

# *Russia condemns so-called Middle East peace deal promoted by Washington*

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Moscow, February 13 (RHC)-- Russian Foreign Minister Sergei Lavrov warns that U.S. President Donald Trump's "deal of the century" will "ruin everything" gained from previous efforts regarding the so-called Middle East peace process, and will fail to fully guarantee a Palestinian state based on the 1967 borders.

The U.S. authorities "have been promising for more than two years to offer some sort of deal of the century. But current information gives us reason to believe that the future deal of the century would ruin everything that has been done so far," further said the top Russian diplomat in Moscow on Tuesday.

His comments was made on the second day of the third edition of intra-Palestinian conference that commenced on Monday in the Russian capital aimed at unifying 12 different Palestinian movements and organizations, including the West Bank-based Fatah movement led by Palestinian President Mahmoud Abbas.

The so-called deal, a backchannel plan to reach a peace settlement between Israel and the Palestinians, was proposed by the U.S. administration in late 2017. Although the plan has not been released, leaks signal it will consist of the same tried-and-failed ideas. Palestinians believe that the deal suggests

building their own Jerusalem from areas surrounding the existing city and forgetting about the historical place. They also believe that the U.S.-drafted plan calls for keeping borders and security under Israeli control, while it keeps Israeli settlements' final borders to be discussed in later negotiations.

Israel lays claim to the whole Jerusalem, but the international community views the city's eastern sector as an occupied territory and Palestinians consider it as the capital of their future state. Trump further darkened the prospects of the establishment of a Palestinian state back in December when he recognized Jerusalem as the "capital" of Israel and ordered the U.S. embassy to be relocated from Tel Aviv to Jerusalem, a move that infuriated Palestinians and triggered numerous protests.

The Russian diplomat also stressed that the proposal does not include the establishment of a Palestinian state with East Jerusalem as its capital. "We, like most countries in the world, are fully committed to the criteria of resolving the Palestinian issue, which came through the United Nations Security Council resolutions, the United Nations General Assembly and the Arab Peace Initiative," Lavrov stated.

He lambasted Washington for its efforts "to promote unilateral approaches" toward the so-called peace process in the region, and its forcibly imposing of "new solutions to the (Israeli) settlement" construction issue. Lavrov also said Russia considers "an absolute majority to re-establish Palestinian unity as soon as possible."

Hundreds of Palestinians have rallied in the occupied west bank against U.S. President Donald Trump's peace plan known as the Deal of the Century.

Trump has time and again called his yet-to-be-released plan as "The Deal of the Century," but it is coincidentally the title of a 1983 comedy, which features a bunch of hapless arms dealers competing to sell a weapon, called the Peacemaker, to a South American dictator.

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