

‘Historic’: Israel Security Cabinet Votes to Add 22 New Settlements in Judea, Samaria

The Israeli Security Cabinet voted Wednesday to strengthen the Jewish state’s presence in Judea and Samaria, also known as the West Bank, by building 22 new settlement communities, most notable among them: Homesh and Sa-Nur, two Samaritan settlements where the Israeli government forcibly removed the residents as part of the 2005 Gaza Disengagement.

The Netanyahu government action, spearheaded by Defense Minister Israel Katz and Finance Minister Bezalel Smotrich, includes the construction of four communities on the Jordanian border.

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Katz declared, “This historic decision to establish 22 new communities in Judea and Samaria strengthens our hold on the land, anchors our historical right to the Land of Israel, and delivers a crushing answer to Palestinian terrorism aimed at harming the settlements and weakening them.”

He added, “The decision we made today is not just about strengthening the settlements on the State’s eastern border – it’s also a strategic move to prevent the establishment of a Palestinian state that would endanger Israel, and it serves as a buffer zone against our enemies.”

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Smotrich praised the vote, noting, “This is a great day for the settlements and an important day for the State of Israel. Through determined leadership and intense work, we have

succeeded, with God's help, in achieving a deep strategic shift, returning the State of Israel to a path of building, Zionism, and vision."

He continued, "Settlement in our ancestral homeland is Israel's shield wall; today we took a giant step toward strengthening it. The next step – sovereignty!"

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In other news concerning the region, President Trump confirmed that he warned Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu and Israeli leaders not to attack Iran's nuclear facilities while the U.S. is still negotiating with Iran over its pursuit of nuclear weapons.

Trump stated, "I told them this would be inappropriate to do right now because we're very close to a solution. Now, that could change at any moment. It could change with a phone call. But right now, I think they want to make a deal. And if we can make a deal, save a lot of lives."

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Israel fears a bad deal will emerge. Jerusalem wants a permanent solution, which means destroying the nuclear facilities. However, the president still seems to believe such a drastic solution can be avoided.

"There are only two outcomes," he said. "You know, with the two outcomes, there's a smart outcome and there is a violent outcome. And I don't think anybody wants to see the second. But I think we've made a lot of progress, and we'll see. You know, they still have to agree to the final stages of a document, but I think you could be very well surprised what happens there."

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