

I. THE YEAR THAT WAS 2012

JANUARY

Jan. 3: Israeli and Palestinian negotiators meet in Amman to explore reviving formal negotiations.

Jan. 4: Deposed PM in the Gaza Strip, Ismail Haniyeh, visits the Turkish Parliament and meets with PM Recep Tayyip Erdogan reaffirming Turkish support for Palestine.

Jan. 5: Israeli security forces issue restraining orders barring 12 settlers (from Elon Moreh, Havat Gilad, Maoz Esther, Ramat Migron, and Yitzhar) from the West Bank because of their violent acts against Palestinians and Israeli forces.

- The EU grants the PA 47.7 million to cover salaries.

Jan. 10: Pres. Mahmoud Abbas meets U.S Senate Foreign Relations Committee, John Kerry, in Amman to discuss the latest developments in the Middle East.

Jan. 11: Visiting Indian FM S.M. Krishna declares his country's support for the creation of an independent Palestinian state on the 1967 borders.

- Israel's High Court judges reject - by a vote of 6:5 - petitions against Citizenship Law that prevents Palestinians married to Israeli Arabs from receiving Israeli citizenship or residency.

Jan. 15: In a keynote address at the ESCWA meeting in Beirut, Sec.-Gen. Ban Ki-moon says, "The Israeli occupation of Arab and Palestinian territories must end. ...Settlements, new and old, are illegal. They work against the emergence of a viable Palestinian state. A two-State solution is long overdue." - Palestinian and Israeli negotiators hold a 3rd round of preliminary talks in Jordan.

Jan. 17: A report by the French Parliament Foreign Affairs Committee accuses Israel of implementing "apartheid" policies in allocation of water resources in the West Bank.

Jan. 19: Thailand becomes the 131st country to officially recognize Palestine as an independent state.

Jan. 25: Following the 5th round of talks between Palestinian and Israeli negotiators in Amman, Pres. Abbas declares that the exploratory talks have ended without progress because the Israelis refuse to demarcate the borders.

Jan. 28: An EU statement expresses concern about the arrest at the East Jerusalem ICRC office of PLC member Mohammed Totah and former Minister for Jerusalem Affairs Khaled Abu Arafah, and the recent arrests of PLC Speaker Aziz Dweik and PLC members Khaled Tafesh and Abduljabbar Foqaha.



FEBRUARY

Feb. 1: Germany upgrades the Palestinian diplomatic representation in Berlin from a delegation to a mission headed by an ambassador.

Feb. 2: Visiting UN Sec.-Gen. calls on Palestinians to stop launching rockets into Israel and on Israel to uphold human rights.

Feb. 2: In Doha, PA Pres. Abbas and Hamas Political Bureau Chief Mashaal agree to form an interim government of independent technocrats to be headed by Pres. Abbas and responsible for overseeing elections and Gaza's restoration.

Feb. 12: Pres. Abbas asks Arab League FMs meeting in Cairo to support his decision not to resume direct peace talks without an Israeli settlement freeze.

Feb. 13: Visiting UN Special Rapporteur on the right to adequate housing, Raquel Rolnik, says that the right to housing is denied in the Occupied Palestinian Territory.

Feb. 22: Palestinian prisoner Khader Adnan agrees to end his 66-day hunger strike after Israeli officials pledge to release him in April.

MARCH

March 7: PM Salam Fayyad says that "It is impossible to have a Palestinian state without Gaza. Reuniting the country is essential..."

March 12: At least 21 Palestinians are killed and over 70 injured in a flare-up of violence following Israeli air strike on Gaza four days earlier.

March 13: Cairo announces, after four days of violence, a "comprehensive and mutual" truce between Israel and Gaza militants.

March 14: At a debate during the 19th session of the UNHRC, 300 NGOs sign a statement calling for lifting the restrictions on the movement of Palestinians in the West Bank.

March 26: Israeli Dep. FM Danny Ayalon says Israel will not cooperate with the UNHCR nor allow committee members to enter the country.

March 28: Hundreds of international non-violent activists begin arriving in Lebanon and other neighboring countries in advance of a planned 'Global March to Jerusalem' on Land Day, March 30th.

March 30: Land Day protests take place across the West Bank and the Gaza Strip.



APRIL

April 3: The International Criminal Court (ICC) rejects a PA request to sign the ICC's founding treaty (the Rome Statute), reaffirming that only internationally recognized states can join the Court.

April 4: The UN International Meeting on the Question of Palestine concludes with proposed measures to address the issue of Palestinian political prisoners.

April 15: "Welcome to Palestine" fly-in participants are detained upon arrival at the Ben Gurion Airport.

April 17: Palestinian Prisoners Day is marked in the West Bank and Gaza.

April 30: The Co-operative Group, one of the largest food retailers in the UK, announces its boycott of four Israeli produce companies which are operating in settlements.

- Estonia upgrades the status of the Palestinian diplomatic delegation to the level of a Mission.

MAY

May 1: Unidentified gunmen fire on the home of Jenin governor Qaddura Moussa, who dies from a heart attack soon after.

May 2: Hamas officials report secret talks with five EU member states.

May 8: PM Netanyahu cancels early parliamentary elections and forms a unity government with Kadima.

May 9: The US Congress grants Israel one billion dollars to develop additional "Iron Dome" missile interception systems.

May 14: The EU expresses deep concern about developments on the grounds which threaten to make a two-state solution impossible.- Palestinian prisoners agree to end their hunger strike as part of a deal in which Israel agreed to allow some 400 prisoners from Gaza to receive family visits for the first time since 2006, release 20 prisoners from solitary confinement, and improve other conditions of detention.

May 16: PA Pres. Abbas swears in a new 24-member government.

May 20: Hamas & Fateh agree on a timetable for a power-sharing deal that envisions elections in late 2012.

May 28: Istanbul court formally presses charges against the Israeli military for the killing of nine people aboard a Turkish ship trying to break Israel's blockade of Gaza on 31 May 2010.

May 30: Migros, one of the largest Swiss enterprises, announces that it will label all Israeli settlement products starting in 2013.



JUNE

June 1: Israel returns the remains of 91 Palestinians killed in prisons, bombings, and resisting the Israeli occupation.

June 3: Upon request from the Palestinians and during a special ministerial meeting of the Arab League Peace Initiative Committee in Doha, Arab States agree to set a “financial safety net” for the PA.

June 4: PM Salam Fayyad commends South Africa’s decision to label all settlement goods as such.

June 6: In Cairo, Fatah and Hamas agree on a new unity government.

June 8: An anti-graft court convicts Mohammed Rashid on charges of corruption and embezzlement.

June 12: US Sec. of State Clinton warns PA Pres. Abbas of "negative consequences" if he returns to the UN to seek symbolic recognition of Palestine.

June 26: Israeli officials start removing the illegal Ulpana settlement outpost, built on privately-owned Palestinian lands, close to the Bet El settlement near Ramallah.- Pres. Mahmoud Abbas welcomes Russian Pres. Vladimir Putin in the WB city of Bethlehem.

June 28: Sweden upgrades Palestine's diplomatic representation from a mission to an embassy.

June 30: UNESCO votes to designate the Bethlehem Nativity Church and pilgrimage route as a World Heritage site, which will provide the PA with funding to maintain and restore the site.

JULY

July 4: PA announces its support for an international investigation into the late Pres. Arafat’s death incl. the exhumation of his body.

July 5: The European Parliament votes in favour of a resolution stressing that no changes on the ground in the OPT that had not been agreed upon by the conflicting parties should be accepted.

July 12: European academics, in a letter to the EU Commissioner for Research, Innovation, and Science, call for the exclusion of Israeli companies engaged in violations of international law from receiving EU funding.

July 15: Israel releases longest-serving Palestinian prisoner under administrative detention, 50-year-old Adnan Asfour, detained since March 2009.

July 24: The Arab League announces that it will unanimously support the Palestinian bid for statehood recognition in the UNGA later this year.

July 31: Suha Arafat and her daughter Zahwa file a lawsuit in a French court to launch a murder investigation into the death of former Palestinian leader Yasser Arafat. - *Ha'aretz* reports that the Israeli Govt. has spent NIS 1.1 billion on settlements in the West Bank in 2011, an increase of 38 % over the previous year.

AUGUST

Aug. 1: Palestine and Thailand officially launch diplomatic relations.

Aug. 8: Scandinavian activists launch a ship bound for Gaza in the hopes of breaking the Israeli blockade.

Aug. 16: The United Church of Canada (UCC) votes for boycotting products made in Israel's settlements in the occupied West Bank.- Pres. Abbas calls on Islamic world leaders to support the Palestinian bid for full UN membership.

Aug. 21: The US State Department lists violence by Jewish settlers as "terrorist incidents."

Aug. 22: The South African Cabinet approves labelling of goods imported from Israeli settlements.

Aug. 25: Experts from the Swiss Radiophysics Institute say they will examine the remains of the late Pres. Arafat.

Aug. 26: Israel denies entry of over one hundred international peace and human rights activists willing to visit the OPT.

Aug. 29: French Prosecution decides to open an official investigation into the death of the late Pres. Yasser Arafat.

Aug. 31: Amnesty International issued a statement, denouncing the Israeli court ruling in the case of the murder of American Peace Activists, Rachel Corrie, in Rafah in 2003.



(Photo Credit: Bilderblogg/Jinge)

SEPTEMBER

Sept. 1: The Socialist International organization, which represents 161 political parties and organizations worldwide, announces it will support the Palestinian request for non-member status at the UN.

Sept. 5: The EU condemns ongoing settler violence and deliberate provocations against Palestinian civilians.

Sept. 6: UNCTAD warns of worsening long-term prospects for economic development in the OPT.

Sept. 10: At the opening of the 21st regular session of the UNHRC, Sec.-Gen. Ban Ki-moon says that he remains concerned about the unfulfilled human rights of the Palestinian people, in particular the right to self-determination.

Sept. 19: The World Bank warns of a deepening fiscal crisis in the Palestinian territory.

Sept. 21: An Israeli soldier and three gunmen are killed in clashes along the Israel-Egypt border.

Sept. 23: Hamas' leader Khaled Mashaal decides not to run for re-election as head of the Hamas politburo.

Sep. 25: UNHRC accused the state of Israel of failing to prosecute Israeli soldiers and settlers who commit crimes against the Palestinian people in the OPT.

Sept. 28: Speaking at the UN in New York, Pres. Mahmoud Abbas calls on the international community to act and help the Palestinians to establish their independent state.

OCTOBER

Oct. 1: The PA consults with Arab countries and other groups over the wording of a draft resolution to the UNGA requesting acceptance of Palestine as a non-member state.

Oct. 2: The US warns European governments against supporting a Palestinian bid at the UNGA, saying that such a move "would be extremely counterproductive" and threatens "significant negative consequences" for the PA, including financial sanctions.

Oct. 8: Churches leaders in the US and other faith-based organizations ask the US Congress to re-evaluate US military aid to Israel.

Oct. 25: Guyana establishes diplomatic relations with Palestine.

- UN Special Rapporteur on the situation of human rights in the Palestinian territories occupied since 1967, Richard Falk, calls for a boycott of Israeli and international businesses that profit from settlements.

- The "Miles of Smiles 17" solidarity convoy reaches the Gaza Strip through the Rafah border terminal due to a rare authorization from Egypt to allow food supplies into Gaza.

NOVEMBER

Nov. 1: Israeli censor releases commando's account, acknowledging for the first time the killing of Abu Jihad in Tunis in 1988.

Nov. 8: 12-year old Hamid Abu Daqqa is killed after being shot in the head by an Israeli military helicopter while playing football with his friends outside his home in Khan Younis. Shortly afterwards, Palestinian fighters blow up a tunnel along the Gaza-Israel border, injuring one Israeli soldier. Israel responds with days of shooting and bombardment.

Nov. 11: During an Israeli cabinet meeting, Transportation Minister Yisrael Katz urges the government to "cut off the head of the snake... take out the leadership of Hamas in Gaza." He also calls for a cutting off of water, food, electricity, and fuel shipments to Gaza's 1.7 million people.

Nov. 12: Palestinian militant factions agree to a truce if Israel ends its attacks.

Nov. 13: Work begins to exhume the body of PLO leader Yasser Arafat amid an investigation of his death.

Nov. 14: Israel breaks two days of calm by assassinating Ahmed Jabari, head of Hamas' military wing. At least eight other Palestinians are killed in Israeli attacks. Palestinian groups respond with rocket fire. In the ensuing "Gaza War" (dubbed by Israel as Operation 'Pillar of Defense') over 139 Palestinians are killed, half of them civilians, over 900 are injured, and some 10,000 have lost their homes.

Nov. 21: An Egypt-brokered cease-fire in Israel's conflict with Gaza is announced in a joint news conference in Cairo with US Sec. of State Hillary Clinton and Egyptian FM Mohammed Kamel Amr.

Nov. 27: The remains of Yasser Arafat are exhumed and Swiss, French and Russian experts are given samples to establish whether his death in 2004 was the result of poisoning before the tomb was resealed.

Nov. 29: The UNGA in New York votes overwhelmingly with 138 in favor, nine against and 41 abstentions to recognize Palestine as a non-member state.



DECEMBER

Dec 3, Israel seizes \$120m in Palestinian tax revenue over UN statehood vote.

Dec 6, King Abdullah II of Jordan arrives in the West Bank as a first official visit of an Arab leader after Palestine's UN status upgrade.

Dec 7, New illegal settlement of Leshim is built on the lands of the West Bank village of Kafr al-Dik, near Salfit.

Dec 8, Hamas leader Khaled Mashal arrives in Gaza for the first time ever to celebrate the 25th anniversary of the founding of Hamas.

Dec 11, Israeli forces attack offices of three Palestinian non-government organizations (NGOs) in the West Bank.

Dec14, upon the shelling of Yarmouk refugee camp, Abbas urges Assad to spare Palestinians in Syria.

Dec 22, Abbas threatens to dismantle Palestinian Authority if Israeli settlement construction continues.

Dec 24, Israel upgrades a college in the "Ariel" settlement to a university, giving it the same status as universities inside Israel.

Dec 30, Speaking with Israeli diplomats at his Jerusalem residence, Israeli President Peres calls for the resumption of peace talks with the Palestinians saying that President Abbas was a willing partner with whom an agreement could be reached.



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