

دولة فلسطين
البعثة العامة
لفلسطين
في استراليا



State Of Palestine
General Delegation
of Palestine to Australia

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

5 June 2007, Canberra

**A Viable and Democratic Palestinian State is a pre-requisite
to lasting Peace in the Middle East**

Advocacy groups, community organisations and churches are preparing for the June 5 recognition of 40 years since the Israeli occupation of the Palestinian territories in the 1967 War. This occupation is the longest military occupation in recent history. It must end.

The international community supported the establishment of the State of Israel in 1948, creating a homeland for Jewish people. In 2007, the international community holds the same political and moral responsibility and authority to end the suffering of Palestinian people through support for the establishment of a viable Palestinian state on the Palestinian territories occupied by Israel in 1967, with East Jerusalem as capital. The international community also has the authority and the responsibility to negotiate a just solution for Palestinian refugees expelled from their homes in 1948 and 1967. These responsibilities are firmly grounded in UN resolutions 194¹ and 242.²

Palestinian people support and are committed to a peaceful solution to the Israel-Palestine conflict. This genuine support for peace was again demonstrated through the Arab Peace Initiative at the Arab Summit in Riyadh on March 28 and 29, 2007. The summit renewed its invitation to Israel to accept a diplomatic solution to the Israeli-Arab conflict, based on the demonstrated willingness of all Arab States to recognize Israel and normalise relationships in return for the full withdrawal of Israel from all Arab territories occupied prior to 1967. The Arab Peace Initiative was a golden opportunity for comprehensive and sustainable peace in the region. The international community should not permit Israel's leadership to discount and miss this opportunity.

The Australian government with its excellent relationships with all parties in the Middle East, has a highly constructive and balanced role to play in negotiating a just solution to the Palestine-Israel conflict. A just solution would accord with Australian moralities and its recognition of human rights principles and international and humanitarian law.

Australian advocacy groups, community organisations, churches, and church-related organisations such as the NSW Ecumenical Council and Christian World Service, are calling for a just and sustainable peace for Palestinians and Israelis.

Forty years of Israeli occupation of Palestine is long enough. The national aspirations and rights of Palestinian people must be supported, if there is to be peace for the people of the Middle East. The creation of a viable and democratic Palestine through the support and commitment of the international community is a global human rights and a social justice issue that is becoming a test case for our universal values and code of ethics.

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¹ UN Resolution 194 was passed on 11 December 1948. It calls for the return of Palestinian refugees, protection of Holy sites and the demilitarization, free access to and UN control of Jerusalem.

² UN Resolution 242 was passed on November 22, 1967. It calls for the withdrawal of Israel from occupied territory and for a just solution to the refugee problem.

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