

GRASSROOTS ADVOCACY TRAINING & LOBBY DAY



WASHINGTON DC
MARCH 7 - 8, 2010



PRE-TRAINING INFORMATION PACKET

ESSENTIAL INFORMATION
BACKGROUND READINGS
FACT SHEETS
RESOURCES

Print and read before arriving in DC in order to make the most of your experience!

A PROGRAM OF INTERFAITH PEACE-BUILDERS AND THE U.S. CAMPAIGN TO END THE ISRAELI OCCUPATION
MORE INFORMATION AT WWW.IFPB.ORG/GRASSROOTS
office@ifpb.org • 202.244.0821 • www.ifpb.org

Introduction

This *Information Packet* provides you with essential information for the Grassroots Advocacy Training and Lobby Day sponsored by Interfaith Peace-Builders and the US Campaign to End the Israeli Occupation on March 7 and 8, 2010.

Included is logistical information on the weekend's events as well as background readings and resources for your advocacy. Although many of these resources focus on political engagement and advocacy, the Grassroots Advocacy Training of March 7 has a much broader focus. Workshops will address a variety of topics and you, as a participant, will come away from the experience with a range of skills and a wider conceptual framework through which to approach your activism.

The background readings included here have been hand-selected by IFPB staff and includes *Fact Sheets* and other resources published by the US Campaign to End the Israeli Occupation. All these resources will be helpful to your thorough participation in the Grassroots Advocacy Training and your success in meetings with your political representatives.

The US Campaign's *Congressional Report Card* rounds out this packet. Because of space considerations, we have not included the full *Congressional Report Card*. Before travelling to Washington DC, however, **we strongly suggest that you download the Report card and thoroughly research your representatives voting records.**

View and download the *Congressional Report Card* at:
www.endtheoccupation.org/section.php?id=202

We want to thank the staff and members of the US Campaign to End the Israeli Occupation and the endorsing organizations. We look forward to seeing you shortly in Washington, DC.

Sincerely,



Mike Daly



Joe Groves



Jacob Pace

Interfaith Peace-Builders Staff

TABLE OF CONTENTS

Grassroots Advocacy Training and Lobby Day Logistics:

Official Events Schedule	3
Affiliated Events Schedule	6
Directions and Maps	7
Grassroots Advocacy Training and Lobby Day Presenters Bios	10
Endorsing Organizations and Websites	12

Taking Political Action:

Tips for meeting your representatives in congress	13
---	----

Overview and Analysis: Obama’s Record after One Year 16

Phyllis Bennis	16
Rami Khoury	18

The Issues

Lobby Day Talking Points	20
---	-----------

The Blockade of Gaza

ASK: Draft Resolution	21
Text of Congressional Sign-on Letter (inc. signers)	23
WHO Health Report	24

US Military Aid to Israel

ASK: AECA	29
ASK: FY2011 Budget Request	30
Factsheet on Military Aid to Israel	32
Factsheet on US Weapons in Gaza	33

Congressional Report Card	34
--	-----------

You are Invited!

Sunday Social Event and Fundraiser	35
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Official Events Schedule

The following events are official Grassroots Advocacy Training and Lobby Day events. There are also affiliated events scheduled for Saturday, March 6; Monday, March 8; and Tuesday, March 9, and organized by the US Campaign to End the Israeli Occupation and CODEPINK, respectively. Affiliated events are optional and may require separate registration.

Official Event Locations:

Sunday, March 7

American University

Ward Building
4400 Massachusetts Avenue, NW
Washington, DC 20016

Guapos Restaurant

4515 Wisconsin Ave. NW
Washington, DC 20016

Monday, March 8

Capitol Hill (The Methodist Building Meeting Room)

100 Maryland Avenue NE
Washington, DC 20002

SUNDAY, MARCH 7

Location: American University - Ward Building, Room 2

9:00 - 9:30 am: *Registration and Welcome*

9:30 – 11:15 am: *Keynote Panel*

US Policy and the Israeli-Palestinian Conflict: The First Year of an Obama Presidency

- **Noura Erakat** - A Palestinian attorney, activist, and adjunct professor of international human rights law in the Middle East at Georgetown University
 - **Zahir Janmohamed** - Former Director of Middle East Advocacy at Amnesty International and a Senior Legislative Aide on foreign affairs for a member of Congress
 - **Rebecca Vilkomerson** - Executive Director of Jewish Voice for Peace and an editor of Jewish Peace News
- Moderated by Gerald Lenoir of Interfaith Peace-Builders Board of Directors*

11:15 – 11:30 am: *Morning Break (coffee and tea)*

11:30 am – 1:00 pm: *Introducing our Policy Asks*

A chance to focus on Monday's Lobby Day, this session will introduce our shared policy asks and discuss strategies to use on Capitol Hill

- **Josh Ruebner** - National Advocacy Director at the US Campaign to End the Israeli Occupation; *additional presenters to be announced*

1:00 - 2:00 pm: *Lunch Break (lunch provided for pre-paid registrants)*

Optional Participant-Led Break-Out Sessions

Participants are encouraged to convene self-organized break-out sessions on the topics of their choice during the lunch break. Participants will have the opportunity to post session topics throughout the morning (more information will be available at the training).

2:00 – 4:00 pm: *Workshop Session 1*

Workshop 1A: *Congressional Engagement 101: Building Skills and Expanding the Congressional District Coordinator Network*

- **Josh Ruebner** - National Advocacy Director at the US Campaign to End the Israeli Occupation

Workshop 1B: *Broadening the Mainstream Discourse: Making Change in Your Local Media*

- **Sam Hussein** - Communications Director at the Institute for Public Accuracy
- **Jacob Pace** - Communications Coordinator at Interfaith Peace-Builders

Workshop 1C: *Coalition Building with Muslim Communities: Creating Stronger Partnerships*

- **Naeem Baig** - Vice President for Public Affairs at the Islamic Circle of North America
- **Ibrahim Abdil-Mu'id Ramey** - Director of the Civil and Human Rights Division at the Muslim American Society Freedom Foundation

4:00 - 4:15 pm: *Afternoon Break*

4:15 – 6:15 pm: *Workshop Session 2*

Workshop 2A: *Congressional Engagement 201: Developing Relationships with Representatives and Staff*

- **Ra'ed Jarrar** - Senior Fellow on the Middle East for Peace Action
- **Gael Murphy** - Co-founder of CODEPINK: Women for Peace

Workshop 2B: *Speaker Training Workshop: Effectively Engage and Educate your Community about Palestine*

- **Anna Baltzer** - award-winning lecturer, author, and activist for Palestinian human rights

Workshop 2C: *A Civil Society Response to Apartheid: Campaigning for Boycott, Divestment and Sanctions*

- **Katherine Fuchs** - National Organizer at the US Campaign to End the Israeli Occupation

6:30 – 7:00 pm: *Final Plenary Meeting and Details for Monday*

7:30 – 9:00 pm: *Social Event and Fundraiser*

Guapos Restaurant

4515 Wisconsin Ave. NW

Washington, DC 20016

Guapos is one block north of the Tenleytown/American University Metro Station

Free entrance for Grassroots Advocacy Training registrants

\$10 - \$50 for non-registrants

*Join Interfaith Peace-Builders for a social event and fundraiser! An opportunity to get a bite to eat, relax and converse. Screening of IFPB mini-documentary "**Looking Forward: Encounters with Interfaith Peace-Builders in Israel/Palestine**", as well as raffle prizes and local entertainment to be announced.*

MONDAY, MARCH 8

Location:

The Methodist Building Meeting Room

100 Maryland Avenue NE (Capitol Hill)

Washington, DC 20002

Between 9:00 AM and 5:00 PM the Meeting Room at The Methodist Building will be available for registrants to use for meeting, resting, and storing bags. *The Methodist Building is accessible by Metrorail from Union Station (Red Line)*

9:00 – 11:00 am: *Practice your congressional meetings*

The Methodist Building Meeting Room

A chance to practice meeting congressional offices. if possible, experts and presenters will be on hand to answer questions and provide advice

10:00 am – 5:00 pm: *Meetings on Capitol Hill*

3:30 pm– 5:30 pm: *Evaluation Session*

The Methodist Building Meeting Room

*A review and evaluation of the lobby day focused on tangible achievements and avenues for growth and success. **Moderated by Joe Groves** - Senior Fellow at Interfaith Peace-Builders.*

Affiliated Events

Schedule

The following affiliated events are organized by the US Campaign to End the Israeli Occupation and CODEPINK: Women for Peace, respectively, and are *optional*. Your registration for the Grassroots Advocacy Training and Lobby Day covers *only* the official events of March 7 - 8 detailed above. **Separate registration is required for some of the following affiliated events.**

SATURDAY, MARCH 6

10:00 am - 4:00 pm: *Boycott and Divestment Training Day* (*separate registration required*)

(*Location TBA*) The Boycott and Divestment Training Day is organized by the US Campaign to End the Israeli Occupation and focus on providing skills for students and other grassroots activists to implement boycott, divestment and sanctions campaigns in their community.

You must register with the US Campaign to End the Israeli Occupation to attend this event.

MONDAY, MARCH 8

5:30 pm: *Boycott AHAVA Action at a beauty store in DC*

Meet at the Methodist Building and walk from Capitol Hill to local DC store marketing AHAVA products. Join CODEPINK's Stolen Beauty campaign calling for a boycott of the Israeli cosmetic's line.

8:00 – 10:00 pm: *Peace x Peace and CODEPINK co-host a special International Women's Day evening event focused on Israeli and Palestinian peace-builders*

Location:

Busboys and Poets Restaurant
2021 14th Street NW
Washington, DC

Join Israeli and Palestinian women peace-builders in launching the new book by Peace x Peace at DC's favorite progressive venue.

TUESDAY, MARCH 9

Times TBA: *CODEPINK Actions at State Department and White House* (*separate registration required*)

(*Locations TBA*) Stay in DC Tuesday and get your hands dirty with CODEPINK raising awareness about what is occurring in Palestine/Israel and demanding justice in the region. Actions are likely to occur at the State Department and the White House.

You must sign-up with CODEPINK to participate in these actions and receive updates about plans, meeting times, and other information.

DIRECTIONS AND MAPS:

The following information provides directions and maps to each location at which Grassroots Advocacy Training and Lobby Day events will take place.

SUNDAY, MARCH 7

Official Event Locations:

American University

Ward Building
4400 Massachusetts Avenue, NW
Washington, DC 20016

Guapos Restaurant

4515 Wisconsin Ave. NW
Washington, DC 20016

DIRECTIONS TO AMERICAN UNIVERSITY (all March 7 daytime events):

See below for an American University Campus Map (The Ward Building is on the southeastern corner of campus near Ward Circle and the corner of Nebraska Avenue and Massachusetts Avenue).

NOTE: If traveling via public transportation, please leave ample time to arrive at the Ward Building by 9:30 AM on Sunday, March 7.

Public Transportation:

American University is accessible via the Washington DC Metrorail and university shuttle services. Detailed information on accessing American University by Metro or by car is available below or and [here](#).

Metrorail:

American University is served by the **Metrorail Red Line (American University-Tenleytown Station)**. Travel Times from downtown DC range from 20 minutes to 45 minutes. For a metro map and train times see www.wmata.com.

American University Shuttle Service:

American University operates a free shuttle service to the main campus from the **American University-Tenleytown Metrorail Station** (the stop is located adjacent to the Metrorail station beside the Sears Home Appliance storefront and is marked by signs inside the station).

Travel time to the main AU Campus is approximately 15 minutes. On Sunday, shuttles run every 15 minutes beginning at 8:00 AM.

Metrobus:

American University is served by Metrobus. Travel Times from downtown DC can vary/ Check weekend schedules and your specific itinerary at www.wmata.com.

Driving:

Detailed information on accessing American University by car is available [here](#).

Parking is free on weekends and ample parking is available in the Nebraska Lot directly across Nebraska Avenue from the Ward Building (see [map](#)).

DIRECTIONS TO SOCIAL EVENT AND FUNDRAISER:

The location of Sunday evening's Social Event and Fundraiser (7:30 - 9:30 PM) is:

Guapos Restaurant

4515 Wisconsin Ave. NW
Washington, DC 20016

Guapos is one block north of the Tenleytown/American University Metro Station. Take the university shuttle to the metro station and walk north on Wisconsin Avenue. For walking/driving directions from American University [click here](#).

MONDAY, MARCH 8

**Events will take place at Capitol Hill (Methodist Building)
Washington, DC**

The Methodist Building - Meeting Room

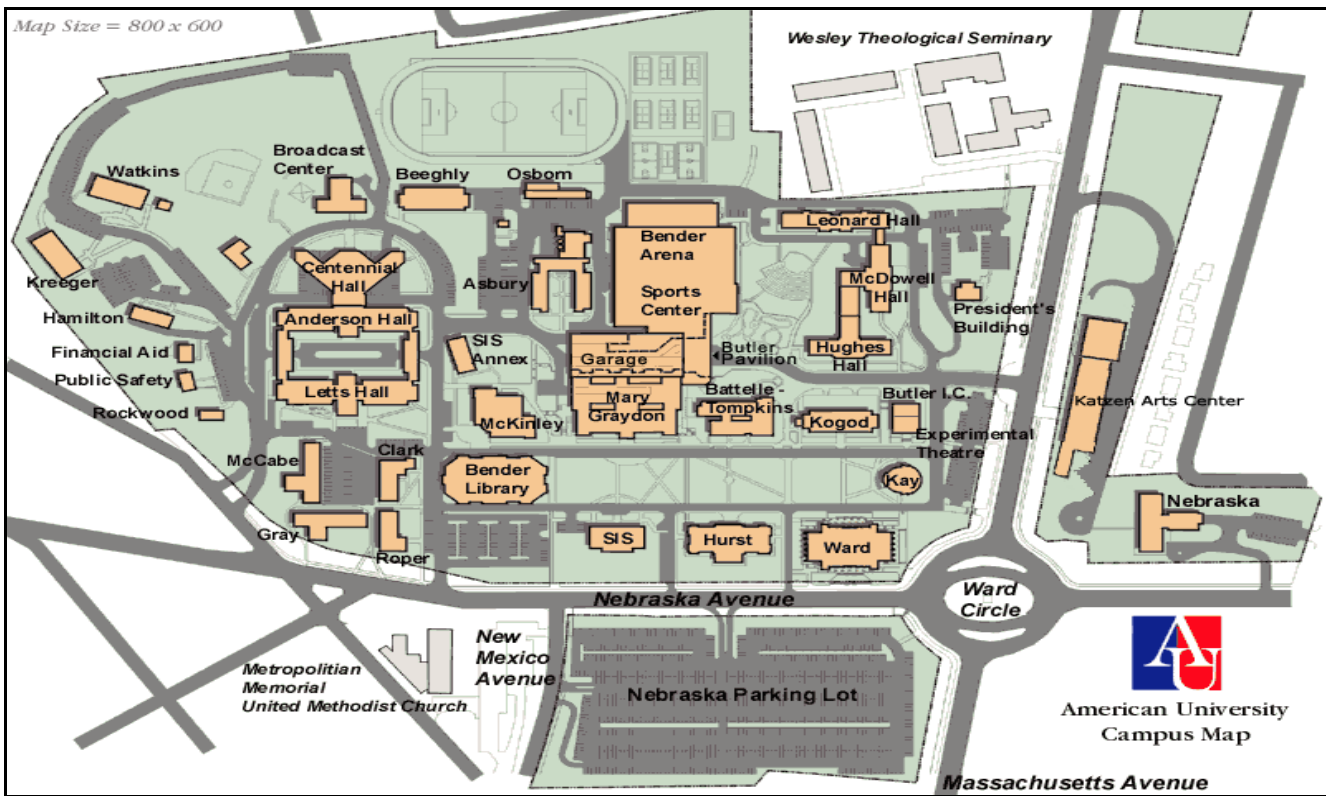
100 Maryland Avenue NE (Capitol Hill)
Washington, DC 20002

Event: Lobby Day Evaluation Session, 3:30 - 5:00 PM

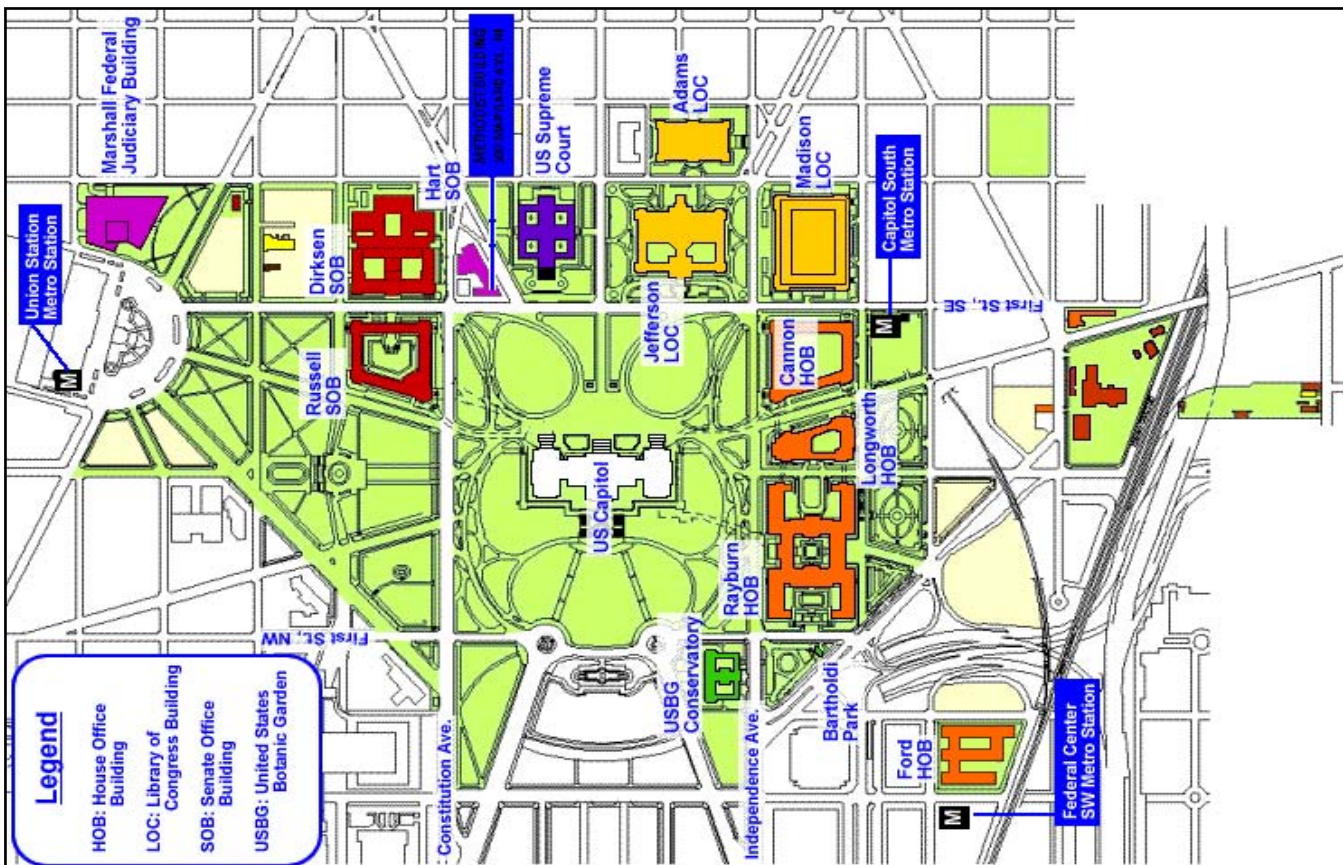
Between 10:00 AM and 5:00 PM the meeting room at the Methodist Building will be available for registrants to use for meeting, resting, and storing bags.

The Methodist Building is accessible by Metrorail from Union Station (Red Line). Click [here](#) for a google map of location and [here](#) for directions to/from Union Station. Check schedules and your specific itinerary at www.wmata.com.

American University campus Map (Ward Building in lower right):



Capitol Hill Map (Methodist Building between Dirksen SOB and Supreme Court):



PRESENTERS AND WORKSHOP LEADERS:

Naeem Baig currently serves as the Vice President for Public Affairs of the Islamic Circle of North America (ICNA). He is also Executive Director for ICNA Council for Social Justice. Mr. Baig served as the Secretary General of the Islamic Circle of North America from 2000 to 2004, and later from 2006 to 2008 and was recently elected to serve on the National Board of ICNA for the session 2010 - 2012. Mr. Baig played a major role in strengthening ICNA's Interfaith Relations Department. During his time as the Secretary General, ICNA became member of many Interfaith Initiatives including Religions for Peace USA. Recently, Mr. Baig served as the consultant on the 'Study on Christian-Muslim Relations', sponsored by the Department of Interfaith Relations of the Presbyterian Church (USA). Currently, he co-chairs the 'National Muslim Christian Initiative'. *Naeem will co-lead a workshop on **Coalition Building with Muslim Communities: Creating Stronger Partnerships**.*

Anna Baltzer is a full-time speaker, writer, and organizer for Palestinian rights. Since she began volunteering with the International Women's Peace Service, documenting human rights abuses and supporting Palestinian-led nonviolent resistance, Baltzer has appeared on television more than 100 times and lectured at more than 400 universities, schools, churches, mosques, and synagogues around the world with her presentation, "*Life in Occupied Palestine: Eyewitness Stories & Photos*," and her full-color book: *Witness in Palestine: A Jewish American Woman in the Occupied Territories*. In 2009, Baltzer received the Arab-American Anti-Discrimination Committee's prestigious *Annual Rachel Corrie Peace & Justice Award*. She is a contributor to four upcoming books and serves on the Board of Directors of The Research Journalism Institute, Grassroots Jerusalem, and Council for the National Interest. For information visit www.AnnalInTheMiddleEast.com. *Anna will lead the **Speaker Training Workshop: Effectively Engage and Educate your Community about Palestine**.*

Mike Daly is Program Coordinator at Interfaith Peace-Builders. He has worked with the organization since 2004. Before coming to IFPB, he studied in Damascus as a Fulbright Scholar, worked as a public relations consultant with the United Nations Development Programme in Ramallah, and completed a year of intensive Arabic at the American University in Cairo. Mike has co-led three IFPB delegations, has presented at numerous conferences and workshops and taken on leadership roles in national, regional and local organizing initiatives and coalitions.

Noura Erakat is a Palestinian attorney, activist, and adjunct professor of international human rights law in the Middle East at Georgetown University. She recently served as Legal Counsel for a Congressional Subcommittee in the House of Representatives. As a recipient of a New Voices Fellowship, Noura previously worked as a national grassroots organizer and legal advocate at the US Campaign to End the Israeli Occupation where she helped seed BDS campaigns nationally as well as support the cases brought against two former Israeli officials in US federal courts for alleged war crimes. Noura holds law and undergraduate degrees from the University of California at Berkeley where she helped launch a divestment campaign along with the Students for Justice in Palestine. She has worked and studied in Israel and Palestine: she interned at Adalah: The Center for Arab Minority Rights in Israel; studied at Hebrew University; and volunteered in Palestinian refugee camps in the West Bank and Lebanon. Noura has also helped to organize national conferences for AMWAJ (Arab Women Arising for Justice) and the US Palestinian Popular Conference. Noura has appeared on Fox's "The O' Reilly Factor," NBC's "Politically Incorrect," MSNBC, and Al-Jazeera International. In February 2009 she participated in a National Lawyers Guild fact-finding mission to Gaza. *Noura will join the keynote panel on the subject of **US Policy and the Israeli-Palestinian Conflict**.*

Katherine Fuchs is National Organizer at the US Campaign to End the Israeli Occupation and a masters candidate at UNESCO's Chair for the Philosophy of Peace in Castellon, Spain. In the summer of 2009 Katherine co-lead an IFPB delegation to Israel, Jerusalem and the West Bank. Before joining the US Campaign Katherine organized and lobbied for Peace Action in Washington, DC and in her hometown of Milwaukee, Wisconsin. She has also worked as a community organizer in Wisconsin for fair trade, voting rights, and LGBT equality campaigns. *Katherine will lead the workshop on **A Civil Society Response to Apartheid: Campaigning for Boycott, Divestment and Sanctions**.*

Joe Groves is Senior Fellow at Interfaith Peace-Builders. He has been working with IFPB since 2001, first as Coordinator for the program under the Fellowship of Reconciliation, then as Co-Director from 2006-2008. Joe has worked on Middle East issues for over 40 years, in the US, Israel and Palestine, and Iraq. He was Professor of Religious Studies and Director of Peace and Conflict Studies at Guilford College and is an Adjunct Professor in the International Peace and Conflict Resolution Program at American University. *Joe will moderate the keynote panel on the subject of **US Policy and the Israeli-Palestinian Conflict**.*

Sam Hussein is Communications Director at the Institute for Public Accuracy. *Sam will co-lead the workshop on **Broadening the Mainstream Discourse: Making Change in Your Local Media**.*

Zahir Janmohamed was the Advocacy Director for the Middle East and North Africa at Amnesty International from 2006 to 2009. A graduate of UC Berkeley and UCLA, he is currently a Senior Legislative Aide on foreign affairs for a member of Congress. *Zahir will join the keynote panel on the subject of **US Policy and the Israeli-Palestinian Conflict**.*

Ra'ed Jarrar is an Iraqi-born architect, blogger, and political analyst. He holds a Bachelors Degree in Architecture from the University of Baghdad, and a Master's Degree from the University of Jordan. After the fall of Baghdad, Jarrar founded an Iraqi grassroots organization that carried out humanitarian and reconstruction work in Iraq. Jarrar is currently a Senior Fellow on the Middle East for Peace Action, based in Washington DC. *Ra'ed will co-lead the workshop on **Congressional Engagement 201: Developing Relationships with Representatives and Staff**.*

Gerald Lenoir is a board member of Interfaith Peace-Builders and Director of the Black Alliance for Just Immigration (BAJI). He is also a board member of the National Network for Immigrant and Refugee Rights and co-founder of the Priority Africa Network. Gerald is the former executive director of the Black Coalition on AIDS in San Francisco and co-founder/board chair of the HIV Education and Prevention Project of Alameda County. He was a member of the editorial board of War Times, an anti-Iraq war newspaper and a long time leader in the racial justice and anti-apartheid movements. He has also served as a strategic planning consultant for racial justice, immigrant rights, and health-related organizations. *Gerald will moderate the keynote panel on the subject of **US Policy and the Israeli-Palestinian Conflict**.*

Gael Murphy is a co-founder of CODEPINK: Women for Peace. Her activism has focused on women and children-centered issues, beginning with her Peace Corps service in the mid-70s. Gael holds a Bachelor's Degree in Anthropology, and Masters Degrees in African Area Studies, Public Health and Fine Arts. She has worked in Africa and the Caribbean as a public health advisor and studied and produced social change media. Most recently, Gael is concerned by the militarization of US foreign policy, with Israel's "defense" at the center, and by the enormous military spending in the face of growing domestic needs. For the past 3 years, Gael has served as co-chair of the Legislative working group, of the anti-war coalition United for Peace and Justice, pursuing legislative and political pressure to de-fund the wars in Iraq and Afghanistan. As part of the Gaza Freedom March, she co-facilitated an ad hoc policy working group to organize inside and outside "actions" in an effort to build Congressional support for Palestinian justice. As a resident of Washington, DC, she has extensive experience with a broad range of tactics to engage Members of Congress, from traditional lobbying to sit-ins. *Gael will co-lead the workshop on **Congressional Engagement 201: Developing Relationships with Representatives and Staff**.*

Jacob Pace is Communications and Grants Coordinator at Interfaith Peace-Builders. Jake joined the organization in 2007 after first traveling to the region with an IFPB delegation in 2003. He previously worked with Partners for Peace, the US Campaign to End the Israeli Occupation and the Resource Center for Nonviolence in Santa Cruz, California. He spent more than a year in Israel/Palestine between 2003 and 2005 working with the Applied Research Institute of Jerusalem in Bethlehem and the Palestinian Centre for Human Rights in the Gaza Strip. His work experience has focused particularly on media advocacy and grassroots organizing. He led an IFPB delegation in August 2008 and will co-lead another delegation in summer 2009. *Jake will co-lead the workshop on **Broadening the Mainstream Discourse: Making Change in Your Local Media**.*

Ibrahim Abdil-Mu'id Ramey is Director of the Civil and Human Rights Division at the Muslim American Society Freedom Foundation (*more details coming soon*). *Ibrahim will co-lead a workshop on **Coalition Building with Muslim Communities: Creating Stronger Partnerships**.*

Josh Ruebner is the National Advocacy Director of the US Campaign to End the Israeli Occupation. Josh is a former Analyst in Middle East Affairs at the Congressional Research Service (CRS), a non-partisan federal government agency which provide Members of Congress with policy analysis. He holds a graduate degree in International Affairs from Johns Hopkins University School of Advanced International Studies. *Josh will lead the session on **Introducing our Policy Asks** and the workshop on **Congressional Engagement 101: Building Skills and Expanding the Congressional District Coordinator Network**.*

Rebecca Vilkomerson is the Executive Director of Jewish Voice for Peace. She has over 15 years of experience in community organizing and advocacy campaigns in the United States and Israel. Immediately before joining JVP, Rebecca worked for a Palestinian Israel public policy center (DIRASAT) and a Bedouin-Jewish environmental and social justice organization in Israel (BUSTAN). Her study, Public Policy in Divided Societies: The Case for a Civil Rights Institution was published in July, 2008 by Dirasat, the Arab Center for Law and Policy. She is also currently an editor of Jewish Peace News. Rebecca is a graduate of Connecticut College and has a Master's Degree in Public Policy from Johns Hopkins University. She has been a member of JVP since 2002. *Rebecca will join the keynote panel on the subject of **US Policy and the Israeli-Palestinian Conflict**.*

ENDORISING ORGANIZATIONS:

A special thanks to the endorsing organizations for their great work and steadfast support. Please visit their websites to view their work and get involved in their Campaigns:

The American-Arab Anti-Discrimination Committee:

www.adc.org

The American Friends Service Committee – Chicago:

www.afsc.org/chicago

CODEPINK: Women for Peace:

www.codepink4peace.org

Stolen Beauty Campaign: www.stolenbeauty.org

The Fellowship of Reconciliation:

www.forusa.org

Holy Land Trust:

www.holylandtrust.org

The Islamic Circle of North America and ICNA Council for Social Justice:

www.icna.org

The Israeli Committee Against House Demolitions – USA:

www.icahdusa.org

Jewish Voice for Peace:

www.jewishvoiceforpeace.org

The Middle East Research and Information Project:

www.merip.org

The Muslim American Society Freedom Foundation:

www.masnet.org/index_publicaffairs.asp

Progressive Democrats of America:

www.pdamerica.org

The Washington Peace Center:

www.washingtonpeacecenter.org

Sponsoring Organizations:

The US Campaign to End the Israeli Occupation:

www.endtheoccupation.org

How Much Military Aid to Israel?: www.aidtoisrael.org

Interfaith Peace-Builders:

www.ifpb.org

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TAKING POLITICAL ACTION: TIPS FOR MEETING WITH YOUR MEMBERS OF CONGRESS

Meeting and establishing a relationship with your members of congress is one of the most direct ways to engage US policy in the region. You don't have to be in Washington DC to meet with your representatives. In fact, it is generally easier, and can be more productive, to meet your senators or congresspeople in your home district. It is not always possible to meet with your member of congress directly. If your member is busy, ask to meet with his or her Foreign Policy Staff or Senior Staff.

The tips below provide some guidance for meeting with your representatives. These tips are based on those distributed by the *US Campaign to End the Israeli Occupation*, and have been further augmented by Interfaith Peace-Builders' experience.

Before the Meeting

1. Consider Bringing a Group of People

You can meet with your representatives alone, however, you may want to consider organizing a small group of people to attend the meeting with you. Your group should be diverse and represent a wide swath of your representative's constituency. Identify people in your community working on your issue and work together to set up a meeting. Representatives of ethnic or religious communities may be willing to accompany you to the meeting. Bringing more than four or five people can be hard to manage, however, so keep it small.

2. Do Your Research

Research your representative's politics and voting record on Israel/Palestine. You can find his or her voting record on the US Campaign to End the Israeli Occupation's [Congressional Report Card](#) (for the user name enter "report" and for the password enter "card"). Use your representative's voting record to craft talking points for your meeting.

Also identify which committee(s) and which caucuses your representative sits on and study what issues currently are pending before Congress and the committee(s). This information can be found at <http://thomas.loc.gov>.

3. Identify Your Goal

Decide what you want achieve. Do you want your member of congress to vote for or against a particular bill? Introduce or co-sponsor specific legislation? Asking your legislator or his or her staff member to do something specific will help you know how successful your visit has been. Discussing your representative's past voting record is also important and will give you good background for future meetings.

4. Rehearse Your Talking Points and Messages

Meet well ahead of time with everyone who is participating and plan out your meeting. Choose one individual to be your spokesperson. Choose an order of who will speak and which person will discuss which issues. Rehearse your talking points and messages well. It is best to keep your message focused on 1-3 main points. You will need to be brief and clear as **you generally will have only 10-15 minutes for the meeting.**

Practice. You may want to have someone role play the Member of Congress or staff person and ask difficult questions. Anticipate the kinds of questions you may be asked from both supporters and opponents and be prepared to answer such questions in the meeting.

5. Provide a Personal Story or Real-Life Illustration from your Delegation

Personal stories are more easily remembered than statistics. As necessary, briefly cite evidence or statistics to support your

position, however, be careful not to overwhelm the representative or staffer with too many statistics or references to studies (this kind of information will be in the materials you leave behind or can be sent with your thank-you note). Also, keep your personal story brief. Discuss how the policy change will have an impact on your community or the communities you met with in Israel/Palestine (for instance, you may want to focus on what local educational or community initiatives can be funded with the more than \$3 billion of aid sent to Israel annually).

6. Prepare a Packet of Materials

It is always good to leave your representative or staff with a small packet of information. Try to keep your packet small and focused on the issues you discuss in your meeting. You may want to use the Institute for Middle East Understanding's [Background Briefings](#) or the US Campaign to End the Israeli Occupation's [resources](#). Other resources are also available online.

Include information on any local group you are active with on this issue, people you met in Israel/Palestine, copies of relevant legislation, and a flyer for the upcoming IFPB delegation which you can download from www.ifpbdel.org/resources. Encourage your representative or staffer to attend a delegation.

At the Meeting

1. Dress for Success and Be on Time

Wear business clothes. For better or worse, you and your message will be taken more seriously by your Member of Congress if you are dressed professionally. Members of Congress and their staff are very busy. Be respectful of their time. Open the meeting by thanking the Member or staffer for his or her time.

2. Introduce the Group

Have the lead spokesperson briefly introduce him/herself, your local activist organization (if relevant) and IFPB. Then have the other participants in the meeting introduced themselves and their affiliations. Mention where you live or work in the district or state so the representative is clear you are a constituent.

Bring up any personal, professional or political connections to the elected official that you may have. If the policymaker/staffer has been helpful in the past or has taken action that you appreciate, be sure to say thank you and acknowledge this up front.

3. State Accurately how many People you Represent

Don't over-inflate your numbers. Members of Congress will be making their decisions about your request in part on how many people you can mobilize.

4. Make your "Ask" up Front

This is the most important part of the meeting and the reason why you came. You are asking the Member of Congress to do something for you. Don't be bashful about asking. They are expecting an "ask". An "ask" is something specific, such as "We would like you to sign on to the Rachel Corrie Resolution." It is not general. "We would like you to support a just peace" is not an "ask". Explain why the Member of Congress should support your "ask".

5. Be Polite and Listen Carefully

Even if you disagree with the representative or staffer's views and positions, it is very important to be courteous. Be flexible, consider the opposing view, and avoid being argumentative or threatening. Much of advocacy is about building and maintaining relationships over time.

Address Members of Congress correctly by calling them "Senator" or "Representative", unless otherwise directed by the Member of Congress. Take notes to show your representative that you are serious about the meeting and follow-up.

6. Be Calm — Don't be Intimidated or Fooled

People wielding power can be scary sometimes. Odds are that you know much more about the issue than does the Member of Congress or his/her staff person. Keep this in mind when making your points.

It is more likely that you will receive a warm and friendly reception - it is in your representative's interest to seem engaged and interested in what you have to say as a constituent. Don't be overwhelmed by their interest in you. Try not to let them steer you off your main talking points. Be prepared to meet your goals for the meeting. You want the representative or staffer to not only be polite but to *respond* to your ask. And even when you may have a less tangible goal than supporting a

specific piece of legislation, don't let your representative off the hook. If your goal for the meeting is to build a relationship, make it clear that you expect your representative to engage in dialogue with you and explain past and present positions.

7. Saying "I Don't Know" can be a Smart Political Move

You need not be an expert on the topic you are discussing. If you don't know the answer to a question, it is fine to tell your representative that you will get that information for him or her. This gives you the chance to put your strongest arguments into their files, and allows you to contact them again about the issue. Never make up an answer to a question -- giving wrong or inaccurate information can seriously damage your credibility!

8. Set Deadlines for a Response

Ask directly, and politely, for the policymaker's views and position on the issue and what he/she plans to do about it. Stay on message and on topic and be sure to make your "ask." However, if the Member truly is undecided, or the staffer is not familiar with the Member's position on the issue, do not force an answer. Often, if an elected official hasn't taken a position on legislation, they will not commit to one in the middle of a meeting. If he or she has to think about it, or if you are meeting with a staff member, ask when you should check back in to find out what your legislator intends to do.

Reiterate your interest, offer to answer any questions or provide additional information, and request a written follow-up letter from the Member once a decision has been made. If you need to get information to your legislator, set a clear timeline for when this will happen. That way, you aren't left hanging indefinitely.

9. Leave your Contact Information and Get a Card for the Representative or Staffer

If you leave a business card, make it clear that you are visiting on your own time and not representing your employer, unless you have received such clearance. If you do not have a business card to leave, make sure you give your home/personal contact information so the office can follow-up. Be sure to get a business card from the Member of Congress/staff member so that you know how to reach them. Ask the Member/staff member their preferred mode of communication (e.g. e-mail, fax, voicemail/phone).

10. Summarize your Requests of the Member of Congress

Leave the meeting by verbally recapping the commitments you have made to the Member or staffer and the commitments that he or she has made to you. Summarize any responses the Member or staffer has provided to ensure you are clear on where they stand on the issues and recap the Member's or staffer's requests and indicate how you plan to respond. Express thanks and appreciation for their time, interest, and courtesy.

After the Meeting

1. Compare Notes

Right after the meeting, compare notes with everyone in your group to understand what the elected official committed to do and what follow up information you committed to send.

2. Send a Thank You Letter

Each person who took part in the meeting should promptly send a personal thank you letter to the representative. **This letter should be addressed** to the Member of Congress whose office(s) you visited with a cc: to the staffer with whom you met, referencing the date of your meeting, who was in attendance and the issues discussed. Your letter should express appreciation for the time and consideration extended to you during your meeting. Reiterate your request(s) and ask for a written response from the office. Keep in touch with the Member/staff member to maintain and strengthen your relationship.

3. Follow up in a Timely Fashion with any Requested Materials and Information

If you e-mail or mail follow-up materials, call the representative or staffer directly to make sure they received it. Schedule a follow-up discussion if appropriate. If the elected official or staff member doesn't meet the deadline for action you agreed to during the meeting, ask him or her to set another deadline. Be persistent and flexible!

4. Establish a relationship with your Members of Congress and their Staff

Keep your relationship current by phoning and faxing your representative or staffer when there is pending, relevant legislation. If your initial meeting is in Washington, D.C., be sure to schedule a similar meeting with the staff in the district or state office. Check in with your representative when she or he is at home to reinforce the relationship and follow up on your issues of priority.

WAR AND PEACE

BY PHYLLIS BENNIS

Barack Obama accomplished one very important thing during his first months in office. He began to transform foreign policy language and ideology away from the proudly unilateralist militarism of George W. Bush. He spoke of the importance of diplomacy over military action, global cooperation rather than global domination, re-engaging with the Muslim world, and respecting the United Nations and perhaps even international law.

But Obama's actions continue to belie those words. He said he would end torture and close Guantánamo. But the prison has not been closed, extraordinary rendition continues, and Bagram's prisoners may well face the same tortures as Gitmo's (even if Afghan officials "take over responsibility" for running Bagram). So far the administration is abiding by the letter of the U.S.-Iraqi terms on withdrawal from Iraq, but no more rapidly than Bush grudgingly agreed to do. Bush hold-over Secretary of Defense Robert Gates has already acknowledged that U.S. troops will remain in Iraq even after the "final" withdrawal scheduled for the end of 2011. And no one even talks about the mercenaries.

Then there's Afghanistan, Obama's war. Candidate Obama warned us of his intention to escalate in Afghanistan, perhaps because an antiwar candidate on Iraq had to find some other war to claim as his own, or perhaps because he improbably convinced

GRADE

5.5



the Obama administration has remained locked in the mindset of militarism.

himself that escalating a failing war would somehow still end up with "victory." But that doesn't mean the escalation makes any sense. In Afghanistan, Obama is encouraging, rather than ending, the mindset that leads to war.

Obama promised early and often he would make Israel-Palestine a priority from day one. He started badly by standing silent during the Israeli devastation of Gaza, which ended just hours before he was sworn in as president, and agreeing to implement Bush's promise of \$30 billion in military aid to Israel. But then he appointed former Senator George Mitchell, known for his work in Northern Ireland where he learned that if negotiations are to succeed, "everyone must be at the table." That augured well for the United States talking to Hamas and putting real pressure on Israel to end its occupation and apartheid policies. But instead, all the Obama administration did was to request—several times—that Israel freeze its settlements. Israel said no each time. So Obama stopped requesting. Obama never made

BARELY MAKING THE GRADE: **OBAMA'S FIRST YEAR**

the \$30 billion in military aid contingent on a settlement freeze.

Elsewhere in the renamed global war on terror, Obama made good on his promise to engage with Iran. It has been dishonest diplomacy — undermined by administration assertions that the goal of diplomacy is to provide political cover for escalating sanctions. But diplomacy is still better than war. In Yemen, war looms. The Obama administration is sending \$70 million in counterterrorism, intelligence, and covert military aid to Yemen. Twenty years ago, the Bush Senior administration cut its entire aid budget to Yemen—at that time development and economic aid, not CIA agents and Special Forces. Coincidentally it was also \$70 million.

Imagine what might have happened differently if, instead of cutting that aid, the United States had flooded Yemen and its people with agricultural assistance, training for midwives and doctors, and lots of money for Yemenis to build up their own country's social and physical infrastructure as they chose, not as U.S. “experts” imposed.

In Yemen, as in Afghanistan, Pakistan, and other fronts in the continuing war on terror, the Obama administration has remained locked in the mindset of militarism. For that reason, his first-year score on war and peace issues is just above failure: a low 5.5.

Obama's year-one: low marks for all

By Rami G. Khouri

Wednesday, January 20, 2010

www.dailystar.com.lb/article.asp?edition_id=10&categ_id=5&article_id=110849

The first anniversary of Barack Obama's presidency is a good time to review his performance in the Middle East, and the Middle East's performance vis-à-vis the United States. The exercise is depressing, but useful, especially when it comes to the Arab-Israeli conflict that remains the central destabilizing factor in the wider region. It is unfair only to measure Obama's performance, and ignore the Israeli and Arab principal players in this prolonged drama of stalemate and stagnation.

Obama started his term with a flurry of profound gestures and a few, limited moves. He reached out to and sat at the table with Iran, resumed high-level contacts with Syria, appointed George Mitchell as his peacemaking envoy, called for an Israeli settlement freeze, sought Arab gestures of acceptance of Israel, asked Israel to allow humanitarian supplies to flow into Gaza, spoke out on US-Islamic ties in Ankara and Cairo, and, once a week between January and July, hugged every Muslim in sight.

These gestures set the tone for a presidency that held out great promise for new activism, ideas and advances in Arab-Israeli diplomacy. Most of them have fizzled out. Clearly, Obama gave urgency to his Arab-Israeli moves, but did not make them a priority. He focused more on issues of greater immediate importance, such as Iraq, Afghanistan, Iran, North Korea, the economy, health care reform and relations with Russia and China. His largely inexperienced team also made some amateurish moves, like equating an Israeli settlement freeze with calls on the Arabs to make gestures of acceptance toward Israel. Washington also appeared not to apply serious diplomatic muscle in the process, beyond public rhetoric.

We still have no idea of how Obama hopes to solve the Arab-Israeli conflict, and the Palestinian-Israeli conflict in particular, because he has not articulated the US view on core issues like refugees, the ultimate status of the settlements, and Jerusalem. He has not indicated how far he is prepared to press the Israelis or Arabs. He may not do any of this in the coming year, when mid-term Congressional elections usually freeze any serious work on Israeli matters in the US, for fear that politicians may lose their seats if the pro-Israel lobby decides to oppose and unseat them.

Obama's Arab-Israeli policy remains an unhurried work in progress, although this week's Mideast trip by Mitchell, coming soon after that of the national security adviser, Jim Jones, may signal early steps in what might become Phase Two of Obama's approach to resolving the Arab-Israeli conflict through a re-launching of direct negotiations.

In the face of this erratic track record by Obama, what have the Arabs and Israelis done in the past year, other than oppose, delay, irritate and obstruct the US president? If Obama gets a B for effort and a D for achievement, Arabs and Israelis probably deserve an F for their collective failure to contribute meaningfully to resolving their own conflict.

The Israelis not only refused to comply with the American demand to freeze settlements, they also pursued several other destructive, predatory or illegal and provocative actions: they expanded some settlements, house demolitions, building permit approvals and land confiscations in the West Bank, Arab East Jerusalem and the Syrian Golan Heights; they continued to steal Arab water above and below ground; they maintained a near-starvation siege on the Gaza Strip and kept killing or jailing Gaza and West Bank Palestinians at will; they continued their over-flights in Lebanon; and, they

maintained Apartheid-like controls over Palestinians living in the lands occupied in 1967. All in all, a pretty normal Israeli year.

The Arabs, for their part, have been on diplomatic leave of absence this year, it seems, perhaps still celebrating the Obama victory and anticipating that the young president would save them. I cannot think of a single meaningful or constructive diplomatic move by the Arab world since the Obama election – not on Israel and Palestine, not on terrorism, not on Iran, not on weapons of mass destruction proliferation, not on Iraq, not on Sudan, not on Somalia, not on Yemen, not on Algeria, not on democratization and human rights, and not on Lebanon (well, perhaps we can celebrate that the Syrians and Saudis started talking again).

The total absence of serious Arab diplomacy or initiatives is one of the profound shortcomings of our contemporary Arab political system, in which regimes are largely immobilized on the international scene because of their near total preoccupation with maintaining power at home. It is profoundly sad to see the political passivity of the Arab region and its people – a people that once, long ago, displayed energy, fostered creativity, took initiatives, and engaged the world to make it a better place.

A year after the start of the era of Barack Obama, the Americans still come and go and speak of their dreams for the Middle East, the Israelis still act like criminals, and the Arabs insist on remaining invisible.

Rami G. Khouri is published twice-weekly by ***THE DAILY STAR***.

Interfaith Peace-Builders/US Campaign to End the Israeli Occupation Grassroots Lobbying Day “Talking Points” | March 8, 2010

1. FY2011 Budget Request for Military Aid to Israel

* Earlier this year President Obama sent his FY2011 budget request to Congress, which included a record-breaking \$3 billion in military aid to Israel, after declaring in his State of the Union address that he would "go through the budget line by line to eliminate programs that we can't afford and don't work."

* The United States cannot afford military aid to Israel. Before your meetings, please look at <http://www.aidtoisrael.org> to determine how much military aid to Israel your state and Congressional district will be providing under the terms of a 2007 agreement between the United States and Israel, and what that money could have funded instead to promote affordable housing, green jobs training, education programs, and health care access. Bring this data to your meetings and share them with Congressional offices to show that military aid to Israel comes at a price that we can't afford.

* Military aid to Israel doesn't work to promote a just and lasting peace between Palestinians and Israelis. In fact, it does the opposite, by literally “fueling” the conflict as documented in a 2009 Amnesty International report. Israel routinely misuses U.S. weapons in violation of the Arms Export Control Act to commit human rights abuses against Palestinians and to maintain its illegal military occupation of the Palestinian West Bank, East Jerusalem, and Gaza Strip. These U.S. weapons were misused by Israel to commit violations of human rights and international law, war crimes, and possible crimes against humanity before, during, and after “Operation Cast Lead,” according to the UN-backed Goldstone Report. During the Bush Administration, Israel killed more than 3,000 innocent Palestinians, according to the Israeli human rights organization B'tselem, often with U.S. weapons.

* Since the United States cannot afford military aid to Israel and since Israel routinely misuses U.S. weapons in violation of U.S. law, U.S. military aid to Israel should be cut off. As a first step towards that, **ask your Members of Congress** to offer amendments to the budget to restrict and condition military aid to Israel to prevent U.S. weapons from being misused, as detailed in the memo.

2. AECA Letter to Secretary of State Clinton

* When a country misuses U.S. weapons in violation of the Arms Export Control Act (AECA), the State Department is obligated by law to open an investigation and report its finding of violations of this law to Congress. Despite killing more than 3,000 Palestinian civilians during the Bush Administration, the State Department has not publicly reported to Congress any Israeli violations of this law.

* Members of Congress have a responsibility to insure that the laws they pass are followed. **Ask your Members of Congress** to send Secretary of State Clinton a letter asking for the State Department to investigate Israel's possible violations of the AECA.

3. Resolution on Israel's Blockade of the Gaza Strip

* Israel's blockade of the occupied Palestinian Gaza Strip is an illegal act of collective punishment, as detailed by the UN-backed Goldstone Report. According to the 4th Geneva Convention, to which both Israel and the United States are signatories, people cannot be collectively punished for a crime they did not commit. This is exactly what Israel's blockade is doing to the 1.5 million Palestinian residents of the occupied Gaza Strip, who are being denied by Israel adequate provisions of food, clean water, sanitation, electricity, medicines, and other essentials.

* Members of Congress need to support the Obama Administration in its efforts to end the blockade of the Gaza Strip. On January 22, 2009, President Obama stated “Our hearts go out to Palestinian civilians who are in need of immediate food, clean water, and basic medical care, and who've faced suffocating poverty for far too long. Now we must extend a hand of opportunity to those who seek peace. As part of a lasting cease-fire, Gaza's border crossings should be open to allow the flow of aid and commerce.” More than a year later, even though the cease-fire between Israel and Hamas has more or less held, Israel maintains its illegal blockade of the Gaza Strip in defiance of the Obama Administration's policy statement.

* **Ask your Members of Congress** to help the Obama Administration achieve its policy goal of ending Israel's illegal blockade of the Gaza Strip by introducing a resolution to that effect.

ASK: THE SIEGE OF GAZA

DRAFT RESOLUTION FOR AN END TO GAZA BLOCKADE:

*Expressing the sense of the House of Representatives that Israel should end its siege of the occupied Gaza Strip.
(Introduced in House)*

HRES _____

**111th CONGRESS
2nd Session
H. RES. _____**

Expressing the sense of the House of Representatives that Israel should end its siege of the occupied Gaza Strip.

**IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES
January ____, 2010**

Mr./Ms. ____ (for himself/herself, _____) submitted the following resolution; which was referred to the Committee on Foreign Affairs

RESOLUTION

Expressing the sense of the House of Representatives that Israel should end its siege of the occupied Gaza Strip.

Whereas Israel has held the Palestinian Gaza Strip in belligerent military occupation since June 1967;

Whereas Israel, as the Occupying Power, has internationally-binding obligations to Palestinians in the Gaza Strip living as protected persons under military occupation, according to the Geneva Convention Relative to the Protection of Civilian Persons in Time of War (Fourth Geneva Convention);

Whereas both Israel and the United States are High Contracting Parties to the Fourth Geneva Convention;

Whereas Article 1 of the Fourth Geneva Convention states “The High Contracting Parties undertake to respect and to ensure respect for the present Convention in all circumstances.”;

Whereas Article 33 of the Fourth Geneva Convention states “No protected person may be punished for an offence he or she has not personally committed. Collective penalties and likewise all measures of intimidation or of terrorism are prohibited.”;

Whereas Article 55 of the Fourth Geneva Convention states “the Occupying Power has the duty of ensuring the food and medical supplies of the population; it should, in particular, bring in the necessary foodstuffs, medical stores and other articles if the resources of the occupied territory are inadequate.”;

Whereas Article 56 of the Fourth Geneva Convention states that the “Occupying Power has the duty of ensuring and maintaining, with the cooperation of national and local authorities, the medical and hospital establishments and services, public health and hygiene in the occupied territory”;

Whereas Article 59 of the Fourth Geneva Convention states “If the whole or part of the population of an occupied territory is inadequately supplied, the Occupying Power shall agree to relief schemes on behalf of the said population, and shall facilitate them by all the means at its disposal. Such schemes, which may be undertaken either by States or by impartial humanitarian organizations such as the International Committee of the Red Cross, shall consist, in particular, of the provision of consignments of foodstuffs, medical supplies and clothing. All Contracting Parties shall permit the free passage of these consignments and shall guarantee their protection.”;

Whereas on November 15, 2005, Secretary of State Condoleezza Rice facilitated an Agreement on Movement and Access between Israel and the Palestinian Authority, in which the parties agreed that crossing points to and from the Gaza Strip “will operate continuously” and that “Israel will allow the passage of convoys to facilitate the movements of goods and persons” between the Gaza Strip and West Bank;

Whereas United Nations Security Council Resolution 1860, adopted on January 8, 2009, calls for the “unimpeded provision and distribution throughout Gaza of humanitarian assistance, including of food, fuel and medical treatment”;

Whereas President Barack Obama stated on January 22, 2009 “Our hearts go out to Palestinian civilians who are in need of immediate food, clean water, and basic medical care, and who've faced suffocating poverty for far too long. Now we must extend a hand of opportunity to those who seek peace. As part of a lasting cease-fire, Gaza's border crossings should be open to allow the flow of aid and commerce.”

Whereas in January 2009, Israel rejected for delivery to the Gaza Strip an unspecified number of cans of meat, humus, peas, white beans, beans, and tuna; 30,000 metric tons of corn oil; and 50,000 metric tons of rice; [Source: www.logcluster.org/gaza09a/supply-chain/clearance-status-of-humanitarian-cargo/list_090331.pdf/view]

Whereas in March 2009, Israel rejected for delivery to the Gaza Strip 125 metric tons of flour; 90 metric tons of macaroni; and 150 pallets of tomato paste, white tahine and jam from the U.S. Agency for International Development; [Source: Same as above and www.ochaopt.org/documents/ocha_opt_gaza_humanitarian_situation_report_2009_03_30_english.pdf]

Whereas the United Nations Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs reported in its Field Update on Gaza from the Humanitarian Coordination, 24-30 March 2009 that “In addition to limitations on humanitarian deliveries, restrictions on imports and exports in general continue to seriously affect the living conditions of the population...Movement restrictions continue to prevent herders and farmers from accessing areas near the borders. Fishermen stand to lose substantial income as a result of new restrictions that limit fishing to three miles from Gaza's shores.”;

Whereas in May 2009, the U.S. Department of State sent a diplomatic note to Israel urging it to open the border crossings of the Gaza Strip, to allow for the access of food and medicine and transfer of money to banks, and for the importation of construction and rebuilding materials;

Whereas on June 30, 2009, the Israeli navy committed an international act of piracy by kidnapping in international waters 21 people, including U.S. citizens and a former member of the U.S. House of Representatives, who were attempting to break Israel's siege of the Gaza Strip and deliver badly-needed humanitarian supplies to the besieged population;

Now, therefore, be it

Resolved, That the House of Representatives—

- (1) urges Israel to comply unconditionally with its legal obligations under the Fourth Geneva Convention to supply all protected persons in the occupied Gaza Strip with all humanitarian necessities;
- (2) finds that Israel's siege of the Gaza Strip constitutes an act of collective punishment that is illegal under the Fourth Geneva Convention;
- (3) urges Israel to comply unconditionally with its obligations agreed to as part of the 2005 Agreement on Movement and Access;
- (4) urges Israel to implement unconditionally the terms of United Nations Security Council Resolution 1860;
- (5) commends President Barack Obama for stating that Gaza's borders should remain open for aid and commerce and urges him to communicate to Israel that Gaza's borders should be opened immediately;
- (6) urges Israel to end immediately its land, sea, and air siege of the Gaza Strip.

Attest:

Clerk.

MCDERMOTT ELLISON LETTER ON HUMANITARIAN ASSISTANCE TO GAZA

President Barack Obama
The White House
1600 Pennsylvania Avenue
Washington, DC 20500

Dear President Obama,

Thank you for your ongoing work to resolve the Israeli-Palestinian conflict and for your commitment of \$300 million in U.S. aid to rebuild the Gaza Strip. We write to you with great concern about the ongoing crisis in Gaza.

The people of Gaza have suffered enormously since the blockade imposed by Israel and Egypt following Hamas' coup, and particularly following Operation Cast Lead. We also sympathize deeply with the people of southern Israel who have suffered from abhorrent rocket and mortar attacks. We recognize that the Israeli government has imposed restrictions on Gaza out of a legitimate and keenly felt fear of continued terrorist action by Hamas and other militant groups. This concern must be addressed without resulting in the de facto collective punishment of the Palestinian residents of the Gaza Strip. Truly, fulfilling the needs of civilians in Israel and Gaza are mutually reinforcing goals.

The unabated suffering of Gazan civilians highlights the urgency of reaching a resolution to the Israeli-Palestinian conflict, and we ask you to press for immediate relief for the citizens of Gaza as an urgent component of your broader Middle East peace efforts. The current blockade has severely impeded the ability of aid agencies to do their work to relieve suffering, and we ask that you advocate for immediate improvements for Gaza in the following areas:

- * Movement of people, especially students, the ill, aid workers, journalists, and those with family concerns, into and out of Gaza;
- * Access to clean water, including water infrastructure materials,
- * Access to plentiful and varied food and agricultural materials;
- * Access to medicine and health care products and suppliers;
- * Access to sanitation supplies, including sanitation infrastructure materials;
- * Access to construction materials for repairs and rebuilding;
- * Access to fuel;
- * Access to spare parts;
- * Prompt passage into and out of Gaza for commercial and agricultural goods; and
- * Publication and review of the list of items prohibited to the people of Gaza.

Winter is arriving and the needs of the people grow ever more pressing. For example, the ban on building materials is preventing the reconstruction of thousands of innocent families' damaged homes. There is also a concern that unrepaired sewage treatment plants will overflow and damage surrounding property and water resources.

Despite ad hoc easing of the blockade, there has been no significant improvement in the quantity and scope of goods allowed into Gaza. Both the number of trucks entering Gaza per month and the number of days the crossings have been open have declined since March. This crisis has devastated livelihoods, entrenched a poverty rate of over 70%, increased dependence on erratic international aid, allowed the deterioration of public infrastructure, and led to the marked decline of the accessibility of essential services.

The humanitarian and political consequences of a continued near-blockade would be disastrous. Easing the blockade on Gaza will not only improve the conditions on the ground for Gaza's civilian population, but will also undermine the tunnel economy which has strengthened Hamas. Under current conditions, our aid remains little more than an unrealized pledge. Most importantly, lifting these restrictions will give civilians in Gaza a tangible sense that diplomacy can be an effective tool for bettering their conditions.

Your Administration's overarching Middle East peace efforts will benefit Israel, the Palestinians, and the entire region. The people of Gaza, along with all the peoples of the region, must see that the United States is dedicated to addressing the legitimate security needs of the State of Israel and to ensuring that the legitimate needs of the Palestinian population are met.

Sincerely,
Members of Congress

Arizona
Raul Grijalva

California
Lois Capps
Sam Farr
Bob Filner
Barbara Lee
Loretta Sanchez
Pete Stark
Michael Honda
Lynn Woolsey
Jackie Speier
Diane Watson
George Miller

Connecticut
Jim Himes

Indiana
Andre Carson

Iowa
Bruce Braley

Kentucky
John Yarmuth

Maryland
Elijah Cummings
Donna Edwards

Massachusetts
Michael Capuano
William Delahunt
Jim McGovern
John Tierney
John Olver
Stephen Lynch

Michigan
John Conyers
John Dingell
Carolyn Kilpatrick

Minnesota
Keith Ellison
Betty McCollum
James Oberstar

New Jersey
Donald Payne
Rush Holt
Bill Pascrell

New York
Yvette Clarke
Maurice Hinchey
Paul Tonko
Eric Massa

North Carolina
David Price

Ohio
Mary Jo Kilroy
Marcy Kaptur

Oregon
Earl Blumenauer
Peter DeFazio

Pennsylvania
Chaka Fattah
Joe Sestak

Vermont
Peter Welch

Virginia
Jim Moran
Glenn Nye

Washington
Jim McDermott
Adam Smith
Jay Inslee
Brian Baird

West Virginia
Nick Rahall

Wisconsin
Tammy Baldwin
Gwen Moore

Gaza Health Fact Sheet

20 JANUARY 2010

The Gaza Strip has been the setting of a protracted political and socio-economic crisis. Recent events have resulted in a severe deterioration of the already precarious living conditions of the people in Gaza and have further eroded a weakened health system.

The closure of Gaza since mid-2007 and the last Israeli military strike between 27 December 2008 and 18 January 2009 have led to on-going deterioration in the social, economic and environmental determinants of health.

REFERRAL ABROAD OF PATIENTS WITH SERIOUS MEDICAL CONDITIONS FOR SPECIALIZED TREATMENT OUTSIDE GAZA

Many specialized treatments, for example for complex heart surgery and certain types of cancer, are not available in Gaza and patients are therefore referred for treatment to hospitals outside Gaza. But many patients have had their applications for exit permits denied or delayed by the Israeli Authorities and have missed their appointments. Some have died while waiting for referral.

1103 applications for permits for patients to cross Erez were submitted to the Israeli Authorities in December 2009. 21% had their applications denied or delayed as a result of which they missed their hospital appointments and had to restart the referral process.

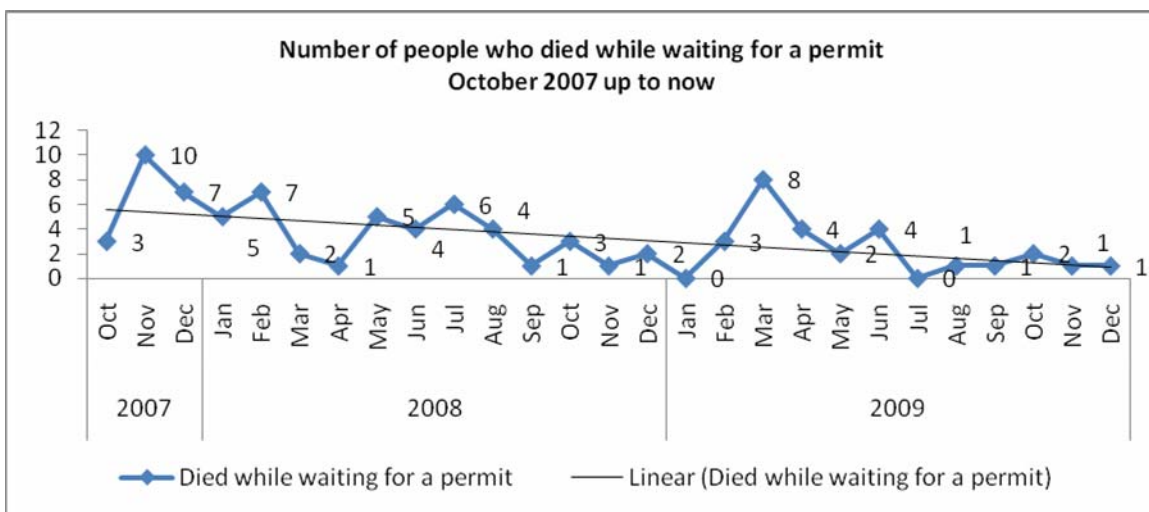
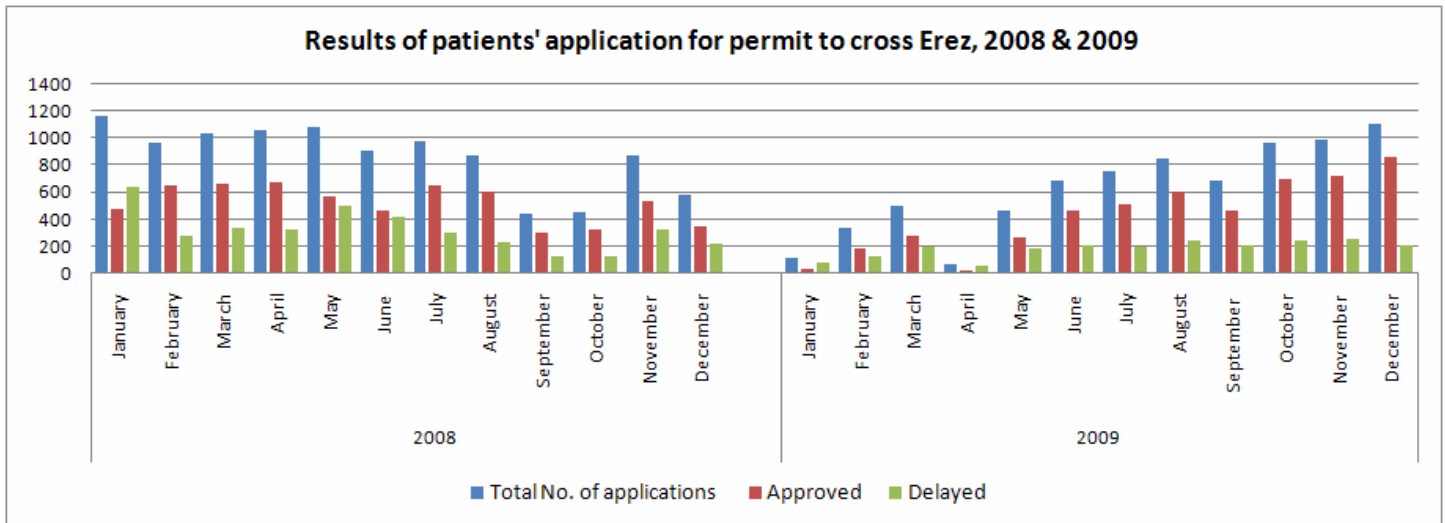
Two patients died recently while awaiting referral - one in November and one in December. 27 patients have died while awaiting referral since the beginning of the year.

DEATH OF FIDAA TALAL HIJJY

Fidaa Talal Hijjy, 19 years old, was diagnosed with Hodgkin's disease in 2007, and was treated at Shifa Hospital in Gaza. Her health deteriorated and she was told she needed a bone marrow transplant. This procedure is not available in Gaza. Her doctors referred her to Tel HaShomer Hospital in Israel on 20 August 2009 and she obtained a hospital appointment for 23 September 2009 for a transplant.

The District Liaison Office submitted an application for Fidaa to cross Erez on the date of her appointment but the Israeli Authorities did not respond to her application and she lost her appointment with Tel HaShomer Hospital. She secured a new appointment for 20 October 2009 and a new application was submitted to cross Erez. She had no response from the Israeli Authorities. Her health condition deteriorated further. She was given a new appointment at Shneider Hospital in Israel for 9 November 2009 and submitted an urgent application to cross Erez. No response was received.

Fidaa died on 11 November 2009. The Israeli Authorities approved her request on 12 November 2009, three days after her hospital appointment and one day after her death.



PROVISION OF MEDICAL SUPPLIES – CENTRAL DRUG STORE

Supplies of drugs and disposables have generally been allowed into Gaza. However, there are often shortages on the ground mainly because of shortfalls in deliveries. The table below shows the drugs and disposables that are out of stock as a percentage of the essential list. The essential drugs list contains 480 items, and the medical disposables list is 700 items.

	Jan.	Feb.	Mar.	Apr.	May	Jun.	Jul.	Aug.	Sept.	Oct.	Nov.	Dec.
Store												
Drugs			30%	14%	17%	15%	16%	22%	29%	16%	26%	
Disposables			10%	13%	14%	16%	20%	15%	14%	17%	17%	18%

Delays of up to 2-3 months occur on the importation of certain types of medical equipment, such as x-ray machines and electronic devices. Clinical staff frequently lack the medical equipment they need. Medical devices are often broken, missing spare parts or out of date

TRAINING OF HEALTH STAFF

- Health professionals in Gaza have been cut off from the outside world. Since 2000, very few doctors, nurses or technicians have been able to leave the Strip for training eg to update their clinical skills or to learn about new medical technology. This is severely undermining their ability to provide quality health care. An effective health care system cannot be sustained in isolation from the international community.
- During the health strike from end August to end December 2008, an estimated 1750 doctors, nurses and non-clinical staff from hospitals and health clinics went on strike and many of their jobs were filled by new people recruited by the de facto authority. Many of the staff who went on strike have not returned to their jobs
- In August 2008, two thirds of hospitals in Gaza had no maintenance staff. All Gaza hospitals – except the two in Rafah - now have engineers and technicians in post. But three quarters of technicians surveyed by WHO West Bank and Gaza in May 2009¹ had been in post for less than one year. Whilst half of the engineers had been trained in medical equipment maintenance, only one in four technicians had had any specific training.
- In medical schools and public health programs, curriculum development processes do not reach international standards.

GAZA'S ECONOMY IN COLLAPSE

- Rising unemployment (41.5 percent of Gaza's workforce in the first quarter of 2009²) and poverty (in May 2008, 70 percent of the families were living on an income of less than one dollar a day per person ³) is likely to have long term adverse effects on the physical and mental health of the population.

WATER: OVER-EXTRACTION, SALINITY AND NITRATE LEVELS

The increasing salinity and high levels of nitrates in water supplies from the over-extraction of the ground water and the intrusion of salt water is a major concern for the safety of drinking water, particularly for children they are most vulnerable to high nitrate levels⁴. Salinity levels in water wells in most parts of the Gaza Strip are above the 250 mg/liter limit established by WHO, and nitrate concentrations exceed WHO guidelines of 50 mg/liter (up to 331 mg/l).

OPERATION "CAST LEAD" – IMPACT ON HEALTH FACILITIES AND STAFF

¹ WHO. *Gaza hospitals: medical devices maintenance*. July 2009.

² OCHA, Special Focus August 2009, *Locked in: The humanitarian Impact of two years of blockade on the Gaza Strip*

³ OCHA, Special Focus August 2009, *Locked in: The humanitarian Impact of two years of blockade on the Gaza Strip*

⁴ UNEP report "Environmental Assessment of the Gaza Strip following the escalation of hostilities in December 2008 – January 2009"

- 16 health workers killed and 25 injured on duty
- Damaged health services infrastructure:
 - o 15 of 27 Gaza's hospitals
 - o 43 of its 110 Primary Health Care services
 - o 29 of its 148 ambulances
- The lack of building materials is affecting essential health facilities: the new surgical wing in Gaza's main Shifa hospital has remained unfinished since 2006. Hospitals and primary care facilities, damaged during operation 'Cast Lead', have not been rebuilt because construction materials are not allowed into Gaza.

ASK: MILITARY AID TO ISRAEL

CONGRESSIONAL LETTER TO SECRETARY OF STATE:

The Honorable Hillary Clinton
Secretary of State
U.S. Department of State
2201 C Street NW
Washington, DC 20520

January 2010

Dear Secretary Clinton,

This month President Obama is expected to submit to Congress his FY2011 budget request, which is scheduled to include \$3 billion in Foreign Military Financing (FMF) for Israel, according to the terms of a 2007 U.S.-Israeli Memorandum of Understanding.

As you know, all foreign aid recipients are required to abide by the terms and limitations on the use of U.S. weapons found in the Arms Export Control Act. According to this law, U.S. weapons can be used only to support "internal security" and "legitimate self-defense."

I am writing because I am concerned that Israel may have violated the terms of the Arms Export Control Act by misusing weapons during "Operation Cast Lead" in particular, and throughout the years of the Bush Administration in general.

According to *B'Tselem: The Israeli Information Center for Human Rights in the Occupied Territories*, between January 2001-November 2008, Israel killed 2,086 Palestinian civilians who took no part in hostilities, including 723 children under age 18. During "Operation Cast Lead," which took place between December 2008-January 2009, according to B'Tselem, Israel killed at least 1,021 Palestinian non-combatants.

I am writing to request the State Department to undertake a thorough, comprehensive review of Israel's possible violations of the Arms Export Control Act during the Bush Administration and to make the results of this investigation public and deliver it to Congress prior to its deliberation on the President's FY2011 budget request for military aid to Israel.

I look forward to hearing back from your Department about my request.

Sincerely yours,

Member of Congress



US Campaign to
End the Israeli Occupation

"We aim to change those US policies that both sustain Israel's 41-year occupation of the Palestinian West Bank, Gaza, and East Jerusalem, and deny equal rights for all."

Leveraging FY2011 Budget Request for Military Aid to Israel to Achieve U.S. Policy Goals

1. Background

In August 2007, the United States and Israel signed a Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) to increase U.S. military aid to Israel by an annual average of 25% over previous levels of assistance, totaling \$30 billion between FY2009-2018.

In January 2010, President Obama is expected to request \$3 billion in Foreign Military Financing (FMF) for Israel in his FY2011 budget, the third budgetary allocation under the terms of the MOU.

In previous years, Congress has approved annual military aid appropriations to Israel without any strings attached, leading to little or no discernible progress toward stated U.S. policy goals of halting the expansion of Israeli settlements and promoting Israeli-Palestinian peace. This year, Members of Congress should reverse this trend and act to ensure that the FY2011 budget request for military aid to Israel is leveraged in order to achieve stated U.S. policy goals.

2. Possible Amendments for FY2011 Budget

A. Accountability to U.S. Laws Protecting Human Rights

i. Restricting Use of U.S. Weapons to Israel's Sovereign Territory

Data compiled by *B'tselem: The Israeli Information Center for Human Rights in the Occupied Territories* shows that between January 2001-November 2008, Israel killed more than 2,000 Palestinian civilians who took no part in hostilities, of whom more than 700 were children. Between December 2008-January 2009, Israel killed more than 1,300 Palestinians in the Gaza Strip, more than an estimated half of whom were civilians. Oftentimes, these Palestinian civilians were killed with weapons paid for by and produced in the United States in violation of the Arms Export Control Act (AECA).

To ensure that U.S. weapons are not being used to commit human rights abuses against Palestinian civilians, while at the same time affirming Israel's right to use these weapons for "legitimate self-defense" against an attack by a foreign country or for "internal security" consistent with the terms of the AECA, Congress should state that U.S. weapons should not be used by Israel in its military occupation of the Palestinian Gaza Strip, West Bank, and East Jerusalem.

Precedent for restricting Israel's use of U.S. assistance within its own sovereign borders already exists through the loan guarantee program. In the April 2003 supplemental war appropriation bill authorizing \$9 billion in loan guarantees to Israel, Congress stipulated that these funds can be used "only to support activities in the geographic areas which were subject to the administration of the Government of Israel before June 5, 1967."

Congress should insert the same or similar language as found in the loan guarantee program and extend this principle to Israel's FMF program to ensure that such funds are not being used in violation of the AECA to maintain a foreign military occupation and to commit human rights abuses against an occupied people.

ii. AECA Violations Must Be Investigated before Money Is Appropriated

In January 2009, Rep. Dennis Kucinich requested the State Department to investigate Israel's possible violations of the AECA during "Operation Cast Lead." To date, the State Department has not complied with this request for an investigation. It is not known whether or when the State Department will initiate an investigation.

Members of Congress can take no action against violations of the AECA until the Executive Branch notifies them of a violation. Therefore, to ensure that Congress adheres to the letter and spirit of the AECA, Members of Congress should insert the following language into the FY2011 budget line-item for FMF to Israel:

“No amounts appropriated under this bill shall be disbursed prior to the State Department transmitting to Members of Congress and making public the results of a complete, accurate, and transparent investigation into Israel’s possible violations of the Arms Export Control Act during “Operation Cast Lead,” as previously requested by Congress in January 2009.”

B. Promoting a Freeze on the Expansion of Israeli Settlements

Since 1967, every U.S. Administration has upheld the illegality of Israel’s settlements in the Occupied Palestinian Territories, decried them as obstacles to peace, and urged Israel not to expand settlements. Despite this stance, Israel has continued to build settlements in the West Bank and East Jerusalem. During the Oslo “peace process,” the number of Israeli settlers doubled, and recently Israel announced plans to add 73,000 housing units to existing settlements. If this plan comes to fruition, all hope of establishing a viable and contiguous Palestinian state will be lost.

On numerous occasions, Israel has pledged to halt the expansion of settlement building, most recently in the “road map” and at the Annapolis peace conference, yet these promises have gone unfulfilled. Israeli Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu’s recently announced temporary moratorium on new settlement expansion approval in the West Bank neither halts already-approved construction, nor does it apply to occupied East Jerusalem.

Members of Congress should hold Israel to its pledge to halt settlement activities and back the Obama Administration’s positions on settlements by inserting the following language into the FY2011 budget line-item for FMF to Israel:

“Amounts appropriated under this bill shall be disbursed only in quarterly installments after the Administration delivers to Congress a report verifying that during the previous quarter Israel has fulfilled its commitments under the ‘road map’ and Annapolis peace conference to halt the building of new settlements in the Palestinian West Bank and East Jerusalem and to freeze the expansion of existing settlements in these areas, including so-called ‘natural growth’ of these settlements. Israel shall be ineligible to receive a quarterly installment of this appropriation if the President reports that Israel has undertaken any form of settlement expansion during the previous quarter.”

C. Ending the Blockade of the Gaza Strip

Since 2006, Israel has maintained a full-scale land, sea, and air blockade of the occupied Gaza Strip in an illegal act of collective punishment against the 1.5 million Palestinian civilians who reside there. This blockade has led to a dire humanitarian crisis and decimated the economic life of the region.

In January 2009, President Obama declared that “Gaza’s border crossings should be open to allow the flow of aid and commerce.” Members of Congress should support this important policy goal by insisting that no military aid to Israel be disbursed until the blockade is ended and that the borders of the Gaza Strip remain open to humanitarian aid and normal economic activities by inserting the following language into the FY2011 budget line-item for FMF to Israel:

“No amounts appropriated under this bill shall be disbursed prior to the President certifying in a public, written report to Congress that Israel has ended its blockade of the Gaza Strip and that its borders are open to the free flow of humanitarian aid and for all normal economic transactions, including imports and exports of materials, and that all provisions of the 2005 Agreement on Movement and Access are being implemented. Amounts appropriated under this bill shall be disbursed thereafter only in quarterly installments after the Administration delivers to Congress a report verifying that during the previous quarter Israel has not reestablished its blockade of the Gaza Strip nor violated the terms of the 2005 Agreement on Movement and Access.”

3. Conclusion

In order to achieve President Obama’s goal of quickly establishing a just and lasting Israeli-Palestinian peace, Members of Congress should incentivize Israel’s behavior toward freezing settlement growth, ending the blockade of the Gaza Strip, and ending the human rights abuses associated with its military occupation of the Palestinian West Bank, East Jerusalem, and Gaza Strip.

This incentivization should be accomplished by leveraging U.S. influence over Israel through its FMF appropriation. For decades, blank checks to Israel have not succeeded in modifying its behavior toward accomplishing U.S. policy goals of promoting human rights and establishing peace. The continuation of the same policy will bring only the same results. Now is the time for change.

U.S. Military Aid to Israel—Illegal and Immoral

Can You Think of a Better Way to Spend \$30 Billion over the Next Decade?

A BRIEF HISTORY

On August 16, 2007, the United States and Israel signed a Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) to increase bilateral military aid to Israel to \$30 billion over the next decade, representing a more than 25% increase over the previous FY2008 appropriation.¹

Even before this increase in military aid, Israel was already the largest recipient of U.S. assistance. According to Congressional Research Service, since 1949, the United States has provided Israel with more than \$53 billion of military aid—a little more than half of total aid to Israel, which stood at more than \$101 billion as of 2007.²

Over the past decade, U.S. military aid to Israel increased yearly while economic aid was phased out, implementing a ten-year understanding negotiated between Congress and the government of former Israeli Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu in 1998.³

In FY2008—the last year of this ten-year understanding—the United States provided Israel with an estimated \$2.38 billion in military aid while traditional economic aid—known as Economic Support Funds in budgetary language—was reduced to zero (although the United States continued to provide an estimated \$39.7 million to Israel under a different budget category known as Migration and Refugee Assistance).⁴

In his budget request to Congress for FY2009—the first budget year of the new understanding signed in 2007—President George W. Bush requested \$2.55 billion in Foreign Military Financing (FMF) for Israel, a 9% increase over actual military aid given to Israel in FY2007.⁵ (FMF is the primary budgetary vehicle through which the United States provides military aid.) Under the terms of the new understanding, annual military aid appropriations to Israel are scheduled to rise to \$3.1 billion by FY2018.⁶

VIOLATIONS OF U.S. LAWS

All U.S. aid programs, whether military or economic, have built-in mechanisms to prevent that aid from being used by countries to commit human rights abuses. According to U.S. law, countries that commit human rights abuses with U.S. aid are to be sanctioned and aid is to be cut off.

The Arms Export Control Act (P.L. 80-829) stipulates that countries purchasing or receiving U.S. weapons cannot use them against civilians and must restrict their usage to “internal security” and “legitimate self-defense.”



The US Campaign and many other organizations have documented Israel's repeated uses of U.S. weapons to commit human rights violations against civilians in the Occupied Palestinian Territories and in Lebanon. Indeed, Israel could not maintain its illegal 40-year military occupation and siege of the Palestinian West Bank, East Jerusalem, and the Gaza Strip without these weapons.

According to the Foreign Assistance Act of 1961 (P.L. 87-195), “No assistance may be provided under this part [of the law] to the government of any country which engages in a consistent pattern of gross violations of internationally recognized human rights.” As documented not only by Palestinian, Israeli, and international human rights groups, but by the U.S. government as well, Israel has an atrocious human rights record and therefore should be ineligible for any form of U.S. aid.

TAKE ACTION

* Send a postcard, sign a petition, or write a letter to your Members of Congress and the President opposing military aid to Israel.

* Sign up for an organizing packet to educate and mobilize people in your community on this issue.

* Organize a meeting of constituents with your Members of Congress to oppose military aid to Israel.

* Put a flash graphic on your blog or social networking site opposing military aid to Israel.

* Learn more about U.S. arms laws and transfers of weapons to Israel at the websites of the Federation of American Scientists: www.fas.org and the World Policy Institute: www.worldpolicy.org

More information at:
<http://www.endtheoccupation.org/article.php?list=type&type=208>

ENDNOTES

¹ “Signing of Memorandum of Understanding between Israel and the United States,” August 16, 2007. Available at: <http://www.mfa.gov.il/MFA/About+the+Ministry/MFA+Spokesman/2007/Signing%20of%20Memorandum%20of%20Understanding%20between%20Israel%20and%20the%20United%20States%2016-Aug-2007>.

² Jeremy M. Sharp, Specialist in Middle East Affairs, Congressional Research Service Report, “U.S. Foreign Aid to Israel,” updated January 2, 2008, Table 5. Recent U.S. Aid to Israel, p. 18. Available at: http://assets.opencrs.com/rpts/RL33222_20080102.pdf.

³ Serge Schmemmann, “Israelis to Discuss Phasing Out 1.2 Billion U.S. Economic Aid,” *New York Times*, January 27, 1998. Available at: <http://query.nytimes.com/gst/fullpage.html?res=9E07E6D7113BF934A15752C0A96E958260&sec=&spon=&pagewanted=all>.

⁴ “Summary and Highlights: International Affairs Function 150, Fiscal Year 2009 Budget Request,” U.S. Department of State. Available at: <http://www.state.gov/documents/organization/100014.pdf>

⁵ *Ibid.*

⁶ Sharp, *op. cit.*, p. 2.

Palestinians in Gaza: Besieged & Attacked w/ U.S. Weapons

Take Action to Protest Israel's Misuse of U.S. Weapons

On December 27, 2008, Israel launched a full-scale air and naval attack on the occupied Palestinian Gaza Strip. On January 3, 2009, Israel expanded its attacks on the Gaza Strip by launching a massive ground invasion.

Israel's three-week war on the occupied Gaza Strip exacted a terrible toll on the 1.5 million Palestinians living there, killing more than 1,300, injuring more than 5,000, destroying 4,000 buildings, and causing an estimated \$2 billion in damage to civilian infrastructure.

Israel's attacks come on top of a brutal siege of the Gaza Strip, which has created a humanitarian catastrophe of dire proportions for Gaza's 1.5 million Palestinian residents by restricting the provision of food, fuel, medicine, electricity, and other necessities of life.

Israel's war and siege on the Gaza Strip would not be possible without the weapons provided by the United States and its veto at the UN preventing the international community from holding Israel accountable for its human rights violations .

Here is a snapshot of the U.S. weapons Israel is using to kill and besiege Palestinians in the occupied Gaza Strip:

* Israel carried out its aerial bombardment of the Gaza Strip with U.S.-provided F16 fighter jets and Apache helicopter gunships. From 2001-2006, the United States provided Israel with more than **\$200 million in spare parts for its fighter jets** and more than **\$100 million in spare parts for its helicopter gunships**.

* In July 2008, the United States provided Israel with **186 million gallons of JP-8 aviation jet fuel** to fly its fleet of F16's and Apaches.

* Israel bombarded the Gaza Strip by sea with naval combat ships and on December 30, the Israeli navy intentionally rammed a boat in international waters which was carrying medical supplies to the Gaza Strip, nearly causing it to sink. The passengers of The Dignity included doctors and recent **Green Party Presidential candidate Cynthia McKinney**. In July 2008, the United States signed a contract to transfer **\$1.9 billion of naval combat ships**

Israel.

* Israeli aircraft and ships fired missiles and bombs provided by the United States. In October 2007, the United States signed a **\$1.3 billion contract with Raytheon to transfer to Israel thousands of TOW, Hellfire, and "bunker buster" missiles**. Israel also is dropped GBU-39 small diameter bombs on the Gaza Strip.

According to weapons experts, these bombs contain **uranium oxide** and have left behind radioactive contamination in places such as Kosovo, Iraq, and Afghanistan. In September 2008, **Boeing received a \$77 million contract to transfer 1,000 of these bombs** to Israel.

* Israel invaded the Gaza Strip by ground using tanks, armored personnel carriers, and other military vehicles with troops wearing night-vision goggles. Since 2001, the United States has given Israel more than **\$300 million in tank components and spare parts and various military vehicles, and nearly \$150 million in night-vision goggles and scopes**.



Israel is the largest recipient of U.S. military aid. In August 2007, the United States and Israel signed an agreement to increase arms transfers to Israel to **\$30 billion over the next decade**. President-Elect Obama already has pledged to implement this agreement without any conditions.

All U.S. aid programs, whether military or economic, have built-in mechanisms to prevent that aid from being used by countries to commit human rights abuses. According to U.S. law, countries that commit human rights abuses with U.S. aid are to be sanctioned and aid is to be cut off.

The **Arms Export Control Act** (P.L. 80-829) stipulates that countries purchasing or receiving U.S. weapons cannot use them

against civilians and must restrict their usage to "internal security" and "legitimate self-defense." Israel repeatedly uses U.S. weapons to commit human rights violations against civilians in the Occupied Palestinian Territories and in Lebanon. Indeed, Israel could not maintain its illegal 41-year military occupation and siege of the Palestinian West Bank, East Jerusalem, and the Gaza Strip without these weapons.

According to the **Foreign Assistance Act** of 1961 (P.L. 87-195), "No assistance may be provided under this part [of the law] to the government of any country which engages in a consistent pattern of gross violations of internationally recognized human rights." As documented not only by Palestinian, Israeli, and international human rights groups, but by the U.S. government as well, Israel has an atrocious human rights record and therefore should be ineligible for any form of U.S. aid.

TAKE ACTION

* **Take to the streets and make your opposition public.** Hundreds of protests are scheduled to take place across the country. Find one near you or add details of your own protest.

* **Educate and organize people in your community.** Sign up to organize people in your community to oppose military aid to Israel and get an organizing packet.

* **Contact the White House, State Dept. and your Members of Congress.** Write a letter and set up a meeting with your Members of Congress to demand a lifting of the siege of Gaza, and investigation into Israel's misuse of U.S. weapons.

* **Get the message out to the media.** Download talking points and make your voice heard.

* **Step up the pressure on President Obama and the new Congress.** Sign our open letter and come to our Feb. 1-2 Grassroots Advocacy Training and Lobby Day.

* **Make a tax-deductible donation to us and give less of your tax dollars to Israel.**

FOR MORE DETAILS, VISIT:
<http://www.endtheoccupation.org>



REPORT CARD FOR 111TH CONGRESS, 2008-2009

Last updated: February 15, 2010

The US Campaign publishes an updated Report Card for each Congress. This is an essential tool for meetings with your members of congress. To view the full Report Card and see how your representatives voted on key legislation see www.endtheoccupation.org/section.php?id=202

Hall of Fame			Hall of Shame	
House			House	
Dennis Kucinich (D-OH)	+9		Scott Garrett (R-NJ)	-6
Nick Rahall (D-WV)	+8		Doug Lamborn (R-CO)	-5
John Olver (D-MA)	+7		Ileana Ros-Lehtinen (R-FL)	-5
Keith Ellison (D-MN)	+7		Dan Burton (R-IN)	-5
Maurice Hinchey (D-NY)	+7		Jerry Moran (R-KS)	-5
Jim McDermott (D-WA)	+7		Shelley Berkley (D-NV)	-5
Pete Stark (D-CA)	+6		Frank LoBiondo (R-NJ)	-5
Lynn Woolsey (D-CA)	+6		Michael McMahan (D-NY)	-5
John Dingell (D-MI)	+6		Patrick McHenry (R-NC)	-5
Betty McCollum (D-MN)	+6		Tim Holden (D-PA)	-5
Earl Blumenauer (D-OR)	+6		Marsha Blackburn (R-TN)	-5
Jim Moran (D-VA)	+6			
Lois Capps (D-CA)	+5		Senate	
Sam Farr (D-CA)	+5		Evan Bayh (D-IN)	-4
Bob Filner (D-CA)	+5		John Thune (R-SD)	-4
Barbara Lee (D-CA)	+5		Max Baucus (D-MT)	-3
George Miller (D-CA)	+5		Kit Bond (R-MO)	-3
Maxine Waters (D-CA)	+5		Barbara Boxer (D-CA)	-3
			Ben Cardin (D-MD)	-3
Senate			Saxby Chambliss (R-GA)	-3
No positively scored resolutions have been introduced yet in the Senate.			Mike Crapo (R-ID)	-3
			Byron Dorgan (D-ND)	-3
			Johnny Isakson (R-GA)	-3
			Tim Johnson (D-SD)	-3
			Jon Kyl (R-AZ)	-3
			Mary Landrieu (D-LA)	-3
			Joe Lieberman (I-CT)	-3
			Mel Martinez (R-FL)	-3
			Mitch McConnell (R-KY)	-3
			Bob Menendez (D-NJ)	-3
			Barbara Mikulski (D-MD)	-3
			Bill Nelson (D-FL)	-3
			Harry Reid (D-NV)	-3
			Chuck Schumer (D-NY)	-3
			Arlen Specter (D-PA)	-3

Access the full Report Card, an *essential* resource, at:

www.endtheoccupation.org/section.php?id=202

YOU ARE INVITED!

Join Interfaith Peace-Builders for a

SOCIAL EVENT & FUNDRAISER

Grassroots Advocacy Training and Lobby Day Celebration

Sunday, March 7

7:30 - 9:30 PM

Guapos Restaurant

4515 Wisconsin Avenue, NW
Washington, DC

(Tenleytown/American University Metro)

Free admittance for all Grassroots Advocacy Training Registrants!

Suggested donation of \$10 - \$50 for non-registered attendees

Interfaith Peace-Builders invites you to join us for a social event and fundraiser to benefit our work to support the courageous voices of Palestinian and Israeli peace-builders and bring more US citizens to see the effects of Israel's occupation with their own eyes.

The event features:

- The debut screening of *Looking Forward: Encounters in Israel/Palestine with Interfaith Peace-Builders*, a mini-documentary
- Your chance to win great raffle prizes, including a \$500 scholarship for an IFPB delegation
- Local entertainment to be announced

Join us to celebrate the second Grassroots Advocacy Training and Lobby Day, bringing 150 people from nearly 30 states to Washington DC to meet with their congressional representatives about US policy in Israel/Palestine (for more information see www.ifpbdel.org/grassroots)!

Interfaith Peace-Builders leads delegations of Americans from diverse ethnic and religious backgrounds to Palestine and Israel to listen and learn from human rights and peace activists immersed in the conflict and committed to nonviolent struggle and peace with justice. IFPB delegates hear directly from those most affected by the conflict and learn about the policies which contribute to the ongoing violence. We support delegates as they carry their observations back home, share them with their families and friends, speak to their communities, and express their concerns to their political representatives. IFPB has organized delegations for over 500 Americans since our founding in 2001.



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