



Statement by Ambassador Munir Akram, Permanent Representative of Pakistan to the United Nations, on behalf of Organization of Islamic Cooperation (OIC) at the open debate of the Security Council on the Situation in the Middle East, including the Palestine Question (New York, 28th October 2022)

Mr. President,

I have the honour to deliver my statement on behalf of the Member States of the Organization of Islamic Cooperation (OIC)

Mr. President,

The constantly deteriorating and extremely volatile situation in the Occupied Palestinian Territory, including East Jerusalem is getting even worse as a result of the escalation of Israeli human rights violations, breaches of international humanitarian law, and recurrent brutal and criminal assaults that claimed scores of innocent lives and hundreds of wounded Palestinian civilians, including children and women.

The situation in East Jerusalem in particular remains of deep concern due to the repeated violations and daily incursions by Israeli extremist settler groups and occupation forces into Al-Aqsa Mosque/Al-Haram Al-Sharif, along with their ongoing attempts to impose spatial and temporal division of this Islamic holy shrine, in contravention of International Law and relevant UN resolutions, including several resolutions of this Security Council, among them resolutions 476 (1980), 478 (1980) and 2334 (2016), and in violation of the historic and legal status quo at the holy sites. These violations do, furthermore, hurt and provoke the feelings of all Muslims across the globe, and threaten to ignite a dangerous religious conflict, which will gravely jeopardize stability and fuel violence in the region and beyond.

The OIC Commends the continued efforts of His Majesty King Mohammed VI, of Morocco, Chairman of Al-Quds Committee, in protecting the Islamic holy sites in Al-Quds Al-Sharif, standing up against the Israeli occupation authorities' measures aimed at judaizing the Holy City and praises the concrete role played by Al-Quds Committee's Bayt Mal Al-Quds Al Sharif Agency in carrying out development and steadfastness building projects and activities for the inhabitants of the holy city.

We welcome the signing of the Declaration of Algiers, emanating from the "Unification Conference for the Achievement of the Palestinian National Unity" held in Algeria on October 11-13, 2022, and highly commend in this regard, the efforts of the President of Algeria, President Abdelmajid Tebboune, and his personal commitment for the achievement of the

intra-Palestinian reconciliation which is highly important for a politically stable, economically viable, sovereign and independent State of Palestine.

The OIC reiterates the call for full respect for the historic and legal status quo for Jerusalem and its holy sites and for the historical Hashemite custodianship over the Christian and Muslim holy sites in the city. In this regard, the OIC stresses that the Jordanian "Administration of Jerusalem's Awqaf and Al-Aqsa Mosque Affairs" is the only entity authorized under the provisions of international humanitarian law to manage all the affairs of Al-Aqsa Mosque in its entirety of 144,000 square meters, and that maintaining the comprehensive calm requires Israel's respect for the legal and historical status quo of Al Aqsa Mosque/Al-Haram Al-Sharif, and finding a real political horizon that guarantees the fulfilment of all legitimate rights of the brotherly Palestinian people on the basis of the two state solution.

The OIC reaffirms, in this regard, that the historical and legal status quo at the holy sites in East Jerusalem must be maintained and respected. We call upon the international actors and bodies, including the UN Security Council, to take urgent action to stop these assaults, ensure protection for Palestinian civilians in occupied East Jerusalem and the rest of the Occupied Palestinian Territory, and ensure accountability and justice for the horrific crimes being committed by the Israeli occupation forces.

Mr. President,

We express our deep concern about the critical situation of about fifty Palestinian political prisoners who started last month a mass hunger strike to protest against the Israeli administrative detention abuses as well as inhuman and oppressive treatment they experience, in violation of their most basic human rights. The OIC stresses that Israel's law breaking record must be urgently checked, in line with its obligations under all relevant international instruments, and it must be held fully accountable for the for its treatment of all Palestinian prisoners it is illegally holding captive in its prisons and detention centers, including women and children and ill persons.

In the same vein, Israel's continual and extensive land expropriation, colonial settlement construction and facilitation and accompaniment of settlers' acts of provocation, violence and terrorism against the Palestinian civilians, raiding of their towns and vandalizing their

properties and agricultural fields, continue unabatedly, in grave breach of international law and in particular international criminal law including the 4th Geneva Convention. We forewarn, in this regard, that such illegal acts, if left unchecked, would further embolden Israel, the occupying power, to pursue these recurrent crimes and violations.

It is time for accountability measures to be pursued in accordance with international law, including the many relevant UN resolutions calling for a complete end of Israel's illegal settlement activities. We urge the Security Council to uphold its resolutions in this regard and to work forthwith for their implementation as a vital contribution towards bringing a halt to these crimes.

Mr. President,

We reaffirm, in closing, that peace and justice require accountability for the human rights violations and heinous crimes that we have witnessing for too long in Occupied Palestine.

There cannot be peace without justice. Ultimately, a constructive and effective role of key international actors to revive hopes and prospects for peace requires urgent efforts to de-escalate the situation and advance justice. This august body is, to this end, urged to engage to promote a multilaterally-sponsored peace process aimed at achieving a just and lasting peace that will end the Israeli occupation and ensure the realization of the inalienable rights of the Palestinian people, including the Palestine refugees, and lead to the long-delayed independence and sovereignty of the State of Palestine on 1967 borders with East Jerusalem as its capital, in line with international law, relevant UN resolutions, and the Arab Peace Initiative.

Thank You.