

MK: Only Bullets will Stop Infiltrators

In a parliamentary tour of southern border fence, MK Aryeh Eldad is unimpressed.

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Border with Egypt

Israel news photo: Flash 90

Members of the Knesset's Foreign Affairs and Defense Committee toured the fence being built along Israel's border with Egypt. The fence is meant to keep away terrorists as well as infiltrators from Eritrea, Sudan and elsewhere in Africa who seek a better life in Israel.

MK Aryeh Eldad (National Union) was not impressed with the new barrier, and said he opposed its construction. "This fence can't stop anything," he said Sunday. "Not infiltrators and not terror."

MK Eldad explained that as long as the government does not give the IDF instructions to shoot the infiltrators, they will continue pouring into Israel in large numbers. "This huge engineering project, impressive as it may be, will not succeed in blocking the infiltrators if the IDF does not receive written instructions from the political tier signed by the Legal Advisor to the Government, that anyone trying to cross the fence will be shot," he said.

"If a person walks across the African continent by foot, a 5-meter high fence will not stop him," Eldad elaborated. "They will cross it, unless the IDF shoots them, but I do not see the state of Israel giving such an instruction."

The unchecked influx of thousands of work-seekers from the African continent every month has changed demographics and caused a spike in violence and other crime in Eilat, Arad and working class neighborhoods in Tel Aviv. This has recently resulted in demonstrations demanding that the government take action to control Israel's southern border.

The IDF is loathe to shoot infiltrators, and the state has not yet completed temporary internment camps currently being built to hold them. Those who make it past the border are placed on buses to Tel Aviv.

Meanwhile, the Population, Immigration, and Borders Authority (PIBA) announced Sunday that it intends to start implementing a law the Knesset passed in January, which enables it to arrest illegal infiltrators and hold them for up to three years, as opposed to letting them enter freely as it has until now. PIBA said it is waiting for the Defense Ministry to issue new arrest warrants for IDF officers to sign, to replace the old ones which were limited to 10 days' arrest.

The detainees will be held in space that has been freed up in existing jails, pending completion of the new detention facility.

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