



# Palestinian Refugee Experiences

July 2024



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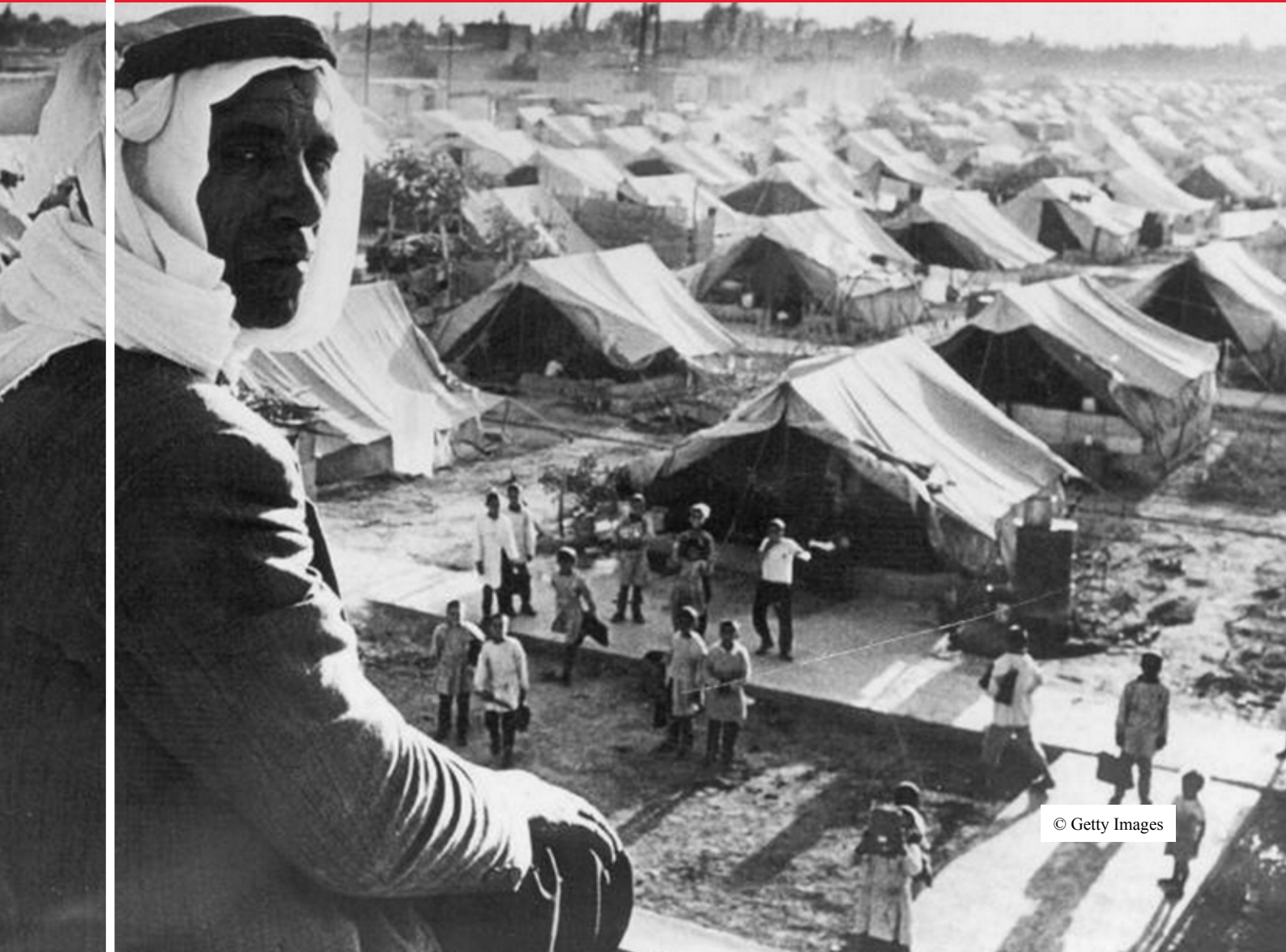
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# History of Palestinian Refugee Expulsion



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## 01

# History of Palestinian Refugee Expulsion

The first wave of Palestinian refugees was created from 1947 to 1949 during *Al-Nakba*.<sup>1</sup> By 1949, 800,000 Palestinians had been ‘ethnically cleansed’ from approximately 530 villages and communities.<sup>2</sup>

Until today, these 800,000 Palestinians and their descendants are scattered all over the world, mostly in refugee camps in neighbouring Arab countries.<sup>3</sup> Israel refuses to recognise their right to return to their homeland, despite this right being recognised in international law.<sup>4</sup> Today, most of these refugees live in Jordan, Lebanon, Syria, and Iraq.<sup>5</sup>

A further 400,000 Palestinians were displaced in one week during *Al-Naksa* in 1967.<sup>6</sup> Ninety-five percent of these refugees fled to Jordan, the rest to Lebanon, Syria, and Iraq.<sup>7</sup> By the end of 1967, the Palestinian refugee population had doubled, and almost half of all Palestinians had become refugees.<sup>8</sup>

Today, almost one-third of registered Palestinian refugees – roughly 1.5 million people – live in 58 recognised Palestine refugee camps in Jordan, Lebanon, the Syrian Arab Republic, the Gaza Strip and the West Bank, including East Jerusalem.<sup>9</sup>

The plots of land on which formal UNWRA refugee camps were set up are either state land or, in most cases, land leased by the host government from local landowners.<sup>10</sup> This means that the refugees in camps do not ‘own’ the land on which their shelters were built but have the right to ‘use’ the land for residence.<sup>11</sup>

## Refugee Testimony

**“We were subjected to a major attack by Israeli forces using airplanes, tanks and ground troops. I recall that dark day vividly. The attack occurred around two in the morning. As we left, the warplanes were targeting any individual or group leaving the village. To shield us from the planes, my father covered us with soil. [...] Over time, contagious diseases began to spread among the refugees, and our living conditions became extremely poor. With the increasing hardship, many residents of villages and cities attempted to return to their residences. However, the brutality and cruelty of the Israeli forces prevented them from reclaiming their homes. [...] Today, at the age of 85, I still hold on to the hope of returning to my village, my home and my land.”**

**Jaber Ahmad Mohammad Shaban**  
Born in 1938 in the village of Simsim,  
displaced to Jabaliya refugee camp in Gaza<sup>29</sup>





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# Palestinian Refugees' Experiences in Jordan



## 02

# Palestinian Refugees' Experiences in Jordan



## History

Palestinian refugees fled to Jordan in four main waves:

1. The majority of Palestinian refugees in Jordan arrived following *Al-Nakba* in 1948. These refugees had largely fled to Jordan from the occupied West Bank.<sup>12</sup>
2. After *Al-Naksa* in 1967, further Palestinians, mostly from Gaza, fled to Jordan.<sup>13</sup>
3. In 2003, following the US-led invasion of Iraq, around 560 Palestinian refugees were accepted to enter Jordan from makeshift camps set up in no man's land on the Jordanian border with Iraq.<sup>14</sup>
4. Since the beginning of the Syrian Civil War in 2011, at least 19,000 Palestinian refugees have fled to Jordan.<sup>15</sup>

Currently, there are more than 2.2 million Palestinian refugees in Jordan.<sup>16</sup> 370,000 Palestinians in Jordan live in 13 refugee camps – three of which are unofficial refugee camps – and the rest live amongst the Jordanian population.<sup>17</sup>



## Legal Status

The majority of Palestinian refugees in Jordan have been granted Jordanian citizenship and a national identification number, which allows them access to the labour market and public health and education services.<sup>18</sup>

However, around 635,000 Palestinian refugees in Jordan have not been granted Jordanian citizenship, most of whom arrived from Gaza, Iraq, and Syria.<sup>19</sup>

## Palestinian Refugees' Experiences in Jordan continued...



### Discrimination

Discrimination against Palestinians in private and state-sector employment remains common and a quota system limits the number of university admissions for Palestinians.<sup>20</sup> These challenges are more severe for Palestinians from

Gaza and other Palestinians without Jordanian nationality, who cannot access basic services and must pay the same university fees as foreigners.<sup>21</sup>



### Notable Event

#### Black September

'Black September', or the Jordanian Civil War, was a month-long battle between Palestinian groups in Jordan, such as Fatah and the Popular Front for the Liberation of Palestine (PFLP), and the forces of Jordanian King Hussein.<sup>22</sup>

Martial law was declared by the King, and his forces fought the Palestinian resistance that Jordanian elites felt were becoming too entrenched in Jordan.<sup>23</sup> This resulted in the Palestine Liberation Organisation (PLO) being driven out of Jordan and moving to Lebanon.<sup>24</sup>



### Political Organising

From 1964 to 1970, the PLO leadership in exile was based mostly in Jordan.<sup>25</sup> During this time, Palestinian resistance fighters engaged in a series of clashes against the Israeli military, including the Battle of Al-Karama in 1968.<sup>26</sup>

In 1968, 15,000 Israeli troops launched a major attack against Fatah's base at al-Karama, killing more than 100 Fatah fighters and 80 Jordanian soldiers.<sup>27</sup> Strong Palestinian and Jordanian resistance led the Israeli army to rapidly retreat after sustaining substantial losses (28 dead, 69 wounded).<sup>28</sup>



## Refugee Testimony

**“I remember the cold winters; we lived in a tent without warmth or privacy. I have spent my whole life in the camp, I’ve been living in Jordan for 49 years. [...] My daughter was born here, raised and studied all of her life in Jordan, and she ended up being treated as if she’s a foreigner, not a Jordanian.”**

**Layla,**  
originally from Bir Saba’ in Palestine, displaced  
to Jerash refugee camp from Gaza in 1967<sup>30</sup>



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# Palestinian Refugees' Experiences in Lebanon



## 03

# Palestinian Refugees' Experiences in Lebanon



## History

Palestinian refugees have fled to Lebanon in three main waves:

1. Around 110,000 Palestinian refugees fled to Lebanon during *Al-Nakba*.<sup>31</sup>
2. A further 6,000 or so Palestinian refugees fled to Lebanon after *Al-Naksa*.<sup>32</sup>
3. Around 45,000 Palestinian refugees have fled from Syria to Lebanon since the beginning of the Syrian Civil War in 2011.<sup>33</sup>

Today, between 270,000 and 475,000 Palestinian refugees are living in Lebanon, roughly 170,000 of whom live in Lebanon's 12 refugee camps.<sup>34</sup>



## Legal Status

Palestinians in Lebanon are not allowed citizenship rights.<sup>35</sup> They cannot own property and are excluded from practicing more than 72 professions.<sup>36</sup>

## Palestinian Refugees' Experiences in Lebanon continued...



### Discrimination

Besides legal discrimination, Palestinians in Lebanon have been regularly subjected to violent attacks by right-wing Lebanese groups since the 1970s, often facilitated by Israel and Syria.<sup>37</sup>

Some of the refugee camps are surrounded by Lebanese Army checkpoints, which restrict Palestinians' movement in and out of the camp.<sup>38</sup>

In 2019, the Lebanese government enacted a new labour law that discriminates against Palestinian refugees.<sup>39</sup> The law states that all

foreign workers will be required to obtain work permits to work and do business in Lebanon.<sup>40</sup> These restrictions were not previously applicable to Palestinians, as they were exempted from these restrictions by the Lebanese government in 2010.<sup>41</sup>

To resist this discrimination, Palestinian refugees participated in a general strike, blocked the entrances to some refugee camps, burnt tyres, and marched in the streets.<sup>42</sup> A large sit-in was also held in Martyrs' Square in Sidon.<sup>43</sup>



### Notable Event

#### **Destruction of Tal al-Zaatar Refugee Camp**

Tel al-Zaatar was a collection of 16 camps for Palestinian refugees with a population between 50,000 and 60,000 people.<sup>44</sup> In 1976, right-wing Lebanese militias - with the support of former leader of Syria Hafez al-Assad - targeted the camp with 55,000 shells over 52 days.<sup>45</sup>

Syrian-backed forces kept the refugee camps under a tight siege until they gained control of

the camp in August 1976, including blocking Palestinians' access of food and water.<sup>46</sup> The number of people killed, both due to the fighting and the siege, is estimated to range between 1,500 to 4,000 people.<sup>47</sup>

There have been no serious investigations into the massacre and thousands of bodies remain missing.<sup>48</sup>

## Palestinian Refugees' Experiences in Lebanon continued...



### Notable Event

#### Sabra and Shatila Massacre

On 16 September 1982, the residents of Sabra and Shatila refugee camps in Beirut were besieged by Israeli tanks and troops, who surrounded the camp.<sup>49</sup> Israelis gave body bags to fighters from the right-wing Christian Kataeb party and the South Lebanon army and encouraged them to attack the camp with protection from Israeli troops.<sup>50</sup>

Israelis used flares to light up areas in order to facilitate night-time attacks, and Israeli bulldozers flattened houses.<sup>51</sup>

The Palestinian refugees in Sabra and Shatila refugee camps were completely defenceless, as the PLO leadership had brokered a deal with

the US and Israel to withdraw from Lebanon, in exchange for Israel's withdrawal from Lebanon.<sup>52</sup>

About 3,500 Palestinians and Lebanese were horrifically murdered – mostly women, children, and the elderly.<sup>53</sup> Many more were injured, and many women were raped. The UN described the massacre as an act of genocide.<sup>54</sup>

Neither Lebanese nor Israeli perpetrators of the massacre have been brought to justice.<sup>55</sup> Ariel Sharon, Israel's former Defence minister, was found 'indirectly' responsible for the massacre by the Israeli Knesset.<sup>56</sup> However, he was later elected Prime Minister.<sup>57</sup>



### Notable Event

#### Destruction of Nahr El-Bared Refugee Camp

Over 40,000 Palestinian refugees lived in Nahr El-Bared refugee camp before it was attacked by the Lebanese Armed Forces in 2007.<sup>58</sup>

During the army's three-month attack of Nahr El-Bared, over 400 people were killed, the camp's buildings were completely destroyed, its surviving residents displaced, and the entire

camp was besieged by army checkpoints and armoured vehicles.<sup>59</sup> Since then, the Lebanese army has surrounded the camp and maintained tight control over it, with Palestinians routinely subjected to humiliating military searches.<sup>60</sup>

The Lebanese government's promise to rebuild the camp has been unfulfilled so far.<sup>61</sup>



## Palestinian Refugees' Experiences in Lebanon continued...



### Political Organising

Palestinian refugees in Lebanon have been active in political organising and protesting since their arrival in Lebanon.<sup>62</sup> Initially, Palestinians in Lebanon resisted UNWRA's attempts to build more formalised infrastructure as they felt this would result in their permanent resettlement.<sup>63</sup>

Refugees' political organisation intensified with the presence of the PLO leadership in Lebanon from 1968 to 1982.<sup>64</sup>

After 1982, when the southern portion of Ein El-Hilweh camp was destroyed by Israel, women rejected UNWRA's tents, and rebuilt their houses themselves.<sup>65</sup> Despite the PLO leaving Lebanon, Palestinians continued to organise protests against the Lebanese government and UNWRA, most recently protesting UNWRA's decision to suspend a member of its staff in Lebanon in March 2024.<sup>66</sup>



### Notable Figures

#### Naji al-Ali

Naji al-Ali was a Palestinian cartoonist born in al-Shajara village in al-Galilee in 1937.<sup>67</sup> At the age of 10, when Zionist militant groups attacked his home village, al-Ali's family fled to Lebanon, taking refuge in the Ain al-Hilweh refugee camp.<sup>68</sup>

Al-Ali's experience of becoming a refugee as a child directly influenced his most famous creation, the character Handala.<sup>69</sup> Handala is a barefoot 10-year-old Palestinian who represents Al-Ali and other Palestinian children displaced from their homeland.<sup>70</sup>

Handala appears with his back to the viewer in protest of how the world had turned its back on Palestinian refugees.<sup>71</sup>

## Refugee Testimony

**“Look at how we are living now; we don’t want this life in Lebanon. In Lebanon, if we get sick, we don’t find medicine. We stay in the dark most of the day. I sleep on the floor every day because the house is too hot, and we don’t have electricity to operate a fan. Children get hungry and we are not able to secure food for them. These living conditions should not be acceptable.**

**Lebanon has severe political and economic problems, and we are suffering. The politicians took the country to this bad place. They don’t want Palestinian refugees in Lebanon. Palestinian refugees have no rights in this country.**

**We will never let go of our right to return to our country. I want to ask the international community to help Palestinian refugees leave Lebanon to any country where we can live with dignity and where our rights and essential needs are secured until our return to Palestine is possible. But until this return is possible, we want to live with dignity.”**

**Nohad (name changed to protect identity), survivor of the Sabra and Shatila massacre, displaced from Haifa to Shatila refugee camp in 1948<sup>72</sup>**



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# Palestinian Refugees' Experiences in Syria



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## 04

# Palestinian Refugees' Experiences in Syria



## History

Palestinian refugees have fled to Syria in three main waves:

1. Around 90,000 Palestinian refugees fled to Syria during *Al-Nakba*.<sup>73</sup> Most of these Palestine refugees are from the northern part of Palestine, mainly Safad, Haifa, and Jaffa.<sup>74</sup>
2. After *Al-Naksa*, a further 100,000 people, including Palestine refugees, fled from the Golan Heights to other parts of Syria when the area was occupied by Israel.<sup>75</sup>

3. Following Israel's invasion of Lebanon in 1982, a few thousand Palestinian refugees fleeing Lebanon took refuge in Syria.<sup>76</sup>

Prior to the 2011 Syrian Civil War, there were around 575,000 Palestinian refugees in Syria, around 71% of whom lived in nine refugee camps – three of which are unofficial.<sup>77</sup>



## Legal Status

Palestinian refugees are excluded from Syrian citizenship.<sup>78</sup> The rights and treatment enjoyed by Palestinians in Syria differ depending on their date of arrival in the country.<sup>79</sup> In general, those who arrived before 1956 enjoy more rights than those who arrived after.<sup>80</sup>



## Discrimination

Prior to the 2011 Civil War, Palestinian refugees in Syria suffered slightly less discrimination than those in Jordan and Lebanon.<sup>81</sup> However, since the outbreak of the Civil War, Palestinian refugees have been intentionally attacked on multiple occasions by the Syrian army.<sup>82</sup>

## Palestinian Refugees' Experiences in Syria continued...



### Notable Event

#### Syrian Civil War

Since the start of the Syrian Civil War in 2011, almost 60% of Palestine refugees in Syria have been displaced at least once.<sup>83</sup>

Most notably, around 130,000 Palestinian refugees were forcibly displaced from Yarmouk camp, and the Syrian regime completely blockaded those who remained.<sup>84</sup> The blockade caused a famine that killed dozens of Palestinian refugees.<sup>85</sup>

Currently, 280,000 Palestinian refugees are internally displaced from their homes,<sup>86</sup> and roughly 160,000 Palestine refugees have left Syria since the war began.<sup>87</sup> Around 54,000 of these refugees are now living in Lebanon in uncertain legal conditions.<sup>88</sup>

The most deadly attacks on Palestinian refugees during the Syrian Civil War were:

- August 2011: The Syrian army invaded Al-Ramel refugee camp, killing 5,000 Palestinians.<sup>89</sup>
- December 2012: The Syrian army bombed Yarmouk refugee camp, killing more than two dozen Palestinians.<sup>90</sup>
- April 2013: The Syrian army invaded Ein el-Tal refugee camp and forcibly displaced 6,000 Palestinians.<sup>91</sup>



### Political Organising

Many Palestinian refugees were politically active in Syria since the 1960s.<sup>92</sup> Their political organisation and activity was largely political and civil in nature, rather than engaging in armed resistance, due to the control of the Syrian state and security forces over Palestinians in Syrian territory.<sup>93</sup>



## Refugee Testimony

**“In Syria we saw a lot, we saw the planes over our heads bombing places. We saw the tanks. We saw cars filled with the dead, the injured. On the road we were very afraid because of the checkpoints. Every time there’s a government checkpoint my daughters would get frightened because they’re still young. [...]**

**But in Damascus in the camp, I saw a lot. And what I have seen when compared to what my husband has seen is nothing. He was there during the siege. Everyone left but few people and he was one of the few who stayed. They are the ones who ate grass, when there was no food. They used to eat cats.”**

**Um Rawand,**  
a former resident of Yarmouk refugee camp  
in Damascus, currently residing in Jordan<sup>94</sup>



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# Palestinian Refugees' Experiences in Egypt



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# Palestinian Refugees' Experiences in Egypt



## History

There were three main waves of Palestinian refugees to Egypt:

1. Palestinian refugees who fled during the 1948 *Nakba*.<sup>95</sup> Roughly 15,000 Palestinians fled to Egypt between 1948 and 1949.<sup>96</sup>
2. Palestinian refugees expelled from Jordan after Black September.<sup>97</sup>

3. Palestinian refugees fleeing Israel's ongoing genocide in Gaza.<sup>98</sup>

Before October 2023, Palestinian refugees in Egypt were estimated to number around 110,000, however numbers are not well documented as UNWRA does not have any offices in Egypt.<sup>99</sup>



## Legal Status

The majority of Palestinian refugees in Egypt have remained unable to access citizenship and hold a refugee travel document.<sup>100</sup> A small number of Palestinians, mostly Christians, were able to obtain Egyptian citizenship through marriage or other means.<sup>101</sup>

## Palestinian Refugees' Experiences in Egypt continued...



### Discrimination

Initially, Palestinians were treated favourably under President Gamal Abdul Nasser.<sup>102</sup> However, following his death in 1970, political tensions between the PLO and subsequent Egyptian governments have had negative consequences on Palestinians in the country.<sup>103</sup>

After the Camp David peace agreement between Egypt and Israel was signed, and the assassination of Egyptian culture minister Yusif al-Sibai by a Palestinian faction in 1978, Palestinians suffered a significant reversal of the rights they previously enjoyed under Nasser.<sup>104</sup>

In times of heightened political tensions, such as the 1991 Gulf War, the Egyptian government increased its imprisonment of Palestinian activists.<sup>105</sup>

The Egyptian media also portrayed the Palestinians as responsible for their own tragedy.<sup>106</sup> Palestinians in the media were labelled as “disloyal,” a charge that was emphasised after al-Sibai’s assassination and renewed with every new political conflict.<sup>107</sup>

Governmental discrimination towards Palestinian refugees in Egypt has intensified since the military coup d’etat which brought Abdel Fattah al-Sisi to power in 2013.<sup>108</sup> The cost of Palestinians’ residency permit has been subject to significant price rises, which many refugees cannot afford, leaving them in legal limbo.<sup>109</sup>

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# Palestinian Refugees' Experiences in Iraq



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# Palestinian Refugees' Experiences in Iraq



## History

Iraq did not sign an agreement with UNRWA in 1949, instead successive Iraqi governments have managed the needs of Palestinian refugees themselves, resulting in significant changes and disparities in Palestinians' treatment over the years.<sup>110</sup>

During Saddam Hussein's rule, Palestinian refugees were granted residency permits, full access to government services including healthcare and education, and were also permitted to work.<sup>111</sup>

The Ba'athist regime built special housing complexes and provided heavily subsidised

accommodation for Palestinians.<sup>112</sup> Palestinians were also exempt from military service, and scholarships were also awarded to Palestinian students, enabling them to study at certain universities.<sup>113</sup>

During the years of economic sanctions in the 1990s, the Iraqi regime froze rent prices, forcing Iraqi landlords to rent their apartments to Palestinians for as little as \$1 per month.<sup>114</sup> This was also a cause of resentment among those Iraqis toward Palestinians, which manifested in ethnically motivated violence towards Palestinians post-2003.<sup>115</sup>



## Legal Status

Palestinian refugees in Iraq are not allowed citizenship, and Palestinians refugees with Iraqi mothers are not able to inherit their mother's citizenship.<sup>116</sup>

The post-2003 Iraqi government stripped Palestinians of their residency permits and forced them to register at the Ministry of the Interior each month.<sup>117</sup>

Ministry of Interior officials have arbitrarily arrested, beaten, tortured, and in a few cases, forcibly disappeared Palestinian refugees attempting to renew their residency permit.<sup>118</sup> This has deterred many Palestinians from renewing their residency in Iraq, leaving them in legal limbo.<sup>119</sup>

## Palestinian Refugees' Experiences in Iraq continued...



### Discrimination

The Palestinians suffered from increasing discrimination by the Iraqi regime during the UN sanctions on Iraq from 1990.<sup>120</sup> Palestinians were banned from investing in companies and entrepreneurial businesses and had to obtain special permissions to marry Iraqis.<sup>121</sup> Palestinians were also prohibited from living in areas close to international boundaries and were not allowed to work in security-sensitive areas.<sup>122</sup>

Palestinians were also only allowed to join the Ba'ath Party and were banned from joining Palestinian political organisations.<sup>123</sup>

Since the fall of Saddam Hussein, Palestinian refugees in Iraq have suffered from discrimination and ethnically motivated violence, in addition to the violence caused by the 2003 invasion and rise of Daesh in 2014.<sup>124</sup>

Between 2003 and 2007, Palestinian neighbourhoods in Baghdad were intentionally targeted by militia groups.<sup>125</sup>



### Notable Event

#### 2003 U.S. Invasion of Iraq

There were around 90,000 Palestinian refugees living in Iraq prior to the Iraq War.<sup>126</sup> In the aftermath of the war, the majority fled to neighbouring Jordan and Syria, or were killed.<sup>127</sup>

Thousands of Palestinians lived as internally displaced persons within Iraq or were stranded in camps along Iraq's borders with Jordan and Syria, as no country in the region would accept them. Hundreds of Palestinians lived in temporary camps along the no man's land in the border zones.<sup>128</sup>

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# Palestinian Refugees' Experiences in Kuwait



07

# Palestinian Refugees' Experiences in Kuwait



## History

There were three main waves of Palestinian refugees to Kuwait:

1. Palestinian refugees who fled during the 1948 *Nakba*.<sup>129</sup> By 1965, Palestinians composed almost 17% of Kuwait's population (78,000 of about 468,000).<sup>130</sup>
2. Palestinian refugees who fled during the 1967 war.<sup>131</sup> After 1967, a second

of Palestinian refugees fled to Kuwait, increasing the number of Palestinians in Kuwait to 148,000 in 1970.<sup>132</sup>

3. Palestinian refugees who fled during the 1973 war.<sup>133</sup> The third wave of Palestinian refugees grew the total population of Palestinians in Kuwait to 204,000 by 1975.<sup>134</sup>



## Legal Status

Until their expulsion in 1990, Palestinian refugees in Kuwait were unable to access citizenship and hold a refugee travel document.<sup>135</sup>



## Discrimination

In 1976, Kuwait's rulers shut down the independent Palestinian school system that had been allowed to operate since 1968.<sup>136</sup>

By 1989, the Palestinian population was estimated between 400,000 to 450,000, in comparison to just 550,000 Kuwaitis - a trend

that members of the Kuwaiti establishment were keen to reverse.<sup>137</sup> Prior to the 1990 Gulf War, a combination of ideological, political, demographic and class factors contributed to the Kuwaiti regime's desire to expel Palestinian refugees from Kuwait.<sup>138</sup>

## Palestinian Refugees' Experiences in Kuwait continued...



### Notable Event

#### 1991 Gulf War

Between March to June 1991, the Kuwaiti government began a sustained campaign to expel the entire Palestinian refugee population through bureaucratic means and acts of violence.<sup>139</sup> The discourse of “cleansing” was employed by the Kuwaiti regime to describe this forced displacement.<sup>140</sup>

The justification for this campaign was Yasser Arafat’s alleged support for Saddam Hussein’s invasion of Kuwait, which was used as an excuse for the collective punishment of the entire Palestinian refugee population.<sup>141</sup> In reality, Palestinians’ demographic size threatened the balance of power within the oil state.<sup>142</sup>

Most Palestinian civil servants were fired or did not get their contracts renewed, Palestinian children were expelled from public schools, educational subsidies were terminated, and heavy financial burdens were placed on Palestinians who wished to remain, such as new health fees.<sup>143</sup>

Palestinians were also frequently threatened with arbitrary arrest, torture, rape, and murder in Kuwaiti police stations and interrogation centres.<sup>144</sup>

It later came to be known that part of this campaign of terror was actually instigated by particular internal elements within the Kuwait ruling family who were displeased with their post-war marginalisation, and sought to use the scapegoating of the Palestinians, to whip up their nationalist credentials.<sup>145</sup>



### Political Organising

The history of Palestinian resistance to the Iraqi invasion is one that has been largely repressed.<sup>146</sup> For example, Fateh and PLO offices in the Kuwaiti district of Hawali organised a demonstration on 5 August to protest the invasion, and four underground leaflets were issued criticising the Iraqi occupation throughout the fall, before the larger war broke out.<sup>147</sup>

There are also cases of Palestinians who engaged in the underground armed resistance, participating in military cells, and ferrying Kuwaitis and supplies around to a network of safe houses.<sup>148</sup>

There is even the case of Rafiq Qiblawi, a central Fateh leader in Kuwait, who was assassinated by the Iraqi military for his encouragement of Palestinians not to engage in the “popular army” that the occupation was establishing.<sup>149</sup>



# Palestinian Refugees' Experiences in Saudi Arabia





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# Palestinian Refugees' Experiences in Saudi Arabia



## History

An estimated 240,000 Palestinians are living in Saudi Arabia.<sup>150</sup>



## Discrimination

Palestinians are the sole foreign group that cannot benefit from a 2004 law passed by Saudi Arabia's Council of Ministers, which entitles expatriates of all nationalities who have resided in the Kingdom for 10 years to apply for citizenship.<sup>151</sup>

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# Future for Palestinian Refugees Fleeing Israel's Genocide



© Ibraheem Abu Mustafa - Reuters

# Future for Palestinian Refugees Fleeing Israel's Genocide

Around 100,000 Palestinians have fled from Israel's genocide in Gaza into Egypt through the Rafah crossing — the only exit out of Gaza not bordered by Israel and the only route out of the territory for Palestinians fleeing the war.<sup>152</sup>

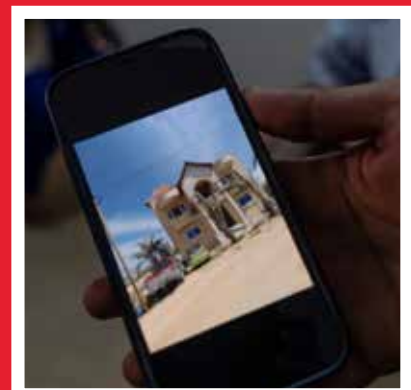
Palestinians fleeing Gaza have had to pay Egyptian travel agencies extortionate fees to get through the Rafah crossing – roughly \$5,000 for children and \$10,000 for adults.<sup>153</sup>

Most Palestinians who fled Gaza to Egypt are living in poverty with no legal documentation in the country. Most are now entirely reliant on charity to survive.<sup>154</sup>

## Refugee Testimony

**“We all feel really guilty about leaving Gaza and knowing that all of our loved ones are still being killed there. And we are here in Egypt struggling each day to find money for basic necessities. Sometimes I think it would have been better to die in Gaza, at least we would have died together with everyone else.”**

**Yusuf Alaydy,**  
a 23 year old Palestinian from Gaza,  
currently displaced to Egypt.<sup>155</sup>



# Footnotes

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