



Press Release

16 October 2020

Canberra, Australia

Israel approves the construction of thousands of housing units in its illegal settlements in the occupied Palestinian territories

The recent announcement of the Israeli approval of the construction of almost 5000 housing units in its illegal settlements in the occupied Palestinian territories, is deeply concerning and disappointing and highlights Israel's continuous and systematic de facto annexation of Palestinian land.

On 14 and 15 October 2020, almost 5000 settlement units were approved, include 2260 approved for deposit and 2688 approved for validation across many illegal Israeli settlements in occupied East Jerusalem and West Bank. In particular, the illegal Israeli settlement of Eli located north-west of Ramallah, had 629 housing units approved. Additionally, the illegal Israeli settlement of Har Gilo, which is situated between Jerusalem and Bethlehem, had 560 housing units approved which will result in the establishment of a new neighbourhood, larger than the existing settlement. These settlement developments expand on the current 428,000 settlers living in the 132 illegal Israeli settlements and 124 random settlement outposts in the West Bank and 220,000 settlers living in the 18 settlements in East Jerusalem.

Despite the recent hollow and short-lived promise by Prime Minister of Israel, Benjamin Netanyahu, to postpone the de jure annexation of significant parts of the West Bank, Jordan Valley and the North of the Dead Sea, de facto annexation, continues to ruthlessly and unapologetically feed Israel's colonialist agenda through the construction and expansion of illegal settlements built in occupied Palestinian territories. This process systematically aims to deny Palestinians the right to self-determination and statehood and pave the way for an apartheid one-State reality, while simultaneously disguising itself as a regional partner who believes in advancing peace and stability.

It is time for the International community, in general, and Australia, in particular, to take a strong position against the Israeli de facto annexation and put real pressure on Israel to abide by International Law and to be held accountable. The de facto annexation of Palestinian land not only violates international law and UN resolutions but also continues to undermine peace and security in the Middle East and block any peaceful solution to the Palestine Israel conflict.

The General Delegation of Palestine to Australia, New Zealand and the Pacific kindly calls for the coalition government to condemn this announcement of the construction of housing units in Israel's illegal settlements and to further condemn the Israeli de facto annexation of Palestinian land, in order to save a



State of Palestine

The General Delegation of Palestine
to Australia, New Zealand and the Pacific



دولة فلسطين

البعثة العامة لفلسطين
في استراليا ونيوزيلندا و الباسفيك

viable and durable Two-State solution and ensure Palestinian right to self-determination in their homeland, in line with the position which Australia strongly upholds.

For more information, please contact the General Delegation of Palestine to Australia, New Zealand and the Pacific: ph. 62869193.

