

Trump Declaration on Jerusalem Unleashes Palestine Solidarity Demonstrations Worldwide

United Nations Security Council debate illustrates increasing isolation of United States' Israeli policy

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Under the tremendous weight of domestic scrutiny and criticisms of his policies, President Donald Trump issued yet another executive order mandating the transfer of Washington's embassy in Tel Aviv to Jerusalem.

Trump was following the sentiments of many within the United States Congress which provides unconditional support to the State of Israel. Both the Democratic and Republican parties have continued to allocate billions in tax dollars and weaponry annually to the Israeli government which is utilized to suppress the national will of the Palestinian people.

Demonstrations immediately erupted inside Palestine in numerous cities, towns and villages denouncing the decision by Trump. Clashes took place between the Palestinians and the Israeli security forces which fired rubber bullets, live ammunition and teargas at unarmed largely youthful protesters.

On December 8, two Palestinians were killed in attacks by Israeli forces in Gaza. This area of the country is considered the largest open air prison in the world which has been subject to periodic bombing operations by the Israeli Defense Forces (IDF).

Israeli authorities have accused Palestinian fighters from Hamas of firing rockets into various areas of the country during December 8-12. No casualties have been reported on the Israeli side and only minor property damage occurred.

Nonetheless, in what is described as retaliatory attacks on Gaza, several missile and airstrikes were conducted by the IDF and the Israeli Air Force (IAF). Initial claims that two Islamic Jihad combatants were killed on December 12 by an IAF strike was later modified saying the deaths were the result of the mishandling of explosives.

Islamic Jihad did acknowledge that two members of the engineering division of the Al Quds Brigades, its military wing, were killed in northern Gaza without claiming any IDF culpability in the deaths. A statement issued by the Al Quds Brigades said the two men killed were Mustafa Mufid Mohammed al-Sultan, 29, from Beit Lahia and Hussein Ghazi Hussein Nasrallah, a 25 year-old who lived in the Karama neighborhood.

Relatives of the deceased who were interviewed at the hospital where their bodies were transported relayed to the French Press Agency (AFP) that the two were affiliated with

Islamic Jihad, a resistance organization that has fought in alliance with Hamas in the ongoing war against Israel. The Islamic Jihad members were riding on a motor bike when the explosion took place near the Gaza-Israeli border.

Demonstrations on the border between Gaza and Israel have resulted in additional casualties among Palestinians. Reports from the Palestine Health Ministry said that over 150 people have been injured since December 6 including at least 30 people being hit by bullets, some of whom were children.

Worldwide Response to the Trump Declaration

The Palestinians were not left alone to protest the latest provocations by the U.S. government as the world rose up to express their views on the issue. From Jakarta, Tehran, Beirut, Berlin, London, New York City, Detroit, etc., millions took to the streets under the slogan of "Free Palestine: Jerusalem is the Capital."



Abayomi Azikiwe holding placard at Palestine Solidarity Demonstration in Downtown Detroit on Dec. 8, 2017

Even in Yemen which has been under heavy bombardment by the U.S. supported and Saudi Arabian-led Gulf Cooperation Council (GCC) for over two years, demonstrations were held in the capital of Sana'a on December 8 in solidarity with the Palestinian people. Thousands attended the protests in the capital and other areas carrying Palestinian flags and pledging to fight for the liberation of Jerusalem.

In the Lebanese capital of Beirut many gathered outside the U.S. embassy on December 8 where they clashed with security forces attempting to push them away from the entrance. Demonstrators set fires in the streets around the embassy while burning U.S. and Israeli flags.

The Indonesian capital of Jakarta was the scene of a mass protest involving thousands of people who gathered also outside the American embassy. Activists said they were not satisfied with the official statements condemning Trump's move by the government and wanted harsher measures implemented against Washington.

Rabat, the capital of the North African state of Morocco, also witnessed large demonstrations in solidarity with Palestine. Participants repudiated the U.S. president saying that Jerusalem belonged to the Palestinian people.

Demonstrations were held as well in the Islamic Republic of Iran where students on December 11 gathered at Palestine Square to protest policies of the U.S. towards Palestine. Inside of Iran the denunciations against Trump were echoed throughout the highest levels of the state and military.

According to an article published by Press TV:

"Major General Qassem Soleimani, commander of the Islamic Revolution Guards Corps' Quds Force, has reaffirmed the Islamic Republic's full support for Palestinian resistance movements. Soleimani made the remarks in a phone call on Monday (Dec. 11) with commanders of Hamas' military wing, Ezzeddin al-Qassam Brigades, which has been defending the blockaded Gaza Strip against Israel's acts of aggression, and the Islamic Jihad resistance movement. The senior IRGC commander also urged all resistance movements in the region to boost their readiness to defend the al-Aqsa Mosque."

Iranian President Hassan Rouhani suggested that the efforts by Trump and the leadership of the Israeli government to win acceptance of Jerusalem as the capital of Israel would fail. The Iranian leader reaffirmed the solidarity of the Islamic Republic in the struggle for the total liberation of Palestine and its people.

As it relates to President Rouhani and his support for the Palestinian resistance, Press TV reported on December 11 saying:

"In a phone call with Ismail Haniyeh, the leader of Palestinian resistance movement Hamas, on Monday (Dec. 11), Rouhani said the 'insulting' move by the US President Donald Trump to recognize Jerusalem al-Quds as Israel's 'capital' was a vicious plan against Palestine and the Muslim world, urging all Muslims to stand against it in unison. 'The Islamic Republic of Iran strongly

condemns this U.S. move. This incorrect move further revealed the nature of the US and Zionist regime [of Israel] to the world and showed that they do not want to officially recognize the Palestinian people's rights at all,' the Iranian president said. Rouhani called on all Palestinian movements to give a firm response to the Israeli regime and the U.S."

Palestine solidarity actions were held all over the U.S., whose government and ruling class have been the staunchest supporters of Israel internationally. Rallies and marches took place in New York City, Chicago, Los Angeles, Detroit, among other municipalities.



Demonstration outside US embassy in Malaysia against US Palestine policy

In the city of Detroit, whose metropolitan area has the largest concentration of people of Middle Eastern descent in the U.S., a rally and march was held on December 8 in the heart of downtown. The demonstration was called by Palestinian American youth with the assistance of anti-imperialist activists from several organizations.

Speeches were delivered at Hart Plaza while people carried placards saying that "Jerusalem is the Capital of Palestine." Later the crowd marched north on Woodward Avenue to Campus Martius where another speak out was held.

United Nations Security Council Holds Unprecedented Session in Response to U.S. Policy

A UN Security Council meeting was convened on December 8 where the executive order of Trump was debated. Only the State of Israel's representative spoke in favor of U.S. policy.

Even Washington's allies within the European Union and the Middle East objected to the declaration by the White House. This emergency session was convened by eight of the 15 members of the council being the U.K., France, Sweden, Bolivia, Uruguay, Italy, Senegal and Egypt.

Nonetheless, no resolutions condemning Washington were put forward. The U.S. has veto power as a permanent member of the UNSC.

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