

UN News

Global perspective Human stories

AUDIO HUB  SUBSCRIBE 

UN marks 75 years since displacement of 700,000 Palestinians



UN Photo | Barefoot and pushing their belongings in prams and carts, Arab families leave the coastal town of Jaffa which became part of the greater Tel Aviv area in the state of Israel.

15 May 2023 | **Migrants and Refugees**

The UN on Monday commemorated for the first time in its history, the mass displacement of Palestinians from land that was to become Israel, 75 years ago, that turned 700,000 Palestinians into refugees, almost overnight.

The mass displacement in 1948, known as the Nakba (meaning “catastrophe” in Arabic), has an importance to Palestinians across the

world, said [Rosemary DiCarlo](#), Under-Secretary-General for Political and Peacebuilding Affairs, addressing a high-level event at UN Headquarters in New York, marking the day.

'The occupation must end'

"The legacy of the event lives on, spurring us to continue our unflinching efforts to find a peaceful and lasting solution to the Israeli-Palestinian conflict," she said, noting that the General Assembly had adopted a [resolution](#) in November 2022 for this commemorative day.

Currently, the Israeli and Palestinian road towards peace and the implementation of an agreed [two-State solution](#) follows **decades pock-marked with war, flaring tensions**, violence, and multiple negotiation processes.

Ms. DiCarlo expressed deep concerns about diminishing prospects for kickstarting the peace process on the way to forging a two-State solution, given the current landscape of expanding Israeli settlements in occupied territory, **recent violence**, and Israel's **violation of Palestinian rights**.

"Palestinians deserve a life of justice and dignity and the realization of their **right to self-determination and independence**," she said. "**The UN position is clear: the occupation must end**. A two-State solution must be achieved in line with international law. We want to see an independent State of Palestine living side by side with Israel in peace."

1948 'catastrophe'

For Palestinians, the 1948 the massive displacement meant families took what they could carry or was shipped in trucks, from their homes to areas outside the new State of Israel.

The UN agency created to serve the displaced population (UNRWA), reports that **5.9 million Palestinian are currently registered as refugees**.

The sombre anniversary spotlights the world's longest-standing protracted refugee crisis, serving as a stark reminder that Palestine refugees continue to live amidst conflict, violence, and occupation while aspiring to a just and lasting solution to their plight, said the [UN Committee on the Rights of Palestine People](#).

'Memory will remain'

The morning event brought together UN Member States and high-level speakers, including the President of Palestine, Mahmoud Abbas.




"The Nakba memory will remain; it will continue to motivate our people to end the occupation," Mr. Abbas said. "The occupation will end. The Palestinian right will prevail sooner or later, so that peace can prevail in our region and in the world."

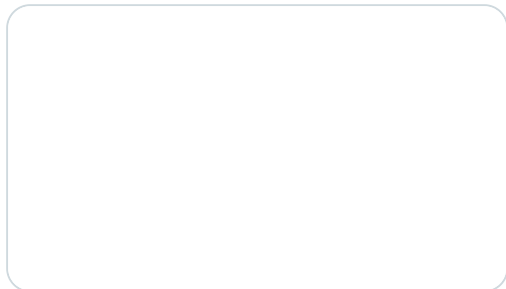
'Longest unresolved refugee crisis'

"The plight of Palestine refugees remains the **longest unresolved refugee crisis** in the world," UNRWA's Commissioner-General, Philippe Lazzarini, said in a video message.



"More than ever, they require our collective

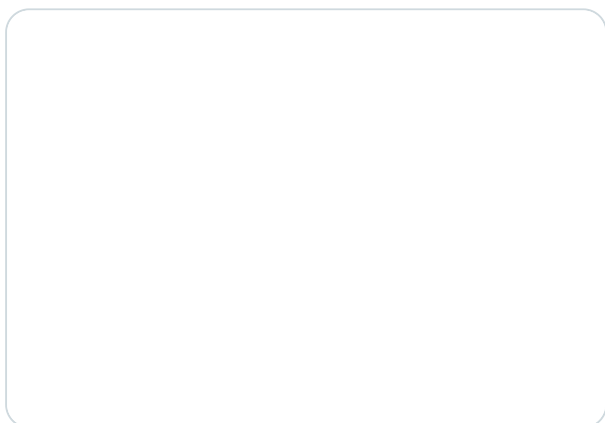
UN Palestinia... · May 15, 2023 
@UNISPAL · [Follow](#)
Replying to @UNISPAL @Palestine_UN and 3 others

LIVE 
President Mahmoud Abbas : "I am confident the UN  will spare no effort to restore Palestinian people's legitimate rights and establishing an annual event considering 15 May as an International Day to commemorate the Palestinian plight."



UN Palestinian Rights Com... 
@UNISPAL · [Follow](#)

LIVE 
President Mahmoud Abbas : "we built human civilization in Palestine and our collective presence in Palestine was uninterrupted. How can Palestine be land without people? "
[#Rights4Palestine](#)



9:58 AM · May 15, 2023 

 19  Reply  Copy link

[Read 2 replies](#)

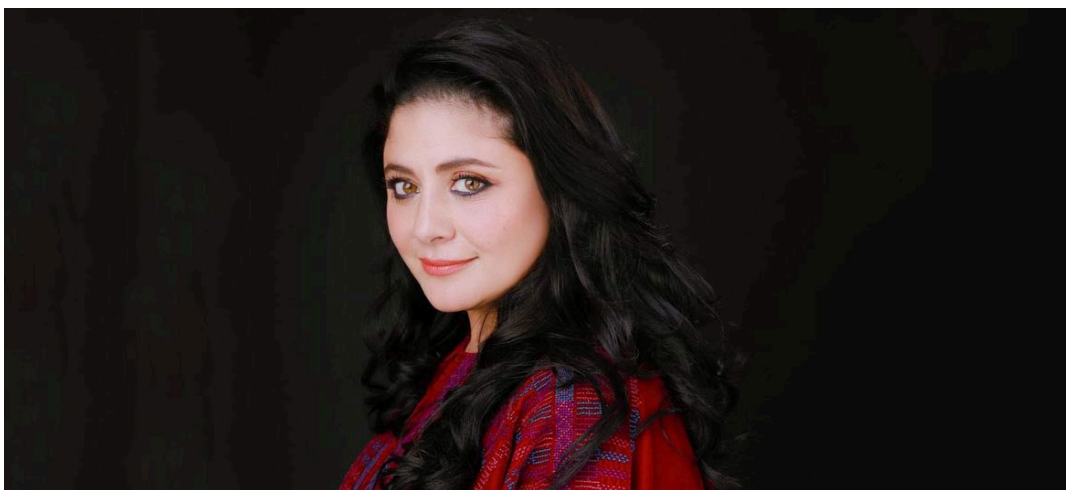
solidarity,” he said. “There simply is no alternative to a political solution for all. Until such a day, there is no alternative to UNRWA; we have to continue to support them until a just solution is finally found to their plight.”



© 1949 UN Archives Photographer | A convoy of trucks carries refugees and their belongings from Gaza to Hebron in the West Bank.

Special commemorative event

On Monday evening, UN Headquarters will host a [special event and concert](#), featuring films and performances by Palestinian singer Sanaa Moussa, cellist and composer Naseem Alatrash, and the New York Arabic Orchestra, directed by four-time Grammy Award winner, Eugene Friesen.



© Sanaa Moussa | Palestinian singer Sanaa Moussa, Ambassador of Palestinian heritage.

Learn more about what UNRWA is doing for Palestine refugees [here](#) .

Commemoration of the 75th anniversary of the

UN Palestinian Rights Committee



Watch on

◆ Receive daily updates directly in your inbox - [Subscribe here](#) to a topic.

◆ Download the UN News app for your [iOS](#) or [Android](#) devices.

ISRAEL-PALESTINE

RELATED STORIES



UN affirms solidarity with the Palestinian people on International Day



Exclusive: A look into the lives of Palestine refugees in Lebanon awaiting a solution to their plight



'Jerusalem is not for sale' Palestinian President Abbas tells world leaders at UN Assembly

NEWS TRACKER: PAST STORIES ON THIS ISSUE



Guterres welcomes ceasefire in Israel and Gaza

14 May 2023 | **Peace and Security**

UN Secretary-General António Guterres has welcomed last night's ceasefire agreement in Israel and Gaza and reiterated that only a negotiated political

solution will lead to lasting peace and end the devastating cycles of violence “once and for all.”



Severe funding shortfalls could leave 200,000 Palestinians hungry

11 May 2023 | [Humanitarian Aid](#)

Grave funding shortages could cut assistance to more than 200,000 Palestinians, the UN food agency warned on Thursday. Grave funding shortages could cut assistance to more than 200,000 Palestinians, the UN food agency warned on Thursday.

[RESOURCES](#)



[SPOKESPERSON'S OFFICE](#)



[SECRETARY-GENERAL](#)



[FIND US](#)



[A-Z SITE INDEX](#) | [COPYRIGHT](#) | [FAQ](#) | [FRAUD ALERT](#) |

[PRIVACY NOTICE](#) | [TERMS OF USE](#)



[Donate](#)

