

REPORT ON ISRAELI SETTLEMENT IN THE OCCUPIED TERRITORIES

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A GUIDE FOR THE PERPLEXED — NEGOTIATIONS AFTER ANNAPOLIS

By Geoffrey Aronson

Negotiations have resumed to resolve the “core issues” of the conflict between Israel and the Palestinians—borders and settlements, Palestinian refugees, and the status and territorial division of Jerusalem. Palestinian and Israeli negotiating delegations have been created, a framework for addressing both final status issues and those related to obligations set out in the road map has been established, and the international community has committed to unprecedented levels of financial support for Palestinian Authority (PA) chairman Mahmoud Abbas and Prime Minister Salaam Fayyad.

Most international attention is focused on this complex and variegated diplomatic framework, which, for the first time in seven years designates Israelis and Palestinians as the central players in the diplomatic process. The experience of diplomatic efforts during the Oslo years, as well as more recent developments, however, suggests that current negotiations between Israelis and Palestinians will be less decisive than the debate among Israelis that such diplomacy fosters, or the dialogue that it sparks between Washington and Jerusalem.

Soon after the announcement of Israel’s intention to evacuate the Gaza Strip, for example, President George W. Bush, in an April 14, 2004 letter to Prime Minister Ariel Sharon stated the following:

As part of a final peace settlement, Israel must have secure and recognized borders, which should emerge from negotiations between the parties in accordance with UNSC Resolutions 242 and 338. *In light of new realities on the ground, including already existing major Israeli populations centers [settlements], it is unrealistic to expect that the outcome of final status negotiations will be a full and complete return to the armistice lines of 1949, and all previous efforts to negotiate a two-state solution have reached the same conclusion. It is realistic to expect that any final status agreement will only be achieved on the basis of mutually agreed changes that reflect these realities. [Emphasis added]*

Sharon chose not to negotiate with Palestinians his historic decision to

evacuate settlements in the Gaza Strip, but he choreographed his policy to wrest maximum advantage from the United States. Notwithstanding the lack of geographic clarity in Bush’s April 2004 statement, the letter signified United States support for Israel’s policy of “creating facts,” contradicting decades of American opposition, and at the very moment when Sharon was establishing the critical precedent of *evacuating* settlements.

Palestinian leader Ghassan Khatib noted at the time that

. . . [Bush’s] assurances justify and consequently encourage right-wing Israeli extremists to proceed with their settlement expansion advocacy, which will ultimately and ironically bring about the final death of Bush’s “vision” of two states living side by side. Bush’s concurrence, included in his letter to Sharon, that the borders contained in a final agreement be modified to accommodate Israel’s settlements is certainly going to encourage settlement expansion and further strengthen the hand of Israeli settlers. Thirty-five years of illegal settlement expansion have now been recognized and legitimated by the president of the only remaining superpower in the world.

Indeed, Prime Minister Ehud Olmert, Sharon’s successor, claimed during Bush’s January 2008 visit to Israel that, “the Palestinians too, know that there is no new construction or confiscation of land, but they also know that Jerusalem and the settlement blocs do

2007 Settlement Wrap-up

West Bank and East Jerusalem settlements: 132

West Bank “outpost” settlements: 100

West Bank settler population: 282,000

East Jerusalem settler population: 191,000

Settlement “outpost” population: 3,000

West Bank settler population rate of growth 2007: 5.2 percent

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TO OUR READERS

"If the day comes when the two-state solution collapses, and we face a South African-style struggle for equal voting rights . . . then, as soon as that happens, the State of Israel is finished."

This remarkable statement by Israeli prime minister Ehud Olmert the day after the Annapolis peace conference echoes what many others, including former president Jimmy Carter and former Israeli attorney general Michael Ben-Yair, have been saying: If Israel fails to reverse its occupation and settlement policies in the West Bank, the eventual result will be a *de facto* apartheid state, in which an unwilling and fast-growing majority of Palestinians live under military occupation, without rights, under the rule of a Jewish minority. This situation is inherent in today's status quo. If it is not reversed the Israeli dream of peace and security in a Jewish and democratic state, and the Palestinian dream of freedom and statehood, may be lost irretrievably.

Olmert's candid warning about the dangers of the status quo should serve as a

wake-up call. Some analysts are arguing already that Israel's massive settlement venture has irreversibly transformed the West Bank, and that ultimately, the only tolerable solution is one single secular, binational democratic state. We disagree. A binational state would create a hopelessly intractable zero-sum conflict. There is no guarantee, however, that Palestinians will continue to support a two-state solution as that prospect appears to recede, nor will they willingly accept a token "state" of the kind Israel now envisages. Given this danger, Washington should avoid further concessions on settlements, fulfill its commitment that any U.S.-Israeli understandings be "mutually agreed" with the Palestinians, and present its own vision of a sovereign, independent, viable Palestinian state that would ensure justice for Palestinians and security for Israel.



Our view is the settlement expansion should halt. The prime minister expressed his views about how Israel is going to undertake that point. The other thing I would say—as you know, this whole issue of settlements gets a lot easier once there is an understanding between Israel and the Palestinians as to what the territory of a new state is going to look like.

Question: Just one more question on that. First of all, it would seem that you're at odds, then, with Prime Minister Olmert on that and how that is viewed. Correct?

Mr. Hadley: I think it's fair to say that the road map is pretty flat. It talks about ending expansion of the—of settlements. Prime Minister Olmert has made some practical distinctions that they are going to adopt in the approach they are taking to that issue. We continue to say, road map obligations are road map obligations and they need to be carried forth.

Press Briefing by National Security Advisor Stephen Hadley on Israeli-Palestinian Peace Process, Jerusalem, January 10, 2008

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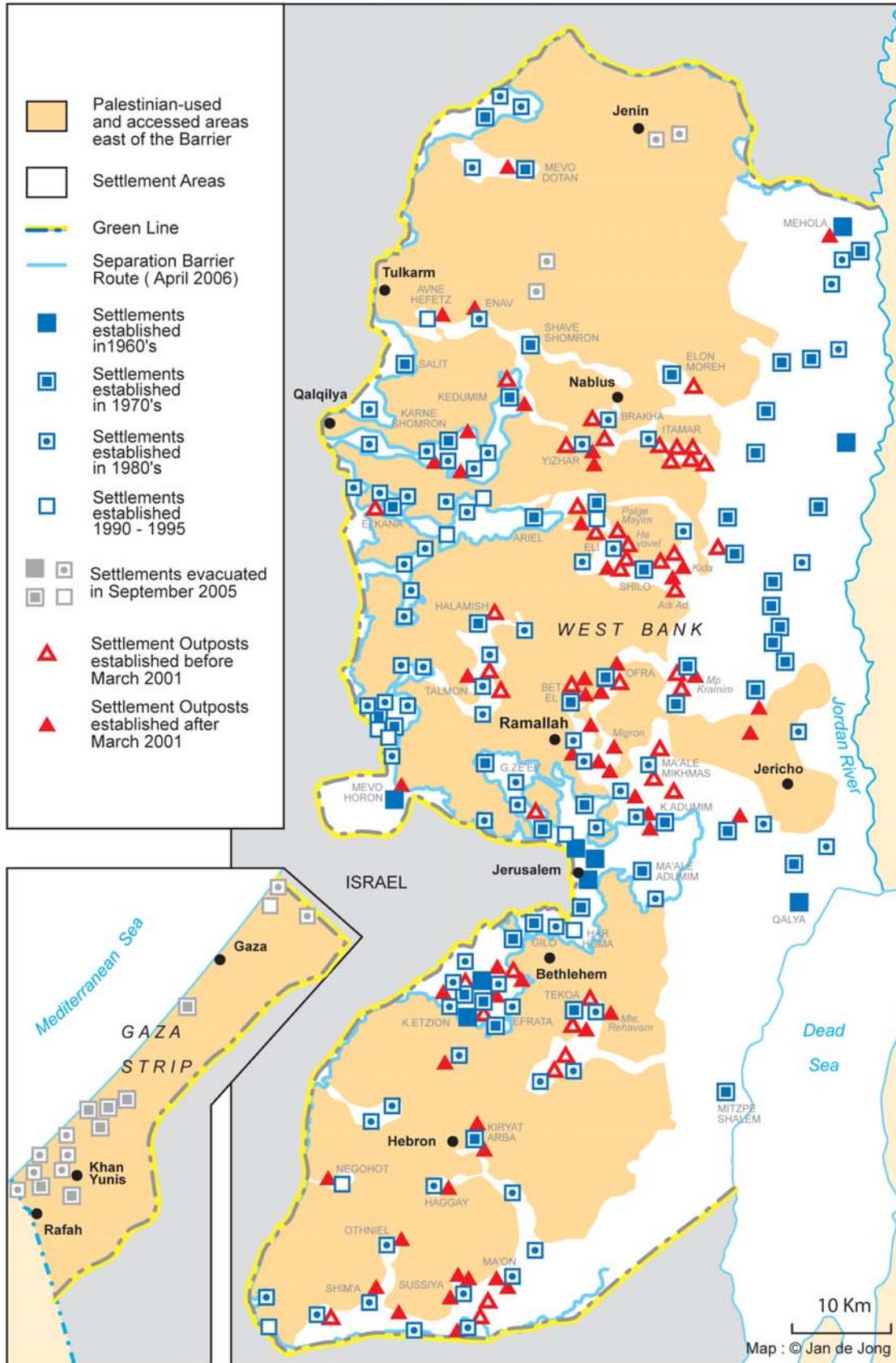
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Settlements Established and Evacuated 1967 - 2008



SETTLEMENT TIME LINE

September 21 *Yerushalaim* reports that 3,600 apartments have been sold in the settlement of Har Homa, East Jerusalem, since 2000.

September 27 Settlers from Alfe Menashe cut down and burn 90 olive trees belonging to Palestinian farmers from Asla village. (OCHA)

Settlers beat and injure a 13-year-old Palestinian boy in Hebron. (OCHA)

September 28 The Israel Defense Forces (IDF) requisition 177.9 dunams of land in Ni'lin for military purposes and construction of the separation barrier. (OCHA)

September 29 Settlers from Itamar steal olives from land belonging to Palestinian farmers from the village of Yanun. (OCHA)

October 1 *Ha'aretz* reports a comment by Internal Security Minister Avi Dichter that Israel will build a police station in the E1 area near Jerusalem despite objections by the United States. The station would eliminate the possibility of territorial contiguity for a Palestinian state.

Settlers clash with IDF soldiers as they erect a new outpost near the settlement of Elon Moreh on Palestinian land belonging to farmers from Yanun. (OCHA)

A group of settlers protected by the IDF spends the night at Joseph's Tomb near Balata village. (OCHA)

The IDF evacuates an outpost created the preceding day on Palestinian land east of the settlement of Efrat. (OCHA)

October 2 Settlers march to and squat in the evacuated settlement of Homesh. In an effort to prevent the settlers from reaching the site, the IDF uses flying checkpoints to close entrances to Palestinian villages connected to Road 60. (OCHA)

October 4 Settlers from Beitar Illit release sewage onto agricultural land belonging to Palestinian farmers from Wadi Fukin. (OCHA)

Settlers from Kiryat Arba throw stones at Palestinians and pick and destroy grapes belonging to farmers in Hebron. (OCHA)

A Palestinian taxi driver is assaulted by settlers near Qalqilya. (OCHA)

October 5 IDF soldiers fire rubber-coated bullets, injuring three Palestinians, during a

demonstration against construction of the separation barrier in Bil'in village. (OCHA)

October 7 The IDF prevents farmers from Asla from accessing their land west of the separation barrier. (OCHA)

Settlers from the Gilad outpost near Nablus prevent farmers from Jit from accessing their land. (OCHA)

October 8 Israeli security forces evacuate tens of settlers squatting in a newly established outpost near the settlement of Alon Shevut. (*Ha'aretz*)

Settlers stone Palestinian vehicles traveling on Road 55 after the IDF forces them from a new outpost near Kedumim. (OCHA)

Settlers throw garbage and dirty water at Palestinians in Hebron. (OCHA)

October 10 Palestinian Authority president Mahmoud Abbas says that a future state of Palestine will be 6,205 square kilometers and include most of the West Bank and East Jerusalem. He notes that he will agree to land swaps equivalent to 2 percent of the West Bank. (*Ha'aretz*)

October 11 Settlers run over a two-year-old Palestinian girl on the main road leading to the settlement of Kiryat Arba, Hebron. (OCHA)

Israeli police demolish the Netzar settlement outpost near the Etzion bloc settlements of Elazar and Alon Shevut. (OCHA)

October 12 Settlers return to the site of the Netzar settlement to rebuild it. (Arutz 7)

Kol Ha'Zeman reports Israeli approval for construction of two additional roads leading into the East Jerusalem settlement of Har Homa.

October 15 Israeli police clash with settlers at Shvut Ami, near the settlement of Kedumim, during their second attempt to dismantle the outpost. The outpost is one of five established during the Sukkot holiday. (*Ha'aretz*)

Jerusalem's Committee on Planning and Construction votes in favor of permitting settlers to reside in a five-storey building located in the middle of the East Jerusalem neighborhood of Silwan, although it was built without a permit and against the recommendation of the city's attorney general. The building had been slated for evacuation. (*Kol Ha'ir*)

October 16 Settlers injure a 50-year-old Palestinian man when they attack farmers from Tel village picking olives on their land near Road 60, Nablus. (OCHA)

Arutz 7 reports the IDF Central District commander issuing restraining orders to several settlers for three months, the duration of the olive harvest.

October 17 Israel's High Court of Justice orders the government to present reasons why it continues to allow settlers to squat in shops in Hebron's market despite a decision to remove them until a final ruling is made on their presence. (*Ha'aretz*)

Settlers from Karnei Shomron steal olives from a farmer from Jinsafut village, Qalqilya. (OCHA)

October 19 *Ha'aretz* reports on a B'Tselem study indicating a sharp increase in violent attacks against Palestinian residents of Hebron carried out by settlers and security forces since March 2007, when settlers began living in the al-Rajabi house there.

October 20 Settlers from Beitar Illit assault and injure a Palestinian man from Husan as he passes by the settlement. (OCHA)

October 21 IDF soldiers prevent farmers from Zbuba village, Jenin, from accessing their land near the separation barrier. (OCHA)

October 22 *The Marker* reports 20 to 24 percent increases in housing sales over the preceding two years in the settlement of Ma'ale Adumim and other settlements on East Jerusalem's outskirts. It reports a 15 to 20 percent increase in Jerusalem housing sales.

October 23 Palestinians shoot and injure two settlers near the settlement of Ariel. (Arutz 7)

October 24 Palestinian gunmen injure three settlers near the Ariel settlement. (OCHA)

The IDF arrests a Palestinian man picking olives in his grove near Yanun village for approaching too close to the fence along the settlement of Itamar. (OCHA)

October 25 The IDF issues stop work orders for six dwellings being built by Palestinians in areas along Road 50 in the vicinity of the Hebron settlements of Kiryat Arba and Kharsina. (OCHA)

SETTLEMENT TIME LINE

Ma'ariv reports on a petition by the Palestinian mission in Paris to the French government against two French companies working with Jerusalem authorities to build a light rail system that would connect the West Bank settlements near Jerusalem to the city.

October 26 A synagogue in a settlement outpost is set on fire for the second time in ten months. (*Ha'aretz*)

A settler is injured by stone-throwing Palestinian youths near Ramallah. (OCHA)

The International Solidarity Movement and a group of Palestinians demonstrate against the Talmon settlement and damage a couple of hundred grapevines belonging to settlers. (OCHA)

October 30 Settlers from Elon Moreh prevent Palestinians from Deir al-Hatab from accessing their olive groves near the settlement. (OCHA)

Israeli authorities evacuate and dismantle caves and tents of twenty-five Palestinian shepherd families in the southern West Bank for being built without a permit. The families had been there for almost fifty years. (*Ha'aretz*)

November 2 *Yerushalaim* reports that a recent proposal to build 1,800 new housing units for Palestinians residing in the East Jerusalem neighborhood of Issawiya will likely not be implemented.

November 3 Settlers throw stones at a Palestinian family's house near the outpost of Giv'at Havot, injuring a 10-year-old boy. (OCHA)

November 4 Israeli police and IDF soldiers evacuate the outpost of Shvut Ami, arresting 32 of 50 settlers squatting there. (*Ha'aretz*)

November 7 Masked, armed settlers from Itamar threaten a family from Yanun staying in a tent on their land in order to pick olives. The settlers order the family to leave their land within three days. (OCHA)

A guard from the settlement of Karmi Tzur prevents Palestinians and French volunteers from collecting olives on Palestinian land near the settlement. Israeli security forces allow them to enter the land. (OCHA)

November 8 The IDF requisitions 22 dunams belonging to the municipalities of Bethlehem and Beit Sahur to establish the

Mazmoriya Terminal, Bethlehem. (OCHA)

Settlers from the Brakha settlement prevent farmers from Burin village from picking olives. (OCHA)

The IDF imposes an eight-hour curfew on al-Zawiya village after Palestinians throw stones at settlers' vehicles on Road 5. (OCHA)

Ma'ariv reports the IDF's withdrawal of soldiers protecting settlers squatting in the outpost of Ramat Gilad after settlers refused to allow Palestinian workers onto the site to repair the soldiers' caravan.

November 11 The IDF bulldozes land belonging to al-Ma'asara village while building a road leading to the settlement of Efrat. Clashes between the soldiers and Palestinian farmers of the village ensue. (OCHA)

November 13 A settler is injured when his car is stoned while driving on bypass Road 443 near Beit Sira village, Ramallah. (OCHA)

The IDF closes the roads leading from Marda and places flying checkpoints at the village entrance in response to Palestinians throwing stones on Road 505. (OCHA)

November 14 *Ha'aretz* reports Palestinians uprooting approximately 500 vines in a vineyard belonging to settlers from Dolev.

Approximately thirty settlers attack a house in Brukin village and damage the owner's vehicle. (OCHA)

November 15 *Ha'aretz* reports the removal of two of the twenty-four West Bank roadblocks that Defense Minister Ehud Barak had recently told U.S. secretary of state Condoleezza Rice had been removed. Some of them never existed.

November 16 Settlers from Elon Moreh destroy fifty olive trees when they set fire to olive groves belonging to farmers from Deir al-Hatab village. (OCHA)

November 17 Palestinians throw stones at settler vehicles near Turmus Ayya village, near Ramallah. (OCHA)

November 19 An Israeli court concludes that settlers' purchase of al-Rajabi house in Hebron is fraudulent. (OCHA)

A settler is killed in a drive-by shooting near the West Bank village of Funduq, near the settlement of Kedumim. (Arutz 7)

November 20 Settlers attack Palestinian vehicles with stones, clubs, and metal bars near the settlement of Yitzhar on Road 60. (OCHA)

November 24 Two settlers are injured by stones in Funduq village during confrontations with Palestinians after settlers attack Palestinian houses and vehicles and vandalize their property. (OCHA)

November 26 In Jerusalem, fifteen thousand Israelis protest the Annapolis conference. (*Ha'aretz*)

Ha'aretz reports that about 1,800 residences, about 10 percent of all the apartments sold in Jerusalem in 2007, were bought by foreigners.

November 27 Settlers squatting illegally in the al-Rajabi house in Hebron are given an extension of two days to evacuate the building. (*Ha'aretz*)

Yediot Abarot reports on a recent meeting between Dorit Beinisch, a chief justice of the Israeli High Court of Justice, and the U.S. ambassador to Israel Richard Jones, during which they discussed settlements and the separation barrier.

November 28 A settler is injured on Road 60 when Palestinians threw stones at his vehicle. (OCHA)

November 29 Israel approves the resumption of construction at the Mughrabi Gate in the Old City of Jerusalem. (*Ha'aretz*)

November 30 Arutz 7 reports that activists from the Land of Israel organization plan to establish three new outposts during Hanukkah and return to three outposts that were removed by police.

Kol Ha'Ir reports that \$5 million will be allocated to the development of the East Jerusalem industrial area of Atarot. This expansion follows an increase in investor confidence in the security of the area with the construction of the separation barrier.

Ma'ariv reports on a change in policy by the Israeli Defense Ministry permitting settler families of fallen soldiers to build memorials to them in West Bank settlements. A law in place since 1967 had limited such memorials to inside the Green Line.

not share the same status as the rest of the West Bank.”

Bush’s recognition and acceptance of the strategy at the heart of Israel’s settlements policy—that settlements are a factor that will determine the borders of the state—marked an unprecedented Israeli achievement that is shaping its diplomacy with the Palestinians. Insofar as Bush has eased Israeli concerns about the acceptability of its colonization effort, his assurances demonstrate that Israel’s preferred address for resolving this issue is Washington, not Palestine. Indeed, the Mitchell Report’s support for a settlement freeze, reiterated in 2003 in the road map, set the stage for extended and detailed, if ultimately inconclusive discussions between Israeli and American diplomats on the finer points of settlement expansion, a process that further compromised U.S. opposition, as a matter of principle, to Israel’s settlement policy.

In the post-Annapolis era, Washington intends to insert itself as the “referee” with power to determine Israel’s compliance with its oft-stated and more often breached commitment not to expand existing settlements or establish new ones. To the extent that Washington assumes this role, the value of Israel’s direct, bilateral negotiations with the Palestinians will be compromised, along with the atrophied policy of U.S. opposition to *all* settlement. Given this structure, any Israeli decision to revise its settlement policy in the foreseeable future is more likely to emerge from discussions between Jerusalem and Washington—along the Sharon-Bush model, through which Israel believes, with good reason, that additional U.S. concessions on settlements can be won—rather than around the table with Palestinians.

So, for example, *Ha’aretz’s* Aluf Benn reported on January 3, 2008 that

Israel is seeking to reach an understanding with the U.S. administration that would safeguard Israel’s security interests in a future final-status agreement with the Palestinians and during current negotiations. . . . Israel would like the U.S. to agree to a number of limitations on the future Palestinian state’s sovereignty. Israel wants Palestine to be completely demilitarized, and for Israel to be able to fly over Palestinian air space. Border crossings would be monitored by Israel in such a way that the symbols of Palestinian sovereignty would not be compromised, but Israel would know who was coming and going.

Israel is to propose the deployment of an international force in the West Bank and along the Philadelphi Route in Rafah, and would ask that a permanent Israel Defense Forces presence remain for an extended period in the Jordan Valley. . . . Discussions with administration officials on this issue began even before the Annapolis summit, during the visit of the Israeli delegation to Washington.

The Other Negotiations: The Internal Israeli Debate

Shimon Peres once quipped that the Oslo negotiations were less about what Palestinians and Israelis agreed than what Israelis themselves decided to offer. The Oslo process

demonstrated the extent to which the internal Israeli debate, rather than talks with the Palestinians, has shaped the diplomatic agenda on issues of territory and statehood. In one telling example, Israel refused to share with the Palestinian leadership the key Oslo II maps defining Israeli and Palestinian jurisdictions in the West Bank and Gaza Strip until moments before agreement was reached in 1995.

On the face of it, Israel has come a long way since the days of its unequivocal opposition to Palestinian statehood in the West Bank, Gaza Strip and East Jerusalem. The United States has traveled a similar road.

Foreign Minister Tzipi Livni, a former Likud “princess” and disciple of Menachem Begin, declared in a December 17, 2007 address to the donor’s conference in Paris, “I am here because the establishment of a peaceful and prosperous Palestinian state that respects law and order and fulfills the legitimate national aspirations of its people is not just a Palestinian dream, it is also an Israeli interest.” George Bush notes with pride that he is the first president to formally endorse the creation of a Palestinian state.

There are many reasons why Israel has embraced the concept of a Palestinian state as the key to resolving the situation created by Israel’s occupation of the West Bank and Gaza Strip in June 1967. As Livni’s statement and the report by Aluf Benn reveal, however, the nature of the state promoted by Israel and the one that it wants Washington to support is conditioned upon its satisfaction of longstanding Israeli settlement and security interests.

Israel’s desire to remove Palestinians in the occupied territories from Israel’s direct control and internationally recognized responsibility while retaining its settlement and security prerogatives has changed little in the last 40 years. Prime Minister Menachem Begin’s 1977 plan for Palestinian “self-rule”—“autonomy for the people and not the land”—was a product of this interest. Like Israel’s contemporary vision of Palestinian statehood, and the limited powers granted to the Palestinian Authority during the Oslo years, Begin’s autonomy plan was also embraced by Washington. The description of the entity to be created has evolved from self-rule to statehood, but by design the ability of such a “state” to act in a sovereign and independent manner remains compromised.

The Palestinian state on offer today, wrote Ahmad Khalidi, a principal architect of the Abu Mazen-Beilin understandings, in the *Guardian* on December 13, 2007, “is largely a punitive construct devised by the Palestinians’ worst historical enemies; Israel and its implacable ally, the U.S. The intention behind the state today is to constrain Palestinian aspirations territorially, to force them to give up on their moral rights, renege on their history and submit to Israel’s diktats on fundamental issues of sovereignty.”

On December 16, Jerusalem’s *Al-Quds* observed that “the state that we demand is not the state that Israel and US President George Bush demand. In any case, we believe that

PERMANENT SETTLEMENTS OR “TEMPORARY OUTPOSTS”— IS THERE A DIFFERENCE?

There are more than 100 unauthorized settlements—termed “outposts”—in the West Bank. Prime Minister Ariel Sharon promised U.S. president George W. Bush to evacuate all outposts established after March 2001. The government of Israel, however, has not taken such action. Defense Minister Ehud Barak has been negotiating with the YESHA settlers council in an effort to reach settler agreement to the voluntary evacuation of some outposts in return for the relocation and formal authorization of others.

TO: Minister [Haim] Ramon, Deputy Prime Minister and Head of the Knesset Committee on Unauthorized Outposts, Members of the Knesset Committee on Unauthorized Outposts, Deputy Attorney General Mlihiel Blas

RE: Proposal submitted for government approval regarding the resolution of issues relating to Israeli settlement in the West Bank

The findings of the [2005] outpost report established that the main problem with regard to construction in the West Bank was construction without the involvement of the government, but rather through the unauthorized actions of state and public authorities. Under this scheme, construction was framed as expansion of existing settlement neighborhoods when in fact new settlements (outposts) were being created.

The purpose of the 2005 outpost report was to place authority over construction in the West Bank in the hands of the government—whereby only the government has the authority and legal right to decide on [settlement construction]. Decisions regarding construction and settlement expansion in the West Bank are of particular importance in order to ensure that settlement “expansion” does not become the establishment of new settlements without the government’s approval.

The proposal [by the Ministry of Justice] with regards to outposts is presented as a solution in the name of the outpost report, when, in fact, it contradicts [the report’s findings and recommendations]. The proposal will strip the government of all control and supervision over construction in the West Bank, and will enable massive construction to take place. The proposal achieves this in two ways. First, by adopting a flexible definition of “abutting and reasonable construction,” the proposal allows for construction in the West Bank without the approval of the government. Second, the proposal to use existing construction plans without government approval allows for the approval of settlement construction even if the construction is not within the settlement—in other words, a new settlement entirely. The proposal legitimizes settlement outposts by allowing for construction in settlement outposts without first dealing with the question of legality. Construction in an outpost will de facto legalize it despite the fact that it has no legal basis.

In order to resolve the problem of illegal settlement out-

In 2005, Sharon commissioned lawyer Talia Sasson to write a report on the outpost situation, and a Knesset committee was established to implement the recommendations of the report. Sasson’s report found that many outposts had been established with funding and assistance from government bodies. Sasson wrote the following letter on October 7, 2007 in response to a proposal for resolving the outpost issue submitted by the Ministry of Justice to the Knesset committee.

posts, it would be necessary to first cancel the Barak government’s 1999 decision 175-b, which deals with requirements for the expansion of settlements (and its unsatisfactory restrictions on settlement expansion). Instead, a decision should be adopted requiring all settlement expansion in the West Bank to be approved by the government in a plenary session. Instead of doing so [the proposal by the Ministry of Justice] not only cancels the Barak government decision 175-b but also cancels restrictions imposed by the Netanyahu administration in 1996 in decision 150, and instead offers a plan that allows construction in the West Bank settlements without restriction or governmental involvement in the basic decision to expand.

This proposal stands in contrast to the conclusions and recommendations of [my 2005 report] on illegal settlement outposts, and goes against the decision made on March 10, 2005 by the government when it established the Knesset committee responsible for implementing the findings and recommendations of the outpost report.

For these reasons, I recommend to you not to agree to the major aspects of this proposal as I have outlined in this letter.

Respectfully,

Talia Sasson, Esq.

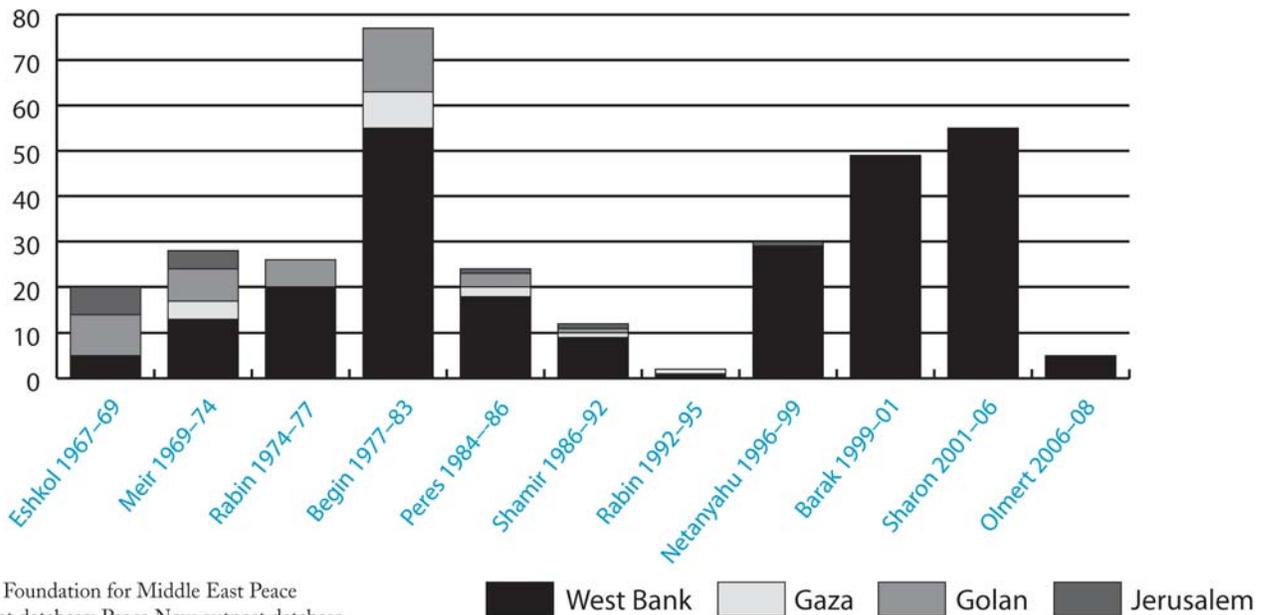
cc: Attorney General [Meni] Mazuz

A GUIDE, *continued from page 6*

the term ‘state’ may be, or we hope it will be, the opening of a new era or a true glimpse of hope towards achieving the dream state that we have long been waiting for.”

Like the Palestinian Authority of the Oslo-era, and Begin’s autonomy plan before it, a vision of Palestinian statehood that fails to establish the prerequisites for genuine Palestinian sovereignty and independence, and that fails to place real limits on Israel’s security and settlement prerogatives in the West Bank, Gaza, Strip, and East Jerusalem, is a recipe for continuing conflict, instability, and violence. The challenge of the Annapolis process is to create a sovereign, independent Palestinian state, that, having won these attributes, will be committed to living in peace with its neighbor Israel. ◆

NEW SETTLEMENTS, 1967–2008



Source: Foundation for Middle East Peace settlement database; Peace Now outpost database.

West Bank Gaza Golan Jerusalem

[President Bush and Secretary of State Rice] know that there is a moratorium on new settlements and the new expropriation of land in the Territories. And they also know, and we have made it clear that Jerusalem, as far as we are concerned, is not in the same status. And they know that the population centers are not in the same status. And there might be things that will happen in the population centers or in Jerusalem which they may not be in love with, but we will discuss them and we will not hide them. We are not going to build any new settlements or expropriate land in the Territories. We made it clear and we will stand by our commitment. And we will fulfill all our commitments as part of the road map because this is an essential part for any progress that will have to take place in the future.

But there are some aspects only just realized which one

can't ignore, and everyone knows that certain things in Jerusalem are not in the same tactical level as they are in other parts of the Territories which are outside the city of Jerusalem. And so it's true about some population centers. So there was nothing that happened that was not known in advance to all our partners in this process. We made clear our positions; we made clear exactly what we can do, what we can't do, what we want to do and what we will not be able to do. And I think that they all know it and they, at least even when sometimes they disagree with us, they at least respect our sincerity and openness about these issues.

Israeli prime minister Ehud Olmert,
Press Availability at the Prime Minister's Residence,
Jerusalem, January 9, 2008

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