



Yesh Din

Volunteers for Human Rights

The Knesset Approved the Preliminary Vote for the Bill to “Eliminate Discrimination in Real Estate Purchases in Judea and Samaria, 2023”

The proposed bill aims to ease the purchase of land in the occupied territory by settlers and to expand the settlement enterprise. It seeks to establish permanent changes in land ownership in the West Bank by enabling, for the first time, individual Israelis to buy land directly instead of the current requirement to buy land through companies registered with the Civil Administration Companies Registry. This kind of ownership would be permanent and irreversible.

The name of the bill and its explanatory notes are misleading. The bill presents itself as fixing an ongoing injustice of alleged discrimination against settlers. In reality, the land regime in the West Bank enacts blatant discrimination in which 99% of the public (‘state’) lands are allocated to settlements. If the legislation is fully enacted, it will not only further entrench the existing discrimination but ease and facilitate the purchase of West Bank lands by Israeli settlers.

Additionally, and no less significantly, legislation by the Israeli Knesset regarding the occupied territory constitutes the application of Israeli sovereignty to the occupied land, in violation of international law, which prohibits annexation.

Further reasons to oppose the bill include:

- Most of the land where settlements have been established is registered as public property (state land) rather than private property. The Civil Administration temporarily allocates state lands to settlers. The law is intended to encourage settlers to purchase land, significantly increasing the amount of land under private and permanent Jewish ownership in the West Bank. Land ownership would belong to companies operating under Israeli regulation, even if future political developments lead to non-Israeli sovereignty in the West Bank (for example, a Palestinian state). This effectively solidifies the Israeli presence.
- The law removes oversight over land transactions, making it easier to use forged documents to buy West Bank lands. In several past cases, serious suspicions of forged land purchases in the West Bank emerged, aiming to retroactively legitimize illegal outposts. One notable example is the *Amona* outpost affair. Read more about *Amona* here:

<https://bit.ly/3PX1B9g>

To learn more about this bill, click here: <https://bit.ly/42E10B3>

Visit Yesh Din's Annexation Legislation Database

The rapid advancement of the bill from approval of the Ministerial Committee for Legislation to the preliminary vote demonstrates a political appetite for quick approval of this bill, indicating that this is the critical time for intervention to stop the legislation, as the bill will likely be heard for the second and final reading and approval soon. Therefore, rapid intervention is crucial to prevent further violations of human rights.

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.

Join Yesh Din's new WhatsApp group

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