

Status of Jerusalem Cannot Be Altered by Unilateral Actions, Secretary-General Stresses in Message to Cairo Conference

Following is the text of UN Secretary-General António Guterres' video message to the High-Level Conference on Supporting the City of Jerusalem and its Population, in Cairo today:

Excellencies, Secretary-General Aboul Gheit, ladies and gentlemen,

I welcome the initiative of the League of Arab States in convening this conference to focus on the challenges faced by the Palestinian population in Jerusalem. I share your deep concerns.

Jerusalem — Al-Quds is not only a treasured home for so many — it also holds a unique place in the hearts of millions of Muslims, Jews and Christians the world over.

As we have seen time and again, what happens in Jerusalem reverberates globally — and tensions, incitement and violence often spill into wider instability.

It is therefore imperative that all parties exercise restraint and refrain from provocations, inflammatory actions and rhetoric. I am very concerned by the unilateral initiatives that we have seen in recent weeks.

The position of the United Nations is clear: The status of Jerusalem cannot be altered by unilateral actions, including settlement activities in occupied East Jerusalem; it can only be resolved through negotiations between the parties.

Jerusalem's demographic and historical character must be preserved — and the status quo at the Holy Sites must be upheld, in line with the special role of the Hashemite Kingdom of Jordan.

The United Nations remains committed to help Israelis and Palestinians chart a credible path forward: Towards an end of the occupation; towards two States living side by side with Jerusalem as the capital of both; towards lasting security, peace and dignity for all. Thank you. *Shukran*.

<https://press.un.org/en/2023/sgsm21684.doc.htm>