

## Update 8 June 2004

### **In this update:**

1. Formation of: National Coalition of Palestine Support Groups
  2. Abby speaks in a function in Canberra
  3. Paul speaks to the Amnesty International SA Parliamentarians
  4. Fund raising Dinner at Parliament House: \$6300 raised
  5. Our Contribution to Charity work in Palestine
  6. Peace Vigil on the 3rd of July
  7. Future Events
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### **1. Formation of: National Coalition of Palestine Support Groups**

Four committee members attended a national gathering in Melbourne on the 15th of May. This gathering included representatives of seven different associations from around Australia who have the support of the Palestinian cause as their main objective. The meeting was successful and resolved to create a national body called: "National Coalition of Palestine Support Groups". This coalition facilitate a platform in which to run national campaigns, share resources and ideas and collaborate on specific projects. The groups and associations retain their full independence and retain the right to decide which of the campaigns or activities they like to take part in.

The coalition has already issued a Media Release announcing its formation and talks are underway for joint campaigns on the political front. Also, SBS radio (in Arabic) interviewed Bassam and Kathryn Kelly regarding the coalition and aired an eight minutes segment.

During the trip:

- We took part in a Peace Vigil in Bourke Street Mall organized by Women for Palestine
  - Paul gave two talks at the La Trobe valley and in Melbourne
  - We were given access to the art work as part of "Palestine lost exhibition" which we are hoping to bring to Adelaide later this year
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### **2. Abby speaks in a function in Canberra**

Abby was invited to speak about the Stateless Palestinian Refugees in detention centers in Australia at a function organized by Australian for Justice and Peace in the Palestine, in Canberra. The meeting was well attended and the talk generated good interest.

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### **3. Paul speaks to the Amnesty International Parliamentarians**

On Tuesday the 25th of May Paul gave a speech to the Amnesty International SA Parliamentarians which was also attended by Bassam and Francis. Eight Parliamentarians attended the meeting. The meeting generated a positive response and a decision was taken to publish a letter of support in the newspaper signed by members of Parliament.

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#### **4. Fund raising Dinner at Parliament House: \$6300 raised**

The Hon Julian Stefani OAM MLC, a member of our association, has generously offered to host 30 people for dinner in the Speaker's Dining Room at Parliament house to raise funds for charity work in Palestine. The dinner was held on Wednesday the 2nd of June and raised \$6300. Those who attended were asked to donate \$100 each and the rest of the funds were raised in an auction for items donated by Julian and Mr Robert Crabtree. The association are grateful to Julian and those who attended the dinner especially to those who donated generously.

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#### **5. Our Contribution to Charity work in Palestine**

The following projects are being supported by our association:

1. Support to Kindergartens in Hitteen Refugee Camp, Amman, Jordan, \$1000.
  2. Support the trip of Dr Francis Nathan and Mrs Merlin Nathan to Palestine in November as part of their regular trips to volunteer in Hospitals in Gaza and the West Bank.
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#### **6. Peace Vigil on the 3rd of July**

The committee decided to hold a peace vigil in the Central Market on Saturday the 3rd of July. We intend to have people playing Middle Eastern music, we will be selling some Palestinian artefacts and distributing information. We encourage all of you to come and participate in the vigil.

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#### **7. Future Events**

The association is sponsoring two Palestinian teenagers from the refugee camps who are visiting Australia in July to come to Adelaide and talk to students at schools and Universities.

We are planing another fund raising dinner in August. A prominent guest will be speaking during the dinner.

For any further information about any of the above please contact the Secretary:  
[secretary@friendsofpalestine.org.au](mailto:secretary@friendsofpalestine.org.au)