

CORNERSTONE

A QUARTERLY PUBLICATION BY SABEEL ECUMENICAL LIBERATION THEOLOGY CENTER JERUSALEM

THE APARTHEID PARADIGM

by: Naim Ateek

Greetings to you in this Easter season! As we celebrate the resurrection of our Lord Jesus Christ, we pray that the message of peace proclaimed by Christ will grow in your hearts and in your communities.

In our Palestinian context, following this message of peace means standing up to the injustices of a system of oppression that many are comparing to the system of apartheid in South Africa. A growing number of peace activists - Palestinians, Israeli Jews, and expatriates have been courageously stating that Israel is already practicing *Hafrada* and *Nishool*, i.e. an Israeli form of "apartheid" vis-à-vis the Palestinians who live under its occupation.

Last October 26-27, 2007, Friends of Sabeel - New England organized a regional conference at Old South Christian Church, Boston, MA to examine this topic. The theme of the conference was *The Apartheid paradigm: how does it apply to Palestine-Israel?* In spite of strong opposition by pro-Israel American groups, approximately one thousand people attended not only from the region of New England but from other regions of the United States as well as Canada and beyond. A number of Christian, Muslim, and Jewish speakers - religious and secular - gave valuable presentations. The keynote speaker was Archbishop Desmond Tutu, the former Anglican Archbishop of the Province of Southern Africa. In this issue of Cornerstone, we present some of the presentations and highlights of that conference.

Continued >>



Photo by Meta Floor

IN THIS ISSUE

The Apartheid Paradigm <i>by: Naim Ateek</i>	1
Realizing God's Dream <i>by: Bishop Desmond Tutu</i>	4
A Biblical Framework <i>by: David Wildman</i>	7
Exclusive Identity <i>by: Farid Esack</i>	8
ACRI Report	10
Occupation, Apartheid, and Colonialism <i>by: John Dugard</i>	11
Domination, Inequality, and Apartheid <i>by: Anat Biletzki</i>	14
Sabeel Statement on Gaza	18

“ It is important to emphasize that the conflict is no longer between Israel and the Palestinians. It is between the forces of peace and justice in Israel and Palestine and those of violence and domination ”

It is apparent that the 1967 Israeli occupation of the West Bank and the Gaza Strip has undergone at least three different stages. It began with an Israeli policy of control of the Palestinians. After the 1987 intifada a gradual shift began to take place. With the increasing escalation of Palestinian resistance, both violent and nonviolent, the objective became no longer a policy of control but of suppression and humiliation. This is evident in the demolition of Palestinian homes, the continued confiscation of Palestinian land, the building and expansion of Jewish settlements, the inhuman treatment of Palestinians at checkpoints, the building of “Israeli-only” roads, policies of collective punishment, the building of the apartheid wall, and Israel’s disregard for international law. A growing number of individuals and groups believe that the suppression is now giving way to Hafrada and Nishool - an Israeli form of apartheid.

This issue of Cornerstone is intended to help readers become aware of this grave danger that threatens the lives of all the people of Palestine-Israel. People of

conscience everywhere need to do everything they can to stop it. This must be done not only for the sake of the Palestinians but for the sake of Israel itself.

The grim realities of Hafrada and Nishool highlighted by this issue are not good news for Palestinians or Israelis. However, as Sabeel board member Jonathan Kuttab has written, “precisely in this dark hour of despair, the message of Easter needs to be proclaimed again: Christ will not remain in the tomb, nor will evil and oppression have the last word. Christ rose again on the third day with a glorious triumph over the forces of evil and darkness, and over death itself, proclaiming to the whole world a new era and the victory of good over evil. The message of Easter, for Palestinians, as well as for the poor and oppressed everywhere, is that God is sovereign in the affairs of the world. No matter how dark things appear on ‘Sad Friday,’ [the Arabic word for Good Friday is jum’a al hazini which means ‘Sad Friday’] Easter is coming and with it the promise, hope, and certainty of resurrection-the victory of life over death.”

THE APARTHEID HOW DOES IT

We believe that it is God’s mandate for every one of us to cry out whenever injustice is done and whenever God’s children are oppressed. We have always condemned the injustice and oppression of the Israeli occupation. It is evil and it must end. We have always condemned violence and terrorism whether coming from the government of Israel and its army or from extremist Palestinian groups. At the same time, we always declared that peace is knocking at the door. We believe that Israel can enjoy peace and security if and when it takes a good look at itself, recognizes the grave injustice it has committed against the Palestinians and implements international law. We believe that it is possible for Palestinians and Israelis to live in peace side by side. To this end we strive and work.

Tragically, the government of Israel is not listening to the voice of peace and reason. It is important to emphasize that the conflict is no longer between Israel and the Palestinians. It is between the forces of peace and justice in Israel and Palestine and those of violence and domination. We are working together as Palestinians and Israelis, as Jews, Muslims, and Christians that are on one side, the side of justice and international law, and against all those who are on the side of oppression and domination.

Today, the government of Israel is guided by a blind obsession for Palestinian land

APARTHEID PARADIGM APPLY TO PALESTINE-ISRAEL?

by: Naim Ateek



Photo by Meta Floor

and by a deep desire to ethnically cleanse the Palestinians and force them to leave the territory. What our people are experiencing is not mere occupation; it is now suppression and de-humanization. In other words, the racism of the government of Israel has become more obviously clear. That is why for quite some time, even Israeli Jewish writers have been using the word apartheid to describe what Israel is doing.

As an example one can cite a recent interview in Ha'aretz with Haggai Alon, who was a senior adviser to Amer Peretz at the Ministry of Defense. Alon described his job as ensuring that the official statements made by the Israeli government regarding its policy toward the Palestinians were in fact implemented.

The article quotes Alon saying: "The IDF is setting a route for the fence that will not enable the establishment of a Palestinian state and is allowing itself to evade High Court orders to change the route". He claims that the Israeli army 'is carrying out an apartheid policy' which is emptying Hebron of Arabs, setting up roadblocks without anyone knowing where and how many, Judaizing the Jordan Valley, and cooperating openly and blatantly with the settlers.

President Carter did not haphazardly use the word apartheid in the title of his book, *Palestine: Peace Not Apartheid*. I am sure he was under pressure to change it. But he chose to keep it because he knew what was happening on the ground under the Israeli occupation.

For some time now, I have been advocating the use of a Hebrew word as a way of describing the Israeli form of apartheid. The word "hafrada" is already used in Israel to indicate the separation desired by the government of Israel and others. In fact, in the Israeli media the wall is referred to as the "hafrada" barrier, i.e. the separation barrier, not the security barrier as it is often referred to in the West. The Israeli public, therefore, is self-identifying a policy of separation. In Afrikaans, the word apartheid literally means separation, though in South Africa it eventually acquired a more sinister and racist connotation. "Hafrada"-separation-today expresses racism in the minds and lives of many Israeli Jews towards Palestinians and Arabs. Already hafrada is conjuring up racist attitudes and not simply a desire for separation.

During the last 40 years, we have had a number of visitors from South Africa including Archbishop Tutu and many others. While witnessing life under occupation, most of them have commented that what they saw in Palestine was far worse than what they experienced under apartheid. One such South African human rights expert, John Dugard, has said: Many aspects of Israel's occupation surpass those of the apartheid regime. Israel's large-scale destruction of Palestinian homes, leveling of agricultural lands, military incursions and targeted assassination of



Palestinians far exceed any similar practices in apartheid South Africa. No wall was ever built to separate blacks and whites.

Though many have called the Israeli Occupation worse than the apartheid regime, we are not here to quantify suffering, but to learn and understand what is happening, to confront racism and to seek a strategy that can dismantle it through nonviolent means.

Jeff Halper argues that the word *hafrada* is inadequate. He has suggested to me the word “*nishool*” which means dispossession in Hebrew. He believes that Israel’s form of racism goes beyond apartheid because its objective is the total dispossession of the Palestinian people. I would like to suggest using both words. What is going on in the Occupied Territories today is both *hafrada* and *nishool*: both separation and dispossession.

From my perspective of faith, this racism and all forms of racism are a crime against God and against our fellow human beings. As apartheid ended in South Africa, so must the *hafrada* and *nishool* which have been hoisted upon the Palestinians. The God of justice and peace, the God of mercy and love demands that we combine our efforts together to struggle against the evil of the Israeli occupation. It must end. International law must be implemented in Palestine. Human dignity must be restored to the Palestinians and peace based on justice must be done. We want Israel to live in peace and security within its pre-1967 borders. At the same time we want justice for the Palestinians in accordance with international law and the creation of a Palestinian state living in peace and security alongside the state of Israel. There is no other way. Without justice to the Palestinians on the basis of International Law, no lasting peace is possible.

Rev. Naim Ateek is the director of Sabeel, Jerusalem

REALIZING C FOR TH

WHENEVER I am asked if I am optimistic about an end to the Israeli/Palestinian conflict, I say that I am not. Optimism requires clear signs that things are changing - meaningful words and unambiguous actions that point to real progress. I do not yet hear enough meaningful words, nor do I yet see enough unambiguous deeds to justify optimism.

However, that does not mean I am without hope. I am a Christian. I am constrained by my faith to hope against hope, placing my trust in things as yet unseen. Hope persists in the face of evidence to the contrary, undeterred by setbacks and disappointment. Hoping against hope, then, I do believe that a resolution will be found. It will not be perfect, but it can be just; and if it is just, it will usher in a future of peace.

My hope for peace is not amorphous. It has a shape. It is not the shape of a particular political solution, although there are some political solutions that I believe to be more just than others.

Neither does my hope take the shape of a particular people, although I have pleaded tirelessly for international attention to be paid to the misery of Palestinians, and I have roundly condemned the injustices of certain Israeli policies that compound that misery. Thus I am often accused of siding with Palestinians against Israeli Jews, naively exonerating the one and unfairly demonizing the other.

GOD'S DREAM THE HOLY LAND

by: Desmond Tutu (*The Boston Globe*)

Nevertheless, I insist that the hope in which I persist is not reducible to politics or identified with a people. It has a more encompassing shape. I like to call it "God's dream."

God has a dream for all his children. It is about a day when all people enjoy fundamental security and live free of fear. It is about a day when all people have a hospitable land in which to establish a future. More than anything else, God's dream is about a day when all people are accorded equal dignity because they are human beings. In God's beautiful dream, no other reason is required.

God's dream begins when we begin to know each other differently, as bearers of

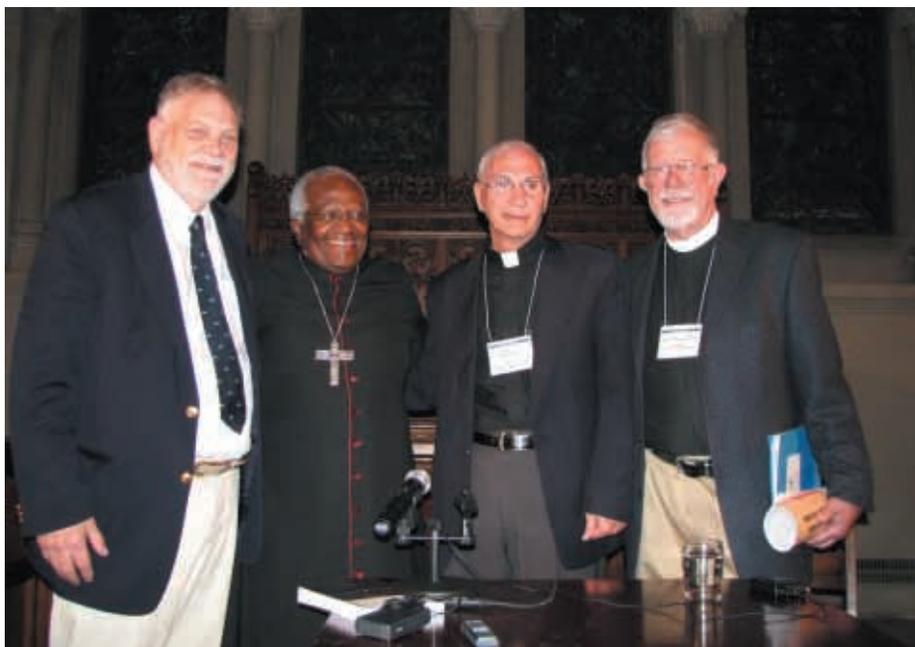


Photo by Betsy Mayfield

a common humanity, not as statistics to be counted, problems to be solved, enemies to be vanquished or animals to be caged. God's dream begins the moment one adversary looks another in the eye and sees himself reflected there.

All things become possible when hearts fixed in mutual contempt begin to grasp a transforming truth; namely, that this

person I fear and despise is not an alien, something less than human. This person is very much like me, and enjoys and suffers, loves and fears, wonders, worries, and hopes. Just as I do, this person longs for well-being in a world of peace.

God's dream begins with this mutual recognition - we are not strangers, we are kin. It culminates in the defeat of oppression perpetrated in the name of security, and of violence inflicted in the name of liberation. God's dream routs the cynicism and despair that once cleared the path for hate to have its corrosive way with us, and for ravenous violence to devour everything in sight.

God's dream comes to flower when everyone who claims to be wholly innocent relinquishes that illusion, when everyone who places absolute blame on another renounces that lie, and when differing stories are told at last as one shared story of human aspiration. God's dream ends in healing and reconciliation. Its finest fruit is human wholeness flourishing in a moral universe.

In the meanwhile, between the root of human solidarity and the fruit of human



Photo by Meta Floor

wholeness, there is the hard work of telling the truth.

From my experience in South Africa I know that truth-telling is hard. It has grave consequences for one's life and reputation. It stretches one's faith, tests one's capacity to love, and pushes hope to the limit. At times, the difficulty of this work can make you wonder if people are right about you, that you are a fool.

No one takes up this work on a do-gooder's whim. It is not a choice. One feels compelled into it. Neither is it work for a little while, but rather for a lifetime - and for more than a lifetime. It is a project bigger than any one life. This long view is a source of encouragement and perseverance. The knowledge that the work preceded us and will go on after us is a fountain of deep gladness that no circumstance can alter.

Nothing, however, diminishes the fear and trembling that accompany speaking the truth to power in love. An acute awareness of fallibility is a constant companion in this task, but because nothing is more important in the current situation than to speak as truthfully as one can, there can be no shrinking from testifying to what one sees and hears.

What do I see and hear in the Holy Land? Some people cannot move freely from one place to another. A wall separates them from their families and from their incomes. They cannot tend to their gardens at home or to their lessons at school. They are arbitrarily demeaned at checkpoints and unnecessarily beleaguered by capricious applications of bureaucratic red tape. I grieve for the damage being done daily to people's souls and bodies. I have to tell the truth: I am reminded of the yoke of oppression that was once our burden in South Africa.

“Because of what I experienced in South Africa, I harbor a vast, unreasoning hope for Israel and the Palestinian territories”

I see and hear that ancient olive trees are uprooted. Flocks are cut off from their pastures and shepherds. The homes of some people are bulldozed even as new homes for others are illegally constructed on other people's land. I grieve for the land that suffers such violence, the marring of its beauty, the loss of its comforts, the despoiling of its yield. I have to tell the truth: I am reminded of the bitter days of uprooting and despoiling in my own country.

I see and hear that young people believe that it is heroic and pious to kill others by killing themselves. They strap bombs to their torsos to achieve liberation. They do not know that liberation achieved by brutality will defraud in the end. I grieve the waste of their lives and of the lives they take, the loss of personal and communal security they cause, and the lust for revenge that follows their crimes, crowding out all reason and restraint. I have to tell the truth: I am reminded of the explosive anger that inflamed South Africa, too.

Some people are enraged by comparisons between the Israeli/Palestinian conflict and what happened in South Africa. There are differences between the two situations, but a comparison need not be exact in every feature to yield clarity about what is going on. Moreover, for those of us who lived through the dehumanizing

horrors of the apartheid era, the comparison seems not only apt, it is also necessary. It is necessary if we are to persevere in our hope that things can change.

Indeed, because of what I experienced in South Africa, I harbor a vast, unreasoning hope for Israel and the Palestinian territories. South Africans, after all, had no reason to suppose that the evil system and the cycles of violence that were sapping the soul of our nation would ever change. There was nothing special or different about South Africans to deserve the appearance of the very thing for which we prayed and worked and suffered so long.

Most South Africans did not believe they would live to see a day of liberation. They did not believe that their children's children would see it. They did not believe that such a day even existed, except in fantasy. But we have seen it. We are living now in the day we longed for.

It is not a cloudless day. The divine arc that bends toward a truly just and whole society has not yet stretched fully across my country's sky like a rainbow of peace. It is not finished, it does not always live up to its promise, it is not perfect - but it is new. A brand new thing, like a dream of God, has come about to replace the old story of mutual hatred and oppression.

I have seen it and heard it, and so to this truth, too, I am compelled to testify - if it can happen in South Africa, it can happen with the Israelis and Palestinians. There is not much reason to be optimistic, but there is every reason to hope.

Desmond Tutu is the former archbishop of Cape Town, an internationally renowned peace activist, and the patron of Friends of Sabeel International.

A BIBLICAL FRAMEWORK FOR ERODING ISRAELI APARTHEID

by David Wildman

The biblical story of the widow and the unjust judge, found in the Gospel of Luke 18:1-8, offers three critical points that guide the work of churches in seeking to end Israeli apartheid and bring justice for all. It is a story about “the need to pray always and not to lose heart.” As the conditions on the ground in Gaza, the West Bank and East Jerusalem worsen by the day, we certainly may be tempted to lose hope.



Photo by Meta Floor

First, we must ask, in the New Testament context of military occupation, colonization and armed resistance, how did this woman become a widow? Maybe her husband was what today would be called ‘collateral damage.’ Maybe he was in the insurrection. Maybe he was killed at a checkpoint, or for revenge, or during a targeted assassination, or from torture in prison. Maybe he was working his fields and his neighbor’s for 16-20 hours a day to try and provide for the family. Whatever the reason, there were probably quite a few people in first century Palestine, like in Palestine today, who had lost loved ones and could identify with this widow’s demand for justice.

The story not only lifts up the widow’s plight but offers someone who has suffered violence and oppression as a model for community empowerment and liberation. The story replaces a ‘blame the victim’ mentality, or a charity mentality, with a challenge to stand in solidarity with the oppressed and take their lead in demanding justice. The Palestinian civil society call for Boycott, Divestment, and Sanctions (BDS) embodies such a demand of justice.

Second, the unjust judge does not change

his mind, but he does change his behavior. How often have we in the churches said that if only political leaders would read one more book or be exposed to facts on the ground, then they would end their unjust ways. If only the US public traveled to Palestine and met with Palestinians and Israelis doing nonviolent resistance, then they would demand changes in US policies that perpetuate military occupation.

The story of the widow offers, not a strategy of converting leaders by sharing statements and information, but a justice-based strategy of erosion! In a context of systemic oppression, violence and ongoing colonization, her tireless, repeated, persistent action simply wears him out. The growing movement for BDS also constitutes a slow, persistent effort in eroding the longstanding injustice of Israeli apartheid.

Third, the widow’s story about the need not to lose heart, takes place in a public confrontation with unjust authorities that

exposes their oppressive practices. Such public actions invariably lead to vicious attacks from the powerful. One unjust judge that we must confront today is the US administration’s use of the veto at the UN. Since 1970 the US has vetoed more UN Security Council resolutions than the other 4 permanent members combined. More than half of US vetoes were to block the international community from criticizing Israeli attacks on Palestinian civilians. One third of

US vetoes were to block criticism of apartheid regimes in southern Africa. Thus over 83% of the vetoes cast by the US were to protect apartheid governments from international criticism and sanction. With sanctions effectively blocked by the US, the anti-apartheid movement turned to boycott and divestment as a major form of non-violent, moral, economic measures to end unjust corporate support for apartheid South Africa. So too, churches and activists are turning to BDS as nonviolent moral pressure to end Israel’s longstanding violation of international law.

I hope and pray that each of us will find the strength and passion of the widow to keep demanding justice as the basis for lasting peace for all in Palestine/Israel, and that that we will learn from our sisters and brothers in Palestine/Israel about creative nonviolent ways to effect change to end military occupation, to end human rights violations and targeting of civilians, to enable refugees to return, and to realize peace for all.

David Wildman is the Executive secretary for Human Rights & Racial Justice for the Board of Global Ministries of the United Methodist Church. He is also on the steering committee of the U.S Campaign to End the Occupation.

EXCLUSIVE IDENTITY AND THE STRUGGLE AGAINST APARTHEID

by Farid Esack

I want to talk about connections. I want to talk about relationships. I want to argue that our authenticity as human beings in fact depends on our ability to make the connections between the suffering of other people and our own humanity. I grew up in South Africa. I still live in South Africa and I grew up as one of those very privileged people, somebody privileged to be part of the struggle against apartheid from a very early age and later on to be a part of the

struggle to create a new South Africa. We do not often think of destruction and of destroying as privileged activities. Sometimes in our liberal world we think that it is just about being together and about being nice and so on. No, South Africa taught us about the value of resisting, the value of destroying. It taught us that when systems are founded on the separation of people from other people on the basis of biological accidents then such a system is anathema

to the human being, to the human conscience and that it has to be destroyed. If men think that their maleness is irrevocably tied to relationships of oppression with women then that understanding of maleness must be destroyed. If that male gets hurt in the process, well sorry! I can't make your hurt the be all and end all of my life. You are in an oppressive relationship with a woman. A woman is being hurt. I understand that you may have been hurt before. I understand that you may be hurting others as a consequence of your own hurt. But at the moment, my darling, take your shoes off the neck of this woman!

In exploring the connection between gender and race, how do we respond when a male insists that the only way I can conceive of my identity is in a relationship of superiority over women? Do we talk about and privilege this male identity in the way that this man is insisting on constructing his identity? Or do we say no? There is inside maleness another strand of masculinity that does not mean a hierarchical relationship. That does not mean the majority of men today deny an authentic space to that other form of maleness. There were other forms of Jewishness.



Photo by Pat Westwater - Jong



Photo by Krista Johnson, South Africa

There are still subversive forms of Jewishness in the world, and indeed, other forms of Zionism which did not necessarily translate into this kind of life for the Palestinians. When this particular male in this new image of a dominant maleness insists that this is the only way of being a male in the world I am quite happy to say that if you insist on constructing men in this way, and if you want to define me as anti-male, then yes I am. I also always know that there are these other men that I can work with. I am a man and part of my insisting that there must be a new form of male identity for you is part of my own

struggle to reclaim my own humanity in the middle of all of this. So we don't speak of domestic violence. No, this man is abusing his wife. Too often as we talk about the Palestinian-Israeli conflict we say "This couple had a bit of an argument among themselves," when it is clearly a question of domination and subjugation. So, I make these connections. I make these connections for the larger question of the interrelationship between struggles. I am of course using this whole male analogy to point out the absurdity of identity when you legitimate it as the basis of what you can go around and do

to other people. But I also believe in our involvement in and commitment to the past struggle against apartheid in South Africa and now the struggle for freedom for the Palestinians. Our struggle is part of a larger struggle against the dehumanization of others and a struggle for our own humanity.

If anything, I think the apartheid analogy is often a weak analogy in relation to how the Palestinians are experiencing Zionism. In apartheid South Africa we never had the walls that we see in Israel. We never had separate roads for black people and for white

people as we see in Israel and in Palestine. We didn't have separate number plates for Arab cars. No, our courts never sanctioned collective punishment. Our courts never sanctioned torture, as the Israeli courts have. No, the apartheid regime never singled out for particular abuse the land, the destruction of the olive groves and their fruits.

In many ways, friends, the struggle in South Africa was always a struggle against apartheid. It was never a struggle against whites. All the ANC leaders of our struggle at all times upheld the sanctity of all people inside that struggle. Condescending as it may sound, we knew and always believed that our struggle was as much a struggle for the liberation of white people from their own prisons of ethnicity and racism as it was for us.

Our engagement in solidarity with the Palestinians is not for the Palestinians. We are really doing this for ourselves. In the same way that in the 70s and the 80s, Desmond Tutu often said that this struggle against apartheid was a barometer of our humanness. Our humanness is measured by the extent to which we are moved by the suffering of other people. It is not a question of my interest, of women standing up for women or Palestinians standing up for other Palestinians. It is about us standing up for each other both because tomorrow it could be me and because for me to see somebody spitting in your face and not to react impairs my own humanity in the process.

Farid Esack is the Prince Walid bin Talal visiting professor at Harvard University. A scholar of Islam who cut his teeth on the South African struggle for liberation, he is the author of Qur'an, Liberation and Pluralism.

The Association for Civil Rights in Israel has recently released its 2007 report entitled *The State of Human Rights in Israel and the Occupied Territories*. The report analyzes a disturbing trend: "Racism toward Arab citizens among the Jewish public continues to rise."

Among the statistics recognizing this trend of racism are the following:

50% of the Israelis interviewed does not think that Jews and Arabs should enjoy full equal rights

55% of Israeli Jews surveyed support the idea that the government should encourage Arab emigration

78% are opposed to Arab political parties joining the governing coalition

50% of the Jewish population reports feelings of fear when hearing Arabic spoken on the street

75% of those questioned stated that they would not agree to live in the same building as Arabs

Over half of the Israeli population agrees that Arabs and Jews should have separate recreational facilities.

The ACRI report adds that it "does not take very much for feelings of fear, hatred, and racism to be translated into actions." It records discrimination against Arab citizens of Israel in the form of popular racism, stereotypes in media portrayals, draft legislation in the Knesset regarding mandatory military service and land usage for "Jews only," racism in airport security checks, allocation of development budgets, and restrictions on freedom of expression and political activity.

For the full report, see ACRI's website at <http://www.acri.org.il/eng/>



Photo by Hannah Ohlen

OCCUPATION, APARTHEID, AND COLONIALISM IN INTERNATIONAL LAW

by John Dugard

International law tolerates occupation, it does not approve it. It accepts occupation as an interim status pending a peace settlement. Because it merely tolerates it and does not approve it, international law imposes obligations upon the occupying power. These obligations are to be found in international humanitarian law,

particularly in the 4th Geneva Convention of 1949. This body of law is designed to protect the occupied people. Although occupation is tolerated by international law, unlike apartheid which was seen to be illegal, it is in many respects a more harsh regime, one in which the interests of security seem to prevail over human

rights. So it is important not to forget that Palestine is occupied territory. Israel desperately likes to forget this. We frequently find the Israeli government saying that they wish the Palestinians would stop using the term occupation, they're getting bored with it. Of course they are, because they would prefer to forget that this is the status. Then of

Most of Israel's discriminatory practices are not to be found in any accessible legal instruments. Take, for example, the whole checkpoint system. What will happen is that a military commander will wake up one morning and say that today no person between the ages of 16-35 may leave Nablus. When a man of twenty presents himself at the checkpoint he is told, 'sorry, you're not allowed to leave Nablus today.' There is no law which tells him this.

course we find that Israel argues that it is not in occupation of Gaza any longer since the withdrawal of the settlements in 2005. But that is absolutely nonsense because the test under international law is effective control and Israel clearly maintains effective control over Gaza. Israel controls Gaza's borders, its airspace, and its sea space. So it is important, I believe, to retain the term occupation and never to forget it. What I do suggest is that it is helpful to see the occupation of Palestine as an aggravated form of occupation. It is aggravated because it is accompanied by elements of colonialism and apartheid.

We must not forget colonialism because we have nearly half a million Jewish settlers living in the West Bank and East Jerusalem. These settlements continue to grow by the day. The illegality of colonialism is recognized by international law. I think it is important to see the settlement policy and the settlement program as an exercise in colonialism. We lawyers tend to condemn settlements on the grounds that they violate a provision in Article 49 paragraph 6 of the 4th Geneva Convention. That's very legalistic. I think it would be much better to talk about settlements as a form of colonialism. During the 1960s, the international community compelled the colonial powers to de-colonize but ironically the international community has allowed Israel to embark on a program of colonization. This must be highlighted and condemned.

Then of course there is the other element

of the occupation and that is apartheid. The 1973 convention on the suppression of apartheid makes it quite clear that the convention does not apply only to apartheid as practiced in Southern Africa. It is a general concept of racial domination by one group over another. It is moreover a crime under international law. So in this respect it is very important to bear in mind that we are here dealing with a general phenomenon, not a peculiarly Southern African phenomenon. Let me just look at some of the laws and practices in Israel which I think can be likened to apartheid. First of all there are some Israeli laws that are openly racist and discriminatory. Take for instance, the law that deals with the seam zone, the area between the green line and the wall. Within this territory Israelis have freedom of movement but Palestinians,

many of whom own land or homes in the seam zone, require a permit to live there. That is a blatant example of racial discrimination. And of course the laws requiring Palestinians to possess permits in order to travel within the West Bank and in some cases to Jerusalem are also an exercise in racial discrimination.

Most of Israel's discriminatory practices are not to be found in any accessible legal instruments. Take, for example, the whole checkpoint system. What will happen is that a military commander will wake up one morning and say that today no person between the ages of 16-35 may leave Nablus. When a man of twenty presents himself at the checkpoint he is told, 'sorry, you're not allowed to leave Nablus today.' There is no law which tells him this. If he asks what is the law they will say it is a military order and that military order



Photo by Hannah Ohlen

many only exist for a week or so and then be replaced by another. So, it is inaccessible. It is deliberately concealed. The same applies to the system of road separation. There is no law that provides that there should be separate roads for Palestinians, the poorer roads, and the separate good roads for settlers but this is the practice. A former Israeli cabinet minister Shulamit Aloni said that she confronted a member of the IDF when he was confiscating a Palestinian vehicle for driving on a settler road. She said, 'What is the legal justification for this action?' He said, 'This is the practice, what do you expect us to do? To put up a sign saying settlers only or Palestinians only? If that happens everyone will start taking photographs and we will be seen to be like South Africa.'

What is happening in the Palestinian territory is that Israel is practicing apartheid but in a very dishonest and concealed manner. At least South African apartheid was open and honest. There were notices to indicate that certain facilities were for blacks and certain facilities were for whites only. In Israel you cannot easily access the law. You just have to take it from some member of the IDF that this is the law for a particular day.

The other discriminatory feature of Israeli practice is in the implementation of the law. For instance, there are laws which require permits for building houses. These laws are ostensibly for both Jew and Palestinian but in practice it is the Palestinian who builds a home



Photo by Meta Floor

without a permit because the Israeli authorities refuse to give him a permit who will have his home destroyed, whereas this does not happen to Israelis. So we have a whole body of law and practice which closely resembles the South African apartheid discriminatory regime.

What do we do about the future? I would suggest that it would be helpful to start talking about the occupation as an aggravated occupation, one which has elements of colonialism and elements of apartheid. I think it would be very helpful if the International Court of Justice were to be asked for a further advisory opinion on the legal consequences of prolonged occupation, the consequences for the occupied people, the consequences for the occupying power, and the consequences for third states, because third states like the United States also have obligations in respect of the occupied people. I believe that such an advisory opinion

would serve not only serve to further delegitimize Israel's occupation but it would also put pressure on the international community to be more active in this field. I think one of the sad things that I find as a special rapporteur to the United Nations is that the United Nations has handed over everything to a quartet comprising, the United States, the Russian Federation, the European Union, and the United Nations. And that body, the quartet, is totally dominated by the United States and is giving it unashamed support to Israel at the expense of the Palestinian people. I think pressure needs to be brought upon the United Nations to disassociate itself from the United States and to act in a more independent manner. We have to look to the long term, and I think it is important that we plan a strategy that will put further pressure on the international community to adopt an evenhanded and impartial approach to the whole problem.

John Dugard is Special Rapporteur on the human rights situation in the occupied Palestinian Territories to the UN Human Rights Council. He is a professor of Human Rights Law at the University of Pretoria, South Africa

DOMINATION, INEQUALITY, AND APARTHEID

by Anat Biletzki

The Israeli Declaration of Independence says: “the state of Israel will foster the development of the country for the benefit of all its inhabitants. It will be based on freedom, justice, and peace, as envisaged by the prophets of Israel. It will ensure complete equality of social and political rights to all its inhabitants, irrespective of religion, race, or sex.” The troublesome paradoxical and contradictory elements of this declaration are now very well known, but let me focus on equality and show that only such focus can really address the evils of apartheid. Let me add that I use apartheid as shorthand for what John Dugard called occupation with elements of colonialism and apartheid, without going into the intricacies of the exact parallels.

Even if apartheid was merely the insistence on separation, we all know the fallacy of separate but equal. We know that separate cannot be equal. We’ve grown up to abhor and dismantle the spurious examples that were made in Jim Crow and in apartheid South Africa and accept, as the famous US Supreme Court decision stated, that separate is inherently unequal. Now going from separate to unequal is a short step to take; from inequality to domination of one group by another. I maintain that equality is the moral force behind the opposition to the realities on the ground which are domination and, of course, separation. Theoretically, in philosophy, I can show how I get from separate to unequal to domination. What we have

in Israel is the other way around. The occupation started with domination which then brought us to inequality and separation.

Domination. There are 47 internal permanent checkpoints manned and womaned by Israeli soldiers. There are 33 checkpoints between the West Bank and Israel. There are 73 gates in the wall. There are 200 flying checkpoints, you never know where they will be. There are 217 dirt piles at entrances to villages. There are 86 fences along the roadways. There are 93 locked gates at entrances to villages. There are 73 checkpoints in Hebron alone. These checkpoints are the icon of domination. Machsom Watch [Machsom is the Hebrew word for checkpoint-ed.] has become one of the most meaningful organizations in Israel because we have to look at these checkpoints. We have to watch them. This is domination.

Onwards to inequality. The place where apartheid came out in the media in Israel was when Bt’selem wrote its report on forbidden roads. On the roads that are literally apartheid roads. Roads for Palestinians. Roads for Jews. I don’t have the time here to go into the numbers but basically there are 700 kilometers

that are segregated, that are not for Palestinians. There are different categorizations: completely prohibited, partially prohibited (you can get on if you have a certain permit), physically restricted, etc. Domination and inequality are very clear there.

It is the separation that interests me and will bring us to something a little different. The separation wall, the separation barrier as the Israeli authorities want to call it, is 780 kilometers that purports to separate Jews from Palestinians. I emphasize ‘purports to separate’ because on its eastern side there are still 69 settlements with around 60,000 Jews. On its western side there are still 21 villages with around 20,000 Palestinians. But there are another 200,000 Palestinians in enclosed villages and towns that are completely surrounded by the wall with one gate to go out. There are the [approximately 25% of the 253,000 Palestinians in East Jerusalem, according to a January 2008 OCHA report-ed.] who are on the wrong side of the wall. There are the million Palestinians in the old green line Israel. What kind of separation is this and why are we all so intent on saying that this is a wall of separation?

The realities on the ground are apartheid

“ Our fight must be against racism. Nothing more and nothing less. ”



Photo by Meta Floor

and apartheid is immoral. The question now is which of these immoral elements: domination, inequality, or separation, are we supposed to fight against? In these days of enlightenment, of everybody standing up for democratic liberalism, we are all pointing at domination and inequality as definitive of the occupation. That is what everybody is challenging in speaking out against the occupation. It seems easy and has been accepted by a majority of actors in the peace camp to decry the occupation, to call for an end to occupation and thereby to confront both the occupation itself and the apartheid which has become its consequence. In Israel, in the US, and

around the world, a consensus has converged on the two state solution as that which can erase the domination and inequality. Indeed, a separation into two states: a Jewish state and a Palestinian state, would set the two warring parties apart and evade the charge of apartheid, separation, since apartheid does require that there be an internal separation between two parts of the citizenry. Given that apartheid is immoral and we must do away with the domination and the inequality, the two state solution seems to be a good political solution to a moral problem.

Many people have said that the Israeli-Palestinian conflict is not a question

about race. It is about real estate, about political power, about religious fundamentalism, and about real historical conflicts. These three religions, two ethnicities, two nations, two peoples do fit the apartheid paradigm of the documents of international law that say that there cannot be such domination and inequality. My worry indeed arises from the racism which I feel motivates the desire for separation. I don't know if I want to say that racism motivates the two state solution, but it does motivate the desire for separation.

There was a poll taken in Israel recently about the Jewish attitude toward Arabs. Over half of Jewish Israelis say that

marrying an Arab is treason. Over 75% refuse to live in the same building as an Arab, over 60% refuse to have an Arab visit their home, over half think the state should encourage Arabs to leave, over 55% think that Arabs and Jews should be separated in places of entertainment, and I can go on and on. Is this not racism? But the overriding argument for ending the occupation among what Sari Nusseibeh tells me are his enlightened Jewish friends, and he does not use the word enlightened here cynically, their main motivation is the demographic threat. Can talk of demography be anything but racism? What will we do

in 20, 30, 40 years from now in that Jewish state within the Green Line when there are just as many Palestinians as Jews? What will we say then? What demographic threat can we then allude to? So given the presence of racism on all sides of the Israeli political map, whether the rightists who believe in our right to all the land or the leftists who believe in a smaller but still Jewish land, our fight must be against racism. Nothing more and nothing less.

One word of hope: apartheid in South Africa did end. Perhaps a moral response to realities is indeed our use of the word apartheid, as Naim Ateek has said. Perhaps by using the word apartheid, by fighting apartheid in Israel and Palestine, we can hope to put an end to it, too. So the moral fight against realities on the ground is the campaign against apartheid.

Anat Biletzki has been active in the Peace Movement and in Human Rights in Israel for over 25 years. She is now with the Program on Human Rights and Justice at MIT.



Photo by Meta Floor

THE NAKBA: MEMORY, REALITY AND BEYOND

SABEEL'S SEVENTH INTERNATIONAL CONFERENCE

NOVEMBER 12-19, 2008

Through lectures, workshops, discussions, and cultural events, Sabeel's Seventh International Conference will focus on the commemoration of 60 years since the Nakba, and the complex issues of memory, narrative, and identity raised by the events of 1948. The conference will discuss how the events of the past affect the current reality and the hope for a future of justice, peace, and healing.

The total registration and program fee for the conference (including all expenses except airline travel) is:

4 star: \$1,288 (double) \$1,528 (single)

3 star: \$1,131 (double) \$ 1,271 (single)

To register contact:

Shepherds Tours, P.O. Box 19560, Jerusalem

Tel: 972-2-6284121 Fax: 972-2-6280251 Email: info@shepherdstours.com and copy: conf2008@sabeel.org

For more information, please contact: conf2008@sabeel.org

1948: THE NAKBA, JUSTICE AND BEYOND

SABEEL INTERNATIONAL YOUNG ADULT CONFERENCE

JULY 24 - AUGUST 3, 2008

Our vision for this conference is to gather, network, and further educate young leaders from Palestine and around the world, during this 60th year of commemorating the Nakba; so that they may be trained, commissioned, and equipped with the tools to act in advocacy to work for justice and peace in the Holy Land.

The total registration and program fee for the conference is \$1000. This includes all costs—food, accommodations, ground transportation, speakers and activities—but it does not include airfare. (When scheduling flights, please keep in mind that participants should arrive by the morning of July 24th).

To register, contact youth@sabeel.org and copy: Kristi.Assaly@Dal.Ca

For more information, please contact: youth@sabeel.org.

Excerpt from Sabeel's Statement "A Human Tragedy Called Gaza"

On March 4, 2008, in response to a major Israeli invasion of Gaza which resulted in the death of over 100 Palestinians, many of whom were children, and the wounding of over 300, Sabeel Jerusalem issued a statement condemning this attack. Below is an excerpt from this statement, calling for justice and nonviolence for all people of Palestine and Israel. To view the entire statement, please visit www.sabeel.org

From Sabeel's position of faith, we believe that for a genuine peace to be achieved, the government of Israel must first terminate its injustice against the Palestinians, cease its violations of international law, and end its illegal occupation of the Palestinian territories.

For the immediate future, the Israeli government must accept Hamas' offer for a long term hudna (ceasefire) and enter into negotiations with the Palestinian Authority in good faith.

We also appeal to the Palestinian fighters in Gaza to abandon violence and to choose the way of nonviolence/It is a much stronger and more effective way of resistance/It has been tried by many people in the past who through nonviolence, stood against empires and were able to gain their rights and achieve their liberation.

We also plead with the Palestinian Authority and Hamas leadership to transcend their differences and to reconcile with each other. It is mandatory that they maintain the territorial integrity of the Gaza Strip and the West Bank as well as the unity of all the Palestinian people.

To all the people of this land - Israelis and Palestinians - we say: It is only when we recognize the humanity of the other and possess the courage and the humility to honor each other's rights and submit to the demands of international law that we can hope for peace and security.

Our faith teaches us that ultimately, the oppressed will be set free, peace will triumph over violence, and liberation will prove to be stronger than occupation.

Blessed are the meek, for they shall inherit the earth.

Important Definitions

by David Wildman

These definitions are useful to situate the anti-apartheid work proposed by the Boston Conference:

1. **Terrorism:** the name that the powerful give to the violence of the weak
2. **War Crimes:** the punishments that the victors impose on the losers
3. **Just war:** the name that the powerful give to their own violence
4. **A Crusade:** the name given to racist violence to exempt oneself from criticism and to demonize the other based on identity
5. **Apartheid:** the name international law and the international community give to the violence and discrimination of governments that divide people based on identity
6. **Boycott, Divestment, and Sanctions:** nonviolent, moral, economic measures that broaden the base of participation
7. **Nonviolent Direct Action:** Christian Peacemaker Teams, the International Solidarity Movement, Bil'in, and EAPPI are all examples of nonviolent direct action.

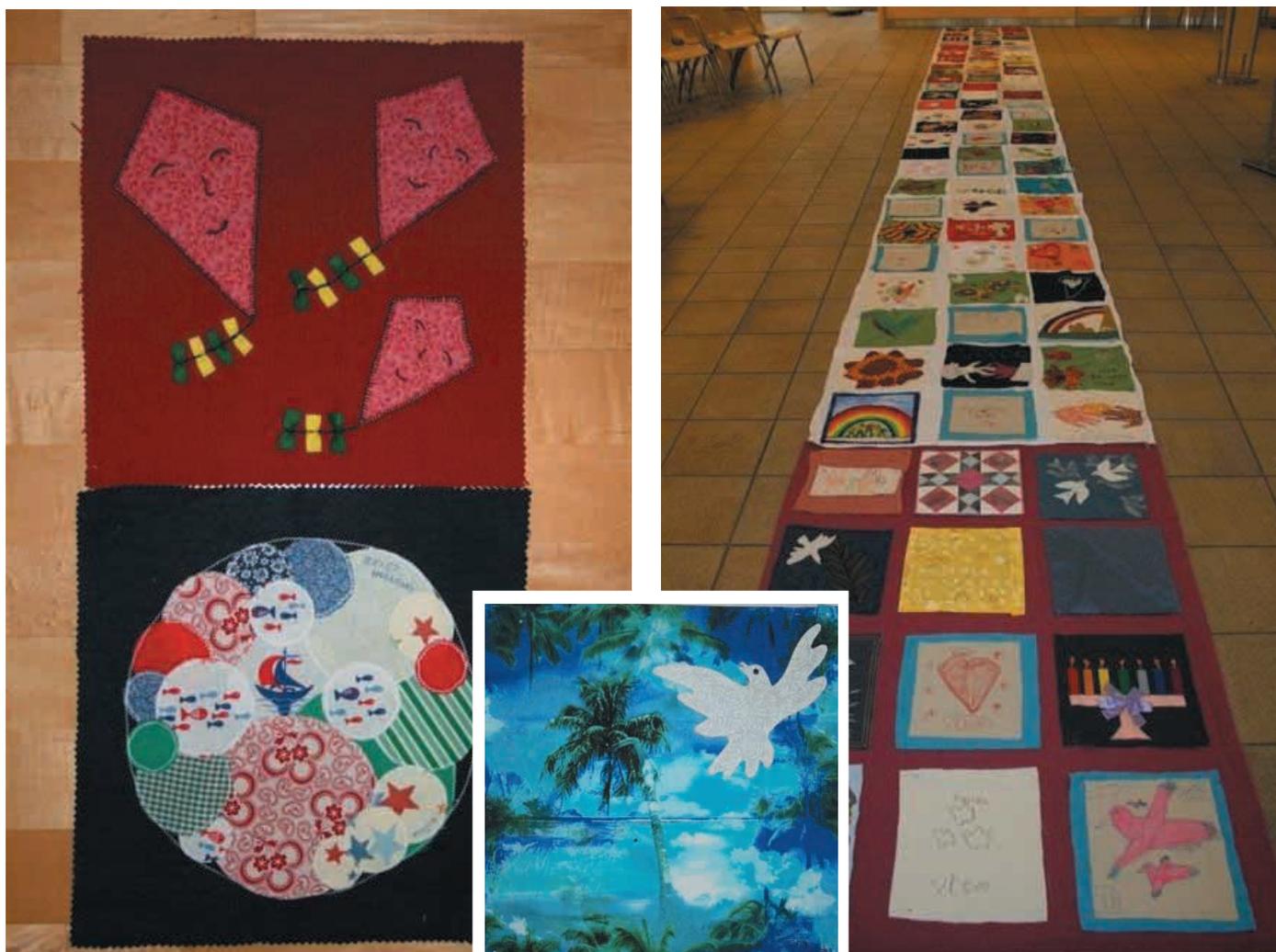


Photo by Marijke Egelie - Smulders

THE PEACE TAPESTRY: HOW ARE WE DOING?

Friends of Sabeel Netherlands is pleased to inform you that the peace tapestry project for the Seventh International Conference is coming along very nicely. We would never have thought that, by Easter, we would have 600 squares for the tapestry, enough to create the first 55 meters of this precious symbol of peace.

This is a powerful sign of our belief in peace, and in the importance of talking about peace, working for peace, and praying that the day will come that people will live in peace. Thank you to everyone who has been working on this, and we want to encourage all of you to contribute to our peace tapestry!

For more information, contact Marijke Egelie-Smulders at vredesloper@vriedenvansabeelnederland.nl



Purpose Statement *of* Sabeel

Sabeel is an ecumenical grassroots liberation theology movement among Palestinian Christians. Inspired by the life and teaching of Jesus Christ, this liberation theology seeks to deepen the faith of Palestinian Christians, promote unity among them, and lead them to act for justice and love. *Sabeel* strives to develop a spirituality based on justice, peace, non-violence, liberation, and reconciliation for the different national and faith communities. The word 'Sabeel' is Arabic for 'the way' and also a 'channel' or 'spring' of life-giving water.

Sabeel also works to promote a more accurate international awareness regarding the identity, presence, and witness of Palestinian Christians as well as their contemporary concerns. It encourages individuals and groups from around the world to work for a just, comprehensive, and enduring peace informed by truth and empowered by prayer and action.

For more information on *Friends of Sabeel* groups in your area please contact our international representatives or the Sabeel Center in Jerusalem.



Sabeel

Ecumenical Liberation
Theology Center
P.O.B. 49084 Jerusalem 91491
Tel: 972.2.532.7136
Fax: 972.2.532.7137

Sabeel-Nazareth

PO Box 8862
Nazareth 16300 Israel
Tel: 972(4)6020790
E-mail: nazareth@sabeel.org
Visit our website at:

www.sabeel.org

E-Mail addresses:

General E-mail: sabeel@sabeel.org; Local Programs: community@sabeel.org; Clergy Program: clergy@sabeel.org;

Friends of Sabeel: world@sabeel.org; Youth Program: youth@sabeel.org; Public Relations: pr@sabeel.org

Friends of Sabeel
North America (FOS-NA)
(U.S. and Canada)
Canon Richard Toll
PO Box 9186
Portland, OR 97207
USA
Tel: (1)-503-653-6625
E-mail: friends@fosna.org
www.fosna.org

Friends of Sabeel
Canadian (CFOS)
3 Sandstone Court
Nepean, Ontario
K2G 6N5
Canada
E-mail: cfos@ca.inter.net
Website: www.sabeel.ca

Friends of Sabeel
United Kingdom (FOS-UK)
Jennifer Oldershaw
8 Silver Street
Dursley
Gloucestershire
GL114ND
U.K.
Tel: 01453 544655
E-mail: fosuk@fish.co.uk
www.friendsofsabeel.org.uk

Friends of Sabeel
Ireland (FOS-IR)
9 Sycamore Road
Dublin 16
Ireland
Tel: 00-353-1-295-2643
E-mail: moynandg@iol.ie

Friends of Sabeel
Scandinavia (FOSS)
Reverend Marianne Kronberg
Centralvägen 21 A
S - 135 51 Tyresö
Sweden
E-mail: mkronberg1951@yahoo.se
Tel: +46 70 609 5010
www.sabeelskandinavien.org

Friends of Sabeel (Les amis de Sabil)
France
Gilbert Charbonnier
charbonniergilbert@hotmail.com

Friends of Sabeel
The Netherlands
info@vriendenvansabeelnederland.nl
www.vriendenvansabeelnederland.nl

Friends of Sabeel **Oceania**
Greg Marsh (Secretary)
E-mail: sabeel@sabeel.org.au
Website: www.sabeel.org.au