

# REPORT ON ISRAELI SETTLEMENT IN THE OCCUPIED TERRITORIES

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## SHARON'S WAR FOR THE SETTLEMENTS

By Geoffrey Aronson

Israel's unprecedented assault against Palestinian-controlled areas in the West Bank is guided by the strategic objective of undermining the prospect of Palestinian sovereignty in these areas and preserving Israeli settlements.

Israel's reoccupation of the West Bank and the associated decimation of the Palestinian security apparatus there was a consequence of the requirement to protect settlements against irregular Palestinian militants, and to preserve a normal everyday existence for the almost 400,000 Israelis who have moved across the Green Line and the millions residing in Israel whose daily lives have been transformed by the Palestinian rebellion.

The national unity government led by Sharon insists that the preservation of Israeli security and the continued existence of Israeli settlements continue to be complementary. However improbable, the belief that settlements and peace proceed in tandem is an article of faith among those conducting Israeli policy today. Israeli doubts about this equation have grown, but they been overwhelmed by the sense that the Palestinian targeting of Israeli civilians throughout Israel places them in an existential battle, not merely for the settlements but for Israel itself.

The Palestinian refrain, particularly since October 2000, has been exactly the opposite. Israel can have security, Palestinians say, only if Israel accepts a "political horizon" that includes the abandonment of settlements and the withdrawal of Israeli military forces from the Palestinian territories captured in 1967.

The battle being fought, particularly during these last months, is often described as a war. And no doubt, the trappings of war and the fear and terror that it manifests are ever-present. Notwithstanding the real battles in Jenin and Nablus in early April, this description obscures more than it clarifies. The sides are not equal, either in the number of forces they have mobilized nor in type of warfare they practice. Armed forces rarely engage each other. Civilians on both sides suffer the most casualties.

"We are actually winning every day," recently declared Israeli chief of staff

General Shaul Mofaz on Israeli television. A similar, and equally unmerited and improbable confidence in their conduct can be heard by Palestinians as well.

The American mediation effort has been trapped by its exclusive focus on security issues. Secretary of State Colin Powell, however, understands that "What is needed is a negotiation ultimately that leads to peace, leads to the creation of a second state to live side-by-side with Israel. That is the only answer. If there is one new thing we have to throw into the equation, it is to move forward the political process more closely to the ceasefire we hope to get, so that the Palestinian people can see some political resolution to the way in which they're living and the price they're are facing, they can see that earlier on.

"You can't keep this pressure on them forever; sooner or later it could only be satisfied by a political process that gives them a state, and the sooner you get to that point, the better."

As a first step, the Bush administration should reaffirm its support and respect for Yasser Arafat and his government, which the U.S. took the lead in establishing and sustaining.

The offer of Saudi Arabia, endorsed at the Beirut summit on March 28, reaffirms the direction of the parameters set out at the end of Bill Clinton's presidency and subsequent diplomacy between Israeli and Palestinian negotia-

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## TO OUR READERS

The Bush Administration must tackle a series of extraordinary challenges if it has decided to win a cease fire and get serious about resurrecting the Israeli-Palestinian peace process: A Palestinian crack down on terrorism that has convinced many Israelis that Palestinians no longer want peace; rapid withdrawal of Israeli forces—whose destructive and brutal tactics breed more terrorism—from areas recently occupied; the rehabilitation of Yasser Arafat as a partner; a real settlements freeze; and an end to repression that provoke Palestinian hatred and violence. These are just first steps, but they are prerequisites for a launching a parallel political process.

Secretary of State Powell has signaled that the Tenet/Mitchell plans are inadequate and that a “political horizon” must accompany a cease-fire. Now, it is stunningly clear that only a bold U.S. plan and sustained diplomacy are needed that promises security for Israel and a viable state for Palestinians. It must be shaped to persuade both peoples, and through them their lead-

ers, to abandon violence and resume negotiations.

Israeli and American efforts to isolate Arafat have backfired, and Prime Minister Ariel Sharon’s hopes for replacing him are dangerous folly. For all his failings, there is no alternative to Arafat, who remains the democratically-elected Palestinian leader. Demonizing him and focusing exclusively on terrorism divert attention from Sharon’s goal of destroying the Palestinian Authority, including its security forces, preserving settlements, and cementing Israel’s control over the territories. If Arafat is killed or exiled, violence will escalate and the very foundation for peace, mutual recognition between two states, will be further undermined. Rehabilitating Arafat as a partner must therefore be part of U.S. strategy, together with a broad American peace plan coupled with carrots and sticks for both sides.



The armed conflict with the Palestinians is not perceived as a fight for the survival of the State of Israel, but rather as an unfortunate entanglement stemming from the decision to establish settlements on land occupied in the Six-Day War. The casualties of the conflict, civilians and soldiers alike, are seen as random victims of an irresolvable reality, and not the “silver platter” reference to Natan Alterman’s poem, “The Silver Platter,” in which he likened the soldiers who died in the War of Independence to a “silver platter” on which the state was handed to the Jewish people.

In the national subconscious, occupation of the territories is perceived as a temporary condition during which the number of those who give their lives for it must be kept to the barest minimum (only the hard core among the settlers display a readiness to pay the bloody price involved in prolonging the occupation). For now, this is a latent attitude, due, among other reasons, to the fact that it is mixed with a wall-to-wall rejection of the Palestinian demand to exercise the right of return within the Green Line.

If the Palestinians were to accept the Israeli condition and see the establishment of their state as the solution to the refugee problem, Israel’s willingness to give up the territories would take center stage.

*Ha'aretz*, February 17, 2002

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## SHORT TAKES

The Israeli organizations—Peace Now, Peace Coalition, Meretz, Doves of Labor, the Kibbutz movement, Young Guards, Green Line—have organized a campaign under the slogan “Leave the Territories, Return to Ourselves.”

The organizations call for Israel’s unilateral withdrawal from the occupied territories, evacuating all settlements in the Gaza Strip and in isolated locations in the West Bank.

*Yediot Aharanot*, February 5, 2002

Ultra-Orthodox members of the Haredim sect who moved to the settlements of Beitar Ilit and Mod’i’in Ilit comprised 65 percent of the 2,500-person increase in the settler population during 2001.

In the less populated settlements, 72 percent of the increase in population was due to natural increase, and 16 percent to internal migration.

*Kol HaZeman*, December 21, 2001

### Implementation of House Demolition Orders in Jerusalem, 1990-February 2002

Year	Israeli Properties	Palestinian Properties
1990	na	24
1991	na	23
1992	7	19
1993	12	21
1994	4	7
1995	10	14
1996	6	6
1997	14	17
1998	12	13
1999	5	16
2000	4	11
2001	7	32
2002	0	18

*Ha’aretz*, February 2, 2002

### Building Permits Issued in Jerusalem, 2001

	Permit Requests	Approvals
Palestinians	219	191
Israelis	1519	1087

*Ha’aretz*, February 7, 2002

The Israeli human rights organization B’Tselem reported that, “from October 2000 to January 2002 in refugee camps in

the Gaza Strip, 655 homes inhabited by 5,124 individuals were demolished by Israeli military forces.”

*Ha’aretz*, February 5, 2002

The Palestinian Human Rights Centre in the Gaza Strip reported that from October 2000 to July 2001, Israeli military forces destroyed 13,500 dunams of agricultural land in the Gaza Strip, 7 percent of the entire area devoted to agriculture. Israel’s Ministry of Defense acknowledges destroying 10,000 dunams.

*Ha’aretz*, February 5, 2002

### Spending on settlements in the West Bank, Gaza Strip, and Golan Heights (excluding East Jerusalem) in NIS 2000 Prices, 1990–1999

Per Capita Annual Capital Transfers from the Central Government to Local Councils

Settlements	3,679
Development towns	2,308
Arab communities	1,720
National average	1,458

Per Capita Expenditures by Local Councils

Settlements	5,428
Development towns	4,176
Arab communities	2,402
National average	3,807

Per Capita Contributions by Residents to Local Government

Settlements	1,732
Development towns	1,925
Arab communities	681
National average	2,348

Findings of the Adava Center for Information on Equality and Social Justice in Israel, *Yediot Aharanot*, January 29, 2002 and *Ha’aretz*, January 28, 2002

We hereby declare that we will not take part in the war for the peace of the settlements. We will not continue to fight beyond the Green Line [Israel’s pre-1967 border with the West Bank and Gaza] in order to rule, expel, destroy, blockade, assassinate, starve and humiliate an entire people.

Excerpted from a petition initially signed by 56 reserve soldiers in the IDF and originally published in *Yediot Aharanot*, on January 25, 2002

## SETTLEMENT TIME LINE

**September 1** *Arutz 7* reports that Gilo in East Jerusalem has installed bulletproof windows in schools prior to the start of the new academic year.

**September 2** The Karnei Shomron-Alfe Menashe route is temporarily closed after Israeli cars are firebombed. (*Arutz 7*)

**September 3** Six Israelis are lightly injured by two car bombs and two other explosions in the East Jerusalem areas of French Hill, Gilo, and Ma'alot Daphna. (*Arutz 7*)

**September 4** Violent confrontations erupt in Deir Ammar, near Ramallah, after Israeli settlers lay claim to land owned by Palestinians. (*Hear Palestine*)

**September 5** An Israeli settler is shot and wounded in Neve Tzuf. (*Jerusalem Post*)

UNRWA reports that the Israeli Defense Forces (IDF) have destroyed 27 homes in Rafah since August 28, leaving 45 families (200 people) homeless. (*Hear Palestine*)

**September 6** The IDF issues orders for the confiscation of 200 dunams of land in Salfit. (*Hear Palestine*)

**September 7** *Hear Palestine* reports that Israeli forces continue to dig ditches along the "demarcation line" northwest of Jerusalem, as well as in areas near the Shufat refugee camp, near Beit Hanina, and Beit Iksa.

The northern Jerusalem settlement of Pisgat Ze'ev is attacked by Palestinian gunmen for the first time. A motorist is lightly injured by the shooting. (*Arutz 7*)

*Ha'aretz* reports that the road from Modi'in and Ben Shemen to Jerusalem will be fully lit at night. Traffic on the road has been targeted by Palestinian gunmen, causing motorists to take the long route via the Tel Aviv-Jerusalem highway.

**September 8** Israeli forces in the Psagot settlement attack Palestinian homes in al-Birah as well as a Palestinian security checkpoint.

Armed settlers under the protection of Israeli soldiers attack shops in Hebron. (*Hear Palestine*)

**September 9** Palestinians kill two Israelis in a shooting north of the Adam Bridge junc-

tion along the Jordan Valley highway. In response the IDF closes parts of the road to Palestinian vehicles. (*Ha'aretz, Arutz 7*)

**September 10** A number of settler caravans are moved onto Palestinian land south of the Kfar Darom settlement. (*Hear Palestine*)

Jordan Valley settlers protest for greater security during a demonstration outside Prime Minister Ariel Sharon's office. (*Arutz 7*)

**September 12** Palestinian gunmen open fire on Katif bloc communities. Pipe bombs are found at the Tunnels Highway between the Etzion bloc and Jerusalem and on the Qalqilya bypass road. Both are defused. (*Arutz 7*)

**The only way for Israelis to have security is, quite simply, to end the 35-year-old occupation of Palestinian territory. Israelis must abandon the myth that it is possible to have peace and occupation at the same time, that peaceful coexistence is possible between slave and master. The lack of Israeli security is born of the lack of Palestinian freedom. Israel will have security only after the end of occupation, not before.**

**Marwan Barghouti, Secretary of Fatah on the West Bank, *The Washington Post* January 16, 2002**

*Hear Palestine* reports new settlement and road construction on Palestinian owned land near the Katif bloc. The land is to be used to link the settlements.

A settler is killed in a drive-by shooting near Qalqilya. (*Arutz 7*)

The IDF attacks Jenin, blowing up two Force 17 posts. Three Palestinians are reported dead. A Palestinian training base in Jericho is also destroyed in the most extensive Israeli operations inside Palestinian Area A since September 2000. (Israel Radio, *Mideast Mirror*)

**September 13** An Israeli woman is killed at Alfe Menashe. (*Arutz 7*)

Palestinian gunmen shoot at IDF soldiers in the Har Homa settlement in southern Jerusalem. The IDF replies with tank fire. (*Jerusalem Post*)

**September 15** A 23-year-old Israeli is killed in a drive-by shooting along the road between Ramot and French Hill in East Jerusalem. (*Ha'aretz*)

**September 16** Intense gun battles occur between Israelis and Palestinians in Psagot, north of Jerusalem. (*Arutz 7*)

The Israeli Housing Ministry announces plans to build another 70 units in Har Homa. Fewer than half of the 2,300 units under construction have been sold. (*Ha'aretz*)

**September 17** Israeli forces bulldoze 200 dunams of Palestinian agricultural land between the Katif bloc settlements and the main north-south road through the Gaza Strip. (*Hear Palestine*)

Prime Minister Sharon tells IDF Radio that it is "the right of every Jew to visit the Temple Mount. The day will come when our relationship with them [Arabs] will be such that everyone will be able to visit."

In an attempt to boost ridership, bus fares are halved for travel on Israeli buses within the West Bank and the Gaza Strip. (*Arutz 7*)

**September 18** Palestinian Authority (PA) leader Yasir Arafat declares a unilateral cease-fire. He says that "violence begets violence" and condemns "all military and paramilitary activities committed against civilians" on both sides of the conflict. (*Palestine Report*)

**September 22** Three mortars are fired at the Kfar Darom settlement. The IDF responds by entering Area A in Deir al-Balah. (*Arutz 7*)

**September 24** A new military location is established on agricultural land along the green line near the Alfe Menashe settlement south of Qalqilya. (*Hear Palestine*)

Two Israeli women are killed by Fatah members in two separate drive-by shootings near the West Bank settlements of Shadmot Mehola and Tekoa. (*Reuters*)

*Hear Palestine* reports that the IDF is

## SETTLEMENT TIME LINE

constructing a new road between Kfar Darom and the Abu Arif road.

**September 28** Settlers from Eliahu and Mehola in the Jordan Valley destroy dozens of dunams of land and greenhouses in the Palestinian village of Bardala. (*Hear Palestine*)

**September 29** Shootings are reported at the settlements of Homesh, Neve Dekalim, Psagot, and Tapuach. Two cars are shot at on the highway between Ma'ale Adumim and Jerusalem. (*Arutz 7*)

**September 30** Palestinian gunmen fire at two cars along the Nablus bypass road and at Ginot Shomron. (*Arutz 7*)

**October 2** Palestinian gunmen kill two Israelis and wound 16 after entering Gaza's Alei Sinai settlement. (*Mideast Mirror*)

On the road between French Hill and Ramot, two Israelis are injured after their car is fired upon. No one is injured in a shooting on the Begin Highway. (*Ha'aretz, Arutz 7*)

**October 5** At least six Palestinians and one Israeli are killed in fighting in two Hebron neighborhoods.

The IDF takes over ten houses and imposes a curfew in Abu Sneineh. The move gives Israel control of 10 percent of Hebron's Area A. (*Ha'aretz, UPI*)

Palestinian gunmen kill an Israeli motorist east of Tulkarem. (*Ha'aretz*)

The IDF bulldozes 1,000 dunams of Palestinian agricultural land, including 10 water reserves and hundreds of fruit trees, between the Alei Sinai and Dugit settlements in Gaza. (*Hear Palestine*)

**October 10** Israeli police are reported to believe that a Jewish underground movement operating in the occupied territories is behind a shooting attack the preceding week, in which two Palestinians were wounded. It is the sixth such attack in recent months. (*Ha'aretz*)

Jordan Valley settlers establish a new settlement, Givat Sal'it, in memory of two settlers killed on September 24. Ten people living in caravan homes will populate the outpost. (*Arutz 7*)

**October 14** The IDF withdraws from positions in Abu Sneineh and Harat al-Sheikh

overlooking the Hebron settlements and removes the Surda and Qalandia checkpoints surrounding Ramallah. (*Arutz 7*)

**October 15** Israeli settlers from Shvut Rachel attack Palestinian farmers in Tarmas'iya, near Ramallah. (*Hear Palestine*)

**October 17** Israeli minister of tourism Rehavam Ze'evi is assassinated in East Jerusalem. The Popular Front for the Liberation of Palestinian claims responsibility. (*Ha'aretz*)

**October 18** Palestinian gunmen fire at Gilo. One Israeli is killed and two are injured after an attack on the road southeast of Ma'ale Adumim. (*Jerusalem Post*)

**The Council for Peace and Security, a group of 1,000 reserve generals, colonels, and Shin Bet and Mossad officials, are to mount a public campaign for a unilateral Israeli withdrawal from all of Gaza and much of the West Bank.**

**Unlike some of the other unilateral withdrawal plans, like the "Life Fence," for example, the council's plan involves evacuating some 40–50 settlements, where some 15 percent of the settlers live.**

*Ha'aretz, February 18, 2002*

**October 19** The IDF moves into Palestinian-controlled Bethlehem and Beit Jala. A Gilo resident is wounded by shots fired from al-Walja. (*Ha'aretz*)

**October 20** Israel begins construction of a one-kilometer road between settlements in the Katif bloc and Salah al-Din Street. (*Hear Palestine*)

**October 24** Settler fire wounds six Palestinian workers near Beni Naim east of Hebron. (*Ha'aretz*)

Palestinians shoot at Gilo, Givat Hananiah, north of Talpiot, and Psagot. (*Arutz 7*)

**October 26** Three Hamas members are killed in an attempt to storm the Dugit settlement in Gaza. (*Ha'aretz*)

**October 27** Settlers from Keddumim destroy more than 50 dunams of cultivated land in the Palestinian village of Jit. (*Hear Palestine*)

**October 30** Israeli forces destroy Palestinian houses in Beit Hanina and Shufat in East Jerusalem. (*Agence France Presse*)

**November 3** Dozens of settlers attack Yanoun, outside Nablus, beating inhabitants with stones. (*Hear Palestine*)

**November 4** Israeli forces bulldoze land southwest of Kfar al-Dik. (*Hear Palestine*)

Two Israeli teens are killed after a gunman from Islamic Jihad fires at a bus in East Jerusalem's French Hill settlement. (*Ha'aretz*)

**November 6** One Israeli is killed while driving along the Nablus bypass road. Another is killed in an ambush south of Nablus. (*Ha'aretz*)

**November 9** An Israeli woman is killed on the road between Mevo Dotan and Shaked. (*Arutz 7*)

**November 11** *Hear Palestine* reports that a group of settlers has set up caravans and generators on Palestinian land in the town of Ya'bid in the Jenin area.

**November 14** The IDF destroys several PA buildings in Khan Yunis in response to Palestinian mortar shells fired at the Katif bloc on November 13. (*Ha'aretz*)

The Israeli Housing Ministry is preparing tenders for 200 housing units in the neighborhood of Nofei Sela in Ma'ale Adumim. (*Ha'aretz*)

**November 18** A rocket launched by Hamas strikes a settlement in the Katif bloc. Shooting is reported at Ariel and Psagot, near Ramallah. (*Ha'aretz*)

**November 19** *Ha'aretz* reports that 480 mortars have been fired in Gaza since the start of the intifada, injuring approximately 20 Israelis.

About 100 settlers in the Katif bloc protest against the construction of the Kissufim Bridge over a thoroughfare used by Palestinians. They argue the bridge will be dangerous for people using it. (*Arutz 7*)

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## SETTLEMENT TIME LINE

Prime Minister Sharon orders the resumption of construction on 12 housing units in Hebron's Tel Rumeida settlement. (*Ha'aretz*)

**November 21** The Jordan Valley Regional Council offers free housing for settlers. (*Hear Palestine*)

**November 22** The European Union Commission takes its first step toward imposing tariffs on goods produced in Israeli settlements that are labeled as made in Israel. Duty free export of such products violates the Israel-EU trade agreement. (*Ha'aretz*)

**November 24** One IDF reservist is killed and two are injured at Kfar Darom in Gaza. The fatality is the first from a Palestinian mortar attack since the start of the al-Aqsa intifada.

Israeli interior minister Eli Yeshai visits the East Jerusalem settlement of Ir David (City of David) and promises to allocate funds for its continued growth. It currently houses 25 families. (*Ha'aretz*)

**November 25** *Yediot Aharanot* reports that the number of IDF special operations—penetrations, preempted strikes, arrests, ambushes and assassinations—has risen by 400 percent in the preceding three months.

Palestinians fire 15 mortar shells at the Katif bloc and Netzarim in Gaza. (*Ha'aretz*)

Prime Minister Sharon announces a halt in the construction of the Kissufim Bridge in Gaza. Settlers in the area strongly oppose the bridge. (*Arutz 7*)

**November 26** Palestinians shoot at Gilo. The settlement had been relatively quiet since the IDF pulled out of Beit Jala and Bethlehem in early October. (*Jerusalem Post*)

Palestinians report that 200 dunams belonging to Deir al-Balah have been seized by Israeli settlements. (*Ha'aretz*)

**November 27** In the Katif bloc, an Israeli settler is killed and three others are injured in a shooting attack. (*Ha'aretz*)

U.S. chief mediator, Anthony Zinni, begins a two-week visit to the region by joining Prime Minister Sharon on a helicopter tour of the West Bank. (*Arutz 7*)

**November 30** The Knesset approves \$13 million for roads in the West Bank. (*Arutz 7*)

**December 2** Two Palestinian men dressed as IDF soldiers kill an Israeli on the road between the Gaza settlements of Alei Sinai and Nisanit. (*Jerusalem Post*)

**December 3** The Israeli government declares the Palestinian Authority "an entity that supports terrorism." (*Arutz 7*)

**Tourism minister Benny Elon suggested "action" trips in the territories during a Knesset meeting regarding tourism to Israel. Action trips entail going out on tours in protected (armored) vehicles to historic and archaeological sites in the territories and spending the night in the hotel in Ariel.**

**Committee member Avraham Shochat (Labor) thought the idea a joke. Avshalom Vilan (Meretz) was also cynical. Shochat and Vilan requested an examination of "the superfluous investment of the tourism office in YESHA."**

**Elon responded that the request for an investment of almost \$2 million over three years was made before he became minister.**

**Committee chair Amnon Rubinstein (Meretz) said that an investment in YESHA would not lead to an increase in the number of tourists. Elon retains his optimism.**

*Yediot Aharanot*, February 5, 2002

**December 4** Israeli tanks invade Beituna west of Ramallah. Homes north of Khan Yunis are attacked from the settlement of Gane Tal. (*Hear Palestine*)

**December 5** In Nablus, Israeli forces in the Elon Moreh settlement attack the Asira area. (*Hear Palestine*)

**December 6** Six mortars are fired at the Katif bloc in Gaza. (*Ha'aretz*)

**December 11** Israeli forces bomb a Force 17 building in response to Palestinian mortar fire at a Katif bloc settlement. (*Ha'aretz*)

**December 12** Palestinians fire six mortar shells into a central Katif bloc neighborhood. According to Avner Shimoni, a local leader, the continuous attacks have caused psychological trauma to the residents.

*Ha'aretz* reports that Hebron settlers have agreed to use bulletproof school buses. The settlers have objected to doing so for years out of ideological conviction.

Palestinian gunmen ambush an Israeli bus near Emmanuel, in the West Bank, killing 10 and injuring 26. Fatah and Hamas take responsibility for the attack. Israel responds by severing contact with PA leader Arafat, bombing Palestinian security targets and invading Palestinian Area A to arrest suspects and confiscate weapons. The Israeli cabinet decides that "Arafat is no longer relevant." (*Ha'aretz*, *Jerusalem Post*, *Reuters*)

The IDF opens fire against Palestinians attempting to break through the gate surrounding Neve Dekalim. (*Arutz 7*)

**December 13** The IDF closes the Netzarim and Katif bloc junctions in Gaza, hindering traffic to and from Gaza City and Khan Yunis.

**December 14** In Khan Yunis, Israeli tanks demolish 35 houses, leaving 345 people homeless. The action is Israel's most extensive demolition of homes since the start of the al-Aqsa intifada. (*Independent*)

**December 15** The IDF divides the Gaza Strip into three sections, halting all traffic to and from Gaza City, the Katif bloc, Khan Yunis, and Rafah. (*Arutz 7*)

**December 17** Palestinian gunmen launch ambushes at various locations in the West Bank less than 24 hours after PA leader Arafat orders a cease-fire. Three Palestinians are killed by IDF gunfire. (*Ha'aretz*)

**December 18** More than 20 shootings by Palestinians are reported in the West Bank and Gaza Strip, matching the daily average. (*Ha'aretz*)

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**December 19** Settlers level Palestinian land in Kfar Qalil village. (*Hear Palestine*)

**December 23** The Israeli Tourism Ministry announces a three-year, \$1.5 million tourism development project in the West Bank and Gaza Strip. (*Arutz 7*)

**December 25** The British department store Harrod's decides to pull from its shelves selected goods produced in Israeli settlements. Within days the store reverses its decision. (Associated Press)

**December 30** The Israeli Committee for Zoning and Construction approves plans for the construction of 630 Palestinian housing units in East Jerusalem's Jabal al-Mukhabar neighborhood. (*al-Quds*)

**January 4** Har Homa is now being populated. This week, twenty families were authorized to move into Har Homa. Ariel Katan, community leader of Har Homa, said, "The settlers, most of them young couples, are happy about the beginning of the population." In a short time, 200 single apartments will be populated. Several other construction companies have obtained authorization to build in the area, and according to Housing Minister Natan Sharansky, these new apartments will also be populated as soon as February. (*Yerushalayim*)

**January 6** Around 150 settlers demonstrate against the Israeli government's decision to ease closure restrictions on Palestinian traffic. The settlers argue that opening roads to Palestinians will lead to more drive-by shootings against Israeli civilians. (*Ha'aretz*)

**January 10** Israeli forces attack the Rafah refugee camp in Gaza, demolishing 54 houses. The action leaves more than 500 people homeless, making it the most extensive demolition since the start of the al-Aqsa intifada in September 2000. (*Ha'aretz*)

**January 14** The IDF destroys five houses in the Issawiya neighborhood in East Jerusalem. (Palestine Media Center)

An Israeli settler is killed in Kedumim. Fatah, whose senior activist Raed Karmi was killed earlier in the day, claims responsibility. (*Jerusalem Post*)

**January 15** Palestinian gunmen kill two

Israelis in separate shootings near Bethlehem and in Givat Ze'ev, north of Jerusalem. (*Ha'aretz*)

The Likud party resolves not to accept a Palestinian state west of the Jordan River. Prime Minister Sharon had earlier issued a statement supporting a Palestinian state. According to the party's resolution, Sharon's statements "stand in stark contrast to the party's platform and ideology." (*Arutz 7*)

**January 16** Palestinian gunmen kill a 30-year-old Israeli Arab driving a rented car with Israeli license plates. (*Ha'aretz*)

**Ishai Menuchim, a reservist tank commander and leader of There Is a Limit, an independent pressure group, said, "The reservists do not care about the territories. Many are in their thirties and forties, they have families and care more about their businesses or studies.**

**"So they are not willing to pay the price and risk their lives for something they don't believe in. This is a big problem for the army because it will affect their operations. The army needs to understand that fewer and fewer people are willing to do their dirty work in the territories."**

**Inigo Gilmore, *Jerusalem Telegraph* (London), January 31, 2002**

**January 17** According to PA officials, 198 of 6,000 Palestinian buildings erected illegally in Jerusalem's Old City have been demolished in the preceding 4 years. They say that construction without permits will continue as long as building in the settlements proceeds. (*Hear Palestine*)

Shooting is reported near Alfe Menashe, near Mevo Dotan, in Neve Dekalim and Rafah. (*Irish Times*)

**January 21** IDF troops enter Tulkarem, imposing a curfew and arresting terror suspects. It is the first time since the signing of the Oslo accords that the IDF has reestablished control over a West Bank city in Area A. (*Jerusalem Post, Hear Palestine*)

*Ha'aretz* reports shootings near Gane Tal, the Katif bloc, Kfar Brukin, Psagot, Rafah and on the Tunnels Highway.

**January 22** *Arutz 7* reports "In the past, entry to Area A required a cabinet decision, while now it is a decision made at the local military levels."

**January 23** Coca-Cola in Israel is reported to be entering the wine market, negotiating with the Golan Winery for a possible partnership. (*Globes*)

The IDF destroys two Palestinian homes in Beit Hanina in East Jerusalem. (*Ha'aretz*)

**January 26** An Arab truck driver is critically wounded after being shot by Palestinian gunmen. His truck has Israeli license plates. (*Arutz 7*)

**January 29** Shooting is reported in Gilo after Israeli forces arrest Palestinians near Bethlehem. (*Mideast Mirror*)

Prime Minister Sharon approves a security plan for Jerusalem that includes Gilo, Givat Ze'ev, and Ma'ale Adumim. (*Ha'aretz*)

**January 31** Israeli forces kill two Palestinians as they attempt to blow up a van on the Katif bloc road near Gane Tal.

Palestinians shoot at IDF posts in Psagot, damaging an army vehicle. (*Arutz 7*)

The IDF discovers five mortars aimed at the Morag settlement in Gaza. (*Ha'aretz*)

Israel Radio reports Palestinian snipers shooting at the Gadid and Neve Dekalim settlements. Settlers in Elon Moreh capture two Palestinians trying to infiltrate the settlement.

**February 1** Palestinians unsuccessfully try to enter the Kfar Darom settlement in Gaza. Shooting is reported at Gadid, Gan Or, Neve Dekalim and Rafiach Yam. The IDF destroys the PA naval police headquarters. (*Arutz 7*)

**February 3** Settlers set up ten mobile homes in the Abu Nadur and Ur areas in Tama'areh near Bethlehem. The new settlement is

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## SETTLEMENT TIME LINE

called Rehavam Ze'evi, in honor of the slain Israeli minister of tourism.

**February 4** Israeli forces destroy two Palestinian homes in al-Issawiya in East Jerusalem. (*Hear Palestine*)

After three mortar shells are fired at industrial areas in Neve Dekalim and Erez, the IDF shells and damages a factory that is believed to be housing bomb-producing equipment in Gaza. (*Arutz 7*)

**February 6** A Palestinian gunman enters a house in Hamra in Jordan Valley and kills a mother and her 11-year old daughter. It is the first action of this kind in the West Bank since the beginning of the al-Aqsa intifada. One IDF soldier is also killed in the attack. (*Mideast Mirror*)

Five Palestinian houses in Beit Hanina in east Jerusalem are demolished. "The houses were being illegally built," a spokesman for the mayor says. (*Agence France Presse*)

Eight Kassam rockets are fired at the Katif bloc. (*Arutz 7*)

Israeli forces bulldoze land in Za'tara, in southeast Bethlehem. (*Hear Palestine*)

*Al-Quds* reports that Italy will impose restrictions on all imports from Israel in a step to ensure that the goods are not manufactured in the settlements. Every Italian importer must deposit a financial guarantee of 5 percent of the cost of the goods before they can be imported.

**February 9** Palestinian gunmen kill a settler from Ma'ale Efraim in a drive by shooting near Tapuach. (*Arutz 7*)

**February 14** A bomb on the road between Netzarim and Karni kills three Israeli soldiers in a tank. (*Ma'ariv*)

**February 16** A Palestinian suicide attack injures a number of people at a shopping mall in Karnei Shomron. It is the first time such attack occurs in a settlement. In response, Israeli warplanes launch air strikes against PA targets in Nablus. (*Ha'aretz*)

More than 15,000 Israelis participate in a peace march in Tel Aviv. "The path to peace is through the return of the refugees to the State of Palestine and the return of settlers

to the State of Israel," says Sari Nusseibeh, the most prominent Palestinian political figure in Jerusalem. (*PeaceNow.org*)

Israeli forces bulldoze greenhouses and trees along Gaza's green line from al-Brej refugee camp to al-Maghazi. (*Hear Palestine*)

Dozens of Palestinian farmers in the Qizan al-Najar and al-Sha'ir areas, near the Morag settlement, are forced to leave their land due to economic losses and dangers related to the occupation. (*Hear Palestine*)

**February 18** A Palestinian detonates a car bomb at an Israeli roadblock between

**The heads of the YESHA Council are enraged soldiers who refuse to serve in the territories. Their spokesman Yehoshua Moor-Yosef: "In every war a group of cowards is revealed." Moor-Yosef continued that "this is a kind of mental illness, that causes you to lose your way and your conscience so that you identify with the enemy in times of war."**

**Shaul Goldstein, head of the local council of Gush Etzion, called for the denial of civil rights for those soldiers who refuse to serve in the territories.**  
*Ma'ariv, January 27, 2002*

Jerusalem and Ma'ale Adumim killing an Israeli Arab policeman. (*Independent*)

Israeli settlers level land along the bypass road that cuts through Ajinsya and Zawata. (*Hear Palestine*)

The IDF commander in the West Bank orders the removal of most checkpoints in order to reduce friction and eliminate potential attacks at them. There will still be surprise checks on vehicles. (*Ha'aretz*)

Two IDF soldiers are killed at the Kissufim crossing between Israel and the Gaza Strip. (*Arutz 7*)

**February 19** Two settlers are killed by Palestinian infiltrators in the Morag settlement. One attacker is also killed. In the course of the skirmish, a Palestinian woman and her daughter in nearby A-Najar are killed by IDF tank shells. The B'Tselem

human rights organization charges that the firing at A-Najar had been deliberate. (*Ha'aretz, B'Tselem*)

Six IDF soldiers are killed when Palestinian gunmen attack their position at a checkpoint north of Ramallah.

**February 20** Palestinian gunfire targets Psagot, the Tunnels Highway between Gush Etzion and Jerusalem, and the Kvasim Junction (south of Hebron). (*Arutz 7*)

The YESHA Council protests against Prime Minister Sharon's promise not to harm PA leader Arafat. The council calls on Sharon to "declare war and clean out the area of terror infrastructure." (*Arutz 7*)

**February 21** Marwan Barghouti, Fatah leader in the West Bank, states that the increase in attacks in the occupied territories signals a desire to attain international and Israeli support for a Palestinian state alongside Israel, and reaffirms that Palestinians do not seek to "eliminate Israel from the map." (*New York Times*)

**February 22** A Palestinian gunman kills a security guard on the road between Givat Ze'ev and Atarot. One person is slightly injured in a suicide bombing at a supermarket in Efrat. A woman is wounded in Palestinian shooting on Gilo. (*Arutz 7*)

**February 23** Settlers wound a Palestinian at the entrance of the Pnei Hever settlement. (*Ha'aretz*)

**February 25** Two Israeli settlers are killed and a pregnant woman injured in an attack on a road near the Nokdim settlement. (*Mideast Mirror*)

Two Palestinian gunmen kill a 21-year-old Israeli female police officer, and injure nine others in the East Jerusalem neighborhood of Neve Ya'akov. (*Arutz 7*)

Residents of the Katif bloc decide to put pigskin and lard on the dead bodies of suicide bombers. "That way we block their passage to heaven," explains the rabbi of the Katif bloc, Yosef al-Nakwa. (*Ha'aretz, Jerusalem Post, Ma'ariv*)

Two Israeli settlers are killed in an ambush near two Israeli settlements outside Bethlehem.

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## ISRAELI BUDGET ENCOURAGES SETTLEMENTS

The recently passed Israeli national budget for 2002 confirms once again the privileged position of settlers and settlements in the occupied territories. Investment grants to industries located in the settlements increased by 12 percent to \$4.6 million. Incentives to encourage home purchases—including grants up to \$20,000 and soft loans of \$8,000 to home buyers—now stand at \$64 million annually. Personal income tax breaks will cost the government \$106 million according to MK Mossi Raz of the opposition Meretz Party. The budget for the Agriculture Ministry's Settlement Division is almost \$19 million. The Ministry of Religious Affairs won \$11 million for construction of synagogues in settlements. Allocations for free pre-school education for settlers amount to \$ 5.3 million. The cost of guarding small settlement areas in East Jerusalem's Silwan, Ras al-Amud, and Old City Muslim Quarter is \$5 million. Overall, reported *Ha'aretz* on December 27, 2001, "the average investment per capita in regional [government] authorities in the territories is NIS 8,146 [\$1,733] annually, nearly three times the sum spent per capita inside the Green Line."

Israeli local authorities in the West Bank, Gaza Strip, and the Golan Heights were the recipients of \$500 million in government funds from 1990 through 1999 to enable them to balance their local budgets. This amount was four times greater than the funds allocated to poor Jewish towns within Israel. Israeli Arab local authorities, in contrast, had deficit financing of \$2 billion over ten years, according to the Adva Center, which analyzes information concerning equality and social justice in Israel.

A report by the ministry of the interior further highlights the settlements' favored position.

The report—which analyzed government financing of settlements in the areas of municipal budgets, residential housing construction, and highway construction—noted that the ministry's grants to local government councils representing the settlements in 2000 were up to eight times the amount allocated to poorer Jewish communities in Israel. Expenditures by the Defense Ministry were excluded.

Adva reported 32,560 housing starts in the West Bank and Gaza Strip settlements in the 1990–1999 period, costing \$2.5 billion, 65 percent of which was financed by public funds, almost twice the national rate of 38 percent. More than one quarter [152] of all residential housing starts in

November 2001 were in the settlements.

Construction of the network of bypass roads in the West Bank and Gaza during 1990–1999 averaged more than three times the national per capita average. In the 2002 budget, \$32 million has been allocated toward the construction of bypass roads, "but in practice," explains a February 15, 2002, article in *Ha'aretz*, "bypass roads amounting to NIS 228 million [\$50 million] are now currently under construction. Last year, partly under Barak and partly under Sharon, no less than NIS 200 million [\$44 million] were allocated to bypass roads in the West Bank. According to one estimate, since Oslo, Israel has spent more than NIS 1.25 billion [\$300 million]

on bypass roads in the territories." Additional road construction—centered in Greater Jerusalem—amounts to more than \$67 million.

Israel, reversing a policy in effect for decades, has decided to establish a separate electricity network in the occupied territories exclusively for settlements. The new network serving settlements will cost \$155.5 million.

MK Avshalom Vilan of Meretz estimates that since 1967 Israel has spent \$11 billion to create the settlement infrastructure in the West Bank and Gaza Strip.

"Had we invested this money within the state of Israel, it would be a different country today," he observed. ♦

**Prime Minister Sharon told a delegation of settler women last week that he sees no need to evacuate any settlement at any stage in the future. "I don't see myself evacuating any settlement, not in the short term, in the context of interim agreements, and not in the long term, in the context of a permanent agreement," he said. In any agreement, he asserted, Israel would hold on to "broad security areas, all the settlements and the water aquifers, like the mountain aquifer."**

*Globes, January 16, 2002*

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SECURITY, *continued from page 1*

tors at Taba in January 2001. This is the "political horizon" Palestinians demand to end their battle for independence. The Sharon government spurns such a deal, principally because it opposes surrendering more of the occupied territories than it is prepared to countenance, and because of its adamant opposition to permitting the Palestinians to win diplomatic gains through armed rebellion.

Without an agreed upon political horizon, Israel and the Palestinians will pursue battles at ever increasing levels of violence and terror that each side feels that it is winning. Their claims are arguable. What is not in question is that civilians on both sides will continue to suffer the hubris of those who lead in their name. ♦

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## SEVENTEEN IDF SOLDIERS FALL IN DEFENSE OF NETZARIM SINCE OCTOBER 2000

The isolated settlements in the northern Gaza Strip, Netzarim and Kfar Darom, have usually been the ones in the headlines since the beginning of the fighting. Morag received less publicity, but the situation there is no different. Officially, the settlement is part of Gush Katif, but in reality, Morag—located between Rafah and Khan Yunis—is cut off from the rest of the Gush Katif settlements. As a result of the Oslo Accords, it remained within an enclave that is linked to IDF-controlled territory via a narrow corridor. The corridor, which is about 500 meters long, contains the road that links Morag with the central route of Gush Katif.

Since the outbreak of the Al-Aqsa Intifada, the road has become an open firing range. The residents have been forced to choose between racing down the roads at crazy speeds or traveling in slow convoys protected by armored jeeps. Most prefer to motor at 130 kilometers per hour. Two women from the settlement were injured by gunfire about a year ago, one of them seriously.

The shootings have made the feeling of isolation more tangible. Morag is now the only settlement in Gush Katif that Egged buses do not reach, even though Egged's information center still states that Bus 36 services the settlement. There are 28 families living in Morag. At the beginning of the intifada, they were joined by eight new families, most of them young couples, products of the hesder yeshivot system. During the same period, only three families left; one of them has already returned to Morag.

The main damage to the settlement has been economic. Most of the families worked in agriculture, but the security situation has brought this work to a halt in most of the hothouses. There are now only three families who are continuing to work in the hothouses adjacent to the settlement, which are guarded by the IDF. The rest of the residents have had to subsist on property tax compensation or have chosen to work outside the settlement.

The new residents have formed a kolel (yeshiva for married men) at the local synagogue; there are currently six men studying there.

In order to protect Morag and the corridor leading to it, the IDF significantly broadened its defenses around the settlement. The access road is completely walled in by concrete barricades and similar obstacles are positioned around the settlement and the huge army post adjacent to it, which is remi-

niscient of IDF outposts in Lebanon. There are about three soldiers deployed to protect each family. The force is comprised of an infantry company that moves about in armored personnel carriers and armored jeeps, a platoon of three tanks, an engineering force with an armored bulldozer, a doctor and team of medics, trackers and a dog trainer.

To make this security detail easier, IDF bulldozers cleared all of the area surrounding the settlement and the army post. There is now an open, flat and completely empty space stretching for hundreds of meters between Morag and the first homes on the outskirts of Rafah and Khan Yunis. This area is called a "special security zone" in which the rules of engagement are particularly harsh. The Palestinians have learned this and take heed: they rarely venture into this area.

IDF soldiers also stay out of this area, and certainly do not

enter on foot. Almost every patrol or entry into the areas around Morag is now carried out in armored personnel carriers or with a tank escort. At the beginning of the intifada, bombs were discovered on nearly a daily basis in the vicinity of the hothouses and after several jeeps were damaged, the IDF decided to open the road around the hothouses every day with a tank escort and armored bulldozer. These bombs also had an economic impact along with the security implications. Up until the beginning of the intifada, most of the workers in the hothouses were from Thailand. According to the settlers, the Thai Embassy demanded that its citizens be

removed from Morag and, if not, threatened to prevent Thai laborers from working in any settlement in Gush Katif.

Today, the workers employed at Morag are all local Palestinians who have received special work permits from the IDF.

In a company of soldiers where many—regardless of their political views—spoke about the absurdity of defending a handful of Jewish settlements in the heart of a hostile Palestinian population, not a single soldier expressed identification with the call to refuse to serve in the territories. Perhaps the policy of "exposing" the land around the settlement contributed to this by creating a separation between the IDF forces and the Palestinians. Today, whoever is not assigned to man a checkpoint—and there are now fewer of these in the Gaza Strip—barely comes into contact with the Palestinian population.

*Ha'aretz*, February 15, 2002

**The Palestinian people are struggling against what they see as settlement activity and what they see as the occupation of their lands. And we have got to find a way to go forward, and the only way to do that is through a political process, and that is what we have to find our way back to—a political process that will solve this.**

U.S. Secretary of State Colin L. Powell  
Meet the Press [NBC], April 7, 2002

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## SETTLEMENT-BASED INDUSTRIES SUFFER EFFECTS OF INTIFADA

Israeli settlement policies have long focused on the transfer of Israeli civilians to new or expanding settlement communities throughout the occupied territories. There is, however, a less heralded, and by most accounts, far less successful element of Israel's settlement equation—the creation of a viable economic infrastructure in the occupied territories to support this growing population.

For most of the last three decades, the aim of settlement groups and governments alike has been to relocate as many Israelis as possible to the areas captured in June 1967. The economic viability of these new colonies has always been less important. This bias is as much a product of geographic realities as the priorities of settlers and government officials, who have always viewed their main task as winning the contest with Palestinians for control of as much of this contested patrimony as possible. Except possibly among settlers in the agriculturally rich Golan Heights and Jordan Valley, and the Gaza Strip, with its easy access to cheap agricultural labor, the prospect of job opportunities has never registered as a leading cause for relocating to these outposts. Most settlers moved for ideological reasons and quality of life, not to find a job.

The geographic placement of settlements seriously challenges planners concerned with establishing a local sustainable economic base independent of government sponsorship. This predicament is particularly true for the scores of smaller outposts scattered throughout the West Bank. Massive investments in roads, communications, water, and electricity have not compensated for the fact that these outposts are capable only of supporting the most rudimentary sort of independent, entrepreneurial economic activities. The state not only builds and protects settlements, it continues to supply the financial wherewithal that enables many of the 40,000 families in the West Bank to live their lives in economic security.

Rather than establishing employment sources in each settlement, successive Israeli governments have allocated tens of millions of dollars to the creation of industrial parks. Of the 26 such developments Israel has built, 10 are in the West Bank. During the last three years, factories established in settlements have received \$46 million in grants from the Investment Center for the Encouragement of New Enterprises and the Expansion of Existing Enterprises. Many other government subsidies act similarly to harness economic development to the overriding objective of settling the occupied territories.

A November 30, 2001, article in *Ma'ariv* notes that during the Oslo period, "the *Yesha* Council understood that the establishment of industrial parks was the simplest, most legal and effective means for extending control over the lands of Judea and Samaria." In an era in which settlement expansion was constrained by a commitment not to establish new outposts, settlement leaders concluded that industrial areas offered "a means to create facts on the ground and to rule over as much empty land as possible." While Israel indeed established new settlement outposts, new industrial parks claimed far

more territory and with far less controversy.

According to *Ma'ariv*, despite the millions of dollars lavished upon these enterprises, "most of the parks are failing and abandoned. The economic and security situation has chased away potential investors and delivered them a grievous blow."

The Bron industrial park, for example, was established during the last two years on 1,500 dunams (400 acres) of land next to the settlement of Keddumim. Only one-third of the site is open, and only two small concerns—one manufacturing cleaning products and the other producing soap—currently operate, employing 30 people.

The only growth industry at the Bron site is security. The monthly bill for such services has risen to \$25,000 since the eruption of violence between Israelis and Palestinians in September 2000.

Two industrial sites have established a record of achievement and economic success that distinguishes them from their hapless peers. The site at Mishor Adumim is almost 30 years old and enjoys quick access to Jerusalem, only a few miles away. Unlike the industrial zone at Atarot, in East Jerusalem, that has been all but abandoned because of security concerns, Mishor Adumim, located next to the large settlement of Ma'ale Adumim (pop. 25,000) along the road to Jericho, has not suffered from the al-Aqsa intifada. Sited on 3,000 dunams, its 115 enterprises employ 2,000 people, half of them Palestinians. Barkan, near Ariel, with its population of more than 15,000, is also close to Israel proper and thus enjoys the dual advantages of proximity and the highest level of government subsidy. Barkan's 5,000 employees, half of them Palestinian, work in 100 enterprises with earnings in the millions of dollars.

Israel exports products from the industrial zones in the occupied territories to the European Union and the United States under preferential trade agreements. The EU has begun to take initial, halting steps toward imposing sanctions on Israel for exporting these products as if they were made in Israel. In late November 2001 it notified importers that Israeli exports from the occupied territories are not included in the Israeli-EU trade agreement and are, therefore, subject to import duties. Israel's reoccupation of Areas A in April 2002 increased these concerns.

Israeli industrialists are already demanding that the government compensate them for any losses resulting from the EU decision. Israelis are also concerned about the domino effect of the EU action, particularly in the United States, whose trade agreement with Israel resembles the one between the EU and Israel. One Israeli company has already moved its operations out of the West Bank and in to Israel.

Avigdore Yitzhaki, Chief of Staff of Prime Minister Ariel Sharon, suggests, however, that the imposition of sanctions by the EU will result in the expansion of industrial parks in the occupied territories. ♦

## SECURITY COUNCIL SUPPORTS PALESTINIAN STATEHOOD

On March 13, 2002, the United Nations Security Council voted 14-0, with one abstention (Syria) in favor of Resolution 1397, marking the first time that the international body has endorsed the establishment of a Palestinian state. The full text of resolution 1397 (2002) reads as follows:

The Security Council,

Recalling all its previous relevant resolutions, in particular resolutions 242 (1967) and 338 (1973),

Affirming a vision of a region where two States, Israel and Palestine, live side by side within secure and recognized borders,

Expressing its grave concern at the continuation of the tragic and violent events that have taken place since September 2000, especially the recent attacks and the increased number of casualties,

Stressing the need for all concerned to ensure the safety of civilians,

Stressing also the need to respect the universally accepted

norms of international humanitarian law,

Welcoming and encouraging the diplomatic efforts of special envoys from the United States of America, the Russian Federation, the European Union and the United Nations Special Coordinator and others to bring about a comprehensive, just and lasting peace in the Middle East,

Welcoming the contribution of Saudi Crown Prince Abdullah,

1. Demands immediate cessation of all acts of violence, including all acts of terror, provocation, incitement and destruction;

2. Calls upon the Israeli and Palestinian sides and their leaders to cooperate in the implementation of the Tenet work plan and Mitchell Report recommendations with the aim of resuming negotiations on a political settlement;

3. Expresses support for the efforts of the Secretary-General and others to assist the parties to halt the violence and to resume the peace process;

4. Decides to remain seized of the matter. ♦

**June will mark 35 years since the territories were occupied. What began as a vision of biblical redemption, a return to the Jewish homeland, a Messianic rerun of the establishment of the Zionist state—three million Jews populating the hills of Judea and Samaria—has become a catastrophic parody. Only a few, thousands or tens of thousands have settled there since 1967, cheap mortgages and panoramic views in four directions.**

**[T]heir presence obfuscates any possibility of an agreement and of quiet. The Oslo agreements, despicable to them, were formulated according to the needs of the settlers and therefore failed. While the agreements were in force, their lives improved and the area calmed down. The bypass roads were widened and they carved up the lands of the neighbor to a thousand separate scraps of scenery.**

**[T]he continued presence of the settlements in the territories has extracted a heavy toll from them and from us: hundreds of Israelis killed, life in a constant state of fear and billions of shekels spent and for what? What has been achieved in Judea, Samaria and the Gaza Strip? Security? High Tech? Literature and Art? What has been created there: Culture? Religious objectives? Or only a Benny Elon-style leadership of incitement calling for transfer of the Palestinians, and the passion for war and for expulsion. It is no longer the 'right' of the settlers to return, but their duty."**

*Journalist Yigal Sarna, Yediot Aharanot, March 19, 2002*

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