

# *European Union Criticizes New Israeli Settlement Plan*

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Brussels, May 11 (RHC)-- The European Union has criticized the Israeli regime for its new plan to continue illegal settlement expansion on the occupied Palestinian lands. The criticism came two days after Israel approved the construction of 900 new illegal settler units in East Jerusalem.

The 28-member EU said in a statement on Saturday that the Tel Aviv regime's plans are in fact an obstacle to the so-called peace process between Israelis and Palestinians.

"Israel's determination to continue its settlement policy despite the urging of the international community not only threatens the viability of the two-state solution but also seriously calls into question its commitment to a negotiated agreement with the Palestinians," the statement read.

An Israeli activist group known as Peace Now had confirmed that the city's district planning committee had given the go-ahead for the new housing units to be built in Ramat Shlomo settlement.

Israeli Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu recently managed to form his ruling coalition before a deadline for the formation of new cabinet. He has announced a deal with the Jewish Home (Bayit Yehudi), a Zionist pro-settlement party.

The international community regards all Israeli settlements built on the occupied Palestinian lands as illegal. More than half a million Israelis live in over 120 illegal settlements built since Israel's occupation of the Palestinian territories in 1967.

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

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