

# *Israel gives green light to nearly 4,500 settler units in West Bank*

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Tel Aviv, May 13 (RHC)-- Israel has advanced plans for the construction of some 4,500 settler units in the occupied West Bank as the regime continues its illegal settlement expansion activities across the occupied Palestinian territories.

Peace Now, an Israeli anti-settlement organization, said that the high planning committee of the so-called Israeli Civil Administration had given the final approval to a total of 4,427 units, including 2,791 housing units and initial endorsement for another 1,636 units.

"This is bad news for Israel and deepens the occupation, making it harder to achieve future peace," Hagit Ofran of Peace Now said, referring to the prospect of a so-called two-state solution that has so far been hindered due to Israel's expansionist policy, among other atrocities against Palestinians.

"The approval of these construction plans in the settlements is a slap in the face, not only to the prospect of peace, but also to the possibility of some future Palestinian economic development."

Ofran also said it was “disappointing” that the regime was following the similar hostile policies of former Israeli prime minister Benjamin Netanyahu against Palestinians.

Israeli interior minister Ayelet Shaked announced the plan to approve the new settlement units last week, drawing widespread condemnation from Palestinian factions and rights groups.

In the occupied West Bank city of Ramallah, Bassam al-Salhe, a member of the Executive Committee of the Palestine Liberation Organization (PLO), called on Palestinians to "step up their struggle in the face of these settlement projects.”

He also called on the international community "to take deterrent action against Israel to compel it to stop settlement and its aggression against our Palestinian people.”

More than 600,000 Israelis live in over 230 settlements built since the 1967 Israeli occupation of the West Bank and East al-Quds.

All Israeli settlements are illegal under international law as they are built on occupied land. The United Nations Security Council has condemned Israel’s settlement activities in the occupied territories in several resolutions.

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