



[Israeli Violence Against Palestinians Escalates Despite Agreement](#)

The recent agreement made between Israel and the Palestinian Authority to "curb and fight violence" and partially halt Israeli settlement development ahead of a critical holiday season, marks a significant development in the ongoing conflict between the two parties. The agreement was facilitated by regional allies Egypt and Jordan, as well as the United States, and represented a breakthrough, at least in language. However, carrying out the promises made in the agreement is likely to prove difficult, given the increasingly inflammatory remarks and actions by Israeli extremists. The Israeli commitments to halt unilateral acts, including putting a stop to discussions about building new settlements for four months and plans to formally recognize illegal settlement outposts for six months, were mostly figurative. There were no imminent intentions to authorize more buildings since Israel just approved the construction of thousands of new settlement houses. However, even mentioning a slowdown in settlement activity runs the danger of sparking a reaction from settler leaders and sympathizers who make up the majority of Israel's new coalition government. This government recently revoked a law that prevented settlers from returning to previously abandoned settlements. There have been mentions that the parties had reiterated their determination to de-escalate the situation and stop future bloodshed, including developing a mechanism to control and oppose violence, provocation, and provocative statements and acts.

Previous attempts to reach some type of agreement ended when violence broke out during a similar summit that took place in Jordan last month, leading to the abrupt abandonment of the conference. The upcoming period is problematic, as the religious holidays of Ramadan, Passover, and Easter all coincide. This has historically led to a significant influx of Jewish and Muslim worshippers into Jerusalem's Old City, the conflict's emotional center and a hotbed of violence, heightening tensions. Conflicts there in 2021 played a role in starting a conflict between Israel and Hamas, which controls the Gaza Strip, which turned into an 11-day war. Jews are also anticipated in large numbers to visit the Al-Aqsa Mosque, a significant Islamic holy site known to Jews as the Temple Mount. The Palestinians consider this as provocative behavior. The recent clashes between Israel and the Palestinians in the West Bank and East Jerusalem have also been among the deadliest in recent memory. The Israeli raids in the West Bank have already killed 85 Palestinians this year. 14 Israelis have also been killed in violence related to the conflict.

In addition to the inflammatory remarks and actions by Israeli extremists mentioned earlier, recent comments made by Bezalel Smotrich, Israel's finance minister, demanding that the Palestinian village of Hawara be "erased," have sparked international outrage. He has also recently made a speech in which he denies the very existence of the Palestinian people. A recent reversal of legislation also now enables Israelis to return to abandoned illegal settlements further complicating the situation and raising questions about Israel's commitment to the recent agreement made with the Palestinian Authority. The Israeli settlements in the West Bank and East Jerusalem are considered illegal under international law,

and the recent legislation reversal could be seen as a deliberate attempt to undermine the agreement and provoke the Palestinians.

The settlement issue is one of the major obstacles to peace in the region, with the Palestinians demanding a halt to settlement activities before resuming any talks with Israel. Hardline proponents of the settlement movement are in control of the Israeli government, which raises concerns about the country's commitment to the peace process. The recent comments by Bezalel Smotrich, along with other high-level Israeli government officials, highlight the extremist views that have gained a foothold in Israeli politics.

In light of these developments, it is essential to have a sustained effort toward dialogue and reconciliation to achieve lasting peace in the region. The ongoing conflict between Israel and Palestine is complex and deeply rooted, with decades of unresolved issues contributing to the current situation. While the recent agreement made between Israel and the Palestinian Authority could be a positive step toward peace, there are significant obstacles that need to be overcome. Israel must honor the commitments made in the agreement and take concrete steps towards de-escalation, including implementing measures to stop violence and halt settlement activities. The international community must also play a role in supporting this process and ensuring that the humanitarian crisis in Palestine is addressed.