



## The All-Palestine Government

Even the formation of an independent Palestinian entity was not undertaken to benefit the Palestinian cause. The transformation of the temporary civil administration that had been appointed by the Arab League into a government for all Palestine led by the AHC was brokered by the Egyptians both to challenge King Abdullah's authority over the West Bank and to absolve the Arab nations of responsibility for the conflict. Once again, a pretence of solidarity with the Palestinians was serving internecine rivalries among the Arab nations. The first Palestinian National Congress was held in Gaza on 23 September 1948, presenting the first Palestinian National Charter proclaiming a Government for All Palestine with Jerusalem as its capital, Hajj Amin as its President, Ahmad Hilmi Abdul Baqi as its Prime Minister, Jamal Husseini as its Foreign Minister, and ten further notables as ministers. The All-Palestine Government was practically helpless in every respect and totally dependent on its Egyptian sponsors, while Transjordan and Iraq refused to recognize it.



*The Grand Mufti Hajj Amin al-Husseini heading the Palestinian National Congress which endorsed the National Charter and formed the All-Palestine Government in Gaza*

## Proclamation of Independence, 1 October 1948

[Excerpt]

“Acting on the basis of the natural and historic right of the Arab people of Palestine to freedom and independence – a right for which they have shed the noblest blood and or which they have fought against the imperialistic forces which, together with Zionism, have engaged our people to prevent them from enjoying that right – we, members of the Palestinian National Council, meeting in the city of Gaza, proclaim on this day, the 28th of the Dhi al-Qi’da, 1367 (A.H.), corresponding to October 1, 1948, the full independence of the whole of Palestine as bounded by Syria and Lebanon to the north, by Syria and Transjordan to the east, by the Mediterranean to the west, and by Egypt to the south, as well as the establishment of a free and democratic sovereign State.

“In this State, citizens will enjoy their liberties and their rights, and this State will advance in a fraternal spirit side by side with its sister Arab States in order to build up Arab glory and to serve human civilization. In doing so, they will be inspired by the spirit of the nation and its glorious history, and will resolve to maintain and defend its independence.

“May God bear witness to what we say.”

## Transjordan and Palestine

In October 1948, King Abdullah began a series of steps in order to effect the annexation of Palestine. They began with a congress in Amman, convened upon the initiative of the Transjordanian government, in which King Abdullah's representatives and a large number of Palestinian refugees called for a wider Palestinian congress to declare Palestinian unity and acknowledge King Abdullah as King of Palestine. The King then toured the cities and villages of Palestine, where he revived his personal relations with a number of mayors, notables and the traditional leadership.

On 1 December 1948, a conference in Jericho called for annexation of what was left of Palestine under the Hashemite crown in order to salvage what was left of Palestine as soon as possible, particularly in view of Arab failure to confront Zionism and in light of the new reality that the Palestinian territory was already administered by the Jordanian authority. The conference voted in favor of a resolution which called for the unification of Transjordan and Palestine as a step towards total Arab unity and recognizing King Abdullah as King of All Palestine. The Transjordanian cabinet and parliament agreed within the following two weeks.



*A Palestinian delegation from the Jericho Conference presenting King Abdullah with the conference resolution for unity of the West Bank with Jordan under the Hashemite crown.*

A Palestinian conference in Ramallah personally attended by King Abdullah on 26 December 1948 declared its support for the Jericho Conference resolution, as did a subsequent Nablus conference, calling for unification of the two banks of the Jordan under the Hashemite crown.

The Arab League condemned the Jericho Conference, and the Syrian press considered its resolution a violation of self-determination. Iraqi PM Nuri as-Said called upon King Abdullah to hold his moves for annexation, which succeeded in delaying implementation of the Transjordanian plans for a year and a half. Hajj Amin al-Husseini attacked the King Abdullah's measures, declaring them null and void and calling to boycott them, but his voice was ignored.

The Transjordanian government gradually assumed the civil functions of the West Bank, paying the salaries of civil servants and absorbing local governors into what was henceforth called the Hashemite Kingdom of Jordan.

In February 1949, the Jordanian Nationality Law was amended to grant every Palestinian Jordanian citizenship.