

(initially) 250-house settlement next to Adam in exchange for the evacuation of the illegal **Migron outpost** near Ramallah whose 45 families would relocate to the as-yet un-built neighborhood. The project's first stage will include 50 houses but before construction takes place a plan ('Plan No. 240/2/14') for 1,380 housing units must be drawn up and approved.

◆ Ma'ale Adumim and the E-1 (East 1) Plan

To the northeast of Jerusalem, Israel's separation barrier was constructed some 15 km into the West Bank in order to include the entire Adumim settlement bloc, where Israel is pursuing plans to almost triple the current size of Ma'ale Adumim (now with over 33,000 settlers) by developing the area to its east and connect it to Jerusalem. While Ma'ale Adumim's current built-up area is some 7 km², its municipal plan covers a total area of 55 km², stretching almost to the Dead Sea and including, to the north, the contested 12 km²-E-1 area (P. Rekacewicz/D.Vidal, "Jerusalem: Whose very own and golden city?" *Monde Diplomatic*, Feb. 2007).

If implemented, the E-1 Plan - dubbed **Mevasseret Adumim** (see box) - will cut the West Bank into two, make it practically impossible to establish a Palestinian state with territorial contiguity. The plan will make it impossible to reach agreement on the question of permanent borders, and will grab the last area of open land available for Palestinian development.

While the E-1 Plan was - for the time being - removed from the agenda for political reasons, construction of the new 'Judea and Samaria District Police' HQ in the E-1 area, commenced in March 2006 (see section on Ras Al-Amud above), was meanwhile completed and is widely seen as a strategic step in claiming the area for further Jewish development. Unless there is a clear "hands-off" message from Washington, Israel is likely to push ahead with its plans unabated.



New 'Judea and Samaria District Police' in the yet undeveloped E-1 area

A new Peace Now report reveals that the Israeli Housing Ministry has approved detailed plans for 1,708 units in Ma'ale Adumim and has prepared plans for another 5,700 units. In addition, its master plan foresees the addition of 6,000 housing units in order to expand the settlement for 104,000 settlers. (Peace Now, *Ministry of Housing Plan's for the West Bank*, March 2009)

In a related development, Israeli Interior Minister Eli Yishai approved on 3 May 2009 recommendations by a special ministerial committee to expand Ma'ale Adumim by 12,000 dunums and



Ongoing construction at Ma'ale Adumim

added 6,000 housing units to the south of the settlement. In so doing, the nearby Kedar settlement, which houses 800 settlers at present, will be linked to Ma'ale Adumim and eventually incorporated into its municipality. The implementation of this plan will also affect the route of the separation barrier with a

single wall encircling both settlements (as opposed to the current recommendation for two separated walls).

E-1 PLAN – MEVASSERET ADUMIM

The E-1 plan, which has yet to be implemented, involves the building of a large new Israeli neighborhood in the narrow undeveloped land corridor that runs east of Jerusalem and is part of the West Bank (see map pages 12-13). The plan involves about 12,000 dunums (12 km²) of land, a significant part of which is privately owned Palestinian land. Most of the area was declared 'State land' by Israel in the 1980s (i.e., land that is not owned by any individual and is thus the property of the State).

In 1994, Yitzhak Rabin expanded the borders of Ma'ale Adumim to include the E-1 area but refrained from implementing any construction in accordance with an understanding with the US Administration that the fate of the area would be determined within the framework of the peace process. The Netanyahu government (1996-99) attempted to expedite the E-1 Plan but it was not formally approved. Prime Minister Barak, who supported the plan, subsequently placed it on the negotiating table at Taba in early 2001 but refrained from allowing any construction in the area to begin.

In 2002, then Defence Minister Ben Eliezer signed the E-1 Master Plan into law, but, primarily because of US objections, nothing else happened until mid-2004, when the Sharon Administration commenced infrastructural work (clearing roads). This action was illegal since no specific town plan existed and thus no permits could be or were issued. In April 2005, the Israeli authorities advertised the plan, which includes 3,500 housing units for up to 20,000 settlers, hotels, an industrial park, and commercial and entertainment buildings.

More recently, *Ha'aretz* reported that over the past two years, Israel has invested almost NIS 200 million in infrastructure for construction in the E-1 area (*Ha'aretz*, "Israel plans to build up West Bank corridor on contested land", 1 Feb. 2009). In March 2009, Peace Now revealed government plans to double Ma'ale Adumim in size, and on 25 March, Israeli Army Radio reported that Prime Minister-designate Netanyahu had struck a secret deal with Yisrael Beit-einu leader Avigdor Lieberman to build 3,000 new housing units in the E-1 area.



Location of the E-1 area