

Ynet-News January 28, 2020 – Tuesday

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Netanyahu will bring plan on West Bank sovereignty to cabinet vote on Sunday

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Hamas: 'All options open' following Trump 'conspiracies' with Israel

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Trump's peace plan: 2 states with settlement recognition

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Hamas to join emergency Palestinian talks in West Bank over Trump plan  
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Netanyahu retracts immunity bid, AG Mandelblitt can now start criminal trial

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IDF troops in Jordan Valley as Abbas declared Day of Rage over US peace plan

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Gantz declared he will implement peace plan immediately after his election in March.  
Monday

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6 IDF soldiers arrested in smuggling ring taking bribes to allow entry of contraband

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Iran parliament managers call for debate on shielding economy from U.S. penalties  
Tuesday

# VISION for PEACE CONCEPTUAL MAP

## The State of Israel



### Israeli Enclave Communities\*

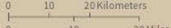
- |                       |                |
|-----------------------|----------------|
| 1 Hermesh             | 8 Ma'ale 'Amos |
| 2 Mevo Dotan          | 9 Asfar        |
| 3 Elon More           | 10 Karme Zur   |
| 4 Tel Hayyim (Itamar) | 11 Telem       |
| 5 Berakha             | 12 Adorah      |
| 6 Yizhar              | 13 Negohot     |
| 7 'Ateret             | 14 Bet Haggai  |
|                       | 15 'Otni'el    |

\* List not all inclusive.

- Israeli access road
- A future State of Palestine
- ⚓ Port access
- Palestinian major road
- ⚙ Bridge or tunnel
- ▲ Strategic site

- ### NOTES
1. Status quo over Temple Mount/ Haram al-Sharif is preserved.
  2. Jerusalem will remain undivided west of the security barrier.
  3. There will be no evacuation of any community, Israeli or Palestinian.
  4. Implementation of the Conceptual Map is subject to the terms and conditions provided in the Vision for Peace.

Boundary representation is not necessarily authoritative.



01.28.20

Netanyahu will bring plan on West Bank sovereignty to cabinet vote on Sunday

01.28.20

In wake of Trump plan, Netanyahu moves on Israeli sovereignty over West Bank  
Speaking from White House, prime minister says Israel will begin implementing its laws in 'all West Bank settlements' and Jordan Valley, will bring it to cabinet vote on Sunday;  
Bennett says Israel not satisfied with partial sovereignty and should 'take it all now'  
Ynet, News Agencies | Published: 01.28.20, 21:39

Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu said Tuesday that he intends to bring a proposal for applying Israeli jurisdiction to the Jordan Valley, the northern Dead Sea and the West Bank settlements to a cabinet vote "presumably on Sunday."

Netanyahu, who stood beside U.S. President Donald Trump as he announced his long-awaited peace plan from the White House, also said after the announcement Tuesday that Israel would begin implementing its laws in "all settlements" in the West Bank, as well as in the Jordan Valley – the stretch of the territory captured in 1967 that abuts Jordan.

According to the Trump plan, Palestinians will in the future receive land in Israel's Negev Desert, while Israel will retain settlements in the West Bank.

U.S. Ambassador to Israel David Friedman said after Trump's announcement Tuesday that Israel can "annex settlements at any time."

Friedman, himself a staunch supporter of the settlements, told reporters at the White House that "Israel should not wait at all for annexation of the settlements."

Netanyahu's hard-line allies called Tuesday for the immediate annexation of the West Bank settlements.

Defense Minister Naftali Bennett said the proposal offers Israel "an opportunity to determine the territory of our country" and "include all the Israeli settlements in the land of Israel within the sovereign state of Israel."

Bennett, a hawkish member of the right-wing Yemina party, said that Israel "cannot wait until after the elections, and won't be satisfied with partial sovereignty -- take it all now."

Ayelet Shaked, former justice minister and Bennett's running mate, said Israel is at "an historic moment" and also called for unilateral annexation of West Bank land.

"The dangerous part of the plan, that is the establishment of a Palestinian state or recognition of a Palestinian state, won't happen," she wrote on Twitter.

The Trump plan more than doubles the territory currently under Palestinian control, although it also recognizes Israeli sovereignty over major settlement blocs in the West Bank, something to which the Palestinians will almost certainly object.

The Palestinians have already rejected the proposal, accusing Trump of being biased in favor of Israel as he has adopted policies that bolster Israel at their expense.

The plan does call for a four-year freeze in new Israeli settlement construction, during which time details of a comprehensive agreement would be negotiated. However, it was

not immediately clear if the freeze could be extended if a final deal is not concluded in the four years.

The 50-page political outline goes further in concessions to the Palestinians than many analysts had believed was likely. However, it would require them to accept conditions they have been previously unwilling to consider, such as accepting West Bank settlements. It builds on a 30-page economic plan for the West Bank and Gaza that was unveiled last June and which the Palestinians have also rejected,

Under the terms of the "peace vision" that Trump's son-in-law and senior adviser Jared Kushner has been working on for nearly three years, the future Palestinian state would consist of the West Bank and Gaza, connected by a combination of above-ground roads and tunnels.

01.28.20

Hamas: 'All options open' following Trump 'conspiracies' with Israel

01.28.20

Hamas: 'All options open' following Trump 'conspiracies' with Israel

Terror group says provisions for Jerusalem are 'nonsense', while Jordan warns against 'annexation of Palestinian lands'; Iran calls proposal one-sided, with senior Rouhani aide branding it 'deal between Zionist regime and America'

News Agencies, Ynet| Updated: 01.28.20 , 21:03

Palestinian terror group Hamas on Tuesday dismissed U.S. President Donald Trump's long-awaited Middle East peace plan as "conspiracies" and warned "all options are open" in response.

"We are certain that our Palestinian people will not let these conspiracies pass. So, all options are open," said senior Hamas official Khalil al-Hayya.

"The [Israeli] occupation and the U.S. administration will bear the responsibility for what they did," al-Hayya said.

Across the West Bank and Gaza Strip, Palestinians took to the streets to protest the plan. Another Hamas official, Sami Abu Zuhri, called Trump's statement as he unveiled the plan aggressive and warned it would "spark a lot of anger." He also slammed the provisions for Jerusalem as "nonsense."

Under the plan, which Trump announced with Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu by his side and ambassadors for three Gulf states in the attendance, Jerusalem will remain the undivided capital of Israel while its predominantly Arab eastern neighborhoods will form the capital of a Palestinian state.

"Trump's statement about Jerusalem is nonsense and Jerusalem will always be a land for the Palestinians," Abu Zuhri said. "The Palestinians will confront this deal and Jerusalem will remain a Palestinian land."

A senior official for Islamic Jihad in the Gaza Strip Khader Habib called for the Palestinian Authority to retract its recognition of Israel following the presentation of Trump's plan.

"This is a chance to retract the recognition of Israel," Habib said. "Trump's plan is a chance to restore unity within the Palestinian people."

Meanwhile, Jordan warned in response to the plan against any Israeli "annexation of Palestinian lands" and reaffirmed its commitment to the creation of a Palestinian state along the 1967 lines.

Jordanian Foreign Minister Ayman Safadi warned of "the dangerous consequences of unilateral Israeli measures, such as annexation of Palestinian lands."

Jordan and Egypt are the only two Arab countries to have made peace with Israel.

Hesamodin Ashena, a senior adviser to Iranian President Hassan Rouhani called the plan one-sided, writing on Twitter that it was solely a deal between the United States and Israel.

He dismissed the proposal as one of "imposition and sanctions".

"This is a deal between the Zionist regime [Israel] and America. Interaction with Palestinians is not on its agenda. This is not a peace plan but a plan of imposition and sanctions," Ashena tweeted.

Trump acknowledged that he has done a lot for Israel, but he said he wanted the deal to be a "great deal for the Palestinians."

He said the deal is a "historic opportunity" for Palestinians to achieve an independent state of their own.

The plan more than doubles the territory currently under Palestinian control, although it also recognizes Israeli sovereignty over major settlement blocs in the West Bank, something to which the Palestinians will almost certainly object.

The **Palestinians have already rejected the proposal**, accusing Trump of being biased in favor of Israel as he has adopted policies that bolster Israel at their expense.

Diab Al-Louh, the Palestinians' ambassador to Egypt, said on Tuesday they had requested an urgent meeting of the Arab League Council at the ministerial level - which Palestinian President Mahmoud Abbas would attend.

In the Hamas-ruled Gaza Strip on Tuesday, protesters waved Palestinian flags and held aloft posters of Abbas. "Trump is a fool, Palestine is not for sale!" an activist shouted through a loudspeaker.

Chief Palestinian envoy to Britain Husam Zomlot said earlier Tuesday that the plan effectively gives a green light to Israel to establish an apartheid state.

"This is a political circus, it's a sad piece of political theater," said Zomlot, who previously served as head of the Palestinian mission to Washington and as strategic adviser to Abbas.

**01.28.20**

**Trump's peace plan: 2 states with settlement recognition**

01.28.20

### Trump's peace plan: 2 states with settlement recognition

Trump's 80-page peace plan calls for Palestinian state with parts of East Jerusalem as capital; major Jewish settlements in West Bank to remain under Israeli control; demilitarization of Hamas in Gaza

Associated Press, Reuters| Updated: 01.28.20, 18:46

President Donald Trump called for the creation of a State of Palestine, ending speculation as to whether his administration, in preparing the Middle East peace plan without input from Palestinian leaders, would abandon a "two-state resolution" to the conflict. The potential future state will include parts East Jerusalem as its capital but only if the Palestinians take steps to become self-governing.

Senior administration officials, briefing the media on the plan the president announced at the White House on Tuesday, said that under Trump's proposal the United States will recognize Israeli settlements on the West Bank. In exchange, Israel would agree to accept a four-year freeze on new settlement activity while Palestinian statehood is negotiated.

However, it was not immediately clear if the freeze could be extended if a final deal is not concluded in the four-year time period allocated for its implementation.

Trump held a special press conference together with Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu where he unveiled the details of the long-delayed proposal, dubbed "the deal of the century." The president said the prime minister told him the Trump administration's proposed plan would be a basis for direct negotiations.

"Today, Israel has taken a giant step toward peace," Trump said at a White House event.

"Yesterday, Prime Minister Netanyahu informed me that he is willing to endorse the vision as the basis for direct negotiations - and, I will say, (opposition leader Benny Gantz) also endorsed and very strongly - with the Palestinians a historic breakthrough."

Trump has also endorsed a proposed map outlining the two states, which he posted on his Twitter account. The Palestinian state would be double the size of land that Palestinians currently control and would be connected by roads, bridges and tunnels.

The proposed state would be entirely demilitarized, including the Gaza Strip, controlled by Hamas terrorist organization, with a large presence of Iranian-backed Islamic Jihad.

"The state of Israel suffers from extraordinary geopolitical challenges," said the peace plan's official document. "Simply put the State of Israel has no margin for error. As dangerous as Gaza, run by Hamas, is to the State of Israel's safety, a similar regime controlling the West Bank would pose an existential threat to the State of Israel."

In addition, the West Bank and the Gaza Strip would be connected by a tunnel passing through Israeli territory.

The plan does call for a four-year freeze in new Israeli settlement construction, during which time details of a comprehensive agreement would be negotiated, according to the officials who spoke on condition of anonymity ahead of Trump's announcement.

However, it was not immediately clear if the freeze could be extended if a final deal is not concluded in the four years.

Trump went on to say he sent a letter to Palestinian President Mahmoud Abbas, where the U.S. president promised if the Palestinian leadership chooses to accept the plan, the Americans as well as the other countries "will be there every step of the way to help." "It's going to work," Trump said. "If they do this, it will work." Your response to this historic opportunity will show the world to what extent you are ready to lead the Palestinian people to statehood."

"This is a historic day," Netanyahu said, comparing Trump's peace plan to former President Harry Truman's 1948 recognition of the state of Israel. "On this day, you became the first world leader to recognize Israel's sovereignty over areas in Judea and Samaria that are vital to our security and central to our heritage," he added, using the Biblical names for the West Bank.

He said he is ready to enter the negotiations with the Palestinians on the basis of the peace proposal, calling it "a realistic path to a durable peace." He added that Trump's plan "strikes a balance."

"And on this day, you too have charted a brilliant future, a brilliant future for Israelis, Palestinians and the region," Netanyahu said.

The prime minister added that Trump recognizes that Israel must have sovereignty in the Jordan Valley and other places "where it can defend itself, by itself."

Netanyahu added that Palestinian refugees won't have a right of return under the plan. Palestinian right of return is a political position that Palestinian refugees, both first-generation refugees and their descendants, have a right to return to what now is the State of Israel.

"I know that there'll be opposition," Netanyahu said. "There's always opposition." I know there will be many obstacles along the way, much criticism. But we have an old Jewish saying: 'If not now, when? And if not us, who?'"

Both leaders then thanked the Gulf Arab states of Oman, United Arab Emirates and Bahrain for sending their ambassadors to attend the conference for the unveiling of the peace plan.

Once the press conference was over, Netanyahu clarified to the reporters that the proposed Palestinian capital would be located in Abu Dis, a neighborhood on the outskirts of Jerusalem. He said the U.S. recognizes Jerusalem as Israel's undivided capital, "by which I mean, within its fences," an apparent reference to municipal boundaries.

The 50-page political outline goes further in concessions to the Palestinians than many analysts had believed was likely. However, it would require them to accept conditions they have been previously unwilling to consider, such as accepting West Bank settlements. It builds on a 30-page economic plan for the West Bank and Gaza that was unveiled last June and which the Palestinians have also rejected.

The officials said that both Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu and his main political challenger in March elections, Benny Gantz, had signed off on the plan. Netanyahu will be beside Trump as he unveils the plan at the White House.

The event comes as Trump's impeachment trial continues in the Senate and Israel's parliament had planned a hearing to discuss Netanyahu's request for immunity from criminal corruption charges. Netanyahu withdrew that request hours before the

proceedings were to begin, but Israel's parliament, the Knesset, is still expected to meet. The body had been likely to vote against immunity, dealing Netanyahu a blow. In the run-up to the March 2 election, Netanyahu has called for annexing parts of the West Bank and imposing Israeli sovereignty on all its settlements there.

Security responsibility for the West Bank would remain in Israel's hands for the foreseeable future but could be scaled back as the nascent Palestinian state builds its capacity, under the terms of the plan, which says that statehood will be contingent on the Palestinians meeting international governance criteria.

The Palestinians see the West Bank as the heartland of a future independent state and east Jerusalem as their capital. Most of the international community supports their position, but Trump has reversed decades of U.S. foreign policy by siding more blatantly with Israel. The centerpiece of his strategy was recognizing **Jerusalem as Israel's capital** and moving the American Embassy there. He's also closed Palestinian diplomatic offices in Washington and cut funding to Palestinian aid programs.

Those policies have proven popular among Trump's evangelical and pro-Israel supporters and could give him a much-needed boost from his base as he gears up for a reelection battle this year.

But the **Palestinians refuse to even speak to Trump** and they are calling on support from Arab leaders. The Palestinian leadership also has encouraged protests in the West Bank, raising fears that the announcement in Washington could spark a new round of violence.

01.28.20

**Hamas to join emergency Palestinian talks in West Bank over Trump plan Tuesday**

01.28.20

**Hamas to join 'emergency' Palestinian talks in West Bank over Trump plan**

Terror group that rules Gaza has long been at odds with Abbas's Fatah movement, but Ramallah says they are part of discussions on 'the position that must be taken' against the American proposal

AFP | Published: **01.28.20** , 14:51

Rival Palestinian factions Hamas and Fatah will join forces **Tuesday** in a rare meeting in the West Bank city of Ramallah against U.S. President Donald Trump's long-awaited Middle East peace plan, officials said.

"We invited the Hamas movement to attend the emergency **meeting of the leadership** and they will take part in the meeting," senior Palestinian official Azzam al-Ahmed said.

Hamas official Nasser al-Din al-Shaar confirmed he would attend the meeting, **which all Palestinian factions were invited to.**



"The meeting will discuss the position that must be taken [against] Trump's plan," Shaar said.

The rulers of Gaza have been at odds with President Mahmoud Abbas' Fatah movement for years, with Hamas representatives rarely taking part in meetings of the West Bank-based Palestinian leadership.

Trump was due to release his plan, years in the works, at the White House later Tuesday together with his close ally Israeli Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu -- but Palestinians, who accuse Trump of pro-Israel bias, were not taking part in the Washington event.

Trump, however, claimed not only that the plan might "have a chance," but said it could benefit the Palestinians, who he predicted might come around to the idea.

"It's very good for them, in fact, it's overly good for them," the US president told reporters on Monday. "We think we will have ultimately the support of the Palestinians."

The Palestinians meanwhile have urged world powers to reject Trump's plan.

"We call on the international community to not be partners in this (plan) because it contravenes international law," Palestinian prime minister Mohammed Shtayyeh said on Monday.

The details of Trump's initiative, which has been in the works since 2017, are not yet public.

But his administration has already recognized Israeli sovereignty over the Golan Heights, which the Jewish state captured from Syria in the Six-Day War of 1967 and stopped referring to the West Bank as "occupied" territory.

It also no longer considers Israeli settlements there as inconsistent with international law, and most analysts expect Trump's peace proposal to reaffirm his administration's positions.

Trump also broke with decades of international consensus that the fate of Jerusalem should be negotiated between the parties when he recognized the disputed city as Israel's capital in December 2017.

The release of the plan comes as Trump faces impeachment hearings over abuse of office. Netanyahu is facing imminent trial proceedings, after dropping his request for parliamentary immunity from corruption charges in a surprise move Tuesday.

"This is a plan to protect Trump from impeachment and protect Netanyahu from prison," Shtayyeh told a cabinet meeting Monday. "It is not a Middle East peace plan."

Palestinian president Mahmud Abbas has rejected repeated attempts by Trump to discuss the plan, with a senior Palestinian official telling AFP there would be no discussion with the US "until they recognize the two-state solution".

Some have speculated that the US proposal could pull back from supporting the creation of a Palestinian state with its capital in east Jerusalem, the common definition of the two-state solution.

A series of Palestinian protests are planned in both the West Bank and Gaza on Tuesday and Wednesday.

01.28.20

Netanyahu retracts immunity bid, AG Mandelblitt can now start criminal trial

01.28.20

Netanyahu retracts immunity bid

The Knesset was scheduled to vote to proceed with debating the prime minister's immunity bid; AG Mandelblitt can now announce the start of Netanyahu's criminal trial at the Jerusalem District Court

Moran Azulay, Tova Tzimukij Updated: 01.28.20 , 11:02

Prime Minister Netanyahu on Tuesday retracted his bid for parliamentary immunity from prosecution on charges of bribery, fraud, and breach of trust.

The Knesset was scheduled to vote Wednesday on whether to proceed with debating the immunity request.

Netanyahu informed Knesset Speaker Yuli Edelstein of his decision Tuesday.

Attorney General Avichai Mandelblitt can now announce the beginning of Netanyahu's criminal trial, set to be held at the Jerusalem District Court.

Netanyahu called the Knesset debate "a circus" and claimed it was another step in the unfair persecution against him.

In a statement posted on his Facebook page, the prime minister wrote: "This is a fateful time for the people of Israel, while I am in the United States on an historic mission to formalize the final borders of the country and ensure our security for generations to come, the Knesset is about to begin the circus of removing my immunity."

Netanyahu also claimed this was further proof of what he called obsessive persecution of him.

"Instead of understanding the importance of the hour, they are busy with petty politics that is harmful to our country," he said.

After realizing his efforts to block a Knesset vote would not succeed, Netanyahu had been considering retracting his bid to prevent a vote that would have, in his view, caused more damage than good.

The timing of the Knesset debate was set to coincide with Netanyahu's visit to the White House, which would have led to a "split-screen" situation with the vote on one side and the White House announcement of Donald Trump's peace plan on the other.

Officials in Netanyahu's Likud party on Tuesday praised the prime minister for dropping his request.

"Netanyahu did good. The immunity request was detrimental and it would have been better if it had never even been made," the officials said.

Blue & White leader Benny Gantz said Netanyahu would now go on trial for corruption and voters would have to choose a leader working for their interests and not his own.

Gantz added that no one can run the country when facing such charges.

Labor-Gesher-Meretz leader Amir Peretz called for Netanyahu to end his bid to be re-elected prime minister as well as his bid for immunity from prosecution.

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"It's time for Netanyahu to leave the political arena, deal with his criminal cases and leave us to worry about immunity for those who genuinely need it," Peretz said.

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01.28.20

IDF troops in Jordan Valley as Abbas declared Day of Rage over US peace plan

01.28.20

IDF bolsters troops in Jordan Valley ahead of Trump peace plan

Although there is no specific intelligence to indicate planned violent events, the military and security services are preparing for an eruption after Abbas calls on Palestinians to protest and even sanctions clashes with Israeli troops

Ron Ben-Yishai | Published: 01.28.20 , 13:37

The IDF is sending additional troops to the Jordan Valley in the West Bank ahead of Tuesday's unveiling by U.S. President Donald Trump of his long-awaited Mideast peace plan.

Both the military and security services began bracing for an outbreak of violence in the West Bank and along the border with Gaza though thus far, there is no specific intelligence information of any planned events.

However, in light of Palestinian President Mahmoud Abbas's call Monday for Palestinians to demonstrate and even clash with Israeli troops, security officials are inspecting potential conflict areas and are preparing for any eventuality should violence erupt.

The IDF and the Shin Bet security service are hoping to keep a low profile so as not to incite the Palestinian street, which is thus business as usual despite the leadership's combative rhetoric.

Palestinian sources confirmed to Ynet late Monday that Abbas instructed his security forces to allow protesters to clash with Israeli troops on Wednesday, the declared "Day of Rage," in response to the White House roll out of the peace plan.

"If we have elections, what do we tell our people about the Jordan Valley being annexed?" Abbas said.

The sources said that although the announcement of the peace plan is the excuse, the Palestinian leadership is more concerned with the possible Israeli annexation of land now that Jerusalem appears to have the backing of the United States to do so.

"The plan will come and go like other American plans," the sources said. "We know it and the countries around us know it too."

Annexation of the Jordan Valley and other parts of the West Bank seem like a realistic possibility under the Trump administration now and would change the nature of relations between the Palestinian Authority and Israel the sources warn.

Hanan Ashrawi, a member of the Executive Committee of the Palestine Liberation Organization (PLO) told Ynet on Tuesday that she fears the announcement of the plan will exert a price from both Israelis and Palestinians.

Ashrawi said the administration never bothered to consult the Palestinian leadership before deciding to release their plan.

"All they seem to care about is handing Palestine to the Israelis."

"I think there will never be peace deal that is based on international war crimes," Ashrawi said, "there can be no plan that regards Palestinians as second or third rate because that will just incite violence and instability, not only in Palestine but in the entire region," she added.

Ashrawi said her people are attempting to stop violence from breaking out but that under Israeli oppression there will ultimately be resistance.

"You cannot continue to see the Palestinian people as the source of violence," Ashrawi said. "From our perspective, the occupation deploys violent means and that begets more violence."

Regarding Wednesday's "Day of Rage," Ashrawi said people are free to express their opinions.

"If they are angry – they will express their anger. The PA remains in support of non-violent resistance," she said.

01.27.20

Gantz declared he will implement peace plan immediately after his election in March. Monday

01.27.20

Gantz intends to implement Trump plan immediately after elections

Former IDF chief calls for shared dialogue with Palestinians and neighboring countries; suggests release of Israeli captives in Gaza should be included in peace plan

Itamar Eichner | Published: 01.27.20, 23:54

Blue & White Chairman Benny Gantz said on Monday that he will work to implement Trump's peace plan for the Middle East immediately after the elections in March.

"The president's peace plan is a significant and historic milestone, indeed," Gantz told reporters at his Washington hotel after his meeting with Trump. "Immediately after the elections, I will work toward implementing it from within a stable functioning Israeli government, in tandem with other countries in our region."

Gantz said he and Trump discussed "matters of the utmost importance to Israel's future and security," but he would not disclose any further details for the time being.

"During the meeting, we talked about the importance of a shared dialogue with the Palestinians, the other countries in the region and Jordanian King Abdullah II," said Gantz.

Gantz thanked Trump for his "deep support and for the citizens and security of Israel, especially with the U.S. assistance against the Iranian threat and its proxies, recognizing Israeli sovereignty over the Golan Heights and moving the American embassy to Jerusalem."

The former IDF chief said that he emphasized the issue of the Israelis held in Hamas captivity in the Gaza Strip, stressing that their release should be included in the plan.

Gantz also addressed Netanyahu's bid to score parliamentary immunity from graft charges he faces, which will be discussed on Tuesday at the Knesset plenum.

"No one has the right to lead an entire country at such complex times, both politically and security-wise, while he's completely dedicated to his personal interests."

U.S. Vice President Mike Pence, U.S. Secretary of State Mike Pompeo and U.S. National Security Advisor Robert O'Brien were also present at the meeting.

After meeting with Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu earlier Monday, Trump announced he will officially publish the plan's details on Tuesday.

First published: 23:54 , 01.27.20

**01.27.20**

**6 IDF soldiers arrested in smuggling ring taking bribes to allow entry of contraband**

**01.27.20**

**6 IDF soldiers arrested in alleged West Bank smuggling ring**

Soldiers accused of allegedly **allowing entry of contraband** in return for tens of thousands of shekels while on duty; 8 Israeli, 8 Palestinian civilians also arrested

Elisha Ben Kimon | Published: **01.27.20** , 20:14

Police arrested on Monday 22 suspects - including six IDF soldiers, eight Israeli civilians and eight Palestinians - on suspicion of operating a smuggling network from the West Bank into Israel.

The group was arrested after Shin Bet security agency and police officers raided their homes in Israel and the West Bank.

A police spokesperson said that the soldiers are accused of allegedly allowing entry of contraband into Israel in return for tens of thousands of shekels while on duty.

The investigation began several months ago after suspicions rose that arms, tobacco products and other goods were smuggled in private and commercial vehicles through passageways connecting Israel to the West Bank, the police said.

The suspects will be brought in front of the Jerusalem Magistrates Court and the Jaffa Military Court for hearings on their case.

IDF's Spokesperson Unit released a statement, saying the IDF will act harshly against those found guilty.

"During the night, in a joint operation of Israeli police and the IDF Unit for Internal Investigations, six soldiers serving at border crossings in the West Bank were arrested for knowingly refraining from conducting security checks as required, with some even taking bribe for their actions," read the statement.

"The IDF considers this type of offenses to be very serious and will act against those found guilty.

We would like to note that this is an unusual event with only a few soldiers suspected to be involved and it does not represent the spirit and conduct of soldiers serving at the border crossings, which deal daily with the security of Israeli citizens and preventing smuggling and terrorist actions.

First published: 20:14 , 01.27.20

01.28.20

Iran parliament managers call for debate on shielding economy from U.S. penalties

Tuesday

01.28.20

Iran lawmakers call for debate on quitting nuclear arms treaty

The fate of the 2015 nuclear pact has been in doubt since Trump pulled the United States out of it in 2018 and reimposed sanctions that have crippled the country's economy

Reuters| Published: 01.28.20 , 16:03

A group of Iranian lawmakers on Tuesday asked parliament to debate a motion for Iran to quit a treaty governing global nuclear arms control, a move apparently aimed at pressuring European powers to salvage Tehran's own 2015 nuclear deal.

A report on the assembly's news site ICANA said a minimum number of MPs had signed a request to parliament's managers to arrange a debate on the motion for Iran to take the far-reaching step of leaving the nuclear Non-Proliferation Treaty (NPT).

Iranian Foreign Minister Mohammad Javad Zarif said last week that Iran could withdraw from the NPT if European countries refer the country to the U.N. Security Council over the 2015 deal, a move that would overturn diplomacy in Tehran's turbulent relations with Western powers.

Lawmakers in the past have sometimes withdrawn their signatures seeking debates on motions about nuclear and other issues.

To become a law, the proposal would have to be passed by lawmakers in two readings and then ratified by the Guardian Council, a body that is in charge of ensuring bills do not contradict religious laws or Iran's constitution.

Iran's Supreme Leader Ayatollah Ali Khamenei, the highest authority in the Islamic Republic, has the final say on all state matters like Tehran's nuclear policy.

rouhani iran zarif uranium nuclear

The 1968 NPT has been the foundation of global nuclear arms control since the Cold War, including the 2015 deal Iran signed with world powers that offered it access to global trade in return for accepting curbs to its atomic program.

The fate of the 2015 pact has been in doubt since U.S. President Donald Trump pulled the United States out of it in 2018 and reimposed sanctions that have crippled the country's economy.

Iran has responded by gradually scaling back its commitments, although it says these steps are reversible if the European powers can salvage the deal by shielding Iran's economy from U.S. penalties.

Britain, France and Germany formally accused Iran on Jan. 14 of violating the terms of the agreement to curb its nuclear program, which eventually could lead to the reimposing of U.N. sanctions lifted under the pact.