

Popular Front for the Liberation of Palestine (PFLP). *First Political Statement. Al-Hurriya (Beirut), 1 December 1967. Translated by The Palestinian Revolution, 2016.*

Masses of our Arab nation;

Masses of our Palestinian people;

For fifty years our people have been confronted with an uninterrupted series of Zionist-imperialist conspiracies against our nation and against the right of its people to liberty and life. For fifty years, the forces of Zionism and of world imperialism have hatched plots, perpetrated acts of aggression and waged war, seeking to consolidate the existence of the state of Israel and to force acceptance of the idea which it embodies. Yet not for a single day, in the whole of this cruel period of history, have our people rested from the struggle to prevent the realisation of these designs. Throughout the years the people of Palestine have been engaged in a continuous struggle which has manifested itself in repeated revolts and upheavals. Recently, the struggle has crystallised into commando activity which has been carried on by the vanguards of the Palestinian people in the usurped territory. Commando activity is an expression of our people's refusal to submit or to surrender, and of their rejection of any "settlement" or any form of futile political action. It is an expression, too, of the determination of the Palestinian people to take the initiative in blazing the trail towards total liberation, which is also the responsibility of the whole Arab people.

Masses of our struggling people;

We hereby declare that the military defeat which the Arab armies suffered was only the beginning of a new era--of revolutionary action in which the people will assume the responsibility and take the lead in combating the forces of imperialism and Zionism, for such is their proper role. They will do this by force of arms, which history has shown to be the most effective means of overcoming all forms of imperialist aggression and of giving the initiative to the people. This is the way in which they can mould the future to their will and in accordance with their interests, in the face of imperialist, Zionist and reactionary acts of aggression. The only weapon left in the hands of the people with which to rechannel history into its proper course, with which to bleed the resources of the enemy and eventually to overcome him, is revolutionary violence. In the face of a vicious enemy who demands

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unconditional surrender, this is the only course open to the people of the Arab nation. The Palestinian Arab people, both in the occupied territory and throughout the whole Arab world, who are fully aware of the objective circumstances attendant on the Arab and Palestinian effort, both before and after 5 June, and of the nature of the phase through which they are passing, know that the time is ripe to raise the banner of armed popular struggle. It is time to undertake armed popular resistance, and to exploit it to the full, in the course of a war that will be long and cruel, but which can only end with victory of the will and the aspirations of the people.

For the first time since the disaster of 1948, the masses of the people of Palestine are to be found, throughout the whole of occupied Palestine, face to face with the enemy usurper. We intend to face the challenge to the bitter end. It is up to us either to accept the challenge or to give in and allow the enemy to realise his ambitions, to continue his daily humiliation of our people, and to bleed us of our means of livelihood. Throughout the whole period of the dispersal of our people, over the past twenty years, the situation has never before arisen in which the fate of our cause, of our people, of every Palestinian, has been conditional on the determination of our people to do battle with the invaders and to rally to the defence of the dignity of the ties that bind us to our land and of the dignity of man.

This is our message to the people of Palestine, to those in the isolation of the refugee camps, to the farmers of a land in flames, the persecuted and the poverty-stricken of our towns, of our villages and of the camps of misery: there is but one course before you and one choice – resistance; there is but one rallying cry from this day on: armed resistance. There is no life left for us in our land except in the pursuit of popular armed struggle. We live to serve its objectives and to fight its battles day after day.

Armed resistance is the effective course, it is the only course, it is the course our people can follow if they are to stand up to the Zionist enemy and to combat his interests and his very presence. The people are the stuff of which the resistance is made, they are its guiding hand, and it is through them that final victory will be achieved. The enlisting of the potential of the popular masses and the mobilisation of their active resources can only be achieved through popular revolutionary organisation, which embarks on the armed struggle strengthened by the armed potential of the masses, by their awareness of the scope of the battle and its stages, and by the constant marshaling of all the human resources that are connected with the armed struggle, and its military and political objectives.

Through revolutionary organisation and under its guidance, the armed popular masses will become better fitted to pursue the course of resistance and to endure in it despite all difficulties and all obstacles. For that reason, and in order to unite the forces of the people of Palestine in the occupied territory and to combine their resources, complete agreement has been reached among the following Palestinian organisations: The Heroes of the Return, the Palestine Liberation Front (the Abd al-Latif Sharuru division, the Izz ad-Din al-Qassam division and the Abd al-Qader al-Husayni division) the National Front for the Liberation of Palestine (Youth of the Revenge) and several other Palestinian groups in the homeland.

The above-mentioned groups have decided to join ranks under the name of "The Popular Front for the Liberation of Palestine," which organisation has undertaken to unite in the certainty that the nature and the dimensions of the battle of destiny and of enemy forces make imperative the unification of the efforts of our people and of their revolutionary ranks in their long and bitter struggle against their enemies. The Popular Front for the Liberation of Palestine, which has already approached an essential section of the revolutionary forces of our people, now issues an open appeal to all Palestinian forces and all Palestinian groups to bring about a wider national union of the forces of revolution, so that this may lead to the unity of all Palestinian groups engaged in armed resistance. What the masses really demand is that all engaged in the struggle should be united. The battle will be long and cruel and will brook no disunity among the ranks of the national movement. For this reason, in its zeal to meet this demand, in response to which it came into existence, the Popular Front now appeals to all those engaged in armed resistance. It is an article of faith for the Front that the sole guarantee for the endurance of the armed struggle and its escalation into a full-scale Palestinian revolt in the fullest sense of the expression is that the popular masses should display total solidarity with the armed resistance and with its united forces.

Masses of our struggling people;

The only language that the enemy understands is that of revolutionary violence. Armed resistance is the one way in which our land can become the major field of battle for the long-drawn-out struggle against the occupation and its efforts to liquidate our cause, whether through attempts to establish a regime which will owe its allegiance to the enemy occupying our land, or the recent attempts to resettle the refugees in various Arab areas, or even the desperate efforts to impose a dishonourable settlement upon us by occupying certain regions of the Arab homeland. The historic course which we shall

follow will be to engage the enemy in fierce fighting on every inch of soil trod by his soldiers until the day comes when we shall launch such an attack against the enemy that the land of Palestine becomes an inferno whose flames will consume the invaders; for armed resistance knows no limits. Nor should the resistance be the exclusive province of those who actually fight; every Palestinian has his role to play in combating the enemy. Let there be a total boycott of all the establishments which the enemy is attempting to set up, whether economic, civil or political. Let the rallying cry of the people be "steadfastness till victory" Let us become firmly rooted in our land, for we shall stay in it and never leave it. The Front, and with it the masses of the people, stand up today and say: "We shall die rather than leave our land." This is the slogan we must repeat every day when every shot is fired, when every martyr meets his death. The land of Palestine today belongs to the masses. Every square inch of it that must be bought with blood and freed from the sway of the usurper will be the heritage of those who fight for it. Every Palestinian will dig his nails into the soil, into the very rocks of his land. He will not forsake one inch of it for it belongs to the multitudes of the poor, the hungry, the refugees. Our fighters die that these may once again enjoy their right to liberate the land; they die with their heads held high.

The people are the lungs through which the resistance fighter must breathe. The participation of the people in the battle is our guarantee of eventual victory. Popular support for the resistance fighters, to be given everywhere and at all times, constitutes the firm and sound basis for the endurance of our struggle and for its escalation to the point where the enemy, his bases and his illegitimate aspirations, will be crushed. Armed resistance rests upon the foundations of the people and their support. All collaborators and all traitors are enemies of the people. Their fate will be as the fate of the enemy who occupies our land: they will be crushed.

The Popular Front for the Liberation of Palestine, in doing what it must to dispel the clouds of waiting and stagnation which have enveloped our land under the occupation, and in declaring its determination to reject all forms of humiliation and abasement and any "settlement," makes this pledge to our people: to present them with nothing but the truth in whatever relates to any engagements with the enemy, our achievements, and whatever real obstacles stand in the way of the movement of armed resistance. The people must have the truth, for we do not believe that we can be any more zealous for the cause and for the welfare of the people than the people themselves. The people must be fully aware of the achievements of the armed resistance and of the problems involved, with no embellishments but with no calls to alarm, for it is the people that is entrusted with the aims and aspirations of the struggle,

and it is they who will give all they have, even the blood of their hearts, for the sake of the struggle. The resistance movement in the land of Palestine has embarked on a new course in its political activities and its dealings with the people characterised by complete frankness. Let the people know all the truth.

People of the Arab nation; Our battle is long and cruel. Armed resistance is the vanguard in the unremitting struggle all along the Arab front. It is required of every Arab that he give his full support to the armed battle and its striking arm at every possible level. The battle that is being fought by the people of Palestine in the occupied territory is an effective part of the Arab revolt against world imperialism and the forces subservient to it. Our confrontation with the alliance of Zionism and imperialism demands that the struggle of the people of Palestine be organically linked with the struggle of the people of the Arab nation who stand face to face with the same danger, the same enemy and the same designs against them. Therefore, the armed Palestinian action defines its position as Arab, alongside whoever sides with it in the struggle, against whoever makes himself its enemy. The struggle of the people of Palestine is organically linked with the struggle of the revolutionary forces in the Arab world and requires the closest possible alliance between it and all the revolutionary and progressive forces in the world. The nature of the alliance against us demands that there be a counter-alliance grouping all anti-imperialist forces throughout the world.

To all fighters throughout the land of Palestine, to the workers, the farmers, the poor, the refugees, the students, the employees and the merchants:

This is the beginning. The Popular Front, which belongs to you all, has adopted challenge, sacrifice and endurance as its battle cry. We, who address you from the battlefield of the war of armed resistance, offer you not rosy dreams but more battles, further endurance, greater political mobilisation, and we promise that we shall use everything that lies in our power to better defend the isolated masses from acts of retaliation. The war on which we are now embarking will be long, bitter and cruel. You are its leaders, you are its material, and it is you who have effective power to determine its course. This, our battle, will not be an easy battle, nor will it be short or its conduct easily improvised. It is a battle for destiny, for survival. It requires a capacity to persevere, to withstand and to endure.