

RELEASE IN FULL

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Subject: Fw: AP: Israeli PM: Israel must keep Jordan Valley

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FYI. In light of upcoming S-call. This just out.

JERUSALEM - (AP) Israel's prime minister says he won't pull out of a key part of the West Bank even if there's a peace agreement with the Palestinians.

Benjamin Netanyahu was referring to the Jordan River Valley along the eastern border of the West Bank. Palestinians claim all of the West Bank as part of their future state.

Netanyahu's pronouncement comes as the U.S. is pushing hard to restart peace talks. Palestinians hesitate to negotiate because of Netanyahu's hardline attitudes and Israeli settlement construction.

Netanyahu told a parliamentary committee Tuesday that the Jordan Valley's strategic importance makes it impossible for Israel to withdraw, according to a meeting participant who spoke on condition of anonymity because the meeting was closed.