

Trump & US Jerusalem move: Fury spreads from Jakarta to Rabat

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A wave of anger against a US decision to recognise Jerusalem as Israel's capital has spread from Asia, through the Middle East, to North Africa, with tens of thousands of people taking to the streets to denounce the controversial move.

Protesters filled central avenues and squares in a number of major international cities on Sunday, waving the flag of Palestine and shouting slogans to express their solidarity with the Palestinians, who see East Jerusalem as the capital of their future state.

US President Donald Trump's announcement on Wednesday drew near-universal condemnation from world leaders and inflamed the Palestinian-Israeli conflict, with violence flaring up in the occupied Palestinian territories for a fifth day.

According to the Palestinian Red Crescent, 157 people were injured on Sunday in confrontations with Israeli forces in the occupied West Bank, Jerusalem and Gaza.

At least four Palestinians have been killed in the Gaza Strip since the US declaration.

Clashes also erupted on Sunday at a protest in Beirut, where demonstrators fought with security forces outside the US embassy in the Lebanese capital.

Demonstrators set fires in the street, torched US and Israeli flags and threw stones at police officers, who responded with tear gas and water cannon.

Adnan Abdullah, a protester in Beirut, said Trump's Jerusalem decision "will not happen as long as there are people like us".

Another demonstrator, whose face was hidden behind a black mask, held up a tear gas canister and condemned Lebanese forces for "defending America".

He went on to add, "There is no one by our side. None of the Arab countries. Oh God, we will raise the Palestinian flag"

Arab foreign ministers, in a resolution on Sunday, urged Trump to rescind the decision and have called for a UN Security Council condemnation of the shift in US policy.

Meanwhile, more than 5,000 Indonesians rallied outside the US embassy in Jakarta to vent their anger for a second day. Protesters carried Palestinian flags and banners saying "Pray for Palestine".

"We are not satisfied with just official statements," said Nurjannah Nurwani, one of the lead organisers of the gathering. "We need follow-up, international lobbying which could pressure them into withdrawing their decision."

Another female protester in Jakarta urged Trump to “use his brain” and “withdraw from Jerusalem”.

Indonesian President Joko Widodo has condemned Trump’s decision. On Thursday, he ordered the US ambassador in Jakarta to be summoned over the move.

In Turkey’s Istanbul, thousands of demonstrators took to the streets again, transforming the city’s Yenikapi Square into a sea of Turkish and Palestinian flags.

“I feel like I should defend Palestine because I don’t know any other way to defend them,” said Ananda Sereka, who was at the protest. “So this is what I can do. This is the least I can do.”

Turkey’s President Recep Tayyip Erdogan, one of the most vocal critics of Trump’s move, has called the declaration “null and void” and vowed to fight it.

He has also called a summit of Islamic countries to discuss the move on Wednesday.

In Rabat, Morocco’s capital, protesters yelled slurs against Trump and carried banners saying Jerusalem belonged to Palestine.

Al Jazeera’s Hashem Ahelbarra, reporting from Rabat, said the protest was “a show of solidarity with the Palestinian people but also an opportunity to express anger” over Trump’s decision.

“The protesters came from all walks of life,” he said. “Government officials, members of the opposition, seculars and conservatives - all denouncing what they consider to be a decision that could destabilise the region.”

Demonstrators in Rabat expressed their opposition to Trump’s decision [Reuters]

Mohamed Boussaid, Morocco’s finance minister, said the demonstration was a way “to express our indignation and un-satisfaction” and to show that “we refuse completely the decision taken by the president of the US”.

Protester Mohamed Alghram agreed.

“We totally reject the decision that targets the most sacred place for us and we say no,” he said. “Jerusalem is a red line.”

Jerusalem is home to Islam’s third holiest site and its status is deeply sensitive for Muslims.

In Indian-administered Kashmir, protesters took a different approach.

Residents of the capital Srinagar, home to 1.1 million people, closed their shops and abandoned the streets in protest. Salman Khan, a Srinagar resident, told the ANI news agency that Trump’s decision was “completely unjust”.

Muslim solidarity with Palestine also spread to the war-torn nations of Yemen and Syria.

Further protests were held in Egypt, where students and professors demonstrated at the Al-Azhar University.

In Pakistan’s Karachi, hundreds of protesters marched towards the US Consulate in the city, but were turned back by riot police.

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