

Israel's claiming of West Bank to spark renewed conflict

Global inaction enables Tel Aviv's abuses



The photo shows a general view of a plenary session to vote on a bill for applying Israeli sovereignty over the West Bank territory, at the Knesset, the Israeli parliament, in Al-Quds (Jerusalem), on July 23, 2025.
● EPA



By Majid Safataj
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OPINION

The Israeli parliament (Knesset) has recently given the green light to impose sovereignty over the West Bank, effectively annexing it. But first and foremost, it's crucial to note that the underpinning agreement between the Israeli regime and the Palestine Liberation Organization (PLO) to sign the Oslo Accord — which handed partial administrative control of the West Bank and Gaza Strip to the Palestinian Authority (PA) — came about due to a necessity felt by the Israelis because of the Palestinian Intifada. The Intifada — a widespread uprising of Palestinians in the West Bank and Gaza — led Tel Aviv to the conclusion that without a deal with the Palestinians, the resistance would drag on, eventually causing Israel to lose. Based on this, the Israeli regime entered the Oslo process, starting with Oslo I and progressing through Oslo II, Oslo III, and subsequent stages.

This accord was inked in 1993 by Yasser Arafat and then-Israeli prime minister Yitzhak Rabin. However, Israel has never stuck to its commitments under this

agreement. Throughout its 77 years of political existence, whenever Israel has sensed that the other side was on the back foot, it has routinely thrown peace and cease-fire agreements out the window and launched hostile actions.

Today, from Israel's viewpoint, the regime sees itself sitting pretty in a position of strength. Hence, the prediction made back in 1993 regarding the Oslo Accord has come to fruition once again. They hold that forming the Palestinian



A Palestinian Bedouin walks in a community as an illegal Israeli settlement stands in the background in the Jordan Valley in the Israeli-occupied West Bank.
● ALI SAWAFTA/REUTERS



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Authority was intended as a way to put an end to resistance and the Intifada, turning this body into an instrument for suppressing resistance movements — in other words, a Palestinian police force serving Israel's security goals.

However, the on-the-ground realities, especially in the West Bank, tell a different story. Resistance operations in the area have ramped up, and alignment with Gaza has picked up steam, despite Israel's claims that Hamas has been defeated in Gaza and resistance leaders have been assassinated in the West Bank. Still, the current situation has pushed the Israeli regime to push forward various plans and proposals to annex parts of the occupied territory and assert sovereignty over the West Bank.

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In Lebanon, too, Israel is cashing in on the absence of effective air defenses to take out Resistance leaders. There is also speculation that Israel may branch out its operations to Iraq, Yemen, and beyond. All this behavior stems from Israel's revised assessment of the Resistance Axis, particularly the situation in Palestine. Many believe that Israel's sovereignty claim over the West Bank is not only a tall order but may result in escalating the conflict and tensions in the region.

Israel may well end up back where it started, prior to the Oslo Agreement — before recognizing the Palestinian Authority's existence — back when the First Intifada forced Israel to bend. Naturally, Resistance forces and the people of the West Bank are expected to push back, and Israel will have to face the music.

However, unlike in 1987 during the First Intifada, Israel now has more experience. Over the past three decades, the regime has honed its methods of suppressing popular protests and tested the waters of international indifference. Just as in Gaza — where we are witnessing the highest of atrocities, the killing of children, and the siege of defenseless people while the global community stays mute — Israel will likely turn up the heat on crackdowns in the West Bank. Still, such measures may well fan the flames of uprising once more in the occupied territories, particularly in the West Bank along the Jordan River.

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Why Israel's push to annex West Bank could be Jordan's breaking point



By Robert Inlakesh
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PERSPECTIVE

The Israeli parliament (Knesset) has passed a bill approving an agenda to annex the illegally occupied West Bank. The move comes as a first step towards a catastrophic move that could prove even more destabilizing to the region than the ethnic cleansing of Gaza would. Israel's lawmakers voted 71-13 on a piece of legislation that seeks to put in motion the full annexation of the West Bank. After the approval of the bill, Israeli Knesset speaker Amir Ohana commented the following:

"This is our land. This is our home. The Land of Israel belongs to the people of Israel. In 1967, the occupation did not begin; It ended, and our homeland was returned to its rightful owners. We are the original first natives of this piece of land. Jews cannot be the 'occupier' of a land that for 3,000 years has been called Judea." Ohana also called for the seizure of Gaza's territory, an opinion that is far from fringe and comes from a Likud Party MK, making it clear that such statements are not simply the sentiment of Religious Zionism Party elected officials like Finance Minister Bezalel Smotrich. The timing of the vote is also no coincidence, as Gaza cease-fire talks progress,

West Bank annexation is a major item on the agenda for Israeli Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu as he seeks to hold together his ruling coalition. If there is a cease-fire agreement implemented between the Israeli cabinet and Hamas, the promise of West Bank annexation could end up keeping dissenters in the fold of Netanyahu's cabinet.

Will annexation work?

West Bank annexation is no longer a question of if, but when. There is a plurality in the political establishment that sees this issue as of great importance, and the overwhelming majority of Knesset Members support it.

Therefore, the timing will depend upon when it is politically viable, which is dictated by both American and Israeli politics. On the US side, Israel's richest billionaire, Miriam Adelson, gave the Trump campaign \$100 million, with the quid pro quo being that he permits West Bank annexation.

In fact, the Republican Party president's campaign was funded by a who's who of Zionist billionaires, making sense of why his administration appears ideologically as if it wouldn't be out of place running the show in Tel Aviv.

US President Donald Trump is not only an opponent of a so-called "Two-State solution" by words, but he also attempt-

ed to implement the disastrous Deal of the Century in 2020. This non-starter deal was, in essence, a plan that paved the way to Israeli annexation of vast swathes of the West Bank, while creating small Gaza-like enclaves in the rest of the territory where the Palestinian Authority would rule without any proper borders or army.

So, when it comes to the United States, there isn't likely to be much pushback. Therefore, the primary determining factor will be Israeli domestic politics.

If Israeli Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu is truly entertaining a cease-fire with Gaza, this could be the perfect time to implement an annexation plot. Yet