

Israel's annexation would violate the terms of the Oslo Accords, which states that final borders should be mutually agreed upon in negotiations with the parties involved, would foreclose the two-state solution as envisioned by the international community, and would raise the urgency of calls for the equal treatment of Palestinians.

Michael Lynk, U.N. special rapporteur on the situation of human rights in the Occupied Palestinian Territory, warned: "If Israel's annexation plans proceed, what would be left of the West Bank would become a Palestinian Bantustan, an archipelago of disconnected islands of territory, completely surrounded and divided up by Israel and unconnected to the outside world. The plan would crystalize a 21st century apartheid, leaving in its wake the demise of the Palestinians' right to self-determination."

Unilateral annexation of occupied land in mandate Palestine has consistently been rejected by the international community. Following the 1967 war, Israel unilaterally annexed East Jerusalem and the Golan Heights. When, on July 30, 1980, Israel declared that "Jerusalem, complete and united, is the capital of Israel" the U.N. Security Council [resolved](#) that "all legislative and administrative measures and actions" taken by Israel, "which have altered or purport to alter the character and status" of Jerusalem are "null and void."

Commentary: The illegal annexation of the West Bank would leave Israel and the U.S. isolated. While the international community has been able to tolerate the *de facto* annexation of parts of the West Bank, *de jure* annexation will force them to confront it. It will leave the segregation of Palestinians an inescapable fact, likely to mobilize local, regional, and international actors in calling for equal rights for Palestinians and Israelis. In the legal arena, it will shift the focus of the international community toward the application of the International Convention on the Suppression and Punishment of the Crime of Apartheid (1973) and compel further action by the International Criminal Court.

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