
Breaking the Law in the West Bank - The Private Land Report - Nov. 2006

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This report by the **Peace Now Settlement Watch Team** is a harsh indictment against the whole settlements enterprise and the role all Israeli governments played in it. The report shows that Israel has effectively stolen privately owned Palestinian lands for the purpose of constructing settlements and in violation of Israel's own laws regarding activities in the West Bank. Nearly 40 percent of the total land area on which the settlements sit is, according to official data of the Israeli Civil Administration (the government agency in charge of the settlements), privately owned by Palestinians. The settlement enterprise has undermined not only the collective property rights of the Palestinians as a people, but also the private property rights of individual Palestinian landowners.

Summary:

The majority of settlements have been constructed either entirely or partially on private Palestinian land

- For the first time Peace Now is able to prove, that despite the State and settler's claims, the majority of the settlements in the West Bank have been constructed on private Palestinian land and not on State land.
- 130 settlements were constructed either entirely or partially on private Palestinian land
- Around 60 thousand dunams of the land used by the settlements is actually private Palestinian land
- Private Palestinian land accounts for 40% of land used for settlements
- Construction of settlements on private Palestinian land is illegal according to the Supreme Court ruling, (Elon More precedent of 1979), and thus cannot be authorized. The result is that not only were the outposts constructed in an illegal manner, but also a large number of the veteran settlements were established on private Palestinian land and are thus illegal.
- The data presented here has been hidden by the State for many years, for fear that the revelation of these facts could damage its international relations. Only recently did Peace Now manage to obtain this material.
- **Conclusion:** For many years the state of Israel has been seizing thousands of dunams of private Palestinian land in order to construct settlements. The claim by the State and settlers that the settlements have been constructed on state land is misleading and false. The vast majority of settlement construction was done against the law of the land and the Supreme Court ruling and therefore unauthorized.

On a moral note this report paints a picture of the Israeli state acting in "daylight robbery" of Palestinian land and handing it over to Israeli settlers. The State has been taking advantage of the weakened status of the Palestinians in order to steal their land.

Peace Now Demands: That the Attorney General order an immediate investigation into these findings and bring those responsible to justice.

For the full report - [click here](#)

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