

Ban Ki-moon Calls on Israel to Halt Illegal Settlement Activities



United Nations, October 5 (RHC)-- UN Secretary General Ban Ki-moon has called on Israel to halt plans to construct a new settlement and an industrial zone in the West Bank. The settlement monitoring group Peace Now reported that Tel Aviv has approved plans to construct 98 new housing units and a new industrial zone close to the illegal settlement of Shilo, located between the cities of Nabulus and Ramallah. According to reports, some 200 more units would be built in the project's second stage.

Ban Ki-moon's spokesman Farhan Haq said: "The secretary general urges Israel to halt and reverse such counterproductive decisions in the interests of peace and a just final status agreement." Haq went on to voice the secretary general's concerns that "the establishment of a new settlement near Shiloh will make the prospect of a viable, contiguous Palestinian state more remote."

Over half a million Israelis live in more than 230 illegal settlements built since the 1967 Israeli occupation of the Palestinian territories of the West Bank, including East Jerusalem al-Quds.

All Israeli settlements are illegal under international law. Tel Aviv has defied calls to stop the settlements expansion in the occupied Palestinian territories. Israel's settlement expansion has been among the main reasons behind the collapse of the last round of the so-called Middle East peace talks in 2014.

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