

## 《Israel agrees to keep status quo in Al-Aqsa compound》

Israeli Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu has vowed that his government will not change the status quo in East Jerusalem's flashpoint al-Aqsa mosque compound. The announcement came after US Secretary of State John Kerry said that Israel and Jordan have agreed on steps aimed to reduce tensions at the holy site. These tensions have triggered the recent deadly wave of Israeli-Palestinian violence.

Tensions are high around the flashpoint al-Aqsa mosque compound in Jerusalem. The latest violence left at least eight Israelis dead and dozens wounded. They were attacked by Palestinians after rumours spread that Israel was planning to change the rules governing the holy site - something Israel denies.

Netanyahu said: "We will continue to ensure access to the Temple Mount for peaceful worshippers and visitors, while maintaining public order and security. We welcome increased coordination between the Israeli authorities and the Jordanian Waqf, including to ensure that visitors and worshippers demonstrate restraint and respect for the sanctity of the area, and all this in accordance with the respective responsibilities of the Israeli authorities and the Jordanian Waqf."

The US Secretary of State, who is on a tour of the region, met Palestinian leader Mahmoud Abbas and King Abdullah of Jordan in Amman Saturday. Speaking after talks in Jordan to the the formal custodian of the site, Mr Kerry echoed his sentiment.

"Israel will continue to enforce its long-standing policy of religious worship. Religious worship at the Temple Mount, Haram al-Sharif, including the fundamental fact that it is Muslims who pray on the Temple Mount, Haram al-Sharif, and non-Muslims who visit," said John Kerry, US Secretary of State.

The steps Kerry announced include round-the-clock video monitoring and Israel's agreement to reaffirm Jordan's historic role as custodian of the religious complex.

The flashpoint compound is holy to both Muslims, who know it as the Noble Sanctuary and to Jews, who know it as the Temple Mount.