

PALESTINE CHRONOLOGY 2013

JANUARY

Jan. 1: Fateh supporters celebrate the 48th anniversary of their movement's founding.

Jan. 6: Following the UNGA vote on 29 Nov. 2012 raising Palestine's status to an observer state, Pres. Abbas signs a directive instructing officials to use "State of Palestine" on all official documents.

Jan. 17: Pres. Abbas and Hamas leader Khaled Masha'al agree to revive their long-stalled reconciliation accord by the end of the month.

Jan. 21: Hamas and Fatah are to form a tripartite committee with Egypt to implement national reconciliation and form a transitional government of technocrats and independents.

Jan. 23: Benjamin Netanyahu wins a third term as Israel's PM.

- In his briefing to the UNSC, UN Special Coordinator for the Middle East Peace Process, Robert Serry, notes that the peace process was entering a critical period that required "courageous" steps by Israelis and Palestinians, adding that there was no future for the PA without a two-state solution.

Jan. 24: British Foreign Office includes Israel as "a country of concern" in its quarterly report on human rights and democracy.

- At his confirmation hearing for the post of the US Sec. of State, US Senator John Kerry says that he hopes for a revival of Israeli-Palestinian peace talks.

Jan. 31: The Human Rights Council's International Fact-Finding Mission on Israeli Settlements in the OPT states that a multitude of the human rights of the Palestinians had been violated.

FEBRUARY

Feb. 14: UNRWA launches an over \$300-million emergency appeal for most needy Palestinians.

Feb. 22: PA officials demand international investigation into the death of Arafat Jaradat, 30, a Palestinian prisoner in Israeli custody.

Feb. 26: A court in Cairo orders the government to destroy all tunnels between Egypt and Gaza.

Feb. 27: The EU Heads of Missions report for 2012 says Israeli settlements endanger the two-state solution *and* recommends, *inter alia*, imposing sanctions by the EU on bodies and organizations involved in construction in the settlements.

MARCH

March 5: Labor unions of France, UK, Ireland, Italy and Sweden agree to boycott settlement products.

March 6: The Swedish parliament upgrades the status of the Palestinian mission to that of an embassy.

- A new UNICEF report on "Children in Israeli military detention" states that there is a pattern of ill-treatment of children arrested by Israeli authorities.

March 12: A World Bank report warns of the damage to the competitiveness of the Palestinian economy caused by the worsening fiscal situation and Israeli restrictions.

March 15: Israeli political leaders sign agreements to form a new coalition government.

March 19: The AHLC meeting in Brussels calls on donors to provide predictable assistance to the PA.

March 20: Pres. Obama arrives for a three-day visit of Israel and the Palestinian territories.

March 21: In an address, Pres. Obama calls on young Israelis to reshape internal political dynamics, warning that a two-state solution was the only way to ensure that Israel remained a Jewish state. Later on, in a joint news conference with Pres. Abbas, Obama says that continued Israeli settlement activity was an obstacle to peace but should not prevent the Palestinians from negotiating.

March 22: The US unblocks almost \$500 million in aid to the PA frozen by the Congress.

- Pressured by Obama, PM Netanyahu calls Turkish PM Tayyip Erdoğan and expresses regret for the raid in 2010 on a Gaza-bound flotilla, also offering compensation.

March 22: During the Arab League summit in Doha, the Emir of Qatar, Hamad bin Khalifa Al-Thani calls for holding a mini-Arab summit to discuss ending the dispute between the Fatah and Hamas.

APRIL

April 1: In Cairo, Hamas leaders re-elect Khaled Masha'al as Political Bureau Chief for the fourth time, and Ismail Haniyeh as one of the three deputies.

April 7: US Sec. of State Kerry meets with Israeli and Palestinian leaders, including PM Netanyahu, Pres. Peres, PM Fayyad and Pres. Abbas, on reviving peace talks

April 9: Palestinian leaders reject revising the Arab Peace Initiative and to change its wording as suggested by US Sec. of State Kerry

April 13: PM Fayyad resigns and Pres. Abbas asks him to stay until a new Government is formed.

April 14: Israel extends its ban on Palestinian family unification requests for another year.

April 19: In a letter to EU High Representative for Foreign Affairs and Security Policy Ashton, a group of former officials, incl. former EU foreign policy chief Javier Solana, former Italian PM Giuliano Amato, former French PM Lionel Jospin and former EU Middle East envoy Miguel Moratinos, call on the EU to adopt a more aggressive policy on the Middle East peace process and to demand a full moratorium on Israeli settlement construction as well as define Israel as an occupying state, legally responsible for everything that happens in the West Bank.

April 21: Pres. Abbas meets US Sec. of State Kerry in Istanbul but they fail to make any progress on Palestinian conditions to restart talks with Israel.

April 30: The Arab League acknowledges the possibility of "comparable", mutually agreed and "minor" land swaps between Israelis and Palestinians. Hamas' Khaled Masha'al rejects it.

MAY

May 4: Denmark, Finland plan to upgrade the status of the Palestinian Missions to that of an embassy.

May 6: During Pres. Abbas' visit to Beijing, Chinese Pres. Xi Jinping makes a four-point proposal for a peace agreement: 1) an independent sovereign State on the basis of the 1967 borders, with East Jerusalem as capital, and respect for Israel's right to exist and its legitimate security concerns; 2) negotiations whose immediate priority are credible steps to stop settlement activities, end violence against civilians, lift the Gaza blockade, and handle the issue of Palestinian prisoners; 3) building on the "land for peace" principle, relevant UN resolutions and the Arab Peace Initiative; 4) guarantees for progress and increased assistance to Palestine by the international community.

May 8: The Jordanian Parliament votes to expel the Israeli Ambassador from Amman and recall Jordan's Ambassador from Israel in connection with recent incidents at the Al-Aqsa Mosque.

May 9: El Salvador and Palestine establish diplomatic relations.

May 15: Palestinians mark 65th anniversary of their *Nakba*.

May 26: In an effort to revive the peace talks, US Sec. of State Kerry announces at the World Economic Forum a plan to invest \$4 billion to develop the Palestinian economy and increase the GDP by 50% over three years.

May 27: The African Union grants Palestine non-member observer status.

JUNE

June 3: Pres. Abbas appoints Rami Hamdallah as new Prime Minister.

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

June 17: Hamas deploys a 600-member force in the Gaza Strip to prevent rocket fire at Israel

June 19: On World Refugee Day, the PLO calls on the international community to hold Israel accountable for the creation and continuation of the Palestinian refugee situation.

June 20: New PM Hamdallah tenders his resignation from office over a "conflict over authority".

June 23: Pres. Abbas accepts the resignation of PM Hamdallah but asks him to stay on as caretaker until a new PM was appointed.

JULY

July 3: OSCE Parliamentary Assembly grants Palestine membership as a non-EU Mediterranean State.

July 19: A new EU binding directive goes into effect forbidding all member states any funding, cooperation, awarding of scholarships, funds or prizes to anyone residing in Israeli settlements.

- Kerry announces agreement between Israel and the Palestinians to lay the groundwork for resuming peace talks.

July 28: The Israeli Cabinet votes to approve the release of 104 prisoners to clear the way for Israeli-Palestinian talks.

July 29: The Israeli and Palestinian negotiating teams begin direct final status negotiations in Washington, D.C., and agree on a nine-month timetable.

AUGUST

Aug. 4: Israel adds 91 Jewish settlements on its national priority funding list

Aug. 14: Just as Israel releases 26 Palestinians prisoners, the first of four planned releases of 104 inmates in line with commitments to US-brokered peace talks, Israel strikes rocket launchers in Gaza.

Aug. 16: Prime Minister Abbas and UN Secretary-General Ban Ki-moon sign a UN Development Assistance Framework for the State of Palestine for the years 2014-2016.

Aug. 22: The Global hacktivist group, Anonymous, attacks Israeli websites in response to the ongoing airstrikes in Gaza.

Aug. 24: France and Palestine sign a 9-million Euro agreement aimed at helping the PA financially and another agreement for 10 million Euros to build a solid waste treatment plant in the Gaza Strip.

Aug. 26: Israeli and Palestinian negotiators meet in Jericho despite the killing of three Palestinians in clashes between Israeli forces and Palestinians in Qalandia camp during early morning hours.

Aug. 27: Norwegian Foreign Minister Eide informs Pres. Abbas that without political progress, funds for Palestinian state-building would stop.

SEPTEMBER

- Sep. 1:** Egyptian navy vessels attack Palestinian fishermen off the coast of Rafah.
- Sep. 5:** Israel proposes a Palestinian state with provisional borders on 60% of the West Bank, while the Israeli settlements and military bases in the West Bank will remain intact.
- Sep. 19:** The new Palestinian government takes oath for a second time.
- Sep. 22:** An Israeli soldier is killed in an apparent sniper shooting near Hebron.
- Sep. 23:** As a result of FIFA's involvement as mediators, the Israel and Palestine Football Associations discuss modalities to facilitate the movement of persons and goods for football purposes in and out of and within Palestine.
- Sep. 27:** Human Rights Watch, asserts that Israeli forces should immediately end unlawful demolitions of Palestinian homes and other structures in the OPT.
- Sep. 28:** Haiti and Grenada establish diplomatic relations with Palestine.
- Sep. 30:** "A day of rage against settlements" is held in the West Bank.

OCTOBER

- Oct. 4:** The village of Burqa near Nablus is restored to Palestinians after a 35-year Israeli confiscation.
- Oct. 6:** The UNESCO Executive Board adopts six resolutions strongly condemning Israeli's violations of Palestinian cultural heritage.
- Oct. 7:** Pres. Abbas meets with Israeli Knesset members at the Mukata'a compound in Ramallah.
- Oct. 8:** The World Bank reports that Israeli control in Area C in the West Bank costs Palestine some \$3.4 billion annually.
- Oct. 17:** Pres. Abbas meets with Pope Francis at the Vatican and invites him to visit Holy Land.
- Oct. 22:** Qatar agrees to provide \$150 million in debt relief to the PA.
- Oct. 26:** Israel blocks European parliament members from visiting the besieged Gaza Strip.
- Oct. 30:** Israel releases a second batch of Palestinian prisoners consisting of 26 long-serving inmates.

NOVEMBER

- Nov. 4:** Hamas appoints first female English spokesperson, Israa Al-Mudallal.
- Nov. 6:** Swiss scientists found unnaturally high levels of radioactive polonium-210 in samples taken from the body of the late Pres. Yasser Arafat.
- US Secretary of State Kerry announces an additional \$75 million aid for Palestinian infrastructure.
- Nov. 7:** Palestine and Bolivia establish diplomatic ties.
- Nov. 8:** The US and Israel lose their voting rights at UNESCO, missing a deadline to repay debts to the agency, after suspending payments in protest over making 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 police arrest criminals in Ar-Ram, within Israeli-controlled Area C.
- Nov. 12:** Fearing an international outcry, Netanyahu halts plans to build 24,000 more settler homes.
- Nov. 19:** Palestine casts its first UN General Assembly vote and claims the moment as a new step in its quest for full recognition by the global body.
- Nov. 20:** During a large arrest campaign in the West Bank, Israeli forces arrest 24 Palestinians.
- Nov. 24:** Pres. Abbas voices support for the Jordan's planned Red Sea desalination project, which will produce around 100 million cm of drinking water.

Nov. 26: Israel and the EU compromise allowing Israel to sign the Horizon 2020 scientific cooperation agreement despite the new EU guidelines that bar funding to entities over the Green Line.

Nov. 27: The Israeli army kills three Palestinians in Yatta, south of Hebron.