



Palestinian Statehood at the United Nations: A Resource

Introduction: These pages aim to serve as an informal resource for issues relating to the current discussions around the question of Palestinian Statehood at the United Nations. The references contained here are not intended to be exhaustive or definitive; rather they are intended to serve as a bibliographic record of our own research around this complex issue. This is a political and emotional topic for man, and much of the commentary is also politicized: views expressed in the sources cited are those of the authors, not of QUNO. We hope to update this resource on a regular basis and welcome feedback and recommendations for supplementary materials, although we do not make a commitment to include all materials submitted. Please write to quno@afsc.org

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On September 23rd, 2011 President Mahmoud Abbas delivered his address to the UN General Assembly.

[Read the full text of the speech.](#)

[Read the official application for full UN membership.](#)

Background

On September 23rd, 2011, Mahmoud Abbas made his speech to the United Nations General Assembly [formally requesting full UN membership status](#) as a state adhering to 1967 borders. [Read expert reactions to the speech.](#) Palestinian statehood was unilaterally declared by the Palestine National Council in 1988 and has been recognized by around 122 countries to date. In UN terms, [becoming a UN member state](#) requires a Security Council (SC) recommendation followed by a vote with a two-thirds majority (129 member states) in the General Assembly (GA). The [Israeli leadership opposes the idea](#) and the [US administration has indicated they will use their veto](#) to block the process in the SC. Should the Security Council reject the initial request for statehood, there are a number of other routes that the Palestinians could take to bolster their case, some of which are referenced below. For example, one alternative could be to request non-member state status at the UN (see Scenarios, below). The Palestinian Authority can also seek to bolster its case for statehood by gaining entrance to international bodies and organizations, as with its initiative to gain full membership in UNESCO (see Scenarios below).

This current initiative for UN recognition follows efforts to strengthen diplomatic relations, support the Palestinian private sector and implement institutional reforms. In April 2011, the [Ad Hoc Liaison Committee](#) and the [IMF](#) joined the [World Bank](#) in stating that the Palestinian Authority (PA) has the institutions and economic policies required of a well functioning state. The backdrop to these



developments is Prime Minister Salam Fayyad's two-year plan '[Ending the Occupation, Building the State](#)' (2009-2011), supported by the Quartet. The latest National Development Plan (2011-13) entitled 'Establishing the State, Building the Future' has also secured international backing.

At the UN, considerations of Palestinian statehood can be seen in the context of broader discussions of [statehood](#), legitimacy, and UN membership that have arisen in recent cases. Examples include Kosovo and South Sudan, and the recognition of Libya's rebel Transitional National Council as a sub-state entity.

An [op-ed](#) by President Abbas ran in the New York Times on 16 May 2011. It explains the timeliness and potential significance of UN recognition, and compares the fates of Palestine and Israel at the UN since 1948.

Scenarios

A number of alternative avenues to pursuing UN membership are being discussed in the public domain. These include:

- Palestinian leadership requesting that the GA upgrades the status for Palestine from a '[non-member entity](#)' to '[non-member state observer](#).'
- Passing a GA resolution recognizing a Palestinian state, which would not be binding but which could have political and symbolic implications.
- Palestinian leadership requesting the GA to reaffirm the 1947 [General Assembly Partition Plan Resolution 181](#), which called for the partition of British Mandate Palestine into a Jewish state and an Arab one.
- Deploying [Resolution 377, Uniting for Peace](#). Uniting for Peace is a rarely applied mechanism in which a two-thirds majority in the GA can potentially overrule the SC (and its veto) in certain circumstances. (See Specific Issues for more information).
- The GA referring aspects of the issue to the International Court of Justice (ICJ). (For further discussion see Specific Issues).
- A return to direct negotiations, with an agreed-upon timetable of one year to come up with a comprehensive settlement, and with facilitation and guidance provided by the Quartet powers.
- Gaining membership in UN bodies like the United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization (UNESCO). On 5 October, the Executive Committee of UNESCO voted in favor of putting the issue of Palestinian membership in the world heritage body. On 31 October the UNESCO General Assembly voted for full membership for the Palestinians with 107 states in favor.



Recent Developments

- On 28 September, the President of the Security Council [referred the statehood application](#) to the standing committee that deals with new member admissions. The proposal is currently stalled in the Security Council with a vote yet to take place, though [a draft report](#) indicates that the body was unable to reach a unanimous recommendation to the Security Council. Israel continues to reject the statehood bid outright, calling on the Palestinian leadership to return to direct negotiations as the only way forward.
 - On 31 October, Palestine received [full membership in UNESCO](#) (where it previously had observer status), with 107 member states voting in favor, among them Brazil, China, Russia, India, South Africa and France; 14 voted against (including the US, Canada, Germany and Holland) and 52 abstained, including Britain and Italy. Achieving full membership grants the Palestinians access to specialized UN agencies like the World Health Organization, the International Civil Aviation Organization, and the International Atomic Energy Agency. The [Palestinian flag was raised](#) at UNESCO headquarters on 13 December. Palestinian President Mahmoud Abbas attended the ceremony.
 - Immediately following the vote, the [United States withdrew its funding](#) from the organization, which comprised about one-fifth of the UNESCO budget. Legislation dating back to the 1990s requires the US to stop funding UNESCO, or any body or institution, in the event of its recognition of Palestine. Director General of UNESCO, Irina Bokova, [announced](#) drastic budget cuts to programs as a result, though some member states have pledged exceptional contributions, such as Indonesia and Gabon.
 - Earlier, on October 4th, Congress froze \$200 million in aid to the PA in opposition to the statehood bid, threatening to stop the progress of projects supported by USAID. The move was part of a larger push by US legislators to increase the transparency and accountability in the way the UN allocates its funding. Critics of the legislation have said that membership in international bodies, like UNESCO, is critical to US security interests and international relations. On 8 November, the House GOP unfroze \$200 million in funding. However, about \$192 million is still being blocked, in addition to the UNESCO-withheld funds.
 - Also following the UNESCO vote, Israel suspended some \$100 million in transfer of tax payments to the Palestinian Authority, acting on earlier threats. But after pressure from UNSG Ban Ki-Moon and the international community, Israel [recanted](#).
 - In a move highly criticized by the UN, Israel has [continued its settlement expansion](#) in East Jerusalem. On 12 December, the Israeli government granted final approval for the construction of 40 new homes in a settlement in the occupied West Bank. Building tenders have also been issued for settlement construction in Efrat and Maale Adumim settlement blocs in the West Bank, according to reports, which Israel has indicated that it wants to keep in a future peace deal.
 - The Quartet powers [met in Jerusalem](#) on 14 December, calling for a restart to negotiations between the sides. In light of Israel's ongoing settlement expansion in the West Bank and East Jerusalem, the PLO will reportedly ask the UNSC to denounce Israel's actions, and [send a delegation](#) to look into Israeli government infringements on Palestinian rights.
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- At a recent meeting in Cairo, Palestinian political parties Hamas and Fatah reportedly agreed on five central issues; establishing a Palestinian state along 1967 borders with East Jerusalem as its capital, preservation of the truce in the West Bank and Gaza to be upheld by peaceful resistance, holding elections in May 2012, formation of an independence technocratic cabinet, and making mutual, confidence-building gestures. President Abbas and Hamas leader Khaled Meshal agreed to form a joint government to supervise next year's elections (currently, Palestinian governance is divided into a Hamas government in Gaza, and a Fatah government in the West Bank). Representatives from all PLO factions will reportedly meet in Cairo on December 22 to discuss the elections committee, as well as the body that would be implemented to oversee the elections. Hamas and Islamic Jihad, which are not affiliates of the PLO, will also participate in the meeting.
- On 20 December, [182 member states voted for the Palestinian right to self-determination](#) in the General Assembly, according to Palestinian representative at the UN, Riyadh Mansour. Seven countries voted against and three abstained. The resolution calls for the establishment of an independent Palestinian state, and encourages all countries, and bodies and organizations like the UN to support the Palestinian people. It also affirms the need for continued peace talks between Israel and Palestine in order to achieve a just and lasting peace. Earlier in the month, the United Nations General Assembly [passed nine resolutions](#) related to Palestine. They are part of a set of 24 resolutions pertaining to human rights and decolonization, and came on the recommendations of the Special Political and Decolonization Committee. One of the resolutions calls on Israel to accept *de jure* applicability of the Convention in the Occupied Palestinian Territory, including East Jerusalem and other areas occupied by Israel since 1967, and urges it to comply with the Convention's provisions. It was adopted by a vote of 162 in favor to 7 against (Canada, Israel, Federated States of Micronesia, Israel, Marshall Islands, Nauru, Palau, the United States) with 4 abstentions (Cameroon, Côte d'Ivoire, Panama, and Vanuatu).

Broad Discussions

[Q+A: What comes next with Palestinian U.N. application?](#)

Reuters, 5 October 2011

This question and answer piece looks at the process for the statehood bid as it currently stands, awaiting determination by the UN Security Council's committee for new member deliberations. The piece discusses the general technical process of the committee, the expected timeframe, and possible results.

[BBC, 16 June 2011](#)

A broad introduction framed as questions and answers, covering the following issues: what is being asked about the process; whether outcomes would be symbolic or change facts on the ground; why it is happening now; how it differs from previous declarations; and who supports and opposes it.

[State-building and political change: Options for Palestine 2011](#)

Elizabeth Sellwood, New York University Centre on International Cooperation (CIC), 2011



CIC's substantive paper provides a comprehensive overview to the political options this September. It covers similar issues as the BBC pages but in more depth and with greater consideration of the political landscape. In particular, it examines how the UN bid fits into Prime Minister Salaam Fayyad's vision of a two-state solution and how it could affect the PA's legitimacy.

[UN General Assembly "Uniting for Palestine"](#)

Robbie Sabel, INSS Insight No. 251, April 2011

The National Institute for Security Studies (INSS) offers an Israeli perspective on some potential avenues for pursuing Palestinian statehood. Included in these are the Uniting for Peace resolution, and its feasibility; the General Assembly calling for a UN trusteeship to replace Israel in the West Bank and Gaza; and the International Court of Justice giving an advisory opinion affirming that the 1949 armistice lines are the boundaries of the Palestinian state.

What does **full membership** in the UN entail?

- The right to sponsor and vote on General Assembly resolutions
- The right to field candidates for key UN posts.
- Legitimacy as a state actor on the international stage

[Al Haq's Questions and Answers: Palestine's UN Initiatives and the Representation of the Palestinian People's Rights](#)

Al Haq, 15 September 2011

This document was released as a follow-up to [an earlier legal brief](#). The comprehensive paper summarizes the most recent developments regarding the statehood initiative. Written in a question and answer format, it goes on to discuss the technical parameters and procedures for statehood, rights and representation, and the status of the PLO, as well as legal implications.

[FAQs on UN Membership for and Recognition of the State of Palestine](#)

US Campaign to End the Israeli Occupation, June 2011

This paper describes the position of the US Campaign to End the Israeli Occupation, and answers questions about US policy and the US role in this initiative. It also briefly considers general historical and legal issues, and possible ramifications of the UN initiative.

[PA Statehood Gambit at U.N. Undermines Peace Efforts](#)

The American Israel Public Affairs Committee (AIPAC), 20 July 2011

This memo summarizes the main points of AIPAC's position that a statehood initiative at the UN will endanger peace negotiations. The first part of the document looks at major developments and arguments of the parties involved in the initiative's progress to date, while the second part discusses the implications that it could have for the peace efforts, which AIPAC asserts could be severe.

[Israel/Palestine](#)

Security Council Report, Update Report September 2011

This report from the UNSC outlines several of the key recent developments and events regarding the Israel-Palestine peace process and the statehood bid. The report also looks at the current and past status of Palestine at the UN.

[Road for Palestine Statehood – Recognitions and Admission](#)



[Negotiations Affairs Department of the PLO](#)

Released by the PLO, this document outlines the organization's perceived necessity of a Palestinian state separate from Israel. It asserts statehood as fulfilling international and UN regulations, and as the only option for sustainable peace. The document includes the 122 member states that recognize Palestinian independence, attesting that Palestinian self-determination is an inalienable right and thus an international responsibility to uphold.

[Palestinian push for full UN membership: Q & A](#)

The Telegraph, 15 September 2011

This broad Q & A looks at several questions regarding the statehood bid in light of Abbas' assertion that the PA will push forward for full membership. It addresses issues such as why membership is desired, what advantages and disadvantages it might bring, potential repercussions exacted by Israel or the United States, and some of the parameters outlined in the bid (such as adherence to 1967 borders).

[Going to the United Nations, Sanctions, and the Tick-tock of the Palestinian Spring](#)

Raja Khalidi, Jadaliyya, 12 September 2011

This piece looks at some of the historical context leading up to the statehood bid, and includes discussion of several broad debates and opinions surrounding the issue. Khalidi considers economic, social, political and legal factors that influence statehood, and provides references and links to a number of outside sources.

[Towards New Strategies for Palestinian National Liberation](#)

The Palestine Strategy Group

The PSG is an informal group of Palestinians representing a broad spectrum of social and political sectors. In its most recent initiative, the group presents several options for Palestinian leaders that could inform strategies regarding statehood. The document looks at scenarios that are and are not acceptable to many Palestinians, and discusses possible routes towards achieving those scenarios. The PSG emphasizes nonviolent popular resistance of Palestinians along the lines of the Tunisian and Egyptian revolutions that formed the Arab Spring.

[The UN and the Status of Palestine – Disentangling the Legal Issues](#)

John Cerone, American Society of International Law, 13 September 2011

This ASIL Insights piece looks more fully and analytically at the legal and technical arrangements of membership and participation in the United Nations system. More specifically, the author discusses these issues in relation to Palestine's current and desired status at the UN.



Specific Issues

Resolution 377, Uniting for Peace

Uniting for Peace presents a possible alternative to a deadlock in the Security Council. In cases of stalemate, and where there is a threat to international peace and security, the GA can pass (non-binding) resolutions with a two-thirds vote. It is not clear that this route is available for issues of UN membership issues however. A March 1950 [ICJ opinion](#)ⁱ stated that a SC majority with no veto was required on membership issues. However, this opinion pre-dates the Uniting for Peace resolution of November 1950.

See the [GA resolution of Uniting for Peace](#) for technical details, or for a scholarly description, read [Christian Tomuschat’s paper](#) on the resolution, published by the United Nations Audiovisual Library of International Law in 2008.

Theories and Legal Technicalities of Statehood

The process of recognizing a political entity (state or government) is characterized by competing theories. In practice, the decision appears to be at the discretion of other entities. For an overview of declarative and constitutive theories of statehood, see Worster’s paper, which also evaluates the application of these competing theories.

[Law, Politics, and the Conception of the State Recognition Theory](#)

William Thomas Worster, Boston University
International Law Journal, Vol 27:115, 2009

John Quigley provides a detailed legal analysis of Palestinian statehood in his book *The Statehood of Palestine: International Law in the Middle East Conflict* (Cambridge University Press, 2010). He advances the case of Palestinian statehood while critiquing the criteria for independence set out in the Montevideo Convention on the Rights and Duties of States. While it is unavailable online, Victor Kattan’s review summarizes the key points while appraising some aspects of Quigley’s argument.

[Review of The Statehood of Palestine: International Law in the Middle East Conflict, John Quigley, Cambridge University Press, 2010](#)

Non-member “Entity” vs. “State”

Non-member **entities** have:

- The right to participate in the general debate of the General Assembly
- Ability to "co-sponsor draft resolutions and decisions on issues of Palestinian and Middle East
- no voting rights

Non-member **states** have:

- More participatory power and authority than observer entities
- Free access to most meetings/documentation
- Access to the General Assembly
- Ability to receive and circulate communications from/to member states/other parties as official documents
- Full membership in UN agencies such as the World Health Organization, the child welfare agency UNICEF and the UNESCO
- no voting rights



Victor Kattan, Recent Books on International Law, Vol. 105, School of Oriental and African Studies, London, 2011

The Role of the International Court of Justice (ICJ) and International Criminal Court (ICC)

The ICJ has been involved in membership issues in the past (most recently in Kosovo in 2010). Strictly speaking, the ICJ only deals with member state disputes, but has already accepted jurisdiction in respect to certain Palestinian issues, such as the 2004 advisory opinion on the illegality of the Separation Wall. UN member states and specialized agencies could make a series of referrals to the ICJ that could help move along the case for Palestinian sovereignty. ICJ involvement increases the internationalization of the conflict as a legal matter, and would help enable the Palestinian leadership to pursue claims against Israel in human rights treaty bodies and the ICC.

The International Criminal Court (ICC) is currently considering whether it has jurisdiction to prosecute Israel for alleged crimes in the Gaza 2009 offensive. The ICC document below, from May 2010, compiles submissions that consider whether the ICC can recognize a Palestinian state and is therefore a forum open to Palestinian leadership. If the ICC does allow a suit to proceed, it may be implicitly recognizing Palestinian statehood.

[Summary of submissions on whether the declaration lodged by the Palestinian National Authority meets statutory requirements](#)

International Criminal Court, 3 May 2010 (See the Annex for hyperlinks to the submissions)

[The Palestine Problem: The Search for Statehood and the Benefits of International law](#)

Adam G. Yoffie, the Yale Journal of International Law, Spring 2011

This paper argues that an unconventional avenue in which the power of the ICJ and the ICC are used to promote Palestinian sovereignty exists and should be explored further. Yoffie contends that international law can be used as a 'step ladder' rather than a stumbling block to achieve Palestinian sovereignty. He also draws comparisons with Kosovo, East Timor and Israel.

[What the ICJ ruling on Kosovo could mean for Palestine](#)

Daniel Haboucha, Legal Frontiers, McGill's Blog on International Law, February 2010

This short article examines the ICJ advisory opinion that determined Kosovo's secession to be legal in relation to a Palestinian declaration of independence. It analyzes some of the similarities between the cases.

History of Palestinian Status at the United Nations

[This background paper](#) by the Observer Mission of Palestine to the UN provides a detailed account of 50 years of the status of Palestine at the UN (1948-1998).

The United Nations Information System on the Question of Palestine ([UNISPAL](#)) offers a collection of relevant documents on this topic.



The website of Israel's Ministry of Foreign Affairs provides a [chronology of Israel's foreign relations](#) for the years 1947-1974 and lists many of the UN resolutions also affecting its neighbor. The Permanent Mission of Israel to the UN also provides a brief historical account of [Israel's relationship with the UN](#).

Legal Arguments

[A recently released legal opinion](#) by Guy Goodwin-Gill, professor and member of the legal team representing Jordan's case against Israel in the ICJ, expresses concern over the [implications of the statehood bid for Palestinian refugee rights](#). Specifically, he argues that if a state were to displace the authority of the PLO, until now the sole legitimate representation of the Palestinians internationally and at the UN, it could disenfranchise millions of Palestinian refugees living outside its borders ([read the full pdf version](#)). A number of rebuttals and responses have followed the legal opinion:

- [Dr. Francis Boyle argues](#) that the PLO was set up as a provisional government for an eventual Palestinian state; as such, Palestinian refugees living outside its borders at the time of statehood will become citizens of the state of Palestine. In response to Goodwin-Gill's concern that statehood would violate the Palestine Charter, Boyle points out that the November 1988 Palestinian Declaration of Independence was approved by the PNC and did not violate these terms.
- [John Quigley points out](#) that Goodwin-Gill's opinion relates to possible implications of recognition of a Palestinian state, and not about gaining UN membership – he argues that the legal opinion thus has little relevance to the statehood bid process at the UN as it currently stands. The constitutional provisions that a Palestinian government would have to make for the rights of Palestinian refugees are, he says, an internal matter and not one to be determined at the international level. Regardless, it is important to continue to maintain institutional mechanisms that ensure and give voice to Palestinian refugee rights.
- Two attorneys from the Association of Civil Rights in Israel (ACRI) released [a legal analysis](#) of possible implications of Palestinian statehood for Israel, including the application of laws of occupation to Israel, how statehood would affect the obligations of Israel in the West Bank and Gaza, as well as the potential implications of Palestinians bringing a case against Israel to an international court of law.

Opinion Pieces

[Full transcript of interview with Palestinian professor Rashid Khalidi](#)

Chemi Shalev, Haaretz

5 December 2011

This extensive interview with Columbia University Professor and scholar Rashid Khalidi touches on a vast array of issues and themes related to Palestinian statehood, as well as the Arab Spring and the US administration's attitudes and policies towards the Middle East.



[Is Israel guilty of the crime of apartheid?](#)

Richard Falk, Al Jazeera

5 December 2011

This op-ed discusses the recent finding of the [Russell Tribunal on Palestine](#) that Israel is guilty of apartheid towards the Palestinians. The Tribunal was originally set up in order to investigate violations of international law by the Israeli government. The body is made up of citizens, including scholars, lawyers, and civil society representatives, among others. It takes place in four sessions, the latest of which occurred in South Africa in November. The fourth and final session will take place in the US in 2012. Falk seeks to fit the RToP into its broader context as a truth-finding mechanism.

[Letter to the UN Secretary General: A UN Resolution to Recognize a Palestinian State within the “1967 Borders” Would be Illegal](#)

Jerusalem Center for Public Affairs, May 2011

A letter to the UN Secretary General drafted by lawyers of the Legal Forum for Israel and the director of the Jerusalem Center for Public Affairs. It argues that a resolution declaring a Palestinian state and determining its borders is illegal, harmful to the Middle East peace process and abusive of the integrity of the UN.

[Online Debate over Palestinian statehood](#)

Al Jazeera, July 2011

Social media is playing a part in the discussions of a possible UN vote. Al Jazeera offers an introduction to the online debate taking place on Facebook, Twitter and YouTube.

[Behind the Headlines: The Dangers of Premature Recognition of a Palestinian State](#)

Israel Ministry of Foreign Affairs, 30 June 2011

This piece voices concern for any unilateral declaration of statehood, arguing that it undermines all internationally accepted frameworks for peace and will intensify the conflict. The MFA considers the initiative as implicitly recognizing a terrorist entity (Hamas) and as a way for the Palestinian leadership to continue to avoid recognizing Israel as the nation-state of the Jewish people.

[Articles, statements and reports on Unilateral Declaration/Premature Recognition of a Palestinian State](#)

The Israeli Ministry of Foreign Affairs has compiled a large number of articles and public statements on the subject

[US needs to support Palestinian state at UN](#)

MJ Rosenberg, Al Jazeera, 25 August 2011

Following up on [an earlier piece](#), Rosenberg argues that Palestinian statehood is an opportunity for both the United States and Israel to finally change up the political dynamic around the Israel-Palestine peace process. He urges the United States not to adhere solely to short-term campaign goals in supporting Israel, but rather look to the longer term by supporting the statehood bid.

[Joint Israeli Palestinian Poll](#)

Harry S. Truman Research Institute for the Advancement of Peace at the Hebrew University of Jerusalem and the Palestinian Center for Policy and Survey Research in Ramallah, June 2011



This survey reports Palestinian and Israeli public opinion regarding the statehood initiative, the chance of its success, and its implications. According to the poll, 65% of Palestinians surveyed support the September UN initiative to obtain recognition for their state, despite US assertions that it would be a mistake to push ahead with the bid. Additionally, almost 60% of Israelis think Israel should accept the decision if the UN recognizes a Palestinian state.

[The problem with Palestinian political leadership](#)

Ben White, The Guardian, 1 September 2011

In this piece, White analyzes the Palestinian Authority's leadership capabilities, surmising that there are several large obstacles standing in the way of an efficient Palestinian government, should the statehood bid succeed. These include the legitimacy deficit of Hamas and Fatah amongst the Palestinian people, as well as their perceived inability to implement creative strategies in decision-making (he further emphasizes the existent role of civil society groups in this capacity).

[How to think about the Palestine UN Vote](#)

Mark Leon Goldberg, UN Dispatch, 9 September 2011

Goldberg analyzes the reasoning behind trying to achieve statehood in order to bring Israel in front of the ICC, deciding that the actual capacity to do this would be limited.

[An Israeli case for a Palestinian state](#)

Yossi Alpher, The New York Times, 11 September 2011

Alpher looks to the statehood option as the best alternative to the failed peace negotiations to date. He believes that a viable state could be created to meet and fulfill both Palestinian and Israeli needs. In lieu of statehood, Alpher calls for a new, post-Oslo peace paradigm.

[Room for Debate: Can Israel survive without a Palestinian state?](#)

The New York Times, 15 September 2011

This ongoing discussion forum features the opinions of several well-regarded scholars, analysts, and writers. The authors address many key issues and themes within the debate around the statehood bid, from a variety of perspectives and backgrounds.

Gaza Think Tank- The PA's UN Statehood Bid

Film by Mohammed Fares Al Majdalawi, 23 September 2011

This film features a discussion of the statehood bid by Palestinian youth in Gaza, including issues of Palestinian representation, the Palestinian Diaspora, and the implications of the PA's decision to move forward with the bid. The youth express disagreement with the decision, and believe that the legitimacy that statehood would achieve is not worth the real-world implications that could result.

Why Palestine is Already a State (Parts One and Two)

Joe Lauria, The Huffington Post, 29 September 2011

In his two part piece, the author gives brief background to the statehood bid and discusses options for the PA if the proposal is vetoed in the UNSC – among these are utilizing the 'Uniting for Peace' resolution, or alternatively aiming to get membership in the ICJ (for more information on both of these options, see Specific Issues). Lauria points out that Palestine is, in effect, 'already a state' because it was recognized as such by some 100 countries after the 1988 Declaration of Independence.



[Answering Obama's UN Address – OpEd](#)

Stephen Zunes, Foreign Policy in Focus (FPF), 4 October 2011

Prominent academic and author Stephen Zunes analyzes President Obama's speech to the 66th session of the UN General Assembly. He uses passages from the speech to discuss US policies regarding Palestinian Statehood and the Arab Spring, as well as nuclear weapons and international cooperation. He finds that United States policies will have to change in order for "peace" as Obama proclaimed it to exist.

[Will the Palestinians Settle for a Rain-check at the United Nations?](#)

Tony Karon, Time blog, 22 September 2011

Karon discusses the likelihood of a Palestinian state being viable, in light of calls for a compromise settlement (by powers like France) and continued United States opposition to the proposal. The author argues that the decision to go for formal membership in front of the UNSC – as it stands, doomed to failure – actually inhibits the Palestinian desire for a state to be recognized by the international community.

[The UN application for the State of Palestine and the future of the PLO](#)

Omar Barghouti, Mondoweiss, 26 September 2011

Omar Barghouti is an independent Palestinian political analyst and writer. Similar to Zunes' piece on Obama's UN speech, Barghouti's opinion article analyzes the points made in President Abbas' speech to the United Nations. He criticizes the terms that Abbas outlined in the application for statehood, seeking to place them in a political, historical and social context, and raises the concern that the PA application includes no protection for the legitimacy of the PLO.

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Alex Spillius, The Telegraph, 22 September 2011

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[World Bank: Building the Palestinian State: Sustaining Growth, Institutions, and Service Delivery](#)
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Saed Bannoura, IMEMC, 6 October 2011

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[U.N. panel draft signals Palestinian U.N. bid doomed](#)

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[Palestinian flag flies at UNESCO to mark admission as new member](#)

UN News Center, 13 December 2011

[US pulls Unesco funding after Palestine is granted full membership](#)

Harriet Sherwood, The Guardian
31 October 2011

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