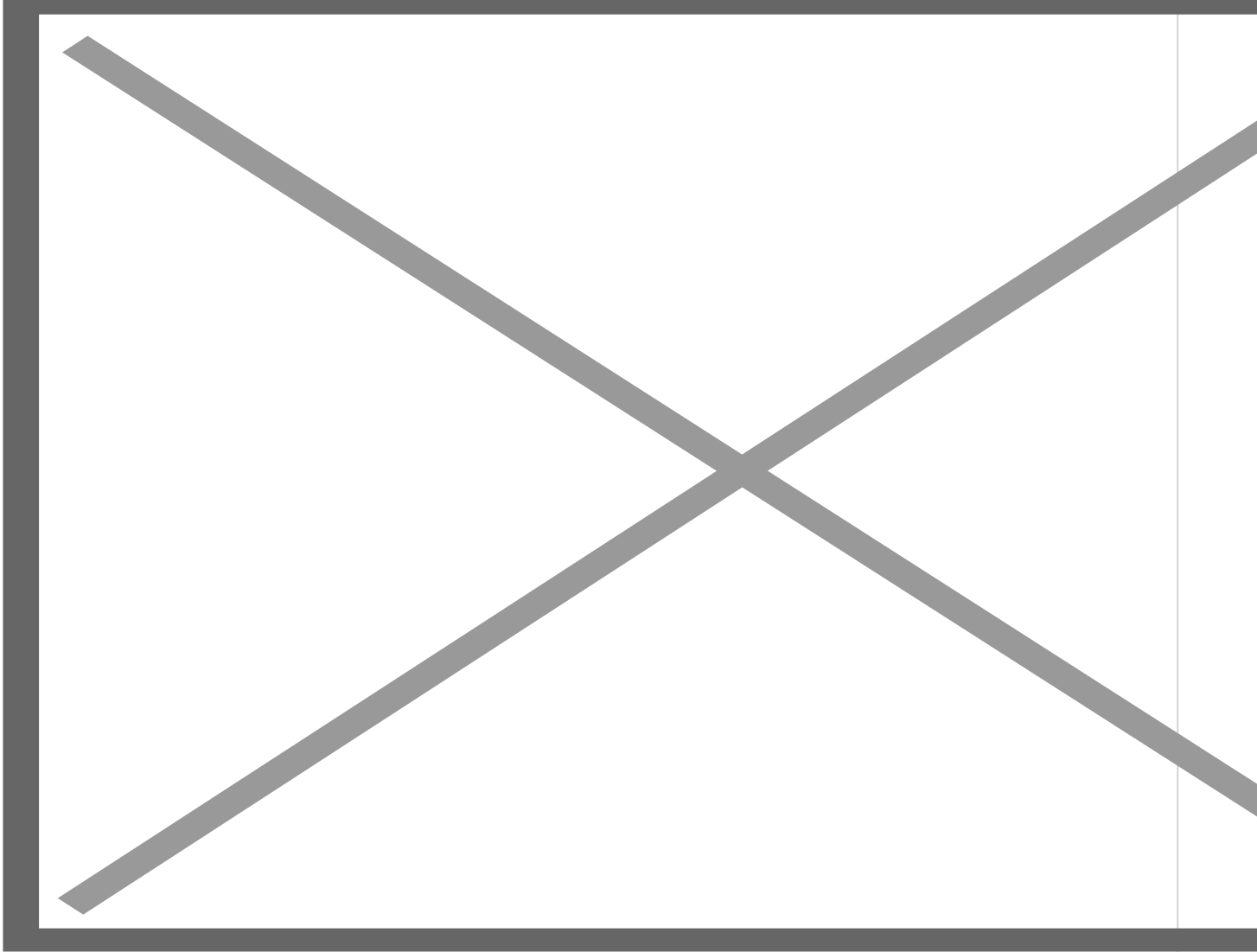


U.S. refuses to condemn Israel over violent assault on Palestinians

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Washington has failed to condemn Israel over its a violent assault on Palestinian worshipers

Washington, May 9 (RHC)-- The United States has failed to condemn Israel over its a violent assault on Palestinian worshipers in the al-Aqsa Mosque compound in the Old City of Jerusalem al-Quds. However, in a general statement early Saturday, the State Department said it is “extremely concerned” over increasing violence in Jerusalem al-Quds but did not denounce Israeli actions.

More than 200 Palestinians were injured as Israeli forces fired rubber bullets, tear gas and stun grenades at hundreds of Palestinians attending night prayers at the compound. The clashes took place on the International Quds Day, the last Friday of the holy Muslim fasting month of Ramadan. They continued till Friday night.

“The United States is extremely concerned about ongoing confrontations in Jerusalem, including on the Haram al-Sharif / Temple Mount and in Sheikh Jarrah, which have reportedly resulted in scores of injured people,” State Department spokesperson Ned Price said. “We call on Israeli and Palestinian officials to act decisively to deescalate tensions and bring a halt to the violence.”

The Palestine Red Crescent ambulance service said 88 of those wounded were taken to hospital, adding, one of them lost an eye, two suffered serious head wounds and two had their jaws fractured. Dozens of worshipers were also arrested by the Israeli occupation forces, according to Wafa news agency.

Tensions have increased in the occupied West Bank during Ramadan, with nightly clashes in East Jerusalem al-Quds’ Sheikh Jarrah, which sits near the Old City’s Damascus gate. Numerous families face eviction in the Palestinian neighborhood due to illegal settlement expansion policies of the occupying regime.

Tensions have escalated in Sheikh Jarrah in recent days amid Israeli court rulings that order a number of Palestinian families to evacuate their homes there. Israel occupied East Jerusalem al-Quds, the West Bank, and the Gaza Strip during the Six Day War in 1967. It later had to withdraw from Gaza but placed the enclave under siege.

Israeli forces used tear gas and rubber bullets at the Palestinians taking part in a weekly anti-settlement protest in Kafr Qaddum over the weekend. Scores of demonstrators suffered breathing difficulties due to inhaling tear gas.

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