

# 2013 - THE YEAR THAT WAS

## January

Jan. 1: The Fateh movement celebrates the 48<sup>th</sup> anniversary of its founding.

Jan. 3: In the village of Issawyia in East Jerusalem, eight Palestinians were imprisoned by Israeli military noting that more than a 100 arrests were carried on in the last 22 days.

Jan. 6: President Abbas signed a directive instructing officials to use “State of Palestine” on all official documents.

Jan. 11: Palestinian and international activists established the village of “Bab Al-Shams” (Gate of the Sun), which consisted of tents, protesting Israeli settlement expansion in area E1 corridor. The settlement expansion in area E1 splits the West Bank and threatens the homogeneity of a future Palestinian state. Eventually, the Israeli army invaded and dismantled the village. However, other villages protesting Israeli settlement expansion were set up, for instance, “Al-Karmah” northwest Jerusalem and a village in Al-Izzariyah east of Jerusalem.



Bab Al-Shams

Jan. 21: Hamas, Fatah, and Egypt formed a three-party commission in order to start implementing the process of reconciliation.

Jan. 23: Israeli Prime Minister, Benjamin Netanyahu, won a third term in the Israeli elections.

Jan. 24: Israel was considered as a “country of concern” in the British Foreign Office’s quarterly report on human rights and democracy.

Jan. 28: In the village of Silwan (East Jerusalem) and after clashes between Israeli forces and Palestinian residents over the destruction of several buildings by the Israeli municipality, nine Palestinians were wounded and seven were detained.

Jan. 31: The Fact-Finding Mission on Israeli settlements of the Human Rights Council found that Palestinian human rights had been violated greatly.

## February

Feb. 5: The White House announced Barak Obama's visit to the region.

Feb. 13: A 13 year old boy from the village of Silwan was sentenced to be released from detention and put under one month of house arrest. This was the boy's 14<sup>th</sup> detention since he was nine years old.

Feb. 19: The below statement was issued by the UN Secretary-General's spokesperson regarding the situation of Palestinian prisoners in Israel:

"The UN Secretary-General is deeply concerned over the rapidly deteriorating condition of Palestinian prisoners in Israeli custody who are on hunger strike, in particular, the critical health condition of one Palestinian detainee, Samer Issawi. (...) Of particular concern are the detainees held in administrative detention without charges. Those detained should be charged and face trial with judicial guarantees in accordance with international standards, or be promptly released. (...) International human rights obligations towards all Palestinian detainees and prisoners under Israeli custody must be fully respected (...)."

Feb. 23: Prisoner Arafat Jaradat died at age 30 in the Israeli prison of Meggido. His death sparked an overwhelming response as it was suspected that he was tortured to death. Prisoners went on a hunger strike and Palestinians were injured during protests around the West Bank and Gaza.

Feb. 26: A court in Cairo ordered the destruction of all tunnels between Egypt and Gaza.



*Jaradat's funeral*

## March

Mar. 4: Arab residents of Jerusalem were victims of 56 "price-tag" attack including vandalizing tires and painting hateful phrases, police sources said.

Mar. 5: In France, United Kingdom, Italy, Ireland, and Sweden, labor unions boycotted settlement products.

Mar. 6: UNICEF's report on the "Children in Israeli Military Detention" indicated mistreatment of Palestinian children detained by Israel.

Mar. 6: The Swedish parliament upgraded the status of the Palestinian mission to that of an embassy.

Mar. 15: Israel signed an agreement to arrange a new government coalition.

Mar. 14: President Vladimir Putin of Russia met with PA President Mahmoud Abbas.

Mar. 20: US President Barak Obama visited Palestine and Israel for the first time. He met with Israeli Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu in Jerusalem then President Mahmoud Abbas in Ramallah. He also visited the Nativity Church in Bethlehem.



*President Obama at the Muqata'a in Ramallah*

Mar. 22: President Barak Obama pressured Netanyahu to call Turkish Prime Minister Tayyip Erdogan, and apologize for the attack on the Gaza-bound flotilla as well as to propose compensation.

## **April**

April 7: US Secretary of State, John Kerry met with Palestinian and Israeli leaders to discuss the resumption of peace talks.

April 13: Palestinian Prime Minister, Salam Fayyad, resigned. Fayyad expressed his frustration regarding the Palestinian Authority.

April 14: Israel extended the ban on Palestinian family unification requests for another year.

April 16: In Jerusalem, Palestinians were arrested and detained for putting Palestinian flags on their cars.

April 30: Hamas' Khaled Masha'al rejected the probable notion of a minor and mutually agreed land swap between Palestinians and Israelis. The Arab League however acknowledged such "comparable" possibility.



*Former Prime Minister Salam Fayyad and PA President Mahmoud Abbas*

## May

May 4: Finland and Denmark planned to upgrade the Palestinian mission to an embassy.

May 6: Chinese President Xi Jinping offered a four-point proposal for a peace agreement during Abbas' visit to Beijing: 1) An independent Palestinian state based on the 1967 borders with East Jerusalem as capital and a respect for Israel's right to exist. 2) The negotiation should aim to end settlement activity, stop violence against civilians, lift Gaza blockade, and deal with the issue of Palestinian prisoners. 3) Build on the "land for peace principle". 4) Increased assistance from the international community to Palestine.

May 8: After developments in regard to Al-Aqsa Mosque and the Jordanian custodianship over it, Jordanian Parliament voted to expel the Israeli ambassador and recalled the Jordanian ambassador in Israel.

May 9: Palestine and El Salvador establish diplomatic relations.

May 13: Israel announced the building of 900 settlement units in East Jerusalem besides the 1200 new settlement structures that were announced recently in the West Bank and East Jerusalem.

May 15: Commemoration of the 65<sup>th</sup> Nakba war in 1948, which resulted in the creation of Israel and the forced uprooting of the Palestine people from their native land.



*Nakba march at the Manara Circle in Ramallah*

May 26: US Secretary of State John Kerry announced at the World Economic Forum a plan to invest \$4 billion to develop Palestinian Economy and Increase GDP by %50 over the next three years.

May 27: Palestine was granted the non-member observer status by the African Union.

## June

June 2: Rami Hamdallah is appointed as the new PA Prime Minister.

June 6: The new 24-member PA government took oath of office.

June 20: PM Hamdallah tendered his resignation citing "conflict over authority".

June 22: Gaza native Mohammed Assaf won the title of the Arab Idol singing competition. He was named the first UN Palestinian refugee goodwill ambassador and UNRWA's first-ever regional youth ambassador. All Palestinians celebrated Assaf's win and considered it a national occasion.

June 23: PM's Hamdallah resignation is accepted by Abbas but he was asked to stay until a new PM was appointed.

June 22: Israel prevented an 18 years old annual tradition of a Palestinian children festival in East Jerusalem because of alleged sponsorship by the Palestinian Authority.



*Poster of the blocked Palestinian children festival*

## July

July 3: Palestine was granted the membership of a non-EU Mediterranean State by the OSCE Parliamentary Assembly.

July 10: Al-Aqsa Mosque was stormed by around a 100 Israelis after the authority's refusal to suspend these visits during the holy month of Ramadan.

July 19: US Secretary of State, John Kerry, announced that Palestinians and Israelis reached an agreement to resume the peace talks.



*John Kerry*

July 19: The European commission issued guidelines banning EU organizations from funding Israeli projects in the Palestinian occupied territories.

July 28: As a gesture to pave the road for the peace talks with the Palestinians, Israel approved the release of 104 Palestinian prisoners in phases.

July 29: The negotiating Palestinian and Israeli teams met in Washington, D.C., and started direct final status negotiations directly. They agreed on a timetable of nine-months.

## August

Aug. 9: Israel added 91 settlements to its national priority fund list.

Aug. 11: Israelis march on Mount Herzl in Jerusalem to protest the planned prisoners release as part of a deal to resume the peace talks.

Aug. 14: Israel freed the first installment of 26 old Palestinian prisoners.



*Celebrating freedom*

Aug. 14: In Jerusalem, Palestinians and Israelis met for the first time in three years to continue peace talks.

Aug. 16: UN Secretary General and Palestinian President Abbas signed a UN Development Assistance Framework for the State of Palestine for the Years 2014-2016.

Aug. 22: As a response for ongoing Israeli airstrikes on Gaza, Anonymous, Global hacktivist group, attacked Israeli websites.

Aug. 24: Palestine and France signed a 9-million Euro agreement to help Palestine financially and another for 10-million to construct a solid waste plant in Gaza.

Aug. 26: Palestinian and Israeli negotiators met in Jericho.

Aug. 27: Norwegian Foreign Minister, Eide, informed President Abbas that without political progress the funds assigned for state-building would stop.

## **September**

Sep. 5: Israel suggested a Palestinian State with provisional borders on 60% of the West Bank while military bases and settlements in the West Bank will stay intact.

Sep. 8: Heads from the settlement movement assembled in front of the Israeli Prime Minister's office to object any plan to evacuate settlements in order to create a Palestinian state.

Sep. 20: Israeli military confiscated diplomatic aid to a recently destroyed Bedouin village.

Sep. 23: Upon FIFA mediation, the Palestinian and Israeli football associations discussed modalities to facilitate the movement of persons and goods related to football purposes in, out, and within Palestine.

Sep. 27: Human Rights Watch asserted that Israeli forces must stop the unlawful demolitions of Palestinian homes in the Occupied Palestinian Territories.

Sep. 30: "A day of rage against settlements was held in the West Bank.

Sep. 28: The Egyptian military reopened the Rafah Crossing linking Gaza to Egypt after a closure that lasted for 9 days. Escalations on the border between Egypt and Gaza started after the Egyptian military ousted former Egyptian president Mohamed Morsi.



*At Rafah Crossing*

## **October**

Oct. 2: A school was opened in East Jerusalem to teach Palestinians the Hebrew language.

Oct. 4: After 35 years of Israel confiscation, the village of Burqa (near Nablus) was restored to Palestinians.

Oct. 7: President Mahmoud Abbas met with Knesset members in the Muqata'a compound in Ramallah.

Oct. 8: According to reports from the World Bank, Israeli domination over Area C costs Palestine \$ 3.4 billion a year.

Oct. 17: President Abbas met Pope Francis in the Vatican and invited him to visit the Holy Land.



*Freed prisoner*

Oct. 20: In order to approve negotiations on the issue of Jerusalem, A Knesset committee accepts a draft bill that requires a 2/3 majority.

Oct. 26: Israel blocked European parliament members from entering the besieged Gaza Strip.

Oct. 30: Israel released the second installment of Palestinian prisoners (26 prisoners).

## November



*Saeb Erekat and Mohammad Shtayyeh*

Nov. 2: Saeb Erekat and Mohammed Shtayyeh (Palestinian negotiating team) submitted their resignations over Israeli announcement to build 5,000 new settlement structures and destroy 1,500 Palestinian houses in East Jerusalem.

Nov. 4: Hamas appointed its first female English spokesperson, Isra'a Al Mudallal.

Nov. 6: In samples taken from the late President Yasser Arafat, Swiss scientists found unnaturally high levels of radioactive polonium-210.

Nov. 7: Palestine and Bolivia establish diplomatic ties.

Nov. 8: The US and Israel lost their voting rights in UNESCO after their failure to repay debts to the agency after suspending payments overmaking Palestine a UNESCO member in 2011.

Nov. 10: FIFA World Cup arrives in Palestine, the first country in the Middle East to host the trophy.

Nov. 11: In a rare operation, PA polices arrested criminals in Ar-Ram within Israeli controlled Area C.

Nov. 19: Palestine cast its first General Assembly vote.

Nov. 24: President Abbas expressed support for Jordan's Red Sea desalination project intended to produce 100 million cm of drinking water.

Nov. 26: Israel signed the Horizon 2020 scientific cooperation agreement despite the new EU guidelines barring financial assistance to entities outside the Green Line.

Nov. 26: The UN General Assembly adopts a resolution declaring 2014 the year for solidarity with Palestinians.

Nov. 30: In an enormous protest reaction to Praver Plan, which called upon displacing thousands of Palestinian Bedouins in the Naqab area, youth organizations organized an international "day of rage". Israeli authorities attacked on-violent Palestinian and pro-Palestinian activists, which resulted in many arrests and injuries.

## December

Dec. 1: Five men and two women were captured by Israeli militaries that were accompanying a Jewish group to perform religious ceremonies at the Golden Gate in Jerusalem.

Dec. 8: The WHO declares concerns over lack of fundamental supplies in the Gaza Strip.

Dec. 15: A snow storm hit the region exposing the poor infrastructure in the West Bank and Gaza. Electricity was cut off for several days in the West Bank. Gaza was flooded with rain water and people were forced to move from their place of resident without target shelter.



*Snow at Al-Aqsa Mosque*

Dec. 16: The American Studies Association approved a boycott of Israeli academic institutions.

Dec. 30: Israel freed the third installment of 26 Palestinian veteran prisoners.