



UNITED NATIONS

Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs
occupied Palestinian territory

THE HUMANITARIAN IMPACT OF ISRAELI SETTLEMENT POLICIES UPDATE DECEMBER 2012

KEY 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. Three new settlements were approved in 2012 by retroactively ‘authorizing’ such outposts.
- In 2011, the settler population was estimated at over 520,000; the annual average rate of growth during the past decade was 5.3% (excluding East Jerusalem), compared to 1.8% for the Israeli population as a whole (ICBS).
- Up to 28 November, there had been a threefold increase in the number of new settler housing units which were issued for tender in 2012, compared to 2011 (Peace Now); on 30 November, the Israeli authorities announced plans to build 3,000 new settlement units in East Jerusalem and the rest of the West Bank.
- The fenced or patrolled areas of settlements cover three percent of the West Bank; in total 43% of the West Bank is allocated to settlement local and regional councils.
- Virtually all of the land declared 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 Palestinian population (B’Tselem).
- About one third of land within the outer limits of settlements is privately owned by Palestinians, according to official Israeli land records (Peace Now).
- In 2012, one Palestinian was killed and approximately 1,300 injured by Israeli settlers or security forces in incidents directly or indirectly related to settlements, including demonstrations.
- Only ten percent of 781 investigations conducted by Israeli police into incidents of settler violence between 2005 and 2011 resulted in indictments (Yesh Din).
- Approximately 540 internal checkpoints, roadblocks and other physical obstacles impede Palestinian movement within the West Bank; these obstacles 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 into the West Bank, including East Jerusalem; once complete, about 80% of the settler population will live in settlements located on the western (“Israeli”) side of the Barrier.
- Israeli settlers in the West Bank consume approximately six times the water used by Palestinians in the West Bank.

- 1. 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 has been confirmed by the International Court of Justice, the High Contracting Parties to the Fourth Geneva Convention and the United Nations Security Council.
- 2. Seizure of land for settlement building and future expansion has resulted in the shrinking of space available for Palestinians to develop adequate housing, basic infrastructure and services and to sustain their livelihoods.** These and related measures have contributed to the forced displacement of families and communities.
- 3. 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 demonstrating

against settlement expansion or access restrictions imposed for the benefit of settlements (including the Barrier) are regularly subject to arrest or injury by Israeli forces.

- 4. 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 illegally 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, thereby discriminating against Palestinians.
- 5. Continuing settlement construction, expansion and encroachment on Palestinian land and water resources 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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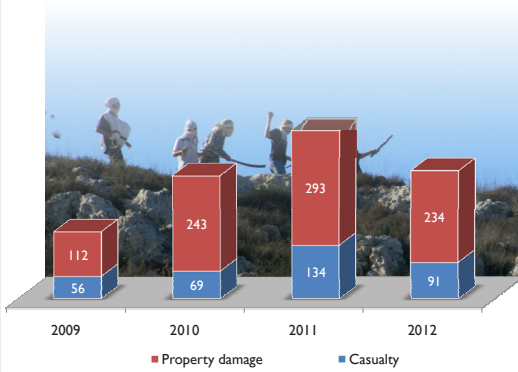
Israeli Settlements

- 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
 Cartography: OCHA-oPt - January 2012. Base data: OCHA, PA MoP. Settlement data: Peace Now, OCHA update 08. For comments contact <ochaopt@un.org> or Tel. +972 (02) 582-9962 <http://www.ochaopt.org>



Har Homa settlement, photo by JC Tordai, 2009

