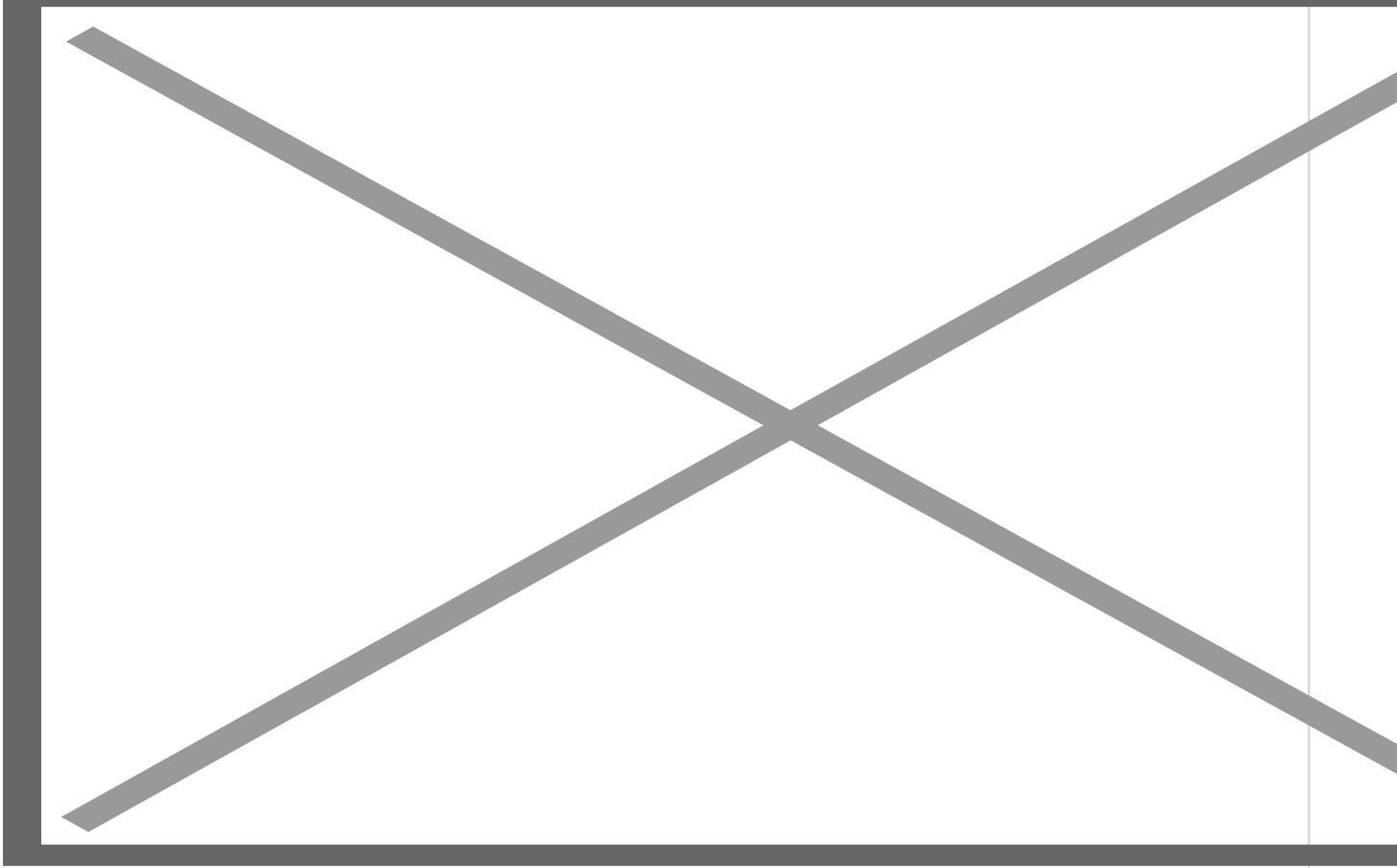


Israeli committee authorizes plans for over 3,500 new settler units in occupied East Jerusalem

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A general view of a part of the illegal Ramat Shlomo settlement in the Israeli-occupied East al-Quds. (Photo by Getty Images)

Tel Aviv, January 7 (RHC)-- An Israeli local committee has approved plans to build more than 3,500 new illegal settler units in the occupied East al-Quds, irrespective of the international outcry over the Tel Aviv regime's settlement construction and land expropriation policies.

The Israeli anti-settlement group Peace Now reported that the construction of the units would largely cut off the city from the southern part of the occupied West Bank, further complicating any efforts to create a sovereign Palestinian state.

One plan would build 1,465 settler units between controversial Giv'at Hamatos and Har Homa settlements, further cutting off East al-Quds from the nearby Palestinian city of Bethlehem and the southern West Bank. Another 2,092 homes would be built elsewhere in East al-Quds.

The projects will now proceed to consideration by the so-called local planning and building committee of the city, which has the authority to approve them, on January 17.

Peace Now said the plans "add to the tension on the ground" and highlight the "blatant discrimination" that the Israeli regime is building in East al-Quds for Israeli settlers only, while "hundreds of thousands of Palestinians in the city can build almost nothing,"

The Palestinian Authority's Ministry of al-Quds Affairs said in a report earlier this week that Israeli officials approved plans for the construction of thousands of new settler units and demolished dozens of Palestinian-owned buildings in occupied al-Quds last year.

The ministry said Israeli authorities green-lighted a host of plans in order to build about 12,000 units in the contested holy city throughout 2021, while they razed 177 Palestinian residences there. They also ordered demolition of another 200 homes in occupied al-Quds.

The international community considers Israeli settlement construction illegal under international law. The UN Security Council has in several resolutions condemned the Tel Aviv regime's settlement projects in the occupied Palestinian lands.

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