

Jordan condemns Israel's aggressive provocations on al-Aqsa Mosque

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Israeli settlers after storming the al-Aqsa Mosque in the Old City of Jerusalem on 27 September 2021. (Facebook\AlQastalps)

Amman, September 28 (RHC)-- In a strong indictment of continued aggression against the al-Aqsa Mosque, Jordan has sent an official note of protest to Israel, warning that the violations of the holy site by regime forces and settlers will provoke sentiments of Muslims around the world.

In a statement, Jordanian foreign ministry spokesman Haitham Abu al-Ful denounced the blatant violations of the sanctity of the al-Aqsa Mosque, calling for restraint. Jordan is the custodian of the holy sites in occupied al-Quds.

It came after hundreds of Israeli settlers on Monday stormed the holy mosque in occupied East Jerusalem's Old City and hoisted Israeli regime flags, in a move deemed "provocative" by Palestinians.

Accompanied by heavily-armed Israeli soldiers, the illegal settlers stormed the mosque compound on Monday morning and again in the afternoon, local media reported. One of the settlers raised an Israeli flag outside the mosque complex, as policemen escorting them prevented Palestinians from entering the compound. One Palestinian man was arrested when he tried to obstruct the settlers, said a report.

Abu al-Ful said the Jordanian foreign ministry has sent a letter to Israel, calling on it to "stop its violations and provocations, and respect the historical and legal status quo as well as the sanctity of the mosque," as reported by Jordan's Petra News Agency.

The spokesman said Jordan "rejects and condemns" these violations by the Israeli regime, which "provoke the sentiments of Muslims around the world." He further stressed that the holy mosque is a place of worship for Muslims and that the Jerusalem Waqf (Endowment) Department, which is responsible for the affairs of the al-Aqsa mosque, is a "legal body with exclusive jurisdiction to run all of the affairs of the mosque and to regulate entry and exit from it."

Jordan's Hashemite ruling family has been the sole custodian of the Muslim and Christian holy sites in East al-Quds, including the al-Aqsa Mosque and the Temple Mount, since 1924.

Al-Quds-based Islamic Waqf has repeatedly denounced the tours of Israeli settlers to al-Aqsa Mosque as "provocative", claiming that the Palestinian worshipers and guards at the mosque feel insecure in the presence of trigger-happy Israeli troops and settlers.

The provocations are in line with calls by the fanatic Israelis for the destruction of al-Aqsa Mosque compound to make way for a Jewish temple. Some have even advocated seizing the eastern area of the mosque compound, known as al-Rahmeh Gate, and turning it into a Jewish praying place.

In May, frequent acts of violence against Palestinian worshipers at the al-Aqsa Mosque led to an 11-day war between Palestinian resistance groups in the besieged Gaza Strip and the Israeli regime, during which the regime killed at least 260 Palestinians, including 66 children.

The al-Aqsa Mosque compound, which overlooks the Western Wall plaza, houses both the Dome of the Rock and the al-Aqsa Mosque. The Jewish visitations of the al-Aqsa are permitted, but according to an agreement signed between Israel and the Jordanian government in the wake of Israel's occupation of East Jerusalem al-Quds in 1967, non-Muslim worship at the compound is prohibited.

Israel occupied East Jerusalem during the 1967 war and annexed the entire city in 1980, in a move that failed to gain recognition of the international community. Palestinians want the occupied West Bank as part of their future independent state with East al-Quds as its capital.

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