UN Chief Condemns Israeli Colonists' Attack on West Bank Mosque

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New York, November 14 (QNA) – UN Secretary-General Antonio Guterres has strongly

condemned an attack carried out by Israeli colonists on a mosque in the town of Deir Istiya, in the

Salfit Governorate of the occupied West Bank, on Thursday.

"Such acts of violence and the desecration of religious sites are unacceptable," UN spokesperson

Stéphane Dujarric said in a statement.

He stressed that "religious sites must be respected and protected at all times."

Dujarric added that the Secretary-General condemns all attacks by Israeli colonists against Palestinians and their property in the occupied West Bank, noting that these incidents form part of a growing pattern of extremist violence that is heightening tensions and "must stop immediately."

"Israel, as the occupying power, must protect the Palestinian civilian population and ensure that those responsible for attacks are held accountable," he said.

The Palestinian Liberation Organization's Commission Against the Wall and Settlements said in a statement that Israeli colonists set fire to parts of the mosque and spray-painted anti-Islam slogans on its walls.

The Palestinian Ministry of Endowments and Religious Affairs said the attack constituted a violation of international law and conventions safeguarding freedom of worship and the sanctity of religious sites. It called on the Organization of Islamic Cooperation and Arab and Islamic states to take action to "end these indescribable attacks."

The occupied West Bank, including East Jerusalem, has witnessed a sharp escalation over the past two years, resulting in the martyrdom of at least 1,069 Palestinians, the injury of about 10,000 others, and the arrest of more than 20,000 people, including 1,600 children.