



January 2021

This month at the Delegation

Diplomatic Engagements

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Image: Hiking in the West Bank

## Ambassador's Foreword:



### Palestinian Elections

Welcome to the first GDOP newsletter of 2021. I would firstly like to wish everyone a Happy New Year and despite the many challenges and obstacles that we were faced with in 2020, I hope that the year 2021 will bring prosperity, peace and happiness to the Palestinian people, Australi-

an and New Zealand people and Pacific communities.

Indeed, this year already brings promising upcoming developments in the Palestinian political context after the announcement by President Mahmoud Abbas that Palestinian legislative elections will be held on May 22, the presidential vote on July 31 and the Palestinian National Council on the 31 August of this year, the first elections to be held in 15 years.

Since the last Palestinian election, held in 2006, many obstacles have hindered the path to organizing parliamentary and presidential elections and, in the bid, to heal long-standing division. Particularly due to the West Bank and Gaza split, and maintaining difficulties in achieving national unity. East Jerusalem has also posed as an obstacle to holding elections, with Israel restricting the participation of Palestinians in Jerusalem in the elections and having the opportunity to partake in an electoral process.



This announcement is a crucial step towards Palestinian unity and largely welcomed by both the Palestinian people and the international community alike. Notably, it has been praised by Sven Kühn von Burgsdorff, the Representative of the European Union to Palestine, who affirmed the European Union's readiness to support this process, through the provision of monitoring and technical support to the Central Elections Committee. Similarly, UN Secretary-General Antonio Guterres highlighting this process as 'a crucial step towards Palestinian unity'. Conducting elections is a fundamental step forward, as it will not only strengthen the Palestinian community, but also promote democracy and preserve Palestinian unity.

It is the hope that this electoral process will advance Palestinian statehood and self-determination, in line with international law and UN resolutions.

Izzat Abdulhadi

Ambassador of the State of Palestine

Head of the General Delegation of Palestine to  
Australia, New Zealand and the Pacific



## This month at the Delegation

### **Australian government contributes \$1 million to combat COVID-19 in Palestine**

In recognising the severity of the COVID-19 situation in Palestine, Australia has announced a contribution of \$1 million to assist in this regard.

The funding will be provided to the World Health Organisation and will be used to procure medical supplies and technical assistance to help the immediate and mid-term response in West Bank and Gaza. This has been pledged through a letter from Australian Foreign Minister Marise Payne who reconfirmed the Australian government's commitment to the Two State solution.

Palestinian Foreign Minister Dr Riad Malki shows his appreciation to Foreign Minister Marise Payne in a letter for her support in this regard. It also highlighted the appreciation for continuous solidarity and cooperation.

### **For further information: Australia contributes \$1 million in coronavirus aid to Palestine**

<https://english.wafa.ps/Pages/Details/122944>



### **Farewell for H.E. the Moroccan Ambassador**

On 12 January and on behalf of the Council of Arab Ambassadors, the Dean of the Council of Arab Ambassadors, Dr Ali Kraishan organised a farewell dinner for the outgoing Moroccan Ambassador His Excellency Karim Medrek. The dinner was attended by significant members of the Arab Ambassadors.

The Dean of the Council of Arab Ambassadors granted a trophy to His Excellency Karim Medrek on behalf of the Council of Arab Ambassadors and thanked the outgoing Moroccan Ambassador for his tireless work for the Arab issues and for promoting bilateral relations between Morocco and Australia.



## Palestinian Community Gathering at the GDOP

On Saturday 30th January, the General Delegation of Palestine hosted a congratulations and thank you ceremony for members of the Palestinian community. It was a wonderful opportunity for everyone to meet together after the challenges of 2020.

During the evening Ambassador Abdulhadi gave a speech in which he highlighted the challenges and achievements of 2020 in Palestine, Australia and at the GDOP. He also took the opportunity to congratulate new college graduates on their achievements and also thanked the members that took part in the 2020 Multicultural Festival in Canberra during their performance of the 'Henna Night'.

Also, new college graduate Ms Ruba Nazzal Gave a speech highlighting the challenges and achievements of completing college during 2020.

Finally, Ms Eman Al Sakka gave a speech to thank the GDOP for the hard work of the 'Henna Night' performance during the 2020 Multicultural Festival in Canberra.





## Additional information and sources

**Prime Minister Dr. Mohammad Shtayyeh meets with EU Representative :**

<http://www.palgov.ps/en/article/262/Prime-Minister-Dr-Mohammad-Shtayyeh-meets-with-EU-Representative>

**A regime of Jewish supremacy from the Jordan River to the Mediterranean Sea: This is apartheid**

[https://www.btselem.org/publications/fulltext/202101\\_this\\_is\\_apartheid](https://www.btselem.org/publications/fulltext/202101_this_is_apartheid)

**Israel destroys nature reserve, uproots 10,000 trees**

<https://www.middleeastmonitor.com/20210128-israel-destroys-nature-reserve-uproots-10000-trees/#.YBMHL8q5uJU.twitter>

**Guterres welcomes Palestinian announcement of elections as ‘crucial step’ towards unity:**

<https://news.un.org/en/story/2021/01/1082342>

**Palestinians excluded from Israeli Covid vaccine rollout as jabs go to settlers**

<https://www.theguardian.com/world/2021/jan/03/palestinians-excluded-from-israeli-covid-vaccine-rollout-as-jabs-go-to-settlers?fbclid=IwAR2j4Qk7BMmcjVvjF8MNIAX->



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