



(IN)SECURITY AND RECONSTRUCTION IN POST-CONFLICT NAHR AL-BARID REFUGEE CAMP

ISMAEL SHEIKH HASSAN AND SARI HANAFI

This article examines the intersection of the Lebanese state's post-conflict security policy in Nahr al-Barid refugee camp and the reconstruction of the camp, which was destroyed in a battle between the Lebanese army and the militant group Fatah al-Islam. The significance of the government's security focus derives from its intention to make Nahr al-Barid a "model" for all the other camps in the country. After discussing the Lebanese security context, the characteristics of the pre-conflict camp, the arrival of Fatah al-Islam, and the ensuing battle, the authors focus on the urban planning process for a reconstructed Nahr al-Barid, highlighting both the state's militarization of the process and the local grassroots planning initiative which, in partnership with UNRWA, managed to secure some concessions. Also analyzed is the government plan submitted to donors, which conceives of "governance" as community policing without addressing the status of the Palestinians in Lebanon.

IN THE SUMMER OF 2007, the Palestinian refugee camp of Nahr al-Barid, the second largest of the fourteen United Nations Relief and Works Agency for Palestine Refugees in the Near East (UNRWA) camps in Lebanon, was totally demolished. This was a result of a battle between the Lebanese army and Fatah al-Islam, an Islamist fundamentalist group, predominantly foreign, that had implanted itself in the camp only six months earlier. After its destruction, the camp remained a strict militarized zone, imposing additional hardship on a post-disaster community of refugees struggling to rebuild their lives. Various security-based projects and policies affecting the camp's urban form, governance structure, and legal status that were planned, negotiated, or approved by the Lebanese government signaled a new era in Lebanese-refugee relations. With the events of Nahr al-Barid, the Lebanese state entered

ISMAEL SHEIKH HASSAN was an urban planner and community activist with the Nahr al-Barid Reconstruction Commission for Civil Action and Studies (NBRC) and a PhD candidate at Katholieke Universiteit of Leuven, Belgium. He wishes to thank all NBRC fellow volunteers who have been pushing to reconstruct the camp over the past three years.

SARI HANAFI is associate professor at the American University of Beirut (AUB). He would like to thank Rami Khouri and Tara Mahfoud from the Issam Fares Institute (IFI) and research assistant Nizar Shaaban, who carried out twenty interviews with Nahr al-Barid leaders from April to September 2008. Part of the fieldwork was carried out in the framework of the IFI-AUB camp program. The article is an updated and expanded version of an earlier paper published in the spring 2009 issue of *JPS's* sister publication, *Majallat al-Dirasat al-Filastiniyya*. The authors are indebted to Linda Butler for her input into this article.

the realm of the camp, and security concerns and practices assumed new forms that would potentially affect the future lives of Palestinian refugees in all Lebanon. The camp remains a military zone to this day.

More importantly, the Lebanese government's plan to make Nahr al-Barid a security model for the other Palestinian refugee camps in the country¹ brings the issue of security more urgently to the forefront of the debate about Palestinians in Lebanon. Nahr al-Barid also fits into a wider security discussion relating to Palestinians in the host countries in the context of the "war against terror," with issues relating to the status of camps becoming intertwined with the correlative themes of good governance, refugee rights, human security, and integration for the benefit of international donors and development agencies, even as policies on the ground disregard and sometimes contradict these concepts.

This article is based on two years of fieldwork and action research in Nahr al-Barid camp. Our involvement included participation in local community post-conflict initiatives, in-depth interviews with Nahr al-Barid residents and community leaders, and up-close observation of various Palestinian and Lebanese actors in the reconstruction planning process. Our aim is to contribute to the debate on the role of "security" in dictating state policy and actions during and after the battle. The fact that government policies are still in flux makes reflection and debate on these events all the more urgent.

CONTEXTUALIZING SECURITY WITHIN PALESTINIAN REFUGEE CAMPS

A variety of themes and discourses at the local, regional, and global level intertwine as a backdrop to a discussion of the heightened security measures for Palestinian refugee camps in general and Nahr al-Barid in particular. One of these is the state's traditional fear of refugees as a potentially threatening and disruptive political force. Ironically, this fear—and the security measures it engenders—is shared by those who produced the refugee problem and the host states that suffered its consequences; indeed, some disturbing parallels have been drawn, *mutatis mutandi*, between measures against Palestinians enacted by Israel and Arab states in the name of security.² Thus, whereas historically the violent conflicts between the Palestinian movement and various Arab regimes were attributed to ideological differences and power struggles, the current situation seems to be heading in new directions. Today, what has become a seemingly universal obsession with security and fighting terror increasingly infiltrates Arab slogans to validate various practices against Palestinian camps and neighborhoods (not to mention against their own citizens). These practices affecting citizens/refugees and cities/camps alike are empowered by largely uncritical international military, financial, and political support for the "war on terror." As a result, massive urban destruction has been wreaked on densely populated communities with scant consideration for civilian populations, with the suspension of civil liberties and imposition of siege now standard procedures validated by security-based arguments

for Afghanistan (2001), Iraq (2003), Jenin/Nablus in the West Bank (2002), Lebanon (2006), Nahr al-Barid (2007), Gaza (2008), and Yemen (2009).

Within the Lebanese context, a number of specific factors have contributed to shaping state policies regarding security and the camps. The first was the government's fears that the Palestinian movement would drag it into conflict with Israel, a fear especially relevant before the PLO's expulsion from Beirut and southern Lebanon in 1982. Prior to the 1969 Cairo agreements, which legalized and regulated the PLO presence in Lebanon, security measures concerning the Palestinians included mandatory permits for entry and exit in and out of the camps, curfews, and the banning of Palestinian meetings and listening to Sawt al-Arab (Nasser's radio station from Cairo). Another factor, which intensified after the Lebanese civil war, is the widespread tendency of the Lebanese public (reinforced by certain Lebanese politicians and media) to associate the Palestinian camps with multiple negative images: "security island," refuge for criminals, ghetto, threat to Lebanon's confessional-sectarian balance, and so on. In the politically volatile post-civil war Lebanon, the Palestinian refugees, who had lost their political representation and protection with the departure of the PLO, were increasingly scapegoated as the cause of the civil war. The issue of *tawteen* (the naturalization of Palestinian refugees as Lebanese citizens) was often used as a populist slogan during electoral campaigns or as a bogeyman to unleash public fears with the aim of preventing the passage of basic rights for Palestinians. In this context, discriminatory legislation, such as outlawing Palestinian ownership of land, passed in the name of "preventing *tawteen* and supporting the Palestinians' right of return." Such laws, coupled with the post-1982 end of PLO funding and UNRWA's dwindling refugee services as a result of donor cutbacks, further marginalized Lebanon's Palestinian population, reinforcing the camps' ghetto status. Although the Cairo agreements, which among other things put the camps off limits to Lebanese security and allowed Palestinians to bear weapons, were officially abrogated in 1987, the terms of reference between the two parties remained ambiguous at best. On the one hand, Lebanese security, which typically relied on Palestinian factions for arrests of wanted persons hiding inside the camps, rarely entered. On the other hand, tight state control began at the very perimeters of the camp, especially in the south, where the checkpoint policy reached the level of siege. The camp thus became a legally suspended space, projected as ungoverned and hence dangerous, but in fact controlled not only by the army patrolling but also by military intelligence through its wide networks of informants inside.

Finally, starting with the still-unsolved assassination of former Lebanese prime minister Rafiq Hariri in February 2005, Lebanon has experienced a series of far-reaching political developments, including, most importantly, the withdrawal of Syrian troops from the country in April 2005. Within this latter context, Lebanon's attempt to tighten security procedures to demonstrate its ability to control its territory was challenged both by intensifying Israeli

incursions into Lebanon's national space and by the heightened activity of nonstate armed groups. The weakness of the Lebanese security apparatus became especially apparent with the salience of the Islamic armed resistance Hizballah, whose superior training, organization, firepower, and intelligence made it the strongest military force in the land. Following Israel's summer 2006 war against Hizballah, establishing state sovereignty across Lebanese territory became a major state preoccupation, supported internationally by UN Security Council Resolution 1559, which set the terms for ending the Israeli war. Among its provisions, military and security funding and training were provided by countries such as the United States in an effort to "stabilize" Lebanon's pro-Western government. More importantly, the political instability of the state (as manifested in a presidential vacuum and contentious cabinet formations), sectarian violence, ongoing political assassinations, and the country's vulnerability to military assault from Israel all increased feelings of fear and insecurity within its population.

It was against this background that the Lebanese state's assault on Nahr al-Barid camp, launched less than a year after Israel's July 2006 Lebanon war, must be situated.

NAHR AL-BARID CAMP AND THE ARRIVAL OF FATAH AL-ISLAM

Ever since the end of the Lebanese civil war in the late 1980s, significant Lebanese state actors and parties have been determined to bring the camps under Lebanese sovereignty. This determination, strengthened in the post-9/11 security environment, received the impetus it needed with the installation of radical Islamist militants in Nahr al-Barid camp in autumn 2006 and the ferocious battle waged by the Lebanese army to expel them in spring-summer 2007.

During the battle, Nahr al-Barid was likened by some journalists to 'Ayn al-Hilwa camp in southern Lebanon. But while few would deny that a critical security situation existed in 'Ayn al-Hilwa, which had long been a site of deadly factional fighting and a refuge for wanted men, this was not the case in Nahr al-Barid. There, for over a decade prior to Fatah al-Islam's arrival six months before the battle, interfactional fighting, whether inside the camp or on its outskirts, had rarely occurred. Thus, Nahr al-Barid camp had escaped much of the stigma attached to Palestinian camps in Lebanon and was largely exempted from the state policies of marginalization and containment practiced against most others.

Situated on the Mediterranean coast some twenty kilometers north of Tripoli, Lebanon's second largest city, Nahr al-Barid camp challenged the stereotypes. With strong economic, social, and marriage ties with the surrounding community forged over sixty years, the camp was socially and economically intertwined with its larger context. Its economic integration derived from its location on the international highway connecting Syria to the Lebanese coast and Lebanon's main cities—one of the rare instances where

a major Lebanese thoroughfare intersected with camp space. The camp was also situated in the midst of an agricultural region, and these factors, combined with the refugees' active entrepreneurial spirit, made Nahr al-Barid camp an important regional commercial hub. Lebanese farmers from the surrounding areas came to the camp to sell their produce and take advantage of the competitive prices for their own purchases, while customers from Tripoli and other northern towns and villages were drawn to its dense concentration of businesses selling goods at competitive prices in an economic climate characterized by inflation and high prices as a result of the government's post-civil war neoliberal economic policies. The region had never witnessed anything even remotely resembling the bitter "battle of the camps" waged in the 1980s against the camps of Beirut and the south.

It is important to mention that what is commonly known as Nahr al-Barid camp was actually two distinct entities: the official UNRWA camp (also called the "old" or "historic" camp), characterized by a high-density urban fabric (over 20,000 residents in a 190,000-square-meter space), and the adjacent "new camp" on rural land (more than ten times the surface area of the old camp) that began to be urbanized in the late 1970s. The new camp, which on the eve of the battle housed about a third of Nahr al-Barid's total population of about 33,000, was officially and legally under the jurisdiction of the Mhamara municipality, with UNRWA providing social and educational services to the Palestinians living there.

To understand how the Islamist militants who later formed Fatah al-Islam managed to intrude on the peaceful and regionally integrated community of Nahr al-Barid camp, a brief political background is necessary. While the PLO forces had been expelled from Beirut and southern Lebanon following Israel's 1982 invasion, they remained in northern Lebanon, which at the time was under Syrian army control. But in spring 1983, a Syrian-backed rebellion within Fatah against the PLO fighters loyal to Arafat broke out and spread throughout the region, forcing the PLO/Arafat loyalists to leave the country in November 1983. Under Syrian patronage, the rebels, now organized into a faction called Fatah al-Intifada, became entrenched in the camps in regions controlled by Damascus. Together with other Syrian-backed factions, Fatah al-Intifada took over Nahr al-Barid camp's governing bodies, particularly the popular committee. Whatever the preferences of the local refugees, the members or sympathizers of Fatah and the other PLO organizations remained in the background, at least within the "official" camp structures. After the Syrian troops pulled out of Lebanon in 2005, the traditional political factions began reasserting themselves, testing their potential influence and strength.

Meanwhile, around the same time as Israel's July 2006 war against Hizballah, a significant movement northward of Islamic Salafist militants was noted. Some tried to penetrate the Beirut refugee camps of Burj al-Barajneh and Shatila but were ousted by the local popular and security committees. They found a more hospitable environment in the religiously conservative

region of the north, particularly around Tripoli, where men with long beards and Islamic appearance did not stand out and where local elements, wittingly or otherwise, provided cover and ideological support for the newcomers. Some of them rented apartments in Biddawi camp about fifteen kilometers south of Nahr al-Barid camp. However, this led to questioning by residents and members of the local popular committee, resulting in an armed clash, the death of an innocent bystander, and the escape of this band of Salafists further north toward Nahr al-Barid.

These militants, who later became part of the as-yet nonexistent Fatah al-Islam, had been unable to penetrate the closely knit social and urban fabric of Nahr al-Barid's old camp, but they did manage to establish themselves (albeit as outsiders) in the adjacent new camp. As noted above, the new camp was formally part of the Mhamara municipality, which in principle was responsible for providing infrastructure and services, policing, record keeping, and issuing and enforcing permits. In fact, however, the municipality had no real presence in the area, which was widely seen as the social and urban continuation of Nahr al-Barid camp. The result was the creation of a vague in-between zone, neither camp nor municipality, where the state was effectively absent. In the Lebanese context, where land sales to Palestinians were complicated (and, as of 2001, prohibited), the refugees had been able to acquire land there through informal (i.e., unregistered) purchase from Lebanese landowners and to build on it without formal permits. The ambiguity of this space, combined with an abundance of available real estate, would prove attractive to the various international and Lebanese Islamic fundamentalist groups that began grouping around Nahr al-Barid. Some camp dwellers had also rented rooms and apartments to members of the as-yet unidentified group, later claiming that the transactions had been made for financial reasons only and without knowledge of the renters' aims.

Another large group of Salafist militants arrived in Nahr al-Barid camp during that period as part of the well-established and ostensibly secular Fatah al-Intifada faction through the intervention of its Damascus-based general secretary, Abu Khaled Amleh. The newcomers initially remained within the faction's military bases, supposedly as members, but it appears that an internal coup had taken place in which the Salafists had essentially taken over Fatah al-Intifada's bases for themselves. On 26 November 2006, the man subsequently revealed to be the group's leader, Shakir al-Abssi, announced the creation of Fatah al-Islam.

By all accounts, the announcement created a stir in the community. Ironically, many camp residents first learned of it on Lebanese television. Community leaders, including some religious shaykhs, warned of dangerous consequences for Nahr al-Barid camp. Indeed, the Lebanese military soon intensified checkpoints, making entry and exit to and from the camp very difficult. Customers stopped coming to the camp, greatly damaging its economy. Most of the community opposed the group's arrival (one of the camp's neighborhood committees denied the newcomers passage through its

alleyways), but others, especially shaykhs of Salafist persuasion, were pleased by the “moral order” the new group was thought to impose. Many witnesses confirmed that some imams, who had assumed the role of new notables, had “pacified” the presence of Fatah al-Islam in the camp in their Friday sermons.³ Although our research does not suggest the shaykhs’ complicity in Fatah al-Islam’s later actions, it does indicate the ignorance or simplicity of many Islamist sympathizers who were taken in by the apparent devotion of these “pious” men while ignoring their extremist beliefs. Without doubt, such support facilitated the group’s establishment in Nahr al-Barid.

That Fatah al-Islam was not *of* the camp but an *external* phenomenon that had emerged *around* and *within* the camp in autumn 2006 is beyond dispute. Its decidedly nonlocal character was confirmed by the Lebanese Judiciary Council,⁴ which listed its composition as follows: 69 Lebanese nationals, approximately 50 Palestinians (the vast majority from Syria),⁵ 43 Saudis, 12 Syrians, 1 Tunisian, 1 Algerian, 1 Yemeni, and 1 Iraqi. According to our fieldwork, the organization comprised three distinct components: a Lebanese contingent mainly originating from the Sir al-Dinniyeh area of northern Lebanon led by Abu Hureira (Shehab al-Qaddour); a disparate assortment of Saudis and other Arab nationals; and the 50-odd Palestinians from Syria under Abssi, who had gotten himself proclaimed leader for his role in securing the bases of Fatah al-Intifada. Our interviews showed that Fatah al-Islam was perceived as having two goals: to establish an Islamic emirate in northern Lebanon (making it part of a larger Lebanese battle), and to serve as a jihadi base to train militants for action against U.S. and other Western forces in Iraq and Afghanistan and more generally the alleged U.S. project in the region. While the statement announcing its formation linked Palestinian nationalism with global jihadism, fighting Israel was never on the agenda.⁶ What seems clear is that the group skillfully played the local game, at least for a while, maintaining ties with a wide spectrum of Lebanese actors and sending messages to all relevant parties.⁷

If the political factions within Nahr al-Barid camp had been able to form a united front against Fatah al-Islam, they could probably have driven the group from the camp and spared it from its tragic fate. All the factions agreed the group was a problem but disagreed on how to deal with it. Weakened by rivalries and infighting, and with Palestinian political institutions at a low point, Fatah al-Islam managed within months to assert itself as the single strongest military actor in Nahr al-Barid. At one point they even managed temporarily to occupy the headquarters of the popular committee, with the result that its head, Abu Hisham Leyla, resigned over the failure of the “official” actors to remove the group from the camp.

THE BATTLE AND ITS AFTERMATH

The first clash between the Lebanese Internal Security Forces (ISF) and Fatah al-Islam took place in downtown Tripoli in May 2007. After members

of the group robbed a bank in the nearby town of Amyun that had refused to cash their checks, the ISF raided one of their affluent downtown Tripoli apartments, triggering a battle between the militants and Lebanese security backed by the army. Fatah al-Islam then launched a brutal attack on a Lebanese military base, slaughtering thirteen soldiers, to which the army responded by massively shelling Nahr al-Barid camp on 22 May.

Ironically, although Fatah al-Islam had virtually no presence in the old camp, it was the old camp that bore the brunt of the Lebanese army's onslaught, which involved almost nonstop shelling of homes, commercial buildings, mosques, schools, and clinics for almost four months. A total siege was imposed, with relief supplies, medical aid, food, and so on prevented from entering the camp except briefly during ceasefires. The press was strictly banned throughout the entire period of the fighting, and journalists were barred access without military security passes and obligatory military escort.

The refugees refused to defend their camp: they neither saw the Lebanese army as their enemy nor had any desire to help Fatah al-Islam. This marked the first time that a Palestinian camp had been abandoned under fire without being defended by its inhabitants.

While the refugees at first wanted to remain in the camp to protect their homes and belongings, the relentless artillery pounding eventually forced Nahr al-Barid's entire population, including the fighters of all the local factions, to evacuate during a series of temporary cease-fires. Significantly, the refugees refused to defend their camp: they neither saw the Lebanese army as their enemy nor had any desire to help Fatah al-Islam. This marked the first time in history that a Palestinian camp had been abandoned under fire without being defended by its inhabitants.

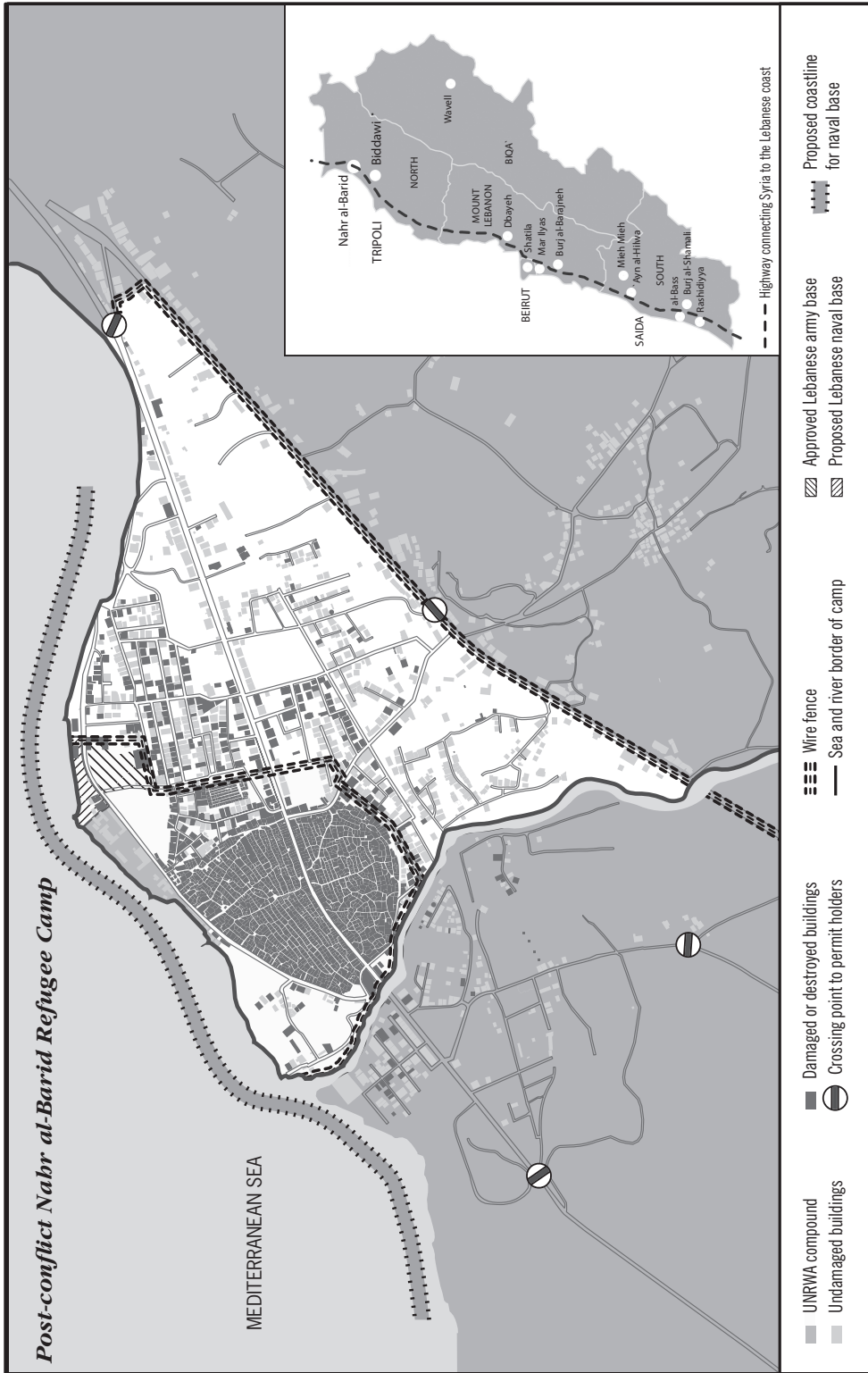
The battle continued until September 2007, when the last Fatah al-Islam militants attempted to escape from the ruins of the camp and the army declared victory in its first battle against global terrorism. The death toll was over 40 Palestinian civilians, 168 Lebanese soldiers, and 222 militants.⁸ Some 33,000 refugees were displaced to other camps, especially nearby Biddawi. Beyond the human cost was the extensive destruction of houses, businesses, and physical and social infrastructure.⁹ All 1,700 buildings of the old camp were completely destroyed. In the adjacent camp, over 100 buildings were destroyed and most of the others were severely damaged. Throughout the battle, there was virtually no public criticism of what some observers saw as the Lebanese army's indiscriminate and excessive use of force, probably because the climate of uncertainty and political instability that characterized the period before the battle had made most Lebanese see the army as the only united, cohesive, and functioning institution in the country. In fact, the army's military response in Nahr al-Barid was widely heralded and supported by the Lebanese general public and media.¹⁰

For more than a month after the fighting ended in early September, residents were barred from entering Nahr al-Barid camp, old or new, even to



This photograph, taken facing away from the sea in a south-easterly direction, shows approximately a third of the old camp. The photo was taken before the end of the battle in summer 2007, and the large “empty” space (center-right of the photo) was bulldozed by the military to cut through the urban fabric for better access. Between the exposed facades of the taller buildings (note the white building) and the bulldozed swath, one can perceive the path of the main road that bisects the camp (see map on next page), totally obscured on the left side of the photo by the collapsed buildings. The new camp lies almost entirely outside the photo to its left (i.e., west and northwest), although a few buildings beyond the old camp perimeter are visible at the top of the photo. At the top right-hand corner of the photo, the foliage in front of a large one-story undamaged building indicates Nahr al-Barid river, which cannot be seen but marks the southeast boundary of the old camp. (Source: UNRWA)

assess the damage. The old camp and the adjacent areas were encircled by two rings of barbed wire and concrete barriers, and remain so to this day. On 10 October 2007, however, thousands were allowed to return to limited areas of the new camp,¹¹ only to find what remained of their homes, shops, and businesses burned, looted, and vandalized by persons who remain officially unnamed. Interviews conducted by our own team, as well as by Amnesty International’s Fact Finding Mission in 2007,¹² attest to a systematic pattern of burning and looting. Racist graffiti scrawled on walls were signed by Lebanese army battalions participating in the operation. While preliminary looting may have been committed by Fatah al-Islam and some camp residents, given its scope, the quantities of commercial goods involved, not to mention the tight military siege, wide speculation of army involvement was inevitable.



The map, prepared by Kharita media team, shows the situation of the camp as of 20 January 2009. While the outer fence remains the same, the inner fence has since been moved closer to the old camp, which remains off limits to the refugees. Areas northeast of the old camp also remain off limits, sparking speculation that they will become sites for permanent military/navy installations.

Amnesty International's appeal to the Lebanese prime minister and defense ministry in December 2007 for an inquest went unheeded.

The battle and its fallout, and particularly the state's obsession with security and control, dramatically increased the local Palestinians' feelings of mistrust toward the government, to the point that many refugees later regretted their cooperation during the conflict. Despite their public disassociation from Fatah al-Islam, the camp's fleeing residents had been treated like criminals throughout Lebanon, arrested at checkpoints for the mere mention of Nahr al-Barid on their refugee cards.¹³ Government decisions reinforced the widespread Lebanese notion of Palestinian responsibility for the events and of Nahr al-Barid as a terrorist-prone area. Almost immediately after the fighting, the council of ministers approved the establishment of a military base on the abandoned site of a PLO compound, where the refugee youth's soccer field was located, abutting the camp.¹⁴ Meanwhile, those who had been allowed to return to their damaged properties in the new camp, and others who were being housed in temporary metal containers set up by UNRWA as shelter for the now-homeless Palestinians, could leave and reenter the camp space only through checkpoints and upon presentation of a special temporary military permit. This became a humiliating daily experience as Lebanese, Palestinians, and international aid workers alike had to wait in line for automobile checks, body searches, and identity and permit verification.¹⁵ What remained of Nahr al-Barid camp had become one large prison.

It is noteworthy that there has been almost no public debate concerning what happened in the camp. No public investigation into who had backed and funded Fatah al-Islam militants was ever published or announced. No investigation into mistreatment of civilians by the military has taken place. As a space of exception,¹⁶ the camp became an emergency zone where witnesses were not allowed: journalists and human rights organizations were denied entry to the camp without special permission from the army, and this remains the case to this day. It is the suspension of law that makes possible vendetta and looting. In Nahr al-Barid, the camp's population is, to use Giorgio Agamben's term, *homo sacer*,¹⁷ their property destroyed and looted, and the perpetrators granted immunity.

NEGOTIATING SPACE: THE MILITARIZATION OF THE PLANNING PROCESS

Lebanon's post-conflict policy changed Nahr al-Barid camp's status. From being "inaccessible" and "uncontrollable," it became the most controlled site in a country where the state is constantly struggling to control its national territory. The camp's transformation was made possible by its sudden and complete depopulation, its reduction to a tabula rasa under total military control. The absence of a strong role for the Palestinian embassy and the traditional factional representatives allowed the Lebanese policies to go "officially" unchallenged. Furthermore, the likelihood of potentially large amounts of international funding for reconstruction gave the government

the resources it needed to create a post-conflict Nahr al-Barid—envisaged as a model for all Palestinian refugee camps in Lebanon—according to its preferences. Steps by the various state actors ensured that through the military's facts on the ground and state control of the reconstruction plans, policing, and governance schemes, this vision would eventually be realized. As implementation got underway, the contradiction between the government's declared policy ("open camp," swift reconstruction, and the forging of a new relationship of trust between Palestinians and Lebanese) and its actual planning on the ground (dominated by delays, abuses, heightened security measures, and absence of real dialogue) became increasingly apparent.

Security considerations were given priority in the post-conflict planning not only by the military but also by all the government agencies, ministries, and committees involved in the Nahr al-Barid project.¹⁸ The nonmilitary actors were the Lebanese Palestinian Dialogue Committee (LPDC), an exclusively Lebanese body formed in 2005 to coordinate interministerial action aimed at improving Palestinian refugee conditions, and the Nahr al-Barid Recovery and Reconstruction Cell (RRC), established in July 2008 by the prime minister to monitor the implementation of the reconstruction program,¹⁹ along with consultants, all working in coordination with the ISF.

Already before the battle ended, Lebanese officials had begun to make plans for reconstructing Nahr al-Barid and its future, with the key words "sovereignty" and "security" featuring prominently in the discussions. The idea was that Nahr al-Barid would be the prototype for a new kind of camp that would be "safe and controlled" under the established sovereignty of the state. A consultant was hired and immediately entered into discussions with the military concerning planning specifications. These included streets ten to fifteen meters wide laid out on a grid as well as standardized apartments for the refugees within free-standing (rather than connected) housing blocks. The army believed that such provisions would prevent "terrorists" from breaking through walls to escape and, by facilitating the entry into the camp space of tanks and armored vehicles, would allow for efficient security control.

The government's vision for a new, modern, and secure camp that left no place for the traditional social fabric and living patterns was reported in the press, galvanizing the community, which had not been consulted. In Biddawi camp, where most of the Nahr al-Barid residents had taken refuge, a spontaneous grassroots initiative, energized by the widespread conviction that Nahr al-Barid's total destruction and the government's reconstruction plans were politically motivated, emerged with the goal of formulating a counter plan. Named the Nahr al-Barid Reconstruction Commission for Civil Action and Studies (NBRC), the group attracted activists, practitioners, and academics from beyond Nahr al-Barid who had prior reconstruction experience in Lebanon. The result was an expanded and diverse network that included architects and planners who were able to transfer their knowledge and experience of a range of urban policies and reconstruction projects to the local committee, thereby empowering the community to strategize effectively

against the state's project. Among other things, the NBRC conducted a series of surveys and remapped the destroyed camp, identifying the locations and size of the demolished homes based on the residents' communal memory recorded by volunteers.

By the second month of the fighting, the NBRC, through a series of open meetings and community workshops, created a broad local consensus on a set of reconstruction principles. Key among them was the absolute necessity for community participation and state transparency in the planning and assessment processes. The NBRC principles also stressed the preservation of the original camp's social fabrics, neighborhoods, circulation routes, and landmarks. The main architectural demand was the preservation of the extended-family-type dwelling as the camp's basic "building block." The reason for insisting on this building type, which would allow the younger generation to build on top of their parents' home, was not only to maintain the camp's social and familial coherence but also to accommodate future expansion in the context of a marginalized community legally barred from owning property.

It is doubtful that the state would have paid any attention to the community project had it not been for the strategic partnership forged early on between the NBRC and UNRWA. Working within the context of its Camp Improvement Program (CIP), UNRWA played a vital role in empowering the community by assuring the full participation of NBRC at every stage of the design, planning, and negotiation process. UNRWA brought to the table the CIP's practical experience on improvement works in Neirab camp (Syria) and Dahaysha camp (West Bank) and from its reconstruction projects in Jenin and Gaza. Together, NBRC and UNRWA produced a reconstruction plan for Nahr al-Barid that preserved the camp's social fabric, building typologies, and neighborhoods while improving its spatial quality.

After the battle, protracted negotiations began between the various Lebanese actors and UNRWA/NBRC. Security-related issues raised by the military dictated all spatial and design considerations. Nonetheless, thanks to the UNRWA-NBRC partnership, significant concessions were made in response to the community demands. In contrast to the government preferences, for example, the grid pattern was not adopted, and the previous circulation patterns and social fabrics dominated the reconstruction plans. The government even acceded to the demand to preserve the original placement of houses in relation to others, meaning that camp residents would have the same neighbors as before the conflict. The residents also prevailed in their desire to allow additional floors in the future, though to a maximum limit of four stories.²⁰ With regard to the camp roads, while their width in the final plan was significantly narrower than the government had originally proposed, this was not so much a concession as the result of mutual agreement on the minimums required for adequate lighting conditions.²¹ As the negotiation process continued, international pressures mounted for the government to complete a reconstruction plan in time for the international conference

being organized to raise the funds to rebuild Nahr al-Barid. An agreement on general principles was reached between the parties and approved by the prime minister in February 2008.

However, the military's preponderant role continued to influence the camp's design as the plan was fine-tuned after the general agreement. The army consistently opposed miscellaneous items such as the installation of handicap ramps on streets (because they might obstruct security vehicles) and the addition of balconies on buildings (presumably because of their potential to conceal street movement from aerial surveillance).²² It also mandated the ceiling height of ground floor shops to limit the final height of the building. Some of the project's technical designers automatically self-adapted their designs to anticipate security concerns that the army *might* have in order to prevent additional delays called for by army demands for redesign. For example, infrastructure engineers considered designing pipes with smaller radii in case the military objected that terrorists could crawl through larger ones.

THE VIENNA DOCUMENT: SECURITY AS GOVERNANCE

From the start of the battle, UNRWA had shouldered the burden of the Nahr al-Barid residents' immediate relief, but the massive reconstruction anticipated from the outset would inevitably require substantial international funding. On 7 June 2007, scarcely two weeks after the military incursion was launched, the Lebanese government held its first meeting with UNRWA representatives to plan for an international donor conference to rebuild the camp. The conference was ultimately set for June 2008 in Vienna under the sponsorship of Austria, Lebanon, the Arab League, UNRWA, and the European Union.

In preparation for the event, the Lebanese government drew up what came to be known as the Vienna document, a comprehensive recovery and reconstruction plan including cost estimates, for presentation to the donor-participants prior to the conference.²³ The prime minister's technical office (soon to be renamed the RRC) did the actual drafting in collaboration with the LPDC and consultants. The document amalgamates technical studies prepared by the UNRWA/NBRC team, the UN Development Program, the World Bank, and the engineering firm Khatib & Alami into a unified vision for a rebuilt Nahr al-Barid.

The camp's physical reconstruction was only one aspect of the government vision, and in fact took second place to the plan's "first pillar": "Creation of an Enabling Environment in the Nahr el-Bared Camp [NBC],"²⁴ the main component of which was "Establishing Clear and Effective Governance in NBC." This included "enforcing security and rule of law inside NBC through community and proximity policing."²⁵ To this end, the document requested \$5 million in donor funds for "Capacity building and technical assistance to the [Lebanese] Internal Security Forces (ISF) aimed at introducing community and proximity policing into NBC."²⁶ According to the document,

Community Policing in NBC context entails the presence inside the camp of a culturally and politically sensitive ISF that will work to reduce the fears and tensions that existed prior to and after NBC conflict. Such type of policing will promote community engagement, partnership and proactive problem solving. . . . Building trust between the ISF and the NBC community would encourage camp residents to be more supportive and forthcoming in reporting community problems and security issues. Police officers would engage in various types of community activities (youth schemes, community programs, etc.) to foster a closer relationship with the residents of the camp. A closer partnership between the ISF and the community would ultimately help make the rebuilt NBC a safer place and would promote a successful security model for other Palestinian refugee camps in Lebanon. The ISF police officers will be exposed to the political history of the Palestinian refugees in Lebanon, and will be trained to better understand the cultural and social specificities of the Palestinian community. Moreover, officers will be trained in problem solving, conflict resolution, and communication skills.²⁷

A major flaw in the document's proposal for "transparent and effective" camp governance is its problematic reading of camp governance purely as a security issue, which flies in the face of the widely accepted contemporary discourse on good governance and its necessary components of administration, community representation, and economic development. The very fact of proposing policing as the main component of governance reduces the Palestinian refugees to the status of "security subjects" and frames the camp as a "security island." It also implies that Nahr al-Barid had been a crime-ridden zone in need of policing, whereas prior to the arrival of Fatah al-Islam, crimes in the camp were contained and violators prosecuted within the framework of the local governance structures, notably the popular committee and the security committee.²⁸ The document uses the attractive term "community policing," with its connotations of community empowerment and citizenship action, but the *policing* it describes is performed exclusively by the ISF. The level of government intrusion in camp life foreseen, as exemplified in the provision for police participation in community and youth activities, is also highly problematic.

Extensive interviewing among Nahr al-Barid residents revealed the community's strongly negative reactions to the document's security focus. Their rejection of the approach was expressed in a petition to Prime Minister Fuad Siniora signed by hundreds of camp residents and published on 24 January 2009 in the Lebanese dailies *al-Akbbar* and *as-Safir*. That same month, the council of ministers passed a decision to place a new naval base on the coast right next to the previously approved army base, and where the camp's

wedding salon had been located.²⁹ Community demonstrations against the plans were met with military and government statements implying that whatever security measures were introduced were to ensure the safety of the Palestinians.

The governance section of the Vienna document in many ways exemplifies the state's traditional unilateralism in dealing with the Palestinians, whether in plans for the camps that totally ignore existing conditions or, more generally, in projects with important implications for Palestinians that are formulated without consultation and then presented to the community as a *fait accompli*. The negotiations and compromises, however limited, that took place in the Nahr al-Barid reconstruction planning process thanks to UNRWA's involvement were the rare exception.

This one-sided decision making was illustrated by the PLO's exclusion from the formulation of the Vienna document's security-related sections. The document makes a point of stating that the "above security arrangements for NBC were agreed upon with the Palestinian Liberation Organization" (p. 51). In fact, however, the PLO embassy first saw these "arrangements" at the same time as the donor states, when the printed document was delivered before the conference. The PLO ambassador objected to the community policing concept during an official meeting with the head of LPDC several days before the conference, but the document was not altered.³⁰ Without doubt, the PLO's weakness makes this kind of exclusion possible, but pursuing and securing funding for a one-sided vision of governance in a Palestinian camp, which moreover is planned as a prototype for all the Palestinian camps in the country, is clearly unwise, especially when the solutions proposed are not based on a critical review of either Nahr al-Barid's pre-conflict situation or the failures on the Palestinian and Lebanese sides that precipitated the rise of Fatah al-Islam in the first place.

Highlighting the government's failure to take into account camp traditions in trying to engineer their future is the fact that the Vienna document makes no mention of the popular committee or any other local governing body, even as an interlocutor or intermediary between the "community" police and the population. The traditional structures are consistently bypassed by the

The camp's traditional governing structures are consistently bypassed by the government and military, fuelling resentments and ensuring the community's noncooperation.

government and military, fuelling resentments and ensuring the community's noncooperation. There is no question that the popular committee in its present state is incapable of handling the flood of reconstruction proposals and projects coming in from international NGOs and development agencies. Aside from its lack of technical expertise, the committee—nominally composed of representatives of all factions in the camp—had long suffered from declining effectiveness stemming from its lack of financial resources (following the departure of the PLO in 1982), its dominance by pro-Syrian factions between 1983 and 2005, internal conflicts, and in some cases corrupt practices. Over the

years, with the popular committee unable to deal with the complex urban, social, and infrastructural challenges facing the camp, local NGOs and in some cases spontaneous grassroots initiatives gradually assumed service provision and other functions that the traditional actors were unable to carry out. Nonetheless, the popular committee, though not legally recognized (and in fact long delegitimized) by the Lebanese state,³¹ has remained in the eyes of the residents “officially,” if not always effectively, the principal governing body of the camp.

For all Nahr al-Barid camp’s urban and governance problems, the public scene had always been very active, with a diverse set of actors including—besides the popular and security committees—political factions, neighborhood committees, notables, professional unions, local NGOs, and others, interacting on various issues affecting the camp. Ad hoc committees would spring up according to need, examples being an engineering committee to address electricity problems in the camp and an open-heart surgery committee to collect donations for heart patients not covered by UNRWA’s medical assistance. Moreover, the speed with which the NBRC was formed and its high level of competence show that the dynamism that characterized the camp before the conflict remained and could be mobilized when necessary.

CONCLUSION

Today, three years after the end of the battle, a very slow reconstruction process is taking place in Nahr al-Barid. For reasons of practicality, the destroyed old camp was divided into eight “packages” to be reconstructed in overlapping sequence. Except for rubble removal, work so far has only been done on the first package, which comprises 130 buildings. There, foundational works finally began in late November 2009, and construction is expected to be completed by the end of 2010. The old camp’s remaining seven packages, comprising 1,570 buildings, remain untouched, and nothing has yet been done on roadways and other infrastructure. In the new camp, funding for the reconstruction of the some 100 buildings that were destroyed beyond repair has been withheld to date because of legal obstacles discussed below, but some residents are rebuilding on the site of their former dwellings at their own expense. As for the new camp’s other buildings, most of which were severely damaged in the combat, most emergency repairs have been already funded and implemented by various international organizations.

The long delays in reconstruction are the result of a number of factors, but especially the legal and bureaucratic tangles that are among the unpredicted consequences of the state’s entry into the camp space after the battle. Two examples of the bureaucratic obstacles will suffice. The first concerns the new adjacent camp, where the buildings, as already noted, had been built on informally purchased and unregistered land in circumstances described earlier in this article. When the state took over the area, it declared all the buildings in the adjacent camp illegal in keeping with the 2001 legislation

prohibiting Palestinian land ownership and because they were not built according to the local zoning laws. In keeping with other laws, however, only the some 100 totally demolished buildings in the adjacent areas were affected by the legal controversy, and for these buildings the RCC has held firm on its determination to bar reconstruction funds until a “legal framework” is in place.³²

The second example concerns the old camp. In March 2009, just as reconstruction of the first sector was about to begin, archaeological ruins were discovered under the rubble, leading to a total work stoppage. The prime minister immediately took the decision to cover the site to protect the antiquities while allowing the long delayed works to proceed, but soon afterward a Lebanese politician seized on the decision to exercise political pressure against the prime minister. Challenging the legality of covering the site, a judge issued a ruling temporarily halting the reconstruction works. After massive objections and demonstrations from the community and international actors, the reconstruction was allowed to resume in autumn. Even today, the camp’s reconstruction and its future remain hostage to Lebanon’s divisive internal politics and their impact on approvals and procedures from the RCC, the archaeology department, the Lebanese Planning Directorate, and the military.

There are countless examples worldwide of governments in post-disaster scenarios that manage to find exceptional solutions to expedite emergency reconstruction in poverty-afflicted settings where informal building was the norm. In Lebanon itself, “illegal” reconstruction following wide-scale destruction is nothing new and was most recently encountered in places like Haret Hreik in Beirut and the villages of south Lebanon, where the reconstruction of buildings destroyed in the 2006 war likewise often violated the zoning and building regulations. There, however, the presence of a strong political actor like Hizballah was able to produce exceptions giving priority to rehousing. In Nahr al-Barid, no such strong political force exists, and UNRWA avoided intervention in the adjacent areas that technically were not part of its mandate.

Thus, three years after the Nahr al-Barid fighting ended, the state is still searching for legal solutions while the Lebanese parliament argues about whether or not to allow changes in Lebanese land ownership law that discriminates against Palestinians. One of the sad facts of the post-conflict situation is the intrusion of state law into the lives of a community against which that very law has traditionally been wielded. In the meantime, almost half of Nahr al-Barid’s population has returned to the adjacent areas in the last few years, including some 1,000 families housed in the prefabricated metal barracks built by UNRWA while they await the reconstruction of their homes in the old camp. The rest of the community remains scattered, mostly in or around Biddawi camp. Economic conditions are dire. Although some of the local businesses that were looted and destroyed have reopened, the post-conflict economy never picked up; as a closed military zone encircled by

barbed wire and checkpoints, Nahr al-Barid camp can no longer attract the regional traffic on which it formerly thrived. Nonresident Palestinians and non-Lebanese citizens cannot enter without permits issued by the military, and even after permit procedures were canceled for Lebanese citizens,³³ the inconvenience and possible humiliation of waiting at checkpoints kept them away, definitively severing the once strong relations between the camp residents and their Lebanese neighbors, already weakened by the battle and its aftermath. Thus Nahr al-Barid, previously Lebanon's most "open" camp, has been transformed into a closed security island by the security measures and plans forced upon it, resulting in the community's almost complete dependence on relief assistance and UNRWA.

* * *

In late 2005, a year and a half before the Nahr al-Barid conflict erupted, the Lebanese government appeared to be embarking on a new policy with regard to the Palestinians in the country. A Camp Improvement Initiative³⁴ aimed at improving Palestinian refugee conditions was launched involving infrastructural works for which the government itself actively fundraised internationally. Steps were taken to amend legal and administrative impediments to the Palestinian right to work in some professions. The military "sieges" of the camps in the south were eased slightly, and some building materials were allowed entry. It was at that time that the LPDC was created, one of whose functions was to study the possibility of changing the legal status of Palestinians in Lebanon.

The Nahr al-Barid conflict hijacked that process. Despite repeated positive declarations and gestures by Lebanese and Palestinian diplomats, there is yet to be a sustainable, working relationship, not to mention trust between the two counterparts. During the reconstruction process, the lack of constructive dialogue resulting from state obsession with security and control can be seen as a missed opportunity to forge better Palestinian-Lebanese relations in the post-Nahr al-Barid battle period. Without doubt, meaningful dialogue is rendered particularly difficult by the fundamental asymmetry between the two parties, beginning with that between a nonnational outside body and a host state. But there is also asymmetry at the technical and capacity levels. Major donors and Western embassies support the technical team of the LPDC, bypassing the "official" Palestinian representatives.³⁵ The fact that all donor funds for Nahr al-Barid reconstruction are channeled through the Lebanese government further empowers Lebanese state actors to impose one-sided visions regarding sovereignty and security. The results are often inappropriate policies and projects.

There were other, more specifically Palestinian, factors as well: notably, the Palestinian embassy's weak representative and communication structures in the refugee community, contributing to its failure to play a positive role in the crisis and, most importantly, to bring the voice and concerns of

the Palestinian refugees to the table. No mechanisms (either PLO or by other factions) exist for refugees to choose their political representatives at the local (camp) level in the diaspora, not to mention at the national level.³⁶ This lack of representation adds to the dysfunctional nature of the PLO structures, affecting both camp management and relations with the host state. The role of the Palestinian and PLO structures in the diaspora has thus become more symbolic, forcing refugees into increasing dependence on host state policies and UNRWA resources.

At the same time, the Lebanese state has habitually practiced an exclusion/inclusion duality with regard to the Palestinian refugees. Palestinian refugee camps are for the most part *excluded* from municipal service provision, but Palestinian refugees are *included* in issues pertaining to security and taxes.³⁷ Otherwise stated, Palestinian refugees are *excluded* from the regime of rights and benefits but, as subjects under permanent control and surveillance either by writ of law or political imperative, are *included* under the regime of security. Besides juggling the inclusion/exclusion duality, the state also practices a contradictory application of the law. On the one hand, when Palestinians lobby for basic civil rights as refugees, the government responds that the issue is not legal but political (i.e., pertaining to the carefully calibrated balance among confessional groups). On the other hand, when the Palestinians ask for a political solution, for example to the reconstruction blockages in Nahr al-Barid's adjacent areas, the government insists on a legal framework.³⁸

Despite the Lebanese state's ongoing insistence on the Palestinian right to return to their homes—and the refugee community's widespread slogans proclaiming that Nahr al-Barid is “the road to return to Palestine” and that its reconstruction is “part of our struggle for return”—there are few prospects in the foreseeable future for realizing that right. The destruction of Nahr al-Barid was seen by certain actors as an opportunity to transform the Palestinian refugee condition in Lebanon, notably by making the reconstructed camp a security model that could be replicated in other camps to tighten state control. While this vision for the time being seems to have been put on hold in the face of clear resistance at various community levels, whether or not the state ultimately decides/is able to implement it will undoubtedly await the completion of Nahr al-Barid's reconstruction several years down the road.

Meanwhile, another reality appears to have emerged from the Nahr al-Barid experience, which is the refusal of refugees to willingly accept a model of governance—even if backed by the international donor community—that reduces them to a security problem or at best an apolitical humanitarian community needing only food and shelter. The Nahr al-Barid crisis, and the immediate community response in the form of a grassroots initiative of community reconstruction, clearly demonstrated the Palestinian refugee camp's social dimension and its role in preserving and developing community identity. For all the many problems besetting the refugee camps, not least their increasing

poverty, their deterioration from lack of services and legally imposed lack of opportunity, and political splits, they remain an important social and political space where moments of resistance to inappropriate plans to transform their reality are still possible.

ENDNOTES

1. See Government of Lebanon, "A Common Challenge, A Shared Responsibility: The International Donor Conference for the Recovery and Reconstruction of the Nahr el-Bared Palestinian Refugee Camp and Conflict-Affected Areas of North Lebanon," Vienna, 23 June 2008, pp. 11, 51.

2. For example, between Israel's wall in the West Bank and Egypt's fence bordering Gaza and between the destruction of Jenin and the destruction of Nahr al-Barid.

3. Many interviewees reported that after two clashes between the population and Fatah al-Islam fighters, at least two imams in Nahr al-Barid camp asked the population not to harm the fighters as they were "pious faithful people."

4. Cited by Bernard Rougier, *Qu'est-ce que le salafisme?* (Paris: Presses Universitaires de France, 2008), p. 187.

5. According to our interviews, only seven were from Lebanon.

6. Rougier, *Qu'est-ce que le salafisme?* p. 193.

7. International Crisis Group, "Nurturing Instability: Lebanon's Palestinian Refugee Camps," Middle East Report no. 84, 19 February 2009, <http://www.crisisgroup.org/en/regions/middle-east-north-africa/israel-palestine/084-nurturing-instability-lebanon-palestinian-refugee-camps.aspx>.

8. According to the 10 September 2007 press release of Defense Minister Michel al-Murr.

9. The cost of reconstruction is estimated at \$221 million and the fiscal cost of higher military expenditures at \$140 million. Disbursed or identified relief expenditures amount to \$27 million while other emergency expenditures could amount to \$64 million. The reconstruction and the activity it will generate, projected over two years, totals \$500 million and will help compensate for the negative effects of the conflict.

10. The only public statement during the events that implied any opposition

to the possible destruction of the camp was Hizballah leader Hasan Nasrallah's announcement that both the military and the camp were red lines not to be crossed.

11. The old camp remains closed to this day.

12. See Amnesty International, "Lebanon—Amnesty International Report 2008," 2008, <http://www.amnesty.org/en/region/lebanon/report-2008>.

13. In late June 2007, soldiers opened fire on a civilian crowd protesting the demolition of the camp at a peaceful demonstration marking the one-month anniversary, killing two.

14. As of this writing (September 2010), the base has not yet been built.

15. Since November 2009, Lebanese citizens have been allowed to enter the camp without obtaining a preapplied permit. However, they still have to wait at the checkpoint until their names are phoned in to headquarters and approved for entry. After this procedure, they have to go through the conventional body, car, and ID check procedures.

16. Sari Hanafi, "Palestinian Refugee Camps in Lebanon: Laboratory of Indocile Identity Formation," in Muhammad Ali Khalidi, ed., *Manifestations of Identity: The Lived Reality of Palestinian Refugees in Lebanon* (Beirut: Institute for Palestine Studies, 2010).

17. Giorgio Agamben, *Homo Sacer: Sovereign Power and Bare Life* (Stanford: Stanford University Press, 1998).

18. The government-military power relations in this period are quite ambiguous. However, the prime minister and the LPDC did inform all the government agencies of the formation of a coordination unit for the reconstruction of Nahr al-Barid camp within which the military would be an actor in November 2007.

19. RRC, which also oversees the allocation of resources and donations and answers directly to the prime minister,

grew out of the special coordination unit set up in the prime minister's office in the immediate wake of the crisis.

20. The "footprint" of each building was smaller in order to increase the area of open public space in the camp. However the increase in the number of floors guaranteed that the reconstructed total built area was similar to that of the original building.

21. Under the final plan, the camp's main road, which runs through its center, will be 12 meters wide, and four emergency access routes will be 6 meters wide. Of the circulation routes within the camps, about half will be pedestrian streets of 4.5 meters' width, and the other half alleyways averaging 2.2 meters. The alleyways were articulated with semipublic courtyards to ensure adequate lighting in the buildings while preserving the intimate scale of the original camp.

22. In the end, a compromise was reached on the balconies, which were decreased in size, but the handicap ramps were never permitted.

23. Government of Lebanon, "A Common Challenge, A Shared Responsibility."

24. Government of Lebanon, "A Common Challenge, A Shared Responsibility," p. 49. The third pillar involves the repair and reconstruction of the new camp and the nearby Biddawi camp, where most of the Nahr al-Barid refugees have been temporarily housed and where the almost overnight doubling of the population caused damage and strain.

25. Government of Lebanon, "A Common Challenge, A Shared Responsibility," p. 46.

26. Government of Lebanon, "A Common Challenge, A Shared Responsibility," p. 48. The \$5 million requested for ISF training was secured during the conference itself through U.S. and British donations to allow for the project's swift implementation.

27. Government of Lebanon, "A Common Challenge, A Shared Responsibility," p. 51.

28. Traditionally, the popular and security committees played an important role in resolving conflict within the camp (and even in the region if requested), in resolving interfactional disputes, and in dealing with grievances between Lebanese and Palestinians. The committees were also in charge of camp

security, though crime was not considered a problem in Nahr al-Barid as the community was tightly knit with strong social and familial relations.

29. To date, the base has not been built, but the site is closed off and the government has placed the land on an expropriation list.

30. PLO representatives did endorse the document overall and played a symbolic role in the endorsement of most of its sections, with the exception of those relating to security and governance. However it should be noted that PLO representatives did not object to the governance section of the document during the conference, thereby allowing money to be raised for this item during the proceedings.

31. Lebanese military intelligence and police forces used Nahr al-Barid camp's popular and security committees only when they needed special favors or for delivering wanted persons to justice.

32. In principle, the legalities the government cites as preventing the release of reconstruction funding for the destroyed buildings in the new camp should equally apply to the reconstruction currently being undertaken by some owners at their own initiative. However, there is no government agency to implement Lebanese law in the camp, which is under military rule and where the military's policies on reconstruction issues have been selective and changing.

33. Amnesty International, "Lebanon."

34. Despite the name, the government plan was independent of UNRWA's Amman-based Camp Improvement Program, although UNRWA would implement any projects under the Lebanese initiative.

35. Donor support for Palestinians generally goes to Palestinian civil society organizations rather than PLO channels.

36. Representation at the "national" level is complicated by the duality of the PLO/Palestinian Authority.

37. Palestinians, like Lebanese nationals, are subject to many taxes related to trade and employment.

38. There were exceptions to this stance. Fuad Siniora, the prime minister at the time, tried to exert political pressure to advance some aspects of the reconstruction process. However, these attempts were sometimes politically costly and generated legal counteraction, as with the archaeological issue.