

UN: New settlement building not 'conducive to peace'

By JPOST.COM STAFF
03/13/2011 17:19

Serry criticizes gov't decision to build 400 units in W. Bank as Fogel family, killed in Itamar terror attack, laid to rest.

UN special coordinator Robert Serry was "concerned" by media reports of 500 new housing units to be constructed in the [West Bank](#), AFP reported Serry's spokesman Richard Miron as saying Sunday.

Serry was responding to the [government's Saturday approval](#) for hundreds of new [apartments](#) in the [settlements](#) of Ma'ale Adumim, Ariel, Kiryat Sefer and Gush Etzion, which came in the wake of a terrorist attack Friday in which five family members were stabbed to death in the Itamar settlement.

Serry stressed that the decision to build "is not conducive to efforts to renew negotiations and achieve a negotiated Israeli-Palestinian peace."

On Saturday Serry released a statement, saying that he "unequivocally condemns last night's shocking murder of an Israeli family of five, including three children, in the West Bank, and calls for those responsible to be brought to justice."

He added that there "can be no justification whatsoever for such atrocities which are the acts of extremists opposed to peace in the Middle East."

On Sunday, Interior Minister Eli Yishai said that the government's plan was not ambitious enough, commenting that "I would not stop with 400 units, we need at least 1,000 new housing units for each person murdered."

"After this terrible and shocking murder, nothing will comfort the families," Yishai said. "The [Palestinian] Authority is raising a generation of murderers."

The [Palestinian Authority responded](#) to the approval of settlement building, calling it "wrong and unacceptable."

Nabil Abu Rudaineh, Palestinian Authority President Mahmoud Abbas' spokesman, said that the atmosphere in which such a decision is made "does not help, but only creates problems." He added, "Peace requires courageous decisions."

The Palestinian Authority's chief negotiator Saeb Erekat also condemned "the

decision of the Israeli government to speed up and increase the building of settlements."