



The Roots of Evil

Under the guise of "agricultural assistance," the Palestinian Authority is taking over Area C, with the help of massive European financial support and in violation of the law



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Regavim is a public NGO dedicated to the protection of Israel's national land reserves and natural resources.

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1# Overview and Executive Summary

Over the past decade, the Palestinian Authority has implemented a long-term program aimed at taking control of strategic locations in Area C of Judea and Samaria – areas that are, under the Oslo Accords, under full Israeli jurisdiction. The PA's objective is to annex these areas and bring them under PA control, as part of its larger plan for the unilateral creation of a Palestinian state. This plan was publicized in 2009, in an official PA document written by then-Prime Minister Salam Fayyad;¹ since its publication, it has been carried out virtually unhindered, without any discernable response from the government of Israel or the Israeli security apparatus.

As we will demonstrate in the following pages, since 2013 there has been a marked acceleration of the plan's execution, mainly through intensive, large-scale agricultural activity, with the understanding that this tactic, as opposed to illegal construction, enables the PA to take control of vast tracts of land relatively quickly. Additionally, this type of activity is more easily presented to international media outlets and foreign benefactors as 'humanitarian aid.'

The key actor in these land-grab projects is the Union of Agricultural Work Committees (UAWC). With branch offices throughout Judea and Samaria, UAWC maintains close organizational and operational ties to the Peoples' Front for the Liberation of Palestine, a terror organization that has carried out many murderous attacks against Israel's citizens (including the murder of Minister Rehavam Ze'evi, and numerous suicide bombings in the 2000s²). UAWC is funded, for the most part, by foreign governments and humanitarian aid organizations.

The majority of UAWC's activities are carried out in Area C. Among the more central projects: Illegal seizure of thousands

of dunams of land through agricultural use, illegal seizure of water sources, and creation of new roads, ostensibly to facilitate Palestinian farmers' access to agricultural areas. These activities are concentrated in areas of strategic importance, particularly areas adjacent to Jewish settlements and the security barrier, as well as locations in Area C that serve as a buffer zone between Areas A and B (which are under full or partial PA jurisdiction, respectively).

Needless to say, all of this activity is carried out unilaterally, without permits or coordination with the State of Israel - in violation of the law that is in force in these areas, in violation of the Oslo Accords, and in violation of international law.

The following report is based on precise and painstaking documentation and mapping of PA activity in the field, as well as information collected through monitoring Palestinian and European Union publications, media reports, and internet coverage. In the pages that follow, we present only a small sample of the extensive information collected from these sources, in an attempt to illustrate the scope of the activities being carried out through UAWC and the dangers these activities pose. One such example is a video, created jointly by the EU and the PA and published on Facebook, which explains: "The European Union regards (Area C) as occupied territory, and therefore has devoted special attention to this area, and has been particularly active in these areas, in coordination and cooperation with the Palestinian Authority, in order to stabilize and strengthen the local population and to insure their essential needs."²

In addition, we will examine the nearly-imperceptible activities of the government of Israel and Israeli law enforcement bodies, and recommend practical steps for improvement.

1. The Fayyad Plan, August 2009: "Ending the Occupation, Establishing the State".

2. <https://www.facebook.com/EUandPalestinians/videos/1363546850413030>.

2#

The Political Context – The Battle for Control of Judea and Samaria

In the "Interim Agreement between the State of Israel and the Palestinian Authority" signed in Oslo in 1993 ("The Oslo Accords") between Israel and the leaders of the PLO, the State of Israel officially recognized this terrorist organization, and allowed it to establish a Palestinian Authority to oversee autonomous Arab governance in parts of Judea and Samaria.³

Under these accords, Judea and Samaria were divided into three regions: Area A was placed under full Palestinian civil and security jurisdiction; Area B was assigned to PA civil control, while Israel remained responsible for security; and Area C, which was placed under full Israeli civil and security jurisdiction. Despite the fact that, in practice, many of the Oslo Accords' clauses were never activated and other elements are no longer relevant, the division of jurisdictional authority remains in force.

Almost a decade ago, then-Prime Minister of the Palestinian Authority Salam Fayyad began to promote a unilateral program for the creation of "an independent, fully autonomous Arab state on all of the territory of the West Bank and Gaza Strip, as per the 1967 borders, with Jerusalem as its capital."

The Fayyad Plan is built on three essential components: Structural reform of central and local government; rehabilitation and re-establishment of the Palestinian security system (police, judiciary, prisons, and more); and creation of economic and physical infrastructure (banks, public and educational institutions, electricity, water, sewage,

and transportation infrastructure).

A central element of the Fayyad Plan is the attempt to deepen the PA's official administrative presence specifically in Area C and to establish de facto annexation of the territory, based on the underlying assumption that Areas A and B have already been "taken care of" by the Oslo Accords.

The implementation of this program of "creeping annexation" is carried out on two parallel tracks. The first involves cooperation with Israel: The PA submits requests to the relevant Israeli authorities for approval of "special priority" construction projects; generally, international funding for these projects is contingent upon a "seal of approval" from Israel. The second track, which is far more widespread, is the creation of facts on the ground, through extensive illegal construction and development, without coordination or permission of the Israeli authorities. The projects in this illegal track are planned and executed according to a very clear, systematic masterplan that aims to create territorial contiguity for the future Palestinian state while disrupting the growth and contiguity of Israeli communities.

Over the past number of years, the illegal track has become not only more pronounced but more ingenious, using agricultural work to establish facts on the ground - in violation of the law in force in this region, in violation of the Oslo Accords which stipulate that the State of Israel is the sole sovereign over this territory, and in violation of international law.

The PA has enjoyed the diplomatic support of European

Continued ➡

3. See "Interim Israeli-Palestinian Agreement Regarding the West Bank and Gaza Strip," <https://www.knesset.gov.il/process/docs/heskemb1.htm>

countries for decades. Although the European Union was an active participant in the formulation of the Oslo Accords and its representatives participated in the signing ceremony, in recent years the EU has actively funded many of the PA's illegal activities in Area C³, contributing to the very projects that undermine those accords by taking unilateral steps to create a Palestinian state encompassing all of Judea and Samaria.

Palestinian "civil society" organizations and the PA itself have received massive practical and economic support from European governments and organizations. European funding, as well as diplomatic support and other forms of active participation, have been channeled directly to Fayyad Plan projects.

One of the methods employed by the European Union is to block the development of infrastructure and expansion of Jewish settlements in Judea and Samaria through Palestinian

construction and agriculture. Over the last several years, the EU has built more than 2000 structures in Area C for the Palestinian population, creating or supporting dozens of illegal settlement clusters, without requesting or receiving construction permits or coordinating these projects with the relevant Israeli authorities⁴. These construction projects, like the agricultural projects that will be examined in this report, establish territorial contiguity for the Palestinian Authority presence, in an attempt to preclude the possibility of annexation or development of these areas by Israel in the future.

In keeping with this policy, all of the infrastructure and agricultural projects in Area C outlined in this study are carried out illegally, in contravention of Israeli jurisdiction over this territory, under the guise of European Union Foreign Affairs Council humanitarian aid to needy Palestinian communities in Judea and Samaria.



Illegal EU-Funded Construction – coupled with "creeping population transfer" of Arab residents from the Palestinian Authority into Area C

4. http://ec.europa.eu/echo/files/funding/decisions/2014/HIPs/palestine_en.pdf

5. For a more detailed look at this issue, see "The Last Colony: Illegal European Construction in Judea and Samaria," Regavim: February 2015. <http://www.regavim.org/illegal-eu/>

3# The Legal Context – Ottoman Property Law in the Service of Land Expropriation

The law in force in Area C of Judea and Samaria, which is under full Israeli jurisdiction, is comprised of many layers of legal systems, including Ottoman law, Mandatory law, Jordanian law, military rule, international law, as well as legislative acts of Israel's parliament, the Knesset. In general, however, the essential underpinnings of property law in Area C rest upon Ottoman law.

According to Ottoman law and Israeli Supreme Court decisions that continue to enforce it, uncultivated land belongs to the sovereign – in this case, the State of Israel.⁶ Additionally, some of the land in Area C is classified as "survey land" – tracts that are not registered as privately owned, which the sovereign (the Israeli government) is in the process of regulating and registering as state land.

A private individual may be granted ownership of agricultural land (as per section 78 of the Ottoman Legal Code) if he held and cultivated the land in question for a consecutive period of several years (the precise period required is dictated by the nature of the land parcel itself).

Thus, a person who poaches land and uses it for agricultural purposes may claim ownership or other rights to the land in question, simply by claiming to have worked the land for a number of years. Palestinian land-use projects exploit this "loophole" in Ottoman law to great advantage.

Activities carried out under the Roots Project are presented as agricultural projects; nonetheless, many of these types

of work – erecting fences and walls, excavation with heavy machinery, creation of roads, and more – require building permits, which they obviously do not have. In contrast, the regulations that require permits for work of this kind are meticulously enforced in the Jewish sector, through military orders issued by the commanding officer in the area.

Military orders of this kind are applied almost exclusively in the Jewish sector – for example, "delimiting orders"⁷ that allow law enforcement to be carried out against illegal structures in a defined area, as opposed to structure-by-structure treatment of building infractions. Another example are "obstructive use orders," which empower the authorities to evict a person from a plot of land if a third party calls the plot's ownership into question; the person previously in possession of the land may be barred from entering the area until he is able to prove his connection to the contested plot.

The Civil Administration is responsible for protecting land resources in Area C. It is important to remember that this is an active responsibility; in other words, the Civil Administration is required by law to initiate monitoring and enforcement activities, and to remove squatters from state land. The mandate of the Civil Administration clearly includes encroachers who attempt to take control of state land and use it for agricultural purposes.

The failure to protect state land in Judea and Samaria, and the abandonment of huge swaths of this land to the hands of

Continued ➔

6. see, for Example, A. Ben Shemesh, "Land Law in the State of Israel, 27 (1953) (Hebrew); Eyal Zamir, "State Land in Judea and Samaria: A Legal Survey (1985), pp. 4-5 (Hebrew).

7. Order 1539 (Structures Lacking Permits) https://www.aka.idf.il/SIP_STORAGE/FILES/8/60628.pdf

poachers, causes tremendous economic damage to the State of Israel, while at the same time damages the rule of law and the public interest by allowing the blockage of existing roads, ecological damage, and the complication of Israeli planning and development efforts for this area.

An illustrative case is the land-seizure project initiated by the PA in 2015, involving a strategic tract of land in the eastern section of Gush Etzion. As a means of taking control of this crucial area, the PA created a road and surrounded it with agricultural projects.

Heavy engineering and paving equipment began to pave the new road from the Arab village of Tekoa, heading east. All along the route of this new road, the PA carried out intensive

agricultural work to cultivate the stepped terrain; wells were dug and thousands of trees were planted.

The location and route were chosen with great care: This is a narrow corridor in Area C that connects Gush Etzion to the Dead Sea region. In recent years, a number of Israeli cabinet ministers have reiterated the State of Israel's intention to pave a road connecting Gush Etzion to the Dead Sea region, and this corridor is the only possible location for a road of this kind. The corridor is just over half mile (approximately 1 km) wide; the PA's land-grab creates contiguity between two blocs of Area B while making any passage or the creation of any Israeli road impossible. This project is a clear illustration of the strategy we have described, the strategy that continues to dictate PA activity in Area C.



Agricultural land-seizure and creation of roads in the Israeli-controlled corridor slated for the Gush Etzion-Dead Sea Highway

8. Order 1586 (Obstructive Use of Private Property) https://www.aka.idf.il/SIP_STORAGE/FILES/9/60629.pdf

4#

The Union of Agricultural Work Committees – The Operational Arm of the Land Seizure Enterprise

The Union of Agricultural Work Committees (UAWC) is the main operational arm of the PA's plan to seize control of Area C and to create a de facto Palestinian state in this territory.

The Union, headquartered in Ramallah, is comprised of more than 65 branches of local agricultural councils throughout Judea, Samaria, and Gaza. With over 100 employees, its annual budget exceeds 5 million Euros (nearly US \$6million). Its budget is based mainly on direct and indirect donations from foreign sources, including the European Union and the United Nations, and the governments of France, Norway, and Holland.

As we will see in the following chapter in greater detail, UAWC has both overt and covert ties to the Marxist-Leninist terrorist organization "PFLP – People's Front for the Liberation of Palestine," and its activities are carried out in coordination with the Palestinian security apparatus and other Palestinian judicial bodies. UAWC's purpose is to seize land in Area C under the guise of humanitarian aid for Arab farmers.

While UAWC is not an official government body, it enjoys the status of a respected national institution within the PA, and is for all intents and purposes the only Palestinian organization with the technical and professional know-how, the operational capabilities, and the public standing to successfully execute projects of this magnitude.

The Union of Agricultural Work Committees and the

Palestinian Authority work in full administrative and military coordination, in order to further the shared interests of resisting Israel and taking control of Area C. Nonetheless, UAWC describes itself as an apolitical and independent association, registered in the PA. This categorization means that the relationship with the PA is purely professional, and does not include ideological or financial obligations.

As the main organization involved in agricultural projects in Area C, the UAWC oversees and coordinates all field activity in order to avoid duplication and wasted resources, and no less importantly, in order to ensure that all projects comply with the PA's strategic masterplan, which is directed towards overtaking as much territory as possible in strategic locations throughout Area C.

At the same time, the UAWC uses judicial, media, and diplomatic means to prevent the IDF and the Civil Administration from acting against the illegal land seizures it carries out.

In an interview with journalist Alice Rothschild in 2017, the Director General of the UAWC, Fuad Abu Saif made it very clear that "the Palestinian Authority's agreement to waive rights to more than 60% of the West Bank (i.e., Area C in the Oslo Accords) was a grave mistake."⁹ The focus of the UAWC specifically on Area C expresses its goal of erasing the geographical ramifications of the Oslo Accords. This statement, and many others like it (some of which were made by senior EU staff) are consistent both with our findings in the field and with findings of our archival research.

Continued ➡

9. <http://justworldeducational.org/2017/01/alice-rothchild-crisis-in-west-bank-agriculture/>

Activities of the type we have described, which are carried out for the most part in Area C, are a violation of Israel's sovereignty, as they are not coordinated or cleared with the IDF, the sole sovereign in the area.

In recent years, the UAWC has openly supported¹⁰ the Boycott-Divest-Sanction (BDS) movement. The UAWC's 2015 annual report quotes a decision taken by its Board of Directors which states: "The Board of Directors continued on this course, supporting the UAWC's policy of boycotting and rejecting all forms of normalization with Israel and politically-conditioned funding. It confirmed in all meetings

on the local and international levels, that this organization fully supports the national campaign to boycott the Israeli occupation and impose sanctions on Israel." ¹¹

As we will detail below, the UAWC operates in cooperation with terror organizations and organizations that support terror.

In the Gaza Strip, UAWC employs technical, legal and media to assist Gazan fishermen in order to establish facts regarding the nautical rights and as a means of creating pressure to lift the nautical blockade.



Road work, fencing and cement work for water cisterns – Judean Desert

10. <https://bdsmovement.net/news/palestinian-civil-society-applauds-uk-co-operative-movement-decision-end-trade-companies>

11. <http://uawc-pal.org/Files/a1bc851a-931e-4412-9d32-9205bdb4bed6.pdf>

5#

The Method: Access and Seizure

The UAWC's modus operandi for projects of this type usually follow a set pattern: In the first stage, access is established to the land parcel slated for encroachment, through creation and/or refurbishing of roads; at the same time, water sources are created or secured, either by laying water pipes from existing water sources or by construction of reservoirs. In the second stage, UAWC provides training and funding for the agricultural work itself, directly to workers in the field.

Principle Tactics Employed by UAWC



Land seizure through agricultural activity: Tree planting, ploughing, engineering and excavation, construction of landscape terracing, fencing, and more.



Seizure of water sources: Renovation and seizure of natural springs near Jewish communities, creating cistern networks in arid areas, construction of water-collection basins by diverting streams, laying hundreds of kilometers of water pipes, construction of reservoirs, and more.



Laying new roads: Paving hundreds of kilometers of agricultural roads that enable Arab farmers to access arable land in Area C, in the Jordan Valley, Gush Etzion, the Ariel area and other areas in Samaria, Har Hebron, eastern Binyamin, and elsewhere.

These agricultural projects are carried out through a number of frameworks, the most prominent of which is the "Roots Project," in cooperation with other official Palestinian Authority bodies (the PA Ministry of Agriculture, the Center for Land Research, and others).

Agricultural land seizure

2013-2017

7629 ^{swamps}
of land overtaken



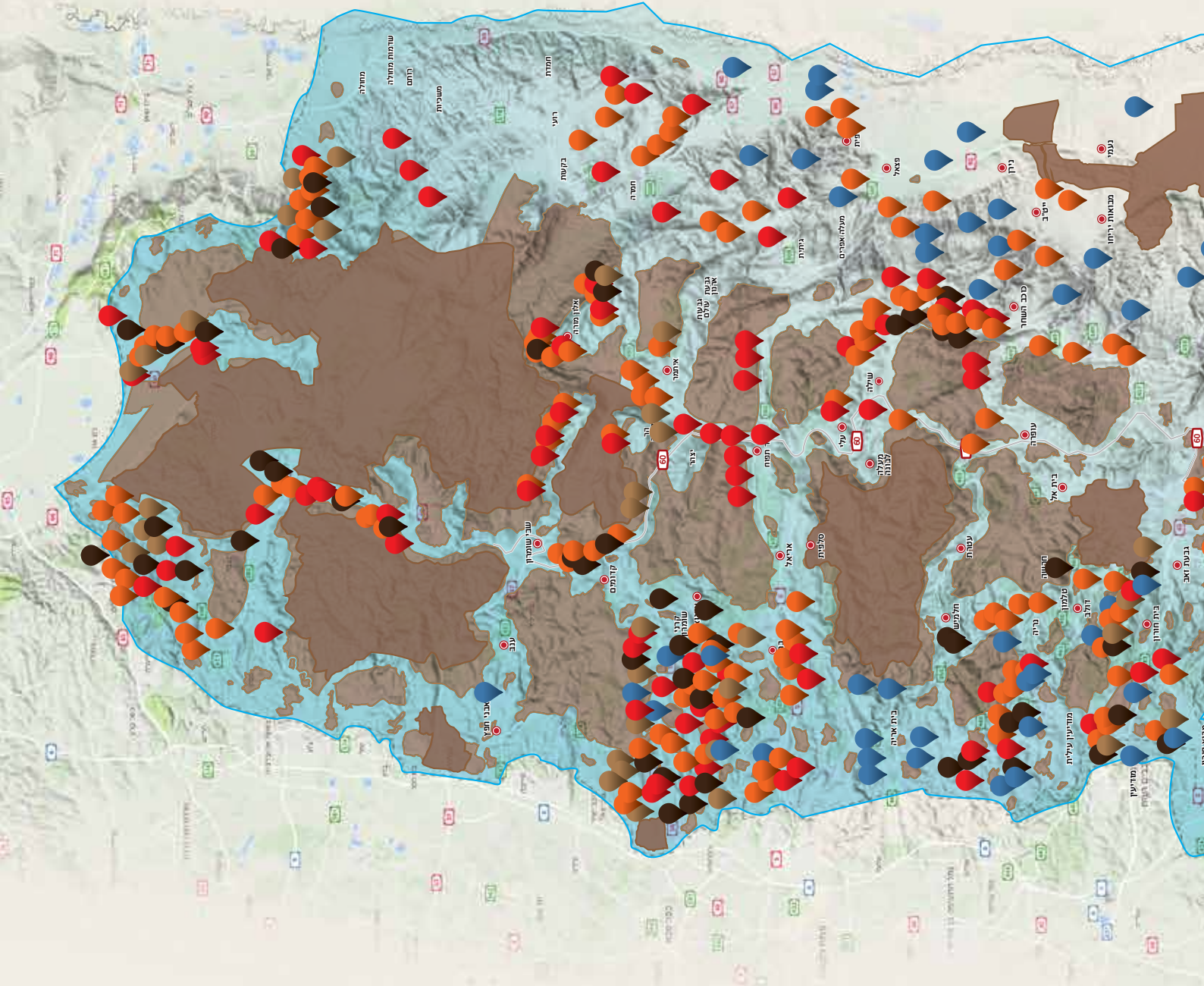
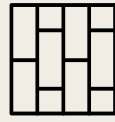
250 ^{swamps}
locations

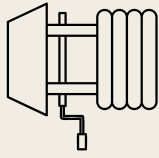
573 ^{Km (356 miles)}
of access roads



181

112,348 ^{m²}
retaining walls and terracing





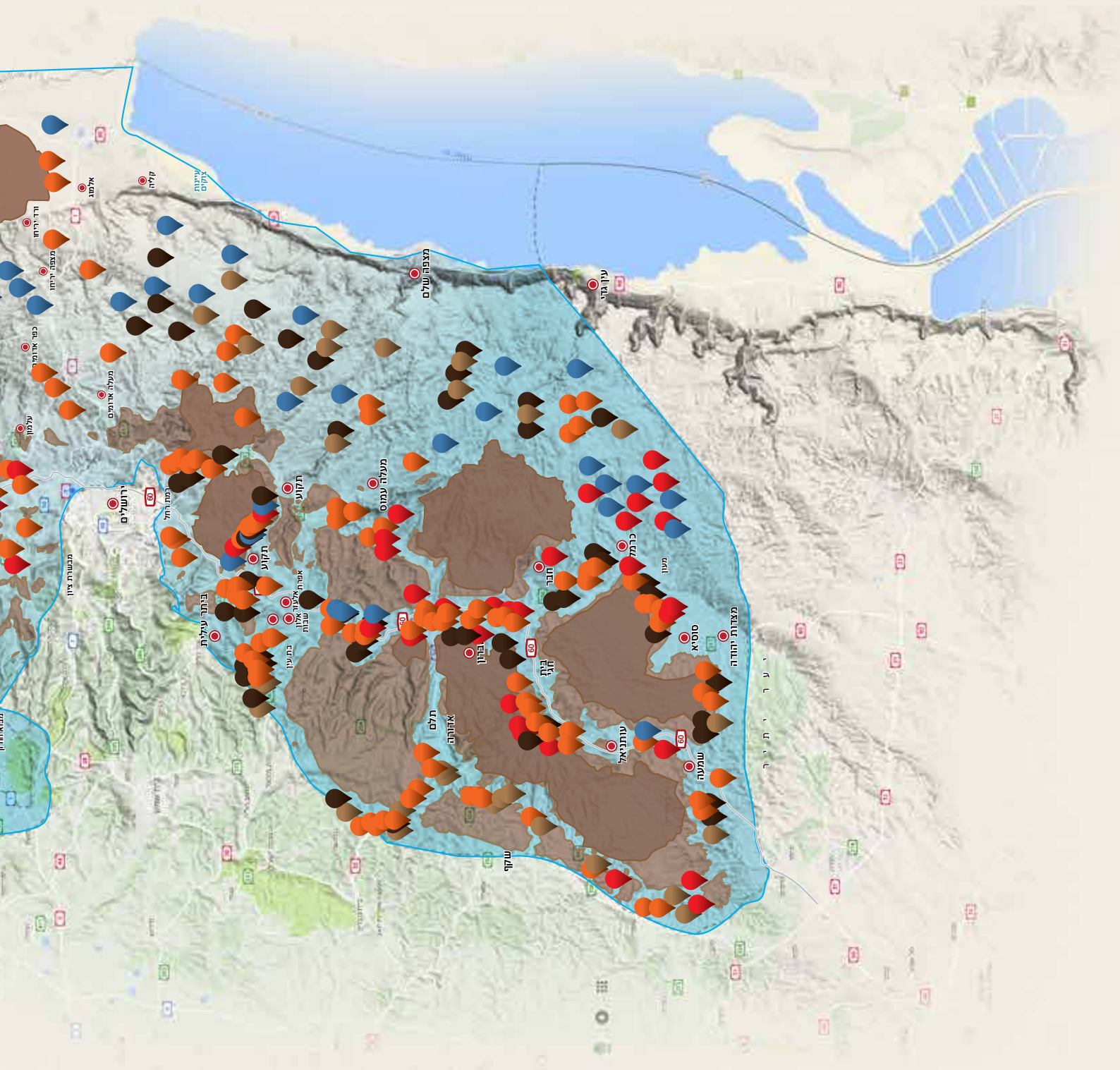
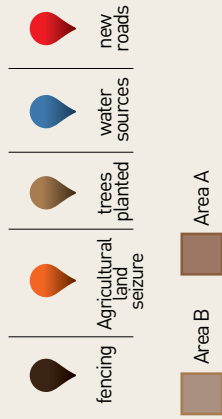
286
cisterns

13
springs refurbished

30
reservoirs

819
water tanks

Legend



6# The Roots Project (جذور -Juthoor)

The 'Roots Project,' launched in 2014, is the largest of the UAWC's projects. Its goal is to take control of thousands of dunams of land in Area C, which is why this name is often applied to the totality of agricultural work carried out under the UAWC's auspices.

The first instance of agricultural work as a means of land seizure was carried out on a tract of state land on the eastern slopes of the hills south-east of Bethlehem that extend through the northern approach to Hebron, most of which lies in Area C. From there, this tactic spread to the rest of Area C, all across Judea and Samaria, where the Palestinians are making concerted, carefully-orchestrated efforts to create irreversible facts on the ground.

The European Union earmarked 3.6 million Euros to the UAWC to run the Roots Project in the Bethlehem area in 2014, and funded 90% of its overall budget. Under the

auspices of the Project, a representative of the EU visited the area in order to report on the progress of the initiative, and provide an overview of the UAWC's activities.

In March 2015 the inaugural ceremony for the Roots Project was held in Bethlehem. The EU's ambassador to the Palestinian Authority, John Gatt-Ruter, an honored guest, addressed the ceremony: "The projects the European Union will carry out for the residents of Area C are essential, particularly in the agricultural sector, which is an important segment of the economy. This project will contribute to assistance for Palestinian farmers ... and establishing Palestinian facts on the ground, in light of the settlement policy of Israel ... The Union of Agricultural Work Committees has demonstrated its ability to carry out agricultural projects in many Palestinian areas, and the relationship with the European Union is the result of the successes achieved by the UAWC." ¹²

Continued ➔



Ralph Tarraf, head of the European Union Mission to the West Bank and Gaza, picks olives near Nahalin in Gush Etzion: October 2016¹³

12. http://www.al-ayyam.ps/ar_page.php?id=ef115aby250680747Yef115ab

13. Photo source: : <http://www.wattan.tv/ar/print/189517.html>

Additional EU-Funded Projects that are Portrayed as Innocuous Agricultural Activity

Alongside the Roots Project, the UAWC conducts an array of additional illegal programs that follow the same lines as the Roots Project; all of these projects are assigned seemingly-innocent titles in order to allow them to misrepresent their activities and to pose as a legitimate civil society organization. Some prime examples:

- 'The Olive Oil Project': Tree planting, land-clearing, terracing and construction of retaining walls - all of which are very costly, and are not cost-effective or economically feasible projects. The program's slogan, "Making olive oil competitive through its value as a local product," hints at the underlying impetus for the campaign as a whole – the "added value" of olive oil that creates facts on the ground. The EU provided over 3 million Euros for this project between 2012-2014.¹⁴
- 'The Water and Land Management Project' – A program for appropriation of land and water resources. Between 2013-2017, 3,000 dunams of land were seized, 320 km of 'agricultural' roads were paved, and more than 43 km of water pipes were laid for agricultural use, funded by the Netherlands Representative Office in Ramallah.¹⁵ The program's next stage aims to improve land and water-source appropriation procedures and to branch out into additional areas of operation, including registration of land.
- 'Strengthening Palestinian Ownership of Land and Preventing Workforce Drain to Jewish Settlements.' This program offers agricultural and legal assistance to residents of Arab villages in the Jordan Valley, with the assistance of the MEDICO Fund of Germany, with the goal of seizing land and preventing law enforcement activity.¹⁶
- 'Refurbishing Greenhouses in the West Bank' – A land-seizure strategy focused mainly in eastern Samaria and the narrow strip of land between the Trans-Israel Highway (Route 6) and Kalkilya.¹⁷
- 'Assistance for Shepherds on the Eastern Slopes of the West Bank' – An initiative aimed at choking the Jewish communities of the South Hebron Hills and eastern Gush Etzion.
- 'Palestinian Refugees in the Margins' Program – Paving and refurbishing agricultural roads in the Jerusalem, Jordan Valley, and Bethlehem regions, targeting, among other areas, projected routes of Israeli road projects, in order to preclude these national (Israeli) projects.¹⁸



John Gatt-Rutter, head of the European Union Mission to the Palestinian Authority, addresses the Inaugural Ceremony of the Roots Project, Bethlehem: March 2015

14. See the EU's financial database: http://ec.europa.eu/budget/fts/index_en.htm

15. <https://www.ngo-monitor.org.il/funder/netherlands>, <https://www.facebook.com/NLRepOfficeRamallah/posts/729114907258134>

16. <http://www.uawc-pal.org/news.php?n=3088&lang=2>

17. https://ops.unocha.org/Reports/daily/CAPProjectSheet_1036_60192_2018423.pdf

18. <http://www.uawc-pal.org/news.php?n=3198&lang=2>

التقرير السنوي 2015

7#

Summary of Activity in Judea and Samaria: 2013-2017

The data below summarize the extent of the primary activities of the Union of Agricultural Work Committees in Judea and Samaria, and were extrapolated from the annual reports that are publicized on the UAWC's website. As we have noted, both the findings of our field research and the statements made by senior UAWC officials indicate that the vast majority of the UAWC's agricultural activity is carried out in Area C, which is under full Israeli jurisdiction.

| Activity Year | Land Reclamation and Rehabilitation | Creation of Agricultural Roads | Terracing and Retaining Walls | Accessing Water Sources | Establishing Central Water Pipeline Infrastructure | Irrigation Systems |
|------------------|--|-----------------------------------|-------------------------------------|---|---|-----------------------|
| 2013 | 150 dunams | 3 km | 101 units | | 19 km | 153 m ² |
| 2014 | 500 dunams | 110 km | 6658 m ² | 8 storage pools | 62 km | 3777 m ² |
| 2015 | 4091 dunams | 280 km | 286 units | 15 storage pools 286 cisterns 729 water tanks | 21 km | |
| 2016 | 1900 dunams | 105 km | 95,000 m ² | 11 springs 90 water tanks | 62 km | 8000 m ² |
| 2017 | 978 dunams | 75 km | 13,233 m ² | 1 water tower | | 3100 m ² |




7#

Major UAWC Projects, 2012-2021 (Classified by type and source of funding)









Water Sources

-  - Baider Project
-  - Land and Water Management Program
-  - Water Resource Management Program
-  - Creation of 12 new wells in the Hebron area
-  Land and Water Rights




Road Works

-  - Sustainable Use and Universal Access
-  - "Palestinian Refugees on the Margins"
-  - Qarawat Bani Zeid Project

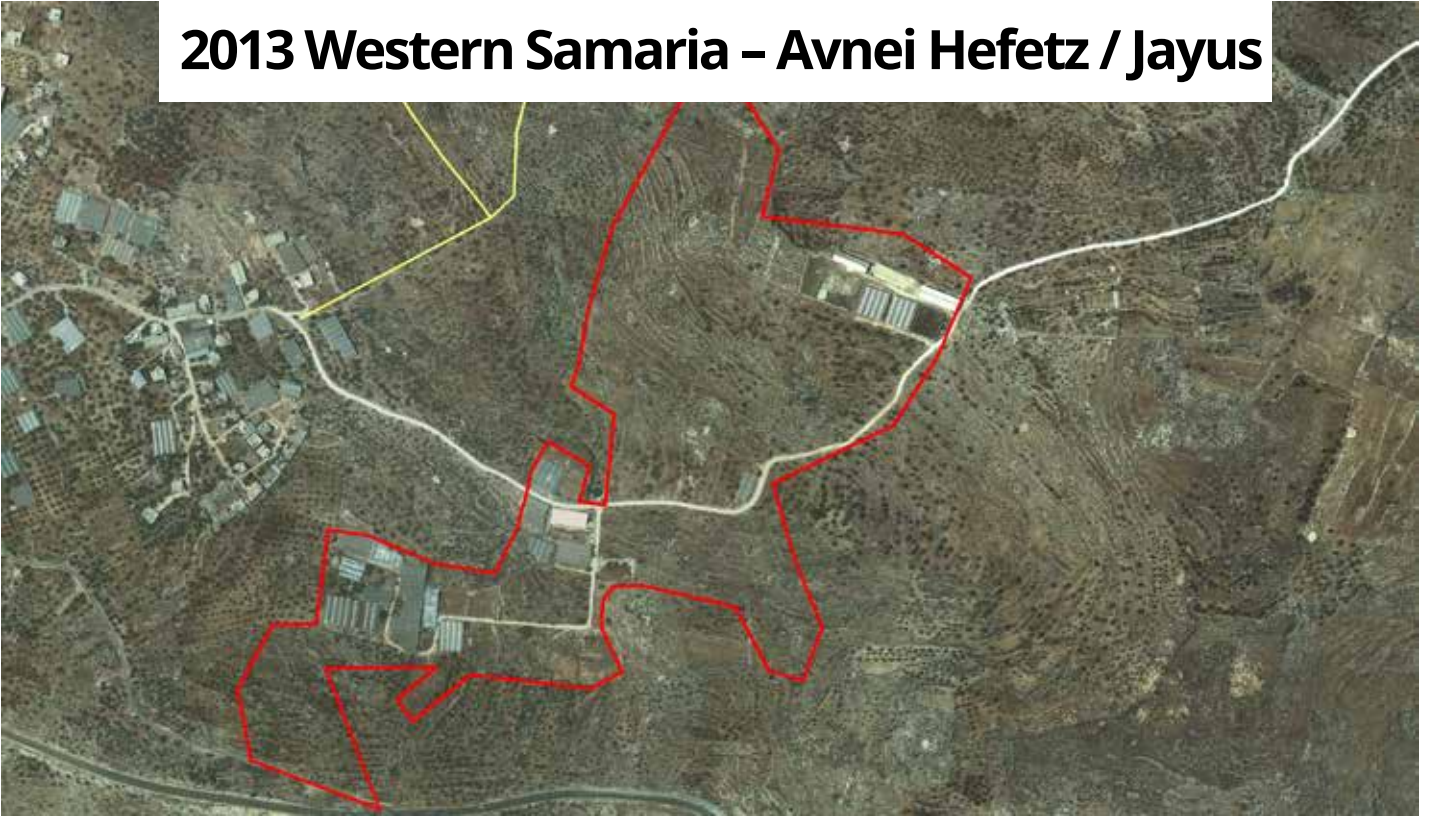
Agricultural Land Seizures

-  - Tree-planting campaign, 2017
-  - Olive Oil Project
-  - Program for the Advancement of Shepherds
-  - 'Roots Project'
-  - Tree-planting along the route of "Heart of Judea" highway
-  - 'Improving Agricultural Production Systems'
-  - Greenhouse Rehabilitation
-  - Advancement of Shepherds in the West Bank
-  - Protection of Palestinian Property in the Jordan Valley
-  Farmers' Rights

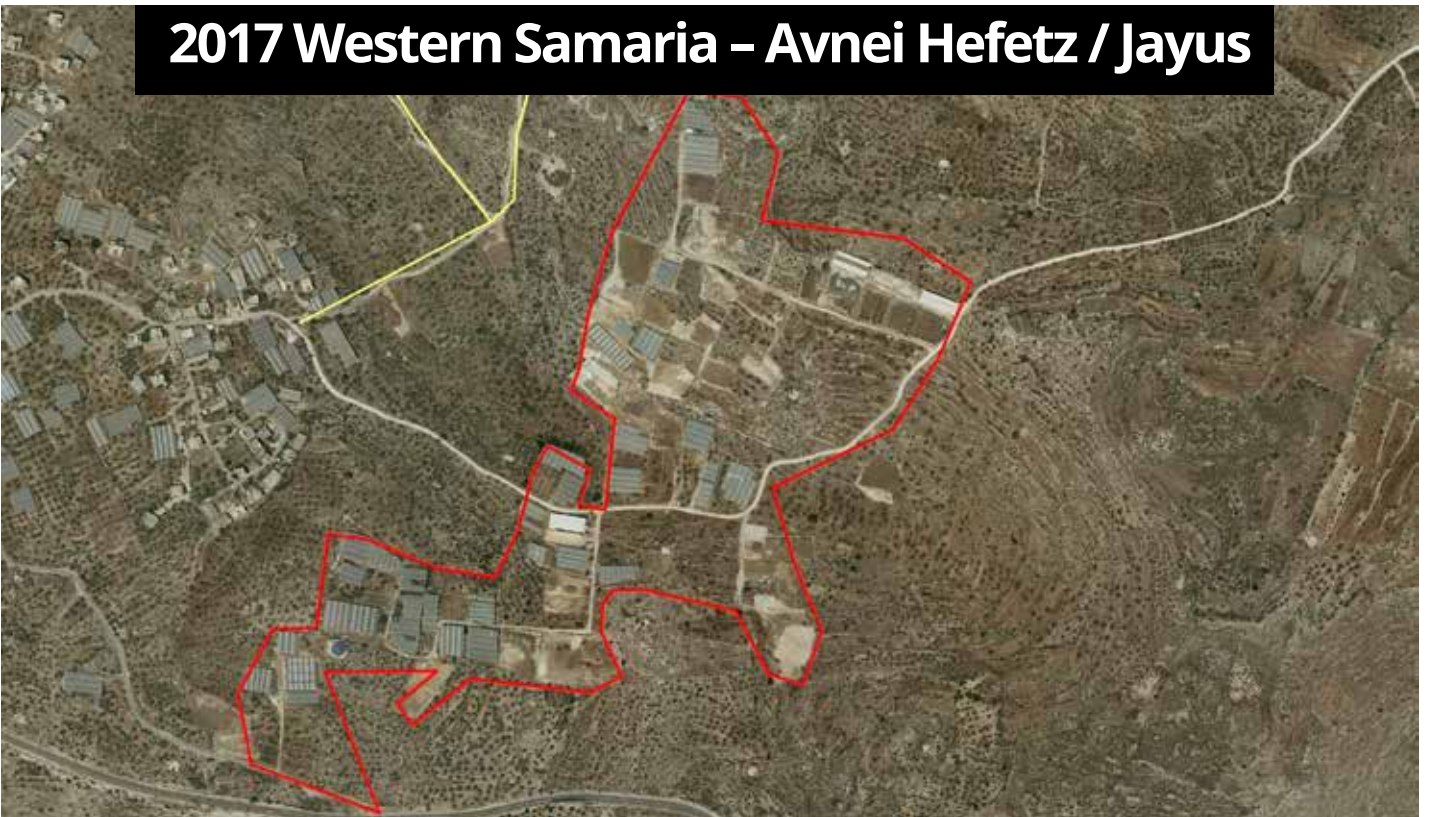
Seizure of Nautical Rights- Gaza Coast

-  - Assistance for Adversely Affected Gaza Fishermen
-  - Nutritional Rehabilitation and Security
-  - Protecting Lives in Closed-Border Areas

2013 Western Samaria – Avnei Hefetz / Jayus



2017 Western Samaria – Avnei Hefetz / Jayus



2013 Gush Etzion – Route 60



2017 Gush Etzion – Route 60





8# Funding Sources for UAWC Projects

In order to finance and carry out these massive projects – only some of which have been included in this report – the UAWC created a large administrative structure that includes more than 100 employees: Field operatives, charged with identifying strategic locations, enlisting and directing "farmers" and carrying out different types of coordination activities; and office staff, who are in charge of policy and fundraising.

The chart below summarizes our in-depth research on the minimum budget of the Union of Agricultural Work Committees. The data indicate that in the 2009-2017 period, UAWC received at least €45,608,214– more than US \$52.5 million) from foreign governments, governmental bodies, aid organizations and foundations.

These sums are minimum estimates, gleaned from readily-available published sources (such as annual financial reports of organizations and foundations), but there were apparently additional sources of support that were not made public.

| Source | Gross Donation (€) | Comments |
|--|--------------------|--------------------------------|
| European Union | 16,114,867 | 2012-2016 |
| Netherlands Representative Office in Ramallah (Dutch government) | 19,650,000 | 2013-2021 |
| German Foreign Ministry through the MEDICO Fund | 572,000 | Minimum estimated contribution |
| Government of Spain | 184,000 | 2015 only |
| Government of France | 425,151 | 2010-2014 |
| UNOCHA | 1,085,136 | Minimum estimated contribution |
| Government of Norway and NPA | 3,320,000 | 2016-2019 |
| OXFAM Fund | 4,120,060 | |
| GRI (Grassroots International) | 137,000 | 2015 only |
| TOTAL | €45,608,214 | |

9# A Wolf in Sheep's Clothing: The Overt and Covert Connection to the Terrorist Organization PFLP

The Union of Agricultural Work Committees was created in the 1980s with the stated purpose of supporting farmers, but its founders are either directly or indirectly affiliated with the People's Front for the Liberation of Palestine, an armed secular-nationalist Palestinian terror organization that carried out many murderous attacks against Jews in recent years (including the massacre at the Lod airport, the assassination of Minister Rehavam Zeevi, and many of the suicide bombings that claimed dozens of Israeli lives in the 2000s).

Both the PFLP and UAWC have attempted to obscure their close ties, in order to portray the civilian organization as an independent non-profit. Notwithstanding their efforts, there is clear evidence of their ideological and financial interdependence: An internal document prepared for the American humanitarian organization USAID in 1993 stated that the UAWC is "the agricultural wing of the People's Front for the Liberation of Palestine."¹⁹ In fact, the PLO registered the UAWC as a branch of the Popular Front.²⁰

The affiliation of the UAWC with the PFLP is ongoing, despite the latter's classification both by the United States and the European Union. Senior figures in the PFLP hierarchy have served in senior positions in the UAWC, among them Jamil Muhammad Ismail AlMajdalawi, formerly the Vice President of the UAWC in Gaza, who is a well known senior officer in the PFLP. He served as head of the political division of the PFLP in Gaza, and in 2013 acted as the PFLP's representative

to Fatah bodies in the Palestinian Authority. Bashir Al Khiri served as Chief of the PFLP's Political Division in the early 2000s. He was arrested and imprisoned by the State of Israel, and after his release served as President of the UAWC Advisory Board from 2005-2010.²¹

One of the European organizations that provides financial support for UAWC activities is Norwegian People's Aid – NPA, a Norwegian society that describes itself as "committed to building democratic society and to strengthening people's ability to take control of their own lives." NPA describes itself as non-political, although its views are not neutral. Thus, it "supports organizations that represent weak or vulnerable populations, particularly if they resist or are in conflict with those in power."²² NPA lists UAWC as one of its partner organizations in Palestine.²³

NPA, which was supported by the American government's humanitarian aid program USAID for many years, **was brought up on charges of supporting terrorism by the US Department of Justice in 2017.** In the course of the trial, which was concluded in 2018, the NPA admitted to supporting Iran, Hamas, and a number of other terror organizations.²⁴

From 2016 to 2018, NPA has received 32,000,000 Norwegian Kroner (3,320,000 Euros – nearly US\$4 million) from the government of Norway (out of a total commitment of 50 million Kroner) for joint UAWC-NPA projects.

19. http://pdf.usaid.gov/pdf_docs/PNABY769.pdf

20. <http://uawc-pal.org/Files/3a6e8918-0e80-4922-a607-7a83c05e31e3.pdf.pdf>

21. Leaders of UAWC: <https://uawc-pal.org/news/?n=php127&lang=1>

22. http://uawc-pal.org/upludes/center/_2017-01-2419-27-31.pdf

23. <https://www.npaid.org/Our-Work/Countries-we-work-in/Middle-East/Palestine/Partners-in-Palestine/Union-of-Agricultural-Work-Committees-UAWC>

24. <https://www.npaid.org/Our-Work/Countries-we-work-in/Middle-East/Palestine/Partners-in-Palestine/Union-of-Agricultural-Work-Committees-UAWC>



New Roads –Near the Trans-Samaria Highway



Terracing and retaining walls – Central Gush Etzion



Construction of water network – Eastern Gush Etzion



Distributing water tanks –Maaleh Adumim Region



Planting thousands of trees in response to President Trump's announcement that the US embassy would be moved to Jerusalem (from the UAWC Facebook page)



Planting project in Samaria (from the UAWC Facebook page)



10# Regavim's Monitoring Activities

Regavim, which was founded over a decade ago, is dedicated to the preservation of the land and other natural resources of the Jewish People in the Land of Israel, and to protecting these resources from seizure by foreign entities.

We believe that only the State, through its official representatives and with the tools and resources at its disposal, can provide a comprehensive response to the massive environmental damage and to the ravages to which our national resources have been subjected. Therefore, our activities aim to influence all systems of government in order to spur them into action and to fulfill their responsibilities and obligations to the People of Israel: To act on and carry out the basic Zionist vision of the State of Israel.

Regavim's Field Directors conduct frequent reconnaissance tours, cooperate with an array of groups and individuals, conduct fact-finding tours for Members of Knesset and journalists, and initiate hearings in relevant Knesset committees and sub-committees. Regavim publishes reports and other materials in order to raise public and media awareness and debate, and monitors PA and EU publications in a variety of media and languages.

In the course of monitoring PA/EU efforts to seize control of Area C, Regavim noted a drastic surge in PA activity in Area C beginning in 2013: The 'Roots Project' was given high priority, and foreign support skyrocketed. Regavim's staff identified 247 new agricultural sites and 181 new roads, all of which were investigated and mapped out through meticulous analysis of aerial photos taken between 2013-2017.

Regavim's legal department issued dozens of formal inquiries and other correspondence to the Civil Administration, demanding that they carry out enforcement procedures and halt the systematic violation of the law. In some cases, when our inquiries did not result in effective law enforcement, we petitioned the High Court of Justice.

In addition, in the course of monitoring the situation on the ground, Regavim discovered many projects that were carried out in the area after the most recent aerial photographs were taken, in 2017; these most recent projects are not included in the present report.

After completing our research and compiling the data, we presented our findings to the Knesset Foreign Affairs and Security Committee. The subcommittee on Judea and Samaria of the Knesset Foreign Affairs and Defense Committee, headed by MK Moti Yegor, conducted a number of hearings that brought together representatives of the relevant enforcement and policy bodies to examine various aspects of the PA's take-over of Area C. At the most recent hearing, MKs and other participants were presented data reflecting the financial, operational, and strategic aspects of the problem. Regavim also conducted several fact-finding tours, attended by MKs and municipal leaders, to familiarize them with the situation on the ground.

The data regarding the massive scope of European funding for the Roots Project (presented in the chart above) was commissioned by Regavim and collected by "Ad Kan," as part of ongoing research into Palestinian activities in Area C, and the ways and means and financial resources through which these activities are supported.

11# Israel's Response to Palestinian Authority Activities

As a general rule, the response of different Israeli authorities – the government itself, the Civil Administration, enforcement bodies, the Foreign Ministry – has been extremely feeble, and in some cases non-existent.

The Civil Administration, the body entrusted by law with protecting the land in Area C, has done virtually nothing at all to stem the tide of land seizures or to restore the situation to equilibrium. This may be attributed to several factors:

First, illegal agricultural activity is at the bottom of the enforcement priorities list, and manpower shortages result in the extremely low incidence of law enforcement in these cases.

Second, a considerable portion of the activities used to seize land through agricultural use do not require permits, if they are carried out by the owners of the property. Since a large percentage of this activity is carried out on survey land, to which the encroachers will claim rights by virtue of agricultural use and possession.

This makes it very difficult to identify the illegal activity in areas that have not been comprehensively surveyed and registered, and the status and ownership of each tract of land must be thoroughly investigated (in order to determine whether it is registered as state property, as opposed to unregistered state property, privately owned land that belongs to others, etc.)

In the relatively few instances of active law enforcement, such as the case of encroachment on state land in the area between Ariel and the Tapuach Junction in early 2018, law enforcement activity is often a watered-down version

– in this case, heavy equipment was confiscated, and then returned to the offenders soon after. Many other complaints submitted to the Civil Administration by Regavim and others, such as the case of the Palestinian land-grab within the municipal boundaries of Neveh Daniel, receive the same laconic response: "If necessary, oversight measures will be carried out according to regulations, and enforcement activity will be conducted according to pre-established priorities." In this case, as in almost every other case, no steps were taken in practice.

Until recently, this issue was not placed at or near the top of the Ministry of Defense's list of priorities. Kobi Eliraz, assistant to the Minister of Defense, participated in the Knesset Foreign Affairs and Defense sub-committee hearing held in June 2018. Eliraz noted that, in fact, the scope of these illegal agricultural projects has had a decisive impact, and the Ministry of Defense has decided to prioritize prevention of future land seizures, leaving action against already-existing instances of land seizure for a later date.

So, too, the Ministry of Foreign Affairs: Either because they have failed to grasp the strategic threat posed by these agricultural projects, or because they are more interested in maintaining a "manufactured sense of calm" despite the fact that senior ministry figures are fully aware that the EU is violating the law in Area C, Israel's Foreign Ministry has taken no action to halt the flow of funds or other support, and has not taken even the most basic step to curb this support: reprimanding the ambassadors of foreign governments involved in this illegal activity.



12# Conclusions and Recommendations

In the past decade, the Palestinian Authority has made a concerted effort to gain control over as much land in Area C as possible. In recent years, and in particular since 2013, the Palestinians have intensified agricultural activity as a means of quickly and efficiently seizing large swaths of land under the guise of humanitarian aid for farmers. This activity is illegal, and violates the international treaties to which the PA is a signatory. But this has not troubled foreign governments and organizations, including the European Union, who continue to bankroll this illegal activity – while at the same time vocally criticizing the State of Israel.

Despite all this, the sovereign – the State of Israel – is virtually absent. Israeli authorities have taken virtually no military, law enforcement, or diplomatic steps to prevent this activity, and the Civil Administration allows the Palestinians and their European co-conspirators to establish more and more facts on the ground in areas that are of vital strategic importance.

Because of the large-scale strategic consequences of the Palestinian program of land seizure, this problem cannot be addressed as a case-by-case, localized problem. The larger picture must be taken into consideration, and the agricultural projects that are being used to carry out the Palestinian program must be placed at the top of law enforcement's list of priorities.

If the government of Israel does not come to its senses soon, the Palestinian Authority's plan will create irreversible changes on the ground.

The only way to address this challenge is with clear, decisive action on the part of policymakers, who must create and implement a comprehensive response that acknowledges the strategic dangers to Israel's future. We therefore suggest that the following law enforcement and prevention measures be instituted immediately, alongside judicial and diplomatic action.

Continued ➡

- 1. Government resolution** – The first step that is required is a government decision, through the Ministry of Justice, that instructs the Civil Administration and other enforcement and judicial bodies under its jurisdiction, including the Israel Police Force and the General Security Service, to utilize existing tools in order to halt the spread of the land-seizure projects we have described, to block all further unauthorized work in Area C, and to restore the status quo ante based on a systematic analysis of strategic areas.
- 2. Prioritization and intensified law enforcement** – Agricultural land seizure must be a law enforcement priority. In order to prevent further deterioration, the current situation on the ground must be mapped and documented in each area, to create a "red lines" map for each of the relevant enforcement bodies. Resolute and efficient enforcement must be carried out, making use of all the tools currently at the disposal of law enforcement bodies, including delimiting orders and "obstructive use" orders, confiscation of heavy equipment for extended periods, or forfeiture of this equipment, which would significantly improve deterrence and help curb illegal activity.
- 3. Land Protection** – A national program for active safeguarding of land in Judea and Samaria must be created, based on the formation of a specialized unit, modeled after the Green Patrol, charged with protecting the endangered open spaces in these areas.
- 4. Judicial activity** – The activities of the Union of Agricultural Work Committees, the primary force behind agricultural land-seizure in Area C, must be curtailed. A comprehensive, systemic approach should be formulated to counter the purposeful abuse by the PA and foreign NGOs of Israel's judicial system, who file hundreds of "lawfare" suits and initiate endless administrative and legal actions each year.
- 5. Land protection and completion of Area C land survey** – Decades of procrastination have created a vacuum. Because the survey and registration of land in Area C has not been completed, large amounts of land have been seized illegally. Areas of strategic importance must be identified and mapped, and the necessary steps to complete a survey of these areas, to facilitate registration of state land, should be taken without delay and in keeping with national priorities. In order to complete this process, additional manpower should be added to the legal department that is charged with registration of state land in Judea and Samaria.
- 6. Political Activity** – The Ministry of Foreign Affairs must take decisive steps vis a vis foreign organizations and governments that support illegal activity. Emphasizing the links between the UAWC and the PFLP, which is classified as a terrorist organization not only by Israel but by the United States and the European Community, might halt the continued funding of these illegal projects. Case-by-case complaints should be filed against individuals who participate in, support, or facilitate illegal financial or other activities.
- 7. Environmental rehabilitation:** A list of priorities should be created for restoring the status quo on the ground: Illegal structures and unauthorized roads must be demolished, terracing, steppes, and retaining walls built without permits should be torn down, illegal cultivation of state land must be blocked, trees planted for purposes of encroachment must be transplanted in legally-sanctioned areas.



**"The spot where the last row is
plowed is where our nation's
borders will be drawn"**

- Joseph Trumpeldor, Tel Hai

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