



A Torrent of Lies

Amnesty's Report on
Water

The Accusation

Israel is using its control of water as a tool of Apartheid and a means of ethnic cleansing

The Facts

By every conceivable measure of consumption of fresh water, the Palestinians' situation improved dramatically – indeed beyond all recognition - since 1967 under Israeli administration,

- overall consumption*;
- per capita consumption;
- consumption relative to Israel/Israelis,
- conveyance of running water to households;
- net conveyance to Palestinians from pre-67 Israel;
- area under agricultural cultivation;
- size of the agricultural product

* The comparison between Israeli and the Palestinian consumption refers only to naturally occurring fresh water which is the focus of the dispute and not recycled effluents or desalinated water which each of the parties is permitted to produce for themselves. (A map and cross section of the Mountain Aquifer the disputed water source shared by Israel and the Palestinians referred to in the Water Agreement in the Oslo II Accords is shown in the Appendix.)



The Evidence*

Exhibit #1

Overall Palestinian Consumption of Fresh Water

Increase of 300% - from 60 Mcm** to 180 Mcm

Fig. 5.1: Total Consumption of Fresh Natural Water, 1967 vs. 2006 (MCM/yr)

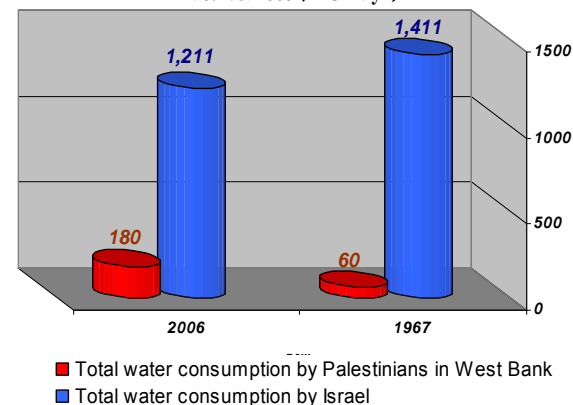
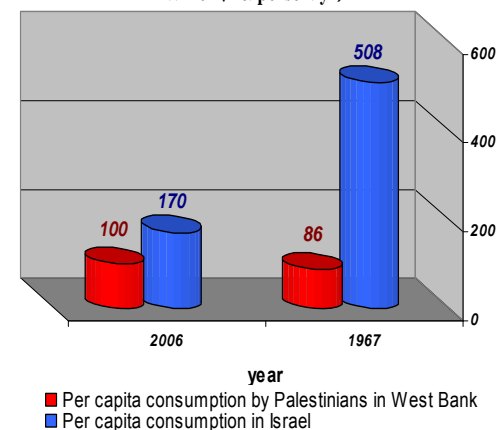


Exhibit #2

Per Capita Palestinian Consumption of Fresh Water

Increase of almost 15% - from 86 Cm*** to 100 Cm

Fig. 5.2: Per Capita Consumption of Fresh Natural Water (m³/person/yr)



The Evidence (cont)

Exhibit # 3 (a)

Palestinian Fresh Water Consumption Relative to Israel

In Overall Consumption

Palestinian - Increase of 300% - from 60 Mcm to 180 Mcm
Israeli - **Decrease** of 17% - from 1411 Mcm to 1211 Mcm

Fig. 5.1: Total Consumption of Fresh Natural Water, 1967 vs. 2006 (MCM/yr)

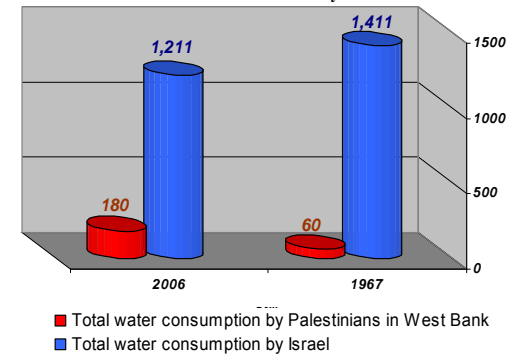
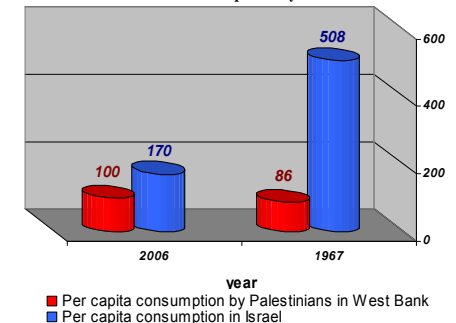


Exhibit # 3 (b)

In Per Capita Consumption

Palestinian - Increase of almost 15 % - from 86 Cm to 100 Cm
Israeli - **Decrease** of almost 70% - from 508 Cm to 170 Cm

Fig. 5.2: Per Capita Consumption of Fresh Natural Water (m³/person/yr)



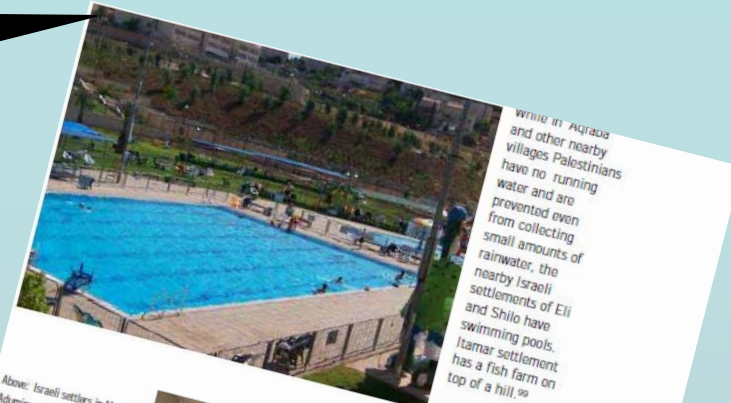
The Gap between Israeli and Palestinian Fresh Water Consumption **Decreased** from :
- 1351 Mcm to 1111 Mcm (almost 20%) in Overall Consumption
- 422 Cm to 70 Cm (almost 85%) in Per Capita Consumption

This was made possible by (a) **conservation efforts**, (b) great **advances in irrigation techniques**, (c) intensified **use of recycled sewage** in agricultural irrigation and (d) **desalinated sea water** for domestic consumption by Israel; as well as by (e) **conveyance of water from within Israel to the Palestinians** (f) **increased Palestinian extraction from the joint Mountain Aquifer**.*

* See Appendix

The Accusation

The water Israel provided for the Jewish settlements' swimming pools and lawns deprives the Palestinians of their water supply and depletes their water sources.



While in Aqra and other nearby villages Palestinians have no running water and are prevented even from collecting small amounts of rainwater, the nearby Israeli settlements of Eli and Shilo have swimming pools. Itamar settlement has a fish farm on top of a hill. 99

Above: Israeli settlers in Maaleh Adumim enjoy a swim. © Angela Godfrey-Goldstein
Right: An empty Palestinian agricultural reservoir near Jiftik in the West Bank. © AI



TROUBLED WATERS – PALESTINIANS DENIED FAIR ACCESS TO WATER
ISRAELI-OCCUPIED PALESTINIAN TERRITORIES

WATER IS A HUMAN RIGHT
AMNESTY INTERNATIONAL

The Facts

Israel conveys more water from inside the pre-67 Green Line to the West Bank than the total consumption of the Jewish settlements. There is thus a **net conveyance** of water **from Israel to the Palestinians** that more than compensates for the settlers “swimming pools and lawns”

The Evidence (cont)*

Total Water Conveyance from pre-67 Israel to "West Bank"

Total Water Consumption by Jewish Settlers in "West Bank"

אספקת המים מחב' מקורות ליו"ש ובקעת הירדן - ומקור המים המסופקים (במליוני קוב-2008)

מקור המים		סה"כ	בקעה	יו"ש	הצרכן / המיקום
מערכת ארצית	יו"ש-בקעה				
32.1	20.0	52.0	6.9	45.1	פלסטינים
23.7	24.7	48.3	23.5	24.8	ישראלים
55.7	44.6	100.3	30.4	69.9	סה"כ

הערה: האספקה לפלסטינים ביו"ש כוללת כ-1 מלמ"ש דרך חברת הגיחון. לעזה אנו מספקים בפועל כמעט 5 מלמ"ש וע"פ ההסכם אמורים לספק עוד 5 מלמ"ש במחירי מים מותפלים.

Exhibit #4

The total water consumption of the Jewish settlements on the "West Bank" is 48.3 Mcm, while the Israel Water Utility, Mekorot, conveys 55.7 Mcm from National Water System inside the pre- 67 frontiers to the "West Bank".

Also Israel still continues to supply Gaza with the amounts specified in the Oslo agreement.

* Source:  Israel Water Authority

The Accusation

Israel's restrictive water policies have prevented the development of Palestinian agriculture and inflicted severe economic damage on the Palestinian economy



... Israel has imposed restrictions on the overall quantity of water accessible to the Palestinians in the OPT to an extent where it has severely impaired realization of the Palestinians' right to adequate food, health, work and to achieve a decent standard of living. Israeli policies and restrictions have served to restrict agricultural and industrial development, and have thereby seriously hindered and obstructed social and economic development.

The Facts

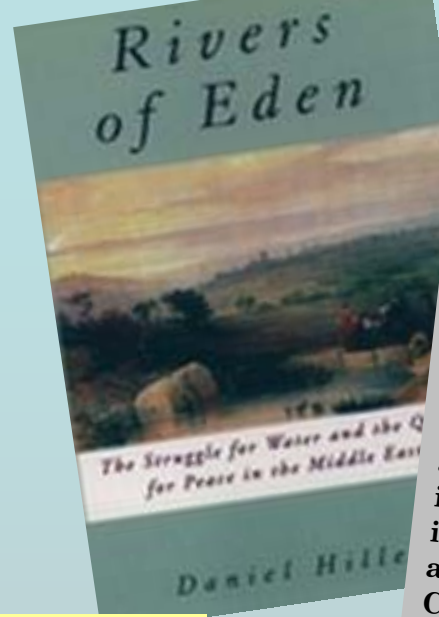
Under Israeli administration Palestinian agriculture developed and expanded beyond all recognition compared to what it was in 1967 in the "pre-occupation" era

The Evidence

In the period between 1967 to the late 80s – the years immediately preceding the “Oslo process”

- (a) the area under cultivation increased by 160%
- (b) the agricultural product grew by 1200%

These figures are reflected in the scholarly account of Daniel Hillel **Rivers of Eden*. (Oxford University Press, 1994), which describes the dramatic development of Palestinians agriculture under “occupation” - and its transformation from a **“from a subsistence enterprise to a commercial industry.”**



“The Israeli occupation changed local agriculture profoundly. It introduced modern technology, including mechanization, precision tillage, pest control, plastic covering of crops for temperature control, high yielding varieties, postharvest processing of produce, marketing, and export outlets. It also introduced efficient methods of irrigation, including sprinkler and especially drip irrigation. Consequently, output increased greatly, and farming was transformed from a subsistence enterprise to a commercial industry.”
Daniel Hillel, *Rivers of Eden*: (Oxford University Press, 1994, p. 206)

The Accusation

Israel's water policies of restricting water allocation to Palestinian farmers reflects racial discrimination



... Israel has imposed restrictions on the overall quantity of water accessible to the Palestinians in the OPT to an extent where it has severely impaired realization of the Palestinians' right to adequate food, health, work and to achieve a decent standard of living. Israeli policies and restrictions have served to restrict agricultural and industrial development, and have thereby seriously hindered and obstructed social and economic development.

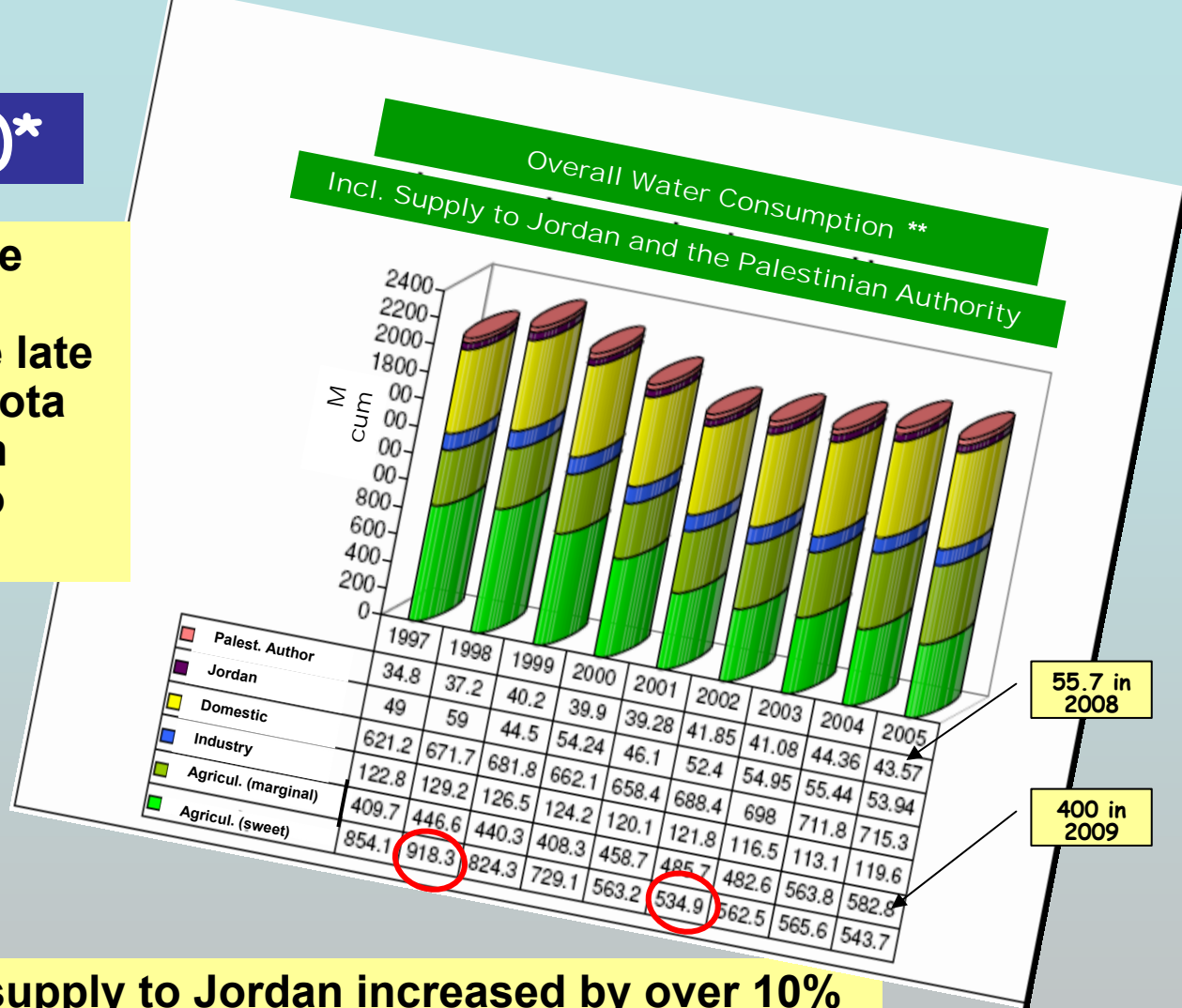


The Facts

- (a) Israeli administration has significantly increased the quantity of water available to the Palestinians and has greatly enhanced Palestinian accessibility to water
- (b) Israel has drastically cut back on water allocations to Israeli farmers

The Evidence (cont)*

Severe water cut backs have been imposed on *Israeli* agriculture which, since the late 1990s, has its fresh water quota cut back by over 60% - from levels of almost 900 Mcm to levels of around 550 Mcm



By contrast, Israel's water supply to Jordan increased by over 10% (49 Mcm to 53.94 Mcm) in the period 1997-2005, and to the Palestinians by over 25%. This rose to an increase of over 60% by 2008.

* Source:  Israel Water Authority

** Israeli consumption includes fresh water, recycled wastewater and desalinated water

The Evidence (cont)*

In 1967, only 50 villages were connected to running water. According to figures supplied by Israel Civilian Administration this number rose by over 500% to 260 by 1991.

These data are strongly endorsed by a World Bank survey according to which the percentage of households with safe water also grew by over 500% - from 15% in 1970 to 80% in 1996

* World Bank; Civilian Administration

Public Disclosure Authorized
Report No. 23820
West Bank and Gaza
An Evaluation of Bank Assistance
March 7, 2002
Operations Evaluation Department

34 ANNEX I

Table 3: Social Indicators: WB&G, 1970 and 1996

	1970	1996
Life expectancy (years)	56	72
Total Fertility		6.2
Natural pop growth rate (%) ^{1/}	2.5	4.0 ^{2/}
Maternal Mortality		70-80
Infant Mortality	95	40-45
Child Mortality (age 1-5)	73 ^{3/}	36
Gross primary enrollment (%)		96
Gross secondary enrollment (%)		52
Illiteracy (%)		16
Households with electricity (%)	30	
Households with safe water (%)	15	80
Access to public sewer		29
% of pop. in poverty		17-20 ^{4/}

... otherwise indicated)
... Investment in Peace, Volume 1, page 5;
... Under Adversity, 1999

... 3/ Devel...
4/ World Bank...
... AD, figure is for 1997

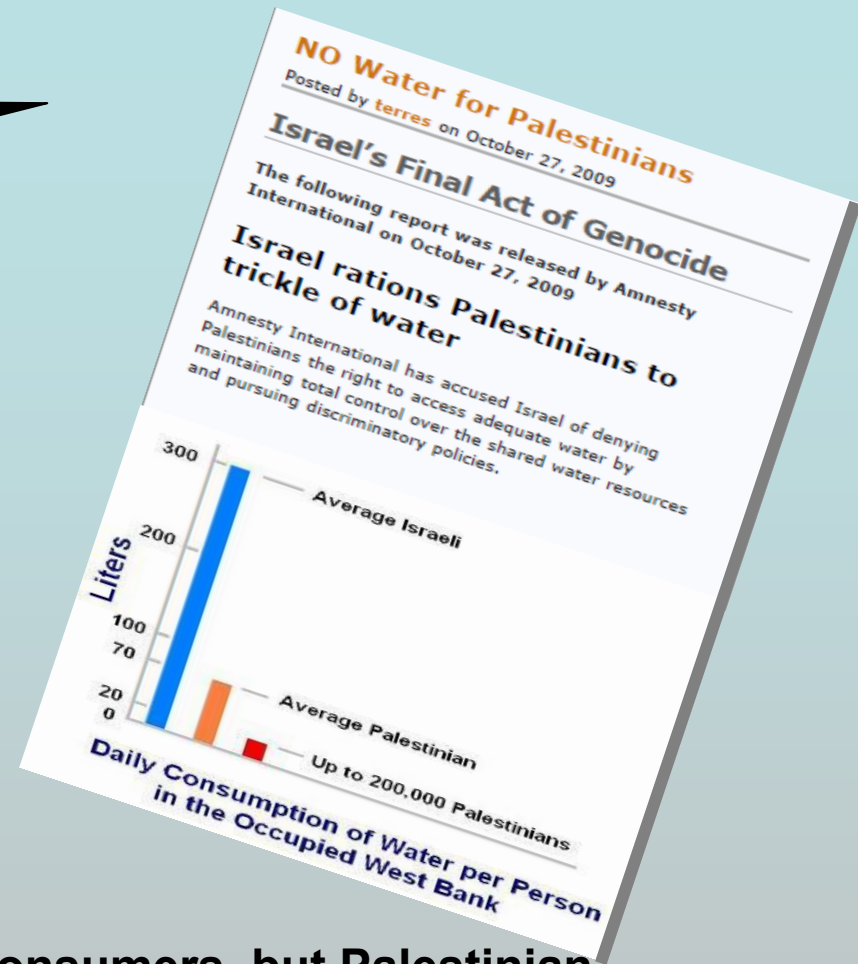
Households with safe water (%) 15 80

The Accusation

Israel conducts a discriminatory policy of racist rationing, depriving Palestinians of water for their basic needs

The Facts

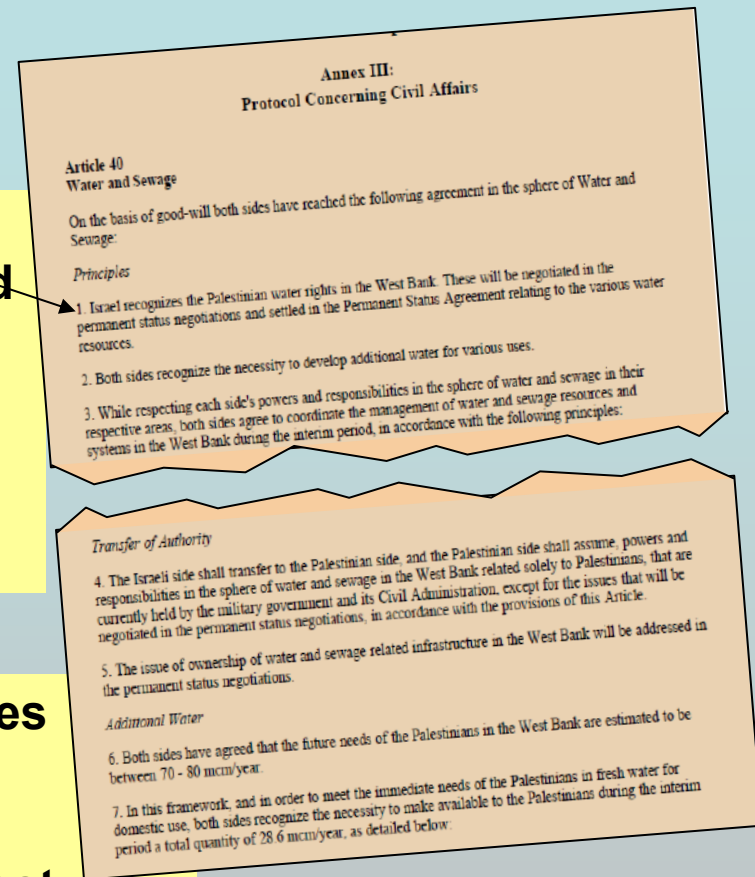
Israel does not supply Palestinian consumers, but Palestinian Authority, in compliance with – indeed considerably in excess of – its agreed Oslo obligations. The Palestinian Water Authority, municipalities, private producers and Palestinians water companies are responsible for the conveyance/distribution of water to Palestinian consumers . Most of the water consumed by Palestinians (over 70 %) is provided from sources totally operated by Palestinians. Only 30% is supplied by Israel by means of it Water Utility, *Mekorot*).




The Evidence (cont)

Since the signature of the Oslo II Agreement (Annex III, Article 40 Clause 4), Israel transferred all powers and responsibilities in the sphere of water and sewage in the West Bank, which relate solely to the Palestinian population, to the Palestinian Authority (PA), which in turn assumed these powers and responsibilities.

Via its water utility *Mekorot*, Israel supplies Palestinian providers (such as the PA, municipalities, and local and private water companies) – far in excess of, indeed almost double the 28.6 Mcm specified in (Annex III, Article 40 Clause 4) of Oslo II.*



*  Israel provided an additional 22 Mcm yearly although according to the the Oslo Agreement this should be 3.1 MCM. Israel also granted permits for new wells that can supply an additional 50 Mcm yearly. See [The Issue of Water between Israel and the Palestinians](#), March 2009, pp. 34-5

The Evidence (cont)

Since the responsibility (officially and in practice) for the water supply to the Palestinians is fully under the Palestinian Water Authority, the claims of inefficient water supply should be directed at the Palestinian Authority.

Typically stoppages are due to theft, poor infrastructure* maintenance, or unpaid bills- a feature which even the Amnesty report is forced to grudgingly acknowledge



Such disruptions of supply regularly occur in several Arab capitals such as Amman and Damascus.

* According to a Palestinian report "The Palestinian water and wastewater sector", Oct 2009, page 211) overall water losses in the Palestinian domestic supply system reach 33%!

The Evidence*

It is true that the per capita consumption of the Israeli population is much higher than that of the Palestinian population. However this is principally a result of differences in demand—rather than in supply—due to the differing lifestyles in the two societies .

Similarly different rates of consumption occur between the Jewish and Arab populations within pre-1967 Israel—and between different socio-economic groups within the Jewish population—without anyone raising the claim that this is the result of purposeful deprivation See table .

Location	Ave. Annual per Capita Household Consumption of Water (Cm) in 2007
Kiryat Arba (W..Bank Settlement)	33.5
Beitar Ilit (W..Bank Settlement)	36.5
Taiba (Arab village in Israel)	37.9
Modi'in Ilit (U/Religious W.Bank Settlement)	38.2
Majdal Shams (Druze Village in the Golan)	38.9
El Ad	39.1
Jerusalem	45.0
Rahat (Bedouin Town in Negev)	47.0
Modi'in-Macabim- Reut (Suburbia)	68.1
Tel Aviv Yafo	71.9
Herzliya	95.5
Omer (Wealthy Town in Negev)	135.6
Kfar Shmaryahu (Very Wealthy Town)	236.5
Saviyon (Israel's Most Exclusive Town)	299.3

* Source:  Israel Water Authority;

Note: according to the previously mentioned Palestinian report (p. 211), the average municipal consumption per capita in the West Bank is 110cm per day i.e. over 40cm per capita per a year. In practice it may well be even higher since according to some estimates the true size of Palestinian population is probably lower than specified in the report

The Accusation

The Mountain Aquifer is the Palestinians' only source of water. Israel is using around 80% of the shared water, leaving the Palestinians 'with what is left'.

The Facts

This assertion is inaccurate and misleading.

It is indeed true that Israel uses about 70% of the waters of the aquifer today. But in the pre-occupation times - before 1967- it utilized around 90% of these waters, which flow naturally (from the northern and western sections) into the coastal plain and the Jezriël valley*.

Thus Israel has legitimate claim to these waters by virtue of the internationally recognized principle of "Prior Use", the very same principle that Egypt invokes for its claim to the waters of the Nile, as do Syria and Iraq for their claims to the waters of the Euphrates and the Tigris.

*By means of the Yarkon River & Harrod springs respectively



The Evidence*

In 1967 the Palestinian consumption of fresh water totaled 60 Mcm which is around 10% of the total Mountain Aquifer's capacity. Today this has risen to 180 Mcm (or around 30%)

In other words, since the "Occupation", there is actually a greater percentage of water from the aquifer available to the Palestinians – due to more efficient utilization, advances in irrigation techniques, increased use by Israel of recycled sewage in agricultural irrigation and desalination in the urban sector

* Source:  Israel Water Authority

The Issue of Water between Israel and the Palestinians

13. Coping with Water Shortages – Israel's Viewpoint

The principles outlining the mode of water sharing, both present and future, as well as the methods for coping with expected water shortages, were stated in the section on water in the framework of the Interim Agreement signed between Israel and the Palestinians.

Water from the Mountain Aquifer that Israel has used even before 1967 has drained naturally into its territory, principally from the Yarkon, Taninim, Harod, Gilboa and Beit Shean springs. The Palestinians have never used this water. This fact grants Israel rights of possession and use regarding this water, even according to international law.

Realistic solutions to the problem of water shortage are those that derive from the principles that were determined in the Water Agreement signed by the two sides, in terms of both international law and responsible and sustainable management, principally:

March 21

- Reduction of water losses and conservation.
- Full exploitation by the Palestinians of the eastern basin in the Mountain Aquifer.
- Treatment of wastewater and reuse of the effluent as well as stormwater for irrigation.
- Desalination of brackish water and seawater for domestic use.
- Cooperation for optimal utilization of all the water sources, adoption of advanced technologies and management techniques.
- Concerted regional efforts to increase the total quantity of available water.

Implementation of the first three activities will double the total quantity of water that will be available for domestic use by the Palestinians.

The above activities, which Israel is already carrying out in its territory, add at present about 800 MCM/yr to the country's water sector. Most of this water is diverted to agriculture, thus freeing fresh water for domestic use. (Israel is currently desalinating seawater to the extent of 130 MCM/yr and brackish water to the extent of 36 MCM/yr; in September 2009, an additional seawater desalination plant, with a capacity of 100 MCM/yr, will commence operation at Hadera.)

Summation

The Evidence has been presented.

The Verdict is inescapable:



The Palestinians' accusations regarding water are motivated by political interests and are part of their ongoing attempt to undermine Israel's international legitimacy.

They also reflect the quintessential reasons why the Palestinians find themselves in the miserable state in which they are today:

- a) a chronic and cavalier disregard for the truth;**
- b) an enduring propensity to blame others for their fate; and**
- c) an obdurate refusal to take responsibility for their own actions - and inaction...**

Appendix

The Mountain Aquifer

The joint water source referred to in the Water Agreement in the Oslo II Accords (Article 40)

Map & Cross Section

