What is Apartheid?

In 1973, the UN General Assembly adopted the international Convention on the Suppression and Punishment of the Crime of Apartheid, a crime against humanity. The word ‘Apartheid’ means separation, ‘Apartheid’ is defined by the UN as “…a system of institutionalized racial segregation and discrimination for the purpose of establishing and maintaining domination by one racial group … over another … and systematically oppressing them…” by: creating ghettos; land confiscation; bans on freedom of movement, speech assemblies and mixed marriages; illegal arrest and detention. 1

Two Systems: Separate and Unequal

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Participants</th>
<th>Law</th>
<th>Justice</th>
<th>Rights</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Palestinians</td>
<td>Military Law</td>
<td>no redress</td>
<td>no representation</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Israelis</td>
<td>Civil Law</td>
<td>seek redress</td>
<td>have freedom</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

- **Palestinian** villages and towns face **collective punishment** in the form of bulldozing of family houses, extended 24 hour curfews, closures, military raids, violence and harassment. **Israeli** settlers face no such collective punishment. 3

- **Palestinian** land ownership (agricultural and residential) is subject to military and economic **confiscation**. The purpose is to establish Jewish only settlements, take water resources and confine the Palestinian population into smaller and smaller cantons. **Israelis** face no land confiscation. 4

- Over **17,000 Palestinian houses** have been **demolished**, creating 100,000 of thousands homeless. Over a million **Palestinian olive and fruit trees** have been **uprooted**. A few Israeli outposts have been dismantled, but there has been no widespread destruction of **Israeli homes and trees**. 5

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Nelson Mandela said in 1997:
“….injustice and gross human rights violations were being perpetrated in Palestine. In the same period the UN took a strong stand against apartheid; ....which helped to bring an end to this iniquitous system. But we know too well that our freedom is incomplete without the freedom of the Palestinians.” 6

Desmond Tutu said in 1989: “If you change the names, the description of what is happening in the Gaza Strip and the West Bank would be a description of what is happening in South Africa.” 7
Two Systems: Separate and Unequal

- **Palestinians** are prohibited from using the extensive network of settler only highways that connect the settlements to Israel.  

- The **Israeli** military authority controls virtually all the water in the West Bank. 73% of West Bank water is piped back to Israel. Illegal Jewish settlers use 10% of West Bank water. **Palestinians have access to only 17% of their own water** and must buy it from Israel at 4 times the price Israelis pay.  

- The wall fragments Palestinian communities; it separates families from their land, their livelihood, health care and schools. The wall also divides communities and families from each other. **The wall does not fragment Israeli settlements**; it is built in such a way to as to annex them to Israel proper.

Bantustans in the West Bank

Palestinians are ghettoized within 12 percent of the original territory in the West Bank. The West Bank is divided up into 70 isolated cantons with no physical movement without Israeli permission. There are over 500 military check points where Palestinians often wait hours, and must have ID cards and passes just to travel short distances. Israeli settlers can travel easily.  

This dispossession is reminiscent of apartheid which set aside 13% of the lands as “Bantustan” homelands for black South Africans.

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