

# *Israel Approves Construction of 500 New Settler Units*

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Tel Aviv, November 4 (RHC)-- An Israeli activist group says the Tel Aviv regime has approved the construction of 500 new illegal settler units in East Jerusalem, despite mounting international criticism of its expansionist policies.

Peace Now said the Israeli Interior Ministry gave the go-ahead on Monday for the new housing units to be built in Ramat Shlomo settlement. Hagit Ofran, Peace Now spokeswoman, told reporters: "The...decision on the 500 homes in the Ramat Shlomo settlement comes after Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu's announcement last week that he would accelerate construction in East Jerusalem" -- adding that "the decision to move forward in Ramat Shlomo is irresponsible."

On October 27th, Israel approved plans for the construction of 1,060 new settler units in East Jerusalem. UN Under-Secretary-General for Political Affairs Jeffrey Feltman warned the Security Council on October 29th over Israel's expansionist policies in East Jerusalem, saying they threaten the viability of a future Palestinian state.

More than half a million Israelis live in over 120 settlements built since Israel's occupation of the Palestinian territories of the West Bank including East Jerusalem in 1967.

Much of the international community considers the settlements illegal because the territories were captured by Israel in a war in 1967 and are thus subject to the Geneva Conventions, which forbid

construction on occupied lands.

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