



Final statement and recommendations

The twentieth session of the Al-Quds Committee

Marrakech, Kingdom of Morocco

January 17-18, 2014

Text of the final statement of the Twentieth session of Al-Quds Committee in Marrakech. Al-Quds Committee culminated its activities in Marrakesh on January 17 and 18 by issuing the following final statement:

In response to the generous invitation of His Majesty King Mohammed VI, King of the Kingdom of Morocco, Chairman of the Jerusalem Committee, Al-Quds Committee held its twentieth session, under the effective presidency of His Majesty, Chairman of Al-Quds Committee, and in the presence of His Excellency President Mahmoud Abbas, President of the State of Palestine, in Marrakesh, in the Kingdom of Morocco, On 15 and 16 Rabi` al-Awwal 1435 AH, corresponding to 17 and 18 January 2014 AD.

The works of the twentieth session of Al-Quds Committee was attended by their Highnesses and Excellencies, the foreign ministers of the member states of Al-Quds Committee and their accompanying delegations, the General Secretary of the Organization of Islamic Cooperation, Mr. Iyad Amin Madani, and the General Director of the Bayt Mal Al-Quds Al-Sharif Agency, Dr. Abdel-Kabir Al-Alawi Al-Medaghri.

The committee meeting was also attended by international personalities who were invited, for the first time, as honor guests.

The session was opened by His Majesty King Mohammed VI, Chairman of Al-Quds Committee, with a speech in which he emphasized that holding this meeting is the best evidence of the joint management of Islamic countries in continuing to defend the legitimate rights of the brotherly Palestinian people, and the Arabic and Islamic identity of Holy city.

His Majesty also considered that defending this city is not an act of circumstance, and is not limited to the committee's meetings, but rather includes particularly its influential diplomatic moves and concrete field of work inside Al-Quds, which is carried out by the Bayt Mal Al-Quds Al-Sharif Agency, as a mechanism of the committee.

His Majesty King Mohammed VI, Chairman of the Al-Quds Al-Sharif Committee, added that given the situation in the city of Al-Quds, joint Arab and Islamic action should be strengthened, ranks united, and innovative methods adopted to contribute constructively to the embodiment of the will for peace, calling for a practical and effective strategic approach, in which the Al-Quds Committee plays a decisive role as a permanent mechanism for the Organization of Islamic Cooperation.

In this context, His Majesty emphasized that Al-Quds is the core of the Palestinian cause and that there is no peace without defining the final status of East Al-Quds as the capital of the independent Palestinian state.

After that, His Excellency President Mahmoud Abbas, President of the State of Palestine, delivered a speech in which he thanked His Majesty King Mohammed VI for his invitation to the Al-Quds Committee to convene in this difficult circumstance in which the Holy city and its Islamic and Christian holy sites are subject to Judaization and changing its demographic and geographical features, and isolating it from its Arab and Islamic surroundings, and demanding concerted efforts to save the holy city from the fierce onslaught of the Israeli occupation, stressing that Al-Quds is in danger and that the situation has become unbearable to wait or delay.

His Excellency President Mahmoud Abbas, President of the State of Palestine, presented to His Majesty King Mohammed VI, Chairman of Al-Quds Committee, an official document prepared by the State of Palestine containing an inventory of violations committed by the Israeli occupation authorities in Al-Quds Al-Sharif and Al-Aqsa Mosque.

The foreign ministers of the member states of Al-Quds Committee held an interactive meeting with the aforementioned international personalities, which focused on explaining the situation known to Al-Quds Al-Sharif and affirming the international responsibility in preserving the legal status of this city, its position, and symbolism in accordance with the relevant UN resolutions.

In light of the deliberations conducted by the committee members, under the effective presidency of His Majesty King Mohammed VI, Chairman of Al-Quds Committee, the committee concluded the following:

1. The Committee affirms the centrality of the Al-Quds Al-Sharif issue to the Islamic nation, as it is at the heart of the political solution, and that any attack on this city and the Al-Aqsa Mosque will only lead to more tension, violence, and despair, and will lead to dire consequences for the region, and will eliminate any opportunity to achieve peace.

- 2.**The Committee reiterates that the establishment of a comprehensive, fair, and lasting peace in the Middle East region is the option for which the member states of the Organization of Islamic Cooperation are working, in accordance with international legitimacy decisions and based on the principle of land for peace, the Arab Peace Initiative and the provisions of the roadmap so that the Palestinian people can establish their independent, sovereign, and geographically connected state with Al-Quds Al-Sharif as its capital.
- 3.**The committee considers that the resumed negotiations between the Palestinians and the Israelis, since July 2013, are a crucial stage in reaching peace in accordance with the international legitimacy resolutions and the approved peace process references. In this regard, it stresses the importance of confronting all acts that contradict the goal of peace and perpetuating and deepening the occupation that has existed for 64 years.
- 4.**The Committee expresses its condemnation and denunciation of the policy adopted by the Israeli occupation authorities in Al-Quds Al-Sharif and all their aggressive and illegal practices that seek to change the legal status and cultural character of Al-Quds Al-Sharif, and its demographic composition by restricting its Palestinian residents by withdrawing their identities, demolishing their homes and forcing them to abandon them, in addition to continuing settlement activities, confiscating lands and building a wall to encircle and isolate Al-Quds Al-Sharif from its natural Palestinian surroundings.
- 5.**The Committee rejects the decisions of the occupation authorities to prevent worshipers from reaching Al-Aqsa Mosque and to allow Jewish extremists to enter its squares and desecrate it, and to continue excavations in and around it, and to impose any changes to the status quo in Al-Aqsa Mosque before the occupation, including the illegal transformations to divide it between Muslims and Jews, in time and space, in preparation to acquiring it and considering it part of the Jewish sanctities.
- 6.**The committee calls for a growing awareness of the international collective responsibility toward Al-Quds, considering that any state, institution, organization, group, or individual that seeks to preserve the identity and symbolism of Al-Quds Al-Sharif is a true contributor to building peace, providing the conditions for achieving it and running the agenda of those looking for it, it urges the international community to assume its full responsibilities in saving Al-Quds, caring for the global human and civilizational heritage represented in it, protecting the educational, demographic and cultural situation there, and putting pressure on Israel to stop all colonial practices aimed at changing the legal status of the holy city.

- 7.**Emphasizes that these Israeli measures constitute a continuous violation of the Security Council resolutions, which considered these measures in Al-Quds Al-Sharif to be null and without effect and must be stopped immediately.
- 8.** The Committee calls on all components of the international community to assume their responsibilities and pressure Israel to stop its illegal settlement operations, its violations of the rights of the Palestinian people, and its provocative declarations in the Occupied Palestinian Territory, including Al-Quds Al-Sharif, and the statements of some of its officials and their unlawful claims to annex Al-Quds and the Islamic and Christian sanctities, in order to create the appropriate climate for the success of the resumed negotiations and to reach a just and comprehensive solution based on the two-state solution in which the State of Palestine and Israel live side by side, which will contribute to building normal peace relations between Israel and its neighbors and the Islamic world, in accordance with the Arab Peace Initiative.
- 9.**The Committee affirms its support for the Palestinian position in the resumed negotiations and welcomes the serious role of the United States of America, the sponsor of these negotiations, which must be resolved in all issues of the final solution, especially Al-Quds Al-Sharif, the capital of the independent state of Palestine, according to a specific timetable and based on international legitimacy decisions. It also emphasizes the importance of the establishment of the State of Palestine, consulting with the committee's presidency and inviting it to contribute with regard to the future of Al-Quds Al-Sharif.
- 10.**The Committee welcomes the positive impact of the efforts undertaken by His Majesty King Mohammed VI, Chairman of Al-Quds Committee, to protect the Islamic and Christian holy sites in Al-Quds Al-Sharif and urges countries to refrain from anything that would be considered a concession in favor of the occupation or prejudice to the legal status of the Holy City.
- 11.**The Committee welcomes the guidelines adopted by the European Union that prevent Israeli bodies and their activities in Al-Quds Al-Sharif and the rest of the occupied Palestinian territories since June 1967 from obtaining grants and financial instruments from the European Union and calls on the Union to adhere to these guidelines and to play a more effective role to confront the process of Judaizing Al-Quds Al-Sharif.
- 12.**The committee stresses the importance of Christian churches as an essential component of the diverse cultural heritage of Al-Quds Al-Sharif and praises the role of these institutions in facing the processes of Judaizing Al-Quds, and calls for strengthening this role and accompanying it.

- 13.**The Committee urges the United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization (UNESCO) to continue its efforts to preserve the heritage of Al-Quds, as it is the heritage of humanity and a symbol of the coexistence of cultures and religions, and it calls on Israel, the occupying State, to facilitate the implementation of the World Heritage Committee's decision to send a joint mission between the World Heritage Center and UNESCO's technical advisory bodies to investigate and examine the Israeli excavations in and around the Old City of Al-Quds and its walls as a world heritage at risk.
- 14.**The Committee denounces the continued closure of Palestinian institutions in Al-Quds by Israel, the occupying State, namely Orient House, and calls on all member states of the Organization of Islamic Cooperation and the rest of the international community to take practical measures to pressure Israel to reopen these institutions and enable the official Palestinian presence in Al-Quds.
- 15.**The Committee calls on the UN Security Council to show due attention to the escalating tensions and the critical situation in Al-Quds Al-Sharif and to assume its responsibilities in accordance with the provisions of the United Nations Charter and in accordance with the relevant Security Council resolutions, especially Resolutions N°. 242 (1967), N°. 252 (1968), N°. 267 (1969), N°. 338 (1973), N°. 465, N°. 476, N°. 478 (1980) and N°. 1073 (1996) relating to Al-Quds Al-Sharif, and holding a special session to discuss the dangerous situation in the city as a result of violations and the continuous and dangerous Israeli occupation of Islamic and Christian sanctities, and the Israeli government's denial of the relevant decisions and disavows its responsibilities as the occupying State.
- 16.**The Committee calls on the member states of the Organization of Islamic Cooperation to intervene with other countries to urge them to amend their vote within international organizations on decisions related to Al-Quds in line with international law and consensus regarding the city's legal status.
- 17.**The Committee renews its call on all states to persist in rejecting any attempt by Israel, the occupying State, to annex East Jerusalem, and calls on it to abide by its legal obligations to ensure that governmental, non-governmental, and private levels are obligated to not recognize everything that would support settlement in the Occupied Palestinian Territory and contribute to Consolidation of the occupation, In this regard, it calls for legal measures to be taken against all individuals, institutions and companies that work, directly or indirectly, for the benefit of the occupation system, in line with international law.
- 18.**The Committee calls on the member states of the Organization of Islamic Cooperation to commit, in accordance with the OIC's charter, to adopting and voting in favor of decisions on the Palestinian issue, specifically those related to Al-Quds, in international forums, including the United Nations General Assembly and UNESCO.

- 19.**The Committee appreciates the Hashemite sponsorship role for Islamic and Christian holy sites in Al-Quds Al-Sharif, which is undertaken by His Majesty King Abdullah II, King of the Hashemite Kingdom of Jordan, and welcomes the agreement concluded between His Majesty and His Excellency President Mahmoud Abbas, President of the State of Palestine, on March 31, 2013.
- 20.**The Committee calls on the permanent delegates of the member states of the Organization of Islamic Cooperation to the United Nations organs to follow the issue of Al-Quds Al-Sharif, and to make efforts to ensure that Israel, the occupying State, complies with international law, relevant United Nations resolutions, and the will of the international community, including an affirmation of refusing to accept the submission of representatives of the occupation authority for credentials issued by Al-Quds.
- 21.**The Committee recommends the General Secretariat of the Organization of Islamic Cooperation to set up practical mechanisms to follow up and implement the decisions issued by the summits and sessions of the Council of Foreign Ministers of the Organization of Islamic Cooperation on Al-Quds, and invites it to initiate, in coordination with the Presidency of the Jerusalem Committee and consultation with the Summit Presidency and the State of Palestine, in arranging visits to the Ministerial Contact Group which was established upon the call of the Council of Foreign Ministers of the member states of the Organization, in its fortieth session (Conakry, 11/12/2013) to move, urgently, to convey the organization's message to the international community of the need to protect Al-Quds Al-Sharif and the blessed Al-Aqsa Mosque.
- 22.**The Committee welcomed the official document prepared by the State of Palestine, which includes an inventory of violations committed by the Israeli occupation authorities in Al-Quds Al-Sharif and Al-Aqsa Mosque.
- 23.**The Committee appreciates the outcome of the new approach adopted by Al-Quds Committee over the past twelve years, represented in focusing on direct and tangible support, targeted political initiatives, and responding to the urgent and renewed humanitarian needs of Jerusalemites to help them survive in their homeland, and fieldwork and projects in Al-Quds Al-Sharif to confront the policy of Judaization that the Israeli occupation authorities are pursuing in the Holy City to change its features and its Arab, Islamic and Christian identity.
- 24.**The Committee affirms that the Bayt Mal Al-Quds Al-Sharif Agency, which was created in 1998 within the framework of the Organization of Islamic Cooperation, is the ideal institutional tool for the organization and the executive arm on which Al-Quds Committee relies in carrying out the tasks entrusted to it in following up the implementation of the organization's decisions regarding the preservation of Arab and Islamic Quds and its cultural heritage.

- 25.**The Committee praises the resources that the member states of the organization have placed at the disposal of the Bayt Mal Al-Quds Al-Sharif Agency, headed by the Kingdom of Morocco, which in the last five years has borne 80% of the agency's budget to implement concrete projects for Jerusalem and Jerusalemites, especially in the social, health, cultural, and educational sectors, in addition to restoration archaeological and historical buildings of Al-Quds Al-Sharif, especially the facilities of Al-Aqsa Mosque.
- 26.**It calls on all member states and their financial institutions to provide the necessary material support to the agency in order for it to rise to the level of aspirations of Islamic governments and people in the field of defense of Al-Quds Al-Sharif.
- 27.**The Committee expresses its satisfaction at the summit of the fourth session of the «Guardianship Committee» of the Bayt Mal Al-Quds Al-Sharif Agency and the second session of its Board of Directors, in parallel with the holding of its 20th session in Marrakesh, and welcomes the reports submitted to it by these two reporting bodies of the Agency, including the five-year plan for the Agency's projects 2014-2018, With a budget of 30 million US dollars, the member states of the Organization of Islamic Cooperation are invited to contribute to this budget.
- 28.**The Committee notes with satisfaction the consistency of this plan and its complementarity with the strategic plan to support vital sectors in Al-Quds Al-Sharif, adopted by the fourth session of the Extraordinary Summit (Makkah Al-Mukarramah / 8/15/2012) and approved by the Donors Conference, held in Baku, the capital of the Republic of Azerbaijan (11 / 6/2013), the agency's role in its implementation.
- 29.**The committee affirms that, in parallel with the committee's political endeavors, support for the fieldwork of the Bayt Mal Al-Quds Al-Sharif Agency is of utmost importance in order to alleviate the suffering of Al-Quds people, the first line of defense for Al-Quds, who are exposed to the worst forms of persecution, discrimination and displacement, and defending the Holy City through major and medium-sized projects that it intends to implement at the level of residential, social and educational facilities, restoring historical sites, purchasing real estate lands, allocating scholarships and equipping health facilities to contribute to improving the living conditions of Jerusalemites, especially women and youth, and supporting their steadfastness, and preserving cultural monuments and the spirit of this city.
- 30.**The committee calls for studying the possibility of creating an endowment and moving on mandatory contributions for member states of the Organization of Islamic Cooperation at rates determined by the states to support the budget and projects of the Bayt Mal Al-Quds Al-Sharif Agency.

- 31.**The committee calls for the launching of popular donation campaigns in the member states of the Organization of Islamic Cooperation to support Al-Quds Al-Sharif.
- 32.**The committee calls on the member states of the organization to organize visits at various levels to Al-Quds Al-Sharif, and asks them to encourage Arab and Muslim businessmen to actively contribute to supporting the occupied city of Al-Quds.
- 33.**The committee calls for declaring Al-Quds the capital of Islamic culture and calls on the General Secretariat to develop a media strategy that works to expose Israeli plans and violations of Al-Quds Al-Sharif and misinformation that is circulated about the location and history of Al-Quds in some media circles and contributes to educating international public opinion on the need to preserve Al-Quds as a global heritage of humanity and as a symbol for peace and coexistence.
- 34.**The Committee praises the ongoing consultation and coordination between the Presidency of the Committee and the State of Palestine, and entrusts to the Presidency of the Committee, after consulting with the Presidency of the State of Palestine, to call for a meeting at the appropriate level, whenever the need arises, to follow up the implementation of recommendations and all the daily and urgent issues of the status of Jerusalem, and to make relevant recommendations that are linked to the presidency.
- 35.**The committee salutes the steadfastness and resilience of the heroic Palestinian people, especially the steadfast people of Al-Quds, and affirms its support and backing for them and their legitimate struggle to achieve their legitimate national rights, on top of which is the establishment of the independent state of Palestine with Al-Quds Al-Sharif as its capital.
- 36.**The committee expresses its sincere gratitude and appreciation to His Majesty King Mohammed VI, King of the Kingdom of Morocco and Chairman of Al-Quds Committee, for his noble stances and continuous effort to defend Al-Quds Al-Sharif and its sanctities, and it extends to His Majesty and the Moroccan government and people thanks and appreciation for the warm welcome and hospitality accorded to the participating delegations.