

# Geopolitical situations In Hebron Governorate Palestine

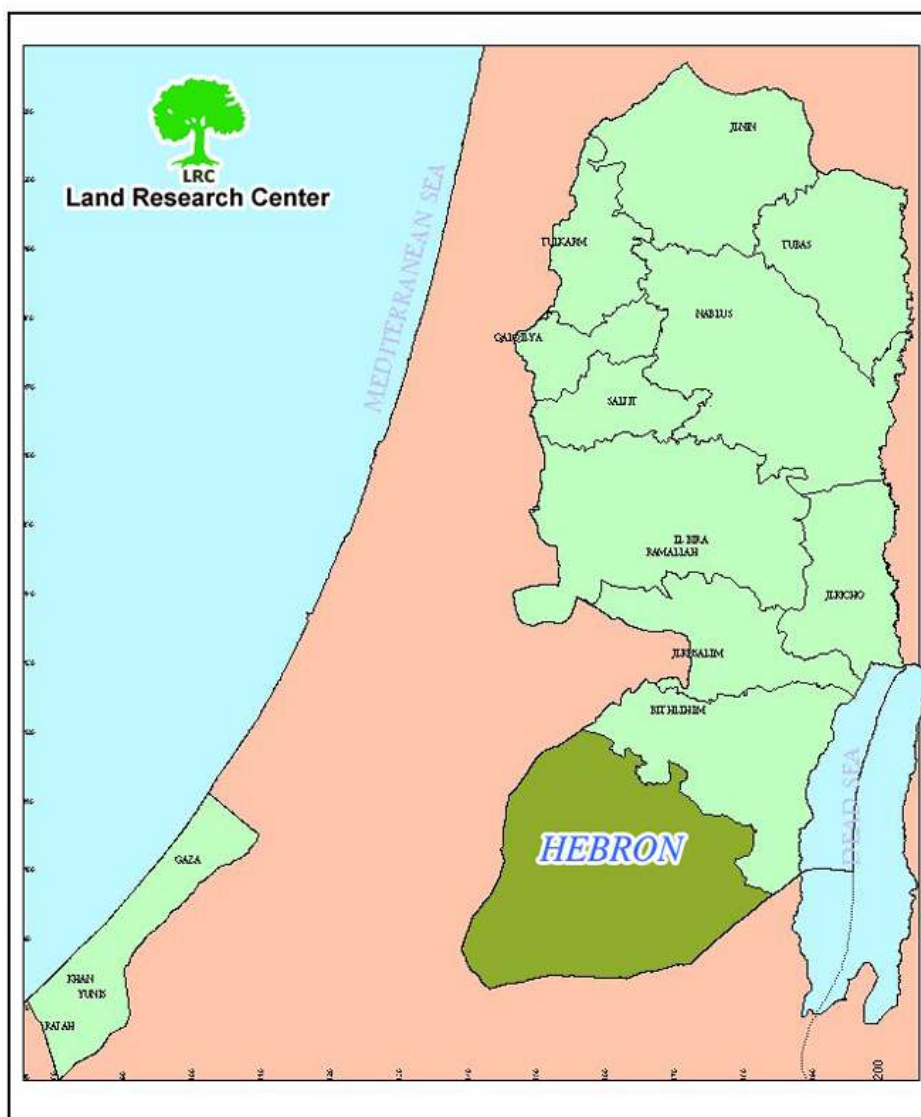


Prepared by:  
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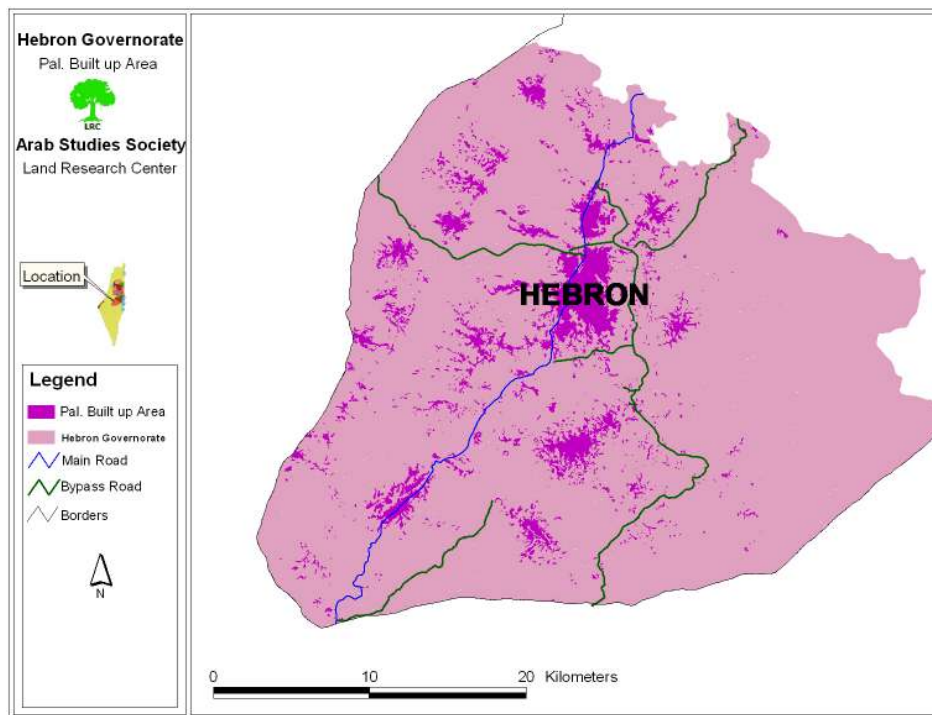
## Hebron Governorate:

The Governorate of Hebron is located in the southern part of the West Bank. It is the largest Governorate in the West Bank in terms of size and population. Its area before the 1948 Nakba (disaster) was 2076 km<sup>2</sup> while its current area is about 1060 km<sup>2</sup>. This means that Hebron has lost 51 % of its original size due to the events of Nakba.

The population of the Governorate is now half million according to the estimates of the Palestinian Central Bureau of Statistics. The population density of the Governorate is 500 individuals per km<sup>2</sup>.



The number of Palestinian communities in the Governorate is 145, the largest of which is the city of Hebron. The total built up area is nearly 79.8 km<sup>2</sup> (about 7.5 % of the total area of the Governorate).



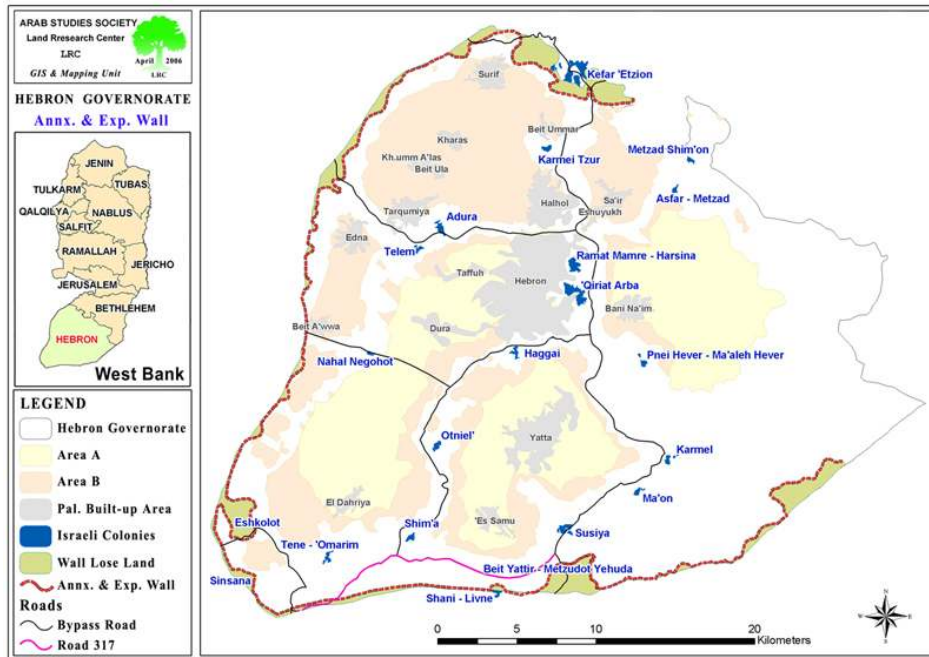
The Governorate of Hebron contains many religious, historical and archeological sites, the most important of which are: the Ibrahimi mosque, the Tel Arumaida area of ancient Hebron which started in the Bronze age – 3500 BC- the biblical site of Mamreh where Abraham pitched his tent and dug a well after his journey from Mesopotamia in 1850 BC, Al Ma'mudiay spring (probable baptismal site of Saint John the Baptist in the village of Taffuh), Saint Philip's spring in Halhul where Saint Philip baptized the Ethiopian eunuch.

### Settlements in Hebron Governorate:

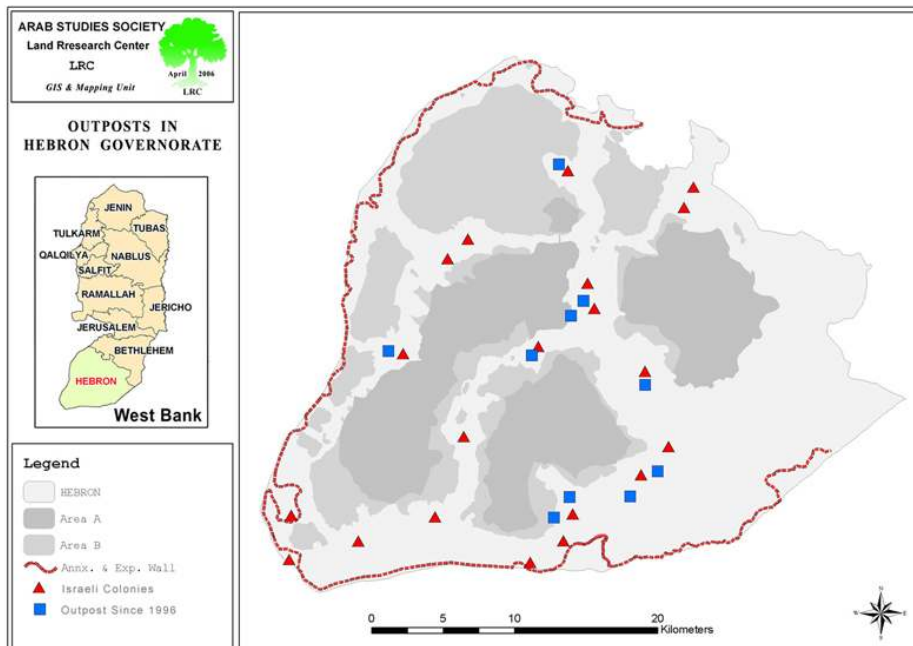
There are 23 settlements in Hebron Governorate whose built up area is 3.7 km<sup>2</sup> (about 0.4% of the total area of Hebron Governorate) as illustrated by the attached map. This number doesn't include the municipal area estimated at 39.9 km<sup>2</sup> (3.7% of the total area of Hebron district). The over all number of built up area and municipal area is 43.6 km<sup>2</sup> (4.1% of the total area of the district) – Source- Foundation for Middle East Peace, Washington- Settlement Report, June, 2006.

These settlements are distributed along three nearly parallel lines, in addition to the existence of a settlement belt at the southern section of the Governorate. The settlement of Kiryat Arba and its northern neighborhood, Kharsina (Ramat Mamre), are the largest settlements in the Governorate with a total population of 7000 extremist settlers. As for the total settler population in the Governorate of Hebron it reached about 15,000.

Most of the Israeli settlements in Hebron have been established during the early eighties except for the settlement of Kiryat Arba which was established in 1968. The rest of the settlements were established after the signing of the 1979 peace treaty between Egypt and Israel.



In addition, there are 10 settlement outposts established since 1996 after the former Israeli prime minister Ariel Sharon called upon settlers to occupy hilltops and put caravans atop them before "losing them to Palestinians in negotiations" and in an effort to expand the existing settlements and force new facts on the ground.



**Table 1**  
**Israeli settlements and outposts in Hebron governorate**

No.	Settlement	Outpost	Location ( <i>vis-a-vie</i> Hebron City)	Date of Est.	2004 Population Census	Built up area Dunum	Municipal area dunum
1	Adora		Northwestern	1983	186	159	207
2		Ashal	Few kilometers to the north of Mezadot Yehuda south of Hebron	NA	10	NA	NA
3	Asfar (Metzad)		Northeastern	1984	275	178	733
4	Metzad Shim'on		Northeastern	NA	NA	NA	NA
5	Eshkelot		Southwestern	1982	231	133	6997
6		Giva't Abigal	2.5 kilometers to the south of Ma'on south of Hebron	NA	5	NA	NA
7		Hazon David	East (close to Kiryat Arba')		NA	NA	NA
8	Hagai		South	1984	429	233	872
9		Hagai south	South		NA	NA	NA
10	Karme Zur		North	1984	665	160	226
11		Karme Zur South	300 m to the south west of Karme Zur settlement	NA	NA	NA	NA
12	Karmel		Southeastern	1981	319	177	1758
13-14	Kiryat Arab' and Kharsina (Ramat Mamre)		East	1972	6651	882	4047
15	Ma'on		Southeastern	1981	308	173	393
16		Ma'on Farm	1.0 kilometers to the east of Ma'on south of Hebron		5	NA	NA
17	Mezadot Yehuda ( Beit Yattir)		South	1980	425	170	2817
18		Har Manuh	Southern tip of the City of Hebron	NA	NA	NA	NA
19	Negohut		South west	1982	135	90	90
20		Mitzpe Lackish	west	NA	NA	NA	NA
21	Otne'il		Southwestern	1983	692	291	631
22	Pene Hever ( Ma'ale Hever)		Southeastern	1982	377	110	359

23		Pene Hever south	South west of Pene Hever	2006	NA	NA	NA
24	Shani		South	1989	500	30	195
25	Shim'a		Southwestern	1985	344	212	10597
26	Suseya		Southeastern	1983	663	352	1546
27		Sansana	Southwestern	NA	NA	NA	NA
28	Telem		Northwestern	1981	141	117	201
29	Tene ( Ma'ale Omarim)		Southwestern	1983	538	272	8269
30		Yattir south	West of Mezaotot Yehuda south of Hebron	NA	NA	NA	NA
31-34	4 colonial nuclei inside Hebron city: 1. Tel Ar Rumayda 2. Beit Hadasa 3. Beit Romano 4. Abraham Avino		The heart of the City of Hebron	Starting in 1968	600	NA	NA
<b>TOTAL</b>					<b>13848</b>	<b>3739</b>	<b>39938</b>

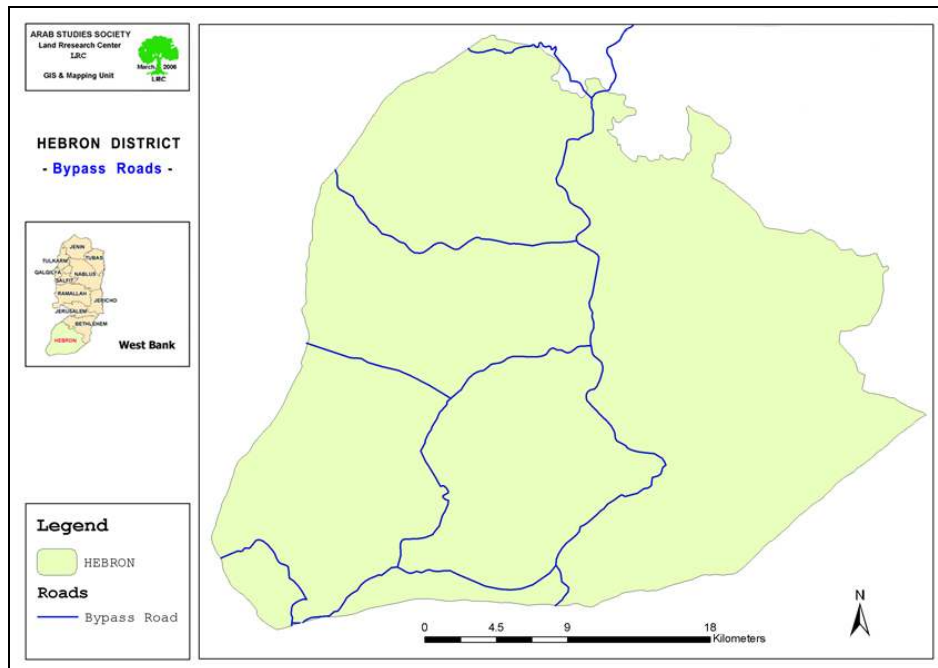
Source: Foundation for Middle East Peace

## By-Pass Roads:

The by-pass roads criss-crossing the Governorate have been established after the start of the Oslo peace process with a total length of 150 kilometers.

The bypass roads divide the Governorate to six separate entities as illustrated in the attached map.

Taking into consideration that Palestinian land owners are prevented from using their land located 150 meters along both sides of the by-pass roads, we can conclude that establishing these roads led to Israeli control of 36 km<sup>2</sup> (about 3.3 % of the total area of Hebron Governorate).

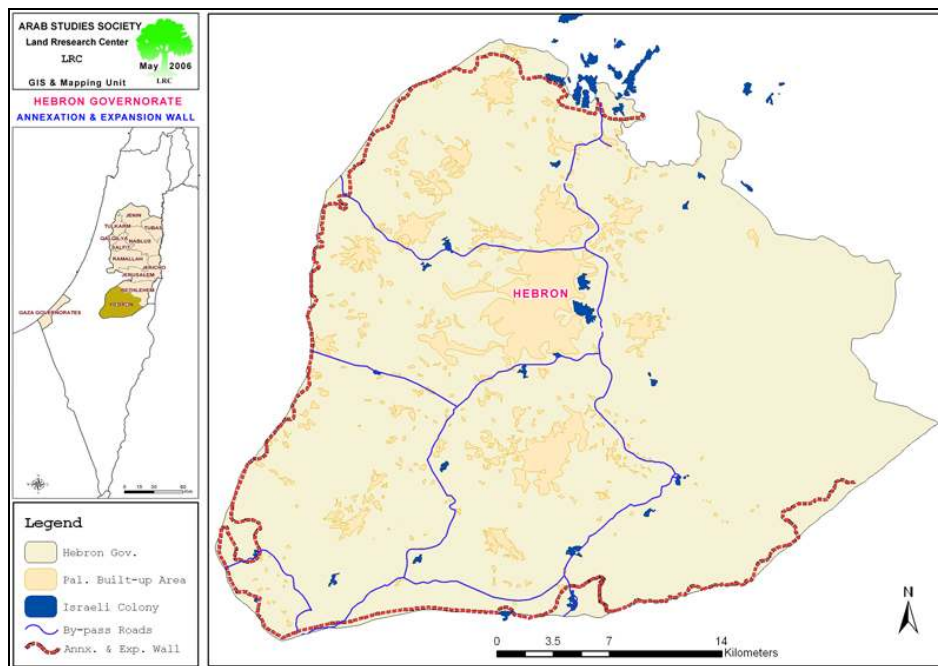


## The Segregation Wall in Hebron Governorate

The Segregation Wall in Hebron governorate has the total length of 125.5 Km (excluding parts of the eastern Wall route). The existing Wall route starts in Gush Etzion settlement bloc and ends in Hazalin Bedouin area in the eastern slopes of Hebron district. About 109 km of the Wall have been semi finished, while the rest (16 km from Gush Etzion until the village of Al Jaba'a) is still planned.

The total land area devastated under the path of the Wall is estimated at 12.5 km<sup>2</sup> (1.1% of the total area of Hebron district), while the total land area separated behind the Wall is estimated at 41.4 km<sup>2</sup> (3.9% of the total area of Hebron district). The over all area of land devastated or separated behind the Wall is 53.9 km<sup>2</sup> (5% of the total area of Hebron district).

The latest revised Wall plan was announced by the Israeli army on April 30<sup>th</sup>, 2006, according to which the village of Al Jaba'a in the most north western corner of Hebron district became inside the Wall with its 1000 population.



## Wall effects on Hebron Governorate

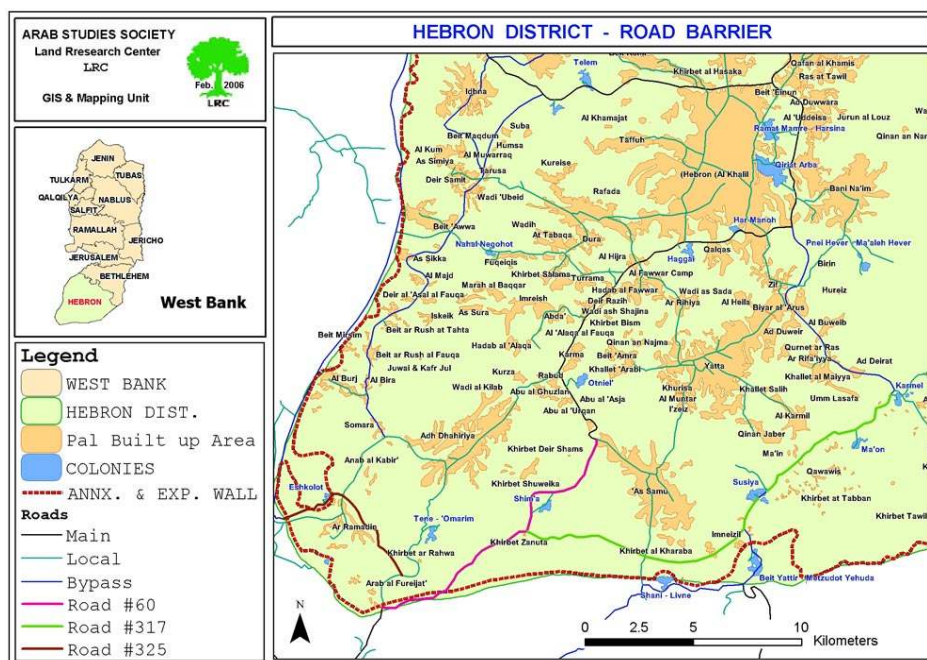
1. One of the main goals of the Segregation Wall in the Governorate of Hebron is to annex and link the largest number of settlements through the establishment of isolated “geographical pockets or fingers”, especially in the west of the Governorate to include the settlements of Telem, Adora, Negohut and Eshkelot and in the southern part of it to assure the linkage between the settlement of Otni’el and other settlement blocs located to the south of the town of Yata. Furthermore, the path of the Wall guarantees the establishment of a geographical pocket which links between the settlements south of Yata and the settlements of Kiryat Arba, Kharsina and the four settlement spots inside the old city of Hebron, as well as including the settlement of Pene Hever ( Ma’ale Hever) which is located to the south of the Palestinian town of Bani Nu’eim. On the whole, about 30 settlements and outposts, mostly in the west and south of the governorate, are expected to be inside the fence once it is completed.
2. Besieging and isolating the Governorate of Hebron from other West Bank Governorates.
3. Cutting off the center from periphery, that is, separating between Palestinian country side and the main urban centers where social and public services are located.
4. Restricting the possibilities for future natural expansion and development.
5. The forceful and active eviction and transfer of Palestinians living in the Wall's vicinity as well as confiscating their lands and sources of income, leading to an increased unemployment and major damage to the Palestinian national economy, especially that it depends largely on agriculture and livestock.
6. The Wall is designed to ensure Israeli control over Palestinian natural resources, such as water, gas, natural stones and queries, etc. In this regard, a number of wells and springs will be separated behind the Wall.
7. Depriving Palestinian manpower from reaching their workplaces inside Israel, and hence, increasing the levels of unemployment and poverty within Palestinian society.

## Additional Wall

In October, 2003, the Israeli army published plans for the route of the Segregation Wall which kept the belt of Israeli settlements in south Hebron on the southern side of the fence, served by roads 60 and 317, safely connecting them to Israel. The Wall would have trapped Palestinian communities

living between it and the Green Line in an area of around 170,000 dunum, nearly 16 % of the land of the Governorate and the largest “seam zone” of the West Bank.

In December, 2005, the Israeli occupation army (IOA) released three military orders to requisite a corridor of land alongside roads 317, 60 and 325 and which run from the settlements of Karmel to that of Tene in south Hebron. The new security measure would involve the construction of a continuous barrier of concrete running along the northern side of the bypass roads (317, 60 and 325). Built within three to four meters of the edge of the road, the barrier will be 80cm to 1m high to prevent vehicles from crossing onto the main road.



The route of the “road barrier” roughly follows the same direction of the 2003 plan for the Wall but it also represents the last in the long list of closures cumulatively applied to roads 317, 60 and 325 to prevent access of Palestinians. The new security measure will entrench further the disconnection already evident on the ground, possibly leading to complete isolation and the likelihood of displacement and loss of land.

These restrictions have been put in place to benefit and secure the movement of Israeli settlers residing in the Governorate, allowing them to move safely between settlements and further on to Israel. Roads 317 and 60 break up the transportation contiguity between Palestinian controlled areas (“area A”, under Oslo II agreement), force Palestinians onto internal secondary roads, and fragment the territorial contiguity of the Governorate. The result is particularly dramatic in south Hebron where communities do not have the option of moving on internal secondary roads and have to cross bypass roads to access services and markets.

According to LRC estimates, the new “road barrier” will directly affect access to nearly 80,000 dunums (7.5 % of the total area of the Governorate) mostly of agricultural and grazing land: 22 communities including Ar Ramadmin and Arab Al Fureijat in the most south western corner of the West Bank, and over 8000 Palestinians will be enclosed between the road barrier and the Wall being constructed along the Green Line. The numbers grow during the spring and summer, when seasonal migration increases population figures by one third.

**Table ( 2 )**  
**Total land area under Israeli control so far**

• Settlements	43.6 km <sup>2</sup> (4.1% )
• Military camps (only built up area)	0.2 km <sup>2</sup> (0.02%)
• Bypass roads	36 km <sup>2</sup> (3.3%)
• Segregation Wall	53.9 km <sup>2</sup> (5%)
• The additional Wall (road barrier on roads 317, 60. 325)	80 km <sup>2</sup> (7.5%)

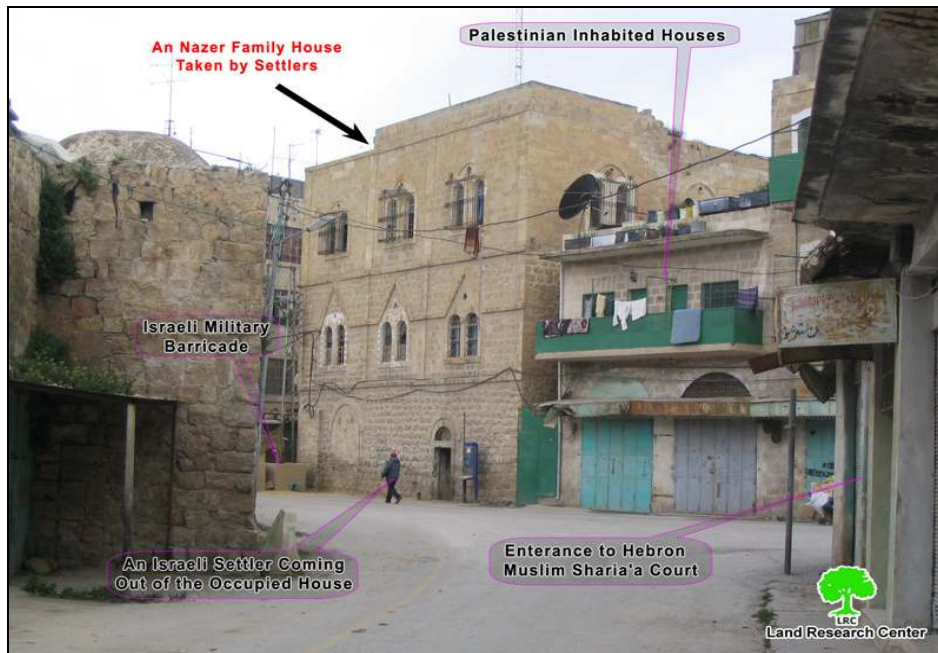
**Total land area: 213.7 km<sup>2</sup> (19.9%)**

**Source: Field work by Land Research Center**

### **A survey of life inside Hebron's old city (H2)**

In January, 1997, the Hebron protocol was signed by Israel and the Palestinian Authority according to which the city was divided into Hebron 1 and 2. Hebron 2 covers approximately 20 % of the municipal territory. It comprises the entire Old Suq and areas adjacent to the Israeli settlements. The total population of H2 is 35 000 Palestinians. The Protocol authorizes security and civil administration to the Israeli occupation in Hebron 2, while in Hebron 1 the Palestinian authority was given full security and civil administration. In April, 2002, the whole city was re-occupied by the Israeli army.

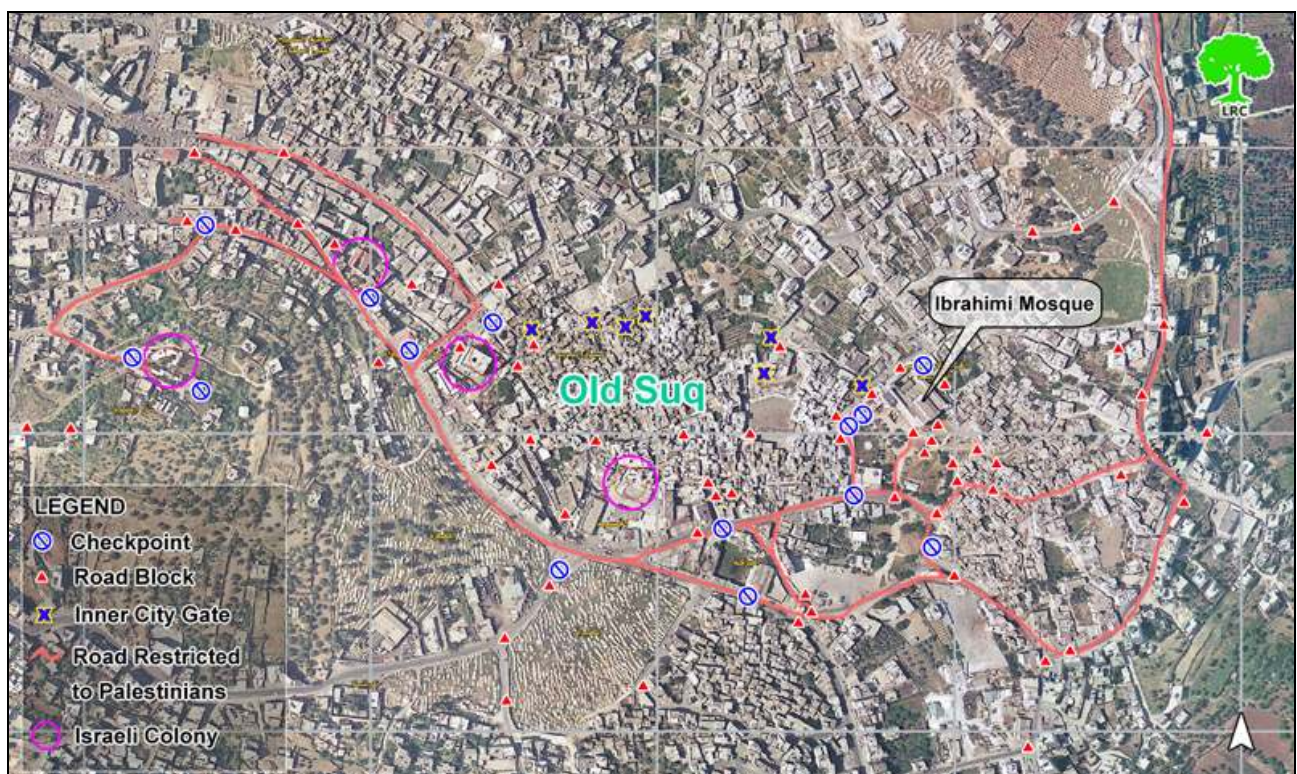
Once the centre of Hebron's commercial and cultural life, the old Suq is now virtually deserted. The city of Hebron is the second city after Jerusalem with Israeli settlements inside its urban area where there are about 600 settlers who live in the four settlements of Avraham Avino ( Old Market), Beit Rumano ( Usama Ben Al Mungiz School), Beit Hadassah (Daboiya) and Ramat Yasha ( Tel Rumaida ). The Israeli settlers in Hebron are protected by more than 1500 Israeli soldiers and security men. Last April, the Israeli settlers in Hebron's old city occupied a 3 storey residential building owned by the Hebronite family of An Nazer and close to Abraham Avino settlement in the old vegetable market area in the heart of the old city. On May 7<sup>th</sup> the Israeli army evacuated the settlers from the building, but the keys to the building are still at the hands of the army under the pretext of farther "legal" discussion. On the other hand, there are two larger settlements whose population exceeds 7000 sit on the hills overlooking the Hebron's eastern quarters- Kiriayt Arab' and Givat Kharsina.



## Movement restriction in Hebron 2

H 2 section of Hebron city is surrounded with checkpoints, road blocks and military barriers cutting roads leading to other parts of the city in Hebron 1 and even to other parts of Hebron 2 such as the only industrial zone in Al Fahs area. Farmers from around the city has no access to the city's old markets, including the vegetable market, gold market, yogurt market, leather market and others which have been under closure since the beginning of the current Intifada.

As of April, 2006, more than 82 closures of different kinds block Hebron 2 area, particularly the old city and Suq. Many of these block the exits from the Old Suq toward Al Shohada street or onto "prayers' road" which was built for exclusive Jewish use from Kiriayt Arba' to Ibrahimi mosque.



Restrictions on movement were imposed on Palestinians on all roads that run between, toward and adjacent to settlements. For instance, students from Cordoba school which is located on Al Shuhada street cannot use the main road (although rehabilitated by American money in the year 2000 on condition that it should be used by both Palestinians and Israelis) and have to take a detour around the southern side of the school across fields to avoid crossing the path of settlers along Al Shuhada street ( see map above).

Out of the aforementioned closures, there are 14 checkpoints preventing Palestinians from driving or walking inside Hebron 2. Those who live beyond are required to be registered with the Israeli army to reach their homes. For instance, in the area of Wadi Al Gruz, a Palestinian quarter between the settlements of Kiriyat Arba' and Givat Kharsina, and the area of Al Buweira which is located at the northern edge of Givat Kharsina, the combination of earth mounds, road blocks and gates has isolated their residents from the rest of the city.

### Inner Walls and fences

Construction works in the Segregation Wall have been completed in Wadi Al Gruz, Ein Bani Salim and Al Buweira areas located in between or around the two settlements of Kiriyat Arba' and Givat Kharsina. Hundreds of dunums of fertile vine yard, peach and apple groves have been devastated under the path of the Wall or seized behind it for future expansion of the two settlements. The construction of the Wall inside Palestinian agricultural lands in these areas meant that Palestinian farmers have either completely lost their lands or are required to pass through gates which necessitates prior coordination with the Israeli army and security apparatus to reach their lands. The most recent military order was issued last July stipulating the confiscation of land for the construction of a 6 km long road around the settlement of Kiriyat Arba' to enlarge the "security " buffer zone around the settlement.



*The Wall passes few meters in front of Palestinian houses near the settlement of Kharsina in Ein Bani Salim*

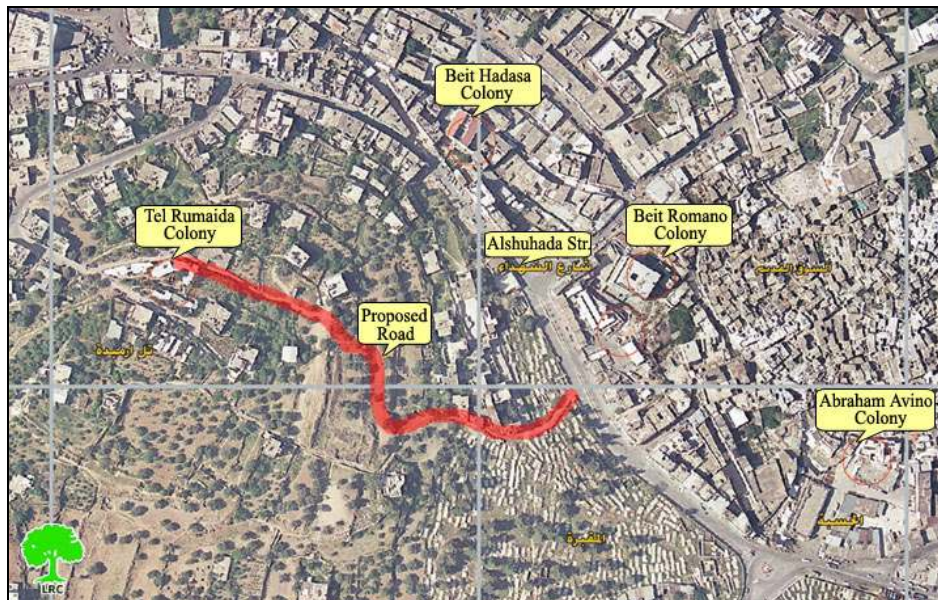
## More settler's roads:

In addition, "security" roads were constructed to link the settlements of Kiriyat Araba' and Givat Kharsina to the Israeli settlements inside the old city of Hebron. One of these roads was already established in August, 2004, on the eastern side of the Ibrahimi mosque under the name of the "prayers road" which led to the demolition of 11 Palestinian houses dating back to the Ottoman and Mamluk periods.



**Jaber quarter- old houses and stores destroyed to open the road**

There are additional plans to build another road from the settlements of Ramat Yashai (Tel Rumaïda) to the Ibrahimi mosque cutting through Hebron's Islamic cemetery.



### Closure on commercial activities and impact

The Israeli measures represented by military orders, prolonged curfews during 2001 and 2002, as well as settlers' violence have emptied the Old Suq of trade. Shopkeepers resort to back-to-back system of transportation (moving goods from one vehicle to another) at the gates to bring in goods. The wholesale and vegetable markets have been relocated from H2 to H1. According to the Palestinian Ministry of National Economy there were 1610 shops licensed in H2 before September, 2000. Currently, more than 1000 shops are closed, one third by military orders. According to Hebron Rehabilitation Committee, of the 650 shops and storage places still located in the Old Suq, just 10% are functioning.



*Closed commercial stores inside Hebron's old Suq*

The aforementioned conditions have increased poverty in H2. According to a survey conducted by the Ministry of National Economy the average income per household in H2 is about NIS 700 per month which is well below the poverty line. The International Committee of the Red Cross initiated a monthly distribution of food parcels in 2002 to almost 2500 households in H2 that includes all of the Old Suq residents.

## Settlers' violence

Israeli settlers continue their daily violent attacks against humans and properties inside the old city and in Wadi An Nasarah quarter for its proximity to Kiriayt Arba' settlement. These continuous attacks are aimed at dismissing Palestinian families out of the area, particularly those living in the Old Suq and near the settlements. Metal netting has been erected above the sections of the Old Suq running under Avraham Avino settlement and above the Old Shalala street running under Beit Hadasah (Daboyia) settlement from where settlers throw garbage, stones and empty bottles at the heads of passersby and store keepers in an act of continuous humiliation of human beings and as an attempt to discourage movement below.

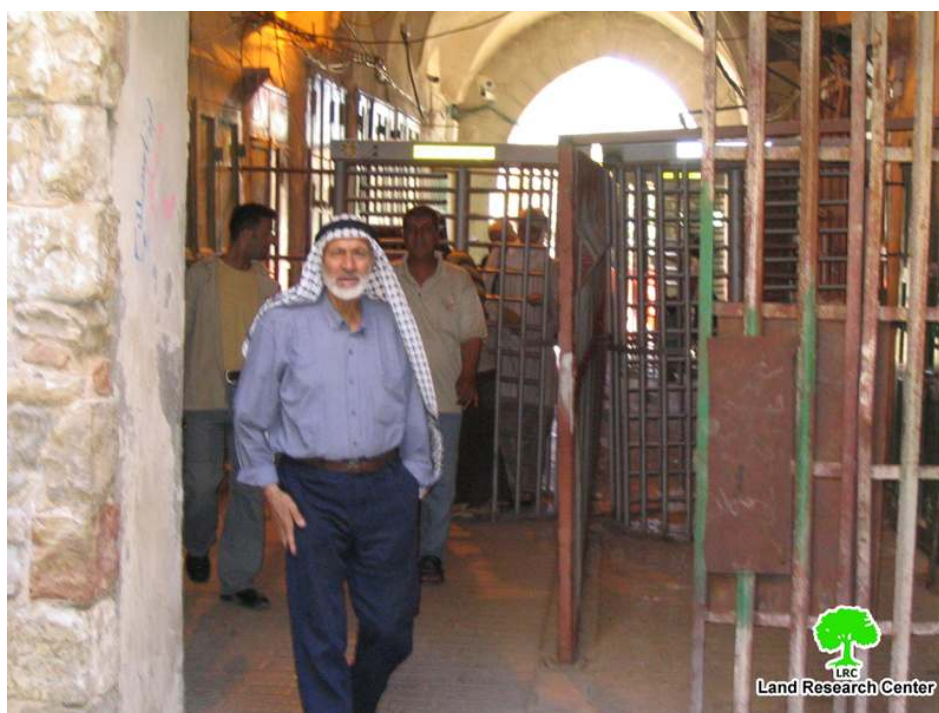


*One of the alleyways in Al Qasab Suq provided with metal netting*

## Humanitarian effects of closure and violence

**In the religious field**, prayers have to pass through a series of iron metal detector gates upon entering into the Ibrahimi mosque. This long process could take up to half an hour to reach the mosque. Prayers have to queue in lines in front of the gates and wait for permission from soldiers to enter into the gates for checking one by one. Some times, people are stuck inside the rolling gate waiting for the soldier to press a button to allow access. This humiliating process only leads to an increase in the level of anger and tension amongst Palestinian prayers and residents of the area. In certain Jewish anniversaries and religious celebrations, the Ibrahimi Mosque Mu'azin (one who

calls for praying) is prohibited from performing his task. Some times, this ban could last for many days and nights.



**Gates leading to the Ibrahimi mosque**

On the other hand, the Israeli occupation authorities stopped the Hebron rehabilitation Committee from doing any renovation and rehabilitation works inside the Ibrahimi mosque for no clear reasons.

**In the educational field**, school attendance and pupils' performance are dropping in schools close to settlements. For example, attendance in the three schools closest to settlements – Al Ibrahimiyye, Cordoba and Al Fayhaa schools- has dropped to almost 50 % since September 2000 because the children cannot study in unsafe conditions.

**Table 3**

**Attendances in schools close to settlements**

School/year	99/00	00/01	01/02	02/03	03/04	04/05
Cordoba	194	196	148	139	85	88
Al Fayhaa	327	335	269	253	207	222
Al Ibrahimiyye	532	539	428	401	309	352

**Source: Education Department – Hebron**

The department of education's records of the pass rate for 2005 final year Tawjihi exams show students in H2 far well below the average for the city, with the schools in the old city – Tariq Ibn Ziad and Abdul Khaliq – ranking 40 and 41 out of a total of 43 schools in Hebron city.

**In the health sector**, restrictions on movement imposed on various parts of H2 mean that medical evacuations are either delayed or denied. Ambulances cannot reach H2 or the eastern side of Hebron. The Palestine Red Cross Society estimates that, as a direct result of the closures in the old city, the time to reach patients has increased from 7 to 17 minutes. Even, when coordination with the Israeli army is necessary (usually to pass through a checkpoint) the average time is 47 minutes.

The unreliability of emergency medical care from H2 area has meant that pregnant women take the precaution of moving to friends' and relatives' houses in H1. The Palestine Red Cross Society reports a drop in the request for ambulance from H2 patients from three to one per day in the last five years.

On the other hand, the Hebron fire brigades are located in H1 which means that delays are expected to calls from H2. Between September 2000 and January 2004, the fire brigades responded to 120 calls from H2 with an average waiting time of 15 minutes to obtain the authorization to access the area. In 38 cases the fire brigades waited for more than one hour before reaching their destination.

**For more information, please visit the following sites:**

[www.lrcj.org](http://www.lrcj.org) – [www.poica.org](http://www.poica.org)

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