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## **Secretary-General Condemns Israeli Approval of Settlement Building in West Bank, Urges Reversal of Decision for Sake of Peace, 'Just' Final Status Agreement**

The following statement was issued today by the Spokesman for UN Secretary-General Ban Ki-moon:

The Secretary-General condemns the announcement today that Israel has approved construction of some 300 housing units in the West Bank settlement of Beit El, as well as the planning and construction of nearly 500 housing units in a number of settlements in East Jerusalem. He reiterates that settlements are illegal under international law, an impediment to peace, and cannot be reconciled with the Government of Israel's stated intention to pursue a two-State solution. The Secretary-General urges the Government of Israel to halt and reverse such decisions in the interest of peace and a just final status agreement.

The Secretary-General remains concerned about the imminent threat of demolitions in the Palestinian village of Susiya in Area C of the West Bank ahead of a 3 August court hearing on a directly related planning petition. The destruction of private property in occupied territory is prohibited under international humanitarian law, and for which actions there must be accountability.

**For information media. Not an official record.**

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