:info@multaqa.org">info@multaqa.org</a>	2347129	2347674

