

Israel moves to build 4,500 settler units, illegal under international law



Tel Aviv, October 5 (RHC)-- Despite international outcry against the Tel Aviv regime's policies of land grab and illegal settlement expansion, Israel will build yet another 4,500 settler units in the occupied West Bank.

The Israeli Haaretz daily newspaper reports that formal sessions on the construction of the units will begin on October 12th, and at the behest of Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu. Earlier, the Israeli Hebrew-language Israel Hayom daily newspaper reported that more than 2,000 housing units within the construction plans would be built in the Beitar Illit settlement, about 10 kilometers south of Jerusalem al-Quds, 629 in the Elieh settlement and 560 others in the Gilo settlement in southwestern al-Quds.

Moreover, 286 units will be constructed in the Har Barkha settlement near the city of Nablus, 181 in the Einav settlement and 120 others in the Pnei Kedem outpost.

All that against the backdrop of a U.S.-brokered deal signed between Israel and the United Arab Emirates (UAE) on August 13 to normalize relations. Under the agreement, Israel has apparently agreed to "temporarily" suspend applying its own rule to further areas in the West Bank and the strategic Jordan Valley which Netanyahu had pledged to annex.

While Emirati officials have described the normalization deal as a successful means to stave off annexation and save the so-called two-state solution to the Israeli-Palestinian conflict, Israeli leaders have lined up to reject the bluff of Abu Dhabi's crown prince and de facto ruler of the UAE, Sheikh Mohammed bin Zayed Al Nahyan, that Israel's annexation plans were off the table.

The Israeli prime minister has underlined that annexation is not off the table, but has simply been delayed. The Palestinian resistance movement Hamas has also rejected UAE officials' claim that Israel had stopped settlement annexation following a full normalization of diplomatic relations.

Hamas spokesman Hazem Qasem said in a statement on September 30 that the constant expansion of the Israeli settlements in the West Bank has exposed the false claims of the Arab country.

"These [UAE] claims [that normalization with Israel has stopped settlement construction] are meant to mislead the Arab public opinion and to cover up the normalization crime."

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