

Istanbul Summit: The Organization of Islamic Cooperation (OIC) Declares East Jerusalem Capital of Palestine, Urges US to Withdraw From Peace Process

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The Organization of Islamic Cooperation (OIC) declared East Jerusalem the capital of Palestine “under occupation” and urged the U.S. to withdraw from the peace process and back down from its Jerusalem decision in a statement issued following an extraordinary summit in Istanbul on Wednesday.

The OIC also called on other countries to recognize East Jerusalem as the Palestinian capital.

Following the summit, President Recep Tayyip Erdoğan, Palestinian President Mahmoud Abbas and OIC Secretary General Dr. Yousef bin Ahmad Al-Othaimen held a joint press conference to announce its results.

Abbas said that Palestinians can no longer accept the U.S. as mediator in the peace process since it has lost impartiality.

“We will apply to the UN Security Council for the annulment of US decision to recognize Jerusalem as Israel’s capital,” Abbas said, noting that all 14 member countries of the UNSC other than the U.S. support Palestine’s position.

As the final leader speaking in the summit, Erdoğan bitterly criticized the U.S. and Israel for reckless decisions placing themselves above the international law.

“I believe that with this historic summit we have shown the world that Jerusalem is not abandoned,” Erdoğan said and thanked all leaders for convening in such a short notice. “I think this portrait of unity on Jerusalem should set an example, lesson and warning for everyone,” he added.

Invited by Erdoğan, leaders and representatives of 57 Muslim countries gathered in Istanbul in response to last week’s U.S. recognition of Jerusalem as the capital of Israel, a decision believed to be pushed by President Donald Trump.

“Trump, do you stand behind this Israel? There is occupation, torture, terror there. Do you defend this Israel? But I find it normal since the [same] Trump mentality that used terrorist YPG/PYD against Daesh also does this,” said Erdoğan while condemning Israeli security forces for the violence against

protesters.

Erdoğan once again urged all countries which have not already done so to recognize the State of Palestine with Jerusalem as its capital.

Iranian President Hassan Rouhani, Jordanian King Abdullah II and Lebanese President Michel Aoun are among the heads of state attending the emergency summit in Istanbul, as well as the emirs of Qatar and Kuwait and presidents of Afghanistan and Indonesia.

Trump's announcement drew widespread international rejection and condemnation and sparked a wave of protests across the Muslim world.

Tension has particularly mounted in the Palestinian territories. Israeli security forces have so far killed two Palestinians and injured several hundred during demonstrations against the declaration.

Jerusalem remains at the heart of the Israel-Palestine conflict, with Palestinians hoping that East Jerusalem — illegally occupied by Israel since 1967 — might eventually serve as the capital of a Palestinian state.



This file photo dated Nov. 9, 2017 shows President Recep Tayyip Erdoğan speaking during the 1st Science and Technology Summit of the Organization of Islamic Cooperation (OIC) in Astana, Kazakhstan. (AA Photo)

According to the final communique of the summit in Istanbul, the OIC members agreed to:

1. Reject and condemn in the strongest terms the unilateral decision by the President of the United States America recognizing Al-Quds as the so-called capital of Israel, the occupying Power; reject it as null and void legally, and consider it an attack on the historical, legal, natural and national rights of the Palestinian people, a deliberate undermining of all peace efforts, an impetus to of extremism and terrorism, and a threat to international peace and security; and call upon all member states to give high priority for the Palestinian

question in their daily discourses and foreign policy agenda, especially in their dealing with counterparts in other parts of the world;

2. Reaffirm the centrality of the Cause of Palestine and Al-Quds Ash-Sharif to the Muslim Ummah; renew our principled support for the Palestinian people in their pursuit to attain their inalienable national rights, including their right to self-determination and the establishment of their independent and sovereign Palestinian State on the borders of 4 June 1967, with Al-Quds Ash-Sharif as its capital; assert the status of Al-Quds Ash-Sharif in the hearts and minds of the Muslim and Christian peoples throughout the world because it has the first of the two qiblas, the third holy mosque, where Prophet Muhammad, peace be upon him, started his Mi'raj (Ascension to Heaven), and the birthplace of Jesus Christ, peace be upon him; and resolve to confront any steps that would affect the historical, legal, religious or status of the or political City of Al-Quds Ash-Sharif;

3. Reaffirm our attachment to the just and comprehensive-peace based on the two-state solution with East Jerusalem as the capital of the State of Palestine and consistent with internationally-recognized terms of reference and the 2002 Arab Peace Initiative adopted by the Extraordinary Islamic Summit Conference in Makkah Al-Mukarramah in 2005- as a strategic choice; and call on the international community to act in an effective and serious manner to achieve this solution;

4. Reaffirm our adherence to all resolutions adopted by the regular and extraordinary sessions of the Islamic Summit on the Cause of Palestine and the City of Al-Quds Ash-Sharif, in particular the Extraordinary Summit in Jakarta, including the affirmation that a comprehensive and just peace will be achieved only by ending the occupation and establishing the independent State of Palestine that has full sovereignty on the City of Al-Quds Ash-Sharif as its eternal capital;

5. Consider that this dangerous declaration, which aims to change the legal status of the City of Al-Quds Ash-Sharif, is null and void and lacks any legitimacy, as being a serious violation of the international law, and the Fourth Geneva Convention in particular, and all relevant resolutions of international legitimacy, particularly the U.N. Security Council resolutions No. 478 (1980) and 2334 (2016), the foundations of the peace process that stipulate that City of Al-Quds Ash-Sharif as a final status issue, the agreements signed and the undertakings made in this regard by the United States of America, which requires the immediate reversal of this decision;

6. Hold the U.S. Administration fully liable for all the consequences of not retracting from this illegal decision; and regard it as an announcement of the U.S. Administration's withdrawal from its role as sponsor of peace and its realization among all stakeholders and an encouragement of Israel, the occupying Power, to continue its policy of colonialism, settlement, apartheid and the ethnic cleansing it has been practicing in the occupied Palestinian territory in 1967, and in the City of Al-Quds Ash-Sharif at its core;

7. Thank regional institutions for their positive stand in favor of the State of Palestine and the status of Al-Quds; and mandate the General Secretariat to mobilize support for the cause of Palestine from all regional organizations.

8. Declare East Jerusalem as the capital of the State of Palestine and invite all countries to recognize the State of Palestine and East Jerusalem as its occupied capital;

9. Assert our continued commitment to protecting the City of Al-Quds Ash-Sharif, its historic status, its cultural mission, and its legal status, and to take all necessary measures to put an end to the violations committed by the brutal

Israeli occupation and any party that supports this occupation and its colonial and racist policies; and condemn in this regard the full and unjustified bias of the U.S. Congress in favor of the imperial and racist policies and practices of Israel, the occupying Power;

10. Welcome the international consensus rejecting the declaration of the U.S. Administration, which violates all resolutions of international legitimacy, because of its serious repercussions on the security and stability in the region and the world; and regard this international consensus as a message of strong support for the rights of the Palestinian people and their just Cause and right to their land, notably the City of Al-Quds Ash-Sharif;

11. Support all legal and political steps at the national and international levels, which contribute to preserving the historical and legal status of the City of Al-Quds Ash-Sharif; and support the State of Palestine in its efforts in all international forums to consolidate its sovereignty over Al-Quds Ash-Sharif and the occupied Palestinian territory in general;

12. Call upon all States to continue to fully implement UNSCR 478 of 1980 and in this regard urge all States to: a) refrain from supporting the U.S. decision to recognize Jerusalem as the so-called capital of Israel and; b) not to relocate their Diplomatic Missions to Al-Quds Ash-Sharif;

13. Call on the U.N. Security Council to assume its responsibilities immediately and reaffirm the legal status of the City of Al-Quds Ash-Sharif, and to end the Israeli occupation of the land of the State of Palestine, to ensure the international protection of the Palestinian people, and to implement and respect all its resolutions on the Palestinian Cause;

14. Affirm its readiness to take up this grave violation in the U.N. General Assembly should the U.N. Security Council fail to act in accordance with the U.N. General Assembly resolution no.377A; the "Uniting for Peace resolution";

15. Stand for the Cause of Palestine and Al-Quds Ash-Sharif as the main issue in international forums, including Member States' voting in favor of the relevant resolutions of the Security Council, the General Assembly, the Human Rights Council, the UNESCO and other international organizations and expressing their rejection of any action contrary to this principled position, and any member state taking a different stance shall be considered to have left Islamic unanimity and should therefore be held accountable;

16. Urge strongly all member states to support Bayt Mal Al-Quds Ash-Sharif, the executive arm of Al-Quds Committee chaired by His Majesty King Mohammed VI of Morocco, in order to help the steadfastness of the inhabitants of Al-Quds;

17. Express unequivocal support for the just struggle of the Palestinian people and our condemnation of the Israeli attacks on the peaceful protests of the Palestinian people against the illegal declaration of the U.S. Administration and our full solidarity with the Palestinian people in these difficult circumstances, which require Member States and all peace-loving forces to take urgent action to avoid taking any similar steps and to respond to the imperialist and racist procedures by Israel, the occupying Power, towards the City of Al-Quds Ash-Sharif;

18. Also affirm commitment to provide the necessary material resources to support the steadfastness of the Palestinian people within the occupied Palestinian territory, particularly in the City of Al-Quds Ash-Sharif, who continue to protect the historic, civilizational and legal identity of the Holy City;

19. Strongly urge all Member States, specialized agencies and non-governmental organizations in the Member States to increase their contributions to the United Nations Relief and Works Agency for Palestine Refugees in the Near East (UNRWA) so as to ease the ongoing financial crises, exacerbated by the current humanitarian situation on the ground, and to support the Agency's valuable work in assisting the Palestine refugees;

20. Call upon the Member States and relevant OIC bodies to continue to provide all forms of economic, social, technical and material support and assistance to the Palestinian people and the State of Palestine including promotion and facilitation of trade with Palestine, developing capacity building programs and enhancing financial and economic assistance to build up a strong and independent Palestinian national economy and to strengthen the economic and social development of Palestine, including the City of Al-Quds Al-Sharif, as its capital;

21. Call upon the OIC Executive Committee and its Bureau and the Ministerial Contact Group on Al-Quds to act expeditiously and communicate with the governments of world countries and international organizations to raise their awareness of the seriousness of this step and the actions of Muslim countries in this regard and to act preemptively concerning any negative consequences of the declaration of the U.S. Administration;

22. Request IDB to support economic and social development endeavors in Quds Al-Sharif and other occupied territories through the "Islamic Solidarity Fund for Development" by prioritizing Palestine's projects and formulating special and flexible mechanisms and procedures for them;

23. Assert the need to continue to follow developments in this regard and to take the necessary action accordingly.

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