

INTRODUCTION

The Civic Coalition for Palestinians' Rights in Jerusalem wishes to bring certain specific issues relating to violations of the International Covenant on Economic, Social and Cultural Rights (ICESCR) by the State Party affecting Palestinians living in the Occupied Palestinian Territory (OPT) to the attention of the Committee on Economic, Social and Cultural Rights (the Committee).

This document is an alternative report on Israel and focuses on the following issues:

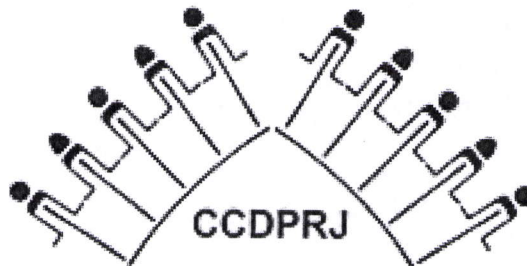
- Article 11 – The right to an adequate standard of living
- Article 13 – The right to education
- Article 15 – Cultural Rights

The report is not intended to comprehensively cover all violations but rather focuses on the certain issues that have been identified as particularly affecting Palestinians living in the OPT at the time of reporting. The information is relevant for the Committee's entire reporting period.

OHCHR REGISTRY

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الائتلاف الاهلي للدفاع عن حقوق الفلسطينيين في القدس
The Civic Coalition for Defending the Palestinians' Rights in Jerusalem

The Civic Coalition for Palestinian Rights in Jerusalem's Alternative Report on Israel to the Committee on Economic, Social and Cultural Rights 47th Session, (14 November - 2 December 2011)

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The Civic Coalition for Palestinian Rights in Jerusalem is a nongovernmental nonprofit coalition of institutions, societies, associations and individuals with experience and mandate of working in Jerusalem on human rights issues. The Coalition was established in 2005 and currently has a membership of 22 institutions.

Our vision: To promote and protect Palestinian rights in Jerusalem and combat Israeli government violations of their human rights.

Our mission: To mobilize efforts, capacities and resources to protect the political, civil, economic, social and cultural rights of Palestinians in Jerusalem based on international and human rights law.

- *Water shortage*

Over half of the population, about 160,000 Palestinian residents have no suitable and legal connection to the water network and 50km of main sewage lines are lacking. They are left no choice but to rig makeshift connections to water mains or to homes that are legally connected to the water network, or to suffice with stored containers of fresh water. Therefore the water pressure is weak and the supply irregular; stored water is exposed to a range of pollutants, from bacteria that thrive in standing water to dead fowl.

- *Health hazard*

The lack of fresh water, the chronic shortage of sanitation facilities and regular sewage overflow reduces the hygiene level (showers, dish-washing, and house-cleaning etc.), creating ideal conditions for the spread of infectious diseases. This situation severely undermines the East Jerusalem residents' rights to adequate living conditions, to dignity, and to health.

2. Freedom of movement

The route of the separation barrier and its associated permit regime continue to have a serious humanitarian, social and economic impact on Palestinian life. It continues to sever the connection between East Jerusalem and the wider West Bank and between Palestinian communities in East Jerusalem itself. More than 100,000 East Jerusalem residents who live in neighborhoods on the east side of the Separation Barrier (most in areas which are still within the Jerusalem Municipality boundaries) have been disconnected from the city, which had always been the focal point of their lives.

Palestinians who do not have residency rights in East Jerusalem or do not have Israeli citizenship need a permit to enter Jerusalem. Access for those Palestinians granted permits is restricted to three out of the 14 barrier checkpoints: Qalandiya, Gilo and Zaytoun. The permit is difficult and time limit or a ban on driving a car or staying overnight. West bank ID holders with permits for Jerusalem or Israel must enter and exit through the same checkpoint and risk having their permits revoked if this is not complied with. Permits are suspended during security closures and often during Jewish holidays.

3. Residency status

Restrictive measures continue to apply in relation to the ID and residency status of Palestinians from East Jerusalem. Following the Israeli occupation of East Jerusalem in 1967, Palestinian residents of the city have been given the civil status of "permanent residents" of Israel. This status gives them the right to live in Jerusalem and work in Israel without the need for a special permit. To retain this status, residents are forced to regularly prove that they adhere to the strict criteria that demonstrate Jerusalem is the centre of their life. If they fail to convince the Israeli authorities their status is revoked and they lose their right to reside in the city. Between 1967 and 2010, some 14000 Palestinian residents of Jerusalem have had their status revoked. Unlike Israeli citizenship, permanent residency is not automatically passed on to non-Jewish children, who only receive permanent residence under certain conditions. This leads to difficulties in the registration of children with the Jerusalem Centre for Socio-Economic Rights estimating that there are as many as 10000 unregistered children in East Jerusalem. This makes it difficult for them to access basic education, health and other social services. Around 5500 children in school age are not registered and therefore do not attend school.

Palestinians residents of East Jerusalem, who marries a Palestinian from West Bank or Gaza strip, must apply for family unification. Applications for family reunification and ID cards and identification for

1. Article 11 - The right to an adequate standard of living

The States Parties to the present Covenant recognise the right of everyone to an adequate standard of living for himself and his family, including adequate food, clothing and housing, and to the continuous improvement of living conditions. The States Parties will take appropriate steps to ensure the realisation of this right, recognising to this effect the essential importance of international co-operation based on free consent.

1. Poverty (report ACRI)¹

At the end of 2009, approximately 303,429 Palestinians were living in East Jerusalem, constituting an estimated 36% of the total Jerusalem population of 835,450. East Jerusalem is one of the most poverty stricken areas in Israel. Jerusalem Institute data published in 2008 indicates that 65.1% of Palestinian families in Jerusalem (as opposed to 30.8% of the city's Jewish families) live below the poverty line. The incidence of poverty among Palestinian residents of Jerusalem is also considerably higher than the rate of 23.7% among the general population in Israel. The poverty statistics for children are even graver: 74.4% of Palestinian children in East Jerusalem are beneath the poverty line, as opposed to 45.1% of the city's Jewish children. Over 95,000 children in East Jerusalem live in a perpetual state of poverty.

Life in East Jerusalem can be described as a continuing cycle of neglect, discrimination, poverty, and shortages. These, compounded by construction of the Separation Barrier cutting Jerusalem off from the West Bank, have led to the social and economic collapse of this part of the city. A large majority of East Jerusalem residents do not receive, and cannot afford to buy, the most basic services. The primary victims are the vulnerable populations: the aged, the disabled, and children. The chronic state of poverty has also had serious social ramifications, such as damage to family relationships; an increase in the rate of family violence; a decline in the functioning of children, reflected in high rates of school dropout and early entrance into the job market; crime; drug use; and health and nutritional problems.

• Limited services

The poverty line in 2007 was a monthly income of \$770 for a family of two and \$1,400 for a family of five. Palestinians faced discrimination in almost all sectors of life. Israel's policy for the past four decades has taken concrete form as discrimination in planning and construction, expropriation of land, and minimal investment in physical infrastructure and government and municipal services.

Despite the conditions, only 10 per cent of East Jerusalem's 300,000 Palestinians have access to social services to help remedy the situation, the organization said. Furthermore, the number of welfare offices in East Jerusalem is disproportionately low compared with the number of offices in West Jerusalem: 3 versus 20.

Economical pressure is just one of the elements used by Israelis to succeed in their plans - to get the Palestinians to leave Jerusalem and to replace them with settlers. Only 19 per cent of social worker positions in Jerusalem serve the Palestinians, who make up a third of the city's residents, and generally are in a much worse socio-economic state.