POLITICAL DECLARATION OF THE MINISTERIAL COMMITTEE OF THE NON-ALIGNED MOVEMENT (NAM) ON PALESTINE ON THE QUESTION RELATED TO THE STATUS OF JERUSALEM

1. The Ministers of the Non-Aligned Movement (NAM) Committee on Palestine agreed to adopt this Political Declaration, taking into account the urgent need to address recent worrying developments in the international arena and on the ground, undermining the inalienable rights and legitimate national aspirations of the Palestinian People, particularly as a result of the recent provocative and reprehensible decision by the Government of the United States of America, on 6 December 2017, regarding Jerusalem, in contravention of international law, relevant United Nations resolutions.

2. In light of these grave developments, the Ministers declared from the outset their firm commitment to the principles and positions adopted in previous Declarations by the Committee, as well as by past Ministerial Meetings and Summits of the Movement, regarding the question of Palestine, and reaffirmed their abiding solidarity with the Palestinian People and unwavering support for their just cause.

3. The Ministers stressed that a just, lasting solution to the question of Palestine in all its aspects must remain a priority on the Movement’s agenda. Hence, the Ministers appealed to the Members of the Movement to renew their commitment and further strengthen and coordinate their efforts to promote the realization of justice and the inalienable rights of the Palestinian People, including to self-determination and independence.

4. The Ministers recalled with deep regret that June 2017 marked the passage of fifty years since the onset of Israel’s foreign occupation of Palestinian and other Arab lands in 1967, and reflected on other solemn anniversaries in 2017, including the seventieth anniversary of the General Assembly’s decision to partition Mandate Palestine by its resolution 181 (II) of 29 November 1947 and the ensuing Nakba in 1948, which tragically continues to be endured by the Palestinian People to this day.

5. The Ministers stressed the need for urgent collective efforts to advance a just and peaceful solution to the question of Palestine on the basis of the relevant UN resolutions; to bring a halt to the grave violations of international law being perpetrated by Israel, the occupying Power, in the Occupied Palestinian Territory, including East Jerusalem; and to alleviate the hardships being endured by the Palestinian People in the absence of a just solution. They expressed grave concern that the lack of accountability for violations has further emboldened Israel’s impunity, destabilized the situation on the ground, and diminished peace prospects, and deplored any support to or cooperation with Israel’s illegal actions and impunity.
6. The Ministers *reaffirmed* their readiness to contribute to the achievement of a just and peaceful solution, and called for the intensification of international and regional efforts for this objective, as called for by Security Council resolution 2334 (2016). They *recalled* in particular the responsibilities of the Security Council and the General Assembly, in accordance with the Charter and relevant resolutions.

7. The Ministers *called* for the urgent provision of political, economic and humanitarian support to assist the Palestinian People and support their efforts to realize their inalienable rights, including to self-determination and freedom in their independent State of Palestine, with East Jerusalem as its capital, on the basis of the pre-1967 borders and a just solution for the Palestine refugees, based on General Assembly resolution 194 (III), and to achieve genuine peace, security and coexistence. They firmly *rejected* and condemned any threats, intimidation and means of pressure, whether political, financial or humanitarian, aimed at forcing the Palestinian People and their leadership to forsake their inalienable rights and legitimate national aspirations.

8. The Ministers *received* a comprehensive briefing from the Minister for Foreign Affairs of the State of Palestine regarding recent serious developments, including the unilateral, provocative decision by the Government of the United States of America on 6 December 2017, in contravention of the relevant Security Council resolutions. They *assessed* these developments and the impact of the continued absence of a credible political horizon for justly resolving the conflict and realizing the rights of the Palestinian People. They *deeply deplored* Israel’s continuing intransigence and obstruction of peace efforts and entrenchment of its fifty-year military occupation via various illegal schemes and measures in the Occupied Palestinian Territory, including East Jerusalem - the territory that constitutes the State of Palestine, and *expressed grave concern* about the consequent human rights crisis and protection crisis being deliberately inflicted on the Palestinian People, and the deepening insecurity and humanitarian and socio-economic suffering they are enduring.

9. The Ministers further *reiterated their strong condemnation* of the occupying Power’s systematic settlement colonization of the Palestinian land, including East Jerusalem, including the confiscation of Palestinian land, demolition of homes and properties, construction of settlements and the wall, forced displacement and transfer of Palestinian civilians, exploitation of natural resources, and all other measures aimed at changing the demographic composition, character, status and identity of the Palestinian Territory occupied since 1967, including East Jerusalem, in grave breach of humanitarian law, violation of relevant UN resolutions, and disrespect of the 2004 Advisory Opinion of the International Court of Justice. They *cautioned* that such unlawful and destructive measures seriously undermine the contiguity, integrity, viability and unity of the Occupied Palestinian Territory, including East Jerusalem, and jeopardize the possibility of achieving the two-State solution for peace on the basis of the pre-1967 borders.
10. In this regard, the Ministers *strongly denounced* the 6 December 2017 decision of the U.S. Government to recognize the City of Jerusalem as Israel’s capital and to transfer the American Embassy to Israel to the City. The Ministers categorically *rejected* these and any other related actions recognizing Israel’s illegal measures and claims in the City, which are aimed at consolidating Israel’s unlawful control and *de facto* annexation of the City, in grave breach of international law and in direct contravention of relevant Security Council resolutions.

11. The Ministers *deemed* such actions to be null and void and to be without any legal effect; and affirmed the need for the protection and preservation of the unique spiritual, religious and cultural dimensions of the City, as per the relevant UN resolutions. They once again *strongly cautioned* that such provocative, illegal actions have and will further fuel tensions and undermine the prospects for peace, with potentially far-reaching repercussions, including aggravation of heightened religious sensitivities and the stoking of a religious conflict, not only in the region, but also in many other countries around the world.

12. The Ministers *expressed grave concern* that, since the decision of the U.S. Government on 6 December 2017, Israel’s illegal, destructive and aggressive measures in the Occupied West Bank, including East Jerusalem have been intensified. They *deplored* all such measures, which have caused dozens of civilian deaths, including children, and *expressed grave concern* that, in the same period, hundreds of Palestinians, including 140 children, and at least 10 women have been arrested or detained by the occupying Power.

13. The Ministers *expressed* their alarm at such developments and deplored Israel’s flagrant contempt of the Security Council and its relevant resolutions in this regard, including resolution 2334 (2016), which clearly underscored non-recognition of any changes to the 4 June 1967 lines, including with regard to Jerusalem, other than those agreed by the parties through negotiations, and also called upon all States to distinguish, in their relevant dealings, between the territory of the occupying Power and the territory occupied since 1967. The Ministers *called* for a halt to all violations and provocations in this regard, including the rescinding of the decision by the U.S. on 6 December 2017 and the cessation and reversal of all Israeli violations, including the recent illegal decision taken by the Israeli government in January 2018, which attempts to severely change the status of Jerusalem and to impose illegal Israeli exclusivity over the City.

14. The Ministers *recalled* Security Council resolutions 476 (1980) and 478 (1980), by which the Council, inter alia, reconfirmed “that all legislative and administrative measures and actions taken by Israel, the occupying Power, which purport to alter the character and status of the Holy City of Jerusalem have no legal validity” and must be rescinded forthwith; affirmed “that the enactment of the “basic law” by Israel constitutes a violation of international law”;
decided “not to recognize the “basic law and such other actions by Israel that, as a result of this law, seek to alter the character and status of Jerusalem”; and called upon all Member States to accept this decision, while also expressly calling upon “those States that have established diplomatic missions at Jerusalem to withdraw such missions from the Holy City”. Hence, the Ministers called for full respect of the relevant Security Council resolutions.

15. The Ministers welcomed the clear international consensus rejecting the decision of the U.S. administration, as expressed in the Security Council and the General Assembly, as well as at the Arab Ministerial Meeting held in Cairo on 9 December 2017, and at the Extraordinary Islamic Summit Conference held in Istanbul on 13 December 2017. In this regard, they expressed their appreciation to H.E. Mr. Nicolás Maduro Moros, President of the Bolivarian Republic of Venezuela, for participating in the latter, in his capacity as Chair of the Non-Aligned Movement (NAM), which is a testimony of the historic solidarity of the Movement with the just Palestinian Cause and its heroic People.

16. The Ministers strongly welcomed the adoption of the General Assembly resolution ES-10/19 on 21 December 2017 by an overwhelming majority, reaffirming the relevant resolutions; reiterating the call upon all States to refrain from establishing diplomatic missions in the Holy City of Jerusalem, pursuant to resolution 478 (1980) of the Security Council; and stressing that Jerusalem is a final status issue to be resolved through negotiations in line with relevant UN resolutions.

Calls for Support to Palestine:

17. The Ministers reaffirmed the resolve of the NAM Ministerial Committee on Palestine, with the support of the Movement as a whole, to continue assisting the Palestinian People in their legitimate struggle for justice, dignity, peace and the exercise of their inalienable rights, including to self-determination and freedom in their independent State of Palestine, with East Jerusalem as its capital, and a just solution for the plight of the Palestine refugees based on resolution 194 (III).

18. The Ministers called for increased efforts to bring about international efforts, in a collective process, aimed at achieving, without delay, an end to the Israeli occupation that began in 1967 and a comprehensive, just and lasting peace in the Middle East, on the basis of relevant UN resolutions, the Madrid terms of reference, including the principle of land for peace, the Arab Peace Initiative and the Quartet Roadmap, stressing that a peaceful solution to the question of Palestine is central for establishing peace and stability in the Middle East and globally.

19. The Ministers reiterated their call on the Government of the United States of America to rescind its 6 December 2017 decision and to act in conformity with the relevant UN
resolutions and in a manner that will salvage the prospects for a just solution and ensure, without delay, a future of peace, security, prosperity and dignity for both the Palestinian and Israeli Peoples.

20. They called upon all States to continue to fully respect all Security Council resolutions related to Jerusalem and the situation in the rest of the Occupied Palestinian Territory. They stressed that such respect is essential for the calming and rectifying the current situation and advancing the prospects for peace.

21. The Ministers called for urgent efforts by States, individually and collectively, by all political, diplomatic and legal means, to hold Israel, the occupying Power, accountable for its violations. The Member States of the Committee that are Party to the Rome Statute also affirmed the importance of the International Criminal Court (ICC) for addressing the war crimes and crimes against humanity being committed by Israel against the Palestinian people, and emphasized the centrality of justice in bringing an end to such crimes and impunity.

22. The Ministers invited all countries that have not recognized the State of Palestine to do so forthwith as an expression of their sincere commitment to peace based on the two-State solution and their respect for international law and legality.

23. The Ministers called for the exertion of efforts with friendly countries that have yet to establish diplomatic relations with the State of Palestine to encourage them to do so, in line with the Movement’s positions and as a contribution to preserving the two-State solution on the pre-1967 borders and salvaging the prospects for peace. They also called on countries who have recognized the State of Palestine to publicly reaffirm that East Jerusalem is the capital of the State of Palestine. The Ministers called on States to explicitly clarify that their recognition of diplomatic relations with Israel are also on the basis of the pre-1967 borders, and that no Israeli sovereignty is recognized over the 1967 line (1949 Armistice Line), including in East Jerusalem. They stressed that this too would be in line with their obligations under resolution 2334 (2016), specifically operative paragraphs 3 and 5 regarding non-recognition of any changes to the 1967 lines, including with regard to Jerusalem, and calling on all States to make this distinction in their dealings with Israel, the occupying Power.

24. The Ministers decided to support the initiatives of the State of Palestine at the UN and to coordinate positions to foster and mobilize the support of Member States. They stressed in this regard the importance of the unity and support of the Member States of the NAM Caucus in the Security Council.

25. The Ministers noted with concern a significant number of NAM member states who voted against, abstained or were absent during the vote on General Assembly resolution ES-10/19. The Ministers urged the States to observe the established principles of NAM in respect to the
status of Jerusalem and the question of Palestine as a whole, and the reaffirmation of principled positions in this regard. They also decided that Member States of the Movement will reflect in their statements on Palestine at the UN clear principles, consistent with the positions endorsed by the Movement.

26. The Ministers decided to consider arranging a highly-publicized trip of the Ministerial Committee to Occupied East Jerusalem, in solidarity with the Palestinian People and to meet with Palestinian and Israeli civil society organizations advocating for a two-State solution.

27. The Ministers stressed the urgency of providing support to the United Nations Relief and Works Agency for Palestine Refugees in the Near East (UNRWA), following the decision of the Government of the United States of America to drastically reduce funding to the Agency, undermining its provision of vital humanitarian and development assistance to the Palestine refugees. They called on all States to continue to support the works of the Agency to ensure the continuity of its assistance, in line with the relevant General Assembly resolutions, with a view for it to meet rising refugee needs, and to prevent the decline of humanitarian conditions and further destabilization among the Palestine refugee population throughout the region.

28. The Ministers also urged continued assistance to support Palestinian economic recovery and development, in line with the national priorities and development plans of the Palestinian People, and with a particular view to alleviating the dire humanitarian situation in the Gaza Strip due to the illegal ten-year Israeli blockade, which they insisted must be completely lifted. They called on the international community, particularly the Member States of the Movement to do their utmost to provide humanitarian assistance and capacity building; and commended the many initiatives of humanitarian and developmental support by Member States in this regard, including in the framework of South-South cooperation.

29. The Ministers agreed, in view of the deteriorating situation in the Occupied Palestinian Territory, including East Jerusalem, and the increasing threats to the achievement of the two-State solution on the pre-1967 borders, as well as on the basis of the Movement’s quest for the establishment of a peaceful and prosperous world, to enhance the status and role of the Non-Aligned Movement (NAM) as an anti-war and peace-loving force, including through its instrumentalization as a Front for World Peace, and in favor, in particular, of the respect of the right to life and the inalienable right of the peoples to their self-determination and independence.

30. The Ministers reaffirmed the resolve of the NAM Ministerial Committee on Palestine, with the support of the Movement as a whole, to continue assisting the Palestinian People in their legitimate struggle for justice, dignity, peace and the exercise of their inalienable rights, including to self-determination and freedom in their independent State of Palestine, with East
Jerusalem as its capital, and a just solution for the plight of the Palestine refugees based on resolution 194 (III). They called for the redoubling of international efforts, at the governmental, inter-governmental and non-governmental levels, to realize these noble objectives as rapidly as possible, stressing that a peaceful solution to the question of Palestine is central for establishing peace and stability in the Middle East.

31. The Ministers pledged to remain in constant contact and coordination, in order to uphold the principles and positions declared herein in support of a just, lasting, comprehensive and peaceful solution to the question of Palestine, and its attainment without delay, and in solidarity with the Palestinian People at this critical moment.

New York, 22 February 2018