

Concern over the use of the inaccurate term “Temple Mount” to refer to Al-Aqsa Mosque Compound in Jerusalem

Al-Aqsa Mosque Compound, sometimes referred to as the Noble Sanctuary (“Haram al-Sharif” in Arabic), is the compound that contains Al Aqsa building itself, ablution fountains, open spaces for prayer, monuments and the Dome of the Rock building. This entire area enclosed by the walls which spans 144 dunums (almost 36 acres), forms the Mosque.

Sacred to approximately 1.6 billion Muslims around the world, and a symbol for all Palestinians, the Mosque has been under exclusive Muslim sovereignty and control since the construction of the Dome of the Rock in 692 CE. As such, any entrance to the Al Aqsa Mosque must be agreed and coordinated by the Muslim Waqf.

Al-Aqsa Mosque Compound is located in East-Jerusalem, an internationally recognized part of the Occupied State of Palestine.

Since Israel’s military occupation of East Jerusalem in the June 1967 War, several plots by Settler organizations and other Zionist extremists to blow up the Mosque were uncovered by the Israeli authorities. In 1980, Israel adopted the “Basic Law” on Jerusalem, which ratified the annexation of Occupied East Jerusalem to Israel. The international community does not recognize this annexation, in line with UN Security Council Resolution 478. This Resolution rejected the Israeli measure as a violation of the Fourth Geneva Convention and determined that:

“all legislative and administrative measures and actions taken by Israel, the occupying Power, which have altered or purport to alter the character and the status of the Holy City of Jerusalem, and in particular, the recent ‘basic law’ on Jerusalem, are null and void.”

Today, many settler leaders, with the support of the Israeli government, continue to incite against this sacred site, and consequently provoke Palestinian fears and anger. Israel, the occupying power, has failed at stopping settler extremists from entering the Mosque and this constitutes a violation of the Waqf’s custodianship and its obligation as an occupying power to maintain public order and civil life in the occupied territory.

All international media representatives are advised to adhere to international law and correct any other existing terminology used. The Al-Aqsa Mosque compound is not a disputed territory and all other terms, therefore, are null and void.

