

Palestinian Authority says U.S.-led Bahrain conference 'stunning failure'



Ramallah, July 1 (RHC)-- The Palestinian Authority says the United States-led Bahrain conference was a "stunning failure." Palestinian President Mahmoud Abbas' spokesman Nabil Abu Rudeineh emphasized the conference was guided by "a policy of punishment and intimidation used by the Trump administration against everyone."

Trump's son-in-law and close adviser, Jared Kushner, unveiled the economic portion of the so-called "Deal of the Century" peace plan in Bahrain last week. In it, the administration calls for a \$50 billion investment in the Middle East and Arab region with the hopes of revitalizing Palestine and neighboring country economies.

Of that amount, \$5 billion will be used to construct a transportation corridor between the West Bank and Gaza, along with another 179 infrastructure and business projects, according to Reuters.

The PA statement was a response to Trump's comment earlier Saturday at the G-20 summit in Japan that there will never be an Israeli-Palestinian peace agreement without him. "With me being president, if you don't get that deal done it'll never happen," Trump touted.

Palestinian officials boycotted the summit in Manama, and called on U.S.-aligned Arab states not to participate, although many did. Overwhelming however, Palestinian business leaders stayed away from the two-day summit.

Rudeineh said the Palestinian's refusal to attend the Bahrain conference should constitute a clear message to Mr. Trump and his administration that the policy of dictates, threats and coercion is no longer effective with our steadfast people and its legitimate leadership headed by President Mahmoud Abbas, which rejected all suspicious deals aimed at the liquidation of our national cause.

Parts of the century deal leaked last month called for the creation of a 'New Palestine' that will not be allowed to have an army, will share Jerusalem as a capital with Israel and all the illegal settlements in West Bank will become part of Israel.

In a statement issued in Ramallah, Abbas argued that a political solution to the Israeli-Palestinian conflict must precede projects to develop the Palestinian economy. 'We say that national rights are not pieces of real estate that are purchased and sold and that arriving at a political solution that guarantees freedom, dignity, independence and justice for our people must precede any economic programs or projects because that will create stability and security for everyone,' the president said.

Rudeineh, the Palestinian Authority spokesman, said that the road to peace 'must be based on the UN resolutions and the Arab Peace Initiative, not on economic illusions that replace land for peace with prosperity for peace.' The PA spokesman also says the U.S. administration is 'totally biased toward Israel,' and 'cannot offer solutions that can lead to a lasting and just peace.'

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