

Annual Report

ZOCHROT, 2020

“*I cannot overstate how important Zochrot is: as the only Israeli organization promoting the memory of the Nakba, as well as full return and reparation among Jewish citizens of Israel, it holds the key not just to return, but to the future of all peoples of Palestine/ Israel.*

Zochrot is working in impossible conditions, creating street art and conferences about practical return, organizing memorials and collecting testimonies. It is targeted and subjected to restrictive legislation, administrative restrictions, violence and intimidation.” (Israeli Zochrot supporter)

“*For me, Zochrot represents freedom - the freedom to think outside of what was expected of me, of what I was pushed towards. The freedom to try and soar beyond racism and segregation and dream of another place here - fairer, more egalitarian and more pleasant, based on a deep familiarity with history as well as on a vision of a future return. ” (Tom Pessah, Board of Zochrot)*



"Hi, it's Judith Butler

....Since 2002, Zochrot has been one of the most courageous and creative non-profits to seek acknowledgement and accountability not only for the Nakba of 1948, but for the continuing Nakba – the intensification of dispossession and disenfranchisement of Palestinians in Palestine. They have done the hard work of documenting the destruction of hundreds of Palestinian villages, sought to deepen and circulate the practices of acknowledgement and to argue in strong and persuasive ways for the Palestinian Right of Return. For Zochrot, the practices of remembering and reparation belong together as they seek to name Israeli rule as devastating and ongoing colonial power and to join an anti-colonial struggle even when it comes at great risk to themselves and to their projects.

As a group which includes Palestinian and Jewish Israelis working against colonial power, it opposes both the internal racism of the state as well as its ongoing refusal to know, name, and repair the history of its violent dispossessions. Singular among activist movements, it refuses forms of accommodation for Palestinian claims and focuses on the brutal founding of the state through the destruction of homes and villages, the production of Palestinians as a class of refugees, and struggles to imagine and implement a world in which repair is both possible and doable.

For Zochrot, the future state will be democratic, exemplifying principles of radical equality, only when the current citizens of Israel agree that Return is the only way toward a substantive equality that undoes every law that discriminates, and retells every history that has propagated massive denial for historical crimes against the Palestinian people.

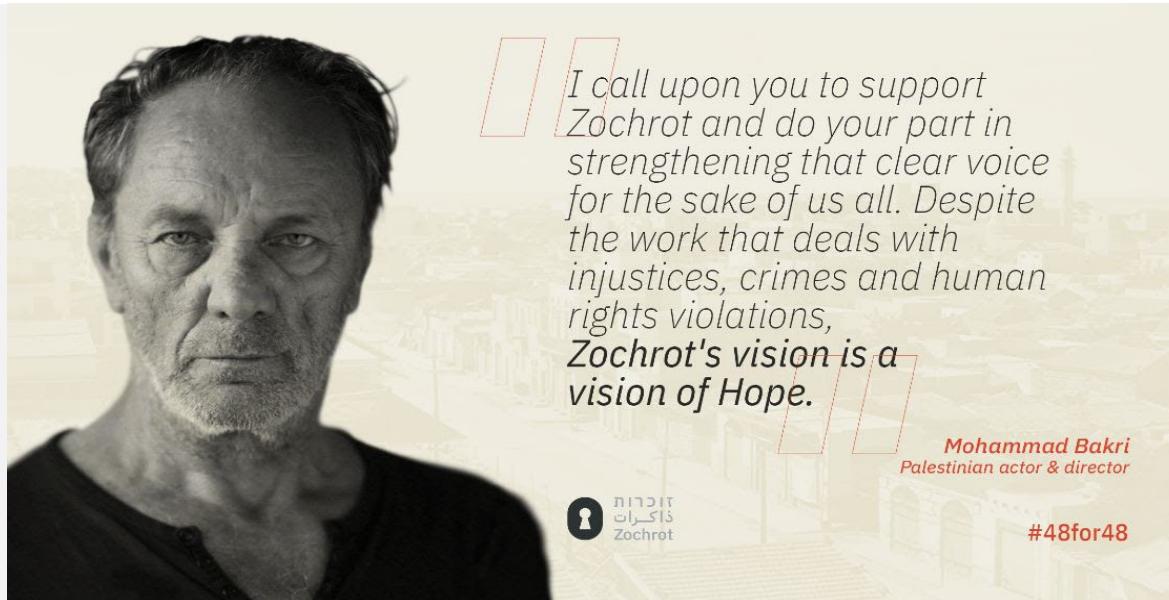
Zochrot has struggled since the beginning against efforts at censorship, slander, and threats of violence. But they are an indefatigable, brilliant, and courageous group that seeks to insist upon the true history of Israeli state violence against Palestinians who have every right to that land and to equal and free participation in the political powers that define their futures.

They have, quite simply, dared to [imagine Return](#), given material form to that imagining, marking the losses that would otherwise remain unseen, designing the villages that would be repurposed for co-habitation and that would begin the process of Palestinian return, reparation, and the first moments of democracy for the polity that will one day live together in the light of justice, equality, and true democracy.

I urge you to donate to this courageous and struggling organization nourished by the commitment to truth and to repair. They hope when the rest of us despair. They struggle on when the rest of us fear that the struggle is over.

Let us support their amazing efforts.

Judith Butler"



I call upon you to support Zochrot and do your part in strengthening that clear voice for the sake of us all. Despite the work that deals with injustices, crimes and human rights violations, Zochrot's vision is a vision of Hope.

Mohammad Bakri
Palestinian actor & director

#48for48

"Hello, I am Mohammad Bakri.

Today, I address you with an unusual request, one that I normally do not make. I want you to donate – but not to me. I want to direct your attention to one of the most courageous NGOs in our space..... I'm talking about Zochrot .

I was born in the Galilean village of al-Bi'na. In 1948, some of its inhabitants were forced to flee it due to an Israeli attack. Despite the fact that it was occupied without resistance and although the war was over, Israel did not let the refugees of my al-Bi'na return to their homes. It did the same to the hundreds of thousands of Palestinian refugees uprooted and forced to leave their homes in 1948. That year, hundreds of Palestinian towns and villages became completely depopulated, only to be destroyed in the following years by the State of Israel.

A unique pioneer, Zochrot is active in raising awareness to this Palestinian disaster – to the Nakba. It teaches the Israeli public about the Nakba and the fate of Palestinians in this country, seeking its acknowledgement of the injustices perpetrated against the Palestinian people by the Israeli side. Zochrot strives to have Israelis take responsibility for the violent expulsion of more than 750,000 people from their homeland that turned them – and their descendants – into refugees, and for demolishing their homes and erasing their communities. To recognize the right of return as a necessary step for a future of peace and equality in this country . Zochrot's target audience is Jewish Israelis. This is nothing short of amazing. The only one to do so, its activity challenges and undermines familiar Zionist and Israeli perceptions. It reveals what is hidden from Israelis' view, bringing the repressed to light, and invoking what many would rather deny.

Zochrot is the first organization that organized educational tours to destroyed Palestinian communities – for Israelis. Zochrot told their history, about the life before the Nakba and the circumstances of the Palestinians' uprooting, opening the eyes of thousands of Israelis to the stories behind the multiple ruins (in)visible all across the country, often not far from the homes of the tour participants. This is a profound, consciousness-raising political protest .

Zochrot offers a variety of activities. It has a rich, trilingual website with extensive materials bout the Nakba, the refugees, the destroyed communities and the right of return. After publishing the Nakba Map with the erased names of the destroyed Palestinian towns and villages, it launched the iNakba app. Try it. It provides an amazing experience. It includes rich information about every destroyed community in three languages, but more than that, it can

also be used as a navigation program – a GPS that takes you right to the erased Palestinian community. It is the only application in the world that can take you to a place that is no longer there, to a community we would like to rebuild.

I had the honor of participating personally in Zochrot activities more than once. As a filmmaker and actor, the NGO hosted me and films I played in or directed in its 48mm Film Festival from Nakba to Return – an outstanding initiative to promote the discourse on the Nakba and return through cinema.

I wholeheartedly applaud Zochrot and its activism. I call upon you to support it and do your part in strengthening that clear voice for the sake of us all. Despite dealing with difficult issues, with crimes and wrongs and violations of human rights, what Zochrot offers us is a message of hope."

Opening

In 2020 Zochrot continued to open new channels in discussing the Nakba and the return in ways that allow Israelis to go re-examine the events of 1948 and to think about Palestinian return as a possibility for a different, more just and peaceful future.

Since the beginning of 2020 we worked with different segments in Israeli society to expose more and more Israelis to the injustices of the ongoing Nakba and discuss with them why the return must be part of the solution. This, in continuation of our many years of work. We had carried out 55 different activities including 25 online tours, lectures and panels; We have also conducted 5 on-the ground tours to destroyed Palestinian villages under the restrictions of Covid-19, film screenings, workshops and more. About 2,000 people participated directly in these activities in 2020 and more than 28,000 participated indirectly, mainly through watching our activities online.

Throughout Zochrot's many years of work we have learned that changing the discourse and triggering a change in the larger society involves much more than just making facts and information available. Zochrot's work has contributed to a much more wide-spread knowledge of the facts of the Nakba among Israelis, but agreement on the responsibility for the Nakba, the need for redress and the way forward towards justice, is much less widespread. To help our society face its past and present crimes, we learned that we need to build a resilient community of committed people, among them teachers, artists, organizers and activists, who can serve as agents for social change.

Every year, 1700 to 2400 people directly participate in Zochrot's activities, and at least 100,000 benefit from the resources we provide, such as maps, testimonies and information kits, via our website and social media platforms. We see this pool of individuals as a base for continued and focused work that they are both beneficiaries of and contributors to – using Zochrot's resources to educate themselves and their communities and to advance recognition and truth seeking in different platforms. We see this kind of ripple effect growing in the last two years, 2019-2020, and we draw a conclusion from this growing interest to have an even more deliberate effort to cultivate an activist community capable and willing to carry on this effect.

Various projects funded mainly through our partners who supports the creation of teaching materials, mapping projects, testimonies projects, information gathering, film screenings and educational tours, created a large pool of materials to the benefit of our communities, even beyond people we reach directly, thus one of the consequences of Zochrot's work so far was many independent projects, such as films, books or art projects made independently of the organization but with reliance on our resources.

Last but not least, our communication and social media tools are designed to support the work we do and the vision we wish to promote and inspire more people to join. Hence, we always make sure that we are using a language and messages that bring back hope and inspire people to take responsibility for a better future for all. Despite the fact that part of our work sheds light on the past, we are determined to motivate people to act and see the teaching of the past as an

opportunity to look into the possibilities of the future of Return and to reflect this vision. We have been working this past year to refresh our visual identity and upgrade our website's design and technology. This will improve users' experience in research and encourage more people to use it to learn more.

Our intense efforts during the time of this report and in particular during the time of the global pandemic to organize online events and intensify our media presence for our knowledge sharing has enabled us to be more in touch with our communities and increase our number of newsletters, posts, quotes, videos and events enabling us to have a more interactive relationship with our social media audience. This was clear in the immediate registration for our events following sending out the newsletter, the number of attendees, the increased number of post engagement and number of shares of our photos, posters, recorded videos and live videos. It has also been rewarded by many letters, comments and responses of acknowledgment, appreciation and encouragement to continue.

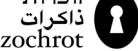
From "Stay Home to "Return Home" – our work under COVID-19

Since March 2020 Zochrot, like most of the world, was working under unexpected circumstances with the outbreak of the global pandemic of Covid19. This required quick adjustment of some of our methods to allow us to connect with beneficiaries during lock-down. We saw it as necessary to further initiate, support and sustain public discourse, in Israel, on the ongoing injustices suffered by Palestinian since the Nakba, particularly the issue of the right to return, even when focus went elsewhere. The outbreak of the coronavirus in early 2020 has highlighted existing oppression and injustice. The poorest and most marginalized people have been affected the most by Covid19, among them communities of Palestinian refugees.

In the past year, during the pandemic, Zochrot have been more committed than ever to expose the truth of what occurred in 1948 and since and to point at the injustices Palestinians face especially in a crisis like this one. We immediately adjusted our work mechanisms while staying committed to our mission. We intensified our digital presence by conducting virtual tours to destroyed localities, conversations and lectures about Nakba and Return. We also organized discussions on COVID19 impact on Palestinians, especially on refugees, while making sure to address the root problems and historical yet continuous injustices that underlie our political system. This was a way to link the current situation directly to the core of our work on Nakba as a major historical event that also shapes Palestinian public health situation and Return as the only just solution that will assure safety. In all of our activities since March we highlighted both the current situation of Palestinian refugees in pandemic times and the necessity of a long term just solution rather than just humanitarian relief. For our Israeli target groups, we encouraged them to use the time that we were all required to stay home to reflect on our immediate environment, home and neighborhood and on who is missing from it and why, we made teaching materials available online for distant learning, and we continued to hold outdoor activities in the months this was possible, in smaller groups.

Our Partners

Zochrot is grateful for the solidarity, partnership and support of Christian Aid, Misereor, HEKS-EPER, IHL Trust, AFSC, MCC, Kaleidoscope, EMHRF, Rockefeller Brothers Fund, Sparkplug, The Jerusalem Fund, Haella Foundation, St. Het Solidariteitsfonds, BSST, Sivmo, Urgent Action Fund as well as of private individuals from all over the world.



Vision

1. The return of Palestinian refugees to their land.
2. Recognition and accountability of Jewish Israelis for the crimes of the Nakba and the need to redress the wrongs against the Palestinian people.
3. Decolonization and the creation of an egalitarian democratic space enabling and benefitting from return. A just, multicultural society that will respect individual human rights as well as the collective rights of the various communities within it and strive for peace and shared living.

Overarching GOAL

Promoting the concept of return in Israeli society as both a fundamental right and a realistic possibility and political program forming the core of realizing the ambition for a better, just society in which Jewish Israelis could be full partners should they abandon the colonialist project

Objectives

1. Transforming the consciousness of Jewish-Israeli society with regard to the Nakba and return through educational and public activities. Holding and promoting public discourse in Israel on the Nakba and its ongoing effects, and particularly as related to the fate of Palestinian refugees. We believe acknowledging the past is the first step in taking responsibility for a better future. We therefore act to contribute to a realistic and viable solution for the conflict, centered on the return of refugees.
2. Promoting activism that draws public attention to the crimes of the Nakba and challenges attempts to relegate them to oblivion; that calls for acknowledging responsibility for those crimes, as well as for taking responsibility for the future – primarily by realizing the right of return. Supporting such activism and generating a cumulative effect that will place the return at the center of political discourse as a feasible and above all desirable solution. The more spaces are created where these issues could be spoken, the more the taboo around return will shatter, facilitating a serious discussion of the fears of this transformation and solutions that will allay them.
3. Recruiting global support for return in order to influence the local discourse.

Activities Highlights 2020

Tour at 'Ayn Karim

Zochrot invited the public to a special study tour at Ayn Karim village on January 17, 2020. About 70 people – Israelis, Palestinians and internationals took part in the tour. The tour aimed to expose the hidden mantle beneath the pastoral tranquility of the locations and pointed to the power and political violence practiced to form knowledge and consciousness/awareness in the public sphere. Through the tour we attempted to restore a 72 years of occupied identity. We explored few of the exteriors of the houses and their stories, visited the cemetery and observed what is visible and what is hidden.



48mm Film Festival from Nakba to Return in Jerusalem

Zochrot's 48mm film festival was held for the 7th time in Tel Aviv in November 2019. Early 2020, following the festival, the Jerusalem Cinemateque invited us to hold a special screening for the second year in a row. This cooperation brought the best of the festival to be screened in Al Quds, Jerusalem, in two special screenings participated by over 250 people. Descriptions of all the films can be found [here](#).



Action and tour to expose JNF

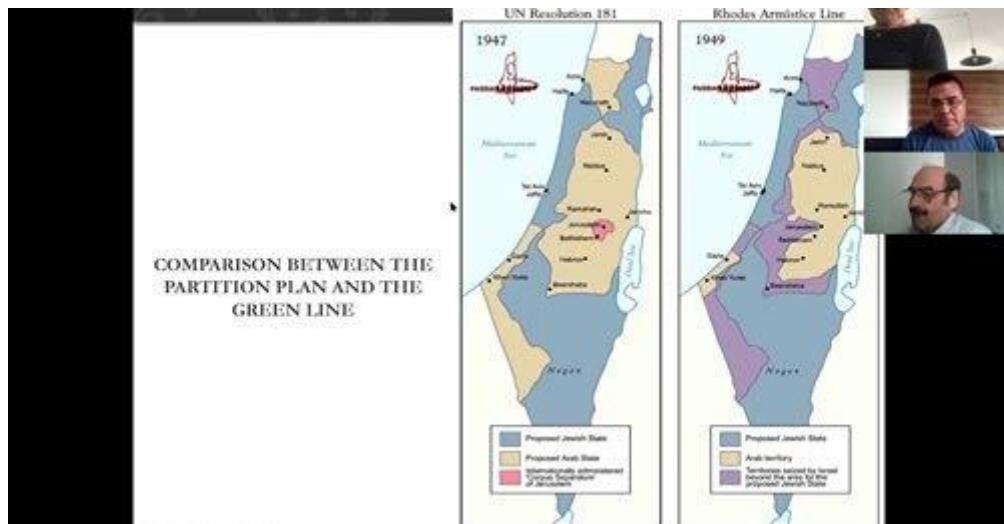
Some 30 people participated in an action and tour to expose what Jewish National Fund insists on hiding. We visited a number of sites of the JNF, learned the names of the villages hidden under the groves and trails and placed signs containing the relevant information about each village.

The ruins of hundreds of Palestinian villages' communities are hidden in the JNF's forests and parks around the country. These sites do not mention the names of the destroyed villages or the Palestinian history of these places. Thus, the JNF plays an active part in the erasure and denial of the Palestinian existence that began with the Nakba in 1948, and serve as a tool for shaping a false consciousness of the public.

The event was held on February 15, 2020 and included five parks and forests in the Modiin, Jerusalem and Beit Shemesh areas: Ben Shemen Forest, Rabin Park, Britania Park, Begin Park and USA Independence Park.



Depleted Land: A Virtual Tour from Manshiyya to Jaffa



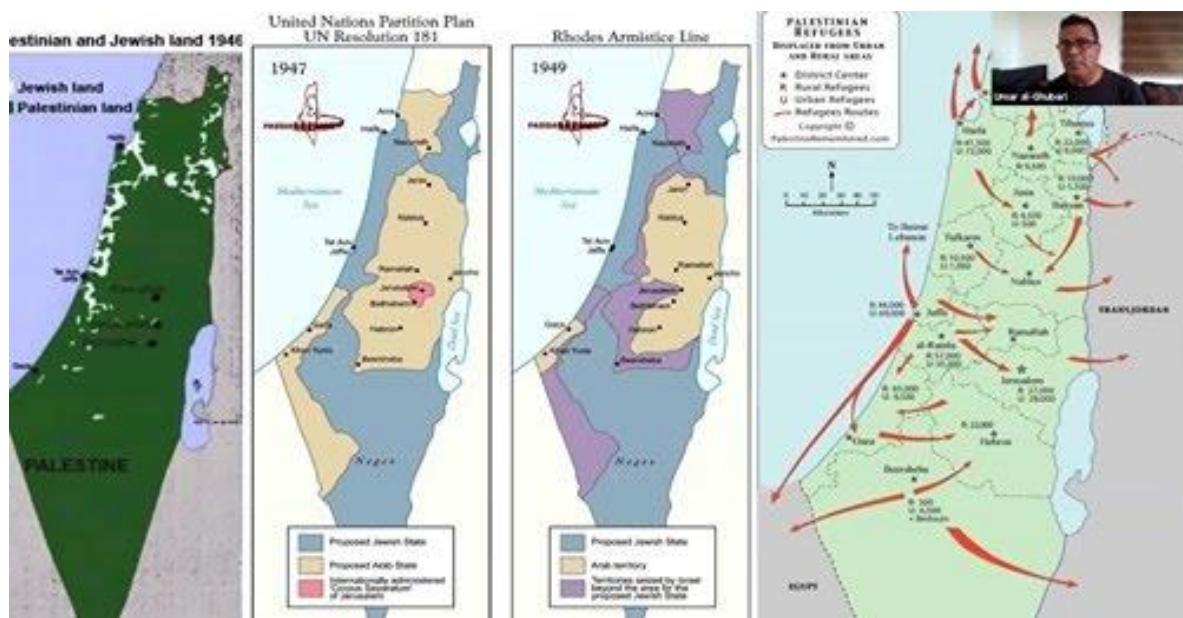
Due to the severe restrictions during Covid 19 outbreak we could not hold regular tours so we had replaced it with a virtual tour to al Manshiya as a [lecture](#) via zoom platform. The event included a brief lecture about the ongoing Nakba with a presentation of photos we use in our actual tour. The participants heard about life in Al-Manshiyya and the city of Jaffa before the Nakba, about the events during which the city was occupied and all but few of its residents were displaced or expelled, and of the processes of Judaization, Israelization, and the removal of Palestinian identity from space and consciousness. The online [lecture](#) was given in Hebrew by Umar al-Ghubari from Zochrot.

"Remembering Dayr Yasin- Online Memorial Event"



On the 72nd anniversary of the Dayr Yasin massacre, the occupation and depopulation of the village, Zochrot organized an international virtual memorial event – one event in [Hebrew](#) and another event in [English](#), together with Palestinian, Jewish and international activists. About 100 people participated in the events (both events were recorded and you can watch them using the links accordingly).

Each year, Zochrot has been holding a memorial tour on the lands of Dayr Yasin. Most of the village homes have been demolished by the State of Israel, to make room for the establishment of the Jewish Yefe Nof neighborhood and the expansion of other neighborhoods such as Givat Shaul. This year, due to the coronavirus pandemic, it was impossible to meet physically in the village and hold a tour. Therefore the tour was held in cyberspace, using Zoom software. Some 40 more people participated in another event in Arabic, held in cooperation with the school for peace in Wahat-al-Salam.



Zochrot believes its tradition of commemorating the Nakba, and particularly the Dayr Yasin massacre memorial must be maintained, even under these conditions. We must use new channels under the situation forced upon humanity to convey information about the crimes of the Nakba and call for justice for the Palestinian people – acknowledging the Nakba, righting the wrongs, and implementing the Palestinian refugees' right of return. The Nakba is still ongoing. The State of Israel is even taking advantage of the atmosphere of fear and confusion created by the pandemic to intensify its racist, colonialist and violent policies against the Palestinians. In the face of this policy, we must act persistently to reveal the denied truth and the injustice ongoing since 1948.

In the virtual events we shared a presentation of photos and texts and talked about the history of Dayr Yasin, on the attack on the village, the massacre and expulsion. We described the present condition of the village and showed some of its ruins, private homes, the school and the cemetery. We had also discussed the fact that right in the center of Dayr Yasin, within Palestinian houses still standing, Israel established the Kfar Shaul psychiatric hospital. Here are some of the responses we received following the events:

"Thank you for the opportunity to participate in last evening's event "Remembering Dayr Yasin". Joan and I found it very informative and we appreciated your worldwide reach with the memorial. There was much to reflect on from the presentation and invited guest speakers."

(James & Joan from MCC).

"Zochrot's event was moving beyond anything I can express with words. Participating in it strengthens my commitment to our struggle. Thank you for that." (from Heidy, South Africa).

Speaking with Jewish Voice for Peace

Zochrot's CEO Rachel Beit Arie spoke with Rabbai Alissa Wise from Jewish Voice for Peace organization (JVP) in the US about Israeli colonialism during the COVID-19 times and our insistence to continue opposing oppression and calling for return at the present time as well. Watch the [conversation](#).

Israeli Independence Day Eve "Exit Strategy? Let's talk about Return!"

On 28th of April , the eve in which many celebrate the state that was built on the ashes of the lives of hundreds of thousands of Palestinians, still under the restrictions of the Covid19, Zochrot invited the public to an [online Event](#) to talk about Political imagination of a future of return. With different fascinating speakers and an open discussion with over 80 participants we have had a very interesting discussion about future possibilities of a vision of return. Normah Mussih, a known academic, gave a talk about Political imagination and Israeli and Palestinian artists & activists gave their inputs, including Darin Tatour, a Palestinian poet and political prisoner.

Nakba day commemoration Event - A Return Virtual Tour to Lifta (In Hebrew)



In commemoration of Nakba day, Zochrot invited the public to a virtual return tour to the village of Lifta in Jerusalem. The tour to Lifta was a memorial event for the Nakba that began in 1948, but also a political act calling for recognition of the Nakba and for the return of Palestinian refugees. More than 80 participants joined us on Zoom, including a refugee from Lifta, with additional 1,800 people who watched the event via Facebook Live. The event was very moving and painful but mostly it made it possible for us to share the hope for return of the people from Lifta and all the Palestinian refugees, and to call on everyone participating to act to make this hope a reality.

Thank you very much, it was impressive, inlighting and it brings back hope!"

"Thank you for a sad and fascinating event, may the people of Lifta return to their homes!"

"I salute you. Thank you"

"Great lecture, many thanks. It is a very painful story."

"We will not forget! Return is a fundamental right! Thanks for a fascinating lecture"

"Thank you very much, a very interesting lecture and it is very sad for me as a citizen of the state since it was founded. How do we live with this terrible injustice? Well done to you, the flag bearers for justice"

"Impressive and knowledgeable, painful and thought provoking, thank you very much"

"Million thanks for this amazing and very informative meeting. God bless you all!"

"Inshallah! you Yacoub , and all the Palestinians will see and can return to your cities, towns and villages, and be truly free!"

Return home: why Palestinian health is linked to their liberation

In a time when we were all compelled to #stayhome to protect ourselves from COVID19, the value of the term "home" became greater than before. But what happens if your home is in a confined refugee camp? Or about to be destroyed by the Israeli occupation? How do you wash your hands several times a day when there is no access to clean water? Covid-19 in this event was a fresh wake up call to address the historical yet continuous injustices that underlie our political system.. More than 80 participants joined us via [Zoom](#), with additional 1,000 people who watched the event via Facebook Live and took part in our online gathering on the 18th of May to hear from guest speakers about the conditions for Palestinians during the pandemic and the historical injustices leading to the devastating crisis that Covid-19 outbreak brought upon Palestinians and why the solution to this health crisis can only be political.



"Thank you for your courageous vision. It is most difficult to challenge taboos in society. I believe that it is important that Palestinians here your voice."

"Imagining the return is a super important political act, which gives hope"

Tour & action at the Destroyed Palestinian village of 'Imwas [In Canada- Ayalon Park]

Tour to the destroyed Palestinian village of Imwas, marking the anniversary of the occupation and uprooting of the Latrun villages 53 years to the occupation of the West Bank, part of 72 years of ongoing Nakba.

Almost 50 people took part in a public tour among the ruins of the Palestinian village of Imwas. The tour was also available to watch live on-line via Facebook and almost 6K joined us to Imwas. Imwas, one of three villages in the Latrun area – together with Yalu and Beit Nuba – which the Israeli army occupied and destroyed in June 1967, ethnically cleansing their entire population.

The Latrun area was targeted for occupation in the 1948 war, but the Israeli army's attempts to take it over failed repeatedly. In the 1967 war, their goal was achieved. The villages in the area were occupied in a matter of minutes, almost without a fight. Their surprised inhabitants were ordered by the military to evacuate the villages and march to Ramallah. Within two weeks, Imwas, Yalu and Beit Nuba were razed to the ground, and the military used force to prevent the villages from returning after the war. This was a planned move of ethnic cleansing to total erasure.

What happened in 1967 was the continuation of the 1948 Nakba, which unfortunately endures to this day. Despite the fact that the Latrun area – now euphemistically called Canada Park or Ayalon Park – was occupied like the rest of the West Bank and is thus located across the Green Line – it is de facto annexed to Israel. These days, Israel apparently intends to annex additional sections of the West Bank in accordance with the American-Israeli "Deal of the Century". This deal is yet another manifestation of the ongoing Nakba, representing the approach that has guided Zionism since its early beginnings.

Hence, the occupation of the Palestinian territories in 1967 and the additional "facts" created by Israel on that ground must be seen as part of the ongoing Nakba.

The tour included a walk between the ruins of Imwas, explanation about the erasure process, reading texts and historical images.

Feedback from one of the participants in the tour:

"Thanks for the excellent tour and guidance! Each time, it's harder to understand how these crimes are so blatant, so obvious to those of us whose eyes are opened, scattered in endless space, and everyone else keep ignoring and instead picnic on ruined villages without even knowing."



Annexation 2020: Resisting one more chapter in the ongoing Nakba

— ANNEXATION 2020 —

RESISTING ONE MORE CHAPTER IN THE ONGOING NAKBA



A CONVERSATION WITH:
**Izeddin Tamimi, Rebecca Pierce,
Aditi Saraf, and Yaniv Junam**

MONDAY, 29.6 || 8PM JERUSALEM TIME

With a new Israeli government facing hardly any opposition, parts of president Trump's "Deal of the Century" may become a reality as early as next month. Netanyahu's plan to annex parts of the West Bank is going forward with little resistance from the international community.

What does "annexation" mean for Palestinians? How can we, as activists and organizers in various communities, resist this new chapter in the ongoing Nakba, and how can we put forth a vision for justice in Palestine?

Over the past decade we have witnessed the increasing application of a settler colonial framework to better conceptualize and contextualize the Zionist project and Israel's policies. However, there is still much to learn and advance in terms of potentially decolonizing methods of resistance, for both Palestinians and allies.

About 60 participants joined us to an online Zoom event on June 29th, for an interesting conversation with a group of brilliant scholars and activists in order to bring into clear view the implications of further Israeli colonization and to develop corresponding resisting strategies and actions. The event was also streamed live on [Facebook](#).

Memorial Tour in Lydd

In commemoration of the massacre in Lydd, one of the central Palestinian cities from 1948 where more than 200 people were massacred in a bombing of a mosque, Zochrot invited the public to a return tour to the city also broadcasted live on [Facebook](#). To comply with health regulations enforced at the time, the tour was held in a small group of 20 people. The son of one of the surviving Palestinian families that stayed in Lydd after 1948 joined the tour to talk about the city's past and present. The live broadcast garnered more than 4000 views.

Before Balfour protest – remember the Balfour declaration & the Nakba

On the 29th of August Zochrot invited the public to a memorial tour in Talbiyah neighborhood in Jerusalem, close to where the protests against Netanyahu and his government took place. Palestinian neighborhoods emptied from its residents were here long before these protests demanding justice spurred, yet their Palestinian expelled residents are awaiting their return until this very moment. Talbiyah was built by Palestinian elite families who were exiled from West-Jerusalem in 1948. It then fell to the hand of Zionist elite and was populated by people

close to the ruling party (Mapai), Members of the Knesset, Supreme Court judges etc. We looked at the villas, saw the family home of Edward Said, the home of Martin Buber and others, told the stories of the refugees and asked how all of this is connected to the house in Balfour Street. About 80 people participated in the tour, guided by Yahav Zohar, a graduate of Zochrot's training for tour guides, and more than 4500 joined the [live broadcast](#) online.

"Imagining the Way(s) Forward"

Zochrot's managing director Rachel Beit Arie spoke on a panel with Foundation for Middle East Peace on Imagining the ways forward. Here is the [link](#).

Virtual Tour at the destroyed Palestinian village of al-Tantura

At the end of September, Zochrot invited the public to take part in a [virtual tour and lecture](#) about the destroyed Palestinian village of al-Tantura to learn about its history, occupation in 1948, ethnic cleansing, massacre, destruction of the Palestinian houses and building up the Israeli Moshav Dor, Kibbutz Nahsholim and Dor guest house.

al-Tantura is located on the Mediterranean coast, 20 Km south to Haifa. We will present maps, photos and relevant data regarding the process of Palestinian history erasure and the process of Israelization on the land scape. The event was conducted in Hebrew and facilitated by Umar al-Ghubari from Zochrot. 56 people participated in the tour.

The Nakba in Tarshiha- a Palestinian village in Israel - A Symposium on the anniversary of the occupation of the village in 1948

On the anniversary of the village's occupation, Zochrot held an online discussion on the Nakba in Tarshiha. Palestinian villages that exist today inside Israel survived the devastation and ethnic cleansing of 1948, but those communities also carry with them traumatic histories and silenced stories. Tarshiha, a village in the upper Galilee, is one example that stands out. On the virtual event on October 29th, we have learned from our panel of speakers, all third generation to Nakba survivors from Tarshiha, how the village was occupied, its resistance and trauma, and its story in the overall history of the Nakba. We also heard of commemoration events the community of Tarshiha has been holding for the past few years. 88 people participated in a facilitating discussion about the history but also the possibilities that the future holds for Tarshiha.

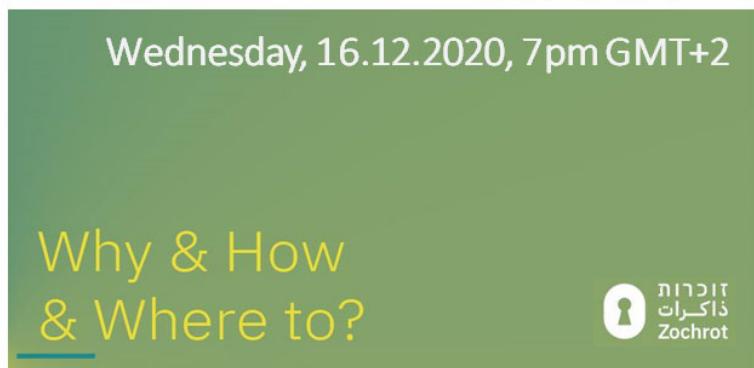
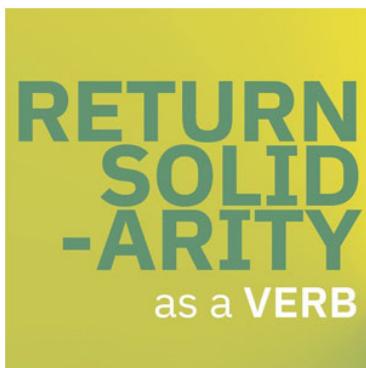


House of the Palestinian Najib Daqqaq. Settlers from Romania 1949. photo credit: The Zionist Archive

The Nakba, Ashkenazi and Mizrahi responsibility

At November 22nd, Zochrot member Tom Mehager gave an online on the subject, based on a curriculum he developed last year at a program in Harvard university. 115 people participated in the event and more than 800 watched the Facebook live broadcast. A video of the talk is available [here](#) (Hebrew)

Solidarity as a verb: Why and How and Where to?



While solidarity with Palestine is as old as the Nakba, the experience of global solidarity has figured prominently in the past two decades, in response to the growth of global capitalism and imperialism. The need to confront the systematic violation of people's rights around the world and the powers behind it, is leading to the unity of the different movements seeking justice and laying the ground for collective learning and strategizing, generating new forms of solidarity.

On December 16th, Zochrot facilitated an [online](#) panel with 3 fascinating speakers to discuss the ways we share responsibility for solidarity with Palestine transforms into action and why solidarity with Palestine is crucial, not only for the liberation of Palestinians but for a just future for all. We have heard from our guest speakers about their different experiences, activism and commitment for social and racial justice not only to their people but to that of all people, and how they view Return as an integral part of their commitment and work towards a just and better future for all.

The Nakba in South Palestine: A tour of learning, commemoration and hope to Bir al-Saba' (Be'er Sheba)



In a tour of learning and commemoration, we have learned about some of the history of Bir al-Saba', founded in 1901 and its occupation in October 1948 turning it into an Israeli town. We walked among houses whose Palestinian owners were displaced at the start of the Nakba to become refugees and the state of Israel still prohibits their return. We learned about the life that was once here and were cut short. The tour was broadcasted live on Facebook to enable greater number of participants to attend because of the limitation of Covid19.



Decolonizing TLV - "learning and acting" workshop

Decolonizing TLV is Zochrot's first "learning and acting" workshop. Based on the understanding that decolonization and pre-transitional justice processes require not only recognition, remembrance and commemoration but political action, this workshop is a first step in establishing local communities in which participants acquire knowledge about the Palestinian Nakba, specifically in their living area, and organize activities and direct actions to promote acknowledgement and accountability for the ongoing injustices of the Nakba, and re-conceptualize the right of return as the key for a just solution and sustainable future.

In August 2020, a call for applications for the workshop was published and circulated through Zochrot's newsletter, social networks, and direct contacts. Our target audience was Israeli-Jews who live in Tel Aviv-Jaffa, have at least basic knowledge about the Nakba and experience in political activism and civil resistance. We received around 25 applications and after a round of interviews we selected a group of 13 participants. The group is diverse and includes participants who come from a wide variety of age groups, cultural backgrounds, and political focus and experience (artists, climate activists, anti-occupation activists, physicians for human rights activists, health professionals and more). These participants could later act as social agents in the local community and in their own circles.

The workshop consisted of two parts. The first five meetings focused on the historical, geographic, and political background of the Nakba, the refugee issue and the ongoing oppression and discrimination of the Palestinian people. The last five meetings focused on translating the knowledge acquired into grassroots activism. The workshop ended on December 27 with a commitment from the group to keep working together on a series of actions in 2021.

COVID-19 regulations raised some challenges, but we were determined to avoid postponing the workshop. While the first session was conducted online, in the following sessions we met in person either in Zochrot's offices or in the field, wearing masks and keeping distance from one another.

Learning about the Nakba is a tough experience for Israeli-Jews, it challenges the foundations on which many of them were raised and educated and it might evoke a paralyzing mixture of emotions such as guilt, shame and despair. The participants of Decolonizing TLV report that the local focus of the workshop and its explicit activist objective have helped them to translate the knowledge and tools that they've acquired into positive and pro-active thinking about a future based on a new set of relationships between Israelis and Palestinians, grounded in respect, mutual acknowledgement, and responsibility.

We already got queries about future "learning and acting" workshops in other cities and we are looking forward to seeing more decolonizing communities flourishing out of common learning, awareness to colonial power-relations and responsible activism.

Activism

Zochrot is proud to support grassroots activists' initiatives. This year, Zochrot member Moran Barir organized a meeting for activists to learn about Palestinian return and the hope it holds for the future. 12 leading social justice activists participated in a lively conversation in January. In May, Zochrot activist Yosefa Mekaytan organized an online talk for 15 Israeli activists with an organizer of the great march of return rallies in Gaza. In August, several members participated in a larger anti-government demonstration in Jerusalem, carrying signs to commemorate the Nakba and engaging with other protestors. On December 10th, International human rights day, we helped organize a protest near the headquarters of the Shabak (state security service) in the destroyed village of Shek Mawnes, to oppose administrative detentions as part of the ongoing Nakba, about 90 people participated.

Educational Materials

With the eruption of COVID-19 in Israel we saw the shutting of schools and the quarantine methods as an opportunity to introduce Zochrot's Study Guide "How do we say Nakba in Hebrew?" to new audiences. Since late March we have been sharing through our Facebook page one unit each week and encouraging parents and teachers to combine the rich materials and activities at home or through remote teaching.

Towards May, 15, which marks the commemoration day of the Palestinian "Nakba" Zochrot's education team supplied learning materials and varied suggestions for activities to teachers and

educators who were looking for ways to mark the date and promote open discussion about the Nakba and the Right of Return in Israeli schools and educational programs.

Educational Lecture & Tours to organizations

During the time of the report Zochrot gave 17 lectures, workshops and tours about the ongoing Nakba and the right of the Palestinian to return to different organizations, universities and activists groups. The impact of COVID-19 was felt and many international groups that usually include our tour in their visit to Palestine were unable to visit this year, but some of them booked online lectures. The institutions and organizations include: Tel Aviv university, "Neve Shalom", "Ajik", "Arava institute", "Right to move", "Sadaka-Reut", Dane Church Aid, Harvard University, Parents Circle, Hebrew University, "Hagar" bi-lingual school, "Combatants for Peace", The Ottawa Forum. Four Israeli organizations and institutions included Zochrot in their program for the first time: Mesarvot (an organization to support conscious objectors), Dror institute, the program for community engagement at Hebrew University and the School for Peace.

Testimonies

Zochrot collects oral histories from Palestinian refugees who witnessed and survived the Nakba of 1948, we put a special emphasis on collecting testimonies from female survivors. During the time of the report we have collected the testimony of Sultana Sbait - Refugee from Iqrith. Here is the [link](#) to the testimony. Another testimony is being edited and is due to be published in early 2021.

Communication and Social Media

With an increased number of requests by academics, volunteers and activists, Zochrot's website and app continue to serve as the largest and most accessible online source devoted to Nakba. It is the only resource available in Hebrew and one of the leading ones in Arabic and English.

Since the beginning of this year, 2020, we've had 121,674 unique users visiting our website, including 86% new users, an increase of 10% of the total number of all users and news users compared to last year. We're happy to maintain young people, between the ages of 18-34 and mostly from Israel, as the majority of our audience reaches up to more than 57%. During the report period we received about 70 direct request for materials or advice regarding various research projects.

Our Geos indicate our commitment to our mission of exposing the Nakba mainly to our Israeli audience with a 10% increase, but they also indicate an increase in our international audience as planned since we have invested more efforts in international events, collaborations and educational meetings in an effort to highlight the intersectionality of global struggles and the of importance of collective efforts of solidarity, responsibility and actions towards a just future for all.

Our Geos in the past year are divided as follows:

43% are from Israel, 12% from the U.S and 11.5% from Jordan and 11% from Palestine and the rest are from different locations such as the UK and Germany, including an increased number of visitors from Arab countries like Saudi Arabia, UAE and Lebanon. The overall percentage of Israelis using the website in the past 4 years is over 50% or around 333,000 Israelis. Which means we are still committed to reaching mainly the Israeli audience but also expanding our international audience, especially in the U.S.

The overall number of unique users is over 750,000 from all over the world, including 20% returning users, and over 2 million page views which indicates that most people who visit our website explore at least 2 pages.

The well-trafficked site and app have proven to be very beneficial tools for reaching new audiences, including those interested in learning but reluctant to join activities. Both tools also contain a large image gallery depicting Palestinian life before 1948 and during the Nakba.

Additionally, and following our increased virtual events due to Covid-19, and our crowdfunding campaign, we have organically gained over 2000 new followers on Facebook since the beginning of this year with an average of 200 a month, and over hundreds on Instagram and Twitter. Our online events and social media presence have widened our circle of supporters and followers making our post reach up to more than 100,000 this year and an average of 2500 post engagement a month and our video reach up to more than 20,000 views.

We have been increasing our efforts to expose the truth about the Nakba through our social media platforms and advance our vision for a shared just future with the return of the Palestinian refugees at the heart of it. This is briefly what we have done so this year:

1- We organized a crowdfunding campaign to expand our circle of supporters, using our social media platforms, newsletter and most importantly our community of activists, academics and well known figures to help us amplify it and share our vision of return. We are proud and honored of having such a community, greatly committed to Zochrot's work toward a just future, helping us through their networks, social media and other platforms to widen our network and increase our supporters. They made our crowdfunding campaign and most importantly engagement campaign a great success.

2- We continue to expose our work and promote our resources and information center to make it more reachable, through our destroyed villages calendar which enables us to bring people's attention to the history and stories of these localities before and during the Nakba. The visuals, quotes and information we have been publishing has been quite efficient in drawing the attention of many people and increasing our reach and engagement percentage, specifically on Facebook. They have also contributed to creating a shared memory where everyone is held accountable for, emphasizing that the Nakba of the Palestinians is not only part of the Palestinian history but the history of all inhabitants of this land.

3- We have been sharing relevant articles, blogs, podcasts and videos in all three languages to provide more resources and diverse voices on the Issue of Nakba, colonialism and Return in an attempt to raise awareness and reach a more diverse audience.

The adjustments of COVID-19 might have been necessary to continue our work but they have also made us realize the importance of these events especially for our international audience and for building a global network for racial and social justice fighting the colonial project and white supremacy. Our activities have always been followed by sharing of the videos of these events which has been a good addition to our resources, particularly our YouTube channel and website leading more traffic and better ranking.

At last, our communication and social media tools are still here to support the work we do and the vision we wish to promote and inspire more people to join. Hence, we always make sure that we are using a language and messages that bring back hope and inspire people to take responsibility for a better future for all. Despite the fact that a great part of our work sheds light on the past, we are determined to motivate people to act and see the past as an opportunity to look into the possibilities of the future of Return. We have designed a new visual identity including our website design, which will be implemented in 2021 to reflect this vision, hoping this will improve people's experience in research and encourage more people to dive into it to learn more.

Our Team

Rachel Beit Arie
Director

Umar al-Ghubari
Landscape & Space Coordinator

Dr.Yaara Benger Alaluf
Political Education Coordinator

Najwan Berekdar
Media, Outreach & Testimonies Coordinator

Liat Rosenberg
Resource Development Coordinator

At the beginning of 2020 we have had some internal staff changes. We parted ways with two of our team members: Amaya Galili, who was our education coordinator vacated the position and was replaced by Yaara Benger Alaluf. Natasha Dudinsky, who coordinated the 48mm project left us in January when the project ended.

Board of Directors

Dr.Tom Pessah

Aya Zinatey

Fadi Canaan

Haneen Agbaria

Dr.Munir Nuseibah

Maysoon Badawi

Niva Greentwsig

From the Media

Israël-Palestine : l'équation à un Etat	https://www.lemonde.fr/international/article/2020/09/25/israel-palestine-l-equation-a-un-etat_6053522_3210.html	Le Monde
Article by Tom Mehager on Mizrahim - including his experience with zochrot	https://www.972mag.com/mizrahim-right-wing-ashkenazi-supremacy/	972mag
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Cry the beloved country - a review of Gil Mualem-Doron's work	https://mondoweiss.net/2020/09/cry-the-beloved-country-a-review-of-gil-mualem-dorons-recent-works/	Mondoweiss