

Illegal Construction on Stolen Palestinian Land: Netanyahu's Settlement Bloc Boundaries Proposal

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Reports indicate Netanyahu proposed establishing boundaries on settlement blocs – on the one hand to justify continuing illegal construction on stolen Palestinian land.

On the other, for Israel to annex under any peace agreement. Public Security Minister Gilad Erdan said the proposal was always Netanyahu's position – so "nobody should be surprised."

"(E)veryone in the Likud knows if there will ever be a partner for peace, it is clear there will be territorial concessions" – code language for grand theft with Palestinians having no say whatever over what's rightfully theirs.

Israel already controls over 60% of West Bank land and much of East Jerusalem. Agriculture Minister Uri Ariel called Netanyahu's proposal "dangerous and precedential."

It contradicts government guidelines for Jews to have all Judea and Samaria, he said.

Netanyahu's proposal is little more than a PR stunt. He publicly rejected peace talks as a waste of time. He fundamentally opposes Palestinian statehood. He wants unlimited settlement construction.

Senior Palestinian Authority officials rejected his PR stunt. Chief negotiator Saeb Erekat said:

"It's a request to continue illegal settlement construction with Palestinian consent. This looks like one state and two systems rather than two sovereign and democratic states."

"If Mr. Netanyahu wants to have meaningful negotiations ending the occupation that began in 1967, he should recognize a Palestinian State on the 1967 border and honor Israel's obligations including a halt of settlement construction and the release of the Palestinian prisoners."

PLO official Hanan Ashrawi blasted Netanyahu calling his scheme a "disingenuous and manipulative exercise of political and legal deception."

"All settlements are illegal and in flagrant contravention of international law and consensus, and any efforts to annex and to legalize the settlement blocs is a blatant attempt to steal more Palestinian land and to legitimize Israel's ongoing system of apartheid, land theft and expansion."

Talks with Israel should be based on international law with a binding timetable for ending

occupation and removing settlements, she stressed. Nothing less is acceptable.

In nearly 50 years of occupation, Israel never negotiated in good faith. Why expect a new leaf under the most ruthless regime in its history.

Israel steals Palestinian land regularly for exclusive Jewish development. Entire Palestinian villages are destroyed to ethnically cleanse Arabs.

Homes are lawlessly bulldozed. Families are uprooted. When Israel wants Palestinian land, it steals it.

On May 26, Haaretz reported one example, saying "Israel Defense Forces' Civil Administration transferred hundreds of meters of private (Palestinian) land...to the West Bank settlement of Shim'a.

The Samsaras family lost their property. Their High Court petition to halt construction was rejected. Justice Anat Baron said work in the area stopped so there was no need for court intervention.

A Final Comment

While Netanyahu pretended to turn a new leaf, his security force thugs critically injured a 10-year-old Palestinian boy.

Fishermen and farmers were attacked. Palestinian communities were terrorized. Gaza remains repressively besieged for political, not security reasons.

Palestinian Legislative Council Speaker Aziz Dweik was sentenced to one year in prison and a 6,000 shekel fine for belonging to the wrong political party.

Children continue being tortured during interrogations for the alleged crime of stone-throwing.

Noor Muhammad Hilmi Hamamrah is one of countless victims. His mouth was forced open. Interrogators began prying off his braces. He was threatened with having all his teeth ripped out if he didn't confess to throwing stones at Israeli cars.

On May 26, the Al Haq human rights group said Palestinian land annexation is increasing. Settlements are expanding. Settlers attack Palestinians with impunity – on average multiple times weekly.

Abuses on Netanyahu's watch are horrific. The only new leaf he'll turn is making them worse than ever.

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