

Israeli Settlement Construction Fallout

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Netanyahu's E1 Ma'aleh Adumin settlement construction announcement drew considerable flack. What it means remains to be seen. Palestinian rights have been spurned for decades. Expect little change now.

At issue is separating the West Bank from Jerusalem, Judaizing the entire city, surrounding Palestinian urban areas with encroaching Israeli settlements, and allegedly preventing a two-state solution no longer possible with or without E1 development.

Netanyahu and previous Israeli prime ministers promised none. Plans were drawn long ago. Now they're announced. Washington and major Western partners knew about them all along. They said nothing earlier.

If completed, Ma'ale Adumin settlement will be connected to Jerusalem. Doing so divides the West Bank into separate north/south areas.

Washington expressed weak opposition. National Security spokesman Tommy Vietor called the move "counterproductive." UN Secretary-General Ban Ki-moon was no better.

Through his spokesman he expressed "disappointment." UN Human Rights Council High Commissioner Navi Pillay said nothing. She fell from grace long ago. Like Ban, she's a reliable imperial partner. Both spurn what they claim to support.

On December 3, [Haaretz](#) headlined "UK, France may recall ambassadors to protest Israel's settlement construction," saying:

So far it's not announced. Haaretz quoted an unnamed "senior European diplomat" saying:

"This time it won't just be a condemnation. There will be real action taken against Israel. London is furious about the E1 decision."

Something may be announced this week. Recalling ambassadors would be a first. British and French bluster may stop short of doing it.

Instead, they "could invoke it (as a possibility) in case of further" Israeli escalation against Palestine. Something will be announced soon.

What follows may be moderate. Possibilities include "suspending strategic dialogue meetings," labeling Israeli settlement products, and/or perhaps imposing slap-on-the-wrist sanctions against them.

German and Dutch officials also warned about less Israeli diplomatic support.

“Europe (is) putting heavy diplomatic pressure on Israel to reverse its decision,” said Haaretz.

“Five senior (EU) ambassadors communicated strong words of protest to” Israel’s Foreign Ministry.

EU ambassador Andrew Standley asked Netanyahu’s office for “clarifications.”

His office said more punitive PA steps are planned. An unnamed Israeli source said:

“The Palestinians will soon come to understand that they made a mistake when they took unilateral action and breached their treaties with Israel.”

Israel considers public posturing about abstaining from E1 building “no longer relevant.”

On Sunday, Netanyahu said “Palestinians want to use the peace process to bring about an end of the State of Israel.”

He has his own way of turning truth on its head. Every comment he makes proves it. He gives new meaning to rogue governance.

Former State Department official Robert Danin called E1 construction “a red line” for Washington.

Former US Israeli ambassador Israel Kurtzer said Israel’s move “should spur the administration into action.” How he didn’t say.

Haaretz cited UK Sky News quoting Foreign Office sources saying, “All options are on the table.” There’s an “appetite for action.”

Britain may consider “revisiting” or perhaps suspending EU/Israeli trade agreements. Don’t bet on it or anything else harsh.

A French Foreign Ministry official said, “There are other ways in which we can express our disapproval.”

In other words, talk tough. Do little or nothing. Free Israel to do what it wants. It’s taken full advantage for decades. Expect no change now.

On Sunday, Netanyahu’s cabinet voted unanimously to call Occupied Palestine “disputed territory (over which) the Jewish people have a natural right and territorial claim.”

Around 600,000 Israeli settlers occupy over half the West Bank and parts of East Jerusalem. Doing so violates international law. Fourth Geneva leaves no ambiguity. Article 49 states:

“Individual or mass forcible transfers, as well as deportations of protected persons from occupied territory to the territory of the Occupying Power or to that of any other country, occupied or not, are prohibited, regardless of their motive.”

Israel spurns all international law with impunity. After the 1967 Six Day War, the Allon Plan proposed:

- “maximum land with minimum Arabs;”
- annexing the choicest 40% of the West Bank and Gaza, including the Jordan Valley and Dead Sea’s western shore;
- expropriating a substantial area around Greater Jerusalem, including the Latrun salient; other portions would be seized later to secure full control of a united city, never again to be divided;
- dispossessing Palestinians from areas Israel wants solely for Jews;
- building permanent settlements and army bases; and
- making remaining parts of the West Bank an autonomous region economically linked to Israel.

Allon and subsequent plans made peace and Palestine for Palestinians impossible. Israeli policy reflects separation, discrimination, and permanent occupation harshness.

Israel manipulates conditions on the ground. It’s done to create the appearance of settlement legitimacy. Military order diktats enforce it. Israel tramples on inviolable international agreements.

It makes its own rules. It does what it pleases. It’s contemptuous of fundamental human rights. It ignores its responsibilities as an occupying power.

It won’t end what long ago became lawless. Palestine belongs to Palestinians, not Israelis. Redrawing the Territories has no legitimacy. E1 construction is Israel’s latest outrage. Western rhetoric stops short of ending what no one should tolerate.

In 1999, Israel approved an E1 master plan. It covers about 12,000 dunams. Israel declared them “state land.” Doing so was illegal.

In 1979, Israel’s High Court Elon Moreh case decision prohibited requisitioning private Palestinian land for settlement construction. Israel ignored the ruling. Straightaway it declared 900,000 dunams state land. It steals Palestinian land with impunity.

Ma’ale Adumim settlement claims jurisdiction over 48,000 dunams. E1 construction involves stealing private Palestinian land.

Israel wants it for residential housing, commerce, tourism, regional services, and other Jews-only development. Detailed plans were approved.

E1 and other settlement construction require land theft, home demolitions, forced dispossessions, and denying Palestinian self-determination.

In 1967, settlement construction began. Washington and other Western states expressed rhetorical opposition only. Policies with teeth never followed.

It’s hard imagining what never before happened is planned now. America will apply heavy pressure to prevent it.

So far, opposition to E1 construction is just bluster. Little more than that may

follow. [Reuters](#) said “Netanyahu brush(ed) off world condemnation,” saying:

“We will carry on building in Jerusalem and in all the places that are on the map of Israel’s strategic interests.”

Israeli Housing Minister, Ariel Attias, said invitation bids for 1,000 East Jerusalem homes and over 1,000 West Bank ones would be announced in weeks.

In late November, Carter administration National Security Advisor [Zbigniew Brzezinski](#) said:

“I don’t think there is an implicit obligation for the United States to follow like a stupid mule whatever the Israelis do.”

“If they decide to start a war, simply on the assumption that we’ll automatically be drawn into it, I think it is the obligation of friendship to say, ‘you’re not going to be making national decisions for us.’ ”

“I think that the United States has the right to have its own national security policy.”

Perhaps he feels the same way about lawless Israeli settlements. If so, what better time to say so than now.

A Final Comment

On December 3, the International Middle East Media Center ([IMEMC](#)) headlined “Israeli Security Services Oppose Government Decision to Build More Settlement,” saying:

Officials called Netanyahu’s announcement a hasty “angry move.” Punishment shouldn’t follow unless Palestine sues Israel at the ICC or ICJ.

At the same time, occupation harshness continues. On December 3, Israeli soldiers murdered a Palestinian civilian near Nablus. Hatem Shadid was a 35-year old construction worker father of five.

Overnight, a Fatah official and 10 other Palestinians were kidnapped. Settlers burned a Palestinian car. They also spray-painted hate slogans in Hebron. Israeli security forces did nothing to stop them.

On December 4, Palestinian political prisoners will again hunger strike in solidarity against lawless detentions and gulag harshness.

In 2009, Israel began stamping visitor passports to the West Bank “Palestinian Authority only.” Doing so restricted them to West Bank areas.

Israel changed tactics. It’s now stamping passports “Judea & Samaria only.” Doing so amounts to stealth West Bank annexation. Israel annexed East Jerusalem earlier.

Western outrage didn’t follow. Nothing is said now about West Bank annexation.

E1 construction is bad enough. Decades of lawless settlement construction is worse. Annexing the entire West Bank reveals Israel’s dirty game. Don’t expect Western condemnation to follow.

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