

Fact Sheet: Israel's Security Barrier

Reasons for the security barrier

Despite Israel's ongoing efforts to reach peace with its Palestinian neighbors, a brutal wave of suicide bombings and other acts of terror against Israeli civilians was unleashed in the fall of 2000. Palestinian terrorist groups have attacked families at a pizzeria in Jerusalem, Israeli Jews and Arabs at lunch in a Haifa restaurant, teens at a disco in Tel Aviv, grandmothers and toddlers at an ice cream parlor in Petach Tikva, and Holocaust survivors and others at a Passover Seder in Netanya. More than 1000 Israelis have been killed, and over 6500 have been maimed and wounded by these acts of terror.

The Palestinian Authority has not fulfilled its obligation to respond to terrorism. It has neither dismantled the terrorist infrastructure in areas under its control nor prevented suicide bombers and other terrorists from entering Israel.

The barrier is legal

On June 30, 2004 Israel's Supreme Court issued a detailed and binding ruling recognizing the legality of the anti-terrorist barrier. The Court ordered changes (in addition to the changes already made to accommodate farmers) to 30 kilometers of the route of the West Bank security barrier northwest of Jerusalem, saying that everything must be done to minimize hardships to Palestinians living in the area even if this might reduce security for Israelis. This decision is a profound demonstration of Israel's rule of law in action. Israel is a democracy with an independent judiciary that has the capacity and the will to evaluate its security concerns while at the same time respecting the human rights of the Palestinian people.

The barrier is effective

The security barrier, a non-violent defensive measure, proved itself to be very effective. Suicide attacks dropped by over 90% from the northern West Bank since that area of the barrier became operational in mid-2003. Only one suicide bomber has reached Israel from Gaza, where there is a full security barrier.



The walled sections of the barrier (3.8% of the barrier or about 5 miles) were erected in areas (such as in the towns of Tulkarem and Qalqiliya) where snipers target and shoot commuters along Israel's main highway.

Determination of the route of the security barrier

Israel is making every effort to provide local population and landowners with individual solutions to any difficulties caused by the security barrier. Gates along the security barrier enable Palestinian farmers and their workers to cross from one side to another. Use of public lands is a priority but when this is not feasible, private land is requisitioned but remains the property of its original owner. Legal procedures are in place to allow every owner to file an objection to the requisition of his land. Property owners are offered compensation for the use of their land and for the damage to their trees.

Israel seeks a partner for peace

Israel has made it clear that the barrier is not intended as a permanent border. The government and people of Israel are still waiting for a partner ready to negotiate peace and subsequently, borders. Until Israelis have that partner, the barrier is being built to accomplish what any government in the world has the obligation to provide for its citizens: freedom from terror.

