

RAMIFICATIONS OF THE US MIDDLE EAST PLAN ON THE FUTURE OF JERUSALEM

ANALYSIS PAPER

April 2020



BACKGROUND

The US Middle East Plan formally released in January 2020 by US President Trump grants for the first time international recognition of Israel's annexation of East Jerusalem in 1967. As of the date of the plan's publication, East Jerusalem remains the only area in the West Bank that was formally annexed by Israel since 1967. Affirmation of Israel's sovereignty over East Jerusalem constitutes a direct continuation of previous measures taken by the Trump administration over the past three years, including the transfer of the US Embassy to Jerusalem and the closure of the US Consulate that operated as the direct US diplomatic mission to the West Bank and East Jerusalem, independent of the US Embassy in Israel. Contrary to Trump's declaration at the time, the significance of the embassy's transfer went far beyond mere recognition of the existing reality. The move was rather part and parcel of a joint American-Israeli effort to unilaterally dictate the final status of Jerusalem along with the other core issues of the Israeli-Palestinian conflict, and to impose an irreversible reality which is advantageous to one party.

Against the backdrop of these measures, the US Plan reveals the complete scope of understanding reached between Israel and the Trump administration and underscores the stark resemblance between the plan and the Israeli right-wing agenda. This understanding is clearly "the deal within the deal," as Ambassador Friedman himself described.¹ In other words, rather than proposing a viable basis for negotiation, the Trump administration put forth an outline which enables Israel to carry out provisions in the plan that are convenient for it regardless of Palestinian consent or implementation of the plan's sections concerning them. This is particularly evident in terms of the status of Jerusalem and its borders.

The unilateral recognition of Israeli sovereignty over East Jerusalem includes the entire Old City Basin, home to the city's historical and religious sites, and is accompanied by far-reaching measures of separation and annexation which completely alter Jerusalem's character and its boundaries. The totality of these measures, which are detailed in this

¹ Aviv Tatarsky & Yudith Oppenheimer, *The Deal within the Deal*, **Haaretz**, 18 February 2020 [Hebrew]

paper, constitutes a deep erosion of the Palestinian collective attachment to Jerusalem and hence the character of the city as the home and capital of two peoples. In its sweeping unilateral decisions regarding Jerusalem, the American Plan essentially removes the issue of Jerusalem from the negotiating table in any future peace process. Even if the plan pays lip service to a semblance of a two-state solution, the exclusion of Jerusalem from the terms of debate renders it all but futile and nonviable and will only serve to further fuel the conflict, while inflicting harm on the residents of the city and the entire region.

Netanyahu's declarations concerning the advancement of building in Givat Hamatos, Har Homa and E1, which were made shortly after publication of the Trump Plan lend further credence to the notion that US affirmation of Israeli sovereignty over East Jerusalem is not just mere symbolic recognition. Its formal acknowledgement of Israeli sovereignty over a "united Jerusalem" emboldened the Israeli government and essentially gave it carte blanche to carry out unilateral measures of settlement expansion in areas of East Jerusalem and its vicinity, which have remained longstanding international redlines. The advancement of such moves has been consistently regarded as destructive to the prospect of a future Palestinian capital in the city within a viable two-state framework.

THE TRUMP PLAN'S PROCLAMATIONS CONCERNING JERUSALEM

1. The plan recognizes "united" Jerusalem, including its entire historical center (Old City Basin), as the capital of Israel under its complete sovereignty.
2. The route of the Separation Barrier will serve as the municipal boundary of Jerusalem. The East Jerusalem Palestinian neighborhoods that are physically detached from the city by the Separation Barrier (the Kufr Aqab-Semiramis area and Shuafat Refugee Camp area) will be formally cut off from Jerusalem and transferred to Palestinian control.
3. The route of the Separation Barrier similarly sets the metropolitan borders of Jerusalem, implying that the settlement blocs of Maaleh Adumim (including E1 area), Gush Etzion and Givat Ze'ev, located on the Jerusalem side of the existing/planned route of the barrier will not only be annexed to Israel, but immediately considered an integral part of Jerusalem.
4. A Palestinian capital will be established to the east and north of the Separation Barrier and will include the East Jerusalem neighborhoods beyond the barrier and the

Palestinian town of Abu Dis. As stated in the plan, it “could be named Al- Quds or another name as determined by the State of Palestine.”²”

5. Palestinian residents of Jerusalem who reside within the Separation Barrier will be able to choose between three options concerning their legal status: 1. Israeli citizenship 2. Palestinian citizenship or 3. Retain permanent residency status in Israel (their current status).
6. All of Jerusalem’s holy sites, including the Temple Mount/Haram al-Sharif, will remain subject to the existing governance regimes and “should remain open and available for peaceful worshippers and tourists of all faiths.” While omitting a number of Muslim and Christian sites, the list adds various Jewish sites which Israel has never officially regarded or recognized as holy.
7. Although the plan theoretically states that the status quo on the Temple Mount/Haram al-Sharif will be maintained, it substantially deviates from these arrangements by providing that “people of every faith should be permitted to pray on the Temple Mount/Haram al-Sharif, in a manner that is fully respectful to their religion, taking into account the times of each religion’s prayers and holidays, as well as other religious factors.”³ Such a statement implies the possibility of a division of worship space and time which would undermine the status of the place as a Muslim religious site.
8. The State of Palestine would be permitted to develop a special tourism zone in an agreed upon area in Atarot along the northern border of Jerusalem. This zone will provide services to Muslim tourists who visit Jerusalem, including transportation, restaurants, stores, hotels and a cultural center.
9. Points four and eight along with apparently five are contingent upon Palestinian agreement to the entire outline. For its part, Israel can implement the measures contingent upon the state in a unilateral and unconditional manner.

² [*Peace to Prosperity: A Vision to Improve the Lives of the Palestinian and Israeli People*](#), Trump Administration, January 2020, p. 17

³ Ibid, p. 16

IMPLICATIONS OF THE PLAN'S PROVISIONS FOR JERUSALEM

Recognition of Israel's Annexation and Application of its Sovereignty over East Jerusalem in 1967 Unilaterally Grants Israeli Control over the Entire Historic Area of the City

Comprising the heart of East Jerusalem with its concentration of sites of historic, religious and political import, the Old City Basin—the Old City and the Palestinian neighborhoods encompassing it— is inherently the core of the conflict in Jerusalem and the most politically and religiously sensitive area in the city. Negotiating teams along with Israeli, Palestinian and international stakeholders involved in the peace talks over the years have all been well aware of the tremendous complexity of this area and the immense sensitivity required in dealing with the issues concerning it. The deep significance of this area to the two peoples and three world religions was the basis for the decision to internationalize Jerusalem (*corpus separatum*) as laid out in the 1947 UN Partition Resolution and the fact that until 2017, no country in the world recognized Israeli sovereignty over Jerusalem (including West Jerusalem).

Even following the Trump administration's unilateral recognition and transfer of the American embassy to Jerusalem, the rest of the world, save for Guatemala, did not follow suit in moving their embassies to the city. The position of the international community concerning Jerusalem has remained that its permanent status must be determined through negotiation and full agreement between the two parties based on respect and recognition of the national and religious heritage of both sides. The plan's position with respect to the historical area of East Jerusalem significantly harms the Palestinian ties to the city as well as erodes its status as the capital of two peoples and its importance to three world religions. This alone for the Palestinians, renders the plan unviable and undermines the legitimacy of US arbitration.

Official Removal of Neighborhoods Beyond the Barrier from Jerusalem (refer to map in appendix)

The US Plan's declaration that the Separation Barrier marks the border of Jerusalem essentially finalizes the process undertaken by Israel over the past few years to formally cut-off eight East Jerusalem neighborhoods from the city. These neighborhoods include Kufr Aqab-Semiramis and the area of Ras Shehadeh, Ras Khamis, Dahiyat a-Salaam, and the Shuafat Refugee camp, referred to as "East Shuafat" in the plan. They are currently home to 120,000 to 140,000 Palestinians, most of whom have Israeli residency, and account for more than one-third of East Jerusalem residents.

Since the construction of the Separation Barrier, Israel has steadily increased its pressure on Palestinian residents in the form of mass restrictions on Palestinian planning and building and an intensification of punitive measures against unpermitted construction in areas within the barrier, driving many to seek "refuge" in the neighborhoods beyond the barrier. In tandem, Israeli authorities overlook the unrestrained and unregulated construction in the neighborhoods beyond the barrier, turning them into grossly neglected and densely populated enclaves overrun by poverty with little municipal oversight and provision of services. Tens of thousands of residents who were forced to migrate to these neighborhoods as the sole "escape" from the longstanding planning stranglehold have found themselves trapped between the necessity to provide a roof over their families' heads and the concern that Israel's ultimate objective is to sever them from the city as explicitly reflected in the Trump Plan.

The plan's position regarding the neighborhoods beyond the barrier directly contradicts its declaration that "peace should not demand the uprooting of people – Arab or Jew – from their homes."⁴ While it is true that the residents of these neighborhoods will not necessarily be displaced from their private homes, they will rather be imprisoned within them and uprooted from everything that constitutes home in its broader, collective sense: identity, legal status, space, community, and the right to the city. If until now the Separation Barrier caused them to be 'uprooted *within* their city,' in the wake of the Trump Plan, they will become 'uprooted *from* their city.'

- **Ramifications**

After the construction of the Separation Barrier, tens of thousands of East Jerusalem residents who had been living on the outskirts of Jerusalem returned to live within the city. The return of these residents created tremendous pressure on the failing infrastructure and exacerbated the already existing severe housing shortage in East Jerusalem, which accelerated the migration to the neighborhoods beyond the barrier. If actual moves are taken to formally sunder these neighborhoods from Jerusalem, large waves of Palestinians will presumably return to the city, this time to Palestinian neighborhoods within the barrier and potentially to nearby Jewish neighborhoods/ settlements such as Pisgat Ze'ev, Neve Yaakov and Armon Hanatziv.

Driven by a sense of crisis and duress, these waves will only increase the pressures and distress already implicit within East Jerusalem. As a result, throughout the city and within a distance of only one barrier from it will live large Palestinian populations in greater poverty, neglect and desperation. This dire

⁴And in continuation: "Such a construct, which is more likely to lead to civil unrest, runs counter to the idea of co-existence." [Peace to Prosperity: A Vision to Improve the Lives of the Palestinian and Israeli People](#), Trump Administration, January 2020, p. 8

reality imposed on both Palestinians and Israelis alike will only fuel more friction between the two populations and escalate overall tension throughout the entire city.

- **A Legislative Element**

Formal removal of these neighborhoods from Jerusalem would require the Knesset to pass a law overriding previous legislation, which acutely prohibits the transfer of territory from Jerusalem within the 1967 annexation line to a foreign entity. While legislative measures have been advanced by the right-wing in recent years to amend the law for the purpose of detaching these neighborhoods, certain right-wing factions ultimately opposed the move due to apprehension it would legitimize a future compromise on Jerusalem.⁵ If the right comes to an internal agreement regarding this matter, it is reasonable to assert that they would succeed in overcoming this obstacle to amend the aforementioned clause. It is likewise worth noting that previous political statements made by center-left political parties indicate their support for such a move.⁶

- **A Legal Element**

As is the case for the entire Palestinian population in East Jerusalem, the residents of the neighborhoods beyond the barrier possess permanent residency status in the State of Israel. While the Trump plan does not explicitly address this issue, provisions within the plan imply the potential sweeping revocation of residency status of more than 120,000 Palestinian residents who reside within the neighborhoods beyond the barrier.

Although according to Israel, East Jerusalem was officially annexed in 1967, Israel has refrained from granting collective citizenship to its residents. They instead have been conferred with permanent residency, the only status for the past 53 years with which they could maintain their ties to their birthplace and to all aspects of their lives. In 2017, the Supreme Court recognized the status of East Jerusalem residents as unique by virtue of being “indigenous inhabitants.”⁷ International judicial forums have equally adjudicated in recent years against the revocation of residency status in various countries.⁸ The uniqueness of the status of East Jerusalem residents merits immediate discussion, utilizing both Israeli and international law (which cannot be exhaustively discussed in this paper), in order

⁵ Ir Amim, [Destructive Unilateral Measures to Redraw the Borders of Jerusalem](#), January 2018

⁶ Ibid.

⁷ AAA 3268/14 Al-Haq v. Minister of Interior; Ronen, Yael, *Pnei Hilkhatah Awad – To Where? The Status of the Palestinian Residents of East Jerusalem* [Hebrew]

⁸ Ronen, Yael, *The Ties that Bind: Family and Private Life as Bars to the Deportation of Immigrants*, INTERNATIONAL JOURNAL OF LAW IN CONTEXT 8.2 pp. 283-96 (2012) Cambridge University Press

to prevent the potential exploitation of their residency status to displace Palestinian residents from Jerusalem.

Actualization of "Greater Jerusalem" – Annexation of the Three Settlement Blocs within the Existing/Planned Route of the Separation Barrier (*refer to map in appendix*)

Even prior to publication of the Trump Plan, Israel had initiated legislative measures (which were not passed) to annex the three settlement blocs of Maaleh Adumim, Givat Zeev and Gush Etzion to Jerusalem as part of its "Greater Jerusalem" policy.⁹ Since the US plan confers Israel with the right to annex all West Bank settlements, it would appear there is no particular significance to this additional provision. However, the inclusion of these blocs within Jerusalem's metropolitan borders grants them a unique status. The immediate manifestation of this is exemplified by the US' tacit acquiescence to Netanyahu's promotion of construction in the E1 area just prior to the March 2020 elections as part of a spate of new settlement plans advanced in East Jerusalem and its vicinity since the plan's release.

Until the unveiling of the US Plan, the E1 area, located within the Maaleh Adumim settlement bloc, constituted a red line in longstanding US foreign policy due to its dire ramifications on the viability of a two-state solution with two capitals in Jerusalem. Israeli construction in the E1 area would bifurcate the West Bank along every axis, driving a wedge between the Ramallah and Bethlehem areas as well as fracture the contiguous Palestinian space between East Jerusalem and the West Bank necessary for a viable Palestinian state with East Jerusalem as its capital. This territorial contiguity is likewise essential for preserving the Palestinian fabric of life and the ability for Palestinians to conduct sustainable independent lives in the future. Building within the E1 area would thus advance implementation of the "Greater Jerusalem" concept, creating more Israeli contiguity, while rupturing the Palestinian environs into fragmented and disconnected enclaves.

- **A Demographic Dimension** is likewise implicit in the annexation of the three settlement blocs to Jerusalem. Such a move will artificially add some 140,000 settlers to Jerusalem's demographic balance while removing a similar number of Palestinian residents living in the neighborhoods beyond the barrier (as described above). The realization of "Greater Jerusalem" will create one large metropolitan body, which will guarantee a solid Israeli Jewish majority and a further diminished and weakened Palestinian minority. Thus, by officially excising the neighborhoods beyond the barrier from Jerusalem and annexing the settlement blocs to a

⁹ Ir Amim, [Destructive Unilateral Measures to Redraw the Borders of Jerusalem](#), January 2018

Jerusalem metropolis, the Trump Plan brings Israel substantially closer to achieving its longstanding goal of controlling East Jerusalem without its residents.

The Status Quo on the Temple Mount/Haram al-Sharif

As is the case with many other provisions, the Trump Plan uses ambiguous and contradictory language, but in actuality leads to a radical and unilateral shift of the existing reality in favor of the Israeli right-wing agenda. Although the plan avers to uphold the status quo on the Holy Esplanade, it contains blatant contradictions which constitute a flagrant breach to the status quo. It states that “people of every faith should be permitted to pray on the Temple Mount/Haram al-Sharif, in a manner that is fully respectful to their religion, taking into account the times of each religion’s prayers and holidays, as well as other religious factors.”¹⁰ Enshrined in peace agreements with Jordan and upheld since 1967, the status quo confers only Muslims with worship rights, while all others are visitors. In the words of Prime Minister Netanyahu himself in October 2015, “Muslims pray at the Temple Mount, non-Muslims visit it.”¹¹

Permitting people of all faiths to pray on the Mount marks a dramatic shift in the longstanding policy concerning worship rights on the Holy Esplanade and implies the establishment of division of worship space and time. In addition, the plan adopts the distinction -- promoted by state-backed Temple Movements - between Al-Aqsa Mosque as an exclusively Muslim holy site and the Temple Mount/Haram al-Sharif complex as a site where all three religions should enjoy equal worship rights. This stands in blatant violation of the status quo which avows that the entire compound is a Muslim religious site.

While Netanyahu explicitly confirmed his commitment to the status quo in 2015, he simultaneously continued to lend support to the Temple Movements who are acting to overturn the status quo on the Temple Mount/Haram al-Sharif. The proposed changes in the plan contravene the peace agreements between Israel and Jordan and will exacerbate the already tenuous relations between the two countries. In recent years, serious escalations in clashes between Israelis and Palestinians have derived from tensions surrounding the Temple Mount/Haram al-Sharif.¹²

¹⁰ [*Peace to Prosperity: A Vision to Improve the Lives of the Palestinian and Israeli People*](#), Trump Administration, January 2020

¹¹ TOI Staff, [*Netanyahu Pledges to Prevent Jewish Prayer on Temple Mount*](#), **Times of Israel**, 25 October 2015; Ir Amim, [*Collective Restrictions on the Entry Muslim Worshipers to the TM/HAS...*](#), November 2015

¹² *Ibid.*

Holy Sites in Jerusalem

The plan's only operative statement with respect to the holy sites is the necessity of ensuring freedom of access to them for worshippers of all faiths. The main significance of this section is rather its problematic proclamations: **a.** Save for the Haram al-Sharif and a general reference to Muslim holy shrines, the list of holy sites neglects to include a number of Muslim sites in East Jerusalem, while entirely excluding other Muslim and Christian sites in West Jerusalem, such as the Muslim cemetery in Mamilla and the churches in Ein Kerem (to which Palestinians have strong ties). **b.** Conversely, the list expands the number of Jewish holy places to include sites which according to Israel and/or Jewish tradition have never been officially regarded or recognized as holy. These include: archeological sites in Silwan and its vicinity, Tomb of Absalom, the Tomb of Zechariah, Second Temple Pilgrimage Road, Gihon Spring, the Pool of Siloam, City of David, as well as the Mount of Olives and the Sambuski Jewish cemetery on Mount Zion. The common feature between many of the additional Jewish sites on the list is that they are managed by the Elad settler organization and constitute the epicenter of the organization's settlement operations.

The ascription of 'holiness' to historical/touristic sites reinforces the aim of state-backed settler organizations like Elad in erasing the historic Palestinian connection to Jerusalem and blurring the multicultural and multi-religious heritage of the Old City Basin by superimposing an exclusive Israeli Jewish narrative of the space. These efforts bolster the ring of settlement activity around the Old City Basin, marked by settler-operated touristic projects, including national parks and the planned controversial cable car, settler-initiated evictions of Palestinians and takeovers of their homes.¹³

Abu-Dis and the Neighborhoods Beyond the Barrier as Al-Quds

In order to thwart any basis for a Palestinian claim to East Jerusalem, the Trump Plan provides for the establishment of the capital of the future Palestinian state in an aggregate that is municipally and geographically unviable. This artificially engineered construct would be comprised of the neighborhoods beyond the barrier--Kufr Aqab-Semiramis in the north and the Shuafat Refugee Camp area in the northeast-- and the West Bank town of Abu-Dis to the east of Jerusalem. Located in peripheral areas which possess no religious, historical or political significance, these geographically fragmented locales cannot constitute a substitute for the historic East Jerusalem with its deep symbolic value.

¹³ Ir Amim, [Settlement Ring Map Around the Old City and Accompanying Map Notes](#), March 2019

The efforts to exchange Abu Dis for historic East Jerusalem are not new. This concept has repeatedly been raised in previous rounds of negotiations between the Israelis and Palestinians as part of a relentless Israeli effort to reinvent a "Palestinian Jerusalem" outside of Jerusalem and consistently rejected by the Palestinian side. Proposing Abu-Dis and the neighborhoods beyond the barrier as Al Quds 'or another name as determined by the State of Palestine' in the framework of the US Plan is intended to remove the issue of Jerusalem from the future negotiating table and to mark the Palestinian claim to East Jerusalem as entirely illegitimate.

Furthermore, at one stage prior to the formal release of the Trump Plan, it was leaked that the Abu Dis concept would include, in addition to the neighborhoods beyond the barrier, Jabal Mukabber and Issawiya—two East Jerusalem neighborhoods both located within the barrier.¹⁴ While this idea was ultimately not included within the published plan, it appears that there has been consideration among some to also detach these neighborhoods from Jerusalem, and it is uncertain that this notion has been shelved entirely¹⁵. Since the summer of 2019, Issawiya in particular has been the target of an unprecedented aggressive police campaign, accompanied by incessant police raids and harassment, which has generated immense friction within the community.¹⁶ The goal of such measures may serve to effectively mark these neighborhoods with the stigma of being a violent, fringe enclave inhabited by lawbreakers in order to justify any potential future steps towards excluding them from the city, which in turn will further reduce the number of Palestinians in Jerusalem.¹⁷

The Legal Status of East Jerusalem Residents

The US Plan provides that East Jerusalem residents living on the Jerusalem side of the Separation Barrier will be able to choose among three options: Israeli citizenship, Palestinian citizenship or retain their current permanent residency status in Israel. Under any other conditions, the multiple options proposed by the plan could be interpreted as a sign of goodwill and recognition of the immense complexity of the identity of Palestinian residents of East Jerusalem. Yet, none of the proposed possibilities ensure an adequate level of guarantee. Since 1967, East Jerusalem residents have been granted the ability to apply for Israeli citizenship. Due to growing uncertainty concerning their residency status, a large number of Palestinian residents have requested Israeli citizenship in recent years, yet the process is often hampered and drawn out by stringent

¹⁴ Nadav Shragai, [Jerusalem in the Deal of the Century](#), *Israel Hayom*, March 7, 2019 [Hebrew]

¹⁵ *ibid*

¹⁶ Nir Hasson, [340 Arrests and Only Five Indictments: Summer-long Police Sweep Strikes Fear in Issawiya](#), *Haaretz*, August 28, 2019; Noa Dagoni, [In Issawiya, Who Should Be Feared More: the Coronavirus or the Police?](#), *Local Call*, March 22, 2020 [Hebrew]

¹⁷ Yudith Oppenheimer, [The Security Excuse for Pushing Al-Issawiya Out](#), *Times of Israel*, August 2, 2019

bureaucratic hurdles, including conditioning the receipt of citizenship on a declaration of loyalty to the Jewish state and knowledge of Hebrew. Approval of the application is likewise subject to the discretion of the Minister of Interior. Under these circumstances, the ability to apply for Israeli citizenship is just a mere formality that only a few succeed in attaining.¹⁸ The US plan neither lays out demands to amend this procedure nor does it obligate Israel to approve Israeli citizenship for any resident who submits an application.

Likewise, the possibility of obtaining future Palestinian citizenship comes with its own obstacles. First, the chances of a Palestinian state being established according to the conditions set forth in the Trump Plan are exceedingly slim. Second, the plan does not indicate how Palestinian residents of East Jerusalem who choose to receive Palestinian citizenship will continue to remain in the city under full Israeli sovereignty. Since the 1990's, Israel has prohibited residents of the West Bank and/or Gaza, including spouses of East Jerusalem residents, to live or spend time within the State, save for those with special work permits. The lack of any precedent of those with Palestinian citizenship or IDs living securely under Israeli sovereignty casts serious doubts on the likelihood that such an arrangement for East Jerusalem residents is realistic and viable.

Most East Jerusalem Palestinians will presumably continue to remain within the current anomalous framework – stateless residents – dependent upon the goodwill of the sovereign state and perpetually apprehensive over the possible revocation of their residency status for one reason or another. Given the general spirit of the Trump Plan and the non-obligatory manner in which it presents options concerning the legal status of East Jerusalem residents, it appears that this issue has been intentionally left nebulous, conditional per individual case, and entirely subject to Israel's goodwill. This inevitably confers Israel with the utmost discretion while releasing it entirely from overall responsibility and the fulfillment of any obligation in advance. Moreover, the plan does not provide a timeframe for implementation of this section.

Tourism Zone in Atarot

While this provision is marginal in relation to the others, it is indicative of the Trump Plan's overall approach and fits into the general framework of offering Palestinians amorphous economic benefits as a substitute for sovereignty, self-rule and territory, as encapsulated in the plan's title "Peace to Prosperity." The area of Atarot is located on the northern edge of Jerusalem and has no symbolic importance or touristic value – a choice which further highlights Palestinian displacement and dispossession from every place of significance in Jerusalem. This supposed tourism zone will be no more than a commercial and transportation terminal adjacent to the Qalandia checkpoint in one of

¹⁸ Yael Ronen, *id.*

the most environmentally polluted areas in Jerusalem.¹⁹ The touted success of the proposals contained in this section is equally questionable from an economic perspective. Moreover, just weeks after the unveiling of the Trump Plan, Israel advanced building plans for a new Israeli neighborhood/settlement in the majority of the area designated for this theoretical tourism zone.

IR AMIM'S POSITION

In close coordination with the current American administration, Israel is advancing a policy of annexation and separation of 'Greater Jerusalem.' A large portion of the Trump plan is not a basis for negotiation or peace, but rather constitutes a fleshed-out work plan, which both echoes and advances measures already being implemented on the ground. It likewise further entrenches Israeli control of East Jerusalem and the majority of the West Bank, while foiling any prospect for a just and agreed resolution to the conflict. As both US Ambassador Friedman and Prime Minister Netanyahu stated, an agreement has been reached between the US and Israel concerning the advancement of Israeli moves regardless of Palestinian position or consent. This policy will not only impact the future of Jerusalem, but also the entire Israeli-Palestinian conflict and will consign both Israelis and Palestinians alike to an accelerating apartheid reality. In Jerusalem, the uprooting of approximately one-third or more of the Palestinians living in East Jerusalem from the city and their confinement to neglected enclaves along with further isolation and suppression of those who remain within the city will fracture the urban fabric and liable to increase confrontation between the two populations of the city.

As opposed to the destructive conditions and measures laid out within the US Plan concerning Jerusalem, Ir Amim's position rather holds that Jerusalem is the current home of two peoples whom both regard as their capital and the source of their historic, religious and political attachments. A secure and stable life in Jerusalem can exist only out of recognition of the entirety of the connections of both peoples to the city, and when both are able to conduct their daily and public lives in an independent and sovereign manner. In the absence of a permanent solution in the foreseeable future, the two peoples will continue to share a complex urban reality dependent on a delicate weave of symbiotic relations and interdependence. In this current reality, policies should be adopted to enhance the living environment and personal security of all of Jerusalem's residents and to reduce elements that exacerbate tension in the city.

¹⁹ Nir Hasson, *Report: Air Pollution in the Industrial Area of Atarot in Jerusalem is Several Hundred Percentages Above the Standard*, **Haaretz**, March 3, 2020.

First and foremost, the living conditions and the existential security of East Jerusalem residents must be significantly improved, both within and outside of the Separation Barrier, in an adequate and non-coercive manner. Palestinians must be permitted to physically and socially develop their communities in the urban sphere, preserve the wholeness of their community and physical surroundings, and conduct their affairs in the city through their own institutions without fear. Living conditions in West Jerusalem also require improvement, while positive economic, social and political channels for dialogue and cooperation must be established. The residents of both parts of Jerusalem and their respective political leaderships, along with the support of the international community, must be full partners in determining the political future of the city. The shared life in the city can and must constitute a basis for negotiations for a viable sustainable solution, out of the understanding that in every possible political constellation, the two peoples will live alongside each other in Jerusalem.

APPENDIX

