

2009/10/22 Chicago Faith Coalition Update #12



Informing and Advocating on Israeli/Palestinian Issues

The [home page](#) of the Chicago Faith Coalition website features and retains these email updates. Check out the monthly [calendar](#) for speakers and events scheduled in the Chicago area.

Please email [Ed Thompson](#) with suggested items for inclusion in these weekly updates or with comments about the update.

Action Opportunities

[Send a message to President Obama, your Senators and your Representative](#) that you support B'Tselem and other Israeli human rights groups that have called for the establishment of a comprehensive, independent, impartial inquiry into Israel's conduct in Gaza during Operation Cast Lead.

[Join the individuals and organizations](#) who have signed a letter to President Obama about Mohammad Othman's detention as reported by Adam Horowitz on MONDOWEISS.

U.S. Foreign Policy

[Read](#) why Yousef Munayyer calls President Obama a "rookie" and Netanyahu a politician who is skilled at working things to his favor.

The *Wall Street Journal* reported [about the FBI arresting a Chicago native who was charged with attempting to spy for Israel](#). However, as [reported in PULSE](#) a Treasury official does not appear likely to crack down on US nonprofit charitable corporations and individual donors who since 1977 have helped launder \$50-\$60 billion into illegal West Bank settlements.

U.S. foreign policy toward Israel/Palestine could be much improved if policy makers listened to [Amy Goodman's interview with Amira Hass on Democracy Now](#).

Must read or must view or must hear

[Read](#) the Horowitz and Weiss article in *The Nation* for insight into the changes in Jewish opinions about Israel.

The J Street first national conference scheduled for next week has been very visible in the Israeli media. The Jerusalem Post published an [open letter inviting Michael Oren](#), Israel's newly appointed Ambassador to the U.S. to speak at this first National Conference and also reported on a [Kadima Knesset member who urged the Israeli embassy to take J Street seriously](#). In a very different vein, [Cecilie Surasky of Jewish Voice for Peace writes](#) about J Street inviting and then uninviting Josh Healy after his appearance was protested by a hard-line, pro-Israel organization.

Realities rarely reported in U.S. news media

The Chicago and American media have given little attention to Ehud Olmert's appearance at the University of Chicago last Thursday. However, the [electronic intifada](#) includes video from a portion of the speech and describe what happened during the speech. The President and the Provost of the University sent an email to all faculty, staff and students bemoaning the "repeated disruption by audience members" and emphasized that "we remain committed to fostering an arena for the free expression of ideas because it is the essence of our existence as a great University, and we as a community will continue to defend the rights to free expression on our campus." The University of Chicago student newspaper includes in the [VIEWPOINTS section of their homepage](#) a variety of positions including some that support of free speech, some that support the disruptions and some that criticize the University for inviting a leader who is facing serious charges of corruption and who initiated and presided over serious destruction in Lebanon and Gaza.

A new source of information from Israel/Palestine is the CNI: Jerusalem Calling conference call that is held on Thursday from 11AM to noon CST. On October 22, host Anna Baltzer will be joined by Micha Kurtz, a co-founder of Breaking the Silence. Archived audio replays are available [here](#).