

## 2009/09/16 Chicago Faith Coalition Update #7



### Informing and Advocating on Israeli/Palestinian Issues

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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.

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#### **Action Opportunities**

The Toronto Film Festival has become embroiled in a volatile uproar over its spotlighting of Tel Aviv. You can support the media figures who have protested this spotlighting of Tel Aviv by signing the Jewish Voice for Peace petition [here](#).

Although the conclusion of [this article](#) seems to recommend not signing this petition, the author Patrick Goldstein includes comments that are rarely found in the American press. His article includes the following quotes: "So it may come as a surprise to Americans, who have been steady supporters of Israel since its birth as a country in 1948, that the Jewish state has been treated as something of a pariah in international circles." and "In other political circles, abortion or healthcare is the great divider. But in artistic circles, it is Israel."

Give your opinion [here](#) about what kind of action you believe will be most likely to bring justice, security, peace and reconciliation to Israelis and Palestinians. Once your answer is recorded, you can see how others have responded.

Our Update #5 invited you to join the [Jewish Fast for Gaza](#). Rabbis Brian Walt and Brant Rosen had an [op-ed](#) published in the *Jerusalem Post* responding to the attacks that were launched against them.

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## **U.S. Foreign Policy**

A Saudi Arabian Prince "drew a line in the sand" in a *New York Times* op-ed entitled "[Land First, Then Peace](#)."

*POLITICO* [reports](#) on the status of the possible meeting next week between Obama, Netanyahu and Abbas as well as the contentious settlement freeze issue.

[Americans for Peace Now \(APN\) legislative roundup for September 11](#) includes detailed discussion of a Congressional lobby effort on Iran by a Jewish umbrella organization of which APN is a member. APN conducted its own lobby effort on Iran but with positions that conflicted with the positions of the Jewish umbrella organization. *POLITICO* also reports on this Iran lobby effort [here](#).

Yossi Alpher gives his views about the Obama peace plan and about the removal of West Bank settlers in his Peace Now column entitled [Hard Questions, Tough Answers for September 14, 2009](#).

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## **Must read or must view or must hear**

The issue of Professor Neve Gordon's [op-ed](#) branding Israel as an "apartheid state" and his calling for an "international boycott" has spilled into the pages of [The Chronicle of Higher Education](#).

Sam Bahour's op-ed entitled "[The Elders' Next Move](#)" highlights Palestinian nonviolent resistance to Israeli occupation. Bahour argues that international boycotts are an effective nonviolent way to influence the Israeli government to remove the boot of military occupation from the necks of Palestinians.

J Street was featured in a [New York Times Magazine article](#). This is one more indication that AIPAC is losing its position as the sole voice of American Jews.

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## **Realities rarely reported in U.S. news media**

If [claims about illegal settlement money](#) are ever investigated and proven to be true, then uncritical and unconditional support for Israel is likely to be dealt a serious setback.

B'Tselem's report on civilian casualties in Israel's Gaza operation Cast Lead was referenced by [Newser](#) but has not been reported by mainstream media. B'Tselem's press release is [here](#).

[The Wall Street Journal reported](#) that a U.N. probe into last winter's Gaza war found that both Israeli forces and Gazan armed groups committed war crimes and possibly crimes against humanity. The advanced edited version of this report can be read [here](#).

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