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Russia Urges No 'Escalation of Violence' in Jerusalem

By AFP

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Russia on Saturday condemned attacks on civilians after violent clashes between Israeli police and Palestinians at Jerusalem's flashpoint Al-Aqsa mosque compound and urged both sides to refrain from escalating violence.

More than 200 people were wounded when Israeli riot police clashed with Palestinians at the Al-Aqsa mosque compound late Friday, capping a week of violence in the Holy City and the occupied West Bank.

"This development of events is perceived with deep concern in Moscow. We strongly condemn attacks against civilians," the foreign ministry said in a statement.

"We call on all parties to refrain from any steps fraught with the escalation of violence."

The clashes came as tensions have soared over Israeli restrictions on access to parts of the Old City during Ramadan and the threat of eviction hanging over four Palestinian families in east

Jerusalem to make way for Jewish settlers.

In its statement, Russia's foreign ministry said it reaffirmed Moscow's position that "the expropriation of land and property located on it, as well as the creation of settlements by Israel in the occupied Palestinian territories, including East Jerusalem, have no legal force."

"Such actions are a violation of international law and impede the achievement of a peaceful settlement based on the creation of two states — Palestine and Israel."

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