**Wall Presentation Summary:**

The wall is under construction in the northern areas of the West Bank with a total length of 125 km for the first phase.  The machines started land demolition, uprooting of trees, and destruction of water networks and green houses in more than 39 villages.

Palestinian farmers are worried about the future of their agricultural land isolated between the wall and the green line, especially the most affected villages like Jayous, Qifeen, Falamia, and Nabi Ilyas. Agriculture in these areas is intensive and depends on irrigation. Most of the families in these villages depend entirely on agriculture as their main source of income.

As to this date, no law has been issued by the Israeli government to confiscate the isolated land owned by Palestinian farmers. On the contrary, the Israeli government maintains that the ownership of land west of the wall will remain in the hands of farmers.  Therefore, by law, Palestinian farmers in these villages have every right to utilize the isolated lands west of the wall and continue their normal daily agricultural activities. However, the worries of the farmers, that this land will be gradually confiscated by the Israeli government as soon as the wall construction is completed, is being reflected negatively on their investment tendencies in their isolated lands which will lead eventually to its dissertation. In addition, many farmers have dismantled dunums of green houses in Zita and other villages in Tulkarem out of fear for their property. After several incidents of military and settlers attacks on farmers in villages like Irtah, Fara’oun, Jayous, and Falamia, hundreds of farmers stopped going to their fields out of fear for their lives and the lives of their laborers. The farmer’s reluctance to invest in the land will increase the future threat of confiscation by the Israeli government and settlers

The support of Palestinian farmers, through specialized committees, in developing and cultivating their isolated lands will help to preserve the land and ensuring the liveliness of these areas, and   secure the main source of vegetables, fruits, grains, and animal production for the Palestinian people.

**The Separation Wall**

Since the start of occupation of the West Bank and the Gaza Strip, especially during the 1980s, a series of settlement project were implemented by the various Israeli governments that lead to the confiscation or control of more than 55% of land in West Bank and Gaza to the benefit of the Israeli people. This confiscation was for the purpose of constructing more settlements, opening new roads to facilitate the secured movement of the settlers, and establishing security zones.

The number of the settlers in the West Bank and Gaza Strip reached 400,000 distributed into 297 areas. These settlers control 8.5% of the land while 3 million Palestinian are living in only about 4% of the land. The Israeli settlement expansion project continued during the Peace Process, where the growth rate in the number of settlers reached 31% between the years 1996 and 2001 compared to a 2% growth rate in the Israeli population. These rates give evidence to the aggressive Israeli approach towards confiscation and the establishment of settlements in Palestinian territories.

Furthermore, The Israeli government encourages its Israeli citizens inside the green line area to settle in the West Bank through a number of incentives. First the Israeli ministry of housing gives a grant equivalent to 15,000 dollars to every Israeli who decides to settle in the West Bank and Gaza Strip. Second, these settlers pay lower taxes for the government in comparison with the regular Israeli citizen who lives inside the green line. Third, the Ministry of Tourism and the Ministry of Industry support the Industrial areas and the settlements in the West Bank and the Gaza Strip with what exceeds 65 million dollars.  Finally, in the year 2000 the Israeli army and the Ministry of Transportation paid 40 million dollars for the construction of bypass roads for settlements. All these incentives are aimed to increase the standards of living for the individual settler, while at the same time, lowering the standards of living for the Palestinian farmers who are forced to pay the price for the wellbeing of the Israeli settler with their lands, income, and the safety of their families.

The Wall comes as a continuation of this Israeli settlement project. In June 2002 the Israeli army began the implementation of the government decision to construct a Wall on Palestinian lands in the West Bank through three main phases. A number of lands were confiscated for the purpose of constructing the wall which will be 360 km long in the Western zones and will extend from the northern regions of the West bank to its southern regions. Some maps indicate that large portions of land will be separated from its villages. These maps also indicate that whole villages and residential clusters will be separated by the wall, were its Palestinian residents will live in complete isolation from the rest of the West Bank.

The First Phase:

The first phase of constructing the wall targets the most fertile and precious lands starting with the villages of northern region of Jenin ( Zbuba, Tayba, Rumana) and extending to the southern region of  Qalqilia ( Mashah). Phase one of the Wall construction will be completed in July 2003.   According to published maps, the length of the wall in this phase is 125 km in the districts of Jenin, Qalqilia and Tulkarem, and isolates 96,500 dunums of land in the area between the Green line and the barrier, which includes 15 Palestinian communities that are completely separated from the rest of the West Bank. Furthermore, an additional barrier will be established east of the Wall “the depth barrier” in the northern region of Jenin and east of the City of Tulkarem. In some areas, the depth barrier passes 7 km within the West Bank. The depth barrier and the enclaves created by the winding route of the wall  isolate an additional 19 communities living over 65,200 dunums of land east of the Wall. The total area isolated east and west of the wall is 161,700 dunums or 2.9% of the West Bank.

The wall construction that has been witnessed so far indicates that the wall has different shapes in different areas. In some areas the width of the wall area reaches 150m in other places 60m. As for the height of the wall, in some areas like Qalqilia the wall  reaches a height of 8m of enforced cement, and in other areas like Zbuba, Al-Tayba, and Ta’nik in Jenin the Wall reaches 3.5 m, of which only 1.5m is enforced cement and the rest is wire fence. A road is also constructed on either side of the wall. In some areas, a trench exists on the eastern side of the Wall like in Al-Tayba.  In Tayba, Ta’nk, and Zbuba, green and white barrels were placed as signs on the eastern side as a preparation to isolate these villages with what is called the “depth barrier.” In general, the final shape of the depth barrier is not known to Palestinians due to the unclear Israeli maps given to farmers, only facts from the actual construction of the wall can be given to describe what the wall will look like.

In this phase farmers were informed about the Wall construction through leaflets left on trees near their homes. These hung announcements informed the farmers that they will be given the opportunity to protest the Israeli decision, however all the protests of the farmers sent by lawyers to the Israeli Supreme Court were rejected with the claim that this wall was planned for the security of the Israeli people and to prevent Palestinians from crossing into Israeli areas. However, this claim does not justify the construction of the wall on Palestinian lands in the West bank and the isolation of villages, agricultural areas, and water resources. A security wall could have been built on the green line and still performed the same security purposes. This is clear evidence to show that the real purpose of the Israelis is to confiscate more Palestinian land for the benefit of the settlers and to control larger portions of the Palestinian water resources.

More than 25 building contractors equipped with more than 250 heavy machinery are constructing the wall in 40 areas with the length of about 100 km. The current work includes the uprooting of trees, destruction of property in Wall areas, digging, and the construction of enforced cement walls in 8 km.