PA complains to ICC over Israeli construction in E1

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The Palestinian Authority (PA) on Sunday said that it has referred Israel's latest “settlement expansion plan” to the International Criminal Court (ICC), the Xinhua news agency reports.

Saeb Erekat, secretary general of the Palestine Liberation Organization (PLO), told reporters in Ramallah that the recently announced Israeli plan to build new housing units in eastern Jerusalem had been reported to the ICC.

The PA is not interested in "revenge, but interested in finding justice" and halting the settlement activity, he added.

Prime Minister Binyamin Netanyahu announced last week that he would advance a plan to build 3,500 new housing units in E1 near Maaleh Adumim.

PA spokesman Nabil Abu Rudeineh condemned the announcement on new construction in E1, saying the decision is the result of “the biased and dangerous American policy in favor of the Israeli occupation.”

The PA’s “foreign minister”, Riyad al-Maliki, warned that plans to build in E1 would destroy the prospect of a two-state solution.

Building in E1 has been a point of contention between Israel and the PA, and also between Israel and the West which objects to Israeli construction in the area, which the West calls “occupied territory”.

Israel approved construction in the E1 area in 2013, soon after the PA was recognized by the United Nations as a non-member observer state, in a unilateral move by PA chairman Mahmoud Abbas in violation of the Oslo Accords.

Netanyahu faced international criticism after the government approved new construction in the area, and later directed the city of Jerusalem to postpone a meeting on the construction.