MEDIA STATEMENT

UNITED NATIONS HUMAN RIGHTS OFFICE OF THE HIGH COMMISSIONER
Occupied Palestinian Territory

UN Human Rights in Occupied Palestinian Territory

Ramallah

13 May 2025

Israeli security cabinet's decision to resume land registration in Area C of the occupied West Bank is deeply troubling

The UN human rights office in the Occupied Palestinian Territory is alarmed by reports that the Israeli security cabinet on 11 May decided to resume land registration in Area C of the occupied West Bank. The registration, which was suspended in 1968, appears to be the latest tool used by Israel to acquire Palestinian land and consolidate the unlawful annexation of the West Bank.

The process of land registration or settlement of land title, under which Israel purportedly seeks to definitively establish land ownership registration in favour of Israeli settlers, represents an exercise of sovereignty prohibited in occupied territory. The office has in the past raised concerns that the settlement of title in East Jerusalem, ongoing since 2018, has been conducted in a discriminatory manner and has resulted in the seizure of Palestinian lands and property for the establishment of Israeli settlements, while placing Palestinians at risk of evictions. Similar concerns arise with any process of settlement of title in Area C of the occupied West Bank.

The announcement by the Israeli government cannot be separated from recent legislative initiatives to further extend Israeli sovereignty, including through allowing Israeli individuals to purchase land in the West Bank, which Israel, as the Occupying Power should hold in trust for the Palestinian population, the dramatic intensification of violent and discriminatory practices against Palestinians such as demolitions and movement restrictions, and the continued expansion of settlements and settlement infrastructure. These policies have been accelerated in the shadow of the escalation of hostilities in Gaza and have, along with relentless settler attacks, led to the forcible transfer of thousands of Palestinians, particularly from Area C, and are changing the geography and demography of the West Bank.

If pursued, land registration by the occupying power would likely result in further expropriation of Palestinian land and natural resources in violation of the property rights of Palestinians, as well as other rights such as the rights to housing and shelter, food, and the benefit of Israeli settlers and settlements.

In this context, such a land registration exercise would also be in violation of Israel's obligations as an occupying power, as it would not only be exceeding its limited legislative powers but would further entrench 50 years of unlawful transfer by the occupying power of its population into the occupied territory.

ENDS

For more information and media requests, please contact:
ohchr-opt-media@un.org

Tag and share
Twitter @OHCHR_Palestine
Facebook UN Human Rights Palestine