



## Yesh Din

Volunteers for Human Rights

### Authorization of 13 Illegal Outposts as Independent Legal Entities

On March 23, 2025, Israel's Security Cabinet approved a proposal by Bezalel Smotrich, the additional Minister in the Ministry of Defense, to authorize the separation of 13 outposts in the West Bank from their adjacent 'mother' settlements and to recognize them as independent settlements.

This decision, led by Minister Smotrich as part of the work of the Settlement Administration under his responsibility, aligns with the approval of tens of thousands of housing units in the West Bank and represents another significant step in the process of normalization and legalization of the settlement enterprise.

The 2019 Yesh Din report, [The Age of Regularization](#) explained how the term 'regularization' has been employed as a euphemism for legalizing illegal outposts while dispossessing Palestinian landowners of their land and violating Palestinians' property rights. One of the important concepts to understanding the process of regularization of illegal outposts is the contiguity principle - a central planning principle (applied inside sovereign Israel as well), according to which new neighborhoods must be built in immediate proximity to existing neighborhoods, maintaining urban continuity. It is designed to serve public interests such as protecting the environment and reducing construction costs.

By applying the contiguity principle flexibly in the West Bank - as recommended by the Zandberg Committee in 2018, which was appointed to provide the

Government of Israel with tools to retroactively authorize illegal outposts - Israel has been misrepresenting independent outposts as neighborhoods of existing settlements, when, in reality, they are new distinct settlements. In this manner, dozens of outposts have been in the process of regularization as “neighborhoods” of older settlements, ignoring the fact that they operate as separate entities from the settlements, with separate institutions, and that, in some cases, the communities of the outpost and the settlement are entirely disparate. "Applying the contiguity principle flexibly" strips the principle of contiguity - which is central to planning - of its meaning and compromises the public interests it is designed to protect.

For further information on the contiguity principle and the process of regularization at large, read Yesh Din's position paper:

### **The Age of Regularization**

These 13 settlements were originally established as illegal and unauthorized outposts. In order to avoid international and local criticism, Israel maintained a false pretense that these are not settlements, but rather neighborhoods of existing settlements. However, since in actuality they were not built close enough to them and operated as separate entities, they encountered difficulties in their daily administration.

Recognizing each of the 13 outposts as a new, independent entities, changes their status to permanent and legal settlements in the eyes of Israeli law. As such, they will enjoy budget allocations, planning permits, and other privileges that will greatly advance their expansion and development.

**This is a list of the 13 outposts that will be retroactively authorized and declared as settlements:**

Alon  
Harasha  
Kerem Re'im  
Neria  
Migron  
Shvut Rachel  
Ovnat  
Brosh HaBik'a – Bitaronot  
Leshem  
Nofei Nehemia  
Tal Menashe  
Ibei HaNakhal  
Gva'ot

### **Yesh Din's Appeal on Crowdfunding for the Homesh Illegal Outpost was Denied**

Yesh Din's appeal concerning the fundraising activities of the *Ma'amakim* school in the illegal outpost of Homesh was denied. In 2019, after law enforcement measures were initiated against the Homesh outpost, an 'educational NGO' named the *Ma'amakim* school launched a crowdfunding campaign serving as a conduit for fundraising (including under Section 46, which makes donations tax-deductible in Israel) for the construction of new buildings in the outpost.

Yesh Din filed a complaint with the police at the time, and the police investigation was closed based on the claim that "there is no criminal offense" in this matter. Yesh Din then filed a petition to the HCJ demanding, among other things, the annulment of the police's decision to close the investigation. The justices

criticized the police's decision, primarily for lacking reasoning and investigative actions, and in October 2021, a ruling was issued stating that "the Israel Police shall make a new decision regarding the petitioners' request."

This was followed by a long series of inquiries to the police to determine whether a new decision would finally be made. Only after March 2022, when [the Disengagement Law was changed](#), did the police inform us that the case had been closed. When we requested the investigation materials, it became clear that no investigation had been conducted.

One of the prosecution's claims in the decision is that the statute of limitations has expired because no substantive investigative actions were taken during the relevant period since the offense was committed in 2019. This effectively means that when the police drag their feet, an appeal cannot be filed, and when they refuse to make decisions — or issue decisions that, following an HCJ ruling, require revision — the prosecution ultimately backs the police's inaction. As a result, the obstruction of the investigation itself becomes an independent justification for closing cases.

This is an excellent example of the state and police's collaboration with criminal activity (even through omission), as well as the prosecution's complicity and whitewashing of law enforcement failures - enabling fundraising for illegal construction by offering tax deduction benefits under Section 46, the police's inaction and delays, and the prosecution's reliance on this inaction—both in its response to the HCJ and afterward.

[Read the denial of the appeal \(Hebrew\)](#)

[Read our report 'The World Turned Upside-Down' about Homesh](#)

## Join Our WhatsApp Group for Diplomatic Updates

We invite you to join our WhatsApp group for diplomatic updates, in which we send periodic updates on important developments in the West Bank easily and conveniently. It is a 'silent' group, meaning only the administrators can post messages, and there are no conversations or debates. You are welcome to join and share the link with colleagues.

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