

# A matter of justice



The NUT's delegation to Palestine  
27 October-2 November 2013



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# An introduction by Beth Davies, delegation leader and NUT President 2013-14

The National Union of Teachers (NUT) has been campaigning for justice for the Palestinian people since 1982 when the Executive expressed "its horror and outrage at the massacre of children and their parents in the Palestinian refugee camps at Sabra and Chatila in Beirut".

In the 1990s the Union and local associations raised money to rebuild and re-equip the kindergarten in the Balata refugee camp where much damage had been done during the First Intafada. In 2006, following the shooting and killing in Gaza of NUT member Jocelyn Hurndall's son Tom by an Israeli sniper, the Union established a fund to provide educational opportunities for disabled children in Gaza.



**"I will forever  
remember the dignity,  
warmth and resilience  
of the Palestinian  
people and in  
particular the amazing  
children we met."**

**Beth Davies  
NUT President  
2013-14**

*Beth with students at Al  
Galil High School in  
Nazareth, Israel*

The Union has maintained its commitment to the Palestinian people, the teachers and young people, for 30 years. In June 2013 the Executive agreed to send a national delegation of 12 members to the occupied territories. This is the report of that delegation's work during October half-term 2013, meeting with colleagues in the General Union of Palestinian Teachers

(GUPT); visiting schools; talking to young people and their parents; and also engaging with non-governmental organisations (NGOs) concerned with the rights of the Palestinian people.

We went to show our solidarity with the teachers and to conduct a study into the plight of children. The NUT is particularly concerned about the ill-treatment of Palestinian children, some as young as 12, illegally detained by the Israeli armed forces, brought before military courts and placed in Israeli custody.

In a report published in February 2013, UNICEF estimated that 700 Palestinian children, aged 12-17, some even younger, are arrested in the West Bank and jailed by the Israeli military courts every year. They are usually accused of throwing stones at vehicles of the forces of the occupation - a crime punishable under military law by up to 20 years in prison.

Arrests most frequently take place during violent night raids when the child is forcibly removed from the family home, shackled, hooded and taken to a detention centre for questioning.

They often appear in court in leg shackles, bail is virtually never granted and they are detained in solitary confinement for weeks. Often their families do not know where they are and they are interrogated alone with threats of death and physical violence.



When they do appear in the military court, almost all of these children have signed confessions written in Hebrew, a language which they do not understand - as this is the only chance of early release. Conviction rates are astonishingly high (97 per cent) and a custodial sentence is imposed on 90 per cent of the cases.



These detentions of children in the majority of cases are contrary to international law including the UN Convention on the Rights of the Child. The NUT has pledged to fight for the rights of these children.

In addition to sending a delegation the NUT has:

- written to and sought a meeting with Rt Hon Hugh Robertson MP, the Minister for

## UN Convention on the Rights of the Child Article 30

**In those States in which ethnic, religious or linguistic minorities or persons of indigenous origin exist, a child belonging to such a minority or who is indigenous shall not be denied the right, in community with other members of his or her group, to enjoy his or her own culture, to profess and practise his or her own religion, or to use his or her own language.**

**(Israel signed the Convention on 3rd July 1990 and ratified it on 3rd October 1991)**

*Above left: NUT green T-shirts being presented to GUPT officers*

the Middle East, asking what progress has been made in Israel in implementing the 40 recommendations of the Foreign and Commonwealth Office funded June 2012 report on Children in Military Custody;

- highlighted the plight of children in detention to over 300,000 NUT members in our magazine 'The Teacher';
- given full support for the Action for Palestinian Children Campaign and the Defence for Children International Palestine speaking tour; and
- participated in the 27 November 2013 lobby of Parliament on the plight of the Palestinians.

The delegation's work hasn't stopped at this visit. We are developing clear points for future action.

I urge you to read our report of eye witness accounts, become involved in the Union's campaign and support us as we fight for the rights of generations of Palestinians.



# Report of the NUT delegation

## Jerusalem – meeting teachers

On our first day we met members of the Jerusalem branch of the General Union of Palestinian Teachers (GUPT) and were welcomed by their Secretary, Issa Salman. The branch organises teachers in East Jerusalem, the designated capital of a future Palestinian state, but currently occupied by and under the control of Israel.

## More classrooms – more teachers

Issa explained there is a major shortage of classrooms and teachers in the city. More than 900 children are out of school. To reduce the average class sizes of 40 they need 1,000 more classrooms and more teachers. The Israeli authorities, who control all development in the city, stop Palestinians building new schools. Many are in inappropriate rented buildings, sometimes without doors and windows.

## Palestinian children in Israel and the curriculum

Palestinian teachers inside East Jerusalem in Israeli Government municipal schools and their colleagues inside Israel in Palestinian towns, like Nazareth, were greatly concerned about an imposed curriculum which did not celebrate their Palestinian heritage.

Teachers and students we met in the Galilee in northern Israel, which has a large Palestinian population, echoed these concerns. At Al Galil High School in Nazareth, the head teacher told us that the teaching of

**"It was an honour to be a member of our Union's delegation to Palestine and it is clear that we have a responsibility for ensuring that the voices of the Palestinians we met are heard. In particular the young Palestinians in schools who continue to have aspirations and dreams despite the obstacles that are forever placed in their path."**

**Philipa Harvey  
NUT Senior  
Vice-President  
2014-15**

**"I was so impressed by the enthusiasm of the young people and teachers we met. This was despite all the difficulties they face day-to-day."**

**Marilyn Bater  
NUT Executive**



*Secretary Issa Salman (pictured, with Max Hyde, right).*

Palestinian history and culture was excluded from the curriculum of schools attended by Palestinians. History and geography were presented from an Israeli perspective.

## Censoring the poets – rewriting history

English teacher Rida Salameh explained that young people did not learn about their own culture – poets like Mahmoud Darwish, novelists like Ghassan Kanafani or writers like Edward Said. The "Nakba" (Catastrophe), as Palestinians call the events of 1948, which resulted in the expulsion of more than 750,000 Palestinians, was presented from an Israeli perspective.

One student, Reem, spoke about the problems Palestinian young people faced gaining entrance to university in Israel. Although Arabic is recognised as an official language in Israel, Hebrew has already replaced it in some curricular areas and hurdles are placed in the way of students.

## Inequality in Israel

One of the teachers said, "We Palestinians inside Israel are 20 per cent of the population, yet this isn't reflected in budgets and jobs or university places. We don't have equal rights. We are 20 per cent yet we only have two per cent of the land." They, like the teachers we met in East Jerusalem, were of the view that, for Palestinians inside Israel, "democracy is not applied equally and fairly".

At the beautiful Abhara Primary School in Ein Mahel village (see right), the Principal,



Raed Habib Allah, showed us around. Whilst he was rightly proud of the school and the environment created by the teachers and pupils, he also stressed the teachers' concerns about the curriculum.

Despite these problems, we were impressed by the positive relationships between the teachers and their students and their real enthusiasm for education.

### **Israel's education system – a cause for concern**

Similar concerns about the Israeli curriculum were expressed to us by Professor Nurit Peled Elhanan and Dr Samira Alayan, both education lecturers at the Hebrew University in Jerusalem.

They said that many textbooks in the Israeli school system either omitted mention of Palestinians or treated them in stereotypical ways, fostering racism towards them whilst promoting a narrative more fitted to preparing students for military service.

Nurit and Samira said that they had found no evidence of anti-Jewish sentiments in Palestinian textbooks. Both were of the view that the Israeli education system is racist.

**"I experienced first-hand the discriminatory and crude nature of the Israeli occupation. For Palestinians this is a daily reality and far worse than anything I had encountered"**  
**Bodrul Amin**  
**Luton NUT**

*Below: Abhara Primary School, Ein Mahel near Nazareth, Israel*



### **Ramallah, the "Spanish School"**

When we visited schools we were greeted by teachers and pupils with warmth and hospitality and an eagerness to talk about their schools and their achievements.



In Ramallah we visited the "Spanish School" (see above) – built with the help of the Spanish Government. It is one of the city's 240 primary and secondary schools, the majority of which (182) are public schools. With 620 pupils and 27 teachers, the "Spanish School" has an average class size of just over 34.



Pupils in this all-girls school showed us round. They described their school with pride and were keen to tell us about the conflict management programme used to resolve differences between students and between teachers and students.

All the children we met were keen to try out their English, and the visit concluded with a display of traditional dabke dancing. The staff were conscious that their school was better off than many others in the city. The neighbouring boys' school we went to was less well equipped and had larger classes but we met the same enthusiasm for learning (see below).



## Nablus – Askar Girls' School

In Nablus, Serin Refa't Dweikat, the head teacher of Askar Girls' School, welcomed us.

The school is one of 98 schools established in the West Bank under the United Nations Relief and Works Agency (UNRWA) for the children of the 771,000 refugees whose families fled to the West Bank in 1948 and 1967.



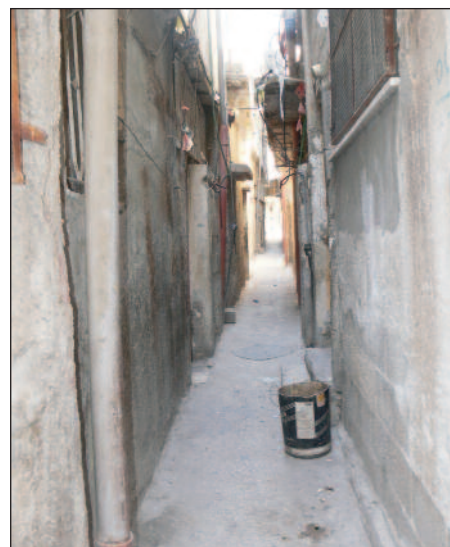
*Above: Philipa Harvey presenting greetings from children in South London to the head teacher of Askar Girls' School, Nablus, Palestine*

*Below left: Dabke dancing at the "Spanish School", Ramallah, Palestine*

The school is in Askar Refugee Camp (see below) which has a population of nearly 16,000 and was established in 1950 by refugees forced from their homes near the Haifa and Jaffa areas in 1948. The camp is cramped, has no green spaces and is constantly patrolled by the Israeli army.

One of three schools in the camp, the school ran on two shifts. The head teacher told us the school had been praised for the achievements of its pupils amongst which was their invention of a gadget to be used in the home to sound an alarm if a baby stopped breathing. She and the girls we met were rightly proud of their school.

**"Nothing prepared me for this delegation trip to Palestine. I got a small insight into what it is like for the Palestinians to be socially, emotionally, economically and physically restrained day in, day out. An unforgettable trip which left me wanting to fight even more for justice."**  
**Caroline Ezzat**  
**East London NUT**





## Occupation! Occupation! Occupation!

Everywhere we drove, two features of the occupation dominated the skyline – the separation wall and the settlements.



### The wall

In Jerusalem, Ray Dolphin, of the United Nations Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs (UN OCHA) talked to us about the separation wall and its impact on people's lives. The wall is 600 kilometres long, made of eight-metre high concrete blocks in urban areas, whilst in rural areas it is a high fence with razor wire, electronic surveillance and a 30 – 100 metre-wide military-only road alongside.

Ray told us that the construction of the wall started in June 2002 and that on 9 June 2004 the International Court of Justice (ICJ) had ruled that it was illegal under international law and in breach of the Geneva Convention. On 20 July 2004, the United Nations General Assembly demanded that the Government comply with its

**The UN OCHA Barrier Update**  
**The International Court of Justice demands that Israel must: cease construction of the barrier, including in and around East Jerusalem; dismantle the sections of the barrier already completed; and repeal the gate and permit regime.**  
(July 2011, page 23)

**"For historical reasons Britain bears a significant responsibility for the partition of Palestine. The delegation's visit made me more aware of this role and more determined to encourage British trade unionists to express their solidarity with the Palestinian cause."**  
**Dave Harvey**  
**Chair, NUT International Sub-Committee**

legal obligations and dismantle the wall but successive Israeli Governments have ignored both the UN and the ICJ.

In Ramallah, Mr Ayub Ayallan, the Director of Education, told us that some schools on one side of the wall have been separated from their catchment areas on the other. Students and teachers, who must go through checkpoints to pass from one side to the other, face hours added to their journeys. Sometimes checkpoints are closed and everyone is delayed or even prevented from going about their daily lives.

### The "seam zone"

The Green Line is the name given to the 1967 cease-fire line demarcating the West Bank from Israel. It is generally considered to define the West Bank which will form the main part of a future Palestinian state but the wall does not follow the same path. The wall snakes round the illegal settlements and, taking a further 9.4 per cent of the West Bank, is more than twice the length of the Green Line.

The area where the path of the wall and the Green Line diverge is called the "seam zone". Around 25,000 Palestinians living in this area are trapped between the two. Additionally many farmers who live "behind" the wall are cut off from their crops, olive orchards or grazing lands which also lie in the West Bank but in the "seam zone" on the other side of the wall. They have to travel long distances and have a military permit to pass through one of the 66 gates which are opened for limited periods each day.

All of the 2.7 million Palestinians who live in the West Bank need



permits to journey anywhere in the area through the many army checkpoints, causing long delays. Ambulances have been kept waiting with fatal consequences for those they were carrying. Students taking exams have been delayed, causing them to miss their papers.

In addition to those in the “seam zone” a further 200,000 Palestinians are being surrounded by settlement building encircling East Jerusalem and incorporating them into an Israeli Greater Jerusalem.

East Jerusalem, a vital part of the Palestinian economy, is being forcibly separated from its West Bank hinterland and may well be prevented from being part of any Palestinian state. The route of the wall is creating “facts on the ground” which will adversely affect any negotiations on the final status of the West Bank or Jerusalem.

**“I believe in and strive towards a time when the Israeli government and its allies will be shamed for their double standards, hypocrisy, lies and cruelty and the dignified people of Palestine will have their freedom, justice and human rights.”**  
**Seema McArdle**  
**Brighton and Hove**  
**NUT**

### **The Jordan Valley – agribusiness expansion**

Undoubtedly the largest appropriation of land by the Israeli occupation in the West Bank is in the Jordan Valley. The Valley constitutes about 30 per cent of the West Bank.

Driving through the valley, from Jericho to Nazareth, we saw the extent of the expropriation and the huge irrigation systems used by Israeli agribusiness but denied to the Palestinian farmers. Many of the herbs, fruit and other goods, labelled “produce of Israel” in British supermarkets come from this region.

This West Bank area contributes significantly to the Israeli economy and the profits of the companies illegally operating in it. Water is a major issue in the area – Israel controls the water supply, taking 86 per cent of the available shared resources.



Large volumes of water are plundered from the aquifers beneath the West Bank whilst Palestinians living there are refused permission to drill new wells or to improve old ones. Israeli companies are profiting whilst Palestinian farmers are impoverished.

### **Jerusalem – house demolitions**

On a tour of East Jerusalem, we were told by our guide, Ashraf Katib of the Negotiations Support Unit, that the city's future as the capital of a Palestinian state is a key issue in any negotiations. From the hill of the Mount of Olives we could see how the city was being surrounded by the illegal settlements which even penetrated into the refugee camps. Alongside this land theft went house demolitions and seizures. We were taken to see one Palestinian family where Israeli settlers had occupied part of their house. We learned that this is becoming quite common, including in the old city of Jerusalem.

### **Palestinian children and house demolitions**

We were shocked to learn that the building of settlements – especially in East Jerusalem – goes along with the demolition of Palestinian homes and businesses.

In a March 2012 submission to the UN Human Rights Council by the Israeli Committee Against House Demolitions (ICAHD), it was reported that 880 people, including 468 children, had been displaced due to the demolition of over 600 structures. By the end of November, similar figures looked set to be recorded for 2013.

**Israeli Committee Against House Demolitions (ICAHD)**  
**Israel has failed to comply with the Fourth Geneva Convention and International Convention on the Elimination of Racial Discrimination. Since 1967, Israeli authorities have demolished more than 28,000 homes, businesses, livestock facilities and other structures vital to Palestinian livelihood. The motivation for demolishing these homes is purely political and racially informed.**  
**(ICAHD Report to the UN Human Rights Council)**

*Bedouins' homes reduced to rubble, Al Arakib*

Permission for Palestinians to build is all but denied, whilst Israeli Government-licensed illegal settlements expand.

### **Inside Israel – monopolising the land**

According to Israel's Central Bureau of Statistics there are more than 1,658,000 "Arab citizens of Israel" as they insist on calling the Palestinians inside Israel.

What surprised us on our visit to the Galilee, and then later in the Naqab (Negev) desert, was that a very similar process involving the theft of Palestinian-owned lands was taking place inside Israel itself. We visited the Palestinian village of Ein Mahel and were shown plans outlining a development that would completely encircle the village taking their lands. We saw documents which proved the land had been first registered to the Palestinian owner in 1943. Nevertheless the land was still being confiscated. Outside Nazareth, a similar development was taking place at Nazareth Illit – a new suburb almost exclusively set aside for Israeli Jewish citizens.



## Forced transfers of Bedouins inside Israel

We found a similar story of dispossession when we met residents of the Bedouin village of Al Arakib, in the Naqab (Negev) Desert in Israel. Under a proposal called the "Prawer Plan" the Israeli Government intends to forcibly move up to 70,000 Bedouin out of 35 "unrecognised" villages and towns. Because the Israeli state deems them "unrecognised" they are denied all basic services such as electricity, water supply or refuse services.

Despite its "unrecognised" status, the village of Al Arakib, with its cemetery dating back before 1913, was there long before the state of Israel. The army has attacked the village many times, uprooting over 4,000 olive trees; killing 160 animals including 16 horses; cutting the water and electricity supply; and bulldozing homes. After all this, the village was given a two million shekel bill (about £350,000) for "cleaning up".



We were told that the village has been destroyed 61 times since July 2010 and rebuilt 62 times. Villagers are campaigning against the plans.



*Above: Remains of Al Arakib village, Naqab (Negev) Desert*

*Below left: Historic village well - part of the infrastructure of the established community*

**"I couldn't believe how much the situation had deteriorated since ten years ago, with the expansion of the settlements and the extension of the hated apartheid wall. One cannot help but be inspired and humbled by the resolve and fortitude of the Palestinian people. By the end I didn't want to leave but returned determined to continue to support their fight for justice."**

**Roger King  
Vice-Chair, NUT  
International  
Sub-Committee**

## Checkpoints

It is impossible to travel anywhere in the West Bank without being stopped at a checkpoint. The largest of these is at Qalandiya between Ramallah and Jerusalem. It is huge - like an international border crossing point with heavy security, vehicle-holding bays, armed guards and document checks. Pedestrians and all passengers are filtered through metal turnstiles and scanners one by one. Everyone is forced to queue, sometimes for hours. In some areas, workers have to queue half the night to get to work on time.

The checkpoints at Bait She'an, in the Jordan Valley, and the entrance to Bethlehem are similar though on a smaller scale.

Elsewhere we saw other types of checkpoint - iron gates, concrete blocks or earth mounds piled across roads to stop the traffic. When leaving Hebron, towards the end of our stay, we were stopped by the Israeli army at a "flying" checkpoint. An armed vehicle, backed by a heavy machine gun, pulled across the road. Soldiers stopped us and boarded our minibus. Once again, as at Tel Aviv airport and



at Bait She'an in the Jordan Valley where we were stopped for three quarters of an hour, it was only the black members of the group who were under scrutiny.

According to the UN OCHA there are over 532 checkpoints distributed across the West Bank.



### Segregated roads

We saw a number of side roads that were blocked off. One of the blocked roads had a sign saying "Welcome to Jaba Village" – but you couldn't enter. We were told that these barricaded roads led to Palestinian towns and villages. The Israeli army had closed them, forcing inhabitants and anyone visiting to add miles to even the shortest of journeys.

Settler-only roads in the West Bank, by contrast, are newer, better constructed, well maintained, and checkpoint free. Near Nablus, on a road used by both Israelis and Palestinians, we saw a mobile army checkpoint on the opposite side, where cars with Israeli number plates (yellow with black numbers) were waved through whilst Palestinian vehicles (white with green numbers) were obliged to wait. As a result a long tailback built up. It was impossible to look at this segregated road system without thinking of apartheid South Africa.

*Below left: Max Hyde at checkpoint in Hebron, Palestine*

**Conclusions of the Report of the UN independent international mission on settlements:** The establishment of the settlements in the West Bank, including East Jerusalem, is a mesh of construction and infrastructure leading to a creeping annexation that prevents the establishment of a contiguous and viable Palestinian State and undermines the right of the Palestinian people to self-determination. (7 February 2013)

**"The Palestinian people welcomed us into their homes and their schools. They want freedom, they want justice and a future for their children. Their struggles are supported and their stories will be told."**

**Max Hyde  
NUT President 2014-15**

### Settlements

The settler-only road system is exclusively for the settlements. Every day we saw the huge settlement expansion that is taking place. Driving from Jerusalem to Bethlehem we saw how these are in fact large towns. Ma'ale Adumin has a population of around 40,000; Modi'in Illit - 56,000; Beitar Illit - 43,000. Under international law they are illegal and contravene the Geneva Convention. However, they are now expanding.

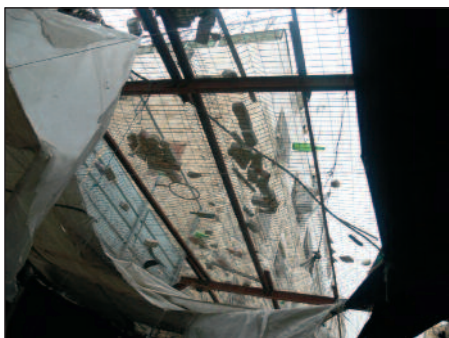


According to the UN there are more than 550,000 illegal settlers living in the West Bank in developments, frequently built on the hills overlooking Palestinian towns and villages (see above). New settlements are being built surrounding East Jerusalem, cutting it off from the rest of the West Bank and pre-empting final status negotiations, robbing the Palestinian economy of valuable tourist trade and violating international law.

The settlement buildings cover 1.2 per cent of the land in the West Bank – but their control extends to 42.7 per cent of it (UN OCHA).

## Settler violence

A disturbing feature of the expansion is that it is frequently accompanied by unprovoked settler attacks against Palestinians – men, women and children. Olive orchards are singled out for attack thereby destroying people's livelihoods.



In Hebron, the largest Palestinian city in the West Bank, Rashad Junaidy of the GUPT branch showed us how parts of the market had to be protected by strong wire mesh supplemented with plastic sheeting (pictured above). He explained that it was to prevent the rocks, bricks, rubbish and liquids, including urine, thrown by the settlers who lived above landing on the traders and shoppers below.

Whilst in Hebron we met a group of Ecumenical

**"Witnessing the facts and impact of the Israeli occupation first hand was almost overwhelming at times, but the Palestinians we met taught us important lessons that have stayed with me since my return. Their resilience and determination to fight for their rights, despite the odds stacked against them, is an inspiration to anyone engaged in the fight for equality and justice."**

**Kiri Tunks  
East London NUT**

Accompaniers who had come from Australia, Finland and Norway – these are people of all denominations and none who were accompanying Palestinian children to and from school to protect them against settler assaults. Even with their presence, the settlers had attacked the children verbally and physically and thrown rocks at them.

## An Nabi Salih – a village under siege

We visited a small village north of Ramallah called An Nabi Salih. Sitting in the lounge of a local family we watched a video and Manal Tamimi told us how settlers had lain claim to a well traditionally used by the village and had attacked anyone trying to use it. In response she and other villagers organised weekly peaceful non-violent demonstrations to assert their rights to the well. However these demonstrators were regularly attacked by the Israeli army with tear gas, rubber bullets and sometimes live ammunition. The village was frequently raided and young children arrested in the middle of the night. The army had also fired "skunk" water into water tanks on the tops of houses to





pollute them. The army however did not stop there. Frequently they returned at night to arrest local children who had participated in the demonstrations.



## Palestinian child prisoners

One of the most distressing aspects of our visit was to hear about the plight of Palestinian children once they had been arrested. We heard evidence first hand from the Tamimi family about the night raids. Their account was backed up by Ivan Karakashian of Defence for Children International – Palestine, who told us that, since the year 2000, some 75,000 children had been arrested.

There are two different legal systems in the occupied territories – military law for Palestinians and civil law for the Israeli settlers. Under military law, throwing a stone at a wall can result in a ten-year prison sentence and throwing a stone at a jeep can result in 20 years. Parents are rarely present during questioning and permits to visit take a long time. Children are often transferred to prisons inside Israel in breach of Article 76 of the Fourth Geneva Convention. There has been an increase in the use of solitary confinement since 2012.

*Below left: Manal Tamimi with Beth Davies*

## UN Convention on the Rights of the Child Article 16

1. No child shall be subjected to arbitrary or unlawful interference with his or her privacy, family, home or correspondence, nor to unlawful attacks on his or her honour and reputation.
2. The child has the right to the protection of the law against such interference or attacks.

*"I have travelled to the West Bank several times over the last few years. Each time I find the situation has deteriorated even further. Alas, it was no different this time."*  
**Samidha Garg**  
**NUT International Relations Officer**

This picture was echoed by Gerard Horton of Military Court Watch who made the point that it was irrelevant if the children had in fact thrown stones – they still deserve to be treated as any other child should be. There clearly is one law for the Palestinian children and another for the settler children and the children in Israel.

## Employment and poverty

It was clear to us from the teachers and parents we met how much Palestinians value education and were concerned for their children's futures. The literacy rate amongst Palestinians stands at over 95 per cent and, although we were not able to visit Gaza, a UN official told us that 54 per cent of the population is under 18 and there is 50 per cent youth unemployment. Apart from the oppressive nature of the occupation itself, another issue became evident. How can the Palestinians develop an economy in the face of so many restrictions?

As Dr Samia Botmeh of Bir Zeit University told us, the Palestinian economy is very fragile. Some 70 per cent is service based and increasingly dependent on external contributions. In addition to the losses to agriculture in the Jordan Valley and the impact on tourism because of the wall and checkpoints, Israeli companies are directly involved in other breaches of international law. According to the World Bank report of 2 October 2013, Israeli firms working illegally in the West Bank produce and sell potash, bromine and magnesium worth \$918 million a year – the equivalent of 9 per cent of the Palestinian GDP.

## Campaigning for justice – in Palestine and in Britain

Over the week, the picture we saw was a bleak one. The constant physical presence of soldiers and all the apparatus of occupation was oppressive. As Gerard Horton said to us about the arrest of children by the army – the real problem is that the occupation “gets inside people’s heads”.

Despite the traumatising of Palestinian children, the daily problems of just getting to school, and the anxiety of parents we met, there is ongoing resistance to the occupation which involves the majority of the Palestinian people.

We also met courageous Israeli citizens opposed to the actions of the Israeli Government – but they were the first to point out that, sadly, their voices are, at this time, in a tiny minority. Typical of their views was the opinion expressed by Sergio Yahni of the Alternative Information Center who said that there was a complete

**“As one of those who raised Palestine on the Executive in 1982 it was an honour to be asked to facilitate the October 2013 delegation. I hope the Union will continue to campaign for justice for the Palestinian people. Only by ending the occupation, dismantling the wall and ending settlement building, will that be possible. That is the route to lasting peace for the Palestinian people and the people of Israel.”**

**Bernard Regan  
Former NUT  
Executive Member  
and Palestine  
Solidarity Campaign**

imbalance of power between a strong right-wing Government in Israel and a weak Palestinian Authority. They were candid and said that they were not hopeful for the immediate future.

Both Samia Botmeh and Sergio Yahni expressed their support for the campaign by the Trades Union Congress (TUC) which is supported by unions in Britain “to boycott the goods of companies who profit from the illegal settlements, the occupation and the construction of the wall”.

The children, young people, teachers and parents that we met asked us to tell their story. Answering, for the whole delegation, the question “Why did you choose to help us?” delegation leader Beth Davies said, “For justice - and your country is number one on our list”.

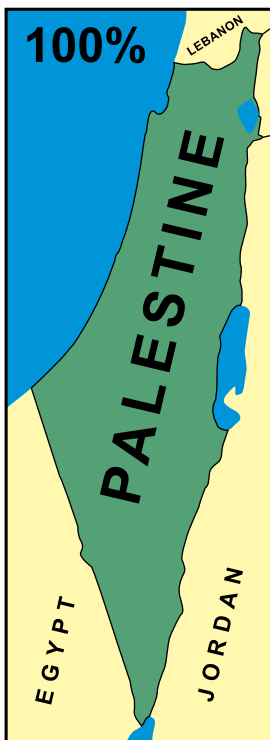
We hope this report explains the importance of that answer and lays the basis for developing the campaign amongst all those concerned for the welfare of the children and people of Palestine.



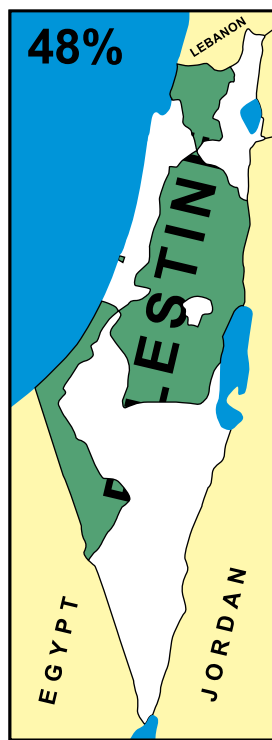
*Israeli Army tear gas canisters hanging in a garden in An Nabi Salih, Palestine*



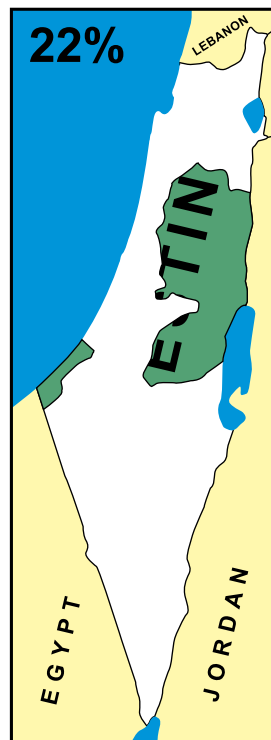
# PALESTINE



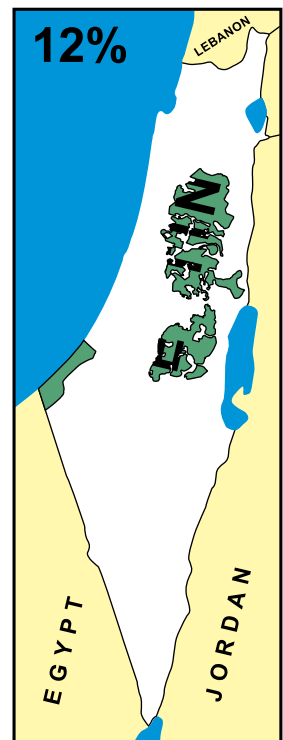
Before 1947



1947 UN Plan



1967



Today

# A matter of justice

## The NUT's delegation to Palestine

27 October-2 November 2013

### MEMBERS OF DELEGATION

<b>Beth Davies</b>	NUT President 2013-14
<b>Max Hyde</b>	NUT President 2014-15
<b>Philipa Harvey</b>	NUT Senior Vice-President 2014-15
<b>Dave Harvey</b>	Chair, NUT International Sub-Committee
<b>Roger King</b>	Vice-Chair, NUT International Sub-Committee
<b>Marilyn Bater</b>	NUT Executive
<b>Seema McArdle</b>	Brighton and Hove NUT
<b>Caroline Ezzat</b>	East London NUT
<b>Kiri Tunks</b>	East London NUT
<b>Bodrul Amin</b>	Luton NUT
<b>Bernard Regan</b>	Palestine Solidarity Campaign
<b>Samidha Garg</b>	NUT International Relations Officer

All photographs provided by members of the delegation

### CONTACTS

Adalah <http://adalah.org/eng/>

Al Haq <http://www.alhaq.org>

Alternative Information Center <http://www.alternativenews.org/english/>

Breaking the Silence <http://www.breakingthesilence.org.il>

B'Tselem <http://www.btselem.org>

Jews for Justice for Palestinians <http://jfjfp.com>

Kav LaOved <http://www.kavlaoved.org.il/en/>

Negotiations Affairs Department PLO <http://www.nad-plo.org>

National Union of Teachers <http://www.teachers.org.uk>

Palestine Solidarity Campaign <http://www.palestinecampaign.org>

Palestinian Grass Root Anti-Apartheid Wall Campaign <http://www.stopthewall.org>

UN Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs <http://www.ochaopt.org>

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