

# *Arab League warns against Israel settlement expansion amid virus pandemic*

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Cairo, April 14 (RHC)-- The Arab League has raised the alarm about Israel's policy of expanding its illegal settlements in the Palestinian territories at a time when the whole world is scrambling to rein in the new coronavirus pandemic.

Arab League Secretary-General Ahmed Abul Gheit issued the warning in letters to world leaders on Monday as he detailed the dangerous situation in the Palestinian territories and the continuation of the Israeli occupation in the wake of the deadly virus outbreak.

Abul Gheit warned in the letters against the dangerous policies adopted by Israeli leaders, especially the ruling Likud Party of Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu, to take advantage of the current global situation related to the coronavirus spread to expand illegal settlements in the Palestinian territories.

The Arab League chief also called on world leaders to use utmost efforts to hold the Tel Aviv regime to account for its policies in order to prevent the health, social and economic repercussions in the Palestinian lands and refugee camps in the wake of the pandemic.

The letters were sent to the UN Secretary-General, the foreign ministers of the United States, Russia, France, Britain, China, and Germany, in addition to the High Representative of the European Union for Foreign Policy and Security.

Last week, Abul Gheit also sent a letter to Director-General of the International Committee of the Red Cross Robert Mardini to warn about the danger that Palestinian prisoners are facing in Israeli jails amid rising cases of infection with the new coronavirus in the occupied territories.

More than 600,000 Israelis live in over 230 settlements built since the 1967 Israeli occupation of the Palestinian territories of the West Bank and East Jerusalem. The UN Security Council has condemned Israel's settlement activities in the occupied territories in several resolutions.

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