



# FINAL REPORT SEEDS OF PEACE 2009

by Maaïke Broos and André Kloer

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audiovisuele producties



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# Dutch Summary<sup>1</sup>

## Vraagstelling

In 2006 kwam André Kloer in Israël in contact met Simone Korkus, een Nederlandse journalist die sinds 2001 in Israël woont en werkt. Zij vertelde ons over de positie van Palestijnse arbeiders die werken voor Israëlische werkgevers in de nederzettingen van de Westbank. Deze arbeiders vallen nóch onder het Palestijnse arbeidsrecht, nóch onder het Israëlische, vanwege de onduidelijke juridische status van de nederzettingen. De Israëlische werkgevers lijken vrij spel te hebben in dit juridisch niemandsland. De industriële nederzetting die centraal staat in onze documentaire heet 'Seeds of Peace'.

In de documentaire onderzochten we het effect van de juridische onduidelijkheid op de arbeidsomstandigheden van Palestijnen die werken in de nederzettingen. Ook vroegen we ons af welke mogelijkheden de daar werkzame Palestijnen tot hun beschikking hebben om hun omstandigheden te verbeteren en waarom Palestijnen überhaupt in de nederzettingen werken.

Daags voor ons vertrek naar de Westbank deed de Israëlische Hoge Raad na een jarenlange juridische strijd een historische uitspraak: Palestijnse arbeiders die werken in de Israëlische nederzettingen vallen onder het Israëlische arbeidsrecht. Deze uitspraak breidde onze onderzoeksvraag verder uit: hoe wordt de Israëlische arbeidswet in de nederzettingen gehandhaafd?

## Bronnen

Twee bronnen vormden het begin van ons onderzoek. Ten eerste het in april 2007 gepubliceerde Ha'aretz-artikel 'Back to the Wall' van Simone Korkus, over de positie van Palestijnse arbeiders in de nederzettingen. Ten tweede het rapport van de International Labor Organization (ILO) 'The situa-

tion of workers of the occupied Arab territories' dat in mei 2007 werd gepubliceerd.

De research richtte zich vervolgens op het verzamelen van statistische gegevens en het lezen van onderzoeks- en beleidsrapporten over de Palestijnse arbeidsmarkt, de Palestijnse economie, de ontwikkeling van industriële nederzettingen in de Palestijnse gebieden, de positie van de Palestijnse arbeiders, en de activiteiten van de vakbonden.

Voor de documentaire 'Seeds of Peace' hebben we interviews gehouden met overheden, vakbonden, juristen, wetenschappers, onderzoeksbureaus, journalisten, ngo's, het Israëlische leger, Israëlische werkgeversorganisaties en werkgevers, Palestijnse ondernemers en niet te vergeten de Palestijnse arbeiders en hun families. Daarnaast hebben we ook gebruik gemaakt van participerende observatie om inzicht te krijgen in de dagelijkse leefwereld van de arbeiders en het werkveld van de vakbonden.

Israël kent de wet openbaarheid van bestuur, maar veel besluiten die worden genomen over de Palestijnse Gebieden en de nederzettingen zijn niet openbaar. Het gebied valt namelijk onder de jurisdictie van de Civil Administration, dat onderdeel is van de IDF, het Israëlische leger. We hebben de Civil Administration benadert om inzicht te krijgen over het beleid inzake werkvergunningen voor Palestijnen die werken in de nederzettingen. De door ons gevraagde informatie wilden ze niet geven.

We hadden van de Palestijnse arbeider Jawdat Talousy gehoord, dat hij in geen van de industriegebieden werk kon krijgen, nadat hij in opstand was gekomen tegen zijn werkgever en hierom ontslagen werd. Zo hoorden we dat er een zwarte lijst zou bestaan die Israëlische werkgevers gezamenlijk bijhouden, met daarop de namen van Palestijnse arbeiders die in opstand zijn gekomen. De Civil Administration kon daarover uitsluitel geven omdat die de

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<sup>1</sup> Deze samenvatting is tevens de inschrijving voor de VVOJ aanmoedigingsPrijis voor onderzoeksjournalistiek

vergunningen verstrekt aan arbeiders die werken in de nederzettingen.

## Problemen

Tijdens het project zijn we tegen verschillende problemen aangelopen. Het grootste obstakel ondervonden we in de distributiefase. Voor journalistieke onderzoeksdocumentaires is in het circuit van filmfestivals die gericht zijn op een breed publiek weinig plaats. Daarvoor mist 'Seeds of Peace' teveel een persoonlijk verhaal. Ook was het lastig de documentaire onder te brengen bij distributeurs, want die zoeken bij voorkeur producties die niet gericht zijn op een actuele gebeurtenis of een onderwerp hebben met betrekking tot een bepaald gebied, omdat die moeilijk wereldwijd te verkopen en tijdelijk houdbaar zijn.

We hebben de documentaire ook naar televisieproducenten gestuurd, maar begrijpen nu dat producenten graag vooraf betrokken worden in de productie, om budgettaire redenen en vanwege hun eigen programmering. Televisie is dus voor 'onafhankelijke' producties van onderzoeksdocumentaires een moeilijk medium en we waren dan ook niet succesvol om de documentaire op televisie te krijgen; maar 'Zembla' kreeg de documentaire wel onder ogen, en heeft een klein stukje van het beeldmateriaal gebruikt voor de uitzending 'Geld voor Gaza'. Uitgebreide informatie over 'Seeds of Peace' en een trailer staan daarom op de website van ONJO, de website voor onderzoeksjournalistiek van de Publieke Omroep.

Meer succes hebben we op gespecialiseerde platforms. De documentaire draait wereldwijd op festivals die zich specifiek richten op arbeidsrecht of de Palestijnse Gebieden. Daarnaast merken we ook dat internet een steeds belangrijker medium wordt om een documentaire aan een groot publiek te vertonen. Dit blijkt ook uit CBS-cijfers over 2008: steeds meer Nederlanders luisteren naar radio en bekijken tv-uitzendingen via internet. Dit geldt vooral voor jongeren tot 25 jaar, daar is het percentage ruim 70%. Deskundigen ver-

wachten dat internet de komende jaren in rap tempo andere media zal opslokken.

Een ander probleem tijdens de distributiefase was dat Maaïke Broos ernstig ziek werd. Eind mei 2008 werd bij haar Hodgkin lymfoom geconstateerd, een vorm van kanker; daarop volgde een intensieve chemotherapie van een half jaar, waardoor het project flinke vertraging opliep. We begonnen het project in juni 2007 met de eerste subsidieaanvragen. De documentaire draaide voor het eerst in april 2008 op de Afrikadag, een Haags festival georganiseerd door de Evert Vermeer Stichting. Daarna volgden vertoningen op diverse festivals die zich richten op arbeidsrecht of de Palestijnse Gebieden. De komende maanden (en misschien wel jaren) zal de verspreiding van de documentaire onder dit soort festivals doorgaan. De productie heeft dus tot nu toe bijna twee jaar geduurd, maar effectief hebben wij per persoon voltijd een half jaar aan het project gewerkt.



*André Kloer filming the factories of Nizzane Ha Shalom on a roof top.*

## Leermomenten

'Seeds of Peace' is onze eerste grote documentaire. Gedurende het project hebben we veel geleerd van het hele productieproces rondom een onderzoeksdocumentaire, omdat we vrijwel alles met zijn tweeën hebben gedaan.

We hebben inzicht gekregen in de verhouding tussen de informatieve laag van een documentaire, en het persoonlijke verhaal. Het is belangrijk om vroeg in het productieproces daarover een beslissing te maken. In 'Seeds of Peace' hebben we de informatieve laag (context, feiten, argumenten) steeds meer ruimte gegeven ten koste van het persoonlijke, subjectieve verhaal van onze hoofdpersoon Jawdat Talousy.

Dat is geen goede of verkeerde keuze geweest, maar hierdoor veranderde wel de doelgroep. Willen we een bioscooppubliek bereiken, dan moeten we onze film cinematografischer maken. Maar wilden we dat ook? Meer aandacht voor het persoonlijke verhaal zouden ten koste gaan van de feitelijke informatie en de inhoudelijke diepgang. Het ontbrak 'Seeds of Peace' daarom aan een uitgewerkt persoonlijk verhaal, maar de documentaire werd des te interessanter voor betrokkenen en specialisten in het werkveld.

Door ons onderzoek hebben we een expertise opgebouwd en interesse gekregen in het arbeidsrecht en in vakbondsvorming. In Nederland zagen we onze verworven rechten als een vanzelfsprekendheid, maar in Israël en Palestina ontdekten we dat die rechten werden verkregen door strijd. Vakbonden spelen hierin een cruciale rol, vooral in de totstandkoming van arbeidswetgeving en de handhaving hiervan.

## Conclusie

Het ontbreken van een duidelijke wetgeving en het niet goed handhaven van wetten werken altijd in het voordeel van de werkgever en vrijwel nooit in het voordeel van de werknemer. Door gebrekkige handhaving van de Israëlische arbeidswet verdienen Palestijnen die werken in de nederzettingen voor Israëlische bedrijven gemiddeld drie keer onder het officiële minimumloon, zijn de arbeiders de facto onverzekerd bij ongevallen op de werkvloer en wordt er door de werkgever gesjoemeld met werkbriefjes. Arbeiders die daar tegen in het verzet komen worden ontslagen en kunnen (volgens de arbeiders en vakbon-

den die we gesproken hebben) in geen van de andere nederzettingen meer aan de bak.

Werkgevers hebben vrij spel omdat Palestijnse vakbonden geen toegang hebben tot de nederzettingen, en de Israëlische vakbond (die wel toegang heeft) Palestijnse arbeiders niet afdoende vertegenwoordigt. Er is geen controlerende instantie om de wet te handhaven, behalve dan de Civil Administration, maar die lijkt samen te werken met de werkgevers van de industriegebieden.

Waarom werken Palestijnen dan in die industriegebieden? De mogelijkheid voor werk in de Palestijnse Gebieden is steeds moeilijker geworden na het uitbreken van de Tweede Intifada in 2000. De Israëlische bezetting en de uitbreiding van het aantal checkpoints zorgen voor een enorme stijging van de werkloosheid onder Palestijnen. Tegelijkertijd is het aantal vergunningen om in Israël te kunnen werken (waar Palestijnen volledige arbeidsrechten genieten en minimumloon) gehalveerd. En dus trekken steeds meer werkloze Palestijnen naar de Israëlische industriële nederzettingen voor werk. De conclusie die wij trekken is dat de Palestijnen voor werk steeds afhankelijker worden van de Israëlische nederzettingen, en dat op die manier Israël van de Palestijnse gebieden steeds meer een wingewest maakt voor goedkope arbeid.

De enige mogelijkheid voor Palestijnse arbeiders om te strijden voor hun arbeidsrechten is via de Israëlische rechter. Kav La'oved, een Israëlische ngo, verleent om die reden juridische bijstand aan ontslagen Palestijnse arbeiders. Deze organisatie informeert arbeiders ook over hun rechten en het belang om gezamenlijk op te treden tegen hun onderdrukkende werkgevers. Bij Jawdat Talousy ging dat laatste mis: Zijn collega's lieten hem in de steek, omdat ze bang waren ook hun baan te verliezen en nergens meer werk te kunnen vinden in een van de nederzettingen.

Betekent de uitspraak van de Israëlische Hoge Raad van 2007 dan niet dat Palestijnen nu beter beschermd zijn door

de Israëlische arbeidswet? Daar is geen ondubbelzinnig antwoord op te geven. Los van de problemen rondom de handhaving van de arbeidswet, kregen we een beleidsrapport onder ogen van de Wereldbank. Hierin staan plannen om nieuwe industriegebieden te bouwen die zullen opereren onder de Palestijnse vlag maar in feite Israëlische bedrijven zijn. Palestijnse arbeiders die bij deze 'Palestijnse' bedrijven komen te werken, kunnen daarom geen aanspraak maken op de Israëlische arbeidswet en minimumloon.

Dus wat voor effect gaat de uitspraak van de Hoge Raad van 2007 hebben? Volgens Assaf Adiv (directeur 'Workers Advice Center') geeft de uitspraak alleen maar meer legitimiteit aan Israëls aanspraken op delen van de Westbank: de nederzettingen. Eigenlijk zegt de Hoge Raad: als de nederzettingen aan Israël toebehoren, dan moeten daar ook de Israëlische wetten worden nageleefd.

Echter de uitspraak van de Hoge Raad voorziet in een paragraaf waarin zij benadrukt dat de uitspraak niet mag worden uitgelegd als een verandering in de soevereiniteit van de Palestijnse Gebieden:

*'We have already decided [in case # 205/82] that 'application of a specific Israeli norm on some place out of Israel does not necessarily entail that such place is part of Israel' (paragraph 12 to Justice Rivlin's decision, writing for the Court).*

## Gevolgen

Ons script en de subsidieaanvraag zorgden ervoor dat de relaties tussen FNV Mondiaal en de Palestijnse en Israëlische vakbonden weer werden verstevigd. FNV Mondiaal is samen met Oxfam Novib de hoofdsponsor van 'Seeds of Peace'. FNV Mondiaal stuurde een facts finding mission naar het gebied om de rol van vakbonden in Israël en Palestina te onderzoeken. Hun rapport over de vakbonden sloot aan bij onze bevindingen.

In de Palestijnse Gebieden gebruikt veldwerker Salwa Alinat van Kav La'Oved de documentaire om Palestijnse arbeiders

te informeren over hun arbeidsrechten. We onderhouden intensief contact met haar over het maken van een vervolgdocumentaire over kinderarbeid. In de Jordaanvallei groeit een hele generatie Palestijnse kinderen op om te werken in de Israëlische nederzettingen. Ze krijgen geen onderwijs en verliezen hun dromen en perspectieven voor de toekomst. Wordt vervolgd.

# Introduction

## Key Information

- **project title:** Seeds of Peace (Nizzane Ha Shalom / Kiem van Vrede)
- **project number:** NL093011
- **organization:** March21Films
- **country:** the Netherlands
- **coordinators:** André Kloer, Maaïke Broos
- **period:** November 2007-December 2008
- **reporting period:** January-March 2009

## Synopsis

The documentary **Seeds of Peace, workers' rights in a legal no-mans' land** examines the legal ambiguity in the Israeli settlements on the West Bank, and the impact of this legal ambiguity on working conditions of Palestinians who work in these settlements. The documentary also examines what possibilities Palestinians have to their disposal to improve their labour conditions and why they actually work in the settlements.

One of these workers is **Jawdat Talousy**. He has worked in the Jewish settlement Nizzane Ha Shalom ('Seeds of Peace'), located on the West Bank nearby the city of Tulkarem. He and two other Palestinian workers were fired, because they have established a labour committee to force their Israeli employer to apply the same legal rights and minimum wages for them, as for their Israeli coworkers. In the settlements on the West Bank, labour laws for Palestinians are ambiguous and law enforcement is weak. This juridical chaos is causing abuse of the workers. In spite of this more and more Palestinians turn for work to the Israeli settlements, because the Palestinian economy is unable to create enough jobs.

From all the people we have interviewed, we have probably learned most from Jawdat. We have learned from him what it means to be in a position without labour rights. He has set for us an example: no matter your personal circumstances, you

should always pursue your dreams and stick to what you believe in.

## Genesis

We have first learned about the legal position of Palestinians who work in the Israeli industrial zones on the West Bank through



*workers' strike at Yamit factory in Tulkarem, november 2007*

**Simone Korkus**, a Dutch journalist in Israel. Korkus is writing i.a. for *Vrij Nederland* and *Sunday Times*; she has won the UN International Press Prize for the best report about the Middle East in 2006. André Kloer met her in Israel in 2006 during the making of the short documentary 'The Magical Children of Light'. It was about a peace project in which Palestinian and Israeli children played together in a theatre piece. Half a year later Korkus sent us an article about the abuse of Palestinians who work in the Israeli industrial settlements on the West Bank. The article was published in April 2007 in the Israeli daily **Ha'aretz**.<sup>2</sup> After reading this article we decided to make a documentary about this subject. Korkus was closely involved in the making of this documentary by providing us with the first contacts and background literature.

Another important source we used as a starting point in our research was the report of the **International Labor Organization** 'The situation of workers in the occupied Arab territories' which was published in May 2007.

<sup>2</sup> see Appendix 1: Back tot the Wall



The second stage of our research was spent on analysing statistic data and reading research and policy reports concerning the Palestinian labour market, the Palestinian economy, the development of industrial settlements in the Palestinian Territories, the position of the Palestinian workers, and the activities of the Trade unions.

In the final phase of our research we had to look for the right interviewees. For the documentary 'Seeds of Peace' we have had interviews with governments, trade unions, lawyers, scientists, journalists, NGO's, the Israeli army, Israeli trade organizations, Israeli employers, Palestinian entrepreneurs and of course the Palestinian workers and their families. Moreover we have also used participating observation to get insight in the daily environment of the workers and the trade unions.

Israel has freedom of information legislation, but many governmental decisions made about the settlements and the Palestinian Territories are not public. The area falls under the jurisdiction of the Civil Administration, which is part of the Israeli army. And the army is not obliged to follow the freedom of information law. We have approached the Civil Administration however to verify the existence of a black list stating the names of Palestinian workers who have revolted against their employers. Jawdat Talousy, other fired workers and the Palestinian trade union claim the existence of such a list. This black list would prevent these Palestinians to get employment in any of the Israeli settlements. The Civil Administration, which keeps records of all work permits issued to Palestinians, could shed a light on the existence of such a list. The information we requested has not been given.

So we haven't been able to check the existence of this black list and we did not use it in the documentary, but we have mentioned in the film that Jawdat could not find work in any of the other factories of Nizzane Ha Shalom.

## Background

### Industrial Zones

The second Intifada, the Palestinian uprising against the Israeli occupation that began in the year 2000, and the construction of the Israeli separation barrier, led to skyrocketing unemployment on the West Bank. Large numbers of Palestinians were refused permission to work in Israel. According to the International Labour Organization there were a hundred and ten thousand Palestinians working in Israel shortly after the outbreak of the intifada. By 2007 half of them had lost their jobs.

A small number of these Palestinians found employment in the **Israeli industrial zones** on the West Bank. The first were built in the late 1980s. The Israeli industrial settlements are attractive locations for some Israeli companies because of the weak enforcement of laws, such as environmental regulations.

### Legal Rights

In 1982 it was decided that Palestinians who worked in the Jewish settlements had the right to the same minimum wage as their Israeli coworkers. Since then the Israeli authorities have never properly monitored whether companies in the settlements comply with the rules. They also have few legal protections in terms of safety and social security, because until recently it was unclear whether Israeli labour law applied to Palestinians working in the settlements. This issue is linked to more fundamental questions: Are the Israeli settlements in occupied Palestinian territory legitimate, and are they part of Israel?

For years, the Palestinians have fought a legal battle for equal labour rights. But in 2002 an Israeli judge ruled that Israeli labour law did not apply to Palestinians working in the settlements. **Kav La'Oved**, an Israeli organization that defends the rights of Palestinian workers, filed an appeal with a higher court against this decision.

Finally on the 10th October 2007, shortly before our departure to the West Bank, the

Israeli Supreme Court handed down a historic ruling: Palestinian laborers who work in the settlements do fall under Israeli labour law. In his verdict **judge Salim Joubran** has stressed the importance of equality: *The Labor Court's ruling implies that the only distinction between the Palestinian and Israeli workers is that the former are Palestinians, residents of the Palestinian Authority. This distinction on the basis of nationality is improper and tantamount to discrimination [...] applying a foreign law to Palestinian workers and the Israeli law to Israeli ones infringes on the Palestinians' basic rights and discriminates against them, although they all work together.*<sup>3</sup>

### Labour Unions

The Israeli trade union **Histadrut** supported the lawsuit, which led to the Supreme Court decision in 2007. But the union has barely any contact with Palestinian workers on the other side of the separation barrier. And even the Palestinian trade union, the **PGFTU**, can do little to support these Palestinian workers, because it has no access to the Israeli settlements. What's more the Palestinian trade unions are said to be less than democratic and more preoccupied with politics than with organizing workers. That's why the Israeli organization **Kav La'Oved**, supports these workers in the legal struggle against their Israeli employers, and helps the Palestinian trade unions to organize themselves.

### Palestinian Economy

The closing of commercial crossing points along the borders of the West Bank and the Gaza Strip, a measure taken in response to Palestinian attacks, has severely damaged the Palestinian export trade. It has also paralyzed many manufacturing processes that depend on imported materials like machines and tools. More than five hundred Israeli checkpoints inside the West Bank badly hamper the movement of workers and goods. This is the main reason for the collapse of the Palestinian economy and the unprecedented increase in unemploy-

ment and poverty in the Occupied Territories.

The Palestinian economy is unable to create enough jobs and the few jobs that do exist are so poorly paid that workers don't earn enough to feed a family. More and more of them are turning to the last resort: working in the Jewish settlements.



*Salwa Alinat, a representative of Kav La'Oved, speaks with women workers.*

### Joined Industrial Zones

In 2005 the World Bank unveiled a plan to expand industrial areas on the West Bank and Gaza Strip. It was presented as a peace project, because Israeli and Palestinian companies are meant to cooperate in so-called joint industrial zones. The three joined industrial zones planned for the West Bank are to be established near the Palestinian villages of Irtha in the West, Jalama in the North and Tarqumia in the South. All three will be located at the border. These projects will be financed by Japanese, American, German and Turkish donors.

The industrial zones will operate at least partly under the Palestinian flag. So how will the Palestinians who work there be affected by the Israeli Supreme Court ruling of 2007? They will not fall under Israeli labour law and the 'Palestinian' employer doesn't have to pay them according to the Israeli minimum wages. But except for the Palestinian flag and the Palestinian workers the company is de facto Israeli: the raw materials are coming from Israel, the export

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<sup>3</sup> see Appendix 2: Israeli Labor Laws to Apply to Palestinians Who Work in Settlements

goes through Israel and the managers are Israeli.

For this reason organizations like **Kav La'Oved** and the **Workers Advice Center** are continuing fighting for equal labour rights for Palestinians, through the court and through the unions. The Supreme Court ruling of 2007 is clearly not the final destination of the struggle.

## Gender Analysis

Gender issues did not fall within the scope of the documentary. However, we have spoken to several women, in particular to fieldworker **Salwa Alinat** of Kav LaOved. As a traditional Islamic woman she helps female and male workers in their labour struggle. We have also interviewed Jawdat Talousy's spouse and used her remarks and views on gender roles in Palestinian society.

# Objectives and Results

## Raising Awareness

### Objective

One of the millennium goals is fair trade. In line with this goal the documentary wants to raise **awareness** among Dutch companies doing business with the companies in the settlements, among the Dutch audience, and in the Dutch government. Also, the documentary wants to raise awareness among Palestinian and Israeli audiences.

### Achievement

- The documentary has had its first screening on the **Afrikadag** in the Hague. A hundred registered visitors have watched the film. In cooperation with United Civilians of Peace (UCP) we have organized a debate after the screening. The participants of the debate were Leo Mesman (FNV), Suying Lai (Oxfam Novib) and Jan Marinus Wiersma (Euro Parliament PvdA). The moderator of the debate was Martin Siepermann (UCP).<sup>4</sup>
- Fieldworker Salwa Alinat of workers organization Kav La'Oved is distributing the documentary in Israel and Palestine among local, national and online television stations. This distribution is an ongoing process. Updates about these achievements will be published on our website: [www.march21.nl/seedsofpeace](http://www.march21.nl/seedsofpeace)
- In 2006 the settlement trade was on the political agenda in the Netherlands, when members of parliament **Harry van Bommel** (SP) and **Farah Karimi** (Groen Links) asked questions to Minister Bot

about the Dutch economic relations with the Israeli settlements on the West Bank. The Dutch government considers these ties as 'undesirable', but sees no possibilities to take actions against them. We have sent a copy of the documentary to member of parliament Harry van Bommel to inspire him to keep on asking critical questions about the Dutch settlement trade.

- Dutch NGO **United Civilians for Peace** (UCP) has published a research about 'Dutch economic links in support of the Israeli occupation of Palestinian and/or Syrian territories' in 2006. This research revealed that dozens of Dutch companies (through their activities) support or facilitate the Israeli occupation of Palestinian and Syrian territories. UCP can refer to the documentary to support their findings, and use the documentary in their lobby work to convince Dutch companies and Dutch consumers to take responsibility.
- We have sent the documentary to festivals, distributors and television stations in the Netherlands and world wide. After a period of research we have found festivals which are specialized in the field of our documentary: i.e. labour film festivals and Palestine film festivals.<sup>5</sup> The films will be screened at this kind of festivals. We will update the website [www.march21.nl/seedsofpeace](http://www.march21.nl/seedsofpeace) with information about upcoming screenings.
- **Video 48**, an Israeli video production house which produces documentaries on the events within the Arab society in Israel, will help us to screen the film in film houses in Israel. They are very eager to create awareness in the Israeli society.

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<sup>4</sup> see appendix 3: Report of the Afrikadag 2008

<sup>5</sup> see appendix 4: List of Festivals, Distributors and Television Stations

- We have built a website for the documentary with detailed information about the film and a trailer. The Google Analytics report shows that the Seeds of Peace website generates about 90 unique visitors a month.<sup>6</sup>
- The trailer and detailed information about 'Seeds of Peace' has been published at the **ONJO** site, the website for research journalism of the Dutch Public television channels, and a cooperation of Reporter (KRO), Zembra (VARA, NPS), Tegenlicht (VPRO), Netwerk (EO/NCRV) and others. ONJO publishes a weekly digital newsletter, and 'Seeds of Peace' has been on the front page.<sup>7</sup>
- The entire 50 min. documentary will be broadcasted on the internet after we have finished the distribution to bigger international festivals which demand a first screening.

## Visual Tool

### Objective

The documentary wants to provide FNV Mondiaal, UCP, Oxfam Novib and NGO's and labour unions in Israel and Palestine (Kav La'Oved, Workers Advice Center and PGFTU) with a **visual tool** in their struggle for better working conditions for Palestini-

ans working in the Israeli industrial settlements on the West Bank.

### Achievements

- Fieldworker Salwa Alinat of workers organization Kav La'Oved will help us market the documentary among Israeli and Palestinian NGO's, who are concerned with labour rights of Palestinian workers. Updates of these achievements will be published on our website: [www.march21.nl/seedsofpeace](http://www.march21.nl/seedsofpeace)
- Labour unions and NGO's in Israel and Palestine collaborating with the Palestinian workers have, with the documentary in their hand, a visual tool to help the workers to understand the importance of unity in the struggle against an oppressing employer. We have given the documentary to fieldworker Salwa Alinat of Kav La'Oved, so she can use it in workshops in which Palestinian workers learn about their legal rights.
- The documentary has been used within the FNV, and will be screened and debated at the **FNV Middle East Conference** in July 2009.



*Afrikadag 2008, viewing 'Seeds of Peace' and debate. Panel members (from left to right): Jan Marinus Wiersma (Europarlement PvdA), Suying Lai (Oxfam Novib), Leo Mesman*

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<sup>6</sup> see appendix 5: Google Analytics Report Seeds of Peace Website

<sup>7</sup> see appendix 6: Publication Onjo Website

## Insight

### Objective

To give the labour union FNV Mondiaal, Oxfam Novib, United Civilians for Peace and others **insight** into the problems of Palestinians working for Israeli companies in the industrial settlements on the West Bank.

### Achievements

- The documentary points out what organizations like Kav La'Oved, PGFTU and Histadrut do for Palestinians. For example the film gives insight into the priorities of the Israeli labour union Histadrut and shows that they are mainly concerned with the Israeli workers on the Israeli labour market, and that they poorly represent Palestinian workers who work for Israeli employers in the settlements.
- The documentary also gives insight in the role of the World Bank in the planned expansion of the industrial zones on the West Bank, and shows under which dubious conditions these expansions are supposed to take place. The industrial zones will operate at least partly under the Palestinian flag, while they are de facto Israeli. This means considerable restrictions of the workers' rights.
- The documentary itself has not been broadcasted on television, but Zembla has used a part of the documentary for its television program **Geld voor Gaza** (Money for Gaza). Zembla has also approached us for more background information. We have told them i.a. about the above mentioned World Bank report.
- On October 10 2007, shortly before our departure to the West Bank, the Israeli Supreme Court handed down a historic ruling: Palestinian laborers who work in the settlements do fall under Israeli labour law. The documentary clarifies what this ruling means. It is good news for Palestinian workers at the settlements, but at the same time it raises questions. According to **Assaf Adiv** (director **Workers Advice Center**) this ruling comes together with Israel's claims to annex parts (i.e. the set-

tlements) of the West Bank. And how will this law be enforced? However The ruling of the Supreme Court does address this issue, and states:

*'We have already decided [in case # 205/82] that 'application of a specific Israeli norm on some place out of Israel does not necessarily entail that such place is part of Israel' (paragraph 12 to Justice Rivlin's decision, writing for the Court).*

- The documentary clarifies how disturbed political relations affect labour conditions on the shop floor. Palestinians become increasingly dependent on the Israeli settlements as the only place for work. This is caused by two developments: on one hand it becomes increasingly difficult for Palestinians to work in Israel. On the other hand the Palestinian economy is unable to create enough jobs, because the far reaching Israeli control and restriction measurements make it too difficult for Palestinian businesses to create new jobs. **Sam Bahour** (owner of a telephone company) explains in the documentary that the telephone frequencies are in control by Israel. The issue of the license has been delayed for several years. An other example is transport: Palestinian goods become too expensive because of the delay at the checkpoints, while Israeli products have direct access to every Palestinian city and town, and are therefore cheaper.

## Balanced Dialogue

### Objective

To strengthen the contacts between FNV Mondiaal and labour organizations which represent or are supposed to represent Palestinian workers. The documentary should **stimulate a balanced dialogue** around the heavily debated conflict between Palestine and Israel from the point of view of workers' rights.

### Achievements

- We have no real means to measure to what extent the documentary has strengthened the relationship between

FNV Mondiaal and the labour organizations in Israel and Palestine. In any case, the documentary can be used as such.

- The documentary has been screened at **&Samhoud Consultancy** in Utrecht, followed by a debate by youth organizations with different perspectives on the Israeli-Palestinian conflict: **Next Step** (youth organization of a Different Jewish Voice / een Ander Joods Geluid), **CIDI Jongeren** (the youth organization of Centre Information and Documentation on Israel), members of the board of **Young Democrates**, the employees of &Samhoud and the filmmakers.<sup>8</sup> The debate was interesting



for &Samhoud because one of their mission statements is to stimulate connections between groups with different backgrounds in society. For more information visit <http://intoconnection.samhoud.com>

- Although the documentary has been made from the point of view of Palestinian workers we have fairly and prudently covered allegations from both sides, and have **cross checked** everything that can be independently verified. In this we have followed the same practices of good journalists. The accused is not always guilty, and the accuser is not always innocent.

## Activities

- **The Hague**, April 25 2008: Screening at Afrikadag
- **Utrecht**, October 23 2008: Screening and debate at &Samhoud Consultancy
- **Geneva**, June 16 2009: Screening at Geneva Labour Film Shorts Festival
- **Rotterdam**, July 2 2009: Screening and debate at FNV Middle East Conference
- **San Francisco**, July 15 2009: Screening at Labor Fest Film Festival
- **Cape Town**, August 22 2009: Screening at Tri Continent Film Festival
- **Paden City (WV)**, September 7 2009: Labor Day Film Festival
- **Israel**, all year 2009: Screenings at film houses (in cooperation with Video48)
- **Washington D.C**, October 13 2009: Screening at DC Labor Film Fest
- **Toronto**, October 26 2009: Screening at Toronto Palestine Film Festival
- **Rochester (NY)**, October 4 2009: Screening at Rochester Labor Film Series
- **Boston**, October 16, 2009: Screening at Boston Palestine Film Festival
- **Toronto**, November 22 2009: Screening at Canadian Labour International Film Festival
- **everywhere else in Canada**, November 28 2009: Screening at Canadian Labour International Film Festival
- **Norway**, 2010: Screening at Norwegian Labour Film Festival
- **Delaware**, May 2010: Screening at Delaware Labor Film Series
- **Capetown**, May 2010: Screening at Capetown Labour Film Festival

For an updated list of all activities visit: [www.march21.nl/seedspeace](http://www.march21.nl/seedspeace)

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<sup>8</sup> see appendix 7: Invitation Viewing and Debate at &Samhoud

# Contributing Factors

## Network

One of the contributing factors in achieving our objectives was our cooperation with Dutch journalist **Simone Korkus**. Her article **Back to the Wall** has made us start the project in the first place. She has helped us providing the first important contacts and has given us insight into the complexity of workers' rights in the settlements on the West bank. She has also supported us with advice about travelling in the West Bank.

We have had also great help of **Mohammed Amara** of the international department of the PGFTU. He provided us with important contacts, advised us how to travel, and provided us with housing in his office. Our accommodation was very primitive, but sufficient.

Many more contacts have helped us to understand the problems of Palestinian workers, and to look at these problems in the wider context of the Palestinian-Israeli conflict. In particular Salwa Alinat (Kav La'Oved) and Assaf Adiv (Workers' Advice Center). Also the conversations with Dani Tadmor, our contact in Israel, were very inspiring.

## Cooperation and Skills

The cooperation between the two of us has been outstanding, and our skills were complementary for a large part. We both have an enormous curiosity and enthusiasm. We also have had many discussions, which were sometimes tough and complex, but eventually it has made the result better. Our ability to reach people and make use of our network was very important in realizing the project.

**André Kloer** has a journalistic background. He has studied Dutch Language and Media at the University of Leiden and has worked as an independent camera journalist for the

Financieele Dagblad (a Dutch financial newspaper). As a documentary filmmaker, he has made films in Israel, Kenya and the Netherlands before. His international experience as well as his journalistic approach and his thorough research have been very helpful for this project.

**Maike Broos** has an organizational anthropological background and she has studied Human Resource Management. Her anthropological eye in observing people and situations and her open minded view as an anthropologist has made the interviewees feel safe and open to answer questions freely. Her experience in writing a script and transform it into a visual story has been very helpful. Her organizational skills have been practical in the production process. Unfortunately she hasn't been able to finish this task entirely in the distribution phase, because of her serious illness (more about this in the Problems Encountered section).



# Problems Encountered

## Time

Six weeks in the West Bank have been a tight schedule for our project. During that period we had to get acquainted with our main character **Jawdat Talousy** and had to finish the last part of our research (i.a. making appointments with the interviewees). In the mean time we had to make a documentary too. We have managed, but the documentary has not reached the cinematographic style with a fully developed main character as we had in mind. This was probably due to the lack of time to really get to know Jawdat Talousy and partly a conscious decision to make a more journalistic documentary and not to a personal documentary.

## Budget

The budget was tight to cover all the expenses of the project. We have misjudged the costs of the final phase: the distribution. Most of the bigger festivals ask a 20 to 60 dollars entry fee.

## Distribution

We have found out that television stations were sometimes positive about the documentary, but were unable to fit the documentary within a time slot.

Festivals aiming at a wide audience on the other hand, rather look for more cinematographic and personal documentaries, while 'Seeds of Peace' has a more journalistic style. Many producers and distributors want cinematographic documentaries too. Moreover, they rather look for stories which are timeless and not dealing with current events, so they can be sold anywhere, and anytime.<sup>9</sup> For these reasons the documentary has only been screened at specialized platforms, like festivals about the Palestin-

ian Territories or festivals specialized in labour rights.

## Serious Illness

At the end of May 2008 Maaïke Broos got the terrible news that she was suffering from Hodgkin disease, a form of cancer. In the six months following she has had an intensive treatment of chemotherapy. Unfortunately the project had to miss one of the project leaders, and was delayed.

## Fixer

The fixer we had arranged was unable to work for us. Due to a recent violent encounter with settlers in his home village he had been hospitalized and severely traumatized. Fortunately we have had enough contact persons who have helped us find our way in the West Bank

## Security

In at least two occasions we have felt our footage was at risk of being confiscated by the Israeli security forces. The first time happened while we were filming in Tel Aviv nearby the Azrieli Centre. It appeared that we were filming nearby an Israel military base. The army interrupted our filming and questioned us about our objectives, our place of residence, and so forth. With the help of Dani Tadmor, our contact in Tel Aviv, we barely managed to talk ourselves out of it, but we had to erase some of our footage on the spot.

The second time was at the airport on the day of our departure. We have been separated from each other and interrogated by different security people. It was a very unpleasant experience. Also the computer hard drives have been taken for three hours, but have been returned afterwards. We have no idea if the data had been copied.

In general the transport of the equipment and the video footage in and out of occupied territory has sometimes caused a stressful situation.

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<sup>9</sup> see appendix 8: Reviews

# Financial Administration

The administration has been done by André Kloer, who has experience in setting up solid business administrations and budgets from former documentary projects in Israel and Kenya and from his company.

## Informal Economy

All expenses in the Netherlands and Israel have been properly booked. But we have had some difficulties how to maintain an accountable administration in 'rural' Palestine, because it is for a large part an informal economy. For example it was not possible to get receipts or invoices for taxi rides (our main form of transport), food, housing, etc. Should we have rented a car in Israel to solve this problem? No, apart from the much higher costs, it would have been very dangerous to travel in the West Bank with an Israeli number plate.

We have also noticed that Palestinians, including strangers, were very hospitable and helpful. For that reason it has been relatively easy to find accommodation, even though there are no hotels in Tulkarem. But many Palestinians we have met didn't accept financial compensation in return for their services. It is custom however, to thank people by giving them presents. Therefore our representation costs were higher than our accommodation costs.

As far as administration is concerned it would have been easier to stay in Israel and to travel by taxi to the West Bank, but that was not an option for us; we wanted to avoid a daily checkpoint hassle, and wanted to experience the West Bank from inside out. We both were aware of the way most journalists report about the West Bank from their residence in Israel, and we both were critical on this approach. Moreover, by staying in Palestine, we have gained a lot of goodwill by the local Palestinian people and authorities, which has helped us in getting housing, protection, information, general support and useful contacts. There were

also moral arguments for us, to spend the budget rather in Palestine than in Israel.

So what to do with all the expenses we have made without a written proof, totally accounting for roughly € 1,000 of the Project expenses? The solution we have used was to write them ourselves, so we could keep track of our expenses. Although these self written receipts aren't really valid, they enable us to run a comparison between our expenses and expenses of similar projects. Such a comparison at least shed a light on whether or not the expenses are reasonable.

*Geshuri factory, located in the industrial zone Nizzane Ha Shalom nearby the Palestinian city of Tulkarem*



This does not imply that we should have informed FNV Mondiaal about this matter, which we honestly have forgotten. Leonie McCann of FNV Mondiaal has pointed this out to us.

# Conclusion and Future Plans

## How Did We Improve?

### Determine the Style

We have learned that it is important to determine the style of the documentary in an early stage in the production process, since it influences the form of the documentary and the approach. Do we structure our story with an abstract and subjective style, i.a. a personal story of a main character, who ideally could develop into a character which symbolizes a wider problem? Or do we work with a more objective and concrete style, i.a. a lot of contextual information, concrete facts and a journalistic approach by reporting every side of a story?

We think it depends on your target audience. The objective and concrete journalistic style appeals to an audience of specialists and engaged audiences. This kind of documentaries can be very useful in the working field too.

The abstract and subjective cinematographic style on the other hand leaves less space for context and facts, but it has the advantage that the audience is able to identify with the main character more easily, and can become emotionally involved. Because of that various interpretations are possible. Bigger festivals aiming at wider audiences like these 'cinematographic' documentaries.

The more attention goes to the informative content the fewer minutes are available for the personal story, so these two styles are for a part mutual exclusive. Our first intentions were to use a more abstract and subjective cinematographic style. During the process however, we realized we were using the more concrete and objective journalistic style. There were several reasons for this.

First of all we wanted to satisfy our funders who had certain expectations of the documentary: Oxfam Novib and FNV Mondiaal have raised questions about possible biases in the documentary. While UCP has requested a clear zoom out from micro (the worker) to macro economic level (the effects of the Israeli occupation on the Palestinian economy). To meet these expectations, the documentary needed a lot of contextual and factual information.

Secondly the available time has limited the possibility to make a personal, cinematographic story with a main character. It takes time and patience to find a suitable person, to follow him, become part of his life, and gain his trust.

Thirdly, we have found out that our scientific and anthropologic/journalistic background made us curious to try to understand 'the bigger picture'. The more answers we found, the more questions they raised. So automatically the documentary has turned into a fact finding research.

We have noticed that some of our objectives were partly contradictory sometimes. For example raising awareness asks for a more cinematographic and personal style, while our objective to get more insight into the subject demands a more concrete, journalistic style.

### Research

A learning point for us would be to consider an additional research phase on location, that would follow the research phase at home. The additional research phase could take place shortly (a few weeks) before the actual production. During this research on location, ap-

pointments for interviews should be made, and it should cover selecting and meeting the main characters as well.

### **Distribution**

We have learnt more about distributing a documentary and we have built a network of producers and distributors. We know more about the way producers and distributors work, and when they want to get involved in the production, what kind of fields they work in, and which conditions should be met.

We have been successful in finding labour rights related platforms. Apart from the specialized film festivals these platforms are to be found on internet increasingly. This is one of the reasons why internet has become for us important as an alternative medium for television. Other reasons are that Internet will increasingly swallow other mediums in the near future, experts expect. In the Netherlands 70% of young people up to 25 years listens to the radio and watches television through Internet, according to CBS figures over 2008. Another advantage of publishing 'Seeds of Peace' on the internet is that many people world wide will have access to the documentary and the documentary will be available for a indefinite period of time. It takes time however to develop a good marketing strategy to generate many page views.

### **Finance**

It was a learning experience that some of the important costs should have been budgeted in a better way, especially the distribution expenses.

We have also learned that in informal economies like rural Palestine it is difficult to get receipts. Perhaps a workaround for future projects would be to make use of a journal entry 'travel expenses', of which all costs concerning housing, travelling, representation and food should be paid. Each of the crew members receives a certain amount of these travel expenses, for which he has to sign. In this way, all expenses will be accountable.

An easier administration would be an additional advantage. The drawback is that it would not give a detailed insight in the kind of expenses which have actually been made.

### **Subject**

We have become experienced in the subject of labour issues and the importance of labour unions. We have realized that labour unions are one of the pillars for a democratic society. In the Netherlands we have taken our labour rights more or less for granted. But in Palestine and Israel we have experienced that in order to get these rights, a struggle is necessary, and an organization that unites people to stand stronger in that struggle.

### **Other**

We have learned a lot about managing a large documentary project, and experiencing all the phases that documentaries go through. By experiencing and doing most of it ourselves we have come to know the pitfalls. This also means that in next projects we will be more capable to delegate some of the tasks, like sound, or maybe even editing.

## **Have We Been Effective?**

We have both been effective in building a supportive network which has given us information and has helped us find our way quickly in the West Bank. The production in Palestine and Israel has also been effective, because we have made use of daily call sheets. We have managed to interview all the key figures we had planned beforehand, and we have also been able to incorporate new contacts we have met through our network.

In spite of the enormous amount of available information and the complex and political sensitive subject of the documentary we have been able to narrow the content down to a comprehensible and yet complete story. Therefore we think we give the labour union FNV Mondiaal, Oxfam Novib and United Civilians for Peace a complete insight into the problems of Palestinians working for Israeli companies in the Israeli industrial settlements on the West Bank. To quote Assaf Adiv (director Workers Advice Centre): *'I felt you were able in a very short visit to catch the essence of the situation and to present the difficult reality that faces workers in Palestine and Israel today.'*

We have been able to reduce the costs without compromising the quality of the documentary: not only have we made a professional documentary, but we have also made a professional soundtrack, artwork design and website. Therefore we have been able to provide a professional and useful visual tool for labour unions and labour related NGO's in Palestine, Israel and the Netherlands particularly.

## Plans for the Future

### Mission

Subject of labour rights have opened our eyes. We have become experienced in the subject of labour issues and the importance of labour unions. We see for ourselves a role as documentary filmmakers to document workers who have the courage to fight for their rights and for a better life for themselves, others and society as a whole. Here in the Netherlands and worldwide. What are the ideas on follow up? The following subject have come to our attention.

### Child Labour in the Settlements

Journalist Simone Korkus has written a follow up story about working conditions in the settlement. In the Jordan Valley, in the east of the West Bank, a generation of youth grows up being forced to work. More than half of the inhabitants of the West Bank is unemployed, which makes children the real breadwinners of their families. Some are lucky and find a job for the day in a Jewish settlement or workplace. They don't get school education, and lose their dreams and perspectives for the future.

### New Political Agenda of Egyptian Workers

Bloggers and citizen journalists in Egypt use Facebook, Twitter, Flickr, blogs and other new media tool to report on the wave of strikes which, since December 2006, has been shaking the regime of president Hosni Mubarak. **The New York Times** has identified the movement as the political Facebook group in Egypt with the most dynamic debates. By January 2009 it had 70,000 predominantly young and educated members, most of whom have not been politically active before; their core concerns include free speech, nepotism in government and the country's stagnant economy. **Mahalla al-Kubra**, the textile city and the epicenter of the new labor movement serves as symbol for the revolt in Egypt. Its workers - in particular the women - have started the first, now famous strike of December 2006.

The textile workers are among the worst paid in the public sector (this sector has 6 million people, in a workforce of 22 million), but the other sectors are also in poverty, for example doctors, who moonlight as taxi drivers. The strikes are aimed against Mubaraks plans to privatize the industry, which put the wages under pressure even more. In combination with the food crisis this causes a wide range of poverty.

### Other Future Plans

- the Netherlands: the black underclass

- the Netherlands: self employed in crisis: self employed people are the first to be kicked out in times of economical crisis. However, their numbers are rising. Martin Kraak is one of them. He is now working for an employment agency, but he would like to have his own catering company.
- India: global body shopping

# Appendices

## Appendix 1: Back to the Wall

by Simone Korkus

It's six o'clock on a cold winter morning in Tulkarem, a major Palestinian city in the Westbank. In front of a narrow iron door in the long concrete wall, that runs along the Taybehstreet, opposite the garage of Adjib, hundreds of Palestinians in overalls and sweaters with sandwich bags in their hands, have gathered and are waiting patiently for the door to open. They slap their arms around their bodies to keep warm and in the light of the projectors on top of the wall their breath makes little clouds. Behind the iron door lies the Israeli industrial estate with the poetic name 'Nizzane Ha Shalom' (literally: buds of peace) and for many Palestinians this name symbolizes their last chance for work.

Nizzane Ha shalom, which is situated between Tulkarem on one side and the separation wall and the Israeli highway 6 on the other, was established in 1995 as one of nine planned industrial estates in the Westbank. There are seven factories, which provide jobs for some 700 Palestinians in various industries such as the production of cartons, plastic spare parts, pesticides and poisonous liquids.

"It's better than no work at all", comments M. (35) on his job at the carton factory 'Tal El iesoef ve mihzoer ltd'. M. urges not to publish his name. This father of five comes here every day – six times a week, nine hours a day – for an hourly wage of 11 Shekels; that is more than 7 shekels under the Israeli minimum wage. And for this salary M. literally works himself to death. Why? Because he is a privileged man, he says.

"Of course I know the situation is bad, but at least I have a job. I can feed my family and send my children to school". But sometimes M. is overwhelmed with fear. Will his boss dismiss him if he asks for a raise or if he'll be late at work or becomes ill? It hap-

pened before. Latecomers are punished and do not get work nor salary for at least a week. Rebels and the ill and weak are fired on the spot. "In my place the boss can find ten others immediately", M. explains. And therefore he leaves his home by five in the morning, does not ask for the minimum salary, works when he is ill or during the holiday of Id Al Adha and he has never heard of vacation.

His ten years older colleague J. knows what happens if you protest." I work already ten years in the Israeli wood factory here. The company doesn't have a name and I doubt that it is even registered. I get 100 shekel per day for 9 hours of work. We work here with 30 employees. There's hardly any protection against the sun or rain and the factory hall has no flooring. In the winter we stand all day in the mud. There is no toilet and we are not allowed to go out, because this iron door only opens at four. Can you imagine how dirty it gets, with thirty men? Two years ago I finally found the courage to complain. You know what happened? I was sacked on the spot and sent home without pay. Two weeks later the phone rang. It was my boss. He said he would give me a last chance, but I had to shut up".

And that's what J. does. He doesn't complain about the lack of protective clothes and he was silent when the boy Namer incidentally shot himself in the abdomen with the electric stapler and was sent home without pay. But he admits he's furious. "The worst thing is, that the manager doesn't really care. It's not that he treats us as animals. He just doesn't see us at all".

### The last straw

As a matter of fact the building of the barrier has made Nizzane Ha Shalom – as well as Israeli settlements and other estates near the barrier - more attractive for Israeli businessmen, says Shahiye Yacub, representative of the Palestinian Ministry of employment in Tulkarem. "From one side the building of the fence has worsened the already chronic problem of Palestinian unemployment; 150,000 Palestinians who

worked legally or not in Israel before 2000 can no longer go there. And tens of thousands of farmers are separated from their own lands by the wall. Today only an average of 10.000 – this depends on the security situation – can enter Israel. Therefore there is a large number of cheap Palestinian labor. These people are desperate and willing to take any job at practically any price. From the other side Israeli businesses feel confident about estates near the wall because of the high level of security".

According to the Palestinian Central Bureau of Statistics the unemployment rate reached in the fourth quarter of 2006: 28,4%. This might seem relatively low, but one should bear in mind that more than half of the Palestinian population is children and therefore the number of dependents is high. Sometimes a worker has to provide for as many as ten persons. Jacob: "Officially there are about 18.000 Palestinians working in Israeli factories and settlements in the Westbank, but I can not even estimate how many are working without a license, especially in the agricultural sector".

### **Injuries and amputations**

Meanwhile a group of 15 workers have gathered around us in front of the iron door in Tulkarem. They are whispering and nodding. Abdelatif Abu Raye, a young man with bright blue eyes, is brave enough to tell me his story. Several months ago his hand was sliced in two when he operated a cutting machine in the carton factory. After the accident the employer sent him home and stopped paying his salary. Because of this accident Abu Raye is paralyzed on one side. The hospital in Tulkarem couldn't perform the rather complicated operation, that could have saved the motion in his hand and he is not allowed to go to the Israeli hospital that can help him.

Abu Raye: " My employer didn't pay me any indemnification and because of my injury I can't find work elsewhere. My magnetic card (the permit to work in Israeli areas) was revoked. I talked to a lawyer who

started court procedures in Israel, but I can not even meet him, because I'm not allowed to cross the checkpoint".

Another worker, Mohammed Abu Harma, can not repeat his story anymore. Five years ago he was asked to make a fence around the factory plant of 'Rational Systems' in Nizzane Ha Shalom, recalls his son, Majed. "They used plastic barrels with chemical waste to support the fence. One of these barrels exploded and my father was injured in the head. He died four days later of his injuries, leaving my mother with eight children to fend for themselves. We never received any pension or indemnification". Majed, then 22, had to break off his study and find a job to provide for the family. "We have been in court procedures with my father's employer for the last couple of years, but the judges didn't get to any conclusions yet".

Others join in with stories about amputated fingers, injuries and breathing problems occurred during work. Listening to these Palestinians it seems that work accidents because of occupational, safety and health hazards at the places of employment are common practice here.

At exactly half past six the iron door opens and the mass of men disappears. The door closes by seven and will remain closed for the next nine hours.

### **The symbiosis**

It's a strange sensation to enter the estate a little later from the other, the Israeli side. Here no locked iron doors, no long cues of workers, no separation barrier. At the junction with highway 6 you turn to the right and pass a sleepy guard at the entrance gate. The high walls around the estate hide the view of Tulkarem and give the impression that you're in Israel. We try to arrange meetings with two owners of companies, but we do not get further than the secretary who tells us politely off.

Gil Letterman the owner of Rational Systems – a company in Polyurethan parts for



printers and medical equipment – is willing to talk and invites us to come and have a look for ourselves. He started his company 25 years ago in the coastal city of Netanya, but with the outbreak of the Intifada it became more and more difficult for his Palestinian workers to come to work and therefore Letterman moved part of his activities – the casting of parts, painting, inspection and packing – to this area. "Because of its location beside the wall, it's easy to get here. An additional advantage is that this estate is declared a so called C zone and we do not pay municipality taxes", explains Letterman.

Some factories might have had other motives as well to move to this area. Letterman's neighbor " Geshuri Industry" for instance, which is probably the largest factory on the Tulkarem industrial estate and specializes in pesticides and other chemical products, was until 1985 located in Cfar Saba, but local residents complained of its horrible smells and it was moved to the West Bank. Also neighbor residents from Tulkarem and 'Lev HaSharon' on the Israeli side complained but were unsuccessful to move Geshuri away from Tulkarem.

The factory plant of Rational Systems looks well organized and workers wear protective clothing. Letterman insists that there are no problems with salaries and safety requirements. But what about the accident with Abu Harma we heard of? He admits that he had problems with subcontractors in the past, like Abu Harma, but these were solved legally. "There are Palestinian workers who have been with us since the establishment of the company and now I even employ the second generation, their sons. I know their families, I was at their wedding parties. These are decent reliable people, whom are well paid. You should understand that Palestinians benefit from the Israeli factories here, at least they have work and I bet you that they earn more in Nizzane Ha Shalom than with a Palestinian employer in Tulkarem".

With 50% of the Palestinian population living below the poverty line – that interna-

tional organizations put at \$2.10 a day – Letterman might be right and Palestinians might indeed be glad to be able to work. But the question is under which conditions and for which price? Here between the separation barrier and the Palestinian city of Tulkarem the Israeli Palestinian paradox suddenly becomes painfully clear. Occupation and conflict created an intense symbiosis between Israeli employers, whom under favorable conditions moved to the Westbank and Palestinian workers, in need of work. If you liquidate the employers by economical sanctions or closure, you also kill the Palestinian employees and if Palestinian employees are not allowed to work, the Israeli companies can not exist.

### **Structural problem**

In the year 2007 these stories seem incredible, but they are not unique. Salwa Alinat, representative of Kav La Oved, an organization which protects workers' rights, started one and a half years ago an information and aid program for Palestinian workers in Israeli employment in the Westbank and heard similar and worse stories everywhere. "I talked to date pickers from Jericho, who were employed in an Israeli settlement and - during the harvest period in april and may – had to sit for nine hours nonstop on a palm tree in the burning sun, without even a toilet break. And they didn't even get the minimum wage. A Palestinian woman who is cleaning houses of settlers endures the harassment of the guards at the entry of the settlement, in order not to loose her work. I found factory workers who work long hours with insufficient protection against hazardous circumstances and receive 10 shekels or less. The worst of it all are the stories about child labor. During the summer months children as young as 12 or 13 work in two shifts of 12 hours each. I met a boy of only 10 who works in a warehouse in the Jordan valley during the summer break but also in the evenings after school, because his father is unemployed and his family needs the money".

The Westbank has been divided through barriers, checkpoints and roadblocks into

three large economical centers – north, middle, south. As a result the production and interests are localized, Alinat explains. Palestinians can not travel freely between these centers and therefore also the information remains limited to local data. "People do not understand that we have a structural problem in the Westbank", says Alinat.

### **A system of permits and cards**

It is not easy to legally obtain a job in one of the settlements or industrial estates, because you have to have a permit of the military authority – the so-called 'magnetic card' – to enter the settlements and the estates, explains Alinat. Some workers therefore work 'black' with no contract or insurance at all. You only receive the card after thorough screening for possible security risks by the 'Shabak', the Israel Security Agency. Alinat: "The motives for granting or refusing the permit are not clear. There are workers whose permits were rejected for security reasons whereby they had no criminal record or connections to what Israel would describe as terrorist organizations". Subsequently the employer has to apply for a work permit (Ishur Avoda) . The costs for this permit , around 1200 Sjekel , have to be paid upfront by the employee and even before starting his job he already spends a small fortune.

Alinat: "This permit is worth gold for the Palestinians and forms an important trump card for employers and sometimes leads to blackmail. If he doesn't act according to the boss's instructions he loses his card and his job".

### **Research**

It is still hard to believe that this, almost colonial, system takes place right under our nose and nobody seems to know or care. We decide together with the Palestinian guide, the human rights activist Zakaria Sadea, to do a small field research. Our first stop is at the industrial zone of Karnei Shomron, a settlement from 1978 with 6500 inhabitants, south of Tulkarem. In the industrial area we count ten Israeli factories. In

front of the steel factory G.T., which is surrounded by high walls - according to the Palestinians it produces parts for the army – we bump into Hakan (46). Hakan works already nine years for ' G.T.' but he can't stand it anymore. "I work ten hours a day and earn 100 shekel. My boss is very tough. The other day a block of 200 kilos fell on the foot of my colleague and the boss told him to continue working, because the pain would pass. I'm not insured and I'm worried what will happen to my family should I get hurt here. It is just not worth it". We try to talk to Hakan's employer, but the gate remains closed. Snoopers are not welcome here.

At the parking of the neighboring factory in metal refuse bins – we didn't find its name – a peculiar incident occurs. A young Palestinian boy approaches our car and whispers through the half open window, while his eyes go restlessly from us to the factory entrance: "I'm working here and I earn 9 shekels per hour but I can't prove it because I don't get a pay slip or any other document". When an older man walks towards us – later we understand that he's the supervisor- he hisses: " Don't tell him anything", and suddenly disappears between the parked cars. But Faleh – the Palestinian supervisor – insists that the working conditions are perfect. "Palestinians should be grateful to have a job here. Everybody earns a fair wage. I get for example 11,000 Shekels a month".

Puzzled by the discrepancy in the stories we leave the plant. Who knows who's wrong and who's right? Are all these workers just telling stories or is this an indication of a phenomena Alinat told me exists within some factories: a kind of colonial 'Divide and rule' system, whereby certain ' good 'Palestinians get favors – better salaries and conditions – in exchange for information about the conduct of other workers and the daily control?

### **Barkan**

Via the industries in Alfei Menashe and Emanuel, where we hear similar complaints

from workers, we drive to Barkan, in the east of the Westbank, situated on the top of a hill near Ariel. Barkan exists 25 years and is with its 120 factories one of the major industrial estates in the Westbank. Obviously Barkan has plans for further extension, because down the slope we notice construction work. The factories produce products varying from plastic, metal, to food and textile and employ some 5000 workers. Part of the products is exported to the European market, according to an in 2006 released report of the United Civilians for Peace. The European multinational Unilever has a majority share in Beigel&Beigel, where some 50 Palestinians work and Ketter plastics sells its products in Holland and Belgium.

The streets are empty. Most factories lie behind walls and fences. Via the intercom at the gate we try to talk to several employers, but we're sent away. At "Oram Joram Arizot", a factory in plastic wrapping material, the director, Ronnie Kaufman, invites us in his office. We're not allowed to enter the factory hall says Kaufman, because we're not insured. This factory with an annual turnover of \$ 5,000,000 employs 20 workers, half of them Israeli and half Palestinian. We hear the same story. According to Kaufman the relations are good and he calls a Palestinian to confirm it. Ibrahim, an elderly man with growth rings around his eyes, works here already 18 years and says he's satisfied with the job. "I earn 5000 Shekel and there is a good atmosphere. What more could one want?" But when we return to our car, another employee who recognized Sadea calls him on his cellular phone and warns: "Don't be deceived by Ibrahim's story. We get only nine Shekels and work ten hours a day".

### Legal chaos

Our confusion is complete when we try to check which law governs the relation between an Israeli company and a Palestinian worker on Palestinian soil. Is it Israeli labor law or maybe military law? Or even Palestinian law? According to Juval Livnat, attorney specialized in labor law and legal advi-

sor of Kav La Oved, it is unclear. "The industrial estates and the settlements are usually situated in so called C zones, which means that they fall under Israeli jurisdiction. You would expect that also Israeli labor law applies, but the labor court decided that Jordanian law is applicable for Palestinian workers, unless it would violate public interest. Such a decision is multi interpretable and open ended. Moreover the Jordanian law dates back from 1967 – before the six day war – and gives workers very limited rights and protection regarding work hours, safety regulations and vacation. The result is that Palestinian workers are legally discriminated compared to their Israeli colleagues at the same workplace and this is unacceptable".

The Palestinians do seem to have a right to the Israeli minimum wage, according to an Israeli military order from the past, but the Minhal Izrahi, the civil Administration for Judea and Samaria, who has to supervise this order, is failing. Livnat: "I sent complaints about false remuneration forms – the employer declared for instance less days than the worker worked – and falsified pay slips to the minhal Izrahi, but they did not follow them up".

In a democratic state the solution seems obvious. Why don't these Palestinians sue their employers in Israeli labor court? But if they have the courage to do so, these Palestinians are confronted with yet another barrier. They are considered foreign residents in Israel who might evade paying their debts and as such they have to deposit large sums of money to guarantee payment of court expenses, which could mount up to 5,000 shekel even before procedures have started.

And international law can not help them either, explains Steven Oats, representative of the U.N. organization I.L.O. (International Labor Organisation), because Israel never signed the international labor treaties and protocols.

## The authority

Legal chaos, insecurity about rights, lack of information because witnesses are afraid to talk and a total dependency between employers' and employees' stories seem to have transformed the Westbank in a legal 'no man's land' where everything is possible and nothing forbidden. We turn to the only independent institution who should know and can know all the facts; the Minhal Izrahi. According to the State of Israel's 'Measures to improve the welfare of the population of the territories' this institution is responsible: "(...)for the administration of civil activities (...) for the welfare and in the better interest of the Arab population" and one of the measures that is mentioned is: "establishment of the minimum wage". But the responsible representative for labor cases – Itzhak Levi – is not authorized to give us any information about the number of Israeli factories in the Westbank ,their number of employees and if the 'Minhal' knows about similar complaints and what they plan do about it. He refers us to capt. Tzidki Maman, who promises a prompt reply. This was on February 18. We did not hear from him since.

*Photograph : Nir Cafri*

*Publsihed in Ha'aretz*

## Appendix 2: Israeli Labor Laws to Apply to Palestinians Who Work in Settlements

by Yuval Yoaz

A panel of nine justices ruled on a petition submitted by Kav La'Oved Worker's Hotline, and two Palestinians working for Israeli employers in the West Bank.

The Palestinian petitioners worked for the local council of Givat Ze'ev and various private companies, and demanded the rights extended to workers in Israel, including minimum wage, severance pay and various social benefits.

"This issue has extensive implications for all the workers employed in Israeli settlements in the territories and its solution affects the relations between Israeli employers in the territories and both Israeli and Palestinian workers," wrote Justice Eliezer Rivlin in the unanimous ruling.

The High Court overturned a ruling of the National Labor Court, which stipulated that the law applying to Palestinian workers is the territories' law, rather than Israeli law.

However, attorneys Alexander Spinard and Nava Pinchuk-Alexander of Kav LaOved argued that according to the employment contracts in Israeli settlements, both sides intended the Israeli law to apply to them.

"The territorial affiliation could have led to the conclusion that Jordanian law is the law governing Palestinian workers, since the location of the employment is in the territories," Rivlin wrote.

However, in the absence of a clear agreement between both sides, we should aspire to apply an equal and identical law to all workers for equal work, he continued.

This position gained the support of the Histadrut labor federation, but was opposed by Attorney General Menachem Mazuz, who joined the case when it was already underway.

Justice Salim Joubran stressed the importance of equality.

"The Labor Court's ruling implies that the only distinction between the Palestinian and Israeli workers is that the former are Palestinians, residents of the Palestinian Authority. This distinction on the basis of nationality is improper and tantamount to discrimination ... applying a foreign law to Palestinian workers and the Israeli law to Israeli ones infringes on the Palestinians' basic rights and discriminates against them, although they all work together," he wrote.

## Appendix 3: Report of the AfriCADAG 2008

Viewing 'Kiem van Vrede': Economische levensvatbaarheid in Palestina

Tijd sessie: 14:30 tot 16:00

Sprekers: Jan Marinus Wiersma (Europarlement PvdA), Leo Mesman (FNV Mondiaal) en Martin Siepermann (United Civilians for Peace).

### Verslag in Nederlands (report is in Dutch)

Palestijnen die in de nederzettingsbedrijven werken, strijden jarenlang voor gelijke arbeidsrechten. Gelijke arbeidsrechten ten opzichte van Israëlische werknemers in deze bedrijven, conform het Israëlische arbeidsrecht. De documentaire die getoond is, gaat over een aantal Palestijnse werknemers die in de nederzettingen strijden voor gelijke arbeidsrechten. Verder is in de documentaire te zien hoe weerbarstig het leven is in de Tulkarem (Palestijnse stad). Mensen kunnen zich moeilijke staande houden onder slechte omstandigheden. Verder werd naar aanleiding van de documentaire de vraag gesteld wat de verhouding is tussen de strijd om het arbeidsrecht en de noodzaak tot het stichten van een levensvatbare Palestijnse staat.

De heer Sieperman heet iedereen welkom en geeft aan waar deze workshop over gaat. De documentaire 'Kiem van Vrede' wordt vervolgens getoond.

Na de documentaire heeft de heer Sieperman een aantal vragen gesteld aan documentairemakers. Zoals 'Waarom hebben jullie dit onderwerp gekozen, en niet bijvoorbeeld over India?' Verder is de vraag gesteld of het lastig was om deze documentaire te maken in de bezette gebieden.

Hierna werden de panelleden naar hun mening gevraagd over de documentaire en de kwestie hier rondom. De heer Mesman was onder de indruk van de documentaire. Hij geeft aan dat de documentaire bijdraagt aan de bewustwording van het Neder-

landse volk. Mevrouw Ly geeft tevens aan dat ze onder de indruk is van de film en dat de kwestie in de nederzettingen geheel van ander aard is dan bijvoorbeeld India. Hier opvolgend geeft de heer Wiersma net als de vorige sprekers te kennen onder de indruk te zijn van de documentaire. Daarnaast benadrukt hij dat er heel veel geld richting de Palestijnse gebieden gaat vanuit de Europese Unie, alleen er zijn een aantal factoren waardoor het niet op de goede plaats terecht komt (o.a. splitsing Fatah en Hamas). Verder is de heer Wiersma heel erg optimistisch over de vrede in het Midden-Oosten.

Na de ronde werd aan het publiek gevraagd om een aantal vragen te stellen aan de panelleden en de documentairemakers. Zo zijn er een aantal vragen gesteld, waaronder 'Wat had de Europese Unie kunnen doen na de verkiezingen?' en 'Wat kan de Nederlandse politiek doen aan het Israëlische beleid?' Hierna volgde een discussie tussen de panelleden en het publiek.

### Conclusie

De documentaire is heel goed opgezet en verteld een verhaal die voor iedereen heel begrijpelijk is. Dit komt omdat deze documentaire gemaakt is vanuit de mens van de straat. Verder waren de sprekers op de hoogte van wat er speelt in de bezette gebieden, waardoor er een goede discussie werd gevoerd met inhoud.

### Oorspronkelijke omschrijving

In de industriële zones die Israël op de bezette Westoever heeft gevestigd woedt een opmerkelijke strijd. Palestijnen die in nederzettingenbedrijven werken, strijden voor gelijke arbeidsrechten. Gelijke rechten ten opzichte van Israëlische werknemers in deze bedrijven, conform het Israëlische arbeidsrecht. Over deze strijd gaat de documentaire 'Nizzane Ha Shalom' van filmmakers Andre Kloer en Maaïke Broos, waarvan op de AfriCADAG een unieke 'pre-view' te zien is.

In de industriële zone 'Nizzane Ha Shalom' (Kiem van de Vrede), een Israëlische ned-

erzetting gevestigd vlakbij de Palestijnse stad Tulkarem op de bezette Westelijke Jordanoever, staat de recyclingfabriek Tal El. Jawdat Toulousy werkte al 6 jaar als heftruckchauffeur in de fabriek. Toen hij de arbeiders in de fabriek wilde verenigen om samen te strijden voor minimale arbeidsrechten, waaronder het verkrijgen van het wettelijke minimumloon, werd hij ontslagen.

Het is een felle strijd, die nog lang niet gestreden lijkt. Het Israëlische Hooggerechtshof bepaalde in October 2007 dat het Israëlische arbeidsrecht in de nederzettingen moet worden toegepast, ook op de Palestijnse werknemers aldaar. Maar de praktijk is weerbarstig. In juni 2007 publiceerde de Nederlandse journaliste Simone Korkus, woonachtig in Israël, een artikel over de arbeidssituatie van Palestijnen in nederzettingen, getiteld 'Slavernij op de Westbank' (dit artikel verscheen in Wordt Vervolgd, het maandblad van Amnesty International Nederland). Er is nog een lange weg te gaan.

Na de vertoning van de documentaire volgt een debat met de documentairemakers, een kamerlid van de PvdA, een vertegenwoordiger van de FNV, de MVO-lobbyist van OxfamNovib en een medewerker van United Civilians for Peace (UCP). Wat laat de film eigenlijk zien? En hoe verhoudt de strijd voor gelijke arbeidsrechten zich tot de noodzaak de randvoorwaarden voor een levensvatbare Palestijnse staat te scheppen?

## Appendix 4: List of Festivals, Distributors and Television Stations

### Distributors and Producers

- The Jam Department: Margot Nicolaes
- Cinephil (Israel): Philipa Kowarsky
- Volya Films: Fleur Knopperts
- Godmother Films: Amber Bordewijk
- Off the Fence: Manuel Tillmann
- Cinema Delicatessen
- SND Films: Sydney Neter

### Festivals

- International Film Festival Haifa
- Human Right Watch Film Festival New York
- New Orleans International Human Rights Film Festival: Emily Faye Ratner
- Movies that Matter Festival: Marloes den Hoed
- International Documentary Festival (IDFA)
- Nederlands Filmfestival
- Sheffield Filmfestival
- Chicago Palestine Film Fest
- Boston Palestine Film Festival
- Toronto Palestine Film Festival
- Palestine Film Foundation
- Labor Film Festival Canada
- DC Labor Filmfest
- San Fransisco LaborFest 2009
- P'tit Ciné labor filmfestival Brussel
- CPH:DOX-Kopenhagen Documentary Festival
- DocAviv
- CLiFF Canadian Labour International Film Festival 2009
- Cape Town Tri Continental Film Festival 2009

### Television Stations

- Commissioning Editor BBC: Charlotte Moore \*
- BBC Storyville: Nick Fraser / Greg Sanderson
- IKON TV: Margje de Koning
- NPS: Annemiek van der Zanden
- NPO Sales: Kaisa Kriek
- VPRO TV/ Tegenlicht: Jos de Putter
- Humanistische Omroep
- Goede Doelen TV /Goed TV
- Dokument NCRV: Jelle Peter de Ruiter

- Winter Media (het Gesprek): Harry de Winter
- Zembla: Simone Tangelder
- Multi Culturele Omroep Nederland: Dhr. Römer
- IDFA TV: Caspar@idfa.nl
- Israeli and Palestinian national, local and online television broadcast stations: through Salwa Alinat
- Duits/Franse televisie Arte: Ursela Hocker
- Deense televisie: Rutger Dosando

### Events

- Evert Vermeer Stichting (Afrikadag 2008): Mark Vermeulen
- Cinema De Balie: Dirk van der Straaten

### Internet

- The internet Movie Database (IMDB)
- Holland doc
- Docs Online
- Project Aware
- www.urgencepalestine.ch

### Other

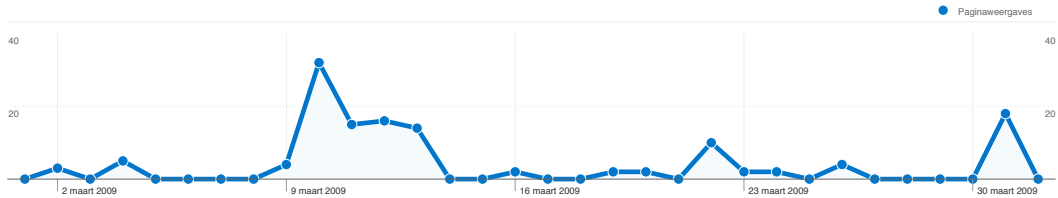
- VVJO De loep 2009: aanmoedigingsprijs onderzoeksjournalistiek
- ILO: Steven Oates
- www.withoutabox.com
- Cinemaneteurope



## Appendix 5: Google Analytics Report Seeds of Peace website March 2009

www.march21.nl  
**Instapbronnen:**  
 /seedsofpeace/

1 mrt. 2009 - 1 apr. 2009  
 Vergelijken met: Site



Deze pagina is 131 keer bekeken via 5 bronnen.

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(direct)	72	45	00:00:41	7,69%	18,06%	\$0,00
zembra.vara.nl	35	28	00:00:19	0,00%	34,29%	\$0,00
google	20	10	00:00:48	0,00%	10,00%	\$0,00
onjo.nl	2	2	00:00:01	0,00%	50,00%	\$0,00
pvdattenleur.web-log.nl	2	2	00:00:01	0,00%	50,00%	\$0,00

1 - 5 van 5

## Appendix 6: Publication Onjo Website



<a href="#"><u>ADOPTIE</u></a>	<a href="#"><u>AFGHANISTAN</u></a>	<a href="#"><u>ASIELBELEID</u></a>
<a href="#"><u>ECONOMIE</u></a>	<a href="#"><u>FRAUDE</u></a>	<a href="#"><u>GEZONDHEID</u></a>
<a href="#"><u>GIFCONTAINERS</u></a>	<a href="#"><u>GUANTÁNAMO BAY</u></a>	<a href="#"><u>INFORMATIEMAATSCHAPPIJ</u></a>
<a href="#"><u>INLICHTINGDIENSTEN</u></a>	<a href="#"><u>INTEGRATIE</u></a>	<a href="#"><u>IRAK</u></a>
<a href="#"><u>ISLAM</u></a>	<a href="#"><u>JONGEREN</u></a>	<a href="#"><u>JSF</u></a>
<a href="#"><u>KHAN</u></a>	<a href="#"><u>KLOKKENLUIDERS</u></a>	<a href="#"><u>LEGEBEKE LEGAAT</u></a>
<a href="#"><u>MIDDEN OOSTEN</u></a>	<a href="#"><u>MILIEU</u></a>	<a href="#"><u>OLYMPISCHE SPELEN</u></a>
<a href="#"><u>OUDEREN</u></a>	<a href="#"><u>POLITIE / JUSTITIE</u></a>	<a href="#"><u>POLITIEK</u></a>
<a href="#"><u>PRIVACY</u></a>	<a href="#"><u>SREBRENICA</u></a>	<a href="#"><u>WOB</u></a>
<a href="#"><u>WAPENHANDEL</u></a>	<a href="#"><u>TERRORISME</u></a>	

Geen nieuws in deze lijst:

### SEEDS OF PEACE



12 maart 2009

Film van Maaïke Broos & André Kloer

In de industriële zones die Israël op de bezette Westoever heeft gevestigd woedt een opmerkelijke strijd. De daar werkzame Palestijnen strijden voor gelijke arbeidsrechten ten opzichte van de Israëlische werknemers in deze bedrijven, conform het Israëlische arbeidsrecht.

Een van deze industriële zones is 'Nizzane Ha Shalom' (Seeds of Peace), gevestigd vlakbij de Palestijnse stad Tulkarem. Heftruckchauffeur Jawdat Toulousy werkte er 6 jaar. Maar toen hij de arbeiders in de fabriek wilde verenigen om samen te strijden voor minimale arbeidsrechten, werd hij ontslagen.

Het is een felle strijd, die nog lang niet gestreden lijkt. De Israëlische bedrijven die op de Westoever gevestigd zijn, maken dankbaar gebruik van de situatie: ze redeneren dat de juridische status van de nederzettingen onduidelijk is, en dus is het niet evident dat het Israëlische arbeidsrecht zou moeten gelden voor Palestijnen.

Maar in oktober 2007 was er een doorbraak: na een jarenlange juridische strijd bepaalde het Israëlische Hooggerechtshof dat het Israëlische arbeidsrecht in de nederzettingen moet worden toegepast op de Palestijnse werknemers. De praktijk is echter weerbarstig: controle op naleving van de wet is er op de Westoever nauwelijks.

De Palestijnse arbeider heeft weinig keus: door het conflict is de eigen economie op sterven na dood en niet in staat om genoeg banen te creëren. En de vergunningen om in Israël te werken (met de bescherming van de Israëlische arbeidswet) worden steeds minder verstrekt. En dus zijn de Israëlische industriegebieden op de Westoever voor veel Palestijnen de enige plek voor werk.

#### Links:

► [Seeds of Peace](#)

## Appendix 8: Invitation Viewing and Debate at &Samhoud

- Datum : Donderdag 23 October 2008
- Locatie: &Samhoud, Maliebaan 55 in Utrecht
- Tijd: inloop vanaf 19.00 uur, start 19.15 uur
- Toegang: gratis
- Aanmelden: broos.maaike@gmail.com of 0638908414

### Programma

- 19.15 uur: Documentaire 'Seeds of Peace'
- 20.00 uur: Interview / vragen filmmakers
- 20.15 uur: Pauze
- 20.45 uur: Nagesprek met jongerenorganisaties
- 21.30 uur: Afsluiting avond

### Documentaire "Kiem van Vrede" ('Seeds of Peace')

In de Israëliische industriële zones gevestigd op de bezette Westoever woedt een opmerkelijke strijd. Palestijnen die in nederzettingenbedrijven werken, strijden voor gelijke arbeidsrechten. Gelijke rechten ten opzichte van Israëliische werknemers in deze bedrijven, conform het Israëliische arbeidsrecht. Over deze strijd gaat de documentaire 'Kiem van Vrede' van filmmakers Andre Kloer en Maaike Broos.

### Genodigde organisaties

De jongerenorganisaties die uitgenodigd zijn rondom de documentaireavond zijn jongeren vanuit het CiJo (CIDI Jongerenorganisatie), jongeren vanuit het netwerk van Visie 21 en medewerkers van &Samhoud, NextStep van Een Ander Joods Geluid, en jongeren vanuit de Palestijnse gemeenschap.

## Appendix 7: Reviews

*Being an union man, the message that strikes me most, is how disturbed political relations lead to unacceptable labour conditions on the shop floor.*

Leo Mesman - Policy Adviser for Middle East & Eastern Europe, FNV Mondiaal

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*'Seeds of Peace' is a must-see for anyone who is engaged with the fate of oppressed workers. Hopefully this documentary will force us to critically evaluate our responsibilities as consumers.*

Suying Lai - Policy Advisor Oxfam Novib

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*Your film is serious, realistic, and informative and gives a wide picture to the viewer. I felt you were able in a very short visit to catch the essence of the situation and to present the difficult reality that faces workers in Palestine and Israel today. In addition the film was able to show the nice and humane side of the Palestinian workers away from both the Israeli stereotyping of Palestinians as extremists and the opposite image of the struggle as if it was a religious war between Moslems and Jews or between the Moslem world and the West.*

Assaf Adiv - director Workers Advice Centre, Israel

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*The story is told in an unhurried pace, and with an uncluttered sound-track. It gives the viewers a space to breath and it gives the facts a chance to sink in. And the facts follow each other in an atmosphere of disjoint parts, as if stones were laid, one by one, in a row, on the sand of a beach by a meditative child.*

Dani Tadmor - newspaper editor, Israel

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*Allereerst mijn complimenten voor de documentaire die jullie hebben gemaakt. Een moeilijk onderwerp op een mooie en begrijpelijke manier weergegeven. Het is wel zo dat juist het onderwerp het moeilijk maakt het bij een zender te plaatsen. Dit soort verhalen maken ze vaak zelf en dan meestal als item in 1 van hun actualiteiten-programma's.*

Margot Nicolaes - Algemeen Directeur, Jam Department

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*To be honest we really did like the film, but didn't think we could program it because we were worried about being able to bring out an audience for it. We're trying to have a strong focus on Palestinian programming this year, and we're working on further engaging New Orleans' Palestinian and Arab communities, but we also have to keep in mind the films that tend to bring out more people within the community, and films about Palestine don't generally arouse a lot of interest. The films about Palestine that we've programmed tend to specifically address the recent violence in Gaza, the war against Lebanon in 2006, or are shorts.*

Emily Ratner - Festival Co-Director, Human Rights Festival New Orleans

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*Ik heb de film gezien en moet je helaas melden dat Tegenlicht hem niet zal uitzenden. Zoals je wellicht weet programmeert Tegenlicht sinds twee jaar thematisch, en is het daarom vaak lastig om films van buitenaf in te kaderen Daar komt bij dat we van de netmanager geen geld krijgen voor aankoop, dus dat het ons in principe enorm veel geld kost (aan directe programmakosten die jaarlijks omgeslagen worden over het aantal uitzendingen) wanneer we een aankoop zouden uitzenden.*

Jos de Putter - hoofdredacteur Tegenlicht

---

Ik heb inmiddels 'seeds of peace' deels bekeken. het is een ontzettend interessant onderwerp. deed me trouwens een klein beetje denken aan het verhaal van een documentaire die zo'n 2 jaar geleden op idfa draaide - 9 star hotel van Ido Haar.

'seeds of peace' past als film niet helemaal bij Volya Films, qua onderwerp/thema wel, maar qua stijl niet omdat 't (in ieder geval in mijn ogen) een televisiedocumentaire is. ik mis een cinematografische stijl, en 't komt ook door de voice-over die erg journalistiek is.

Fleur Knopperts - Volya Films

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We care about the wellbeing of our workers, says the son of the owner of a recycling factory at the Nizzane Ha Shalom ('Seeds of Peace') Industrial Zone at the West Bank. However, he does admit that one of his workers' hand was cut off in an accident with a carton cutter. Other workers complain that they fell ill after processing pharmaceutical waste.

Until the second Intifadah, many Palestinians worked in Israel. Especially since the building of the so-called security wall, quite a lot of Israeli employers have moved their factories to settlements at the West Bank (which are considered illegal by international law). They operate in a legal grey area. According to a recent Israeli High Court ruling (October 2007), they should pay their workers the Israeli minimum wage and apply all other Israeli labour law regulations, but enforcement is very weak.

The documentary 'Seeds of Peace', which was made with the support of FNV Mondiaal, shows how workers in these industrial zones try to organise to improve their conditions. This is not easy: official unions are not as supportive as they could be, and a group of workers that formed a workers' committee was fired soon after.

Dirk Kloosterboer - FNV

De documentaire is heel goed opgezet en verteld een verhaal die voor iedereen heel begrijpelijk is. Dit komt omdat deze documentaire gemaakt is vanuit de mens van de straat. Verder waren de sprekers op de hoogte van wat er speelt in de bezette gebieden, waardoor er een goede discussie werd gevoerd met inhoud.

unknown author - Afrikadag/Evert Vermeer Stichting

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The film is very well made, the topic interesting - it just does not fit our catalogue at the moment. We really focus on programs that sell easily worldwide, in the smaller and bigger territories. We think there is a market for your film, just not really world-wide. That is not a bad thing, we are very aware that not all films and all stories can and should be 'saleable' everywhere. We as film lovers like your film but from an international, world-wide distribution point of view we feel we cannot take it on. Maybe a smaller, more specialized distributor would be better for your film.

Manuel Tillmann - Off The Fence (distributor)

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