



INTERNATIONAL MEETING ON THE QUESTION OF JERUSALEM

*Strengthening international support for a just and lasting solution
of the question of Jerusalem*

Ankara, 12 and 13 May 2014

CHECK AGAINST DELIVERY

OPENING SESSION

Statement by

H.E. Mr. Iyad bin Amin Madani
Secretary-General
Organization of Islamic Cooperation



OIC/PAL-2/2014/SG.SP

**ADDRESS OF
OIC SECRETARY GENERAL, MR. IYAD AMEEN MADANI**

**TO THE MEETING ON
“THE ISSUE OF AL-QUDS AL-SHARIF”**

ORGANIZED BY

**THE UN COMMITTEE ON
THE EXERCISE OF THE INALIENABLE RIGHTS OF THE PALESTINIAN PEOPLE**

IN PARTNERSHIP WITH

**THE ORGANIZATION OF ISLAMIC COOPERATION
AND
THE REPUBLIC OF TURKEY**

**ANKARA – REPUBLIC OF TURKEY
12 – 13 MAY 2014**

H.E. Mr. Ahmet Davutoglu, Minister of Foreign Affairs of the Republic of Turkey

H.E. Mr. Mahmoud Alhabbash, Minister of Awqaf, State of Palestine

H.E. Mr. Robert Serry, UN Secretary General's Representative

H.E. Amb. Abdussalam Diallo, Chairman of the Committee on the Exercise of the Inalienable Rights of the Palestinian People

**Excellencies,
Ladies and Gentlemen,**

Allow me, at the outset, to express the OIC's appreciation for the efforts undertaken by the Committee on the Exercise of the Inalienable Rights of the Palestinian People, and for its Chairman Mr. Abdussalam Diallo and all the members of its Bureau, for their diligent action in the service of the just Palestinian cause. I wish also to avail of this opportunity to pay tribute to the UN General Secretariat's Division for Palestinian Rights, for their commendable efforts to ensure the success of this meeting which reflects one of the aspects of our partnership and mutual cooperation. May I also reiterate here our keen interest in keeping up and further developing our joint action in the service of the cause of Palestine and Al-Quds Al-Sharif/Jerusalem. By the same token, let me extend our thanks to the Republic of Turkey, its people and its government, for its co- sponsoring and hosting this meeting as well as for its pioneering role in supporting the Palestinian people and their legitimate national rights.

**Excellencies
Ladies and Gentlemen**

I am highly gratified to be among you today as we gather to discuss the issue of Al-Quds/Jerusalem which was actually a key factor behind the establishment of the Organization of Islamic Cooperation, in the aftermath of the brutal arson attack on the holy Al-Aqsa Mosque in 1969. Ever since, Al-Quds has been at the forefront of our interests and agenda. While we reiterate here our firm position that the holy city of Al-Quds forms an integral part of the Palestinian territory occupied since 1967, we similarly renew our commitment to the defense of its Palestinian people along with our support for the international efforts to end the Israeli occupation and ensure the City's return to Palestinian sovereignty, as a capital for the Palestinian state, and our consistent emphasis on the United Nations' continued responsibility towards the Palestine cause, including Al-Quds Al-Sharif.

**Excellencies
Ladies and Gentlemen**

The OIC has been following with deep concern the serious Israeli occupier's policies in the occupied City of Al-Quds, and its various undertakings designed to alter the City's geographic and demographic character and to obliterate its Arab identity and religious and historical status, through the continued construction and expansion of Israeli settlements both within and around the City, and through recurrent aggressions on its Islamic and Christian sanctuaries, and on its citizens by confiscating their properties, demolishing their homes, forcibly driving them out of their town by all types of means, and through the attempts to pass brutally unjust and illegitimate laws to impose Israeli sovereignty on the Holy Al-Aqsa Mosque; all in addition to the continued settlement policy, the judeization process, the confiscation of land, in addition to imposing the siege on the Gaza Strip. In this respect, we reaffirm that these serious violations do not represent an aggression against the Palestinian people and their land and sanctuaries alone, but also a blatant defiance of the international community's will and the international legitimacy resolutions, not to mention the fact that they also pose a threat to security and stability in the whole region.

Ladies and Gentlemen

We have followed the outcome of the diligent efforts led by the US Secretary of State to work out a peace agreement between the Palestinians and Israelis. We are today on a critical political juncture, concretized in the impasse reached in the peace negotiations with the end of the nine-month period, after Israel, the occupying force, shut down all the doors to any possible progress towards a just and comprehensive political settlement that would ensure security and stability in the region, having persistently refused to honour its commitments to release the Palestinian political prisoners, in addition to announcing the construction of over fourteen thousand new colonial settlement units over the nine-month period.

The immensity of the Israeli violations of international law, which has exceeded all limits, commands a different brand of international intervention. It is not acceptable that Israel continues to conduct itself as if it were a state above the law, perpetrating its exactions fearless of any response and with full impunity. It is therefore an international responsibility for all the states and institutions to deal with these Israeli violations on the basis that they form a threat to international peace and security. On this occasion we need to recall how it was only through an international, unified and firm stand that the Apartheid regime in South Africa was brought to an end. Accordingly, Israel's reversal of its illegal practices is contingent on its realizing that there is a price to pay for its transgressions, and that the world can no longer put up with its practices. Here I feel it my duty to express our satisfaction with the European Union's decision regarding the Israeli colonial settlements and invite the other states of the world to follow suit and take a stand against settlement activities as a colonial act that breaches international law and violates the Geneva Conventions.

**Excellencies
Ladies and Gentlemen**

With Palestine's access to the United Nations as an observer state, this should form an appropriate foundation on which we can build in favour of moving towards the achievement of the two-state solution, and in support of the continued international efforts to invigorate the peace process which the OIC is still committed to promote, and to insist on the necessary conditions for its success, including activating the international community's will, and putting an end to all unilateral actions on the ground, in addition to the recognition of the agreed international references, including the UN resolutions and the Arab peace initiative, as a necessary preliminary stage towards a peace agreement that would lead to the concretization of the sovereignty of the independent state of Palestine with East Jerusalem as its capital.

We have welcomed the agreement concluded recently for the implementation of the Palestinian national reconciliation as a main pillar and important step towards the protection of the higher Palestinian interests, and towards enabling the Palestinian people to continue their progress for the recovery of their legitimate rights and the establishment of their independent state on the 1967 borders with Al-Quds Al-Sharif/Jerusalem as its capital. In this respect, we call upon the international community to support the Palestinian national reconciliation efforts and facilitate their success in view of the significant role this would play in promoting peace and stability the region.

In conclusion, I would like to avail myself of this opportunity to reiterate the OIC's support for, and solidarity with, the Palestinian people in their endeavours to recover their legitimate and inalienable rights, including the right of return, the right to self-determination and to the concrete establishment of their independent state on the Palestinian territory occupied since 1967, with East Jerusalem as its capital, and the achievement of a just solution for the issue of the Palestinian refugees, in accordance with the relevant United Nations resolutions.
