

GAZA: LIFT THE BLOCKADE!!

A protest convoy to Erez checkpoint

Saturday, January 26, 2008 at 13:00

Parallel Palestinian demonstration expected on the other side



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Saturday, January 26th, relief convoys will depart from Haifa, Tel Aviv, Jerusalem and Beer Sheva, bearing signs 'GAZA: LIFT THE BLOCKADE!' Converging at Yad Mordechai at 12 noon, the rally will be at Erez Checkpoint at 13.00. On the other side will be hundreds of Gazans, organised by The Palestinian International Campaign to End the Siege on Gaza (www.end-gaza-siege.ps), including psychiatrist and human rights activist, Dr. Eyad Sarraj.

The convoy will carry vital supplies, with an especial focus on water filters, since the water of Gaza is an undrinkable cocktail of brine, sewage, pesticides and oil, with levels of nitrates ten times higher than those set by the WHO, and coliform eight times higher: denial of filters to Gazans is an unacceptable violation of basic humanitarian standards. We will insist that the military authorities allow the goods entry into Gaza, are prepared for prolonged stay near Erez, and a public/judicial campaign.

January 26, 2008 is an International Day of Action, when worldwide peace groups will hold protest actions against the danger of war in the Middle East.

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Participating: Gush Shalom, Coalition of Women for Peace, New Profile, Combatants for Peace, Israeli Committee Against House Demolitions, Physicians for Human Rights (Israel), Hadash, Balad, Adalah, Tarabut-Hithabrut, Bat Shalom, Bat Tzafon, Anarchists Against the Wall, Follow-up Committee of the Arab Population in Israel, Alternative Information Center, Psychoactive, ActiveStills and Student Coalition ' Tel Aviv Univ.

Background: Despite unilateral evacuation of 7,000 settlers, the Gaza Strip remains Occupied Territory. Israel continues to control its airspace, territorial waters, population registry, tax system, supply of goods, freedom of movement and access to healthcare. Last week, Israel strongly reprimanded Egypt for having dared to let a single group of Palestinians go in and out of the Strip without subjection to Israeli security checks. Moreover, recently Israel has re-established military control over more than a quarter of the

Strip's total territory as 'border security zones'. Israelis are led to believe 'We gave back Gaza' ' but this is simply not true.

We sympathize with Sderot's residents, exposed to traumatising years-long Qassam rockets, but siege and collective punishment are no answer: although 1.5 million men, women and children are denied basic necessities, driven to the edge of starvation, the Qassam attacks continue. Nor has the constant military offensive (1,000 Palestinians were killed in 2007, including many civilians), stopped the rockets. Whilst Sderot suffers, few ask why several Palestinian ceasefire offers have been rejected out of hand by the Israeli government. We'll go to the Gaza border, in co-operation with Palestinian partners inside Gaza, to show there's a peaceful alternative to siege and rocketfire.

This action is in solidarity with the Gaza Relief Convoy being organized by Israeli activists (see <http://gush-shalom.org.toibillboard.info/ConvJan08.htm>)