



Condemnation of the UNRWA's removal of the name "Palestine" from its curriculum

The pace of popular anger among Palestinian communities is increasing following news that the UNRWA administration in Lebanon has deleted the word "Palestine" from school curricula, on instructions from the agency's director in Lebanon, Dorothy Klaus.

Jafrā Foundation for Relief and Youth Development announces its clear condemnation of this irresponsible and politicized step which is a part of a suspicious plan to erase the national identity of the Palestinians and a serious attempt to obliterate the Palestinian cause and undermine the belonging and collective memory of the Palestinian new generation.

This is not the first attempt to violate the rights of Palestinian refugees, including the right to maintain national identity, adherence to the right of return, self-determination, and freedom of expression. These are rights guaranteed by international agreements as inherent rights of peoples. It was preceded by several attempts on different occasions, including the incident of an attempt to prevent a student from wearing the Palestinian flag on her clothes, which sparked widespread anger and massive popular and official protests.

Earlier, the UNRWA administration was involved in the arbitrary dismissal of 4 of its teachers after they exercised their right to express their opinions regarding their national cause on social media sites, where it invoked the pretext of "the agency's neutrality."

At the beginning of last November, it also filed a lawsuit against the secretary of the "Beddawi Camp Gathering" and his deputy against the backdrop of the closure of the office of the Director of Camp Services of UNRWA in protest against its continued ignoring of the demands of the families whose homes were damaged as a result of the 2007 war.

Over the past two years in particular, the Agency's administration has sparked a wave of dissatisfaction and anger among Palestinian refugees on several occasions due to its policies that led to the increasing reduction of services, especially in the health and education sectors. These policies ignited protests in the Palestinian camps in Lebanon from south to north, all the way to the UNRWA headquarters in Beirut, amid demands for Klaus' dismissal.

The Jafrā Foundation, while stressing the importance of continuing financial support for UNRWA so that it can carry out its responsibilities in providing the minimum services to Palestinian refugees, expresses its complete rejection of attempts to undermine the national symbols of the Palestinians and their rights to preserve their identity and belonging and their legitimate struggle for their return to the homes from which they were forcibly displaced and their right to self-determination. It also calls on the Agency's administration to immediately cancel the decision and hold those involved, accountable.