

Permanent Delegation
of the Organization of Islamic Cooperation
to the United Nations Office in Geneva



Délégation Permanente
de l'Organisation de Coopération Islamique
auprès de l'Office des Nations Unies à Genève

**STATEMENT OF THE
ORGANISATION OF ISLAMIC COOPERATION
ON THE OBSERVANCE OF THE INTERNATIONAL DAY OF
SOLIDARITY WITH THE PALESTINIAN PEOPLE
ORGANISED BY THE
UNITED NATIONS COMMITTEE ON THE EXERCISE OF THE
INALIENABLE RIGHTS OF THE PALESTINIAN PEOPLE**

**UNITED NATIONS OFFICE
GENEVA**

29 NOVEMBER 2017

Mr. Michael Möller, Director General of the United Nations Office in Geneva,

**Excellencies,
Ladies and Gentlemen,**

On 29 November each year, the international community observes the International Day of Solidarity with the Palestinian People, in implementation of the United Nations General Assembly resolution 32/40 of 1977, as an expression of its commitment to support the just cause of the Palestinian people and their efforts to regain their inalienable rights. On this occasion, I am pleased to express the Organization of Islamic Cooperation (OIC) appreciation to 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.

Our commemoration coincides this year with the centenary of the 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 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 Al-Quds Al-Sharif as its capital, and finding a just solution to the issue of the Palestinian refugees, in line with the United Nations General Assembly resolution 194.

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 condition in and around East Jerusalem. These measures are null and void under international law.

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, accountable for its non-compliance with the principles of international law and relevant UN resolutions, which can undermine the international efforts to find a just and comprehensive solution based on the two-state solution. In this regard, we call for the international condemnation of the Israeli policy of settlement building to be translated into practical and effective measures in implementation of international resolutions, foremost of which is Security Council resolution 2334, as part of the overall framework of supporting the efforts and chances of achieving peace.

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 occupation jails, including its support for their resilience. It calls for effective action to defend their rights, internationalize their issue and get Israel, the occupying power, to respect the provisions of international humanitarian law and relevant human rights instruments.

The OIC affirms 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 assume its responsibility for providing international protection to the Palestinian people, providing mechanisms for implementing relevant UN resolutions, and launching a political process with international sponsorship, within a specific timeframe, as a real contribution to consolidating and implementing the two-state vision, to which we renew our commitment.

Thank you.