



THE QATARI PERMANENT COMMITTEE FOR THE SUPPORT OF JERUSALEM ARAB-ISLAMIC SUPPORT FOR JERUSALEM IN THE HEART OF THE CITY

This body was established by Qatar's 1998 Amiri Resolution No. 14 to coordinate Qatari financial aid and projects connected to eastern Jerusalem. The word "Permanent" in the body's title attests to its ongoing, institutionalized nature.

The Permanent Committee's primary goal is to strengthen eastern Jerusalem as an Arab city with a clear Arab-Islamic identity, and to support its residents via aid for projects in the fields of education, health, society, and culture.

The Committee functions under the direct sponsorship of the Government of Qatar, specifically by the Foreign Ministry. It is one of the most prominent Arab bodies granting permanent, multi-year aid to the Palestinian Arab population in Jerusalem.

Qatari-PA Cooperation in Staffing the Committee

The Committee's membership is mostly Qatari and Palestinian. Heading it are the following senior Qatari government officials:

- Saif bin Miqdam al-Buainain** - Deputy Chairman of the Committee and its acting representative in regional forums.
- Khalid Shahin al-Ghanem** - Representative of the Qatari Ministry of Endowments.
- Dr. Abdallah Hussein al-Kubaisi** - Representative of Qatar University.
- Jaham Mohammed al-Kuwari** - Representative from a general governmental framework.

Among the Palestinian representatives are:

- Sheikh Muhammad Hussein** - the Mufti of Jerusalem, serving as Chairman of the Committee.
- Major General Bilal al-Natsheh** - Secretary of the Permanent Committee and a key executive figure.
- The Minister for Jerusalem Affairs and the Governor of Jerusalem (such as Adnan Hussein in the past)** - representatives of the Palestinian Authority.

Additional participants include religious and academic figures such as Sheikh Ikrima Sabri, Dr. Haitham al-Hasan, and others.

Bilal al-Natsheh: The Operative Backbone

A central figure in the Committee's operations is the

above-mentioned Jerusalem resident Bilal al-Natsheh, holder of a non-citizen Israeli-issued Jerusalem ID card. He holds the rank of Maj.-Gen. in the PA security forces, and serves as the Committee's Secretary, as well as Secretary-General of the National Popular Conference for Jerusalem, a body associated with the PLO.

Al-Natsheh is the one who signs agreements with educational and healthcare institutions and ensures the actual implementation of the support. Among his main activities have been signing support agreements with universities such as Bethlehem University, the Arab American University in Jenin, Polytechnic University in Hebron, the Contemporary College in Ramallah, as well as providing support to healthcare institutions like the St. John Eye Hospital in Jerusalem.



Gen. Bilal al-Natsheh of the PA security forces and resident of Jerusalem: the central get-it-done figure in the Permanent Committee

Areas of Committee Activity

The Committee operates in three main areas:

- Education** - Providing scholarships & partial or full funding for studies for Jerusalem students.
- Health** - Funding medical treatments in Jerusalem hospitals for thousands of patients who lack health insurance.
- Society and Culture** - Support for schools, community projects, sports and cultural activities, and infrastructure rehabilitation.

Recent Partnerships and Top Projects

In 2025, the Committee signed a series of new agreements with Palestinian Authority institutions:

- Bethlehem University** - Support for students who are Jerusalem residents, who comprise approximately 37% of the student body.
- Al-Istiqlal University** - Memorandum of understanding for financial support.
- Hebron Polytechnic University** - Agreement to strengthen the partnership and support students.
- Arab American University in Jenin** - Scholarships worth 30,000 Jordanian dinars for Jerusalem students.

Relations with the Palestinian Authority: Partnership Without Subordination

Although the committee operates independently and is directly funded by the Qatari government, there is a close coordination framework with Palestinian Authority institutions. This mechanism includes the PA's Ministry of Jerusalem Affairs, Ministry of Higher Education, and Jerusalem District Governorate, as well as PLO institutions. The PA does not fund the activities, but effectively oversees implementation, particularly regarding academic recognition and coordination with existing institutions.

In the past, pressures were applied by the Palestinian Authority to distance itself from Qatar amid regional tensions. However, the PA continued to quietly coordinate the Qatari funding, with the understanding that this was a vital income source for Palestinian institutions in the city.

The Permanent Qatari Committee fills a central role in stabilizing the Palestinian hold on and in eastern Jerusalem. Thanks to the direct funding from Qatar, to the cooperation with the PA, and to the activities in the field by people such as Bilal al-Natshe, the Committee succeeds in guaranteeing ongoing aid in the areas of education, health, and culture.

The integration of forces between Qatar and the Palestinian Authority in this committee represents a strategic partnership, at the core of which stands not only financial support, but also a clear political statement: Eastern Jerusalem remains a center of Arab-Palestinian identity.

The committee's existence and activity reflect Qatar's consistent line of action: maintaining ties with as many relevant players as possible, preferably where these players are dependent on Qatar. Thus, despite Qatar's full alignment with Hamas, the PA's sworn enemy, the terror-supporting Qatari emirate cooperates without hesitation with Abu Mazen's Palestinian Authority government, providing it with financial support.

