

PRESS RELEASE

OIC HOM GROUP IN CANBERRA ADVOCATE PRIME MINISTER TO CONSTRUCTIVELY SUPPORT PEACE BETWEEN PALESTINE AND ISRAEL

The Organisation of Islamic Cooperation (OIC) Heads of Mission (HoM) Group in Canberra has sent a joint letter to the Prime Minister of Australia, The Hon. Scott Morrison MP, encouraging Australia to continue playing a positive and constructive role in supporting the achievement of peace between Palestine and Israel.

The joint letter was sent as a response to the Prime Minister's media statement on Tuesday, 16 October 2018, which discussed the possibility of acknowledging Jerusalem as the capital of Israel and relocating the Australian Embassy from Tel Aviv to Jerusalem.

The OIC HoM Group in Canberra underlines the respect for Australia's rights as a sovereign nation to determine its foreign policy and shares the importance of the Two-State Solution in achieving a comprehensive, just and lasting peace in the Middle East.

The OIC HoM Group in Canberra also reiterates that the issue of Jerusalem is one of the six key issues that needs to be resolved as an integral part of the Two-State Solution.

Therefore, any unilateral action, including the recognition of Jerusalem as the capital of Israel as well as establishment of Embassies in Jerusalem, before the satisfactory resolutions of those issues, will not only undermine the ongoing Middle East peace process, but may well put the future international peace and security in serious danger.

Various United Nations (UN) resolutions, both binding and non-binding, have called upon all States to support the Two-States Solution. In particular, UN General Assembly Resolution ES-10/L.22 of 19 December 2017 called on all States to refrain from establishing embassies in the Holy City, while UN Security Council Resolution 478 (1980) called upon "those States that have established diplomatic mission in Jerusalem to withdraw such missions from the Holy City."

Moreover, the outcomes of recent OIC Summits among others the Final Communique of the 7th Extraordinary Islamic Summit Conference in response to the Grave Developments in the State of Palestine on 18 May 2018 and the Istanbul Declaration on "Freedom for Al Quds" of the 6th Extraordinary Islamic Summit Conference of 13 December 2017, both held in Istanbul, Turkey, have condemned unilateral actions of Embassy relocation to Jerusalem as well as called upon the international community to act in line with international law including all relevant UN resolutions regarding the status of Jerusalem.

The OIC HoM Group in Canberra underscores that Australia continues to be an important partner for the OIC and believes that Australia will continue to maintain its role as an impartial associate in the Middle East peace process.

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Explanatory Notes:

- The current Chair of the OIC HoM Group in Canberra is the Ambassador of the Republic of Indonesia, H.E. Y. Kristiarto S. Legowo.
- A number of recent OIC documents related to the issue of Jerusalem can be found in following links:
 1. <https://www.oic-oci.org/docdown/?docID=1865&refID=1079>
 2. http://www.mfa.gov.tr/site_media/html/oic-extraordinary-summit-istanbul-declaration-on-freedom-for-al-quds.pdf