

## PALESTINIAN YOUTH NETWORK

### Bylaws

#### I. Who We Are

The Palestinian Youth Network (“PYN”) is an independent, nonpartisan alliance, founded by a group of young Palestinians scattered throughout the world as a result of the occupation of our homeland. Our belonging to Palestine, passion to preserve our Palestinian identity, and desire to contribute to the liberation of our land and people has driven us to build this network aimed at amplifying the voices of Palestinian youth and enhancing their role in building a better future for ourselves and our children.

#### II. Vision

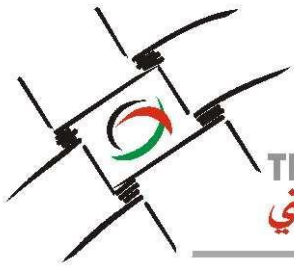
To revive a legacy of Palestinian grassroots activism among all Palestinian youth around the world, promoting the youth’s active participation in our struggle and in the struggles of all oppressed and indigenous peoples. To uphold Palestinian collective consciousness and appreciation for our Palestinian national identity, and to assume responsibility towards achieving the political, social, economic, human, civic and environmental rights of the Palestinian people foremost among them the Palestinian refugee right of return.

#### III. Objectives

- A. To locate and connect Palestinian youth around the world to each other, and to create the means of communication between these youth through a support network that works to strengthen the efforts of local and regional youth organizations;
- B. To strengthen the bonds between Palestinian youth around the world and their Palestinian national identity;
- C. To promote the unity of the Palestinian people regardless of their places of residence, factional affiliation, political ideology, or religious beliefs;
- D. To develop the leadership skills and capabilities of young Palestinians, and foster their spirit of initiative at all levels;
- E. To support Palestinian youth in improving their political, social, cultural and economic status in the various places in which they reside, while raising the consciousness of Palestinian youth of their responsibilities towards the Palestinian people and their homeland;
- F. To empower Palestinian youth everywhere to play a leading and effective role in realization of their inherent rights;
- G. To inform and raise the awareness of the international community about Palestinian culture, history and struggle.

#### IV. Methodology

- A. Organizing local and international forums and conferences to raise consciousness and awareness about the Palestinian struggle for freedom;
- B. Organizing specialized Palestinian youth workshops aimed at developing leadership skills and capabilities;
- C. Creating a Palestinian Youth Voluntary Program in order to promote civic engagement and community service;

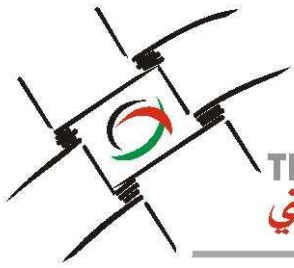


- D. Supporting and initiating solidarity campaigns aimed at supporting the Palestinian freedom struggle;
- E. Distributing regular publications relating to Palestine, its history, culture and people;
- F. Distributing regular publications relating to the activities of the PYN;
- G. Creating and maintaining a database of demographic information about Palestinian communities around the world;
- H. Utilizing a rights-based approach to political advocacy;
- I. Developing other mechanisms as necessary to achieve the above-mentioned goals.

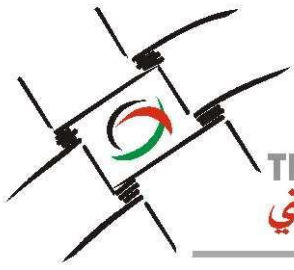
#### V. Membership:

Membership in the PYN is open to any person between the ages of 18 and 35 who is of Palestinian origin (*see Article VIII, Section A*) and to any Palestinian youth organization whose mission and activities do not contradict the principles of the PYN. PYN membership is contingent upon the agreement of the candidate to adhere to the PYN bylaws and of the willingness of the candidate to exemplify a certain level of commitment to the principles upon which the PYN is founded. To remain a member in good standing, a PYN member must observe the guidelines and principles of the PYN for the duration of membership.

- A. *Application:* To apply for membership, an organization or individual should submit an application form to the PYN National Coordinating Committee in their country. The PYN National Coordinating Committee shall discuss and decide on applications in a timely manner. Applications should be evaluated based on criteria set by the International PYN. Final decisions should be communicated in writing to the applicant within 90 days of application by the National chapter of PYN. In the event that an application is rejected, reasons for rejection shall be detailed to the applicant, along with information regarding the process for appeal.
  - 1. If the applicant does not receive a response from the National PYN within the 90 day time period, s/he may notify the International Executive Board. The International Executive Board shall look into the matter and communicate with the applicant within 30 days of notification;
  - 2. National PYN groups shall send a copy of all applications for membership, whether accepted or denied, to the International Executive Board;
  - 3. In countries where is no National PYN branch, an applicant should send his/her application directly to the International Executive Board.
- B. *Appeals:* In the event that an application for membership is rejected, an applicant has the opportunity to appeal. Applicant should submit a Letter of Appeal to the IEB. The Executive Board shall discuss the Letter of Appeal and other information relevant to the particular applicant and communicate its final decision in writing to the applicant within 30 days of appeal. In the event that the IEB affirms a rejection, the IEB's final decision shall detail the reasons for rejection and include criteria that must be met by the applicant in order to reapply for membership.
- C. *Criteria for membership:* In order to be accepted into the PYN, the following criteria must be met:
  - 1. For Individuals:
    - a. Applicant must be of Palestinian origin (*see Article VIII, Section A*)
    - b. Applicant must be between the ages of 18 and 35;
    - c. Applicant must accept the PYN bylaws and commit to the principles upon which



- the network is founded;
- d. Applicant must follow the application procedure detailed above;
  - e. An annual membership fee of 10 euros is required for acceptance and renewal of membership status.
2. For Organizations:
- a. Any Palestinian youth organization (*see Article VIII, Section B*) can be a PYN member as long as its activities and principles do not contradict PYN principles.
  - b. An applying Palestinian youth organization must accept the PYN bylaws and commit to the principles upon which the network is founded;
  - c. An applying Palestinian youth organization must follow the application procedure detailed above. In addition, the organization should present its registration document or any equivalent document together with its membership application.
  - d. An annual membership fee of 30 euros is required for acceptance and renewal of membership status.
- D. *Termination of Membership*: An individual or organizational member of the PYN may terminate their membership in the network by:
1. Ceasing/failing to satisfy or violating one or more of the membership criteria;
  2. Being expelled by the member's national PYN group, and if appealed, receiving a final decision of expulsion by the International Executive Board;
  3. Voluntary resignation.
- E. In the event that a national PYN group suspends or expels an individual or organizational member, the individual or organization may appeal to the International Executive Board in the manner described in Section B above. The member's Letter of Appeal should provide a detailed explanation of the circumstances and any other information that the member would like the International Executive Board to consider. The International Executive Board shall handle the appeal in the manner described in Section B above.
- VI. **Organizational Structure.** The PYN shall be organized on two levels, a national level, and an international level.
- A. **NATIONAL**
1. In each country the PYN shall be organized as follows:
    - a. **NATIONAL GENERAL ASSEMBLY (NGA).**
      - i. All members, both individuals and organizations, working in the same country form the National General Assembly (NGA) and can organize on any level fit for the particular region.
      - ii. In the National General Assembly, individuals have one (1) individual vote and can be elected to the National Coordination Committee. Organizations have two (2) official votes each, however cannot be elected to the National Coordinating Committee.
      - iii. Each National General Assembly will elect its own National Coordination Committee, which will serve as the executive board of the National General Assembly.
    - b. **NATIONAL COORDINATING COMMITTEE (NCC).**
      - i. The National Coordinating Committee is elected by the National General Assembly from a pool of National General Assembly individual members qualified for the position and able to undertake the commitment required.

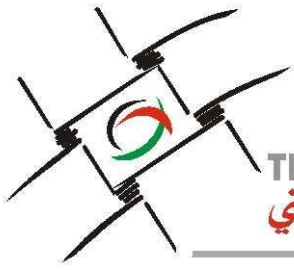


- ii The National Coordinating Committee shall be comprised of 3 members minimum, one of who shall be a National Coordinator, and one of who shall be a Treasurer. A National General Assembly with 10 to 99 members can have three (3) people in the National Coordinating Committee. A National General Assembly with 100 to 999 members can have five (5) people in the National Coordinating Committee. A National General Assembly with 1000 members or more can have seven (7) people in the National Coordinating Committee. Groups with less than 10 members may participate in PYN activities and projects however cannot vote in the International General Assembly.
  - iii Members of the National Coordinating Committee shall serve a two-year term. A member may serve a maximum of two consecutive two-year terms, as long as the member is under 34 years of age at the time of National Coordinating Committee elections.
  - iv National Coordinating Committee members each have one vote in the International General Assembly.
  - v The National Coordinating Committee is responsible for coordinating the work of the National PYN, for representing the PYN on the national level, for coordinating with the PYN on the international level, and for representing the country's National General Assembly to the International General Assembly.
  - vi The election of the National Coordinating Committee should be organized at least two months before the International General Assembly meeting.
2. Each country is responsible for redacting an internal document detailing the way in which the national group will function. This document must be submitted to the International Executive Board before the group is officially recognized as a national branch of the PYN.

## **B. INTERNATIONAL**

### 1. INTERNATIONAL GENERAL ASSEMBLY (IGA):

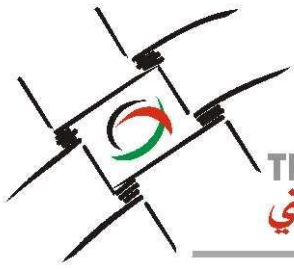
- a. *Definition*-- The International General Assembly sets the political position of the PYN and guides the work of the Network.
- b. *Composition*--The International General Assembly is comprised of the members of National Coordinating Committee of all the countries participating in the PYN
- c. *Duties and Responsibilities*:
  - i To decide on priority areas for the PYN's work by a simple majority vote (fifty percent plus one);
  - ii To approve a 2-year plan of activities for the Network, by a simple majority vote;
  - iii To review and approve the PYN's financial report by a simple majority vote;
  - iv To discuss and approve suggested amendments to the PYN's Charter and Bylaws by a two-thirds approval of the members entitled to vote;
  - v To elect the International Executive Board



- vi To form specialized committees within the Network as needed.
- d. *Meetings*—The International General Assembly shall meet once every two years to discuss and vote on the priority areas for the PYN’s work for the upcoming two years. The date and location of General Assembly meetings shall be announced in writing to General Assembly Members at least four months in advance of the scheduled General Assembly meeting. The Executive Board is responsible for organizing the logistics of the General Assembly meetings. Every effort should be made to hold General Assembly meetings in countries where the least number of General Assembly members will have problems obtaining visas or otherwise entering and/or exiting the country. In the case of calling for an urgent International General Assembly meeting, two-thirds of the International General Assembly members must call for the urgent meeting.
  - i If difficulties, due to unforeseen and uncontrollable circumstances, delay or prevent a scheduled meeting of the International General Assembly, the incumbent International Executive Board will continue its mandate until such time that the International Executive Board is able to organize the next meeting of the International General Assembly or, in the event that difficult circumstances preventing a meeting continue, find an appropriate alternate solution.
- e. *Proposals & Voting*— The PYN General Coordinator shall solicit and collect proposals for the PYN’s work from International General Assembly members. These are due 2 months before the International General Assembly meeting. The General Coordinator will then distribute the proposals to the International Executive Board. The International Executive Board will review proposals, seek clarification if necessary, and organize proposals for the meeting. A consolidated list of proposals will be distributed to International General Assembly members one month prior to the meeting. Each International General Assembly member that is in good standing is entitled to one vote. Members not able to be present at the International General Assembly meeting may vote by proxy by submitting a proxy form, identifying the individual who will cast the absent member’s vote, to the PYN General Coordinator no less than one week prior to the scheduled date of the International General Assembly meeting.
  - i *Quorum*: In order for a vote taken by the International General Assembly to be valid, two-thirds of the International General Assembly members entitled to vote must participate, either in person or by proxy.
  - ii An individual may only be designated a “proxy” for one “principal” (absent member entitled to vote).

## 2. INTERNATIONAL COORDINATING COMMITTEE (ICC):

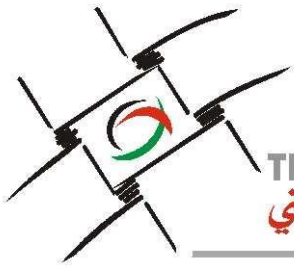
- a. *Definition*: The International Coordinating Committee (ICC) is the body responsible for facilitating the flow of information to and from, and enhancing coordination and cooperation between the International Executive Board and national PYN branches.



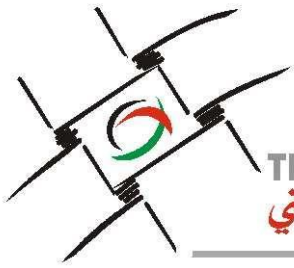
- b. *Composition*: The ICC is comprised of the national coordinators of each country participating in the PYN;
- c. *Duties and Responsibilities*:
  - i To transmit information between their country network and the International Executive Board;
  - ii To evaluate the work of the national PYN groups in relation to the plan of activities agreed upon by the International General Assembly, and to make adjustments as needed;
  - iii To review and approve the internal documents / bylaws of newly established PYN national groups;
  - iv To elect, from amongst its membership, individual(s) to replace International Executive Board member(s) in the event that one or more IEB members are unable to continue in their roles and/or fulfill their duties.
- d. *Meetings*: Meets once a year in conjunction with one of the International Executive Board's bi-yearly meeting.

### 3. INTERNATIONAL EXECUTIVE BOARD (IEB):

- a. *Definition*—The International Executive Board is the international administrative body of the PYN.
- b. *Composition*—The International Executive Board consists of nine (9) members of the PYN elected by the International General Assembly. The members of the International Executive Board shall be comprised of one (1) General Coordinator; one (1) Vice-General Coordinator, one (1) Secretary, two (2) Financial Officers, one (1) Membership Coordinator, one (1) International Activities Coordinator; one (1) Public Relations coordinator; and one (1) Media Coordinator
- c. *Candidacy & Elections*—The International Executive Board shall be elected by the International General Assembly from a pool of candidates presented at the International General Assembly. Candidates for the International Executive Board need not be present at the International General Assembly meeting in order to be nominated for a seat on the International Executive Board, but must communicate to the International General Assembly acceptance of their nomination. Voting shall be conducted by secret ballot. International General Assembly members must have at least one (1) year of PYN member experience before being eligible to run for a seat on the International Executive Board.
- d. *Term*—Members of the International Executive Board shall serve a two-year term. A member may serve a maximum of two consecutive two-year terms, as long as the member is under 34 years of age at the time of International Executive Board elections.
  - i To ensure consistency, members of the old International Executive Board (“Observer Board”) shall serve as observers and available advisors to the new International Executive Board for one (1) year. Observer Board members do not have a vote in the operations of the International Executive Board in term and should refrain from engaging in debate with the International Executive Board. However, in the event of a serious problem the Observer Board



- may call for a meeting of the International General Assembly upon the approval of two-thirds of the Observer Board members. The call must be approved by two-thirds of the IGA members.
- ii In the event that one or more International Executive Board members are unable to continue in their roles and/or fulfill their duties, new members shall be elected by the International Coordinating Committee from amongst its membership to replace them.
  - iii In the event that the elected International Executive Board as a whole is unable to continue serving, an interim committee will be selected by the International Coordinating Committee from amongst its members to substitute until the following International General Assembly meeting.
  - iv Suspension and Expulsion – The rights and responsibilities of an IEB member may be suspended upon the vote of two-thirds of the entire IEB. In the event that an IEB member is suspended, his/her replacement shall proceed according to Article VI(B)(3)(d)(ii) above. In a case where the reasons for suspension are serious enough to warrant formal expulsion of the IEB member, such matter shall be put before the International General Assembly at its next meeting. Formal expulsion must be approved by two-thirds of the IGA members entitled to vote.
- e. *Duties & Responsibilities*
- i. To coordinate the implementation of the International General Assembly program with the national PYN in each country;
  - ii. To represent the PYN on the international level;
  - iii. To create committees if needed and to coordinate with them;
  - iv. To review and approve written materials intended for publication by the (international) PYN;
  - v. To approve the financial expenditures of the PYN;
  - vi. To employ individuals to carry out specific work or tasks of the PYN as needed;
  - vii. To organize the logistics of the International General Assembly meetings once every two years or as needed;
  - viii. To serve as a supportive body to national PYN branches;
  - ix. To call for a meeting of the Coordinating Committee if needed and to organize the logistics of such meeting;
  - x. To review appeals of perspective members denied membership into national PYN branches, and appeals of suspended or expelled members;
- f. *Meetings*
- i The International Executive Board shall meet face-to-face twice per year



- ii The General Coordinator in agreement with the other International Executive Board members coordinates the bi-yearly meetings.

4. ADVISORY BOARD (AB):

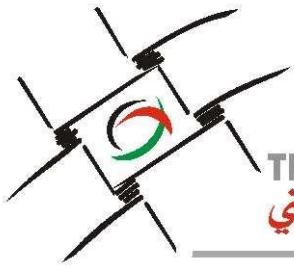
- a. There shall be an Advisory Board comprised of professionals and community leaders working for Palestine who will share their expertise and offer advice to the PYN. Advisory Board shall be selected by the International Executive Board upon suggestions of the International General Assembly.
- b. The AB does not have voting rights nor can it make decisions about the work of the PYN, it can only advise the International Executive Board.
- c. There is no age restriction on the members of the Advisory Board.

**VII. Finances**

- A. The International PYN shall have a central bank account in the country or countries where the PYN is registered;
- B. Each national PYN shall have a national PYN bank account where it is possible to do so;
- C. Each national PYN is responsible for raising money for their national projects and activities;
- D. Before applying for funding from organizations, associations, governmental or non-governmental bodies, private or public institutions, a national PYN group must communicate with the International Executive Board as to the body to which they are submitting a funding application. The International Executive Board has the right to raise concerns regarding a possible source of funding if accepting money from this possible source of funding may contradict the goals and principles of the PYN and/or may compromise the integrity and/or existence of the PYN in any way;
- E. National PYN groups shall donate 20% of their annual budget to the International PYN;
- F. For internationally coordinated and agreed upon projects, the International PYN shall assist national PYN groups in raising the amount needed to carry out the project if this is needed;
- G. Each national PYN shall submit a financial report to the International Executive Board every four months detailing all money received, how much and from where, and all money spent;

**VIII. Definitions**

- A. *Palestinian origin* -- The Palestinians are those Arab nationals who, until 1947, normally resided in Palestine regardless of whether they voluntarily emigrated, were evicted from it or stayed there. Anyone born after that date, of a Palestinian father or mother, grandfather or grandmother, great-grandfather or great-grandmother, whether inside Palestine or outside it, is also Palestinian. A Palestinian is also that person who is entitled to Palestinian citizenship.
- B. *Palestinian youth organization* – any group or organization, identified as being a Palestinian group or organization, whose majority members are Palestinian youth and who are represented by youth.
- C. A youth is defined as an individual who is 35 years of age or younger.



**IX. Dissolution**

Dissolution of the PYN may only occur if two-thirds of International General Assembly members call for an urgent International General Assembly meeting specifically planned to discuss and vote on the dissolution of the network. Two-thirds of the International General Assembly members entitled to vote must approve a resolution for dissolution in order for the dissolution to be valid.

Approved on this 4<sup>th</sup> Day of November 2008 by 28 of the 28 Founding Members present and entitled to vote.

AYS: 28

NAYS: 0

ABSTENTIONS: 0