

**Peace Now Report**  
**Summary of Construction in the West Bank 2008**

**Annual summary for 2008**

The figures are based on aerial photos and site visits by the Settlement Watch team in the last year.

**General Picture:**

- The number of settlers in the territories as of 2008: 285,800.
- The number of new structures built in the territories in 2008: 1,518 (including 261 in outposts).
- 61% of the new structures (927 structures) were built west of the route of the separation fence and 39% (591 structures) east of it.
- A quarter of the new structures east of the fence were built in outposts.

**Settlements**

- At least 1,257 new structures were built in settlements, including 748 permanent buildings and 509 caravans, compared to 800 structures in 2007 (including 442 permanent structures and 368 caravans), a 60% rise.
- In addition the ground was prepared for the construction of 63 new structures.
- Settlements with large construction projects in the last half-year:
  - Keidar (13 new structures)
  - Giv'at Ze'ev (10 new structures)
  - Modi'in Illit (35 new structures)
  - Ma'ale Adumim (13 new structures)
  - Ma'ale Shomron (19 new structures)
  - Alfei Menashe (16 new structures)
  - Efrat (15 new structures)
  - Beit Arye (27 new structures)
  - Beitar Illit (18 new structures)
- \*in most of these structures a large number of housing units are under construction
  - Settlements in which new caravan neighborhoods were built in the last half-year (10 caravans and up)
    - Kiryat Arba (19 caravans)
    - Shilo (12 caravans)
    - Har Bracha (10 caravans)
    - Ofra (21 caravans)



December 2008 Ofra,



May 2008 ,Ofra

## Outposts

- Not a single real outpost was evacuated.
- At least 261 new structures were built, including 227 caravans and 34 permanent structures, compared to 98 structures in 2007 (including 82 caravans and 16 permanent structures), a 2.5-fold increase.
- In addition the ground was prepared for the construction of 9 new permanent structures.
- In three of every four outposts construction or development work took place in 2008 – in 74 of the 99 outposts.

Besides these outposts there is a large number of additional points controlled by the settlers but without their permanent presence.

- Outposts where 5 or more caravans were erected:
  - Mitzpe Danny (5 caravans)
  - Kida (7 caravans and 2 permanent houses)
  - Givat Harel (5 caravans and a permanent structure)
  - Givat Hatamar (28 caravans)
  - Itamar, Hanekuda (11 caravans)
  - Bruchin (10 caravans)
  - Bracha West (6 caravans)
  - Karmeit Doron (5 caravans)
- At the outpost of Migron the settlers added 5 new structures and began building an extension for another permanent structure.



Migron, May 2008



Migron, December 2008

It seems that the government announcement to the High Court of Justice that it agreed with the settlers to evacuate Migron and relocate it to the settlement of Adam must have encouraged the settlers to begin construction at Migron, because if the relocation does take place it will take years.

## While fighting goes on in Gaza the settlers are building roads

- During the war in Gaza the settlers took advantage of the fact that all of the public attention was on the south to expand construction in the outposts and settlements. At this point it is difficult to assess the amount of construction done during the weeks of the war but it can be stated with certainty that a number of new roads were opened, with the goal of extending control in the areas near the settlements:
  - Opening a road connecting the settlement of Eli with the settlement of Shilo
  - Opening a road extending control surrounding the outpost of Haro'e
  - Expanding road ascending from Eli cemetery towards Hayovel outpost
  - Opening the road from outpost of Adi towards Allon Road

- Beginning of opening road from Zayit Ra'anana outpost southward



Road near Haro'e outpost, through plowed field, January 21, 2009



New road between Shilo and Eli, January 21, 2009

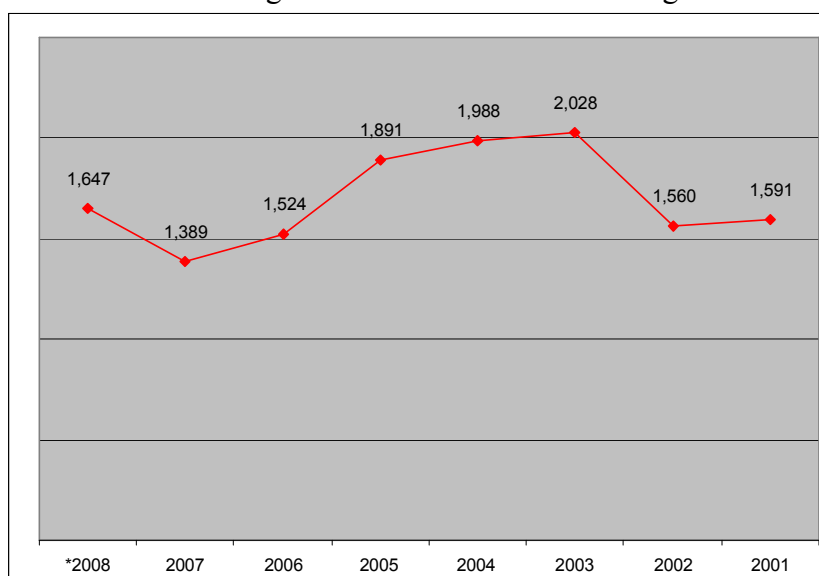
### East Jerusalem

- Tenders were issued to build 1,184 new housing units in East Jerusalem, compared to 793 in 2007. Only 46 of the tenders in 2007 were issued during the first 11 months of the year. All of the other 747 were issued in December 2007, right after the Annapolis Conference.
- Construction plans for 5,431 housing units in East Jerusalem were open for public review, of which 2,730 housing units received final approval, compared to 391 housing units approved during 2007.

### Additional figures

- In 2008 tenders were issued to build 539 new housing units in the settlements, compared to only 65 housing units in 2007, an eight-fold increase in the number of tenders.
- Central Bureau of Statistics figures also showed a 60% rise in the number of building starts in 2008 compared to 2007: 1,647 new housing units (only until September 2008), compared to 1,389 in all of 2007.

New housing units in settlements -- CBS figures



\*Figures for 2008 are only until September 2008.

Comments: the Peace Now figures presented above refer to the **number of new structures** built in the settlements. Sometimes these are apartment buildings with a number of housing units, and sometimes they are buildings with a single housing unit (mainly villas and caravans). On the other hand, the CBS presents the **number of new housing units** in the settlements without counting the number of buildings. Additionally, CBS figures do not include the illegal and unofficial construction that is widespread in the settlements and outposts.

### **Government policy in 2008**

2008 began after the Annapolis conference that met at the end of 2007, with high expectations for diplomatic developments. Along with the declaration of a commitment to freeze the settlements, the government continued the construction of the settlements in three main ways:

1. Initiating and promoting construction and plans in the settlements west of the fence, with the pretext of it not having a bearing on the final settlement.
2. Issuing permits and licenses for plans and construction, at the request of the settlers, as part of agreements and understandings with them.
3. Ignoring and non-enforcement upon unauthorized construction and development.

#### **1. Promoting construction and plans west of the route of the fence**

- **Tenders** -- in 2008 tenders were issued for the construction of 539 housing units in settlements west of the fence (Elkana, Ariel, Efrat, Beitar Illit, Alfei Menashe).
- **Construction permits** -- the beginning of work on large projects west of the fence was approved (950 housing units in Ma'ale Adumim, 800 housing units in Giv'at Ze'ev, 100 housing units in Ariel and more).
- **Construction in East Jerusalem** -- a considerable momentum began in planning and construction in East Jerusalem (Har Homa, Givat Hamatos, near Sur Baher, Pisgat Ze'ev and more).

#### **2. Approval of plans east of the fence route**

During 2008 the Minister of Defense approved dozens of construction plans in settlements, some east of the fence. In many cases these were plans meant to allow small changes in existing plans or the expansion of individual housing units, but in some cases the plans were for the substantial construction and expansion or the retroactive approval of building violations or even the establishment of new settlements. Among the substantial plans approved:

- **Establishment of settlement of Sansana** -- the Minister of Defense approved for completion all planning stages plan 501/1 to build 60 housing units at Sansana in the southern Mount Hebron. The plan actually constitutes the establishment of a new settlement, whose residents currently live in caravans. The construction of the permanent structures began a few years ago without permission and stopped following pressure by various organizations including Peace Now and Bimkom. As soon as Barak approved moving the plan to the open stage, the settlers began construction, even though the plan itself has not yet undergone all of the planning procedures nor did the planning institutions approve it. At the beginning of January 2009 the plan was open for public objections. Officially the government of Israel treats the settlement as a "neighborhood" of the settlement of Eshkolot, 4 km away as the crow flies, without any road connecting them.

- **Establishment of the settlement of Maskiyot** -- The defense minister approved validating plan number 303, which was published for validation on July 23, 2008. What this actually means is the establishment of a new settlement, which had so far served as a Nachal outpost and educational institution (see: <http://www.peacenow.org.il/site/en/peace.asp?pi=62&docid=3418>).

- **Expansion of the settlement in Hebron** -- for the first time in years, the Defense Minister approved construction of a new building for the settlement in the middle of Hebron, near Beit Romano.
- **Other plans approved by Barak** -- Barak approved plans to continue the planning up to execution procedure in dozens of other settlements including: Ovnat, Elkana, Efrat, Ariel, Talmon, Negohot, Kiryat Arba, Kedumim, Na'ale, Mevo Horon, Beit El, Neve Daniel, Giv'at Ze'ev, Alon Shvut, Beit Arye and others.

### 3. **Limited and marginal enforcement**

Whereas in 2008 at least 34 permanent structures and 227 new caravans were erected in the outposts, law enforcement was extremely limited. In a list submitted by the State to the HCJ in order to show its intensive enforcement activities against illegal construction, only 31 incidents were presented in which tin shacks and other temporary structures were evacuated or demolished, and groups of youngsters who were demonstrating on hilltops were evicted. All of the outposts Barak declared were evacuated were not fully evacuated. See: <http://www.peacenow.org.il/site/en/peace.asp?pi=61&fld=495&docid=3476>  
 The evacuation of the disputed house in Hebron is the exception that proves the rule: the decision to evacuate the house was made more than a year and a half before the evacuation, but it was only the sight of the severe violence by the settlers and their throwing stones at Palestinians and police that led the defense minister to evict them from the house.

### **Land confiscation**

Despite government declarations that no new land had been confiscated, Peace Now learned of a number of decisions and orders whose practical meaning is the confiscation of new land and its transfer to state ownership, in the amount of 275 dunams (of the land of al-Khadr near the settlement of Efrat, of the land of Hussan near the settlement of Beitar Illit, of the land of Brukin near Ariel and the land of Al-Uddeisa near Hebron).

For further details see:

. <http://www.peacenow.org.il/site/en/peace.asp?pi=61&fld=495&docid=3497>