



Moving the embassy: US acceptance of the illegal annexation of East Jerusalem

The Civic Coalition for Palestinian Rights in Jerusalem (CCPRJ) is deeply concerned about statements from the White House confirming that President Donald Trump's team is in the "[beginning stages](#)" of discussing a plan to move the U.S. embassy in Israel from Tel Aviv to Jerusalem. The statements followed media sources that were reporting President Trump would announce the move of the US embassy from Tel Aviv to Jerusalem on Monday the 23rd of January. It seems that the Palestinian Authority in recent days [received](#) reassuring messages concerning U.S. President Trump's declarations but until now nothing has been confirmed.

In an earlier [statement](#), CCPRJ expressed its concern about the effect that the election of Donald Trump as the 45th President of the United States may have on illegal Israeli settlement policies in the occupied Palestinian territories, including East Jerusalem.

Since the occupation in 1967 the international community has been very clear on the illegality of the annexation of East Jerusalem, which is considered by the international community to be occupied Palestinian territory. In the most recent UN Security Council Resolution which was adopted late last year, it was once again stated that there will be [no recognition](#) from the international community of any changes to the 4 June 1967 lines, including with regard to Jerusalem, other than those agreed by the two sides through negotiations.

Annexation of occupied territory is illegal. The occupying power [cannot](#) move its own population into occupied territory, nor can it force protected persons from the occupied territory to leave. Several UN legal documents that were adopted in the past five decades have confirmed this reasoning.¹ [Article 47](#) of the Fourth Geneva Convention prohibits the deprivation of the rights of the occupied population by changes introduced as the result of the occupation of the territory. [Article 49\(6\)](#) subsequently states that the occupying power shall not deport or transfer parts of its own civilian population into the territory it occupies. Furthermore, humanitarian law prohibits the expropriation and destruction of private property without military necessity. Additionally, the occupying power is not allowed to make any alteration to the status quo of the occupied territory that will not benefit the local population.² All of these rules have been violated since Israel decided to annex East Jerusalem in 1967 and subsequently [declared](#) the city to be, complete and united the capital of Israel.

Moving the US embassy from Tel Aviv to Jerusalem would constitute the acceptance by the United States of the illegal annexation of East Jerusalem, which is in direct contravention with international law and UN Resolutions.

The illegal annexation of East Jerusalem is a violation international law. The lack of the international community and third state parties' action encourages Israel to continue such violations.

CCPRJ therefore calls upon the international community, specifically the European Union considering its strong [condemnation](#) of the announced plan, to give a protective response by:

- Denouncing the plan to move the embassy and to call on President Trump to refrain from this decision;
- Refraining from any cooperation with the representation of the United States in Jerusalem, should the embassy be moved there.

¹ Draft Declaration on Population Transfer and the Implantation of Settlers, presented as Annex II in “Human Rights and Population Transfer: Final Report of the Special Rapporteur, Mr. Al-Khasawneh”, UN Doc. E/CN.4/Sub.2/1997/23 (27 June 1997); UN Security council resolutions 446, 452, 465, 471 and 476, considered the settlements to have "no legal validity" under Geneva Convention IV.

² Convention (IV) respecting the Laws and Customs of War on Land and its annex: Regulations concerning the Laws and Customs of War on Land, The Hague, 18 October 1907, articles 46 and 55; 1949 IV Geneva Convention, article 53.