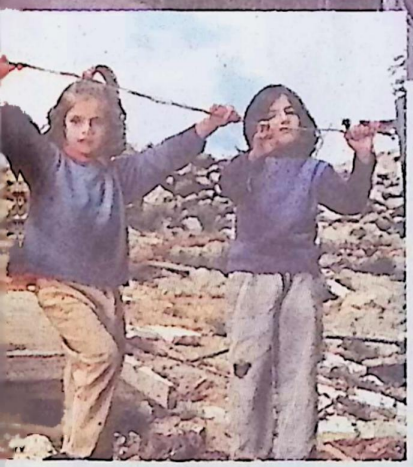
cized the use of house demolitions as a violation of international laws like Article 53 of Fourth Geneva Convention and further suggesting it as Israel's collective punishment measures against Palestinians. On March 17th, 2003, Rachel Corrie, a 23-year-old American peace activist and a member of International Solidarity Movement (ISM) was killed by an Israeli military bulldozer in the Southern strip of Rafah, where she was trying to stop IDF from bulldozing a house of a Palestinian family of four along with their five young children. Before that, another foreign national was killed by IDF on November 22nd, 2002, Iain Hook, the UNRWA project manager of the Jenin Camp Rehabilitation Project, who was shot and killed by an Israeli soldier inside the small project compound.





From demolishing homes to building "Security Fences", Israel's constant breach of international decrees continues with its construction of the controversial Separation Barrier Walls in and around the West Bank, which was declared illegal in July, 2004 by The International Court of Justice (ICJ). However, the Israeli West Bank barrier around the occupied Palestinian territories, which basically creates the largest "prison" in the world, is still standing despite a resolution passed by an overwhelming majority at the UN General Assembly declaring it illegal, urging Israel to comply with the ruling of the ICJ. However, the occupiers' atrocity continues simply due to the United States veto power to prevent the UN Security Council from implementing the Court's decision.

One can't help but wonder what the UN can actually do to resolve this crisis. There is no lack of sincerity and good will but it is the inability of the UN to turn these things into a reality that indulges Israel's aggression towards Palestinians. The question of Palestine and Israel has commanded grave attention in the UN and to ensure peace, affirming the UN Security Council Resolutions 242 and 338, the international community called on Israel to withdraw from the occupied land but the United States' influence has generally kept the issue off the Council's agenda. Every time Council members have introduced resolutions, responding to periodic crises in that region, the US has repeatedly used its veto on Israel's behalf. Interestingly, by law, United States is not supposed to provide foreign aid to any country that engages in "a consistent pattern of gross violations" of human rights; however, despite all the human rights breaches Israel remains the largest recipient of military and financial aid from the US.

Time and time again numerous crucial efforts towards establishing peace in the region were initiated, notably "The Oslo Accord" in 1993 and the "Roadmap" in 2003. However, Israel continued to aggressively impose its occupation in Palestinian territories while undermining all international laws, which simply deepens the crisis. Israel's defiance towards international regulations and disregard for human rights is truly frustrating. Peace is perhaps not in the best of interest of Israel, otherwise why else would their Deputy Prime Minister order its military forces to kill a daily minimum of 70 Palestinians, like Shaul Mofaz did in 2001? Everybody has the right to exist and humanitarian laws apply to us all, despite differences in race and religion. If peace is of any priority to Israel, then perhaps it could be a good start for the country to discard its policy of utter disrespect towards humanity and establish the rights of Palestinians by returning back what is genuinely theirs, an Independent Palestinian State, governed by Palestinians themselves. ■