

While We Were at War: The Government's Annexation Revolution in the West Bank Since October 7th

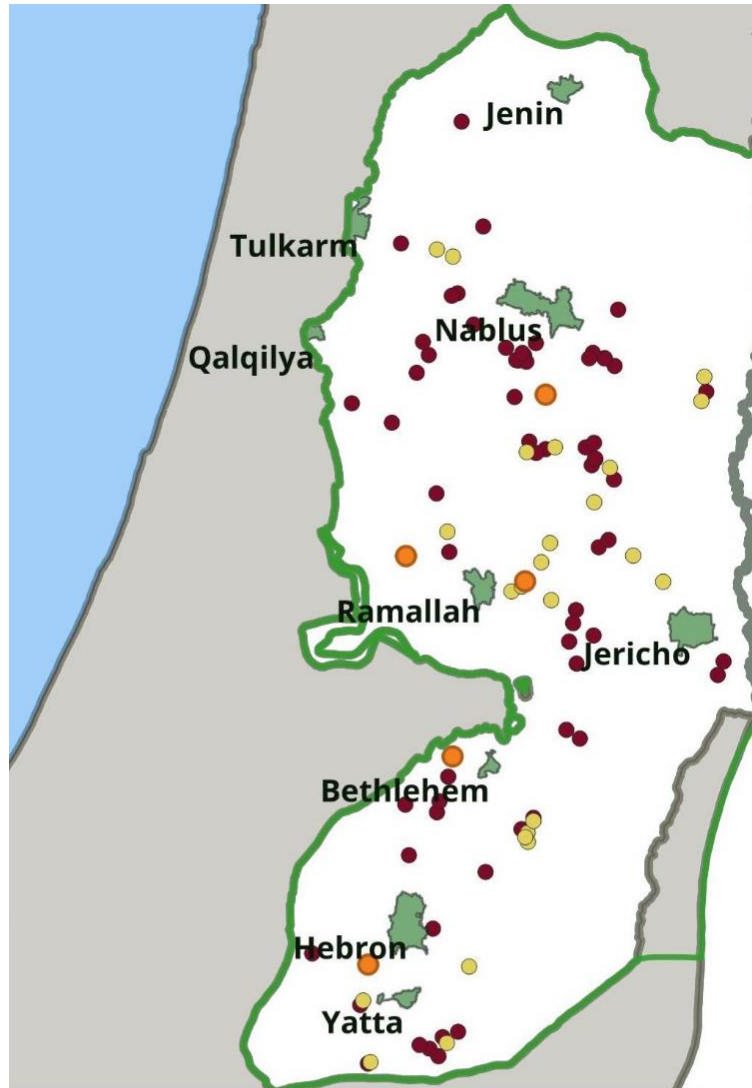
Special Report, Settlement Watch Team

July, 2024

While the State of Israel faced one of the greatest challenges in its history, with an ongoing war on multiple fronts, hundreds of thousands of Israeli citizens displaced, 120 hostages in Gaza, and countless others suffering mentally and economically, Netanyahu's government invested immense resources in creating facts on the ground to expand settlements in the West Bank and accelerate annexation processes, aiming to eliminate the possibility of a two-state solution and peace between Israelis and Palestinians.

Settlements and Outposts:

- **At least 25 new outposts have been established**, most of them agricultural outposts ("[farms](#)") involved in the land takeover and systematic expulsion of Palestinians from the area.
- **Dozens of roads, estimated to stretch tens of kilometers, [have been paved](#)** to establish new outposts and seize additional lands.
- **24,193 dunams were declared as "state land," [nearly half of the total](#)** area declared as state land since the Oslo Accords until today.
- **Plans for 8,721 housing units in settlements have been promoted [by the Higher Planning Council](#).**
- **The cabinet approved the establishment of 5 new settlements: [Evyatar, Givat Assaf, Sde Ephraim, Adorayim, and Nachal Haletz](#)**, all illegal outposts intended to become official settlements.
- **Three outposts were legalized as "neighborhoods" of existing settlements** by approving plans in the Supreme Planning Council: [Machane Gadi, Kedem Arava and Givat Hanan](#).
- **70 illegal outposts were recognized as eligible for governmental funding and infrastructure** – [Minister Smotrich instructed](#) government ministries and other authorities to begin funding 70 illegal outposts, establish public buildings, and connect them to water, electricity, and other infrastructure.
- **New settlements in Hebron** – [settlers entered a house in Hebron](#) they claimed to have purchased from Palestinians. This entry was facilitated by a "transaction permit" granted by entities under Minister Smotrich. Additionally, a plan for a new settlement in Hebron north of Kiryat Arba [with 234 housing units](#) was published for deposit.



WB Developments Since Oct.7

- Government Supported Outpost ●
- New Outpost ●
- Settlement approved by Cabinet ●
- Main Palestinian City ■
- The Green Line —

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Settler Violence:¹

- Approximately 1,100 incidents of settler attacks against Palestinians were documented by human rights organizations.
- About 1,392 Palestinians from 29 communities were expelled from their homes due to settler violence.
- Approximately 46,500 trees and seedlings were damaged by settlers.
- 11 Palestinians were killed by settlers (and for 6 additional fatalities, it is unclear whether settlers or the army shot them).

Funds and Budgets:

- **The government doubled the budget of the Ministry of Settlements** and the [funds allocated to the Settlement Division](#) and settlements – an addition of 302 million shekels.
- **7 billion shekels for roads in settlements** – [according to Minister Smotrich](#), the Ministry of Finance agreed with the Ministry of Transportation on a five-year plan worth 7 billion shekels for intercity roads in settlements.
- **An allocation of 409 million shekels for unique projects in settlements** following a broad budget cut. [Among other things](#), for projects related to the preservation of antiquities in the West Bank, rehabilitation of Sebastia Park, strengthening the Old City basin (a tourist settlement in East Jerusalem), and projects related [to the Elad settler association](#) in Silwan.

Annexation Moves:

- **Authorities related to settlements were transferred from the army to an official under Minister Smotrich** – Minister Smotrich appointed a settler to a position referred to as the "[Civilian Deputy](#)" of the head of the Civil Administration, effectively becoming the governor of the settlements, who is not subordinate to the Civil Administration but directly to Minister Smotrich.
- **The legal advisory of the Civil Administration was transferred from the army to a cadre of lawyers [under Minister Smotrich](#).**
- **The government assumed enforcement powers in Area B under Palestinian authority according to international agreements** – following a cabinet decision, the commander of the Central Command [signed orders](#) granting Israel the authority to demolish Palestinian homes in areas known as "the agreed reserve," under Palestinian control.

¹ Data from OCHA – UN Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs

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Reduction of Palestinian Living Space:

- **Over 550 Palestinians have been killed in the West Bank and East Jerusalem** since 07/10/23, including 131 children. Approximately 5,500 Palestinians have been injured.
- **Hundreds of roads to Palestinian villages have been closed and blocked** by the army and sometimes by settlers.
- **Access to tens of thousands of dunams of agricultural land has been denied to Palestinians** – the army and settlers [prevent Palestinians from cultivating extensive areas](#) near settlements. This is done through physical blockades on dirt roads and roads set up by the IDF or settlers, and by expulsion by settlers or soldiers, usually reserve soldiers living in settlements as part of the regional defense.
- **-1,205 Palestinian structures were demolished by Israel,² resulting in over 2,500 Palestinians losing their homes.**
- 874 structures were demolished due to the lack of building permits from Israel.
- 302 structures were demolished in IDF operations.
- 38 structures were demolished as a punitive measure for committing acts of terror.
- **In total, 1,027 structures were demolished in the West Bank and 178 buildings were demolished in East Jerusalem.**

² Data from OCHA – UN Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs