

# Arab League Rejects Israel's New West Bank Settlement Approvals

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Israel's recent decision to approve 19 new settlements in the occupied West Bank has drawn strong condemnation from the Arab League, which described the move as illegal and a violation of international law. Arab League Secretary-General Ahmed Aboul-Gheit said the decision challenges the international community's long-standing rejection of settlement activity. He stressed that Israeli settlements are illegitimate under international law and cannot be justified under any circumstances.

Aboul-Gheit warned that expanding settlements aims to block the creation of a geographically connected Palestinian state. He said such actions undermine peace efforts and threaten the two-state solution. The remarks followed an announcement by Israeli Finance Minister Bezalel Smotrich that Israel's security cabinet approved 19 new settlements. Israeli officials say this brings the number of settlements approved or legalized over the past three years to 69.

Smotrich said the move is part of a broader policy to strengthen Jewish settlements in the West Bank and prevent the de facto establishment of a Palestinian state.

Settlement approvals have increased under Israel's current right-wing government, which includes parties opposing Palestinian statehood, drawing growing international criticism.

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