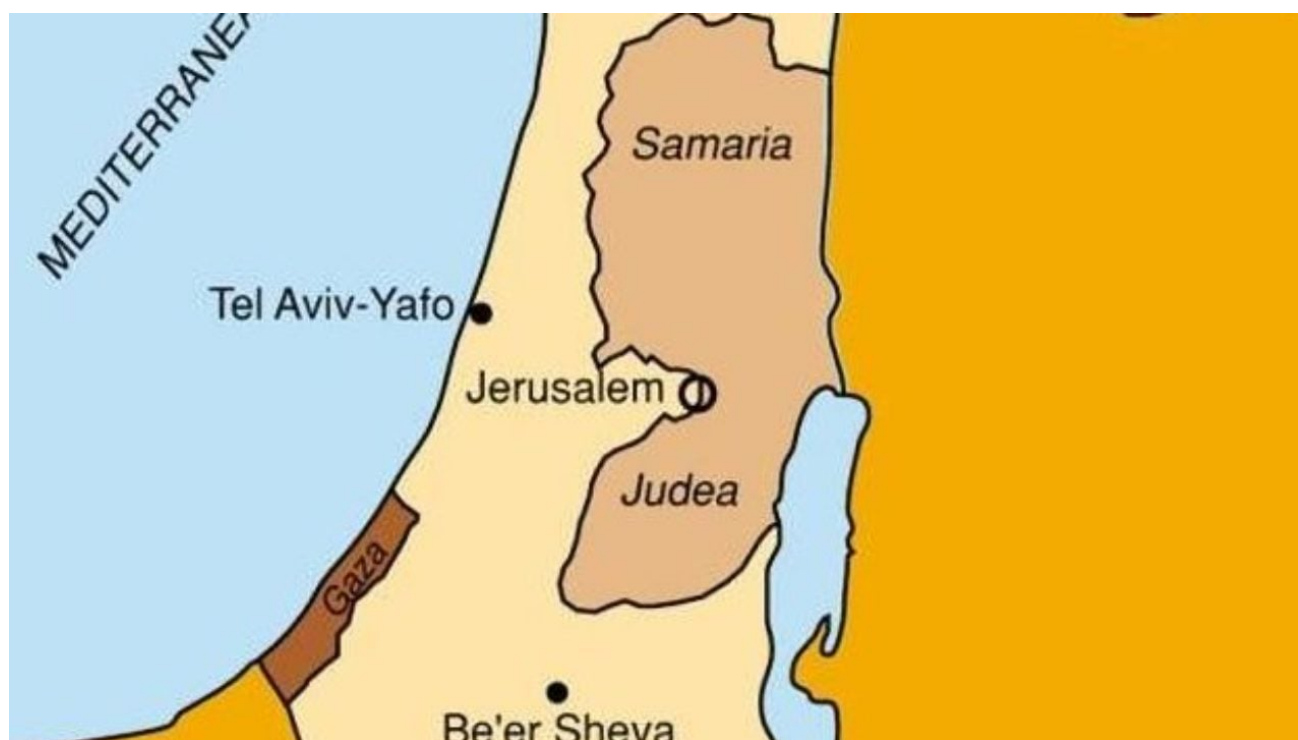


# More Than 1,000 Israeli Former Security Officials Thank Trump and Support Annexation

by Hugh Fitzgerald



The story is at *Israel Hayom* [here](#).

*In a letter to President Donald Trump on Tuesday, some 1,000 former Israeli security officials endorsed the administration's peace plan and praised the parts that allow Israel to extend its sovereignty to areas in Judea and Samaria, thanking the president for his strong support of Israel.*

*The group includes former major generals in the Israel Defense Forces, as well as former senior officials in the Israel Police.*

*“Dear Mr. President, we write to you in the name of more than a thousand senior military officers and combat soldiers from the Israel Defense Force reserves who have joined together in recent months to form a new social movement called Habithonistim – Protectors of Israel,” the letter reads. “We want to thank you for your deep commitment to the State of Israel and the Jewish people. We thank you for recognizing our sovereign rights and our deep historical and religious connection to the Land of Israel, by among other things, recognizing that Jerusalem is now and has always been our capital, and moving the Embassy of the United States to the city. We thank you for respecting Israel’s national security requirements, among other things, by recognizing our sovereignty over the Golan Heights,” the letter continues.*

*The Trump administration’s newly unveiled Vision for Peace stipulates that Washington will endorse an Israeli decision to apply sovereignty to large parts of Judea and Samaria and the Jordan Valley as long as Israel commits to holding good-faith negotiations with the Palestinians and avoids construction in certain areas that could become part of a Palestinian state. That state will only be established four years after negotiations begin and only if the Palestinians fully renounce terrorism and carry out major reforms, and only if they are no longer considered a threat to Israel.*

*Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu has repeatedly said he plans to accept the document [the Trump Peace Plan] and to begin the process of applying sovereignty in Jewish communities as early as July 1.*

*“Your far-sighted vision for peace, which includes a recognition of Israel’s sovereign rights in Judea and Samaria – the cradle of Jewish civilization – has put wind in the wings of thousands of Israel Defense Force officers and warriors and buffeted the sails of the Israeli nation as a whole,” the letter reads.*

*The former officials went on to thank the president “for your friendship and visionary leadership.”*

*The letter claimed that due to the president’s pro-Israel policies and support, the Jewish state now stands “at a historic crossroads in the 4,000-year history of the Jewish people in the Land of Israel. We trust that you will continue to work to secure the future peace of the people of Israel and of the Middle East as a whole by standing with Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu as he applies our sovereignty to our eastern frontier, the Jordan Valley and to our cities, villages, and farms in Judea and Samaria in accordance with your visionary peace plan.”*

Why does this letter matter? We have been inundated with stories about retired IDF officers who oppose any Israeli annexation as inimical to Israel’s true interests. We are told that these Israelis worry that Egypt and Jordan will tear up their peace treaties with Israel, that the Gulf Arab states – Saudi Arabia and the UAE – will cease to cooperate with Israel on security matters, that the entire Arab and Muslim world will be inflamed. But we then learn that behind the scenes, the head of Mossad Yossi Cohen has been working with his Egyptian counterpart, Intelligence chief Maj. Gen. Abbas Kamel, in great secrecy, preparing a pro-forma declaration of dismay that Egypt will issue after the annexation. Furthermore, Egyptian security officials are now working with their Jordanian counterparts so that they can recommend to King Abdullah that he follow Egypt’s lead: a certain amount of sound following any annexation announcement, but no real fury. Israel is simply too important a security partner for Egypt and Jordan to end their valuable cooperation with, and assistance from, the Jewish state.

This letter, signed by more than 1,000 retired IDF officers, police, and other security officials, will not receive the attention it deserves – certainly far less than has been paid

to the letter signed by 220 retired IDF, Mossad, Shin Bet, and Police officers, who in early April claimed that any annexation would ignite the Palestinian Authority-controlled territories and cause the PA to collapse. That nongovernmental group, calling itself Commanders for Israel's Security (CIS), warned that "unilateral annexation has the potential to ignite a serious conflagration," adding that "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."

The Jerusalem Post described [here](#) the CIS and its open letter:

*It [the CIS] issued its statement in an open letter to Blue and White leader Benny Gantz and his party colleague Gabi Ashkenazi.*

*CIS defines itself as a "nonpartisan movement" comprising "retired IDF generals and their Mossad, Shin Bet (Israel Security Agency) and [Israel] Police equivalents.*

*It has taken a very strong stance against any unilateral application of sovereignty over the settlements, even a limited one.*

*In an open letter signed by 220 former army generals and their equivalents, the group asked Gantz and Ashkenazi to ensure that the next government does not annex any part of the West Bank.*

The next time you read, for the umpteenth time, in the *New York Times* or the *Washington Post*, or hear on the BBC, or see on CNN, stories about those 220 IDF, Mossad, Shin Bet, and Police retirees who call themselves, portentously, the CIS, or Commanders For Israel's Security, who want to prevent any annexation of territory by Israel in the West Bank, remind yourself to reread the letter written by another group,

similarly composed of IDF, Mossad, Shin Bet, and Police retirees, but with almost five times the number of signatories, who offer their own open letter on the matter – see the full text above – a cogent expression of support for annexation and deep gratitude for the Trump Administration’s Peace Plan, which recognizes the justification for such a move. And email that second letter to all those who you suspect have only seen the first letter, the one from the CIS, and have taken it to heart, assuming “those Israeli military and security guys must know what they are talking about” without ever having learned that five times as many “Israeli military and security guys” deeply disagree with the CIS letter. Such knowledge may not completely change minds, but it ought to make many stop and think that just maybe those Israelis, with similar security credentials to the members of CIS, who support annexation, also ought to be listened to. Hear them out, in what they have to say in this remarkable letter. Give their piece a chance.

First published in