

## Involvement of KKL-JNF and the Settlement Division in the Settlements

The World Zionist Organization (WZO) will be holding its 38th World Zionist Congress (WZC) on 20-22 October 2020. The WZC only happens every four years and is important for many reasons, not least of which because of its control over established bodies that unfortunately have chosen to operate in the Occupied Territories. Two bodies in particular, Keren Kayemeth LeIsrael-Jewish National Fund and the Settlement Division, are implicated in such activity. Delegates at the WZC have a chance to redirect them and the WZO's \$1 billion annual budget away from the settlements and toward Israel itself. The following is a brief overview of their involvement in the settlements.

### Settlement Division

The Settlement Division is a body that was established in 1971 under the umbrella of the World Zionist Organization to help the Israeli government to establish settlements in the Occupied Territories. [The Settlement Division is funded exclusively by the Government](#), however it is not a government body and therefore it is not subject to the rules and restrictions required by public bodies. The government entrusted the division with two main powers: land management, including allocation of land to settlers, and allocating budgets and implementing projects in the settlements.

**Unregulated Funds and Budgets to Settlements** - Over the years the Settlement Division worked to finance and establish thousands of settlement projects, distributed funds without transparency and supervision, granted settler loans (without collecting the debts) and assisted in establishing hundreds of illegal projects. In fact, the Settlement Division has become a pipeline for transferring money for illegal projects that the government cannot fund directly. In recent years, following public and legal struggles, a law has been enacted that regulates some of the division's activities, subjecting it to the Ministry of Finance's transparency and auditing rules - but at the same time [it appears to continue to fund illegal activities, even if smaller in scope](#).

**Land Management** - Among the powers given to the Settlement Division was the administration of land in the rural sector of the settlements, to the extent that it manages **400,000 dunams (100,000 acres)** which are 60% of the public lands—otherwise known as “state lands”—in the West Bank which were allocated for any use. The Settlement Division allocates the lands in sub-allocations to the settlers (contracts called “bar reshut”, or authorization certificate) for the use of construction, agriculture, industry and more.

**The Settlement Division manages the land [without any transparency, contrary to the rules of proper administration, without supervision](#), and sometimes with corruption and fraud** (there were cases where the Settlement Division had provided settlers with documents giving them “rights” in private Palestinian lands).

The situation has come to such an end that the Civil Administration itself, who is supposed to manage the lands, does not know what the Settlement Division is doing with the lands, and attempts to demand information from the division repeatedly fail.

See more here: [The Settlement Division and its control of lands in the Occupied Territories](#)

## Keren Kayemeth Lelsrael-Jewish National Fund (KKL-JNF)

Keren Kayemeth Lelsrael-Jewish National Fund (KKL-JNF) is a Zionist institution established in 1901 to purchase land in the region. After the establishment of Israel in 1948 it continued to engage in social, educational and environmental activities in Israel. After 1967 the KKL-JNF started to purchase lands from Palestinians in the West Bank, and expanded its social and environmental activity into in the West Bank settlements (A document published by journalist Raviv Drucker revealed that between the years 2002 and 2013, KKL invested close to 50 million shekels in different projects in the settlements).

In recent years, the KKL-JNF is behind West Bank land purchases and Palestinian evictions, while abetting settler plans, all which jeopardize the two-state solution. KKL-JNF's subsidiary Himnuta has one entity which uses discriminatory laws to evict Palestinians in East Jerusalem in order to bring in Israelis settlers. Another Himnuta entity operates in the West Bank, and in the recent few years, secretly spent tens of millions of shekels in purchases of West Bank land for the purpose of Jewish settlement in occupied Palestinian territory.

### **Recent Activities of the KKL-JNF in West Bank settlements:**

- **Throwing out the Sumarin Family from its home in Silwan** – KKL-JNF, through Himanuta, has worked to [throw a Palestinian East Jerusalem family out of its home](#) by exploiting a legal method that is stacked against Palestinians and has not let go for nearly 30 years even after losing in court. This is part of an ugly process of using absentee property law based on questionable evidence to take Palestinian assets and give them to settlers, and to destroy the delicate fabric of life in Jerusalem.
- **Secretly renewing land purchase in the West Bank** - in the past, the JNF through Himanuta has been buying lands from Palestinians in the West Bank in order to establish settlements. (Peace Now knows of at least 65,000 dunams of West Bank land purchased by KKL-JNF through Himanuta on which settlements such as Itamar, Alfei Menashe, Einav, Kedumim, Givat Ze'ev and others were established). However at the beginning of the 2000's the land purchase in the West Bank was stopped. A few months ago it was exposed that the [KKL-JNF has secretly renewed the land acquisitions in the West Bank](#) allocating tens of millions of Shekels of the KKL money for that purpose.
- **Demolishing a Palestinian house** - [following KKL pressure in court, the IDF demolished](#) a Palestinian house and restaurant near Bethlehem.
- **Establishment of an illegal outpost** - A few days after the demolition of the Palestinian house, [settlers established a new, illegal outpost nearby](#), on land they leased from KKL-JNF

(Himnuta). The new outpost is part of a larger settlement plan to connect Jerusalem to Gush Etzion by severing the territorial connection between Bethlehem and a handful of towns lying to the west.

- **Allocating 8 million NIS for a new touristic settlement** in East Jerusalem - The Elad settler organization is currently building [a new visitor center in East Jerusalem](#) Jabel Mukaber neighborhood. Elad receive NIS 8 million for the project from KKL-JNF.