

## **Biography of the Palestinian President**

### **Dr. Mahmoud Abbas**

#### **Upbringing**

President Mahmoud Abbas was born in the city of Safad in 1935. In the aftermath of the Nakba (Catastrophe) of 1948, Mahmoud Abbas, his family, along with many Palestinians were forced to leave their homeland and became refugees in Syria.

#### **Academic achievements**

President Abbas received his elementary education in Safad. As a refugee in Damascus, at the age of 13, he worked for two years to assist in providing for his family, and continued his education studying at home. He resumed his preparatory studies and continued until he finished his secondary studies, Abbas then joined Damascus University and received his Law degree in 1958. In 1982, he was awarded the Doctorate degree from Moscow.

#### **Life in Politics**

President Abbas' involvement in national and political activities began in the mid fifties. At the time Abbas and a number of colleagues formed a secret organization, in the wake of which, the Palestinian National Liberation Movement "Fateh" was formed. Fateh was launched and came into being on Jan. 1<sup>st</sup>, 1965.

In 1957, Mahmoud Abbas worked as director of employee affairs at the Ministry of Education in Qatar. In this capacity, he managed to hire Palestinian from the West Bank and Gaza to work in Qatar in various positions, particularly in education. Abbas travelled frequently to these areas for this purpose.

In 1970, Abbas became fully involved in the national movement. In 1974, Abbas initiated the idea of holding contacts with the Israelis. Those contacts were approved by the Palestine National Council, and began in the same year.

In 1978 he initiated the project of 'twin cities' linking Palestinian cities with other Arab cities.

Abbas represented the Palestinian side in signing the Oslo Agreement on the White House Lawn on Sept. 13, 1993.

On behalf of the PLO, Abbas signed the Transition Agreement signed in Washington in Sept.23, 1995.

## **Official positions held**

- Member of Fateh Central Council since 1964.
- Head of the Fateh Movement in 2004
- Secretary General of the PLO (1996-2004)
- Head of the National and International Relations Department of the PLO (1984 - 2000).
- Head of the Palestinian-Jordanian Committee (1979 - 1981).
- Head of the PLO's Negotiations Department (1974 - 2003).
- Head of the Central Election Committee (1996 - 2002).
- Prime Minister of the Palestinian National Authority in 2003.
- Chairman of the Palestine Liberation Organization (2004 - present).
- Elected President of the Palestinian National Authority on Jan. 19, 2005.
- Elected President of Palestine by the Palestine Central Council on Oct. 14, 2008.

## **Publications**

President Mahmoud Abbas authored more than 60 books in Arabic, titles of some of which are as follows:

- A No Return Travel Ticket
- From the Memory of Abu Mazen
- Investing in Success
- Palestinian Jewish Refugees
- These Contacts, Why?
- Israel and South Africa
- The Political Process in the Middle East
- The Years after Oslo
- The One Hundred and Thirty Days Experience
- Ethnic and Religious Polarization in Israel
- The Epic of Evil
- The Fall of Netanyahu's Government
- The Other Face
- The Palestinian Israeli Peace Negotiations
- Zionism, Beginning and End
- The Road to Oslo
- From Oslo to Palestine
- The Oslo Agreement in the Eyes of the Opposition
- The Zionist Movement in the Literature of Lenin
- Wanted; An Arab Keren Hayesod.