

U.S. to cut off aid to Palestinian hospitals in East Jerusalem



Washington, September 10 (RHC)-- The United States has decided to cut off financial aid to East Jerusalem hospitals that provide cancer treatments and other critical care for Palestinians, amid warnings of the “collapse” of medical centers.

Alessia Dinkel, the U.S. State Department spokeswoman, told reporters in Washington that the administration of President Donald Trump is cutting \$25 million it had planned to give to the East Jerusalem al-Quds Hospital Network, a group of six hospitals, some church-run, which provide care primarily to Palestinians.

According to the World Health Organization, the medical centers provide healthcare for Palestinians to whom such medical assistance is unavailable in the occupied West Bank and the besieged Gaza Strip.

Adnan Hussein, Palestinian Authority minister for East Jerusalem affairs, said the latest cuts were “not surprising at all,” stressing that Palestinians would not surrender to pressure from Washington. “Let America know that all these acts will not change our position toward our cause one bit. On the contrary, it consolidates our positions toward every issue, including Jerusalem [al-Quds].”

Dave Harden, a former senior U.S. official overseeing aid to the Palestinians under the Barack Obama administration, said the cuts were “particularly vindictive,” warning that they could cause the “collapse” of

two of the medical centers in the East Jerusalem al-Quds network.

Earlier this month, Washington announced it would end all funding to the UN's agency for Palestinian refugees, known as UNRWA, and the previous week cut over \$200 million in aid for the West Bank and Gaza.

The U.S.-Palestine ties deteriorated last December, when Trump declared East Jerusalem as the capital of Israel and announced plans to transfer the embassy from Tel Aviv to the occupied city. The contentious move led Palestinian president Mahmoud Abbas to formally declare that the Palestinians would no longer accept the US as a mediator to resolve the conflict because Washington was "completely biased" towards Tel Aviv.

Experts in the U.S. have warned over the Trump administration's single-minded focus on satisfying the short-term goals of Israel and its supporters in the United States, even at the cost of American interests.

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