

Palestinian President Calls on Israel to Halt Settlement Activities



Ramallah, February 16 (RHC)-- Palestinian President Mahmoud Abbas has voiced his commitment to the two-state solution, while calling on Israel to halt its settlement activities in the occupied Palestinian territories.

The Palestinian president's stance was announced in an official statement released after U.S. President Donald Trump and Israeli Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu gave a joint press conference in Washington on Wednesday.

Emboldened by the ever-growing pro-Israeli rhetoric of the Trump administration, the Tel Aviv regime has announced 5,000 new permits for Israeli settlement units in the occupied Palestinian territories. However, during the press conference, Trump made a luke-warm appeal, telling Netanyahu that he would like to see a "pull-back" on Israel's settlement activities.

"The presidency demands that (Israel) agree to (Trump's call), and that of the international community, to halt all settlement activities including in the occupied East Jerusalem," read Abbas' statement.

"The Palestinian presidency stressed its commitment to the two-state solution and to the international law and international legitimacy in the way that secures ending the Israeli occupation and establishes the Palestinian State with East Jerusalem as its capital."

During the press conference, Trump refrained from directly stating whether he backed the two-state solution or not. "I'm looking at two states and one state, and I like the one both parties like...I can live with either one," he said.

On Tuesday, a senior White House official, who spoke on condition of anonymity, said Washington would no longer insist on a "two-state solution" to the Israel-Palestine conflict but would support whatever the two sides agree to.

Abbas' statement also added that Palestine affirms its "readiness to deal positively with the Trump administration to make peace."

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