

Abbas Warns of Palestinian Gov't Collapse, 'Bloody Intifada'

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01/04/2016



The Palestinian government is “on the brink of collapse” as a result of continuing Israeli operations in the West Bank, Palestinian President Mahmud Abbas said Thursday night as he warned of a “bloody intifada.”

“If we give up security coordination there will be chaos here. There will be rifles and explosions and armed militants popping up everywhere and rushing at Israel,” Abbas said in an interview with Israeli Channel 2 broadcast Thursday night.

The Palestinian leader warned Israeli Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu of an uprising in the West Bank if the current situation continues as it is.

“I want to cooperate with the Israelis. There is an agreement between us and I am not ashamed by it. But [Netanyahu] must respect it.”

In theory, the Palestinian government in the West Bank has limited authority and controls security there as part of the Oslo Accords that were signed in the 1990s.

However, Abbas said Israel is breaking the accords as it continues its operations against the Palestinians without any security coordinations with his government.

“So what am I doing here? Where is the security cooperation? You want me to be your employee. Your agent. I don’t accept this,” he said, referring to the Israeli government.

Last October Israel kicked off a major military operation in the West Bank amid anti-occupation protests and anger over repeated Israeli incursions into al-Aqsa mosque in Jerusalem.

Israel claims the operation is to counter stabbing attacks by Palestinians against troops at checkpoints across the

occupied West bank. In most cases the alleged attackers are shot dead even when they do not pose any immediate threat against the soldiers.

Latest estimates from the Palestinian Health Ministry say the total number of Palestinians killed by Israeli forces since Oct. 1 stands at 162, including 30 minors and seven women.

Also since October, Israel has arrested 2,400 people including over 1,200 children, according to a report released by the Commission of Detainees and Ex-Detainee' Affairs in late December.

While he came out against the stabbing attacks, Abbas stressed they are the result of the despair Palestinians feel and their lack of hope for any solution or peace.

"When a child does not see hope for peace, what will he do? Answer me, what will that child do?" Abbas said. "Ask yourselves why a 15-year-old takes a knife and knows he's going to die, and still goes. Ask yourselves why. It's because he has no hope."

Several attempts for peace talks and negotiations by the United States, the United Nations and Europe have failed as Israel continues to reject fundamental requests by the Palestinians such as ending the occupation and settlement activity on Palestinian lands.

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