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STATEMENT BY BUREAU OF COMMITTEE ON THE EXERCISE OF THE INALIENABLE RIGHTS OF THE PALESTINIAN PEOPLE ON THE SITUATION IN JERUSALEM

The Bureau of the Committee on the Exercise of the Inalienable Rights of the Palestinian People issued the following statement today.

The Bureau of the Committee on the Exercise of the Inalienable Rights of the Palestinian People is alarmed by recent developments and increased tensions in Occupied East Jerusalem.

We are particularly concerned by the increasing incursions by Israeli extremists and political leaders, including Government officials, on the Al-Aqsa Mosque compound. These incidents provoke Palestinian and other Muslim worshippers and often lead to clashes, in which Palestinian civilians are injured, tear-gassed and detained. In another worrying development, the Knesset recently began a debate on a bill to impose "Israeli sovereignty" over Al-Haram Al-Sharif. Such actions with regard to this highly sensitive area provoke the Palestinians and may also be perceived as serious acts of incitement in the wider region. Moreover, these actions undermine the current negotiations process, threatening the prospects for peace.

These recent actions are indicative of a strategy aimed at altering the legal, demographic, physical and cultural character of East Jerusalem. Such actions are clearly prohibited under international law. House demolitions, evictions, land expropriation and the revocation of residency rights of Palestinian Jerusalemites are also on the increase. In 2013, 565 structures were demolished in East Jerusalem, displacing 298 Palestinians, including many women and children.

Palestinians are permitted to build in only 14 per cent of East Jerusalem, and a third of Palestinian land in East Jerusalem has been expropriated since 1967. In the same period, the residency status of more than 14,000 Palestinians has been revoked by Israel.

Moreover, the wall, a vast system of checkpoints and the imposition of a strict "entry permit" regime have effectively cut off East Jerusalem from the rest of the West Bank, restricting Palestinian movement, fragmenting the Palestinian Territory and exacerbating the already dire economic and social conditions of Palestinian residents.

Israel also continues to construct settlements in East Jerusalem, in violation of international law and in defiance of the international community's repeated calls for ending such illegal acts. Since the resumption of peace talks last July, Israel announced construction plans for more than 5,000 new settlement units in Palestinian neighbourhoods in the city.

The Bureau of the Committee wishes to reaffirm that East Jerusalem remains an integral part of the Occupied Palestinian Territory and is subject to the provisions of the Fourth Geneva Convention, as affirmed by numerous Security Council and General Assembly resolutions. Article 49 of the Fourth Geneva Convention clearly states: "The occupying Power shall not deport or transfer parts of its own civilian population into the territory it occupies."

The question of East Jerusalem is a crucial permanent status issue. A sovereign, contiguous and viable State of Palestine, with East Jerusalem as its capital and with arrangements for the holy sites acceptable to all, is a core requirement for the achievement of a just and lasting peace.

The Bureau of the Committee calls on the Security Council to act without delay to address these alarming developments, which are in defiance of the Council's resolutions, including [252 \(1968\)](#), [267 \(1969\)](#), [271 \(1969\)](#), [298 \(1971\)](#), [476 \(1980\)](#), [478 \(1980\)](#), [672 \(1990\)](#) and [1073 \(1996\)](#). The Bureau also calls on the Security Council to continue monitoring violations of the aforementioned resolutions and to act accordingly for their implementation.

The Committee will continue to carry out its mandated work until the question of Palestine is resolved in all its aspects. It calls on the international community to do its utmost to make 2014, the International Year of Solidarity with the Palestinian People, a decisive year in achieving the freedom and national rights of the Palestinian people and a peaceful solution to the conflict in all its aspects. The Committee will revisit this important issue at its upcoming Joint Meeting with the League of Arab States on 10 March 2014.

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