



WOMEN FOR PALESTINE
MELBOURNE - AUSTRALIA

Impossible travel

by Amira Hass

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All the promises to relax restrictions in the West Bank have obscured the true picture. A few roadblocks have been removed, but the following prohibitions have remained in place. (This information was gathered by Haaretz, the United Nations Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs and Machsom Watch)

Standing prohibitions

- Ⓢ Palestinians from the Gaza Strip are forbidden to stay in the West Bank.
- Ⓢ Palestinians are forbidden to enter East Jerusalem.
- Ⓢ West Bank Palestinians are forbidden to enter the Gaza Strip through the Erez crossing.
- Ⓢ Palestinians are forbidden to enter the Jordan Valley.

- Ⓢ Palestinians are forbidden to enter villages, lands, towns and neighborhoods along the "seam line" between the separation fence and the Green Line (some 10 percent of the West Bank).
- Ⓢ Palestinians who are not residents of the villages Beit Furik and Beit Dajan in the Nablus area, and Ramadin, south of Hebron, are forbidden entry.
- Ⓢ Palestinians are forbidden to enter the settlements' area (even if their lands are inside the settlements' built area).
- Ⓢ Palestinians are forbidden to enter Nablus in a vehicle.
- Ⓢ Palestinian residents of Jerusalem are forbidden to enter area A (Palestinian towns in the West Bank).
- Ⓢ Gaza Strip residents are forbidden to enter the West Bank via the Allenby crossing.
- Ⓢ Palestinians are forbidden to travel abroad via Ben-Gurion Airport.
- Ⓢ Children under age 16 are forbidden to leave Nabus without an original birth certificate and parental escort.
- Ⓢ Palestinians with permits to enter Israel are forbidden to enter through the crossings used by Israelis and tourists.
- Ⓢ Gaza residents are forbidden to establish residency in the West Bank.
- Ⓢ West Bank residents are forbidden to establish residency in the Jordan valley, seam line communities or the villages of Beit Furik and Beit Dajan.
- Ⓢ Palestinians are forbidden to transfer merchandise and cargo through internal West Bank checkpoints.

Periodic prohibitions

- ⊙ Residents of certain parts of the West Bank are forbidden to travel to the rest of the West Bank.
 - ⊙ People of a certain age group - mainly men from the age of 16 to 30, 35 or 40 - are forbidden to leave the areas where they reside (usually Nablus and other cities in the northern West Bank).
 - ⊙ Private cars may not pass the Swahara-Abu Dis checkpoint (which separates the northern and southern West Bank). This was canceled for the first time two weeks ago under the easing of restrictions.
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Travel permits required

- ⊙ A magnetic card (intended for entrance to Israel, but eases the passage through checkpoints within the West Bank).
- ⊙ A work permit for Israel (the employer must come to the civil administration offices and apply for one).
- ⊙ A permit for medical treatment in Israel and Palestinian hospitals in East Jerusalem (The applicant must produce an invitation from the hospital, his complete medical background and proof that the treatment he is seeking cannot be provided in the occupied territories).
- ⊙ A travel permit to pass through Jordan valley checkpoints.
- ⊙ A merchant's permit to transfer goods.
- ⊙ A permit to farm along the seam line requires a form from the land registry office, a title deed, and proof of first-degree relations to the registered property owner.
- ⊙ Entry permit for the seam line (for relatives, medical teams, construction workers, etc. Those with permits must enter and leave via the same crossing even if it is far away or closing early).
- ⊙ Permits to pass from Gaza, through Israel to the West Bank.
- ⊙ A birth certificate for children under 16.
- ⊙ A long-standing resident identity card for those who live in seam-line enclaves.

Checkpoints and barriers

- ⊙ There were 75 manned checkpoints in the West Bank as of January 9, 2007.
 - ⊙ There are on average 150 mobile checkpoints a week (as of September 2006).
 - ⊙ There are 446 obstacles placed between roads and villages, including concrete cubes, earth ramparts, 88 iron gates and 74 kilometers of fences along main roads.
 - ⊙ There are 83 iron gates along the separation fence, dividing lands from their owners. Only 25 of the gates open occasionally.
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Main roads closed to Palestinians, officially or in practice

- ⊙ **Road 90** (the Jordan Valley thoroughfare)
 - ⊙ **Road 60**, in the North (from the Shavei Shomron military base, west of Nablus and northward).
 - ⊙ **Road 585** along the settlements Hermesh and Dotan.
 - ⊙ **Road 557** west from the Taibeh-Tul Karm junction (the Green Line) to Anabta (excluding the residents of Shufa), and east from south of Nablus (the Hawara checkpoint) to the settlement Elon Moreh.
 - ⊙ **Road 505**, from Zatarra (Nablus junction) to Ma'ale Efraim.
 - ⊙ **Road 5**, from the Barkan junction to the Green Line.
 - ⊙ **Road 446**, from Dir Balut junction to Road 5 (by the settlements Alei Zahav and Peduel).
 - ⊙ **Roads 445 and 463** around the settlement Talmon, Dolev and Nahliel.
 - ⊙ **Road 443**, from Maccabim-Reut to Givat Ze'ev.
 - ⊙ **Streets in the Old City of Hebron.**
 - ⊙ **Road 60**, from the settlement of Otniel southward.
 - ⊙ **Road 317**, around the south Hebron Hills settlements.
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Travel time before 2000 versus today

Tul Karm-Nablus

Then: half an hour, at the most.

Now: At least an hour.

Tul Karm-Ramallah

Then: less than one hour.

Now: Two hours.

Beit Ur al-Fawqa-Ramallah

Then: 10 minutes.

Now: 45 minutes.

Katana/Beit Anan-Ramallah

Then: 15 minutes.

Now: One hour to 90 minutes.

Bir Naballah-Jerusalem

Then: seven minutes.

Now: One hour.

Katana-Jerusalem

Then: five minutes.

Now: "Nobody goes to Jerusalem anymore."

AMIRA HASS is an Israeli living and working in the Occupied Territories. She is a journalist whose work appears in the Israeli daily Ha'aretz and is author of "Drinking the Sea at Gaza: Days and Nights in a Land under Siege" (2000).

Web link

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