

## Impact of the First Phase of the Security Barrier on the Qalqiliya, Tulkarm and Jenin districts

### Part 2 – Course and Impact of Barrier by Governorate Qalqiliya (see map 2)



The governorate of Qalqiliya comprises 32 villages with approximately 90,000 Palestinians. There are also 19 Israeli settlements with an estimated population of 50,000. The route of the barrier is such that six settlements will lie to its west – in effect annexed to Israel – resulting in large tracts of Palestinian land and water resources isolated, with some Palestinian communities in isolated enclaves. In the southern Qalqiliya district, the settlement block of Oranit (pop. 5,200), Elkana (3,000), Sharei Tikva (3,500) and Ets Efrayim (600) will lie to the west of the Barrier. Sharei Tikva which stretches for a distance of 2.5 kilometres severs the territorial contiguity between the villages of Azun Atme, Beit Amin and Saniriya; the three villages lost 3,000 dunums with the creation of Oranit settlement. Most affected will be Azun Atme, the most southerly village in the Qalqiliya district, which will be completely encircled in its own enclave to the west of the barrier, to protect the four settlements.

#### Azun Atme, Qalqiliya (1)

Azun Atme, population 1,500 with six refugee families, is situated ten kilometres south east of Qalqiliya, about three kilometres from the Green Line. Villagers were initially informed that the village would be west of the barrier; then east, on the 'Palestinian' side; before finally discovering that it would be west, but totally encircled in its own enclave. However, because Route 505 will remain open for Sharei Tikva settlers, nine families who live south of this road will be severed from the rest of the village. For lack of building permits residents have constructed houses in Area 'C' on the village's perimeter: twenty-four homes have recently been served with demolition orders. Residents are now mainly dependent on agriculture although most of the village's land will be isolated by the barrier.

Rubbish from Sharei Tikva is dumped behind the Azun Atme –Beit Amin Boys' High School and sewage seeps into the schoolyard. Half of the 250 pupils are from Beit Amin and will have to cross the barrier daily to reach school. Of the sixteen teachers in the school, thirteen live in other villages in the area. The school's bathrooms which have been built without permits in Area 'C' have also been served with demolition orders. In the village Basic Girls' School only two of the eighteen teachers are residents, with the remainder residing in nearby villages and in Qalqiliya.

The village's clinic is staffed by a nurse who comes from Qalqiliya three times a week, and a physician who comes from Hable once a week. The clinic also serves residents of Beit Amin, Izbet Salman, al Mudawwar, and Izbet Jal'ud, villages in which no medical treatment is available and which will remain on the other side of the barrier. More specialised services are available in Qalqiliya but once the barrier travel to Qalqiliya and vice versa will necessitate crossing the barrier four times, twice in each direction.

Residents mistrust assurances of access through the barrier's sole local access gate following similar assurances when Oranit settlement was built, fifteen years ago. Thirty farmers were initially granted access to their farmland through the settlement gates but this right was soon withdrawn for security reasons. The settlement has since expanded onto this farmland.

The inclusion of Alfei Menashe (pop. 5,000) west of the barrier will result in the creation of another isolated enclave of Palestinian communities, with others hemmed in on three sides. In the original plans for the barrier, Alfei Menashe lay on the eastern side but following a tour of the settlement in the summer of 2002, Prime Minister Sharon changed the route. The revised route will result in the villages of Hable, Izbat Ja'ud and Ras Atiya surrounded on three sides, losing large tracts of their agricultural land and cut off from direct access to Qalqiliya town. Hable (pop. 5,300), will lose 4,000 dunums and four wells. Although only some hundred metres from Qalqiliya, Hable has been particularly badly affected by movement restrictions since an unmanned gate was installed to block vehicular access to Route 55. According to B'Tselem, once the barrier is complete, residents of Hable and Ras Atiya will have to travel twenty kilometres to reach Qalqiliya town, assuming they are allowed to use Route 55, which will continue to be used as the main traffic artery for settlers. Plans to build an alternative road to link Alfei Menashe to Israel through the Israeli town of Matan were blocked when Matan residents complained that their quality of life would be affected.<sup>(2)</sup>

In addition, the 'khirbets' or small villages of Ras Tira, Dab'a, Wad Rasha, Abu Farda and Arab a-Ramadeen will be completely isolated within the Alfei Menashe enclave and cut off from Hable, Ras Atiya and Kfar Thult, on which they rely for services. There are no educational or health services in these 'khirbets', except for an elementary school in Dab'a (pop.250) and they are not connected to the water or electricity network. Dynamiting around Dab'a has also resulted in structural damage to seven of the village's 40 homes. Residents of these khirbets have been told that a new road will be built to connect the enclave to route 55 through Alfei Menashe although this has to be confirmed.

Qalqiliya town has 45,000 residents of whom more than 3,900 families are refugees. There are approximately 3,500 dunums of developed, urban land with an additional 6,500 dunums of agricultural land surrounding the city, half of which will be isolated by the barrier. To complete the effective dismemberment of the district the town of Qalqiliya will be hermetically sealed, surrounded on three sides by the barrier, with one exit near Nabi Elias on Route 55. On its eastern side, the town is surrounded by an eight metre high wall, part of a 70 metre wide system which includes patrol roads, trace paths, trenches and surveillance cameras. On the north and south, a fence will be constructed as part of a 100-metre wide system. In some areas the barrier is less than 30 metres from the nearest houses. Movement in and out of the town will be possible from the east only and the repercussions will be severe for residents of the nearby villages who rely on municipal services, including the UNRWA hospital. There is already an exodus of residents, especially business people, to Israel, local villages and to the Gulf. Unemployment now stands at 67 percent compared to 20-30 percent before the intifada.<sup>(3)</sup>

North of Qalqiliya town, the settlement of Tsufin will also be de facto annexed to Israel and the barrier will shear off large tracts of land from Jayous and Falameya. Jayous, (pop.3,000) with 9,000 dunums isolated, is one of the Green line villages whose land and livelihoods will be most affected. A large tract of land outside the village has already been levelled and three of the four dirt access roads have been blocked. The barrier is only 60 metres from the nearest house in some cases. The village is already suffering a critical water shortage, especially in summer, when three blocks within the town only receiving water for two hours every three days. Seven wells will be cut off, belonging to Jayous, Falameya and Qalqiliya. Falameya (pop. 600) has an extensive water network and development of three of its five wells has been financed by the French government. Four nearby villages utilise Falameya's water: barrier construction has already damaged water pipes. Representation from the French government at the highest level has led to assurances that the Israeli contractor will replace French-project pipes, but there are no such assurances regarding local pipes.<sup>(4)</sup>

## Tulkarm

The inclusion of Salit settlement (pop. 400) west of the barrier will result in villages in the southern Tulkarm district losing large tracts of land. In Kfar Jamal, (pop. 2,500) 7,000 of the village's 14,000 dunums will be isolated between the Barrier and the Green Line. The situation is the same in the smaller villages of Kfar Sur (pop. 1,500) and Ras (pop. 500) which will lose 50 and 75 percent of their farming land respectively.<sup>(5)</sup> In Ras, the requisition orders were filed one week after work on the barrier had begun, when hundreds of trees had already been uprooted.<sup>(6)</sup> The planned route of the Barrier will cut across Route 574 north of Khirbet Jabara (pop. 350) and sever these (and other) villages remaining direct link with Tulkarm: Khirbet Jabara will be isolated in an enclave of its own. B'Tselem, after studying the course of the barrier in this area concluded that the route did not make sense from a security/topographic point of view – it passes along hillsides and river beds rather than high points – and that it also contradicted the IDF's claim that the Barrier should avoid unnecessary damage to cultivated land.<sup>(7)</sup>

In Tulkarm town, living conditions have severely declined since September 2000 due to restrictions on movement and trade and the difficulties retailers face in transporting produce to local markets. Unlike Qalqiliya, it was believed that Tulkarm town and its immediate hinterland would be largely unaffected by the barrier: however, in addition to a wall which will be erected to the west of the town, a 'depth barrier' or deep trench 9,845 metres long and 24 metres wide will be excavated to the east. This trench will run north from Jarushiya, 1,200 metres east past Nur Shams camp and south to Far'un (3,000), encircling Shuweika, Iktaba (pop. 1,800), Danaba (7,600), Kafa (300) and Izbat Shufa (900). Some 236 dunums of land will be lost by the actual construction of the barrier around Tulkarm while over 23,000 dunums will be included in the enclosed area.<sup>(8)</sup>

Although there are no settlement blocks to the immediate north of Tulkarm town, the barrier sheers large tracts of land from the populous villages of Deir Al-Ghusun (pop. 8,200), Atil (11,000), and Zeita (3,000). Deir Al Ghusun will have some 15,000 dunums isolated west of the wall and has had over 8,000 trees uprooted. In Zeita, 2,500 dunums are isolated and over 6,000 trees have been uprooted. In Atil, which has a large number of refugee families, only six farmers are principally affected but their lands amount to 9,000 dunums. The farmers concerned are allowed to access their land and greenhouses but only on foot or by donkey cart, which is impractical for transporting large quantities of cucumbers, potatoes and other crops to market (see box inset above). Produce is also being lost due to the time delays in transporting it by donkey cart, and farmers are unable to transport bulky plastic sheeting to repair greenhouses.

In the northern Tulkarm district the barrier will create the largest enclave of Palestinian communities west of the barrier, Baqa esh-Sharqiya (pop. 3,500), Nazlat Issa (2,500) and Nazlat Abu Nar (200). In Baqa esh-Sharqiya thousands of olive trees and hundreds of citrus trees have been uprooted, with some 560 dunums lost to the barrier. The town has one health centre and four schools but specialised services are to the north in Ya'abad or south in Tulkarm, which will be more difficult to access once the barrier is built. All four employees of the health centre live outside the town, as do 60 percent of the teachers and 20 percent of the pupils. The town has strong family and social ties with Baqa Gharbiya which is on the Israeli side of the Green Line. Nazlat Issa has been de facto sealed off from its neighbouring villages for almost a year, with no vehicles allowed in or out. On 21

January, the IDF demolished 62 shops in the central market which attracted many customers before the intifada: the remaining 100+ shops have also been threatened with demolition for lack of permit.

#### Qafin, Tulkarm

Qafin (pop. 9,000) is the most northerly of Tulkarm's 35 towns and villages. Qafin lost 70 percent of its land in 1948, an additional 1,000 dunums after 1967 and 500 dunums recently to the settlement of Khemesh. Six thousand dunums are isolated beyond the barrier, affecting 750 families, leaving only 3,000 dunums to the village. Bulldozing began on 5 September, 15 days before the olive season. Some 12,000 trees were cut down, many bearing their full harvest. Others were harvested before their time, resulting in a low yield. The orders seizing the lands explicitly provide that the farmers receive their uprooted trees, but few had land left on which to re-plant. Despite this, most of the olive harvest was saved and the mayor believes that the full economic impact of the barrier will only be apparent next autumn with the next harvest. Pipes for the irrigation well were broken during the construction and as the well is right on the barrier boundary villagers fear that it will be inaccessible. The barrier will cut through both routes 584 and 585, cutting Qafin off from Tulkarm. Qafin will also be cut off from nearby towns with which it has strong family ties, Baqa Esh-Sharqiya, Barta'a esh-Sharqiya and Naslat Issa, all of which will be isolated between the barrier and the Green Line. Before the intifada, 90 percent of the labour force worked in Israel: nobody now has a permit and unemployment is 70 percent.

### Jenin

In the Jenin area, all the communities affected by the first phase of the barrier either lie within an enclave or are isolated between the barrier to the west and a 'depth barrier' to the east. The enclave includes Barta'a esh-Sharqiya (pop. 5,000), Umm a-Rihan (400), Khirbet Abdallah al-Yunis (100), Khirbet Sheikh Sa'ad (200) and Khirbet Dhaher al-Malah (200). This enclave lies west of the barrier to accommodate the inclusion of four settlements, Shaked (pop. 500), Khinanit (600), Tal Menashe and Reikhan (100). Barta'a esh-Sharqiya is divided from Barta'a Gharbiya on the Israeli side of the Green Line by a narrow valley: it is believed that a fence will be placed down this valley to separate the two Barta'as. Border police regularly patrol both Barta'as to ensure that residents from the Palestinian side do not stray across. Demolition orders have been served on 12 homes and some 150 businesses in the village.

The enclave will be cut off from the smaller khirbets from a number of local villages on which they rely on for services, of which Tura el Gharbiye (pop. 1,200) is the largest. Tura serves as a local centre for the nearby khirbets: there are no schools in Daher el Malih or Khirbet Radiyeh. Of the co-educational secondary school in Tura some 50 of the 170 pupils come from surrounding villages: the figure is 40 out of 135 for the elementary school. The main clinic for the area, which is open for four hours, three days a week, is also in Tura, as is the area's main mosque. In addition to services, Tura also has strong social and family ties with the surrounding villages. So far, some 1,500 dunums of land have been confiscated in Tura and residents are already prevented from accessing land on the western side of the barrier.

#### Notice from Salem DCL

To owners of lands located in the northern villages of (Zbuba, Rumana, Jalame, Tianik, Burqin, Muqeibla and Yamun) along the borders with Israel.

A field round will be made on 18/2/2003 regarding the possession of land, order No. 03/18/T'.

Owners of land at (Zbuba, Rumana and Tianik) villages will be meeting at the northern edge of Zbuba, end of the base course, at 2:00 p.m.

Owners of land at (Yamun) village will be meeting at the edge with the Israeli Ram-Un settlement at 2:30 p.m.

Owners of land at (Jalame, Burqin and Muqeibla) villages will be meeting near Jalame checkpoint to the west, at the edge of Muqeibla village at 3:00 p.m.

Delegates from the Israeli Civilian Liaison will be participating in the round.

Landowners, your presence is of great importance.

A 'depth barrier' or 'deep trench' will be constructed in the north west Jenin district, running from Salem to Araqa villages, to encircle Rumana, Khirbet Taibe, and Anin villages. Rumana (pop. 3,500) has a majority refugee population and contains an UNRWA co-educational school in the village. Rumana is losing some 800 dunums to the Barrier, affecting some 60 families. The barrier is virtually completed in the area, consisting of barbed wire and an electric fence, with patrol roads on either side. There are no access gates in the area.

FOOTNOTES:

1. This information is based on successive field visits and a case study in the forthcoming B'Tselem: The Separation Barrier: Position Paper, ps. 20-21
2. B'Tselem: The Separation Barrier: Position Paper, (draft copy), March 2003, ps. 34-35.
3. PLO Negotiations Affairs Department: Bad Fences make Bad Neighbours – Focus on Qalqilya, undated.
4. World Bank, The impact of the West Bank Separation Barrier on Affected West Bank Communities, p.43.
5. B'Tselem: The Separation Barrier: Position Paper, September 2002, p. 6.
6. B'Tselem: The Separation Barrier: Position Paper, September 2002, p. 14.
7. B'Tselem: The Separation Barrier: Position Paper, September 2002, p. 16.
8. Interview with Jamal Zayad, surveyor, Tulkarm Local Authority, 6 March.