

# *Report Reveals U.S. Donors Paid \$220 Million for Israel's Illegal Settlements*

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Tel Aviv, December 8 (RHC)-- An investigation by an Israeli daily reveals that U.S. donors have channeled over 200 million dollars into Israeli illegal settlements in the occupied West Bank in recent years.

In a report published on Monday, the Haaretz daily said private American donors, including some 50 non-profit organizations from across the country, have pumped some \$220 million into the illegal settlements in recent years through tax-deductible donations.

The tax-deductible status means the U.S. government "is giving incentives and indirectly supporting the Israeli settlement movement," even though Washington claims that settlement construction is an obstacle to peace with the Palestinians.

The investigation found that the money sent by American donors is either spent on providing legal aid to Israelis for the terrorist activities or for improving the living conditions of Israeli settlers.

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

More than half a million Israelis live in over 120 illegal settlement colonies built since Israel's occupation of the Palestinian territories of the West Bank and East Jerusalem.

The United Nations and most countries regard the Israeli settlements as illegal because the territories were captured by Israel in a war in 1967 and are hence subject to the Geneva Conventions, which forbids construction on occupied lands.

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