



Press Release

15 November 2021
Canberra, Australia

Palestinian Independence Day

Today, 15 November, marks the anniversary of the Palestinian Declaration of Independence which, in 1988, proclaimed the State of Palestine according to 1967 borders. This vision and process adopted 33 years ago was based on principles of International Law, United Nations Resolutions, the Universal Declaration of Human Rights, and on the values, culture, and priorities of the Palestinian People:

"[The State of Palestine] further announces itself to be a peace-loving State, in adherence to the principles of peaceful co-existence. It will join with all states and peoples in order to assure a permanent peace based upon justice and the respect of rights."

"Governance will be based on principles of social justice, equality and non-discrimination in public rights of men or women, on grounds of race, religion, color or sex."

– The Palestinian Declaration of Independence

Following the Declaration of Independence, 78 countries formally recognised the State of Palestine. Today, 139 states have extended recognition of the State of Palestine. Palestine is signatory to tens of international treaties and agreement, and in 2012, it was upgraded to non-member observer status at the United Nations.

The vision and process of the Declaration has been endorsed and strongly supported by the international communities and the Palestinian people. Unfortunately, it has been consistently challenged by Israeli measures and military occupation, particularly Israel's colonial settlement expansion project which represents the greatest barrier to the establishment of a Palestinian state.

In spite of the occupation, the state-building process has continued. There are 2,784 schools in Palestine, and the curriculum has recently been developed to positively address social justice issues such as gender equality and care for the environment. Over 96 percent of the total Palestinian population are literate, and over half of Palestinian students enrolled in tertiary education are women. There are 750 primary healthcare centres in Palestine, with highly skilled doctors including specialists, and the Ministry of Health has had great success in controlling many infectious diseases in Palestine, including COVID-19.

It is the responsibility of the international community, including Australia and Aotearoa New Zealand, to recognise the State of Palestine within 1967 borders, with East Jerusalem as its capital. This is the only path to durable and just peace in the Middle East. It is also the immediate responsibility of the international community to support the conduct of an international peace conference to solve the conflict with clear terms of reference based on International Law and UN Resolutions.

For more information, please contact the General Delegation of Palestine to Australia, Aotearoa New Zealand and the Pacific: ph. (02) 6286 9193.

