

Netanyahu: Agreement could signal weakness

by UPI

JERUSALEM - Jerusalem would be a magnet for terror if Israel withdraws from eastern neighborhoods as part of Israeli-Palestinian talks, an Israeli opposition leader warns. "Israel must not, under any circumstances, withdraw from Jerusalem and allow another terrorism base to be established in the heart of the country," opposition leader Binyamin Netanyahu said Wednesday. The Likud chairman, speaking during the Jerusalem Conference in Jerusalem, said "it should be made clear" that Hamas would take over any place from which the Israelis withdraw, Ynetnews.com reported. Israeli Prime Minister Ehud Olmert and Palestinian Authority President Mahmoud Abbas and negotiating teams have been engaging in peace negotiations that include Jerusalem. The Palestinians want East Jerusalem, claimed by Israel in the 1967 war, as a future capital. Netanyahu said Islamic fundamentalism "constitutes a conventional and unconventional threat to Israel," saying the withdrawal from Lebanon bolstered Hezbollah and the pullout from Gaza fortified Hamas. "Signing an agreement with such a weak Palestinian government signals Hamas and Iran that Israel is planning a pullout, and that Iran can move to fill in the void," Netanyahu said. "If we withdraw from Jerusalem, it will become the Mecca of global terror."

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