

**IPHRC strongly condemns the increasing Israeli aggression against innocent Palestinian civilians in the Occupied Palestinian Territory, and calls for holding Israel, the Occupying Power, accountable for its systematic and grave human rights violations**

**Jeddah, 19<sup>th</sup> April 2018:** The OIC Independent Permanent Human Rights Commission (IPHRC) expressed grave concern towards the deteriorating human rights situation in the Occupied Palestinian Territory by the Israeli Occupation forces and authorities, and underlined the importance and urgency of ending the Israeli occupation of Palestine, which is the root cause of all systematic violations against basic human rights and freedoms of Palestinians, including the fundamental rights to life, worship and freedom of movement.

During its 13<sup>th</sup> Regular Session (from 15-19 April 2018), IPHRC extensively discussed the recent developments concerning the human rights situation in Occupied Palestinian Territory, including the illegal and arbitrary use of force by the Israeli Occupation forces in Gaza Strip, resulting in extrajudicial executions, physical and psychological torture and injuries to the innocent and peaceful Palestinian protesters, including women and children, medical personnel, journalists and human rights activists. IPHRC holds Israel, the Occupying Power, solely responsible for the deteriorating situation of human rights of the civilian population in Gaza Strip and the West Bank, including through various systemic policies of home demolitions and discrimination against Palestinians in various forms and all aspects of their livelihood. The Commission stressed that the indiscriminate targeting of civilians as is done systematically by Israeli Occupation forces recently in Gaza, constitutes war crimes and crimes against humanity, which cannot be justified under any circumstances or reason.

The Commission reiterated its strong condemnation and rejection of the US decision to recognize Jerusalem as the capital of Israel and to transfer the US Embassy there. IPHRC stressed that the US decision was not only an illegal unilateral act that contravenes the international law and legitimacy, but also an action that has overwhelming negative consequences on the whole range of human rights of Palestinians, including their fundamental right to self-determination and the establishment of their independent State. IPHRC warned against any Israeli attempt to use this illegal US move as an additional pretext to undermine the status and identity of the Occupied Jerusalem as the Third Islamic Holy Site and its significance as such for around two billion Muslims across the globe. The Commission stressed the identity of Al-Aqsa Mosque as a uniquely Islamic holy site, and recalled all the UNESCO decisions on the status of the City of Al-Quds and its Walls, which annuls any Israeli sovereignty over Al-Quds and declares any changes caused by the Israeli Occupation in the Old City of Al-Quds and its wider territory, as illegal.

The Commission expressed its disappointment towards the inability of the UN Security Council to undertake its responsibility in this context, which contributed to the intransigence of Israeli authorities towards international pressure and to the deterioration of humanitarian, socio-economic and security conditions in the Occupied Palestinian Territory, including clear violations of International Human Rights and Humanitarian laws. Furthermore, IPHRC reiterated its call to the international community, particularly the UN Security Council, General Assembly, and Human

Rights Council to assume their responsibility and to put an end to the grave and systematic Israeli violations against people, land and sacred places in the Occupied Palestinian Territory.

In this context, and to affirm Muslim Ummah's firm support to the cause of AlQuds Al Sharif, the IPHRC commended the declaration made by the Custodian of the Two Holy Mosques, King Salman Bin Abdul Aziz of Saudi Arabia, to name the latest Arab League Summit in Dhahran as the Al Quds Summit, his generous donation of US\$150 million for the maintenance of Islamic heritage in East Jerusalem and to support the administration of Jerusalem's Islamic property, as well as to donate US\$50 million to UNRWA, as an urgent support to Palestinian refugees. IPHRC urged all Member States to take similar steps and make their best efforts to protect the identity of Al Quds and help the Palestinian people suffering under Israeli occupation.

The Commission also urged OIC Member States to continue to take lead in providing political, economic, diplomatic and humanitarian support, at all levels, to the Palestinian people in their struggle to exercise their inalienable right to self-determination and the establishment of their own independent, viable and contiguous State, with Al -Quds Al-Shareef as its capital, including their unquestionable right to return to their homeland and to acquire their properties, as stated in various UN resolutions, and guaranteed by international law.

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