

Sample Position Paper

Topic 1: **The Question of Palestinian Refugees**

Country: **Palestinian National Authority (PNA)**

Committee: **Multilateral Middle East Peace Summit**

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After fifty years of turmoil in the Palestinian and Israeli territories, a number of problems have resulted from the conflict. One of the most severe of these problems is that of the over 4 million Palestinian refugees dispersed throughout the Middle East and the world, millions are still living in refugee camps. Many Palestinians feel that the refugees should be given the “right to return,” thus allowing them to repatriate back to their native land. On the other hand the Israeli position is that repatriation is not an option because it would have damaging impacts on the population of the small country and also create a significant Palestinian majority. For the Israelis this can pose two problems; first a question of sustainability, can the small country sustain such a substantial population increase. Second: Israeli authority in the land may be challenged by the presence of a large Palestinian population, thus threatening their control of power, and ultimately the fate of nation of Israel.

The Palestinian National Authority will stand strong on the issue of the “right to return” for all Palestinian refugees. It is our belief that it is the inalienable right of our people who have been expelled from their homeland, to return as Palestinian citizens. We are not alone in our belief that all Palestinian refugees should have the “right to return,” in fact many international organizations, such as Amnesty International recognize and support the same need. The “right to return” is not only agreed upon within international organizations, but more importantly was specifically outlined in the UN resolution 194 (1948). It may also be understood that all successful peace negotiations will be contingent upon the acceptance of this policy.

To respond to the first concern of the Israeli’s, the question of sustainability, all refugees that return to the area will return to the Palestinian territory. This makes the question of sustainability a question for the Palestinian National Authority not for the Israeli government. As for the second concern that Israeli sovereignty in the region would be threatened by the increased Palestinian population; this is also an unfounded concern. With the support of the United States, Israel undoubtedly proves that as long as the US possesses the world’s most powerful military, and declares absolute support for Israel, their existence will not be threatened. The “right to return” for all Palestinian refugees will in no way endanger the state of Israel. In fact if Israel makes the decision the concede this demand for peace, then the Palestinians may become more willing to sit at the table for further and more drastic peace concessions. One of the major points of anger for the Palestinian people is the plight of their refugees, and resolving this matter would ultimately be progressing towards the resolution of the greater problem of peace in the land.