

Netanyahu: Prisoner release a big mistake

by UPI

JERUSALEM - Former Israeli Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu said Tuesday that Prime Minister Ehud Olmert's decision to release Palestinian prisoners is a mistake.

Netanyahu also told a Jewish assembly that he wasn't going to interfere in negotiations over the release of Israeli soldier Gilad Shalit, the Jerusalem Post reported.

Olmert announced Monday that Israel would free 250 Fatah prisoners.

"For us, releasing prisoners would be crossing a red line. We must remember there are prices we can pay and prices we cannot afford to pay," Netanyahu said in the Post report.

Deputy Defense Minister Efraim Sneh praised the prisoner-release decision, telling Israel Radio release could hasten Shalit's release.

"We must return Shalit home at a price that is bearable for Israeli society," Sneh said on Israel Radio, the Post reported.

Shalit was kidnapped by Palestinians in Gaza a year ago Monday.

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