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## New Construction May Signal Near Opening of "Apartheid Road" Between Jerusalem and Settlements

1 message

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### New Construction May Signal Near Opening of "Apartheid Road" Between Jerusalem and Settlements

Today, Ir Amim field researchers spotted new construction work on the northern section of the Eastern Ring Road (also known as the "Apartheid Road"), final construction of which was announced last June. The new road (located in this [map](#) just between E1 and Anata) will serve traffic between Jerusalem and the settlements situated northeast of Jerusalem.

The new construction spotted today – where the road comes into Jerusalem - is most likely for a checkpoint that will control traffic coming into the city. It signals that the road will soon be ready and may become operational in the coming months.

The road will serve a dual purpose. A brainchild of former Prime Minister Ariel Sharon, the road is Israel's response to the problem of E-1 bifurcating the West Bank from the North to the South. It would replace the current road which passes through E1 and which enables navigation from Ramallah to Bethlehem for Palestinians. For this reason the new road removes one of the obstacles for realizing settlement construction in E1.

At the same time, the road will offer a new highway to Jerusalem for settlers from the Ramallah area. In Jerusalem it will connect to Road 1 (Jerusalem-Ma'ale Adumim) through the Zeitim interchange, construction of which was launched last year. The road will not only expedite traffic flow to Jerusalem from the settlements northeast of the city, but will further enable expansion of the settlement bloc around Ramallah.

This road is part of the infrastructure advanced by Israel to create so-called "Greater Jerusalem", bringing together the city and settlements surrounding it. Similar projects underway include the Zeitim interchange (connecting the new road to the highway coming into Jerusalem from Ma'ale Adumim), advancement of a plan for a tunnel on the road between the Hizma checkpoint (near Pisgat Ze'ev) and the Begin Highway, preparation of a plan for a tunnel to replace the French Hill Junction on the road between Ma'ale Adumim and the Begin Highway and plans to expand the Tunnel Road between Jerusalem and the Gush Etsion settlements near Bethlehem.

During the past year government coalition members submitted bills to, inter alia, annex Ma'ale Adumim and apply Israeli law to "Greater Jerusalem". While this legislation has yet to advance, Israel is establishing facts on the ground for the de facto creation of "Greater Jerusalem".

This alert was written by Ir Amim Researcher Aviv Tatarsky

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