

Mahmoud Abbas says UAE stabbed Palestine in back by normalizing with Israel



Ramallah, August 19 (RHC)-- President Mahmoud Abbas has strongly criticized the United Arab Emirates (UAE) — which long portrayed itself as an advocate of Palestine’s cause — for stabbing the Palestinian nation in the back by making peace with Israel, warning other Arab countries not to follow in Abu Dhabi’s footsteps.

He made the remarks at a meeting of the Palestinian leadership in the West bank city of Ramallah on Tuesday night, which was also attended by representatives of different Palestinian factions, including the Gaza-based resistance groups of Islamic Jihad and Hamas.

Abbas condemned the UAE’s decision to normalize ties with Israel was a “stab in the back of the Palestinian people.” He reminded the Arab countries that based on the 2002 Arab Peace Initiative any Israeli normalization should come after an agreement is reached between the Palestinians and Tel Aviv, and not the other way around.

“Some countries have begun moving, both openly and in secret...this is rejected, and we the Palestinians will continue to absolutely reject this, no matter which country does this. You must respect the decisions

on which you have signed off," he said.

Last week, Israel and the UAE announced in a joint statement, issued by the White House, that they had agreed to the full normalization of relations, sparking anger among Palestinians and other supporters of the Palestinian cause against Israeli occupation.

Upon a request by U.S. President Donald Trump, it claimed, Israel "will suspend declaring sovereignty" over parts of the occupied West Bank.

Abbas delivered the warning after media reports, citing experts, speculated that Bahrain was likely to toe the UAE line in normalizing ties with Israel.

On Tuesday, Israeli media also cited Sudanese government sources as announcing an "impending" normalization agreement with Tel Aviv. Sudan's acting foreign minister, however, denied knowledge of such talks with Israel.

Elsewhere in his comments, the Palestinian president accused the UAE of turning its back on Palestinians while trying to justify the deal with Israel by arguing it helped stop West bank annexations.

"They added the term annexation and attempted to give the others and the world the illusion that the UAE had come up with a great achievement for us and that is the rejection of annexation, as if the Palestinian issue is only about annexation while they disregard everything else: the rights of the Palestinian people, the Palestinian state, the two-state vision, holy Jerusalem [al-Quds]... This is deception, and this is totally unacceptable. We consider it a stab in the back of the Palestinian cause," he emphasized.

Abbas also stressed that only the Palestinians have the right to speak on the Palestine issue. "You cannot can take our place... Palestine speaks in its own name. She is who will say 'yes' or 'no'. You [are] not responsible for the Palestinian cause, we alone, the Palestinians here, will speak on behalf of the Palestinian cause," he said.

Additionally, Abbas hailed the presence of representative from different Palestinian factions at Tuesday's meeting as a show of unity. "I welcome our brothers in Hamas, Jihad, General Command and Al-Saiqa who are here today. This indicates that the Palestinian people are united against the conspiracy, regardless of the differences between us, but in adversity we stand together and have on position against anyone who wants to attack our cause," he said.

Abbas further Palestinians were not concerned about the normalization agreement between Israel and the UAE, referring to the accord as "nonsense." "We aren't worried about the nonsense that happens here and there and especially in recent days, when a trilateral agreement between the Emirates, Israel and America was announced," he said.

Saeb Erekat, secretary general of the Palestine Liberation Organization (PLO)'s Executive Committee, criticized the Arab League and the Organization of Islamic Conference (OIC) for failing to condemn the normalization deal.

"Why do they (the Arab League and OIC) convene if they did not convene for the violation of a state's constitution?" he told Palestine Radio, referring to the UAE's Constitution that stipulates commitment to the common Arab agenda.

There has long been an Arab consensus not to make agreements with the Israeli regime before a solution to the Palestine issue is found.



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