

Turkey's President Recep Tayyip Erdogan, centre, flanked by other leaders poses for photographs during



Jerusalem 'should be Palestinian capital'

Istanbul

Leaders from the world's main Pan-Islamic body yesterday urged the international community to recognise East Jerusalem as the Palestinian capital after US President Donald Trump declared Jerusalem to be the capital of Israel.

The emergency summit of the Organisation of Islamic Cooperation (OIC) in Istanbul said it declared "East Jerusalem as the capital of the State of Palestine" and invited "all countries to recognise the State of Palestine and East Jerusalem as its occupied capital", according to the final statement.

They declared Trump's decision "null and void legally" and "a deliberate undermining of all peace efforts" that would give impetus to "extremism and terrorism".

The statement said the OIC summit regarded Trump's move "as an announcement of the US administration's withdrawal from its role as sponsor of peace" in the Middle East.

It added that Washington's decision amounted to

A protester wears a mask - illustrated with Jerusalem's Dome of the Rock mosque - at a rally in Istanbul near the venue of the summit



Islamic nations gather to seek united stance against Jerusalem move by the U.S.

"encouragement of Israel ... to continue its policy of colonialism, settlement, apartheid and ethnic cleansing".

The OIC groups together 57 member states. Turkish President Recep Tayyip Erdogan convened the meeting, seeking a coordinated response to Trump's announcement last week.

Regarding himself a champion of the Palestinian cause, Erdogan denounced Israel as a state defined by "occupation" and "terror", in a new diatribe against the Israeli leadership.

"With this decision, Israel was rewarded for all the terrorist activities it has carried out. It is Trump who bestowed this award even," he said.

"I am inviting the countries who value international law and fairness to recognise occupied Jerusalem as the capital of Palestine," he said, adding that Islamic countries would "never give up" on this demand.

In an angry address, Palestinian leader Mahmoud Abbas said the United States had lost its role as the mediator in the peace process between

Saudi King Salman criticises Trump's Jerusalem decision

Riyadh

Palestinians have the right to Israeli-annexed east Jerusalem as their capital, Saudi King and Custodian of the Two Holy Mosques King Salman bin Abdulaziz Al Saud said yesterday, echoing calls at the Islamic summit in Istanbul.

"The kingdom has called for a political solution to resolve regional crises, foremost of which is the Palestinian issue and the restoration of the Palestinian people's legitimate rights, including the right to establish their independent state with east Jerusalem as its capital," the king said.

The king renewed his condemnation of President Donald Trump's decision, saying it "represents an extreme bias against the rights of the Palestinian people in Jerusalem that have been guaranteed by international resolutions". (AFP)

Israel and the Palestinians, denouncing Washington as biased in favour of the Jewish state.

"Jerusalem is and will forever be the capital of the Palestinian state ... There will be no peace, no stability without that," Abbas said.

He slammed the recognition by Trump as a "gift" to the "Zionist movement" as if he "were giving away an

American city".

"We do not accept any role of the United States in the political process from now on. Because it is completely biased towards Israel," he said.

Earlier, Turkish Foreign Minister Mevlut Cavusoglu indicated that Ankara would be pushing for OIC states to recognise East Jerusalem as the capital of a future Palestinian state. (AFP)