

Palestinian Refugees

March 29, 2011

Palestinian Refugees

- Palestinians claim the “Right of Return” of all Palestinian refugees to their ancestral homes and lands (U.N Resolution 194 (paragraph 11 out of 15) and assign blame and responsibility to Israel.
- Contrary to Palestinian claims Resolution 194 did not guarantee Palestinians the right of return:
 - Willing to live in Peace with their neighbors
 - Return at “the earliest practicable date” not 63 years later
 - It does not refer only or specifically to Palestinian refugees (what about Jews?)
 - It offers alternatives to repatriation. e.g. Resettlement and Rehabilitation

Regardless...

- The return of all Palestinian refugees to Israel proper is not practical, logical and definitely not attainable...
- Who says so?

“The return of even 1 million refugees would mean "the end of Israel" and does not seem practical. It would be “illogical” to ask Israel to absorb 5 million refugees as part of a final peace deal.”

Mahmoud Abbas, President, Palestinian Authority November 2008 (source Al Jazeera)

We will argue that:

- 1. Israel did not create the Palestinian Refugees problem.**
- 2. Most Palestinians fled Palestine by choice or by encouragement**
- 3. The Arab Nations perpetuated the plight of the Palestinian Refugees**
- 4. There exists a disincentive to resettle the Palestinian Refugees and it grows with time.**
- 5. Israel created a model for resettling refugees and that it is an applicable and pragmatic solution**

We agree and propose...

- The conditions of the refugees in the camps are appalling, and their resettlement is a human right obligation of the international community.
- Resettling the Palestinians Refugees in the Palestinian State as part of a comprehensive peace in the Middle East is the only solution.
- A joint responsibility of all countries of the Middle East including Israel.

Argument -1

- **Israel did not create the Palestinian Refugees problem.**

Israel accepted U.N resolution 181-
Partition Plan

Israel recognized by U.N. (33/10)

Declaration of Independence

Arabs declared war , and YES

Arab Armies did attack Israel
(Beer Sheba, Latrun, Rehovoth)



Israel's Declaration

- **WE APPEAL** - in the very midst of the onslaught launched against us now for months - to the Arab inhabitants of the State of Israel to return to the ways of peace and play their part in the up-building of the State, on the basis of full and equal citizenship and due representation in all its bodies and institutions - provisional or permanent.
- **WE EXTEND** our hand of peace and unity to all the neighboring states and their peoples, and invite them to establish bonds of cooperation and mutual help with the sovereign Jewish people settled in its own land. The State of Israel is prepared to do its share in a common effort for the advancement of the entire Middle East.

Declaration of Independence: David Ben-Gurion, 14th May 1948

Argument - 2

- **Most Palestinians fled Palestine by choice or by encouragement:**

Some Palestinian were in fact expelled especially from villages on the roads leading to Jerusalem in order to prevent supply convoys to the besieged city of Jerusalem from being attacked.

The vast majority of the Palestinian Arabs left on their own, or were encouraged to leave by Arab nations on the promise of a short term return as soon as Israel was defeated.

Sources: Near East Arabic Radio April 3, 1948, Habib Issa New York Lebanese daily June 8, 1951, Nimr el Hawari, Sir Am Nakbah, 1955, Edward Atiyah, secretary of the Arab league office in London, *"The Arabs"*

Argument -3

- **The Arab Nations perpetuated the plight of the Palestinian Refugees**

“It is inconceivable that the refugees should be sent back to their homes while they are occupied by the Jews...It will serve as the first step towards Arab recognition of the State of Israel and partition”

Emile Ghoury, the secretary of the Arab Higher Committee

In 1957 the Refugee Conference at Homs Syria passed a resolution stating:

“Any discussion aimed at a solution of the Palestine problem which will not be based on ensuring the refugees right to annihilate Israel will be regarded as a desecration of the Arab people and an act of treason”

Beirut al Massa, July 15, 1957

“The Arab States do not want to solve the refugee problem. They want to keep it as an open sore, as an affront to the United Nations and as a weapon against Israel. Arab leaders don't give a damn whether the refugees live or die”

Sir Alexander Galloway, UNRAW official, April, 1952

Argument - 4

- **There exists a disincentive to resettle the Palestinian Refugees and it grows with time.**

The only refugees in the history of the world whose status extends to their descendants in perpetuity

The number of registered Palestine refugees has subsequently grown from 914,000 in 1950 to more than 3.8 million in 2001, and continues to rise due to population growth and today it is estimated to be between 5-7 million.

Many Palestinian refugees in the camps decline resettlement outside the refugee camps in order not to lose their potential future rights for compensation. In fact many claimants who no longer live in refugee camps are claiming residence in the camps and continue to draw UNRAW assistance.

Conclusion

- **The Palestinian Refugee problem could and should be resolved in the context of a Palestinian State as did Israel for the Jewish Refugees from Arab nations.**

More than 800,000 Jews were forced or fled from their homes in Arab countries from 1948 until the early 1970s; 260,000 of them reached Israel between 1948–1951, and 600,000 by 1972 .

By 2002 these Jews and their descendants constituted about 40% of Israel's population. Israel absorbed, integrated and created a homeland for these refugees who were initially housed in tent cities.