

Ankara, 29 November 2017

Mr. Fodé Seck
Chairman of the Committee on the Exercise of the Inalienable Rights of
the Palestinian People

Mr. Chairman,

On the occasion of the Day of International Solidarity with the Palestinian People, I would like to once again salute the noble struggle of brotherly Palestinian People against oppression, occupation and destruction and to confirm our continuous support to our Palestinian brothers in their struggle for rights and freedom.

The ongoing Israeli occupation in Palestine is the most important hindrance for the establishment of stability and peace in the Middle East. Israel, despite the resolutions of the United Nations Security Council and the increasing international reaction, is expanding its occupation every passing day. Illegal settlements spreading harmfully on Palestinian lands like ivy are the most obvious proof of this.

As Turkey, we deem that the two-state solution within the 1967 borders for living side by side in peace and security is the only way to end the Israeli-Palestinian conflict. It is never possible to establish permanent peace in the Middle East without an independent, sovereign and contiguous Palestinian State and the Palestinian people embracing freedom in their own land. With this understanding, Turkey will continue to support all efforts for a comprehensive, fair and lasting peace. However, Israel's acts violating international law, occupation related activities and attempts to change the status of East Jerusalem frustrate the peace initiatives.

Israeli efforts to change the structure of Jerusalem, a city that is sacred for all three religions and the Israeli violations of the sanctity and the historical status of Al-Haram al-Sharif, one of the three sacred places of Islam are unacceptable. Each and every person should necessarily react to such practices in Jerusalem which is a corner stone for the stability of the region. The Cause of Jerusalem is the common concern not only for

Palestinians but also for all the people with a sense of justice in their hearts and for all the Muslims. As the Summit Chairman of the Organization of Islamic Cooperation, we will continue to follow these issues in the coming period.

We closely follow the recent developments particularly in terms of the Palestinian reconciliation. We welcomed the agreement signed by our Palestinian brothers on 12 October. We strongly desire that 2017, the 100th Anniversary of the Balfour Declaration, to be a year of unity and solidarity in Palestine. Resolution of the disagreements among our Palestinian brothers and them becoming one voice and one soul are important for the future of their just Cause. The recognition and support for Palestine by the countries that have yet to recognize Palestine also bears importance in this critical period. Turkey will give all the support for the successful advancement of the Palestinian National Reconciliation process and will never leave Palestinian brothers alone.

We are following with appreciation the efforts of the Committee on the Exercise of the Inalienable Rights of the Palestinian People towards defending the fundamental rights and freedoms of the Palestinian people. On this occasion, I wish success from Allah with the workings of your Committee and want to emphasize that we will continue our support and solidarity for the Palestinian Cause. On this meaningful day, on behalf of myself and the Turkish People, I send my heartfelt regards and affection to the Palestinian people; and I pray for their peace, welfare and prosperity.

Recep Tayyip Erdoğan
President of the Republic of Turkey