



Photo Courtesy of ARIJ

When the freeze was announced, it came with the assertion that some 3,000 units were grandfathered in and would proceed during the moratorium.

David Ha'lvri, spokesman for the Shomron Regional Council in the northern West Bank, said the leader of the council, Gershon Mesika, knew a freeze was coming and so approved more than 1,600 units in 2009, nearly 10 times the number that had been approved the previous year for his area.

Moreover, data from the Central Bureau of Statistics for 2006 through 2008 show that on average about 3,000 West Bank settlement units were built in each of those years. So the 10-month freeze offered no fundamental change of pace. In addition, the statistics show, in the last quarter of 2009, more than 750 housing units were approved for West Bank settlements.

That was double the number of each of the three previous quarters. So in the first half of 2010, when no more units were permitted, the pace of building remained largely unchanged.

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