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The Blue Gold: Water Is for Everyone

Meeting on Human Rights

Florence, December 10, 2002

Prepared by: Attorney Dr. Hiba Hussein

Water as a Weapon: Why Wars for Water?

- Water is the source of all life
- Amount of fresh water in the Palestine/Israel is decreasing in quality and quantity
- In Palestine/Israel water is a very scarce resource
- Sources of Water:
 - ◆ Ground water: Aquifers
 - ◆ Surface water: Jordan River, Lake Tiberius

Cause of Conflict

- Did you know that there was conflict in 1503 between Pisa and Florence?
- Machiavelli wanted to divert the Arno River away from Pisa.
- Major reasons for conflict between Palestine and Israel
 - ◆ Control over scarce water resources
 - ◆ Political reasons: captured and future capture of land

Control over Water Resources

- Israel controls 95% of water resources in Palestine
- Palestinians buy water from Israel at prices set by Israel
- Israel subsidizes prices for Israeli users but sells to the Palestinians at unsubsidized prices
- Settlements in the West Bank and Gaza receive almost full subsidy (90%) and settlers receive water freely for their domestic use.
 - ◆ Settlers are largest consumer of water
 - ◆ 5-6 times more than the Palestinian user
 - ◆ 2-3 times more than the Israeli user

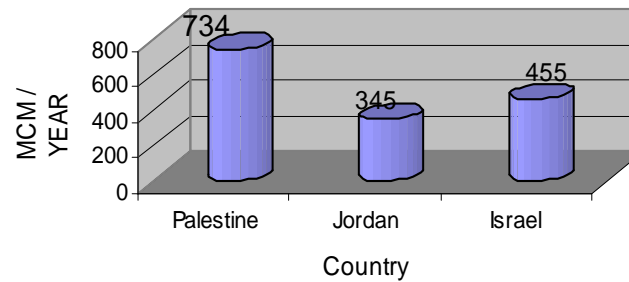
Political Reasons: Wars and How Israel Took Control Over Water Resources

- 1987, 1916, 1919 years that affecte water and marked Israeli control over major water resources in Palestine.
- In 1948 the war resulted in extending Israeli control to all head waters of Upper Jordan River, Lake Hula and Lake Tiberias up to the Golan Heights in the East, and Southern Part of Lake Tiberias. This was totally contradicting with all the agreements and treaties signed to define the borders: new map for the region was formed.

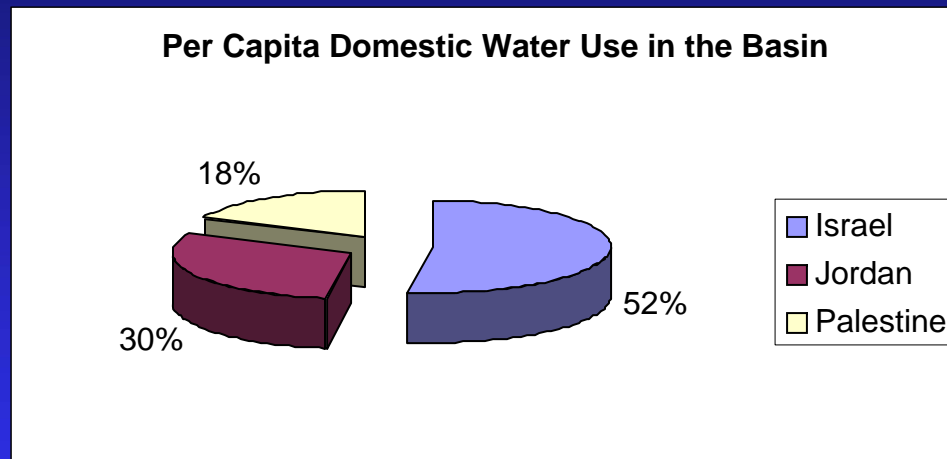
- 1948-1967: Israel implemented large water schemes to draw the water from rich north to the poor - desert south (national Carrier).
- 1967 War: resulted in occupying the West Bank, Golan Heights and Gaza and controlling all ground and surface waters between Jordan River and Mediterranean Sea.

Ground Water in the Jordan River Basin

Groundwater Occurrence in Each Country of the Lower Jordan Basin



Per Capita Domestic Waster in the Jordan River Basin



Total Per Capita Use and Per Capital Domestic Use

■ Total per capita use

- ◆ Israel: 344 m³/year
- ◆ Jordan: 244 m³/year
- ◆ Palestine: 93 m³/year (25% of the population lack any running water supply)

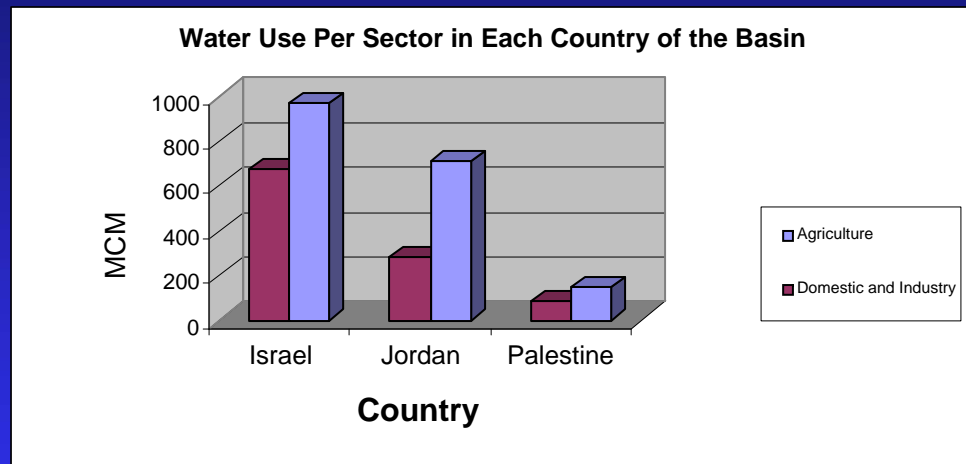
■ Total Domestic Use

- ◆ Israel: 98 m³/year
- ◆ Jordan: 56 m³/year
- ◆ Palestine: 34 m³/year

Water Rich Countries: Per Capital Use

- Northern Europe and Canada
 - ◆ 2000 m³/year
- World Average to maintain good social and economic life
 - ◆ 500 m³/year

Industry and Agriculture Use



Future Prospects

- When demanded increases in Palestine as the populations grows, economy grows the shortages become more acute the from existing resources
- The impact of natural scarcity conditions and conflicting demands among the riparian countries (Palestine, Israel and Jordan) on control and use will increase conflicts

Possible Solutions

- Alternatives include
 - ◆ Water conservation
 - ◆ Wastewater treatment
 - ◆ Re-use
 - ◆ Regional cooperation and equitable sharing of the scarce resources to avoid all out conflicts and overcome constraints