

Yasser Arafat

Chairman of the PLO

Born on Aug. 4, 1929, in Cairo, Yasser Arafat spent his early years in Gaza. In 1948, he returned to Cairo where he studied civil engineering. From 1953 to 1968 he headed the Palestinian Student League. Mr. Arafat received military training in the Egyptian army in 1955-56. In 1957 he moved to Kuwait.

In 1958, Mr. Arafat helped form the Palestinian National Liberation Movement (Al Fatah), and was appointed its official spokesman in 1968. The following year, he was elected Chairman of the PLO.

In general elections held in 1996, Mr. Arafat was elected to head the executive of the Palestinian Authority.

Mr. Arafat is married and has one child.