

OIC recognizes East Jerusalem as capital of Palestine

Under the leadership of the Turkish President, the OIC unites for Palestine, while Erdogan bolsters his personal prestige in a calculated diplomatic masterstroke.



by [Adam Garrie](#)

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BREAKING: OIC recognizes East

Jerusalem as capital of Palestine

15-19 Minuten

A meeting of the Organisation for Islamic Cooperation (OIC) in Turkey has produced a joint declaration on Palestine. The Istanbul Declaration's main points are as follows:

- The OIC will recognise East Jerusalem/East Al-Quds as the capital of the State of Palestine
- The US cannot play any part in the peace process as it Washington is not impartial
- Members of OIC nations will push for the UN to recognise the full statehood of Palestine



- The OIC will put pressure on countries which have not yet recognised Palestine as a state to do so immediately

Below is the [full text of the 23 point](#) Istanbul Declaration on Palestine:

“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”.

How it unfolded

After a closed door meeting, OIC Secretary General Yousef Al-Othaimeen offered brief introductory remarks followed by a statement from Palestine’s President Mahmoud Abbas.

President Abbas hailed the meeting as one of the most successful Islamic summits in history. He reaffirmed that Palestine cannot accept the US as a peace broker as the US has forfeited any claim to be an honest and neutral partner.

He further affirmed that Palestine will go to the UN in order to declare Trump’s declaration null and void while pushing the UN to recognise the full statehood of Palestine.

The main speaker was the summit’s host Turkey’s President Recep Tayyip Erdogan. Erdogan stated that the founding mission of the OIC was to protect that sanctity of al-Quds and that today’s summit has shown the world that Al-Quds is not alone.

Erdogan affirmed the mutual stance of the OIC that America's participation in future peace talks over Palestine has "come to an end" and that OIC member states will identify new mediators along with the UN.

As he did earlier in the day, Erdogan once again showed slides detailing the history of Israeli occupation of Palestine. He then showed images of Israeli soldiers and military style police torturing Palestinian children and other civilians.

Erdogan then rhetorically asked how Trump could defend such actions, saying,

"Hey Trump, are you backing up *this country*—this Israel? There is torture here...terrorism here..is that what you are defending?"

The Turkish President answered his question by stating that Trump is a defender of a "zealous Zionist rationale".

He further stated that Trump "*would* defend such a country" as the US has been using YPG-PYD terrorists to allegedly fight Daesh in Syria.

What is the significance?

In many ways the most significant development at the summit was the unmistakable position of Iran and Turkey as non-Arab countries, taking a clear leadership role on Palestine, an issue once dominated by Arab luminaries such as Egypt's Nasser, Libya's Gaddafi and to an extent Iraq's Saddam Hussein. Today, Syria remains the only Arab state to continue and speak in a clear and decisive manner for Palestine, although Syria's own war against terrorism is the immediate priority.

In this sense, the conference helps to further solidify an already strong and rapidly growing Iran-Turkish partnership that just over a year ago would have been difficult to imagine.

Inspired by very high level participation at extraordinary OIC summit, despite handful of telling exceptions. The entire Muslim world stands in solidarity with Palestinians and rejects Trump's gifting of what he does not own to those who have no right to it.

— Javad Zarif (@JZarif) [December 13, 2017](#)

This, along with Lebanon's support for the OIC initiatives affirms my own statements that the Northern Bloc of the Middle East is the clear diplomatic winner in the hearts and

minds of the Arab street and the wide Muslim world.

The comparative lack of enthusiasm from Saudi Arabia and its contemporary allies, including Egypt was noticeable. Even Jordan's King Abdullah II, the custodian of the holy mosques of the Noble Sanctuary in Al-Quds, make what by his standards were strong statements in favour of the OIC's ultimate decision. Considering Jordan's normally good relations with Israel and highly good relations with the US, this statement carried considerable weight.

Beyond this, Donald Trump's move has clearly triggered a geo-political backlash. The signatories to the Istanbul Declaration include countries as varied as Pakistan, Indonesia, Albania, Malaysia and the Arab world. While it remains to be seen which countries will be fully implement the declaration in respect of their own national laws and diplomatic positions, it is clear that the condemnation of the US move has been universal, with even the EU criticising Trump's unilateralism.

Erdogan's moment

Turkey's President has clearly used the summit to enhance his personal prestige in

the wider Muslim world. His impassioned rhetoric and fierce condemnation of both Israel and the US has already proved popular on Arabic social media, outside of the countries with whom Turkey has outstanding disputes.

Beyond this, Erdogan has used the summit to solidify his multi-polar credentials. Venezuela's President Nicolas Maduro attended the summit as an observer and Erdogan thanked Maduro profusely during his remarks.

When Erdogan went on to call the Venezuelan President the voice and leader of his region, it was another shot at the US which for years has been trying to oust both Maduro and his Bolivarian predecessor Hugo Chavez.

CONCLUSION:

In respect of the efficacy of the Istanbul Declaration, it all boils down to how united OIC members will remain when it comes to implementing that which they have pledged to implement.

If a majority of the concerned nations do take active measures to implement the articles of the Declaration, it could have a

great deal of geo-political impact, insofar as a wide variety of nations from around the world—nations which don't often agree with one another, act in unison in response to a highly provocative move by the United States.

For Erdogan, it is largely mission accomplished. He has finally found an issue to bolster his pan-Islamic credentials to the broadest possible audience, while shaming some of his own regional rivals (Egypt and Saudi Arabia in particular) and making it clear beyond a reasonable doubt, that for the time being, Turkey's once healthy relations with both the US and Israel are over.