



SETTLEMENTS

SPECIAL BULLETIN

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AND THE FINAL STATUS TALKS

Introduction

After over seven years of negotiations Israel and the Palestinians are no longer in conflict, per se, about the prospect of a Palestinian state, but about the area of its sovereignty and about the land Israel intends to annex from the West Bank and Jerusalem. The core issue is that of Israeli settlements, which Israel began to establish - in blatant violation of international law - after it occupied the West Bank and Gaza Strip and imposed its military rule over both regions (together with the Golan Heights and the Sinai) in 1967. Israeli settlement policy followed the pattern of earlier Zionist colonization in pursuing the realization of 'Greater Israel' and centered on securing as much control over the territories as possible, including their water and other natural and infrastructural resources.

Ever since, consecutive Israeli governments have pursued a policy intended to disrupt the integrity of the Palestinian community and create apartheid-like enclaves, based on the presumption that the presence of Israeli settlements will make it more difficult to surrender territory and thus prevent any possibility of the establishment of an independent Palestinian state. These motives have found themselves manifest not only with the illegal settlements but also in strategically supportive development and infrastructure agendas within Israel proper. Without these settlements Israel could no longer stand in the way of an immediate transfer of sovereignty.

This special bulletin aims to present the basic text and figures relating of the issue.



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