

REMEMBERING AL-NAKBA

1948-2004:

56 YEARS OF OCCUPATION, 56 YEARS OF STRUGGLE

In 1948, al-Nakba (the Catastrophe in Arabic) befell the people of Palestine. The Zionist project of colonizing Palestine, seeking to create an exclusionary, European colonialist “Jewish state” – at the cost of the lives and independence of the indigenous Palestinian Arabs, Muslim, Christian and Jewish - reached its culmination as British colonial control of Palestine passed into Zionist colonial hands. The United Nations passed Resolution 181, without consultation with the Palestinian people – a resolution that divided their land and required they forsake their right to 56 percent of their nation. Promised self-determination and independence by the British and the Western powers represented in the UN since the dawn of the British colonial mandate following World War I, the Palestinian people instead were officially made victim to a racist ideology, Zionism, that sought to control the entire land of Palestine through the expulsion and oppression of its indigenous people.



Zionist forces used this resolution to intensify their ongoing assaults upon the people of Palestine. In the colonial war waged against the people of Palestine, **800,000 Palestinians** were made refugees, forced to flee their homes and lands. **Over 400 Palestinian villages** were destroyed and depopulated entirely by Zionist forces, while Palestine's major cities were attacked and huge numbers of their Palestinian citizens driven out.

Since that time, the colonial assault upon the Palestinian people has only continued. Those 800,000 Palestinian refugees have become five million, the world's largest refugee population. In defiance of all human rights and international law, these refugees are forbidden from returning to their homes and lands to which many still hold the keys and deeds – simply because they are Palestinian. The racist ideology of Zionism considers them a “demographic threat” to the state of Israel, founded as it was upon the dispossession and exclusion of the people of Palestine. In 1967, the Zionist state extended its military occupation to the rest of historic Palestine – the West Bank and Gaza Strip, where millions more Palestinians live under brutal military occupation. Those Palestinians not driven out in 1948 live under a discriminatory regime similar to that of apartheid South Africa. A wall that further divides Palestinians from each other and their land is imprisoning Palestinian cities and towns as if inside giant prisons. Palestinian homes are demolished daily, with over 1100 Palestinians made homeless by Zionist military onslaught in just the past ten days. All of this is funded by \$15 million daily in U.S. tax dollars. Despite facing vast military and political power, for 56 years, Palestinians – in Palestine, in the refugee camps, and around the world - have continued to resist Zionist colonization and occupation and to struggle for the day when the refugees will return and all of **PALESTINE WILL BE FREE**, from the river to the sea.

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