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ISTANBUL: Prime Minister Shahid Khaqan Abbasi talking with Palestinian President Mahmoud Abbas during Organisation of Islamic Cooperation Extraordinary Summit on Al-Quds, Wednesday. Punjab Chief Minister Shehbaz Sharif also present. — Online

14 DEC 2017

Istanbul | Among friends



Prime Minister Shahid Khaqan Abbasi shakes hand with Turkish President Recep Tayyip Erdogan on the sidelines of the OIC extraordinary summit in the capital of Turkey. DNA

THE NATION
ISLAMABAD

14 DEC 2017



ISTANBUL: Leaders and representatives of member states pose for a group photo during OIC Extraordinary Summit on Wednesday.—AFP

DAILY EXPRESS
ISLAMABAD

14 DEC 2017



استنبول: او آئی سی کے غیر معمولی سربراہ اجلاس کے موقع پر وزیر اعظم شہباز شریف، شہباز شریف فلسطینی صدر محمود عباس سے تہا دل خیاں کر رہے ہیں (ان سمیت) صدر اردوان خطاب کر رہے ہیں

DUNYA
ISLAMABAD



لندن: شوکت عزیز، شہباز شریف کا گھر آمد پر استقبال کر رہے ہیں شہباز شریف، خواجہ آصف بھی ساتھ ہیں

DUNYA
ISLAMABAD



استنبول: بیت المقدس کے حوالے سے او آئی سی اجلاس کے موقع پر شریک کار کا گروپ فوٹو بڑک صدر اردوان، فلسطینی صدر محمود عباس، شہباز شریف اور وزیر اعظم عباسی نمایاں ہیں

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ISTANBUL: Leaders and representatives of the Organisation of Islamic Cooperation (OIC) member states pose for a group photo during an extraordinary meeting, here on Wednesday.—Reuters

JANG RAWALPINDI



استنبول، اوداآئی سی کے ہنگامی اجلاس کے موقع پر اسلامی ممالک کے سربراہان مملکت کا گروپ فوٹو

OIC declares East Jerusalem as capital of Palestine

Erdogan says Muslim world will never give up on demand; PM Abbasi says Al-Quds as capital of Palestine remains only road map for Muslim Ummah and OIC

ISTANBUL: The Organisation of Islamic Cooperation (OIC) Wednesday declared East Jerusalem as the capital of the State of Palestine, and invited all countries to recognise the State of Palestine and East Jerusalem as its occupied capital.

A draft declaration adopted by the extraordinary session considered Washington's decision to recognise Jerusalem as the capital of Israel as a sign of US withdrawal from its role as a sponsor of Middle East peace.

Addressing the extraordinary summit, Turkish President Recep Tayyip Erdogan urged the world to recognise occupied East Jerusalem as the capital of Palestine, as Palestinian leader Mahmoud Abbas warned there could be no peace in the Middle East until such a step was made.

Erdogan convened an emergency summit of the Organisation of Islamic Cooperation (OIC), seeking a coordinated response to the recognition of Jerusalem by US President

Donald Trump as Israel's capital.

In an angry address, Abbas warned that the United States had lost its role as mediator in the peace process between Israel and Palestinians, denouncing Washington as biased in favour of the Jewish state.

Erdogan denounced Israel as a state defined by "occupation" and "terror", in a new diatribe against the Israeli leadership.

"With this decision, Israel was rewarded for all the terrorist activities it has carried out. It is Trump who bestowed this award even," he said.

Erdogan added, "I am inviting the countries who value international law and fairness to recognise occupied Jerusalem as the capital of Palestine," saying Islamic countries would "never give up" on this demand.

Abbas warned that there could be "no peace or stability" in the Middle East until Jerusalem was recognised as

the capital of a Palestinian state.

"Jerusalem is and will forever be the capital of the Palestinian state... There will be no peace, no stability without that," Abbas said.

He slammed the recognition by Trump of Jerusalem as the capital of Israel as a "gift" to the "Zionist movement" as if he "were giving away an American city," adding that Washington no longer had any role to play in the Middle East peace process.

Erdogan, whose country holds the rotating chairmanship of the OIC, will be hoping to unite the Muslim leaders into a tough final statement on the Trump move.

Turkish Foreign Minister Mevlut Cavusoglu early Wednesday indicated that Ankara would be pushing for OIC states to, in a counter move, recognise East Jerusalem as the capital of a future Palestinian state.

"We will never be silent," he said, urging countries to recognise Palestine on the basis of its 1967 borders with East Jerusalem as the capital.

Addressing the summit, Prime Minister Shahid Khaqan Abbasi said a sovereign homeland for the Palestinian people with Al-Quds Al-Sharif as its capital remained the only road map for the Muslim Ummah

and the OIC.

"We are at the watershed moment again. The question on every Muslim mind today would be whether we can rise above our differences, stand united and give hope to our people, or once again adopt declarations which cannot be translated into effective actions," he told the gathering of heads of state and government of more than 26 Islamic countries.

He said the US decision was a blatant attempt to set in motion steps to change the historic and lawful status of the Holy City.

He urged the United States to rescind, fully comply with all applicable UN Security Council resolutions and recommit unequivocally to the two-state solution.

"On behalf of the people and Government of Pakistan, I wish to reiterate our strong condemnation of this decision," he said and added that the international community had the opportunity to uphold the principles of justice and the rule of law.

He said Pakistan called upon the United Nations Security Council to play its role as envisaged under the UN Charter, as its credibility would be questioned if it did not live up to its primary role in maintaining international peace and security.

Abbasi said both the houses of Pakistan's Parliament had unanimously echoed these sen-

tements and "we all stand firmly behind the Palestinian people and their just struggle."

Speaking on the occasion, Foreign Minister Khawaja Asif said the US recognition of Jerusalem undermined its role as an honest broker in the peace process.

Asif said President Donald Trump's decision of recognizing Jerusalem as Israel's capital was contrary to the international legality.

He asked the participants that if the UN Security Council was unable to act, then the OIC should call for a UN General Assembly emergency session.

Iranian President Hassan Rouhani, Jordanian King Abdullah II and Lebanese President Michel Aoun are among the heads of state attending, as well as the emirs of Qatar and Kuwait and presidents of Afghanistan and Indonesia.

"Some countries in our region are in cooperation with the United States and the Zionist regime and determining the fate of Palestine," seethed Rouhani, whose country does not recognise Israel and has dire relations with Saudi Arabia.

But as the summit was being held, Saudi King Salman in Riyadh echoed the calls over Jerusalem, saying it was the "right" of the Palestinians to establish "their independent state with East Jerusalem as its capital". — Agencies

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OIC declares Jerusalem as Palestine capital

Divided summit fails to agree on any sanctions against US, Israel | Abbasi for seeking ICJ's opinion

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The Organisation of Islamic Cooperation (OIC) has declared East Jerusalem as the capital of Palestine, rejected the US stance as "dangerous" and called on the international community to follow in its footsteps, as Palestinian President Mahmoud Abbas warned the United States no longer had any role to play in the peace process.

Turkish President Recep Tayyip Erdogan convened in Istanbul an emergency summit of the world's main pan-Islamic body, the Organisation of Islamic Cooperation (OIC) on Wednesday, seeking a coordinated response to the recognition by US President Donald Trump of Jerusalem as Israel's capital.

With the Islamic world itself mired in division, the summit fell well short of agreeing any concrete sanctions against Israel or the United States.

But their final statement declared "East Jerusalem as the capital of the State of Palestine" and invited "all countries to recognise the State of Palestine and East Jerusalem as its occupied capital."

They declared Trump's decision "null and void legally" and "a deliberate undermining of all peace efforts" that would give impetus to "extremism and terrorism."

Jerusalem's status is perhaps the most sensitive issue in the Israeli-Palestinian conflict.

Israel sees the entire city as its undivided capital, while the Palestinians want the eastern sector, which the international community regards as annexed by Israel

as the capital of their future state.

Erdogan - who regards himself a champion of the Palestinian cause - denounced Israel as a state defined by "occupation" and "terror", in a new diatribe against the Israeli leadership.

"With this decision, Israel is rewarded for all the terrorist activities it has carried out. It is Trump who bestowed this award even," said Erdogan, who holds the rotating chairmanship of the OIC.

He said all countries who "value international law and fairness" should recognise occupied Jerusalem as the capital of Palestine, saying Islamic countries would "never give up" on this demand.

Using unusually strong language, Abbas warned that there could be "no peace or stability" in the Middle East until Jerusalem is recognised as the capital of a Palestinian state. Moreover, he said that with Trump's move the United States had withdrawn itself from a traditional role as the mediator in the search for Mideast peace.

"We do not accept any role of the United States in the political process from now on. Because it is completely biased towards Israel," he said.

The final statement from the OIC echoed this sentiment, saying Trump's move was "an announcement of the US administration's withdrawal from its role as sponsor of peace" in the Middle East.

Abbas slammed the recognition by Trump of Jerusalem as the capital of Israel as a "gift" to the "Zionist movement" as if he "were giving away an American

city," adding that Washington no longer had any role to play in the Middle East peace process.

But bridging the gaps in a Muslim political community that includes arch rivals Saudi Arabia and Iran was always a tall order, let alone announcing any concrete measures agreed between the 57 OIC member states.

Several key players, like Egypt, Saudi Arabia and the United Arab Emirates, were unlikely to want to risk their key relationship with Washington for the sake of an anti-Washington OIC statement.

Iranian President Hassan Rouhani, Jordanian King Abdullah II and Lebanese President Michel Aoun were among the heads of state present, as well as the emirs of Qatar and Kuwait and presidents of Afghanistan and Indonesia.

The level of Saudi representation - critical if the final statement is to carry long-term credibility - was only at the level of a senior foreign ministry official.

"Some countries in our region are in cooperation with the United States and the Zionist regime and determining the fate of Palestine," seethed Rouhani, whose country does not recognise Israel and has dire relations with Saudi Arabia.

But as the summit was being held, Saudi King Salman in Riyadh echoed the calls over Jerusalem, saying it was the "right" of the Palestinians to establish "their independent state with East Jerusalem as its capital".

Sudanese President Omar al-Bashir, who is wanted by the International

Criminal Court for genocide and war crimes, was also in attendance and warmly greeted by Erdogan.

A surprise guest was Venezuela's leftist President Nicolas Maduro whose country has no significant Muslim population but is a bitter critic of US policy.

Trump's announcement last week prompted an outpouring of anger in the Muslim and Arab world, where tens of thousands of people took to the streets to denounce the Jewish state and show solidarity with the Palestinians.

The decision sparked protests in Palestinian territories, with four Palestinians killed so far in clashes or Israeli airstrikes in response to rocket fire from Gaza and hundreds wounded.

Addressing the summit, Prime Minister Shahid Khaqan Abbasi said a sovereign homeland for the Palestinian people with Al-Quds Al-Sharif as its capital remained the only roadmap for the Muslim Ummah and the OIC.

"We are at the watershed moment again. The question on every Muslim mind today would be whether we can rise above our differences, stand united and give hope to our people, or once again adopt declarations which cannot be translated into effective actions," he told the gathering.

He said the US decision was a blatant attempt to set in motion steps to change the historic and lawful status of the Holy City. He said Pakistan urged the

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United States to rescind, fully comply with all applicable UN Security Council resolutions and recommit unequivocally to the two-state solution.

"On behalf of the people and Government of Pakistan, I wish to reiterate our strong condemnation of this decision," he said and added the international community had the opportunity to uphold the principles of justice and the rule of law.

He said Pakistan called upon the UNSC to play its role as envisaged under the UN Charter as its credibility would be questioned if it did not live up to its primary role in maintaining international peace and security.

Abbasi said Pakistan's parliament had unanimously echoed these sentiments and "we all stand firmly behind the Palestinian people and their just struggle."

"Pakistan is proud to have piloted resolutions in the UN Security Council as Chair of OIC including resolutions 476 and 478," he added.

He said Pakistan renewed its call for establishment of a viable, independent and contiguous

State of Palestine, on the basis of international parameters, the pre-1967 borders, and with Al-Quds Al-Sharif as its capital.

Abbasi said as OIC, the Muslim leaders needed serious introspection and reflected on two questions. "Firstly how we come to this pass. The fact is that we have not given concrete shape to our expressions of solidarity and unity," he said and added it had been true not only for Palestine but for other common causes also.

He said the world was a witness to a similar pattern of tragedy, both in scope and scale, adding for seventy years, the people of Jammu and Kashmir had been subjected to illegal Indian occupation and blatant violation of their fundamental rights, including their right to self-determination. Here too, the UNSC resolutions continue to be defied and the just struggle for freedom conveniently branded as terrorism, he added.

Moreover, the prime minister said another reason for the situation the Muslim world found itself was: "We are not writing enough, producing enough. Without rec-

tifying our political, economic, communication and technological weaknesses we will be unable to mount a sustained defence of our brethren whether in Palestine or Kashmir."

He said it was that increasing disarray that had allowed the US to take the deeply troubling decision to shift its embassy to Jerusalem. Abbasi said the second question was "what should be our response? Should we accept this as fait accompli? We hope that a few demonstrations of rage would not dissipate in passive acceptance of the status quo."

He said the Ummah's response should be a clear expression and renewal of its solidarity and unity, adding the Ummah must also urgently overcome its political differences, which would be the only guarantee to resist external pressure and reverse the losses and take its destinies in its own hands.

In the immediate term, he said, the OIC would suggest consideration of a number of options. Diplomatically, if the UNSC was unable to respond, "we should garner support in

the UNGA (United Nations General Assembly)."

Secondly, he said, OIC decisions for economic actions to change the behaviour of the occupying forces should be followed up and thirdly, ICJ's (International Court of Justice) opinion on the current move should be sought.

