

Flash Report

“Big Brother” in Jerusalem’s Old City: Israel’s Militarized Visual Surveillance System in Occupied East Jerusalem

November 2018

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Executive summary

In this flash report, Who Profits examines the ‘Mabat 2000’ visual surveillance program implemented in the occupied Old City of Jerusalem by the Israeli state and for-profit corporations. Launched in the year 2000, ‘Mabat 2000’ – an acronym in Hebrew which stands for “technological & surveillance center,” and also a word which means “gaze” – is the Israeli police’s most comprehensive visual surveillance project in the Old City, saturating every street and alleyway with Close-Circuit Television (CCTV) cameras.

Who Profits documented the involvement of the public Israeli conglomerate, C. Mer Group, in the installment, maintenance and implementation of software used for ‘Mabat 2000.’ In addition, the involvement of four corporations in the provision of surveillance hardware was documented: VideoTec, a private Italian company; Dahua Technology, a publicly traded Chinese company; Sony Corporation, a publicly traded Japanese conglomerate, and Evron Systems, a private Israeli company.

Introduction

Since its occupation and subsequent annexation of East Jerusalem in 1967, Israel has pursued aggressive policies of land grab and displacement, declaring the whole of the occupied city as its “undivided capital” in contravention of international law. Successive Israeli governments have expanded municipal boundaries, built 12 illegal settlements to house over 200,000 Israeli settlers, facilitated the occupation of Palestinian homes in the Old City and adjacent neighborhoods,¹ and developed an intricate web of bypass roads

1 What Israel calls the ‘Holy Basin’ are included: the Muslim and Christian Quarter in the Old City, Sheikh Jarrah, At-Tur (Mount of Olives), Silwan, Ras al-Amud, Wadi Joz, and Jabal Mukabbir – occupying around 150 Palestinian properties.

and a light rail network to create an integrated infrastructure for consolidating Israeli control.

In parallel, Palestinians are systematically cut off from the city and their development is suffocated. Approximately 323,700 Palestinians live in East Jerusalem as permanent residents,² 67% of whom live below the poverty line.³ Between 1967 and 2016, Israeli authorities revoked the residency status of more than 14,500 Palestinian Jerusalemites.⁴ Meanwhile, the Municipal Planning Authorities implement an active policy of house demolitions. Since 1967, Israel has demolished over 2,000 houses in East Jerusalem. As Israeli building permits are extremely difficult to obtain, over 100,000 Palestinian residents live under the constant threat of demolition.⁵

Such policies and practices are enabled by a violently repressive security apparatus, designed to suppress any form of resistance to Israel’s occupation, while engineering a “façade of normalcy.”⁶ Out of 5,640 Palestinian political prisoners incarcerated in Israeli jails, some 500 are from East Jerusalem⁷. Children face a “concentrated campaign of arrest” by Israeli authorities.⁸ In 2017 alone, a

2 They are eligible for social security and municipal services, but are not citizens and do not hold an Israeli passport.

3 The Association for Civil Rights in Israel, [“East Jerusalem Facts and Figures 2017”](#), acri.org.il, 21 May 2017.

4 Ibid.

5 UN Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs, [“High Numbers of Demolitions: the ongoing threats of demolition for Palestinian Residents in East Jerusalem”](#), ochaopt.org, 15 January 2018.

6 Lior Volinz, [“Comparative Military Urbanism: Topographies of Citizenship and Security Threats in Brussels and Jerusalem”](#), International Journal of Urban and Regional Research, *ijurr.org*, February 2017.

7 Adameer -Prisoner Support and Human Rights Network, [“East Jerusalem Prisoners”](#), December 2017.

8 Adameer – Prisoners Support and Human Rights Network, [“Born A Target: The Arrest and Prosecution of Jerusalem’s Palestinian Children”](#), 22 April



CCTV cameras, Bab Al Amond (Damascus Gate) Occupied Old City of Jerusalem | July 2018 | Photo: Who Profits

total of 1,138 children were arrested, many of whom have been placed under house arrest.⁹ This apparatus of militarized surveillance increasingly integrates hi-tech panoptic mechanisms and algorithms which are controlled jointly by public security bodies, chiefly the Israeli police, and state funded private security companies (PSCs).

This flash report investigates the multiple layers of panoptic surveillance and control mechanisms operating in East Jerusalem, paying special attention to 'Mabat 2000' project and exposing corporate complicity in it. The report sheds light on the project's central position within Israel's broader security apparatus in the occupied city. It looks at specific government policies that facilitate the installation of cutting-edge visual surveillance networks by the police and PSCs across occupied East

Jerusalem. Moreover, the report illustrates how former members of Israel's security institutions privatize knowledge and generate profit through corporations. Finally, the report reveals the system's adverse impact on Palestinians and the ways in which the site of the Old City and its Palestinian residents are being used as a testing ground as well as a marketing tool by Israeli and international corporations.

Methodology

The research for this flash-report included both desk and field research. The desk research entailed the collection and analysis of information from various public sources, including the Israeli Registrar of Companies, publications by various state authorities, and Israeli and international media sources. Further data was collected from the companies themselves, including through annual reports and information published on their websites. The field research

2018.

9 Ibid



VideoTec CCTV camera, Occupied Old City of Jerusalem | July 2018 | Photo: Who Profits

is based on several visits to the Old City in East Jerusalem, conducted in July and August 2018, and a series of interviews with Palestinians subjected to Israel's surveillance.

Prior to publication, Who Profits contacted all of the companies profiled herein to share data and request comment – no responses were received.

Implementers of visual surveillance networks

The Israeli police

Since 1967, the Israeli National Police has been responsible for public security provision and criminal investigation in occupied East Jerusalem, with assistance from the Israeli intelligence services. There has been a steady

increase in the police's budget over the years. In 2016, its direct budget from the Ministry of Public Security stood at 10.797 billion NIS, the following year it increased by 7% to a total of 11.557 billion NIS, and in the year 2018 it came to a total of 12.940 billion NIS.¹⁰

The Jerusalem Police District is divided into three geographical sub-districts: Zion, David and Kedem. The Kedem and David sub-districts cover occupied East Jerusalem, while Zion covers West Jerusalem. The David sub-district covers the Old City, with headquarters located in the Armenian Quarter within the Old City.¹¹ The Kedem sub-district, in operation since March 2014 and covering the rest of occupied East Jerusalem, is headquartered in the Palestinian neighborhood of Shuafat. By August 2017, around 2,564 police officers operated in Jerusalem, with the aim of increasing the number by 1,030 by 2020.¹²

In addition to regular police officers, the Israeli Border Police, an arm of the Israeli police, is heavily deployed across occupied East Jerusalem.¹³ The border police is composed of 8,000 career officers and individuals fulfilling their army service,¹⁴ carrying 9-millimeter pistols and M-16 rifles, in addition to non-lethal weapons. Since 2017, the Jerusalem division of the border police also independently operates the 'Seam Zone' district,

10 Israeli Police, "[Israel Police Annual Report Under the Freedom of Information Law for the Year of 2017](#)" (Hebrew), *gov.il*, 2017:15.

11 Ibid.

12 Citizens Empowerment Center in Israel, "[Follow-up Report: Improving the level of Personal security in the Arab Sector and Strengthening Security in Jerusalem](#)", (Hebrew) December 2017:6.

13 The Unit also operates in the West Bank under the command of the Israeli military.

14 Israeli Ministry of Public Security, "[Israel's Border Police: a Versatile Force Since 1948](#)", *gov.il*, 1 November 2014.

the area of East Jerusalem that has been cut off by the Wall.¹⁵ The district has three battalions, South, North, and Adumim, which was inaugurated in June 2018 to cover the center.¹⁶ During a field tour in Jerusalem's occupied Old City, Who Profits documented the presence of Israeli border police officers in its alleyways, at the entrance to Al Aqsa mosque, around the Wailing Wall, and along three permanent watchtowers at Bab Al-Amud (Damascus Gate).

The Israeli police increasingly integrates pan-optic visual surveillance as part of its strategy in Jerusalem.

Presenting the Israeli Ministry of Public Security's work plan at a Knesset meeting in July 2018, Deputy Director General Eliezer Rozenbaum stated that Israel's security in Jerusalem is going through a "significant buildup, including the reinforcement of forces, the recruitment of policemen, technology And of course, the reinforcement of cameras."¹⁷

The amalgamation of conventional forms of repression with an analytical visual surveillance system was articulated in Resolution 1775, approved by the Israeli government on 29 June 2014. The resolution puts forward a strategy for increasing security in East Jerusalem and in Palestinian communities within the Green Line.¹⁸ Since then, the plan has been reinforced and expanded.¹⁹

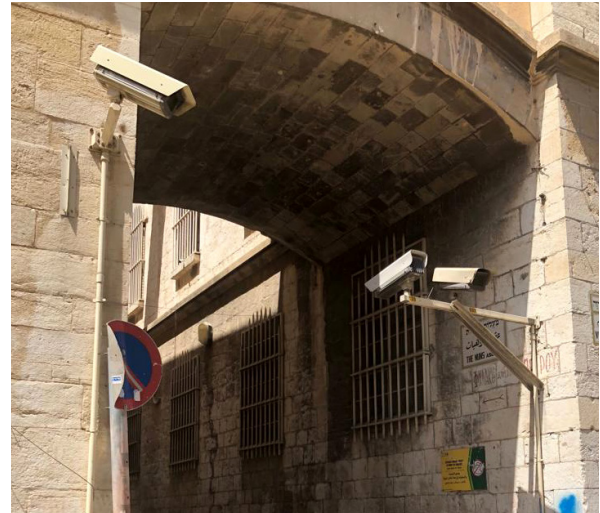
15 Ami Rohkas Dombah, "[The opening of the Adumim Battalion in the Jerusalem envelope area of the Border Police](#)" (Hebrew), *Israel Defense News*, 21 February 2018.

16 Ibid.

17 Open Knesset, "[Committee Meeting of the 20th Knesset: Presenting the Work Plan of the Ministry of Public Security](#)", 2 July 2018.

18 Prime Minister's Office, "[Resolution 1775: The Plan to Increase Personal Security and Socio-Economic Development in Jerusalem for the Benefit of All its Residents](#)" (Hebrew), *pmo.gov.il*, 29 June 2014.

19 Ministry of Public Security, "[Budget Proposal for the Year 2019](#)" (Hebrew), *mof.gov.il*, February



VideoTec CCTV camera, Occupied Old City of Jerusalem | July 2018 | Photo: Who Profits

As a first step, Resolution 1755 facilitated the investment of 94.5 million NIS to enhance policing in the Kedem sub-district by increasing the number of police officers operating in the area and establishing 'Mabat Kedem.' 'Mabat Kedem,' modeled on 'Mabat 2000,' entailed the installation of a network of license plate capture (LPR) CCTV cameras, dubbed 'Hawk Eyes.' LPR cameras can capture numbers and letters of license plates on still or moving vehicles and be used in investigations, intelligence gathering, detection and traffic enforcement.²⁰ In 2015, the Jerusalem Police district plan included the investment of 48.9 million NIS in the strengthening, purchase and installation of CCTV cameras and surveillance technology in East Jerusalem.²¹

Over the course of 2018-19, the Israeli police aims to open stations in the Palestinian neighborhoods of Silwan and Sur Baher and to move forward on the implementation of

2018:23.

20 Israeli Police, "[Israel Police Activity Report for the Year 2014 According to Freedom of Information Regulations](#)" (Hebrew), *police.gov.il*, 2015.

21 Nir Hasson, Yaniv Jovovich and Amos Harel, "[The Police Plan for Jerusalem: Placing Another 1,000 Policemen and Setting Up Stations in Arab Neighborhoods](#)", (Hebrew), *Haaretz News*, 1 January 2015.

‘Mabat Kedem.’ In addition, the police plans to intensify patrollers in the David sub-district in response to Palestinian protest around Al Aqsa mosque, boosting the usage of technology and establishing ‘Mabat Jerusalem,’ a project linking CCTVs from across the city to a centralized Command Center.²² In 2018, 246 million NIS were added to the police’s basic budget line, as well as a one-time supplemental budget of 400 million NIS for the purpose of increasing its capacity to implement this plan.²³

Private security companies

While the Israeli police is nominally tasked with maintaining ‘public security’ for all residents, private security firms have no such pretensions. The professionalization of occupation through PSCs inserts a group of private actors accountable only to an illegal settler population, giving it the authority to monitor and control Palestinian lives.

PSCs are contracted by the Israeli Ministry of Construction and Housing (MOCH)²⁴ to provide services for some 3,500 Israeli settlers occupying around 150 Palestinian homes in the Old City and adjacent Palestinian neighbourhoods.²⁵ In 2014, 370 private security guards were also contracted to provide regular patrols and armed on-foot and vehicular escorts, to guard buildings and to operate a

network of video cameras.²⁶ In 2017, the Ministry provided ⁹⁷ million NIS for the provision of private security for settlers occupying Palestinian property in East Jerusalem.²⁷

Though the MOCH has been contracting PSCs in occupied East Jerusalem since the 1990s, the arrangement was only regulated in 2007, under Resolution 1073, annulling Resolution 498, passed the previous year, which tasked the Ministry of Public Security with contracting PSCs in occupied East Jerusalem.²⁸ The relationship between the MOCH and PSCs dates back to 1992, when then Minister of Construction and Housing, Ariel Sharon, brought a house in the Wittenberg settlement compound in the Muslim Quarter of the Old City.²⁹ The Ministry assigned a security guard to protect his property, and soon after other settlers started demanding that the Ministry provide security for them. Shortly after, a tender was published, awarding a contract to the Israeli private security company ‘[Modi’in Ezrachi](#)’.³⁰ The company continues to provide security for settlers in occupied East Jerusalem and the West Bank.

According to the UN Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs, settlement

22 Israeli Police, [“Israel Police Annual Report Under the Freedom of Information Law for the Year of 2017”](#) (Hebrew), *gov.il*, 2017:15.

23 The Knesset Research and Information Center Department for Budget Supervision, [“Description and Analysis of the Budget Proposal of the Ministry of Public Security for the Years 2017 and 2018”](#) (Hebrew), *knesset.gov.il*, 20 November 2016.

24 Prime Minister’s Office, [“Resolution 1073: Regulating responsibility for the security of compounds in East Jerusalem”](#), (Hebrew), *pmo.gov.il*, 21 January 2007.

25 UN Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs, [“Humanitarian impact of Settlements in Palestinian Neighbourhoods in East Jerusalem: Evictions and Displacement”](#), *ochaopt.org*, 5 June 2018.

26 Nir Hasson, [“The security of a Jewish resident in East Jerusalem rose to NIS 30,000 this year”](#), *Haaretz News*, 23 November 2014.

27 Shahrar Ilan, [“Revealed in the finance Committee: the cost of Securing Jewish Settlement in East Jerusalem -100 NIS Million”](#) (Hebrew), *Calcalist*, 27 December 2017.

28 Prime Minister’s Office, [“Resolution 1073: Regulating responsibility for the security of compounds in East Jerusalem”](#), (Hebrew), *pmo.gov.il*, 21 January 2007.

29 Gia Shalem, [“Who Finances the Private Police in East Jerusalem”](#) (Hebrew), *TheMarker*, 15 June 2007.

30 Lior Volinz, [“Crafting and reinforcing the state through security privatisation: territorialisation as a public-private state project in East Jerusalem”](#), *Policing and Society: An International Journal of Research and Policy*, 18 June 2018.



VideoTec CCTV camera, Occupied Old City of Jerusalem | July 2018 | Photo: Who Profits

enclaves have an adverse effect on Palestinians living in the area, generating a coercive environment that pressures them to leave. The central elements of this environment include violence and arrests, restrictions on movement and access, especially during Jewish holiday periods, and the breaching of residents' privacy through the presence of surveillance cameras.³¹

PSCs are also contracted to install and enhance a visual surveillance system in the areas in which they operate. In 2006, under government Resolution 4090 entitled "Priorities: Strengthening the City of Jerusalem,"³² the MOCH was tasked with implementing an 80 million NIS security project in At-Tur, also known as the Mount of Olives, 4 million of which were spent on the installation, maintenance and securing of a network of 136 CCTVs in the area. The network is to be expanded by the addition of 160 police installed CCTV cameras, all of which will be connected to 'Mabat

Jerusalem.'³³ The project has been delayed due to cameras and equipment being burnt or otherwise damaged, forcing the Israeli authorities to secure the security system.

Although privately contracted by the MOCH, private security providers work in close coordination with the Israeli police and under their directive. A 2012 MOCH tender stipulated that the PSCs must consult with the police when arming their employees, that they be connected to the police's communication system and that they must abide by police orders regarding the scope of their security provision and timing of patrols around settlement compounds.³⁴ The same contract also has clauses to ensure that all responsibility for any damages resulting from the guards' operations falls solely on the security company involved. The company must subsidize the legal fees of defending security guards in criminal tri-

31 UN Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs, "[Humanitarian Impact of Settlements in Palestinian Neighborhoods of East Jerusalem: the Coercive Environment](#)", *ochaopt.org*, 10 July 2018.

32 Prime Minister's Office, "[Resolution 4090: Priorities – Strengthening the City of Jerusalem](#)" (Hebrew), *pmo.gov.il*, 9 August 2005.

33 Open Knesset, "[A committee meeting of the 20th Knesset: Security at Mount of Olives – Follow up meeting](#)" (Hebrew), 15 June 2015 and "[A Committee Meeting of the 20th Knesset: A tour of Mount of Olives for assessing security and impression of grave vandalism](#)" (Hebrew), 9 August 2015.

34 Ministry of Construction and Housing, "[Tender No. 2012/21 For Providing Security and Guarding Services in Compounds in East Jerusalem](#)", (Hebrew) 27 September 2012.

From and into a surveillance state

Israeli visual surveillance of Palestinians as part of a political agenda of control and displacement predates the establishment of the Israeli state in 1948. The Haganah, the Zionist paramilitary organization that was the precursor to the Israeli military, and its intelligence agency Shai,¹ made extensive use of British Mandate mechanisms of control and repression of Palestinians.

In particular, between 1943 and 1948, cartography of Palestine and detailed lists of Palestinian villages and population data were systematically collected by Haganah.² This operation, known as the 'Village Files' and attesting to the centrality of Palestinian villages to the 1936-9 Great Revolt, involved the creation of a database of geographical, topographical and planning information about each village, its population and surroundings.³

Following the forcible expulsion of 85% of Palestine's indigenous population in 1948, this information was utilized to consolidate Israel's control over Palestinian land by providing demographic data on the Palestinians who remained within the borders of the newly established Israeli state, who were subjected to almost two decades of military rule.

During Israel's occupation of the West Bank, Gaza and East Jerusalem in 1967, the acquisition of the Jordanian intelligence agencies archives was prioritized. In addition, Israel embarked on its own intensive and detailed intelligence gathering process, in the West Bank, Gaza and East Jerusalem, covering a wide range of socio-economic factors, from population characteristics to per capita income and even the number of stamps sold.⁴

1 Hebrew acronym for Sherut Yedi'ot – Information Service.

2 Elia Zureik, Strategies of Surveillance: the Israeli Gaze, *Journal of Palestine Studies*, (66) 2016:16.

3 Rona Sela, Scouting Palestinian Territory, 1940-1948: Haganah Village Files, Aerial Photos, and Surveys, *Journal of Palestine Studies*, (52) 2013:38.

4 Ibid:16.

als arising from their operations and take out an insurance policy, which would protect the state from any lawsuit brought against it as a result of the company's operations.

Through the outsourcing of security to settler enclaves, Israeli authorities both facilitate and try to distance themselves as the direct target responsible for an ongoing illegal colonial process and the violation of Palestinian rights that arise from it.

In 2012, after an Israeli High Court order, the MOCH came under pressure to increase its supervision of PSCs operations in East Jerusalem³⁵. It reacted by adding yet another layer

35 Israeli Association for Civil rights, "[High Court](#)

of private actors to administer, supervise and train outsourced security operations, distancing itself further from the works of PSCs.³⁶

In addition to the police and PSCs, the Jerusalem Municipality also actively partakes in the visual monitoring and policing of the city's Palestinian neighborhoods. In 2014, it used unmanned aerial vehicles (UAVs) and surveillance balloons to secure the route of

[to state: Explain Use of Private Guards in E. Jerusalem](#)", 13 December 2012.

36 Israeli Government Procurement Administration, "[Tender No. 5/2016 for the Provision of administrative, guidance and control of security and guarding systems in East Jerusalem](#)" (Hebrew), *mr.gov.il*, 4 august 2016.



Sony Technology CCTV cameras, Bab Al Amoud (Damascus Gate) Occupied Old City of Jerusalem | July 2018 | Photo: Who Profits

the Jerusalem light rail around the clock, in its repression of protests which erupted after three Israelis kidnapped and burnt to death sixteen-year-old Muhammad Abu Khdeir from Shuafat. As is frequently the case in the occupied Palestinian territory, the emergency measure outlived the “emergency” and became routine.³⁷

‘Mabat 2000’: surveilling the Old City

Launched in 2000, the ‘Mabat 2000’ project demonstrates the depth and scale of the public-private partnership between the Israeli state and for-profit corporations in implementing visual surveillance systems in East Jerusalem.

‘Mabat 2000’ entailed saturating the streets, corners and alleyways of the 1 square kilo-

meter of the Old City, excluding the Al-Aqsa compound, with 400 CCTVs.³⁸ In effect, there is approximately one camera per every 100 persons in the Old City’s four Quarters.³⁹

‘Mabat 2000’ CCTVs are IP (cameras that are connected to the internet) infra-red LPR cameras that can maneuver 360 degrees. Real-time footage from CCTVs is displayed on 36 high-tech touch screens in the project’s Observation & Command Center, manned by 12 specially trained police officers working a 24/7 shift system.⁴⁰ The project’s officers have a direct line of communication with more than 800 police and border police

³⁷ Who Profits Research Center, [“Eye in the sky: New Ariel Surveillance Systems and the Jerusalem Light Rail”](#), *whoprofits.org*, March 2015.

³⁸ Roi Yanovsky, [“Jerusalem’s Mabat 2000: Catching terrorists in the act,”](#) *Yediot Achronot*, 18 November 2015.

³⁹ Approximately 44,600 people live in the Old City.

⁴⁰ Daniel K. Eisenbud, [“Old City Hi-Tech helps Israeli police prevent crime,”](#) *The Jerusalem Post*, 1 August 2016.



VideoTec CCTV cameras, Occupied Old City of Jerusalem | July 2018 | Photo: Who Profits

officers occupying the streets of the Old City at any given time.⁴¹ With ‘Mabat 2000,’ the Israeli police claim 95% visibility of all public areas in the Old City of Jerusalem.⁴²

Palestinians are acutely aware that they are the primary target of ‘Mabat 2000,’ and fully cognizant of its adverse impact on their daily lives. A resident of Bab Hatta neighborhood in the Old City told Who Profits’ that, “When one walks through the Old City, they feel like they are walking on spikes. Every move you make has to be calculated, as anything you do, no matter how irrelevant, can be filmed and used against you.”⁴³

41 Cara Dorris, [“The eyes of the Old City: ‘Mabat 2000’ captures all,”](#) *The Jerusalem Post*, 18 June 2013.

42 Roi Yanovsky, [“Live: Hundreds of Cameras in Jerusalem will be Connected to the Police”](#) (Hebrew), *Yediot Ahronot*, 9 August 2016.

43 Interview conducted by Who Profits on 19 September 2018.

C. Mer Group: implementation and software

The 1999 Israeli police tender for the installation and maintenance of ‘Mabat 2000’ was awarded to C. Mer Group,⁴⁴ an Israeli company established in 1987 by Chaim Mer, a former intelligence officer for the Israeli military Intelligence Unit 8200.⁴⁵ Mer is a publicly traded Israeli conglomerate specializing in communications and security, with annual revenues of approximately 168 million USD. In 2016, the Group won a 10-year contract worth 30 million NIS (around 8 million USD), giving it the overarching responsibility for upgrading ‘Mabat 2000’ and installing the most advanced technology, including improved resolution and video quality and analytics system. Once the system upgrade is completed, the company is to provide 24/7 technical support and maintenance, including regular software upgrades.⁴⁶

This “Big brother” system, as it was called by Mer’s chairman of staff,⁴⁷ subjects’ residents and visitors to systematic visual monitoring, where an individual’s activity and life in the public sphere is under the gaze and control of the Israeli police at all times and to the smallest detail. According to the former commander of the Jerusalem Police David sub-district, which covers Jerusalem’s Old City “there is nothing like it anywhere else in the world.”⁴⁸

44 Ami Rohkas Dombah, [“The opening of the Adumim Battalion in the Jerusalem envelope area of the Border Police”](#) (Hebrew), *Israel Defense News*, 21 February 2018.

45 The Israeli military’s intelligence division responsible for collecting signal intelligence and code decryption.

46 Amy Rohkas Dombah, [“Mer Group to upgrade Israeli police video system in Jerusalem’s Old City”](#), *Defense News*, 14 September 2016.

47 Quoted in Helga Tawil-Souri, [“Surveillance Sublime: The Security State in Jerusalem,”](#) *Journal of Palestine Studies*, (68) 2016:62.

48 Roi Yanovsky, [“Jerusalem’s Mabat 2000: Catching terrorists in the act,”](#) *Yediot Ahronot*, 18

Behavior prediction algorithms

Speaking to the Israeli media in 2016, the then commander of the David sub-district, Doron Turgeman, who today served as the commander of the Kedem sub-district, described how ‘Mabat 2000’ allows for open and immediate line of communication between officers in the Observation & Command Center and those stationed in the Old City to prevent attacks. The system also purports to enable the prediction of an individual’s behavior: “We operate on three planes of time. On the future plane - we know how to prevent events before they happen,” he said.⁴⁹

Athena, a fully owned subsidiary of C. Mer Group, is the main company providing software for ‘Mabat 2000.’ The company was established in 2003 by Shabtai Shavit, a former head for the Israeli National Intelligence Agency (Mossad). Athena sells advanced espionage solutions for cameras and cyber surveillance, boasting software that can “predict to prevent” and the ability to detect the “wolf in sheep’s clothing.”⁵⁰ To do this, the company offers customers three products: OSCAR, OSCAR + and SAIP.

This software engages in constant collection of data and analytical cross matching of information and metadata from – multilingual texts, images and videos, websites, social media, dark-net, and more – creating profiles of individuals and “identifying persons of interest.”⁵¹ The company’s technology includes facial recognition, ongoing surveillance of individuals, and the ability to deploy analysis

algorithms to “identify and evaluate relationships between entities.”⁵²

Such algorithms have a tangible effect on Palestinian lives, including harassment through stop and search, arbitrary arrest and could factor into extrajudicial killings. The use of algorithms as part of “predictive policing” methods, have been subjected to critique by scholars who have highlighted the biased and discriminatory nature of its application. These policing methods support subordination, targeting and discrimination against specific groups. In the words of Israel’s Public Security Minister, Gilad Erdan, “The algorithm leads you to suspect someone.”⁵³ Since 2015, over 200 Palestinians on both sides of the Green Line have been preemptively arrested using data analysis technology.⁵⁴

In the summer of 2017, Palestinians in East Jerusalem protested the installation of metal detectors and CCTVs at the Al Aqsa mosque, forcing the Israeli government to remove them.⁵⁵ In response, the Israeli government announced the investment of 100 million NIS in enhancing and upgrading its already invasive visual surveillance system in the Old City.⁵⁶ The upgrade includes the installation of advanced software which can provide the police with facial recognition abilities, the ability to detect if an individual is carrying a weapon, including concealed weapons, and providing full profiles of individuals who walk through

November 2015.

49 Roi Yanovsky, [“Live: Hundreds of Cameras in Jerusalem will be Connected to the Police,”](#) (Hebrew) *Yediot Ahronot*, 9 August 2016.

50 Athena, [“Oscar – Open Source Collection and Analysis Solution,”](#) *athenaiss.com*.

51 Athena, [“Oscar + - Open Source Collection and Analysis Solution,”](#) *athenaiss.com*.

52 Ibid.

53 Agencies, [“Police Minister: Social Media Monitoring has foiled 200 terror attacks,”](#) *The Times of Israel*, 12 June 2018.

54 Associated Press, [“Israel claims 200 attacks predicted, prevented with data tech,”](#) *CBNS News*, 12 June 2018.

55 Al-Jazeera, [“Israel removes metal detectors from al-Aqsa compound,”](#) *Al-Jazeera*, 27 July 2017.

56 Itamar Ekhner and Hassan Shalan, [“The Cabinet decided to remove the magnetometers, praying: “We will not enter the Temple Mount”](#) (Hebrew), *Yediot Ahronot*, 25 July 2017.

the streets of the Old City, including “suspects from the West Bank.”⁵⁷

This upgrade adds another layer to Israel’s visual surveillance apparatus, violating Palestinians’ right to privacy and altering their relationship to their city: “For us, residents of the Old City, the streets and alleyways used to be our collective social spaces, our living rooms. Now, not only are our living rooms surveilled, but they can even see underneath our clothes. Our privacy and liberty are systematically deprived from us, to make us leave and stop resisting.”⁵⁸

C. Mer Group corporate

C. Mer Group is a publicly traded Israeli integrator in the areas of communications and security. The Group offers a wide range of technology-based solutions and end-to-end services that include consultancy, development, engineering and manufacturing, as well as integration and implementation.

Traded: Tel Aviv Stock Exchange.

Revenues: 168.8 million USD in 2017.

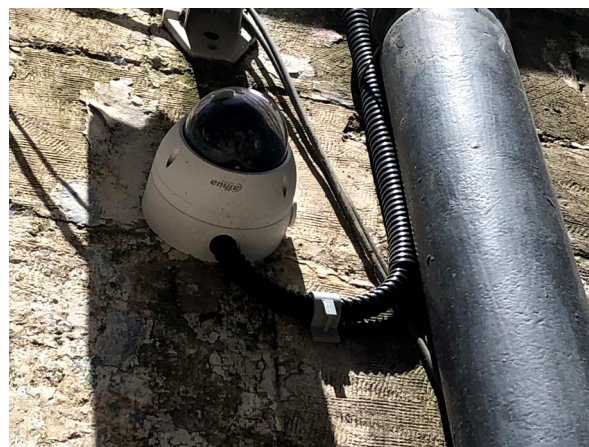
Ownership: Main shareholders: FIMI Five 2012 Ltd (36.60%), Haim Mer (28.52%), Isaac Ben Bassat (9.19%).

CEO: Nir Lempert.

Subsidiaries: Fully owned subsidiaries: Mer Metal workers, Mer Telecom Ltd., Mer Communication and Security Sy, Rotal Networks, Rotal Infrastructure, RMCS Communications, ORT Tech Systems, TechMer Ltd., Mer Cello Wireless, TechMer NAMS, MEr Defense and Technologies Ltd., TechMer, Athena GS3 Security Implementations Ltd.

57 Tal Shelo, [“The Cabinet Decided to Remove Metal Detectors and Cameras from the entrance to Temple Mount”](#) (Hebrew), *Walla News*, 25 July 2017.

58 A resident of the Old City in an interview with Who Profits on 22 September 2018.



Dahua Technology CCTV camera, Occupied Old City of Jerusalem | July 2018 | Photo: Who Profits

Merimon natural Gas North Ltd (50%), Rotem Natural Gas Ltd (33%), Peak Diamonds Ltd (28%), Gamefly inc (5%), Opion B.V (29%), Xenia Ventuers Ltd. (8%), P.L.H Ltd (37.5%).

Head office: 5 Hatzoref St, Holon, Israel

Tel: +972-3-557-2555

Website: www.mer-group.com

Corporate hardware suppliers

During field missions in July and August 2018, Who Profits documented the infrastructure of Israel’s visual surveillance in the Old City’s four Quarters. In addition to C. Mer Group, the findings reveal the complicity of three corporations in the provision of surveillance hardware: VideoTec, Dahua Technology and Evron Systems Ltd.

The CCTV camera most in use across the Muslim, Christian and Armenian Quarters, particularly in the streets leading to Al Aqsa mosque, is the AVBPHK2A00 manufactured by VideoTec. VideoTec is a private Italian company specializing in cutting edge surveillance equipment. The AVBPHK2A000 model weighs only 12kg, is made of thick aluminum and has 18mm of bullet-proof glass.⁵⁹

59 VideoTec, [“AVBHP: Armoured Large Camera housing”](#), *videotec.com*.

Who Profits documented the presence of 26 VideoTec CCTVs across the around 566 meters long Al-Wad street. Al-Wad is the main artery of the Muslim Quarter, stretching from Bab al-Amud (Damascus Gate) to Al Aqsa mosque. In the main market street of the Muslim Quarter, Khan al-Zeit, stretching over 383 meters, the presence of 15 VideoTec CCTVs was documented. On the 491 meters long Via Dolorosa Street, in the Christian Quarter, Who Profits documented the presence of eight VideoTec CCTVs.

In these Quarters, most intersections have at least two VideoTec CCTVs providing a 3D image of every movement in a specific location. For example, Who Profits documented the installation of three VideoTec CCTVs at the intersection between Via Dolorosa and the Nuns Ascent, two at the intersection between As-Saraya Ascent and Al Qirami Street, and two CCTVs at the entrance to Al Qattamin market leading to Al Aqsa mosque.

CCTVs manufactured by Dahua Technology, a publicly traded Chinese company, are installed at the entrance to settler occupied homes and spaces in the Muslim Quarter. Who Profits documented the installation of Dahua Technology CCTVs at the settler occupied homes on Al-Wad Street, including the famous house occupied by Israel's late Prime Minister, Ariel Sharon. Settler occupied Palestinian homes and spaces in the Old City and surrounding East Jerusalem neighborhoods themselves function as "urban optical devices for surveillance and the exercise of power."⁶⁰

Inside the Old City's Jewish Quarter, there is a striking lack of VideoTec or Dahua Technology CCTVs. However, Who Profits did document the use of an Everon Systems CCTV camera at the entrance to the Jewish Quarter from the



Evron Systems Ltd. CCTV camera, Occupied Old City of Jerusalem | July 2018 | Photo: Who Profits

Muslim Quarter. The private Israeli advanced communication provider has developed the Aureus 3D-AI, a face recognition software that can analyse still and video footage. The software has an advantage in face recognition due to its ability to use 3D technology, sophisticated algorithms and computer intelligence. According to Evron, the software can undertake "25 million facial comparisons in a second!"⁶¹

The visibility of the infrastructure of surveillance serves to suppress Palestinians, by reminding them that they are being continually watched by the Israeli state apparatus. "Not only are there armed police everywhere you go, but you also can't miss these big box CCTVs. They don't only want to watch us, they want us to know that they are watching at all time, that they are the controllers," said a shop owner in Khan al Zeet.⁶² No public space in the Palestinian dominated Quarters of the Old City is free of scrutiny.

Who Profits was not able to determine which of these surveillance cameras were installed by the Israeli police as part of 'Mabat 2000' and which were installed by private security

⁶⁰ Eyal Weizman, "[Optical Urbanism](#)," *Open Democracy*, 27 April 2002.

⁶¹ Evron Systems Ltd., "[Facial Recognition Software](#)," www.evrionsystems.co.il

⁶² Interview conducted by Who Profits, 22 September 2018.

Bab Al Amud

Who Profits documented the extensive visual surveillance present at Bab al-Amud (Damascus Gate), the main gate to Jerusalem's Old City, leading directly into the Muslim Quarter. For Jerusalemites, it is a space of great socio-political and economic significance. The Gate's Square has been a site of many confrontations between Israeli settlers, the police and Palestinians.

At the 2017 annual Herzliya conference,¹ Israel's Minister of Public Security, Gilad Erdan, specifically mentioned the need to vamp up security architecture and visual surveillance at the Gate. "We are going to make unprecedented changes in the entire security system of Damascus Gate," he said. Among the changes are the installation of additional cameras, greater intelligence gathering, increased numbers of police officers, and the construction of permanent surveillance watchtowers. The Gate will "undergo a revolution," according to Erdan.²

Hanadi Qawasmi, a Palestinian journalist, noted that "60 new and old surveillance cameras are watching Bab Al-Amud Square, the passages leading to it, and the nearby area in Sultan Suleiman Al-Qanuni Street, to Bab Al-Zahreh in the East and Nablus street to the North."³ Who Profits documented at least 6 CCTVs manufactured by Sony Corporation, the Japanese multinational conglomerate, installed on two towers on each side of the Gate's square.

In addition, three new permanent surveillance towers were built on Bab al-Amud Square, manned by the Israeli border police.

1 An annual conference organized by the Intra Disciplinary Center at Herzliya, in which state representatives articulate Israeli policies.

2 Assaf Golan and Yaron Doron, "[Dramatic Change: This is How Police Officers will prevent Terror Attacks at Damascus Gate](#)" (Hebrew), Makor Rishon, 22 June 2017.

3 Hanadi Qawasmi, "[In Search for 'Security' ...Fortifications at Damascus Gate in Jerusalem](#)", (Arabic) Anadolu Agency, 21 December 2017.

companies. The Israeli police refused to disclose this information, following a Who Profit Freedom of Information (FOI) request.⁶³

Dahua Technology corporate information

Dahua Technology is a publicly traded Chinese provider of video surveillance products and services.

Since 2014, Dahua has ranked 2nd in the global video surveillance equipment market according to an HIS Markit report, and in 2017 Dahua ranked 3rd in the A&S International "Security 50."

Ownership: Taiping Asset Management

Co., Ltd. (13.75%), Everbright Pramerica Advantage Balanced Fund (8.69%), GF Jufeng Fund (5.99%), China AMC Growth Fund (5.36%), China International Neixu Dongli Fund (5.60%), Fund Kexun (4.11%).

Traded: Shenzhen Stock Exchange.

Revenues: 2.89 billion USD in 2017.

Subsidiaries: The company has 42 subsidiaries globally, including in: Mexico, USA, Brazil, Chile, Colombia, Peru, Panama, Argentina, UK, Netherlands, Poland, Hungary, Italy, Germany, Iberia, Russia, Serbia, France, Singapore, Malaysia, Kazakhstan, Thailand, India, Korea, Indonesia, Turkey, Australia, South Africa, Dubai.

63 Appendix I.



VideoTec CCTV cameras, Occupied Old City of Jerusalem | July 2018 | Photo: Who Profits

Partners: 3dEYE, Accellence Technologies, Advancis, Agora, Aimetis, Angelcom, Argos Technologies, Anet Systems Inc. and OnSSI.

Head office: No.1199, Bin'an Road, Binjiang District, Hangzhou, China.

Tel: +8657187688883

Website: www.dahuasecurity.com

Everon Systems Ltd. corporate information

Everon Systems Ltd. is a private Israeli provider of solutions in the field of low voltage, advanced communication systems, security systems (including CCTV cameras), control and multimedia.

Ownership: The company is privately owned by Meron Abraham and Sidis Aharon.

CEO: Sidis Aharon

Revenues: 3,499,990 million USD in 2017.

Partners: Evron is the Israeli representative and distributor for On Net surveillance System Inc. (OnSSI).

Head office: High-Tech Village, Hebrew University - Givat Ram Campus 39235, Israel.

Tel: +972-73-7841790

Website: www.evransystems.co.il

VideoTec- Video Security Products corporate information

VideoTec is a private Italian company which designs and manufactures video surveillance products, including cameras.

President: Alessio Grotto

Subsidiaries: VideoTec (Hong Kong) Ltd, VideoTec France S.A.R.L, VideoTec Security INC

Partners: Among the company's partners are governmental bodies, ISS- Intelligent Security System, Sightlogix, Sony Security Systems, Milestone Systems, Genetec, digivod, Bosch, Axis Communications.

Head office: Via Friuli,6 - I-36015 SCHIO (VI), Italy.

Tel: +39-0445697411

Website: www.videotec.com

Sony Corporation corporate information

Sony Corporation is a publicly traded Japanese multinational conglomerate. Its diversified business includes consumer and professional electronics, gaming, entertainment and financial services.

Ownership: Major shareholders are: Sumitomo Mitsui Trust Bank, Limited (5.04%), BlackRock Japan Co., Ltd. (6.27%), Capital Research and Management Company (6.12%).

CEO: Kenichiro Yoshida

Traded: Tokyo Stok Exchange and New York Stok Exchange under the ticker symbol: SNE.

Revenues: 77,042 million USD in 2017.

Subsidiaries: Sony has a large number of consolidated subsidiaries in Japan and globally, including: Altair Semiconductor Ltd., Sony Capital Corporation, Sony Corporation of America, Sony Corporation of Hong Kong Ltd., Sony DADC Austria GmbH,

Sony DADC UK Limited., Sony Entertainment Inc., Sony Europe Limited, Sony Film Holding Inc., Sony Enterprise Co., Ltd., Sony Bank Inc., Sony Global Solutions Inc. and Sony Global Manufacturing & Operations Corporation.

Partners: OnISS, AJA, AMD, Blackmagic, Boris FX, Contour Design, Digital Juice, Dolby Laboratories, Edward Troxel, Franhofer IIS, FXHOME, GenArts, Intel, Izotope, Main Concept, Matrox, Microsoft, NewBlueFX, nVIDIA, Pixelan Software, Real Networks, Red Giant Software, RE:Vision, Singular Software, Toontrack, VASST.

Head office: 1-7-1 Konan Minato-ku, Tokyo, 108-0075, Japan.

Tel: +81-3-6748-2111

Website: www.sony.net

A pilot project and a marketing opportunity

Further expansion

The purported success of ‘Mabat 2000’ has been used as justification for expanding visual surveillance in occupied East Jerusalem and exporting it internationally, generating huge profits for complicit corporations.

In 2014, the Israeli police announced its intention to establish ‘Mabat Kedem.’ Two years later, in August 2016, it announced the establishment of ‘Mabat Jerusalem,’ a project modeled after and inspired by ‘Mabat 2000.’⁶⁴ The scale of this project highlights the breadth of institutional involvement in Israel’s surveillance apparatus. According to an Israeli police spokesperson, ‘Mabat Jerusalem,’ an advanced and expanded system, will “work like in the movies.”⁶⁵

64 Roi Yanovsky, [“Live: Hundreds of Cameras in Jerusalem will be Connected to the Police”](#) (Hebrew), Yediot Ahronot, 9 August 2016.

65 Itzek Sabn, [“Revealed: Every car entering Jerusalem to be filmed and Registered”](#), (Hebrew), Israel

The project will connect new and existing cameras to a centralized Command Center to be built in the Gilo settlement neighborhood in southern East Jerusalem.⁶⁶ Cameras pertaining to multiple bodies and institutions, including 130 Ministry of Construction and Housing, 20 Hebrew University, and 250 Jerusalem Municipality CCTVs, will be connected to a Centralized Command & Control Center.⁶⁷ ‘Mabat Jerusalem’ will also connect transit and surveillance infrastructure systems by linking 193 newly installed CCTV cameras with 60 LPR cameras on the city’s main roads, entrances and exits,⁶⁸ 75 traffic cameras and 240 CCTV cameras installed along the route of the Jerusalem light rail.⁶⁹

A subsidiary of CityPass Ltd, the consortium that built and operates the red line of the Jerusalem light rail, was contracted in May 2018 to install infrastructure for ‘Mabat Jerusalem.’ It was awarded a 1 million NIS Israeli police contract for laying an 8km optic fiber from the light rail depot in the French Hill settlement neighborhood to the Jerusalem Police Headquarters that would connect light rail cameras with ‘Mabat Jerusalem.’⁷⁰ In 2015, Who Profits documented the commercial involvement of Bladeworx, RT LTA Systems and DJI - Dajiang Innovation Technology Company in the surveillance of the light rail’s route, which

Hayom, 4 June 2017.

66 Open Knesset, [“Committee Meeting of the 20th Knesset: Presentation of the Ministry of Public Security’s Work Plan”](#) (Hebrew), 2 July 2018.

67 Itzek Sabn, [“Revealed: Every car entering Jerusalem to be filmed and Registered”](#) (Hebrew), Israel Hayom, 4 June 2017.

68 Roi Yanovsky, [“Live: Hundreds of Cameras in Jerusalem will be Connected to the Police”](#) (Hebrew), Yediot Ahronot, 9 August 2016.

69 Itzek Sabn, [“Revealed: Every car entering Jerusalem to be filmed and Registered”](#), (Hebrew), Israel Hayom, 4 June 2017.

70 Israeli Government Procurement Agency, [“Contract exemption: the Laying of an Optic Fiber Line, Jerusalem”](#), (Hebrew), mr.gov.il, 27 May 2018.

was the prelude for the establishment of a new aerial surveillance unit under the Emergency and Security Department of the Jerusalem Municipality.⁷¹ Inherent with the planned expansion of the light rail is the prospect of greater visual surveillance in Jerusalem.⁷²

‘Mabat 2000’ technology is also being showcased and exported internationally. The project’s command center has been visited by international political representatives and homeland security personnel, who according to a former Israeli police spokesperson, “have come and examined how the system works to learn how to use it overseas.”⁷³

A 2011 itinerary for the visit of US top ranking law enforcement officers, including police chiefs, as well as homeland security and border patrol, obtained by the campaigning group *Jewish Voice for Peace*, shows that part of the visit was dedicated to examining Israel’s surveillance system in the Old City, with a focus on visual surveillance.⁷⁴ During a 2016 visit, the delegation specifically met with the David sub-district police in the Old City.⁷⁵ In 2017, New York’s Governor, Andrew Cuomo, personally visited the Command & Observation Centre and cemented this process of knowledge exchange by establishing the Israel-New York commission. For Cuomo, the Israeli police’s use of technology is “something that we can learn from.”⁷⁶

71 Who Profits, [“Eye in the Skye: New Aerial Surveillance System and the Jerusalem Light Rail”](#), whoprofits.org, March 2015.

72 Who Profits, [“Tracking Annexation: The Jerusalem Light Rail and the Israeli Occupation”](#), whoprofits.org, July 2017.

73 Daniel K. Eisenbud, [“Old City Hi-Tech Helps Israeli Police Prevent Crime,”](#) Jerusalem Post, 1 August 2016.

74 [“National counter Terrorism seminar,”](#) muckrock.com, April 2011.

75 [“ADL National Counter-Terrorism Seminar in Israel”](#), deadlyexchange.org, July-August 2016.

76 Alex Kane, [“Israeli Companies are Making a](#)



CCTV cameras, Bab Al Amoud (Damascus Gate) Occupied Old City of Jerusalem | July 2018 | Photo: Who Profits

A marketing opportunity

Companies contributing to the development of East Jerusalem’s network of visual surveillance have a unique marketing advantage with the potential to exponentially increase the market value of their products. In an interview in September 2016, C. Mer Group’s CEO noted that his company’s involvement in this project “reflects our ability towards the security market in Israel and abroad, and opens the doors for expanding the market of Mer.”⁷⁷

The marketing value of Jerusalem as a site for the testing of hi-tech surveillance systems was crystalized by a joint pilot project between the Jerusalem Municipality and Cisco Systems, a publicly traded US-based company. In August 2017, Cisco made an offer to the Jerusalem Municipality to launch a pilot project for the development of Smart City technology, free of charge. The 36-month joint venture

[Killing off Technology Perfected over 50 years of Occupation”](#), The Alternet, 6 June 2017.

77 Amy Rohaks Dombah, [“Mer Group to upgrade Israeli police video system in Jerusalem’s Old City,”](#) Defense News, 14 September 2016.

is to be implemented in two sites in the city centre of West Jerusalem, with the prospect of expansion. The pilot project includes the implementation of technology, communication equipment and CCTVs, connected to a command and control centre. The centre is to be equipped with video analysis software and technology – including the ability to detect voice and alert of lingering groups – and have the ability to analyse footage from up to 10,000 CCTV cameras.

As one private Israeli company noted in an objection filed to (and dismissed by) the Jerusalem Municipality, “Cisco is a commercial company whose intention is to profit. Underlying its agreement to provide the system to the Jerusalem Municipality is no motive other than profit, whether directly or indirectly, if not in the first stage (and that should also be doubted), then surely in the next stage, *after a three year maintenance period.*”⁷⁸

Cisco is currently involved in the establishment of a network of technology hubs in the Naqab (Negev) desert, Jerusalem (including occupied East Jerusalem) and the occupied Syrian Golan.⁷⁹ It has also won an IMOD tender to provide servers and IT support to the Israeli military, replacing HP.⁸⁰

Conclusion

As this flash report has demonstrated, there is no single, overarching system of surveillance in Jerusalem, but rather an amalgamation of state, municipal and private mechanisms, both low and hi-tech, all governed by a log-

ic in which Palestinians constitute a ‘security threat.’ An array of public bodies, including the Israeli police, the Jerusalem Municipality and the Ministry of Construction and Housing, rely heavily on the private sector to implement surveillance projects and to provide partisan security for illegal Israeli settlers, who in turn lay their own networks of visual surveillance across occupied East Jerusalem. By providing surveillance services and equipment to the Israeli state in the Old City and beyond, Israeli and international corporations contribute to the violation of the right of Palestinians to privacy and freedom of expression and association, protected under international law.⁸¹

Palestinians and the overwhelming majority of the international community do not recognize Israel’s illegal annexation of East Jerusalem. Israel’s 1980 “Basic Law: Jerusalem, Capital of Israel” has been declared “null and void” in Resolution 478 of the UN Security Council, and the United Nations, the High Contracting Parties to the Geneva Conventions, the International Court of Justice and the International Committee of the Red Cross consider East Jerusalem to be indisputably occupied under international law. Programs such as ‘Mabat 2000’ and its more recent offshoots, ‘Mabat Kedem’ and ‘Mabat Jerusalem,’ affect all Palestinians living in or visiting Jerusalem, strengthening Israeli control over their lives and territorial expansion at the heart of Palestinian urban space. For Israeli corporations, these programs and the Palestinian residents they target serve as a laboratory for the development of tools and technologies of repression that can be profitably exported worldwide as battle-proven.

78 Jerusalem Municipality, [“Response to an objection to the process by a private company”](#) (Hebrew), [jerusalem.muni.il](#), 2 October 2017

79 Cisco Systems, [“Cisco Expands Network of Digital Hubs Connecting Communities and Businesses in Israel.”](#) [cisco.com](#), 7 March 2018.

80 Yoav Azulay, [“Cisco won a tender worth millions of Shekels to supply servers to the IDF.”](#) (Hebrew), [Globes](#), 16 January 2017.

81 United Nations Human Rights Office of the High Commissioner, [The Right to Privacy in the Digital Age](#), [ohchr.org](#).