

Netanyahu: Israel will not, it cannot cede Jerusalem

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In his Jerusalem Day speech on Sunday, Israeli Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu declared emphatically that he will never divide Jerusalem, a key Palestinian peace demand.

Speaking at Ammunition Hill, site of a key battle for Jerusalem in the 1967 Six Day War, Netanyahu explained that, contrary to Palestinian claims, dividing Jerusalem will only lead to more conflict.

"There are those who believe that if we only divide Jerusalem, and that means giving up the Temple Mount, they believe we will have peace. I am doubtful, to say the least, that if we deposit that

square of the Temple Mount with other forces, that we won't quickly deteriorate to a religious sectarian war," said Netanyahu.

At any rate, for the vast majority of Israelis, dividing Jerusalem is a red line they are not prepared to cross after their people's millennia of hoping to again inhabit and control the holy city.

"Israel without Jerusalem is like a body without a heart. And our heart will never be divided again," Netanyahu promised. "A nation willing to sacrifice its heart will convince its enemies that it is willing to give up on everything."

The Palestinian Authority insists it will not make peace with Israel unless it receives the eastern half of Jerusalem, including the Temple Mount, as its capital. When the Palestinians point to "Jewish settlement activity" as an obstacle to peace, they are also talking about the large Jewish neighborhoods in eastern Jerusalem.

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