Ain al-Hilweh refugees mark day Palestine was divided

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By Mohammed Zaatari

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Palestinian Return Centre

<http://www.prc.org.uk/portal/index.php/publications/articles/721->

Palestinian refugees at the south Lebanon camp of Ain al-Hilweh staged a demonstration Monday to mark the International Day of Solidarity with the Palestinian People.

Refugees gathered outside the notorious refugee camp of Ain al-Hilweh and representatives of various Palestinian political and civil-society organizations were present.

The demonstrators held banners confirming the need for an armed struggle to recover Palestine and calling for Palestinian unity.

The crowd was marking a day the UN has since 1977 dedicated to the support of the Palestinian people and their cause, after Palestine was divided into a Jewish and an Arab state on November 29, 1947.

Palestinians all over the world have since then been voicing their resistance and condemnation of Israel’s violations of international laws on November 29 each year.

Demonstrators of all ages gathered at the entrance of the Ain al-Hilweh Palestinian refugee camp. Youssef Ouweid, 70, raised his fist and cried out: “Palestine, we will avenge you and we do not fear death.”

Next to him stood Abdel-Hadi Othman, a young boy wearing the traditional Palestinian scarf known as the Keffieh. “Palestine will return by the power of the Keffieh and by the power of guns,” he said.

Democratic Front for the Liberation of Palestine (DFLP) member Khaled Younes stressed the need to maintain Palestinian unity, while DFLP official Abu Ihab tackled Lebanese Palestinian relations and said that Palestinian refugees were “at equal distance from [all] the Lebanese.”

Fatah official Maher Shabayita agreed with Abu Ihab and said: “Refugee camps will not be the knife to stab Lebanese security.”

He then called on granting Palestinians in Lebanon their rights and on hasting the reconstruction of the Nahr al-Bared camp, which was reduced to rubble in 2007 during fighting between the Lebanese Army and the Al-Qaeda inspired Fatah al-Islam militant group.

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