

Nearly 1,000 Israeli settlers storm al-Aqsa Mosque in occupied Jerusalem



Jerusalem, September 28 (RHC)-- Nearly one thousand Israeli settlers have stormed the al-Aqsa Mosque compound in the Israeli-occupied Old City of East Jerusalem amid an escalation of acts of violence by Israeli forces and settlers against the Palestinian people.

Firas al-Dibs, spokesperson of the Islamic Waqf (Endowment) organization, which manages the compound's affairs, told the Palestinian Safa news agency that 924 Israeli settlers forced their way into the holy site through the Bab al-Magharibah and Bab al-Silsilah under tight protection of several groups of Israeli soldiers and special police forces.

The settlers performed acts deemed provocative by Palestinians at the mosque's courtyard in commemoration of the biblical Jewish holiday of Sukkot (Feast of Tabernacles). Heavily armed Israeli police forces set up iron barriers on the doors and confiscated identity cards of Palestinians before allowing them to enter the compound.

The occupied Palestinian territories have witnessed new tensions ever since US President Donald Trump announced his decision on December 6th last year to recognize Jerusalem as Israel's capital and relocate

the U.S. embassy in Israel from Tel Aviv to the occupied city.

The dramatic shift in Washington's policy vis-à-vis the city triggered demonstrations in the occupied Palestinian territories, Iran, Turkey, Egypt, Jordan, Tunisia, Algeria, Iraq, Morocco and other Muslim countries.

On December 21 last year, the United Nations General Assembly overwhelmingly voted in favor of a resolution that calls on the U.S. to withdraw its controversial recognition of Jerusalem as Israeli capital. In an attempt to prevent the passing of the resolution, Trump threatened reprisals against countries that backed the measure, which had earlier faced a U.S. veto at the UN Security Council.

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