

Report says Israeli settler councils drafting plan for annexation of West Bank



Israeli army vehicles are pictured during a military raid in the Jenin camp, in the occupied West

Bank, on November 19, 2024. (Photo by AFP)

Tel Aviv, December 2 (RHC)-- In the wake of former President Donald Trump's re-election, Israeli settler councils have been drafting a plan to accelerate the path towards annexation of the occupied West Bank and other Palestinian territories, a Hebrew media report says.

According to a report in the Hebrew newspaper Israel Hayom, one of the plan's most important aspects relates to future control and annexation of Palestinian territories. The goal is to create "an operational strategy ready for implementation during a potential Trump administration."

A high-level meeting on the matter was recently attended by Avihai Boaron, a parliament member from the ruling Likud party of Israeli Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu and several other settler councils to advance the scheme.

"We are at a critical juncture – a window of opportunity that we can utilize either wisely or squander. Taking the foolish path would merely result in 700,000 residents and additional housing units four years from now," Boaron said at the meeting.

"The wise approach would establish conditions to make West Bank and the Jordan Valley inseparable from Israel – not just by creating demographic facts on the ground, but by fundamentally transforming the region's administrative framework," he added.

The plan includes widening the authority of settler councils to extend across regional council areas, effectively giving local authorities control over interconnecting areas, not just their settlement areas, in order to strengthen administration.

An Israeli right group says Tel Aviv uses settler violence as a strategy to drive Palestinians from their own land in the occupied West Bank.

Dissolving the Palestinian Authority (PA) is essential to this plan, which would see Arab villages fall under complete Israeli jurisdiction. "The two-state solution must be permanently removed from consideration through clear political directives," Boaron adds.

The Likud member also aims to ensure that "American policy doesn't simply resume from where the Deal of the Century left off, which effectively sought to constrain settlement growth."

The plan also includes the erection of new cities, including "dedicated communities" for the Druze and ultra-Orthodox Jews. "This demographic shift would fundamentally alter the region's character, ultimately leading to sovereignty," an involved source told Israel Hayom.

Trump's victory in the U.S. election has given Israel's far-right extremist settler movements, who dominate the Netanyahu far-right cabinet, hope for their plans to annex the West Bank.

Haaretz reported in June that Trump received a pledge from Miriam Adelson, the widow of late US businessman Sheldon Adelson, to support his presidential campaign with at least \$100 million.

In exchange, she seeks US support for Israeli annexation of the West Bank and recognition of Israeli sovereignty over the occupied territory.

U.S. investigative journalist Seymour Hersh reported last month, citing an official in Washington, that Israel will soon officially annex the West Bank, which was illegally occupied in 1967. This came after Israel's far-right hawkish minister Bezalel Smotrich recently called for the full annexation of the West Bank and the Gaza Strip.

Smotrich, who has a history of making outrage-inciting comments and provoking Palestinians, repeated his proposal of expanding Israeli settlements within the West Bank and other occupied territories.

Mahmoud Mardawi, a senior official with the Palestinian resistance movement Hamas has warned of Israel's plans to annex the West Bank and drive Palestinians out of their villages.

Israel has ramped up its aggression against Palestinians across the West Bank since October 7 last year, when it launched a genocidal war against the Gaza Strip.

Hundreds of Palestinians have been killed and thousands of others injured by Israeli settlers or troops across the occupied territory since the onset of the war.

More than 700,000 Israelis live in over 230 settlements built since the 1967 Israeli occupation of the West Bank and East al-Quds. The international community views the settlements as illegal under international law and the Geneva Conventions due to their construction on the occupied territories.

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