



Freedom of movement is important because it is a prerequisite to the exercise of other rights, such as the right to education:

Obstacles to movement, threats of military incursion, Israeli forces' harassment, fear of harm and humiliation at checkpoints create stress and fear among students and their families. Due to harassment by soldiers at checkpoints, families often stop sending their children to school. Also the parents in Cremisan made already clear, that they will not send their children to the school anymore if they have to cross a checkpoint every day.

As noted by the UN Special Rapporteur on the Right to Education, "military occupations are another appreciable curb on the human right to education, the most egregious example being the Israeli-Palestinian conflict." (UN Doc. E/CN.4 17 Dec. 2004, paragraph 124).

Also the International Court of Justice in July 2004 found that the separation barrier and the laws associated with it impede the liberty of movement of Palestinians in the occupied territories and consequently the exercise of their right to education.



We call upon the Israeli authorities to

- **Move the course of the wall and respect the needs of the local communities!**
- **Leave the educational compound of the Salesian Sisters untouched so that the sisters can continue with their mission to serve the children of the surrounding communities!**
- **Respect international law under which the planned construction of the wall on Palestinian lands is illegal!**



Society of St. Yves
Catholic Center for Human Rights

Latin Patriarchate Road
Jaffa Gate
P.O. Box 1244
Jerusalem

Office: +972 (0)2 62 64 662
Fax: +972 (0)2 62 64 6623
E-Mail:
anica@saintyves.org.il

➤ **Save the school in Cremisan:**

Support bridges, not walls!



The right to education is a basic human right enshrined in the Universal Declaration of Human Rights and other international agreements. Article 50 of the Fourth Geneva Convention (1949) states: **"The Occupying Power shall, with the cooperation of the national and local authorities, facilitate the proper working of all institutions devoted to the care and education of children."**

The Salesian Sisters Convent and School in Cremisan

The Salesian Sisters Convent and School in Cremisan is situated mainly in Area C of the West Bank, North West of Bethlehem, separated by a valley and agriculture land from the Jerusalem neighborhoods. Parts of the Convent land are also situated within the Jerusalem municipality boarders, and are therefore under international law occupied territory.



Nearest Jerusalem neighborhood is the settlement Gilo, which is built on land occupied and unlawfully annexed to Jerusalem in 1967.

The convent has been present since 1960 and includes a developing primary school (today until 5th grade), a kindergarten, a school for children with learning disabilities, as well as afternoon activities and three summer camps for children.

Around 400 Palestinian children – girls and boys, Muslims and Christians alike - from the surrounding towns and villages (e.g. Bethlehem, Beit Jala, Beit Sahour, Al-Walajah, ...) enjoy the services provided by this educational compound.

As the convent aims to serve the needy it charges just minimal fees. Following the educational method of Don Bosco school systems, the Convent is one of 1,500 educational facilities around the world teaching values of truth, just peace and co-existence between different people and religions.

The Case

For **more than 50** years the Salesian Sisters Convent and School in Cremisan has been educating children according to the method of Don Bosco school systems. The Convent is one of 1,500 educational facilities around the world teaching **values of truth, just peace and co-existence** between different people and religions.

Currently the convent is under the threat of losing either its mission or its premises.

For the purpose of building the separation wall between Beit Jala and Gilo settlement, the Israeli army issued a military order seizing land from the Salesian Sisters Convent and School in Cremisan among others. The Israeli authorities suggest two options for building the wall:

1. The wall is to be built on the Convent land and leaves Convent and school on the Palestinian side of the wall. As a consequence the Convent is cut off from its land and will have access to it only through an agricultural gate. This gate will be opened just during certain periods of the year.

The six meter high wall will be built around the current fence of the educational compound, blocking the view and **creating a prison like atmosphere**. Also, as a consequence **any possibility for expanding the school and using the land for educational activities is blocked**.



At the moment the grounds of the Convent are used for agriculture and provide employment for several families. If the land lies on the Israeli side of the wall, **permits are needed for people who want to pass the gate** to cultivate the land. But as the agricultural gate will be opened just for certain periods in the year, these families will lose their livelihood even if they succeed to get a permit issued, as a continual cultivation will be impossible.

2. The wall will block the entrance of the Convent, leaving the educational compound on the Israeli side of the wall, while the community it serves is left on the Palestinian side. The wall would have a guarded gate at the entrance of the compound, to be opened at specific times to allow the passage of children, teachers and Convent staff, who will also have to apply for permits in order to be able to cross the wall into their school and work place.

The parents of the children have already made clear, that **they will not send their children to the school anymore if they have to pass a military guarded gate**. The existence of the separation wall in vicinity to the school **ridicules the whole teachings of this educational compound**, and the presence of military at the school gates, will **create friction and endanger the children**. Further it is **inconceivable that children should have to apply for permits in order to reach their school** and for teachers to apply for permits to be able to work.



According to experts from **The Council for Peace and Security**, an association of high-ranking Israeli security experts, another way is possible and the now planned way is **not necessary for serving the Israeli security needs**.

The advisory opinion of the International Court of Justice states:

The separation barrier in general is contrary to international law.