



**The Hashemite Kingdom of Jordan  
and  
The State of Palestine**

Status Report on  
**The State of Conservation of  
the Old City of Jerusalem and Its Walls**

Presented to  
**The UNESCO World Heritage Centre**

January 30<sup>th</sup>, 2014 CE

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4. 2005 – Erecting a wooden bridge to replace the historic pathway.
5. 2007- 2010 – Major demolitions and erasing major parts of the MGP by bulldozers and heavy machinery.
6. 2010-2011 – Demolitions and construction plans at the MGP site
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9. 2012 – Using tractors and heavy machinery to erase large historic remains at the base of the Magharbeh Gate Pathway.
10. Using reinforced concrete to remove and conceal Islamic remains at the site.
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### **1- The IOA changed the centuries-old *Status Quo* and committed 22** **aggressions against the Nabi Dawud Compound and Mosque**

1. Destruction and obliteration of the Ottoman tiles on the internal façade of the lower mosque.
2. Attempts to damage part of the historic inscription panel above the northern entrance of the Compound.

3. Installing Jewish symbols (Star of David) on the new iron grille on the windows.
4. Judaization of the site by presenting the entire compound as 'David's Tomb'.
5. Enforcing a new function on the site by converting the mosque's rooms into a synagogue.
6. Smashing part of one of the compound's Mihrabs;
7. The IOA changed the surface of the main dome of the Nabi Dawud Mosque.
8. Banning the Jerusalem Awqaf from restoring and maintaining the ceramic tiles and the Mihrab of the mosque.
9. Demolishing the Dajani Family Waqf Cemetery and preventing the Awqaf from undertaking the necessary measures to restore it,

## **2 - The IOA's intrusive excavations and tunneling in and around the Old City of Jerusalem and its Walls: 24**

1. **Tens of intrusive excavations** are spreading all over the Old City of Jerusalem and on both sides of its walls.
2. **The IOA supports excavations and tunneling conducted by extremist groups.**
3. **The IOA illegally moves large quantities of archaeological remains** from these excavated sites to unknown destinations.
4. **Major excavations were carried out by non-professional groups with permits from the relevant Israeli official authorities** or with unsubstantial participation from Israeli archaeologists.
5. **Excavations and tunneling have caused several collapses**, such as the collapse of the floor of the UNRWA Girls School near the southern wall of Al-Aqsa Mosque on February 1<sup>st</sup>, 2009.
6. **Excavations have changed and undermined the structural integrity of the holy sites**, e.g.
7. **The hollowing out of areas around and under Al-Haram Al-Sharif have not stopped since 1967.** The Government of Jordan is deeply concerned that the structural integrity of these holy and historic sites may deteriorate further.
8. **According to renowned Israeli archaeologist Me'ir Ben-Dov who excavated the area, there are about 17 points from which settlers might breach into the underground prayer rooms and cisterns of Al-Aqsa Mosque.**
9. **Ben-Dove has also warned of: 1- the IOA's removal of historic relics; 2- the IOA falsifying the history of Ummayyad and Byzantine remains by describing them as remains of Jewish periods.**
10. **The Jerusalem-based Emek Shaveh Organization recoded tens of tunneling violations south of Al-Aqsa Mosque down to Silwan, most significant is the**

exclusivist Jewish narrative imposed on Islamic and Byzantine history and the erasing of remains unrelated to Jewish history.

11. **It is a matter of deep concern for the GoJ that the IOA is adversely** affecting the authenticity and cultural heritage of the Old City of Jerusalem and its Walls through **authorizing intrusive excavations and tunneling.**

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2. Converting historical entrances of Old City gates into artificial public parks
3. Covert excavations at the Waqf of Al-Buraq Plaza (Beit Haliba Project)
4. Israel has demolished arches at the Al-Buraq Wall area and replaced them with an illegal high rise structure in the Old City of Jerusalem
5. “Western Wall” Tunnel and excavations
6. Enforcement of Jewish names on Arab sites and roads
7. The IOA arbitrarily and indefinitely confiscated the building of Al-Tankaziyyah Mamluki School (the Court Building) next to Bab Al-Silsilah of Al-Aqsa Mosque
8. The IOA’s removal of the historic grille of the Church of Holy Sepulchre
9. Demolishing the Shepherd Hotel in the Sheikh Jarrah Neighborhood
10. Israeli settlers burned the Okasha Mosque in Jerusalem
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**More than 60 synagogues, most of them newly created in the Old City of Jerusalem:**

1. Turning the Buraq “Western Wall” Plaza into a square of synagogues undermining Waqf land and Arab properties both over and under the ground;
2. Turning one of the main halls of the second floor of the **Tankaziyyah Court and School** into a Jewish synagogue overlooking the Al-Aqsa Mosque.
3. Plans to build the **largest and tallest synagogue** atop the Tankaziyyah Waqf school which will affect the skyline of the Old City and pollute the visual view of its Holy

Sites.

4. **“Western Wall” Tunnel synagogues**, “Temple Models” at the “Western Wall” entrance, Rabbi Gates Synagogue, Ohel Yetzhak (a new building in a historical site ) and others.
5. **New synagogue (prayer platform) for liberal Jews** (American Reform) at the western side of the Ummayad Palaces and near the southwest corner of Al-Aqsa Mosque.
6. Plans for building a huge synagogue over the historic site of **Burj Al-Laqlaq** in the northeast corner of the Old City.
7. New **Jewish neighborhood over the roofs of the Christian Quarter and atop the Bazaar** and the Muristan area (Haret Assabra) in the Old City of Jerusalem.

#### **5- IOA implanting over 3000 fake Jewish graves around Al-Aqsa Mosque, Ras El-Amoud, the Mount of Olives and Silwan** 40

1. Israel is implanting **thousands of fake Jewish graves in the land surrounding the eastern and southern wall of Al-Aqsa Mosque.**
2. **IOA Bulldozing the Islamic Cemetery of Ma'man Allah (Mamilla):** The GoJ rejects the IOA's measures and activities at the historic Islamic Waqf Cemetery of Ma'man Allah (Mamilla).
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# **Introduction**



## **Status Report on The State of Conservation of the Old City of Jerusalem and Its Walls January 30, 2014 CE**

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### **Introduction:**

This annual Status Report aims to update daily documentation, observations and reports by the Jordanian Jerusalem Awqaf (JJA) and the Jordanian and Palestinian World Heritage National Committees regarding The State of Conservation of the Old City of Jerusalem and its Walls. The report presents activities and projects undertaken by the JJA in the Old City of Jerusalem and its Walls. The report also highlights information and evidence on the continued Israeli violations, aggressions and unilateral measures which harmfully affect and jeopardize the integrity, authenticity and cultural heritage of the Old City of Jerusalem and its Walls, a site inscribed by Jordan on the UNESCO World Heritage List in 1981, and the UNESCO list of World Heritage in Danger in 1982.

The Government of Jordan (GoJ) and the Government of Palestine reiterate their deep concerns regarding the Israeli violations in and around the Old City of Jerusalem and its Walls. These include: the intrusive illegal excavations; tunneling and digging; drastic unilateral alteration of the Magharbeh Gate Pathway (MGP); obstructions of Awqaf restorations and administration; the imposing of new Israeli town planning schemes that do not conform with the historic character of the Old City of Jerusalem; the banning of Muslims and Christians from access to their respective Holy Sites; militarization of tourism in the Al-Masjid Al-Aqsa Compound and implanting thousands of fake Jewish graves as a pretext to confiscate Waqf and Arab land.

The abovementioned unprecedented Israeli and escalatory violations constitute a flagrant breach of International Humanitarian Law, including specific Israeli obligations under the *Hague Convention for the Protection of Cultural Property in the Event of Armed Conflict of 1954*. Both Israel and Jordan are signatories to the *Hague Convention* which remains applicable at all times to all parties in relation to the Old City of Jerusalem and its Walls; in particular Al-Masjid Al-Aqsa (Al-Haram Al-Sharif)<sup>1</sup> which is part of the cultural property occupied by Israel in 1967.

According to article 5 (2) of the 1954 *Hague Convention*, the occupying power is allowed, only when the competent national authorities are unable to take such measures, and in close cooperation with the national authorities, to take the most necessary measures of preservation. Therefore, as the competent national authority and a primary concerned party, Jordan shall not accept any process that falls short of enabling it to fulfil and exercise its right to safeguard and maintain the cultural site of the Old City

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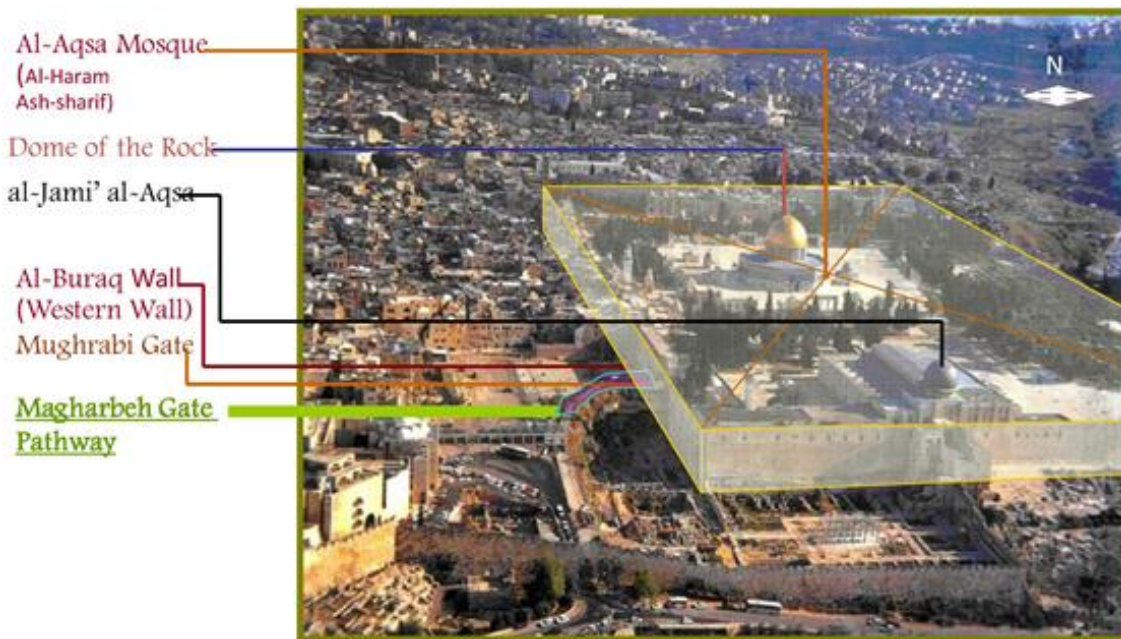
<sup>1</sup> Definition of Al-Masjid Al-Aqsa: Al-Masjid Al-Aqsa or Al-Aqsa Mosque mentioned in the Qur'an (*Al-Isra'*, 17:1) and Al-Haram Al-Sharif (the Noble Sanctuary) are synonymous. They refer to the entirety of the Islamic Holy Site located in the far southeast corner of the walled Old City of Jerusalem. This site constitutes the entire esplanade including its walls and its environs. This includes the Dome of the Rock Mosque, Al-Jami' Al-Aqsa, the Marwani Mosque, the Dome of the Rock, the Cave of the Dome of the Rock, the Old Aqsa, the Khanthaniyyah School, the Buraq Mosque, the Buraq Wall, the plazas of the esplanade, its gates, hallways, roads, cisterns, aqueducts and aquifers, inner and outer prayer areas and structures both above and below the holy site. The environs of the Mosque include the Magharbeh Gate Pathway and the Buraq Plaza. Al-Haram Al-Sharif (about 144 dunums over the ground), the above mentioned underground spaces and their perimeters and environs are an indivisible part of Al-Masjid Al-Aqsa which is an Islamic Waqf unutterably holy to 1.7 billion Muslims worldwide.



of Jerusalem and its Walls, including particularly the Holy Sites, which fall under the Awqaf Administration and the custody of His Majesty the King of Jordan, according to continuous and uninterrupted practice since 1921. This role was also reaffirmed by the March 2013 agreement between His Majesty the King of Jordan and the President of Palestine.

Intrusive Israeli violations and excavations in and around the Holy Sites in the Old City of Jerusalem and its Walls are totally rejected by Jordan and Palestine. These violations and excavations are also clearly in contradiction with the letter and spirit of Article 9 of the 1994 Peace Treaty between the Hashemite Kingdom of Jordan and the State of Israel and registered at the United Nations, which stipulates that Israel shall respect the historic and special role of Jordan in administering the Holy Sites in Jerusalem.

Israel, the occupying power in the Old City of Jerusalem, continues to violate International Humanitarian Law and UNESCO's relevant conventions by authorizing illegal and intrusive excavations, tunneling and digging which adversely affect the integrity and authenticity of the cultural heritage of the Old City of Jerusalem and its Walls and jeopardize the structure and foundations of Al-Haram Al-Sharif, adjacent historic buildings, and Islamic and Christian Awqaf. Such Israeli acts and violations represent Israeli insolence in dealing with its obligations in accordance to the *1954 Hague Convention for the Protection of Cultural Property and its Protocols* and the *1972 World Heritage Convention*.



*Figure 1: Visual definition of Al-Aqsa Mosque and the location of the Magharbeh Gate Pathway.*

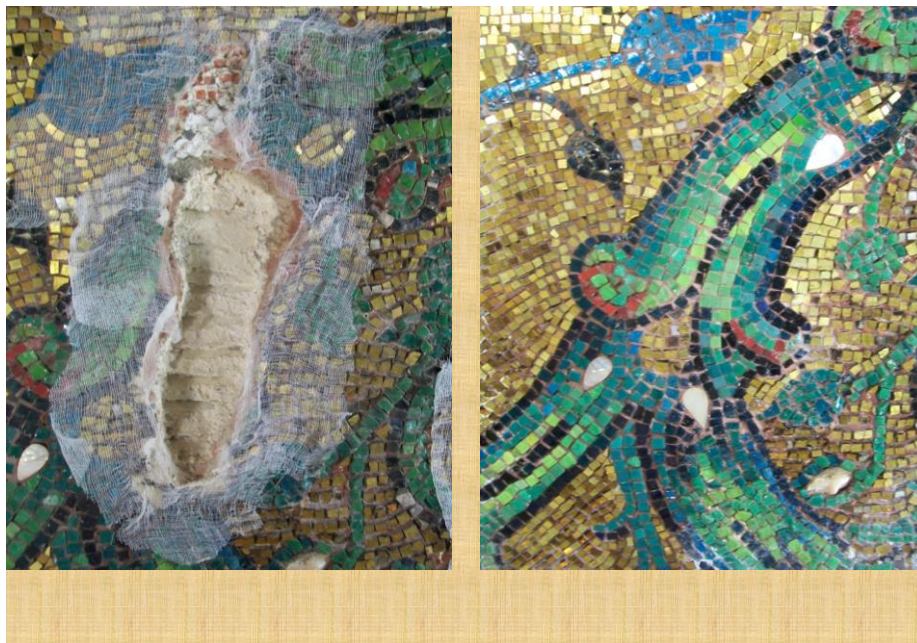
**Chapter 1: Conservation Projects  
Undertaken by the Jordanian Jerusalem  
Awqaf (JJA) in the Old City of  
Jerusalem and its Walls**

The Hashemite restoration and safeguarding of Jerusalem's Holy Sites started in the 1920s. The Heritage Conservation projects have been conducted by the Jordanian Committee for the Restoration of Al-Aqsa Mosque and the Dome of the Rock and the Jordanian Jerusalem Awqaf team which is made up of highly qualified and efficient experts who work according to international standards and practices and UNESCO regulations.

### **Update of 26 projects implemented during 2013 CE**

1. Continuing the restoration works of the stucco and mosaic ornamentation inside the Dome of the Rock. This project is supervised by Jordanian expert Dr. Mohammad Abu Aisheh, in addition to five Italian experts specialized in this field;
2. Starting restoration work on Al-Jami' Al-Aqsa's mosaic ornamentation;
3. Continuing with the laying of lead sheeting over the roofs of the buildings of the Al-Aqsa Mosque Compound;
4. Continuing the restoration of the interior marble cladding of the inside walls of the Dome of the Rock;
5. Continuing the restoration of the mortar lining of the ceilings of the sixth and seventh colonnades of the Al-Marwani Mosque;
6. Restoration of the rainwater channels over the Al-Marwani Mosque;
7. Completing the restoration of the historic tiles (Qashani) for the Dome of the Chain (Qubbat Al-Silsilah) adjacent to the Dome of the Rock;
8. Restoration of the Khanthaniyyah School and library below the Al-Aqsa Mosque;
9. Conducting studies and preparing tender documents for the ventilation system of the Dome of the Rock;
10. Finishing the restoration and maintenance of the Mamluk Jawliyyah School (part of the Omariyyah School);
11. Conducting studies and preparing tender documents for the construction of a canopy for the entrance of the Al-Marwani Mosque;
12. Partial tiling of the Al-Masjid Al-Aqsa Compound (prevented by IOA);
13. With appreciation, UNESCO continues to dispatch technical missions for the rehabilitation project of the Manuscript Restoration Centre and for the Islamic Museum, while the Jordanian Ministry of Awqaf in turn appointed the required four employees in the Islamic Museum and five other employees in the Manuscript Restoration Centre;
14. Replacing two wooden gates of Al-Jami' Al-Aqsa which were damaged by the IOA's violent aggressions against Al-Aqsa;

15. The JJA has recently appointed five trainees at the Manuscript Restoration Center; the trainees are paid by a UNESCO grant;
16. With appreciation, UNESCO retained a museum expert to develop a conceptual design for the Islamic Museum of Al-Aqsa Mosque;
17. Continuing the restoration of the outside of the eastern wall of Al-Aqsa Mosque;
18. Completing the restoration of the southern wall of Al-Aqsa Mosque;
19. Restoring parts of the underground water pipes around the Dome of the Rock Plaza;
20. Her Majesty Queen Rania's *Madrasati Initiative / Palestine* in cooperation with the JJA completed the restoration of (20) schools and started a new phase of educational and computer skills training at these schools;
21. Completing the study of, and plans for, the external lighting project for the Dome of the Rock;
22. His Majesty King Abdullah II ibn Al-Hussein's Waqf (endowment) for the Integral Chair for the Study of Al-Imam Al-Ghazali Work at Al-Aqsa Mosque and Al-Quds University began efficient seminary activities in January 2013;
23. Continuing the restoration of the wooden tie beams between the main columns of Al-Jami' Al-Aqsa;
24. Re-gilding the crescent of the Dome of the Rock;
25. Work on the ventilation of Al-Jami' Al-Aqsa;
26. Continuing the restoration of the stucco and glass windows of Al-Jami' Al-Aqsa;



*Figure 2: Sample of the mosaic restorations at the Dome of the Rock.*

## **Chapter 2: Israeli Obstruction of the Jordanian Jerusalem's Awqaf Conservation and Maintenance of Al- Masjid Al-Aqsa (Al-Haram Al-Sharif)**

## 1- Eighteen conservation projects banned by the IOA

1. After conducting a study on the restoration of the **stone columns of Al-Marwani Mosque**, the Israeli occupation authorities are still banning, for the fourth year, the Restoration Committee's technical team from commencing the restoration process;
2. Banning a Jordanian team of technical experts from commencing the necessary measures of **applying technical structural and stability measures** inside Al-Marwani Mosque;
3. Banning the execution of external **lighting for the southern and eastern walls of Al-Masjid Al-Aqsa**;
4. Preventing the execution of the **protection shade necessary over the electrical generators**;
5. Obstructing, since January 3<sup>rd</sup>, 2011, the installation of the **firefighting system** in Al-Masjid Al-Aqsa;
6. Banning the execution of **sound system** projects in Al-Aqsa;
7. Banning the execution of necessary tiling around the distribution board wiring system room to insulate the bare electrical cables;
8. Preventing the JJA from **removing the waste material from the restoration works at the western side of Al-Masjid Al-Aqsa** for more than 14 years;
9. Obstructing the necessary **restoration of Al-Ghadiriyya School** at the northern side of Al-Masjid Al-Aqsa which is at great risk due to lack of maintenance;
10. Banning the **installation of the speakers for Adhan** (call to prayer);
11. The IOA is banning the JJA from restoring **Bab Al-Rahmah (the Golden Gate)** of Al-Masjid Al-Aqsa; the IOA is also banning lessons by the Al-Ghazali Chair's Professor;
12. The IOA is banning the **restoration of medical emergency rooms** at Al-Masjid Al-Aqsa;
13. Obstructing the execution of the **ventilation system for the Dome of the Rock**;
14. Obstructing the execution of the **tiling of the pathways of Al-Aqsa Mosque Plazas**;
15. Banning the construction of a **canopy for the entrance of the Al-Marwani Mosque**;
16. Banning the restoration of the external pediment **of the western upper roof of Al-Jami' Al-Aqsa**;
17. Banning the **planting of trees** in place of those fallen or uprooted by IOA officers;
18. Banning the installation of **the iron grille for the windows of the Al-Marwani Mosque**;

## 2- IOA Limiting / prohibiting access to the Old City of Jerusalem and its Walls

### A. Aggressions against Jerusalem Awqaf employees:

1. Obstructing JJA staff from bringing in necessary restoration materials and tools;
2. Withdrawing permits of entrance to Jerusalem for some employees who live outside the discrimination wall;
3. Seizing the identification cards of some Awqaf employees and worshippers;



4. Exiling some JJA employees outside the Aqsa Mosque and its surroundings for years;
5. Threats and investigations against some employees who report on the IOA's aggressions;

## **B. Preventing Public Access to Muslim and Christian Holy Sites**

The IOA very frequently bans Muslims younger than the age of 50 from praying in Al-Aqsa Mosque in an act contrary to Humanitarian and International Laws. Moreover, the IOA frequently prevents Arab Christians from access to Jerusalem to celebrate their religious holidays and to visit their holy sites. Jordan and Palestine sent several letters of protest in this regard to the UNESCO Director General requesting Her Excellency to take the necessary measures to ensure freedom of access and worship for Muslims and Christians at their holy sites in Jerusalem.

### **3- Enforcing Israeli law, aggressive statements and actions against Al-Aqsa Mosque**

1. Alarming developments have arisen against the Jerusalem Muslim Holy Sites
2. A bill has been proposed and discussed several times by the Israeli Knesset that could adversely affect the fourteen-century-long Islamic identity of Al-Aqsa;
3. The bill aims to divide Al-Haram Al-Sharif and limit the free access of Muslims to it during certain days and hours;
4. The bill further aims to affect the ability of the Islamic Waqf to administer Al-Haram Al-Sharif;
5. Though the bill has – at the time of this writing – not yet passed, the acts and omissions of the IOA dictate the spirit of the bill by allowing the desecration of Al-Haram Al-Sharif and by the attempts of extremist factions to impose a new narrative on the site. These actions and omissions include the provocative visits of Jewish extremists to Al-Haram Al-Sharif and Jewish prayers and at the site.

### **4- Israeli plans to divide Al-Aqsa, and major violations of the pre-occupation Status Quo at the Holy Site**

1. **Israeli official tolerance with extremists'** moves against Al-Haram Al-Sharif.
2. **Extremist moves against the restoration of the Muslim Holy Sites:** Jordan was infuriated by the Israeli extremists' offensive petition to the Israeli Supreme Court describing the Hashemite safeguarding of the Dome of the Rock, as "destruction of the

Foundation Stone of the Jewish Temple”. The Israeli government’s silence on all these extreme moves indicates its tacit support of them.

3. **Unprecedented Israeli permits for Jews to pray inside Al-Aqsa Mosque: A Jerusalem Magistrate’s Court** urged the IOA’s police several times to allow Jews to pray inside Al-Aqsa Mosque.
4. **Israeli General Attorney: “Temple Mount part of Israel”**. The Attorney General of Israel says that Al-Aqsa Mosque is part of Israeli territory and so Israeli law applies there. The statement was condemned by the majority of the international community and the GoJ perceived it as a direct aggression against the Holy Sites and a breach of the *Status Quo* and the 1994 Israel-Jordan Peace Treaty.
5. The IOA continues to **refuse a return to the pre-August 2000 *Status Quo* arrangements re the JJA’s supervision of non-Muslim tourism inside Al-Masjid Al-Aqsa**;
6. **Israeli extremists’ incursions into Al-Haram Al-Sharif**: The JJA documented the incursions of more than 20.000 extremists who broke through the Muslim Holy Site and violated its sanctity during 2012-2013. Jordan and the Muslim World is outraged by the Israeli authorities’ systematic acceptance of extreme religious Jewish groups to storm the Al-Aqsa Mosque Compound. Weekly violence is resulting from extremist incursions such as prayers inside the Mosque Compound, insulting Muslims and the provocative raising of the Israeli flag and placing models of the so-called “third temple” next to the Dome of the Rock.
7. **Military tourism inside Al-Haram Al-Sharif**: The JJA recorded about 13000 soldiers breaking into the Al-Aqsa compound during 2012-2013.



*Figure 3: IOA militarization of tourism and protection of extremists inside Al-Aqsa Mosque, 2012.*



8. **Surveillance cameras against freedom of worship at Al-Jami' Al-Aqsa:** Jordan demands that Israeli authorities remove the installed surveillance cameras at Al-Aqsa Mosque Compound and the window of the Magharbeh Gate. These surveillance cameras defile the sanctity of the Mosque and blatantly violate the religious freedom of worship in one of Islam's three holiest sites.
9. **Surveillance cameras to spy on Awqaf employees and violate freedom of worship at the Dome of the Rock:** In December 2013 **three surveillance cameras** were installed at the northern side of the Dome of the Rock Plaza. Jordan deeply condemned these cameras which spy on the movement of worshippers, Awqaf employees, Hashemite Restoration Committee staff and members of the Jerusalem Awqaf Council.
10. **Sound bombs** used by the IOA have **destabilized the beautiful and historic ceramics atop the main gates of the Dome of the Rock.**



*Figure 4: Ceramic cracks in one of the beautiful arches of the Dome of the Rock's southern gate due to IOA sound bombs, December 2013.*

11. **Breaking the historic gates of Al-Jami' Al-Aqsa:** The IOA has used the new tactic of detaining worshippers inside Al-Jami' Al-Aqsa by using iron chains, locks and plates to lock them in; this has left the wooden doors of Al-Aqsa in a very bad state.



*Figure 5: Damage caused by Israeli police to Al-Jami' Al-Aqsa's historic gates for the purpose of capturing worshippers inside, December 2013.*

## 5- Al-Magharbeh Gate Pathway (MGP) / “Magharbeh Ascent”:

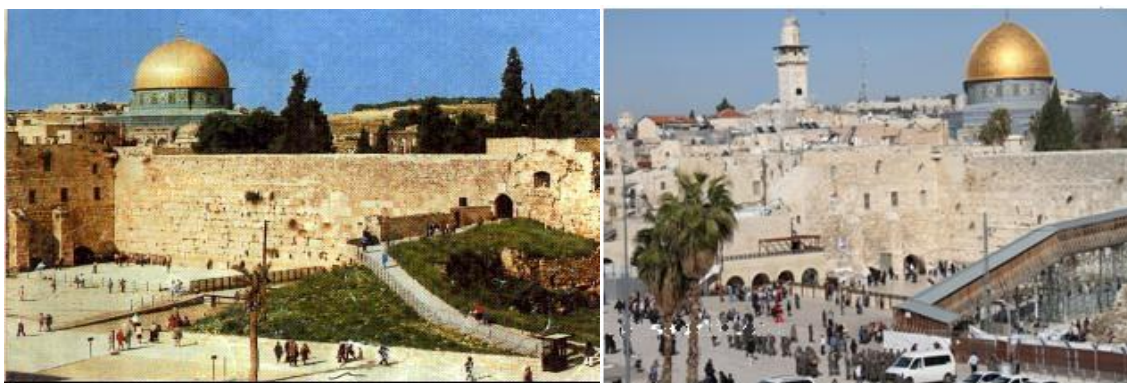
The extensive aggressions against the MGP and its surroundings include the following:

1. 1967 – Demolition of the Magharbeh Quarter, an 800-year-old Muslim Waqf. This heinous demolition of an entire ancient quarter echoes the destruction and demolition of the MGP which has been ongoing for the last 10 years (since 2004).



*Figure 6: IOA demolition of the historic Waqf of the Magharbeh Quarter in June 1967.*

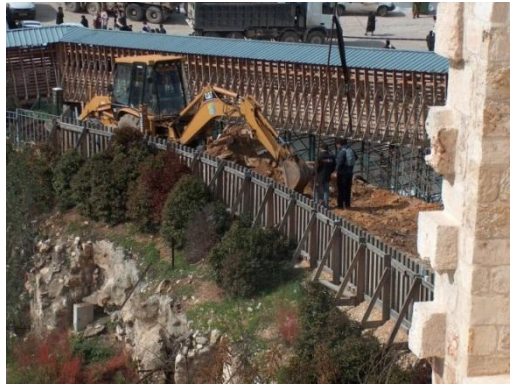
2. 1967-1969 – Demolition of historic buildings, schools and houses in the MGP area (Al-Zawiyya Al-Fakhriyya, Dar Abu Al-Saud, Al-Afdaliyya Mosque).
3. 2004, 15<sup>th</sup> February – Collapse of part of the MGP due to the IOA’s illegal excavations at the site.
4. 2005 – Erecting a wooden bridge to replace the historic pathway with the aim of changing the Muslim Arab heritage of the site.



*Figure 7: Comparison of the MGP in 2004(left) with the MGP in 2013 (right); erasing antiquities both above and below the ground.*



5. 2007- 2010 – Major demolitions and erasing major parts of the MGP by bulldozers and heavy machinery.



*Figure 8: In 2007 the IOA used heavy machinery to remove Mamluk and Ummayyad walls from the MGP site.*

6. 2010-2011 – Demolitions and construction plans at the MGP site. Municipal plans to extend the Buraq Wall / “Wailing Wall” Plaza at the expense of the authentic and historic remains of the MGP.



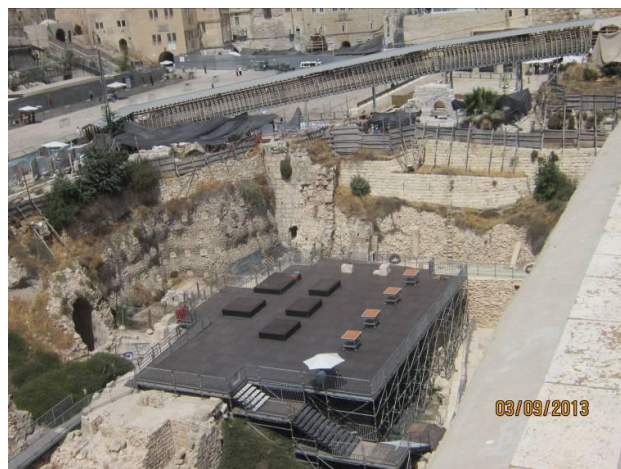
*Figure 9: IOA demolishes an historic room atop the MGP, August 2012.*

7. Continued threats to construct a permanent MGP bridge, neglecting the calls of UNESCO and the international community to preserve the site’s heritage.
8. 2012 – Intense demolitions of the historic remains, including entire rooms and parts of the Afdaliyya Mosque.
9. 2012 – Using tractors and heavy machinery to erase large historic remains at the base of the Magharbeh Gate Pathway.\
10. Using reinforced concrete to remove and conceal Islamic remains at the site.

11. 2013 – Transferring large amounts of the remains of the MGP.
12. Continued disregard of all UNESCO decisions regarding the MGP and banning the Jordanian Jerusalem Awqaf from performing their duties to restore the MGP area for the 10<sup>th</sup> consecutive year (see: Annex of UNESCO MGP Decisions).
13. Demolishing and erasing part of the MGP in order to expand the Jewish women's prayer area.
14. Leveling and lowering large areas of the MGP.
15. Enforcement of a new Jewish prayer platform for American Reform Jews.



*Figure 9: The IOA leveled the base of the Magharbeh Gate Pathway in order to expand a Jewish women's prayer area, January 2014.*



*Figure 10: Construction of a 120 sqm platform as a prayer room for American Liberal Jews, September 2013.*



*Figure 11: Jordanian proposed design for the MGP, submitted to UNESCO, 2011.*

The Government of Jordan is deeply concerned about Israeli acts prohibiting the entrusted National Authority from performing emergency restorations and stabilization measures to the Ummayyad / Ottoman / Mamluk Walls at the site of the Magharbeh Gate Pathway. These historic treasures have recently been removed or covered with concrete and new walls by the IOA.

# **Chapter 3: Israeli Occupation Violations Imposing New Facts on the Ground in and Around the Old City of Jerusalem and its Walls**



## 1- The IOA changed the centuries-old *Status Quo* and committed aggressions against the Nabi Dawud Compound and Mosque

1. Destruction and obliteration of the Ottoman tiles on the internal façade of the lower mosque.



*Figure 12: Flagrant destruction of the Ottoman ceramic and pottery tiles from the gates of the Nabi*

*Dawud Mosque and Compound, 2012 - 2013.*

2. Attempts to damage part of the historic inscription panel above the northern entrance of the Compound.
3. Installing Jewish symbols (Star of David) on the new iron grille on the windows.
4. Judaization of the site by presenting the entire compound as 'David's Tomb', ignoring the fact that for centuries the compound has been a mosque and includes the Cenacle (the Last Supper room) .
5. Enforcing a new function on the site by converting the mosque's rooms into a synagogue.



*Figure 13: Converting the Nabi Dawud Mosque into a Jewish synagogue. Left: removal of the*

*historic Ottoman grille from the window and replacing it with a Star of David grille.*

6. Smashing part of one of the compound's Mihrabs;
7. The IOA changed the surface of the main dome of the Nabi Dawud Mosque.
8. Banning the Jerusalem Awqaf from restoring and maintaining the ceramic tiles and the Mihrab of the mosque.
9. Demolishing the Dajani Family Waqf Cemetery and preventing the Awqaf from undertaking the necessary measures to restore it, (see the pictures below)



## **2 – The IOA's intrusive excavations and tunneling in and around the Old City of Jerusalem and its Walls:**

1. **Tens of intrusive excavations** are spreading all over the Old City of Jerusalem and on both sides of its walls.
2. **The IOA supports excavations and tunneling conducted by extremist groups.**
3. **The IOA illegally moves large quantities of archaeological remains** from these excavated sites to unknown destinations. The Government of Jordan is extremely concerned with the manner in which excavations and tunneling affect the foundations and structural integrity of the western wall of Al-Haram Al-Sharif.
4. **Major excavations were carried out by non-professional groups with permits from the relevant Israeli official authorities** or with unsubstantial participation from Israeli archaeologists who get coverage for the settlers' excavations in exchange for financial benefits.
5. **Excavations and tunneling have caused several collapses**, such as the collapse of the floor of the UNRWA Girls School near the southern wall of Al-Aqsa Mosque on February 1<sup>st</sup>, 2009; the collapse of Silwan's main street in January 2010; the collapse on December 26<sup>th</sup>, 2011 of the tunnel adjacent to Ain Silwan Mosque which housed a kindergarten resulting in serious damage, evacuation of the kindergarten and closure of the mosque.
6. **Excavations have changed and undermined the structural integrity of the holy sites**, e.g. bulges in the walls have appeared (2001, 2004), in addition to several structural collapses (1984, 1990, 1996, 2004, 2009).



7. **The hollowing out of areas around and under Al-Haram Al-Sharif have not stopped since 1967.** The Government of Jordan is deeply concerned that the structural integrity of these holy and historic sites may deteriorate further, a matter that requires imminent intervention to avoid irreparable harm.
8. **According to renowned Israeli archaeologist Me'ir Ben-Dov who excavated the area, there are about 17 points from which settlers might breach into the underground prayer rooms and cisterns of Al-Aqsa Mosque.**
9. **Ben-Dove has also warned of: 1- the IOA's removal of historic relics; 2- the IOA falsifying the history of Ummayyad and Byzantine remains by describing them as remains of Jewish periods.**
10. **The Jerusalem-based Emek Shaveh Organization recoded tens of tunneling violations south of Al-Aqsa Mosque down to Silwan, most significant is the exclusivist Jewish narrative imposed on Islamic and Byantine history and the erasing of remains unrelated to Jewish history. In addition, many archaeological excavations are run by non-professional contractors (settlers) and they are used as tools to occupy the land and evacuate Jerusalemite Palestinians from their homes.**
11. **It is a matter of deep concern for the GoJ that the IOA is adversely affecting the authenticity and cultural heritage of the Old City of Jerusalem and its Walls through authorizing intrusive excavations and tunneling. Israeli archaeologists confirmed that more than 100 excavations are being conducted in the Old City of Jerusalem and on both sides of its Walls.**

Below is a photo of one of the important Ummyad stones which was transferred from one of the Ummayyad palaces south of Al-Aqsa to the garden of the Israeli Knesset.



*Figure 14: Transferring large historic stones from the Ummayyad palaces to the garden of the Israeli Knesset*

## Recent Tunneling and Excavations Include the Following:

### A- Major Tunneling and Excavations around the Wall of Al-Aqsa Mosque:

Following are details of Israeli excavations and tunnels spreading in the Old City of Jerusalem and its Walls. The tunnels below are among the most risky post-1967 excavations which may have a direct effect on the structural integrity of Al-Aqsa Mosque (see tunneling map below):

#### Examples of Documented Tunnels and Excavations Under and Around al-Haram al-Sharif:

1. **Southern Wall of the Marwani Mosque (1967-1968):** (70m long, 14m deep tunneling and excavation at the southeastern wall of Al-Haram Al-Sharif). The main goal of this attempt was to open an entrance to the underground Marwani Mosque inside Al-Haram Al-Sharif. This was the first case of Israeli digging under the southeastern wall of Al-Haram Al-Sharif. It started in 1967 and continued through 1968-1969. These excavations are reported as the main cause of the 2002 bulge in the southeastern wall of Al-Haram Al-Sharif and the increased danger of the wall collapsing. Excavations and archaeological incursions at the site are reported regularly<sup>2</sup>.
2. **Southern Corner of the Buraq Wall / “Western Wall” of Al-Haram Al-Sharif (1967-1969):** (80m long). The excavations are to the north and all the way to the Magharbeh Gate Pathway. The tunnels go under Al-Zawiyeh Al-Fakhriyah<sup>3</sup> and 14 other historical Islamic buildings. The tunneling caused cracks in all the aforementioned buildings. Israeli Jerusalem Municipality engineers declared them dilapidated and consequently bulldozed them on June 14, 1969, leading their Arab residents to leave the Holy City.

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<sup>2</sup> Interviews with Engineer Ra'ef Najem's staff at the Awqaf Council in Jerusalem. Jordanian notes and complaints were sent to UNESCO. Ra'ef Najem has been the Director of the Jordanian Committee for Restoration of Al-Aqsa Mosque and the Dome of the Rock since the early 1970s. He was also one of the founders of the committee in 1953-54. Israeli unilateral excavations and work at the site of the Ummayad Palaces continue until the present time.

<sup>3</sup> Source: regarding the demolition of Al-Zawiyya Al-Fakhriyyah, a mosque and other prominent historic building at the site, please see “letter dated (November 6, 1968) from the Permanent Representative of Jordan to the UN Secretary General. <http://domino.un.org/unispal.nsf/cf02d057b04d356385256ddb006dc02f/86d0946f5c3d743685256ee1006cfe61?OpenDocument>

3. **Western Wall Tunnels and Excavations** (1970-present): (320m long; beneath Al-Haram Al-Sharif and the Muslim Quarter). The tunnel starts under the Muslim Shari'ah Court building which was occupied by Israel who then converted part of it into a synagogue. The tunnel goes north and passes under 6 main gates of Al-Haram Al-Sharif and over highly significant Islamic archaeological buildings. This massive tunnel has many extensions which encompass other tunnels and underground rooms. The tunnel was opened to the public in 1994. Its main exit, which was opened in 1996 and is through the Via Dolorosa, enables thousands of additional tourists to access the tunnels and hear the Jewish narrative of the "Third Temple" by mostly extremist tour guides. Many collapses and three massacres at Al-Haram Al-Sharif (e.g. the 1996 Netanyahu Tunnel riots left more than 75 Palestinians killed) occurred because of the extensions of this tunnel and its offensive results<sup>4</sup>.
4. **Tunnel under Mihrab of Al-Aqsa** (1970-1974): (20m deep, located under the southern wall of Al-Aqsa Mosque, reaching under the mosque's Mihrab). Jews call it the Double Gate Tunnel or the Hulda Gate Tunnel. To avoid an uprising, Israel closed the tunnel and blocked it with stones and earth after the Awqaf Administration discovered it<sup>5</sup>.
5. **Tunneling and Excavations under the Mosque of Omar** (1971-1974): The tunneling and excavations under the southeastern wall of the Al-Aqsa Mosque were exposed in 1974. It is believed that the tunneling created possible access to cisterns and underground chambers.
6. **Tunneling and Excavations of the Triple Gate** (1970-undetermined): Opened to enable Jewish access to the Lower Aqsa, also known as the Ancient Aqsa, through the southern wall of Al-Haram Al-Sharif<sup>6</sup>.

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<sup>4</sup> See UNESCO "Jerusalem and the implementation of 147 EX/Decision 3.6.1 (150 EX/ 13 and 150 EX/42)" resolution "*requests the Israeli authorities to return the tunnel to its state prior to the events of 23 September 1996, in accordance with the relevant international decisions, rules and instruments;*"

<sup>5</sup> Sources: Interview with Raef Najem at his home in Amman (July 2010). Awqaf employees and members of the Committee for the Restoration of al-Aqsa Mosque and the Dome of the Rock said that they were eyewitnesses of the incidents of penetrating the lower al-Aqsa and they closed the penetrated wall by earth. The incident was followed by the Israeli extremist fire, which burnt most of al-Aqsa Mosque in 1969. Later on the Awqaf Council and the Restoration Committee went down to the lower Aqsa and fortified its foundations.

<sup>6</sup> (3.2.1971) The Jordanian Mayor of Jerusalem, Rawhi al-Khatib, notes to the Jordanian PM about some Israeli violations and aggressions against Muslim holy places in the city: Jews enter al-Haram and do their prayers inside; excavations reach a depth of 35 meters South and West of al-Haram; continuity in digging under al-Buraq wall; opening a road through Muslim cemeteries; al-Buraq Wall is about to collapse. Rawhi al-Khatib seeks PM support to raise a case against the occupation authorities in order to stop the Israeli campaign against the holy shrines.

7. **Tunnel of the Golden Gate** (1975-undetermined): This is the only gate in the eastern wall of Al-Haram Al-Sharif and has been closed for centuries. Excavations started in 1975 and continued for many years with some intervals of interruption. The tunnel starts in the Islamic Al-Rahmah Cemetery and goes beneath the Golden Gate (*Bab Sitna Mariam* in Arabic). Awqaf employees reported that the extremist sponsors of this tunneling aim to use the tunnel to reach the foundations of the Dome of the Rock in order to blow it up<sup>7</sup>. Some extremists believe the Dome of the Rock to be the location of the Holy of Holies and hope to build the “Third Temple” in its place<sup>8</sup>.

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<sup>7</sup> State of Israel vs Livni, District Court of Jerusalem (a case about an attempt by Jewish extremists to blow up the Dome of the Rock), in Ruth Lapidot and Moshe Hirsch (eds.) *The Jerusalem Question and its Resolution: Selected Documents* (Dordrecht: Martinus Nijhoff Publishers, 1994), p. 522.

<sup>8</sup> 2009 classified sources said that digging currently taking place to the right of the Rahmah Gate of the Aqsa and that after these diggings are completed it will become possible for these extremists to reach any point in the holy sites.

**Annex II: 42 Follow-up of the UNESCO reactive monitoring mission to the Old City of Jerusalem and its Walls and the UNESCO experts meeting on the Mughrabi Ascent**<sup>7</sup> (192 EX/42 Rev; 192 EX/47)

The Executive Board,

1. Having examined document 192 EX/42 Rev.,
2. Recalling the Executive Board decisions 191 EX/Decision 5.1 and 191 EX/Decision 9 as well as World Heritage Committee decision 34 COM/7A.20,
3. Recalling the agreement reached at the 191st session of the Executive Board, whereby the concerned parties declared their commitment to implement the following requirements:
  - (a) the immediate dispatch, as of 19 May 2013, of the joint World Heritage Centre/ICCROM/ICOMOS reactive monitoring mission to the Old City of Jerusalem and its Walls, in accordance with paragraph 11 of decision 34 COM 7A.20 adopted by the World Heritage Committee in Brasilia at its 34th session,
  - (b) the adjournment of the five Middle East items on the agenda of its 191st session to its 192nd session,
  - (c) participation in the experts meeting on the Mughrabi Ascent, which was supposed to be held at UNESCO by 27 May 2013,
4. Notes with satisfaction the Arab side's fulfilment of its commitment by accepting, at the 191<sup>st</sup> session, the adjournment of the five Middle East items;
5. Regrets the unilateral Israeli cancelation of the joint reactive monitoring mission to the Old City of Jerusalem and its Walls by requiring new restrictive preconditions, as well as the absence of Israeli representatives at the UNESCO experts meeting on the Mughrabi Ascent;
6. Urges Israel to respect the terms of the above-mentioned agreement by accepting and facilitating the joint reactive monitoring mission to the Old City of Jerusalem and its Walls and by participating in the UNESCO experts meeting on the Mughrabi Ascent;

8. **Tunnels under Al-Buraq Wall / Western Wall** (1967-1977): (60m long). Israel aims to broaden the Buraq Plaza / “Western Wall Plaza” and excavate the so-called Roman or Herodian roads below. Tunnels endanger parts of the Al-Buraq Wall and are said to penetrate the wall and continue underneath the Al-Haram Al-Sharif. The tunneling and excavations resulted in cracks in the old Shari’ah Court, Khaldiyyah Library, Zawiyat Abu-Madyan and more than 35 residential Waqf properties in the vicinity of Al-Haram Al-Sharif. Some of these historical structures were occupied by Israeli settlers and Israeli police while other buildings were destroyed<sup>9</sup>.
9. **Bab El-Qataneen Tunnel / The Warren Shaft Tunnel** (1980-present): (25m deep, 6m wide). This tunnel was partially opened to Israelis in 1980 and goes under Bab Al-Silsileh and Bab Al-Qataneen where it turns towards the Dome of the Rock. The tunnel also became known as the Netanyahu Tunnel after the Israeli authorities opened it to the public in 1996. This incident sparked the “Tunnels Revolt” which resulted in the death of more than 75 Palestinians and 16 Israelis. The tunnel’s exit is found on the northern side of Al-Haram Al-Sharif, under Al-Omariyyeh School.
10. **Bab Al-Ghawanmeh Tunneling and Excavations** (1967-present): (70m deep under Al-Haram Al-Sharif). This is the most covert of all the excavations and the hardest to gain access to. The Awqaf Administration reports tunneling that is at least 70 meters deep under Al-Haram Al-Sharif heading towards the Dome of the Rock<sup>10</sup>.
11. **Magharbeh Gate Tunnel** (2000-present): (100m long): Also known as the “Hasmonean Tunnel,” it starts in the Jewish Quarter and runs 100 meters towards and beneath the Magharbeh Gate before turning left (north) towards the Dome of the Rock.
12. **Ohel Yitzhak Tunnels (Isaac’s Tent)** (2006-2009): This is located a mere 100 meters from the Buraq Wall / “Western Wall” and is slated to pass beneath many houses in the Muslim Quarter. Although some NGOs became aware of a decision to

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7. Thanks the Director-General for her efforts to implement the above-mentioned UNESCO joint mission, and encourages her to continue her efforts to implement this decision and all related UNESCO decisions and resolutions;

8. Decides to include this item in the agenda of its 194th session, and invites the Director-General to submit to it a follow-up report thereon.

<sup>9</sup> Source: Bahat, Dan (2002) *The Western Wall Tunnels: Touching the Stones of Our Heritage*, Heritage Foundation, Israel.

<sup>10</sup> “Zionist Definition of Religious Tolerance: If it’s not Jewish, either we Judaize it or we Destroy it! (II)” in *My Palestine* (February 28 2010), <http://avoicefrompalestine.wordpress.com/tag/al-haram-ash-sharif/>

begin excavations, no building plan was officially submitted to the planning authorities. These tunnels are being carried out almost completely by Jewish extremist groups such as Ateret Cohanim and the Elad Company for Jewish Settlement in the Old City<sup>11</sup>.

13. **Western Wall Underground Synagogue** (2009-present): (7m deep; within the Western Wall Tunnel - **precisely opposite the Dome of the Rock**). Work on this project commenced in 2008. It entails hollowing out columns into which reinforced concrete can be poured. Buildings of different Islamic periods would then be removed in order to build the synagogue at the level of the “Roman road”. The project is being financed by Israeli businessman and New York Plaza Hotel owner, Yitzhak Tshuva<sup>12</sup>.
14. **Silwan Tunnels and Excavations** (1990–present): Settler organizations, such as Elad, in cooperation with the Israeli Antiquities Authority, have been conducting extensive excavations over and under the ground in Silwan, south of Al-Haram Al-Sharif. Many reports indicate that the purpose of tunneling in Silwan is to develop an underground network of tunnels, some of which will reach under Al-Haram Al-Sharif. Skeletons dating from the Islamic era were discovered in the course of the excavations and were removed from the site without informing the Muslim authorities and have since disappeared. According to the London Times (March 1, 2008), “Jewish settler groups are digging an extensive tunnel network under Muslim areas of Jerusalem's Old City while building a ring of settlements around it to bolster their claim to the disputed city in any future peace deal.”<sup>13</sup>

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<sup>11</sup> “Tunnel to link J'lem's Jewish Quarter, Muslim Quarter synagogue” in Haaretz (November 2 2007), <http://www.haaretz.com/news/tunnel-to-link-j-lem-s-jewish-quarter-muslim-quarter-synagogue-1.232372>

See also “AG Mazuz asked to halt Muslim Quarter excavation,” in Haaretz (January 9 2008), <http://www.haaretz.com/print-edition/news/ag-mazuz-asked-to-halt-muslim-quarter-excavation-1.236849>

<sup>12</sup> “Excavations at ‘Isaac’s Tent’” in *Ir Amim* (July 2010), <http://www.ir-amim.org.il/Eng/?pg=&categoryid=293&articleid=&searchparam=underground%20synagogue>

<sup>13</sup> Source: “Settlers dig tunnels around Jerusalem,” in The Sunday Times (March 1, 2008), [http://www.timesonline.co.uk/tol/news/world/middle\\_east/article3463264.ece](http://www.timesonline.co.uk/tol/news/world/middle_east/article3463264.ece)  
“City of David (Silwan) tunnel excavation proceeds without proper permit” in Haaretz (February 4 2007), <http://www.haaretz.com/news/city-of-david-tunnel-excavation-proceeds-without-proper-permit-1.211942>



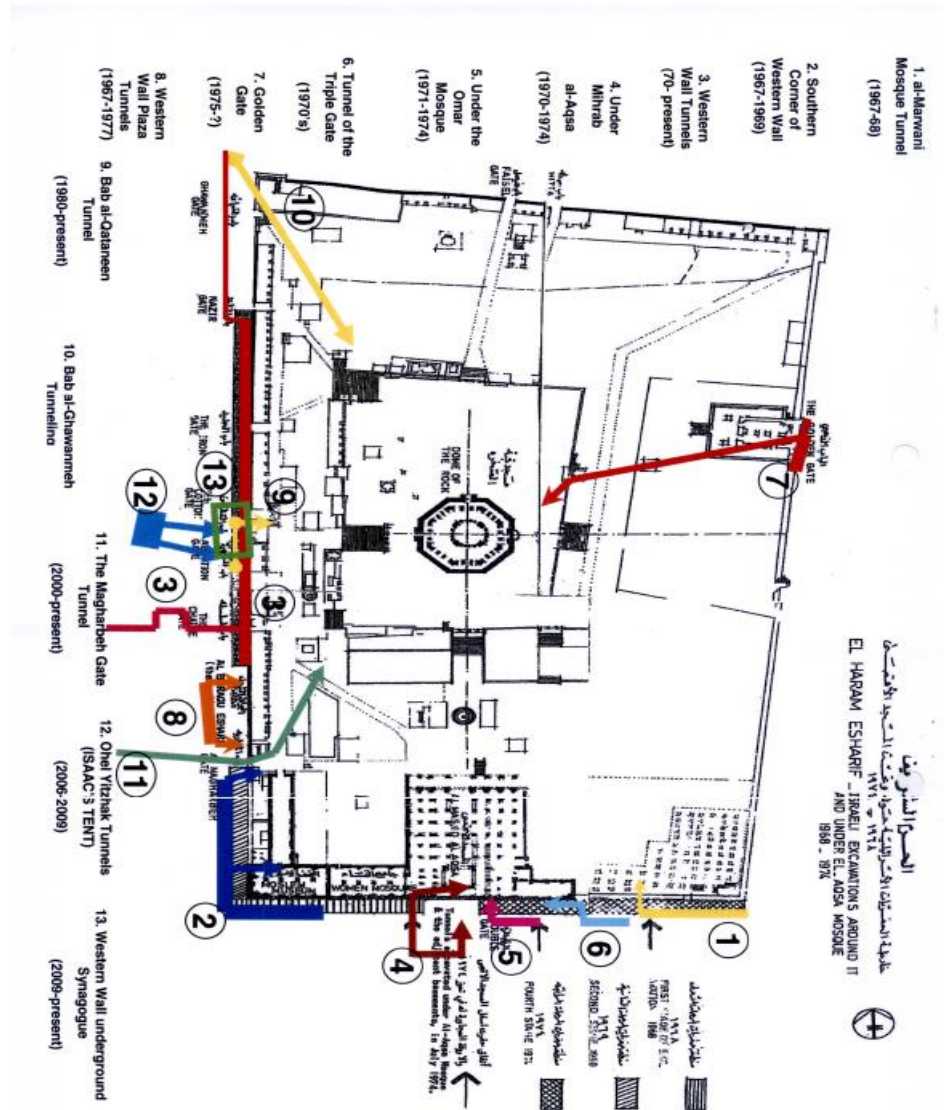


Figure 15: Map of excavations and tunneling revealing attempts to breach Al-Aqsa's Wall.

## B- Tunneling and Excavations Around the Old City of Jerusalem:

1. **Tunnels connecting Al-Wad Street with Al-Buraq Wall and the Kittan Cave:** An Israeli plan was adopted to renovate the infrastructure at Al-Wad Street, closing off the street through 2013-2014. The project includes establishing the appropriate structure for tunnels located right beneath the Muslim Quarter and its streets, connecting tunnels starting beneath the quarter to Al-Buraq Wall with the Kittan Cave.

2. **Construction and adoption of an exclusivist narrative re Magharet Al-Kittan / Al-Kittan Cave:** In November 2012, the IOA opened a new gate to the Al-Kittan Cave under the northern walls of the Old City of Jerusalem and poured huge amounts of concrete. An exclusivist narrative has been imposed on the location in order to undermine the historic significance of the location as the cave from which the building stones of the Ottoman Wall of the Old City were extracted, a project commissioned by the Ottoman Sultan, Suleiman the Great. A Jewish name has been imposed on the cave and it is now being referred to as “Zedekiah’s Cave” in an attempt to advocate a claim that this is the cave from whence the stones of the “First Temple” were extracted.
3. **Removal of historic paving stones from the Al-Wad-Via Dolorosa streets junction:** Since October 2012, an ongoing IOA project has removed the historic paving stones from the area held to be the Third Station of the Cross and one of the most significant features of the Old City. This project caused vast destruction to the historic relics at Al-Wad Street and affected the authenticity of the site.
4. **Tunnels connecting Silwan to the Buraq Plaza (“Western Wall” Plaza):** Tunnels connecting Silwan to the Buraq Plaza are being dug. The tunneling, which extends towards Al-Aqsa Mosque and a connecting area adjacent to Al-Haram Al-Sharif, exposes the foundations and structure of many historic buildings to great danger. Tunneling in Silwan has been the direct cause of several collapses in the area, such as the collapse of the floor of the UNRWA Girls School near the southern wall of Al-Aqsa Mosque (February 1<sup>st</sup>, 2009) and collapses in Silwan’s main street (January 26<sup>th</sup>, 2010; December 2011; March 3, 2012). Tunneling in Silwan has also led to the cracks in, and closure of, the Silwan Mosque and the adjacent kindergarten.
5. **“Jewish purity sites” are created everywhere around Al-Aqsa Mosque, especially in the area of the Ummayyad Palaces:** the Government of Jordan is highly concerned about the fact that most of these excavations have been conducted exclusively by the IOA’s archaeologists and many Israeli archaeologists assert that the history of many of these “Jewish purity sites” has been concocted.

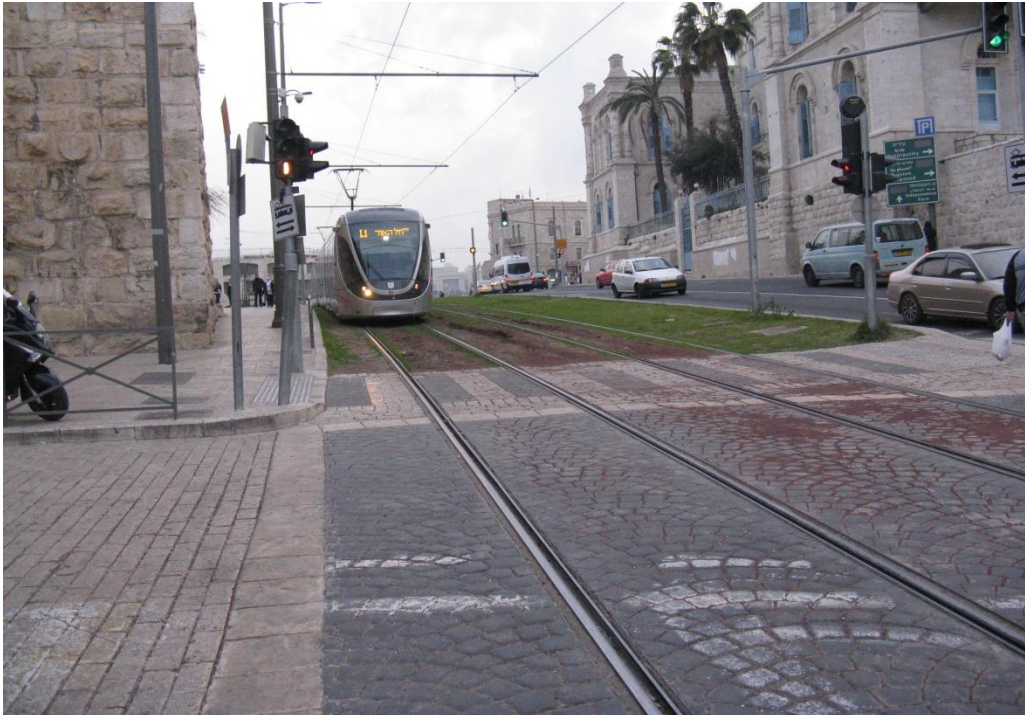
### **3- IOA acts/ violations altering the character of the Old City of Jerusalem and its Walls:**

Contrary to the *Hague Convention* of 1956 calling for protecting the cultural heritage of occupied land and in opposition of tens of decisions taken by the World Heritage Committee and Executive Board of UNESCO (see Annex I of UNESCO World Heritage 37 Sessions), numerous acts and omissions were undertaken by the Israeli Occupation Authorities in a



manner that alters the integrity, authenticity and historical heritage of the site. These acts / omissions include:

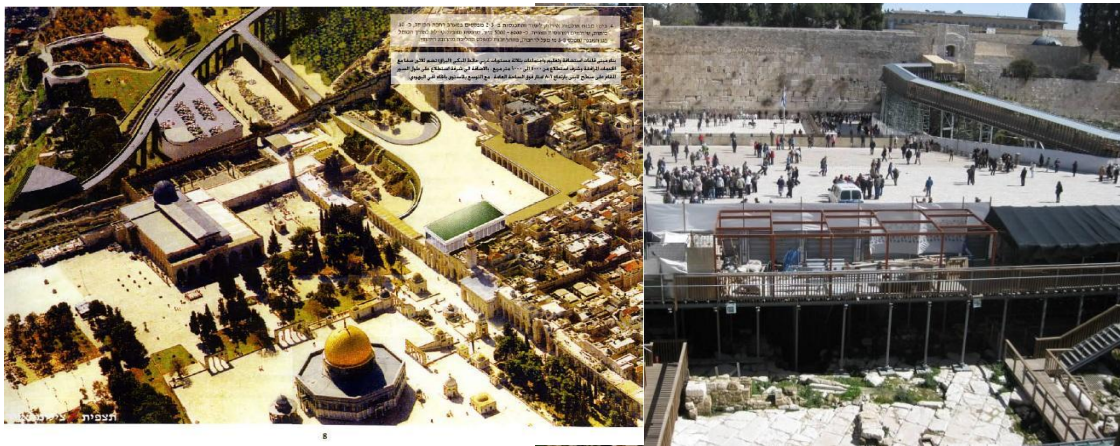
1. **IOA tramway tracks less than two meters away from the Northern Wall of the Old City of Jerusalem:** In September 2011 Israeli Occupation Authorities operated the railway / tramway which dangerously passes less than two meters next to the north-western corner of one of the Walls of the Old City of Jerusalem. The tramway negatively affects the integrity of the site due to the vibrations of the movement of the train on the tracks. The tram passes the location every five minutes.



*Figure 16: Tramway less than 2 meters away from the northern wall of the Old City.*

2. **Converting historical entrances of Old City gates into artificial public parks:** The IOA is changing the features of the main gates and walls of the Old City of Jerusalem by establishing so-called “Biblical Parks”. These gates include: the Damascus Gate; Bab Al-Asbat (Lions Gate) and Bab Al-Sahera (Herod’s Gate). The outside entrances of these gates have been changed and converted into parks and gardens. Some historical grounds and relics have been covered with earth and concrete, planted with trees and new walkways have been created in a way that drastically changes the authentic character of the Holy City.
3. **Covert excavations at the Waqf of Al-Buraq Plaza (Beit Haliba Project):** The IOA is currently executing intrusive and covert excavations at the western side of Al-Buraq Plaza (a Waqf property and legally and historically part of Al-Aqsa Mosque). The

ongoing excavations, which started majorly in 2004 have removed historic rooms of the Magharbeh Quarter and historic Mamluk and Ummayyad remains. The excavations have been expanded and deepened with the aim of hollowing out the area beneath the plaza. **In February 2012, a plan for construction on the western section** of the Buraq Wall / “Western Wall” Plaza was deposited for public review by the Jerusalem Building and Planning District Committee. The plan was put forth by the Western Wall Heritage Fund, an Israeli government body responsible for the “Western Wall” Plaza and the “Western Wall” tunnels. The structure, known as “Beit Haliba,” is planned to cover approximately 3,700 square meters and to rise three floors above ground level and one and a half floors below ground. The planned building will face Al-Haram Al-Sharif



*Figure 17: Right: View of the western section of the Buraq Wall Plaza.*

*Front: Site of the “Beit Haliba” project.*

*Left: Intended plans for the Buraq Wall area changing its historic features and undermining its structural, historic and cultural authenticity and integrity.*

4. **Israel has demolished arches at the Al-Buraq Wall area and replaced them with an illegal high rise structure in the Old City of Jerusalem** (February 5, 2013): Israeli bulldozers demolished part of a building and arches at the Buraq Wall area in order to construct a 900 square meter project under the name of “Strauss House” (religious school, police station and synagogue) located at the northwest corner of the Buraq Plaza. The building will negatively affect the view of the Dome of the Rock and will completely alter the historic skyline of the entire area, while also blocking the windows of Muslim Waqf houses and properties overlooking the Buraq Plaza (e.g.: Sob-Laban, Dar Khalidi, Khalidi Library and the Tankaziyyah School.) An Israeli

court rejected the suspension of the new illegal building which violates both UNESCO and Geneva Heritage Conventions, and despite objections by the neighboring Arab families, Israeli UNESCO representative Michel Turner, the Israeli Society for the Protection of Nature and many Israeli heritage experts.

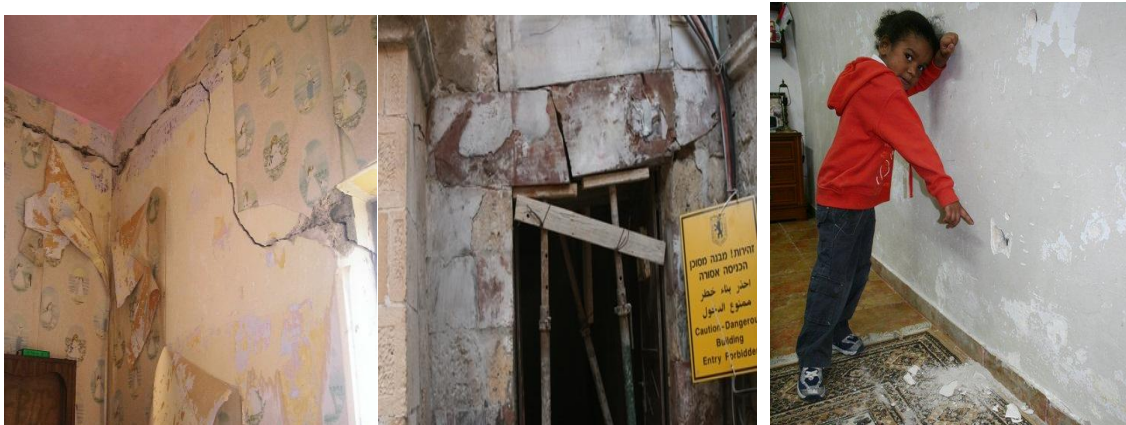


*Figure 18: Demolition of arches and buildings in order to construct the Strauss compound, February 2013.*

*Right: Reinforced concrete over historic remains at the Strauss site, January 24, 2014.*

5. **“Western Wall” Tunnel and excavations:** The IOA continue excavations of the “Western Wall” Tunnel going beneath the Muslim Quarter and the western colonnades of Al-Masjid Al-Aqsa. This tunneling is affecting the unique historic and cultural heritage of the buildings above, such as Al-Manjaqiah School, Al-Umariyyah School and Al-Jawhariah School as well as other nearby buildings.





*Figure 19: Impact of the covert excavations in the “Western Wall” Tunnels: cracks and holes in the buildings over Al-Aqsa.*

*Middle: Al-Qirami neighborhood cracks, 2013.*

6. **Enforcement of Jewish names on Arab sites and roads:** Israeli Occupation Authorities are systematically changing the geographical features and the inherited identity and names of traditional and historic sites and roads in the Old City of Jerusalem and its Walls, contrary to international laws and norms.



*Figure 20: Arabic replaced by Hebrew at Mt. Scopus (left). Both English and Arabic names of Solomon’s Cave are denied and replaced with “Zedekiah’s Cave” (right).*

7. **The IOA arbitrarily and indefinitely confiscated the building of Al-Tankaziyyah Mamluki School (the Court Building) next to Bab Al-Silsilah of Al-Aqsa Mosque,**

and are using it as it as a police station. The IOA have continuously prevented the JJA from restoring this building, in contravention with International Humanitarian Law. Such confiscations are beyond any military necessity and are contrary to the *1949 Fourth Geneva Convention*. 2013 witnessed intensive covert works inside the school. Observers documented converting parts of the historical Waqf school into a synagogue. The Zamosh municipal project includes a plan to build a tall synagogue over the roof of the Tankaziyyah.

8. **The IOA's removal of the historic grille of the Church of Holy Sepulchre:** The IOA infringed upon the historic Waqf building of Al-Khanqah Al-Salahiya and the western wall of the Church of Holy Sepulcher. The IOA also confiscated the antique metal protection grille located therein and erected a new and inauthentic grille and has yet to return the original grille which is considered a substance breach of *International Humanitarian Law, the 1954 Hague Convention, and the 1972 World Heritage Convention*.
9. **Demolishing the Shepherd Hotel in the Sheikh Jarrah Neighborhood:** The IOA demolished the historic Shepherd Hotel in the neighborhood of Sheikh Jarrah in East Jerusalem in order to build settlement units on the site and in a measure designed to alter the historic and cultural character and heritage of the surroundings of the Old City of Jerusalem. The move further seeks to create new facts on the ground and destabilize the Occupied Palestinian Territories because of the sensitivity of the site being located in the heart of the Sheikh Jarrah neighborhood of Arab East Jerusalem.
10. **Israeli settlers burned the Okasha Mosque in Jerusalem:** Israeli settlers burned Ukasha Mosque (an Islamic Waqf property) in West Jerusalem and wrote slogans hostile to Muslims and Arabs on the walls. The IOA continuously prevent any restoration works to be made to the mosque and do not allow it to be used for praying. At the same time, these authorities allowed settlers to establish a park within the mosque's courtyard. The JJA is deeply concerned about the serious physical damage to this site in addition to the grave breach of its cultural heritage.
11. **The Israeli Occupation Authorities' attempt to change the *Status Quo* of Howsh Al-Shehabi (Ribat Al-Kurd):** During 2013, the IOA intensified aggressions against the family Waqf property of Howsh Al-Shehabi, adjacent to Al-Haram Al-Sharif. The IOA's infringements aim to seize the privately-owned Waqf property and impose an exclusivist narrative to the location and annex it to the Buraq / "Western Wall" Plaza. The GoJ rejects such plans which are contrary to International Law and consecutive UNESCO decisions, and requests that the relevant parties call upon Israel to cease its

plan that effects the integrity, authenticity and cultural heritage of the site and infringes upon the Waqf property. Moreover, the IOA banned the Jordanian Jerusalem Awqaf from restoring the site several times.



*Figure 21: The IOA's unjustifiable change of the original historic pavement of Howsh Al-Shehabi (left) in November 2013.*

#### **4- Town planning Judaization undermining the integrity and authenticity of the Old City of Jerusalem**

Many Waqf properties have been confiscated to impose an exclusivist narrative that undermines the authenticity, integrity and cultural heritage of the Old City of Jerusalem and drastically alters the centuries-old *Status Quo*. Many such occupation actions are taking place in the vicinity of Al-Aqsa Mosque in a manner that negatively affects the function, visual view and skyline of Old City, and more importantly, contribute to **isolating the Al-Aqsa Mosque from its cultural surroundings and the Arab and Muslim community for whom it is unutterably holy**. Example of these actions / violations:

**More than 60 synagogues, most of them newly created in the Old City of Jerusalem:** tens of Waqf properties and illegal tunnels have been recently converted into Jewish synagogues. Many synagogues are newly created in an attempt to seize the area around Al-Aqsa Mosque and to isolate it from its Arab and Islamic demographic and human support. Among these synagogues are:

8. Turning **the Buraq “Western Wall” Plaza** into a square of synagogues undermining Waqf land and Arab properties both over and under the ground;
9. Turning one of the main halls of the second floor of the **Tankaziyah Court and School** into a Jewish synagogue overlooking the Al-Aqsa Mosque.

10. Plans to build the **largest and tallest synagogue** atop the Tankaziyyah Waqf school which will affect the skyline of the Old City and pollute the visual view of its Holy Sites.
11. **“Western Wall” Tunnel synagogues:** “Convoy of Generations”, “Temple Models” at the “Western Wall” entrance, Rabbi Gates Synagogue, Ohel Yetzhak (a new building in a historical site ) and others.



*Figure 22: (Left): The Ohel Yetzhak Synagogue at Al-Wad Street (between Bab Al-Hadid and Bab Al-Silsileh) a few meters from Al-Aqsa Mosque.*

*Right: The Zamosh municipal plan for the so-called tallest synagogue of “Light” over the Tankaziyyah School to be overlooking Al-Aqsa Mosque.*

12. **New synagogue (prayer platform) for liberal Jews** (American Reform) at the western side of the Ummayyad Palaces and near the southwest corner of Al-Aqsa Mosque. This aggression for the purpose of expanding the Al-Buraq / “Western Wall” Plaza is planned through infringing upon the Ummayyad palaces located on the southwestern corner of Al-Aqsa Mosque in order to impose a new synagogue on the ruins.
13. Plans for building a huge synagogue over the historic site of **Burj Al-Laqlaq** in the northeast corner of the Old City.
14. New **Jewish neighborhood over the roofs of the Christian Quarter and atop the Bazaar** and the Muristan area (Haret Assabra) in the Old City of Jerusalem.



## **5- IOA implanting more than 3000 fake Jewish graves around the Al-Aqsa Mosque in Ras El-Amoud, Mount of Olives and Silwan:**

4. Israel is implanting **thousands of fake Jewish graves in the land surrounding the eastern and southern wall of Al-Aqsa Mosque** with the pretext of “carrying out repair and maintenance works and new excavations”. This violation aims to confiscate Palestinian and Waqf land.
5. **IOA Bulldozing the Islamic Cemetery of Ma'man Allah (Mamilla):** The GoJ rejects the IOA's measures and activities at the historic Islamic Waqf Cemetery of Ma'man Allah (Mamilla), over which Israeli Occupation Authorities are building the so called “Tolerance Museum”. The museum is being constructed over the demolished graves that contain the remains of thousands of notable Muslims, some of whom are Companions of the Prophet Muhammad (PBUH).
6. **Desecration and destruction of Islamic burial sites and tombstones at Bab Al-Rahmah Cemetery** and the destruction of many graves at the Dajani Family Cemetery in the Nabi Dawud Compound.



*Figure 23: (Left): Jewish Fake Graves around the Wall of the Old City of Jerusalem*



# **Chapter 4: The Reactive Monitoring Mission to the Old City of Jerusalem and Its Walls**

## **1- Agreement reached at the 191<sup>st</sup> Session of the Executive Board**

At the 191<sup>st</sup> session of the Executive Board, all concerned parties reached an agreement to dispatch a technical mission to the Old City of Jerusalem and its Walls. As part of this agreement the Israeli Ambassador to UNESCO made the following statement:

“Following intensive consultations with various delegations and the indispensable assistance rendered by the Director General, positive progress for UNESCO has been achieved.

As part of this progress, we would like to state the following:

1. Israel is willing to participate with Jordanian, Palestinian, and World Heritage Centre in an experts meeting on the Mughrabi Ascent, similar to the one conducted in October 2010. This experts meeting is to be held in May 2013 in Paris at a date, which will be decided upon by the Director General.
2. Israel accepts and shall facilitate a UNESCO technical mission to the ‘Old City of Jerusalem and its Walls’ to start on May 19<sup>th</sup> 2013 in accordance with Paragraph 11 of Decision 34 COM 7A.20 adopted by consensus in August 2010 during the World Heritage Committee meeting in Brasilia, Brazil. The composition of the mission will be in accordance with the aforementioned World Heritage Decision.
3. The report and recommendations of the mission as well as the report of the technical meeting on the Mughrabi Ascent in Paris will be prepared with a view to present them to the concerned parties on June 1<sup>st</sup> 2013 and to the 37th session of the World Heritage Committee in Phnom Penh.
4. Israel is committed to the above provided that the five items submitted by the Arab Group on the agenda of the current Executive Board will be procedurally adjourned to the 192nd session of the executive board and that the only decision related to Jerusalem to be considered in the 37<sup>th</sup> session of the World Heritage Committee will be the adoption of the report and recommendations of the mission as well as the report of the Director General on the technical meeting.”

## **2- Sequence of Events**

1. (April 24, 2013) the UNESCO Mission deal was announced during the course of the UNESCO Executive Board 191<sup>st</sup> Session in Paris.
2. (May 21, 2013) UNESCO Mission was supposed to arrive to Jerusalem.
3. (May 20, 2013) Israel calls off the mission under the pretext that there are Palestinian attempts to politicize the Mission.
4. (May 24, 2013) Jordan and Palestine confirmed to UNESCO their participation in the MGP meeting on May 27<sup>th</sup> in Paris.

5. (May 24, 2013) Director of the WHC, Kishore Rao, stated that Israel has informed him that it is not going to take part in the MGP meeting, under the pretext that such a meeting is premature, as long as the mission's Terms of Reference are still contested.
6. (May 24, 2013) Permanent delegations of Jordan and Palestine, and the Arab group as well as the Organization of Islamic Cooperation sent to the UNESCO DG letters stressing the following:
  - a. Deplore the Israeli refusal to abide with WHC 34 consensus decisions,
  - b. Regret the Israeli refusal to allow UNESCO mission to Jerusalem on May 21, as agreed in front of the UNESCO during the EX 191,
  - c. Urges the international community to support efforts aiming at preventing further deterioration of the grave situation in Jerusalem.

### **3-Follow up of the Reactive Monitoring Mission requested by the 192 EX**

The EX, at its 192nd session, adopted a decision entitled “Follow-up of the UNESCO reactive monitoring mission to the Old City of Jerusalem and its Walls and the UNESCO experts meeting on the Mughrabi Ascent” where it urges Israel to respect the terms of the agreement by accepting and facilitating the joint reactive monitoring mission to the Old City of Jerusalem and its Walls and by participating in the UNESCO experts meeting on the Mughrabi Ascent (See annex II);

# **Recommendations**

The Governments of Jordan and Palestine urge the intervention of UNESCO and the World Heritage Center to resume monitoring and to inspect all of the observations mentioned in this Status Report.

Taking into consideration the fact that the Israeli Occupation Authorities have failed several times to keep their promises to implement UNESCO decisions to send a mission to monitor and report on the state of conservation of the Old City of Jerusalem, Jordan and Palestine call on UNESCO to ask that this urgent matter be discussed at the United Nations General Assembly and other relevant international forums.

Bearing in mind the consecutive World Heritage Committee decisions recognizing the Jordanian and Palestinian concerns about the Israeli violations in Jerusalem, Jordan and Palestine call on Israel, the Occupying Authority, to comply with the relevant UNESCO decisions, most importantly to refrain from the attempts to change the *Status Quo* at Al-Masjid Al-Aqsa, excavations and other illegal measures against the heritage of the Old City of Jerusalem and its Walls.

Jordan and Palestine reaffirm in this regard, (relating to the Israeli violations) that no measures, unilateral or otherwise, should be taken which will affect the authenticity and integrity of the Old City of Jerusalem, in accordance with the Convention Concerning the Protection of the World Cultural and Natural Heritage of 1972, and the relevant provisions on the protection of cultural heritage of the Hague Convention for the Protection of Cultural Property in the Event of Armed Conflict of 1954.

Jordan and Palestine insist on the demand that the IOA shall provide to the World Heritage Center all relevant information concerning all excavations and illegal works in the Old City of Jerusalem and its Walls as stipulated in previous WHC and Executive Board Decisions.

Jordan and Palestine request that the World Heritage Centre and its Advisory Bodies undertake an appropriate analytical study on the effects of the aforementioned violations and convey the results to the World Heritage Committee 38<sup>th</sup> Session, June 2014 for its consideration and action.

Jordan and Palestine underscore the necessity that UNESCO and the World Heritage Centre continue their guidance and direction towards fulfilling the obligations of all parties concerned, including UNESCO, towards the Old City of Jerusalem and its Walls, as a site listed by Jordan in the UNESCO World Heritage List in 1981 and in the List of World Heritage Sites in Danger in 1982.

Jordan and Palestine ask that this Status Report be distributed to all members of the World Heritage Committee and its integrity be reflected in the working document of the WHC's 38<sup>th</sup> Session, June 2014. Jordan and Palestine also request that the report submitted by Israel be clearly presented, as the report of the Occupying Authorities according to the UN and UNSC resolutions and decisions relate to the status of East Jerusalem.

# Annexes

## **Annex I: Old City of Jerusalem and its Walls (site proposed by Jordan) (C 148 rev)**

### **Decision: 37 COM 7A.26 (Phnom Penh, Cambodia, 16 - 27 June 2013 )**

The World Heritage Committee,

1. Having examined Document WHC-13/ 37.COM/7A.Add 2,
2. Recalling the relevant provisions on the protection of cultural heritage including the four Geneva Conventions (1949), the Hague Convention for the Protection of Cultural Property in the Event of Armed Conflict of 1954 and its related protocols, the Convention for the Protection of the World Cultural and Natural Heritage of 1972, the inscription of the Old City of Jerusalem and its Walls at the request of Jordan on the World Heritage List (1981) and on the List of World Heritage in Danger (1982), and the recommendations, resolutions and decisions of UNESCO, including Decision 36 COM 7A.23 (I), adopted at its 36th session (Saint Petersburg, 2012),
3. Reaffirming that nothing in the present decision, which aims at the safeguarding of the authenticity, integrity and cultural heritage of the Old City of Jerusalem on both sides of its Walls, shall in any way affect the relevant United Nations resolutions and decisions, in particular the relevant Security Council resolutions on the legal status of Jerusalem,
4. Deplores the continued Israeli failure to cooperate and facilitate the implementation of the World Heritage Committee Decision 34 COM 7A.20, which requests a joint World Heritage Centre/ICCROM/ICOMOS reactive monitoring mission to the Old City of Jerusalem and its Walls and despite its own letter to the Director General of UNESCO dated 23 April 2013 accepting the Mission as reflected in the agreement reached at the 191<sup>st</sup> session of the Executive Board and as stipulated in the Executive Board 191 EX/Decision 9, and asks Israel to refrain from any new preconditions in order not to obstruct the implementation of the above mentioned agreement;
5. Deeply deplores the persistence of Israeli archaeological excavations and works in the Old City of Jerusalem and on both sides of its Walls and the failure of Israel to cease such works, and requests the Israeli authorities to prohibit all such excavations and works, in conformity with its obligations under the Hague Convention for the Protection of Cultural Property in the Event of Armed Conflict of 1954 and its related protocols, the Convention for the Protection of the World Cultural and Natural Heritage of 1972, and as clearly stated in the Delhi UNESCO Recommendation of 1956 concerning excavations undertaken in occupied territories;

6. Reiterates the necessity of cooperation to facilitate access to the Old City of Jerusalem and both sides of its Walls, including religious heritage sites therein, in the context of the UNESCO Conventions for the protection of the cultural heritage, and expresses its concern regarding the restricting obstacles imposed by the Israeli authorities on the freedom of access provided to Jordanian and Waqf experts to safeguard such sites;
7. Also deplores, in this regard, the damagingeffect of the Jerusalem Light rail (tram line), itinerant at few meters from the Walls of the Old City of Jerusalem, which severely affects the visual integrity and the authentic character of the site and urges Israel to restore the original character of the site in conformity with its obligations under the Hague Convention for the Protection of Cultural Property in the Event of Armed Conflict of 1954 and its related protocols and the Convention for the Protection of the World  
Decisions adopted by the World Heritage Committee WHC-13/37.COM/20, page 37 at its 37<sup>th</sup> Session (Phnom Penh, 2013).

Cultural and Natural Heritage of 1972 as well as the 2011 UNESCO Recommendation concerning the Historic Urban Landscape;

8. Regrets the Jerusalem Municipality plan to build a two-line cable car system to connect the Mughrabi Quarter with the Mount of Olives in East Jerusalem, and also urges Israel to prevent any damage to the integrity and authenticity of the property by abandoning the above mentioned project in conformity with its obligations under the Hague Convention for the Protection of Cultural Property in the Event of Armed Conflict of 1954 and its related protocols and the Convention for the Protection of the World Cultural and Natural Heritage of 1972;
9. Also regrets the decision of the Jerusalem District Planning and Building Committee, that approved the construction of a visitor centre on the Givati Parking lot in Silwan at a distance of twenty meters from the Walls of the Old City as well as its approval of the so called “Liba House” project, a huge structure of three storeys and approximately 3700 square meters in the Old City of Jerusalem, the extension of the Strauss Building and the Western Wall elevator, and further urges Israel to renounce to the above mentioned projects in conformity with its obligations under the Hague Convention for the Protection of Cultural Property in the Event of Armed Conflict of 1954 and its related protocols and the Convention for the Protection of the World Cultural and Natural Heritage of 1972;
10. Requests the World Heritage Centre to continue applying the Reinforced Monitoring Mechanism to the Old City of Jerusalem on both sides of its Walls, including the Mughrabi Ascent, and also requests it to report every four months on this matter;
11. Thanks the international donors for their generous contributions to UNESCO projects for the Safeguarding of the Cultural Heritage of the Old City of Jerusalem on both sides of its Walls, and calls upon the international donor community to further support, through extra-budgetary funding,

activities aimed at the safeguarding of the integrity and authenticity of the Old City of Jerusalem and both sides of its walls;

12. Also thanks the Director-General of UNESCO and the World Heritage Centre for their efforts aimed at the Safeguarding of the Cultural Heritage of the Old City of Jerusalem on both sides of its walls and invites them to report on this matter at the 38th session of the World Heritage Committee in 2014;

## II

13. Recalling 176 EX/Special Plenary Meeting Decision, and Executive Board 189 EX/ Decision 5 (II) relating to the Ascent to the Mughrabi Gate in the Old City of Jerusalem,
14. Taking into consideration the 12th and all previous Reinforced Monitoring Reports and their addenda prepared by the World Heritage Centre,
15. Expresses its concern about the decision by the Jerusalem District Planning and Construction Commission on the town planning scheme for the Mughrabi Ascent, and the subsequent decision by Israel's National Council for Planning and Construction to adopt "an alternative plan for the Mughrabi Ascent", approved on 31 October 2010 by the above-mentioned Commission;
16. Requests that, despite the decisions mentioned in paragraph 15, the design process of the Mughrabi Ascent be inclusive of, and accepted by, all parties concerned in accordance with obligations and duties of such parties as stipulated in the provisions of the relevant UNESCO Conventions on the protection of Cultural Heritage;

Decisions adopted by the World Heritage Committee WHC-13/37.COM/20, page 38 at its 37<sup>th</sup> Session (Phnom Penh, 2013).

17. Reaffirms in this regard that no measures, unilateral or otherwise, shall be taken which will affect the authenticity, integrity and the distinctive character of the site, in accordance with the relevant provisions of the Convention for the Protection of the World Cultural and Natural Heritage of 1972 and the Hague Convention for the Protection of Cultural Property in the Event of Armed Conflict of 1954;
18. Also notes in this regard reports of preliminary discussions reached by Jordan and Israel respectively regarding the Mughrabi Ascent which stipulate that no measures, unilateral or otherwise, shall be taken on the site in accordance with paragraph 17 above;
19. Acknowledges receipt of the Jordanian design for the restoration and preservation of the Mughrabi Ascent, submitted to the World Heritage Centre on 27 May 2011, and thanks Jordan for its cooperation in accordance with the provisions of the relevant UNESCO Conventions for the Protection of Cultural Heritage;



20. Expresses its concern regarding Israel's submission and content of its plan for the Mughrabi Ascent, and requests that the World Heritage Centre be proactive in the evaluation of the design received in accordance with above paragraph 19;
21. Reiterates in this regard, the need for the parties concerned to cooperate on all related aspects of this issue and regrets Israel's refusal to fulfil World Heritage Committee Decision 36 COM 7A.23.II, Executive Board 191 EX/Decision 5 (I) and related UNESCO Resolutions and Decisions;
22. Expresses its concern regarding the continuous, intrusive archaeological demolitions and excavations in and around the Mughrabi Gate Ascent since 22 May 2012, and calls on the Israeli authorities to end such violations, respect the *Status Quo*, and cooperate with Jordanian and Waqf experts as the competent authorities to maintain and safeguard the site in accordance with the relevant provisions of the Convention for the Protection of the World Cultural and Natural Heritage of 1972 and the Hague Convention for the Protection of Cultural Property in the Event of Armed Conflict of 1954;
23. Further regrets Israeli religious-extremist groups' provocative incursions into Al-Aqsa Mosque Compound through the Mughrabi Gate, and urges the Israeli authorities to take the necessary measures to prevent such abuses that violate the sanctity and integrity of the Compound and inflame tension on the ground;
24. Affirms, in this regard, the necessity to respect and safeguard the integrity, authenticity and cultural heritage of Al-Aqsa Mosque Compound, as reflected in the *Status Quo* as a holy place for Muslim worship and as an integral part of a World Cultural Heritage site;
25. Thanks the Director-General for her attention to the sensitive situation in the Ascent and calls upon her to consult with the concerned parties on the dispatch of the necessary expertise to assess possible damages incurred to the site through the conduct of recent Israeli demolitions as referenced in the 12th Reinforced Monitoring Report prepared by the World Heritage Centre and above paragraph 22;

### III

26. **Decides to retain the Old City of Jerusalem and its Walls on the List of World Heritage in Danger**