



**'Israeli annexation: an anathema to peace' –
A statement by the Palestine Israel Ecumenical Network**

*"They have treated the wound of my people carelessly, saying, 'Peace, peace,'
when there is no peace."*

Jeremiah 8:11

The Palestine Israel Ecumenical Network (PIEN) firmly believes that for any peaceful outcome to be achieved and sustained in the Holy Land, there needs to be a peace that is imbued with justice. This justice includes peace and security for all people in the land of Israel and Palestine.

Where is the justice for Palestinians in the so called 'Deal of the Century', devised by the Trump administration, and planned to be delivered by the newly formed Netanyahu/Gantz Israeli Unity government, as early as 1st July 2020. No Palestinians were privy to the planning of this 'peace plan'.

Where is the justice when the State of Israel plans to further annex large areas of Palestinian territory in the West Bank, including much of the Jordan Valley, the food bowl of Palestine.

Where is the justice for Palestinians, who will continue to come under the existing Israeli military policies of home demolitions, blockades, the indefinite detention of children and growing Israeli settler violence.

The State of Israel has frequently ignored the opinion of the international community with relative impunity since its establishment in 1948, progressively occupying more and more of the lands of historical Palestine beyond the original UN Partition Plan. For that reason, the Netanyahu/Gantz/Trump plan merely reflects longstanding, illegal Israeli annexation policies and Israel's abiding intention for there never to be a Palestinian state.

PIEN views the threat of further Israeli annexation as a deplorable denial of Palestinian rights. It exacerbates the already unacceptable status quo and is in direct contravention of a series of UN resolutions.¹ The United Nations and the International Court of Justice hold that annexation of Palestinian land violates international law, particularly the Fourth Geneva Convention. These land acquisitions will continue to undermine the viability of a Palestinian state, which will be left with isolated pockets of disconnected territory and will escalate tensions and erode any genuine advancements for peace.

We note the many voices who have spoken out against these latest unilateral annexation plans. Voices from European governments, from the World Council of Churches, from the Heads of Churches in the Holy Land, and from Palestinians and Jewish people the world over.

*"Dismissing international law and basic rules of diplomacy is not a "realistic" solution to the conflict nor does it make peace possible. Rather it deepens the roots of oppression and denial of rights, ensuring Palestine, its land and people, remain perpetually under Israel's control."*²

*"We believe that the consequences of the proposed unilateral moves are grave – for the Palestinian people, whose basic rights and aspirations for statehood would be permanently denied; but also for Israel's democratic character, its security and its international standing."*³

To these voices we add our own, to implore our Foreign Minister and Australian government not to remain silent but to pressure the Israeli Government to cease these latest land grabs and to comply with international law and UN resolutions. It is time to defend the Palestinian peoples' inalienable rights to their own homeland. If the Australian government continues to assert its position for a Two-State solution, then it needs to step up and recognise the State of Palestine on 1967 borders, including East Jerusalem as its capital.

PIEN, 15 June 2020.

PIEN has a detailed resource paper on annexation - <https://pien.org.au/wp-content/uploads/2020/06/PIEN-Annexation-Guide-15-June-2020.pdf>

APAN has a Fact Sheet on annexation - <https://apanaustralia.files.wordpress.com/2020/04/annexation.pdf>

¹ United Nations General Assembly resolutions 242 (1962), 338 (1973) and 2334 (2016).

² <https://files.constantcontact.com/9a33c36c001/98087609-a7dd-48c2-b8f0-9d6bc95be4e4.pdf> by Fr Jamal Khader & Rev. Munther Isaac

³ https://www.nif.org.au/our-letter-to-marise-payne?utm_campaign=fmletter&utm_medium=organic&utm_source=facebook by New Israel Fund Aust.