

25% of Israel's 2014 Settlements Built in Jerusalem's Eastern Side



Tel Aviv, September 29 (RHC)-- About 25 percent of Israel's settlement constructions this year have been erected in the eastern side of East Jerusalem where a larger population of Palestinians resides, an NGO says.

An official from Israeli NGO Peace Now said on Sunday that a quarter of the illegal constructions in 2014 were in the eastern side of the occupied city, annexed during the 1967 Six-Day War.

Earlier, the city council said 2,100 settler units were built there between January 1st and June 30th but it did not mention where the constructions were carried out.

Palestinians are seeking to create an independent state on the territories of the West Bank, East al-Quds, and the besieged Gaza Strip and are demanding that Israel withdraw from the occupied Palestinian territories.

Tel Aviv, however, has refused to return to the 1967 borders and is unwilling to discuss the issue of Jerusalem. According to the city's Israeli municipality, 306,000 Palestinians live in East Jerusalem, who are not considered citizens by Tel Aviv. Some 200,000 illegal settlers also live there, according to the municipality's figure.

The presence and continued expansion of Israeli settlements in occupied Palestine has created a major obstacle for the efforts to establish peace in the Middle East.

More than half a million Israelis live in over 120 illegal settlements built since Israel's occupation of the Palestinian territories of the West Bank and East Jerusalem. The UN and most countries regard the Israeli settlements as illegal because the territories were captured by Israel in the 1967 war and are hence subject to the Geneva Conventions, which forbids construction on occupied lands.

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