

# *Washington ready to recognize Israeli sovereignty over in West Bank*

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Tel Aviv, May 8 (RHC)-- U.S. Ambassador to Israel David Friedman says Washington is ready to recognize the Tel Aviv regime's sovereignty in parts of the occupied West Bank, including the Jordan Valley, as U.S. authorities look to implement President Donald Trump's so-called Deal of the Century.

"We are not declaring sovereignty, but rather Israel, and then we are ready to recognize it," Friedman said in an exclusive interview with the Israel Hayom daily newspaper. He added that several processes must be completed prior to this move, saying the timetable for those depends mainly on Israel.

Friedman further asserted that the US would recognize the application of Israeli law to areas of the West Bank after a series of steps, including the completion of mapping and cessation of Israeli settlements construction in Area C of the West Bank, which is excluded from the annexation, are taken, and when Israeli Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu agrees to negotiate with the Palestinians along the lines set forth in Trump's plan.

The remarks by the U.S. diplomat drew response from the Palestinian Authority. The spokesman for Palestinian President Mahmoud Abbas dismissed Friedman's words as "unacceptable." "Neither Israel

has the right to annex any part of the West Bank, nor is the U.S. allowed to recognize Israeli sovereignty over such parts, namely the Jordan Valley. Any such Israeli step would be illegitimate since it violates the international law and resolutions,” Nabil Abu Rudeineh said.

He emphasized that the Palestinians would thwart all fiendish plots and would not allow such an annexation move to proceed, holding the Trump administration and the Israeli regime responsible for the adverse repercussions of such a move.

The struggle of hundreds of millions of Muslims will continue against the Zionist war crimes machine until Palestine is finally liberated, Kevin Barrett writes. The Palestinian Authority and much of the international community have already rejected the plan.

Palestinian President Mahmoud Abbas has warned Israel against the intention to annex parts of the West Bank, urging the international community to block attempts by the regime to exploit the novel coronavirus pandemic and steal more Palestinian land.

“We have informed all international parties that should Israel take this step, we will be absolved of all obligations, agreements and understandings with Israel and the U.S. administration,” he said on Monday in an address to a virtual meeting of the leaders of the Non-Aligned Movement (NAM) Contact Group.

On April 28, the Palestinian Ministry of Foreign Affairs and Expatriates roundly condemned Washington’s readiness to recognize the Israeli regime’s annexation of occupied territories.

The ministry said in a statement that it “condemns in the strongest terms” such statements and considers them “an extension of the unqualified US bias to the [Israeli] occupation and its expansionist colonial policies at the expense of the territory of the State of Palestine.”

Earlier last month, the UN’s special Middle East envoy Nickolay Mladenov had warned Israel not to annex parts of the occupied West Bank, stating that such a move would be a “devastating blow” to the so-called two-state solution to the Israeli-Palestinian conflict and would violate international law.

Separately, the European Union foreign policy chief, Josep Borrell, said the bloc does not recognize Israeli rule over Palestinian land, and that it will “continue to closely monitor the situation and its broader implications, and will act accordingly.”

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