

**The Central Elections Commission (CEC)
Palestine**

The Presidential Elections 2005

Guidebook

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A Welcome Letter from the CEC Chairman

On behalf of the Central Elections Commission (CEC), it gives me great pride to welcome you to Palestine as we prepare for a critical event in the history of the Palestinian people.



On Sunday, January 9th 2005, more than one million Palestinians are expected to head to polling stations in Jerusalem, the West Bank and the Gaza Strip, to elect the new president of the Palestinian National Authority. It is the second time in recent history (the first being in 1996) that the Palestinians get the chance to practice their civil and democratic rights to select their leader, and thus to have a say in the shaping of their destiny. Given the political history of Palestine and the hardships Palestinians have lived under in the last half century, the importance of the present elections cannot be overstated.

The present CEC was established in October 27, 2002 through a decree by the late President Arafat. It is an independent body that is responsible for the administration, conduct and supervision of Palestinian Presidential and Legislative elections. Thanks to the work of a team of dedicated and motivated staff, and the support of numerous international agencies, the CEC has already implemented a major drive to register eligible voters, conducted voter education campaigns, trained more than 17,500 supervisors and staff for polling and counting stations, coordinated the participation of thousands of local and international election observers, and secured that all logistical matters are in place and ready for Election Day.

Despite the difficult circumstances of working within the reality and constraints of a military occupation, the CEC remains determined to conduct free, fair and transparent elections. We see the role of international observers and media representatives as a dual one: first to monitor our elections and to ensure that they are being held in

accordance with internationally accepted standards, and second to monitor the activities of the occupying power so that our elections could be held without any harassment or intimidation.

The present booklet has been prepared by the CEC's Public Relations department. It contains informative material to guide you as you witness and observe the forthcoming elections. We hope that it will enhance your understanding of the present election process, the challenges that face the CEC and the key issues of concern for Palestinian voters. If you need further information please do visit our website at www.elections.ps.

Once again I welcome you to Palestine. Whether you are here as an international observer, a media representative or a guest, I extend to you my sincerest wishes for an exciting and rewarding experience, and hope that the present elections will herald a new era in the region, namely the establishment of a free Palestinian state – a state free from military occupation, a state based on democratic principles, but equally important a state that is based on respect for moral values and human dignity.

Dr. Hanna Nasir
Chairman, CEC

Section I:

Background on Palestine and Elections

1- A Brief History of Palestine

For thousands of years the geographical area known today as Palestine occupied a prominent place in human history and remained a site of special significance for different civilizations and religions. Throughout those years the indigenous people of the region endured empires and administrations imposed on them by outsiders, a situation that continues till today.

In more recent history Palestine was administered as a group of regions that were part of the territories under the control of the Ottoman Empire. The region of Jerusalem, however, maintained a measure of autonomy. By the mid 19th century, the area's population totaled around 500,000 Arab speakers, of which 60,000 were Christian, 20,000 Jewish and the rest Muslim. Around 50,000 Ottoman soldiers and administrators were also present in the area along with around 10,000 representatives of various European and American interests.

While urban Palestine was more 'modern' and more closely integrated with Western societies, it remained tied to, and was the link with, a more traditional rural Palestine. Throughout Palestine, family and clan identities provided most people's primary allegiances, and people of all religions and ethnic groups lived, for the most part, lives that were peacefully intertwined. This situation by and large continued until the unprecedented rupture in Palestinian society that occurred when Zionist militias used violence and intimidation to force most of the indigenous population from their homes and land in 1948.

The following are key events in Palestinian modern history:

a. The British Mandate (1917-1947)

With the demise of the Ottoman Empire at the close of the First World War, Palestine was one of several former Ottoman Arab territories to be administered by Great Britain under the quasi-colonial Mandates System of the League of Nations. All but one of those Mandated Territories became fully independent States, as anticipated. Palestine was the exception.

Despite the indigenous population's aspirations for independence, in 1917 Great Britain adopted a proposal from Theodor Herzl's World Zionist Organization, known as the Balfour Declaration, supporting the establishment of "a Jewish national home in Palestine".

The years 1922 to 1932 saw a growing tide of immigration to Palestine, with the Jewish population increasing from 83,970 to 192,137. Following Hitler's rise to power in 1933 a further 100,000 predominantly German and Eastern European immigrants arrived in the area. Land acquisitions, expropriations and Jewish nationalist aspirations began to threaten local aspirations for a Palestinian state. Tension between the indigenous population and the new wave of colonialists

increased. Palestinian demands for sovereignty and resistance to Jewish immigration led to clashes in the 1920s, a General Strike in 1936, and a rebellion in 1937.

Great Britain withdrew from Palestine in 1947, and passed responsibility for the problem to the United Nations. UN Resolution 181 advocated the partition of Palestine into two independent states. Although Jews owned less than 7% of the land and comprised only 30 percent of the population at that time, their state would be allocated 56.47% of Palestine, within which an estimated 407,000 Palestinians would continue to live. The Palestinians, who comprised 70% of the population, would be granted 43.53% of the land for their state. Jerusalem would be delegated the status of a *corpus separatum* and placed under the administration of the United Nations. The “Partition Plan” was rejected by the Palestinians, as well as other countries in the region, on the grounds that it condoned the displacement of a nation and violated the rights of the Palestinians to self-determination. The Jewish Agency accepted the resolution.

b. The 1948 War and the Palestinian Refugee Crisis (1947-1967)

The unilateral declaration of the State of Israel by the Jewish Agency on the 14th of May 1948, brought the armies of Egypt, Syria, Transjordan, Lebanon and Iraq into the areas allocated to the Palestinians in the Partition Plan, setting the scene for the 1948 war. By the end of the war, Israeli forces had defeated the Arab armies, gained control of 77.4% of Palestine, and created what would become one of the largest refugee populations in the world. Palestinians fled by force or in fear to the West Bank, Gaza Strip and neighboring Arab countries, following outrages such as that at Deir Yassin on 9th of April 1948, when Jewish forces invaded the Palestinian village and massacred 254 civilians.

Approximately 914,000 Palestinians were displaced from their land, that which was to become Israel, leading to a major humanitarian crisis. The remaining parts of Palestine, the West Bank and Gaza, were placed under Jordanian and Egyptian administration respectively. UN Resolution 194 in the General Assembly stipulated the right of return for all displaced Palestinians.

In 1964 the Palestinian Liberation Organization (PLO) was established as the representative body in exile for the Palestinian people. The PLO evolved into an umbrella organization for different Palestinian factions, playing a critical role in mobilizing Palestinians and generating international support. By 1968, the PLO had been dominated by Fateh (the Palestinian Liberation Movement), which had been founded by Yasser Arafat and other members in 1959.

c. The 1967 War and Israel’s Invasion of Lebanon (1967 – 1982)

A second war broke out on the 5th of June 1967, between Israel on one side and Egypt, Syria and Jordan, on the other. By the end of the war Israel had captured the Sinai Peninsula, the Golan Heights, the Gaza Strip, the West Bank and East Jerusalem. East Jerusalem was annexed and the humanitarian refugee crisis intensified with the

displacement of an additional half a million Palestinians. The UN Security Council passed Resolution 242 demanding that Israel withdraw from the territories it had occupied.

In an attempt to recuperate their territories from Israel, the Egyptians and Syrians attacked Israel in the 1973 War. UN Resolution 338 called for an immediate cease-fire, negotiations, and the implementation of UN Resolution 242.

On the 22nd of November, 1974 the inalienable rights of the Palestinian people to self-determination, national independence, sovereignty, and their right of return was restated by the General Assembly. The PLO was granted observer status in the UN General Assembly and in UN sponsored conventions.

In June 1982, the invasion of Lebanon was approved by the Israeli government with the stated aim of halting attacks on Israel from southern Lebanon. The Israeli army, however, marched on to Beirut with explicit mission of eradicating the PLO. Following intense fighting, a cease-fire was reached whereby the PLO agreed to withdraw from Lebanon on condition that the safety of Palestinian refugees remaining in Lebanon would be guaranteed. Nevertheless, over 2,750 refugees were slaughtered in the Sabra and Shatila refugee camps in Beirut. Ultimate responsibility for the atrocity was attributed to Ariel Sharon, the Israeli Defense Minister at the time.

d. The First Palestinian Uprising – The Intifada (1987 – 1991)

On the 9th of December 1987, four Palestinians were killed in Gaza when they were run over by an Israeli vehicle. This sparked the first *Intifada* or “shaking off”, a Palestinian civil uprising against the Israeli occupation. The Intifada was a mass movement involving hundreds of thousands of people, expressed in distinct forms of civil disobedience. It encompassed every segment of society including refugees, rural and urban sectors of the population, women and children. Women assumed a central role in the Intifada. Participation transcended class and gender lines and cemented the solidarity of the Palestinian people under occupation.

The Israeli government approved outrageous methods to quell the Intifada, including the breaking of bones, torture, house demolitions and deportations, all in violation of international laws. Over 1,500 Palestinians lost their lives and tens of thousands were injured. The Palestinian determination to persevere illustrated the depth and breadth of Palestinian aspirations for freedom.

e. The Madrid Conference and the Oslo Peace Accords (1991 – 2000)

The International Conference in Madrid in 1991 initiated direct negotiations between Israel and the Palestinians, and between Israel and the Arab states. The Declaration of Principles on Interim Self-Government/The Oslo Accords, were signed in Washington, D.C. between Yasser Arafat for the PLO and Yitzhak Rabin for Israel, on September 13, 1993. In the period between 1991 -1996, mutual recognition between Israel and the PLO, partial withdrawal of Israeli forces from

the occupied territories, the holding of Palestinian elections and the establishment of the Palestinian National Authority (PNA), took place. The Intifada ended and hope for a peaceful resolution built amongst the majority of the Palestinian people.

A period of relative calm prevailed between 1996 and 2000. However, the rate of new Israeli settlements increased rapidly, additional land was confiscated and Palestinian Jerusalemites were forced to relinquish their residency rights. The construction of settlements between 1993 and 2000 exceeded that of the first 23 years of occupation, and the demolition of Palestinian houses continued. The transitional period agreed in the Oslo declaration never reached a conclusion, while issues related to refugees, Jerusalem and sovereignty were not addressed. The expectation of peace deteriorated.

In July 2000, Prime Minister Barak and Chairman Arafat met with US President Clinton at Camp David, Maryland in an attempt to reach a compromise framework for a final status agreement. The summit was unsuccessful, primarily due to issues including sovereignty over Jerusalem, the right of return of Palestinian refugees, Palestinian control over their own borders, airspace and water resources, and Israel settlements in Palestinian territories.

f. The Second Palestinian Uprising – Intifada (2000)

The second Intifada broke out on September 28, 2000 following a provocative visit to the Al-Aqsa Mosque by then Israeli opposition leader Ariel Sharon, and a corps of armed security officers. Muslims consider the Al-Aqsa Mosque to be the third holiest site in Islam while Jews consider it to be the site of King Solomon's Temple. In clashes between local Palestinians and Israeli forces accompanying Sharon, seven Palestinians were killed and over 200 injured.

The next two years saw violent oppression by the Israeli forces of Palestinian resistance activities. Peace marches and other non-violent initiatives were met with tank- and gun-fire. Palestinians factions increasingly adopted armed resistance, including attacks on Israeli soldiers and settlements and suicide bombings within Israel. Addressing the Israeli parliament in October, 2001, Israeli Prime Minister Ariel Sharon, abandoned the Oslo Accords. Collective punishment including closure, torture and demolitions were carried out against Palestinian villages, towns and cities, as were targeted assassinations using Apache helicopters and F-16 warplanes.

In April 2002, the Israeli army reoccupied the West Bank, sealing off the Gaza Strip and imposed economic sanctions and curfews on Palestinian cities. The reinvasion devastated the Palestinian cities of Ramallah, Nablus and Jenin, destroying Palestinian infrastructure.

In April 2003, following the appointment of Mahmoud Abbas as the first Prime Minister of the Palestinian National Authority (PNA), the "Road Map" for peace was announced. The plan specified independent actions to be undertaken by Israel

and the Palestinian National Authority towards a peaceful resolution. The Road Map has not been implemented.

g. On-Going Acts of Violence

By December 2004, the Palestinian death toll during the 2nd Intifada reached 3,930, with over 28,300 injured. The Israeli death toll, civilians and soldiers, reached around 1000. A staggering 7,636 Palestinian homes were demolished by the Israeli army and much of Palestine's infrastructure and economy had been destroyed. The overwhelming majority of those affected have been refugees registered with the United Nations Relief and Works.

The devastating incursions by the Israeli army led to demands by the UN Commission on Human Rights that the government of Israel should comply with international human rights standards, in particular enforcing strict limits on the use of lethal force.

For more information please refer to:

United Nations Reports:

<http://www.un.org/unrwa/>

<http://www.un.org/Depts/dpa/qpal/>

MIFTAH: The Palestinian Initiative for the Promotion of Global Dialogue & Democracy

<http://www.miftah.org>

B'Tselem: The Israeli Information Center for Human Rights in the Occupied Territories.

<http://www.btselem.org>

2- Palestinian Political Structure

a. Antecedents

Under the Oslo Accords of 1993, an interim Palestinian self-governing structure was established in 1994, to provide government for a five-year transitional period towards Palestinian self-determination that would begin with Palestinian self-rule in the West Bank and the Gaza Strip. On January 20, 1996, the first Palestinian national elections were held to elect a Palestinian Legislative Council and a President of the Palestinian National Authority (PNA). However, a series of political disagreements, aggravated by continued Israeli colonization of the West Bank and Gaza and associated Israeli military and security activities, prevented a Palestinian state from coming into being, and contributed to the eruption of a second Intifada in late September 2000. Although substantially weakened by Israel's reoccupation of the West Bank and Gaza Strip in 2002, the Palestinian governing structure remains largely intact, though with considerably limited capacity at present.

b. Palestinian National Authority (PNA)

The Palestinian National Authority (PNA) is a combination of parliamentary and presidential systems, divided into executive and legislative bodies. The President of the PNA, together with the Government, holds the executive authority and the Palestinian Legislative Council (PLC) performs the legislative role. Voters directly elect the President of the PNA, and a parliament that represents multi-member legislative constituencies.

c. Government

The government of the PNA is the executive authority and autonomous governing body of the Palestinian people and the Palestinian controlled territories. The Government consists of a President elected for a five year term, and a cabinet of 26 ministers, led by the Prime Minister. The President appoints the cabinet, of whom a minimum of 80% must be elected members of the PLC. The PNA President may implement legislation and promulgate laws passed by the PLC. Since institution, the PNA's capacity to govern has been compromised by Israeli incursions, political assassinations and the arrest of its officials.

d. Palestinian Legislative Council (PLC)

The PLC is comprised of 88 elected members that include the President of the PNA as an ex-officio member of the council. Members represent

16 electoral districts each of which is entitled to a particular number of seats in the parliament corresponding primarily to population. The PLC's jurisdiction covers all domestic issues and sectors including economic affairs, education, and health care. It also approves the selection of the Palestinian Cabinet. The PLC General Secretariat, together with 11 committees, facilitates its daily work.

e. Palestine Liberation Organization (PLO)

The PLO was established in 1964 as an umbrella organization for all Palestinian factions. The PLO represents all Palestinians in the Diaspora, as well as those living in the West Bank, Gaza Strip, and East Jerusalem. The PLO's legislative body is the Palestinian National Council (PNC). Its Executive Committee, consisting of 18 members elected by the PNC, is the executive organ of the PLO, and undertakes leadership tasks between PNC sessions.

f. Palestinian National Council (PNC)

The Palestinian National Council (PNC) is the parliament-in-exile of the Palestinian people and the legislative body of the PLO since it adopted the Palestinian National Charter, also referred to as the Palestinian National Covenant, in May 1964. PNC membership includes all members of the PLC, and others representing the Diaspora. The Council holds session every two years, and resolutions are passed by simple majority.

(The graph below explains the relationship between the PLO and the PNA.)

Sources of Reference:

Center for Middle East Peace & Economic Cooperation

<http://www.centerpeace.org/>

Palestinian Academic Network

<http://www.planet.edu/>

PASSIA, Palestinian Academic Society for the Study of International Affairs

<http://www.passia.org>

PLO

All Palestinians
natural members



ESTABLISH- MENT

Established in 1964 in Jerusalem; recognized as sole legitimate representative of the Palestinian people on 14 Oct. 1974 by the UNGA (Res. 3210), and on 28 Oct. 1974 by the Arab League Rabat Summit.

MANDATE

Ultimate decision-making body and legislative authority; formulates policies; declared Palestinian independence on 15 Nov. 1988.

As sole legitimate representative of the Palestinian people superior to the PA and its term of reference.

PLO Charter, Art. 26: The PLO... is responsible for the Palestinian Arab people's movement in its struggle - to retrieve its homeland, liberate and return to it and exercise the right to self-determination in it - in all military, political, and financial fields and ... on the inter-Arab and international levels.

HEAD

President of the State of Palestine proclaimed on 15 Nov. 1988
(Yasser Arafat - elected by the PLO CC on 30 March 1989)

Chairman
Head of the Exec. Committee
(Arafat, since 1969)
(Abu Mazen, 2004)

EXECUTIVE

Executive Committee (18 members)
- acts as a cabinet
- assumes all PLO responsibilities, in accordance with the PNC policies and resolutions
- establishes and oversees PLO departments, incl. the Negotiations Affairs Department
- representing the Palestinian people
- supervises the PLO's subsidiary bodies
- issues regulations and instructions
- takes decisions and implements policies

supervises

Palestine Liberation Army (PLA)

Palestinian National Fund

Palestinian Red Crescent Society

LEGIS- LATIVE

PLO Central Council
- 130 members, incl 15 from the PLC
- established in 1973 by the PNC
- makes policy decisions when PNC not in session, acting as intermediary body between PNC & Exec. Committee
- presided over by the speaker of the PNC

Presidency Office
- President
- two Vice Pres.
- Secretary General

Palestinian National Council (PNC)
- parliament in-exile/PLO's supreme authority
- 669 members, currently mostly appointed by the Exec. Committee, and all 88 PLC members
- drafts PLO policy and programs

FOREIGN RELATIONS

Conducts foreign relations and related activities, mainly through its Political Department

OTHER REMARKS

- Does not include Hamas and Islamic Jihad!
- Obtained observer status by the UNGA in 1974 and access to the UNSC in 1975
- Changed its charter twice: in 1968 and 1998

PASSI

Palestinian Academic Society for t

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Elect if possible

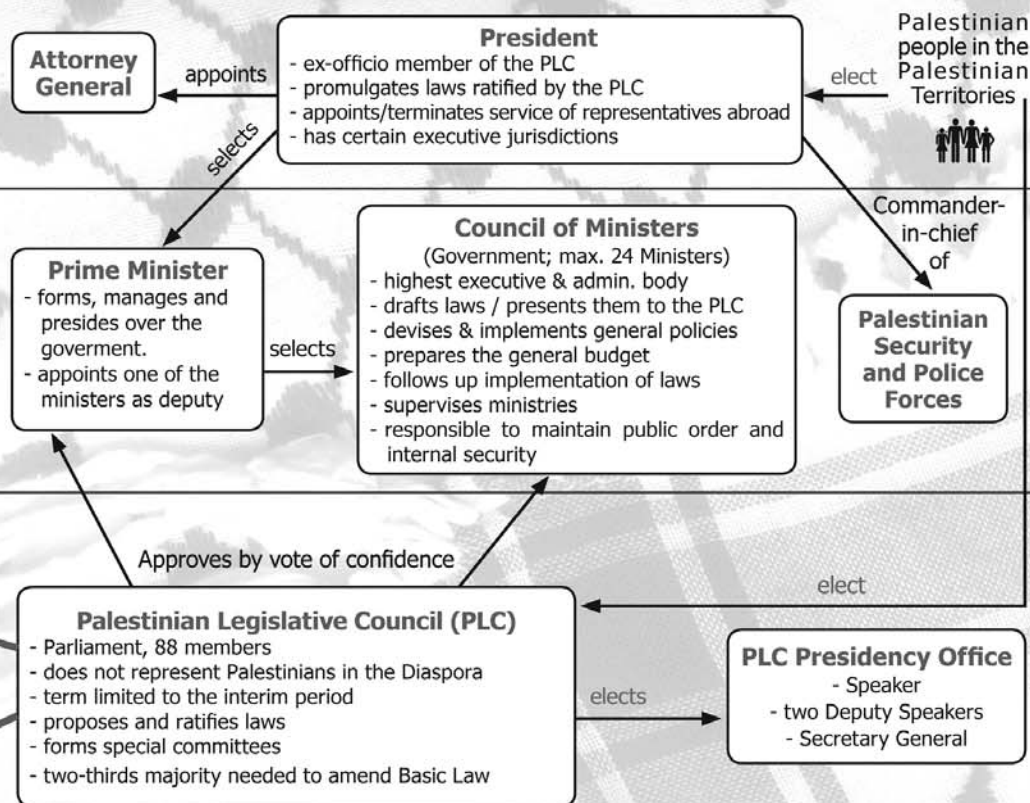
Members



PNA

Established on the basis of the Palestinian-Israeli Declaration of Principles on Interim Self-Government Authority (DoP), Washington DC, 13 Sept. 1993, under which it was given temporary civil responsibilities until final status negotiations, which were to take place after three years

Transitional institution with a restricted mandate, and powers limited by the Palestinian-Israeli agreements; legislation excludes issues left for the final status negotiations. No control over its borders, overall security, currency, fiscal or monetary policy, natural resources, or foreign policy. It did not determine citizenship and its trade is either with Israel or passed through its ports



Conducts foreign relations based on *de facto* realities since the establishment of Representative Offices mandated by foreign countries (issue to be permanently settled in final status negotiations)

- It is not allowed to combine between membership in the PLC's Presidency Office, the Presidency of the Executive Authority, and membership in the Cabinet, or any other government position

PASSIA

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December 2004

3 - The 1996 Presidential and Legislative Elections

The first Palestinian General Elections were held on January 20, 1996 in accordance with Article III of the Oslo Accords and the subsequent Palestinian Elections Law of 1995. The aforementioned Law adopts the electoral district system, block vote and open lists.

The Palestinian territories were divided into 16 electoral districts, 11 in the West Bank and 5 in the Gaza Strip. The following are key figures and results of the 1996 elections:

a. Voter Registration and Turnout

- Registered voters totaled 1,028,280.
- Voter turnout was 736,825 or 71.66% of total registered voters.
- The total valid votes was 715,966 or 97% of total cast votes.

b. Election Observers

The elections were observed by 519 International observers and more than 2000 local observers. In their final report observers deemed that the elections had been conducted in a free and democratic manner.

c. The Presidential Election

Two candidates competed for the presidency of the Palestinian National Authority: Mr. Yasser Arafat and Ms. Samiha Khalil. Mr. Arafat won the election with 88.2% of the votes.

d. The Legislative Elections

- 672 candidates, 370 from the West Bank and 302 from Gaza, competed for a seat in the Palestinian Legislative Council.
- Candidates included 25 women. Five won, constituting 5.7% of the 88 member PLC.

e. Allocation Of Seats Per District

PLC seats per district were allocated through the Presidential Decrees of the 14th, 28th, and 30th of December 1995. The seats were allocated as follows:

GAZA STRIP	
Gaza North	7
Gaza City	12 (of which 1 is a Christian seat)
Gaza Central/Dier El-Balah	5
Khan Younis	8
Rafah	5
Gaza Strip Total	37
WEST BANK	
Jerusalem	7 (of which 2 are Christian seats)
Jericho	1
Ramallah	7 (of which 1 is a Christian seat)
Bethlehem	4 (of which 2 are Christian seats)
Jenin	6
Hebron	10
Nablus	8 (of which 1 is for Samaritan Jews)
Tubas	1
Salfit	1
Tulkarem	4
Qalqilya	2
West Bank Total	51

f. Results of The 1996 Elections

Presidential Elections		Percentage of Votes
Mr. Yasser Arafat		88.2
Ms. Samiha Khalil		11.5

Legislative Council			88 Seats
Fatah (Palestine Liberation Movement)	Fatah	.	55
Independent Fatah	-	.	7
Independent Islamists	-	.	4
Independent Christians	-	.	3
Independents	-	.	15
Samaritans	-	.	1
Others	-	.	1
Vacant			2

4- Issues on the Palestinian Agenda

As Palestine remains under Israeli military occupation it is hard to separate Palestinian issues from the activities of the Israeli government and army. The following are issues that dominate Palestinian political discourse:

a. Refugees

The current number of Palestinian refugees living in refugee camps in the West Bank, the Gaza Strip, Jordan, Lebanon, Syria and elsewhere, is estimated to be 5.5 million. The confiscation of Palestinian land and property was not confined to the holdings of refugees who fled from the area that was to become Israel, but extended to 200,000 Palestinians who remained in 1948 and were displaced internally. The long series of extraordinary Israeli laws and regulations facilitating the acquisition of Palestinian land and property includes “The Land Acquisition Law,” “The Abandoned Areas Ordinance of 1949,” and “The Absentee Property Regulations of 1948”.

The UN General Assembly Resolution 194 stipulated that “Refugees wishing to return to their homes and live in peace with their neighbors should be permitted to do so at the earliest practicable date...compensation should be paid for the property of those choosing not to return”. The value of confiscated and demolished Palestinian property has been calculated at US \$209 billion. No compensation to refugees, however, has ever been paid or offered. The fate of the refugees remains unresolved and is a major stalemate in endeavors for peace.

b. Occupation & Settlements

The Fourth Geneva Convention (Art. 49) prohibits an occupying power from transferring citizens from its own territory to the occupied territory. Violation of this article is considered by the International Criminal Court as war crimes. Israeli governments since 1967, however, have built hundreds of settlements in Palestinian territories, and provided incentives for the arrival of hundreds of thousands of settlers to the occupied territories of Gaza and the West Bank.

According to a leading Israeli human rights organization, between 1993 and 2000, a relatively peaceful period in Israeli-Palestinian relations, the number of settlers in the West Bank doubled. In addition, the Israeli government has imposed on Palestinian territories racist and discriminatory legal systems which manipulate every aspect of Palestinian daily life under occupation, akin to those of apartheid South Africa. One Israeli group of 5000 settlers, for example, currently consumes about as much of the West Bank’s water resources as do 75% of the entire Palestinian West Bank population. Of the Gaza Strip’s 365 square kilometers, 7,500 Israeli settlers control 40% of the territory, enjoy full freedom of movement and use of the best agricultural land, while 1.3 million Palestinians cannot even subsist on the remaining land and are subject to massacres, curfews, restricted mobility, and ongoing reliance on international humanitarian assistance for their survival.

Heavily armed Israeli settlements threaten Palestinian livelihoods with extinction, quelling self-determination and freedom of movement, and turning Israel’s illegal confiscation of land and property into a daily reality for the indigenous population. As a consequence of the settlements, Israel has created facts on the ground, such as bypass roads and security zones, to construct what are effectively a series of Palestinian ‘Bantustans’ which compromise the ongoing endeavor to establish a viable Palestinian state.

c. Jerusalem

Palestinians consider East Jerusalem to be the capital of Palestine, while Israel regards Jerusalem as its “eternal capital”. In June 1967, Israel invaded, captured and annexed East Jerusalem, historically the home of a large and predominantly Palestinian Muslim population. The city’s borders were expanded from 6.5 km² to 70.5 km², to subsume lands from several West Bank villages. Today, the area constitutes the Greater Municipality of Jerusalem. As part of an effort to secure Jerusalem within the Jewish state, Israel has enforced demographic changes on

East Jerusalem's population, and constructed a series of settlements on the city's outskirts to make an effective enclave of the remaining Palestinian population. Palestinians in East Jerusalem have been practically severed from the rest of the West Bank, threatening the possibility of their integration into a Palestinian state.

d. The Separation Wall

In 2003 Israel began the construction of a series of walls, eight or more meters high, that extend the length of the West Bank and sprawl deep into occupied Palestinian territory. If completed, Israel's wall will divide Palestinian population centers from their adjacent agricultural land and water resources, isolate population centers from one another, restrict freedom of movement, and undermine an already stifled Palestinian economy, to a far greater extent than does the current occupation.

The wall will secure illegal settlements built on occupied land and effect the further confiscation of additional land surpassing the 1967 boundaries, in a fashion prohibited by both the Charter of the United Nations and the Fourth Geneva Convention.

The International Court of Justice (ICJ) recently ruled that the "construction of the wall and its associated regime are contrary to international law". The ICJ ruled that Israel must immediately cease construction of the Wall in all areas, dismantle parts already built, repeal any legislation or regulation relating to the Wall and make reparations for damages caused by construction of the Wall. The ICJ referred to the Wall's unilateral demarcation of a new border in the West Bank, seizure and destruction of property and the effective annexation of occupied lands. The Court fully disregards the relevance of Israel's claim that the Wall fulfills security or "self defense" purposes. The UN General Assembly also passed a resolution demanding Israel tear down the parts of the barrier already completed. Israel, however, is continuing with the construction of the wall.

e. Public Sector Reform

In recent years, prominent Palestinian personalities have intensified calls for wide spread reforms of the Palestinian public sector, especially the Palestinian National Authority. Their calls emphasized the need to refocus efforts on critical building blocks for the future Palestinian State such as institution building and good governance practices.

In response, the Palestinian National Authority in 2002 announced the 100-day Reform Plan. More recently, just a few weeks before his unexpected death, President Arafat announced a new list of reform priorities.

Palestinian governance NGOs have been instrumental in this effort and public sector reform is likely to continue to be a dominant issue in 2005.

Section II:

The 2005 Presidential Elections

1- The Call for Elections

The Palestinian National Authority called for national, legislative and presidential, elections as part of a 100-day Reform Plan initiated in the days prior to Israel's 2002 invasion.

In response, President Arafat inaugurated the Central Elections Commission (CEC) on October 27, 2002 as an independent electoral authority responsible for the preparation, administration and supervision of Palestinian elections, and appointed its commissioners. The CEC diligently assumed its role regarding the elections, establishing an electoral administration, a National Elections Office (NEO), and initiating operational planning.

On November 12th 2004, following the unexpected death of President Yasser Arafat, Mr. Raowhi Fattouh, the Acting Palestinian President, asked the CEC to commence preparations to conduct a Presidential election in 60 days as stipulated by the Palestinian Basic Law.

2- The Central Elections Commission (CEC)

The CEC is composed of nine commissioners drawn from the Palestinian judiciary, legal profession and academia, and is exempt from governmental or administrative authority in the exercise of its functions. Adhering to the provisions of the Election Law, the CEC has adopted procedures which will permit it to carry out elections in an impartial and transparent manner, monitor the electoral process and announce the results of the elections. The following is the operational framework of the CEC.

a. National Elections Office (NEO)

The NEO is the administrative and executive body of the CEC, focusing on the logistical and administrative plans necessary for the execution of the various phases of the electoral process. *The NEO comprises the CEC Headquarters, the Regional Office in the Gaza Strip, District Electoral Offices and Registration and Polling Centers.

b. CEC Headquarters

The CEC Headquarters (HQ), located in the city of Ramallah, develops and oversees plans for the overall management of the electoral process. It is divided into the four departments: Operations, Administration, Electoral Affairs and Public Relations.

c. The Regional Office

The Regional Office supervises the work of the District Electoral Offices and monitors the progress of electoral processes in the Gaza Strip.

d. District Electoral Offices

Each electoral district has a CEC District Electoral Office. These offices supervise the various phases of the electoral process including voter registration, polling, and counting in their respective electoral district.

e. The Centers

More than 1000 centers, each with up to 5 polling stations, are distributed throughout the electoral districts according to population estimates. Each center is responsible for the different phases of the electoral process in its neighborhood. Approximately 2,800 polling stations are distributed among the centers.

3 - Legal Framework and the Electoral System

a. The Basic Law

The Basic Law, as amended in 2003, serves as a precursor to the constitution of a future Palestinian state. As such, it establishes the foundation for a democratic, parliamentary, governing system in Palestine based on political and party pluralism. The law stipulates that the President of the Palestinian National Authority (PNA) shall be directly elected by the people and that the Palestinian Legislative Council (PLC), an elected legislative authority, shall have 88 members.

b. The Electoral System

The majoritarian plural electoral system defined as a variant of the block vote system, also referred to as limited vote, is used in Palestinian legislative elections. The block vote or limited vote is a “First Past the Post” voting system for multi-member districts, with multiple votes and open lists permitting the possibility of voting for candidates of different parties. In each constituency, voters can vote for as many candidates as there are seats to be filled and may use one or all votes as desired.

The Palestinian ballot is categorical, and does not allow for the expression of preferences. The candidates with the highest number of votes in each constituency are elected. Candidates can be nominated by “partisan entities” in any constituency and independent candidates are also allowed. In order to be registered as a “partisan entity”, the entity must submit a written application to the Ministry of Interior and the CEC.

c. Electoral Legislation

Palestinian elections are conducted according to the 1995 Election Law. The following are its key elements:

- The process of direct elections of the PLC and the President;
- The division of the Palestinian areas into 16 electoral districts, eleven in the West Bank and five in the Gaza Strip;
- A certain number of candidates representing each district based on population size and a straight-forward majority system , resulting in an 88-member Council;
- The provision of a quota for Christians and Samaritans;
- The consideration of the Palestinian territory of the West Bank and Gaza as a single constituency with regard to the election of the President;
- The appointment of an independent Central Elections Commission by the President to administer the elections process;
- The presence of a District Election Office (DEO) in each district;
- The presence of a Polling Center containing 1-5 Polling Stations in each polling area to administer the voting and counting;
- The right to vote of every Palestinian from the West Bank, Gaza Strip and Jerusalem who meets the requirements as established by the Law;
- The right to request inclusion in the electoral register by any Palestinian willing and able to vote according to the law;
- The availability of a claims and appeals process for each stage of the process. The presence of an Election Appeals Court, comprised of members of the judiciary as the supreme body and final instance of electoral appeals; and,
- The specification that all aspects of the process are to be monitored by national and international observers and agents of the Presidential and Legislative Council candidates.

Section III:

Electoral Preparations and Operations

Since inception, the CEC has dedicated its attention to institution building, human resource development and the implementation of systems and procedures necessary to meet the challenge of conducting free, fair and transparent elections throughout all electoral districts. The following are the key preparation tasks undertaken by the Commission.

1- The Data Entry Center (DEC)

One of the biggest projects undertaken by the CEC was to develop from scratch a data entry center incorporating a state of the art modern data entry system. The project began with the need to create customized data entry software that would enable the gathering and databasing of election information on eligible voters, partisan agents and candidates, local and international observers, list exhibitions, challenges and appeals.

Specifications for the software were established by a team of software programmers in coordination with all CEC departments to make sure the software was both user friendly and adequate for the CEC's needs. Advanced programming language was used to protect data from access or alteration by unauthorized individuals. Backup systems ensure that data is not lost.

Once the data entry system was implemented the CEC established the data entry center and conducted extensive staff training on its use. The following are the key features of the system and its procedures:

a. Voters List

The voters list component enables the entry of voters information and the processing of entries to avoid mistakes.

The program produces an initial 'voters list and challenges' form. Once challenges are received the program allows for the data to be accurately modified and then produces a final voters list. The program also performs statistical analysis to obtain data such as the percentage of youth or women who register.

b. Registration and Polling Centers List

The program allows for access to information on all polling and counting centers to assist in the performance appraisal of each center. The program is also used to enhance the commission's work in the areas of public relations, logistics and training. It also stores information on polling center employees to track attendance and improve accountability.

c. Observers, Partisan Agents and Candidates

Information on observers, partisan agents and candidates are used to facilitate the:

- Accreditation of observers, partisan agents and candidates.
- Printing of identification cards.
- Monitoring of candidates' eligibility.

- Preparation of ballot forms.
- Avoidance of duplications in the entries.
- Compilation of results.

d. Tracking System

The tracking system monitors applications and forms, captured in the CEC database, through the use of a double entry process. Each piece of data is entered twice in the system, each time by a randomly selected data entry officer. The system then detects inconsistencies and warns data entry supervisors. Erroneous entries are analyzed by the system to distinguish between intentional and unintentional mistakes.

The tracking system has also been utilized to monitor CEC warehouses. It registers the movement of election materials, such as ballot boxes. The system can be controlled from the CEC HQ or from the sub-warehouses; it also prepares reports to assist warehouse management.

2- Voter Registration

As mandated by Presidential Decree, the Central Elections Commission conducted a voter registration drive from September 4 to October 13, 2004, opening registration sites throughout the West Bank and Gaza Strip. The original timeframe for registration was 5 weeks. However, disruptions to the process as a result of curfews, checkpoints, and Israeli military raids (especially in the Gaza Strip), led the CEC to extend registration by one week.

Registrants were required to appear in person at a registration center within their locality as defined by their place of residence, unless otherwise indicated by special CEC categories (e.g. political prisoners in Israeli jails may be registered by proxy). Registrants temporarily residing outside their place of residence were allowed to remote register. They must, however, vote in their permanent place of residence.

Once in the registration center, registrants were required to show proof of nationality, age, and residence within the West Bank or Gaza Strip. The Palestinian ID card was the primary form of identification. For Palestinians living in East Jerusalem, the Jerusalem ID card was required for registration. In cases where the voter did not hold a Palestinian ID card or a Jerusalem ID card, other identity documents proving eligibility were accepted.

Upon registration, each person was issued a registration receipt showing proof of registration and indicating the place they should return to on polling day.

The initial voter registration period ended with the registration of 67% percent of eligible voters. (This percentage does not include the Jerusalem Electoral District due to the Israeli closures of registration centers in Jerusalem.) During this time, the CEC set up hundreds of temporary registration centers in high traffic areas and implemented a mobile registration process for the elderly and disabled who were unable to reach registration sites.

3 - Exhibition, Challenges & Additional Voter Registration

The Palestinian Election Law requires a public exhibition of the Preliminary Voters List, giving registered voters an opportunity to verify their own registration and challenge the registration of other individuals.

Following the announcement of an extraordinary election to replace the president, the Central Elections Commission announced a week long exhibition and challenge period along with additional voter registration between November 24 and December 1, 2004. The same sites used during voter registration in September and October 2004 were reopened for this purpose. The exhibition and challenge period resulted in a few unsubstantiated challenges to names on the voters list and approximately 15,000 requests for corrections to the list (misspelling of family names, etc). None of the registrant challenges were accepted by the CEC.

A Supplementary Preliminary Voters List with the names of the 33,000 people who registered in November was exhibited on December 19 & 20, 2004, in the sixteen district electoral offices.

The complete Final Voters List is exhibited at the CEC Headquarters in Ramallah and the Regional Office in Gaza. Each district office displays the complete list for its respective district.

Chart of Registrants by Electoral District:

Electoral District	No. Eligible Voters	Registrants as of 13 Oct.	Registrants between 24 Nov. and 1 Dec.	Total Registered Voters	Percentage
Jerusalem	197,052	184,058	1056	185,114	93.9%
Jenin	123,650	87,016	3393	90,409	73.1%
Tulkarim	81,695	60,896	1357	62,253	76.2%
Tubas	22,592	19,267	297	19,564	86.6%
Nablus	159,124	115,403	3559	118,962	74.8%
Qalqilya	45,364	29,858	574	30,432	67.1%
Salfit	30,067	23,447	448	23,895	79.5%
Ramallah & Al Bireh	134,912	88,249	3639	91,888	68.1%
Jericho	20,447	14,645	668	15,313	74.9%
Bethlehem	84,657	60,638	1126	61,764	73.0%
Hebron	252,847	161,016	2604	163,620	64.7%
North Gaza	125,422	72,610	3531	76,141	60.7%
Gaza	234,562	139,137	4290	143,427	61.1%
Deir Al Balah	86,708	62,599	1896	64,495	74.4%
Khan Younis	129,229	77,999	3467	81,466	63.0%
Rafah	79,296	52,293	1488	53,781	67.8%
Total	1,807,624	1,249,130	33,393	1,282,524	71.0%¹

1 If the estimated 180,000 Palestinians living abroad are removed from the pool of eligible voters, the percentage of registered eligible voters rises to nearly 78 percent.

4 - Civil Registry Voters

In December 2004 the Palestinian Legislative Council decreed that eligible voters who were not able to participate in the CEC voter registration drives will still be able to vote if they are listed on the Palestinian Civil Registry.

In accordance with this decree the CEC began planning for special polling stations for Civil Registry voters and processed the Civil Registry, obtained from the Ministry of Civil Affairs, in order to avoid repetition in voters' names.

5 - Candidate Nominations, Exhibition and Challenges

The nomination period for presidential candidates lasts for twelve days as dictated by Palestinian law. Unlike the nomination period for the Palestinian Legislative Council, the period of presidential candidate nomination is not extendable. The short nomination period allows for reasonable challenges and alterations to the candidates list and time for printing ballots.

Candidates for President can either be nominated by a political party or a coalition registered with the CEC. They can also apply as independent candidates by submitting a nomination with a list of at least 5,000 registered voters. All candidates must submit a deposit of US \$3,000 to the Ministry of Finance to be refunded if elected.

a. Requirements for Candidates

Candidates for Palestinian president must be:

- Palestinian;
- 35 years of age or older on the day of the vote;
- Registered to vote; and
- Have a valid address within the territory. A valid address includes a residential property which is owned, rented or otherwise legitimately occupied by the candidate.

Candidates must not be:

- A Minister of the Palestinian National Authority,
- Employed by the government or other public institution,
- President or a member of a municipal council,
- Employed by an international institution operating within the territory,
- A member of the security forces.

b. Exhibition and Challenges of Candidates List

Once the applications of candidates are reviewed by the CEC, a preliminary list is officially released for exhibition and challenge. After the publication of the preliminary candidates list, the CEC accepts challenges to the legitimacy of a candidate's nomination for a two-day period.

The Central Elections Commission received twelve nominations from presidential candidates, ten of which it approved and two of which were rejected. The two candidates were rejected because one was a member of the security forces and the other failed to pay the deposit. The CEC published the preliminary candidates list on Friday, Dec. 3 and officially opened the list to challenges between Dec. 4 & 6, 2004.

The CEC received two challenges from registered voters about the candidates list. One concerned the legitimacy of Hasan Khresheh, who later dropped out. The second questioned the legal status of the three political parties that nominated candidates: FATEH, the People's Party of Palestine, and the Democratic Front for the Liberation of Palestine. The challenger asserted that none of the parties had registered with the Ministry of Interior as required by law. Upon receiving verification from the Ministry of Interior that the parties were registered, the CEC dismissed the challenge. The challenger's appeal to the Elections Appeals Court was rejected.

6- Elections Appeals Court



A rejected candidate or challenger has legal recourse to the Elections Appeals Court. The President of the Palestinian Authority is responsible for appointing five judges to the Elections Appeals Court. These judges must be certified judges in Palestine and have at least ten years of judicial experience.

The court has sessions in Ramallah and Gaza City. Individuals can submit appeals to the court's offices, any of the district electoral offices, the CEC regional office in Gaza, or the CEC Headquarters in Ramallah. In order to render a routine decision, the president of the court and two other judges must be present. For decisions of special importance, the entire court must be in attendance. All proceedings before the Court are public.

An appeal must be submitted to the court within two days of a decision by the Central Elections Commission to reject a challenge or to remove a candidate from the list. Once an appeal has been filed, the Court must make a decision within five days. The appeal must be signed by a lawyer and a practicing lawyer must represent the individual appealing the CEC's decision to the Court. The CEC can be represented by any of its legal advisers.

7-Voter Education Campaigns



Conducting voter education and awareness activities is mandated by the Palestinian Election Law of 1995 which calls on relevant authorities to provide voters with the necessary registration and voting information.

Given that only one presidential and legislative election has been previously held in Palestine, the CEC places particular emphasis on voter education and awareness.

Voter education and awareness programs planned and implemented by the CEC voter education department are comprised of two phases: a pre-registration campaign and a pre- polling campaign.

a. Pre-registration Voter Education Campaign

An extensive pre-registration campaign was launched 18 days prior to the start of the registration period that began in September 2004. The campaign aimed to raise awareness of the registration process and to register as many eligible voters as possible.

Because no elections had taken place in eight years, and no date had been set for elections at the time of the registration drive, the CEC needed to motivate eligible voters to register.

Using a variety of creative communications tools the campaign sought to:

- Raise public awareness of the registration process and timeframe;
- Clarify who qualifies as an eligible voter;
- Convey that the registration process was fast and simple;
- List registration guidelines and locations; and,
- Emphasize registering to vote as an essential step in enabling individuals to fulfill their national duty to participate in the elections, and in building a better future for Palestine.

The CEC also crafted special messages to encourage the participation of women and youth.

To maximize the impact of the campaign, voter education activities were conducted in partnership with local councils, universities and other interested organizations. Those partners provided 2,500 volunteers who worked for one week throughout the electoral districts in the West Bank and Gaza Strip.

b. Pre-Polling Campaign

The pre-polling campaign was conducted on a smaller scale than the pre-registration campaign. The unexpected death of President Yasser Arafat and the subsequent announcement of an election date enhanced public discussions and debates on the election and increased the public's sensitization to voting issues.

Nonetheless, several pre-polling voter education activities were conducted. The campaign launched 14 days prior to Election Day aimed to:

- Motivate as many eligible voters as possible to go to the polls. Special emphasis was placed on Jerusalem voters due to their unique political situation.
- Inform eligible voters where to vote. Special attention was placed on raising awareness of additional polling centers established to accommodate voters – known as 'civil registry' voters – who were unable to register owing to Israeli interference, but who still wished to vote.
- Provide eligible voters with a step by step explanation of the voting process, explaining why voting ink will be used, and listing documents that eligible voters must present to participate.
- Educate eligible voters on how to complete ballots.
- Assure the public of the integrity of the election process and raise awareness of the steps taken by the CEC to ensure that elections are conducted in a free, fair and transparent manner.

c. Voter Education and Awareness Tools

In both campaigns the CEC voter education and awareness department used a variety of creative communications tools to reach the public. These included national and international print and advertising materials such as press releases, brochures, posters, banners, billboards and stickers. Television coverage and radio broadcasting were utilized together with public forums and conferences. The table below details the types and frequencies

Voter Education for Registration		Voter Education for Polling
TV	6 different spots on 21 local TV stations and the national TV channel. Each spot played 5 times per day.	3 different spots on 21 local stations and the national TV channel. Each spot played 10 times per day. Messages, particularly ones targeted at Jerusalem voters, played on Al Jazeera & Al Arabiyya.
Radio	12 different messages playing 10 times a day on 23 radio stations.	Same.
Print	Over 1 million pamphlets (containing a variety of messages including lists of registration centers, motivational messages, Q&A, and general explanation of reg. process).	----
Billboards & Banners	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 2000 square meters of billboard space • 400 Banners in areas without billbo 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 1750 square meters of billboard space • No banners because of wea
Posters	5 different posters – total of 300,000 produced	Limited scale in polling period
Interactive Voice Response (IVR)	The system called every home number in Palestine and delivered a recorded message.	---
Promotional Items	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 500,000 plastic bags distributed at shops and supermarkets • 65,000 napkin boxes for houses, taxis, & restaurants • 250,000 stickers 	----



8 - Observer Accreditation

The Palestinian Election Law of 1995 makes specific provisions for international and domestic observation of national elections. In keeping with the law, the Central Elections Commission (CEC) accredits three types of observers: domestic observers, international observers, and political party or candidate agents. Observers are free to observe all aspects of the electoral process.

The CEC values electoral observation as an important part of the electoral process and recognizes the international standards that must be fulfilled by electoral observation organizations and members. To this end, the CEC issued the Code of Conduct for Local and International Observers. The Code of Conduct, included later in this handbook, lays out the principles and standards of electoral observation, observers' rights, and observers' duties.

As with the local and international observers, partisan and candidate agents are free to observe all phases of the electoral operations. Agents monitor the electoral process, alerting electoral officials and their partisan entity to any unfair practices or irregularities in the electoral procedures. Their duties and responsibilities are governed by a separate code of conduct: Partisan Entity and Candidate Agent Code of Conduct. Despite their partisan affiliations, agents must abide by standards of observation and refrain from influencing election staff or voters.

a. Registration Period Observation

- Domestic Observers representing 83 Palestinian Institutions: 2,600
- International Observers representing 3 observation entities: 19
- Political Party Agents representing 10 Palestinian Partisan entities: 4,103
- Total Number of Observers and Agents: 7000 +

b. Preparations and Polling Period Observation (including numbers from registration)

- Domestic Observers representing 200+ Palestinian Institutions: 6,655
- International Observers representing 40+ observation entities: 441
- Political Party Agents representing 13 Palestinian Partisan entities: 12,139
- Total Number of Observers and Agents: 19,235

These numbers are current as of 27 December 2004.

9 - Polling Centers, Ballot Boxes and Election Kits

With the Palestinian Legislative Council's accreditation of the Palestinian Civil Registry as a valid list of eligible voters, the CEC will operate two types of polling centers with different eligible voter lists and different requirements for identification.

a. Polling Centers for Registered Voters

The process for registered voters is simple: registered voters vote where they registered. If citizens registered at a temporary registration site, they simultaneously chose a permanent polling site within their locality to vote at. The one exception is for remote registrants who registered in a different city than the one they intend to vote in. Remote registrants also have a receipt from registration indicating the location of their polling center. A registered voter must present proof of identity.

b. Polling Centers for Voters on the Civil Registry

The CEC will establish a varying number of Civil Registry Centers in every electoral district. The number of Civil Registry Centers in each district is determined by population size. In order to compile a functional list of civil registry voters, the Central Elections Commission removed all registered voters from the civil registry and broke the remainder down into lists corresponding to the CEC's electoral districts.

In localities with multiple civil registry centers, the civil registry list has been divided alphabetically by family name so that each Civil Registry Center will have a different section of that electoral district's civil registry list. No name will appear in more than one civil registry center.

The number of polling stations in each Civil Registry Center will vary given the difficulties faced by the CEC to accurately predict the number of citizens that will turn out for the vote. The civil registry center will confirm a citizen's identity based on the presentation of the Palestinian ID card only: no other form of identification is acceptable.

c. Polling Centers in Jerusalem

The Central Elections Commission opened six registration centers in East Jerusalem on September 4, 2004. After a period of intense harassment by Israeli authorities, the Israeli government forcibly closed all registration centers on September 13, 2004. As a result, approximately 200,000 eligible voters in the Jerusalem district were unable to register. The highly contested status of East Jerusalem means that the CEC has to approach elections there differently than in the West Bank and Gaza Strip.

The CEC continues to coordinate with Palestinian Authorities to secure the right of Palestinian residents of Jerusalem to participate in the presidential elections. As of December 27, 2004 the CEC has only received a vague outline of a Palestinian-Israeli agreement that stipulates that voting arrangements in Jerusalem will follow the framework adopted for the 1996 Palestinian elections.

d. Ballot Boxes

Ballot boxes, generously donated by the Danish Government, were delivered to CEC offices in December 2004. The boxes are semi-transparent to allow polling station staff to see the ballot forms inside yet not be able to read their contents. The number of boxes delivered is sufficient to meet the needs of the estimated 2800 polling stations spread across 16 electoral districts.

e. Election Kits

The Election Kits comprise several components some of which are described below (see the section below “Polling and Counting Procedures” for list of all components). The components are packaged inside the ballot boxes for ease of distribution.

Ballots

The Central Elections Commission imported ballot paper from Spain, and has stored it in a secure warehouse in Ramallah. The CEC has taken measures to prevent the production of fraudulent ballots including using ballots with a unique watermark, irregular paper size, and an undisclosed ballot design.

Election Ink

After the accreditation of the civil registry list, the CEC decided to use ink as a protection against voter fraud. Every voter (registered by the CEC or on the civil registry list) with the exception of Jerusalem voters, will be marked with visible, indelible ink. The ink cannot be removed for at least twenty-four hours.

f. Polling and Counting Station Staff Training

The CEC set up an extensive training program for supervisors and officials who will staff the Polling and Counting Centers in the West Bank and Gaza. The training process was carried out in two phases:

- **Phase 1** (Dec 18th -23rd, 2004): Six workshops trained 300 Polling and Counting Center supervisors of whom 200 are assigned to the West Bank and 100 to the Gaza Strip.
- **Phase 2** (Dec 29th, 2004 – Jan 3rd, 2005): Workshops administered in 155 training sites throughout the West Bank and Gaza trained 17,322 Polling and Counting Center staff members.

Preparations for voting day required an extensive technical and logistical effort to ensure the integrity, accuracy and transparency of the election process. Training workshops educate supervisors and staff members on:

- Polling and counting procedures, rules and regulations;
- Completing presidential election forms;
- The use of voting ink;
- Handling special cases.

Supervisors and staff are also trained on how to communicate with different election stakeholders including:

- The voting public;
- Representatives of political parties;
- Independent candidates;
- Local and international observers;
- Local and international media representatives.

10- Polling and Counting Procedures

a. Polling Centers

- Is the same location that was used for voter registration.
- Can have up to 5 polling stations within each center.
- Where the polling center is a school, a separate classroom is used for each polling station.
- Polling officials report to the polling station between 6:00 AM and 6:30 AM to set up the polling station.
- A polling station is: a table at which polling officials sit to issue ballots to voters; a table with a polling booth for secret voting; and a table for the ballot box.

b. Polling Center Staff

Each polling station has five officials:

- Presiding officer – responsible for set-up, supervision of staff and the count.
- Identification officer – verifies voter registration, crosses off names on voters list, and applies ink.
- Ballot paper officer – stamps ballots and issues them to voters and directs voters to polling booth.
- Ballot box controller – ensures voters deposit ballot, and only ballot, into ballot box.
- Queue controller – controls the flow of voters into the polling station.

Other persons who may be present at a polling station include:

- Other polling station officials.
- Voters.
- Candidate/party representatives and/or agents.
- Domestic and international observers.
- Media representatives.
- Security personnel may enter the polling station at the request of the presiding officer.

c. Election Materials

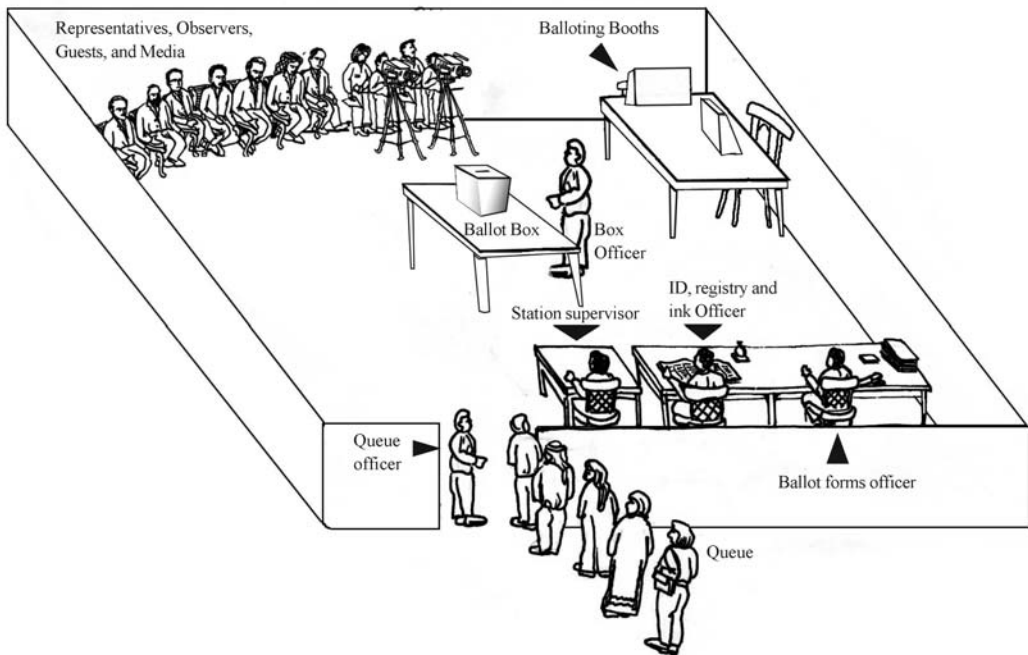
- Ballot papers; sequentially numbered, stitched in packs of 100 and bundled in packages of 700.
- Ballot box; semi-transparent and sealed with plastic seals.
- Polling booths; three per polling station (two plus a spare).
- Final voters list; provided for the specific polling station.
- Visible ink; for application to the voter's thumb.
- Envelopes to package ballots that have been counted.
- General materials and supplies.

d. Voting Process

- On Election Day polling station will open at 7 AM and close at 7 PM.
- If there is no line at the polling station, the queue controller will direct the voter to the table of polling officials.
- The voter's identification is checked and name located on the voters list.
- The voter's name is crossed off in the voters list and thumb inked using a brush. The CEC has decided to use electoral ink in order to avoid duplication in voting. Polling station staff will place the ink on the thumb of each voter just before the voter is handed his/her ballot. The ink is specially made so that it cannot be removed for at least 24 hours. The ink has been presented to representatives of all candidates to allow them to examine it.



- The ballot paper official stamps the back of a ballot paper, issues it to the voter, instructs the voter to fold the ballot once he/she has filled it, and directs the voter to the polling booth.
- The voter marks the ballot for one candidate by marking a cross (X) in the box beside the candidate of choice and folds over the ballot paper to conceal the voter's mark.
- The voter leaves the polling booth, shows the stamp on the back of the ballot paper to the ballot box controller, deposits the ballot into the ballot box, and promptly leaves the polling center.



e. Special Circumstances

- A disabled, infirm or illiterate voter may be assisted to vote by an elector who is trusted by the voter.
- If a voter's name is already crossed off in the voter's list the voter will not be allowed to vote.
- If the voter has a registration receipt but the name is not in the voters list, the voter will not be allowed to vote at that polling station. The voter may be directed to the Civil Registry voting center.
- There is no proxy voting.
- If the voter cannot enter the polling center, the voter cannot vote.
- There is no voting in prisons.
- There are no mobile ballot boxes.

f. Counting Procedures

- If at 7 PM there is a queue of voters, the queue controller will mark the back of the queue and all voters in the queue at that time will be allowed to vote, but no one else may join the queue.
- When the last voter has voted the ballot box will be sealed.
- The presiding officer will initiate a reconciliation of the ballot papers issued, ballot papers used and unused, and voters' names struck off the voters list as having voted.
- Ballot counting will take place in front of local and international election observers, candidates' representatives and media.
- The ballot box will be opened, ballots unfolded, counted and stacked in bundles of 50 by the polling officials working in teams of two.
- The presiding officer will determine for whom the vote is cast or declare the vote invalid, and show the face of the ballot to observers.
- A second official will place the ballot in the pile of ballots for that candidate.
- A third official will record the vote on a tally sheet and a fourth polling official will record the vote on a board or sheet for all observers to see.
- When all of the ballots have been counted the results will be announced.
- The decision of the presiding officer is final but an official challenge can be filed with the presiding officer and reviewed later by a higher authority.
- The results protocol will be completed, all election materials packaged and placed in the ballot box.
- The original protocol and one copy will be placed in a tamper-evident bag. A second copy of the protocol will be placed in another tamper-evident bag. The third copy will be posted on the door of the polling station.
- All materials will be delivered to the district electoral office by the presiding officer.
- The district electoral officer will open the tamper-evident bag containing the second copy of the results protocol and fax the document to the Central Election Commission.
- The district electoral officer will dispatch the tamper-evident bag containing the original results protocol and first copy to the Central Election Commission

11- Logistics: Challenges and Solutions

The essential objective of logistics is to deliver the correct items (people or electoral materials), to the correct location, at the correct time, and within budget. The generosity of the international donor community means there are fewer budgetary constraints on the conduct of elections in Palestine at this time than might otherwise be expected.

Palestine, however, remains under Israeli military and the CEC had to register voters, implement voter education programs, guarantee equal opportunity for all

candidates and hold the presidential elections **under very difficult** circumstances. The following are a few of the challenges that the CEC has had to deal with:

a. Road Closures

The Palestinian population is continuously subjected to checkpoints, roadblocks, road gates and other physical barriers that impede freedom of movement. A few barriers are not permanently closed, allowing limited mobility for Palestinians that depend largely on the whim of Israeli security forces at any particular time. This limited or complete lack of mobility has been taken into account in the logistics process.

b. Individual Permits Allowing Freedom of Movement

Freedom of movement within one's own country, other than in exceptional circumstances, is generally accepted as a basic right. Nonetheless, the Israeli authorities impose strict limitations regarding which Palestinians can move within their own country, where they can go and, frequently, when and how often. The extent of movement or lack thereof is officially determined by an ID card and in particular, by the color of the ID card. Those with an ID card of a certain color can move relatively freely and those with ID cards of another color are restricted to specific towns or localities. However, Palestinians have little recourse if denied passage, regardless of the ID cards they hold.

c. The Road Network

Palestine has two road networks. The more efficient and modern roads are for use solely by Israelis. As the two networks are not formally signposted, it is difficult for a foreigner to identify them. The discrimination that restricts Palestinians from using many roads, compounded by the Israeli government forbidding their travel to other cities by car², was also taken into account during logistics preparations.

d. The Separation Wall

Israel is building a series of walls that will further fragment the Palestinian community. In the short term the construction has had major disruptive effects on the lives of Palestinians, limiting movement of goods and people. In the context of the electoral process, the Separation Wall, by severing villages from other parts of Palestine, restricts constituents' access to their registered polling place. In addition ongoing home demolitions have meant that many registered voters no longer reside at the same address, or in some cases districts, indicated on the voters list.

2 Palestinians cannot travel by car between locations in the West Bank and locations in Gaza

e. Gaza

In terms of logistics, Gaza presents the following problems:

- External: The highly restricted number of Israeli-controlled access points to Gaza are each amenable to only particular kinds of traffic – Erez (VIPs, Diplomats, foreigners with passes, other foot passengers with passes); Karni (most freight); Sufa (building materials) and Rafah (limited international crossing to Egypt).
- Internal: Permanent road blocks at the Abu Holi Junction cuts the only (Palestinian) north/south access. In addition, numerous temporary road blocks are often manned at very short notice.
- Gaza poses a challenge because it can be easily severed from the outside world, and/or divided into small internal segments for an extended period, causing difficulty for polling and counting and election staff mobility.

f. Central Elections Commission (CEC) Solutions

The overriding objective of the CEC is to facilitate registration and the voting process for all eligible Palestinians. To this end, the CEC has streamlined a planning approach that can adjust quickly to unforeseen events. The approach delegates a large part of the operational initiative for the completion of logistical and electoral tasks to the district level, where plans are made that reflect local circumstances and knowledge, and inspired reactions to current events. For example, local employees are not adverse to using donkeys or human porters to distribute and collect electoral materials when circumstances mean more conventional distribution methods are unavailable.

In December 2004 the CEC, in coordination with the Ministry of Civil Affairs, concentrated its efforts to provide the seven presidential candidates and accompanying staff with special permits from Israeli authorities. These permits guarantee candidates and their staff the right to move between the West Bank and the Gaza Strip for canvassing purposes during the electoral campaigns.

As of December 27th 2004, 2 days after the beginning of the campaigning period, only 4 candidates received special permits and of 35 permit requests for candidates' companions only 2 were approved. The lack of freedom of movement for candidates constitutes a serious breach of the principle of equal opportunity.

Section IV:

The 2005 Presidential Candidates

1- The Candidates

At the end of the candidate registration and withdrawal period, seven eligible candidates remained. The following brief biographies of the 2005 presidential candidates, listed in the order in which they will appear on the ballot, were written by each candidate's representatives.

a. Dr. Mustafa Barghouthi (Independent Candidate)

Dr. Barghouthi was born in Jerusalem and holds a PhD in medicine, a post graduate degree in philosophy and a Masters Degree in Administration and building Administrative Systems. In 1979, he was elected as the president of the Medical Relief Committee, which he had established with a number of colleagues. He was shot by the Israeli army in 1996, arrested in 2002 and banned from entering Jerusalem. He is currently the Secretary-General of the Palestinian National Initiative, Al Moubadara, which he established in cooperation with Dr. Haidar Abdul Shafi, Ibrahim Daqqaq and the late Dr. Edward Said.



Dr. Barghouthi was one of the leaders in: the campaign against the apartheid wall at The Hague; the International Solidarity Movement with the Palestinian people and the international campaign to impose sanctions on Israel. He resigned from the Madrid Negotiations delegation in protest against the course of the negotiations which led to the Oslo Accords and the continuation of Israeli settlement building in the West Bank and the Gaza Strip.

Dr. Barghouthi was awarded several international prizes, including the prize of the International Health Organization in 2002 and the award of defending the Palestinian Human Rights from the Struggle Against Racial Discrimination Organization.

b. Mahmoud Abbas "Abu Mazen" (FATEH)

Mahmoud Abbas was born in Safad in 1935. His family fled the town and sought refuge in Syria after Safad was occupied by Zionist militias in 1948. Although he was only 13 years old at the time, he had to work for 2 years to assist his family. He studied at home and after finishing his schooling became a teacher. Later he worked as a human resource director at the Ministry of Education of Qatar and during that time visited the West Bank and Gaza Strip several times to select teachers to work in Qatar. He obtained a Law Degree from the University of Damascus and a PhD from the Oriental Institute in Moscow in 1982. He authored several books and studies.



Mahmoud Abbas has devoted much of his life to the Palestinian struggle for independence. In the Fifties, he established with several colleagues a secret national organization and later took part in establishing the Palestinian National Liberation Movement (Fatah). He has been a member of Fatah's Central Committee since 1964 and a member of the PLO's Executive Committee since 1980. He became the first Palestinian Prime Minister in 2003 and was elected as Chairman of the PLO's Executive Committee after the death of President Yasser Arafat.

c. Bassam Al-Salhi (People's Party of Palestine)



Bassam Al-Salhi was born in the Amari refugee camp in 1960. He obtained his masters degree in international studies and authored several books and political studies. He was elected as the head of the student council at Birzeit University between 1979 and 1981. He led the student movement against the Camp David Agreements for which he was arrested several times and placed under house arrest.

He was a member in the National Unified Command of the first Intifada, during which time he was arrested and sentenced to 3 years in prison and an additional 3 years under probation. He participated in the leadership commission of the Tunnel Intifada of 1996 and the Al- Aqsa Intifada of 2000. He is a member of the National Guidance Committee, the Palestinian National Council and the Palestinian Central Council.

Recently, Mr. Al-Salhi was a member of the Palestinian delegation to attend court sessions at The Hague that dealt with the issue of the Apartheid Wall. He was also a member of the follow-up Committee on the same file. He has devoted much of his work to mobilize international support for the Palestinian people.

d. Tayseer Khaled (Democratic Front for Liberation of Palestine)



Tayseer Khaled was born in Qaryout village in Nablus in 1941 and holds a Masters degree in Economy and Political Science from Heidelberg University in Germany. He joined the ranks of the Democratic Front for the Liberation of Palestine (DFLP) when it was established in 1969, was elected as a member of its political bureau in 1971 and was in charge of the DFLP organization in Lebanon from 1972 to 1982. He headed the international relations office for the DFLP after 1982 and participated in leading the front's organization in the occupied territories during his stay in Amman between 1982 and 1991.

Mr. Khaled was elected as a member of the PLO Executive Committee in 1991 and headed the National Office to Defend the Land and Resist the Settlements. He was injured while leading a large protest against the

construction of Israeli settlements in Aseerah al-Qibliyye in 1998. He was arrested by the Israeli occupation troops at the beginning of 2003 and was released in June 2003. He has several publications on economics and politics.

e. Dr. Abd Al Karim Shbair (Independent Candidate)

Dr. Shbair was born in Gaza in 1959 and holds a PhD in international law. He has devoted much of his work to defending Palestinian political, security and administrative detainees in the Israeli occupation prisons. He also defended Palestinian deportees and lived their suffering on a daily basis. He compiled a 23-volume encyclopedia containing all Israeli military orders and communiqués in the Gaza Strip between 1967 and 1994.



His academic dissertation was on the Palestinian constants, mainly the right of return and the rights of refugees. The title of his study was “The Rules governing deportation in International Law: A case study on Israeli practices in the Palestinian territories”. He also conducted a scientific study on solitary confinement of political and security prisoners in Israeli occupation prisons. He practiced law for 22 years and has two law offices in Gaza and Khan Yunis. He lectures at the Gaza Mental Health Program and is a member of several trade unions as well as local and Arab institutions. He participated in many conferences, seminars, and workshops in the field of law, human rights and drafting legislation.

f. Dr. Abd Al Halim Al-Ashqar (Independent Candidate)

Dr. Abd Al Halim Al-Ashqar was born in Sayda village in Tulkarem in 1958. He finished his secondary studies in Ateel School, graduated from Birzeit University in 1982, and obtained his Masters degree from Lavern University in Greece in 1989. He concluded his PhD degree in Business Administration from the University of Mississippi and worked as a professor in several American universities, the last of which was Howard University in Washington.



The USA authorities arrested him three times because he refused to testify against some Palestinian and Muslim activists. He is currently under house arrest awaiting trial for refusing to testify on charges of membership in Hamas and assisting Hamas activities.

g. Sayyed Hussein Barakeh (Independent Candidate)



Sayyed Hussein Barakeh was born in Bani Suheila village in Khan Yunis in 1956. He graduated from the Arts College of Alexandria University in 1979. He later worked as a teacher in both Algeria and Palestine. He was arrested three times before and after the first Intifada in 1987 and was deported to Lebanon in 1989 on charges of political leadership of the Islamic Jihad. He remained in exile in Lebanon for ten years and during that time established the "Palestine Martyr Institute" which established Al-Quds Hospital in Ein al-Hilwe in Sidon and a maternity hospital in Burj al-Barajneh in Beirut. The institute also provided job opportunities through the institute and its projects.

Also in Lebanon he established the "Palestine Scholars Commission" as a framework for scholars in Lebanon and through which he issued a magazine called "The Guiding Torch".

Mr. Barakeh returned to Palestine in 1998 on the occasion of the holding of the Palestinian National Council and participated in the sessions of the Palestinian Central Council which was held in Gaza. He participated in several activities in terms of political and cultural speeches and sermons. He authored two books: "Building the Aspired Self" and "The Right to Disagree in Righteousness". He also authored several publications and editorials in the "Mujahid", a publication issued in Lebanon before his resignation from Islamic Jihad. After his return, he became a Director-General at the Ministry of Youth and Sports until he submitted his resignation to run in the presidential elections.

2 - Palestinian Political Parties and Factions

The following are the political parties and factions that have registered with the CEC:

- a. The Palestinian National Initiative (Al-Moubadara).
- b. Palestine Democratic Union (FIDA).
- c. Palestinian Popular Struggle Front.
- d. Palestinian Liberation Front (PLF).
- e. Popular Front for the Liberation of Palestine (PFLP).
- f. Hamas.
- g. Palestinian Arab Front.
- h. Palestinian People's Party.
- i. Democratic Front for the Liberation of Palestine.
- j. Islamic Salvation Party.
- k. Palestinian National Liberation Movement (FATEH).
- l. The Green Palestinian Movement (Al-Khudur).
- m. Popular Front for the Liberation of Palestine - General Command.

3 - Election Campaigning: Codes of Conduct

All presidential candidates, political parties, media representatives and relevant organizations must adhere to the campaigning codes of conduct, as stipulated by the Palestinian Election Law and codes of conduct established by the CEC.

a. Election Campaigning is a Legal Right:

Election campaigning is a legal right guaranteed to all presidential candidates according to the Election Law, articles (54-59), as well as the codes of conduct issued by the CEC.

b. Definition of Election Campaigning:

Election campaigning includes all legal election campaigning activities undertaken by registered political parties or candidates for the purpose of raising public awareness of their political platforms. Included under the definition of election campaigning are all statements issued by candidates and political parties that call on the public to vote for a particular candidate.

c. The Election Campaigning Period:

- The election campaigning period commences 14 days prior to Election Day. All campaigning activities must stop 24 hours prior to Election Day. According to the 2005 presidential election schedule the campaigning period will begin on December 25th 2004 and end at midnight on January 7th 2005.
- No campaigning activity should take place before or after the set date. This includes all announcements, statements, press releases, exhibitions, conferences, speeches or any activity that seeks to raise public awareness of a candidates' political platform and that calls, directly or indirectly, on the public to vote for a particular candidate.

d. Locations in Which Election Campaigning is not Permitted:

It is strictly forbidden to engage in any campaigning activity in mosques, churches and governmental institutions and buildings.

e. Content and Activities not Permitted in Election Campaigns:

It is strictly forbidden for campaigning activities to include any statements of actions that would libel other candidates or cause social unrest between different denominations, families etc.

f. Election Campaigning and Media Outlets:

Official Media Outlets:

The CEC, in coordination with official Palestinian media outlets, will establish a schedule allocating unrestricted and free official media exposure for all presidential candidates. The allocation will provide equal opportunities to all candidates.

Unrestricted media exposure: All candidates can communicate their political platform without monitoring or intervention as long as they abide by election campaigning laws.

Free media exposure: Official media outlets are prohibited from requesting or receiving compensation for the exposure time allocated to each candidate.

Equal chance: All candidates are afforded equal campaigning conditions. This includes equal air time and broadcasting time (e.g. Official media exposure for all candidates should be broadcast at peak viewing time, candidate exposure should be rotated and all candidates must be allocated equal access to all media space associated with official media outlets). Official media outlets may not broadcast additional campaigning commercials or statements on behalf of any candidate, whether paid for or free of charge.

Private Media Outlets (Newspapers, radio and TV):

All private media outlets must adhere to established election campaigning laws. In particular they must adhere to the campaigning period and refrain from any activity that libels other candidates or contributes to social unrest. Daily newspapers, for example, must not publish, before the commencement of the campaigning period, paid campaigning material or advertisement in favor of a particular candidate or articles in which a candidate states his political platform.

The CEC will monitor the media for violations of elections campaigning laws in coordination with the Ministry of Information. The Ministry will follow-up on any illegal activity on the part of media outlets.

g. Campaign Funding:

- Candidates are forbidden from receiving campaign funding from the Palestinian National Authority, according to article 3/93 of the election law.
- Candidates are forbidden from receiving campaign contributions from any foreign source, according to article 1/94 of the election law.

All political parties participating in the elections and winning candidates must submit to the CEC, within 20 days of the election result announcement, a detailed report of funding sources and amounts spent during the election campaigning period.

Section V:

International and Domestic Observers

The Central Elections Commission (CEC) is pleased to welcome local and international observation of all phases of the electoral process, including voter registration, political parties registration, nomination of candidates and polling and counting. To this end, the CEC has issued the Bylaws regarding the Accreditation of Local Observers and the Accreditation of International Observers, which grant equal opportunities to all interested local and international organizations and institutions to apply for accreditation to observe the elections.

The CEC values electoral observation as an important component of the electoral process and recognizes the international standards that must be fulfilled by electoral observation organizations and personnel. Therefore, the CEC has issued the Code of Conduct for Local and International Observers (hereinafter, the Code of Conduct) to highlight the observation standards and define the rights and duties of local and international observers. The present Code of Conduct constitutes Annex (A) to the Accreditation Procedures of Local Observers and the Accreditation Procedures of International Observers issued by the CEC

1- General Provisions

a. The Right to Observe the Electoral Process

The right to observe the electoral process is guaranteed by the Electoral Law. It shall be exercised by observation organizations and its personnel accredited by the CEC in accordance with the relevant Bylaws.

b. Adherence to the Code of Conduct

All CEC accredited local and international observation organizations and observers shall adhere to the provisions, principles and standards stated in this Code of Conduct.

c. Immunities

International observers shall not enjoy any special immunities, unless otherwise established by the relevant authorities.

2 - Principles and Standards of Electoral Observation

Observation consists of gathering of information regarding the electoral process, in a systematic and consistent manner, without interfering in the process itself. Additionally, it entails the issuing of objective evaluations on the basis of information gathered by the accredited observation organizations.

Electoral observation shall conform to the following principles and standards:

a. Neutrality: To exercise observation in a neutral and impartial manner, without bias towards any of the electoral stakeholders or any other party and, with due respect to the electoral process.

b. Non-Partisanship: Electoral observers must be totally disengaged from any financial, hierarchal or administrative affiliation to any Palestinian political party or independent candidates, regardless of the parties' participation in the electoral process.

c. Comprehensiveness: To consider all aspects and factors related to the electoral process during the observation process. Observation organizations shall identify the phases of the electoral process under observation, including the locations covered in the process of formulating comments and evaluations.

d. Institutionalism: Accreditation to observe the electoral process shall only be granted to observation organizations rather than individuals. Therefore, observers may not issue any individual statements concerning their observation findings regarding the progress of the electoral process. In contrast, the observation organization is entitled to issue reports and make statements regarding the progress of the electoral process through delegated spokespersons.

e. Transparency: Observation organizations and observers shall reveal all methods used in information gathering, including the types of assumptions and analyses utilized, as well as the methodologies adopted to carry out the observation and formulate conclusions.

f. Accuracy: Observation organizations and observers shall use accurate and reliable information throughout the observation process, and shall always refer to the sources of such information.

g. Abiding by the Laws and Bylaws: Observation organizations and observers shall recognize and respect the sovereignty of the Palestinian National Authority, and shall respect the Palestinian Laws, the CEC regulations and procedures, as well as its role and staff members.

3- Observers Rights

Local and international observers shall enjoy the following rights:

a. To observe all phases of the electoral process, and to collect relevant information and access necessary resources to accomplish their mission.

b. To contact the CEC, and to obtain information and responses to any inquiries, as well as to communicate any comments and/or findings resulting from observation. The CEC Electoral Affairs Department at HQ shall respond to any inquiries and/or comments made by the observation organizations.

c. To have unimpeded access to all registration, polling and counting centers, stations and the data entry center.

d. To issue observation reports and statements concerning the progress of the electoral process. However, these must be institutional reports and statements, and shall be accurate, comprehensive and relayed by the spokespersons accredited by the observation organization.

e. To make institutional statements concerning their observation findings to the media, and to meet with partisan entities and civil society organizations, as well

as to enjoy freedom of movement throughout the Palestinian territories without any restrictions and without violating any of the aforementioned principles and standards.

Inside Registration, Polling and Counting Centers and Stations

Observers may talk to voters or registrants inside the registration and/or polling centers. However, observers may not do so inside the polling stations or registration rooms. Observers may observe registration, polling and counting procedures at a reasonable distance inside the registration and polling centers and stations.

4- Observers Duties

Observers shall adhere to the following duties, which aim at streamlining the observation process without violating the progress of the electoral process:

- a. To wear the accreditation badge in a visible manner while exercising their duties, and to present an official and formal identification document to the competent authorities upon request.
- b. To refrain from interfering in the activities of the electoral administration, the political parties, the candidates, the registrants or the voters, except when explicitly allowed by the Bylaws and the Code of Conduct. Observers shall not engage in partisan activities or activities beneficial to any of the partisan entities or candidates. An observer, however, may monitor such events in a neutral manner, maintaining due impartiality with regards to all political parties and/or candidates.
- c. To refrain from exerting influence on registrants' or voters' choices and decisions, and from obstructing the correct progress of any of the electoral operations, or from giving instructions to any of the CEC staff members.
- d. To provide the CEC with copies of all reports issued by the observation organization on the electoral process. The observation organization shall be committed to develop a final report within a time-frame not exceeding two months from the date the electoral process is finalized. The observation organization shall provide the CEC with a copy of such report as soon as it is issued.

Inside the Registration, Polling and Counting Centers and Stations, and the Data Entry Center

- a. Observers shall abide by the instructions issued by the officials at the registration, polling, counting and data entry centers, as well as the regulations concerning the presence of observers and agents inside such centers.
- b. Observers shall not record any personal details relating to registrants or voters, such as their names or the names of the individuals or entities that they vote for.
- c. Observers shall refrain from creating any disturbances or chaos that may affect the smooth progress of the electoral operations, , and shall not display, wear or hold any logos, colors or symbols identical or similar to those of any partisan entity or candidate.

5- Final Provision



The relevant committee of the CEC may revoke the accreditation of any observer in the event he/she is proven to having violated the provisions of the effective Laws, Bylaws or this Code of Conduct, in accordance with the rules stated in the Bylaw regarding the Accreditation of Local Observers and the Bylaw regarding the Accreditation of International Observers

Contact Information:

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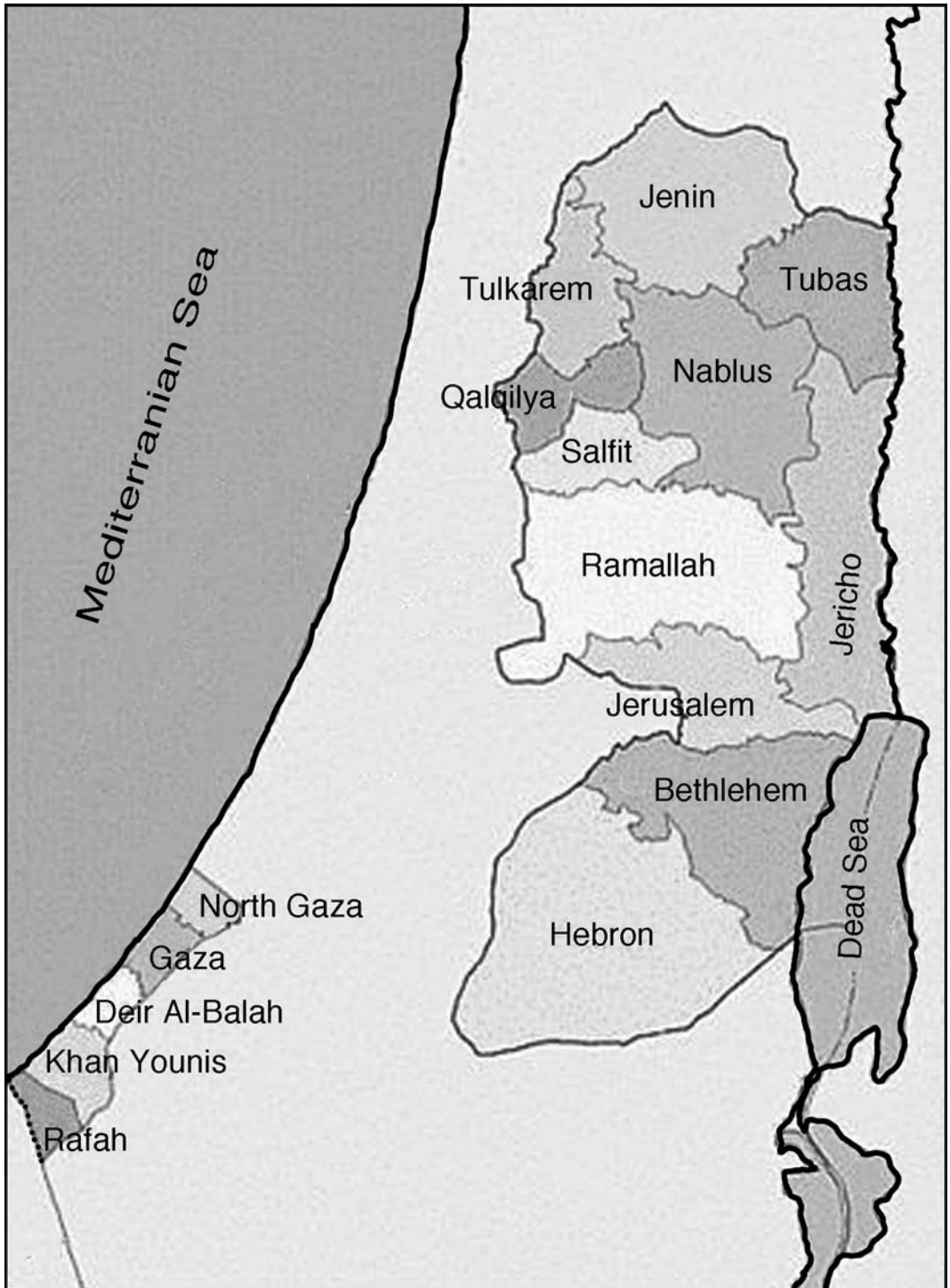
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Map of Electoral Districts

