



2025 Conference on the Question of Jerusalem

“Palestinian Oppression and Displacement in Jerusalem in the Shadow of the War: A Microcosm of the Situation throughout the Occupied Palestinian Territory”

Convened by the
Committee on the Exercise of the Inalienable Rights of the Palestinian People (CEIRPP)
and
the Organization of Islamic Cooperation (OIC)

Dakar, Senegal

9 July 2025

CHAIR SUMMARY

The 2025 Conference on the Question of Jerusalem *“Palestinian Oppression and Displacement in Jerusalem in the Shadow of the War: A Microcosm of the Situation throughout the Occupied Palestinian Territory”* was convened in Dakar, Senegal, under the joint auspices of the Organization of Islamic Cooperation (OIC) and the United Nations Committee on the Exercise of the Inalienable Rights of the Palestinian People (CEIRPP). In the margins of the Conference, the Committee Delegation held bilateral meetings with Senegalese officials, including the Prime Minister, the Minister of Foreign Affairs, the Committee on Foreign Affairs of the National Assembly and the leadership of Cheikh Anta Diop University.

The Conference focused on updating on the situation on the ground – in East Jerusalem and the wider Occupied Palestinian Territory (OPT) – and outlining practical actions that Member States and their civil societies can take to operationalize and implement GA res. ES-10/24 and to make the High-level International Conference for the Peaceful Settlement of the Question of Palestine and the Implementation of the Two-State Solution on 28-30 July 2025 a practical exercise leading to the achievement of the two-State solution.

Participants called for a just and lasting peace based on international law and the two-State solution. They stressed that the status of Jerusalem cannot be changed unilaterally and that the Israeli occupation, including the annexation of East Jerusalem, is illegal, based *inter alia* on relevant UN General Assembly and Security Council resolutions and the July 2024 Advisory Opinion of the International Court of Justice (ICJ). In the face of persistent impunity and lack of holding Israel accountable for its crimes, participants also called for strong international actions remedy this situation. Member States also called for the formal recognition of the State of

Palestine by those who have not yet done so and for its full membership in the United Nations, to ensure a peaceful future based on the coexistence of two sovereign states.

The event assembled a large number of ambassadors and other representatives of the diplomatic community in Dakar, academics and West African networks of civil society and solidarity movements. The video recording of the event is available on the Committee website (un.org/unispal).

At the Opening Session, **Ambassador Coly Seck, Permanent Representative of Senegal to the United Nations and Chair of the Committee**, underlined how the situation in East Jerusalem reflected the broader realities of the Occupied Palestinian Territory (OPT), where Palestinians endure the consequences of ongoing violations under an illegal occupation that affects every aspect of their daily life. As the General Assembly, through resolution ES-10/24, had called for an end to Israel's illegal occupation by end of September 2025, with less than three months remaining to act he urged Israel to immediately reverse its unlawful policies, measures and actions that entrench its control and occupation, its annexation of East Jerusalem and the threat to permanently annex more parts of the occupied West Bank. In terms of international support, Africa, in particular, had a profound role to play in advancing justice and solidarity, as evidenced by legal proceedings brought before the ICJ by South Africa and other countries, and the emergence of the Hague Group, a global bloc of States committed to "coordinated legal and diplomatic measures" in defence of international law and solidarity with the people of Palestine.

In his opening remarks, **Minister Riyad Mansour, Permanent Observer of the State of Palestine to the United Nations**, saluted the role of Senegal in the long struggle of the Palestinian people and its chairmanship of the UN Committee on Palestinian Rights since that body's inception in 1975. Jerusalem remained in danger of having its Palestinian and religious identity erased, a situation that needed to be halted and reversed. The situation in the City could not be seen outside the ongoing deterioration of that in the rest of the OPT, including "the genocide in the Gaza Strip". The international community's collective duty was to work on an immediate ceasefire and to stop the war and the killing of civilian women and men, he stressed. That ceasefire should then be made permanent, so that the Israeli forces would stop using starvation as a weapon of war against the Gazans, to bring them to submission to leave, committing the crime of forced transfer. The Gaza Strip remained part of the Palestinian homeland, along with the West Bank, including East Jerusalem. The reconvening of the High-Level Conference should lead to the reconstruction of Gaza and a meaningful political process that will bring an end to the illegal Israeli occupation as a whole.

The **Assistant Secretary-General of the OIC for Al-Quds and Palestine Affairs Samir Bakr** asserted that Al-Quds, as the capital of the State of Palestine, remained an integral part of the Occupied Palestinian Territory since 1967. All Israeli policies and measures in this context lacked legitimacy under international law and were a profound infringement on the political, historical, and legal rights of the Palestinian people, also contravening pertinent UN resolutions. He reiterated that the OIC categorically opposes any schemes aimed at the forced displacement of Palestinians, viewing such actions as grave violations of international law, and supports the Arab-Islamic Plan for Relief, Early Recovery, and Reconstruction of the Gaza Strip.

He emphasized the necessity of concrete steps from the international community towards realizing the two-State solution, including formal recognition of the State of Palestine and supporting its bid for full UN membership. He added that the OIC and its members believe that convening the United Nations High-Level Conference represented a historic opportunity to initiate actionable measures that would lead to a just, durable, and comprehensive peace in the region.

The representative of the United Nations Secretariat to the Conference, **Deputy Special Representative of the Secretary-General in the UN Office for West Africa and the Sahel Barrie Freeman**, delivering the remarks of Secretary-General Guterres, saluted Senegal for hosting this year's Jerusalem Conference thereby sending a powerful message of African solidarity with the Palestinian people. She called for an immediate ceasefire in Gaza and the unconditional release of all hostages in a dignified manner, and for full, safe and sustained humanitarian access. She added that what was happening in Jerusalem, including restrictions on Palestinian access and worship, continued provocations and incitements to violence, reverberated globally. In this regard, the position of the United Nations was clear – the status of Jerusalem cannot be altered by unilateral actions. It could only be resolved through negotiations between the parties. Jerusalem's demographic and historical character must be preserved and respecting and upholding the status quo at the Holy Sites was essential. She reiterated that the two-State solution remained the only framework rooted in international law, endorsed by UN resolutions and supported by the international community. The Jerusalem Conference offered a timely platform to mobilize collective efforts towards this solution.

In his opening remarks delivered on behalf of the Minister of African Integration and Foreign Affairs, the **Minister of Interior and Public Security of the Republic of Senegal Jean Baptiste Tine** praised efforts of the UN Palestinian Rights Committee, recalling Senegal's historic role and unwavering commitment to respect international law, justice and to the preservation of human dignity. The country resolutely supported the rights of the Palestinian people to self-determination and the establishment of an independent state, in accordance with the two-State solution, living side by side in peace and security, with East Jerusalem as the capital of Palestine.

Minister Tine painted a grim picture of the reality in Gaza, citing “more than 55,000 deaths, mostly women and children, thousands of wounded, millions of displaced people, and the destruction of an economy built through decades of effort.” He insisted that the Jerusalem Conference must not be another platform for repeated condemnations but constitute a decisive turning point in the international community's efforts to achieve a definitive solution to the Palestine question. “As diplomatic initiatives are running out of steam and calls for a ceasefire are met with indifference from some, we have a duty to transform our indignation into action, our solidarity into strategy, and our compassion into concrete commitment”, he stated. He called for a rapid and credible relaunch of the peace process, the adoption of an international mechanism for the protection of civilians, the implementation of the Arab Reconstruction Plan, and the effective recognition of the State of Palestine, with East Jerusalem as its capital, within the pre-1967 borders.

During the first plenary session under the topic “The Situation in Jerusalem and the Wider Occupied Palestinian Territory”, **Mr. Munir Nuseibah**, Director of Al-Quds Human Rights Clinic and Community Action Centre, spoke of the expansion of Israel’s “colonial project” in East Jerusalem through more structured and efficient demolitions of Palestinian homes and settlement expansion policies. He focused on recent Israeli legislation, including the laws banning the United Nations Relief and Works Agency for Palestine Refugees in the Near East (UNRWA) from working in the OPT and closing its headquarters in East Jerusalem, while prohibiting any communication with Israeli officials. These acts have led to the closure of schools and medical facilities, impacting on the provision of essential services to Palestinians. Secondly, a law allowing the Israeli Interior Minister to “deport” Palestinian residents of the City whose family members are facing terrorist charges has also been passed, amounting to collective punishment. Mr. Nuseibah further mentioned the amendment to the Israeli Basic Law, providing a legal and constitutional defence for the application of Israeli law in East Jerusalem, thus cementing its annexation, as well as the controversial bill that seeks to impose an 80 per cent tax on non-governmental organisations (NGOs) receiving foreign state funding while stripping them of their right to file lawsuits in Israeli courts. He lauded international initiatives to address the current situation, including the cases of South Africa v. Israel and Nicaragua v. Germany at the ICJ, and the establishment of the Hague Group.

Mr. Umar Al-Ghubari, a Palestinian educator working with the NGO Zochrot, recalled the first partition plan, in 1937, as the precursor for the establishment of a Jewish state with a strong military and economy, and the intention to use it to later control the other parts of Mandate Palestine. From the beginning, Zionist leaders had been clear in their intentions to forcibly transfer the Palestinian population to neighbouring Arab states at a later stage. Then, during the Nakba, more than 700,000 Palestinians had been expelled from the area that became the state of Israel. Around 600 towns and villages had been destroyed, and more than 150,000 Palestinians had remained under occupation, living under military rule for many years. While they later became citizens of Israel, their citizenship did not allow them to claim back land that had been expropriated or return to villages from which they had been expelled. Mr. Al-Ghubari cited the example of a neighbourhood in Jaffa as part of Israel’s erasure of the Palestinian identity and presence, as mosques and churches were converted to synagogues and museums. In West Jerusalem, cemeteries were vandalized and served as grounds for the construction of parks and university campuses. In light of the 1948 Nakba, he called for the prioritization of a process of accountability and repair and to focus on the right of return, as crucial for and an intrinsic part of the two-State solution.

Ms. Fatima Sheikh Ali, a field researcher at Al-Haq, spoke about the situation of hospitals in East Jerusalem. They are facing shortage in funds to cover the majority of their operational costs as a result of Israel’s withholding of the Palestinian Authority’s revenues. The debt accumulated by the five main Palestinian hospitals in the City now amounts to \$120 million dollars. In the education sector, since 1967, at first Israel has sought to impose its own curriculum, but following the Oslo Accords it was replaced by the Palestinian curriculum. However, as Israel was still printing the textbooks, this allowed it to remove key historical facts, for example glossing over its own occupation, and replacing them with a Zionist narrative. In May 2025, East Jerusalemites witnessed a shocking escalation with the closure of the UNRWA schools – including in Shu’fat refugee camp, Silwan, Wadi al-Joz and Sur Bahir –

forcing the evacuation of students and staff, just weeks ahead of the final exams. Over 780 students were directly impacted. All these policies and developments were emblematic of an overall position against Palestinian identity, history and national awareness. The new policies announced for the 2025 school year now ban Palestinian textbooks at all grade levels, including the high school curriculum, demonstrating Israel's calculated policy to weaken Palestinian institutions and fragment Palestinian society while ultimately severing East Jerusalem from its Palestinian roots.

Mr. Mahmoud Nawajaa, General Coordinator of the “Boycott, Divestment, and Sanctions (BDS)” National Committee (BNC) in Palestine, focused on the OIC's recent initiatives towards ending the war on Gaza and illegal occupation, including at the Extraordinary Arab-Islamic Summit of November 2024, calling on its membership to take effective action to compel Israel to adhere to international law and denouncing the double standards in the application of international law and UN Charter that is placing Israel above accountability. Similarly, the OIC's submission in the context of the SG report on the implementation of GA resolution ES-10/24 had called for the focus on concrete, actionable measures to dismantle the Israeli “apartheid” system and to seek accountability for those responsible for crimes and those complicit, and to impose sanctions at all international, economic, sports and cultural levels and expel Israel from international organisations and forums, while refraining from supporting its candidacy to international positions and freezing the assets of entities and persons proven to have been involved in Israeli crimes. While the majority of OIC members were implementing these measures, some were still engaging in arms trades with Israel, thus contributing to funding its “apartheid” system. Referring the recent report “From economy of occupation to economy of genocide” of the Special Rapporteur on the situation of human rights in the occupied Palestinian territory, he urged trade unions, lawyers, civil society and ordinary citizens to press for boycott, divestment and sanctions, justice for Palestine and accountability at domestic and international levels.

During the discussion, **Pakistan, Maldives, Turkey and Morocco** (in order of intervention) called for an immediate and full ceasefire in Gaza and across the OPT; urged the full and safe passage of humanitarian aid into Gaza in accordance with international humanitarian law; and a cessation of illegal settlement activities, systematic displacement and dispossession as they erode the viability of a two-State solution. They expressed their support for a just and lasting solution grounded in international law and relevant UN resolutions and that human suffering must not be used as leverage in negotiations and civilians as collateral casualties.

Civil society groups, including representatives of the Pan-African Solidarity Network and the African Coalition for the Defense of Human Rights, raised their concerns over the international community's inaction and failure to take urgent measures to stop the war in Gaza, including the delivery of humanitarian assistance by UNRWA and the resumption of its essential services, as well as the release of the hostages. They called for international solidarity to counter Israel's use of military force. Strong measures should include the rupture of diplomatic relations with Israel, boycott of its products and closure of airspaces – all constituting a meaningful counterweight to Israel's policies, if implemented by all Member States.

During the second plenary with the theme “States Obligations and Avenues of Action”, **Mr. Amr Hamzawy**, Senior Fellow & Middle East Programme Director at the Carnegie Endowment for International Peace, spoke of the diplomatic efforts that could be pushed forward by the OIC to promote a peaceful settlement of the Palestinian cause, including multilateral mediation efforts for an immediate ceasefire, reaffirmation of the principles of the Arab Peace Initiative, and particularly the Israeli withdrawal from Arab lands in exchange of peace instead of the current “peace for peace” approach. In addition, the Organization would continue to push for easing the dire humanitarian situation in Gaza and mass displacement of its population across different zones for unclear political objectives. Another avenue could be the collaboration with civil society within Palestine and Israel and similar regional organizations in the global south including in Asia and Latin America.

Mr. Seydi Gassama, Director of Amnesty International Senegal, saluted the work of human rights organisations in documenting and exposing the apartheid policies being practised by the Israeli government against the Palestinians. This work had contributed to diminish Israel’s influence in the African continent and had culminated in the first anti-Apartheid conference in West Africa, held in Dakar in March 2022, with the participation of key Tanzanian and South African political figures. That conference had allowed for a successful civil society campaign that led to the expulsion of the Israeli delegate from the African Union summit and subsequent suspension of the Observer status that Israel previously had managed to achieve in 2021. In Senegal, there had been significant protests bringing together people and organisations, not only to denounce the ongoing genocide in Gaza and fate of Palestinian children, but also to call for the boycott of Israeli products and brands. In 2024, an Amnesty International delegation had met with the new President, who committed to do more for the Palestinian cause, starting at the 2024 OIC Summit in Banjul.

Ms. Zukiswa Wanner, writer and member of the Palestine Solidarity Campaign in South Africa, framed the ongoing conflict in Israel and Palestine as part of the neo-colonial order empowering industrial and military institutions and corporations in 1 per cent of Member States to exploit the other 99 per cent. She called for the de-registration of companies in trade of Israel, to shut down embassies in Israel, to expel it from International Federation of Association Football (FIFA), and to continue promoting boycott, divestment and sanction likeminded policies, as BDS marks its twentieth anniversary today. She called on civil society, academics and artists to stop attending pro Palestine events in countries that censor solidarity movements, such as Germany and the United States.

During the subsequent discussion, **the Islamic Republic of Iran** stated that recent Israeli attacks on countries without nuclear weapons had been a blatant violation of all international laws and norms. He lamented that the UN Security Council was incapable of action as it was dominated by Western powers supporting the Israeli apartheid regime. So far 188 resolutions had condemned Israeli violations, yet no concrete follow-up steps had been undertaken. The representative of the **League of Arab States** spoke of Israel’s systematic policies threatening East Jerusalem’s very identity and history and intended to empty the City of its indigenous people through forced displacement and dispossession, revocation of residency rights, while the demolition of homes and sites were altering the City’s religious and cultural character. **South Africa** described the rallying around the Palestinian struggle as a “long walk”, quoting Nelson

Mandela, and called for accountability for all the atrocities committed against the Palestinian people and Israel's blatant disregard of international law. Given the grave nature of violations being committed, Member States were obliged to prevent and punish the crime of genocide; this had been South Africa's prime motivation to take Israel to the ICJ. **Tunisia** expressed appreciation for the holding of the conference, as it was taking place amidst the war on Gaza and intensification of occupation in the West Bank – all constituting flagrant violations of fundamental human rights and values. **Indonesia** informed that in its submission to the SG report on the implementation of GA res. ES-10/24 in December 2024 it had asked for the recognition of the State of Palestine, the halting of settlement expansion and de facto annexation by Israel and the upholding of the territorial integrity of Palestine, including East Jerusalem, the protection of UNRWA and ensuring sustainable support of its mandate, and to ensure accountability for crimes before the International Criminal Court (ICC) and adopt accountability measures. **Colombia** highlighted the Hague Group's purpose to halt arms transfers aimed to harm civilians in Gaza, as well as the transport of fuel and the docking of ships in ports. Other Member States took the floor, including **Angola, Sudan** and **Iraq**.

Senegalese civil society representatives called for African solidarity on the question of Palestine. Senegal, as Chair of the UN Palestinian Rights Committee for more than 50 years, should lead its neighbours in the Economic Community of West African States (ECOWAS), the African Union and the OIC.

In the closing session, **Ambassador Coly Seck (Senegal)** stated that the conference came to an end in a moment of severity as Jerusalem continued to embody the wounds of a long-standing painful and unresolved conflict, but also of hope because the meeting in Dakar had given voice to a shared will to put law, human dignity and peace back at the heart of the Palestinian question. Jerusalem could not be monopolized by any nation or people; it was a moral test for humanity.

Minister Riyad Mansour (Palestine) expressed his gratitude to the government and people of Senegal for their collaboration with the UN and the OIC for the organization of this important event at a crucial time for Palestine, while the tragedy in Gaza continued to unfold. The commitment to actions had become visible at government and civil society levels, replacing symbolic statements and gestures for Palestine. Jerusalem remained the heart of the Palestinian question and continuing this annual conference with the OIC was of paramount importance. He stated that the upcoming High-Level Conference would require concrete commitments to ending the illegal Israeli occupation and realizing the rights of the Palestinian people. He called on Member States and civil society in attendance to act jointly and at the level of the sacrifices of the Palestinian people today.