



Campaign for the Right of Entry/Re-Entry to the Occupied Palestinian Territory (oPt)

A Grassroots Campaign for the Protection of Foreign Passport Holders Residing in and/or visiting the oPt

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

Jerusalem-Based Palestinian Legislators Under Attack by Israel

(Ramallah, June 24, 2010) - In yet another move by Israel to empty occupied East Jerusalem of Palestinians, Israel has taken actions to strip four Palestinians living there of their Jerusalem residency rights and has already acted to deport one of them. Three are deputies to the Palestinian Legislative Council: Mohammed Mahmoud Abu Teir, Ahmed Mohammed Atoun, Mohammed Omran Tawtah, all of whom were elected in internationally observed and validated elections in 2006. The fourth is former Minister of Jerusalem Affairs Khaled Ibrahim Abu Arafah.

Third states -- first and foremost among them the Quartet members, the United States, European Union, Russia, and the United Nations -- as signatories to the Fourth Geneva Convention of 1949 and international humanitarian law, are obligated to employ political, diplomatic, and economic pressure to bring Israel in line with international law. The Fourth Geneva Convention of 1949 strictly forbids the expulsion of individuals from an occupied population, as well as the separation of family members, under any circumstances. East Jerusalem is part and parcel of the Palestinian lands under Israeli military occupation since 1967. Attempting to hide the illegality of Israel's actions behind the Israeli legal system, or requiring Palestinian residents to pass some sort of "loyalty test" to the same power that militarily occupies them, is not simply morally repugnant, but criminal.

Israel's continued restrictions on entry and residency rights comprise yet another example of its numerous policies and practices that aim to further entrench the unlawful fragmentation and annexation of large swaths of the oPt; all these actions violate international law and undermine the prospects for peace and a just resolution to the Israeli-Palestinian conflict.

The Campaign calls on the members of the Quartet and its Special Envoy Tony Blair to meet their obligations in bringing Israel in line with international law and morality before more damage is done to the Palestinian people. The continued culture of impunity must be challenged.

The Campaign also calls on the Palestinian Authority to employ responsible policies and efforts to protect its constituency and their elected representatives by fully exposing Israeli violations and calling on third states to act against illegal Israeli practices, in Jerusalem and throughout the oPt.

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