



Jerusalem Chronology

(June - September, 2002)

June 2

Palestinian eyewitnesses reported that the Israeli government began erecting a fence around 115 dunams of Palestinian land in the northern hills of Jabal Al-Mukkaber in East Jerusalem. The land is to be used to construct a new settlement project of 200 housing units and a six-story hotel overlooking Jerusalem. Israeli authorities ratified the project in 1994. The same day, Israeli bulldozers also leveled some 120 dunams belonging to citizens from Al Sawahra Sharkiya, another Jerusalem suburb. Authorities claim that the land belongs to Jews. (*Al-Ayyam*, PR)

June 4

Residents of East Jerusalem's Essawiyeh neighborhood were handed orders from the Israeli authorities informing them that a piece of land belonging to the Dari and Dirbass families was to be taken and used temporarily for "military purposes." Thirty of a total of 170 dunams belonging to the two families was also to be confiscated.

The families expressed fears that the land would be permanently expropriated after two years, once this order expires. (PR)

June 10

Lawyers representing a number of the 15,000 Jerusalem residents who live in the four quarters of Sameer Amis, Kufr Aqab, the "Airport" and the Zghayar neighborhood, all falling on the Ramallah side of the Qalandiya checkpoint, filed a

suit in Israeli courts demanding the removal of the checkpoint. The complainants argued that their land falls inside the expanded Jerusalem municipal borders, while the checkpoint separates them from services and rights they have as Jerusalem ID carriers.

In response, the Israeli court ordered attorneys for the state to submit a document outlining changes to be carried out at the checkpoint between 7 May and 10 June. Israeli army officials had argued in court that they planned to facilitate passage for Jerusalem residents living beyond the checkpoint and that those changes had already begun on the ground. (PR)

June 10

Israeli police closed down the headquarters of the union of chambers of commerce in East Jerusalem, claiming that it carries out activities connected to the Palestinian Authority. During the raid, police also arrested Legislative Council member Ahmad Zghayyar, the head of the union and several employees. They also confiscated papers and documents from the office. Zghayyar was released hours later (*Al-Quds*).

June 12

In the name of Jerusalem merchants and with the authorization of concerned Jerusalem resident Amal Nashashibi, Attorney Husam Younis sent a letter to Israeli Mayor Ehud Olmert calling on him to address the theft of old stones from East Jerusalem. The lawyer was particularly concerned about stones taken from sidewalks on Salah Eddin Street during the municipality's recent renovations. While the sidewalk has been fixed, the stones have now disappeared. Younis believes



that the stones were sold to West Jerusalem buyers at a high price. Younis, merchant representatives and Amal Nashashibi have met repeatedly with Israeli municipality officials, including its legal advisor Shalom Goldstein, asking them to stop the theft of the ancient stones. Younis says they were told that the thieves were Arab, indicating that the municipality had full knowledge of the disappearing stones. (PR)

June 18

Hamas' Izzedin Qassem Brigades claimed responsibility for a massive explosion killing 18, detonated on a bus outside the Israeli settlement of Gilo and carried by Mohammed Hazza' Kayed Al-Ghoul, 24, from Far'a village near Jenin. Al-Ghoul, killed in the attack, was a graduate of the Islamic Religious Studies Department in Nablus' Al-Najah University. The evening of the bombing, the Israeli army invaded the city of Jenin and took up positions around the city and refugee camp. Israeli troops also entered the entire town of Nablus in the northern West Bank and began to make arrests and occupy buildings in the city.

Some 50 Palestinians published an appeal in the newspaper *Al-Quds* in opposition to attacks on Israeli civilians inside Israel proper. The appeal met with scathing opposition from Palestinian Islamist groups, as well as many individuals who said that the appeal should have equally condemned Israeli killing of Palestinian civilians. (*Ha'aretz*)

June 19

Seven Israelis were killed when Palestinian man on foot approached a hitchhiking post in the East Jerusalem settlement neighborhood of French Hill

and detonated a bomb in the crowd. The bombing was claimed by Fateh's Al-Aqsa Martyr's Brigades. (*Herald Tribune*)

June 26

Groups of European civilians who intended to participate in a human chain event in Jerusalem were turned back at Ben Gurion Airport on 26 June by Israeli authorities. According to the internationals, Israeli airport officials told them, "participating in the human chain is a non-sufficient reason for entering Israel." The group says it had previously obtained official permission for the initiative. While many Italian citizens were forced to take a flight back to Italy, some 15 were made to spend the night in a locked room at the airport. The human chain, organized by the Israeli-Palestinian Peoples' Peace Campaign, is currently on hold. European diplomatic sources say the Israeli interior ministry has decided to ban all international citizens from taking part in the event (*IPPPP*).

July 8

Bilateral meetings were held in Jerusalem between Israeli foreign minister Shimon Peres and newly appointed Palestinian finance minister Salam Fayyad. The agenda included the Palestinian economy and easing of Palestinian daily life. One day later, new Palestinian interior minister Abdel Razzaq Al-Yehiya and local government minister Saeb Erekat met with Peres and other Israeli officials to discuss "broader issues." Erekat said Palestinians demanded an Israeli withdrawal from Palestinian cities, an end to the siege, a release of Palestinian Authority funds and a return to peace process negotiations. Israel did proceed to announce plans to release confiscated



Palestinian Authority tax money of a reported NIS 2 billion or \$44 million on condition that the funds are not used to "finance terror." The funds have been withheld since the start of the Intifada. (*Al-Hayat al-Jadida, Al-Quds*)

July 9

Israeli border police padlocked the offices of Al-Quds University in Jerusalem on 9 July, ordering its staff to go home. The order came from Israeli Public Security Minister Uzi Landau, who claimed that the university was "part of the long arm of the Palestinian Authority operating against the law" in Jerusalem. The university's president, Sari Nusseibeh, is also the Palestine Liberation Organization's representative in Jerusalem. Eventually, the university was reopened when Nusseibeh promised not to conduct PLO business on school grounds. (*Ha'aretz, Al-Quds*)

July 10

Palestinian sources say that the United States Consulate in Jerusalem has invited 20 unnamed Palestinian figures to travel to Washington and meeting with President George W. Bush. The sources say that some of these figures are members of the Legislative Council. According to the Israeli newspaper Ma'ariv, there have been US-Israeli contacts to formulate a secret list of Palestinians for negotiations and to push forward internal reforms (*KNA*).

July 20

Western diplomatic sources reported that several international teams were on their way to the Palestinian territories to follow up on non-security reforms recently conducted by the Palestinian Authority. The first meeting of these teams was to be held in Jerusalem on 22 July. Each of team

will deal with a specific area including the private sector, economic transparency, civil society, local governance, the judiciary and the rebuilding and restructuring of Palestinian Authority ministries. The committee in charge of the teams is comprised of the Quartet, the World Bank, the International Monetary Fund, Norway and Japan. (*Al-Ayyam*)

August 1

A Palestinian left an innocuous-looking bag on the floor of a cafeteria in Jerusalem's Hebrew University and departed. Moments later, the bomb inside exploded, killing seven people and injuring dozens more. Five of the dead were American citizens. The Federal Bureau of Investigations has reportedly sent agents to Israel to investigate the bombing and to help in capturing the perpetrator. Hamas claimed the attack in retaliation for the assassination of its military leader Salah Shehadeh and 14 other civilians two weeks ago in Gaza. (*AP*)

August 4

A young Palestinian man shot and killed an Israeli telephone security guard waiting in a truck near the Old City's Damascus Gate. The Israeli, the gunman, and a Palestinian bystander were killed and 14 others wounded in the incident. (*JMCC*)

August 5

A meeting was reportedly held in Jerusalem between interior minister Abdel Razaq Al-Yahya and Israeli defense minister Benjamin Ben Eliezer. The meeting was also attended by Palestinian intelligence director Amin Al-Hindi and Mohammed Dahlan, Arafat's security advisor. Israeli military radio said that Ben Eliezer proposed a security plan



stipulating Israel's withdrawal from Palestinian territories and banning attacks on Israelis. The meeting also discussed unifying all Palestinian security services under Al-Yehya's leadership. (*Al-Hayat al-Jadida*)

August 25

Approximately 60,000 people, most of them from inside Israel, rallied in Jerusalem's Al-Aqsa Mosque compound to protect the mosque and renovate Islamic holy sites. The gathering was organized by the Islamic Movement within Israel and was held at the conclusion of a campaign to raise money for the Al-Aqsa Mosque. Leader of the Islamic movement Sheikh Raed Salah called on the Islamic world to take action, emphasizing that these holy sites must be maintained. (*Al-Hayat al-Jadida*)

August 26

Residents of Wadi Qaddum met with their lawyers to discuss the threat of demolition since the Israeli-controlled Jerusalem municipality decided to demolish 15 homes in their neighborhood, south of the city, in order to expand a nearby road. The road is part of the Eastern Gate plan to connect the settlements of Gilo and Har Homa (Jabal Abu Gneim) to Ma'ale Adumim and Mishor Adumim. (*Al-Quds*)

September 4

Israeli religious right wing groups conducted a laser show above the Dome of the Rock in Jerusalem's Al-Aqsa Mosque compound. The show was to include a three-dimensional representation of the former Jewish temple transmitted to the site from a projector located on Mount Scopus. The demonstration staged on the

second anniversary of Ariel Sharon's controversial visit to the site was to be attended by Israeli ministers and Knesset members. (*Al-Ayyam*)

September 10

Dozens of right wing Israeli settlers took over a Palestinian home in Jabal Al-Mukabar, East Jerusalem, claiming it as their own. The settlers from a group called Elad, say they bought the home five years ago. When the Palestinian family brought the incursion to the attention of the police, they were asked to provide proof of ownership, and the Israeli courts are now determining the house's ownership. (*Al-Ayyam, Al-Ayyat al-Jadida*)

September 12

The Israeli cabinet voted to annex Rachel's Tomb to the Jerusalem municipality and to erect a separation wall between it and the surrounding Palestinian towns of Bethlehem and Beit Jala. The plan also includes paving a new road to allow Israelis easy access to the tomb. The move will relocate the Bethlehem checkpoint 300 meters closer to Bethlehem and annex some 35 Palestinian homes to Jerusalem, some of which will likely be demolished. (*Al-Quds, Al-Ayyam*)

Acronyms:

- AP - Associated Press
- IPPPC - Israeli-Palestinian Peoples' Peace Campaign
- JMCC - Jerusalem Media and Communication Centre
- KNA - Kuwait News Agency
- PR - Palestine Report