**NGO Action News – 8 December 2017**

United Nations

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https://www.un.org/unispal/ngo-action-news-8-december-2017/

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**Global**

* In relation to U.S. President Trump’s [Statement on Jerusalem](https://www.whitehouse.gov/the-press-office/2017/12/06/statement-president-trump-jerusalem) on 6 December, [Global Ministries of the United Methodist Church](http://www.umcmission.org/learn-about-us/news-and-stories/2017/december-/127statement-on-u-s-jerusalem-embassy-decision) restated its vision of a shared Jerusalem, as a city of peace and reconciliation, expressing concern that the decision *“risks emboldening further Israeli settlements on Palestinian land and further displacement of Palestinians from East Jerusalem.”*
* Daniel Sokatch, CEO of the [New Israel Fund](http://www.nif.org/news-media/press-releases/nif-ceo-trumps-embassy-move-dangerous-reckless-irresponsible/) (NIF), a partnership of North Americans, Israelis, Europeans and Australians committed to promoting equality and democracy in Israel, stated that *“international recognition of Jerusalem’s status has always hinged on a successful resolution to the conflict, as part of a negotiated, final status peace agreement. Doing so outside of that context severally damages prospects for a negotiated peace agreement.”*
* Citing resolution 2334 (2016), [Pax Christi International](http://www.paxchristi.net/) requested the UN Security Council, *inter alia*, to reaffirm in the emergency meeting of 8 December that it would not recognize any changes to the 1967 lines, including with regard to Jerusalem, other than those agreed by the parties through negotiations.
* The [World Council of Churches](https://www.oikoumene.org/en/resources/documents/general-secretary/statements/on-us-recognition-of-jerusalem-as-israels-capital) (WCC) called on the U.S. Administration to reconsider its position on Jerusalem and to exert its maximum efforts in promoting renewed negotiations between Palestinians and Israelis for a genuine, just and sustainable peace.

**Middle East**

* [Al-Haq](http://www.alhaq.org/advocacy/targets/third-party-states/1156-al-haq-condemns-united-states-recognition-of-jerusalem-in-the-occupied-state-of-palestine-as-israels-capital) called on the UN General Assembly to convene an Emergency Special Session and to seek from the International Court of Justice (ICJ) an Advisory Opinion on *“the question of Israel’s annexation, colonization and apartheid.”* Al-Haq further called on UN bodies and regional organizations to ensure that sanctions are placed on Israel.
* Issam Younis, general director of [Al Mezan Center for Human Rights](http://www.mezan.org/en/post/22149/Issam%20Younis%20rejects%20the%20position%20the%20United%20States%20has%20taken%20on%20Jerusalem%20and%20stresses%20that%20it%20will%20not%20change%20the%20legal%20status%20of%20the%20occupied%20city), called on the international community to oppose the recognition of Jerusalem as Israel’s capital and to work on an *“international law-based engagement in the conflict that prioritizes ending impunity and allowing justice to prevail.”*
* [B’Tselem](http://www.btselem.org/press_releases/20171206_jerusalem_status) noted that no unilateral announcement or embassy relocation could change the fact that hundreds of thousands of Palestinians lived under occupation in Jerusalem, deprived of their political rights. *“This is the reality that must change,”* the organization stated.
* [Ir Amim](http://www.altro.co.il/newsletters/show/10538?key=0fc57d85eea58718a2b13d60a0cc628a&value=851ee8eecf3193dafdb931a499e42421675c7dfd:1303262) expressed concern that the decision would embolden Israeli policy makers proposing to unilaterally redraw the boundaries of Jerusalem and alter its demographic balance. *“If realized, these proposals would result in the transfer of approximately 120,000 Palestinians from East Jerusalem and the de facto annexation of some 140,000 settlers from the adjacent major settlement blocs,”* Ir Amim remarked.
* Drawing a comparison to the Balfour Declaration, the [Palestinian Center for Human Rights](http://pchrgaza.org/en/?p=10167)(PCHR) issued the position paper *“A Grant of Recognition from those who do not own to those who do not deserve”*, setting out recommendations for action to the Palestinian leadership, the international community and civil society.
* [Peace Now](http://peacenow.org.il/en/embassy-to-jerusalem) expressed concern that in the current context, a unilateral recognition of Jerusalem as Israel’s capital risked undermining chances for peace. The group stated that *“the only way to make Jerusalem universally recognized as the legitimate capital of Israel is through a two states agreement in which the Palestinians establish their own capital (Al-Quds) in East Jerusalem.”*
* The [Open Letter by Patriarchs and Heads of Local Churches in Jerusalem](https://hcef.org/790809127-heads-local-churches-send-letter-president-donald-trump-regarding-status-jerusalem/) of 6 December to U.S. President Trump is available on the website of the [Holy Land Christian Ecumenical Foundation](https://hcef.org/790809160-hcef-statement-u-s-president-trumps-unjust-decision-jerusalem-rateb-y-rabie-president-ceo/) (HCEF). The latter also issued a statement, concluding that *“Jerusalem is for all.”*

**North America**

* Nadia Hijab, executive director of [Al-Shabaka – The Palestinian Policy Network](https://al-shabaka.org/commentaries/trumps-jerusalem-h-bomb-weighing-options-palestinians/) published an analysis, weighing options for Palestinians after President Trump’s announcement on Jerusalem.
* [Amnesty International USA](https://www.amnesty.org/en/latest/news/2017/12/usa-recognition-of-unified-jerusalem-undermines-palestinians-human-rights/) stated that the decision showed disregard for human rights violations linked to Israeli annexation policies and undermined the international rule of law.
* [Canadians for Peace and Justice in the Middle East](http://www.cjpme.org/pr_2017_12_06) (CJPME) issued a statement, opposing the presence of foreign Embassies in Jerusalem.
* [Churches for Middle East Peace](https://org2.salsalabs.com/o/5575/t/0/blastContent.jsp?email_blast_KEY=1406252) (CMEP), a coalition of 27 national church denominations and organizations, warned that the decision would undermine trust and make the resumption of negotiations more difficult, if not impossible.
* The [Council on American Islamic Relations](https://oneclickpolitics.com/messages/edit?promo_id=3774) (CAIR) has launched an Action Alert, calling on citizens to raise with their elected representatives their concerns about plans to move the U.S. Embassy from Tel Aviv to Jerusalem.
* [Jewish Voice for Peace](https://jewishvoiceforpeace.org/jvp-responds-to-trumps-announcement-of-jerusalem-as-israels-capital-and-plan-to-move-u-s-embassy/) (JVP) cautioned that the decision would endorse *“Israeli policies of dispossession and forcible transfer, harming the rights and lives of Palestinians and crushing any hope for a peace based on equality and freedom for everyone in the region.”*
* Expressing concern about the President’s change of U.S. policy, [J Street](http://jstreet.org/) called on Members of Congress and Jewish communal leaders concerned about Israel’s security not to support it.
* The [US Campaign for Palestinian Rights](https://uscpr.org/trumps-recognition-jerusalem-israels-capital-politically-dangerous-morally-egregious/) noted that the move was contrary to international law, the consensus of the international community and decades of U.S. foreign policy.
* Daniel Levy, President of the [S. Middle East Project](http://www.usmep.us/), analyzed the implications of President’s Trump decision in *The National Interest.*

**Latin America**

* The [Federación Palestina de Chile](http://www.federacionpalestina.cl/noticia.php?id=3070) issued a statement, calling on the Government of Chile to oppose the unilateral recognition of Jerusalem as Israel’s capital. A statement by the [Confederación Palestina de América Latina y del Caribe](http://www.federacionpalestina.cl/noticia.php?id=3077) (COPLAC) is also available online.

**Europe**

* [Cités Unies France and its Réseau de Coopération Décentralisée pour la Palestine (RCDP)](http://www.cites-unies-france.org/Palestine-Communique-conjoint-RCDP), the French section of the Global Network of Cities, Local and Regional Governments (UCLG), stressed that France had a pivotal role to play in efforts to achieve peace in the Middle East and a full recognition of the State of Palestine. RCDP is inviting participation in a project to support Palestinian youth in Jerusalem.
* The [Palestinian Return Centre](https://prc.org.uk/en/post/3793/prc-update-uk-mps-on-jerusalem-status-in-light-of-trump-s-dangerous-decision) (PRC) updated the British Parliament on recent developments, providing a fact sheet regarding the status of Jerusalem under international law, relevant UN resolutions and current conditions in the city.
* Expressing support for Palestinian rights, the [Jewish Socialists Group](http://www.jewishsocialist.org.uk/news/item/jsg-statement-on-trumps-announced-move-of-the-us-embassy) announced its participation in the *“Hands Off Jerusalem”* demonstration scheduled to take place in London on 8 December, organized by the Palestine Solidarity Campaign (PSC) and other groups.

**Australia**

* The [Australia Palestine Advocacy Network](http://www.afopa.com.au/blog/2017/12/8/apan-australia-must-join-condemnations) issued a statement, calling on the Government to stay with the international consensus and keep the Australian Embassy to Israel in Tel Aviv.

**United Nations**

* On 8 December, the UN Security Council held an emergency meeting on the situation in the Middle East, including the Palestinian question. In his briefing to the Council, Nickolay Mladenov, [UN Special Coordinator for the Middle East Peace Process](https://unsco.unmissions.org/sites/default/files/security_council_briefing_on_jerusalem_-_8_december_2017.pdf), reiterated that Jerusalem remains a final status issue for which a comprehensive, just and lasting solution must be achieved through negotiations between the parties, and on the basis of relevant United Nations resolutions and mutual agreements, and urged the international community to fulfil its historic responsibility to support the parties in achieving peace and a comprehensive agreement.
* In a statement issued on 7 December, the [Committee on the Exercise of the Inalienable Rights of the Palestinian People](https://www.un.org/unispal/document/bureau-of-palestinian-rights-committee-statement-on-recognition-of-jerusalem-as-the-capitol-of-israel/) (CEIRPP) strongly urged the Government of the United States of America to rescind its decision to recognize Jerusalem as the capital of Israel.
* Stressing that there is no alternative to the two-state solution, [UN Secretary-General António Guterres](https://static.un.org/sg/en/content/sg/statement/2017-12-06/secretary-general%E2%80%99s-statement-middle-east-peace-process-delivered) stated on 6 December that he would do everything in his power to support a return to meaningful negotiations and the realization of a lasting peace for both peoples.