

Secret Document Reveals How Israel Skipped International Law to Build Settlements



Ramallah, August 11 (RHC)-- A secret Israeli document has revealed that one of the first Israeli settlements in the West Bank was constructed under false pretenses aimed at bypassing international legislation.

A meeting was reportedly held in 1970 at the offices of then Israeli Minister of Military Affairs Moshe Dayan where a number of politicians, civil servants, and military leaders discussed plans for the Kiryat Arba settlement on the outskirts of West Bank city of Hebron.

According to the minutes of the meeting, seen by Haaretz, the participants discussed a plan to build some 250 homes on a piece of land that was claimed by the army for “security purposes.” Their plan, revealed in the minutes, goes like this: after the completion of base 14, “the commander of the Hebron district will summon the mayor of Hebron, and in the course of raising other issues, will inform him that we’ve started to build houses on the military base in preparation for winter.”

In 1971, the first settlers who were relocated to the occupied territories were given permanent residence in the said homes in a move which circumvented the international law that bans building for civilian

purposes on occupied lands.

According to human rights groups, the process was used by the Israeli military on multiple occasions at the time to build illegal settlements on land they claimed was “required for essential and urgent military needs.”

The United Nations and most countries regard the Israeli settlements as illegal because the territories were captured by Israel in a war in 1967 and are hence subject to the Geneva Conventions, which forbid construction on occupied lands.

More than half a million Israelis live in over 230 illegal settlements built since the 1967 Israeli occupation of the Palestinian territories of the West Bank and East Jerusalem.

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