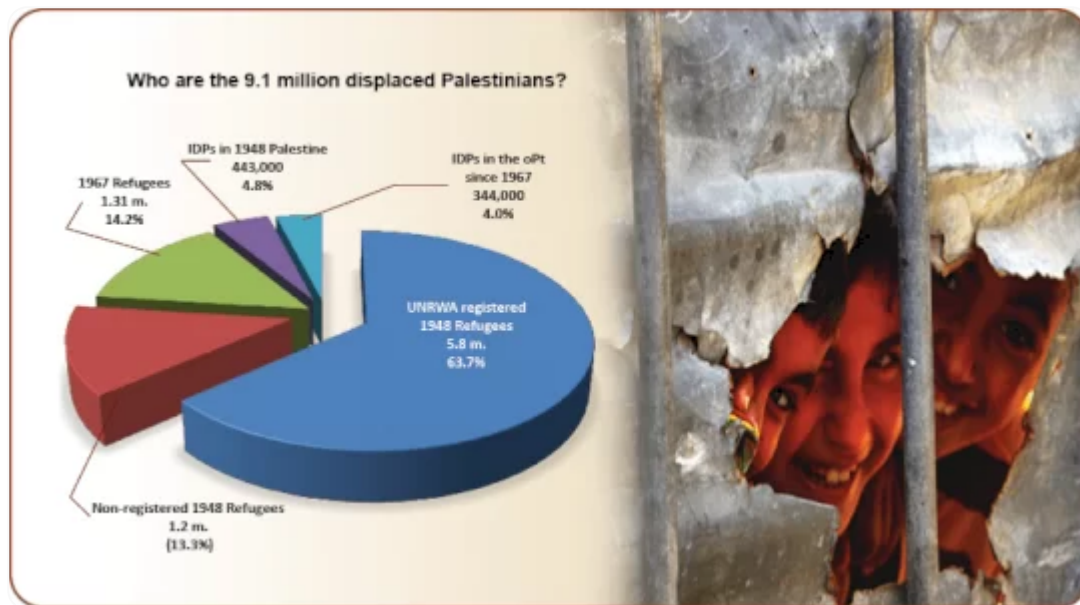


## Press Releases

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### NAKBA Statement: 73 years of Nakba and 73 years of Resistance



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The Nakba is not a memory or a historical event that occurred and ended. The Nakba is a crime that has been going on for more than 73 years and continues to result in more injustice and suffering that must be challenged and stopped. The Ongoing Nakba of the Palestinian people reflects the extent of international complicity with the Zionist-Israeli colonial enterprise in Palestine. The cessation of the Nakba and the reparation of the damage inflicted on multiple generations of Palestinian refugees and displaced persons can only be achieved through resistance in all its forms of popular, political, legal and economic struggle through self-reliance, and not by pleading Israel, the colonizing power, and its colonial allies.



After 73 years of the Nakba, the Israeli colonial and apartheid regime continues to prevent the return of millions of Palestinian

refugees (more than 8.3 million refugees) and internally displaced persons in Palestine with its mandatory borders (approximately 790,000).

The continuation of the Nakba is shown through the continuation of the colonial policies of annexation, pillaging of natural resources, repression, denial of residence rights, isolation, segregation and fragmentation, demolition of homes, and discriminatory planning systems and permit regimes. All of these policies illustrate the Zionist-Israeli strategy of seizing the greatest area of land with the least number of Palestinians. The case of forced evictions in Sheikh Jarrah in Jerusalem is nothing but a stark example of the ongoing Nakba, international complicity, the impotence of the United Nations (UN), and the failure of Oslo and the so-called peace process.

After 73 years of the Nakba, and the displacement of more than two-thirds of the Palestinian people from their homes, the international community not only continues to disregard its responsibilities towards the Palestinian people, but it also continues to provide Israel with legitimacy, support, impunity and protection. This umbrella of protection evidently encourages Israel to further its colonial-apartheid regime.

After more than 73 years of the Nakba, powerful western states, which claim to be defenders of human rights and the rule of international law, are still preventing the implementation of UN Resolution 194 (III)

of 1948 which ensures both the Palestinian refugees' protection and the implementation of durable solutions, including the right of return to their homes, property restitution, and compensation. Those states thwarted the efforts of the United Nations Conciliation Commission on Palestine (UNCCP) in the 1950s to facilitate the return of refugees after the Nakba. Those same states have not lifted a finger in the face of Israel's blockade of more than two million Palestinians in the Gaza Strip, 80 percent of whom are refugees, for 15 years. And, those same states practice discrimination against Palestinian refugees fleeing armed conflicts in a number of Arab states, such as Syria, Iraq and Libya, and those fleeing due to the denial of civil, economic and social rights such as Lebanon and the blockade in the Gaza Strip. This racist approach, which distinguishes between refugee groups on the basis of nationality or national origin, not only explicitly violates international law and reveals the level of moral decay, but rather reflects the extent of American and European western political complicity with the Zionist-Israeli project aimed at terminating the refugee issue without resolving it.

After more than 73 years of the Nakba, the UN, which is primarily responsible for unlawfully partitioning Palestine under UN Resolution 181, and for not taking measures to prevent the Nakba, still deals with the issue of Palestinian forcible displacement and transfer as a marginal issue that requires nothing more than providing emergency humanitarian aid to millions of refugees and displaced persons. The United Nations Relief and Works Agency for Refugees (UNRWA) continues to be a temporary agency whose budget depends on the voluntary contributions of states, and it decreases annually despite the increasing numbers of refugees and their growing needs. Due to the hegemony of western states' complicit with the Zionist-Israeli project in Palestine, the UN continues to be unwilling to take measures to make UNRWA a stable agency capable of fulfilling its obligations according to its mandate established in the decision to establish it, until the refugees are able to exercise their right to return to their homes and properties. Moreover, the provision of donations to UNRWA includes political requirements to restrict its work and the scope of its services and beneficiaries. Recently such conditions demand that UNRWA must exclude any reference to Palestinian history and legitimate resistance from the educational curriculum in exchange for states' contributions.

After more than 73 years of the Nakba, Arab states continue to deny the rights of refugees, and normalize relations with Israel at the expense of the rights of the Palestinian people. This includes the Gulf states, which go as far as denying the Arab States' Protocol of 1965 on Treatment of Palestinian Refugees (Arab League, also known as the Casablanca Protocol). In Syria, the demographic strength of

the refugees is being targeted for the purpose of dismantling it and weakening the political position of Palestinian refugees that refuse to give up on return. In Lebanon, the policies of depriving Palestinian refugees of their civil, economic and social rights is justified with claims of refusing their integration, and concern for ensuring their right of return and their national identity. In the Gaza Strip, which is subject to an unjust and suffocating Israeli siege, pushes refugees to board death boats and to forfeit their original rights in exchange for humanitarian asylum in western states.

As for the Palestinian Authority, in order to preserve its international relations, it still excludes from its strategy resisting the Israeli colonial-apartheid regime and the serious defense of the civil, social and economic rights of refugees in host states. The approach of seeking the consent of the colonial states and those complicit with the Zionist-Israeli colonialism in Palestine has proven fruitless.

**Accordingly, we, the undersigned, reaffirm that:**

1. Return to the homes of origin, including restoration of property and compensation, is a national, legal and human right that cannot be derogated from and has no temporal limitations; any solutions or proposals that do not explicitly recognize this are void and rejected.
2. Ensuring the UNRWA budget by the international community does not constitute a gift or a favor; rather, it is an international responsibility that cannot be used for political blackmail.
3. The recognition and guarantee of civil, social and economic human rights for Palestinian refugees in countries of asylum, including Arab states, does not waive their inherent right to return to their original homes and the restitution of their properties.
4. The weak official Palestinian political discourse, and its lack of an explicit and unequivocal affirmation of the rights of refugees and displaced persons, contributes to the disappearance of the core lawfulness of the Palestinian cause at the global level, and gives the Israeli colonial-apartheid regime room to legitimize itself.
5. There is a dire need for revitalizing the struggle and developing a national resistance strategy through self-reliance; putting reparations into practice through return to the original homes, property restitution and compensation is one of the basic pillars of the required national strategy.

**Return is our Right and our Will**

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1. Global Palestinian Refugee and IDP Network
  2. BADIL Resource Center for Palestinian Residency and Refugee Rights
  3. Center for Refugees Rights/ Aidoun (Lebanon)
  4. ADDAR for Culture and Arts
  5. Al-Fawar Cultural Center for the Development of Children Capacity

6. Women Center, Askar Refugee Camp
7. Al-Qadsiya Marching Scout Band, Askar Refugee Camp
8. Najdeh – Palestinian Women Development Society – Ramallah
9. Al- Awda Center – Tulkarem Refugeem Camp
10. Women Center, Al-Walajeh
11. Al-Bustan Association, Jerusalem
12. Social and Psychology Development Association – Al- Jalazoun Refugee Camp
13. Tadamon for Democratic Action, Bethlehem
14. Women Center, Dhiesheh Refugee Camp
15. Wasel Organization - Ramallah
16. The Palestinian Center of Youth Action for Community Development (LAYLAC), Dhiesheh Refugee Camp
17. Lajee Center, Aida Refugee Camp
18. Ibda'a for the Development of Children Capacity, Dhiesheh Refugee camp
19. Al- Rowwad Center, Aida Refugee Camp
20. Shoruq Association, Dhiesheh Refugee Camp
21. Ansar Center, Walajeh
22. Social Youth Center, Aida Refugee Camp
23. Shoruq Association, Dhiesheh Refugee Camp
24. Bait Alkhair Society for Development – Gaza
25. Al-Karmel Organization for Social and Cultural Development, Gaza
26. Refugee Popular Committee, Al-Maghazi Refugee Camp, Gaza.
27. Yabous Center – Jerusalem
28. Yafa Center – Balata Refugee Camp
29. Social Youth Center, Aqbet Jaber Refugee Camp
30. Al-Tawasol Forum Society – Gaza
31. Youth Development Association, Wadi Fukin
32. Jordanian Women Union – Jordan
33. Al-Mustaqbal Association for Development of Youth Capacity – Tulkarem
34. Refugee Popular Committee, Nablus
35. Women Center, Al-Ama'ri Refugee Camp
36. Partnership Youth Forum – Tulkarem
37. Wadi Al-Hawarith Charity Association – Tulkarem
38. Palestinian Agricultural Relief Committees – Nablus
39. Palestinian Medical Relief Society – Nablus
40. Local committee for rehabilitation of the disabled - Balata
41. Tanweer Palestinian Cultural Enlightenment Forum – Nablus
42. Al-Jalazoun Youth Society – Jalazoun Camp
43. Al-Jalazon Women Society – Jalazoun Camp
44. Manajel Organization – Jalazoun Camp
45. Aidoun Group /Syria
46. Aidoun Group/Europe
47. Welfare Association - Taawon – Lebanon
48. National Institution for Social Care and Vocational Training (Beit Atfal al-Sumud) /Lebanon
49. Palestinian Association for Human Rights "Witness" - Lebanon
50. Association 302 to defend refugees rights – Lebanon
51. Palestinian National Forum – Lebanon
52. General Union for Palestinian Jurists ( Lebanon)
53. Palestinian Student Fund/Lebanon

54. Majed Abu Sharar Media Foundation – Lebanon
55. Popular Aid for Relief and Development (PARD)/Lebanon
56. National Institution for Vocational Training and Social Services/Lebanon
57. Palestinian Youth Association (Laj'a)
58. Centre for Human Development (ALWAN)/Lebanon
59. Women's Humanitarian Organization – Lebanon
60. [Fraternity Association Beirut](#)
61. [Al Jana | Arab Resource Center for Popular Arts](#)
62. Human Call Association – Lebanon
63. Al-Karmil Sport Club/Lebanon
64. Women's Programs Association – Beddawi/ Lebanon
65. Hana Association for Development/Lebanon
66. Campaign to Boycott Supporters of Israel/Lebanon
67. Arab Renaissance for Democracy and Development / Jordan
68. Palestinian Movement of Nazareth
69. Sayr wa sayrora Hirak – Jerusalem
70. Sada Youth Movement - Jerusalem
71. Taliba Youth Movement – Jerusalem.
72. Youth Movement – Qalansweh
73. Edward Said Forum – Shiekh Mwanes
74. Almntada – Arab Law Students Forum– Shiekh Mwanes
75. Refugee Popular Committee, Aida Refugee Camp
76. Al- Awda Committee, Belfast
77. Al- Awda Committee, Edinburgh
78. Al- Awda Committee, Boston
79. Al-Awda Youth Forum, Al-Baq'a Camp – Jordan