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Settlement Monitor

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# SETTLEMENT MONITOR

EDITED BY GEOFFREY ARONSON

*This section covers items—reprinted articles, statistics, and maps—pertaining to Israeli settlement activities in the Gaza Strip and the West Bank, including East Jerusalem, and the Golan Heights. Unless otherwise stated, the items in this section have been written by Geoffrey Aronson directly for this section or drawn from material written by him for Report on Israeli Settlement in the Occupied Territories (hereinafter Settlement Report), a Washington-based bimonthly newsletter published by the Foundation for Middle East Peace. JPS is grateful to the Foundation for permission to draw on its material. Major documents relating to settlements appear in the Documents and Source Material section.*

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## MAPPING THE FUTURE OF PALESTINE

*From Settlement Report, July–August 2000.*

In the wake of the revelations in mid-May about discussions in Stockholm between Israeli interior minister Shlomo Ben-Ami and Palestinian legislative Speaker Ahmad Qurai', the Israeli press was rife with reports about an unprecedented Israeli willingness to accede to the creation of a Palestinian state on up to 90 percent of the West Bank.

But the only authoritative final status map of the West Bank that has surfaced to date [September 2000] is the one presented by the Israeli government to Palestinian negotiators Saeb Erakat, Yasir 'Abid Rabbuh, and Muhammad Dahlan during the Elat round of final status talks in early May.

The Elat map's presentation marks a departure from the practice followed during the interim period of the Oslo process. Israel has traditionally reserved for itself alone the task of determining the territorial extent and location of lands transferred to Palestinian control, presenting maps to Palestinians not for discussion but for endorsement, and only at the last moment. From Oslo's inception until the presentation of Barak's map, there has never been any significant negotiation with Palestinians on this critical issue.

The Palestinian response to the map is also instructive. From the opening of the Madrid talks, Palestinian negotiators have complained about Israel's unwillingness to

present maps during negotiations. But when the Elat map was offered, Palestinian negotiators refused to discuss it and left their copy on the table. Their reaction suggests what some call the "Syrian strategy"—a simple, unambiguous, and unchanging demand for a complete Israeli withdrawal from all of the occupied territories.

The Elat map may be the first of its kind to be placed before the Palestinians, but it is merely the latest in an evolution of final status maps prepared by the Israelis, beginning with the Allon Plan in 1967 and including an Israel Defense Force (IDF) map revealed in February 2000, as ammunition in the decades-long domestic Israeli debate about the optimum extent of territory to be retained of lands seized in June 1967.

Barak's immediate predecessor, Benjamin Netanyahu, was the first Israeli leader to put Israel's territorial demands to the diplomatic test, presenting his "Allon Plus" map in May 1997. The map incorporated the long-prevailing strategic sentiment, also prominent in Barak's map, favoring Israel's retention of relatively smaller "quality" areas with strategic and settlement value over larger "quantity" lands, that is, territories populated by Palestinians.

Netanyahu's proposed map acknowledged that while most of Israel's 150 West Bank settlements, with almost 200,000 settlers, would be annexed to Israel, some settlements and settlers would find themselves in Palestinian territory, where their status was undetermined. These settlements amounted

to fewer than twenty isolated and sparsely populated outposts near Nablus and Jinin. Netanyahu's map, unlike Barak's, also appeared to exclude the settlements of Kiryat Arba, with its population of 5,000, and Hebron.

Ariel Sharon noted that "the details may vary, but in principle the essence [of the Netanyahu map] is very much the same" as one he first proposed in 1977.

The purpose of the presentation of Barak's map was twofold: first, to set the diplomatic agenda at the outset of serious discussions on a framework agreement for the final status and, second, to highlight rather than to specify Israel's territorial concerns. Indeed, Barak subsequently assured PLO chairman Yasir Arafat that the map was "merely an illustration" of Israeli interests and not a final offer. Israelis and Palestinians alike claim that Barak has indeed moved beyond the map presented in Elat, although news reports in the period before July's Camp David summit suggested that it still formed the basis of Barak's offer. In any case, the map remains an important template for identifying the issues of consensus and dispute as the countdown to a final status agreement progresses.

Barak's views about the security advantages attending a transfer of territory to the Palestinian Authority (PA) were conveyed at a meeting with his One Israel party colleagues on 26 April:

Our aim is to separate peacefully from the Palestinians. . . . We have to tell the public what the alternative could mean, what could happen if we do not reach a settlement. We have to stress that the agreement will bring about a dramatic improvement for the majority of the settlers. They will become legitimate residents under Israeli sovereignty. We do not want tens of thousands of Palestinians in our area. We do not want apartheid or a second Bosnia. A firm Jewish majority will strengthen us.

The Arab villages close to Jerusalem, heavily populated Arab areas, do not need to remain under our sovereignty. It is better for us to hand them over to Palestinian security control. For us, it is difficult to operate there from the security point of view. For the Palestinians it is easy. In every densely populated Arab area which we left, the security situation improved.

While the Elat map is in important respects more forthcoming to Palestinians than Netanyahu's version, it is still faithful to the basic Israeli demand for strategic superiority and settlement rights throughout most of the contested territory.

Barak proposes the creation of a Palestinian state on 66 percent of the West Bank, including part of annexed East Jerusalem, noted in brown on the map. However, the map itself, published in *Yedi'ot Aharonot* on 19 May, awards only 61 percent of West Bank territory to the Palestinians. Areas to be annexed outright by Israel, noted in white, comprise 25 percent of the territory. The remaining 14 percent, noted in green, would eventually revert to some measure of Palestinian sovereignty but in the meantime would remain under Israel's security control. The Gaza Strip was, yet again, not part of the discussion. The territorial status quo in Gaza, where Israel still retains control of around 15 percent of the area and all of its border crossings, has not been altered since the inauguration of the Oslo redeployments in 1994.

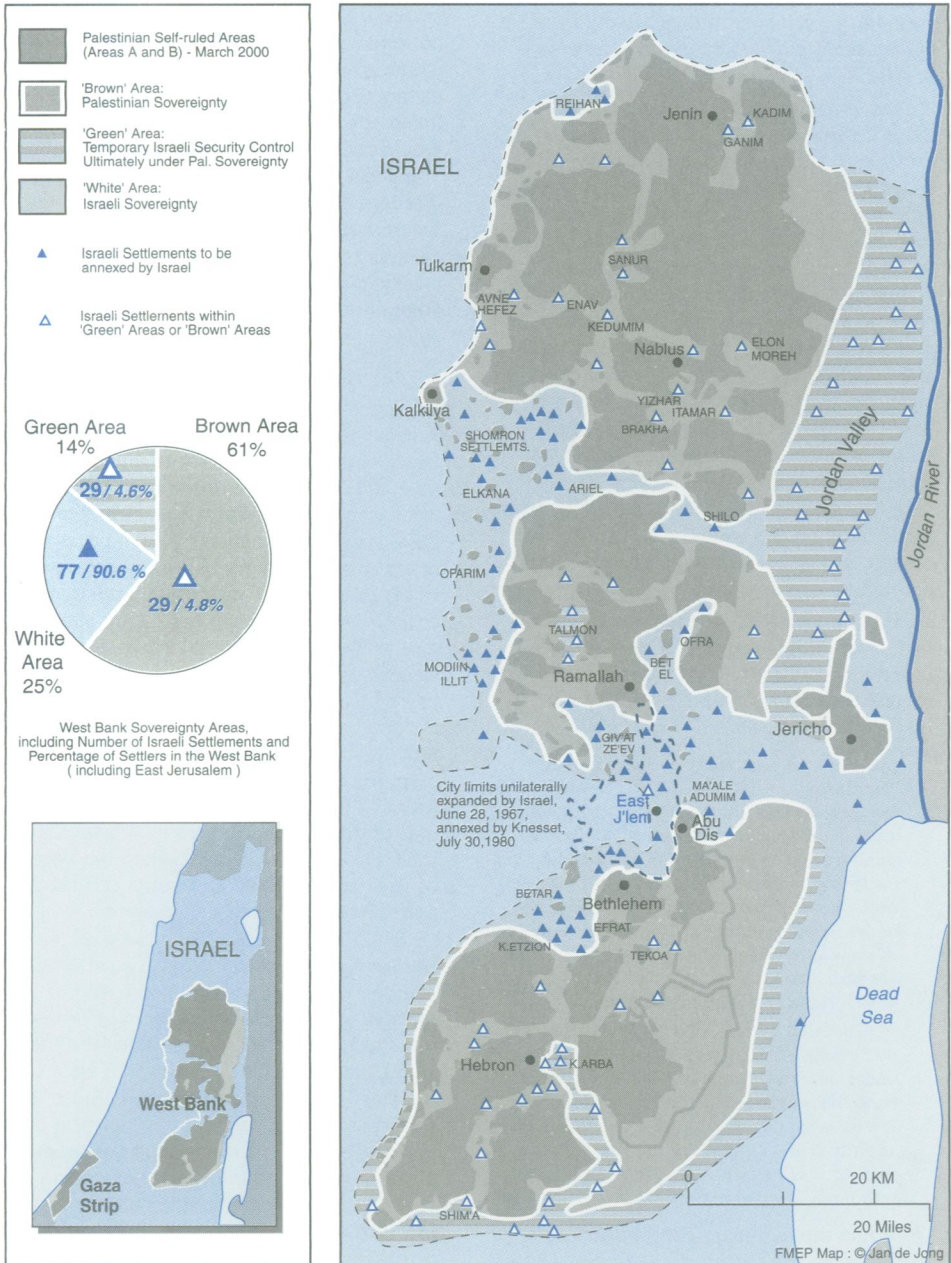
### *The Brown Areas*

The brown areas, the territory marked for Palestinian sovereignty, are consistent with Israel's intention to dominate the nascent state strategically by surrounding it and controlling its borders. However, even before the Camp David summit in July, it was already clear that Barak had gone beyond any of his predecessors in his willingness to transfer West Bank and East Jerusalem territory to the Palestinians. In the sovereign Palestinian area, the published map includes part of East Jerusalem north of the airport, including the Qalandia refugee camp and Kafr Aqab. This extraordinary aspect of the map, marking the first time that Israel has formally offered to redraw the map of the part of the city that it effectively annexed in June 1967, is only evident when the borders of East Jerusalem are superimposed on the map presented to the Palestinians.

In the north of the West Bank, all lands bordering Israel from Qalqilya to al-Mutilla, southeast of Jinin, will be transferred to Palestinian sovereignty, with the exception of the small Reihan settlement bloc. The inclusion of much of the desert region west of the Dead Sea signifies a continuation of the principle first conceived by Netanyahu in the Wye agreement, marking an almost complete erosion of the traditional Israeli demand for control of this area first articulated in the Allon Plan. In this vein, the central (but not the northern) sector of the Allon Road along the western ridge of the Jordan Valley is also ceded to Palestinian sovereignty.

The Barak map splits Palestinian territories in the West Bank into four cantons—

West Bank Final Status Map Presented by Israel - May 2000





Jinin-Nablus, Ramallah, Bethlehem-Hebron, and Jericho. In the case of the link between Ramallah and Jericho, a passage would transit newly sovereign Israeli territory. The linkages between other cantons may prove problematic.

Twenty-nine settlements, with a population of 17,000, are situated in the "brown" areas.

This Palestinian entity would have no border with Jordan or any passage to Jordan under Palestinian control, and each canton would be encircled by either white or green areas.

A formal reply to the Barak map, made on 28 May by the PA Negotiations Affairs Department headed by Arafat adviser Mahmud Abbas, highlighted these two topics of continuing dispute: the territorial relationship between Palestinian cantons, and the control of Palestine's borders with Jordan and Egypt. The reply noted that "no viable state can be established and no economic development can be engineered without territorial contiguity and effective control over external borders. Bantustans can never lead to viable statehood and in fact will impede it."

#### *The White Areas*

The white areas, to be annexed by Israel, take three forms: four settlement blocs contiguous to Israel, comprising perhaps 150,000 of the West Bank's 200,000 settlers; two east-west strips separating the three main cantons of the Palestinian state; and a strip running directly along the entire Jordan River and the western shore of the Dead Sea.

The PA's Planning Ministry has recently begun to assess the overall importance to a Palestinian state of lands claimed by settlements. Their preliminary results suggest that in terms of land value, strategic importance, access to water, transport, and other measurements, the settlement areas of the West Bank most important to Israel—the white areas—are also areas of great significance to the Palestinians.

#### *The Green Areas*

The 14 percent of the West Bank marked on the Elat map in green is in many respects the most interesting and significant innovation made by Israel as it contemplates a final status agreement. The nature of the division of powers and the location of the areas themselves suggest an Israeli effort to meet Palestinian demands for formal sovereignty over West Bank territory without surrendering either de facto Israeli security control or the prerogatives of the settlers.

The green areas, with twenty-nine settlements and a total population of 17,000, comprise three distinct territories. The first is the band of Israeli settlement areas of the Jordan Valley. The second is the small, compact Talmon bloc of settlements northwest of Ramallah. The third comprises a narrow strip of land that skirts the Judean desert and the southern canton of Hebron-Bethlehem and then follows the Green Line northward until it merges into the Etzion Bloc; a narrow corridor starting from the southern base of the strip follows the line of settlements from Bet Yatir, Susia, and Ma'on northward through Kiryat Arba to Hebron, making a deep cut into the Palestinian Hebron-Bethlehem canton.

Issues of sovereignty and control in the green areas are far more ambiguous than those contemplated in the white or even the brown areas. Sovereignty for an unspecified period would remain with Israel but would eventually be transferred to a Palestinian state. Abbas's office noted critically that "leaving parts of the territory under Israeli control without determining their permanent status until an unforeseeable future is a guarantee of continuing friction and discontent. The risk of deferring yet again these issues would mean the end of any measure of popular support, and ultimately, the viability of the peace process."

Palestinian negotiators make the point that no settlement would be evacuated under the proposal made by Barak, nor would actual control over any settlement area or over settlers themselves, whatever their location, pass to the nominally sovereign Palestinian state. This topic, too, is under continuing discussion. Other Palestinian officials with intimate knowledge of the Israeli offer note that a number of outstanding issues critical to enhancing Palestinian sovereignty remain unresolved. These issues include the following:

- the specific powers vested in each party in each area—brown, white, and green;
- the status of Israeli settlement and military locations, as well as settlers within green areas;
- the status of Palestinian locations and population within the white and green areas;
- the control of access roads to settlements;
- the status of settlements; and
- the nature of the corridors between Palestinian cantons and those connecting settlement blocs.

'Abid Rabbuh, who until revelation of the secret Stockholm channel was the PA's chief negotiator in final status negotiations, explained his view of Israel's Elat proposal:

Their position revolves around one main point, which is bargaining with us over the declaration of the state on 13 September in exchange for large-scale land concessions. These concessions come in many forms. Part entails annexing lands that include settlement blocs [the white areas], others include areas of Israeli investment and other areas under the guise of long-term leasing, perhaps reaching ninety-nine years [green areas]. This is also annexation but by another name. A third is control over areas, in particular the Jordan Valley, for alleged security reasons [green areas]. In my opinion this is also annexation. They want approximately one-third of the Palestinian land in the West Bank to remain under Israeli sovereignty [white and green areas] and to give us some civil jurisdictions over the population, such as health and education. These jurisdictions do not include construction or land. In this way, they are trying to rid themselves of the burden of the population and to maintain their control over the land while giving us a symbolic presence in holy places.

Their goal is to segment and separate the Palestinian territories from each other—to establish a state of cantons surrounded from all sides by Israel while calling this solution an independent state. In reality, however, it is a protectorate, under full Israeli sovereignty and isolated from the Arab world, Jordan in particular and its eastern borders. This is the Israeli project, and it is worse than the current occupation. It is a project that aims at giving legitimacy to the occupation and to reinforce a solution that would achieve, in the long run, Israel's goal in keeping the Palestinian people under their control. This project is the closest to the Sharon project, which is based on the most possible amount of settlement land to be annexed to Israel and to surround and segment the Palestinian areas into cantons and isolate them from each other; the northern canton is isolated from the center and the center is isolated from the southern. And the roads between all the Palestinian cities would be separated from each other by areas annexed by Israel. It would be a homeland made of safe passages.

'Abid Rabbuh's comments illustrate that the percentage of land that Israel is prepared to transfer to Palestinian sovereignty is only one—and in vital respects not the most important—measure of the sovereign powers of the future state of Palestine.

The detailed delineation of spheres of authority and power that will determine the quality of Palestinian sovereignty in any areas transferred to the PA—measured against powers retained by Israeli military forces and settlers—are where the true extent of Israel's concessions are best measured.

It is this very process that will determine the effectiveness of Palestinian control, fo-

cus, for example, on questions such as the status of the 32,000 Israelis who may find themselves in nominally sovereign Palestinian territory, more than on the amount of territory declared to be transferred to Palestinian sovereignty.

The "main and most difficult challenge" that Palestinian negotiators now confront, according to one negotiator, "is to create mechanisms that make a final status agreement different from the Oslo approach" by locking in substantive Israeli concessions on these fundamental issues.

## SETTLEMENT CHRONOLOGY

*From Settlement Report, July–August 2000 and September–October 2000.*

### 15 March

The Israeli cabinet endorses the last of the redeployments required under the September 1999 Sharm al-Shaykh Accord (Wye II). The PA had successfully argued for ten changes in the map initially presented to them but was unable to win Israel's consent to include villages close to Jerusalem—Abu Dis, Anata, or Azariyya—in the redeployment. Israel is to withdraw from an additional 6.1 percent of territory, bringing the total land under PA control to 41 percent—17.2 percent in area A and 23.8 percent in area B.

### 16 March

*Ma'ariv* reports that the IDF has notified settlements with populations over 100 that they will be responsible for providing their own security guards, who typically monitor people entering and leaving settlements.

### 19 March

Israel's Housing Ministry reports that a \$5,000 grant available to buyers of new apartments in some East Jerusalem settlements will cost the government \$4 million during 2000.

### 20 March

*Ha'Aretz* reports that a new Israeli settlement may be built in Jerusalem's Arab village of Walaja. The land was purchased from three Arab families by a group of Jewish investors. The PA jailed members of the families that had sold the properties but released them after Israeli officials intervened on their behalf.

### 21 March

Final status talks resume in Washington. According to *Ha'Aretz*, Israel considers that

settlement areas include access roads, security areas around settlements, and lands that connect isolated settlements to settlement blocs.

### **27 March**

Israel's Ministry of Industry and Commerce approves a \$6.5 million investment for the expansion of an industrial concern in the Golan settlement of Mevo Hama. The producer of polypropylene exports 80 percent of its production to Europe and the United States.

### **28 March**

Palestinians in Gaza hold demonstrations at the Morag, Katif, and Netzarim junctions, prompting the IDF briefly to close off the settlement of Morag.

The Housing Ministry approves a new housing development in the Golan settlement of Qatzrin, the first such action in many months.

### **29 March**

Israel's High Court rules that Palestinians removed from their homes as part of a deal with settlers evacuated from the Ma'on settlement should be returned to their homes.

PM Barak announces that the IDF will not build a new army base, which settler environmentalists had opposed, in the Shaked forest west of Nablus. He also tells the Golan Residents Committee that he will soon begin releasing funds for stepped-up development in the Golan.

### **31 March**

*Ha'Aretz* reports that the Jerusalem residency rights of 411 Palestinians were revoked by Israel during 1999, compared to 788 in 1998, 1,067 in 1997, 739 in 1996, and 91 in 1995.

### **3 April**

The YESHA settlers council states that PM Barak "is conducting a policy of drying up and freezing everything connected to building in YESHA."

At a ceremony funded by the Education Ministry commemorating 32 years of Jewish resettlement in Hebron, Israeli housing minister Yitzhak Levy promises to build fifteen permanent dwelling units at the city's Tal Rumayda site.

### **4 April**

More than 100 Palestinians from Bayt 'Umar, north of Hebron, try to tear down a fence erected by settlers of Karme Tzur. The IDF declares the site a closed military area

and uses tear gas and rubber bullets to disperse the protesters.

### **6 April**

Israel Wire reports that paratroopers evicted YESHA leaders and youths attempting to reestablish the Ma'on settlement but will permit them to farm the land.

### **10 April**

The Knesset's Budget and Security Committee approves \$400 million for settlement security and construction of twelve bypass roads in the occupied territories. The funds will be taken from \$1.2 billion in U.S. assistance promised as part of the Wye agreement in October 1998.

### **11 April**

YESHA begins groundwork for a new neighborhood at Olive Hill in Efrat, where PM Barak has refused to approve construction.

### **13 April**

Arutz 7 reports that the IDF has recently conducted extensive military exercises simulating armed conflict with Palestinians.

### **14 April**

PM Barak's office informs the Golan Regional Council that the two-month ban on new construction in the Golan Heights has been lifted. Golan officials move to implement new construction plans that include 2,500 homes in four settlements—Had Nes, Kanaf, Gamla, and Ramot.

### **17 April**

The United Nations Human Rights Committee demands a halt to Israeli settlement construction in the occupied territories. Thirty-one of the fifty-three member countries vote in favor, nineteen countries (including seven European states) abstain, and the United States votes against.

### **21 April**

*Yedi'ot Aharonot* quotes PM Barak as saying, "Construction on the Golan was frozen during negotiations. That's what we've opened up. But I don't think it's correct to go for big plans. The door is still open, and Israel doesn't want to appear provocative."

### **24 April**

*Yedi'ot Aharonot* reports that the idea for a "down payment" on the third and final IDF redeployment in the occupied territories called for in the Oslo accords—and which is set to include Palestinian areas near but not

within Jerusalem's municipal boundaries—originated in Washington.

### 30 April

Palestinian and Israeli negotiators open final status talks in Elat. The meetings are scheduled to last two weeks.

Peace Now reports that the Israeli Housing Ministry has issued a tender for 174 housing units in Ma'ale Adumim, formally ending the freeze on new tenders ordered by PM Barak in December 1999.

### 2 May

*Ma'ariv* reports concerns in Israel's security establishment about settler efforts to organize local armed militias that will operate outside settlements against Palestinians.

### 9 May

According to MK Mossi Raz (Meretz), tenders for 1,185 new units in the West Bank and Gaza Strip have been published since the beginning of the year.

### 11 May

The Tel Aviv District Court sentences a West Bank settler, Gur Hamel, to life in prison for killing an elderly Arab farmer.

*Ha'Aretz* reports that the IDF has authorized the construction of a bypass road leading to the settlements of Tekoa and Nokdim, southeast of Bethlehem. Palestinian land in the area of Za'atra and Bayt Sahur will be expropriated to pave the road.

### 12 May

*Yerushalim* reports that Housing Minister Levy has budgeted \$37.5 million for upcoming development of new settlement areas at Ma'ale Adumim, the Etzion Bloc, and Har Homa/Jabal Abu Ghunaym.

### 15 May

As part of the violent unrest accompanying the fifty-second anniversary of the Nakba, the settlers of Negohot, Beit El, and Psagot are under siege and hundreds of Palestinians reportedly try to storm the settlement of Netzarim in Gaza.

The Knesset votes (56-48) in favor of placing Abu Dis, Sawahara al-Sharqiyya, and Azariyya under total PA control (area A).

### 17 May

The Israel Land Administration publishes a tender in *Yedi'ot Aharonot* for the construction of 582 housing units in the settlement of Har Homa/Jabal Abu Ghunaym. Tenders for 1,500 units at the site have already been tendered, and many are in various stages of construction.

The Housing Ministry is offering additional subsidies and incentives for a construction project in the settlement of Ariel. "Take an apartment, pay only \$4,600, and pay off your mortgage with only a \$390 monthly payment," notes an advertisement for the units, which range from \$92,000 to \$105,000.

### 19 May

*Qol Ha'ir* reports that Israel's Religious Affairs Ministry has declared a cave located on private land in the Shaykh Jarrah neighborhood of East Jerusalem to be a holy site for Jews, thus assuring state support for public access to the site.

### 22 May

Palestinian medics say six Palestinians were killed and more than 1,000 wounded in recent West Bank and Gaza clashes with Israelis. An IDF spokeswoman says forty IDF soldiers and twenty-two Israeli citizens have been wounded in the past nine days of fighting.

PM Barak tells his cabinet that the transfer of three Jerusalem suburbs—Abu Dis, Azariyya, and Sawahara al-Sharqiyya—to full Palestinian control will be postponed "until we see the clear results of the investigation of the incidents that took place and the promise of real control by the PA over its people."

Jerusalem's planning and building committee approves the establishment of an Israeli settlement on 64 dunams of land in Abu Dis lying inside Jerusalem's boundaries. The settlement will be known as Qidmat Zion and will have 220 apartment units.

### 26 May

The *Jerusalem Post* reports a \$51.2 million investment by Texas Pacific Investment in the Ma'ayanot Eden company, a Golan-based concern supplying 50 percent of the local market for bottled water.

### 31 May

Israeli security services report that the Haram al-Sharif is beginning to overshadow the Orient House as a focal point for the PA. They also report incremental increases in the PA's presence in Jerusalem in the fields of security, commerce, tourism, intelligence, real estate, and criminal matters. The transfer of Abu Dis to area A status will intensify these trends, they report.

### 1 June

*Ha'Aretz* reports that YESHA leaders believe, on the basis of information from the



Prime Minister's Office, that settlements under a final status agreement are to be divided into three categories: settlements to be evacuated, which will include all of the Katif Bloc settlements in the southern Gaza Strip and a few in the West Bank; settlements to be placed under Palestinian sovereignty but with a connection to Israel; and settlements annexed to Israel. Settlers also note that the IDF is preparing scenarios that include the transfer of some areas in East Jerusalem to Palestinian sovereignty. The Prime Minister's Office denies the settlers' claims.

*Ha'Aretz* also reports that the government is now implementing orders issued in the period after the June 1967 war for the expropriation of more East Jerusalem lands for "public purposes."

Jerusalem mayor Ehud Olmert announces that the first residents of the 2,000 housing units under construction in Har Homa/Jabal Abu Ghunaym will be able to move in within six months and that the planned settlements in Ras al-Amud and Abu Dis will likewise be completed.

A tender for the construction of 162 dwelling units in the Jerusalem settlement of Pisgat Ze'ev is published in *Ma'ariv*.

A tender for the construction of eighty-six dwelling units in the Golan settlement of Qatzrin is published in *Yedi'ot Aharonot*.

## 2 June

YESHA decides to resume settlement construction in locations where such activity was frozen by the government late in 1999.

Barak notes that if a final status agreement is reached, "80 percent and more of settlers will live under Israeli sovereignty. This is a historic, extraordinary achievement marking the achievement of the goal set by the settlement enterprise in Judea, Samaria, and Gaza."

According to Peace Now, the Israel Land Administration sold land for 1,596 housing units in the settlements between January and April 2000. During January and February, about 60 percent of the total settlement land marketed was sold. This figure dropped to approximately 40 percent during March and April.

The reclassification and expansion (by 350 families) of the Golan settlement of Klea, where nineteen families currently reside, is approved by the regional planning and construction committee.

## 6 June

The first of 600 families move into the settlement of Tal Zion, adjoining the settlement of Kochav Ya'acov near Ramallah.

## 7 June

Israel Radio, quoting a senior military commander, states that the Jerusalem municipality's decision to grant permits for the construction of a "Jewish quarter" in Abu Dis is an act of provocation. When activists attempt to establish a presence in the proposed settlement area, the IDF declares Abu Dis a closed military zone.

## 11 June

A new six-unit building is dedicated in the settlement inside Hebron, the first such structure in fifteen years. The population of the settlement is currently 550.

A tender for the construction of eighteen units in the Golan settlement of En Zivan is published in *Ma'ariv*.

*Ma'ariv* reports a "compromise" between Burger King International and its Israeli franchisee permitting the continuing operation of a controversial restaurant in the settlement of Ma'ale Adumim but prohibiting additional outlets in occupied territory.

## 13 June

*Ha'Aretz* reports that Israel will sign the convention establishing an international court for war crimes but will not accede to its jurisdiction. The primary cause of this refusal is the accepted definition of the establishment of civilian settlements in occupied territory as a war crime.

## 14 June

According to the Palestinian Bureau of Statistics, 210,209 Palestinians reside in the annexed areas of East Jerusalem. Their population by year's end is expected to reach 228,200.

## 15 June

Some 4,000 settlers demonstrate across from PM Barak's home to protest any agreement with Palestinians requiring the evacuation of settlements or their transfer to Palestinian jurisdiction.

YESHA's committee of rabbis calls upon settlers not to employ violence against Israeli forces. "If, God forbid, shots are fired against us, we will not return fire against brothers. We are prepared to be wounded, but not to wound."