

Remember Rachel Corrie

Statement from the family of Rachel Corrie

By [Global Research](#)

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[Palestine Solidarity](#) 16 March 2009

Theme: [Crimes against Humanity](#)

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We thank all who continue to remember Rachel and those who, on this sixth anniversary of her stand in Gaza, renew their own commitments to human rights, justice and peace in the Middle East. The tributes and actions in her memory are a source of inspiration to us and to others.

Friday, March 13th, we learned of the tragic injury to American activist Tristan Anderson. Tristan was shot in the head with a tear-gas canister in Ni'lin Village in the West Bank when Israeli forces attacked a demonstration opposing the construction of the annexation wall through the village's land. On the same day, a Ni'lin resident was, also, shot in the leg with live ammunition.

Four residents of Ni'lin have been killed in the past eight months as villagers and their supporters have courageously demonstrated against the Apartheid Wall deemed illegal by the International Court of Justice—a wall that will ultimately absorb one-quarter of the village's remaining land. Those who have died are a ten-year-old child Ahmed Mousa, shot in the forehead with live ammunition on July 29, 2008; Yousef Amira (17) shot with rubber-coated steel bullets on July 30, 2008; Arafat Rateb Khawaje (22) and Mohammed Khawaje (20), both shot and killed with live ammunition on December 28, 2008. On this anniversary, Rachel would want us all to hold Tristan Anderson and his family and these Palestinians and their families in our thoughts and prayers, and we ask everyone to do so.

We are writing this message from Cairo where we returned after a visit to Gaza with the Code Pink Delegation from the United States. Fifty-eight women and men successfully passed through Rafah Crossing on Saturday, March 7th to challenge the border closures and siege and to celebrate International Women's Day with the strong and courageous women of Gaza. Rachel would be very happy that our spirited delegation made this journey.

North to south throughout the Strip, we witnessed the sweeping destruction of neighborhoods, municipal buildings, police stations, mosques, and schools –casualties of the Israeli military assaults in December and January. When we asked about the personal impact of the attacks on those we met, we heard repeatedly of the loss of mothers, fathers, children, cousins, and friends. The Palestinian Center for Human Rights reports 1434 Palestinian dead and over 5000 injured, among them 288 children and 121 women.

We walked through the farming village of Khoza in the South where fifty homes were destroyed during the land invasion. A young boy scrambled through a hole in the rubble to show us the basement he and his family crouched in as a bulldozer crushed their house upon them. We heard of Rafiya who lead the frightened women and children of this

neighborhood away from threatening Israeli military bulldozers, only to be struck down and killed by an Israeli soldier's sniper fire as she walked in the street carrying her white flag.

Repeatedly, we were told by Palestinians, and by the internationals on the ground supporting them, that there is no ceasefire. Indeed, bomb blasts from the border area punctuated our conversations as we arrived and departed Gaza. On our last night, we sat by a fire in the moonlight in the remains of a friend's farmyard and listened to him tell of how the Israeli military destroyed his home in 2004, and of how this second home was shattered on February 6th. This time, it was Israeli rockets from Apache helicopters that struck the house. A stand of wheat remained and rustled soothingly in the breeze as we talked, but our attention shifted quickly when F-16s streaked high across the night sky. and our friend explained that if the planes tipped to the side, they would strike.

Everywhere, the psychological costs of the recent and ongoing attacks for all Gazans, but especially for the children, were sadly apparent. It is not only those who suffer the greatest losses that carry the scars of all that has happened. It is those, too, who witnessed from their school bodies flying in the air when police cadets were bombed across the street and those who felt and heard the terrifying blasts of missiles falling near their own homes. It is the children who each day must walk past the unexplainable and inhumane destruction that has occurred.

In Rachel's case, though a thorough, credible and transparent investigation was promised by the Israeli Government, after six years, the position of the U.S. Government remains that such an investigation has not taken place. In March 2008, Michele Bernier-Toff, Managing Director of the Office of Overseas Citizen Services at the Department of State wrote, "We have consistently requested that the Government of Israel conduct a full and transparent investigation into Rachel's death. Our requests have gone unanswered or ignored."

Now, the attacks on all the people of Gaza and the recent one on Tristan Anderson in Ni'lin cry out for investigation and accountability. We call on President Obama, Secretary of State Clinton, and members of Congress to act with fortitude and courage to ensure that the atrocities that have occurred are addressed by the Israeli Government and through relevant international and U.S. law. We ask them to act immediately and persistently to stop the impunity enjoyed by the Israeli military, not to encourage it.

Despite the pain, we have once again felt privileged to enter briefly into the lives of Rachel's Palestinian friends in Gaza. We are moved by their resilience and heartened by their song, dance, and laughter amidst the tears. Rachel wrote in 2003, "I am nevertheless amazed at their strength in being able to defend such a large degree of their humanity—laughter, generosity, family time—against the incredible horror occurring in their lives.....I am also discovering a degree of strength and of the basic ability for humans to remain human in the direst of circumstances...I think the word is dignity."

On this sixth anniversary of Rachel's killing, we echo her sentiments.

Sincerely, Cindy and Craig Corrie On behalf of our family

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