

THE EXTRAORDINARY ISLAMIC SUMMIT OF THE OIC REGARDING AL-QUDS AL-SHARIF

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December 13, 2017

His Excellency Recep Tayyip Erdogan

President of the Republic of Turkey

Your Majesties, Your Highnesses,

Honourable Heads of State and Government

His Excellency Dr Yousef Al-Othaimen

Secretary-General of the OIC

Excellencies, Ladies and Gentlemen,

1. Let me begin by expressing my sincere appreciation to you, Mr Chairman, and the Government of Turkey for the generous hospitality extended to me and my delegation during our stay in Istanbul.

2. I would also like to commend you for the timely convening of this Summit given the grave consequences of recognising Al-Quds Al-Sharif as the capital of Israel.

Mr Chairman,

3. Malaysia condemns and totally rejects the unilateral decision by the United States to recognise Jerusalem as the capital of Israel, and to relocate its embassy from Tel Aviv to Jerusalem.

4. Such a move undermines all efforts towards finding a comprehensive, just and durable solution to the Palestinian-Israeli conflict. More than ever, the future of the two-state solution hangs in the balance given its fragile context.

5. Any attempt to recognise Al-Quds Al-Sharif or any changes in the pre-1967 borders, is an infringement of the Palestinian people's rights and their right to self-determination. It is also a serious breach of international law and the relevant UN Security Council resolutions, including the recent Resolution 2334 (2016).

6. The final status of Al-Quds Al-Sharif should not be decided on by a unilateral recognition. It must be resolved through bilateral negotiations between Palestine and Israel under the framework of the two-state solution.

7. Recognition of Al-Quds Al-Sharif as the capital of Israel is akin to adding fuel to what is already a combustible situation. Doing so also endorses Israel's brutal occupation and repressive policies, which have caused immense suffering to the Palestinian people. Mr. Chairman,

8. As we know, the issue of Al-Quds Al-Sharif is at the heart of the Palestinian cause. The decision by the US is a provocation and has serious consequences on the security of the region. It has inflamed the sentiments of the Palestinians and the Muslim Ummah worldwide. We have witnessed violence and unrest as a result. We have seen protests and demonstrations against the decision, including in my own country. We fear that this is a situation waiting to explode as tensions continue to escalate in the region.

9. As an Organisation that represents more than 1.6 billion Muslims, the OIC must not be indifferent. It cannot remain silent in the face of such an unjust development. Our collective voice cannot be ignored, and neither should the chorus of negative reaction from the wider international community.

10. We must unite in our cause to reject any move to proclaim Al-Quds Al-Sharif as the capital city of Israel. On the contrary, Al-Quds Al-Sharif must ultimately be the capital of the State of Palestine.

11. We must work together as Muslim brothers, and with the international community, to ensure that the status of Al-Quds Al-Sharif is negotiated within the framework of a two-state solution.

12. At the same time, we must strive to dissuade other countries from following suit in proclaiming the city as Israel's capital. Our faith unites us in this endeavour and we must not relent in our collective will to fight for what is right and just.

Mr. Chairman,

13. The impasse in the Middle East Peace Process needs pragmatic solutions based on international law and norms, and we hope the US can make a helpful contribution by firstly rescinding its decision and secondly shouldering its responsibility in helping to achieve a comprehensive and lasting peace on the basis of the two-state solution.

14. We must be reminded that Al-Quds Al-Sharif is sacred to Muslims and is also a place of great religious significance to other faiths. These holy sites remind us that the city should be a place of peace where worshippers from different faiths can congregate and pray. We should therefore do all we can to preserve peace in the city and ensure access for worshippers of all faiths.

15. In concluding, we must remind ourselves that we need to unite and speak with one voice to ensure that any attempt to alter the character and status quo of Al-Quds Al-Sharif against the wishes of the Palestinian people is therefore objectionable and must be totally rejected.

Thank you.

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