



JUST VISION

A JUST VISION FILM

MYNEIGHBOURHOOD

From the creators of *Budrus* and *Encounter Point*



DISCUSSION GUIDE



Find out who is screening *My Neighbourhood* by visiting our events calendar at www.justvision.org/events.

DEAR FRIENDS,

We are delighted by your interest in holding a discussion about *My Neighbourhood*. This 25-minute film tells the story of a remarkable nonviolent struggle taking place in the heart of Jerusalem.

My Neighbourhood is produced by Just Vision, a nonprofit organization that supports Palestinians and Israelis who pursue freedom, dignity, security and peace using nonviolent means. We tell their under-documented stories through award-winning films, multimedia and public education campaigns. Our staff is comprised of Palestinian, Israeli and North and South American filmmakers, journalists, conflict resolution experts and human rights advocates.

This discussion guide is designed to help you host a screening of *My Neighbourhood* and lead a constructive conversation around the film's key themes. It provides background information and discussion questions about the situation in East Jerusalem today, and about the efforts of Palestinian and Israeli civilians who are working toward a future where both societies can live equitably and thrive.

In the appendices you will find additional Just Vision materials including a supplemental lesson plan about nonviolence, an in-depth FAQ, and quotes faith leaders may choose to incorporate in their sermons. Some of these materials rely upon excerpts from our Visionary interviews available at www.justvision.org/visionaries.

We encourage audiences to utilize this discussion guide in conjunction with Just Vision's online resources. References including maps, legal and historical background about Sheikh Jarrah and East Jerusalem, and the +972 *Magazine* Sheikh Jarrah News Hub are available at www.justvision.org/myneighbourhood/resources. In addition to the abbreviated glossary provided at the end of this guide, a complete glossary with over 400 terms related to the Israeli-Palestinian context, reviewed by Arab and Jewish scholars and experts, is provided at www.justvision.org/glossary.

For more films about Sheikh Jarrah visit www.justvision.org/homefront to watch the full *Home Front: Portraits From Sheikh Jarrah* series online.

Stay tuned on Facebook and Twitter and check back in with us at www.justvision.org as we expand our resource offerings.

GOOD LUCK,
THE JUST VISION TEAM

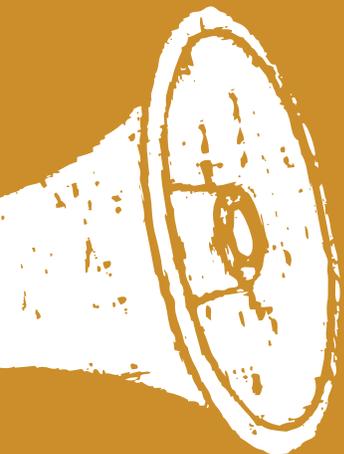




TABLE OF CONTENTS

2	STATEMENT FROM THE FILMMAKERS
4	IN THE HEART OF JERUSALEM
6	WHO'S WHO
7	PREPARING FOR THE DISCUSSION
8	PRE-SCREENING DISCUSSION
9	DISCUSSION QUESTIONS
11	Media Analysis
11	On the Ground
12	Nonviolence and Movement Building
13	Israeli Participation
13	Israeli Settler Presence
13	Israeli Government, Judicial and Police Involvement and Response
14	Approaches to Change
14	Summary
15	QUOTES FROM THE FILM
17	SUPPORT MATERIALS
19	Appendix A: About Just Vision
20	Appendix B: Lesson about Nonviolence
21	Appendix C: Engaging Faith Communities
22	Appendix D: Abridged Discussion Questions
24	Appendix E: Frequently Asked Questions
29	GET INVOLVED
30	GLOSSARY



STATEMENT FROM THE FILMMAKERS

THE STORY WE SET OUT TO TELL IN *MY NEIGHBOURHOOD* IS STILL LARGELY UNFINISHED. PROTAGONIST MOHAMMED EL KURD'S FAMILY AND THEIR NEIGHBOURS HAVE YET TO REGAIN THEIR HOMES, AND THE SPECTER OF DISPLACEMENT REMAINS VERY REAL FOR HUNDREDS OF OTHERS LIVING IN SHEIKH JARRAH AND ACROSS EAST JERUSALEM. IN THE MEANTIME, PROTESTS INVOLVING BOTH ISRAELIS AND PALESTINIANS CONTINUE, THOUGH IT IS STILL UNCLEAR HOW SUCCESSFUL THEY WILL BE IN THEIR CAMPAIGN TO HALT AND ULTIMATELY REVERSE THE EVICTIONS.

Yet, it was precisely the open-endedness of this story, and the urgency of this particular moment, that led us to create *My Neighbourhood*. Events in Jerusalem – the geographic, religious and emotional focal point of the conflict – have a way of quickly spiraling outwards and influencing, for better or worse, the atmosphere throughout the region. Jerusalem can either be an unstable powder keg with the potential to ignite the entire Middle East, or, however remote a possibility it may now seem, a shared city that sets a tone of cooperation and mutual respect between Israelis and Palestinians.

My Neighbourhood came out of a desire to bring crucial local and global attention to those working towards the latter option, in the hopes that it will protect and empower them at this extremely fragile time. We created the film with an understanding that these competing visions are being played out on the ground right now, while the city's future hangs in the balance.

Over the past few years, as we toured around with our previous films *Budrus* and *Encounter Point*, we have been repeatedly struck by the transformative power of an audience's attention. For those like Mohammed and Zvi, who have chosen to struggle nonviolently for the future

of their city, the knowledge that others in their societies and around the world are watching and supporting them is invaluable.

This idea formed the basis of a recent TED Talk by Julia Bacha (Senior Producer and Media Director at Just Vision), in which she described how both nonviolent and violent movements essentially clamor for the same thing: the validating force of being noticed. It is the fuel on which they run. And in Jerusalem, perhaps more than any other place in this conflict, we have been willing to give ample attention to violence and extremism for too long while neglecting the courageous efforts of those pursuing a more constructive path without arms.

My Neighbourhood is an attempt to shift that dynamic. To see Jerusalem not solely from the perspective of politicians and religious extremists, but rather through the eyes of individuals growing up in the city and hoping, despite all they have experienced, that a more noble and equitable future exists for all who live within it. This film is our response to the challenge those like Mohammed and Zvi pose to all of us who care about Jerusalem and the region's future: to bring new storylines and new expectations to this beloved and beleaguered city.



**HUNDREDS
OF PALESTINIAN
RESIDENTS IN
SHEIKH JARRAH
AND ACROSS
EAST JERUSALEM
ARE LIVING
UNDER THE THREAT
OF EVICTION.**



IN THE HEART OF JERUSALEM



BACKGROUND INFORMATION RELATED TO THE FILM AND MAPS OF THE GREEN LINE, EAST AND WEST JERUSALEM AND THE SETTLEMENTS

Sheikh Jarrah is a neighbourhood in East Jerusalem, located entirely to the east of the 1949 Armistice Line (the 'Green Line'), in the area between the Old City and Mount Scopus. There are roughly 3,000 residents in the neighbourhood today, nearly all of them Palestinian (for information regarding Jewish presence in Sheikh Jarrah prior to 1948, please see the FAQ provided in Appendix E of this guide).

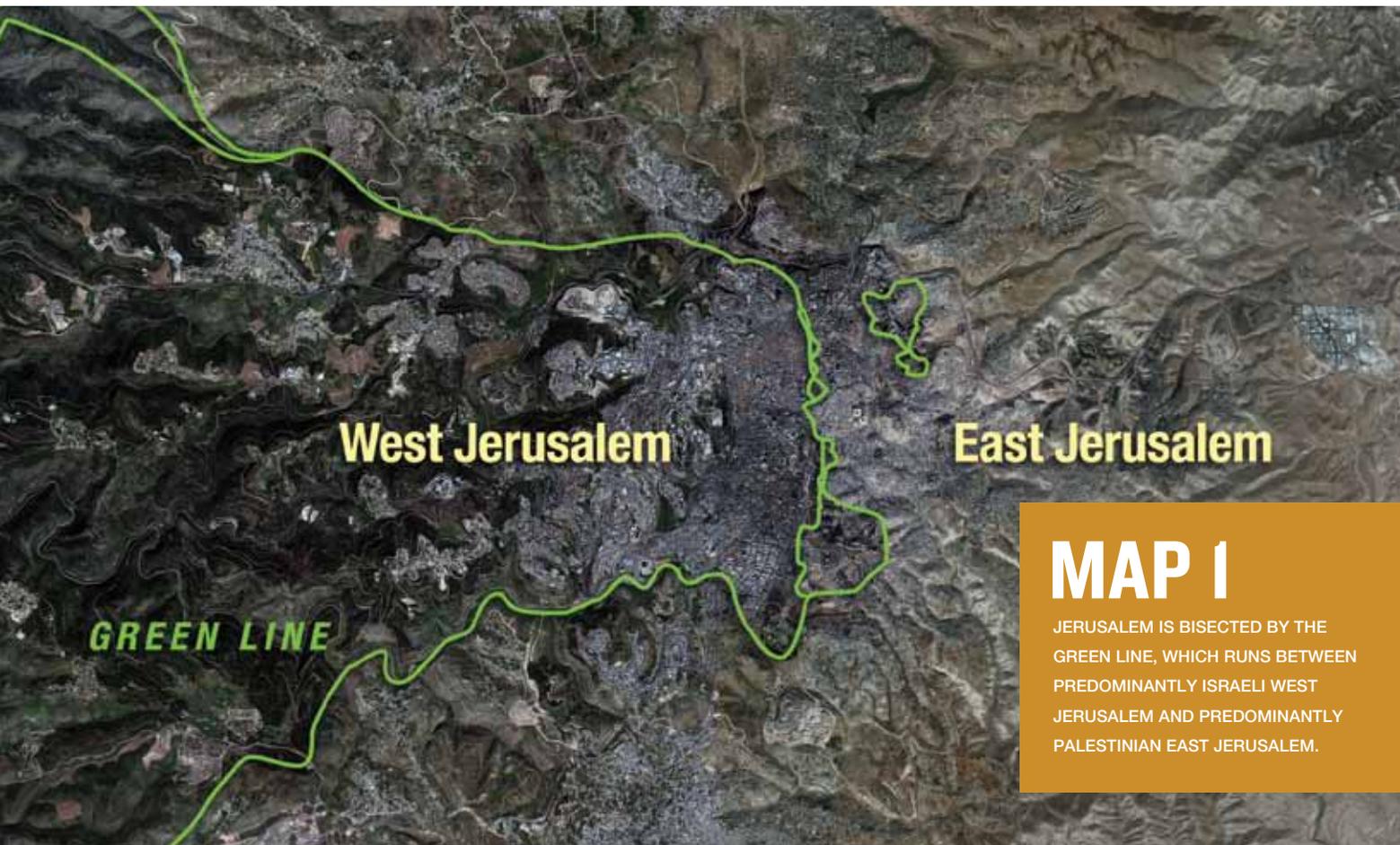
At the heart of much of the controversy in Sheikh Jarrah today are the homes of several dozen Palestinian residents who first arrived in the neighbourhood as refugees in the early 1950s. During the War of 1948, they were displaced from their original homes, located inside what is now the State of Israel. These families agreed to relinquish some of their rights as refugees, and in return were given land and newly-built houses by the United Nations Relief and Works Agency in Sheikh Jarrah (then under Jordanian rule).

Starting in the 1970s and 1980s, religious Jewish settler groups claiming to have deeds to lands

in Sheikh Jarrah began turning to Israeli courts, demanding that ownership over the lands on which these houses were constructed be returned to them and that the Palestinian residents be evicted. The legal process is complex and differs for each family and house. However, in 1999, Israeli courts began issuing eviction orders and, since 2008, several dozen individuals from four separate families have thus far lost their homes. Many more are under ongoing threat of eviction, and a proposed plan exists to turn a significant part of the neighbourhood into a new settlement housing 200 Jewish Israeli families.

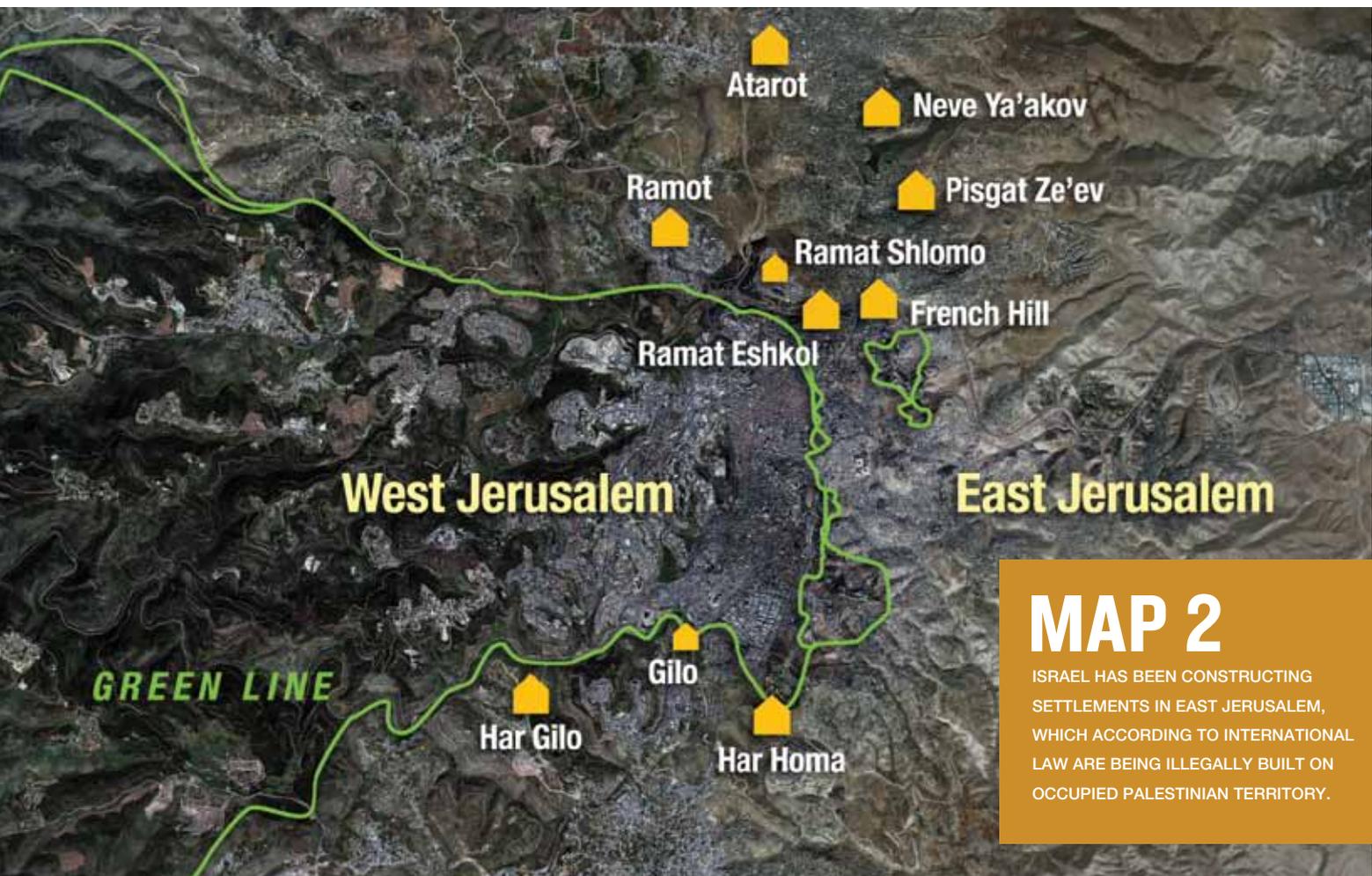
In the wake of these evictions, neighbourhood residents began to organize protests and vigils, which were quickly joined by a growing number of Israeli supporters who refused to accept what was being done in their name. These protests soon grew into large weekly demonstrations, sometimes bringing hundreds and, on occasion, thousands of people out onto the streets of the neighbourhood.

For more on the relationship between what is happening in Sheikh Jarrah and other neighbourhoods in East Jerusalem, please see the FAQ at the end of this guide. Supplemental resources including in-depth maps, historical and legal background about Sheikh Jarrah and East Jerusalem and +972 Magazine's Sheikh Jarrah News Hub are provided at www.justvision.org/myneighbourhood/resources.



MAP 1

JERUSALEM IS BISECTED BY THE GREEN LINE, WHICH RUNS BETWEEN PREDOMINANTLY ISRAELI WEST JERUSALEM AND PREDOMINANTLY PALESTINIAN EAST JERUSALEM.



MAP 2

ISRAEL HAS BEEN CONSTRUCTING SETTLEMENTS IN EAST JERUSALEM, WHICH ACCORDING TO INTERNATIONAL LAW ARE BEING ILLEGALLY BUILT ON OCCUPIED PALESTINIAN TERRITORY.

WHO'S WHO

BRIEF DESCRIPTIONS OF THE *MY NEIGHBOURHOOD* PROTAGONISTS



MOHAMMED EL KURD

Mohammed El Kurd is a Palestinian boy born and raised in the East Jerusalem neighbourhood of Sheikh Jarrah. At age 11, Mohammed comes home from school to find half of his home taken over by Israeli settlers and his grandmother hospitalized. Forced to live under the same roof as the settlers, Mohammed quickly develops deep feelings of animosity towards Israelis. Yet when Israeli activists soon begin arriving in the neighbourhood to join residents in protests against the evictions, Mohammed is surprised. “These are Jews? How can they be Jews?”, he asks himself, adding that he soon learned that “opinions differ within societies.” Mohammed gradually develops relationships with Zvi and other Israeli activists, and becomes committed to finding a nonviolent way to regain his home and stop the evictions.



ZVI BENNINGA

Zvi Benninga is an Israeli medical student who grew up in West Jerusalem. When he hears about the evictions taking place in Sheikh Jarrah, he and his sister, Sara, begin attending vigils and protests regularly. He believes the evictions and settlements are destroying the moral fabric of Israeli society and making a shared future in Jerusalem impossible. Before long, Zvi and Sara convince their parents, who are initially uncomfortable with the idea of challenging the Israeli authorities, to join the protests. Reflecting on his activism, Zvi says: “On the one hand, [my activism] made me much more critical towards the place where I live. On the other hand, it really connected me to this place. It made me realize that I care about what happens here and that I stay so I can be involved.”



RIFKA EL KURD

Rifka El Kurd is Mohammed's grandmother, and has been living in the El Kurd family home in Sheikh Jarrah for over half a century. She first arrived in the neighbourhood as a refugee in the 1950s, after her family had been displaced from Haifa in the War of 1948. Rifka hopes the protests in the neighbourhood can help her regain her home, yet she is wary of Israeli participation in the struggle. “If you want to hear the truth, I don't really trust them,” she says. “You're telling me they will leave their people... their religion and join us? It's not logical.”



YONATAN YOSEF

Yonatan Yosef is the spokesperson for the Israeli settlers living in Sheikh Jarrah. He sees the settlement of Jews in the neighbourhoods of East Jerusalem as a religious duty and an integral part of the Jewish “Return to Zion.” According to Yonatan, the eviction of Palestinian families is a necessary side effect in this effort. “Our dream is that all East Jerusalem will be like West Jerusalem,” Yonatan says, “A Jewish capital of Israel.”



PREPARING FOR THE DISCUSSION



SUGGESTIONS AND STRATEGIES TO FACILITATE A CONSTRUCTIVE AND OPEN CONVERSATION

The facilitator or discussion leader should set a respectful tone to open the discussion. Remind the group that this is meant to be a dialogue rather than a debate, and ask that people focus on listening rather than simply preparing to make their own points. You may want to set basic ground rules by asking participants to suggest their own agreements (and possibly adding your own), such as keeping comments to less than two minutes to allow others time to speak.

You may want to pose the following questions for your audience to ponder for several moments after watching the film. These questions will not be answered or discussed, merely considered privately. This is also a useful technique for defusing a potentially explosive conversation while acknowledging the strength and legitimacy of people's reactions to the film.

- ◆ What are your beliefs about Jerusalem and its inhabitants?
- ◆ What values, prior history or experiences contribute to your beliefs and perspective?
- ◆ What would you want others to know about your beliefs about Palestinians and about Israelis?

- ◆ What are some of the things you question about your own beliefs on this issue?
- ◆ What support would you need to explore your doubts about your own beliefs on this issue?

It can be helpful to develop a clear outline of the questions you intend to ask your audience, along with the sequence in which you plan on asking them prior to the discussion. This applies whether you decide to work with the group as a whole or break participants down into pairs or small groups. You may want to briefly outline the discussion topics for your audience before opening the floor to comments on the first question. As the discussion leader, you should use your own judgment about which questions work with your audience and when to move on to another topic. As the facilitator, you should review the topics ahead and, based on time constraints, you may wish to highlight certain questions you feel are most relevant. If your audience includes two groups who often fall on different sides of the issue, we strongly encourage you to carefully consider which portraits and questions will ensure the participation of both groups without alienating either one.

PRE-SCREENING DISCUSSION



SUGGESTED ACTIVITIES AND QUESTIONS FOR YOU AND YOUR AUDIENCE TO CONSIDER PRIOR TO SCREENING THE FILM

Consider having participants discuss their own connection to the issues raised in *My Neighbourhood*, to Jerusalem and to the Israeli-Palestinian context more broadly. What makes this topic important to them? What are the source(s) of their interest in or connection to Jerusalem and its inhabitants?

My Neighbourhood can provoke strong emotional reactions from viewers. It is a good idea for discussion leaders to think about their own relationship to the Israeli-Palestinian context before leading a discussion. Prior consideration of the following questions may help organizers explore their own biases and prepare to facilitate an open discussion among participants:

- What are my own beliefs about Jerusalem and its inhabitants?
- What are my assumptions about Palestinians and about Israelis?
- Am I open to multiple narratives and experiences on this topic?
- What are some of the gaps in my knowledge about this issue?

You may want to let participants know that *My Neighbourhood* has challenged a variety of audiences, whether Muslim, Christian, Jewish or secular in different ways. Most audience members, regardless of their background, are surprised by some aspect of the film. It is worth urging participants to consider how communities other than their own might react to *My Neighbourhood*.

You may ask participants to go over recent media coverage of the Israeli-Palestinian context. If possible, request that they explore American, Israeli and Palestinian media outlets.

- What stands out for them?
- What seems to be emphasized?
- What seems to be missing?
- How does coverage of the Israeli-Palestinian conflict affect my narrative and perspective of those that are involved?





DISCUSSION QUESTIONS

The discussion questions provided in this section are intended for a wide range of audiences and facilitation formats. Some facilitators may incorporate the issues raised in *My Neighbourhood* over the course of an entire semester, others may allow the film to serve as the focal point of a day-long workshop and still others may prefer to hold a local community screening and hour-long discussion afterward. Because *My Neighbourhood* reaches such a diverse range of audiences, it is up to you to choose the most appropriate questions for your discussion. Where appropriate, Just Vision has offered suggestions for questions (denoted by *) that you may use to begin the conversation in each discussion area. We have compiled our top suggestions into two pages located in Appendix D of this guide.



A list of recommended discussion questions can be found in Appendix D.

DISCUSSION AREAS BY THEME

- MEDIA ANALYSIS
- ON THE GROUND
- NONVIOLENCE AND MOVEMENT BUILDING
- ISRAELI PARTICIPATION
- ISRAELI SETTLER PRESENCE
- ISRAELI GOVERNMENT, JUDICIAL AND POLICE INVOLVEMENT AND RESPONSE
- APPROACHES TO CHANGE
- SUMMARY



MEDIA ANALYSIS

- What is the significance of Jerusalem in the broader Israeli-Palestinian context? What is the significance of Jerusalem to the wider international community? Why do you think the filmmakers decided to focus on this city?*
- Had you heard about the events taking place in Sheikh Jarrah prior to watching *My Neighbourhood*? How is the film different from or similar to other media portrayals of the Israeli-Palestinian context you have seen?*
- Is it important that the media cover events like those taking place in Sheikh Jarrah? Why or why not? You may consider watching Julia Bacha's TED Talk about the power of our attention to nonviolent movements when considering this question (www.justvision.org/budrus/watch/JuliaBachaTED).
- What constructive role can documentary film play in the Israeli-Palestinian conflict? How can it enhance the discussion or debate?

ON THE GROUND

- What is the significance of the events in Sheikh Jarrah in the discussion about Jerusalem? How might this significance differ for Palestinian residents, Israeli activists and Israeli settlers? What is the significance of Jerusalem to faith-based communities?*
- Research the history of Sheikh Jarrah and broader East Jerusalem. You may consider referencing the maps and legal and historical background provided at www.justvision.org/myneighbourhood/resources as a starting place. What are the competing claims to land? In your view, what are the tensions that exist between these claims? How do local laws impact Palestinians and Israelis living in Jerusalem? Do they differ for each population? If so, in what way?
- Sara Benninga states, "The settlers rely on the fact that in Israel there are unfair laws that discriminate between Jews and Palestinians." What legal inequality is Sara referring to? Do you agree with her interpretation or not? Consider referencing the FAQ provided at the end of this guide and the additional resources provided at www.justvision.org/myneighbourhood/resources for more information.*
- What role does religion play in Sheikh Jarrah? In your experience, does religion help to contribute to or lessen



divisions among people? How do you think religion could be a force for positive change (please reference Appendix C for Israeli and Palestinian faith leaders involved in peacebuilding and nonviolence)?

NOTE TO THE DISCUSSION LEADER

In addition to the discussion questions provided, we encourage you to incorporate a question (or a series of them) that allows your audience to ground *My Neighbourhood* within a familiar context. As you know your audience best, it is up to you to determine the reflection questions that would most effectively connect participants to the issues facing Jerusalem today, while at the same time recognizing that each context is distinct. One example is to ask students to reflect upon housing rights in the US and to explore the contexts in which evictions occur, as well as their impact on individuals, families and communities. Also, given Terry Benninga's reference to the US Civil Rights movement in her portrait (available at www.justvision.org/homefront), you may consider asking your audiences to reflect upon how the US Civil Rights movement and the events taking place in Sheikh Jarrah are similar or different from one another.

DISCUSSION QUESTIONS

“When is civil disobedience an appropriate response to government action or inaction in a democracy?”

NONVIOLENCE & MOVEMENT BUILDING

- According to the film, what challenges do Palestinian residents in Sheikh Jarrah face? Consider the response of the Israeli police and the Israeli courts to the events taking place in Sheikh Jarrah. You may also consider researching the rights of Palestinian residents and Israeli citizens living in Jerusalem. Begin by referencing historical and legal background about Sheikh Jarrah available at www.justvision.org/myneighbourhood/resources and the glossary definition for “Palestinian Resident” provided at the end of this guide.
- In the face of court-sanctioned evictions of Palestinian residents from their homes, Palestinian residents and Israeli activists choose to demonstrate nonviolently in Sheikh Jarrah. Is this an effective strategy? If you were in their place, would you have joined the nonviolent demonstrations? What would you do differently?*
- During the nonviolent demonstrations, one protestor states on the megaphone, “When the law is unjust: Civil Disobedience!” Terry and Simon Benninga, both law-abiding Israeli citizens, find a tension between respect for democratic authority and civil disobedience but eventually decide to join the demonstrations. In your view, when is civil disobedience an appropriate response to government action or inaction when living in democracy?

NOTE TO THE DISCUSSION LEADER

For a lesson aimed at exploring perceptions of nonviolent civil disobedience by Israeli and Palestinian civil society leaders, please visit Appendix B.



NONVIOLENCE & MOVEMENT BUILDING (CONTINUED)

- In the film, Zvi states that the demonstrations brought media attention to the events taking place in Sheikh Jarrah. Mohammad finds hope in the fact that the demonstrations lead to increased attention to the evictions that are taking place in Sheikh Jarrah. What is the role of media in relation to nonviolent movements? Does our attention to these events matter in movement building? Why or why not? Consider watching Julia Bacha’s TED Talk about the power of our attention on nonviolent movements as a supplemental resource for this question (www.justvision.org/budrus/watch/JuliaBachaTED).*
- At the end of the film, Mohammad shares that he hopes to one day become a lawyer so he can help defend his community’s rights. Do you think there is hope for change if he becomes a lawyer? Why or why not?
- If the type of nonviolent movement we see in *My Neighbourhood* were to become more widespread, what influence might it have on the events taking place in Sheikh Jarrah and, more broadly, in Jerusalem? On efforts to end the occupation and resolve the conflict? Why?*



ISRAELI PARTICIPATION

- What is the significance of the Israeli activists' support for Palestinian residents of Sheikh Jarrah? How do you think their involvement might impact the events taking place in the neighbourhood? Is their involvement important? Why or why not?*
- What is Mohammed's reaction to the presence of Israeli activists in Sheikh Jarrah? What is his grandmother's reaction to the presence of Israeli activists? Why do you think they react differently?
- Mohammad states that some Palestinian residents feel that Israeli activists will not "do any good." Why do you think there is reluctance to have Israeli involvement among some Palestinian residents?*
- In the beginning of the film, we learn that Simon Benninga, Zvi and Sara's father, politically "supports what [they] are doing [in Sheikh Jarrah], but going against 'the system' is something that scares [him]." Why does Simon decide to join the nonviolent demonstrations?
- As demonstrated by the film, what are some of the challenges Israeli activists face as a result of their involvement in Sheikh Jarrah?*
- At the end of the film, Zvi states that the situation in Sheikh Jarrah has done two things for him. What are those two things? Do you think they contradict each other? Why or why not?
- Does Zvi's experience as an Israeli activist protesting against his government resonate with you?
- In the film, Simon Benninga states, "I'm the child of Holocaust survivors, and the few people in my family who survived were helped by righteous people. We grew up pretty much knowing that just and righteous and brave people could make a difference." What do you think Simon means by "righteous" people?



ISRAELI SETTLER PRESENCE

- In the film, Yonatan Yosef, the Israeli Settler Spokesperson, states, "All of this area will be a Jewish neighbourhood... I see this as a continuation of the Jewish-Zionist project, the return to Zion." Why is this important to him? What does Jerusalem represent to Yonatan?
- What is the interplay between religion and nationalism in Yonatan's vision?
- How does Yonatan reconcile the eviction of Palestinian residents in Sheikh Jarrah with his vision? What are the implications of Yonatan's vision for the rest of Jerusalem? For the larger Israeli-Palestinian context?*
- Yonatan Yosef states that although the settlement of land by Israeli settlers in East Jerusalem is at "the Arabs' expense," Israeli "government institutions were also built at the expense of Arabs who lived [there] and so was the state itself." What do you think Yonatan means by this? Do you agree or disagree with his logic? Why?
- Mohammed's grandmother says that after her family's eviction, Mohammed became "a man older than his age". What effect does eviction have on individuals? On families? On communities?

ISRAELI GOVERNMENT, JUDICIAL & POLICE INVOLVEMENT & RESPONSE

- What is the role of Israeli police in the evictions taking place in Sheikh Jarrah? What is the response of Israeli police to the nonviolent demonstrations taking place there? How should law enforcement respond to nonviolent demonstrations? How would you respond if you were a member of the police faced with civil disobedience?*
- In *My Neighbourhood*, we learn that Israeli courts have issued eviction orders of Palestinian residents from their homes by Israeli settlers. What do you think about the court's role in the events taking place in Sheikh Jarrah? In your view, what should the judicial response to the events taking place be? In the absence of judicial intervention that you agree with, what would you do?*
- Yair Gabai, an attorney with the Jerusalem City Council, states, "The Jews will not give up Jerusalem, and soon we will see more Jews settling all over East Jerusalem." If the events taking place in East Jerusalem continue on its current path, what implications might it have locally on Jerusalem? On the broader Israeli-Palestinian context?

DISCUSSION QUESTIONS

“Do the Palestinian and Israeli civilian efforts to combat occupation through civil disobedience relate to diplomatic initiatives for peace?”



APPROACHES TO CHANGE

- As demonstrated by the film, what are the various types of power held by those involved in the events taking place in Sheikh Jarrah? Consider the courts, the police, Israeli activists, Israeli settlers and Palestinian residents. How does each choose to exert his or her power?
- In the film, Zvi states, “My struggle, our struggle, is not against the settlers. My struggle is against the state.” Why does Zvi view his activism as a struggle against the state and its policies? Does this statement resonate with you? Why or why not?
- Do the Palestinian and Israeli civilian efforts to combat occupation through civil disobedience relate to diplomatic initiatives for peace? Do you think they help or hinder this process? Why?*
- Considering the different experiences of Mohammad and Zvi, what are your thoughts on the ability of an individual to influence a larger system or series of events?*
- Do nonviolent movements contribute to the process of building and advancing democracy in Palestinian and Israeli societies? If so, how? If not, why not?
- What is the relationship between democracy and civil disobedience? What are the underlying assumptions of civil disobedience vis-à-vis the political and judicial systems?*

SUMMARY

- Who is the most important target audience for *My Neighbourhood*? Why? If you could show this film to one person, who would it be?
- If you had five minutes with a senior Israeli, Palestinian or American government official, what would you tell them about Sheikh Jarrah and East Jerusalem?*
- Is *My Neighbourhood* a film that contributes to ending the occupation and resolving the conflict? Why or why not?
- Does *My Neighbourhood* make you want to take action? Now that you have watched it, is there anything that you plan to begin doing? What will you continue doing? What will you stop doing?



QUOTES FROM *MY NEIGHBOURHOOD*

KEY QUOTES THAT EXEMPLIFY THEMES THROUGHOUT THE FILM

“ [Mohammed] became aware. He became a man, older than his age.”

– RIFKA EL KURD

“ My struggle, our struggle, is not against the settlers. My struggle is against the state because you can find people that are violent and crazy in any society. The problem here is that they’re backed up and supported.”

– ZVI BENNINGA

“ Settlers rely on the fact that in Israel, there are unfair laws that discriminate between Jews and Palestinians. So settlers come and say, this was Jewish land before 1948 and the law allows them to demand it back. But Palestinians have no law they can turn to.”

– SARA BENNINGA

“ Our dream will be that all East Jerusalem will be like West Jerusalem, Jewish capital of Israel... I see this as a continuation of the Jewish-Zionist project, the return to Zion. Is it at the Arabs’ expense? Yes. But our government institutions were also built at the expense of Arabs who lived here and so was the state itself.”

– YONATAN YOSEF

“ When I saw the Israelis coming to protest with us, my first reaction was, ‘These are Jews?’ How can these be Jews? This is the first time I’ve seen this. They are Jews, why would they come and support us? Then I learned the difference between right and left and that opinions differ within societies.”

– MOHAMMED EL KURD

“ If you want to hear the truth, I don’t really trust them. You’re telling me that they will leave their people, their religion, and join us? It’s not logical.” – RIFKA EL KURD

“ When the law is unjust: Civil Disobedience!”

– ACTIVIST

“ I’m the child of Holocaust survivors, and the few people in my family who survived were helped by righteous people. We grew up pretty much knowing that just and righteous and brave people could make a difference.”

– SIMON BENNINGA

“ Some people say that these are Jews and Jews won’t do us any good. But I disagree. They’ve helped us a lot and through these demonstrations they’re expanding their base. So they are helping us and themselves. Why shouldn’t they?”

– MOHAMMED EL KURD

“ My activism has done two things. On the one hand, it has made me much more critical of the place where I live. On the other hand, it really connected me to this place and I stay here so I can be involved.”

– ZVI BENNINGA

“ After they took our house, we had hoped to get it back. But now we say ‘if we get it back’ not ‘when we get it back.’”

– MOHAMMED EL KURD

Explore our Thematic Highlights at www.justvision.org/search/thematic to find quotes that capture perspectives from Palestinian and Israeli nonviolence leaders and peacebuilders.



SUPPORT MATERIALS

This guide was made possible thanks to the generous input and expertise of a range of scholars and experts including Dr. Mohammed Abu-Nimer, Zeina Azzam, Dr. Adina Friedman, Dr. Ned Lazarus, Dr. Saliba Sarsar, Paul Scham, Daniel Seidemann, Shai Tamari and Kacie Wallace. We are grateful to The Bertha BRITDoc Connect Fund for its support of this publication.

We value your feedback and would love to hear any questions, suggestions or stories from the field as you use this resource. Please send us your feedback by filling out our survey at www.justvision.org/screening-guides. You can also reach us at info@justvision.org. We look forward to hearing from you.



APPENDICES

- ◆ APPENDIX A: ABOUT JUST VISION
- ◆ APPENDIX B: VOICES FROM THE FIELD:
A LESSON ABOUT NONVIOLENCE
- ◆ APPENDIX C: ENGAGING FAITH COMMUNITIES
- ◆ APPENDIX D: ABRIDGED DISCUSSION QUESTIONS
- ◆ APPENDIX E: FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTIONS

APPENDIX A

ABOUT JUST VISION



Just Vision supports Palestinians and Israelis who are pursuing freedom, dignity, security and peace using nonviolent means. Our overarching goal is to contribute to fostering peace and an end to occupation by rendering Palestinian and Israeli civic peacebuilders and nonviolence leaders more effective and valued in their efforts. Our principal areas of work are 1) producing award-winning films and multimedia that garner international attention from press to policymakers and thus become agents of social change and 2) using these films as platforms to implement strategic and sustained public education campaigns in the US and the Middle East. Through our materials, we aim to support ordinary people who act when government officials lack the courage, wisdom, authority or legitimacy to do so.

We offer inspiring models that alter the way activists, community leaders, faith groups, students, journalists and the general public think about and respond to the occupation and the conflict. We are vigilant about creating content that is constructive, compelling and that humanizes members of both societies even as it challenges target audiences. Our materials offer insight into perspectives from the two societies and create connection, empathy and hope – critical elements for the success of any eventual diplomatic or reconciliation process.

Just Vision is comprised of a 12-person team of Palestinian, Israeli and North and South American journalists, human rights advocates, filmmakers, and conflict resolution experts. Just

Vision has earned a reputation for leadership, credibility and excellence. We have built relations of trust among a very wide spectrum of Jewish, Muslim, Arab and Christian communities in the Middle East, North America and beyond.

HERE ARE SOME WAYS YOU CAN USE JUST VISION'S RESOURCES:

- Show *Home Front*, *My Neighbourhood*, *Budrus* or *Encounter Point*, our various documentary films, in a class or workshop or include our Visionary interviews in your syllabi, reading lists and community resources (www.justvision.org/films).
- Connect your community members with the various Palestinian and Israeli grassroots organizations and individuals profiled on our website. Consider partnering with them if you are local, or connect with them on your next trip to the region (www.justvision.org/organizations).
- Include an inspiring quote from one of the Visionaries we profile on our website in an upcoming sermon or lecture, or incorporate their interviews into your research or classroom (www.justvision.org/visionaries).
- Use our classroom exercises and lesson plans with high school and college levels students to teach media literacy, explore notions of peace, nonviolence, religion, hopes and fears and the role of leadership in the Israeli-Palestinian context (www.justvision.org/classroom-exercises-and-lessons).
- Attend a local Just Vision event near you and invite your friends and family to join you (www.justvision.org/events).

Just Vision welcomes you to learn more about our work at www.justvision.org and encourages you check back in with us as we expand our online resources.



APPENDIX B

VOICES FROM THE FIELD: A LESSON ABOUT NONVIOLENCE

DESCRIPTION: Using excerpts from our Visionary interviews, participants will explore our Visionaries' ideas, definitions and experiences with nonviolent direct action. Students will also examine their own thoughts on nonviolence as it relates to the Israeli-Palestinian context.

GOAL: Introduce the concept of nonviolence as it relates to the dynamics of this conflict and possibilities for a resolution.

SUPPLIES: Just Vision's excerpts on Nonviolence printed on regular paper.

ESTIMATED TIME: 60-90 minutes.

PDF: Available at www.justvision.org/sites/justvision.org/files/JV_Nonviolence_Quotes.pdf

SUGGESTED GROUP SIZE: 10-15

PROCEDURE:

- 1 Print the PDF located at the link above and post the relevant excerpts on walls in the room.
- 2 Ask participants to spend 20 minutes reading the excerpts.
- 3 Instruct participants to return to their seats and sit in a circle. Pose the following questions for group discussion.

DISCUSSION QUESTIONS:

- What quote did you find the most interesting? Why?
- Do the quotes reflect a uniform definition of nonviolence? Can your group agree on a definition of nonviolence?
- What might be the benefits and challenges for Palestinians and their supporters in adopting nonviolence as a strategy?

OPTIONAL FILM CLIP (to show at close of workshop):

Watch Julia Bacha's TED Talk, *Pay Attention to Nonviolence*, available at www.justvision.org/budrus/watch/JuliaBachaTED.

For additional lesson plans, please visit www.justvision.org/classroom-exercises-and-lessons.

APPENDIX C

ENGAGING FAITH COMMUNITIES

Here are a few ways faith leaders and community members can utilize Just Vision's resources:

- ◆ Host a screening of Just Vision's films for your congregants. To find out more, please visit www.justvision.org/organize/hostascreening.
- ◆ Organize a multi-faith event with local Muslim, Jewish and Christian communities. Use examples of Israelis and Palestinians working together as a launching pad for discussion.
- ◆ Invite a member of the Just Vision team to host a presentation or workshop for your community about the different ways Israelis and Palestinians are working without arms to end the occupation and the conflict, and about how your community can help to make their voices louder on the world stage.
- ◆ Use an inspiring story or quote from our Visionaries section in your sermons and educational programming. Please see suggested quotes below.
- ◆ Connect your community members with one of the various Palestinian and Israeli grassroots organizations and individuals profiled on our website and partner with them during your community's next trip to the region.

In addition to the quotes suggested below, visit www.justvision.org for in-depth resources about Israeli and Palestinian peacebuilders and nonviolence leaders working towards a better shared future.



“We should always look at ourselves as *hetz'yo zakay, hetz'yo hyav* – everything is perfectly balanced, and we never know what little act we will take that seems meaningless, pointless, irrelevant, useless at the time, but whether that will be the act that tips the scales one way or the other... It is... wonderfully liberating to know, to believe that when you can't see things, things are happening. I hope and wish for a blessing for us all, whether in the Middle East or in any spheres of our personal and public lives. You should have the courage and wisdom and faith to tip the scales in the right direction.”

– RABBI ARIK ASCHERMAN



“With our faith in God Almighty, we strongly believe in Him; this is what strengthens us – our faith and the forgiveness within us. We also call for peace that is just and real where there will be no Palestinian or Israeli family that has to go through the same thing we did. Our goal now is to try as much as we can through our love and forgiveness to carry on with our lives and help others not to go through what we went through.”

– GEORGE SA'ADEH



“If I consider myself a peace activist, then all my words and actions must be devoted to peace. For me this is Jihad, and if I die doing this I will be considered a martyr... How do I identify a martyr? He is one that takes a role in improving his community and its situation, according to his own understanding. People can call him what they like, but I consider this a sacred mission that I could use to help the next generations.”

– IBTISAM MAHAMEED

For other ways to get involved in your community, please visit www.justvision.org/get-involved.

APPENDIX D

ABRIDGED DISCUSSION QUESTIONS



PROVIDES A COMPILATION OF QUESTIONS TO BEGIN A CONVERSATION AROUND EACH DISCUSSION THEME

MEDIA ANALYSIS

- Had you heard about the events taking place in Sheikh Jarrah prior to watching *My Neighbourhood*? How is the film different from or similar to other media portrayals of the Israeli-Palestinian context you have seen?
- What is the significance of Jerusalem in the broader Israeli-Palestinian context? What is the significance of Jerusalem to the wider international community?

ON THE GROUND

- What is the significance of the events in Sheikh Jarrah in the broader discussion about Jerusalem? How might this significance differ for Palestinian residents, Israeli activists and Israeli settlers? What is the significance of Jerusalem to faith-based communities?
- Sara Benninga states, “The settlers rely on the fact that in Israel there are unfair laws that discriminate between Jews and Palestinians.” What legal inequality is Sara referring to? Do you agree with her interpretation or not? Consider referencing the FAQ provided at the end of this guide and the additional resources provided at www.justvision.org/myneighbourhood/resources for more information.

NONVIOLENCE AND MOVEMENT BUILDING

- In the face of court-sanctioned evictions of Palestinian residents from their homes, Palestinian residents and Israeli activists choose to demonstrate nonviolently in Sheikh Jarrah. Is this an effective strategy? If you were in their place, would you have joined the nonviolent demonstrations? What would you do differently?
- In the film, Zvi states that the demonstrations brought media attention to the events taking place in Sheikh Jarrah. Mohammad finds hope in the fact that the demonstrations lead to increased attention to the evictions that are taking place in Sheikh Jarrah. What is the role of media in relation to nonviolent movements? Does our attention to these events matter in movement building? Why or why not? Consider watching Julia Bacha’s TED Talk about the power of our attention on nonviolent movements as a supplemental resource for this question (www.justvision.org/budrus/watch/JuliaBachaTED).
- If the type of nonviolent movement we see in *My Neighbourhood* were to become more widespread, what influence might it have on the events taking place in Sheikh Jarrah and, more broadly, in Jerusalem? On efforts to end the occupation and resolve the conflict? Why?

ISRAELI PARTICIPATION

- What is the significance of the Israeli activists’ support for Palestinian residents of Sheikh Jarrah? How do you think their involvement might impact the events taking place in the neighbourhood? Is their involvement important? Why or why not?



- Mohammad shares that some Palestinian residents feel that Israeli activists will not “do any good.” Why do you think there is reluctance to have Israeli involvement among some Palestinian residents?
- As demonstrated by the film, what are some of the challenges Israeli activists face as a result of their involvement in Sheikh Jarrah?

ISRAELI SETTLER PRESENCE

- In the film, Yonatan Yosef, the Israeli Settler Spokesperson, states, “All of this area will be a Jewish neighbourhood... I see this as a continuation of the Jewish-Zionist project, the return to Zion.” Why is this important to him? What does Jerusalem represent to Yonatan?
- What is the interplay between religion and nationalism in Yonatan’s vision?
- How does Yonatan reconcile the eviction of Palestinian residents in Sheikh Jarrah with his vision? What are the implications of Yonatan’s vision for the rest of Jerusalem? For the larger Israeli-Palestinian context?

ISRAELI GOVERNMENT, JUDICIAL AND POLICE INVOLVEMENT AND RESPONSE

- What is the role of Israeli police in the evictions taking place in Sheikh Jarrah? What is the response of Israeli police to the nonviolent demonstrations taking place there? How should law enforcement respond to nonviolent demonstrations? How would you respond if you were a member of the police faced with civil disobedience?

- In *My Neighbourhood*, we learn that Israeli courts have issued eviction orders of Palestinian residents from their homes by Israeli settlers. What do you think about the court’s role in the events taking place in Sheikh Jarrah? In your view, what should the judicial response to the events taking place be? In the absence of judicial intervention that you agree with, what would you do?

APPROACHES TO CHANGE

- Do the Palestinian and Israeli civilian efforts to combat occupation through civil disobedience relate to diplomatic initiatives for peace? Do you think they help or hinder this process? Why?
- Considering the different experiences of Mohammad and Zvi, what are your thoughts on the ability of an individual to influence a larger system or series of events?
- What is the relationship between democracy and civil disobedience? What are the underlying assumptions of civil disobedience vis-à-vis the political and judicial systems?

SUMMARY

- If you had five minutes with a senior Israeli, Palestinian or American government official, what would you tell them about Sheikh Jarrah and East Jerusalem?

For other ways to get involved in your community, please visit www.justvision.org/get-involved.



APPENDIX E

MY NEIGHBOURHOOD FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTIONS (FAQ)

Q WHAT IS JUST VISION?

A Just Vision is a nonprofit organization that supports Palestinians and Israelis who are pursuing freedom, security and peace using nonviolent means. Our overarching goal is to contribute to fostering peace and an end to occupation by rendering Palestinian and Israeli civic peacebuilders and nonviolence leaders more effective and valued in their efforts. Our principal areas of work are 1) producing award-winning films and multimedia that garner international attention from press to policymakers and thus become agents of social change and 2) using these films as platforms to implement strategic and sustained public education campaigns in the US and the Middle East. Through our materials, we aim to support ordinary people who act when government officials lack the courage, wisdom, authority or legitimacy to do so.

We offer inspiring models that alter the way activists, community leaders, faith groups, students, journalists and the general public think about and respond to the occupation and the conflict. We are vigilant about creating content that is constructive, compelling and that humanizes members of both societies even as it challenges target audiences. Our materials offer insight into perspectives from the two societies and create connection, empathy and hope – critical elements for the success of any eventual diplomatic or reconciliation process.

Just Vision is comprised of a 12-person team of Palestinian, Israeli and North and South American journalists, human rights advocates, filmmakers and conflict resolution experts. Just Vision has earned a reputation for leadership, credibility and excellence. We have built relations of trust among a very wide spectrum of Jewish, Muslim, Arab and Christian communities in the Middle East, North America and beyond.



Q WHEN WAS JUST VISION FORMED?

A Just Vision was launched in October 2003 following two years of in-depth research. We are a relatively small team, and are based in East Jerusalem, Washington, DC and New York City.

Q DOES JUST VISION HAVE A POLITICAL POSITION?

A Just Vision is a nonpartisan organization and is not affiliated with any political or religious movement. Our staff is comprised of members who represent diverse backgrounds and hold a myriad of political views.

As an organization, we do not advocate for a particular political solution. However, we do believe that both Israelis and Palestinians are here to stay, and that both have the right to live in freedom, security, dignity and peace in the region. We also believe that the occupation is illegal, immoral and a serious obstacle to any lasting solution. Ending it is a crucial and necessary part of resolving the conflict.

Q WHY DID YOU CREATE MY NEIGHBOURHOOD?

A The story we set out to tell in *My Neighbourhood* is still largely unfinished. Mohammed’s family and their neighbours have yet to regain their homes, and the specter of displacement remains very real for hundreds of others living in Sheikh Jarrah and across East Jerusalem. In the meantime, protests involving both Israelis and Palestinians continue, though it is still unclear how successful they will be in their campaign to halt and ultimately reverse the evictions.

Yet it was precisely the open-endedness of this story, and the urgency of this particular moment, that led us to create *My Neighbourhood*. Events in Jerusalem – the geographic, religious and emotional focal point of the conflict – have a way of quickly spiraling outwards and influencing, for better or worse, the atmosphere throughout the region. Jerusalem can either be an unstable powder keg with the potential to ignite the entire Middle East, or, however remote a possibility it may now seem, a shared city that sets a tone of cooperation and mutual respect between Israelis and Palestinians.

My Neighbourhood came out of a desire to bring crucial local and global attention to those working towards the latter option, in the hopes that it will protect and empower them at this extremely fragile time. We created the film with an understanding that these competing visions are being played out on the ground right now, while the city’s future hangs in the balance.

Q WHO MADE MY NEIGHBOURHOOD? WHAT IS THE CONNECTION OF THE FILMMAKERS TO THE CONFLICT AND TO THE REGION?

A *My Neighbourhood* was directed by filmmakers Rebekah Wingert-Jabi and Julia Bacha, and produced by Just Vision, an Israeli, Palestinian and North and South American team of filmmakers, journalists, conflict resolution experts and human rights advocates.

The filmmakers have a personal relationship to the region, and most of Just Vision’s staff has either grown up or lived in the Middle East for a substantial period of time. Some of our families are Israeli or Palestinian and have lost loved ones, homes and freedom to conflict. We are all committed to promoting nonviolent efforts to resolve the conflict and to end the occupation.

For more information about the filmmakers, please visit www.justvision.org/myneighbourhood/about/filmmakers.

Q WHEN DID YOU BEGIN WORK ON THE FILM? WHO SHOT THE FOOTAGE?

A Rebekah Wingert-Jabi began filming in the Sheikh Jarrah neighbourhood in 2008 when Palestinian families started receiving eviction notices. In partnership with Rebekah, Just Vision’s team conducted extensive research into the history of the neighbourhood and the evictions that were taking place there. Our team interviewed the protagonists and several residents, activists and lawyers who have been present and active in Sheikh Jarrah over the last few years.

The story captured in the film series is dedicated to the late Wally Marks, who expressed deep concern about the events taking place in East Jerusalem and helped support Rebekah in her early stages of filming.



MY NEIGHBOURHOOD FAQ



Q WHAT WERE THE LEGAL GROUNDS FOR THE EVICTION OF THE FAMILIES IN SHEIKH JARRAH?

A The legal battle in Sheikh Jarrah has been long and complex, and each family has had to deal with separate circumstances. However, in most cases, the settlers have relied on a key provision within Israeli law which allows and in some cases encourages Jews possessing pre-1948 deeds for lands east of the Green Line to submit a formal petition in court to get the lands back. Palestinians, in contrast, have not been able to use such deeds to regain lands that they owned prior to 1948 to the west of the Green Line. The key Israeli laws establishing these terms are the Absentee Property Law from 1950 and the Legal and Administrative Matters (Regulation) Law from 1970.

Based on these provisions, beginning in the 1970s, Israeli settler organizations began turning to Israeli courts claiming that they had obtained Ottoman deeds for the lands on which many of the houses were built, and that they are the rightful owners of those lands. While the authenticity of the documents has been disputed, in many of the legal cases the Israeli courts have recognized them and ordered the evictions to proceed.

For more information regarding legal background about Sheikh Jarrah, please visit www.justvision.org/myneighbourhood/resources.

Q WAS THERE A JEWISH PRESENCE IN THE NEIGHBOURHOOD PRIOR TO 1948?

A Yes, though the exact size and location of the lands they owned and lived on is unclear.

Prior to 1948, significant Jewish and Arab populations lived in both East and West Jerusalem. The Tomb of Simon the Just, located near the homes in question in Sheikh Jarrah, has been a site of Jewish pilgrimage for centuries. At least as far back as the 19th Century, there were several Jewish homes around the site of the tomb. The residents of these homes either fled or were forced to leave their property in the lead-up to the War of 1948.

The Palestinian homes in question today, however, were built in the 1950s by the United Nations Relief and Works Agency in Sheikh Jarrah (on lands then under Jordanian rule). The homes were built on a previously uninhabited olive grove, at a time when there was no Jewish presence in the neighbourhood. The status and ownership of the lands on which the homes are built is being disputed in court.

Q WHAT IS HAPPENING IN SHEIKH JARRAH RIGHT NOW?

A As of June 2012, protests involving Palestinians and Israelis in Sheikh Jarrah are continuing, though at a smaller scale than they had been in the past. Court battles surrounding multiple additional evictions are ongoing, and dozens of Palestinian families, including Mohammed El Kurd's, are currently under threat of displacement.

The families who were evicted have been forced to move in permanently with relatives, and relationships between the neighbourhood residents and settlers have become increasingly tense, with occasional outbursts of violence.

Q HOW IS WHAT IS HAPPENING IN SHEIKH JARRAH RELEVANT TO DEVELOPMENTS IN JERUSALEM MORE BROADLY?

A The events in Sheikh Jarrah are part of a broader process of Israeli settlement-building and Palestinian displacement occurring throughout East Jerusalem. In most cases, these processes are led by well-funded Israeli settler groups working in close coordination with Jerusalem municipal and Israeli government authorities.



Since 1967, when Israel extended its authority over East Jerusalem, it has been continuously expropriating land and building settlements to the east of the Green Line, with the stated goal of strengthening Jewish presence and sovereignty over all parts of the city.

In recent decades, private settler groups, often funded by large donations from abroad, have gone a step further, initiating a series of court-mandated evictions of Palestinian families in order to set up new settlements in the heart of Palestinian neighbourhoods. Along with Sheikh Jarrah, these include the Muslim Quarter of the Old City, Beit Hanina, Silwan, Abu Dis, and others.

For more on the broader context of settlement building and evictions in East Jerusalem, please visit www.justvision.org/myneighbourhood/resources.

Q HOW IS MY NEIGHBOURHOOD RELATED TO HOME FRONT: PORTRAITS FROM SHEIKH JARRAH?

A *Home Front: Portraits from Sheikh Jarrah* is a series of four short film portraits (roughly eight minutes each), telling the stories of two Palestinians and two Israelis involved in the nonviolent campaign in the East Jerusalem neighbourhood of Sheikh Jarrah. These portraits and additional resources on Sheikh Jarrah are available for free online at www.justvision.org/homefront.

My Neighbourhood is a significantly expanded 25-minute version of one of the four *Home Front* portraits, focusing on the Palestinian teenager Mohammed El Kurd. At this point, *My Neighbourhood* is not available online.

Q ARE THERE MATERIALS TO ACCOMPANY THE FILM?

A In addition to this discussion guide, please visit www.justvision.org/myneighbourhood/resources for additional support materials, including legal and historical background about Sheikh Jarrah, maps, a news hub provided by *+972 Magazine* and interviews with Palestinian and Israeli nonviolence leaders and experts on the issues facing Jerusalem. You may also choose to supplement *My Neighbourhood* with our short film series, *Home Front: Portraits from Sheikh Jarrah*. Please visit Just Vision's website and click on the 'Resources' tab for additional online tools.

Press materials for *My Neighbourhood* are available at www.justvision.org/myneighbourhood/press/press-materials.

Q WHERE AND WHEN WILL MY NEIGHBOURHOOD BE RELEASED? HOW CAN I INVITE MY NEIGHBOURHOOD TO PARTICIPATE IN A FESTIVAL OR BE SHOWN IN A THEATER?

A *My Neighbourhood* had its world premiere at the 2012 Tribeca Film Festival in New York City. If you are interested in booking *My Neighbourhood* for a festival or theatrical screening, please contact info@justvision.org. *My Neighbourhood* will be released on DVD for the general public in Fall 2012.

For a full list of upcoming screenings, please visit www.justvision.org/events.

To organize a screening or event in your community or school, please e-mail info@justvision.org.





HOW CAN I GET INVOLVED?



🕒 SPREAD THE WORD

Join Just Vision on Facebook (www.facebook.com/JustVision) and Twitter (@JustVisionMedia) and sign up for our mailing list at www.justvision.org or by texting "JUSTVISION" to 22828. Urge your friends, family and colleagues to do the same.

🕒 ORGANIZE SCREENINGS & USE OUR RESOURCES

Organize a local screening of *My Neighbourhood* in your community or school once it becomes publicly available in Fall 2012, and work with Just Vision to make it a meaningful event. Encourage your teachers, professors or religious leaders to bring the stories and quotes of Palestinian and Israeli grassroots leaders profiled on our website into their classrooms and congregations. Write an op-ed about *My Neighbourhood*, Just Vision or Israeli and Palestinian nonviolence leaders. Look at the database of Visionaries on our website at www.justvision.org/visionaries to learn about different ways you can support them and their organizations from abroad or when visiting the region.

🕒 CONTACT LOCAL ORGANIZERS

There are several organizations that are working directly on issues related to Sheikh Jarrah and East Jerusalem. A few that are locally organizing include the Sheikh Jarrah Committee (website coming soon), Sheikh Jarrah Women's Forum (www.sheikhjarrah.com), Sheikh Jarrah Solidarity (www.en.justilm.org) and Rabbis for Human Rights (rhr.org.il/eng). For a list of organizations working on issues related to Jerusalem, please visit www.justvision.org/myneighbourhood/resources.

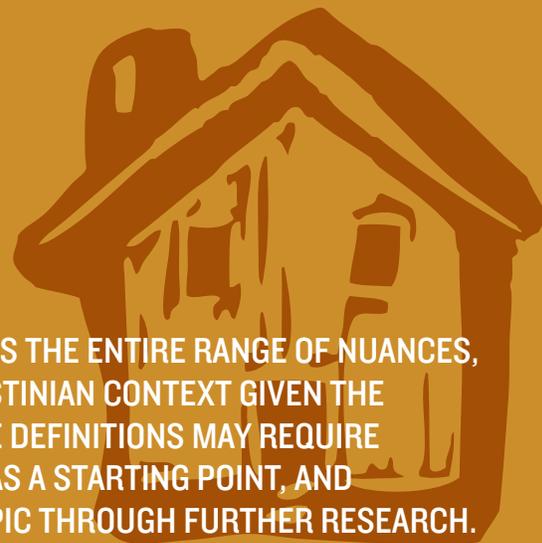
🕒 SUPPORT OUR WORK

We are a small nonprofit organization, and we provide our films and other materials to Israelis and Palestinians for free. We rely on the generosity of people like you to continue our work.

You can make a tax-deductible donation online at www.justvision.org/donate or by mailing a check made out to 'Just Vision' to us at 1616 P St. NW, Suite 340, Washington, DC 20036.

GLOSSARY

WE RECOGNIZE THAT THIS BRIEF GLOSSARY CANNOT ENCOMPASS THE ENTIRE RANGE OF NUANCES, NARRATIVES AND HISTORICAL EVENTS FROM THE ISRAELI-PALESTINIAN CONTEXT GIVEN THE RAPIDLY SHIFTING POLITICAL LANDSCAPE OF THE REGION. SOME DEFINITIONS MAY REQUIRE UPDATING. WE THEREFORE INVITE YOU TO USE THIS GLOSSARY AS A STARTING POINT, AND ENCOURAGE YOU TO CONTINUE YOUR EXPLORATION OF THIS TOPIC THROUGH FURTHER RESEARCH.



GREEN LINE

Refers to the internationally recognized 1949 Armistice Line following the War of 1948 between Israel on the one hand and Jordan, Lebanon, Syria, Iraq and Egypt on the other. Following the War of 1967, it denotes, in most international opinion and UN resolutions, the boundary between territory recognized as part of the sovereign State of Israel and the Occupied Palestinian Territories.

ISRAELI

Refers to a citizen of Israel, but when used on its own, most commonly refers to a Jewish citizen of Israel. Palestinians living in Israel who hold Israeli citizenship are usually referred to as Arab-Israelis, Palestinian-Israelis, 1948 Palestinians or Palestinian citizens of Israel. Palestinians do not usually identify themselves solely as “Israelis.”

JERUSALEM

A city located in the center of both Israel and the West Bank portion of the Occupied Palestinian Territories. It is home to approximately 800,000* people from all three monotheistic religions, as well as sites sacred to these faiths within close proximity in Jerusalem’s Old City. The Green Line, or 1949 cease-fire line between Israel, Egypt, Jordan, Syria and Lebanon, demarcates the unofficial boundary between Israel and the West Bank, and cuts through Jerusalem. Israel declared Jerusalem its capital in 1948, and enshrined this in its Basic Laws in 1980. Palestinians aspire to declare Jerusalem the capital of a nascent Palestine. Following the War of 1967, Israel both extended its sovereignty to the Eastern half of the city (then approximately 6.5 sq. km), including the Old City and holy shrines, and expanded the municipal boundaries of the city to include nearly 64 sq. km of territory that had not been previously considered East Jerusalem (these lands had been controlled by Jordan from 1948). Most countries do not recognize Israeli sovereignty over all parts of the city. Rather, they regard Jerusalem’s status as undetermined, pending final status negotiations

between Israel and the Palestinians.

*Population statistics for Jerusalem vary significantly by source due to the complex discourse surrounding boundaries for the city, settlement expansion, census data criteria, etc. The figure provided above is an approximation.

OCCUPATION

The occupation is used to refer to Israel’s military, infrastructural, economic and political control of the West Bank, East Jerusalem and Gaza Strip since June 1967. Occasionally, it is also used to refer to Israel’s occupation of the Syrian Golan Heights.

OCCUPIED PALESTINIAN TERRITORIES

Also known as the “Territories,” “Palestinian Territories,” “the West Bank, East Jerusalem and Gaza,” the “Occupied Territories” or as “Judea, Samaria and Gaza.” The term generally refers to two non-contiguous territories captured by Israel following the War of 1967. They comprise the territory slated to be the basis for an independent Palestinian state, and are generally considered occupied by the international community and under international law. Some members of the Israeli government refer to the Occupied Palestinian Territories as “disputed territory,” and certain factions in Israel consider the territory an integral part of biblical Israel and, thus, modern political Israel.

PALESTINIAN

Refers to someone of the primarily Arabic-speaking people who live or trace their cultural and/or geographic heritage to what had been Palestine until 1948, and which is now the area comprising Israel and the Occupied Palestinian Territories. Today, Palestinians living in Israel and the Occupied Palestinian Territories are divided into several categories with varying rights: Palestinian Citizens of Israel, Palestinian Residents (of Jerusalem), Palestinians in the West Bank, Palestinians in Gaza and Palestinian refugees. Additionally, there is a significant community of Palestinians in diaspora.

PALESTINIAN RESIDENT

Palestinian residents of Jerusalem are issued Jerusalem IDs (also known as “blue IDs”) which are required for Palestinian residents to live and work in the city of Jerusalem. Palestinian residents are technically provided with municipal services, health insurance and building permits, but are not allowed to vote in Israeli federal elections nor hold an Israeli passport. In practice, services provided to Palestinian residents living in East Jerusalem are limited as compared to those provided to Jews in the city, and building permits are almost impossible for them to obtain (since 1967, an average of only 140 permits per year are given to a population of more than 300,000).

SETTLEMENT

Refers to a Jewish community in the West Bank, East Jerusalem, and prior to 2005, the Gaza Strip. Those ideologically in support of them do not call them “settlements”, and may often refer to them as “communities” or “neighbourhoods”. The settler movement began following the War of 1967, when Israel occupied the West Bank, East Jerusalem, Gaza, the Golan Heights in Syria and the Sinai in Egypt. Many proponents of the settler movement claim that settlement of these lands is a divine right, mandated by religious texts. Other less theological proponents regard settlements as a security necessity for Israel. Still others choose to live in them primarily because of economic incentives and subsidies provided by the Israeli government. Opponents argue that settlements illegally expropriate Palestinian-owned land and predetermine the final status before a negotiated agreement has been reached between Israelis and Palestinians. International law prohibits occupying powers from transferring citizens from its own territory to occupied territory. Thus, the international community generally regards Israeli settlements as illegal under international law. Settlements generally receive Israeli government funding and/or military and infrastructural support.

SETTLER

Refers to a Jewish Israeli living in a settlement. Settlers often receive government-sponsored incentives to live in settlements, including subsidies and tax breaks.

WAR OF 1948

Commonly referred to as the “War of Independence” by Israelis and “Al-Nakba” (Arabic for “the catastrophe”) by Palestinians. The war was fought between Israel, on the one hand, and Jordan, Iraq, Syria, Lebanon and Egypt, on the other. It lasted from the time of the passage of the United Nations (UN) Partition Plan on November 29, 1947 until July 1949, by which point Egypt, Lebanon, Jordan and Syria had each entered into individual armistice agreements with Israel. The war resulted in an expansion of the territory of the State of Israel in Mandatory Palestine beyond that allocated under the Partition Plan, including West Jerusalem. Jordan took control of the West Bank and East Jerusalem, and Egypt took control of the Gaza Strip. As a result of the war, hundreds of thousands of Palestinians were expelled or fled, resulting in a diaspora and creating hundreds of thousands of Palestinian refugees. Thousands of Jews fled or were forced to leave their original homes in East Jerusalem and elsewhere, and were provided new homes within the newly formed State of Israel. Today, there are more than four million Palestinian refugees, many of whom continue to live in UN-administered refugee camps in Gaza, Jordan, Syria, Lebanon and the West Bank.

WAR OF 1967

Commonly referred to as the “June War” or “Al-Naksa” (Arabic for “the setback”) by Palestinians, and the “1967 War” or “Six-Day War” by Israelis. The war was fought between Israel on the one hand and Egypt, Jordan and Syria on the other. The war lasted six days, during which Israel captured the Sinai Peninsula, East Jerusalem, the West Bank and the Gaza Strip, and the Golan Heights.

1967 BORDERS

More accurately termed the pre-June 1967 border. Also referred to as the “Green Line.” Refers to the internationally recognized 1949 Armistice Line following the War of 1948 between Israel, on the one hand, and Jordan, Egypt, Syria, Lebanon and Iraq, on the other. In relation to Gaza, East Jerusalem and the West Bank, following the War of 1967, it is often used to denote the boundary between territory recognized as part of the sovereign State of Israel and the Occupied Palestinian Territories.

For Just Vision’s complete glossary, please visit www.justvision.org/glossary.



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