



THE HUMANITARIAN IMPACT OF ISRAELI SETTLEMENT POLICIES

JANUARY 2012

FAST FACTS

- Since 1967, Israel has established about 150 settlements (residential and others) in the West Bank, including East Jerusalem, in addition to some 100 “outposts” erected by settlers without official authorization.
- The settler population is estimated at approximately 500,000; its rate of growth during the past decade stood at a yearly average of 5.3% (excluding East Jerusalem), compared to 1.8% by the Israeli population as-a-whole (ICBS).
- While fenced or patrolled areas of settlements cover three percent of the West Bank, 43% of the West Bank is off-limits for Palestinian use because of its allocation to the settlement’s local and regional councils.
- Virtually all of the land viewed by Israel as public or “state land” (27% of the West Bank) has been allocated to settlements, rather than for the benefit of the local population (B’Tselem).
- About one third of the land within the settlements’ outer limits is privately owned by Palestinians, according to official Israeli land records (Peace Now).
- Over 60 percent of the Palestinian-owned structures demolished in 2011, due to the lack of permit, were located in areas allocated to settlements.
- In 2011, five Palestinians (inc. two children) were killed and over 1,000 injured (of whom nearly a fifth were children) by Israeli settlers or security forces in incidents directly or indirectly related to settlements, including demonstrations.
- Over 90% of Israeli police investigations into incidents of settler violence during the past six years (2005-2010) were closed without indictment (Yesh Din).
- More than 500 internal checkpoints, roadblocks and other physical obstacles impede Palestinian movement inside the West Bank, including access of children to schools; they exist primarily to protect settlers and facilitate their movement, including to and from Israel.
- The location of settlements was the major consideration behind the deviation of the Barrier’s route away from the Green Line; once complete, about 80% of the settler population will live in settlements located on the western (“Israeli”) side of the Barrier.

- Settlements are illegal under international law as they violate Article 49 of the Fourth Geneva Convention, which prohibits the transfer of the occupying power’s civilian population into occupied territory. This illegality has been confirmed by the International Court of Justice, the High Contracting Parties to the Fourth Geneva Convention and the United Nations Security Council.
- Seizure of land for settlement building and future expansion has resulted in the shrinking of space available for Palestinians to sustain their livelihoods and develop adequate housing, basic infrastructure and services. Settlement expansion plans have led to extensive demolitions of Palestinian homes and the forcible displacement of people.
- The failure to respect international law, along with the lack of adequate law enforcement vis-à-vis settler violence and takeover of land has led to a state of impunity, which encourages further violence and undermines the physical security and livelihoods of Palestinians. Those protesting settlement expansion or access restrictions imposed for the benefit of settlements (including the Barrier) are regularly exposed to injury and arrest by Israeli forces.
- Israeli civil law is de facto applied to all settlers and settlements across the occupied West Bank, while Israeli military law is applied to Palestinians, except in East Jerusalem, which was officially annexed to Israel. As a result, two separate legal systems and sets of rights are applied by the same authority in the same area, depending on the national origin of the persons, discriminating against Palestinians.
- Continuing settlement construction, expansion and encroachment on Palestinian land is an integral part of the ongoing fragmentation of the West Bank, including the isolation of East Jerusalem. This fragmentation undermines the right of the Palestinian people to self-determination, which is to be realized with the creation of a viable and contiguous Palestinian state alongside Israel.





LAND ALLOCATED TO ISRAELI SETTLEMENTS

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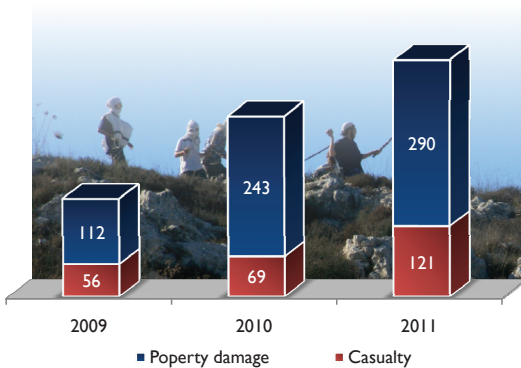
Israeli Settlements

- Fenced or Patrolled Areas and Cultivated Land
- Municipal Boundary
- Regional Council

Barrier

- Constructed / Under Construction
- Planned

SETTLER ATTACKS RESULTING IN PALESTINIAN CASUALTIES OR PROPERTY DAMAGE



United Nations Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs

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