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Israel's Mockery of Security: 101 Actions Israel Could Take



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Israel has made a colossal mockery of the concept of security.

In debating an Israeli friend from Jerusalem, I challenged him that Israel consciously plans and uses its military might to damage the Palestinian's national project to build a state and free itself from Israeli control. Avner, my Israeli friend, argued otherwise, buying into the Israeli state narrative that Israel is "forced" to take measures which negatively affect Palestinians because Israeli security requires it. My knee-jerk reaction as someone living

and working under Israeli military occupation for over two decades, was that this was hogwash and, short of ending its illegal (note: legal occupations are temporary by definition) occupation of Palestinians, I claimed that Israel—the occupying power—could immediately take 101 measures to reduce tensions on the ground, without jeopardizing any true and rational security needs. He shrugged and said, “tell me”?

In the years to follow, I have given numerous talks on the state of affairs under Israeli occupation to groups visiting Palestine from all corners of the world. A large number of those talks were to Jewish-American groups—many participants being rabbinical students and mainstream Jewish influencers hosted by the U.S. not-for-profit [Encounter](#)—who traveled to Palestine for an Encounter Program. In a recent Encounter talk, one rabbi attentively listened as I made the same claim, *Israel can take 101 actions tomorrow morning without jeopardizing security*. He raised his hand and asked, where can we get that list?

So, here it is. A quick compilation, with the generous assistance of several friends here in Palestine, and with a few items selected from the umpteen reports being published about the rapidly deteriorating state of affairs. This list is not intended to be comprehensive by any means, but rather a look beyond the daily headlines to give readers, especially those who have bought into the Israeli propaganda—hook, line and sinker—that this military occupation is all about “security”.

I attempted to place a few subtitles to categorize the list, although many items are multifaceted. Space does not allow for a full explanation of each proposed action, so if anyone wants to be directed to a more in-depth explanation of any listed action, or otherwise, please feel free to reach out at the email listed below.

Before offering the list, I must state upfront and clearly, my goal in presenting these ideas is not to assist the powers-that-be to design an embellished military occupation intended as permanent. Rather, my purpose is to reveal Israel’s underlying intentions, its indefinite time frame for continued domination, and the cornucopia of diverse types of actions carefully calculated to humiliate each and every Palestinian, while structurally blocking a path to Palestinian statehood, otherwise known as the two-state solution. That noted, for those who simply cannot fathom the notion of a Palestinian state free from Israeli occupation, I welcome all efforts to get my list addressed while the occupation continues, which would align Israel’s actions somewhat better with the law of occupation, the Geneva Convention Relative to the Protection of Civilian Persons in Time of War (Fourth Geneva Convention, 12 August 1949).

101 actions Israel could take Gaza

- 1) Allow for free movement of goods to/from Gaza
- 2) Open the Erez [Passenger] Crossing to the West Bank 365 days a year, 24 hours a day, 7 days a week for the nearly 2 million Palestinian residents of Gaza
- 3) Permit Palestinians to tap their natural gas wells discovered in the sea of Gaza in 2000
- 4) Allow access to the Gaza Strip's land
- 5) Allow access to the Gaza Strip's territorial waters, expanding Gaza's fishing zone: The Government of Israel halved Gaza's fishing zone from 6 nautical miles to 3 nautical miles; compare that to the twenty-nautical mile limit set by the Oslo Accords. (World Bank)
- 6) Allow access to the Gaza Strip's air space, releasing 3G frequencies for wireless internet access for Gaza
- 7) Keep the Karm Abu Salem cargo crossing open (World Bank)
- 8) Allow solar panels into Gaza (World Bank)

Jerusalem

- 9) Stop stripping Jerusalemites of their Jerusalem residency status
- 10) Eliminate arbitrary taxation regime being applied to Palestinians in East Jerusalem, especially those in the Old City
- 11) Increase public services to East Jerusalem to align with the level of taxation paid by East Jerusalem residents and with their proportion of the entire city's population
- 12) Allow daily mechanism for Palestinians' freedom of religion, not only on the occasional holidays (entry to Jerusalem to pray at Al-Aqsa, Church of the Holy Sepulchre, e.g.)

Education

- 13) Remove barriers inside the West Bank between children and their schools
- 14) Stop soldiers at checkpoints from harassing school age students, stop the delaying and excessive searching of students (and teachers) coming to/from Jerusalem through the Qalandia checkpoint, especially of those who are unaccompanied by parents
- 15) Provide teachers open access to their workplaces, i.e. crossing checkpoints, etc.
- 16) Eliminate routine Israeli military forces incursions into schools
- 17) Allow academic/educational institutions to operate comfortably and freely within Palestinian communities in the occupied Palestinian territory (oPt), including East Jerusalem

- 18) Recognize/accredit the degrees granted by all Palestinian higher educational institution as legitimate credentials for continuing education in Israel or for professional work permits
- 19) Stop delaying release of textbook shipments
- 20) Stop delaying release of, and desist from tampering with, examination papers and answer sheets coming from the International Baccalaureate Organization (IBO)
- 21) Stop banning basic laboratory supplies for students' laboratory experiments
- 22) Grant permits for school education/recreational trips: an entire generation has never seen the sea
- 23) Stop systematically targeting schools in marginalized areas like Khan al-Ahmar in the Jordan Valley
- 24) Allow importing of educational accessories and tools: During the Microsoft International Student Competition, smart pens, circuits, and other similar materials required by participants were discarded at the Israeli border on the pretext that these educational materials were a threat to Israel's security
- 25) Allow student travel. During the Microsoft International Student Competition, the Palestinian team won first place over 23 Arab countries in the innovation category and were qualified to compete in the US. One of the students, despite the student having no security issues, and with an official invitation from Microsoft and the US consulate in hand, was unable to get Israeli permission to enter Jerusalem to process his US visa.

Humanitarian

- 26) Stop the arrests, especially of children: Number of Palestinians who have been held in Israeli jails for periods ranging from 1 week to life, 1967-1988: 600,000; number of Palestinians arrested during the first intifada (1987-94): 175,000
- 27) Stop the torture: Documented percentage of Palestinian detainees who have been tortured during interrogation: 85%
- 28) Stop the deportations: Documented number of Palestinians deported between 1967 and 1992: 1,522; between 1970 and 1973: 785; in 1992: 415; number deported from the West Bank to the Gaza Strip, 2002-2004: 32
- 29) Stop the house demolitions: Documented number of Palestinian homes in the oPt demolished by Israeli authorities, June 1967-March 2009: 24,145
- 30) Stop the killings: Killings during the two Intifadas: Number of Palestinians killed by Israeli security forces and civilians, December 9, 1987 to September 28, 2000: in the oPt:

1,489; within the Green Line: 60. Number killed, September 28, 2000 – September 28, 2004: 3,234

31) Release the bodies of killed Palestinians to their families

32) Stop ripping apart bicultural families: Provide clear and easy access via family reunification for foreign nationals married to Palestinians

33) Stop arbitrary denial of entries and restrictions on visiting foreign nationals, allowing Palestinian firms to recruit Palestinian and international talent abroad by issuance of work visas/permits for any such person who does not have a Palestinian identity card.

34) Respect Palestinian water rights as defined under international law and honor applicable, signed bilateral water-related agreements

35) Stop spraying of herbicides intended to destroy crops, especially on outskirts of the Gaza Strip

36) Respect the Bedouin community's way of life, stop the displacement of Bedouin communities

Municipalities

37) Reclassify areas currently classified as Area C if they are within defined city boundaries

38) Expedite landfill approvals: The regional landfill in Rammun (center of West Bank) took about 15 years for the Israeli side to approve

39) Expedite cemetery approvals: The new Ramallah cemetery project took about 12 years for the Israeli side to approve

40) Expedite water/sanitation approvals: The project for a central purification plant in Ein Griot has been waiting for Israeli approval for years now

41) Expedite approvals for new or improved transportation routes: The desperately needed Ramallah ring road project, a case in point, has submitted all required details and continues to await Israeli approval

Economic

42) Stop the illegal dumping of Israeli goods and services into the Palestinian markets, Stop unlicensed Israeli firms, such as Israeli telecommunications firms, from illegally selling their services to the Palestinian Authority (PA) areas

43) Stop the arbitrary delays in importation of technology products

44) Release 4G frequencies for West Bank and Gaza

45) Allow for free movement of goods within the oPt

46) Allow for unfettered imports

- 47) Allow for unfettered exports
- 48) Allow the entry of Palestinian goods into the Israeli market, as the Paris Protocol (4/94) provided for in a unique economic and trade regime named the Customs Envelope
- 49) Stop using an Israeli-specific “Dual Use List” for Palestinians, causing unjustified additional restrictions to importation of goods into Gaza and considerable delays and difficulties for West Bank economic projects, such as the Bethlehem Industrial Estate (BMIP)
- 50) Stop the extensive security checks within the West Bank which pose an economic obstacle to trade
- 51) Allow for delivery of large machinery/equipment/vehicles related to PA and international projects, especially for agriculture and construction
- 52) Eliminate all military checkpoints between Palestinian cities/villages inside the oPt
- 53) Provide humane/non-segregated access to Palestinians via air, sea and land ports
- 54) Provide PA security forces full access to all oPt areas
- 55) Provide PA police full control of all oPt roads
- 56) Stop issuing licenses to Israeli firms quarrying of Palestinian lands in the oPt
- 57) Remove closures to all entrances to villages and cities in the oPt, as some residents travel 90-120 additional minutes to reach destinations literally minutes away
- 58) Allow Palestinians full privileges on “Israeli-only” roads
- 59) Allow 24/7 access on Israeli-issued travel permits
- 60) Allow Palestinians with multiday Israeli travel permits to lawfully stay overnight in Jerusalem and Israel
- 61) Eliminate the recent requirement of a so called “Magnetic Card” required to apply for an Israeli travel permit to Jerusalem or Israel
- 62) Eliminate the so called “BMC – Businessman’s Card” required to apply for a multi month Israeli travel permit to Jerusalem or Israel, which artificially segments Palestinian society
- 63) Allow ease of rehabilitation of deteriorating old cities, especially in Hebron and Jerusalem
- 64) De-monopolize the Israeli/Jerusalem tourism sector (tourism operators, guides, licenses, etc.), ending the demand to adhere to the “Israeli narrative”
- 65) Apply and enforce the laws and adjudicate violations equally with respect to all residents/citizens under Israeli jurisdiction as an occupying power

- 66) De-legitimize “open carry” of weapons for Israeli settlers or accord Palestinian farmers the same privileges
- 67) Secure Palestinian farmers yearlong access to their farm land, not only partial harvesting seasons
- 68) Maximize allowed farming area, especially near settlements
- 69) Expedite issuance of land deeds (Tabu), especially in Area C
- 70) Allow legal building in Areas B and C
- 71) Allow access to natural water sources in Area C
- 72) Allow postal mail and packages to reach the Palestinian Post in a timely manner: In August 2018 Israel dumped 10 tons of mail they held up from 2010

Israeli Crossings and Ports

Border Crossings with Jordan / Allenby/King Hussein Bridge (KHB)

- 73) Open this sole passenger crossing to Jordan 365 days a year, 24 hours a day, 7 days a week for the nearly 3 million Palestinian residents of West Bank
- 74) Increase the number of vehicles, load capacity of cargo loading and unloading, and operating hours at the KHB
- 75) Streamline the logistics for imports entering the oPt: For example, cement silos could be constructed to store bulk cement until transferred by Palestinian trucks into the Palestinian territory.

Border Crossings with Israel

- 76) Stop restrictions on shipments through cargo crossings from the oPt into Israel, such as limited number and capacity of cargo crossings, limited working hours, and strict security restrictions: This encourages tax evasion and unfair competition in the form of goods smuggled into the oPt by Israeli trucks that freely enter the Palestinian areas via the crossings and need not unload their cargos, unlike the Palestinian trucks. Moreover, Israeli cargo trucks are not subject to inspection by the Palestinian Authorities.
- 77) Stop random sampling security checks of cargo which cause cargo damage, as well as, long security checks of perishable cargo which is damaged when delayed for a long period for security inspection purposes.
- 78) Logistical arrangements for the entrance of goods into the Gaza Strip is an ultra-complicated and troublesome task. In addition to the very long waiting hours at Erez Crossing, the facility has unsystematic working hours with the constant possibility of sudden closure for “security” reasons.

Container Ports

79) Allow direct imports to the oPt via a Palestinian clearing agent. Currently, all kinds of raw materials and goods need to be imported through an Israeli agent. Such a procedural requirement incurs high costs for the Palestinian importer for security and customs inspection. Additionally, the Palestinian importer incurs fees of relevant bonded Israeli warehouses and storage facilities as long as the cargo is withheld in the Israeli ports for inspection purposes, sometimes weeks, months or years on end.

80) Allow Palestinians to define their own import needs. Currently the quantity, quality, destination of imported goods and materials are determined according to the outdated Paris Protocol, which provides the annual ceiling of imports per country of origin.

Area C

81) Stop the prohibition of construction in Area C: Obtaining a permit to construct any factory or plant in Area C is made unbearably difficult and the process should be streamlined, simplified, and not subject to arbitrary regulations and delays.

82) As things stand, permits issued for Area C are time-bound and must be renewed on an annual basis, causing significant delays and a barrier to investment; revise these regulations to streamline the process.

83) Streamline the exhausting “security”-driven bureaucratic procedures to establish land titles, especially in Area

84) Expand spatial plans for Palestinian villages in Area C (World Bank)

85) Grant approval to Palestinian business projects in Area C (World Bank)

Constraints on Movement and Permits

86) Issue and abide by clear and lawful policies and procedures for obtaining all types of visas for foreign visitors, including granting visas to international faculty as they return for a new academic year and eliminating denial of long-term visas to international and regional experts working in the oPt

87) Lift the military ban on Palestinian commercial drivers’ entering Israel with a Palestinian-registered vehicle: This ban is enormously expensive for Palestinian employers, who bear the added logistical costs to rent an Israeli truck for the Israeli side of the route travelled, incurring more than double the rental cost of the Palestinian truck alone.

88) Allow for permits to manage commercial operations within Israeli areas, such as the management of warehouses in these areas. Currently, the limitations on permits issued shackle Palestinian firms’ ability to manage their internal affairs.

89) Allow Palestinian clearing agents access to Israeli ports at Ashdod, Haifa or Eilat. Currently, an Israeli agent needs to be hired as a go-between with the Palestinian importer.

90) Many Palestinian companies are active in both the West Bank and Gaza. Allow permits for West Bank company staff to enter the Gaza Strip and vice versa. At present, absent such permits, staff is unable to follow up on work in progress, attend meetings, or participate in training courses.

91) Permit Palestinian firms' shareholders to travel to/from the West Bank/Gaza Strip to attend the annual general meetings of firms they are invested in. At present, to work around this, firms incur the extra expense of arranging two venues for a meeting; one in the West Bank and the other in the Gaza Strip, to ensure an equal opportunity for all the shareholders in Palestine to attend the meetings, which are connected by video conferencing.

Legal Issues

92) Streamline legal actions for Palestinian firms having issues with Israeli citizens/cheques; currently, the problem of the Israeli citizen/firm's being subject to another jurisdiction creates manifold obstacles to prompt resolution.

93) Recognize a third country arbitration between Israeli and Palestinian businesses. If a commercial dispute arises between Palestinian and Israeli parties, Israeli laws requires that arbitration be made in Israeli areas for security purposes and for the safety of the Israeli party. This practice is a clear violation of customary international practices and norms that the seat of arbitration should be in a third and neutral country.

94) Stop the military ban on a large number of Gazan traders who have been commercially banned by Israel without due process, rendering them unable to sell or purchase goods and materials.

Quality inspection

95) Stop the discrimination in dealing with standards certificates. The required Israeli quality inspection of imports transshipped through Israel and acquiring of the Israeli Standards Certificate require a lot of time that might extend up to six months with high costs. Currently, Israeli shipments require one certificate for every product being imported, despite the number of times imported, whereas the Palestinian importer must get a new certificate for every shipment of the same product, adding time and cost to every importation of goods.

96) Allow Israeli products entering the Palestinian market to get a Palestinian Standards Certificate. Currently, the Palestinian market is flooded with Israeli products that bypass Palestinian standards certification.

Financial

97) Stop withholding/delaying the various monetary transfers to the Gaza Strip, imposing extra costs to cover transfers

98) Pay the Palestinian Authority seigniorage for their use of Israeli currency

99) Stop delays in transferring payments to Palestinian government, further indebting the PA: VAT and Import duties collected by the Government of Israel (GoI) on behalf of the PA and should be transferred monthly based on an arrangement instituted by the Paris protocol. (World Bank)

100) Stop unilateral deductions from Palestinian funds, further indebting the PA: These are deductions made by the GoI from clearance revenues to settle utility bills owed by Palestinian Local Government Units (LGUs), utilities and distribution companies to Israeli suppliers. (World Bank)

101) Transfer to the Palestinian Authority fiscal losses accumulated over the years. The signed agreements defined specific arrangements through which the GoI collects VAT, import duties and other income, or the so-called clearance revenues, on behalf of the PA and shares it with the latter on a monthly basis. Some of these arrangements have become outdated and others have not been implemented as envisaged by the agreements, resulting in fiscal losses for the PA. The quantified annual loss (excluding revenues collected by the GoI in Area C that could not be quantified due to data constraints) amounts to USD 285 million, or 2.2 percent of Palestinian GDP. (World Bank)

So, here you have it, a detailed sampling of what the Israeli military occupation means from ground zero. These and dozens of other Israeli restrictions are what mainly underlie the inability of Palestinians, individually and collectively, to create a different reality on the ground, let alone properly prepare for a free and independent state.

A longtime Jewish-American attorney friend with whom I shared this list as a draft in process responded unequivocally: These issues, he said, are not Israeli security threats; on the contrary. If they were rationally addressed, the results would serve Israeli security needs. With that, one must step back a bit and reflect on what Israel's real intentions might be in sustaining its 50-year military occupation through the use of this vast web of "security" regulations.

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