

Portuguese parliament recognizes Palestinian Nakba Day

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In this file picture, Palestinian refugees are seen leaving a village near Haifa in June 1948.

Lisbon, July 24 (RHC)-- The Portuguese parliament has overwhelmingly voted in favor of a resolution recognizing Nakba Day or "Day of Catastrophe," when Israel was created at the expense of the forced expulsion of hundreds of thousands of Palestinians from their homeland.

The parliament also praised the Palestinian struggle to obtain the right to self-determination. At the same time, the Portuguese resolution condemned the Israeli regime's expansionist and annexation policies, emphasizing that the practices are in blatant violation of international laws.

It also called on the Portuguese government to take a clear position in defending the right of the Palestinian people as guaranteed by international conventions.

Seventy-five years since the Nakba, or the Palestinian catastrophe, which refers to the ethnic cleansing of Palestinian natives by the apartheid regime of Israel in 1947-1948, the day has not been forgotten.

The Palestinian Ministry of Foreign Affairs and Expatriates welcomed the decision of the Portuguese parliament. The statement described it as a true expression of the southern European country's solidarity with the plight of Palestinians, which has been going on for 75 years. It praised the decision as a first step towards the Portuguese government's recognition of the State of Palestine, and a move on the path toward adopting resolutions that consider the Nakba a human tragedy.

Israel proclaimed its illegal existence on May 15, 1948 when about 750,000 Palestinians were forcibly expelled from their homeland. The day is known among Palestinians as the Day of Nakba, or catastrophe.

For the first time in its history, the United Nations commemorated the 75th anniversary of Nakba Day on May 15, 2023. According to the official Palestinian news agency Wafa, the UN Committee on the Exercise of the Inalienable Rights of the Palestinian People (CEIRPP) organized the high-level special meeting at the UN's New York headquarters.

The event was the first of its kind in the history of the world body pursuant to the General Assembly mandate of November 30, 2022.

It was presided over by the chairman of the committee, Ambassador Cheikh Niang of Senegal, and included a keynote address by Palestinian President Mahmoud Abbas. Senior UN officials and representatives of regional groups and civil societies also made statements to commemorate Nakba.

According to former British Labour leader Jeremy Corbyn, the Nakba has been maintained by Israel, and successive Israeli administrations have expropriated Palestinian-owned lands, expanded illegal settlements and severely restricted Palestinians' freedom of movement.

"The Nakba did not end in 1948 — Palestinians continue to resist a system of colonial dispossession and apartheid," he tweeted on the occasion of the event. He went on to voice his support for the establishment of a sovereign and independent Palestinian state.

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