

The other "Wall" -- Hypocrites!

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A very relevant article -- the title almost sums it up.

Mr. Netanyahu, Tear Down This Wall

On the 20th anniversary of the fall of the Berlin Wall, Western leaders are full of self-congratulation. But their paeans to universal freedom ring hollow, when they bear large responsibility for another wall constricting human freedom: the apartheid wall dividing the Palestinian West Bank.

Israeli authorities refer to it as a "separation barrier," but that's misleading. The wall doesn't separate pre-1967 Israel from the West Bank. If that's all it did, it would be an entirely different political object. Instead, the wall cuts deep into the Palestinian West Bank, separating Palestinians from each other and from their land, and signaling to the Palestinians that Israel intends to annex territory that Palestinians want for an independent Palestinian state. The fact that Western countries that support the Israeli government - above all the United States - say nothing about the West Bank wall signals to Palestinians that Western support for Palestinian statehood is merely rhetorical.

Today, *AFP* reports, Palestinians [tore down](#) a chunk of the wall near Ramallah.

AFP notes that 85 percent of the planned wall is inside the West Bank, and it would leave 9.5 percent of the West Bank and 35,000 West Bank Palestinians between the barrier and the Green Line that marks the 1967 border with Israel.

The World Court issued a resolution in 2004 calling for those parts of the barrier that are inside the West Bank to be torn down and for further construction in the territory to cease. Israel and Western countries have ignored the World Court resolution.

Two years ago Israel's own High Court ruled against the route of the wall near the Palestinian village of Bilin, but the Israeli government [ignored the ruling](#) of its own highest court.

Today, the Israeli-Palestinian "peace process" and the Palestinian Authority are at the [brink of collapse](#), the *New York Times* reports.

We've reached this point in large measure because of the unwillingness of the Obama Administration to put real pressure on the Israeli government to implement past agreements - in particular, to implement a freeze on the expansion of Israeli settlements in the West Bank. When the first President Bush demanded a settlement freeze, he backed up his demand with real pressure - holding up loan guarantees to Israel. The Obama Administration never indicated that there was any "or else" associated with its demand for a settlement freeze, leading the Netanyahu government to conclude that it could just wait the Obama Administration out - a conclusion that appears to have been borne out by events.

This would be an especially opportune time for U.S. officials to indicate that they intend to meaningfully oppose the ongoing construction of "facts on the ground" that are constricting the lives

of Palestinians in the West Bank and undermining their hopes for national independence - facts on the ground like the apartheid wall.

Robert Naiman is Policy Director at Just Foreign Policy

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