

At the 60-year anniversary of Israel's creation, Palestinians are still homeless.

During the month of May, Jewish organizations across the country will be holding events to celebrate the 60th anniversary of the founding of the state of Israel. Israel's anniversary has also drawn statements of support by numerous government officials and public figures.

Many Americans, however, cannot mark the date of Israel's founding without acknowledging the impact of Israel's creation on the Palestinian people. While fully recognizing the tragic history of Jewish persecution culminating in the Holocaust, we recognize also the price paid by another people for European anti-semitism and Hitler's genocidal policies. As we understand what the *Shoah* is to the Jewish people, so we understand that Israel's creation has been a *Nakba* (Catastrophe) for the Palestinian people.

While Israel's supporters celebrate the creation of a Jewish homeland, we remember the simultaneous ethnic cleansing

and dispossession of the indigenous Palestinian population from their homeland, as 750,000 Palestinians were caused to flee or forcibly exiled and more than 400 Palestinian villages were destroyed.

More than 4.5 million Palestinian refugees now live in exile, prevented by Israel from exercising their right to return—despite the fact that the right to return or compensation is guaranteed by both international humanitarian law and by United Nations GA Resolution 194. Meanwhile, Israel's Law of Return guarantees Israeli citizenship to Jewish people worldwide. Israel's differential treatment of Palestinian refugees and Jewish immigrants is one manifestation of its discriminatory policies based on ethnicity or religion.

Recognition of Israel's anniversary should acknowledge the cost of establishing the state: the dispossession of another people



from their land. The dispossession continues, as the state of Israel even now engages in ethnic cleansing and population transfer, violates international law, inflicts disastrous collective punishment on the civilian population of Gaza, and continues to deny to Palestinians their human rights and national aspirations.

The Arabs and Jews of the Middle East share a common future. We recognize the interdependence of the two peoples in their pursuit of human rights and security. Join us in supporting the aspirations of both Arabs and Jews to live in the Middle East in peaceful coexistence and as equals.

To learn more, please visit these on-line resources:

1948 PALESTINIAN NAKBA

Palestine Remembered palestineremembered.com
Nakba alnakba.org
Zochrot: Remembering the Nakba in Hebrew zochrot.org

PALESTINIAN REFUGEES

United Nations Relief and Works Agency for Palestinian Refugees un.org/unrwa
Badil Resource Center for Palestinian Residency and Refugee Rights badil.org

PALESTINIAN LIFE IN ISRAEL

Adalah Legal Center for Arab Minority Rights in Israel adalah.org
Arab Association for Human Rights arabhra.org
Association of Forty assoc40.org
Sikkuy Association for the Advancement of Civic Equality in Israel sikkuy.org.il
Ittijah Union of Arab Community Based Organizations ittijah.org
Human Rights Watch Middle East hrw.org/doc?t=mideast&c=isrlpa

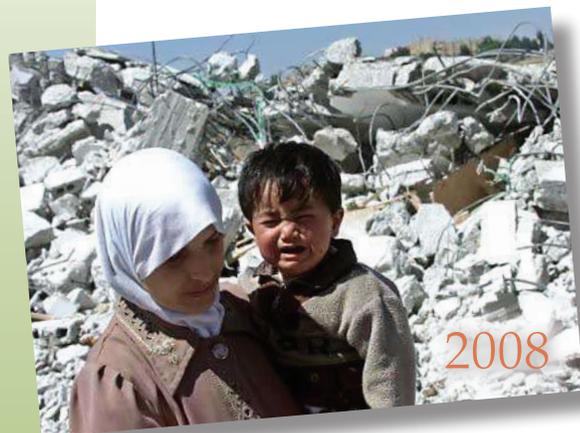
PALESTINIAN LIFE UNDER OCCUPATION

Al Haq alhaq.org
Hamoked Center for the Defence of the Individual hamoked.org.il/index_en.asp
Applied Research Institute - Jerusalem arij.org
Health, Development, Information, and Policy Institute hdip.org
Israeli Committee Against House Demolitions icahd.org
Amnesty International amnesty.org
Palestinian Initiative for the Promotion of Global Dialogue and Democracy miftah.org
Rabbis for Human Rights Israel rhr.israel.net
B'Tselem: Israeli Information Center for Human Rights in the Occupied Territories btselem.org
Christian Peacemaker Teams Palestine Projects cpt.org/work/palestine
Palestine Monitor palestinemonitor.org

ISRAELI MILITARY IN OCCUPIED TERRITORIES

Breaking the Silence shovrimshatika.org
Yesh Gvul yeshgvul.org/index_e.asp
Seruv/Courage to Refuse seruv.org.il

These resources are listed as a courtesy to those interested in further information. Opinions contained in these sites are those of the authors and do not necessarily represent the views of the Washington Interfaith Alliance for Middle East Peace.



**Washington Interfaith Alliance
for Middle East Peace**

P.O. Box 42144
Washington, DC 20015
202-258-0569

www.wiamep.org