

OIC Independent Permanent Human Rights Commission (IPHRC)
Statement
On Al-Aqsa Mosque

The OIC Independent Permanent Human Rights Commission (IPHRC) considered during its Sixth Regular Session the situation in Al-Aqsa Mosque and issued the following statement:

The Commission follows with great concern the recent developments in Al-Aqsa Mosque, and is deeply alarmed at the ongoing Israeli practices in the Holy Site in the absence of international reaction. It notes that these developments come in the aftermath of excessive attacks on Al-Aqsa by extremist Israeli settler leaders and groups that have gained pace in recent months, under Israeli police surveillance and protection. The complacency of the Israeli Government vis-à-vis such acts is a clear indication that it condones the attempts aimed at altering the Islamic nature of the Holy Site, a matter that merely serves to incite more extremism, tension and violence.

It should be noted that the British Commission of Inquiry founded in 1929 under the British mandate of Historic Palestine establishes that there is no evidence that Solomon's Temple existed in this area, and that Al-Aqsa Mosque solely belongs to those of the Muslim faith. Further excavations could not prove otherwise. Any attempt to change the nature of the Holy Site would not only run counter to historic facts, but would also represent a threat to the hopes of a peaceful resolution of the political conflict between Israelis and Palestinians, and adding wider dimensions to the conflict.

The Commission calls on the Occupying Power to uphold its obligation to ensure the sanctity of and free access to the Christian and Muslim Holy Sites in the Occupied East Jerusalem at all times. Attempts to enforce a division and impose restrictions on access to Al-Aqsa based on age or sex run as clear violations of the principle of non-discrimination. According to Article 18 of the International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights (ICCPR), all individuals are entitled to freedom to manifest his or

her religion or belief in worship, observance, practice and teaching, either individually or in community with others, both in public and private, without fear or reprisal. It highlights that extremism begets counter extremism, and violence only breeds more violence.

The Commission further reminds of the obligation of all States under International Human Rights Law to prohibit any advocacy of national, racial or religious hatred that constitutes incitement to discrimination, hostility or violence.
