

PALESTINE CRISIS

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Brief History



Palestine is the Holy Land, significant in all three major religions - Islam, Christianity, and Judaism. The people of Palestine, be they Muslim, Christian, or Jewish, lived in a peaceful and prospering society, engaging in trades such as fishing and farming, and contributing to a shared and rich culture. Palestine was ruled by the Ottoman Empire until it was captured by the British. In 1917, the British Government promised the land of Palestine to the Zionist Jews as a homeland for the Jewish people. Jews began to migrate to Palestine with the help of the Zionist movement at the start of the 19th century. After WWII, Jewish migration to Palestine especially intensified. The Ally Powers recognized and supported the new state of Israel on this colonized Palestinian land. This resulted in the Nakba, a catastrophe that ethnically cleansed over 800,000 Palestinians, including Muslims, Jews, and Christians, from their land through evacuation, displacement, and genocide. Since then, Global powers have legitimized the occupation of Palestine by the Israeli state. Israel has continued to confiscate more and more land from the indigenous Palestinian people, forcing them into smaller areas of land and controlling every aspect of Palestinian life to maintain control over the region through a cruel system of apartheid.

Currently, Israel operates a siege over Gaza, a portion of land bordering the Mediterranean Sea currently under Israeli occupation. Gaza is described as the largest open-air prison in the world. The West Bank is another region that is under Palestinian authority by legality but controlled heavily by the Israeli state. The over-militarized power has used undue force to intimidate and dehumanize Palestinian citizens, surveil and control movements, and even unlawfully arrest, detain, and kill them. Palestinians have struggled to break free of the apartheid state that has been implemented by the Israeli Government, as recognized by Amnesty International as well as renowned human rights organizations across the world.

Israel's abuse of human rights and consistent violation of international law are also well-documented and have been recognized by the United Nations. Still, the Israeli Government continues to abuse the indigenous Palestinian people and has rendered them stateless to prevent them from returning to their land. Palestinian people continue to resist, whether in Gaza and the West Bank or across the world where they exist as refugees and immigrants remembering their homeland from afar.

Current Situation



Since October 7, 2023 Israel has implemented a campaign of indiscriminate attacks on Palestinians in Gaza that has resulted in the murder of more than 10,000 Palestinians (so far), the majority of whom are innocent civilian women and children. Israel has tightened its already existing siege on Gaza, blocking access to water, fuel, cellular service, electricity, and humanitarian aid. The attacks on Gaza have left over 1,000,000 people displaced, and destroyed hundreds of apartment buildings, schools, mosques, churches, and multiple hospitals. Israel's war crimes include using illegal tactics such as white phosphorus and chemical weapons to maximize the damage and indiscriminately attack Gazans. Israel has also bombed neighboring countries, detained and killed Palestinians in the West Bank, and expanded into a ground invasion of Gaza. We are witnessing a genocide and humanitarian catastrophe unfold in real time.

Talking Points



1 - Demand a Ceasefire: We are witnessing crimes against humanity with the current genocide of innocent Palestinians in Gaza. A path to peace in the region requires an immediate ceasefire that ensures that no more civilians will be harmed or killed.

2 - Equal Citizenship Rights: Currently, Palestinians holding residency in the Occupied Palestinian regions are not considered citizens of Palestine, until such a time as Palestine is declared an independent state. However, the occupying power of Israel also does not consider Palestinians to be citizens, leaving them without a passport or ID card that is recognized in much of the world. This is a violation of international law, and a glaringly obvious sign of an apartheid state. We must hold Israel accountable for the quality of life of the Palestinian people.

3 - Acknowledge the Right of Return: When Palestinian families were forcibly removed from the

homes and land they had held for centuries, they were prevented from returning, and those same homes were illegally given to settler families from across the world. It's time to allow Palestinian people back into their own homes and into their lands. The ability to return home is a basic human right for all and a principle of international law.

4 - End the Illegal Occupation: The only way to bring true peace to Palestine and the Palestinian people is to end the illegal occupation of Palestine.

Action Items



- **Engage with Representatives:** Contact your members of Congress ASAP and urge them to support an immediate ceasefire and a just and lasting resolution to the Israeli-Palestinian conflict.
- **Participate in Peaceful Protests:** Join or organize peaceful protests advocating for justice, equality, and an end to the occupation.
- **Raise Awareness on Social Media:** Utilize social media platforms to share information, stories, and resources that shed light on the Palestinian struggle. Amplify Palestinian voices to raise awareness.
- **Support Humanitarian Organizations:** Contribute to organizations working to alleviate the humanitarian crisis in Palestine, providing direct aid to those affected by the conflict. Visit www.hhrd.org as one example.
- **Educate Others:** Foster understanding by educating friends, family, and colleagues about the historical context and current realities of the Palestinian situation.