

**RESPONSES to the Nusseibeh-Ayalon Campaign
against the Palestinian Right of Return:**

*** PLO Department of Refugee Affairs**

*** Popular Refugee Committees – Gaza Refugee Camps**

(Please note: the original statements were issued in Arabic; unofficial English translation was prepared by BADIL.)

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**STATEMENT issued by the DEPARTMENT OF REFUGEE
AFFAIRS, Palestine Liberation Organization – PLO on 9-
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In light of the controversy over statements by Dr. Sari Nusseibeh about his position on the final status issues, including the refugee issue, under the title of the Nusseibeh-Ayalon position, the Department of Refugee Affairs of the Palestine Liberation Organization would like to clarify to the public and the refugee community in the homeland and in exile the following:

First:

The political leadership of the Palestine Liberation Organization and the Palestinian National Authority is the party authorized to design the solution to the Palestinian-Israeli conflict and ensure implementation of the legitimate national rights of the Palestinian people, including the establishment of the Palestinian state on the 1967 occupied territories with east Jerusalem as the capital of the state, and affirming the rights of the Palestinian refugees as set forth in UN resolutions, especially General Assembly Resolution 194.

Second:

Related to its position on the refugee issue, the Palestine Liberation Organization has continuously affirmed its

steadfast commitment to the rights of the Palestinian refugees, and continues to express its clear position internationally that includes: the constant and principal commitment to the right of the refugees to return to their homes as set forth in UN Resolution 194, and, the right to compensation for the damages and losses caused by forced migration.

Third:

The constant and principal commitment to the right of the refugees to return to their homes is a deep-rooted position and is non-negotiable. This right is the legal basis of other rights such as the right to compensation. Any violation of the right of return would lead to a loss and violation of all the refugees' rights.

Fourth:

Finding a durable and comprehensive solution for Palestinian refugees is a basic and necessary condition for implementing a just and comprehensive peace in the region; the just solution for the refugees guaranteed under Security Council Resolution 242 must lead to the implementation of General Assembly Resolution 194.

While the Department of the Refugee Affairs of the Palestine Liberation Organization follows with concern statements recently published by some brothers that do not express the official position of the PLO, especially in these days when the Palestinian people are facing hardships, the Department calls upon everyone to hold fast to the unified national position on the refugee issue, and abstain from all things that may create confusion in Palestinian public opinion and shift attention from the immediate challenges and issues.

**STATEMENT issued by the POPULAR REFUGEE
COMMITTEES – GAZA REFUGEE CAMPS**

Our Struggling People

Greetings as you reach the end of the second year of the blessed *Intifada*, and start the third year with greater steadfastness, confirming to the Zionist enemy and its allies

that the Palestinian people are stronger than the machinery of the Zionist military. Greetings as you hold fast to the right to return to the land of our great grandfathers; and, the establishment of a Palestinian state with Jerusalem as its capital, sacrificing lives and resources to reach those goals. All honor to the martyrs, injured, prisoners, handicapped and those who have been harmed by the brutal occupation.

Our Great People

In the wake of this legendary steadfastness in facing Zionism, and after achieving significant popular Islamic and Christian, Arab and Western sympathy; and with the deep conviction of the right of the Palestinian people to live on their land, the right of the refugees to return to their original homes, and the right of the Palestinian people to establish their independent state;

Some internally defeated people insist on transforming all these achievements into a defeat, ignoring all moral values and the entire Palestinian struggle. Those defeated people, headed by Sari Nusseibeh, recently prepared a senseless poll to disseminate among the Palestinian people to canvas them about their internationally legitimized rights. The poll, which was prepared by Sari Nusseibeh after his meeting with 'Ami Ayalon – the previous head of the Israeli intelligence service (Shabak) – suggests that the return of refugees would be to the future Palestinian state in the West Bank and Gaza Strip. The poll also included a demand to improve the living conditions of refugees in exile through contributions by Arab countries, Israel, United States and Europe, in addition to suggestions concerning Jerusalem and the Jewish state.

Our Heroic People

We, the Popular Refugee Committees, declare the following:

1. What Sari Nusseibeh and others are doing is a stab in the heart of the Palestinian leader Yasser 'Arafat, who holds fast to the national consensus, foremost of which is the right of refugees to return in accordance with UN Resolution 194.
2. We, the Palestinian refugees, reaffirm our steadfast commitment to our right to return to our homeland from which we were expelled from in 1948 by the

- Zionists and their allies.
3. Our right to return is internationally guaranteed by the legitimacy of UN Resolution 194, and we are waiting the implementation of this resolution however long it takes.
 4. We, the Palestinian refugees, did not authorize and will never authorize anyone to compromise our rights; it is our right to resist the occupation until it is brought to an end according to internationally legitimate resolutions.
 5. We declare to everyone that we will resist all proposals that aim to cancel the right of return as well as the proposals calling for resettlement and an alternative homeland.
 6. We call upon all refugees - individuals, committees, organizations and political factions to announce their positions that reject the actions of those who deviate from the national consensus.

Our Heroic People

All greetings as you continue your brave *Intifada*; all greetings to the souls of the heroic martyrs, healing for the injured, freedom for prisoners, shame and infamy for all the defeated.

WE WILL RETURN!

**Refugee Popular Committees
Gaza-Palestine**