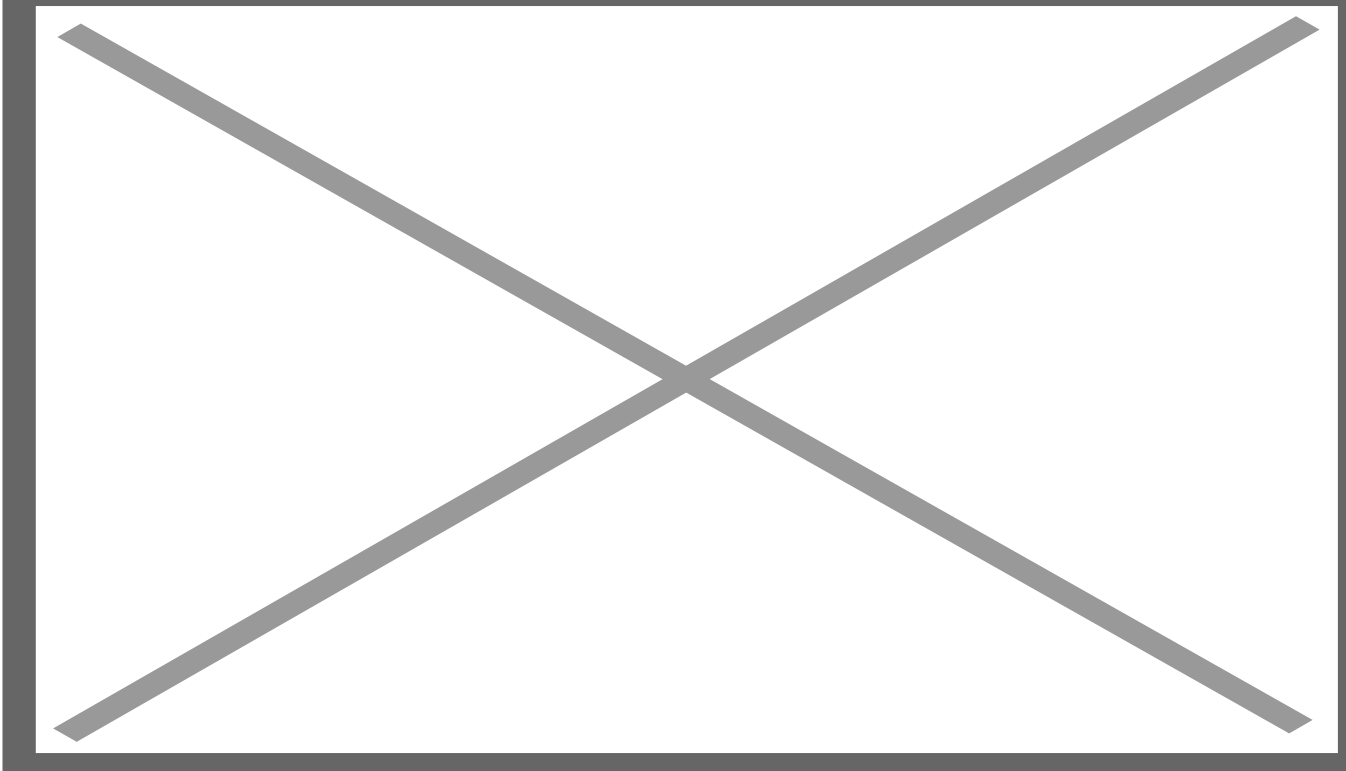


Israel endorses construction of new settlement near besieged Gaza Strip

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A view of the Israeli settlement of Har Homa in the Israeli-occupied West Bank. (Photo: Reuters)

Tel Aviv, November 9 (RHC)-- The Israeli cabinet has approved construction of new settler units near the besieged Gaza Strip, defying international outcry over the Tel Aviv regime's Palestinian land expropriation policies.

Turkey's official Anadolu news agency, citing a report published by the Israeli Hebrew-language Channel 12 television network, reported that Israeli Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu gave the green light for the project on Sunday.

Israeli daily newspaper Yedioth Ahronoth reported that the new settlement will house around 500 families, and will be named as "Hanun." The Israeli regime will reportedly allocate one million NIS (\$296,000) for the development of the infrastructure in the new settlement.

The development comes against the backdrop of an agreement reached between Israel and the United Arab Emirates less than two months ago on normalization of ties, which is claimed to have put a freeze on Tel Aviv's plans for further annexation of Palestinian territories.

Israel and the UAE agreed to the US-brokered deal to normalize relations on August 13. Under the agreement, the Tel Aviv regime has supposedly agreed to "temporarily" suspend applying its rule to further areas in the occupied West Bank and the strategic Jordan Valley that Israeli Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu had pledged to annex.

While Emirati officials have described the normalization deal with the Tel Aviv regime 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.

Netanyahu signed agreements with Emirati Foreign Minister Sheikh Abdullah bin Zayed Al Nahyan and Bahrain's Foreign Minister Abdullatif Al Zayani during an official ceremony hosted by U.S. President Donald Trump at the White House on September 15th. Palestinians, who seek an independent state in the occupied West Bank and Gaza with East Jerusalem al-Quds as its capital, view the deals as betrayal of their cause.

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 al-Quds.

Since U.S. President Donald Trump took office, Israel has stepped up its settlement construction activities in defiance of United Nations Security Council Resolution 2334, which pronounced settlements in the West Bank and East Jerusalem al-Quds "a flagrant violation under international law." All Israeli settlements are illegal under international law as they are built on occupied land.

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