



**STATEMENT OF THE ORGANISATION OF ISLAMIC COOPERATION
ON THE OCCASION OF THE SPECIAL MEETING IN OBSERVANCE OF
THE INTERNATIONAL DAY OF SOLIDARITY WITH THE
PALESTINIAN PEOPLE**

New York, 29 November 2017

**Ambassador Fode Seck,
Chairman of the United Nations Committee on the Exercise of the
Inalienable Rights of the Palestinian People;**

Ladies and gentlemen,

It is an honor for the Organization of Islamic Cooperation to address this important meeting in observance of the "International Day of Solidarity with the Palestinian People". On this occasion, I am pleased to express the profound appreciation of the OIC for the United Nations and its various committees and organs for their unwavering efforts to promote international solidarity with the Palestinian people and support their legitimate national rights.

Mr. Chair,

We meet to observe this occasion, which coincides this year with the first centenary of the ill-fated Balfour Declaration that represented the beginning of the historical injustice whose ramifications continue to be felt by the Palestinian people who, for decades, have suffered occupation, oppression, expulsion and ethnic cleansing. This occasion also comes up after 70 years since the United Nations General Assembly adopted its resolution 181 on the partition plan of Palestine. However, the State of Palestine is yet to achieve its independence and the Palestinian people remain deprived from exercising their legitimate national rights.

On this occasion, the OIC reaffirms the historical, legal, political and moral responsibility which the international community carries to find a just solution to all aspects of the Palestinian question, in accordance with international law and the relevant resolutions of the United Nations. This responsibility, *inter alia*, involves the necessity of ending the Israeli occupation, full recognition of the State of

Palestine, ensuring justice for the Palestinian people, enabling them to exercise their right to self-determination and to establish their sovereign independent state on the Palestinian territory occupied since 1967, with East Jerusalem as its capital, and finding a just solution to the issue of Palestinian refugees, in line with the United Nations General Assembly resolution 194.

Ladies and Gentlemen,

While we assert that East Jerusalem is an integral part of the Palestinian territory occupied in 1967 and the capital of the State of Palestine, we equally underscore the religious status of Al-Quds and the eternal linkage of Muslims all over the world to the blessed Al-Aqsa Mosque. We also reiterate our call on the international community to take practical and effective measures that will put an end to the Israeli violations and illegal practices aimed at changing the geographical and demographic status in and around East Jerusalem. These measures are null and void under international law and threaten to transform the political conflict to a religious war, the consequences of which no one can predict.

The OIC is following with deep concern the continuation of the policy of building and expanding Israeli settlements on the Palestinian territory occupied since 1967, including East Jerusalem. We have warned at many international fora against the failure of the international community to hold Israel, the occupying power, to account for its non-compliance with the principles of international law and relevant United Nations resolutions, which can undermine the international efforts to find a just and comprehensive solution based on the vision of the two-state solution. In this regard, we call for translating the international condemnation of the Israeli policy of settlement building into practical and effective measures in implementation of international resolutions foremost of which is the Security Council resolution 2334, as part of supporting the efforts for achieving peace.

Ladies and Gentlemen,

While we welcome the positive developments relating to the Palestinian national reconciliation, including the assumption by the Palestinian unity government of its responsibilities in the Gaza Strip, we call on the international community to continue to support the Palestinian reconciliation. At the same time, we affirm our stance that the continued illegal Israeli blockade of the Gaza Strip is tantamount to collective punishment and a flagrant violation of international humanitarian law resulting in grave humanitarian consequences for the Palestinian people, and it must stop.

The OIC also reiterates its commitment to the message of the Palestinian prisoners in the Israeli detention centers, including its support for their resilience. We call for effective action to defend their rights, internationalize their cause and get Israel, the

occupying power, to respect the provisions of international humanitarian law and relevant human rights instruments.

Mr. Chair,

The OIC reaffirms its solidarity with the Palestinian people and renews its commitment to support the international efforts aimed at achieving just and comprehensive peace, pursuant to relevant resolutions of the United Nations and the Arab peace initiative. It also calls on the international community to shoulder its responsibility for providing international protection for the Palestinian people, providing mechanisms for implementing relevant international legitimacy resolutions, and launching a political process with multilateral international sponsorship, in accordance with specified timeframe, as a real contribution to consolidating and implementing the two-state vision, to which we renew our commitment.

Thank you.