

Israel Issues Building Permits for 82 New Illegal Settler Units in East Jerusalem



Tel Aviv, June 8 (RHC)-- Israeli authorities have approved permits for the construction of 82 new settler units in the occupied East Jerusalem in defiance of international calls on Tel Aviv to end the practice.

Israel's non-profit organization Ir Amim announced on Tuesday that the units are to be constructed in two buildings and are part of plans unveiled in 2010 to add 1,600 settler units to the illegal Ramat Shlomo settlement. Ir Amim, which opposes settlement construction in the occupied Palestinian territories, said in a statement that the permits had been approved on Monday.

During a conference on advancing the so-called peace talks between Israelis and Palestinians in Paris on Friday, participants voiced "alarm" at the expansion of illegal Israeli settlements.

The Secretary-General of the Palestine Liberation Organization, the PLO, Saeb Efeqat, said that "this is Israel's response to the Paris peace summit," referring to the approval of the 82 new settler units. He said the approvals serve "as yet another reminder to the international community to hold Israel liable for the crimes it continues to commit against the land and people of Palestine."

Earlier this week, it was reported that Tel Aviv is planning to build over 15,000 new settlement units on the site of the abandoned Atarot airport, located between al-Quds and Ramallah. The plan awaits approval by a local planning and building committee, according to a report by Israeli Walla news portal.

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