

# *Israel Closes Off West Bank and Gaza Strip for Jewish Holiday*

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Tel Aviv, April 22 (RHC)-- The Israeli regime is closing off all entry points to the occupied West Bank and the Gaza Strip ahead of a Jewish holiday. According to the Israeli army, the crossings to the West Bank and the Gaza Strip will be sealed off on Friday and Saturday, the days of the Passover holiday, due to security concerns.

The decision on the closings was made after "an evaluation of the security situation," an Israeli military spokesperson said without elaborating. The Israeli decision to block pathways comes as a move to bar Palestinians from the al-Aqsa Mosque in August 2015 caused a major outcry on the part of the Palestinians. Israeli Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu has also said that security measures will be tightened ahead of the holiday.

In related news, With Israel tightening its measures, the Palestinian Authority said a push for a UN resolution demanding an end to Israeli settlement expansion will be put on hold. Foreign Minister Riyad Maliki announced on Thursday that the Palestinians supported a French initiative to hold an international conference in May in an effort to revive so-called peace talks.

The Palestinians initially planned to get the UN Security Council to adopt a resolution that would condemn continued Israeli settlement construction as an obstacle to peace.

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