



America-Eurasia Center's Middle East Program

December 1, 2023

Palestine's Diaspora Rally for Gaza



*Pro-Palestinian diaspora rally for Palestine in London's Trafalgar Square,
Photo Credit: Justin Tallis, AFP*

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*Protestors for Palestine gather in front of the White House to demonstrate on behalf of Palestine
Photo Credit: Al Jazeera*

The Palestinian Diaspora first began in 1948 when Israel took over Gaza and the West Bank. Since then, Palestinians have lived in numerous countries around the world. Palestine refugees are best defined by the United Nations Relief and Work Agency as “persons whose normal place of residence was Palestine during June 1, 1946 to May 15, 1948, and who lost both home and means of livelihood as a result of the 1948 conflict.”¹ There are approximately one-third of recognized Palestine refugees living in refugee camps in Jordan, Lebanon, the Syrian Arab Republic, the Gaza Strip and the West Bank, including East Jerusalem.² The estimated total of

¹UNRWA, “Palestine Refugees | Unrwa,” United Nations Relief and Works Agency for Palestine Refugees in the Near East, accessed November 27, 2023, <https://www.unrwa.org/palestine-refugees>.

² Ibid., <https://www.unrwa.org/palestine-refugees>.

Palestinians at the end of 2021 is approximately 14 million all over the world.³ Although Palestinians are now in various different countries, there is still a part of them that feel like they are not home and want to return back to Palestine.

Although approximately 2.2 million Palestinians do remain in Gaza, Jordan also has a large population of Palestinians. The Hashemite Kingdom of Jordan donated 4.3 million US dollars in support of the UNRWA during this time of crisis for Gaza.⁴ This assistance from Jordan, which is the first in cash in the history of the UNRWA, will help the teams in Gaza to respond to humanitarian needs including delivering food and other basic needs to those impacted by the current conflict.⁵ With this large population of Palestinians, Jordan as a country is very willing to provide aid and help Gaza during this time of struggle for many individuals.

As Palestinians continue to fight for their country and feel a sense of belonging, there are still some underlying fears that remain in the future. In AP News the article, “Why Egypt and other Arab countries are unwilling to take in Palestinian refugees from Gaza,” Jack Jeffery and Samy Magdy report about the constant fear that this conflict could cause Israel to permanently force all Palestinians out. They state, “Arab countries and many Palestinians also suspect Israel might use this opportunity to force permanent demographic changes to wreck Palestinian demands for

³ Arab Center Washington DC, “Brief Report on the Population of Palestine at the End of 2021,” Arab Center Washington DC, January 30, 2023, <https://arabcenterdc.org/resource/brief-report-on-the-population-of-palestine-at-the-end-of-2021/#:~:text=The%20estimated%20number%20of%20Palestinians,countries%20and%20750%2C000%20in%20foreign.>

⁴ UNRWA, “Jordan Donates US\$ 4.3 Million in Support of Palestine Refugees and UNRWA Operations in the Gaza Strip [En/Ar] - Occupied Palestinian Territory,” ReliefWeb, October 12, 2023, <https://reliefweb.int/report/occupied-palestinian-territory/jordan-donates-us-43-million-support-palestine-refugees-and-unrwa-operations-gaza-strip-enar#:~:text=Jordan%20donates%20US%24%204.3%20million,%5D%20%2D%20occupied%20Palestinian%20territory%20%7C%20ReliefWeb.>

⁵Ibid.,<https://reliefweb.int/report/occupied-palestinian-territory/jordan-donates-us-43-million-support-palestine-refugees-and-unrwa-operations-gaza-strip-enar#:~:text=Jordan%20donates%20US%24%204.3%20million,%5D%20%2D%20occupied%20Palestinian%20territory%20%7C%20ReliefWeb.>

statehood in Gaza, the West Bank and east Jerusalem, which was also captured by Israel in 1967.”⁶ Although these fears have been ongoing since 1948, this current conflict has only caused those concerns to heighten.



A Palestinian Diaspora protesting in Chile⁷

The continued conflict has also caused Palestinians all around the world to protest. Chile has the largest Palestinian population outside the Middle East.⁸ Since the Hamas attacks, Chile has been very vocal on their views. This has made Chile one of the loudest regional voices criticizing Israel.⁹ President Gabriel Boric of Chile recalled the country’s ambassador in Tel Aviv and said that Israel was not abiding by International law.¹⁰ There has been a strong presence of Palestinians

⁶ Jack Jeffery and Samy Magdy, “Why Egypt and Other Arab Countries Are Unwilling to Take in Palestinian Refugees from Gaza,” AP News, October 19, 2023, <https://apnews.com/article/palestinian-jordan-egypt-israel-refugee-502c06d004767d4b64848d878b66bd3d>.

⁷ Alexander Villegas, “In Chile, a Palestinian Diaspora Makes Its Voice Heard on Gaza,” Reuters, November 7, 2023, <https://www.reuters.com/world/chile-palestinian-diaspora-makes-its-voice-heard-gaza-2023-11-07/>.

⁸ Ibid., <https://www.reuters.com/world/chile-palestinian-diaspora-makes-its-voice-heard-gaza-2023-11-07/>.

⁹ Ibid., <https://www.reuters.com/world/chile-palestinian-diaspora-makes-its-voice-heard-gaza-2023-11-07/>.

¹⁰ Ibid., <https://www.reuters.com/world/chile-palestinian-diaspora-makes-its-voice-heard-gaza-2023-11-07/>.

in Chile since the 19th century, which is why the country is so passionate with what is occurring in that region although they are rather far from the current conflict.

Another country that is experiencing this Palestinian diaspora that has a large Palestinian population is Australia. There have been many instances where Australians that are of Palestinian descent have wanted to put the Palestinian flag out to show support of their home country. This is something that some politicians in Australia have struggled with. In the article, “Agony for Australia’s Palestinian Community as War Rages on in Gaza,” Dechlan Brennan expresses how Australians feel about the situation occurring abroad as well as how those in political power in Australia view this issue and how it impacts the people of their country. Brennan writes, “However, Liberal opposition leader Peter Dutton disagrees, the Labor minister Tony Burke-whose electorate covers the council mentioned above-condemned Hamas but added that such a condemnation was not ‘somehow weakened if you do something to acknowledge the Palestinian loss of life.’ Dutton decided this was akin to weakness.”¹¹ Prior to this statement it was said that a local council gave permission to fly the Palestinian flag, as there have been multiple other flags flown without needing permission.

As we have seen the support coming from not only Middle Eastern countries that are close and directly impacted by this conflict such as Jordan, as well as countries that are further from the conflict like Chile and Australia, this shows the dedication and passion in the Palestinian population. All over the world, Palestinians of numerous other countries have stood up for their relatives and loved ones globally to speak out about what is happening. This has shown the importance of the Palestinian diaspora and why this has impacted not only so many individuals, but also so many countries. These people have shown that Palestine is not only a country, but it is an

¹¹Dechlan Brennan, “Agony for Australia’s Palestinian Community as War Rages on in Gaza,” – The Diplomat, November 2, 2023, <https://thediplomat.com/2023/11/agony-for-australias-palestinian-community-as-war-rages-on-in-gaza/>.

ethnicity which many identify with and it is bringing Palestinians all around the world together in protest to what is currently taking place between the Israelis and Palestinians.

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