
AdvocacyNet
News Bulletin 149
May 23, 2008

ISRAELI-PALESTINIAN ADVOCACY GROUP PROTESTS DETENTION OF PALESTINIAN ACTIVIST



Jerusalem: The Alternative Information Center (AIC) has protested against the recent arrest of one of its associates by the Israeli secret service and called for an end to the “harassment” of Palestinian activists by Israeli forces. AIC is a partner of the Advocacy Project.

Mohammed Abu Humus was detained on May 15 by agents from the Israeli General Security Service as he left a peaceful Israeli-Palestinian demonstration commemorating the 60th anniversary of the mass expulsion of Palestinians from their homes in Israel in 1948. He was held overnight and questioned about his public opposition to the current Israeli practice of using roadblocks to enforce debt collection against Palestinians in East Jerusalem.

The Alternative Information Center (AIC) is urging supporters to write to Israeli officials and demand an end to any further pressure against Palestinians who are working for peace in the region.

“It is clear that the Israeli authorities are targeting Abu Humus because of his determined political activism against the Israeli occupation and actions on behalf of a just peace for Palestinians and Israelis,” said Connie Hackbarth, Executive Director of the AIC.

“At the same time that (Israeli Prime Minister Ehud) Olmert and visiting President Bush were speaking about peace, actions on the ground proved their real intentions. Israel’s institutional harassment of Palestinian political activists must stop immediately.”

In August 2007, Mr. Abu Humus was a primary signatory on a petition protesting against the use of “debt collection checkpoints” in East Jerusalem. The petition was submitted by the Association for Civil Rights in Israel to the Israeli High Court and is still pending.

Last week, Mr. Abu Humus organized a joint Israeli-Palestinian demonstration at the Damascus Gate in the Old City of East Jerusalem, marking the anniversary of the Nakba (“day of catastrophe”). The term is used by Palestinians to describe the expulsion of over 700,000 Palestinians during the establishment of Israel in 1948.

To mark the 60th anniversary of the Nakba, the AIC is co-sponsoring an exhibition of artwork by Yousef Katalo, titled *Good Morning Jaffa*, which explores the connections between exile, culture and the right of refugees to return. His work is currently being shown in Bethlehem, before moving to Hebron and Ramallah.

Ms. Hackbarth said that the exhibition is part of a month of public commemoration activities in Palestine that includes concerts, lectures, a book fair and film screenings.

- For information about emailing Israeli government officials, visit the AIC **web site** <http://www.alternativenews.org/>
- See a schedule of **Nakba commemoration events** <http://www.alternativenews.org/aic-administrative/aic-administrative/sixtieth-anniversary-of-al-nakba-events-in-palestine-20080514.html>

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