Number of Settlers in the West Bank: 310,990
Number of Palestinians in the West Bank: 2,360,000
Number of Israelis in East Jerusalem: 196,000
Number of Palestinians in East Jerusalem: 282,000

Since the Oslo Accord (1993) until 2011 43,304 new housing units were built in settlements.
The Settlements in the West Bank

According to Israeli law, settlements in the West Bank are not part of the state of Israel, and they are under control of the Israeli military. The state of Israel has never annexed the occupied territories, in order to avoid being labeled as a “belligerent power” under国际 law and in order to avoid being held accountable for war crimes committed in these territories. As a result, the Israeli government has invested huge amounts of money and resources into the settlement enterprise – building in the settlements, building infrastructure for the settlements and settlers, providing security for settlements and settlers, and providing incentives to encourage Israelis to live beyond the Green Line. In 1993, at the beginning of the peace process, there were 116,000 settlers in the West Bank (excluding East Jerusalem). Today there are 310,990. The message this sends to the Palestinians is dangerous: that talking with Israel does not result in peace, but rather, has resulted in the more than doubling of the number of settlers. Continued settlement construction will eventually bring the situation to the point of no return in which an agreement based on two states for two peoples is no longer possible.

East Jerusalem

Unlike the rest of the West Bank, which has never been annexed by Israel, after the 1967 war Israel annexed approximately 71 square kilometers of land occupied during the war, including Jordanian Jerusalem and dozens of adjacent Palestinian villages. As a result, Israel has built some 50,000 housing units in 12 settlements, where today 196,000 Jews reside. Most of these settlers have been built in East Jerusalem, which is currently home to approximately 282,000 Palestinians. They are eligible for National Insurance payments and for government provided health and municipal services, but they are not considered citizens and do not have the right to vote for the Knesset or to carry an Israeli passport. Their residency rights can also be revoked by the government of Israel for any number of reasons, with almost no recourse. Since 1967, one-third of the territory of East Jerusalem has been annexed into the Israeli municipality. In addition, the Israeli government has built more than 50,000 housing units in East Jerusalem, more than half of which have been built inside Palestinian neighborhoods. As a result, many Palestinians feel threatened and isolate themselves from the city due to the fear that an agreement in Jerusalem may be impossible. In 1995, Israel vowed to return some of the occupied land to the Palestinians, but has not done so, and ongoing settlement construction in East Jerusalem, and particularly settlements activity inside Palestinian neighborhoods, like Silwan, Sheikh Jarrah, A-Tur, and others, increases tensions and friction and threaten to alter the status quo to the point where an agreement in Jerusalem will no longer be possible. This, in turn, will mean the end of the two-state solution.

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