

# *United Nations and European Union Slam Israeli Approval of 2,500 New Settlement Units*

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United Nations, January 25 (RHC)-- The United Nations has strongly denounced Israel's approval of the construction of 2,500 new settler units in the West Bank, stressing that such "unilateral actions" are hindering peace.

On Tuesday, UN Secretary General Antonio Guterres' spokesman, Stephane Dujarric, said: "For the secretary general there is no plan B for the two states solution." The Palestine Liberation Organization also reacted to the move with PLO Secretary General Saeb Erekat saying that "the international community must hold Israel accountable immediately." He added that Tel Aviv seems to have become emboldened by "what they consider encouragement by American President Donald Trump."

The EU also slammed the move, stating that it "seriously undermines the prospects for peace" with the Palestinians. "It is regrettable that Israel is proceeding with this policy, despite the continuous serious international concern and objections, which have been constantly raised at all levels," said a statement released by the European Union External Action Service.

A spokesman for Palestinian Authority President Mahmoud Abbas also denounced the construction plans as a new blow to attempts aimed at bringing peace to the region. Nabil Abu Rudeineh said the decision "disregards" international opposition to the illegal settlements, and urged the international community to take a "real and serious position" against Israel.

Earlier in the day, the Israeli ministry of military affairs announced that Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu and the minister of military affairs, Avigdor Lieberman, had endorsed the settlement plans.

More than 230 illegal settlements have been constructed since the 1967 Israeli occupation of the Palestinian territories. The unauthorized structures have hampered attempts to establish peace in the Middle East.

In December 2016, the United Nations Security Council adopted Resolution 2334 that denounced the Israeli settlements as a "flagrant violation of international law."

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