What Israeli Experts & US Supporters of Israel are Saying about Annexation

Israeli security experts and American supporters of Israel are warning that unilateral Israeli annexation of West Bank territory would be a disaster for Israeli and Palestinian security, for Israeli democracy and Palestinian rights, for the US-Israel special relationship and - ultimately - for Israel’s ability to survive as a democratic homeland for the Jewish people.

**Israeli Experts:**

220 Israeli former generals and general-equivalents via Commanders for Israel’s Security: “Unilateral annexation has the potential to ignite a serious conflagration. Any partial annexation is likely to set in motion a chain reaction over which Israel will have no control, leading to the collapse of the Palestinian security agencies and of the Palestinian Authority. This, in turn, would require Israel to take full control over the entire West Bank, and assume responsibility for the lives of its 2.6 million Palestinians. Such unilateral steps would jeopardize the peace treaty and security cooperation with Jordan, coordination with the Palestinian security forces, and the very Jewish character of the state.”

Former Shin Bet Director Ami Ayalon, former Mossad Director Tamir Pardo and former commander of the IDF Central Command Gadi Shamni: “Rescuing Israel from the impossible dilemma of giving up its Jewish identity by granting annexed Palestinians equal rights or forfeiting its democracy by depriving them of those rights may turn out to be a mission impossible. The awakening of many here in Israel and some in the United States to the imminence of this danger offers some hope that steps might be taken during the coming 10 weeks in time to prevent this dire outcome. Deterring unilateral annexation is both urgent and essential. Those who care for Israel’s future as a secure Jewish democracy that upholds the values enshrined in its declaration of independence must act now.”

Col. (res) Dr. Shaul Arieli: “This is what the State of Israel might look like at the end of this summer, if the Israeli government annexes Jewish settlements in the West Bank! This will be the final blow to the Zionist vision of a democratic state with a Jewish majority, which upholds a society in the spirit of the Declaration of Independence.”

MK Yair Lapid, Yesh Atid Party Chair: “[Annexation would cause] Irreversible damage to our relations with the Democratic party and the American Jewish community in the United States.”

Former MK Ksenia Svetlova, Director of the Program on Israel-Middle East Relations at the Mitvim Institute: "Any annexation move will destabilize Israel’s relations with Arab states and might result in another violent outbreak in the West Bank. It will kill any hope for peaceful solution of Israeli-Palestinian conflict and create a quagmire reality of a one-state where different nations will have different set of laws and rights."
US Supporters of Israel:

130 US Jewish Communal Leaders, including former heads of the Conference of Presidents, AIPAC and Jewish Federations of North America: “[Annexation] will make it more challenging for American Jewish leaders as they seek to maintain strong support for Israel and pro-Israel policies at this time. Should annexation be advanced, the majority of American Jews who oppose such a policy will feel more alienated from Israel as a result.”

President of the Union for Reform Judaism Rabbi Rick Jacobs: “We also call on this new government to refrain from unilateral actions that could potentially hinder or thwart the renewal of the peace process in the short and long term, especially unilateral annexation”

Former US Ambassador to Israel Dan Shaprio, et al: “The logical conclusion of annexation is a single, nondemocratic state between the Jordan River and the Mediterranean Sea—and that eventuality will fundamentally alter the nature of the relationship between Israel and the United States.”

Veteran US negotiator Ambassador Dennis Ross: “1 state for 2 peoples is more likely.”

Former senior White House official & National Security Advisor to VP Biden, Colin Kahl: “[Annexation] would be profoundly unjust, costly, & dangerous. It would also jeopardize bipartisan US support for Israel.”

Former senior White House officials Philip H. Gordon and Robert Malley: “[Annexation] would jeopardize Israel’s future as a democratic, Jewish state by making a two-state solution unviable; because it would damage Israel’s relations with Jordan; because it would violate international law; because it ignores the rights and aspirations of the Palestinian people; and because it could be a harbinger of greater regional instability and possibly violence. An Israel that proceeded with annexation would almost certainly deny equal rights to Palestinians while entrenching a system in which they are compelled to live in disadvantaged, isolated areas surrounded by Israel. Such an outcome would fundamentally undermine the values that have bolstered traditionally bipartisan U.S. support for Israel and could lead to growing calls in the United States and elsewhere for Palestinians to be granted equal civil and political rights in a single state—a scenario most Israeli Jews reject.”

Washington Post Deputy Editorial Page Editor Jackson Diehl: “In practice, if Israeli annexation goes forward without Palestinian or Arab agreement, it will not only kill Trump’s plan; it will make a two-state settlement impossible. If there is no Palestine, Israel will be doomed to become a binational state rather than a Jewish one, or else adopt an apartheid system in which millions of Palestinians are ruled by Israel but lack full political rights. This is not the view of the hard-line activists who campaign for BDS — the boycott, divestment and sanction movement. It is the judgment of some of the most pro-Israel members of Congress and policy experts in Washington.”