



Security Council

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Letter dated 10 April 2023 from the Permanent Representative of Jordan to the United Nations addressed to the President of the Security Council

Once again, tensions are rising at Jerusalem's holy sites. Israeli actions are violating the sanctity of the holy month of Ramadan and preventing worshippers from freely performing their religious duties. These illegal and provocative actions are fuelling an already explosive situation.

Despite previous commitments that it would respect the historical and legal status quo at the holy sites, including in the Aqaba and Sharm El Sheikh meetings, the Israeli government continues to violate the historical and legal status quo at Al-Aqsa Mosque/Al-Haram Al-Sharif.

The Israeli Police Force has repeatedly stormed Al-Aqsa Mosque/Al-Haram Al-Sharif. The Israeli government continues to prevent Palestinians from the West Bank and Gaza under the age of 40 from performing their religious duties at Al-Aqsa Mosque/Al-Haram Al-Sharif – one of the three most holy sites in Islam.

During the early hours of 5 April 2023, Israeli police brutally stormed Al-Aqsa Mosque/Al-Haram Al-Sharif. They injured hundreds and arrested hundreds more. The Israeli police fired rubber bullets and tear gas at peaceful, unarmed worshippers and vandalized the holy site.

Israel continues to impose limits on Palestinian Muslims' access to Al-Aqsa Mosque/Al-Haram Al-Sharif with the goal of ultimately creating a spatial and temporal division of the holy site. Such actions by Israel are clear and serious violations of its obligations as an occupying Power under the rules of international law and international humanitarian law, including those contained in the 1907 Regulations respecting the Laws and Customs of War on Land and the 1949 Geneva Convention relative to the Protection of Civilian Persons in Time of War.

These illegal and provocative actions are taking place against a dangerous environment of despair resulting from the absence of political horizons, and unilateral Israeli measures that undermine the prospects of peace and cause more suffering to the Palestinian people.

Jordan and other partners, including the United States of America and the Arab Republic of Egypt, have worked hard to prevent the eruption of violence and to ensure a period of calm that would allow for confidence-building measures and lead to political engagement to achieve just and lasting peace on the basis of the two-State solution.



Unfortunately, efforts have not achieved their purpose due to Israeli actions on the ground that continuously cause the situation to deteriorate. It is imperative that Israel take all necessary measures to de-escalate. Jordan urges members of the international community to send a clear message to Israel that it should stop all illegal and provocative actions that trigger violence. Jordan, however, will continue to work for calm and peace.

Israeli police must respect the sanctity of the holy sites and stop attacking worshippers. Israel must stop all intrusions into Al-Aqsa Mosque/Al-Haram Al-Sharif, especially during the last 10 days of the holy month of Ramadan, in accordance with the practice implemented for years. It must allow all Muslims and Christians to exercise their right to freedom of worship, a basic obligation of Israel not only as an occupying Power but also under the 1966 International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights. Israel needs to decrease the provocative and overwhelming police presence around the holy sites.

The Jordanian Waqf Department, under international law, has exclusive authority over the holy sites. The Waqf Department is the entity entitled, under the 1954 Hague Convention for the Protection of Cultural Property in the Event of Armed Conflict, to preserve and safeguard Al-Aqsa Mosque/Al-Haram Al-Sharif. Israel is bound under the Convention to respect the authority of the Waqf Department over the holy sites.

The Jordanian Waqf Department is capable of managing the holy sites and ensuring calm, but Israel continues to compromise its ability to do so. Israel has prevented the Waqf's cadre from doing its job and is putting unlawful limitations on the Waqf's role and resources.

In the face of Israeli attacks on Al-Aqsa Mosque/Al-Haram Al-Sharif, the Waqf cannot do much to maintain calm at the holy sites. Around 150 unarmed Waqf guards cannot control the chaos resulting from the continued Israeli police incursions.

The Jordanian Waqf Department will maintain calm and peace at the holy sites in these sensitive times if Israel, the occupying Power, stops fuelling tensions, stops attacking worshippers and refrains from creating chaotic conditions, in which it cannot operate.

The right to worship is a core human right that is well established in international law. Violating it is a trigger for violence, and violence begets violence.

Again, as the occupying Power, Israel must uphold its legal commitments and desist from such serious violations of international law.

The Hashemite Kingdom of Jordan will continue to work with all members of the international community to restore calm and achieve stability, security and a just peace on the basis of the two-State solution. This just peace is a right for all. It is imperative that all measures that compromise this right be stopped.

I would be grateful if you would arrange to have the present letter distributed as a document of the Security Council.

(Signed) Mahmoud D. **Hmoud**
Ambassador
Permanent Representative