

# *Iraq says West Asia won't be stable without resolution of Palestine issue*

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Baghdad, February 25 (RHC)-- Iraq's President Abdul Latif Rashid says the resolution of the long-standing conflict generated by Israel in Palestine is the prime factor for the stabilization of the situation in West

Asia.

The Iraqi head of state says it is imperative that the rights of the Palestinians to self-determination and independence are realized. "We now know the only way to shape a safe, stable and bright future in the region is through the establishment of peace and promotion of a sense of mutual understanding among [regional] countries," Rashid said in an address to the sixth Baghdad International Dialogue Conference on Saturday.

The Iraqi president underscored the sufferings the Palestinians are experiencing at the hands of the occupying Israeli regime, calling upon the international community to take concrete steps to end the crimes of Israel against the Palestinians.

Nabil Abu Rudeineh, the spokesman for President Mahmoud Abbas of the Palestinian Authority, said on Sunday the formation of a sovereign independent Palestinian state with East al-Quds as its capital was essential for resolving the conflict and ensuring stability in the region.

Abu Rudeineh warned of "different and dangerous" challenges ahead, noting that the Palestinian position was firm against the "extremist and obstinate" Israeli and "opposing" US positions.

He urged more Arab and international action to stop "Israeli aggression and onslaught." Israel's continued attacks on the Palestinians and their holy sites in Gaza, the occupied West Bank, and East al-Quds would not bring security and stability to anyone, he said.

The regime on Wednesday decided to support Benjamin Netanyahu's rejection of a Palestinian state. Earlier on Sunday, Israel approved a declaration that rejects any unilateral recognition of a Palestinian state.

The Palestinians hope to establish an independent state of their own in the besieged Gaza Strip and the West Bank with East al-Quds as its capital.

Israel occupied East al-Quds during the 1967 Arab-Israeli War. It annexed the entire city in 1980, claiming all of al-Quds as its "eternal and undivided" capital in a move never recognized by the international community.

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