

# *Record Rise in 2014 New West Bank Settlements*

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Tel Aviv, February 24 (RHC)-- An NGO has reported an unprecedented 40-percent climb in illegal settlement construction in the Israeli-occupied West Bank within the past year. In its latest report on Monday, the Israel-based Peace Now group said the construction of 3,100 "residential units" began last year in West Bank settlements, while 4,485 tenders for construction were launched in East Jerusalem settlement districts during 2014, "a record high for at least a decade."

The report further underlines that 68 percent of the new construction is carried out in illegal settlements east of the outline proposed by the Geneva Initiative.

According to the NGO, the third administration of Israeli Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu promoted "an average of 460 residential units [for Jews] per month," mainly in isolated Zionist settlements, which is double the number advanced by the administration of his predecessor.

Out of the 3,100 settler units, whose constructions began during 2014, 2,671 were permanent structures and 429 were caravans and light construction structures, the report added. It further highlighted that 165 public buildings, such as schools and synagogues, and 92 industrial and agricultural structures were additionally built on the settlements.

Much of the international community regards 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 the occupied lands.

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