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The Palestine Liberation Organ.

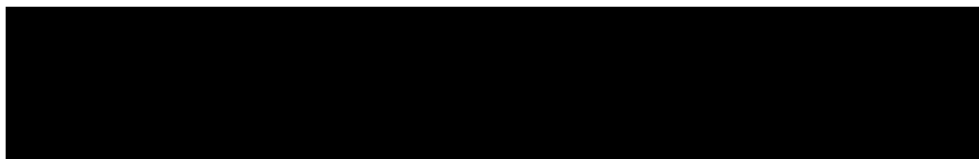
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*The Palestine Liberation Organization—*

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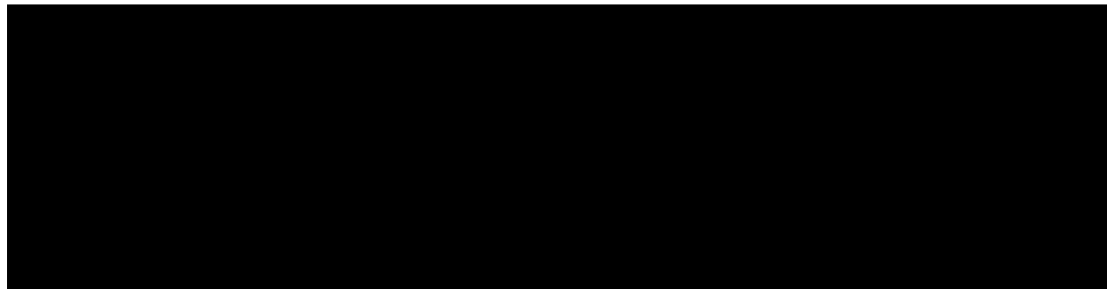
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## PREFACE



### Historical Background

Meeting in Jerusalem from 28 May to 2 June 1964, over 400 delegates from Palestinian communities throughout the Arab world voted to create the PLO as “. . . the only organization to represent the Palestinian people, to organize them and to speak in their name.” More than 10 years later, at the October 1974 Rabat Arab Summit Conference, the PLO won the endorsement of the assembled Heads of State as the sole legitimate representative of the Palestinian people. In the intervening years, it went through many changes as the result of almost perpetual feuding between factions of the diverse Palestinian community; it remains deeply divided on several issues.

By early 1969, control of the PLO, initially under a group of middle-class Palestinians with backgrounds in law, science and diplomacy, had passed into the hands of the enormously popular fedayeen (commando) groups. After Yasir 'Arafat was elected chairman of the PLO Executive Committee (PLO/EC) in 1969, the fedayeen groups, particularly Fatah, consolidated their hold.

At present, the PLO is led by a moderate wing composed of 'Arafat and his Fatah backers; Zuhayr Muhsin, head of the Syrian-supported Sa'iqa forces; and Nayif Hawatmah, secretary general of the Marxist Popular Democratic Front for the Liberation of Palestine (PDFLP). The use of the term “moderate” to describe this PLO faction is not meant to imply that the leaders or groups described have abandoned their radical pasts or disavowed terrorist activities. “Moderate” is used throughout this publication to describe those leaders who seek a Palestinian role in a negotiated peace settlement, who would probably agree to the establishment of a national authority in the West Bank-Gaza Strip area, and who privately admit that the PLO will even-

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tually have to come to some kind of terms with the State of Israel. Some men who are moderate in this sense are clearly radical in others: For example, Hawatmah is a leading Marxist ideologue and a strong Soviet supporter. Furthermore, there is no guarantee that this moderate stance will be maintained; the pressure of events could easily topple the Fatah-Sa'iqqa-PDFLP coalition and bring a resumption of terrorist activities.

Opposition to the moderate grouping comes from the Rejection Front, a coalition of activists of the Popular Front for the Liberation of Palestine (PFLP), the Arab Liberation Front (ALF) and the PFLP/General Command (PFLP/GC), aided by the Popular Struggle Front (PSF), which does not belong to the PLO. The Rejectionists are unwilling to settle for any goal short of the replacement of the State of Israel by a democratic, secular state, and they oppose any efforts to admit the PLO into the Middle East negotiating process.

### **PLO Structure**

The basic political structure of the PLO has remained the same since its creation. Lines of authority are not always clear. The location and subordination of some elements is often a matter of guesswork, and many structures are created and disbanded in short periods of time.

PLO headquarters were originally in Amman but were moved to Damascus after the bitter fighting between Jordanian army units and the fedayeen in 1971. Much of the PLO's information and research activity is undertaken in Beirut, where several of the leaders live. The meetings of the Palestine National Council (PNC) are usually held in Cairo, often at Arab League headquarters; the most recent meeting was in June 1974.

### **The Palestine National Council**

Theoretically the highest authority in the PLO, the PNC is composed of about 180 members, selected according to a set (specifics are currently unavailable) formula from among the guerrilla groups, the popular organizations and Palestinian communities in the Arab world. Delegates serve 3-year terms. PLO statutes call for the PNC to be popularly elected; in reality, however, delegates are appointed by their organizations or communities. This is at least in part because to hold elections among Palestinians living in countries that do not themselves permit elections might prove embarrassing.

The PNC originally had 100 members, but it was expanded to 115 in 1969, to 155 in 1971 and to its present size in 1973. About 85 members represent guerrilla groups; Fatah is dominant here as elsewhere in the PLO. The PNC is headed by a Speaker, Khalid al-Fahum, and is organized into committees.

Any important political step that the PLO takes must be endorsed by the PNC; should the PLO decide to attend the Geneva Conference, the PNC would probably have to approve such a move. The PNC must also approve any amendment to the PLO's constitution, the Palestine National Charter, by a two-thirds vote.

### **The Central Council**

Composed of 30 to 40 members (neither the exact number nor all the names of its members are known), the Central Council includes all members of the PLO/EC, as well as representatives of the fedayeen groups. The Central Council is theoretically the PLO's supreme authority when the PNC is not in session.

### **The Executive Committee**

The PLO/EC, whose members are selected by the PNC, is the PLO's highest executive authority. It is the actual center of power in the PLO, and its chairman is in effect the Palestinian chief of state. The PLO/EC has existed since 1964; from late 1970 to July 1971 it was absorbed by an ad hoc Central Committee created to enable the PLO to coordinate all efforts in its struggle with the Jordanian army; the committee was later dissolved.

The PLO/EC has varied in size since its creation: 14 members were selected in June 1974, but the PFLP representative withdrew in September. (The PFLP also withdrew from the Central Council but kept its seats, thought to be about 15, in the PNC.) The PLO/EC is organized into departments, headed by PLO/EC members, which correspond roughly to Cabinet positions.

#### *Political and International Affairs Department*

The Political and International Affairs Department, headed by Fatah member Faruq Qaddumi, is in effect the PLO's foreign ministry. Headquartered in Beirut, it also has a representative in Cairo, deputy director Sa'id Kamal. The Political Department probably directs the Higher Political Committee for Lebanon, which is responsible for the PLO's political relations with the Lebanese Government.

The department also supervises the offices that the PLO maintains abroad. The status of a PLO office in any given country is often confused: Many operate as information offices, some are subsumed under an overseas Arab League office, and others are simply self-proclaimed and grudgingly tolerated by the host country. The PLO does appear in the diplomatic lists of some countries, however—Uganda and the People's Republic of China are examples—and in early 1975 the PLO announced that the Indian Government had granted it full diplomatic status. In November 1974 the United Nations

granted it observer status. The PLO sends representatives to international conferences, usually as observers, and has a "designated representative" at UNESCO. Several countries have recently announced their willingness to accept PLO offices, and it is expected that the second half of 1975 will see an upsurge in the PLO's attempts to establish offices throughout the world. A list of PLO representatives abroad as of March 1975 appears on page xi.

#### *Military Department*

The PLO's Military Department, headed by Sa'iqa chief Zuhayr Muhsin, has long been plagued by feuding for control. Theoretically, it supervises the Palestine Liberation Army (PLA). In fact, the PLA and the PLO/EC have a long history of controversy, and the PLA has often acted contrary to the PLO's wishes.

The PLA is composed of three brigades—'Ain Jallut, Hittin and Qadisiyya. All are stationed in Arab countries and are tightly controlled by the host governments. The PLA founded a commando-type group called the Popular Liberation Forces in early 1968, but it was never very large.

Another military instrument of the PLO is the Popular Armed Struggle Command. Originally established to coordinate military policy among fedayeen groups, it is now confined mostly to military police duties in refugee camps. The General Command of the Palestine Revolution, headed by 'Arafat, is a coordinating body designed to control and integrate the activities of all fedayeen groups. Each of the six major fedayeen groups under the PLO (PFLP, PFLP/GC, Sa'iqa, ALF, Fatah and PDFLP) has its own military arm, independent of the PLA, but each is expected to coordinate military activity through the General Command.

#### *Popular Organizations Department*

The so-called "popular organizations" include labor unions and student groups with membership in Palestinian communities throughout the Middle East and Europe. The most prominent are the General Union of Palestine Students, which has offices in many European and Middle Eastern countries, and the General Union of Palestine Workers, headquartered in Damascus. The organizations also include the Writers and Journalists Union, women's groups and professional associations (such as engineers and doctors). The Popular Organizations Department was headed by Ahmad Yamani, PFLP representative on the PLO/EC, but he withdrew from the PLO/EC in September 1974 and has not been replaced.

#### *Information Department*

The PLO has at least two information arms. The "official spokesman," 'Abd ai-Muhsin Abu Mayzar, often gives the PLO/EC's reaction to political events and summarizes the outcome of PLO/EC and Central Council

meetings. The Information Department of the PLO/EC is headed by Yasir 'Abd Rabbu, PDFLP representative on the PLO/EC. The department apparently supervises the Unified Information Command, led by Fatah member Majid Abu Sharrar. It publishes a weekly, *Filistin al-Thawra*, and an English-language journal, *Palestine Information Bulletin*; and it includes the PLO news agency, Wafa, and the Voice of Palestine radio station located in Cairo. The individual guerrilla groups also publish information bulletins: *al-Hadaf* (PFLP), *Hurriyyah* (PDFLP), *al-Tha'ir al-Arabi* (ALF) and *Ilal al-Amman* (PFLP/GC).

#### *Other Bodies*

Several independent organizations report directly to the PLO/EC. The Palestine Planning Center, now under the direction of Nabil Sha'th, conducts in-depth studies on subjects of interest to the PLO leaders. It has published studies on Palestinian population and manpower and is now at work on a study of the economic and social viability of a West Bank state.

The Palestine National Fund (PNF) is the PLO's treasury. Contributions to the PLO come directly from Arab governments and through a variety of taxes on Palestinians living in Arab countries. Other sources of income include a tax on PLO employees and fundraising drives such as the Joint Palestine Appeal. The PNF director is a member of the PLO/EC.

Information on the structure and composition of other PLO departments is not available at present. Offices such as the Occupied Homelands Department and the Cultural and Educational Department have no clearly defined functions. Readers with information on these or other departments are encouraged to forward it to the Central Reference Service.



**ORGANIZATIONS MENTIONED IN THIS PUBLICATION**

- ALF ..... Arab Liberation Front
- ANM ..... Arab Nationalists Movement; a group founded by George Habbash and some fellow students at the American University of Beirut circa 1950. In late 1967 the group's paramilitary wing—the Vengeance Youth—merged with two other groups to become the PFLP. After a number of other splits, the PFLP stabilized under the leadership of Habbash.
- Fatah ..... Numerically the largest and politically the most influential of the resistance groups. The name is a reverse acronym for *Harakat Tahrir Filistin* (Palestine National Liberation Movement).
- National authority ..... Term used by PLO to indicate a possible Palestinian state or entity that would be set up on West Bank-Gaza Strip territory vacated by the Israelis. It is contrasted with “democratic, secular state”—the avowed goal of the PLO—which is taken to mean the dismantling of the State of Israel and its replacement by a state in which Muslims, Jews and Christians would have equal religious rights, but that would be run according to majority rule. Theoretically, the national authority is not an end in itself but a step toward the realization of the “democratic, secular state.”
- PDFLP ..... Popular Democratic Front for the Liberation of Palestine
- PFLP ..... Popular Front for the Liberation of Palestine
- PFLP/GC ..... Popular Front for the Liberation of Palestine/General Command.
- PLO ..... Palestine Liberation Organization
- PLO/EC ..... Palestine Liberation Organization/Executive Committee
- PNC ..... Palestine National Council
- PNF ..... Palestine National Front
- PSF ..... Popular Struggle Front (This group does not belong to the PLO)
- Rejection Front ..... A coalition of PSF, PFLP/GC, PFLP and ALF activists who oppose PLO negotiations of any kind with Israel.
- Sa'iqqa ..... The Ba'th Party of Syria representatives in the Palestine resistance. Supported and in some cases led by the Syrian Army, it is the second largest commando group.

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## PLO REPRESENTATIVES ABROAD (March 1975)

## AFRICA

Gambia	'Abd al-Hamid Azzam
Guinea (Conakry)	Abu Fahid
Senegal	'Abd al-Rahman Abassi
Tanzania	Fu'ad Bitar
Uganda	Khalid al-Shayk

## ASIA

India	Fathi 'Abd al-Hamid
Malaysia	Yusif 'Abd al-Karim Abu Hantash
Pakistan	'Ali Hajjaj
People's Republic of China	Munir Ibrahim Hamud

## EASTERN EUROPE\*

German Democratic Republic	Nabil Kulalat
Romania	'Imad 'Abdin
Yugoslavia	'Atif Abu Bakr

## NEAR EAST/NORTH AFRICA

Algeria	Ahmad Wafi
Bahrain/Qatar	Yasin al-Sharif
Egypt	Jamal Surani
Iraq	Vacant**
Kuwait	'Ali Yasin
Jordan	'Abd al-Latif Abu Jabrarah***
Lebanon	Shafiq al-Hut
Libya	Abu Tariq
Morocco	Abu Marwan
Saudi Arabia	Abu Hisham
Somalia	Ibrahim al-Khatib
Sudan	Khayr al-Din 'Abd al-Rahman
Syria	Mahmud al-Khalidi
Tunisia	Kamal al-Din al-Sarraaj
United Arab Emirates	Ibrahim al-Zarrad
Yemen Arab Republic	Faruq Yunis
Yemen, People's Democratic Republic of	****

\*On 24 August 1974 the PLO Political Department announced that the PLO would soon open offices in Czechoslovakia, Poland, Hungary and Bulgaria. No public announcement of the representatives assigned to these offices has yet been made.

\*\*Abu Nidal, PLO representative in Iraq, was suspended in late 1974 and has not been replaced.

\*\*\*Probably representative of the Occupied Homelands Department of the PLO/EC but referred as PLO representative in Jordan.

\*\*\*\*In February 1975 the PLO announced that an office in the People's Democratic Republic of Yemen would open soon.

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**WESTERN EUROPE**

France	'Izz al-Din al-Qalaq
Italy	Nimr Hammad
Netherlands	Mahmud Rabbani
Switzerland	Da'ud Barakat
United Kingdom	Sa'id Hammami

**WESTERN HEMISPHERE**

Cuba	Mansur Khadr
United Nations	Sa'adat Hasan*

\*Also heads PLO Information Office, New York City.

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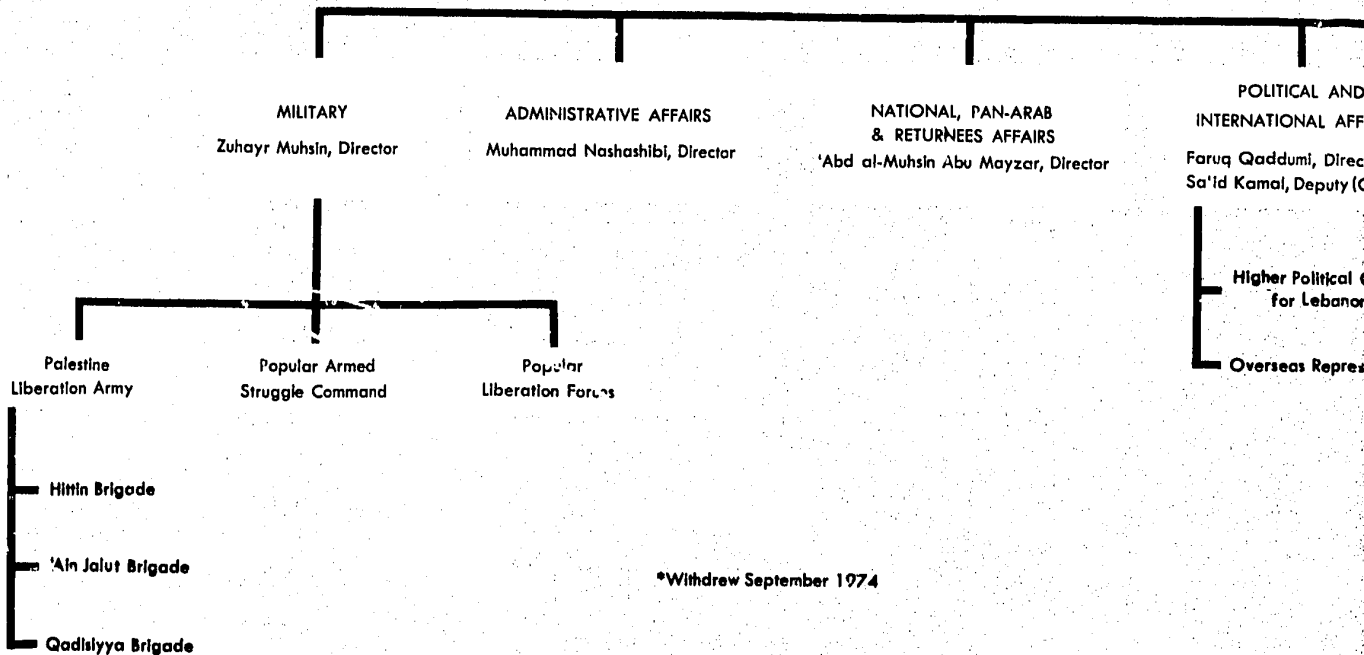
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GENERAL COMMAND  
OF THE PALESTINE REVOLUTION

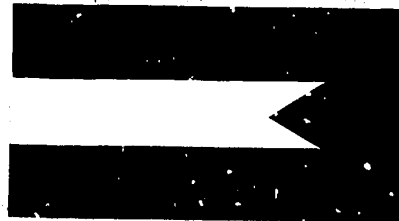
Yasir 'Arafat, Commander in chief

PALESTINE NATIONAL FUND  
Walid Qamhawi, Director

Yasir 'Arafat  
Faruq Qaddumi  
Zuhayr Muhsin  
Yasir 'Abd Rabbu  
Ahmad Yamani\*  
'Abd al-Wahhab Ka  
Talal Najj



PALESTINE LIBERATION ORGANIZATION



PALESTINE NATIONAL COUNCIL

Speaker: Khalid al-FAHUM

CENTRAL COUNCIL

EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE

PALESTINE PLANNING CENTER  
Dr. Nabil Sha'ath, Director

- Muhammad Nashashibi
- 'Abd al-Aziz Wajjih
- 'Abd al-Muhsin Abu Mayzar
- 'Abd al-Jawad Salah
- Walid Qamhawi
- Elia Khury
- Hamid Abu Sittah

POLITICAL AND  
DIPLOMACY AFFAIRS

Director  
Deputy (Cairo)

POPULAR ORGANIZATIONS

Ahmad Yamani, Director

CULTURAL AND EDUCATIONAL

'Abd al-Wahhab Kayyali, Director

OCCUPIED HOMELANDS

Hamid Abu Sittah, Director

INFORMATION

Yasir 'Abd Rabbu, Director

Political Committee  
Lebanon

Representatives

- General Union of Palestine Students
- General Union of Palestine Workers
- Palestine Writers and Journalists Union
- General Union of Palestine Women
- Palestine Orphans Trust
- Union of Palestinian Jurists
- Palestine Doctors League
- Palestine Artisans Organization

Palestine Red Crescent  
Dr. Fathi 'Arafat, Director

Ammun Office

Unified Information Command  
Majid Abu Sharrar

Wafa  
Ziad 'Abd al-Fattah

Filistin al-Thawra

Voice of Palestine

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