

## al-shabaka executive summary

# WHICH JERUSALEM? ISRAEL'S LITTLE-KNOWN MASTER PLANS

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## Key Points

- There are three Israeli master plans for the city of Jerusalem. The best known is the Jerusalem 2020 Master Plan, first published in 2004. The other two are below the radar: The Marom Plan, a government-commissioned plan, and the Jerusalem 5800 Plan (also known as Jerusalem 2050), the outcome of a private sector initiative.
- These master plans reinforce each other in their aim to maximize the number of Jews and reduce the number of Palestinians in Jerusalem through processes of colonization, displacement, and dispossession.
- The plans focus particularly on the development of tourism in the city, as well as of higher education and high tech. Urban planning and the enforcement of laws are some of the methods by which the plans work to ensure a Jewish majority and constrain the urban expansion of Palestinians.
- To rebut the colonization of Jerusalem, popular committees should be established in order to advocate for East Jerusalem residents' rights and jointly serve as a representative body on a local and international level.

## A Jewish Destination for Tourism, Higher Education, and High-Tech

The development of the tourism sector in Jerusalem is at the heart of the three development plans. Tourism is seen as an engine of economic development to attract Jews to the city, and is also a tool to control the narrative and ensure the projection of Jerusalem to the outside world as a "Jewish city."

Plans to promote Israeli tourism have gone hand in hand with Israeli-imposed restrictions on the development of the Palestinian tourism industry in East Jerusalem. The Palestinian tourism sector is further hampered by the lack of a clear Palestinian vision and promotional strategy, which impedes its ability to fuel the limited economic development possible under occupation.

Another common goal of the three plans is to attract Jews from all over the world to Jerusalem through the development of higher education and high tech, including by building an international university in the city center. The plans aim to make Jerusalem a leading academic city that is attractive to both Jewish and international students, who will be encouraged to settle there once they have finished their studies. Another aim is to make Jerusalem a center of R&D in the field of biotechnology.

### **Evicting Palestinian Using Urban Planning and the “Law”**

Measures to ensure a Jewish majority in Jerusalem and Israel’s de facto political borders of the city include the Separation Wall, urban planning, and the enforcement of laws.

Urban planning is a crucial element of the 2020 Master Plan. It encourages Jewish settlements in East Jerusalem and aims to reduce negative migration. While the plan recognizes the housing crisis suffered by Palestinians and makes recommendations to alleviate it, the recommendations are in fact discriminatory.

For example, 55.7% of additional housing for Palestinians will be through building within existing urbanized areas while 62.4% of Israeli Jewish building will be through expansion of urban areas. And while 9,500 dunums are planned for Israeli Jewish construction, only 2,300 dunums are planned for Palestinian construction. The plan also supports spatial segregation, that is, the division of Jerusalem into planning districts based on ethnic affiliation – in which no area would combine Palestinians and Israeli Jews.

Israel has also been using law as a tactic to evict Palestinians and appropriate their land. One of these laws is the Absentee Property Law, which enables Israel to confiscate the property of East Jerusalem Palestinians currently living in the West Bank by considering their property in East Jerusalem “absentee.” Another law is the Third Generation Law, which dictates that properties rented before 1968 by Palestinians must be returned to the original owners, who are mainly Jews who owned the property before 1948, upon the death of the third generation of Palestinian tenants.

### **Saving Jerusalem**

To rebut the colonization of Jerusalem and the dispossession of its Palestinian population, there is broad agreement among representatives of Palestinian organizations, official bodies, and community groups that steps should be taken to establish popular committees in each East Jerusalem neighborhood.

These committees could raise residents’ awareness about their rights and about Israel’s plans for the future, and they could form a representative body for Jerusalem at the national level. The body would work as a channel between Palestinians in East Jerusalem and 1) the Palestinian Authority; 2) the Arab and international community; and 3) Palestinian communities in their homeland as well as in the diaspora.



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