Environment and Political Context

This past year has been extraordinarily tumultuous, as we have witnessed the revolutionary power of the Arab Spring, the social protests in Israel over the summer, the horrific violence in Syria, the lack of progress in the political process between Israel and the Palestinian Authority, the continued Hamas-Fatah split in practice (despite the recent rapprochement), the Palestinian appeal to the UN Security Council and the acceptance of Palestine as a full member of UNESCO, and the overall economic instability in Europe and the US. Some of these developments hold the potential for positive change; others are quite worrisome. However, they all increase the uncertainty with respect to the future.

The 44 year-old occupation continued to have a devastatingly dehumanizing effect on both Israeli and Palestinian societies, alongside the significant and ongoing violations of the rights of the Palestinians living under occupation. Israel's separation policy has become deeply entrenched over the past decade, greatly restricting interactions between Palestinians and Israelis with the exception of Israeli settlers and soldiers present in the West Bank. Palestinians from Gaza are unable to travel to the West Bank and their mobility into and out of Gaza remains restricted (and is almost exclusively via Egypt). The Gaza economy remains severely shackled to an Israeli policy that limits imports and completely prevents exports to Israel and the West Bank. Israelis, Palestinians from the West Bank, and most foreigners are also not allowed to enter the Gaza Strip.

West Bank Palestinians are largely confined behind the separation barrier and severely restricted from travelling to and from Israel. This separation and alienation perpetuates rigid stereotypes and fuels mutual hostility.

The current situation continues to cost both sides dearly. The cycle of violence, disregard for civilian life, failure to uphold the rule of law, and lack of accountability, have made people on both sides weary and wary of the possibility for peace. The Israeli peace camp has crumbled since the collapse of the Oslo process and the outbreak of the Second Intifada. Many Israelis are completely unaware of the daily realities for Palestinians.

Furthermore, ongoing human rights violations in the OPT coupled with continued settlement activity (itself a human rights violation) are associated with great suffering and serve as growing obstacles to peace.

Challenges and Threats to Ongoing Organizational Activity

Challenges to the legitimacy of Israeli human rights organizations: The past year has been marked by increasing attacks on the legitimacy of Israeli human rights organizations through legislation that would make it more difficult for Israeli human rights organizations to raise funding abroad.

Rather than addressing the substance of the criticisms leveled by Israeli human rights organizations against Israeli policy and actions, elements of the elected Israeli government are trying to legislate the criticism out of existence. While there seems to be a temporary respite from the legislative attacks, B'Tselem, together with the community of organizations which has come together to combat these attacks against their legitimacy, remains vigilant. It must be noted here that the loud and clear voice of Israel's friends in the diplomatic community from Europe and the United States has been critical in maintaining the unfettered civil space within which B'Tselem operates.

Difficult economic environment - An additional obstacle comes in the form of the global economic environment and the resulting decrease in B'Tselem’s funding this year. Cuts to B'Tselem from traditional donors have resulted from change in funding focus – for example, one of our funders was compelled this past year to shift local funding from Gaza and the West bank to Iraqi refugees in Jordan, while another funder has had their own funding from back donors severely cut. This loss of funding is a grave cause of concern and compelled us to limit spending during the year and to aggressively seek out new
sources of funding. We have had considerable success in this respect, but are carefully monitoring the challenging and unstable funding environment.

**B'Tselem continues to serve as a premier Israeli source of information** regarding IHL and human rights conditions within the oPt. Its reports are taken seriously and addressed by both military and government officials. They are regularly cited by diplomats and in diplomatic reports (e.g. EU Heads of Mission reports; the US State Department's Annual Human Rights Report, etc.). B'Tselem's activities receive extensive media coverage, generate public debate and encourage changes in official policy.

**Reports Informing Policymakers and the Israeli Public**

B'Tselem's well-researched, in-depth reports continue to serve as a valuable resource for Israeli policymakers and diplomats from around the world, raising Israeli public awareness regarding IHL and human rights violations. In 2011, B'Tselem researched, published and distributed four reports on human rights issues in the Occupied Territories:

- **Caution: Children Ahead: The Illegal Behavior of the Police toward Minors in Silwan Suspected of Stone Throwing** – disseminated via new media in January 2011
- **Dispossession and Exploitation: Israel's Policy in the Jordan Valley and Northern Dead Sea** – published May 2011 together with an interactive version of the report with video documentaries, presentations and maps
- **No Minor Matter: Violation of the Rights of Palestinian Minors Arrested by Israel on Suspicion of Stone-Throwing** – Published July 2011
- **Show of Force: Israeli Military Conduct in Weekly Demonstrations in a-Nabi Saleh** – Published September 2011

Some 16,000 copies of each were distributed via e-mail and the internet and 10,000 printed copies were sent to Israeli policy makers and advisors, government officials, diplomats, journalists, academics and other interested individuals.

**Promoting Accountability**

B'Tselem's accountability efforts serve not only to advance the cause of justice but also to deter future IHL and human rights Law violations. In 2011, B'Tselem submitted 123 demands to Israeli law enforcement authorities to investigate suspected violations, bringing about the opening of 61 investigations. B'Tselem's accountability work achieved an indictment and a conviction in two cases in which soldiers had committed violations. B'Tselem continues to monitor and press for results in the other cases it has submitted. B'Tselem's experience is that ensuring investigations, trials and convictions can take years.

In April 2011, the Israeli military changed a longstanding policy of not investigating every case in which soldiers killed a Palestinian civilian. This policy change came following B'Tselem's petition to Israel's High Court of Justice in partnership with the Association for Civil Rights in Israel (ACRI) requesting that every civilian death be investigated.

**International Advocacy**

B'Tselem continued to maintain and develop relationships with diplomats stationed in Israel and the oPt, as well as with leading international agencies and NGOs, and key policy-makers and opinion shapers. In 2011, B'Tselem regularly responded to requests for information from ambassadors and embassy staff and was invited to meet visiting dignitaries. B'Tselem engaged in 77 briefings and field visits with diplomats and policymakers, thereby enriching international policy discourse. The field visits consistently received overwhelmingly positive reactions from participants, with many stating that the visits—beyond serving them as excellent sources of information—framed and concretized human rights issues in the oPt.

B'Tselem's European-based staff member and USA office in Washington DC worked to inform governments in Europe and the USA, providing them with updated information on IHL and human rights issues in the oPt. International advocacy foci included Israeli policy with regards to Palestinian minors, dispossession of land and resources in the Jordan Valley, Gaza, and planned displacement of Bedouins in the E1 area. The impact of this advocacy work can be seen in the frequency with which B'Tselem's research is cited in EU and US policy briefs and reports on IHL and human rights law.

In 2011, B'Tselem's European Representative and other B'Tselem staff engaged in a range of briefings in European cities, including Berlin, London, Brussels (meeting both EU and Belgian diplomats and policymakers), Copenhagen, Stockholm and Geneva.
B’Tselem USA continued this year to advance elite and community outreach from our Washington DC office, taking part regularly in speaking events targeting both Washington policymakers, and leaders of the American Jewish, interfaith, human rights and academic communities throughout the United States.

In November, B’Tselem’s Video Department Director and two Palestinian video volunteers toured America’s West Coast, sharing the project and their experiences, enriching dialogue on human rights through a dynamic multimedia exhibition and sharing their personal narratives.

**Maximizing Resources of the Human Rights Sector**

B’Tselem remains a cornerstone of the Israeli human rights discourse, functioning to shape the agenda, avoid replication of activities and promote cooperation and collaboration. This is evident in the role that B’Tselem plays in important efforts around subjects such as preventing torture and ill treatment, combating the Gaza blockade, and promoting the right to demonstrate peacefully. In addition, B’Tselem takes part in coalitions and forums advancing human rights in Israel and the oPt, such as the Forum of Directors of Israeli human rights Organizations.

**Monitoring and Documentation**

In 2011, B’Tselem collected 1,449 testimonies and submitted 123 demands for criminal investigations with Israeli law enforcement authorities to the military and the police regarding suspected human rights violations by Israeli security forces or settlers. Following intensive work to ensure that investigations were opened and conducted effectively, 61 investigations were opened this past year. Indictments are rare, but in 2011 an officer was convicted by the JAG's Office for ordering a soldier to run over a Palestinian who posed no danger to the force he was commanding or to other civilians. The officer's indictment was reported in June 2011—two and a half years after B’Tselem compelled the opening of an investigation. A second example of the impact of B’Tselem's accountability work is the indictment by a military prosecutor of an officer for vandalizing Palestinian vehicles with soldiers under his command. The indictment, reported in June 2011, follows the October 2009 B’Tselem documentation of the incident. B’Tselem continues to advocate for accountability in cases submitted previously, a lengthy process that can drag on for years.

In 2011, video footage filmed by B’Tselem volunteers was used some 60 times to advance investigations and to promote changes in policy.

In addition, B’Tselem worked to stop the improper and unlawful use of weapons that are designated as non-lethal crowd control measures in demonstrations. For example, B’Tselem prepared a collection of video clips depicting members of the Israeli security forces firing teargas canisters directly at protesters in a-Nabi Saleh. B’Tselem sent the video clips to the Israeli military authorities to alert them to this ongoing and dangerous practice. In a separate instance that followed the death of a protestor, Bassem Abu Rahma, who was hit in the chest by a high-velocity teargas canister that was apparently fired directly at him, B’Tselem compelled both the Military Judge Advocate General and the Attorney General to order that this especially dangerous subset of teargas canisters—the high velocity canisters—be taken out of use. B’Tselem continues to monitor the investigation that was opened into the death of Abu Rahma. It also continues to monitor adherence to the order taking the high-velocity teargas canisters out of use. Further to this, B’Tselem continues to press through various direct and indirect advocacy channels for the prevention of the unlawful use of teargas and other means used to control or put-down demonstrations.

**Legal Advocacy**

In 2011, B’Tselem used legal advocacy to advance accountability. Many cases documented by B’Tselem in which Palestinians were killed, injured or otherwise denied basic human rights, are never investigated by the Military Police Investigation Unit. B’Tselem has also documented cases involving the death of Palestinians which were investigated by the Unit but remain awaiting a decision by the Judge Advocate General’s Office regarding whether or not to pursue a criminal trial. Some cases remain pending a decision years after completion of the investigation. Such a lengthy delay promotes impunity by lowering the chances of effective evidence collection and harming witness recall. In a number of instances, cases begin only after security force members involved in violations have been released from active duty. Delays therefore harm the criminal proceeding, infringe on complainants' rights and compromise rule of law and the potential for deterrence inherent to effective prosecution.

In 2011 B’Tselem contracted with non-staff lawyers to appeal cases where criminal investigations were closed with no measures taken. B’Tselem also contracted the services of non-staff lawyers in order to examine the legal aspects of various human rights issues and in order to advance accountability through petitions to the High Court of Justice. B’Tselem researchers also used the services of lawyers and legal services were used in order to enable B’Tselem to access summaries of legal proceedings.
Examples of legal advocacy undertaken in 2011 included:

- Filing of a petition regarding the lack of a decision regarding prosecuting on the killing of Firas Qasqas.
- An appeal against the closing of the investigation of abuse of six minors from the village of Hussan, by police officers in the detention facility Etzion.
- An appeal against the closing of the investigation of the beating of Fuad Ranimat.
- An appeal against the closing of the investigation of the beating of Husam Abu Allan.
- Legal counsel regarding an appeal against the closure of a case concerning unjustified detention and beating of one of the detainees.
- Legal counsel regarding preparation of an appeal against the closure of a case concerning the attack on Ibrahim Al-Bas by settlers.
- An appeal against the closing of the investigation of security force violence against Sa'id Fakiah.
- Legal representation of B'Tselem in a defamation suit filed against it by Yaakov Gur-Arieh, following a complaint of settler violence filed by B'Tselem in May 2008. The prosecution was canceled.
- A petition on the lack of investigation into the killing of Faiz Faraj which resulted in a decision and explanation by the prosecution on why it would not investigate the case.
- An appeal against the closing of the investigation of the attack on Ibrahim a-Nawaja'a.
B’Tselem’s YouTube Channel is one of Israel’s top three non-profit channels, and has been viewed 1,250,000 times since its inception in September 2006. The channel offered 170 video items by the end of 2011 and over 2,000 people are now subscribed.

B’Tselem in the Media

In 2011, B’Tselem was mentioned in local and international media some 1,000 times and 14 Op-Eds were published in recognized national and international media (including the Washington Post, the Jerusleam Post, Y-net, Foreign Policy, and the Jewish Daily Forward). Examples include an op-ed by B’Tselem Director, Jessica Montell, on the killing of Mustafa Tamimi; B’Tselem USA Director Uri Zaki's article, “McCarthy Comes to the Knesset,” and B’Tselem’s Hebron Fieldworker Musa Abu-Hashhas on the Conflict in Hebron.

Other mentions include Haaretz’s September naming of B’Tselem’s Director, Jessica Montell, one of ten influential Anglo immigrants; An article in The Guardian on Palestinian children woken in night to be photographed by soldiers; a Galatz Radio Interview with B’Tselem researcher Eyal Hareuveni about the Bedouin displacement plans in E1; a NY Times – the Lede article with B’Tselem photos on the Mustafa Tamimi killing, an Israeli Education TV Channel Interview with B’Tselem researcher Naama Baumgarten Sharon on arrest of minors, and interviews with B’Tselem spokesperson in BBC, CNN and Time Magazine, among others.

B’Tselem’s video footage continued to be used by well-known media providers, both in Israel and internationally. In 2011, footage featured, among others, in the following:

- June 2011: The Guardian - 'East Jerusalem: Six Voices' showcased video diaries created by six Palestinians and Israelis with B’Tselem cameras of their lives under the shadow of the occupation.
- December 2011: Israeli TV Channel 10 broadcast an extensive news item on IDF direct shooting of tear gas canisters, based on B’Tselem's footage.
- December 2011: Israel's premier news network, Ynet, ran an op-ed article that highlighted B’Tselem's field researchers, framing footage from B’Tselem's volunteers in the context of B’Tselem's human rights work. This article brought B’Tselem's human rights message to thousands of Israelis, with some 5,000 responses on B’Tselem's Facebook page alone.

B’Tselem leveraged opportunities such as these to increase exposure of IHL and human rights infringements and to initiate public discourse through its social network. These efforts resulted in thousands participating in online Facebook discussions and sharing B’Tselem content with others. Examples include:

- A Facebook post by B’Tselem denouncing administrative restraining orders issued against 12 settlers generated interaction with the public that exposed 2,498 to this topic, and generated 19 comments on this alone. Ynet, a popular Israeli online news channel, publicized B’Tselem's press release on the topic, generating an additional 24 comments and 1,707 exposures to date in our international page, from both Israelis and internationals.
- B’Tselem footage on the direct shooting of tear-gas canisters at protesters in West Bank demonstrations in May 2011 featured on Israeli Channel 10 News reaching prime-time TV audiences with the important message that security forces' practices in the field are breaching the army's own regulations and endangering lives. This topic, when posted on our site in Hebrew, reached a record 4,027 people, with 62 talking about it and 39 'liking'. 24 comments were generated. When re-posted for English-speakers, the same topic was again 'talked about' by 35 people, exposed to 1,670 with 27 'likes'.
- BBC News also referenced B’Tselem in its broadcast on the protest in a-Nabi Saleh, following the killing of Mustafa Tamimi, who was shot in the head with a tear-gas canister. The report includes an interview with B’Tselem's spokesperson Sarit Michaeli, who explains that the dangerous practice of firing tear-gas canisters directly at protesters, though in violation of the army's own open-fire regulations, is common. This post reached 1,864 people, with 27 talking about it, 15 'liking' and 15 sharing.
Additional Highlights in 2011

- In April, the Israeli military reversed its ten-year old policy not to automatically investigate civilian deaths in the oPt. While this is only the first step in ensuring accountability, it sends an important message that Palestinian lives must be respected.

- Following B'Tselem's research, reporting and outreach concerning the rights of minors in the oPt and considerable diplomatic pressure on Israeli authorities, B'Tselem welcomed the military's September announcement that the age of majority for Palestinians would be raised from 16 to 18.

- In November, the Danish PL Foundation awarded B'Tselem and Palestinian human rights organization Al-Haq with a joint human rights award: The annual award is bestowed upon individuals and organizations who struggle non-violently for the values embodied by the Universal Declaration of human rights. B'Tselem's director, Jessica Montell, traveled to Copenhagen to receive the award. In a visit that Dan Church Aid helped to coordinate, Jessica met with government representatives and Dan Church Aid professionals, and appeared on Danish media.

- B'Tselem is working closely with other actors, including OCHA in order to prevent the planned expulsion of the Jahalin Bedouin from E1 adjacent to Jerusalem. This campaign has proven effective, with senior Israeli officials claiming that no imminent movement of the Jahalin in E-1 is to be expected. B'Tselem continues to monitor and this topic.

Gender Impact

As a human rights organization, B'Tselem is committed to full equality, both as a component of its workplan, and in the daily functioning of the organization.

B'Tselem's board consists of nine men and five women. The staff of the organization consists of 21 men and 19 women. The Executive Director of the organization is a woman. Among the managerial staff, four are women and three are men.

All of B'Tselem's work considers gender impact. Core actions such as research and reports discuss the unique effects of IHL and human rights violations on women and men and, to the extent possible, present data in a disaggregated manner.

Together with this, actions such as our video-program aim to empower women participants, with the result that some of the best quality footage is supplied by women volunteers in the program. By empowering Palestinian women to assume prominent roles in documenting violations and advocating for basic human rights, our actions promote the incorporation of gender perspectives and help promote gender equality.

It should be noted in this context, though, that many of the violations that B'Tselem documents and works to prevent predominantly affect men most directly—taking place in situations such as protests or interrogations. B'Tselem's staff continues to explore ways to increase the sensitivity of its research and analysis to gender perspectives.

Analysis of lessons learned.

- New Media tools are a highly effective means of getting our messages out; sharing reports and sharing footage of IHL and human rights infringements. Social networks allow B'Tselem to extend our outreach tremendously, including the easy sharing of reports and items from our website. B'Tselem also increased its work with both Israeli and international bloggers, recognizing their growing importance and their capacity to spread our messages.

- Field trips with diplomats, bloggers and local and international opinion leaders have proved immensely effective in helping us to reach our target groups and goals. They serve to contextualize IHL and human rights issues in a powerful, concrete manner. Response from participants has taught us the great value of these in leveraging our research and reaching out to international decision-makers and the public.

- Outreach to military attaches stationed in embassies to Israel, including tours and briefings, has proved an effective means of expanding the breadth of B'Tselem's advocacy.
We continue to reap the benefits of having a tangible organizational presence in the US and in Europe. With specific staff members focused on the international agenda both in Israel and in the US and Europe, we are much better positioned to effectively impact international policy discourse.

Knowledge gained by B'Tselem's US office staff is enabling B'Tselem USA to fill an important role in assisting our Israeli partner organizations navigate the policy world in Washington DC as well as other relevant communal networks in the US. Our US staff is increasingly being approached by other NGOs that wish to be advised on how to work effectively within the American arena.

The upgrading of B'Tselem's database of human rights violations is already proving effective, enabling a search of IHL and human rights violations data collected by B'Tselem over the past twenty years. Making information available in this way turns it into a potent tool to advance accountability and to research trends in human rights and IHL and human rights issues.

B'Tselem's actions aimed at preventing the forced displacement of Bedouin communities in E1 outside of Jerusalem to a site with potential health risks has reinforced for us the value of timely action in partnership with a strategic coalition of local and international actors. B'Tselem leveraged not only our experienced staff, but also the network of other actors with which we work: NGOs, diplomats, foundations and the media.

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<th>Specific Objectives</th>
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| Providing documented information to the Israeli public and the international community about violations of human rights in the Occupied Territories | 1. Number and quality of testimonies  
2. Hours of footage and coverage received  
3. Reports produced and distribution scope | 1. 1,449 first-person testimonies  
2. Some 500 hours of video footage have been added to the video archive in 2011, bringing the total to approximately 3,000 hours.  
3. Reports published in 2011 include:  
- Caution: Children Ahead: The Illegal Behavior of the Police toward Minors in Silwan Suspected of Stone Throwing – Disseminated via new media in January 2011  
- Dispossession and Exploitation: Israel's Policy in the Jordan Valley and Northern Dead Sea – Published May 2011, Internet campaign included an interactive version of the report with video documentaries, presentations and maps.  
- No Minor Matter: Violation of the Rights of Palestinian Minors Arrested by Israel on Suspicion of Stone-Throwing – Published July 2011  
- Show of Force: Israeli Military Conduct in Weekly Demonstrations in a-Nabi Saleh – Published September 2011 | 4. 10 e-mail updates were sent in 2011 to a mailing list of some 16,000 |

Advancing accountability to promote rule of law and deter future IHL and human rights violations. | 1. Collecting testimonies of human rights violations  
2. Filing requests to investigate violations with relevant officials  
3. Following up requests and petitioning these in cases of impunity | 1. In 2011, B'Tselem collected 1,449 testimonies of human rights violations.  
2. Staff submitted 123 demands to Israeli law enforcement authorities to investigate suspected violations.  
3. 61 investigations were opened as a result. B'Tselem's accountability work achieved an indictment and a conviction in two cases. Legal consultants were used in 24 cases. |
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| Generating media coverage of human rights issues and serving as an ongoing source of information for media professionals | 1. Monitoring website visitors | 1. New media tools:  
* In 2011, B’Tselem's multilingual website hosted 333,360 visits.  
* B’Tselem's English-Hebrew Facebook page now has 9,637 members and was viewed 991,109 times and drawn 4,672 responses by the end of 2011.  
* A new, all-Hebrew Facebook page was launched in late November, already logging some 374 members and 678 responses by the end of December 2011  
* 170 video items were made available by the end of 2011 via B’Tselem's YouTube Channel, which has been viewed 1,250,000 times since its inception in September 2006. |
|                        | 2. Tracking issuing of press releases and consequent media coverage | 2. In 2011, B’Tselem issued 20 press releases to some 1,300 local and foreign journalists, and an additional 37 press releases focusing solely on Israeli media. |
|                        | 3. Assessing broadcasting of films on mainstream and social media sites | 3. 7 short films were made in 2011, and 13 short video items were published using new media tools. |
| Recommending and advocating for policy changes to ensure greater protection of human rights | 1. Conducting tours, number of participants and feedback | 77 study tours and briefings for diplomats and decision makers took place in 2011.  
Seven European advocacy trips informed policy makers this year.  
B’Tselem USA held five briefings on average each month in 2011. |
|                        | 2. Dissemination of briefings and feedback from participants | |

For additional information, please see our website [http://www.btselem.org/](http://www.btselem.org/)  
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