

FATAH CENTRAL COMMITTEE

P R O F I L E S



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Introduction

The Fatah Central Committee, the party's most senior institution, is responsible for developing and implementing its strategic vision and initiatives. The committee's members hold some of the most important and sensitive portfolios in Palestinian politics.

At the time of the Central Committee's formation in 1963, two years before Fatah's official launch, it included only ten members. Today, the committee has expanded to twenty-three members, including a chairman, nineteen elected members, and three appointed members. Elections to the Central Committee and the Revolutionary Council—the second most senior Fatah institution—are held during the General Congress, a large gathering of members from the West Bank, Gaza, and the diaspora that determines Fatah's strategic vision.

The most recent General Congress took place in Bethlehem in 2009 and resulted in the election of fourteen new members and reelection of five previous members, signaling a partial shift in power away from the older generation. Seven of the newly elected members—Marwan Barghouti, Jibril Rajoub, Saeb Erekat, Mohammad Dahlan, Hussein al-Sheikh, Nasser al-Qudwa, and Mohammad Shtayyeh—are regarded as the younger generation, whereas the rest of the newly elected and appointed members are considered the older generation. These younger-generation members largely represent an emerging current of reform-minded leaders. The election also resulted in a Central Committee majority from the West Bank, with only six members (four elected and two appointed) from Gaza. This scant representation fueled a protest by many senior Gaza Fatah leaders that led to their resignation shortly after publication of the results.¹

On numerous occasions over the past two years, Fatah has announced its intention to host a Seventh General Congress in the West Bank, but has invariably postponed it. Originally planned for summer 2014, the congress was delayed due to the Gaza war. Fatah then announced that it would take place in mid-January 2015, but never agreed on an exact date because of organizational and preparation concerns. Most recently, Fahmy Zarir, deputy secretary-general of the Revolutionary Council and chairman of the Seventh General Congress preparation committee, announced that the committee has recommended

¹ "Election Results for the Fatah Central Committee, Bethlehem, 8 August 2009," *Journal of Palestine Studies* 39, no. 1 (Autumn 2009), pp. 170-71, <http://www.jstor.org/discover/10.1525/jps.2010.XXXIX.1.170?uid=3739584&uid=2&uid=4&uid=3739256&sid=21106790356723>.

November 29, 2015, as a final date for the congress,² although he clarified that the Central Committee still needs to approve this date.

The Seventh Congress—whenever it takes place—will mark an important juncture in Fatah's history, particularly as the movement experiences deep internal tensions between its younger and older members. As Central Committee member Saeb Erekat put it: "We [Fatah] have to order our home, elect a new leadership, and prepare for elections."³ Clearly, the Seventh Fatah General Congress and the election of a new Central Committee will have substantial implications for the future of Fatah and Palestinian politics more broadly.

The following twenty-three profiles include biographical data on each member of the Fatah Central Committee, including Mohammad Dahlan, who was ousted from Fatah in 2011. These profiles are drawn from various primary and secondary sources, including interviews, news articles, and published books; however, we welcome any additions or corrections to this information.

² "Sources Reveal Date for Holding Seventh Fatah Congress," *Firas*, <http://fnp.net/site/news/56270>.

³ Saeb Erekat, email interview by author, May 6, 2015.

Mahmoud Abbas (Abu Mazen)

محمود عباس (أبو مازن)



Birth: Safed, 1935

Education: doctorate, People's Friendship University of Russia, 1982; bachelor's degree in law, Damascus University, 1958

Position: chairman, Fatah; chairman, PLO; president, Palestinian Authority

Mahmoud Abbas attended primary school in his hometown of Safed until the breakout of the 1948 Arab-Israeli war, when he and his family fled to Damascus, Syria, and then on to Irbid, Jordan. After a month at a relative's house in Irbid, his family settled in Tel, near Damascus, before moving to Damascus proper a few months later. In light of his family's difficult finances, Abbas and his younger brother did not immediately return to school, but installed flooring and worked other jobs for a modest income. A few years later, Abbas returned to school, received his middle school diploma, and began teaching at an elementary school outside Damascus. In 1954, he commenced studying law at Damascus University with the goal of organizing Palestinians to fight for their issues. Together with a few other Palestinians, he established a secret organization to recruit Palestinian fighters and facilitate their entry into military colleges. When, in 1956, the Syrian government sanctioned the entry of Palestinians into military colleges, Abbas suspended his studies and moved to Homs to join a military college there. However, the college director dismissed Abbas and his colleagues as "unfit."⁴

Abbas returned to Damascus and resumed his studies, but soon received a teaching position in Qatar. Nonetheless, he still completed his bachelor's degree at Damascus University in 1958. He then received a human resources position at an oil company in Qatar and thereafter another position at the Qatari Ministry of Education as director of employee affairs. He also continued to meet with Palestinians in different Gulf countries to develop an organization similar to the Palestinian political organization he had founded in Damascus. These

⁴ "The Biography and Life Experiences of Palestinian President Mahmoud Abbas," Sama News, <http://www.samanews.com/ar/index.php?act=post&id=58727>.

organizations would eventually evolve into Fatah and the Palestine Liberation Organization (PLO).

In 1969, he resigned from his government position and moved to Jordan to take charge of the Fatah Mobilization and Organization Commission. However, following "Black September"—when King Hussein carried out a widespread crackdown on the kingdom's Palestinians—Abbas relocated to Damascus and spent most of his time writing books, essays, and articles about Israel and its political system. He also initiated a twin cities project that developed special relations between specific Palestinian and Arab cities and contacts with Israeli peace groups.⁵ In the late 1970s and early 1980s, he studied at the People's Friendship University of Russia and wrote his dissertation, "The Secret Relationship between German Nazis and Zionists," which led to accusations of Holocaust denial. Notwithstanding his dissertation, he has since condemned the Holocaust as "a crime against humanity that cannot be accepted by humankind."⁶

After earning his doctorate, he rejoined the Palestinian leadership in Tunisia, assuming in 1988 the role of director of the PLO's international and national relations and negotiations bureaus. In this dual position, Abbas advocated reorienting the PLO and engaging with the international community by accepting the authority of international institutions and UN Security Council Resolutions 242 and 338. Abbas supported the 1991 Madrid peace talks and is considered a primary contributor to the Oslo Accords, which he signed personally on the White House lawn.

After the Oslo Accords, Abbas returned to the Palestinian territories. In 1996, he was appointed secretary-general of the PLO and head of the elections committee before the Palestinian Legislative Council (PLC) elections.⁷ He also played a key role in the 2000 Camp David peace talks and the 2001 Taba peace talks. He was appointed prime minister in 2003, but resigned four months later amid a dispute with Yasser Arafat over control of the security forces.⁸ In November 2004, following Arafat's death, he was named PLO chairman and was elected president of the Palestinian Authority (PA) on January 9, 2005.⁹ In 2006, Hamas won a majority of seats in the parliamentary elections, and a unity government was formed with Ismail Haniyeh of Hamas and Fatah's Abbas. However, this government collapsed after violent clashes between Hamas and Fatah in 2006 and

⁵ "Mahmoud Abbas," *Encyclopaedia Britannica*,

<http://www.britannica.com/EBchecked/topic/906746/Mahmoud-Abbas>.

⁶ "Profile: Mahmoud Abbas," BBC News, http://news.bbc.co.uk/2/hi/middle_east/1933453.stm.

⁷ "Palestinian President Mahmoud Abbas," Ynetnews.com, <http://www.ynetnews.com/articles/0,7340,L-3479383,00.html>.

⁸ Ibid.

⁹ "Mahmoud Abbas Fast Facts," CNN,

<http://www.cnn.com/2012/12/04/world/meast/mahmoud-abbas---fast-facts/>.

2007 culminated in the Hamas overthrow of the PA government in Gaza and Abbas dissolving the unity government. Abbas has since remained president of the PA with control over the West Bank. Since that point, he has also engaged in multiple peace negotiations with Israel and reconciliation attempts with Hamas, but failed to realize major breakthroughs in either.

Abbas, as was Arafat, is a chairman of the PLO and Fatah, and the president of the PA. His presidential term has expired, and he is currently ruling by presidential decree. He is considered a moderate Palestinian leader interested in a nonviolent solution to the conflict, and has strong ties to the U.S. and many European governments. However, he increasingly faces Palestinian critics, including Fatah supporters who question both the efficacy of his leadership and his focus on negotiations and accuse him of quashing internal dissent.¹⁰ Additionally, although Abbas believes Palestinian unity is a national interest, he is hesitant to cede authority to Hamas.

Abbas recently spearheaded Palestinian moves to internationalize the conflict. For example, he led a successful Palestinian effort to acquire nonmember-state status at the United Nations in 2012 and signed multiple international treaties and accords, including the Rome Statute on December 31, 2015, which paves the way for Palestinians to raise a case against Israel at the International Criminal Court.

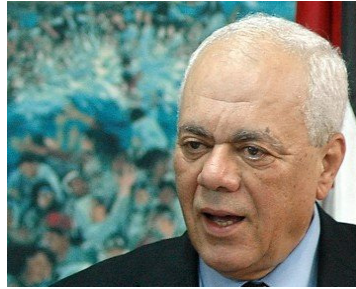
Facebook: <https://www.facebook.com/President.Mahmoud.Abbas>

Website: <http://www.president.ps/>

¹⁰ See <http://kofiapress.net/main/news/82350>.

Al-Tayyeb Abdul Rahim (Abu al-Tayyeb)

الطيب عبد الرحيم (أبو الطيب)



Birth: 1944, Anabta (near Tulkarem)

Education: bachelor's degree in business, Al-Azhar University, Egypt¹¹

Position: secretary-general of the presidency

Al-Tayyeb Abdul Rahim was born to a prominent family, including his father, the famous Palestinian poet Abdul Rahim Mahmoud.¹² Abdul Rahim joined Fatah in 1965 when he was a student at Al-Azhar University and eventually became president of its Palestinian Student Union. After graduating, he studied at a Chinese military academy and later directed Fatah radio stations. Shortly thereafter, he served as PLO ambassador to many countries, including China, Yugoslavia, and Jordan.

In the 1980s, Abdul Rahim continued to ascend the Fatah ranks, gaining membership in the Fatah Revolutionary Council. After the signing of the Oslo Accords, he was appointed secretary-general of the presidency in the PA—a position he still holds—and later elected to the PLC in 1996, representing Tulkarem.¹³ In 2005, he led Abbas's election campaign, and two years later Abbas awarded him the Palestinian Medal of Honor.

Reelected to the Fatah Central Committee in 2009 despite rumors that he originally did not plan to run again,¹⁴ Abdul Rahim has had disputes with Abbas. He even resettled in Cairo in early 2014, temporarily leaving his secretary-general position, after Abbas refused to free one of his bodyguards, who had allegedly killed a young boy. Five months later, Abbas and Abdul Rahim reconciled and the latter was reinstated as secretary-general.

¹¹ "Tayyeb Abd Rahim Will Not Stand for Reelection to Central Committee," *Dunia al-Watan*, <http://www.alwatanvoice.com/arabic/news/2009/07/27/139977.html>.

¹² Ibid.

¹³ "Boisterous Meeting of PLC and Sharp Disputes Postpone Vote of Confidence for New Palestinian Government," *al-Riyadh*, <http://www.alriyadh.com/41457>.

¹⁴ "Tayyeb Abd Rahim Will Not Stand for Reelection to Central Committee," *Dunia al-Watan*, <http://www.alwatanvoice.com/arabic/news/2009/07/27/139977.html>.

During the most recent Gaza war, Abdul Rahim strongly criticized Hamas, saying, "Hamas believes what is happening in Gaza will galvanize the Arab street and restore the project of political Islam that has suffered setbacks in Egypt, Tunis, and other states."¹⁵

¹⁵ See <http://www.ajnad-news.com/site/ajnad/details.aspx?itemid=18876>.

Zakaria al-Agha (Abu Ammar)

زكاريا الاغا (أبو عمار)



Birth: January 13, 1942, Khan Yunis, Gaza

Education: bachelor's degree in medicine, Cairo University, 1965

Position: member, PLO Executive Committee and Mobilization and Organization Commission in Gaza; chairman, PLO Refugee Affairs Bureau

Born to a prominent family, Zakaria al-Agha excelled in his primary and secondary education before studying medicine in Cairo, where he met and developed a close relationship with Yasser Arafat. Agha, however, waited until 1967 to officially join Fatah. After graduating, he returned to Khan Yunis, where he practiced internal medicine at Nasser Hospital until the late 1980s and contributed substantially to many Arab health organizations, including the Arab Medical Organization, Palestine Red Crescent Society, and Blood Bank Organization.

On the political front, Agha helped organize Palestinian protests during the first intifada, and in 1988 he was arrested by the IDF and detained six months for his activities. His increasing involvement in Palestinian politics is reflected in his participation in the 1991 Madrid peace conference. Three years later, he was elected to the Fatah Central Committee and soon thereafter appointed minister of housing in the first PA government. In 1996, he was elected to the PLO Executive Committee, assuming the refugee affairs portfolio.^{16, 17} Agha ran unsuccessfully in the 1996 PLC elections to represent Khan Yunis.

In 2009, Agha did not garner enough votes to retain his Fatah Central Committee seat but regained it by appointment.¹⁸ Agha, considered an Abbas loyalist, was recently entrusted by the PA president with resolving internal Fatah tensions in Gaza.

¹⁶ "Celebratory Welcoming for Dr. Zakaria al-Agha," *Dunia al-Watan*, February 22, 2015, <http://www.alwatanvoice.com/arabic/news/2015/02/22/666639.html>.

¹⁷ "Dr. Zakaria al-Agha," al-Agha Family Webpage, <http://www.elagha.net/?do=person&idp=43&oper=result>.

¹⁸ "Fatah Central Committee Adds Nabil Abu Rudeinah to Its Membership," *al-Mustaqbal*, <http://www.almustaqbal.com/v4/Article.aspx?Type=np&Articleid=403377>.

Azzam al-Ahmed

عزام الاحمد



Birth: 1947, Rummanah (near Jenin)

Education: bachelor's degree in economics and business administration, Baghdad University, 1974

Position: Fatah official responsible for reconciliation portfolio

Azzam al-Ahmed was born to a politically active family. His father, Najib al-Ahmed, represented Jenin in the Jordanian parliament for four consecutive terms, but after the Israel Defense Forces (IDF) occupied the West Bank in 1967, he was arrested and deported to Jordan. Azzam first formally participated in Palestinian politics while attending university in Iraq, serving from 1971 to 1974 as chairman of the General Union of Palestinian Students.¹⁹ After graduating, he was appointed Palestine representative to the General Union of Arab Students and subsequently PLO representative to Iraq, a position he maintained from 1979 to 1994.²⁰ In those years, he simultaneously climbed the Fatah and broader Palestinian political ranks, gaining membership in the Fatah Revolutionary Council in 1989.

Ahmed returned to the West Bank after the signing of the Oslo Accords and won a PLC seat in 1996 as the Fatah candidate representing Jenin. He has since served in multiple Palestinian governments, including as minister of public works from 1996 to 2002 and minister of telecommunication and technology from 2003 to 2005. In 2006, he was reelected to the PLC and was later elected chairman of the Fatah parliamentary bloc.²¹ Following the elections, he served as deputy prime minister for the short-lived unity government.²² In 2009, he was elected to the Fatah Central Committee and has assumed responsibilities over the Fatah reconciliation portfolio, involved in seeking rapprochement with Hamas.

Ahmed has a largely positive relationship with President Abbas and has recently been entrusted with important roles such as serving as lead Fatah representative of the ceasefire-negotiating delegation during the 2014 Gaza war. However, he has

¹⁹ "Palestinian Personalities," Palestinian Academic Society for the Study of International Affairs, http://www.passia.org/palestine_facts/personalities/alpha_a.htm.

²⁰ "Revolutionary Council Celebrates in Its Own Way for Azzam al-Ahmed's Birthday," Maan News Agency, November 25, 2010, <http://www.maannews.net/Content.aspx?id=335763>.

²¹ "Board of Directors-Yasser Arafat Foundation," http://www.yaf.ps/yaf/yaf_structure_details.php?pid=135.

²² See Palestine News and Information Agency, <http://www.wafainfo.ps/atemplate.aspx?id=3658>.

also publicly challenged Abbas, including this past November when he criticized the arrest of Bassam Zakarneh, the head of the Palestinian Civil Servants Union, charged with leading an "illegal" union. As he put it, "No one is above the law," a clear rebuke of Abbas and Prime Minister Rami Hamdallah for countenancing Zakarneh's arrest.²³

²³ "Parliamentary Blocs and Lists Call on President to End Unions Crisis," Maan News Agency, November 13, 2014, <http://www.maannews.net/Content.aspx?id=739799>.

Mahmoud al-Aloul (Abu Jihad)

محمد العالول (أبو جهاد)



Birth: December 11, 1950, Nablus²⁴

Education: bachelor's degree in geography, Beirut University²⁵

Position: general commissioner of mobilization and organization, Fatah²⁶

Following the 1967 Israeli occupation of the West Bank, Mahmoud al-Aloul was arrested by the Israeli army for participating in organized violence against the army. Three years later, the army freed Aloul, deporting him to Jordan. He immediately joined other Fatah members and leaders in Jordan and was appointed to the "Committee for Deportees from the Homeland" and the "Western Sector," the Fatah wing responsible for organizing militant activities in the Palestinian territories and Israel.²⁷ However, in 1973, a little more than two years after his arrival, Jordanian authorities banished him and he relocated to Lebanon. There, he engaged more deeply in military activities and the Western Sector, serving as an assistant to Khalil al-Wazir (Abu Jihad), a top advisor to Arafat and Fatah military leader, and leading a military brigade in both the Mount Sannine and Mount Lebanon areas in central Lebanon.²⁸ After Israel occupied southern Lebanon in 1982, he commanded the "special forces" units in Tripoli (Lebanon) and the Beqa Valley responsible for capturing six Israeli soldiers in 1983 and facilitating a major prisoner swap between Israel and the Palestinians.²⁹

Shortly after the Palestinian leadership was expelled from Lebanon, Aloul moved to Tunis and remained Wazir's special assistant but also began forming special forces units in different Arab states. When Wazir was assassinated in 1988, Aloul was promoted to the position of secretary-general of the occupied territories

²⁴ Mahmoud al-Aloul's Facebook page, <https://www.facebook.com/abujihad1965/info>.

²⁵ "Biographies for Members of the Palestinian Government," Palestine News and Information Agency, <http://www.wafainfo.ps/atemplate.aspx?id=3658>.

²⁶ "Fatah Hebron Region Meets with Commissioner for Mobilization and Organization," Maan News Agency, <http://maannews.net/Content.aspx?id=726525>.

²⁷ "Special Meeting with Mahmoud Aloul, 'Abu Jihad,' Member of the Fatah Central Committee," YouTube, 57:58, posted by "awdah channel TV," December 19, 2013, <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=kkTnB1K9zhA>.

²⁸ "Mahmoud al-Aloul," Jerusalem Media and Communications Centre, updated January 9, 2010, <http://www.jmcc.org/people.aspx?idd=291&pch=M>.

²⁹ Debra Kamin, "The 5 Most Lopsided Prisoner Swaps in Israeli History," *Times of Israel*, June 19, 2014, <http://www.timesofisrael.com/the-5-most-lopsided-prisoner-swaps-in-israeli-history/>.

committee. After the Oslo Accords, Israel initially did not allow Aloul to return to the Palestinian territories because of his previous military activities, but did permit him to return in 1995. He was immediately appointed governor of Nablus and served until he was elected to the PLC and appointed labor minister in 2006. He was elected to the Fatah Central Committee in 2009 and currently serves as the commissioner of mobilization and organization.

Aloul is a stalwart Fatah official and is considered a member of its old guard. Seeing himself as a potential Abbas successor, he believes Palestinians should engage in peaceful resistance, boycotting Israeli products and organizing protests, but has also advocated armed resistance.^{30, 31} He frequently warns of the imminent demise and impossibility of a two-state solution.

Facebook: <https://www.facebook.com/abujihad1965>

³⁰ "Aloul: We Will Not Abandon Armed Resistance," Palestine Press News Agency, <http://www.palpress.co.uk/arabic/?Action=Details&ID=77143>.

³¹ "Special Meeting with Mahmoud Aloul, 'Abu Jihad,' Member of the Fatah Central Committee," YouTube video, 57:58, posted by "awdah channel TV," December 19, 2013, <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=kkTnB1K9zhA>.

Marwan Barghouti

مروان برغوثي (أبو القسام)



Birth: June 6, 1959, Kobar (near Ramallah)³²

Education: master's degree in international relations, Birzeit University, 1998; bachelor's degree in history and political science, Birzeit University, 1994

Position: member, Fatah Central Committee (in prison)

Born to a poor family, Barghouti joined Fatah at age fifteen and in 1976 was imprisoned for four years for participating in armed activities, compelling him to complete his high school studies in prison. Following his release in 1983, he began studying at Birzeit University and became leader of the BZU Fatah youth movement and later the BZU student council in 1984.³³

At the outset of the first intifada in 1987, he organized multiple protests at BZU but was arrested and deported to Jordan. After relocating to Tunisia later that year, he continued to participate in PLO and Fatah activities in Tunis, working closely under Jibril Rajoub, who then headed the West Bank Committee.^{34, 35, 36} After the signing of the Oslo Accords, Barghouti returned to the West Bank and finally completed his bachelor's degree in 1994. At this time, he experienced a major political transformation, supporting the Oslo Accords and the establishment of an independent Palestinian state.^{37, 38} Representing Ramallah, he won a seat on the PLC in 1996, beating his cousin Mustafa Barghouti; he later became the primary leader of Tanzim, an official grassroots wing of Fatah armed by Arafat in the late 1990s, building its network of supporters to several thousands.³⁹ During the second intifada, Barghouti abandoned his support for the peace process and called

³² "Profile: Marwan Barghouti," CNN International, <http://edition.cnn.com/2004/WORLD/meast/12/04/barghouti.profile/>.

³³ "Profile: Marwan Barghouti," BBC, June 2, 2011, <http://washin.st/1K1c1wv>.

³⁴ Ibid.

³⁵ "Marwan Barghouti Abul Qassam," YouTube video, 3:48, posted by "FatehYouth Germany," March 16, 2010, <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=n1bLfdM43aU>.

³⁶ Marwan Barghouti's Facebook page, https://www.facebook.com/Marwan.Barghouty/info?tab=page_info.

³⁷ Jefferson Fletcher, "Interview with Marwan Barghouti," Media Monitors Network, August 7, 2001, <http://www.mediamonitors.net/fletcher3.html>.

³⁸ Yossi Beilin, "Marwan Barghouti Is No Mandela, but Netanyahu Should Let Him Go," i24 News, March 23, 2014, <http://washin.st/1HZ5UIO>.

³⁹ David Schenker, "Inside the Fatah Tanzim: A Primer," *PolicyWatch* 284 (Washington Institute for Near East Policy, October 6, 2000), <http://washin.st/1erg21V>.

for Tanzim and its armed members—who collectively adopted the name al-Aqsa Martyrs Brigades—to carry out attacks against Israelis.⁴⁰ In response, in early 2002 Israel arrested Barghouti, who was hiding in the Ramallah home of Fatah leader Ziad Abu Ein, and sentenced him to five life sentences two years later.^{41, 42} While Barghouti still voiced support for the two-state solution, he believed it could be achieved only through violence.

Despite his imprisonment at the Hadarim facility in Petah Tikva, Barghouti has remained active in politics. In particular, he brokered a temporary ceasefire between Israel and the Palestinians in 2003, coauthored the 2006 National Reconciliation Document, also known as the Prisoners' Document—which calls for a Palestinian state based on the 1967 lines and the return of all refugees—and helped forge the 2007 Hamas-Fatah reconciliation deal.⁴³

Barghouti was elected to the Fatah Central Committee in 2009. With his substantial Palestinian support, especially among the young, he is often portrayed as a primary challenger to Mahmoud Abbas.^{44, 45} Calling for a third intifada and armed rebellion, Barghouti is often at odds with Abbas's nonviolent strategy.⁴⁶ He also has expressed opposition to other policies such as Abbas's recent push for state recognition by the UN and security cooperation with Israel.⁴⁷

In a 2002 *Washington Post* op-ed, Barghouti explained his understanding of resistance and peace: "While I, and the Fatah movement to which I belong, strongly oppose attacks and the targeting of civilians inside Israel, our future neighbor, I reserve the right to protect myself, to resist the Israeli occupation of my country and to fight for my freedom." More recently, in the wake of tensions in Jerusalem, Barghouti called for a third intifada, saying, "Armed intifada is Yasser Arafat's legacy" and "It is imperative to reconsider our choice of resistance as a way of defeating the occupier."^{48, 49}

⁴⁰ "Marwan Barghouti," Palestinian Biographies, <http://washin.st/1JXIRzZ>.

⁴¹ "Abbas Asks Obama's Help to Free Jailed Palestinian Leader Barghouti," *Jerusalem Post*, March 20, 2014, <http://washin.st/1SsjuaP>.

⁴² "Who Is Ziad Abu Ein?" Middle East Eye, updated February 13, 2015, <http://washin.st/1GjF1tC>.

⁴³ "Profile: Marwan Barghouti," BBC, June 2, 2011, <http://washin.st/1QFuHHr>.

⁴⁴ William Booth, "Barghouti and Pollard: Two Prisoners at the Center of the Mideast Peace Talks," *Washington Post*, April 9, 2014, <http://washin.st/1fkbsTg>.

⁴⁵ Marissa Newman, "Poll: Barghouti Top Palestinian Presidential Candidate," *Times of Israel*, May 22, 2014, <http://www.timesofisrael.com/poll-barghouti-top-palestinian-presidential-candidate/>.

⁴⁶ "Marwan Barghouti Placed in Solitary Confinement after Calling for Third Intifada," Middle East Eye, updated February 13, 2015, <http://washin.st/1IRt0jp>.

⁴⁷ "Barghouti from Prison to Abbas: Do Not Go to the UN," Palestinian Press Agency, <http://washin.st/1dMJVsv>.

⁴⁸ Yaniv Kubovich and Jack Khoury, "Barghouti Given Seven Days in Solitary for Call to Renew Intifada," *Haaretz*, November 12, 2014, <http://www.haaretz.com/news/diplomacy-defense/.premium-1.626080>.

⁴⁹ Agence France-Presse, "From Jail, Barghouti Urges 'Armed Resistance,'" Maan News Agency, November 11, 2014, <http://www.maannews.net/eng/ViewDetails.aspx?ID=739285>.

Ahmad Sakhr Khlousi Basseiso (Sakhr Basseiso)

احمد صخر خلوصي بيسيوس (صخر بيسيوس)



Birth: 1944, Beer Sheva

Education: studied engineering in Egypt

Position: deputy, Fatah Central Committee

Following the 1948 Arab-Israeli war, Sakhr Basseiso relocated with his family to Gaza. In 1964, after pursuing his engineering studies in Egypt, he joined Fatah and the next year was elected president of the General Union of Palestinian Students (GUPS). Climbing the ranks of Palestinian politics, he became a member of the GUPS Executive Committee and the PNC in 1969. He was later elected to the Fatah Revolutionary Council, becoming its deputy secretary-general. The same year, 1974, he was also elected to the Palestinian Central Council and president of GUPS, positions he held for approximately eight years each. In 1982, he was appointed PLO representative to Yugoslavia.⁵⁰

Basseiso returned to Gaza after the signing of the Oslo Accords and was appointed governor of Khan Yunis in 1996 and later governor of North Gaza in 2001.^{51, 52} He was also appointed minister of sports in Ahmed Qurei's short-lived government in 2005. Basseiso's appointment to the Fatah Central Committee came in 2009.⁵³ He is considered an Abbas loyalist and a member of the Fatah old guard, often delegated important Fatah files and tasks.

⁵⁰ "Palestinian Personalities," Palestinian Academic Society for the Study of International Affairs, http://www.passia.org/palestine_facts/personalities/alpha_b.htm.

⁵¹ "Abu Mazen Approves Execution of Collaborators," *Elaph*, <http://elaph.com/Politics/2005/2/41207.htm?sectionarchive=Politics>.

⁵² "Sakhr Basseiso Calls on International Community to Take Action to Save Beit Hanoun from a Catastrophe," *Dunia al-Watan*, July 8, 2004, <http://www.alwatanvoice.com/arabic/news/2004/07/08/7134.html>.

⁵³ "Appointment of Abu Rudeinah as Member of Central Committee," Sama News, <http://www.samanews.com/ar/index.php?act=post&id=64759>.

Mohammad Dahlan (Abu Fadi)

محمد دحلان (أبو فادي)



Birth: September 29, 1961, Khan Yunis, Gaza

Education: Bachelor's degree in business administration, Islamic University in Gaza; studies at the College of Physical Education, Egypt

Position: Member, Fatah Central Committee (removed in 2014)

In 1979, Mohammad Dahlan traveled to Egypt for the first time to study at the College of Physical Education. There, he met many Palestinian students who brought him to Fatah and PLO meetings. Dahlan quickly grew politically engaged and relocated to the Islamic University in Gaza to become more directly involved in Palestinian politics.⁵⁴ Shortly after his arrival, Dahlan helped found al-Shabiba (The Youth), a Fatah-affiliated social and political movement. Initially, al-Shabiba focused on carrying out community service activities such as cleaning streets and public parks in addition to distributing food and medicine.⁵⁵ However, the movement gradually achieved substantial representation on student councils, began organizing demonstrations, and expanded to the West Bank, establishing an affiliate at Birzeit University under the leadership of Marwan Barghouti.⁵⁶

During this period (1980-1986), Dahlan was arrested multiple times and spent years in prison, where he learned Hebrew, but still managed to receive his bachelor's degree in business administration from the Islamic University. In 1987, Israel deported Dahlan to Jordan over his involvement in militant activities, and he later relocated to Egypt, Iraq, and finally Tunisia in 1989 at the behest of Yasser Arafat.⁵⁷ From Arafat's office in Tunis, Dahlan coordinated activities in the Palestinian territories during the first intifada. He grew close to Arafat and was

⁵⁴ "Biography of Mohammad Dahlan," <http://www.dahlan.ps/ar/bio/>.

⁵⁵ Scott Atran, "Stones against the Iron Fist, Terror within the Nation: Alternating Structures of Violence and Cultural Identity in the Israeli-Palestinian Conflict," *Politics and Society*, SAGE Publications (1990): 18, http://jeannicod.ccsd.cnrs.fr/ijn_00000567/document.

⁵⁶ "Biography of Mohammad Dahlan," <http://www.dahlan.ps/ar/bio/>.

⁵⁷ "Mohammed Dahlan," European Institute for Research on Mediterranean and Euro-Arab Cooperation, <http://www.mede.be/en/themes/biographies/def/dahlan-mohammed/>.

appointed to the PLO's High Military Council and, after the signing of the Oslo Accords, as chief of Palestinian Preventive Security in Gaza.⁵⁸

Dahlan built a 20,000-member force, establishing himself as a powerful leader in Gaza, but other Palestinian leaders soon accused him of corruption. In particular, he developed a tense rivalry with Jibril Rajoub, then chief of Preventive Security in the West Bank, after Dahlan sent a few low-level commanders to the West Bank.⁵⁹ ^{60, 61} Nonetheless, Dahlan resigned from the Preventive Security service in 2002 amid differences with Arafat, who nonetheless appointed him national security advisor that July.⁶² Gradually, Dahlan himself began accusing Arafat and his government of corruption.⁶³ In 2004, Dahlan was appointed minister of state and security affairs under Prime Minister Mahmoud Abbas, after Arafat refused to appoint Dahlan interior minister over fears he could undermine his authority. Following Arafat's death, Dahlan was appointed minister of civil affairs and then, in 2006, elected to the PLC, representing Khan Yunis.⁶⁴

In early 2007, with Hamas threatening a Gaza takeover and under U.S. pressure, Abbas appointed Dahlan national security advisor. He tried to reassert Fatah's and the PA's authority over the Strip, but Hamas wrested control of Gaza, defeating the PA's security forces in a coup.^{65, 66} Dahlan, who was receiving surgery in Europe at the time, bore substantial criticism from fellow Palestinian leaders for losing control of Gaza and resigned as national security advisor.^{67, 68} Thereafter, Dahlan began expressing sharp criticisms of Abbas and other Fatah leaders, accusing them of cronyism and corruption. Abbas rebuffed such accusations and retorted that Dahlan collaborated with Israelis in killing Palestinians and was himself guilty of corruption. Dahlan was elected to the Fatah Central Committee in 2009, but Fatah revoked his membership in 2011, leveling the familiar corruption charges. A

⁵⁸ Simona Sikimic, "Profile: Mohammed Dahlan, Gaza's Comeback Kid," Middle East Eye, April 7, 2014, <http://www.middleeasteye.net/news/profile-mohammed-dahlan-gazas-comeback-kid-1305037516>.

⁵⁹ Ephraim Kahana and Muhammad Suwaed, *Historical Dictionary of Middle Eastern Intelligence* (Lanham, MD: Scarecrow Press, 2009), p. 69, <http://washin.st/1GskcdB>.

⁶⁰ Lamis Andoni, "Questions of Legitimacy," *al-Ahram Weekly*, <http://weekly.ahram.org.eg/2004/704/re1.htm>.

⁶¹ Jonathan Schanzer, *Hamas vs. Fatah: The Struggle for Fatah* (New York: Palgrave Macmillan, 2008).

⁶² Simona Sikimic, "Profile: Mohammed Dahlan, Gaza's Comeback Kid," Middle East Eye, April 7, 2014, <http://www.middleeasteye.net/news/profile-mohammed-dahlan-gazas-comeback-kid-1305037516>.

⁶³ Conal Urquhart, "Arafat 'Ruining His People,' Says Protege," *Guardian*, August 1, 2004, <http://www.theguardian.com/world/2004/aug/02/israel>.

⁶⁴ Spencer C. Tucker, ed., *The Encyclopedia of the Arab-Israeli Conflict: A Political, Social, and Military History*, Vol. 1 (Santa Barbara: ABC-CLIO, 2008), p. 333, <http://www.amazon.com/The-Encyclopedia-Arab-Israeli-Conflict-volumes/dp/1851098410>.

⁶⁵ David Rose, "The Gaza Bombshell," *Vanity Fair*, April 2008, <http://www.vanityfair.com/news/2008/04/gaza200804>.

⁶⁶ "Palestine Papers: Mohammed Dahlan," *Guardian*, <http://www.theguardian.com/world/2011/jan/25/palestine-papers-muhammad-dahlan>.

⁶⁷ David Rose, "The Gaza Bombshell," *Vanity Fair*, April 2008, <http://www.vanityfair.com/news/2008/04/gaza200804>.

⁶⁸ "Abbas Security Chief Dahlan Resigns, Israeli Forces Kill 5," *Today's Zaman*, July 27, 2007, http://www.todayszaman.com/world_abbas-security-chief-dahlan-resigns-israeli-forces-kill-5_117784.html.

Palestinian court sentenced him to two years in prison in 2014 for insulting state institutions, and another court recently dismissed corruption charges against him.^{69,70}

Despite his adversarial relationship with many Fatah leaders, Dahlan is still believed to enjoy substantial popularity among Gaza's Fatah supporters and is allegedly in close contact with some West Bank PA and Fatah members. He currently lives in the United Arab Emirates and has established strong relationships with the UAE's political leadership. He also has fostered close ties with Egypt and even brokered an agreement between Egypt and Ethiopia, achieving understandings about the construction of a Nile River dam.⁷¹ Moreover, Dahlan has remained considerably active raising armed militias in Palestinian refugee camps in Lebanon, challenging security forces and militias loyal to Abbas.

Additionally, recent reports revealed Dahlan has strong business interests in Serbia and Montenegro and received a Serbian passport. He also has been in contact with Hamas, which allowed for his wife, Jalila, to visit Gaza.⁷²

Even though Dahlan no longer occupies the inner circle of Palestinian decisionmaking, he still poses a major challenge to Abbas and other PA leaders. Recently, he announced his intention to form an opposition bloc to Abbas in a Sky News TV interview, saying, "We must establish a national front to resist these individual actions that will bring disgrace and catastrophe on the Palestinian people. We cannot allow Abu Mazen [Mahmoud Abbas] to continue to make these types of decisions."⁷³ However, reports from late April indicate Lebanese officials have facilitated attempts to achieve Dahlan-Abbas reconciliation.

Facebook: <https://www.facebook.com/mohammad.dahlan2>

Twitter: https://twitter.com/mohammad_dahlan

Website: <http://www.dahlan.ps/>

⁶⁹ "Dahlan Sentenced to Prison for Two Years on Account of Insulting State Institutions," *al-Hayat*, <http://washin.st/1H1BRS6>.

⁷⁰ Nasser Liham, "Mediation between Dahlan and the President," Maan News Agency, April 21, 2015, <https://www.maannews.net/Content.aspx?id=773584>.

⁷¹ Jack Moore, "Exiled Palestinian Leader Looks for Regional Allies in Mediation of Nile Dam Deal," *Newsweek*, April 28, 2015, <http://europe.newsweek.com/exiled-palestinian-leader-looks-regional-allies-mediation-nile-dam-deal-326036>.

⁷² "Mohammad Dahlan's Wife Begins Visit to Gaza with Hamas's Permission," Saraya News, March 31, 2014, <http://www.sarayanews.com/index.php?page=article&id=247804>.

⁷³ "Meeting with Mohammad Dahlan regarding Holes in Palestinian UN Plan," YouTube video, 12:07, posted by "mohammad dahlan," December 30, 2014, <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=dvQoFAS-sJc>.

Hassan Ahmad Abu Einein (Sultan Abu Einein)

حسن احمد ابو العينين (سلطان أبو العينين)



Birth: 1951, southern Lebanon

Position: president, Council of National Organizations, Fatah⁷⁴

Hassan Ahmad Abu Einein was born to a refugee family that moved around frequently before settling in the Rashidiya camp near Tyre, Lebanon. Einein joined Fatah at a young age and enlisted in its military ranks, gradually rising to the position of colonel. He participated in various military activities and played a key role during the Lebanese Civil War in the different Palestinian refugee camps.⁷⁵

In the early 1990s, he refused to return to the Palestinian territories in objection to the Oslo accords. In 2000, a Lebanese military court convicted him in absentia of carrying out terrorist attacks, defaming the state, and acquiring heavy weaponry, handing down a death sentence. However, the courts nullified their decision in March 2006 after determining his trial was politicized.^{76,77} In 2009, he returned to the Palestinian territories and was elected to the Fatah Central Committee.

Einein is a member of the Fatah old guard and frequently defends armed resistance, which led Congress to call on Fatah in May 2013 to strip him of his role and send him into exile.⁷⁸ Following the most recent Hamas-Fatah unity deal, he reasserted his belief in armed resistance, saying, "We [Fatah] are the pioneers of the armed struggle. It's wrong to think that Fatah has abandoned the rifle or thrown away the rifle. We are giving peace a chance, but our rifle is still loaded with bullets...The time has come to agree on a system—if our [people] are killed, so will theirs be killed."⁷⁹

Facebook: <https://www.facebook.com/AllwaSltanAbwAlynyn/timeline>

⁷⁴ "Abu Einein: National Work in Need of Comprehensive Vision," Palestine News and Information Agency, <http://www.wafa.ps/arabic/index.php?action=detail&id=188713>.

⁷⁵ "Sultan Abu Einein," Aljazeera Encyclopedia, <http://washin.st/1K1KqLE>.

⁷⁶ Ibid.

⁷⁷ "America Calls on Palestinian Leadership to Expel General Sultan Abu Einein from Fatah and Palestinian Territories for Supporting Killing of Settlers," *al-Quds*, June 12, 2013, <http://www.alquds.co.uk/?p=53564>.

⁷⁸ Ibid.

⁷⁹ "Abbas Advisor: Fatah and Hamas Unity 'Is Our Weapon against the Israeli Enemy,'" YouTube video, 0:44, posted by "palwatch," October 12, 2014, <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=IGSSwY0-IXo>.

Saeb Erekat (Abu Ali)

صائب عريقات (أبو علي)



Birth: April 28, 1955, Abu Dis⁸⁰

Education: doctorate in peace studies, University of Bradford (Britain), 1983; bachelor's and master's degrees in political science, San Francisco State University, 1977, 1979^{81, 82, 83}

Position: chief negotiator, PLO; PLC parliamentarian

After moving to San Francisco for college, Saeb Erekat returned to the West Bank to be a lecturer at al-Najah University in Nablus and a columnist for *al-Quds*. While pursuing a doctorate in Britain, Erekat experienced a personal political transformation whereby he concluded that "there is no military solution to the (Arab-Israeli) conflict and the only path to end the conflict is negotiations."⁸⁴ An article he penned in 1982 calling for dialogue between Israeli and Palestinian scholars inspired protests at al-Najah University and accusations that he had betrayed the Palestinian cause.⁸⁵ Nonetheless, he initiated an academic exchange with Israeli scholars in 1983 despite increased popular criticism and condemnation. He then joined the Arab Studies Society, the main PLO-affiliated organization in Jerusalem, working closely with the PLO leadership in Tunis, and continued to push his negotiations agenda.⁸⁶

In the early 1990s, Erekat was sent to Madrid, Moscow, and other negotiations as a senior representative of the Palestinian delegation. After the signing of the Oslo Accords, he was appointed minister of local governance and head of the Palestinian negotiating team and was later elected to the PLC in 1996. Erekat was

⁸⁰ "Saeb Erekat ... An Academic Who Became a Major Negotiator," Aljazeera, <http://www.aljazeera.net/news/reportsandinterviews/2014/1/30/-صائب-عريقات-أكاديمي-أصبح-كبير-المفاوضين>.

⁸¹ Ibid.

⁸² Ian Black, "Palestine Papers: Saeb Erekat," *Guardian*, January 23, 2011, <http://www.theguardian.com/world/2011/jan/23/palestine-papers-saeb-erekat-palestinian>.

⁸³ Nathan Jeffay, "Despite Resignation, Longtime Peace Negotiator Erekat Carries On as Before," *Forward*, March 23, 2011, <http://forward.com/articles/136433/despite-resignation-longtime-peace-negotiator-erek/>.

⁸⁴ Ibid.

⁸⁵ Ilene Prusher, "Chief Palestinian Negotiator Saeb Erekat," *Haaretz*, August 3, 2013, <http://www.haaretz.com/news/keeping-track-of-the-peace-process/1.539690>.

⁸⁶ "Erekat...Extracting a Nation through Negotiations," Aljazeera, <http://www.aljazeera.net/news/reportsandinterviews/2009/9/29/عريقات-انتزاع-وطن-بالمفاوضات>.

considered one of Yasser Arafat's closest aides and played a key role during the 2000 Camp David peace talks. After Arafat's death in 2004, he maintained his role as chief negotiator. In 2006, he was reelected to the PLC and in 2009 was elected to the Fatah Central Committee.

In 2011, an Aljazeera leak, "The Palestine Papers," revealed that Erekat offered major concessions to then Israeli prime minister Ehud Olmert and Israeli negotiators on borders, Jerusalem, and refugees.⁸⁷ Protests broke out in the West Bank and Gaza in response to the leak, but Erekat repeatedly rejected the authenticity of the documents, calling them "a bunch of lies."^{88, 89} Nonetheless, Erekat resigned as negotiator after an internal Palestinian investigation found the source of the documents was from his office, yet regained his role as negotiator months later.

Erekat served in 2013-2014 as chief negotiator of the Palestinian delegation in the U.S.-led Israeli-Palestinian talks. Since their collapse in April 2014, Erekat has been a key author and proponent of the Palestinian UN Security Council effort and has traveled to many European capitals to persuade European states to support it.

Erekat is one of the Fatah officials most closely connected to U.S. and European governments and maintains strong relations with Mahmoud Abbas.⁹⁰ He has consistently supported the two-state solution, but blames Israel for the failure of negotiations over the past twenty-one years.

⁸⁷ Chris McGreal, "Reaction to the Leaked Palestine Papers," *Guardian*, January 23, 2011, <http://www.theguardian.com/world/2011/jan/24/reaction-leaked-palestine-papers>.

⁸⁸ Ibid.

⁸⁹ Harriet Sherwood, "Palestine Papers Provoke Anger on Streets of West Bank and Gaza," *Guardian*, January 24, 2011, <http://www.theguardian.com/world/2011/jan/24/palestine-papers-anger-reaction>.

⁹⁰ Ben Birnbaum and Amir Tibon, "The Explosive Inside Story of How John Kerry Built an Israel-Palestine Peace Plan and Watched It Crumble," *New Republic*, July 20, 2014, <http://www.newrepublic.com/article/118751/how-israel-palestine-peace-deal-died>.

Othman Abu Gharbieh

عثمان ابو غربية



Birth: 1946, Jerusalem

Position: secretary-general, Popular National Congress of Jerusalem⁹¹

Education: degree, military college, Nanking, China, 1969; legal studies, Damascus University

In the early 1950s, Othman Abu Gharbieh moved with his family from Jerusalem to Hebron, where he received his primary and secondary education. During his teenage years, he participated in popular protests and first officially identified with Fatah in 1963.⁹² That same year, he was arrested by Jordanian security services but released on bail shortly thereafter. He was arrested again briefly in 1966 and subsequently traveled to Damascus to pursue a bachelor's degree in law, but suspended his studies to fight with Fatah's "Storm Forces" at the outbreak of the 1967 Arab-Israeli war. After earning a degree from a military college in Nanking, China, in 1969, with the rank of first lieutenant, he was promoted to Storm Forces officer and lieutenant commander in Fatah's "201 Brigade," which operated in Jerash, Jordan, and the Jordan Valley. He then led Palestinian forces in the battles of Kafr Qouq and Aisha in the Beqa Valley in 1969, reinforcing the Palestinians' presence in Lebanon. In 1971, Gharbieh joined a Fatah force based in Jordan, and later became one of the top Palestinian military leaders in Jordan. Before and during Black September—which concluded in his and the Palestinian leadership's ouster from Jordan—he carried out attacks against numerous Jordanian and other targets.⁹³

Following the Palestinians' relocation to Lebanon, he served at numerous Palestinian military installations around Lebanon as a commander and trainer. He also fought on both the Lebanese and Golan fronts of the 1973 Arab-Israeli war. Thereafter, he traveled to the USSR to study at the Vistaryl Military Academy, but

⁹¹ "Secretary-General of Jerusalem Popular National Congress Meets with Romanian Ambassador to Palestine," *Dunia al-Watan*, <http://www.alwatanvoice.com/arabic/news/2014/05/27/543909.html>.

⁹² "Palestinian Personalities," Palestinian Academic Society for the Study of International Affairs, http://www.passia.org/palestine_facts/personalities/alpha_a.htm.

⁹³ Abu Gharbieh's Facebook Page (temporarily unavailable), <http://washin.st/1IndB7C>.

in 1976 he traveled to Lebanon to fight in the civil war, thus preventing him from completing his studies. In Lebanon, he was imprisoned by Kataeb forces but later released in a prisoner exchange. He was elected to the Fatah Revolutionary Council in 1980 and continued to participate in military activities until the Palestinian leadership relocated to Tunisia. In Tunisia, he became deputy commissioner of mobilization and organization, recruiting members and directing many Fatah conferences and activities around the Middle East. Gharbieh opposed the Oslo Accords but still returned to the Palestinian territories in 1994.⁹⁴

After settling in the West Bank, Gharbieh held a variety of political positions, including president of the foreign affairs committee, Fatah deputy commissioner of mobilization and organization, president of the Fatah membership committee, and president of the Sixth Fatah General Congress. His election to the Fatah Central Committee came in 2009. Additionally, in 2011, he was appointed secretary-general of the Popular National Congress of Jerusalem, the government organization responsible for Jerusalem affairs.

Gharbieh is a member of the Fatah old guard and considered a supporter of hardline positions. He has remained skeptical of the peace process and even recently said, "The Oslo process is dead, but a death certificate has yet to be issued."⁹⁵ However, he has a cordial relationship with President Abbas and has advocated nonviolence.⁹⁶

⁹⁴ Ibid.

⁹⁵ Khaled Abu Toameh, "Senior Palestinian Official: Oslo Accords Are Dead," *Jerusalem Post*, April 1, 2015, <http://www.jpost.com/Middle-East/Senior-Palestinian-official-Oslo-accords-are-dead-395735>.

⁹⁶ "Portraits of Palestine: Connecting Ordinary Citizens with Decision Makers in Jenin," *OneVoice* (blog), February 5, 2013, http://blog.onevoicemovement.org/one_voice/2013/02/portraits-of-palestine-connecting-ordinary-citizens-with-decision-makers-in-jenin.html.

Muhammad Ghneim (Abu Maher)

محمد غنيم (أبو ماهر)



Birth: 1937, Jerusalem

Education: unavailable

Position: secretary-general of the Fatah Central Committee

Muhammad Ghneim is considered one of Fatah's founders, establishing its precursor groups in the West Bank and Jordan in the late 1950s and early 1960s.⁹⁷ His influence within the organization has included the decision to carry out an armed struggle and helping train the first Palestinian fighters in China. After returning to the Middle East, he led the Fatah military's "Storm Forces" and was appointed Fatah deputy leader of administrative affairs. After Black September in Jordan, he moved with the Palestinian leadership to Lebanon and later became the main Fatah leader in Syria. In 1977, he was promoted to Fatah commissioner of mobilization and organization.⁹⁸ After Fatah's ousting from Lebanon in 1983, he relocated with the leadership to Tunis.

Objecting to the Oslo Accords, Ghneim refused to return in 1994 to the West Bank with the Palestinian leadership.⁹⁹ He persisted in this position until the Sixth Fatah General Congress, in 2009, which he helped organize. He has since settled in Nablus and serves as Fatah secretary-general.¹⁰⁰

In his 2009 reelection to the Fatah Central Committee, Ghneim received the most votes of any contestant, but his popularity has since dwindled over his general aloofness and infrequent granting of press interviews, along with his failure to undertake initiatives and demonstrate his political credentials. Regarding politics, he often has disagreed with Fatah leadership on the peace process and negotiations. For example, he was absent from the hours-long Fatah Central Committee meeting in July 2013 to study a possible return to negotiations with

⁹⁷ Samir Qadih, "Who Is Abu Maher Ghneim?" *Panet*, July 31, 2009, <http://www.panet.co.il/article/219119>.

⁹⁸ "Abu Maher' Ghneim Arrives Tonight to Reside Permanently in the Palestinian Territories," Maan News Agency, July 29, 2009, <http://www.maannews.net/Content.aspx?id=215497>.

⁹⁹ "Israeli Sources: Abu Maher Ghneim Will Be Next Palestinian President," Palestine Today News Agency, <http://paltoday.ps/ar/post/57762/الفلسطينية-للسلطة-القادم-الرئيس-غنيم-ماهر-أبو-إسرا-انبلية-مصادر>.

¹⁰⁰ "Abu Maher: Dahlan's Interview Does Not Deserve a Response," *al-Hayat al-Jadidah*, <http://www.alhayat-j.com/newsite/details.php?opt=2&id=230993&cid=3244>.

Israel.¹⁰¹ However, some argue that his return to the West Bank in 2009 at least indicates a minor moderation of his political attitude.^{102, 103}

Despite Ghneim's infrequent media appearances, he has strongly criticized Central Committee member Mohammad Dahlan. He recently called for Dahlan to stand before the Palestinian courts for the corruption charges against him, saying, "What is required of Dahlan is to turn himself over to the courts. He has the right to hire defense lawyers and Palestine is known for its clean courts."¹⁰⁴

¹⁰¹ "From the Secrets of the Leadership...Abu Maher Is Absent," Maan News Agency, <http://maannews.net/Content.aspx?id=615288>.

¹⁰² "Israeli Intelligence: Abu Maher Ghneim Is Not Qualified to Replace Abbas," Sama News, <http://www.samanews.com/ar/index.php?act=post&id=78117>.

¹⁰³ "Israeli Sources: Abu Maher Ghneim Will Be Next Palestinian President," Palestine Today News Agency, <http://paltoday.ps/ar/post/57762/الفلسطينية-للسلطة-القادم-الرئيس-غنيم-ماهر-ابو-اسر-انبلية-مصادر>

¹⁰⁴ "Abu Maher: Dahlan's Interview Does Not Deserve a Response," *al-Hayat*, <http://www.lhayat-jcom/news93&cid=3244>.

Muhammad al-Madani

محمد المدني



Birth: 1941

Position: head of the Committee for Dialogue with Israeli Society

Muhammad al-Madani worked for Khalil al-Wazir in the "Western Sector," the Fatah wing responsible for organizing militant activities in the 1980s in the Palestinian territories and Israel. However, after the signing of the Oslo Accords, he returned to the West Bank and served as governor of Bethlehem, later resigning to protest administrative appointments made without his approval.¹⁰⁵ His election to the Fatah Central Committee came in 2009. In December 2012, he assumed a newly created position as head of the Committee for Dialogue with Israeli Society, a government initiative that, true to its name, arranges meetings between Israeli civil society and Palestinian citizens and officials.¹⁰⁶

Madani has received substantial criticism, including charges of "normalization," for his contacts with Israelis. Nonetheless, he defended his work in a recent interview, saying, "It is necessary for communication with Israeli society to be a cornerstone of Palestinian politics. Communication with Israeli society is essential and important under any circumstance and even after Palestinian independence."¹⁰⁷

¹⁰⁵ "Madani Denies ... Disputes within the Central Committee Oust Elections Commissioner Madani," Sama News, <http://samanews.com/ar/index.php?act=post&id=64475>.

¹⁰⁶ "Without Limitations: Muhammad Madani, Chairman of the PLO Committee for Dialogue with Israeli Society," YouTube video, 25:02, posted by BBC Arabic, September 24, 2013, <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=dKwBBZ7VDkg>.

¹⁰⁷ Interview with Muhammad Madani, *al-Sham Today*, <http://www.alshamtoday.net/data.php?s=2&cat=100&id=6718#.VSGsOPnF-Ck>.

Sharif Ali Meshaal (Abbas Zaki) (Abu Meshaal)

شريف علي مشعل (عباس زكي) (أبو مشعل)



Birth: 1942 Sair (near Hebron)

Position: general commissioner for Arab-China relations, Fatah

Education: bachelor's degree in law, Damascus University¹⁰⁸

Sharif Ali Meshaal joined Fatah in 1962, while working toward his law degree. Shortly after graduating, Zaki became a teacher, but decided to get involved in Fatah politics after Israel occupied the West Bank in 1967. In 1970, he was appointed to the Fatah Revolutionary Council and later, in 1974, as a PLO representative to the People's Democratic Republic of Yemen (PDRY). He quickly climbed the PLO's diplomatic ranks, being appointed chief of the PDRY diplomatic corps in 1977 and then general chief of the diplomatic corps in 1980.¹⁰⁹

In 1986, he gained membership in the PNC, and in 1989 he was elected to the Fatah Central Committee along with being appointed secretary-general of the Higher Intifada Council and a member of the "Western Sector," the Fatah wing responsible for organizing and funding militant activities in the Palestinian territories and Israel.¹¹⁰ After the signing of the Oslo Accords, he returned to the West Bank and was appointed Fatah deputy commissioner of mobilization and organization, the Fatah position responsible for recruitment and activities. In 1996, he was elected to the PLC representing Hebron and was appointed Fatah foreign relations chief in 2003 and PLO ambassador to Lebanon in 2005. In 2009, he was reelected to the Fatah Central Committee and currently serves as Fatah general commissioner of Arab-China relations.¹¹¹

Considered a member of Fatah's old guard, Meshaal maintains a cordial relationship with President Abbas but is not considered a close confidant. He also frequently makes provocative statements about violence. During the summer 2014 Gaza war, he congratulated Gaza militants for their "valiant" performance, saying, "The actions of the resistance will put an end to this Zionist arrogance by sending

¹⁰⁸ Abbas Zaki's Facebook page, <http://washin.st/1ITeuaT>.

¹⁰⁹ Ibid.

¹¹⁰ See the Palestinian National Council website: <http://washin.st/1MPVqed>.

¹¹¹ Ibid.

rockets to Herzliya, Tel Aviv, and Jerusalem. These are among the memorable days of the Arabs."¹¹²

Website: <http://www.abbaszaki.plo.ps/>

Facebook: <http://washin.st/1J5NMyz>

¹¹² "Interview with Abbas Zaki, member of the Fatah Central Committee," YouTube, 10:41, posted by "A Mu.," July 14, 2014, https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=ed_ZS8zkZTE.

Jamal Muhaisen

جمال محيسن



Birth: March 15, 1949, Hebron Hills, southern West Bank

Position: Fatah commissioner for foreign regions

Education: doctorate in philosophy, Charles University, Prague, 1988; master's degree in Islamic studies, University of Tripoli (Lebanon), 1978; bachelor's degree in education, Beirut University, 1972

During his early years, Muhaisen and his family moved around the West Bank before settling in Amman in 1960. While working toward his undergraduate degree at Beirut University, he served on the student council, representing Fatah. After graduating, he assumed a number of important roles in Fatah, including as a member of the Mobilization and Organization Commission in Damascus—a role he continued when the PLO relocated to Tunis in 1982—and a member of the PNC. In 1989, he was elected to the Fatah Revolutionary Council, and in 1991 he joined the PLO's financial auditing committee. After the Palestinian leadership returned to the Palestinian territories, he served as a member of Fatah's oversight committee.

In 2007, he was appointed governor of Nablus, serving until his 2009 election to the Fatah Central Committee, for which he is commissioner for foreign regions, leading the party apparatus responsible for the Palestinian diaspora.¹¹³ He was also elected to the PLO Executive Committee in 2009.

Muhaisen recently inspired strong reactions from those sympathetic to Hamas after commenting on the group's classification by an Egyptian court as a terrorist group, saying, "It is a judicial and not a political decision."¹¹⁴

¹¹³ "Fatah Holds Regional Conference in United States of America," Maan News Agency, <http://www.maannews.net/arb/ViewDetails.aspx?ID=692245>.

¹¹⁴ "Muhaisen to *al-Hurriyah*: Considering Hamas a Terrorist Organization Is a Judicial Decision, Not Political," *al-Hurriyah*, <http://hr.ps/ar/news/70712.html>.

Nasser al-Qudwa

ناصر القدوة



Birth: 1953, Gaza¹¹⁵

Position: president, board of directors, Yasser Arafat Foundation; special envoy to Libya, Arab League

Education: bachelor's degree in dentistry, Cairo University, 1979

The son of Yasser Arafat's sister,¹¹⁶ Nasser al-Qudwa first learned about Fatah in depth from the former Palestinian leader when both lived in Libya. Impressed by Arafat and the Palestinian fedayin, Qudwa officially joined Fatah in 1969.¹¹⁷ He quickly became active in the youth movement and was elected to the Palestinian Diaspora Parliament and appointed in 1975 to the PNC, the PLO's highest decisionmaking body.^{118, 119} When he began his studies at Cairo University, Qudwa joined the respected General Union of Palestinian Students (GUPS) and was later elected to its administrative and executive councils. After graduating in 1979, he replaced Sakhr Basseiso as GUPS president and was appointed to the Palestinian Central Council, the PLO's second-highest decisionmaking body.^{120, 121}

Qudwa rose to the senior PLO leadership when Arafat appointed him permanent deputy to the PLO representative at the UN, Zuhdi al-Tarzi, in 1987. After four years serving under Tarzi, he became the PLO representative at the UN and played a crucial role in bringing a case against Israel to the International Court of Justice for the construction of the security barrier. In 2005, following Arafat's death, Riyad Mansour replaced Qudwa as the PLO representative at the UN, but Qudwa remained involved in Palestinian politics as foreign minister. Nonetheless,

¹¹⁵ "Israel Decides to Prevent Rajoub from Entering Tel Aviv to Participate in Conference," *al-Quds*, <http://www.alquds.com/news/article/view/id/442465>.

¹¹⁶ "Was Arafat's Death Natural?" *France 24*, <http://f24.my/1Ab5SjI>.

¹¹⁷ "Nasser al-Qudwa: Arafat Did Not Leave a Will," *al-Arabi al-Jadid*, <http://www.alaraby.co.uk/politics/6506b0f1-b464-42a2-837d-bb76dea12deb>.

¹¹⁸ "Founding of Council," Palestinian National Council, <http://washin.st/1CfjXPF>.

¹¹⁹ Mission of the State of Palestine to the United Nations, <http://palestineun.org/about-palestine/palestine-liberation-organization/>.

¹²⁰ "Nasser al-Qudwa...The Man of the Complex Task," *Aljazeera*, <http://www.aljazeera.net/news/reportsandinterviews/2012/3/6/ناصر-القدوة-رجل-المهمة-المعقدة>

¹²¹ Daoud Kattab, "Palestinian Central Council to Decide on Peace Talks," *Al-Monitor*, <http://www.al-monitor.com/pulse/originals/2014/04/palestinian-central-council-abbas-peace-talks.html>.

he was replaced a year later and has not returned to the center of Palestinian politics since.¹²²

Since 2007, Qudwa has served as president of the board of directors for the Yasser Arafat Foundation, a nonprofit committed to "preserving the legacy of Yasser Arafat."¹²³ Additionally, he has continued to develop his international diplomatic resume, serving as the UN secretary-general's special envoy to Afghanistan, deputy UN envoy, and Arab League envoy to Syria under Kofi Annan and Lakhdar Brahimi. He is currently the Arab League's special envoy to Libya.¹²⁴

Qudwa has a reputation as a seasoned Palestinian diplomat who was a stark Arafat advocate. He once aspired to become PLO chairman, but has indicated more recently he is not interested in pursuing higher office. He has maintained a rocky relationship with President Abbas, especially after being accused of building an opposition bloc within Fatah against Abbas in 2010 and declaring his opposition to the Palestinian UN statehood bid in 2011.^{125, 126, 127}

Qudwa has consistently supported a two-state solution but often declares that it may soon be invalidated by settlement building. During the U.S.-sponsored peace talks in 2010, he claimed that settlements may imminently derail the peace process: "It's about to reach a point whereby it is going to kill the possibility of a two-state solution."¹²⁸ He has also made some controversial remarks about violence. For example, while serving as foreign minister in 2005, he said, "The disarming of Palestinian factions is not on the table because weapons are legal as long as the occupation exists."¹²⁹

¹²² Ehud Yaari, "The Riddle of Succession in the Palestinian Authority," *PolicyWatch* 2252 (Washington Institute for Near East Policy, May 14, 2014), <http://www.washingtoninstitute.org/policy-analysis/view/the-riddle-of-succession-in-the-palestinian-authority>.

¹²³ Yasser Arafat Foundation, <http://www.yaf.ps/yaf/index.php?langid=2>.

¹²⁴ "UN Deputy Mediator on Syria Nasser al-Kidwa Resigns," *Al-Arabiya*, February 3, 2014, <http://english.alarabiya.net/en/News/middle-east/2014/02/03/U-N-deputy-mediator-on-Syria-Nasser-al-Kidwa-resigns.html>.

¹²⁵ "Nasser al-Qidwa Denies That He Proposed Himself as a Replacement for President Abbas," *Dunia al-Watan*, <http://www.alwatanvoice.com/arabic/news/2010/10/29/156337.html>.

¹²⁶ Ardavan Amir-Aslan, *Islam and the West: Wars of the Gods; The Geopolitics of Faith* (New York: Enigma Books, 2013).

¹²⁷ L. Barkan, "Palestinian Senior Officials, Writers: It Is Doubtful Whether a Bid to the UN Will Benefit the Palestinian Cause," *Inquiry & Analysis Series Report* 716 (Middle East Media Research Institute, July 26, 2011), <http://www.memri.org/report/en/print5506.htm>.

¹²⁸ Reuters, "Fatah Official: Israeli Settlements Could Kill Two-State Solution," *Haaretz*, September 27, 2010, <http://www.haaretz.com/news/diplomacy-defense/fatah-official-israeli-settlements-could-kill-two-state-solution-1.315997>.

¹²⁹ Editorial, "Call Time Out," *Jewish Chronicle*, June 16, 2005, p. 6, <http://digitalcollections.library.cmu.edu/awweb/awarchive?type=file&item=685991>.

Jibril Rajoub (Abu Rami)

جبريل الرجوب (أبو رامي)



Birth: May 14, 1953, Dura (near Hebron)¹³⁰

Education: master's degree in Middle East studies, al-Quds University, 2012; bachelor's degree in security studies, College of Defense and Security, Russia, 2004¹³¹

Position: president, Palestine Olympic Committee; president, Palestinian Football Association; deputy secretary, Fatah Central Committee¹³²

Jibril Rajoub joined Fatah as a teenager in September 1969, but he was arrested and given a life sentence in 1970 for throwing a hand grenade at an Israeli military vehicle. During his imprisonment, Rajoub studied Hebrew and English and even translated Menachem Begin's book *The Revolt*, about a prominent prestate Jewish paramilitary group, into Arabic.¹³³ However, Israel nullified his life sentence and deported him as part of a prisoner exchange in 1988, and he relocated to Tunisia. In Tunisia, Rajoub worked under Khalil al-Wazir (Abu Jihad), a senior Fatah military leader, serving as head of the West Bank Committee, for which he coordinated activities in the Palestinian territories during the first intifada. During this time, he frequently clashed with Gaza Committee head Mohammad Dahlan.

Following the signing of the Oslo Accords, he returned to the West Bank, for which he was appointed chief of Preventive Security. During his tenure, he fostered close relations with Israel and the CIA, was responsible for training much of the Preventive Security Organization (PSO), and allegedly participated in secret peace talks sponsored by the United States.¹³⁴ However, Israel targeted Rajoub's security headquarters in Bitunia during the second intifada, claiming he

¹³⁰ "Jibril Rajoub," Aljazeera,

<http://www.aljazeera.net/specialfiles/pages/D49342F5-86F0-4EB2-996A-A4BF250024D6>.

¹³¹ "Al-Quds University Celebrates Its Excellent Students and General Jibril Rajoub," *Dunia al-Watan*,

<http://www.alwatanvoice.com/arabic/news/2012/06/29/292071.html>.

¹³² Ibid.

¹³³ "Jibril Rajoub," Aljazeera,

<http://www.aljazeera.net/specialfiles/pages/e8946b61-ede0-4b3f-8548-006acbbab5ac>.

¹³⁴ Matthew Kalman, "Rajoub Begins His Run," *Haaretz*,

<http://www.haaretz.com/blogs/2.1167/.premium-1.590851>.

did not do enough to prevent terrorist attacks.¹³⁵ Shortly thereafter, he engaged in a power struggle with Gaza counterpart Mohammad Dahlan, then chief of Gaza's Preventive Security, for control of the PSO.^{136, 137} Nonetheless, under U.S. pressure to unify the security forces, Arafat sacked Rajoub in 2002 amid concerns that he was plotting against him, inspiring major protests among the Preventive Security forces in the West Bank.^{138, 139} Responding to internal pressure, Arafat reappointed Rajoub as a national security advisor, a position he continued to hold after Arafat's death.¹⁴⁰

In the 2006 Palestinian parliamentary elections, Rajoub ran against and lost to his brother Nayef Rajoub, an imam and Hamas leader, to represent Hebron. Following his defeat, he resigned as national security advisor and assumed the leadership of the Palestine Olympic Committee and Palestinian Football Association. In 2009, he reemerged as a major political player when he was elected to the Fatah Central Committee, serving currently as its deputy secretary-general.¹⁴¹

Rajoub, a Fatah loyalist, has established himself as an influential member of the Fatah Central Committee.¹⁴² He frequently defends President Abbas and his political agenda. He has also consistently supported the two-state solution and said that violence does not advance the Palestinian cause.¹⁴³ Nevertheless, although Rajoub sometimes appears on Israeli television for interviews and travels to Israel to meet Israelis and participate in conferences, the Israeli defense minister barred him from entering Israel in June 2013 for a Meretz Party conference.¹⁴⁴

In a speech at the Institute for National Security Studies (INSS) conference in April 2013, he stated, "The solution for this conflict is a political one. It is not militaristic, ideological, or economic. The only solution is a political solution and

¹³⁵ Joe Stork, *Erased in a Moment: Bombing Attacks against Civilians* (New York: Human Rights Watch, 2002), p. 113, <http://bit.ly/1t6sCDY>.

¹³⁶ Ephraim Kahana and Muhammad Suwaed, *Historical Dictionary of Middle Eastern Intelligence* (Lanham, MD: Scarecrow Press, 2009), p. 69, <http://washin.st/1erORUr>.

¹³⁷ Lamis Andoni, "Questions of Legitimacy," *al-Ahram Weekly*, August 19-25, 2004, <http://weekly.ahram.org.eg/2004/704/re1.htm>.

¹³⁸ "Rajoub Supporters Demonstrate in Hebron against the Ousting of Their Leader," *Elaph*, <http://www.elaph.com/ElaphWeb/Archive/1026046583763670100.htm>.

¹³⁹ Jibril Rajoub's Facebook page, https://www.facebook.com/Jibril.Rajoub/info?tab=page_info.

¹⁴⁰ Frank Bruni, "Arafat Picks Security Adviser He Had Shunned," *New York Times*, August 26, 2003, <http://www.nytimes.com/2003/08/26/world/arafat-picks-security-adviser-he-had-shunned.html>.

¹⁴¹ Isabel Kershner, "Fatah Party Election Brings in a New Generation," *New York Times*, August 11, 2009, http://www.nytimes.com/2009/08/12/world/middleeast/12fatah.html?_r=0.

¹⁴² Matthew Kalman, "Rajoub Begins His Run," *Haaretz*, <http://www.haaretz.com/blogs/2.1167/.premium-1.590851>.

¹⁴³ "Jibril Rajoub Acknowledges His Collaboration [with the Enemy]," YouTube video, 1:12, posted by "RamallahUSA," August 25, 2008, <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=rYUH8wGDNMo>.

¹⁴⁴ "Israel Decides to Prevent Rajoub from Entering Tel Aviv to Participate in Conference," *al-Quds*, <http://www.alquds.com/news/article/view/id/442465>.

the only game in town is the two-state solution."¹⁴⁵ However, Rajoub often makes much more incendiary, less-conciliatory remarks, such as his statement shortly after the kidnapping of three Israeli teenagers in June 2014, when he said, "Kidnapping is the only language understood by Israel, thus it is the only way to free our prisoners that Israel refused to release. The kidnapping of Israeli soldiers is the only solution to make Israel release the Palestinian prisoners held in its prisons and who are increasing on a daily basis."¹⁴⁶

Facebook: https://www.facebook.com/Jibril.Rajoub/info?tab=page_info

Twitter: <https://twitter.com/JibrilRajoub>

Website: <http://www.jibrilrajoub.ps/>

¹⁴⁵ "Statement by Jibril Rajoub regarding the Palestinian Issue," Tel Aviv University, webcast, April 23, 2013, http://video.tau.ac.il/events/index.php?option=com_k2&view=item&id=3646%3Acreative_ideas_for_israels_changing_strategic_environment-orig-d2-24&lang=en.

¹⁴⁶ Adnan Abu Amer, "Hard-Line Fatah Leader in Running to Succeed Mahmoud Abbas," Al-Monitor, July 3, 2014, <http://www.al-monitor.com/pulse/originals/2014/07/palestine-qatar-nominates-rajoub-abbas-president.html>.

Nabil Abu Rudeinah

نبيل ابو ردينة



Birth: 1952, Bethlehem

Position: spokesperson of the Palestinian presidency

Education: bachelor's degree in law, Cairo University, 1970s¹⁴⁷

Born to a Christian family, Rudeinah worked under Khalil al-Wazir until the latter's assassination by Israel in 1988. Yasser Arafat thereafter appointed Rudeinah spokesperson of the Palestinian presidency. Rudeinah also served as a close advisor to Arafat and participated in numerous negotiations, including the 2000 Camp David talks.¹⁴⁸ After Arafat's death in 2004, Rudeinah was reappointed spokesperson of the presidency, a position he still holds today.¹⁴⁹ He was appointed to the Fatah Central Committee in early 2010.¹⁵⁰

Rudeinah is considered a loyalist of the Palestinian president, never contradicting the official line of Abbas, or Arafat before him. He travels everywhere with Abbas, with whom he maintains a strong relationship. Even though he has served in the same position for almost thirty years, he seemingly does not harbor ambitions for higher PA office.

¹⁴⁷ "Nabil Abu Rudeinah," Jerusalem Media and Communications Centre, <http://www.jmcc.org/people.aspx?id=4356>.

¹⁴⁸ Dennis Ross, *The Missing Peace: The Inside Story of the Fight for Middle East Peace* (New York: Farrar, Straus and Giroux, 2005).

¹⁴⁹ Nasser Liham, "Nabil Abu Rudeinah...30 Years in a Cage of Tigers," Maan News Agency, November 3, 2011, <http://www.maannews.net/Content.aspx?id=435060>.

¹⁵⁰ "Appointment of Abu Rudeinah as Member of Central Committee," Sama News, <http://www.samanews.com/ar/index.php?act=post&id=64759>.

Nabil Shaath (Abu Rashid)

نبيل شعث (أبو رشيد)



Birth: August 1938, Safed

Position: commissioner, Fatah Department of International Relations¹⁵¹

Education: master's and doctoral degrees, University of Pennsylvania, 1961, 1965; bachelor's degree in business administration, University of Alexandria, 1958

Nabil Shaath fled during the 1948 Arab-Israeli war to Egypt, where he was raised and earned his bachelor's degree. After traveling to the United States for his graduate studies,¹⁵² Shaath returned to the Middle East, acquiring Egyptian citizenship and leading a major Arab consulting firm, TEAM International, while also teaching business administration at the American University of Beirut.¹⁵³

In 1971, Shaath was appointed senior economic and diplomatic advisor to PLO chairman Yasser Arafat, for whom he quickly became a trusted confidant.¹⁵⁴ However, Shaath only emerged into the Palestinian political spotlight in 1991, at the start of the Madrid peace talks, as a key interlocutor between the Palestinian leadership in Tunis and the Palestinian delegation in Madrid.¹⁵⁵ He was also one of the first PLO officials to talk to Israelis.

After returning to Gaza following the signing of the Oslo Accords, he was elected to the PLC in 1996, representing Khan Yunis, and was subsequently appointed minister of planning and international cooperation.¹⁵⁶ However, Shaath's credibility and popularity declined substantially after a PLC-led committee

¹⁵¹ Eric R. Mandel, "The Viability of a Two-State Solution after Operation Protective Edge," *Jerusalem Post*, September 7, 2014, <http://www.jpost.com/Opinion/The-viability-of-a-two-state-solution-after-Operation-Protective-Edge-374708>.

¹⁵² Ibid.

¹⁵³ "Nabil Shaath," European Institute for Research on Mediterranean and Euro-Arab Cooperation, <http://www.medea.be/en/themes/biographies/stu/shaath-nabil/>.

¹⁵⁴ Philip Mattar, *Encyclopedia of the Palestinians*, rev. ed. (New York: Facts on File, 2005), p. 440, <http://washin.st/IITggbO>.

¹⁵⁵ Robin Wright and Michael Parks, "Moving toward Peace: Potholes Mark Road to Madrid II," *Los Angeles Times*, July 26, 1994, http://articles.latimes.com/1994-07-26/news/mn-20036_1_peace-process.

¹⁵⁶ "The Oslo Agreement: An Interview with Nabil Shaath," *Journal of Palestine Studies* 23, no. 1 (Autumn 1993): pp. 5-13, http://www.jstor.org/stable/2537854?seq=1-page_scan_tab_contents.

accused him of embezzling PA funds for his and his colleagues' benefit in 1997.¹⁵⁷ Nonetheless, Shaath has remained active in Palestinian politics, participating in the 2000 Camp David and 2001 Taba peace talks, leading a committee to rebuild PA infrastructure after the second intifada, and being appointed foreign minister in 2003.¹⁵⁸ He even served as acting PA prime minister when then prime minister Ahmed Qurei briefly ran for Palestinian parliament in 2005.¹⁵⁹ In 2009, Shaath was reelected to the Fatah Central Committee and currently serves as Fatah commissioner of international relations and advisor to President Mahmoud Abbas.¹⁶⁰ Recently, he has led Palestinian efforts to achieve European recognition of the state of Palestine.

Over the years, Shaath has established himself as an important Palestinian leader with close ties to European and other governments. He maintains a strong relationship with President Abbas but is viewed by a large part of the Palestinian public as corrupt. Still, he has never having spent time in prison, unlike most Fatah Central Committee members. He has developed a substantial fortune and owns an excellent collection of Palestine stamps.

¹⁵⁷ Serge Schmemmann, "Corruption Panel Urges Arafat to Dismiss His Cabinet," *New York Times*, July 30, 1997, <http://www.nytimes.com/1997/07/30/world/corruption-panel-urges-arafat-to-dismiss-his-cabinet.html>.

¹⁵⁸ See Palestine News and Information Agency, <http://www.medeia.be/en/themes/biographies/stu/shaath-nabil/>.

¹⁵⁹ Spencer C. Tucker, ed., *The Encyclopedia of the Arab-Israeli Conflict: A Political, Social, and Military History*, Vol. 1 (Santa Barbara: ABC-CLIO, 2008), p. 440, <http://www.amazon.com/The-Encyclopedia-Arab-Israeli-Conflict-volumes/dp/1851098410>.

¹⁶⁰ Neri Zilber, "Gaza's Explosion Waiting to Happen," *Politico*, December 21, 2014, <http://www.politico.com/magazine/story/2014/12/the-explosion-waiting-to-happen-in-gaza-113727.html> - VXCg2CWuFS.

Hussein al-Sheikh

حسين الشيخ (أبو جهاد)



Birth: December 14, 1960

Position: PA minister of civil affairs

Hussein al-Sheikh was elected to the Fatah Central Committee in 2009. As minister of civil affairs, he serves as the primary interlocutor between the Palestinian people, the PA, and Israel. In this role, he has coordinated with Israel to enable family reunifications, secure permits for Palestinians to visit and receive health care in Israel and pray at Jerusalem's al-Aqsa Mosque, and address other issues important Palestine-related issues. In September 2012, Sheikh was hit with sexual harassment charges but vehemently denied them. Sheikh also was recently appointed to represent the PA in the trilateral Gaza rebuilding committee following the 2014 Gaza war.

Mohammad Shtayyeh

محمد اشتية



Birth: 1958, Nablus¹⁶¹

Education: doctorate in development studies, Sussex University, 1989; master's degree in development studies, Sussex University, 1983; bachelor's degree in economics and business administration, Birzeit University, 1981¹⁶²

Position: director, Palestinian Economic Council for Development & Reconstruction

Mohammad Shtayyeh is a former assistant professor of economics at Birzeit University and a member of numerous organizations dedicated to developing the infrastructure of the Palestinian territories, such as the Technical Development Corporation (TDC), the forerunner to the Palestine Investment Fund (PIF), and the Palestinian Housing Council.¹⁶³ In 1993, he was appointed as a permanent member to the Ad Hoc Liaison Committee, a tripartite entity consisting of Israel, the PA, and international donors commissioned to facilitate international aid to the Palestinians. In 1994, along with other Palestinian leaders, he founded the Palestinian Economic Council for Development & Reconstruction (PECDAR), a government institute that researches, crafts, and implements development policies. He was appointed general director of PECDAR in 1996, and in 2003 named president, with the rank of minister, by Yasser Arafat.

Shtayyeh has joined and led multiple other initiatives related to Palestinian development and also focused on regional projects. He founded the Institute for Information and Technology and the National Administration Institute to train and improve the efficiency of PA employees.¹⁶⁴ He was a member of the cabinet, minister of public works and housing in 2005 and 2009, and governor of the Palestine Islamic Bank in 2007.¹⁶⁵ Shtayyeh has served on multiple Palestinian negotiating teams, including the most recent U.S.-led negotiations in 2013-2014.

¹⁶¹ "Abbas Accepts Resignation of Prime Minister and Shtayyeh Is Strongest of Potential Replacements," *al-Mayadeen*, <http://www.almayadeen.net/ar/news/palestine-BBv4qflasUOZKaHmAKzpNA/> -يقبل-عباس- المرشحين-أقوى-وأشنتيه-الحكومة-رئيس-استقالة

¹⁶² "Dr. Mohammad Shtayyeh Arabic CV," Palestinian Economic Council for Development & Reconstruction, <http://www.pecdar.ps/etemplate.php?id=645>.

¹⁶³ Ibid.

¹⁶⁴ Ibid.

¹⁶⁵ Ibid.

However, he resigned before their collapse in April 2014, protesting the lack of progress.¹⁶⁶

Shtayyeh was elected to the Fatah Central Committee in 2009. He also contributed to a long report surveying the damage to Gaza following the summer 2014 war.

Shtayyeh maintains a close relationship to Abbas and frequently defends his policies, seeing himself as a potential Abbas successor.¹⁶⁷ Although historically a supporter of a two-state solution, he recently warned that it may no longer be possible: "We are headed toward the one-state option."¹⁶⁸

¹⁶⁶ "Abbas Accepts Resignation of Palestinian Peace Negotiator Shtayyeh," *Jerusalem Post*, November 22, 2013, <http://www.jpost.com/Diplomacy-and-Politics/Abbas-accepts-resignation-of-Palestinian-peace-negotiator-Shtayyeh-332671>.

¹⁶⁷ Editorial, "Palestinians Are Let Down Again by Their Leaders," June 27, 2013, <http://www.thenational.ae/thenationalconversation/editorial/palestinians-are-let-down-again-by-their-leaders>.

¹⁶⁸ Khaled Abu Toameh, "Former PLO Negotiator Calls for 'Resistance' against Israel," *Jerusalem Post*, January 23, 2014, <http://www.jpost.com/Diplomacy-and-Politics/Former-PLO-negotiator-calls-on-PA-to-endorse-resistance-against-Israel-339194>.

Tawfiq al-Tirawi (Abu Hussein)

توفيق الطيراوي (أبو حسين)



Birth: November 15, 1948, al-Tira (near Lod)¹⁶⁹

Position: Fatah commissioner of popular organizations; president of the board of directors, Istiqlal University (Jericho)^{170, 171}

Education: doctoral studies in education administration, Tanta University (Egypt); master's degree in education administration, al-Najah National University (Nablus), 2008; bachelor's degree in philosophy and psychology, Beirut University, 1976; bachelor's degree in Arab literature, Beirut University, 1971¹⁷²

Tawfiq al-Tirawi moved with his family to Rantis, a village outside Ramallah, following the outbreak of the 1948 Arab-Israeli war.¹⁷³ Throughout his childhood, he and his family migrated to different West Bank towns, finally settling in Jericho. Tirawi joined Fatah while a student at Beirut University. He soon assumed senior student positions in the movement, including leadership of both the General Union of Palestinian Students and the Fatah students' secretary-general's office.¹⁷⁴ After graduation, Tirawi emerged as a prominent Fatah leader, gaining membership in the Palestinian National Council (PNC) and the Fatah Regional Committee in Lebanon. In the years leading up to the 1982 Lebanon war, he contributed substantially to Fatah's organizational, military, and political wings. But meanwhile, he was closely followed by Syrian intelligence, culminating in his imprisonment from 1985 to 1990.¹⁷⁵

Following the signing of the Oslo Accords, he relocated to the West Bank to serve in the PA's General Intelligence Service. He soon became enmeshed in controversy when Israel accused him of ordering the killing of property owners who sell land to Israelis.¹⁷⁶ In 2002, Israel placed Tirawi on its wanted terrorists list

¹⁶⁹ See <http://fpnp.net/site/news/20653>.

¹⁷⁰ "Tawfiq al-Tirawi: Participation of Fatah Members in Lawyer Union Elections Is Obligatory," *Dunia al-Watan*, <http://www.alwatanvoice.com/arabic/news/2015/04/04/692290.html>.

¹⁷¹ "General Tawfiq al-Tirawi," Istiqlal University website, http://www.pass.ps/site/index.php?action=show_page&ID=115&lang=ar&cat=114.

¹⁷² "Tawfiq al-Tirawi," Aljazeera Encyclopedia, <http://washin.st/1LpsM6t>.

¹⁷³ Tawfiq al-Tirawi's Facebook page, https://www.facebook.com/Tawfiq.Altirawi/info?tab=page_info.

¹⁷⁴ Tawfiq al-Tirawi's website, <http://www.tirawi.ps/>.

¹⁷⁵ Ibid.

¹⁷⁶ Rebecca Trounson, "Palestinian Officers Deny Taking Part in Slayings," *Los Angeles Times*, June 3, 1997, http://articles.latimes.com/1997-06-03/news/mn-65171_1_palestinian-authority.

for aiding the al-Aqsa Martyrs Brigades, but he escaped to the besieged Mukata, staying there until Israel pardoned him as a goodwill gesture to Abbas in 2007.¹⁷⁷ ¹⁷⁸ Despite Tirawi's tense relationship with Israel, Mahmoud Abbas promoted him to General Intelligence Service chief in 2007, but quickly replaced him in 2008 to appease Hamas and achieve a reconciliation accord. In 2009, Tirawi was elected to the Fatah Central Committee and currently serves as the Fatah commissioner of popular organizations.¹⁷⁹ He also chairs the committee investigating the death of Yasser Arafat and is pursuing a doctorate in education administration at Tanta University.¹⁸⁰

Tirawi has developed a reputation as a staunch Fatah loyalist and public supporter of Abbas.¹⁸¹ He is rumored, however, to maintain some ties to Mohammad Dahlan, an internal Fatah opponent of Abbas.^{182, 183} He also has called for appointing a vice president to Abbas, arguing it will ensure a smooth transition should Abbas be unable to carry out his presidential duties.¹⁸⁴

Facebook: <https://www.facebook.com/t.tirawi/timeline>

Twitter: <https://twitter.com/GTirawi>

Website: <http://www.tirawi.ps/ar/about-tirawi>

¹⁷⁷ David Samuels, "In a Ruined Country," *Atlantic*, September 2005,

<http://www.theatlantic.com/magazine/archive/2005/09/in-a-ruined-country/304167/>.

¹⁷⁸ "Profiles: Killing Arafat," Aljazeera, November 6, 2013, <http://www.aljazeera.com/investigations/killing-arafat/2013/09/profiles-killing-arafat-201392392859540472.html>.

¹⁷⁹ "Election of New Members to Fatah Central Office for Lawyers," Maan News Agency, <http://www.maannews.net/arb/ViewDetails.aspx?ID=750223>.

¹⁸⁰ Gregg Carlstrom, "Yasser Arafat's Body Exhumed in Ramallah," Aljazeera, November 27, 2012, <http://www.aljazeera.com/news/middleeast/2012/11/2012112795443645353.html>.

¹⁸¹ Reuters, "Hamas Security Officers Question Daughter of Abbas Loyalist," *Haaretz*, July 1, 2007, <http://www.haaretz.com/news/hamas-security-officers-question-daughter-of-abbas-loyalist-1.224508>.

¹⁸² "Altercation between Tirawi and Muhaisen Because of Dahlan," *al-Resalah*, <http://alresalah.ps/ar/index.php?act=post&id=101973>.

¹⁸³ Mahmoud Jaraba and Lihi Ben Shitrit, "Fatah in the Shadow of the Abbas-Dahlan Conflict," *Sada*, Carnegie Endowment for International Peace, April 22, 2014, http://carnegeendowment.org/sada/index.cfm?fa=show&article=55402&solr_hilite=

¹⁸⁴ "Fatah Leader Calls for Creation of Palestinian Vice President Position," *Maghress*, <http://www.maghress.com/bayanealyaoume/38556>.

Salim Zanoun (Abu Adib)

سليم الزعنون (أبو الأديب)



Birth: December 28, 1933, Gaza

Position: chairman, Palestinian National Council

Education: graduate degree in politics and economy, Cairo University, 1958; bachelor's and graduate degrees in law, Cairo University, 1955, 1957

Salim Zanoun moved in the early 1950s from Gaza to Cairo, where he studied law and met Yasser Arafat, whom he joined as a leader of the General Union of Palestinian Students. The two developed a strong relationship and cooperated closely, especially during the 1956 Suez Crisis. After completing his graduate studies, Zanoun returned to Gaza to teach but quickly transitioned to a role in the Gaza judiciary and was appointed acting attorney general. In 1960, at age twenty-seven, he was appointed attorney general in Kuwait.¹⁸⁵

Following a visit from Khalil al-Wazir, Arafat's top deputy, Zanoun mulled a foray into politics after many years absorbed in legal work. He told Wazir that he would write for the political magazine *Our Palestine*. However, he soon found himself deeply involved in Fatah and contributed extensively to its official founding as a movement in 1965. Four years later, he became deputy chairman of the PNC.¹⁸⁶ He was elected to the Fatah Central Committee in 1989 and appointed its main representative in Kuwait and the Gulf. In 1996, he was elected chairman of the PNC, a position he still holds today.¹⁸⁷

Zanoun, a member of Fatah's old guard who lives in Amman,¹⁸⁸ enjoys cordial relations with President Abbas and is a popular Fatah official, as evidenced by his receiving the fourth most votes in his 2009 reelection to the Fatah Central Committee.

¹⁸⁵ Naim Nasser, review of the memoir *al-Sira wa al-Masira*, by Salim Zanoun, PLO Studies Center, <http://www.shuun.ps/page-381-ar.html>.

¹⁸⁶ "Chairman of the Palestinian National Council," <http://washin.st/1Br0YLF>.

¹⁸⁷ "Salim Zanoun," Aljazeera Encyclopedia, <http://washin.st/1H1Hrnq>.

¹⁸⁸ "President Abbas Receives Zanoun in Amman," *al-Quds*, <http://www.alquds.com/news/article/view/id/552077>.

