



Campaign for the Right of Entry/Re-Entry to the Occupied Palestinian Territory (oPt)

The Issue

Sept. 6, 2006

Preamble

The Palestinian people have lived under Israeli military occupation for over 39 years. Their occupation is not only one of the longest standing in contemporary world history, but has also been distinguished by an incredible amount of repressive creativity. Israel has employed an ever-increasing array of means and ways to oppress Palestinian's basic human rights while maintaining a level of discrimination that, if applied anywhere else in the world, would shock the world into action.

The most recent addition to Israel's "Matrix of Controls" is to deny Palestinians and foreign nationals that do not hold an Israeli-issued Palestinian I.D. entry into, or residence in, Palestine. The results are catastrophic – families are being separated, investors are exiting the country, educators are unable to reach their schools and universities, students' educations are being disrupted, elderly are being left without caretakers, just to state some of the ramifications of such a policy.

This undeclared Israeli policy of 'denying entry' is currently in effect and can only be attributed to the Israeli Government's continued actions of unilateralism which defy International and Humanitarian Law, agreements previously signed and witnessed by international parties, Israelis own legal system decisions, as well as sheer common sense.

Palestinians have inalienable rights that cannot be ignored

The irony of this policy is horrific! Denying Palestinians access to their family structures and human resources, while the international community -- Israel included -- is demanding of Palestinians to create the most democratic, modern, transparent, accountable and productive society in the region, is not only a recipe for failure, but one that will only embroil more Palestinians to fall into even a deeper despair than what their reality has already created.

Development is a human right.

A right to education requires students, teachers and professors be in Palestine!

A right to economic development requires entrepreneurs, investors, managers, employees, suppliers, consultants, and consumers be in Palestine!

A right to social order and well-being requires families be united, not separated!

The ultimate resolution to the ongoing conflict is the complete end to the Israeli military occupation, once and for all -- not a unilateral redeployment, and not a half-cooked discriminatory entry policy. This would mean that

- Palestinians have sovereign control over their agreed borders;
- the recognized population registry belongs to the Palestinians themselves, not to the occupiers;
- Palestinians define their own immigration policy

Until such a time that Israel's military occupation of Palestinians ends, it is imperative under International and Humanitarian Law that Israel respects basic human needs of the occupied population.

Therefore, we declare our insistence on the most basic human rights such as the

- The protection of the right of Palestinian ID holders to have their non-ID spouses/children/parents/caretakers reside with them in the occupied Palestinian territory.
- Guaranteed permanent 'visitation' rights of spouses and family members of Palestinian I.D. holders to the occupied Palestinian territory.
- Guaranteed visitation rights by foreign nationals, including professionals, foreign eyewitnesses and peace activists who are in solidarity with the Palestinian people, to the occupied Palestinian territory without discriminating against their ethnic origin or religious affiliation.
- The immediate cessation of Israeli interference in the development of the Palestinian economy, education and health systems, and civil society through the occupier's denial of entry of those seeking to contribute to Palestinian development.

Call for Action

We call upon the international community and all governments whose citizens are victims of the current Israeli policy of denying them access to the occupied Palestinian territory to uphold their responsibilities, especially those under the Fourth Geneva Convention as they pertain to the "protection of an occupied population" under military rule, and:

1. Demand that Israel immediately stop separating Palestinian families.
2. Demand that Israel stop discriminating against those wishing to enter Israel/Palestine.
3. Demand that Israel stop disrupting the native Palestinian people's capacity to maintain and develop their society by prohibiting access to the necessary human resources - be they mothers, fathers, investors, educators, health professionals or otherwise.

As the last 10+ years have proven, peace processes can take forever. In the meantime, all Israeli unilateral measures, such as emptying Palestine of its native Palestinian population and non-Palestinians contributing to the development of their country, are illegal and a threat to peace, stability and prosperity in the whole region.

PLEASE ACT TODAY