

Israel Admits Wall is Not Just About Security, Not Temporary

What Palestinians have known all along, Israel has finally openly admitted.

By [Palestine Monitor](#)

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Israel has publicly acknowledged that the route of the so-called Security Wall is not determined solely by security considerations.

Haim Ramon, the Jerusalem cabinet minister, said on Israel radio that the Wall in Jerusalem was built “first and foremost to prevent [terrorism].” But the barrier, he added, “also makes [Jerusalem] more Jewish. The safer and more Jewish Jerusalem will be, it can serve as a true capital of the state of Israel.”

The Wall isolates a number of Jerusalem’s Arab neighborhoods, in which at least 55,000 Palestinians live, from Jerusalem while effectively enclosing tens of thousands of illegal Israeli settlers within Jerusalem. Palestinians call the route a transparent attempt to annex as much land and as many Israeli settlements in East Jerusalem as possible while including as few Palestinians as possible

Ramon’s statement contradicted Israel’s ongoing assertion that the immense Wall is solely a security measure. It adds convincing evidence to the claim by the Wall’s detractors that the Wall is indeed political in nature, a measure used to strengthen Israel’s annexation of the city. Israel’s annexation of the city is not recognized internationally and is illegal under international law.

Also adding credence to this view are plans for a new Jewish settlement in the heart of the Muslim Quarter of Jerusalem’s Old city and plans to demolish an Arab East Jerusalem neighborhood called Silwan for an Israeli archaeological park, a move that would leave 1,000 Palestinians homeless.

A new settlement called Nof Zion (Mt. Zion) is also being built in East Jerusalem’s Palestinian neighborhood of Jebel Mukaber. The housing units will largely be sold to wealthy American Jews as holiday homes, according to Israel’s Ynet News. A billboard is posted above the future site of the neighborhood very near the Palestinian homes that are “in the way” of the construction plans and are either already demolished or slated for demolition. Once the gated community is completed, the road that Palestinians from Jebel Mukaber use to access the western parts of East Jerusalem will be severed.

While the Wall itself may or may not be temporary, new Jewish neighborhoods being built inside the Wall are definitely not intended as temporary measures by the Israeli government.

In its first ruling on the issue last year, in the case of the Wall near Beit Surik, the Israeli High Court determined that Israel has no authority to build a Wall for “political” considerations such as annexing land to Israel. The statements by Ramon and the scores of new settlement projects in East Jerusalem and elsewhere in the West Bank confirm that Israel is violating the ruling of its own High Court, violating the Road Map, and violating international law.

Not a Temporary Measure

Earlier this month, the Israeli High Court ruled the route of the Wall near the village of Azzun to be unsuitable. In the region north of Qalqiliya, the route departs from the Green Line to annex thirteen square kilometers of fertile Palestinian land, which is 80% of the farmland of the nearby Palestinian village of Jayyous, to Israel. An illegal settlement called Zufin (Tzofin) has been built on that land and is currently being expanded, destroying Jayyous’ land that has been stranded west of the Wall.

The state of Israel responded to the ruling that the Wall route was unsuitable by requesting that the Wall, already completed, be left on its original route, on the grounds that it would be very expensive to move.

The state’s position marks a fundamental change in its legal arguments. Initially Israel claimed that security concerns were the sole motivation for building the Wall, and there were no other considerations.

The state’s argument highlights a major policy change regarding the “temporary” nature of the Wall. Until now, Israel has maintained that the Wall is a short-term measure that is easily removed or dismantled.

Jerusalem Wall – The New Berlin Wall?

Meanwhile the Jerusalem Wall continues to be built, an action likened by Mohammad Dahla, the attorney representing the local council of Al-Ram, a community north of Jerusalem that is being split in two by the Wall, to the construction of the Berlin Wall.

Said Dahla, “The Wall will separate families and relatives and harm the right to normal family life. It will cut off thousands from their places of work, and critically harm freedom of movement, the residents’ right of ownership, the value of properties in the area and their right of access to educational institutions.”

Israel’s position has always been to insist that the Wall was only about security concerns. Now that Israel had admitted it is also about creating political realities on the ground, said Dahla, “The cat is out of the bag.”

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