

Day 217: Jerusalem during "Al-Aqsa Flood" Operation

May 10, 2024



On the 217th day of "Al-Aqsa Flood Operation", the United Nations Relief and Works Agency for Palestine Refugees (UNRWA) in Jerusalem decided to close its headquarters in the city of Jerusalem after a series of settler attacks. The occupation authorities continued to impose restrictions on the entry of worshippers to Al-Aqsa Mosque, while the municipality forced Jerusalemite to self-demolish his commercial store.

Closing the UNRWA headquarters

Philippe Lazzarini, Commissioner-General of the United Nations, announced the closure of the headquarters of the United Nations Relief and Works Agency for Palestine Refugees (UNRWA) in the Sheikh Jarrah neighborhood in Jerusalem, until adequate security is restored in the place.

The decision came after a series of attacks since last February, the most recent of which was setting fire to the agency's headquarters.

The agency said in a statement that Israelis set fire to the vicinity of the UNRWA headquarters in occupied East Jerusalem twice, while UNRWA employees and other United Nations agencies were in the compound, exposing the lives of the employees to great danger.

The agency noted that the fire caused damage to the external areas, noting the presence of a gasoline and diesel station for agency vehicles inside the headquarters.

The agency explained that the director, with the help of other employees, extinguished the fire themselves, as it took some time before the Israeli fire department and police arrived.

The agency added that a group of armed men arrived outside the agency's headquarters, chanting, "Burn the United Nations."

The agency explained that over the past two months, Israeli extremists organized protests outside the UNRWA compound, and this week the demonstrators threw stones at United Nations employees and the compound buildings, in addition to harassing and intimidating

the employees, threatening them with weapons, and the headquarters was subjected to vandalism and damage.

The agency stressed, "It is the responsibility of the State of Israel, as the occupying power, to ensure the protection of United Nations personnel and facilities at all times, and United Nations personnel, buildings and operations must be protected at all times in accordance with international law."

It called for the perpetrators of these attacks to be investigated and those responsible held accountable.

As for the Deputy Mayor Aryeh King, he published a post on his Facebook page in which he spoke of his joy at closing the agency's headquarters, "even if temporarily," as he said.

Al-Aqsa Mosque...continuing restrictions

The occupation forces imposed restrictions on worshipers entering Al-Aqsa to perform Friday prayers by preventing some young men from entering and keeping them away from the vicinity of Al-Aqsa.

The forces also prevented Turkish tourists from entering Al-Aqsa to perform prayers, and a week ago the police stationed at all the gates of Al-Aqsa prevented Turks from entering the mosque to perform prayers, "as the Turks explained in their conversation with the staff of the Wadi Hilweh Information Center."

The forces also continued their deployment in Al-Aqsa squares and their positioning at several points during the Friday sermon and prayer, in a procedure followed since the seventh of last October.

Demolition of a commercial facility

The occupation municipality forced the Jerusalemites Ghazi Srour to self-demolish his commercial store in the village of Jabal Al-Mukabber, under the pretext of building without a permit, even though it had been in existence for 15 years.