

119TH CONGRESS
1ST SESSION

H. RES. 409

Recognizing the ongoing Nakba and Palestinian refugees' rights.

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

MAY 14, 2025

Ms. TLAIB (for herself, Ms. LEE of Pennsylvania, Ms. OMAR, Ms. SIMON, Ms. OCASIO-CORTEZ, Mrs. WATSON COLEMAN, Ms. PRESSLEY, Mrs. RAMIREZ, and Mr. CARSON) submitted the following resolution; which was referred to the Committee on Foreign Affairs

RESOLUTION

Recognizing the ongoing Nakba and Palestinian refugees' rights.

Whereas May 15, 2025, is the 77th commemoration of the Palestinian Nakba, meaning “catastrophe” in English, a term which refers to Israel’s uprooting, dispossession, and exile of the Palestinian people from their homeland;

Whereas the United Nations General Assembly recommended on November 29, 1947, to partition Palestine into two States against the wishes of Palestine’s majority indigenous inhabitants;

Whereas, almost immediately following the passage of the United Nations partition plan, Zionist militias began a deliberate and systematic effort to expel Palestinians

from their lands, a campaign which included massacres and other atrocities against civilian populations;

Whereas, before the State of Israel declared its independence on May 14, 1948, between 250,000 to 300,000 Palestinian refugees had already been forcibly expelled or fled from their homes, often following attacks by Zionist militias on major Palestinian cities and villages;

Whereas, by the time of the signing of armistice agreements between Israel and neighboring Arab countries in 1949, the new State of Israel had established control over 78 percent of Palestine and, in the process, conquered an additional 23 percent of Palestine beyond those areas allocated to the Jewish State under the partition plan;

Whereas, by the time of the 1949 armistice, Zionist militias and the new Israeli army had expelled at least 750,000 Palestinians, roughly 75 percent of the entire indigenous Palestinian population, from their homes in areas that became the State of Israel, becoming refugees living in exile;

Whereas, by 1949, Israel had depopulated more than 400 Palestinian villages and cities, often demolishing all homes and other structures and planting forests over them;

Whereas the United States knew of the scale and magnitude of the Palestinian refugee crisis as it unfolded, as is documented in an October 1948 telegram to the President and Secretary of State from the Embassy of the United States to Israel, warning that the “Arab Refugee tragedy is rapidly reaching catastrophic proportions and should be treated as a disaster”;

Whereas the United States voted in favor of United Nations General Assembly Resolution 194 on December 11, 1948, which states that Palestinian “refugees wishing to return to their homes and live at peace with their neighbors should be permitted to do so at the earliest practicable date, and that compensation should be paid for the property of those choosing not to return and for loss of or damage to property which, under principles of international law or in equity, should be made good by the governments or authorities responsible”;

Whereas Palestinian refugees’ right of return is not only stipulated in a General Assembly resolution, but is also anchored in international law and in Article 13 of the Universal Declaration of Human Rights, which states: “Everyone has the right to leave any country, including his own, and to return to his country”;

Whereas, on December 8, 1949, the United Nations General Assembly adopted Resolution 302 establishing the United Nations Relief and Works Agency for Palestine Refugees in the Near East, which the United States has financially supported on an almost continuous basis since its establishment;

Whereas, of the more than 7,000,000 Palestinian refugees, the United Nations Relief and Works Agency for Palestine Refugees in the Near East provides much-needed social services to 5,900,000 Palestine refugees today;

Whereas international law also recognizes that descendants of refugees retain their rights as refugees, and that according to the United Nations, “Palestine refugees are not distinct from other protracted refugee situations such as those from Afghanistan or Somalia, where there are multiple generations of refugees, considered by UNHCR as

refugees and supported as such. Protracted refugee situations are the result of the failure to find political solutions to their underlying political crises.”;

Whereas the Nakba refers not only to a historical event but to an ongoing process of Israel’s expropriation of Palestinian land and its dispossession of the Palestinian people that continues to this day, including the systematic destruction of Palestinian homes, the construction and expansion of illegal settlements, and the confinement of Palestinians to ever-shrinking areas of land;

Whereas the apartheid Government of Israel is committing a genocide against the Palestinian people which, as of April 9, 2025, has—

- (1) killed at least 50,810 people, including more than 15,600 children, with over 14,000 more still missing and presumed dead under the rubble;
- (2) wounded more than 115,688;
- (3) displaced over 1,900,000; and
- (4) engineered a state of famine across Gaza;

Whereas the establishment and expansion of hundreds of illegal settlements and outposts in the occupied Palestinian West Bank in which approximately 737,000 Israelis reside as of 2023 is another form of ethnic cleaning used to perpetuate the Nakba;

Whereas the United States is complicit in Israel’s ongoing Nakba against the Palestinian people by providing Israel with weapons and diplomatic support even as its leaders openly announce and carry out plans to ethnically cleanse and depopulate Palestinian communities today; and

Whereas a just and lasting resolution requires respect for and the implementation of Palestine refugee rights as en-

shrined in United Nations General Assembly Resolution 194 and the Universal Declaration of Human Rights: Now, therefore, be it

1 *Resolved*, That it is the sense of the House of Rep-
2 resentatives that it is the policy of the United States to—

3 (1) commemorate the Nakba through official
4 recognition and remembrance;

5 (2) denounce the ongoing Nakba of the Pales-
6 tinian people;

7 (3) reject efforts to enlist, engage, or otherwise
8 associate the United States Government with denial
9 of the Nakba;

10 (4) encourage education and public under-
11 standing of the facts of the Nakba, including the
12 United States role in the humanitarian relief effort,
13 and the relevance of the Nakba to modern-day ref-
14 ugee crises;

15 (5) support the resumed provision of social
16 services to Palestinian refugees through the United
17 Nations Relief and Works Agency for Palestine Ref-
18 ugees in the Near East;

19 (6) support the implementation of Palestinian
20 refugees' rights as enshrined in United Nations Gen-
21 eral Assembly Resolution 194 and the Universal
22 Declaration of Human Rights;

1 (7) recognize that Palestinians are a unique
2 people who are every bit as human as everyone else;

3 (8) reject bigoted efforts to question, dismiss,
4 or otherwise deny the existence of Palestinians and
5 their humanity; and

6 (9) ensure the United States ends its complicity
7 in Israel's ongoing Nakba against the Palestinian
8 people by—

9 (A) prohibiting United States weapons
10 from being used to destroy Palestinian homes
11 and forcibly remove Palestinians from their
12 land; and

13 (B) ending United States diplomatic sup-
14 port for such actions.

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