



State of Palestine

Ministry of Interior

Directorate General of Non-governmental
Organizations and Public Affairs

User's Manual of Foreign Association Branches

Name of Service: Registration of a branch of a Foreign/International Association

Place to Submit Documents: The Department of Foreign Associations.

Place to Collect Approved Documents: The Department of Foreign Associations.

Requirements for Providing the Service:

- Application form from the MoI Department of Foreign Associations signed by the Representative(s) of the Association.
- A copy of the statute (basic law) of the Head Office of the association translated into Arabic and certified by the Embassy of Palestine in the country of the Head Office, the Ministry of Foreign Affairs, and the Ministry of Justice in Palestine, or any other Government of Palestine Representative Office.
- A copy of the association's registration certificate translated into Arabic and certified by the Embassy of Palestine in the country of the Head Office, Ministry of Foreign Affairs, and the Ministry of Justice in Palestine, or any other Government of Palestine Representative Office.
- Official letter from the association to express its interest in opening a branch in Palestine, stating the name of its representative/s in Palestine, translated into Arabic and certified by the Embassy of Palestine in the country of the Head Office, the Ministry of Foreign Affairs, and the Ministry of Justice in Palestine, or any other Government of Palestine Representative Office.
- Proof of identity (copy of ID or valid passport) of the association's representative/s.
- A brief explanation about how the services and projects provided by the association meet the needs and serve the interests/needs of the people of Palestine.
- Provide a copy of the internal financial by-laws of the Association, translated into Arabic.
- A 20 Jordanian Dinar (JD) stamp attached to the application for registration.
- Representatives of Palestinian nationality must provide clearance from the Department for Income Tax.
- Conduct an interview with the association's representative. Interviews are usually conducted on Thursdays from 10-12 at the Department of Foreign Associations.
- Provide a no-objection letter for a representative of the association with Palestinian nationality from the Income Tax of the Ministry of Finance (MoF).
- Commitment from the association's representative to respect and abide by all the Palestinian laws (i.e. Foreign Associations law, labor law, Income tax law, safety and security law).

Duration of Service Completion:

- In accordance with the law maximum sixty (60) calendar days.

Service Procedures:

1. The applicant fills out the registration form from the Department of Foreign Associations or from the Ministry's portal.
2. The applicant submits the registration form and the required supporting documents to the Department of Foreign Associations.
3. The staff from the Department of Foreign Associations checks the registration form and the attachments. If the file is complete, the staff issues a receipt and informs the applicant about the timeframe required to process the registration.
4. The applicant will be contacted within two weeks to answer any queries.
5. The applicant must provide the requested information as a response to the inquiries and remarks. The applicant will then receive a second receipt by the staff of the department.
6. If the registration is approved, the applicant will be provided with the following documents from the Department of Foreign Associations:
 - Registration certificate.
 - Registration approval.
 - Letter of approval of the representative of the association in Palestine.
 - Letter of approval of the objectives of the association in Palestine.
7. If the registration is rejected, the applicant is provided with the Minister's decision outlining the reason for rejecting the registration.

Name of Service: Request for Opening a Bank Account or Removal of Signatures

- **Request for Approval to Open/Renew Bank Account**
- **Request for Approval to Add/Cancel Authorized Signatories**

Place to Submit Documents: The Department of Foreign Associations.

Place to Collect Approved Documents: The Department of Foreign Associations.

Requirements for Opening a Bank Account:

- An official letter from the association's authorized representative/s in Palestine to open a bank account for the association. This letter should include the name of the bank, branch/es, and at least two full names for the persons the association would like to list as signatories.
- A formal, original, officially translated into Arabic letter from the Board of Directors of the Association or Chief Executive, certified by the Embassy of Palestine in the country of the Head Office addressed to the Ministry of Interior requesting to approve appointing a new representative for the association in Palestine.
- Copies of IDs/passports for the authorized signatories on behalf of the association.

Duration of Service Completion:

- Five (5) calendar days.

Service Procedures:

1. The applicant applies to the Department of Foreign Associations for opening a bank account. **(Annex 1: Template of the Bank Application Letter)**.
2. The authorized staff from the Department of Foreign Associations reviews the application.
3. The applicant returns to the Department of Foreign Associations to pick up the letter approving the opening of a bank account or adding/removing signatories.
4. In order for an Association to receive clearance to keep its signatures validated, the Association has to submit its Annual Narrative Administrative Report and certified financial audit reports by May 2nd of every year.
5. The Department of Foreign Associations of the Ministry of Interior will review the reports submitted, in case the MoI has questions or needs further clarity, the MoI will get in touch with the Association.

Name of Service: Letter of Approval of New Representative/s for Foreign Associations.

Place to Submit Documents: The Department of Foreign Associations.

Place to Collect Approved Documents: The Department of Foreign Associations.

Requirements for Receiving the Letter of Approval:

- A formal, original, officially translated into Arabic letter from the Board of Directors of the Association or Chief Executive, certified by the Embassy of Palestine in the country of the Head Office addressed to the Ministry of Interior requesting to approve appointing a new representative for the association in Palestine.
- Copy of the ID or passport of the new representative.
- Clearance from the previous representative, including statement of handing over responsibilities, signed by the old and the new representative.
- The MoI will conduct an interview with the new representative, usually the interview is conducted on Thursdays from 10-12 at the Department of Foreign Associations at the Ministry of Interior.

Duration of Service Completion:

- Fifteen (15)calendar days starting from the submission of the official letter.

Service Procedures:

1. A request to approve a new representative of the association must be submitted to the Department of Foreign Associations, and to be interviewed by the MoI . **(Annex 2: Template of the Application Letter for New Representative)**.
2. The applicant returns to the Department of Foreign Associations to receive the letter of approval.

Note:

From the date of the approval of the new representative, the former bank authorization approval of the signatories become invalid, and the new representative will have to apply to the

Department of Foreign Associations for the new authorized signatories. The application submitted should include the name of the new authorized signatories, their ID/passport numbers, and job titles.

Name of Service: Obtaining A Letter for Exemption from Customs.

Place to Submit Documents: The Department of Foreign Associations.

Place to Collect Approved Documents: The Department of Foreign Associations.

Requirements for Receiving the Letter for “Exemption from Customs”:

- An official letter from the authorized representative/s of the association in Palestine requesting a customs exemption for purchasing a vehicle, indicating clearly the funding source for this purchase.
- The letter should clearly indicate the name of the authorized person to follow up on the exemption request on behalf of the association.
- The letter should clearly indicate the details of the vehicle the association would like to purchase: (type of vehicle, year of manufacturing, chassis number, engine number, color of the vehicle, license plate number).
- Letter of clearance from both the income tax and VAT departments.
- The Ministry of Interior reserves the right to provide the association with a custom exemption or not. If the exemption is not granted, the Ministry of Interior will provide a written explanation.

Duration for Service Completion:

- Eight (8) calendar days.

Service Procedures:

1. The applicant submits a request for custom exemption at the Department of Foreign Associations.
2. The applicant returns to the Department of Foreign Associations to receive a clearance letter addressed to the Ministry of Finance in order to receive the actual exemption.

Name of Service: Obtaining a Letter of Clearance Addressed to the Department of Traffic for Vehicle Registration, Licensing, Renewal of a Vehicle License.

Place to Submit Documents: The Department of Foreign Associations.

Place to Collect Approved Documents: The Department of Foreign Associations.

Requirements for Obtaining a Letter of Clearance:

- An official letter from the authorized representative/s of the association in Palestine requesting registering the association's vehicle. **(Annex 3: Template of letter for vehicle registration or selling).**
- The letter should clearly identify the authorized person to follow up on this process on behalf of the association.
- The letter should state the specifications of the vehicle (type, year of manufacturing, chassis number, engine number, color of the vehicle, and license plate number).
- A copy of the expired vehicle license and insurance.

Duration of Service Completion:

- Seven (7) calendar days.

Service Procedures:

1. The applicant submits the request for registering, licensing, or renewing the license of a vehicle to the Department of Foreign Associations.
2. The applicant returns to the Department of Foreign Associations to receive the letter of clearance addressed to the Department of Traffic for registering, licensing or renewing the vehicle license, the actual registration, licensing or renewal of license will be done by the Department of Traffic.

Name of Service: Obtaining a Letter of Clearance Addressed to the Department of Traffic for Approval of Selling A Foreign Association's Vehicle.

Place to Submit Documents: The Department of Foreign Associations.

Place to Collect Approved Documents: The Department of Foreign Associations.

Requirements for Obtaining a Letter of Clearance:

- An official letter from the authorized representative/s of the Association in Palestine stating the reasons for selling the association's vehicle. **(Annex 4: Template of letter for vehicle registration or selling).**
- The letter should state the vehicle specifications (type of vehicle, year of manufacturing, chassis number, engine number, color of the vehicle, and license plate number).
- A copy of the vehicle license.
- A copy of the advertised sale announcement.
- Minutes of the meeting of the bid opening session and the decision of the bid committee.
- Letter of clearance from both the income tax and VAT departments from the Ministry of Finance.

Duration of Service Completion:

- Eight (8) calendar days.

Service Procedures:

1. The applicant submits the required documents to the Department of Foreign Associations.
2. Applicant returns to the Department of Foreign Associations to receive the clearance letter addressed to the Department of Traffic who is responsible for approving the selling of the vehicle.

Name of Service: Obtaining a New Certificate of Registration for an Association that Changes its Name.

Place to Submit Documents: The Department of Foreign Associations.

Place to Collect Approved Documents: The Department of Foreign Associations.

Requirements for Obtaining a Registration Certificate:

- An official letter from the Head Office of the Association, translated into Arabic, requesting the change of name of the Association in Palestine.
- The original registration certificate of the Association in Palestine.
- A copy of the internal bylaws of the Head Office, translated into Arabic, certified by the Embassy of Palestine in the country of the Head Office, the Ministry of Foreign Affairs and the Ministry of Justice in Palestine. Or any host country representing the Palestinian State.
- A copy of the registration certificate of the Association at the country of the Head Office, translated into Arabic, and certified by the Embassy of Palestine in country of the Head Office, the Ministry of Foreign Affairs and the Ministry of Justice in Palestine. Or any other Government of Palestine Representative Office.
- An official letter from the Head Office, translated into Arabic, expressing interest in continuing its operation in Palestine, stating the name of the representative/s in Palestine, certified by the Embassy of Palestine in the country of the Head Office, the Ministry of Foreign Affairs and the Ministry of Justice in Palestine. Or any other Government of Palestine Representative Office.
- A copy of a valid passport/ID of the representative/s of the Association.
- A brief explanation on how the services and projects of the Association fulfill the needs of the Palestinian people.
- A copy of the internal financial by-laws of the Association, translated into Arabic.
- A 20 Jordanian Dinars (JD) stamp attached to the application for registration.
- If the representative of the Association is Palestinian, then s/he should provide a letter of no objection from the income tax department.
- The Ministry of Interior will conduct an interview with the representative of the Association, usually the interview is conducted on Thursdays from 10-12 at the Department of Foreign Associations at the Ministry of Interior.

- A letter of commitment from the representative of the Association to respect and abide by Palestinian laws (foreign associations laws, labor law, income tax law, safety and security law).

Duration of Service Completion:

- Thirty (30) calendar days.

Service Procedures:

1. The applicant submits the required documents to the Department of Foreign Associations.
2. A certificate with the new name of the association will be prepared by the Department of Foreign Associations and signed by the Minister of Interior.
3. The applicant goes back to the Department of Foreign Associations to receive the new certificate with the new name and submits the old registration certificate.

Note:

According to the Palestinian laws, it is prohibited to unite international associations. However, merging of Associations is allowed if the Head Offices have been merged.

Important Notes

- Foreign associations branches commit to submit their annual narrative and audited financial reports certified by an a credited auditor after four months of the end of the fiscal year (December of every year), i.e. reports are due by the 2nd of May of every year at the latest. **(Annex 4: Template for the Annual Narrative Administrative Report).**
- Foreign Associations must submit their narrative/administrative report and any other communication to the Department of Foreign Associations in Arabic. Any communication with the Department of Foreign Associations should include full contact details of the focal point on behalf of the Association for any follow up or clarification issues.
- Upon submission of the annual reports to the Department of Foreign Associations, the person submitting the report and the person receiving it from the Department of Foreign Associations both sign on the cover letter of the report. Reports submitted must include the name and contact details of the focal point from the association for any queries or follow up.

Important Articles from the Law to Refer to:

1. **“Article 35”:**

Authorized representatives of the foreign associations branches should inform the Ministry (Ministry of Interior) of any changes in the information submitted to the Ministry within a period of two months from the date of change.

2. **“Article 36”:**

Foreign Associations should submit an annual narrative/administrative and certified audited report about its work in Palestine; the report should include the total funds spent.

3. **“Article 37 item 2”Dissolving an Association:**

If the foreign association branch does not start its operations in the first year of its registration, unless this is related to force majeure, the Ministry of Interior cancels the registration of the association after sending a written notification to the association.

4. **The President’s Decree on the Dissolution and Liquidation of Associations:**

In accordance with Article 2 in the General Law of the year 2011, issued on 28/4/2011 by Mr. President Mahmud Abbas, in case of the dissolution or liquidation of an association, the property (cash and owned material) of the association is be transferred to the Treasury of Palestine, or to Palestinian associations with similar objectives.

Annexes

- Annex 1: **Template of the Bank Application Letter**
- Annex 2: **Template of the Application Letter for New Representative**
- Annex 3: **Temple of letter for vehicle registration or selling**
- Annex 4: **Template for the Annual Narrative Administrative Report**