

Hanan Ashrawi



Hanan Daoud Khalil Ashrawi (Arabic: **حنان داود خليل عشاروي** ; born October 8, 1946) is a **Palestinian** legislator, activist, and scholar. She was a protégé and later colleague and close friend of **Edward Said**. Ashrawi was an important leader during the **First Intifada**, served as the official spokesperson for the Palestinian Delegation to the Middle East peace process, and has been elected numerous times to the **Palestinian Legislative Council**. Ashrawi is a member of **Palestinian Prime Minister Salam Fayyad's Third Way** party. She is the first woman elected to the **Palestinian National Council**.

http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Hanan_Ashrawi

Politics and activism



While voluntarily a student but denied re-entry to the **West Bank**, she became the spokes-person for the **General Union of Palestinian Students** in Lebanon, helped organize

women's revolutionary groups and served as a guide to foreign reporters visiting refugee camps.

Ashrawi returned to the West Bank under the family reunification plan in 1973 and established the Department of English at [Birzeit University](#). She served as Chair of that department from 1973 to 1978, and again from 1981 through 1984; and from 1986-1990 she served the university as Dean of the Faculty of Arts. She remained a faculty member at Birzeit University until 1995, publishing numerous poems, short stories, papers and articles on Palestinian culture, literature, and politics.

Ashrawi's political activism in the Palestinian territories began almost as early as her academic career at Birzeit. In 1974, she founded the Birzeit University [Legal Aid Committee and Human Rights Action Project](#). Her political work took a greater leap in 1988 during the [First Intifada](#), when she joined the Intifada Political Committee, serving on its Diplomatic Committee until 1993. From 1991 to 1993 she served as the official spokesperson of the Palestinian Delegation to the Middle East peace process and a member of the Leadership/Guidance Committee and executive committee of the delegation.



From 1993 to 1995, with the signing of the [Oslo Accords](#) by [Yasser Arafat](#) and [Yitzhak Rabin](#), Palestinian self-rule was established, and Ashrawi headed the Preparatory Committee of the Palestinian Independent Commission for Citizens' Rights in Jerusalem. Ashrawi has also served since 1996 as an elected member of the [Palestinian Legislative Council, Jerusalem Governorate](#).

In 1996, Ashrawi was appointed the [Palestinian Authority](#) Minister of Higher Education and Research, but she resigned the post in 1998 in protest against political corruption, specifically Arafat's handling of peace talks.

In 1998, Ashrawi founded MIFTAH -- the Palestinian Initiative for the Promotion of Global Dialogue and Democracy, an initiative which works towards respect for Palestinian human rights, democracy and peace. According to MIFTAH, Ashrawi "has nothing to do with the day to day management at MIFTAH.

In November 2004, Ashrawi gave a lecture entitled "Concept, Context and Process in Peacemaking: The Palestinian-Israeli Experience" at the University of San Diego's [Joan B. Kroc Institute for Peace & Justice](#) Distinguished Lecture Series.

In April 2007, Ashrawi visited the [Palestine Center](#) in Washington, DC and gave a lecture entitled, "[Palestine & Peace: The Challenges Ahead](#)"

In July 2011, she represented the Palestinian people in a meeting with the [Canadian Foreign Minister John Baird](#) and convinced him to visit the [Palestinian territories](#)

Ashrawi serves on the Advisory Board of several international and local organizations including the [World Bank](#) Middle East and North Africa ([MENA](#)), United Nations Research Institute for Social Development ([UNRISD](#)) and the International Human Rights Council.^[3]

She received her bachelor's and master's degrees in literature in the Department of English at the [American University of Beirut](#). Ashrawi also has a [Ph.D.](#) in Medieval and Comparative Literature from the [University of Virginia](#).