



**** New book ****

*“For Hammam – A Handbook
for Young People on Human
Rights in Palestine”*

****in English and Arabic ****



Camden Abu Dis human rights reports for Abu Dis 2009

This is to draw our monthly human rights reports to your attention. 2009 has been a bad year for human rights + respect for international humanitarian law in Abu Dis and Palestine. Sometimes other things happening in Palestine have been overshadowed by the horrors in Gaza this year, with the Israeli war on Gaza in Dec 08- Jan 09 and the continuing siege, but it is important to focus also on what is happening in the West Bank and Jerusalem.

We have produced reports each month, in English and Arabic, that give more details of the Israeli human rights violations in and around Abu Dis. You can find these on our website at:

<http://www.camdenabudis.net/HRreports.html>

In these reports you will see that...

- **In Jerusalem**, the process of “Judaisation” has escalated this year. Radical settlers and the Israeli state have been pushing Palestinians out, taking Jerusalem IDs, destroying houses, and preventing most people from Abu Dis and the West Bank from entering Jerusalem.
- In Abu Dis, a suburb of Jerusalem but now completely cut off from Jerusalem by the **Separation Wall**, there have been further land confiscations and the **process of building settlements has escalated** despite the “settlement freeze” declared by the Israeli government.
- The Wall on the west side is finished but no work has been done this year on the east side. However people in Abu Dis remain **trapped by checkpoints** in and outside the town. There are severe restrictions on freedom of movement and many problems at the military checkpoints.
- There have been several **house demolitions** on Abu Dis land, both on the east and the west of the Wall, and the Bedouin living locally have been treated very badly.

We have produced a new book in English and Arabic, which is aimed at young people but could be of use to anyone interested in human rights and Palestine.

“For Hammam” is available from Camden Abu Dis Friendship Association in London and will shortly be available in Abu Dis and from bookshops and Amazon.

- The **military violence** of occupation has continued, and several young people from Abu Dis have been shot and severely wounded since December 2008. Others have been beaten, some of them very badly. Invasions of houses and **imprisonment** have continued with many young people experiencing arrest and imprisonment.
- In August, in response to pressure about their treatment of young people, the Israeli authorities said that they would begin to treat juveniles differently from adults on arrest, and create special military courts for young people. However to date there is no evidence from Abu Dis that this has made a difference.

Some of the individual cases that we have taken up this year

Mohammed Hassan Eriqat aged 17 was badly wounded by Israeli army shooting in December 2008. His parents were not allowed by the Israelis to go and see him in hospital although he was in a coma. We wrote to our representatives asking them to raise this case, and ask for his parents to be allowed to visit. At least one of our MEPs raised this at European level and maintained an interest in the case. After a month, Mohammed's mother was finally able to go and see him. However he was then taken to Al Ramleh prison and we continued to be concerned, as were his family, about his getting appropriate treatment. He was finally released, having paid a fine, in July this year.

Hamam Mohsen was shot in the head by Israeli soldiers in December 2008 and was initially in a coma. He has made an amazing recovery (and was well enough to visit London with CADFA in November 09) but he is still paralysed on his right side, and his life affected very badly. Note that his family have been punished by the Israeli authorities and are now unable to get any permits to go to Jerusalem. For example, this affected his sister when she was pregnant – she was not able to go to the hospital in Jerusalem for security reasons.

His family have not been able to demand an investigation into the shooting, because of a deep lack of faith in Israeli army investigations – and in particular because this happened at the time of the huge Israeli attack on Gaza, when so many other people were badly injured or killed. CADFA are however taking it up with our representatives the UK, in particular because Hamam is a student at Abu Dis Boys' School which has a strong relation now to Camden and to Hampstead School.

Mohammed Saleh Mohsen is still very sick in prison – his family asked for his release after nine years in prison, very worried about his health - but he has now been there for almost ten years.

Dead Sea beatings In May, two young men from were badly beaten and ten were involved in an unprovoked incident at a checkpoint by the Dead Sea. This was taken up by B'tselem [see May/ June reports] who put in a complaint to the Israeli military. Two Israeli soldiers were arrested but they were released again, and the young Palestinian men were each given a big fine.

Wael Younis Bader was about 15 in summer 2007 when Israeli soldiers threatened his brothers in a serious way that they would kill him if they did not hand him in at the police station. We wrote public letters to the Israeli Embassy and many newspapers, calling for his safe treatment. He began to feel safe and returned home from hiding, and was left alone until he was shot by an Israeli soldier in September 2009 during a peaceful demo against the settlers' activities in the Al Aqsa Mosque. Three months later, with his leg still needing treatment, Wael was arrested in December 2009.

Camden Abu Dis Friendship Association works to promote human rights and respect for international humanitarian law. We organise publications, information meetings, twinning links, visits to Palestine and Britain so that people can meet each other, and campaigns. We welcome your help. For more information please see our website www.camdenabudis.net or get in touch with us at contact@camdenabudis.net