**Israel uses Water as a Weapon against Palestinians**

**Israel controls Palestinians’ access to water in the occupied West Bank**

The COVID-19 infection rate in the West Bank, East Jerusalem, and Gaza Strip is surging. As of March 5, 2021, there were at least 218,600 COVID-19 cases in Occupied Palestinian Territories, and Palestinians deaths exceeded 2,300. Israel, which has fully vaccinated nearly half its population, is providing the vaccine to other countries in return for diplomatic favors and denying it to Palestinians, a violation of its duties as Occupier under the Fourth Geneva Convention. Limited access to water makes it very difficult to maintain proper sanitation.

• Israel controls all the water resources of the water-rich West Bank and uses more than 85% of that water for its own population. Meanwhile, nearly 200,000 Palestinians in the West Bank have no access to running water.

• Since Israel’s occupation began in 1967, not a single Palestinian village or individual has received permission to drill a well for irrigation. Israel blocks the development of new water infrastructure, destroys and confiscates existing infrastructure, and limits Palestinian access to local water sources such as freshwater springs, drilled wells, and rainwater cisterns.

• The World Health Organization’s minimum water consumption for “short-term survival”

is **100** litres/ person/day (lpd). In the West Bank, water consumption is **73** lpd for Palestinians *connected* to a water grid, and **20­** lpd for Palestinians *not connected* to a water grid.

• The more than 600,000 illegal Israeli settlers have access to **300** lpd per capita. Settlers use six times more water than the entire West Bank Palestinian population of 2.8 million people.

• Israel diverts large quantities of water from Palestinian wells and springs through pipes and tanker trucks, and destroys pipelines that provide West Bank villages with water.

• Israel cuts off water supply to Palestinian communities for weeks at a time, forcing people to buy trucked water at 5 times the price of network water. This can cost up to 50% of a family’s monthly expenditure. During the summer, Israel diverts Palestinian water supplies to its illegal settlements. Palestinians wait weeks for water, often receiving it only in the middle of the night. Sometimes residents receive running water *once every ten to fourteen days*.

• No Israeli settlement, except those within the boundaries of the municipality of Jerusalem, has a sewerage system. Settlements routinely release their wastewater onto Palestinian land, destroying crops and degrading Palestinian water supplies.

• Israeli dumping sites in the occupied West Bank and Jerusalem have severely polluted groundwater, surface water supplies, valley watercourses, and springs.