

# *Israel Plans Over 55,000 New West Bank Settler Units*

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Tel Aviv, December 29 (RHC)-- Israel plans to build more illegal settlements in the occupied West Bank, according to the Israeli rights group Peace Now.

The group published a report on Monday, based on government data obtained under a Freedom of Information Act, revealing that the Israeli regime's housing ministry was seeking to build 55,548 units in the West Bank - including two new settlements - of which more than 8,300 would be in the contentious area of the occupied West Bank known as E1, which is located adjacent to East Jerusalem.

E1 and the Maaleh Adumim settlement next to it form an Israeli buffer east of Jerusalem that the Palestinians say would divide the West Bank and severely undermine the likelihood of the creation of a contiguous Palestinian state.

"The area of Maale Adumim and E1 is one of the most sensitive areas in terms of the chances for two state solution," Peace Now says. "For these reasons, whenever an Israeli leader tries to promote the plans in E1, the international community strongly condemns them."

International bodies including the United Nations and the European Union are all opposed to Israeli settlement building but have voiced particular concern about plans for E1.

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