



INCITEMENT

An Israeli Official Policy?

April 2017

Encouraging Settlement Expansion and Annexation of Occupied Palestinian Land: Israel's Continued Incitement Against the Two-State Solution.

In recent months, Israel continued and increased consolidation of its colonization agenda. Alongside settlement expansion, demolition of Palestinian homes, and continued attacks by illegal settlers and the Israeli occupying forces against unarmed Palestinians, high-ranking Israeli officials continue to incite against Palestinians:

- The Israeli government's political platform is based on colonization rather than respect of Israel's obligations, including inter-alia, international law;
- The internationally endorsed two-state solution on the 1967 border, accepted by Palestine, is not part of the Israeli government's platform;
- Israel has constantly refused to abide by its obligations under international law, UN resolutions and signed agreements.

This media brief focuses only on recent statements made by top Israeli officials with regard to Israel's illegal settlement enterprise, Jerusalem, and the prospects for a two-state solution. It also includes several statements from the past week in which these Israeli officials incite against the lives of Palestinian political prisoners in Israeli prisons. This report does not include details of Israeli incitement against Palestinians in social media or prosecution of Palestinians, as well as Israeli and international, civil society groups opposed to the Israeli Occupation, approving, for example, a law to prevent their international members from coming to Occupied Palestine.

STATEMENTS MADE IN SUPPORT OF ISRAEL'S SETTLEMENT ENTERPRISE: PROMOTES ANNEXATION TO PREVENT THE CREATION OF A SOVEREIGN INDEPENDENT STATE OF PALESTINE. "THIS IS JEWISH LAND."

Such positions negate the right of the Palestinian people to self-determination, and can be witnessed from the statements delivered by various Israeli officials mainly to Israeli and Hebrew-language media.

For example, Israeli Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu was recently quoted in the [Times of Israel](#) in January 2017:

"What I'm willing to give the Palestinians is not exactly a state with full authority, rather a state minus. This is why the Palestinians do not agree."

This statement is similar to several other statements made by Israeli officials about annexation of settlement areas in the Occupied West Bank, such as Ma'ale Adumim in the Eastern Jerusalem Governorate, or the western Bethlehem area, known by Israel as the "Gush Etzion bloc." This included a statement by Israel's Education Ministry, who stated in December 2016, as quoted in [Ynet](#):

"The Israeli government will advance a program of sovereignty over Ma'ale Adumim for a start," he stated, in which Israeli law would apply to the [illegal settlements of] *"the Jordan Valley, Ariel and Ofra."*

Also, Israel's Deputy Foreign Minister, Tzipi Hotovely, later said in [jpost](#) in November 2016:

"Every future solution (to resolve the Israeli-Palestinian conflict) should include Judea and Samaria¹ under Israel's sovereignty, because this is the Jewish homeland."

She explains her position for annexation of occupied territory as such:

"I always say that the occupation is a myth, because we never occupied other people's land. This is Jewish land. This should forever be a Jewish land under Israeli law."

(jpost, March 2017)

On July 18, 2016, a group of prominent members of the Israeli government coalition, including coalition faction heads David Bitan (Likud), Yoav Ben Tzur (Shas), Roy Folkman (Kulanu),

1 The Israeli occupying authorities refer to the West Bank in Biblical reference of Judea and Samaria.

Robert Ilatov (Yisrael Beytenu), Shuli Muallem (Jewish Home) as well parliamentarians Yitzhak Yakvin (Shas), Oded Forer (Yisrael Beitenu) and Eli Cohen (current Minister of Economy), signed a declaration that states:

"We hereby declare our support for the Israeli Ma'ale Adumim plan, our identification with the call 'the Time has come for sovereignty in Ma'ale Adumim', and our commitment to act to bring the plan to apply Israeli sovereignty to Ma'ale Adumim to fruition, because it is the correct and Israeli step to take"

(Arutz Sheva, July 18, 2016)

Speaker of the Knesset, Yuli Edelstein, a settler residing in the illegal settlement of Neve Daniel, supported the move:

"We've been sending out mixed messages, messages that only drive peace further away... this shift in strategy is very important. It's good to go with consensus issues. And Ma'ale Adumim is a consensus issue. We've initiated a move here and we'll win."

The tone became even more audacious after the election of President Trump, several Israeli leaders have stated that this could lead to a US acceptance of annexation of vast areas of Palestinian land. For example Israeli Minister Avigdor Lieberman, a settler residing in the settlement of Nokdim, said:

"I think that it is possible to come to an agreement with the US on Israeli sovereignty over the settlements blocs"

(Jerusalem Post, January 19, 2017)

The rejection of the two-state solution and calls of support to annex occupied Palestinian territories only allow for limited Palestinian autonomy in a set of cantons which is the Israeli government' public discourse and official policy.

Several Israeli ministers, including right-wing Naftali Bennet, reaffirmed the strict Israeli position against the two-state solution:

"We're in a government that doesn't have a Palestinian state in its guidelines...if we are talking about a return to the 1967 lines and the division of Jerusalem, I won't just resign from

the government, I'll topple it. We shouldn't give up an inch of land, we shouldn't give any land to the Palestinians."

(Times of Israel, June 2016)

Statements calling for annexation of occupied territory go as far as talking about perpetuating Israeli sovereignty over Jerusalem, but also over Hebron. In the context of his weekly government meeting, Benjamin Netanyahu stated on December 30 2015:

"I say to all those who would uproot us from the Tomb of the Patriarchs – except for a few years in the previous century, we have been there for almost 4,000 years and we will stay there forever. You cannot defeat us."

(The Forward, December 30 2015)

The Israeli government has never negated such a position officially. On the contrary, other ministers, such as the chairwoman of the so-called justice portfolio in the Israeli cabinet, Ayalet Shaked, said before the Knesset:

The state of Israel belongs to the Jewish people it will never be a state for two nations and if anyone has any national ambitions it's not the place to accomplish them, you can accomplish them in the neighboring Arab countries. Israel is a Jewish and a democratic state and it will continue to be like this forever.

(Knesset Channel, November 2016)

(Translated from Hebrew)

The Israeli deputy defense minister, Eli Ben Dahan, a settler residing in the illegal settlement of Har Homa, responded to UNSC Resolution 2334 by stating:

"From the eternal capital of Israel, we must say to the world, we did not conquer a foreign country, but returned to our country never to leave it again. Regardless of the other nations' opinion, the Land of Israel belongs to the people of Israel. This is our home."

(Arutz Sheva, December 2016)

More recently, in an interview with Israel Radio in February 2017, Israel's minister of agriculture Uri Ariel, a settler residing in the illegal settlement of Beit El, said:

"So things are moving in the right direction – things go up and down, but I can say conclusively that I know who the ultimate sovereign will be here: The State of Israel. There will only be one country between the river and the sea, and that's a good thing."

(Breaking Israel News, February 2017).

Another prominent member of the Israeli government coalition, Tzachi Hanegbi, concluded that:

"Defense is important and security is important but the most important thing is the moral claim of Israel and we are committed to living in our regional land, land that was given to us not by Google or Wikipedia but by the Bible King David, King Saul, King David, King Solomon, Abraham and this is the right, which we are going to demand our right forever and ever."

(Arutz Sheva, March 2017)

Such statements have been consistent with the Israeli government's policies and have never been refuted by any Israeli official or government spokesperson.

EXPAND EXISTING SETTLEMENTS, BUILD MORE SETTLEMENTS

MK David Bitan has been referred to as “Netanyahu’s right hand” in the Knesset. He is the chairman of the Israeli government coalition at the Israeli parliament and a member of Likud. He stated in [Haaretz](#) on October 31, 2016:

“There is no reason why Ma’aleh Adumim shouldn’t expand ... We will start with Ma’ale Adumim and continue to all of Judea and Samaria.”

MK Bitan went as far as calling for the removal of the Israeli citizenship of Mr. Hagai El-Ad, Executive Director of the Israeli human rights organization B’Tselem, after he addressed the UN Security Council describing the tremendous impact of the Israeli settlement enterprise in occupied Palestine and on the lives of the Palestinian people

([Ha’aretz](#), October 2016)

“LAND THEFT” LAW: “REGULARIZING” LOOTING.

On January 29th 2017, Netanyahu announced, through a statement by the Israeli Prime Minister’s Office, the submission of the land theft law, also known as the “normalization law”. The statement said:

“Tomorrow we will submit to the Knesset what is being called the settlement regulation bill. The law is designed to normalize the status of Jewish settlement in Judea and Samaria once and for all and prevent recurrent attempts to harm the settlement enterprise.”

([jpost](#), January 2017)

This statement clarifies the support the bill enjoyed among the members of Israel’s government coalition: it aims to intensify the theft of Palestinian private property. This has been one of the main requests from extremist Israeli colonialist groups. It is a step towards further annexation of occupied territory, which has been part of the Israeli government’s discussions.

The passing of the law was warmly welcomed by the Israeli government coalition. Israel’s

Israel’s minister of agriculture, the settler Uri Ariel, promised to build more settlements after 42 caravans were removed from the illegal colonial installation of Amona, located on lands belonging to the Ramallah governorate and private Palestinian land. He said:

“Here on this mountain range, there will be a new Jewish settlement and we will wave the Israeli flag here.”

([Times of Israel](#), February 2017)

The same night, the Israeli government had announced the construction of around 3,000 new settlement units. Again, the occupying power’s Prime Minister announced the construction of a new illegal Israeli settlement in occupied Palestine. The announcement elevated to over 6,200 new settlement units announced between January and March of 2017.

Science Minister Ofir Akunis welcomed the law by echoing what other cabinet members repeated on several occasions:

“The legalization bill is an important bill that legalizes the settlement enterprise in a far better manner in Judea and Samaria. I think that the Palestinians, if they thought hard about this instead of merely disseminating empty slogans, would be able to see the logic.”

([Ynet](#), in Hebrew P.2, February 6)

Other members of the government coalition, such as Habayit Hayehudi chairwoman Shuli Moalem-Refaeli, explained the main consequences of the law in their perspective:

“[T]his is a historic day, with the passage of a historic law. The homes of citizens who made their home in Judea and Samaria, with the encouragement of Israeli governments, will no longer be a target for extremist left-wing organizations that seek to destroy and to damage settlements.”

([Ha’aretz](#), February 2017)

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MK Bezalel Smotrich, a settler in the illegal settlement of Kedumim, known for his racist and inflammatory statements, said:

"Today Israel decreed that developing settlement in Judea and Samaria is an Israeli interest. From

here we move on to expanding Israeli sovereignty and continuing to build and develop settlements across the land."

(Ha'aretz, February 2017)

JERUSALEM: "ETERNAL AND UNDIVIDED CAPITAL OF THE JEWISH PEOPLE."

Israeli officials have repeatedly affirmed religious arguments to justify policies of colonization and annexation. The vision of Jerusalem as an exclusive Jewish city is reaffirmed in such statements. This is what the Israeli Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu clarified in a statement published last year on the Israeli [Prime Minister's Office Website](#) in May 2016:

"We are in the land of the Bible, in the city of Jerusalem. Everything that happened there happened here. This is our land, our heritage, our book, our story, our faith and our hope. Everything is in the Bible."

In December 2016, Israel's Transportation Minister, Yisrael Katz, from Netanyahu's Likud paper, stated his position for the future of Jerusalem:

"[T]o widen the borders of Jerusalem and impose Israeli sovereignty on communities in greater Jerusalem such as Ma'ale Adumim, the communities of Gush Etzion, Givat Ze'ev and Beitar Illit, just as Menachem Begin did in the Golan Heights 35 years ago."

(Ynet, December 2016)

This vision aims to legitimize Israeli policies of annexation in occupied East Jerusalem and is directly linked to another quote delivered by Israel's Tzipi Hotovely, when she assumed as Deputy Foreign Minister. Speaking in Hebrew to foreign affairs officials regarding a religious Israeli book:

"We must return to the basic truth about our right to the land...It's important to say - this country is all ours. We didn't come here to apologize for that."

(Times of Israel, May 2015)

Israel's deputy defense minister, Eli Ben Dahan, a settler residing in the settlement of Har Homa, went as far as threatening the destruction of the Al Aqsa Mosque Compound in order to build a "Jewish temple" in its place:

"We aren't embarrassed to say it: We want to rebuild the Temple on the Temple Mount."

(Arutz Sheva, August 2016)

INCITEMENT AGAINST PALESTINIAN PRISONERS: DEHUMANIZING A NATIONAL STRUGGLE

Since 1967, with the beginning of the Israeli occupation, over 800,000 Palestinians have been imprisoned by Israel. Currently there are approximately 6,500 Palestinian political prisoners in Israeli jails. Over 1,000 of them have initiated a hunger strike referred to as "Freedom and Dignity" strike, in order to gain basic rights granted under International Humanitarian Law. One of the leaders of the strike is Marwan Barghouti, a prominent

Palestinian national leader who has been jailed by Israel for the past 15 years. The occupying power's Prime Minister, Mr. Netanyahu, stated:

"Calling Barghouti a 'political leader' is like calling [Syrian President Bashar] Assad a 'pediatrician.' They are murderers and terrorists."

(pmo.gov.il)

The spokesman for the Israeli Foreign Ministry, Mr. Emmanuel Nachshon said:

"The Palestinian prisoners are not political prisoners...They are convicted terrorists and murderers. They were brought to justice and are treated properly under international law."

(CNN, April 2017)

Several members of the Israeli cabinet have used similar talking points. The Israeli Minister of Education, Mr. Bennett, said:

"Marwan Barghouti is not just an enemy ... he is a lowly murderer who should rot in prison until the day he dies."

(post)

The Israeli Minister of Transportation and Minister of Intelligence, Yisrael Katz, was more explicit:

"There is only one solution - the death penalty for terrorists"

(post)

Far from what has been stated by Israeli ministers, the conditions of Palestinian political prisoners are not required pursuant to international law. With 500 prisoners jailed without charges or trial ("Administrative detainees"), 300 children, and hundreds of ill prisoners, Palestinian political prisoners have been denied basic rights, including and most importantly the right to a fair trial.

The demands of Palestinian political prisoners include an end to arbitrary administrative detention, torture, unfair trials, the arrest and detention of children, medical negligence, solitary confinement, degrading treatment, and the denial of other human rights, such as visitation rights and the right to education. Many of the violations committed by Israeli occupying authorities are tantamount to war crimes according to International Humanitarian Law and international human rights law.

The Israeli government has stated that they will not going negotiate with the prisoners.

(ABCNEWS)

TIME TO ACT

What Israel is doing on the ground is part of a clear policy drawn up by successive Israeli governments to continue the colonization of Palestine. This is not only about the systematic destruction of the two-state solution, but about the daily incitement and hate speech that fuel the Israeli oppressive and segregationist regime against millions of Palestinians under Israeli belligerent military occupation.

Israeli official incitement against Palestinian rights, including the right to an independent and sovereign state, has fueled Jewish-Israeli citizens to incite against Palestinians. According to 2016 study by the Arab Center for Social Media Advancement (7amleh), Israelis wrote a racist statement in social media against Arabs/Palestinians every 46 seconds. This included at least 30,000 racist/hateful

attacks directed against President Mahmoud Abbas², known for his support of a negotiated two-state solution.

Israel rejects the two-state solution. It is time for the international community to deal with this fact. The selected statements made by Israeli officials in this media brief represent only a sample. To include them all would have been repetitive and lengthy.

Israel accuses the Palestinian leadership of incitement in order to dehumanize the Palestinian national liberation movement. Some members of the international community have attempted to equate “Palestinian incitement” with Israeli violations of International Humanitarian Law and UN resolutions, while ignoring the daily incitement from the Israeli government and its proxies.

After the Paris Peace Conference, several international parties have shown their willingness to take action. This includes ongoing contacts with the new US administration. We believe that there is an opportunity to create a negotiations environment in which power is equalized and where international law and human rights are respected.

However, no negotiations process should serve as an alternative to the international community’s responsibilities: accountability and not impunity will bring about a just and lasting peace for Palestinians and Israelis.

We call upon the world to take concrete measures that respect and support the inalienable rights of the Palestinian people by implementing international law and resolutions, with accordance to the following:

1. Recognize the State of Palestine on the 4th of June 1967 border in accordance with UNGA resolution 67/19;
2. Ban all Israeli settlement products and services from entering international markets;
3. Hold foreign companies and organizations accountable if they profit from the Israeli occupation of Palestine; and
4. Hold Israel accountable for its systematic violations of Palestinian human rights

2 Arab Center for Social Media Advancement. “The Index of Racism and Incitement in the Israeli Social Media – 2016” Available at <http://www.7amleh.org/en/article/106?platform=hootsuite>. Last accessed in February 2017 ,2.



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