

2009/08/19 Chicago Faith Coalition Update #3



Informing and Advocating on Israeli/Palestinian Issues

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You are receiving this August 18, 2009 Chicago Faith Coalition Update #3 email because you have endorsed a Chicago Faith Coalition on Middle East Policy (CFCMEP) letter, attended (or were invited to) a CFCMEP meeting or have requested being added to this distribution list. The Chicago Faith Coalition will be the sole user of your email. You can unsubscribe at any time.

The [new Chicago Faith Coalition website home page](http://www.chicagofaithcoalition.org) [www.chicagofaithcoalition.org] will also feature and archive these updates. In addition, every two weeks, we will post a new poll about the Israeli/Palestinian situation.

Please email [Ed Thompson](mailto:Ed.Thompson@chicagofaithcoalition.org) with suggested items for inclusion in these weekly updates or with comments about the update.

Action Opportunities

Use the new website [www.obamasmearbusters.com/] from J Street that refutes the smears that are being spread to discredit President Obama.

Christiane Amanpour reports on the situation in Gaza in a documentary CNN report entitled "[Generation Islam](#)." CNN and Christiane Amanpour deserve thanks and appreciation for their report showing Gaza realities that rarely appear in U.S. media.

Meet with your Senators and your Representative during their August recess to speak out for justice, security, peace and reconciliation in Israel/Palestine. Find contact information for your elected representative [here](#).

U.S. Foreign Policy

View [here](#) Fareed Zakaria's CNN GPS show in which he "grilled" Michael Oren, the new Israeli Ambassador to the United States.

According to Amira Hass, in her *Haaretz* article entitled "[Israel toughens entry for foreigners with West Bank ties](#)" American citizens with ties to people in the West Bank may have severe restrictions placed on their freedom to travel in Israel.

Recognizing Israel's right to exist is an assumed expectation by much of the world community for any person or organization to be accepted as a legitimate party to negotiate with Israel. However, two articles question that assumption. The article by Hussain Agha and Robert Malley entitled "[The Two-State Solution Doesn't solve Anything](#)" published in the *New York Times* on August 11, 2009 and the article by John V. Whitbeck entitled "[What 'Israel's right to exist' means to Palestinians: Recognition would imply acceptance that they deserve to be treated as subhumans](#)" published in the *Christian Science Monitor* on February 2, 2007 challenge that assumption. Lara Friedman of American for Peace Now counters Agha and Malley [here](#).

An article published in *Haaretz* entitled "[U.S. group invests tax-free millions in East Jerusalem land](#)" raises the question why the Internal Revenue Service has not examined pro-Israeli organizations (be they Christian, Jewish or secular) that claim one purpose in their IRS returns but use the money for another purpose that would deny them tax exempt status? According to Richard Silverstein (read [here](#)), Arkansas Governor Mike Huckabee's recent visit to Israel included sponsorship by a front for the group mentioned in the *Haaretz* article and meetings with Gush Katifnik settlers who have protested with acts of violence and mayhem.

Must read or must view or must hear

[Read](#) the Huffington Post article by John Dugard entitled "Two States or Apartheid?" This article ends with the following statement: "Israel must make the choice in the weeks ahead whether it intends to continue ruling over the Palestinians indefinitely or will step back from the dual system of law and apartheid it appears poised to embrace under the leadership of Prime Minister Netanyahu."

Slavoj Zizek's article entitled "[Quiet slicing of the West Bank makes abstract prayers for peace obscene](#)" suggests that one cannot condemn terrorist attacks without hypocrisy until one also condemns the slow, invisible process, by which the State of Israel is taking West Bank land from the Palestinians on a day by day basis.

Realities rarely reported in U.S. news media

[View](#) a video that was recorded by Machsom Watch about a checkpoint in the West Bank that the Israeli Ministry of Defense announced had been removed but continues to operate from time to time.

[Read](#) one Palestinian mother's lamentations about the absence of water in her Palestinian village even though Israeli settlements nearby routinely water their lawns and fill their swimming pools.

[Read](#) an ICAHD (Israeli Committee Against House Demolitions) volunteer's report of Sunday, August 16, 2009 about how settlers engage in violence against local residents in the Hebron area of the West Bank.

The United Nations has published a report entitled "[LOCKED IN: The Humanitarian Impact of Two Years of Blockade on the Gaza Strip](#)" that documents the humanitarian impact of the blockade on Gaza imposed by Israel since June 2007.

Ed Thompson
Project Manager
Chicago Faith Coalition on Middle East Policy
ethompson@dpfinc.com
www.chicagofaithcoalition.org