



**Negotiations Affairs Department**  
**Negotiations And Support Unit**

**Colonial Settlement Announcements in the Occupied Palestinian Territory (OPT)**  
**(January - July 2024)**

Since 1967, each Israeli government has invested significant resources in establishing and expanding Israeli settlements in the OPT, both in areas of land they occupy and in population. As a result of this policy, approximately 740,000 Israeli settlers now live in the West Bank settlements, including 240,000 Israeli settlers living in East Jerusalem. Over the last decade alone, there has been a 200,000 rise in the Israeli settlers' population, with the majority of these increases occurring in larger settlements like Modiin Illit, Beitar Illit, Maale Adumim, and Ariel, which collectively house 215,000 Israeli settlers.

The following are the main Israeli settlement announcements since the beginning of the year 2024:

On 09 July, the Settlement Administration under Smotrich established jurisdiction for a new settlement near Bethlehem. The settlement, named "Nahal Heletz," is planned to be built on Palestinian land that UNESCO recognized as a World Heritage Site and situated between the nearby Palestinian communities of Beit Jala and Al-Khader and the western villages of Walaja, Battir, and Husan. Approximately 26,000 Palestinians reside in these villages, west of Bethlehem. The Israeli Government's goal in constructing "Nahal Heletz" is to sever their territorial connection to Bethlehem, create an Israeli settlement enclave, and obstruct Palestinian contiguity.

On 04 July, the Settlement Administration under Smotrich approved the advancement of 5,295 housing units in Israeli settlements throughout the OPT. The building plans include expanding settlements and legalizing three outposts: Mahane Gadi, Givat Hanan (Susya East), and Kedem Arava as "neighborhoods" of existing settlements.

**List of the plans approved by the Israeli Government:<sup>1</sup>**

Settlement	Housing Units
Beitar Illit	751
Givat Zeev	452
Neria	436
Mitzpe Yericho	365
Heit Hogla (Kedem Arava)	316
Modiin Illit	300
Nokdim	290
Masu'a (Machane Gadi)	260
Gva'ot	250
Elon Moreh	186
Immanuel	170
Yakir	168
Kiryat Arba	165
Negohot	158
Kiryat Netafim	136
Hagai	135

Settlement	Housing Units
Maale Shomron (Elamatan)	120
Susya (Givat Hanan)	107
Immanuel	96
Mitzad (Asfar)	6
Almon (Anatot)	91
Shilo	90
Tzofim	74
Ganei Modiin	46
Pduel	37
Etz Efraim	36
Eli	24
Revava	16
Elkana	8
Shaarei Tikva	6
Mitzad (Asfar)	6
<b>Total</b>	<b>5,295</b>

<sup>1</sup> <https://peacenow.org.il/en>



## Negotiations Affairs Department

### Negotiations And Support Unit

On 27 June, the Settlement Administration under Smotrich decided to establish five new settlements in isolated areas by legalizing five illegal outposts: Givat Assaf, Adorayim, Sde Ephraim, Evyatar, and Heletz. **(Note: All Israeli settlements built in the territories that Israel occupied in the June 1967 war are illegal under international law and as stipulated by UNSC Resolution 2334 on 23 December 2016. The reference to illegal outposts in this context underlines the fact that the previous Israeli governments did not legalize those outposts. Therefore, they are illegal even under Israeli laws.)** Palestinians either privately own these lands or have complicated ownership difficulties that require complicated legal proceedings to undo the Israeli classification of these lands as "state land," which makes legalizing these settlements easier.

On 25 June, the Custodian of the State's Property in the Civil Administration declared as "state land" 12,700 dunams in the Jordan Valley's Jericho Governorate between the Palestinian villages of Fasayil and Al Jiftlik. This declaration supplements the declaration of 2,640 dunams on 29 February 2024 between the settlements of Ma'ale Adumim and Keidar, the declaration of 8,159 dunams on 20 March 2024 in an area adjacent to the current declaration, and the declaration of 170 dunams near the Herodium. The area designated for declaration is the largest since the Oslo Accords. The year 2024 marks a peak in the extent of declaring state lands. So far, Israel has declared 23,700 dunams of the West Bank land as "state land."

On 9 June, Smotrich announced a series of government administrative moves that have led to the *de facto* annexation of the West Bank and the transfer of management of all settlement matters from the hands of the military to civilian officials, a clear breach of international law. Below are the main steps of the Israeli government:

1. The completion of transferring the power from the army to an administration under Smotrich and the appointment of a "Civilian Deputy" who received the powers of the Head of the Civil Administration regarding the settlements.
2. Creating a "legalization bypass route" for financing and providing services to 63 outposts and allocating NIS 85 million for constructing security components in outposts.
3. Legalizing agricultural outposts, reforming the enforcement system against Palestinian construction, declaring approximately 15,000 dunams as "state land," and regularly promoting plans in the settlements.
4. NIS 1 billion will be added to cover security needs in the settlements in 2024-2025, and NIS 7 billion will be allocated for settler roads.

On 22 May, Israeli Defense Minister Gallant announced the cancellation of the order prohibiting Israelis from entering areas in the northern West Bank, which Israel withdrew from after the 2005 disengagement. This is the first step towards potentially establishing future settlements in these areas, as Israeli settlers are now allowed to visit, stay, and potentially build there.



## Negotiations Affairs Department

### Negotiations And Support Unit

On 21 May, the Israeli Government approved a payment of around NIS 1.5 million for illegal agricultural farms in the OPT. Support allocations have totaled approximately NIS 1.66 million over the past six years. Today, 77 settler's farm outposts in the OPT are designated for sheep and cattle grazing. The great majority of these outposts were established over the past decade. The territory seized by settlers through grazing totals some 243,000 dunums (~7% of the entire Area C) and one-third of the total area is located within areas declared by the Israeli military as “firing zones” on the eastern edges of the occupied West Bank. According to military law, these are “closed military areas.”<sup>2</sup>

On 20 April, Smotrich instructed various government ministries to provide budgets and services to 68 illegal outposts in the West Bank. Smotrich’s directive effectively establishes a ‘legalization bypass’ route, allowing the Israeli government to treat these outposts as legal and become eligible to receive budgets, construction permits, and other services.

On 10 April, the Settlement Administration under Smotrich advanced construction plans to expand the Ariel industrial zone eastward in 324 dunams and to establish the new “Amirim Neighborhood” next to Ariel West, where 1,600 units are to be built two kilometers away from Ariel. The infrastructure works for the new neighborhood establishment have recently begun. They are intended to create a territorial contiguity of settlements that will effectively sever any possibility of development for Palestinian communities in the vicinity, including the city of Salfit and the villages of Harres and Kifl Harres. The plan will essentially disconnect Salfit from its satellite villages.

On 6 March, the Israeli Government approved projects to build 3,426 housing units in the following settlements: 2,402 new housing units in Ma’ale Adumim, 694 in Efrat, and 330 in Keidar, breaking a year’s record of West Bank expansion.

On 27 February, Smotrich announced the approval of municipal boundaries for a retroactively legalized illegal farming outpost known as Mitzpe Yehuda. The outpost-turned-settlement has been named Mishmar Yehuda, located east of Bethlehem and south of the Ma’ale Adumim settlement.

### **Israeli Settlement Plans for Occupied East Jerusalem (January-July 2024)<sup>3</sup>**

Total Number Israeli Settlement Plans: 27 plans with 16,132 housing units.

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<sup>2</sup> <https://www.keremnavot.org/thewildwest>

<sup>3</sup> Ir Amim



**Negotiations Affairs Department**  
**Negotiations And Support Unit**

**New Israeli Settlements:**

Five projects of 6265 housing units were planned for three new settlements and their intended expansion. They are Givat Hamatos along the Hebron Road Strip, Givat Shaked, and Umm Lysoon, south of East Jerusalem. These plans will block the last corridor remaining for connecting Beit Safafa and Sur Baher with other parts of East Jerusalem, creating territorial contiguity between the Israeli settlements of Givat HaMatos and Har Homa and severing Bethlehem from East Jerusalem.

1. 4 January – Givat Shaked – 695 housing units.
2. 12 February – Umm Lysoon – 450 housing units.
3. 2 April – Givat Hamatos – 1200 housing units.
4. 8 April – Givat Shaked – 420 housing units.
5. 15 July – Givat Hamatos – 3500 housing units.

**Expansion of Existing Israeli Settlements:**

Six plans with 4288 housing units are for expanding the existing settlements of Gilo, Har Homa, Pisgat Ze'ev, and Ramot.

1. 20 February – Har Homa – 150 housing units.
2. 30 May – Pisgat Zeev – 150 housing units.
3. 20 June – Gilo – 760 housing units.
4. 10 July – Gilo – 528 housing units.
5. 15 July – Gilo – 1900 housing units.
6. 24 July – Ramot – 800 housing units.

**Expansion of Existing Israeli Settlements within built-up areas:**

Sixteen plans with 5579 housing units planned within built-up areas:

1. 22 January – East Talpiyot – 141 housing units.
2. 22 January – East Talpiyot – 192 housing units.
3. 11 March – East Talpiyot – 311 housing units.
4. 18 March – Neve Yaacov – 356 housing units.
5. 15 May – Gilo – 384 housing units.
6. 15 May – Gilo – 275 housing units.
7. 29 May – French Hill – 878 housing units.
8. 10 June – East Talpiyot – 394 housing units.
9. 18 June – French Hill – 328 housing units.
10. 26 June – East Talpiyot – 340 housing units.
11. 27 June – Gilo – 124 housing units.
12. 7 July – Gilo – 572 housing units.
13. 8 July – Gilo – 617 housing units.
14. 10 July – Gilo – 234 housing units.



### Negotiations Affairs Department

#### Negotiations And Support Unit

15. 17 July –Gilo – 274 housing units.
16. 17 July – French Hill – 159 housing units.

#### **More on settlement expansion in occupied East Jerusalem:**

On 9 July, the Jerusalem District Court ruled on two significant cases affecting 11 Palestinian families in Silwan facing forcible eviction from their homes at the hands of the Ateret Cohanim settler organization. Both cases were found in favor of the settlers, leaving 11 families at risk of imminent mass displacement from East Jerusalem. The Palestinians plan to appeal the ruling to the Israeli Supreme Court – though it was only a month ago that the Supreme Court rejected an appeal by the Shehadeh family, whose case is like those decided this week.

On 26 May, the Israeli Supreme Court rejected the last appeal by the Shehadeh family against being forced out of their home in Silwan at the insistence of the Ateret Cohanim settler organization. The Court ordered the 15-member family to leave their home.

On 15 April, the Jerusalem Magistrate's Court ruled that the Palestinian Diab family (30 people) be evicted from their home 70 after they had lived in the Karm al-Jaouni area of Sheikh Jarrah at the request of the Nahalat Shimon settler group. The Diab family was ordered to leave by July 15th or face forcible eviction by Israeli authorities. The Diab family is one of 30 Palestinian families in the Karm al-Jaouni area of Sheikh Jarrah fighting against the settler group Nahalat Shimon that seeks their eviction.

On 11 February, the Israeli municipality in West Jerusalem moved forward with plans for a new Jewish settlement, Nofei Rachel, comprising 650 settlement units in occupied East Jerusalem, located just meters from Palestinian homes in the village of Umm Tuba.

On 7 January, the Israeli municipality in West Jerusalem approved the construction of the settlement project known as Silicon Valley in the Wadi Al-Joz neighborhood in occupied East Jerusalem. This settlement project involves the construction of buildings ranging from 8 to 14 stories. These structures will replace Palestinian-owned commercial and industrial establishments in the Wadi Al-Joz industrial area. In addition, the Israeli municipality in West Jerusalem approved a waste disposal facility spanning a 109-dunum area in a valley near the neighborhoods of al-Issawiya, Anata, and Ras Shehada to the east of occupied East Jerusalem. This area is home to tens of thousands of Palestinians.

This ongoing creation and expansion of Israeli settlements in the OPT poses the single greatest threat to the establishment of an independent, viable, and contiguous Palestinian state. A freeze on Israeli settlement activity (distinct from a *reversal*) would end any further settlement activity (though it would not undo existing settlement construction or damage from that place). Yet despite the



**Negotiations Affairs Department**

**Negotiations And Support Unit**

International community's call for a freeze on “all settlement activity,” Israel continues to intensify its colonization of the West Bank, particularly in and around occupied East Jerusalem, threatening the two-state solution vision.



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