PMO: Israel Is Waging a Water War against Palestinians

Ramallah – Prime Minister Rami Hamdallah issued a statement decrying Israel's national water company Mekorot's decision to cut off water supplies to several Palestinian cities and villages.

"Israel wants to prevent Palestinians from leading a dignified life and uses its control over our water resources to this end; while illegal Israeli settlements enjoy uninterrupted water service, Palestinians are forced to spend great sums of money to buy water that is theirs in the first place," Hamdallah said.

Israel's national water company has cut off water supplies to the municipality of Jenin, several Nablus villages and the city of Salfit and its surrounding villages. As a result, tens of thousands of Palestinians have been left without access to safe drinking water during the month of Ramadan, and are forced to buy water from water trucks. Almost 200,000 Palestinians in the West Bank do not have access to running water, and require permission from Israeli authorities before collecting it themselves, according to a report by Amnesty International.

Jamal Dajani, Director of Strategic Media and Communications at the Prime Minister's Office, called Mekorot's practice "inhumane and outrageous."

"Israel is waging a water war against Palestinians," Dajani said. "It is not enough for Israel to systematically appropriate Palestinian land and usurp Palestine's natural resources; they also refuse the Palestinians the right to water."

Israel's exclusive control over the Mountain Aquifer – a trans-boundary resource that must be shared between both sides – facilitates its illegal exercise of exploiting Palestinian water resources. According to a 2013 Report by the Human Rights NGO Al Haq, Israel's national water company Mekorot routinely reduces Palestinian water supply during the summer months – sometimes by as much as 50 percent.