

Welcoming address
on behalf of H.E. Mr. Yerzhan Kazykhanov,
Chairman of the Council of Foreign Ministers
of the Organisation of Islamic Cooperation
Minister of Foreign Affairs of the Republic of Kazakhstan
New York, 29 November 2011

In my capacity of the Chairman of the Council of Foreign Ministers of the Organisation of Islamic Cooperation I would like to heartily welcome you and express my sincere gratitude to the participants of the meeting for supporting the noble endeavors of the people of Palestine.

The International Day of Solidarity with the Palestinian People is another good opportunity to reiterate the existing overwhelming international support for an end to the occupation, to address the fundamental security concerns of the region, to find a just solution to the refugee issue and to stop the suffering and hardship of the Palestinians.

Palestine is at the heart of the OIC. The cause of Palestine and Al-Quds Al-Sharif has been central to the Organisation since its very establishment.

The OIC Member States condemn Israel's continuing illegal and intensified settlement construction campaign and human rights violations against the Occupied Palestinian territory. There is no doubt that the Palestinians have full right and justification to resort to the United Nations to exercise their inalienable right of self-determination and to establish their independent State on the Palestinian territory, within the lines of 4th June, 1967, with East Jerusalem as its capital.

The OIC pledged to make all efforts possible to end the Israeli occupation and to extend effective support for the Palestinian people's right to self-determination and the establishment of their independent State. For this purpose according to the OIC Charter a post of an Assistant Secretary General should be devoted to the cause of Al-Quds Al-Sharif and Palestine and designated to a candidate from the State of Palestine.

This year has been especially critical to reaffirm the OIC's solidarity with the people of Palestine. At the 38th session of the OIC Council of Foreign Ministers in Astana and the Annual OIC Coordination Meeting in New York we sent a clear message of support to the bid to recognize the independent, sovereign State of Palestine based on the borders of June 1967. And we were consistent in our policy backing the recent decision of the UNESCO to admit Palestine as its full member.

Being deeply interested in achieving lasting peace and stability in the Middle East we pledge to remain seized of the matter and to exert all necessary efforts until a peaceful, just, comprehensive and lasting solution to the Question of Palestine is achieved in all its aspects and until the Palestinian people can finally realize their legitimate aspirations and inalienable rights in their independent State of Palestine, with Al-Quds Al-Sharif as its capital.

I avail myself of this opportunity to wish to the people of Palestine every success in their noble aspirations for a safer and prosperous future.

Yerzhan KAZYKHANOV