

Committee Chair King Mohammed VI calls for Jerusalem to remain a "haven of coexistence"

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/PRNewswire-USNewswire/ (MACP) -- The official

[communique](#)

released following the two-day meeting in Marrakesh of the al-Quds Committee of the Organization of the Islamic Conference welcomed the role of the United States

as "sponsors" of the recently-renewed negotiations between Palestinian and Israeli officials, and underscored the group's commitment to establishing "a comprehensive, just and lasting peace in the Middle East ."

The Communique also revealed plans to bolster the Committee's humanitarian efforts in the Holy City, by organizing grassroots fundraising campaigns with the possibility of instituting mandatory monetary commitments from member countries.

Established in 1975 by the Organization of the Islamic Conference under the chairmanship of Morocco's King Hassan II , the Committee seeks a political solution to the issue of Jerusalem's status in order to resolve the Israeli-Palestinian conflict.

The Committee's latest statement called the resumed negotiation process "a decisive step towards peace," and invited the international community to "contribute effectively to... creating the conditions for its implementation and facilitating the task of peacemakers," particularly with respect to humanitarian aid.

The Communique recognized Morocco's longstanding commitment to Jerusalem and the well-being of its residents, acknowledging that the country funds up to 80% of OIC's philanthropic projects in the Holy City, including building schools and hospitals and maintaining holy sites.

Morocco's King Mohammed VI, who has served as Committee Chair since his ascension to the throne in 1999, said in a closing speech that "the road to peace is as long as it is arduous. It requires tremendous sacrifices on all sides. It also calls for consensus, realism and courage to make crucial, painful decisions, allowing reason, wisdom, hope and the quest for life to prevail over hatred, extremism, despair and aggression, for the benefit of the peoples in the region."

The King concluded his address by stating that "we are a nation committed to peace and to the alliance of civilizations and cultures;" and to this end, "We want Al-Quds to remain what it has always been: a rallying symbol of the monotheistic religions and a haven of coexistence between its inhabitants, in an environment of peace and concord."

Morocco has played an active role in advancing the Middle East peace process for decades, often alongside American diplomatic efforts. From 1994-1999, the late King Hassan II worked with Israel's then-Foreign Minister David Levy (who is of Moroccan origin) to bring the parties together; and following the signing of the Oslo Peace Accords, King Hassan was publicly honored by Israeli Minister of Defense Yitzhak Rabin for Morocco's efforts to further the negotiations.

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