

## TIMELINE: PALESTINE REFUGEES

*Compiled by* Cairo Review

**1882:** First Aliyah, a mass immigration of Jews from Europe, begins.

**1896:** Theodor Herzl, a Budapest-born Jew, publishes *Der Judenstaat* (*The Jewish State*), a pamphlet calling for Jews to escape anti-Semitism and persecution by achieving “the restoration of the Jewish state” in “a portion of the globe large enough to satisfy the rightful requirements of a nation.”

**1897:** First Zionist congress adopts the Basel Program, stating “Zionism seeks to secure for the Jewish people a publicly recognized, legally secured home in Palestine for the Jewish people” and calling for “the programmatic encouragement of the settlement of Palestine with Jewish agricultural workers, laborers and those pursuing other trades.”

**1909:** Jewish city of Tel Aviv is founded.

**1915:** Amid World War I, British High Commissioner in Egypt Sir Henry McMahon promises Hussein bin Ali, Sharif of Mecca, Britain’s backing for “independence of the Arabs” in return for a revolt against the “Turkish yoke” of the Ottoman Empire.

**1916:** Secret Sykes-Picot Agreement aims to divide parts of the Middle East into British and French protectorates preceding Arab independence.

**1917:** British forces capture Jerusalem from the Ottomans, beginning British control of Palestine that will continue until 1948; the Balfour Declaration announces Britain’s support for “the establishment in Palestine of a national home for the Jewish people” while assuring that “nothing shall be done which may prejudice the civil and religious rights of existing non-Jewish communities in Palestine.”

**1919:** First Palestinian congress rejects Balfour Declaration and demands independence;

King-Crane Commission appointed by President Woodrow Wilson recommends a Mandatory administration for former Ottoman Arab territories in preparation for Arab independence; the commission recommends “serious modification of the extreme Zionist program for Palestine of unlimited immigration of Jews, looking finally to making Palestine a distinctly Jewish State”; the commission adds that “the [Paris] Peace Conference should not shut its eyes to the fact that the anti-Zionist feeling in Palestine and Syria is intense and should not be lightly flouted. No British officer, consulted by the Commissioners, believed that the Zionist program could be carried out except by force of arms”; the commission concludes that “Jewish immigration should definitely be limited, and that the project for making Palestine a distinctly Jewish commonwealth should be given up.”

**1920:** Palestinian Muslim festival of Nabi Musa evolves into three days of anti-Zionist rioting, with six Jews killed; British authorities dismiss Jerusalem Mayor Musa Kazem Al-Husseini for opposing pro-Zionist policies; San Remo Conference confers on Britain a League of Nations Mandate for Palestine; the Mandate text (approved in 1923) expressly calls for “putting into effect” the Balfour Declaration, stipulating that the Mandate administration “shall facilitate Jewish immigration [and] close settlement by Jews on the land”; British administration is established, with Sir Herbert Samuel as the first high commissioner for Palestine; first Immigration Ordinance enacted for 16,500 immigrant Jews; third Palestinian congress elects executive and demands national Palestinian government.

**1921:** Arab-Jewish tensions erupt into rioting in Jaffa, resulting in the deaths of forty-seven Jews and forty-eight Arabs; Haycraft Commission attributes conflict to Arab fears of Zionist mass immigration.

**1922:** Churchill White Paper, addressing Arab-Jewish tensions, states that the Balfour Declaration did “not contemplate that Palestine as a whole should be converted into a Jewish National Home, but that such a Home should be founded in *Palestine*”; the White Paper further states that “the Jewish community in Palestine should be able to increase its numbers by immigration. This immigration cannot be so great in volume as to exceed whatever may be the economic capacity of the country”; British census in Palestine shows a population of 757,182; 78 percent Muslim, 11 percent Jewish, and 10 percent Christian.

**1929:** Dispute over Jewish access to the Western Wall (Wailing Wall) in Jerusalem escalates into Jewish and Arab protests and widespread Arab rioting; 249 people are killed.

**1930:** Shaw Commission calls 1929 disturbances “from the beginning an attack by Arabs on Jews”; fundamental cause was that “the Arabs have come to see in the Jewish immigrant not only a menace to their livelihood but a possible overlord of the future”; Hope Simpson Report says no further land is available for Zionist agricultural settlement, and criticizes Zionist policy of excluding Arab labor in Zionist enterprises; Passfield White Paper restricts Jewish immigration and land transfers.

**1931:** Prime Minister Ramsay MacDonald reaffirms Britain’s “obligation to facilitate Jewish immigration and to encourage close settlement by Jews on the land”; British census in Palestine shows a population of 1,035,821; 73 percent Muslim, 17 percent Jewish, and 9 percent Christian.

**1935:** Sheikh Izzeddin Al-Qassam is killed in a battle with British forces after launching the first Palestinian guerrilla campaign against Zionism and the British Mandate; his death inspires popular Arab resistance; Palestinian parties petition British high commissioner demanding democratic government and end to Jewish immigration and land transfers; Britain rejects demands, proposes a limited legislative council.

**1936:** Strikes and protests led by Palestinian political parties spiral into the Great Revolt against Britain’s Mandate; Arab Higher Committee is formed under chairmanship of Hajj Amin Al-Husseini, mufti of Jerusalem; Fawzi Al-Qawukji

of Lebanon leads guerrilla band against British; Mandate authorities deport Palestinian leaders to Seychelles; Amin Al-Husseini flees to Lebanon; death toll in three years of violence includes an estimated 5,000 Arabs, and 300 Jews; Britain increases the number of troops in Palestine to 20,000.

**1937:** Britain’s Lord Peel conducts a fact-finding mission into the causes of unrest; Peel Commission report proposes the partition of Palestine into Jewish and Arab states; representatives from Arab states meeting in Bloudan reject partition proposal, call for a halt to Jewish immigration and end of Palestine Mandate.

**1939:** Britain quells the Great Revolt with the MacDonald White Paper, which reverses the Peel Commission recommendation for partition; calls for an independent Palestinian state within ten years, adding that the British authorities “now declare unequivocally that it is not part of their policy that Palestine should become a Jewish state.”

**1942:** Zionist congress meeting in New York adopts the Biltmore Program, urging establishment of a Jewish commonwealth in Palestine and calling for the Jewish Agency to be given control of immigration; the congress rejects the White Paper of 1939 as “cruel and indefensible in its denial of sanctuary to Jews feeling from Nazi persecution.”

**1944:** Radical Zionists launch a violent campaign against Britain’s Mandate; Lehi (Fighters for the Freedom of Israel), also known as the Stern Gang, assassinates Lord Moyne, British minister of state for the Middle East, in Cairo.

**1945:** President Franklin Roosevelt tells Saudi Arabian King Abdul Aziz (Ibn Saud) that he would “never do anything which might prove hostile to the Arabs”; defeat of Nazi Germany in World War II reveals extent of genocide of Jews; an estimated six million Jews perished in the Holocaust; President Harry Truman asks Britain to allow 100,000 European Jews to immigrate into Palestine.

**1946:** Radical Zionist group, Irgun Zvai Leumi (National Military Organization), bombs the King David Hotel, the British administrative headquarters, in Jerusalem, killing ninety-one people; Anglo-American Committee of Inquiry recommends a United Nations trusteeship leading to a

bi-national state, and calls for the immediate admission of 100,000 Europeans Jews.

**February 1947:** Britain declares the Palestine Mandate “unworkable” and asks the United Nations to determine Palestine’s future.

**August 31, 1947:** Eleven-nation United Nations Special Committee on Palestine (UNSCOP) recommends the partition of Palestine into Arab and Jewish states with economic union, with Jerusalem under international trusteeship; a minority report recommends establishment of a bi-national federal state.

**September 29, 1947:** Arab Higher Committee rejects partition proposal.

**October 2, 1947:** Jewish Agency announces acceptance of partition proposal.

**November 29, 1947:** United Nations General Assembly (UNGA) adopts Resolution 181 (Partition Plan) calling for Arab and Jewish states with economic union, with Jerusalem under international trusteeship.

**December 1947:** Arab-Jewish violence erupts, with armed clashes, indiscriminate bombings, attacks on population centers, and ambushes; Arab Higher Committee leads general strike; Arabs riot in Jerusalem, attacking Jewish properties; two Irgun bombings in Old City of Jerusalem kill thirty-seven; Irgun attack at Haifa refinery kills six; Arabs massacre thirty-nine Jewish workers in retaliation; Haganah (The Defense), the military arm of the Jewish Agency, launches Plan May (also known as Plan C, or Plan Gimel) for an offensive campaign of violence; Haganah attacks villages of Balad Al-Sheikh and Hawassa near Haifa, killing seventy-six; Arab League declares UN partition of Palestine illegal.

**January 1948:** Haganah, Irgun, and Lehi attacks fuel Arab exodus from Haifa, Jaffa, and Jerusalem; Haganah bombs Semiramis hotel in Jerusalem, killing twenty-six; Irgun bombs Jaffa Gate in Jerusalem, killing twenty-five; Irgun bombs government center in Jaffa, killing twenty-six; Arab Liberation Army (ALA), organized by Arab League, led by Fawzi Al-Qawukji and comprised of 5,000 volunteers from Arab states, arrives to defend Palestinians.

**February 1948:** Arabs bomb *Palestine Post* newspaper in Jerusalem, killing twenty Jewish civilians;

Ben Yehuda Street bombings in Jerusalem result in deaths of fifty-seven Jewish civilians.

**March 1948:** Jewish attacks on villages speed Arab flight from countryside.

**March 10, 1948:** British House of Commons votes to terminate Palestine Mandate as of May 15, 1948; Haganah adopts Plan Dalet (or Plan D) for systematic conquest and permanent occupation of Arab areas— including the destruction and depopulation of villages—within the future State of Israel.

**March 11, 1948:** Arabs bomb Jewish Agency headquarters in Jerusalem, killing twelve.

**March 27, 1948:** ALA ambushes Haganah forces, in Galilee and near Hebron, killing 115.

**April 1, 1948:** United Nations Security Council (UNSC) adopts U.S.-proposed resolution calling for truce.

**April 2, 1948:** Haganah launches Plan Dalet; Operation Nachshon results in the capture of strategic Arab villages, including Castel, west of Jerusalem.

**April 9, 1948:** Irgun and Lehi massacre between 100-350 Arabs in the Arab village of Deir Yassin, spreading wide terror among Palestinian Arabs; leading Palestinian commander Abdul Qader Al-Husseini of the Army of Holy War is killed in Castel counterattack.

**April 13, 1948:** Palestinian militants attack a convoy of Jewish medical workers near Jerusalem, killing seventy-seven people.

**April 18, 1948:** Haganah captures Tiberias; most of 5,000 Arab inhabitants become refugees.

**April 23, 1948:** Haganah captures Haifa; an estimated 95 percent of 70,000 Arab inhabitants become refugees.

**May 9, 1948:** Haganah launches Operation Barak to occupy Arab villages in the gateway to the Negev desert and Gulf of Aqaba.

**May 10:** Haganah captures Jaffa; an estimated 94 percent of 80,000 Arab inhabitants become refugees.

**May 11, 1948:** Haganah captures Safad; most of the 12,000 Arab inhabitants become refugees.

**May 13, 1948:** Haganah launches Operation Ben Ami to occupy Arab towns in western Galilee.

**May 14, 1948:** State of Israel is proclaimed in Jerusalem by Jewish Agency Chairman David Ben-Gurion; United States is the first nation to grant recognition to the State of Israel; United Nations appoints Count Folke Bernadotte of Sweden as the mediator for the Palestine conflict.

**May 15, 1948:** Britain's Palestine Mandate ends; troops from Iraq, Egypt, Jordan, Syria, and Lebanon invade Israel, beginning the first Arab-Israeli War.

**May 16, 1948:** Haganah captures Acre; 60 percent of 15,000 Arab inhabitants become refugees.

**June 8, 1948:** First Arab-Israeli truce takes effect.

**September 17, 1948:** Lehi assassinates Bernadotte in Jerusalem.

**December 11, 1948:** UNGA adopts Resolution 194, stating, "refugees wishing to return to their homes and live at peace with their neighbors should be permitted to do so" and "compensation should be paid for the property of those choosing not to return."

**1949:** Egypt, Jordan, Syria and Lebanon sign armistices with Israel; United Nations Economic Survey Mission for the Middle East estimates the maximum number of Palestinian refugees at 774,000; including 200,000 in Gaza, 350,000 in West Bank and Jordan, 97,000 in Lebanon, and 75,000 in Syria; Israel tells United Nations Conciliation Commission that it will accept 100,000 returning refugees if Arab states resettle the remainder and conclude a peace agreement; Jordanian forces remain in control of the West Bank; Egyptian forces occupy Gaza, which is run by an Egyptian military governor until 1967.

**December 1949:** UNGA adopts Resolution 302 establishing the United Nations Relief and Works Agency for Palestine Refugees in the Near East (UNRWA); as of 2013, UNRWA provides assistance, protection and advocacy for some five million registered Palestinian refugees in

Jordan, Lebanon, Syria and the occupied Palestinian territory; more than 1.4 million refugees live in fifty-eight recognized camps.

**1950:** Israeli Knesset adopts Law of Return, stating: "Every Jew has the right to come to this country as an *oleh* [immigrant into Israel]"; Jordan annexes the West Bank and East Jerusalem, and grants citizenship to the population.

**1951:** Palestinian militants assassinate King Abdullah of Jordan in Jerusalem.

**1952:** Israeli Nationality Law grants citizenship to Arabs living within Israel but denies naturalization to those who have "ceased to be an inhabitant of Israel."

**1956:** Israel, France, and Britain invade Egypt after President Gamal Abdel Nasser nationalizes the Suez Canal; pressure from the U.S. and Soviet Union is followed by a withdrawal of foreign forces; "Suez Crisis" signals the decline of Britain's influence.

**1959:** Meeting in Kuwait, young Palestinian refugees who fled to Gaza secretly establish the Palestinian National Liberation Movement, known as Fatah, for a guerrilla war against Israel; Fatah anonymously begins publication of monthly magazine *Our Palestine—the Call to Life* in Beirut.

**1964:** Arab League initiates creation of the Palestine Liberation Organization (PLO); PLO Chairman Ahmad Shukeiry proclaims the establishment of the group "to wage the battle of liberation."

**January 1, 1965:** Fatah launches its first publicly announced guerrilla operation; attack on Israeli national water carrier is unsuccessful.

**June 1967:** In the Six-Day War, Israel seizes Gaza and the Sinai Peninsula from Egypt, the West Bank and East Jerusalem from Jordan, and the Golan Heights from Syria; some 300,000 Palestinians flee West Bank and Gaza.

**July 1967:** Yigal Allon, head of the Israeli Committee on Settlements, develops a policy for creation of secure borders by establishing Israeli settlements in the West Bank; as of 2010, 512,761 settlers reside in the West Bank and East Jerusalem, according to Foundation for Middle East Peace.

**November 22, 1967:** UNSC unanimously adopts Resolution 242 calling for “withdrawal of Israel armed forces from territories occupied in the recent conflict”; “termination of all claims or states of belligerency and respect for and acknowledgment of the sovereignty, territorial integrity and political independence of every State in the area and their right to live in peace within secure and recognized boundaries free from threats or acts of force”; and a “just settlement of the refugee problem.”

**1968:** Fatah guerrillas repulse an Israeli military assault near the Jordanian town of Karameh, boosting the group’s prestige in refugee camps and throughout the Arab world; rival Popular Front for the Liberation of Palestine hijacks an Israeli airliner; amended Palestine National Charter is adopted by the fourth Palestinian National Council (PNC); it states: “Palestine is the homeland of the Palestinian Arab people”; “the Zionist occupation and the dispersal of the Palestinian Arab people, through the disasters which befell them, do not make them lose their Palestinian identity and their membership in the Palestinian community, nor do they negate them”; “Armed struggle is the only way to liberate Palestine.”

**1969:** Fatah leader Yasser Arafat is elected chairman of the PLO; Israeli Prime Minister Golda Meir says in an interview with the *Sunday Times* (London): “It was not as though there was a Palestinian people considering itself as a Palestinian people and we came and threw them out and took their country away from them. They did not exist.”

**1970:** PFLP hijacks five passenger airliners and lands three of them in Jordan; Jordanian forces loyal to King Hussein crush Palestinian fighters in what becomes known to Palestinians as “Black September.”

**1971:** Secret Palestinian group with links to Fatah calling itself Black September assassinates Jordanian Prime Minister Wasfi Tal.

**1972:** PFLP-allied Japanese Red Army group massacres 24 people at Israel’s Lod (later Ben-Gurion) Airport; Black September abducts Israeli athletes at the 1972 Olympic Games in Munich, resulting in the deaths of eleven Israeli hostages; Israel bombs PLO bases in Lebanon, where Palestinian guerrillas regrouped after their expulsion from Jordan.

**1973:** In the October War (Yom Kippur War), Egypt and Syria launch a surprise attack on Israel, temporarily recapturing parts of territories lost in the 1967 conflict; UNSC adopts Resolution 338, calling for a cease-fire and for negotiations between the parties “aimed at establishing a just and durable peace in the Middle East”; U.S. and Soviet Union sponsor Geneva peace conference, attended by Egypt, Jordan and Israel; U.S. rejects participation by PLO.

**1974:** Arab League designates the PLO as the “sole, legitimate representative of the Palestinian people”; UNGA adopts Resolution 3236 “recognizing that the Palestinian people is entitled to self-determination” and reaffirming “the inalienable right of the Palestinians to return to their homes and property from which they have been displaced and uprooted”; Arafat addresses the UNGA, calling for a democratic, secular state in Palestine.

**1975:** Muslim-Christian tensions, exacerbated by presence of armed Palestinian factions, erupt into Lebanese Civil War (1975-1991).

**1976:** Lebanese Maronite forces besiege Tal Al-Zaatar refugee camp in Beirut, killing an estimated 2,000 Palestinians; Syrian forces enter Lebanon, beginning an occupation that will last until 2005.

**1977:** Menachem Begin of the Likud party (and former Irgun leader) is elected prime minister of Israel; begins expansion of Jewish settlements in occupied territories on basis of election platform that declared “the entire historic Land of Israel is the inalienable heritage of the Jewish people, and that no part of Judea and Samaria [West Bank] should be handed over to foreign rule”; Egyptian President Anwar Sadat makes historic trip to Jerusalem, addressing the Knesset “with an open mind and an open heart, and with a conscious determination, so that we might establish permanent peace based on justice”; PLO condemns Sadat’s “treacherous visit to the Zionist entity.”

**1978:** Fatah attacks a bus near Haifa, killing thirty-eight Israelis; Israel invades Lebanon in Operation Litani; United Nations Interim Force in Lebanon (UNIFIL) establishes a security zone on the Israel-Lebanon border; Israel and Egypt sign Camp David Accords, including a Framework for Peace in the Middle East aimed at ending

the Arab-Israeli conflict and providing for “full autonomy” in the West Bank and Gaza.

**1979:** Egypt and Israel sign a peace agreement leading to the withdrawal of Israeli troops and settlers from the Sinai Peninsula.

**October 6, 1981:** Islamic militants assassinate Sadat during military parade in Cairo on the anniversary of the October War.

**June 1982:** Israeli forces invade Lebanon and besiege Beirut in a military campaign to expel the PLO from the country; 17,825 (combatants and civilians) are killed, according to Lebanese newspaper *An-Nahar*; Israel’s occupation of southern Lebanon lasts until 2000.

**September 1982:** President Ronald Reagan, as U.S. Marines complete supervision of the PLO evacuation from Lebanon, proposes new American peace initiative; declares that “self-government by the Palestinians of the West Bank and Gaza in association with Jordan offers the best chance for a durable, just and lasting peace”; says the U.S. will not support annexation or permanent control by Israel, and “will not support the establishment of an independent Palestinian state”; Lebanese Maronite militants enter the Israeli-controlled Sabra and Shatila Palestinian refugee camps and massacre as many as 3,500 civilians.

**1983:** Syria, maneuvering to control the PLO, launches a military assault and drives remaining Arafat loyalists out of Lebanon; PLO establishes new headquarters in Tunis.

**1985:** In the War of the Camps, the Syrian-backed Shiite Amal militia in Lebanon fights PLO remnants; thousands of Palestinians are killed.

**1987:** Palestinian youths in Gaza clash with Israeli troops, beginning a popular uprising, known as the First Intifada (1987–1990).

**1988:** Jordan severs legal and administrative ties to the West Bank; PLO adopts the Palestinian Declaration of Independence, and accepts UN Resolution 181 calling for two states in Palestine; PLO issues Stockholm Declaration acknowledging Israel’s right to exist and renouncing terrorism; Arafat announces the PLO’s acceptance

of Resolutions 242 and 338; U.S. ends diplomatic boycott of the PLO.

**1990:** Iraq invades Kuwait.

**February 1991:** U.S.-led coalition including Saudi Arabia, Egypt, Syria, and Gulf states expel Saddam Hussein’s forces from Kuwait; Saudi Arabia and Kuwait halt aid to the PLO due to the group’s support for Iraq; 350,000 Palestinians are expelled from Kuwait.

**October 1991:** United States and Soviet Union co-sponsor the Madrid Peace Conference aimed at resolving the Arab-Israeli conflict; PLO is excluded, but Palestinians are represented in a joint delegation with Jordan.

**1993:** Arafat and Labor party Prime Minister Yitzhak Rabin of Israel sign the Oslo Accord, providing for mutual recognition, Palestinian self-rule in the West Bank and Gaza, and a framework of negotiations toward a final comprehensive agreement including borders, refugees, settlements and status of Jerusalem to be reached within five years.

**1994:** Arafat arrives in Gaza and convenes the Palestinian National Authority (PNA); Israel and Jordan sign a peace agreement.

**1995:** Attacks by Hamas (Islamic Resistance Movement) and Islamic Jihad factions opposed to peace with Israel kill dozens of Israelis; Rabin is assassinated by a Jewish militant.

**1996:** Hamas carries out a wave of suicide bombings in Israel in run-up to Israeli elections, killing more than fifty; PNC votes to annul sections of Palestine National Charter that contradict PLO peace undertakings in Oslo agreements including recognition of Israel; Benjamin Netanyahu of the Likud party is elected prime minister of Israel with an implicit mandate to expand settlements and slow implementation of the Oslo agreements.

**1999:** Ehud Barak of the Labor party is elected prime minister of Israel, reviving hope in negotiations.

**2000:** President Bill Clinton convenes talks at Camp David aimed at reaching a final settlement; Clinton and Barak blame Arafat for failure of negotiations; Palestinians begin Second Intifada (2000–2005).

**December 23, 2000:** Clinton issues Parameters for a peace settlement to Israeli and Palestinian negotiators; calls for implementation of UN Resolution 194 with refugees returning to “historic Palestine” or “their homeland” but no specific right of return to Israel; five “possible homes” include State of Palestine, areas in Israel being transferred to Palestine in land swap, rehabilitation in host country, resettlement in third country, and admission to Israel for “some of the refugees.”

**September 11, 2001:** Al-Qaeda group led by Islamic militant Osama bin Laden of Saudi Arabia destroys World Trade Center in New York and part of the Pentagon near Washington, DC, killing nearly 3,000.

**November 10, 2001:** In speech to UNGA calling on nations to defeat terrorism, President George W. Bush affirms that U.S. policy seeks the establishment of a Palestinian state.

**March 2002:** Arab League adopts Saudi initiative calling for peace between all Arab countries and Israel in exchange for Israeli withdrawal from Arab lands; after a suicide bombing in Netanya kills thirty Israelis, Israel launches Operation Defensive Shield and besieges Arafat in his headquarters in Ramallah.

**June 2002:** Israel begins construction of a “security fence” to extend more than 400 miles separating Israel from the West Bank.

**2003:** United States leads invasion of Iraq and topples Saddam Hussein regime; 34,000 Palestinian refugees in Iraq flee conflict; U.S., Russia, UN, European Union (the Quartet on the Middle East) propose a Road Map to Peace that would establish a Palestinian state by 2005.

**March 2004:** Hamas founder Sheikh Ahmed Yassin is assassinated by Israeli forces.

**November 2004:** Arafat dies; Mahmoud Abbas becomes chairman of the PLO; in 2005, Abbas is elected president of the PNA.

**2005:** Israeli forces unilaterally withdraw from Gaza, ending a thirty-eight-year occupation.

**2006:** Hamas upsets Fatah in Palestinian legislative elections.

**2007:** Hamas seizes Gaza from Fatah; Egypt and Israel close land borders with Gaza.

**2008:** Israeli forces launch assault on Gaza, Operation Cast Lead, in response to Hamas attacks on Israel; 1,400 Palestinians are killed.

**2009:** In a Cairo address, President Barack Obama calls on Israelis and Palestinians to reach a peace agreement on two states; says “the Palestinian people—Muslims and Christians—have suffered in pursuit of a homeland... Many wait in refugee camps in the West Bank, Gaza, and neighboring lands for a life of peace and security... America will not turn our backs on the legitimate Palestinian aspiration for dignity, opportunity, and a state of their own.

**2011:** Arab Spring uprisings topple authoritarian rulers in Tunisia, Egypt, and Libya, and in Yemen in 2012.

**2012:** Anti-regime uprising in Syria spills into the Yarmouk Palestinian refugee camp in Damascus; Syrian forces attack the camp, killing dozens and forcing thousands to flee; UNGA recognizes Palestine as a non-member state by a vote of 138–9.