

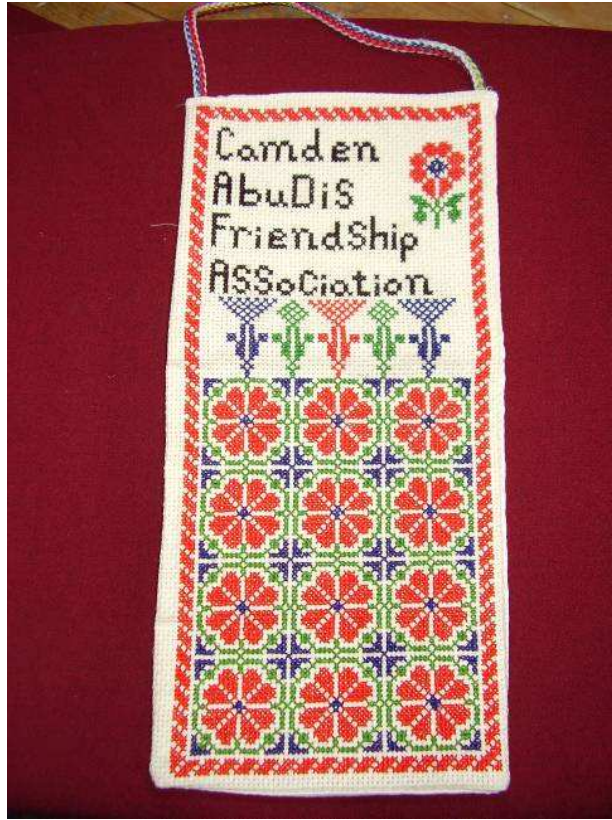


## Camden Abu Dis Friendship Association

جمعية صداقة  
كامدن أبوديس

*Promoting human rights and  
respect for international humanitarian law*

### CADFA Annual Report 2006-2007



CADFA, PO Box 34265, London NW5 2WD  
Tel + fax 0845 458 1167

[camdenabudis@btinternet.com](mailto:camdenabudis@btinternet.com) [www.camdenabudis.org](http://www.camdenabudis.org)  
Charity number 1112717

## Comments we were pleased to get!

“We in Abu Dis Town Council appreciate highly the friendship relation which is growing between Abu Dis and Camden ... and we are looking forward to making the relation better and stronger, specially in this tough situation which the Palestinian people are passing through” –

*Salah Ayyad, Member of Abu Dis Town Council*

“First of all we would like to appreciate your efforts for all things you do to Abu Dees and all people around”–

*Abu Dis Camden Health Committee*

“You are one of the hardest-working groups I know” –

*Supporter from Camden*

“You are becoming one of the important NGOs in this field” –

*Professor Manuel Hassassian, Palestinian ambassador*

“Thank you very much for your great work” –

*Donor from Camden*



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# Camden Abu Dis Friendship Association

Camden Abu Dis Friendship Association is a Camden organisation dedicated to promoting human rights in Abu Dis. Along with others in Palestine, people in Abu Dis suffer abuses of human rights as a result of the illegal Israeli occupation and its practices, for example the construction of the Separation Wall. We are promoting friendship links and twinning because we believe this is an effective way to draw the human rights situation in Abu Dis to the attention of people in Camden and to work with others locally to do something about it

CADFA came into being during 2004, was constituted as a charity in June 2005 and got recognition as a charity in January 2006. In this short time, CADFA has gone from strength to strength. This annual report tells about the work of CADFA between April 2006 and March 2007. There is further detail on our website, [www.camdenabudis.org](http://www.camdenabudis.org)

**Our objects are in the appendix.**

*(left) "Music of East and West" – one of two CADFA concerts in aid of health projects in Abu Dis, and a fundraising meal with an Abu Dis councillor as guest of honour.*



*The Separation Wall, being built by Israel since 2002, runs through Abu Dis, cutting it off from Jerusalem, on which it has traditionally depended. In July 2004, the International Court of Justice found the Wall illegal and called for it to be taken down – but building has continued.*

# The human rights situation in Abu Dis 2006-7

The situation in Abu Dis and in Palestine in relation to international humanitarian law and human rights continues to be very grave. During this year, a useful report on the wider situation has been produced by John Dugard who as part of his research in the West Bank was helped by the CADFA representative in Abu Dis

(<http://www.ohchr.org/english/bodies/hrcouncil/docs/4session/A.HRC.4.17.pdf> )

CADFA has monitored and publicised news of human rights violations in relation to Abu Dis. The CADFA co-ordinator has produced monthly reports which are available on the website. The main headings of these reports point to major human rights concerns that are continuing:

## The economic situation

Since the last Palestinian parliamentary election, there have been international sanctions on Palestine. This has had a particularly bad effect on East Jerusalem which is not under direct Palestinian Authority control.

The continued construction of the Wall and land confiscation  
Israel finished work on the west side of the Wall in early 2006, and this year they have started work on the east sector of the Wall, confiscating more land from Abu Dis especially in the area between the Maale Adumim settlement and Abu Dis.

## Israeli violations at checkpoints.

Things have been getting worse at the checkpoints as Israel has closed the gaps and ways round the checkpoints. A new fixed checkpoint was opened this year at Jaba'a, between Ramallah and Abu Dis. Abu Dis people in general have suffered badly and there have been some very bad incidents.



*Israeli soldier at a checkpoint outside Abu Dis.*



*Patients at one of the small Abu Dis clinics on which people depend – the Jerusalem hospitals are the other side of the Wall.*

A patient was killed at a checkpoint (Shahadeh Mohsen) and a new baby was born at a checkpoint (daughter of Afaf Bader)

Imprisonment in Israeli prisons.

During the year, the number of prisoners from Abu Dis in Israeli prisons has ranged between 50 and 70 at any one time. Many people have been arrested and imprisoned, including many children from Abu Dis Boys' School.

*(Below) One of the classrooms in Abu Dis Boys' School. A number of these boys have been imprisoned since the photo was taken. Some of their stories are on the CADFA website.*

*On 14<sup>th</sup> February, Israeli soldiers entered the school and beat a number of boys inside the classrooms.*





*CADFA is proud of the new activities at Dar Assadaqa, many of them for women and children – above, the women’s internet café, and a children’s art activity for Peace Day....*

## **CADFA achievements 2006-7**

- **Co-ordinator in Abu Dis**

In May 2006, we were able to make our work in Abu Dis more effective by appointing a local co-ordinator for CADFA work in Abu Dis. He has sent us regular reports, organised visits for people from Camden, supported volunteers, helped promote CADFA's work and co ordinate our projects in Abu Dis.

- **Dar Assadaqa (Friendship House)**

The Dar Assadaqa community centre, largely funded by CADFA, opened formally in April 2006. It has since become a lively community centre used by all sections of the community. Many visitors have pointed out that the activity and sense of optimism in the centre are notable in the current depressed atmosphere of Abu Dis. The centre has good relations with local community, schools and organisations in Abu Dis and beyond, and has run activities together with them.

The centre has a number of different courses supported by CADFA including English courses taught by volunteers found via CADFA. We have given resources and wrote a special course book for the children's English classes in the summer.

The women's internet café (funded by CADFA women's links) led to further women's activities including such as handcraft, First Aid, nutrition and fitness courses and a number of women's outings. CADFA women's group have supported the development of a women's committee, which has now got a strong voice in the running



*... a much-needed women's outing that took a group of women out of Abu Dis for a day, an exhibition of local artefacts at the Dar Assadaqa Eid celebration in October and the new youth dabkeh class*

of Dar Assadaqa and produced a magazine “Sowt al Mara” (Women’s Voice) in time for International Women’s Day.

Youth activities are important in the Dar Assadaqa: CADFA supported the first summer camp in summer 2006. Classes and courses and art, dance (dabkeh) and drama clubs have run during the school year.

There have been a number of special activities at Dar Assadaqa this year – health days, parties for the Eids (festivals), and a special exhibition about life in Abu Dis that coincided with one of the visits to Abu Dis organised by CADFA and the Britain-Palestine Twinning Network.

- **Stories from Abu Dis and the website**

We have encouraged people in Abu Dis to write their stories and take photographs to explain to the outside world what life is like in Abu Dis. We had a competition for children to take photos of their town, and some striking photos are on the website and will also go in a booklet by Abu Dis children that is being prepared. The CADFA co-ordinator collected stories of the first days of the Occupation in 1967 from people in Abu Dis – published in June as “The First Six Days” (ISBN 978-0-9556136-0-9)

We are very grateful to our webmaster for regular improvements and updates to our website, which is attracting increasing attention both in Camden and Abu Dis. It now includes many descriptions of life, stories and calls for help by Abu Dis people as well as the monthly reports we are sent and a lot of background information.

- **Visits**

This year a strong traffic has developed between Camden and Abu Dis. CADFA-organised visits in both directions have been very important as a way to bring people into contact with each other and in particular to enable Camden people to learn about the human rights situation in Abu Dis.



*Visits in both directions. Above, Camden and Abu Dis visitors to Dar Assadaqa photographed in April 2006; and Abu Dis children sing a Fairouz song to children at Camden Saturday Music in June 2006.*

A number of **volunteers** went to Abu Dis and contributed in particular to English language teaching in local schools, the university and the Dar Assadaqa.

A good deal of effort fund-raising and planning went into the visits from Abu Dis to Camden. **A visit of school children in June 2006** was important both in Camden and in Abu Dis. 8 children, 2 head teachers and a maths teacher spent 10 days in Camden, visiting schools and youth clubs and seeing the sights of London. In Abu Dis, this visit made a huge difference to the children who came, and also more widely to people's perception of CADFA and their interest in our work. In the Abu Dis UNWRA school, a teacher who watched maths lessons in a Camden primary school has begun an exciting new maths club, supported by CADFA.

In **March 2007**, **Terry Boullata** came for a visit to coincide with international women's day. Terry is very experienced in speaking in English about the effects of the Separation Wall on people's lives. She met with very many people and aroused a lot of interest in our work.

These visits provided many opportunities for publicity of the situation in Abu Dis to people in Camden. We organised busy programmes of meetings with Camden organisations, groups and individuals, and also some effective public meetings. By now, thousands of people in Camden of all ages have listened to people in Abu Dis talking about their lives. From these events, many more people have become interested in human rights issues in connection with Abu Dis and Palestine and have got involved with the work of CADFA.

These visits have also given us the basis on which to develop work with local youth groups and community organisations, led to interest in Palestine in local schools, and have given us many things to build on in the next year – we are looking forward to a Palestinian story-teller's visit to schools and an International Youth Festival where Camden and Abu Dis children can work together.



*Michelle from Camden and Haneen from Abu Dis, fencing champions and friends by email.*



*Children from the Dar Assadaqa English class take photos of each other in front of the Separation Wall*

## **Grassroots work**

We have a number of groups working in particular areas, developing links in Camden to people working in these areas, and together supporting projects in Abu Dis. This year

- **the women's links** group supported the development of the women's committee at Dar Assadaqa, and took up a concern that is of great concern to women there – the issue of child prisoners;
- **the youth links** group supported the summer camp and the dabkeh group at Dar Assadaqa
- **the health links** group raised money for basic medicines in Abu Dis
- **the education links group** organised the Abu Dis children's visit to Camden, gave funds for a maths club in Abu Dis and started on a number of projects for next year.

**A number of individual organisations in Abu Dis and Camden have begun to** set up links (community centres, schools, youth groups, the Keshafe in Abu Dis and a Scout group in Camden).

**A Camden councillor** visited Abu Dis for a week in the summer.

## **Policy-makers**

CADFA have raised the issue of human rights in Palestine with policy-makers, taking the examples we have documented from Abu Dis. We have written to both the Camden MPs, visited an MEP and requested visits to our MPs. We used our knowledge of the local area of Abu Dis and the voices of local people to write a submission for the House of Commons International Development Committee. From this, they included information on the delays at checkpoints and the problems they cause for patients in the report, "Development Assistance and the Occupied Palestinian Territories", published in January 2007.

## **Urgent action – Abu Dis Boys’ School**

In February 2007, we were alerted to an incident in the secondary boys’ school in Abu Dis when the Israeli army entered the school, went into classrooms and beat boys, and several boys were taken for treatment and X rays. We raised this issue immediately with human rights organisations, our MPs and the Foreign and Commonwealth Office. We asked our supporters to write letters to the Israeli Embassy asking for an enquiry. Baroness Jenny Tonge asked questions about the incident in the House of Lords. After some time, an enquiry was begun, and the Abu Dis Boys’ School head wrote his thanks to us. At the time of writing this report, the Israeli police department have dropped the enquiry saying it would be hard to make a conviction, but the headteacher has submitted an appeal.

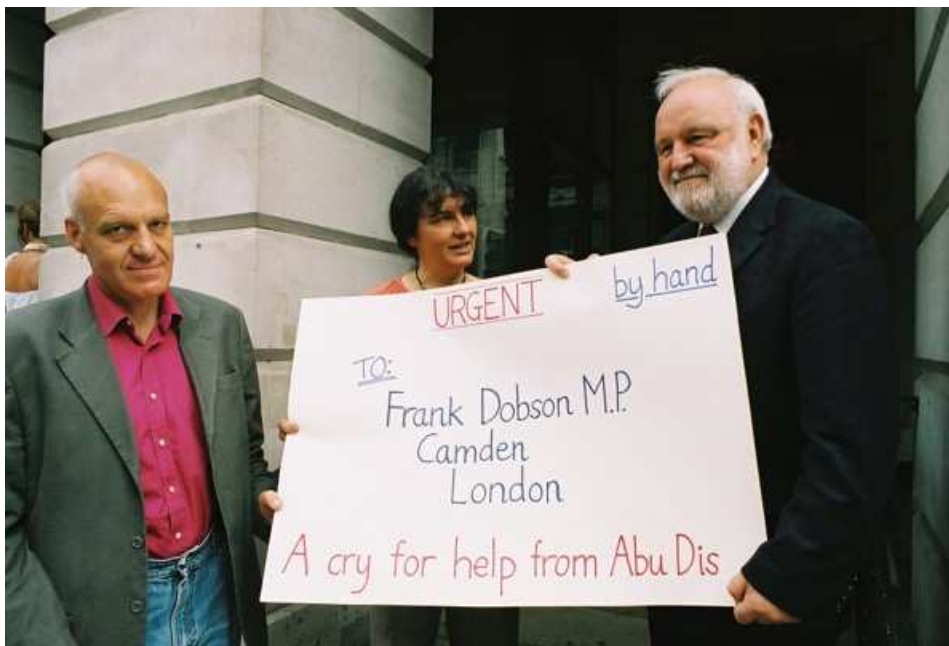
## **Prisoner campaign**

We started work around the issue of imprisonment of children, began a prisoner adoption campaign and prepared an information leaflet in preparation for a conference about Palestinian prisoners for April 2007.

## **Twinning Network**

CADFA members have played a major part in the developing the Britain-Palestine Twinning Network in order to raise the issue of Palestinian human rights more widely. This network has helped new groups to build friendship links, and CADFA has been asked to talk about our experience and advice.

CADFA provided support for twinning trips to Palestine in the autumn and the spring which included visits to Dar Assadaqa and talks by the local CADFA co-ordinator on how our projects work there; we also contributed to the planning of twinning conferences held in Camden in November 06 and in Ramallah in April 07.



*A CADFA stall at a Camden fair; and “a cry for help from Abu Dis” - CADFA trustees delivering a letter to local MP Frank Dobson.*

## Progress in 2006-7

We can be proud of the work that CADFA has done as a very young organisation. During 2006-7, we have had a tremendous number of activities. Membership has gone up. We have had interest in our work from all over the country.

Our hard work in raising funds for our projects produced more than two-and-a-half times the income of the previous year:

### **CADFA income from all sources:**

**2005-6 = £7,323**

**2006-7 = £19,734**

Links groups and CADFA as a whole have used these funds to build systematically on the work done in the first year, thinking carefully about the objects of CADFA and making progress against them.



*“From small beginnings” – a friendship olive tree  
planted by Cllr Fred Carver, the first Camden councillor to  
visit Abu Dis (summer 2006)*

## Looking ahead

A year ago we wrote that

*This second year as a charity should be a time of using the information we have gathered and developing the links, and importantly of making more material that can be used to promote public support for human rights and the observance of humanitarian law.*

We have achieved against our suggested priorities for this year, and we are proud that in Abu Dis, the Dar Assadaqa brings hope to people who use it, while in Camden more people are aware of the human rights issues in Palestine. The fact is however that for the people of Abu Dis, human rights violations continue on a regular basis, and that increasing economic and political pressure is making daily life in Abu Dis worse now.

In the face of this difficult situation, we are committed to expanding CADFA's activities through the next year because the situation demands it. We are pleased to have an active, growing group with energy and many skills, because there is very much more to do.

# APPENDICES

## (1) Objects of CADFA

- **CADFA's Objects - From the constitution adopted on 21st June 2005:**

**CADFA's objects** are to promote human rights (as set out in the Universal Declaration of Human Rights and subsequent United Nations conventions and declarations) and respect for international humanitarian law in the area of Abu Dis, a region of Palestine, by all or any of the following means:

- Raising awareness of human rights and humanitarian issues relevant to the Israeli-Palestinian conflict in general and to the situation of Abu Dis in particular;
- Researching and monitoring abuses of human rights and infringements of humanitarian law in Abu Dis;
- Educating the public about human rights and humanitarian law;
- Promoting public support for human rights and the observance of humanitarian law;
- Working to eliminate abuses of human rights and infringements of humanitarian law in Abu Dis;
- Working to obtain and promote redress for the victims of human rights abuses and infringements of humanitarian law in Abu Dis and their families;
- Providing support to and relieving need among the victims of human rights abuses and infringements of humanitarian law and their families, in Abu Dis.

## (2) Trustees and Officers of CADFA 2006-7

Chair and Secretary – Nandita Dowson

Treasurer to end March 06, then Press Officer – Luca Salice

Trustee without office to end March 06, then Act'g Treasurer – Carmel Elwell

Trustee without office - Nicola Seyd

### (3) Camden organisations that CADFA worked with 2006-7

#### Speakers, visits, joint activities with Camden organisations including

Acland Burghley School	King's Cross and Brunswick Youth Club
Acland Burghley Sports Club	Club
After school club at St George the Martyr	La Sainte Union School
Amnesty Belsize Park and Hampstead	Ossulston St Girls' Club
British Library union	Royal Free Hospital School
Camden Teachers' Association	Somers Town Community Centre
Camden Trades Council	South Camden Community School
Camden Unison	Torriano Junior School
Caversham Practice	Tricycle Theatre
Chadswell Healthy Living Centre	UCL Institute of Archeology
Crossroads Women's Centre	UCL Palestine Society
Eleanor Palmer School	Winchester Project
Hampstead Football Club	Woodcraft Folk
Hampstead School	Maria Fidelis School
Kentish Town Fire Station	Rosslyn Hill Chapel
King's Cross and Brunswick Neighbourhood Association	Henna Women's Group
	UCU City Lit
	UCU Westminster Kingsway College
	LSE Students' Union

### (4) CADFA's main events 2006-7

April 06	Formal opening of the Friendship House in Abu Dis Two volunteer teachers from Camden started English classes in Dar Assadaqa, Abu Dis Third group visit to Abu Dis coincided with Twinning Network visit and British Palestinian Friendship Conference in Bethlehem Demonstration against the Wall in Mornington Crescent, Camden and in Abu Dis on same day
May 06	Abu Dis co-ordinator started; began to prepare children to visit London Comedy night to raise money for children coming from Abu Dis in June. Camden-Abu Dis Friendship March from Hampstead to Holborn
June 06	Visit to Camden by a group of young people and teachers, to meet young people in Camden schools and youth clubs. Many meetings and public activities including a health links concert which raised money for basic medicines in Abu Dis. Report back from recent visit to Abu Dis.
June-July 06	Fundraising for first Dar Assadaqa summer camp (summer scheme) for children in Abu Dis. Summer camp started with 50 children. Two volunteers from Camden helped.
July 06	CADFA fundraising meal to celebrate charity status. Abu Dis councillor visited with greetings from Abu Dis
August 06	First Camden councillor visited Abu Dis Abu Dis women's outing funded by CADFA became the first of a series.
September 06	First of three CADFA volunteers to Abu Dis who between them will teach English this academic year in Dar Assadaqa and local schools
October 06	Group visit to Abu Dis and Palestine Exhibition and Eid event organised at Dar Assadaqa

November 06	National Twinning Conference at Irish Centre, Camden Town. Abu Dis children's outing to see olive presses in Bethlehem and Battir became the first of a series.
December 06	Two carol-singing events about Palestine in Euston. Public reportback from CADFA visit to Palestine
January 07	Film shows for Camden Abu Dis Human Rights Day and for Women's Links
February 07	Youth Links Jumble Sale Music of East and West: concert in aid of Health Projects in Abu Dis Health of Palestinians public meeting
March 07	Visit to Camden by Terry Boullata. Many meetings and public events across Camden including International Women's Day Event and CADFA fundraising meal. Twinning visit to Palestine begins (to include in next year's report)

### **(5) Press and publications**

We have the following current publications:

- Report on the Camden group visit to Abu Dis, April 2005
- Report on the Abu Dis children's visit to Camden, June 2006
- General CADFA leaflet (updated this year)
- Leaflets on health, women, education, youth, prisoners, the Separation Wall.
- Posters and cards

We are keeping copies of press interest in CADFA on our website. To date this includes articles in the Camden New Journal, Ham and High, NATFHE News, Al-Quds (in Palestine), Al-Quds Al-Arabi (in London); BBC Education website; film by Reuters TV, Islam Channel, British Satellite News, BBC World Service Outlook, Jewish Chronicle, Muslim News, PPN (in Palestine).

### **(6) Organisations that supported CADFA in 2006-7 either by donating money or by giving other special help**

- A.M. Qattan Foundation
- Barry Amiel and Norman Melburn Trust
- British Shalom Salaam Trust
- King's Cross and Brunswick Neighbourhood Association
- NUT Camden
- Rosslyn Hill Unitarian Chapel, NW3
- The Maypole Fund
- The Thames Wharf Charity
- The Welfare Association

**This is in addition to many individuals who contributed money, skills and energy in many ways. A big THANK YOU to all of you.**

This Annual Report was printed in Abu Dis, Palestine.