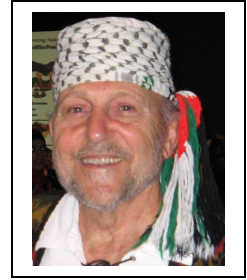


# The Truth Shall Set You Free! Israel is Cancer in The Holy Land

A Report from The Gaza Freedom March  
December 31, 2009

By Yusif Barakat



## Introduction

The opportunity to return back to the land of my birth came at a moment in my life that sparked a renewed interest in justice for a forgotten people. The plight of the Palestinians is one of the human atrocities that rival the dispossession of the Native American Indians by European Pilgrims, and the holocaust of Jews in Germany.

The confiscation of "The Holy Land" (though all land is holy) from a people, who lived there for thousands of years, by European and American Jews ("Zionists") is one of the biggest hoaxes ever perpetrated on humankind. And it remains shrouded in deception and intrigue. See books: 1) "The Myths of Zionism" by John Rose on <http://www.plutobooks.com/display.asp?K=9780745320557&> ) and 2) "OVERCOMING ZIONISM: Creating a Single Democratic State in Israel/Palestine" by Joel Kovel: <http://www.joelkovel.org/archives.html>

The Zionist scheme to steal the land of the Prophets was begun in 1893 by Hertzels and has been fueled by propaganda and misinformation. The myth "**a land without a people for a people without a land**" has been used by the Zionists to justify their take-over of Palestine from the indigenous Palestinians. This myth continues until this very day, misleading the world with its lies and deception. This malicious scheme must be unraveled, if we ever hope to remove the single most dangerous threat to world peace. There needs to be a healing of the arrogant hatred which is like a malignant cancer in The Holy Land that keeps the world in turmoil and threatens the survival of humanity!

In this report, of my trip to the Middle East, December 23<sup>rd</sup>, 2009 to January 18, 2010, I will describe (chronologically) my time in Cairo, going to Gaza and returning to Cairo for the conclusion of the Gaza Freedom March event. Next I will describe my time in Amman, Jordan, my trip to Israel and the West Bank then conclude with observations, comments and personal views and opinions. These observations should give you a bird's eye view of the complex problems in Palestine and the Middle East and why/how that threatens world peace. These reports will be posted on my web site: [www.yusif.org](http://www.yusif.org) along with other related matters. This report will include some pictures from the more than 1300 which I took during my 27 day journey. Soon, I will also post an Op-Ed giving the history of the Palestine conflict, showing it to be not about "Jews in the Promised Land" but about colonialism and control of the oil region of the Middle East.

## Cairo Events

This trip began on December 23<sup>rd</sup>, 2009, when I boarded a flight from Detroit to Cairo, Egypt. In Cairo I visited with my life-long friend, Ahmad, and my two cousins, who moved to Egypt when we all left Palestine in the late 40's. The first few days I spent in Cairo with cousins were wonderful. That was before I became officially a part of the Gaza Freedom March (GFM) team. I slipped under the radar and was not distinguishable from the native population. During that time, I got to visit my two cousins, Nazim and Zuheir's homes and met their families. I had not seen these cousins in 50 years. They took me to St. George Cathedral, a famous land mark in Cairo, and we celebrated Christmas together. We took local buses and I enjoyed mingling with the local people. My friend, Ahmad, took me to visit local people and we had many dinners together.

A few days later, December 26<sup>th</sup>, I welcomed my Michigan Peace Team (MPT) members to Cairo, where Ahmad and I took them out to dinner and we began our odyssey together.



Yusif Barakat, Sheri Wander, Liz Walters, Dorothy Ritter, Kim Redigan, Bella Rowan and Yusif's friend, Ahmad Galal, outside Cairo Khan Hotel.

My MPT mates were the best companions a man could have. They were caring, loving and supportive during all our trials and tribulations over the next few days. I'm grateful to the Michigan Peace Team, and my team members, for all the support they gave me during this trip. We met daily, processed information and planned our strategy for the following days. They e-mailed daily reports that were incorporated into the MPT in Gaza BlogSpot. (See: <http://mptinGaza.blogspot.com>) I recommend a review of this hyperlink for a more detailed description of our

experiences in Cairo.

During the first few days in Cairo we participated as a team in demonstrations and civil activities, in an attempt to persuade the Egyptian government to allow us entry into Gaza. The Egyptians first denied all 1,362 international delegates entry into Gaza claiming protection for our safety. We were met by resistance from the Egyptian police and military to thwart our every effort. They blockaded us from the American Embassy and would not allow us to hold a candlelight vigil on the Nile. We attended meetings called for by the "Code Pink" group, who coordinated the Gaza Freedom March, where we discussed future strategies.

We felt a great deal of disappointment and frustration at being denied access to Gaza, which is what we came to do. On 12-29 one of the major rallies was when 85 year old Jewish holocaust survivor Hedy Epstein announced a hunger strike, which inspired some 29 others to join her for up to 5 days. See N.Y. Times article: <http://www.nytimes.com/2009/12/30/world/middleeast/30Egypt.html?emc=eta1>



Hunger strike rally, at Cairo's Journalist Syndicate building with Hedy in pink scarf and Yusif in Palestine head scarf, on December 29, 2009. A couple of the 30 hunger strikers included Kim Redigan and Sheri Wander.

I was standing two people away from Hedy in the N.Y. Times picture. A few minutes later, I was handed the microphone as I stood next to her and admonished the Egyptian government, in both Arabic and English, for their collaboration with Israel and called them traitors to Palestine, humanity and the Arab cause.

I said that Hedy is one of the last Jewish holocaust survivors and that I am one of the last Palestinian Nakba (disaster of the 1940's) survivors...that we are both a dying breed. **We must keep the memory of both alive, so that the world does not forget both holocausts, and hopefully, end the one in Palestine!** I also thanked Hedy and all the courageous Jewish friends for their standing up for justice in Palestine!

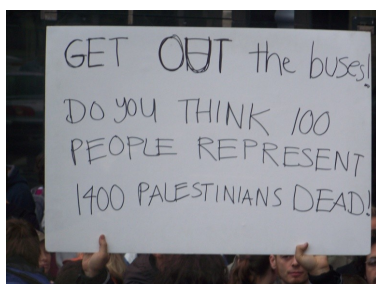
It's curious that the New York Times chose to exclude me from the picture and did not report anything I said! Two days earlier, on 12-28. Ahmed called me to tell me that a picture of me, in the midst of a lot of people, was in the Egyptian newspaper, Al Masry Al Youm (Egypt Today) Issue No. 2024, Vol. 6, page 5. I quickly ran out to get a copy, but could not find a picture of me or the article anywhere in the paper. It turns out that they removed the article, with the picture of me, and replaced it with a totally different and unrelated article on the same page 5 and on the same day. The new article was exactly

the same shape and size, but had nothing to do with Gaza Freedom March! This was my first indication of what the Egyptian government's ability to censor, quash and block coverage of our attempt to get to Gaza. See scanned before and after articles or try English version on: <http://www.almasryalyoum.com/en>

By Tuesday night, 12-29, my team met to decide what we should do next, if we should continue the civil disobedience and discuss our options. I went to bed at 1 am that night feeling helpless and hopeless (a feeling I've become accustomed to when it comes to the Palestine issue). At 2 am my hotel room telephone rang and one of my team-mates was shouting in my ear---"You're going to Gaza!!! ---You're going to Gaza!!!"

At first, I thought I was dreaming. They all rushed to my room and told me that Suzanne Mubarak (Egyptian President, Mubarak's wife) persuaded her husband to allow 100 people to go to Gaza. This was thanks to some Code Pink women meeting with her. As she is chairperson of Red Crescent Committee this decision was likely made so they could take the humanitarian aid (food, medication, clothing, children's toys and other relief items) that were brought to Cairo for that purpose. They showed me, my name on a list, as one of the 100, which came through on Bella's Blueberry. Needless to say, I spent the next several hours packing, half groggy, wondering if this was some kind of hoax.

At 7 am, Wed., 12-30, I was the first one sitting on the bus, eager to go to Gaza. Suddenly, the mood changed from jubilation to gloom, when it became clear that some of the larger delegation of 1,362 internationals were objecting to our going! Some of them were standing on the sidewalk, alongside the bus, declaring that "if we all can't go, then none of us should go".



Sample of signs objecting to the 100 delegates chosen for the Gaza trip.

Signs were paraded outside of the 2 buses scheduled to leave for Gaza, from Cairo, on December 30<sup>th</sup>, 2009.

This to me was reminiscent of the British, now American tactic of "**divide and conquer, divide and rule**", which was practiced throughout the Middle East over the last 100 years. Some felt betrayed (and rightly so) and some felt that this is a sell-out, a carrot on a stick to appease the international community and relieve the pressure on the Egyptian government. While all those are valid points, I felt blessed to be selected as one of the 100 people, and I wanted to deliver all the humanitarian boxes of supplies to the needy people of Gaza, that otherwise would have been left in Cairo to rot.

Until the moment that the two buses left the depot at 11:30 am I was never certain that we were going to be allowed to leave. Some of the original 100 people left the bus, while others came on. For awhile it felt like the game "musical chairs". Finally, the two bus caravan was on the way, with 85 internationals, escorted by heavily armed military police. During the journey from Cairo to Gaza Egyptian security surrounded the buses that carried the Gaza Freedom March delegation through Egypt to the gates of Gaza. There were a lot of delays on the road and at the border crossings. We finally arrived around midnight, ate dinner in the hotel and then were shuffled to our rooms.

## Gaza

In Gaza, I felt a bag of mixed emotions, blending the joy of being with the people and hearing their stories and the frustration of the tight control by Hamas preventing us from really moving around and mixing with the population. We had many memorable moments, like the fishing boat ride (January 1<sup>st</sup>) which showed us the tight death grip Israel has on the coastal waters of the Mediterranean Sea, preventing the fishing boats from getting the fish they need to earn a living and feed the Gazan people! Israeli gun boats were constantly in view and have been known to shoot at and confiscate boats that are within their rights to be within 10 kilometers of the shore. This is aside from the sewage that is being forced to be dumped in the sea that is polluting the beaches and surrounding waters.



A badly damaged fishing boat  
with four Gazans, January 1<sup>st</sup>.  
I saw other boats that were riddled with bullet holes.

We were taken to see the destruction from the Israeli raids that demolished homes, the airport, schools (including the American school), police stations and other municipal buildings, factories, Mosques, the United Nations headquarters, homes and other infrastructures. None of these buildings have been renovated as the Israelis deny the admission of supplies and materials to allow for reconstruction. What little comes in through the underground tunnels, is sporadic, problematic and costly.

The resilience of the Gaza people is a study in endurance and hope. It is also a model of what can be done in recycling. We saw so many places that were recycling cement, iron, paper and so many other resources for reuse in the community.



Samples of devastation left behind by  
Israeli invasion of Gaza,  
December 2008 to January 2009  
Unemployment is nearly 70 % and  
the demolished factories and work  
places continue to lie in rubble!



The threat of flooding the tunnels constantly looms as a possibility! Egypt building an iron wall on their border with Gaza is also threatening an already beleaguered community. This underscores and exposes the unholy alliance and collaboration between Israel, Egypt and the U.S. This highlights the urgency and the dire crisis that is in Gaza and all of Palestine.

While in Cairo I authorized my name as co-signature to be used in a law suit to prevent the building of the iron wall. Shortly after that, I left for Gaza and have not been able to find out the outcome of that attempt. See EGYPTIAN WALL LAWSUIT on Gaza Freedom March's web site: <http://www.gazafreedommarch.org/article.php?id=5302>

A Gaza Freedom March (GFM) did take place, on the morning of December 31<sup>st</sup>, involving hundreds rather than the hoped for 50,000 on the first anniversary of the Israeli offensive into Gaza. Hamas kept a tight lid on those who marched and did not allow anyone other than Hamas participants, excluding local women and people from the civil society and opposition parties. There were a few women from the native population that were kept in vans during the march. I was told this by the women from "Code Pink" leadership. These women, who told me this, also said that they forced the vans open and allowed the women to march at the dismay of the Hamas authorities.

It is important to note here and dispel the myth and misunderstanding about Hamas.

Hamas was supported and encouraged by Israel in order to form a wedge with Yasser Arafat and the Palestine Liberation Organization (PLO). Hamas grew and gained popularity with the Palestinian people and actually won the last election in Palestine. Hamas won the election in all of Palestine, not just Gaza. It was a legitimate democratic and fair election, as testified to by former President Jimmy Carter, and other international observers.

Because Israel and America refused to recognize Hamas as the new government, they encouraged an attempted coup to destroy Hamas. However, Hamas thwarted the coup and declared itself as the government of Gaza... At that time all money and assistance to the Palestinians was withheld and the current circumstance was solidified.

**So much for "Democracy and free elections"!**



Yusif, behind the banner, with women and other Marchers, in Gaza City, on December 31, 2009.

During the March I was combining marching with the group along with running ahead to take pictures. I would photograph the March to the end, then run ahead to march and then take more pictures. During the process I must have run 5 kilometers! It's a good thing that I am a seasoned runner---even though it has been nearly a month since I have done any exercise, other than climb a few stairs.

Yusif surrounded by joyful Gazan boys during the March.



Another high-light of the March was a group of four Orthodox Jewish Rabbis, whom we picked up on the bus on the way to Gaza. They had signs signifying that Judaism has been hijacked by Zionism and that Israelis are criminals for illegally stealing the land from Palestinians. Their position is that the Torah forbids Judaism from having a State and that they want to return to the days of living in peace with Jews, Muslims and Christians, as they had done for thousands of years!



Orthodox Jewish Rabbis (from Neturei Karta) in the March in Gaza City, on December 31<sup>st</sup>, 2009.

I told the Rabbis of the Arabic expression that says: "Free Palestine from Israel and free Jews from Zionism". They were so thrilled with that expression that they asked if they could use it again. They even wrote it down so they would not forget it.

A lot of attention was focused on the Rabbis during the March and the press conference. I spent a lot of time with them, and they, at times asked me to translate what they said into Arabic, for the audience. Here is the link to their web site <http://www.nkusa.org/> as these Orthodox Jewish Rabbis (from Neturei Karta) have a unique view on Palestine. I would also recommend that you check out: 1) "Orthodox Jews Demand End to Zionist Atrocities in the Middle East" (July 18, 2009-New York) and 2) the speech delivered by anti-Zionist Orthodox Jews on December 27, 2008, in New York City.

My picture standing next to them appeared on the front page of the local newspaper "Palestine", which is published in Jerusalem and smuggled into Gaza. The Arabic word for Palestine is "Felesteen", which is used for the web site to that newspaper. To see this front page of this article click on: <http://www.felesteen.ps/file/pdf/2010/01/01/1.pdf>

The March culminated in a press conference covered by a variety of international media. I was included in the program and had a chance to speak in both Arabic and English. I offered support and encouragement to the people and let them know that they are not forgotten. I told them that there were 1,362 international people who came to Cairo; that people all over the world are supporting them and are working for their freedom.

I was also whisked to the local T.V. station, "Al Aqsar", and put on the news program which was broadcast live, in Arabic. There was another young Arabic speaking lady Nura, who also went to the station and was interviewed on a local program..



Yusif in the lobby of "Al Aqsar" T.V. station waiting to go on live newscast, December 31<sup>st</sup>.

That night---New Year's Eve, we gathered for a candle light ceremony at a park, which included the community musicians performing on stage, and a celebration, bringing in the New Year. This included Arabic music and singers along with an underground "Hip Hop rap group" who rapped in Arabic to the amusement and amazement of hundreds of people including the local Gaza community and the internationals.

Several of us were invited to the stage and we each made comments about our mission and gave encouragement to the community. The rest of the evening, a few of us danced with the local population. I had a chance personally, to mix amongst dozens of tables as community members were eager to talk to me, in Arabic, as we asked each other questions and exchanged views, feeling and ideas.

Here is a sample of the audience during the New Years Eve event where we joined the locals in song and dance.



On Friday, January 1<sup>st</sup>, we visited an orphanage, where about 20 of us, including the four Rabbis, had lunch. We visited with the 50 boys and 40 girls as the children sat at tables with us. I and some of the teachers were able to translate. We played out in the playground with the children and left the toys that we brought for them.



Boys playing with a soccer ball at the Al-amal Institute for Orphans, in Gaza City, January 1<sup>st</sup>, 2010.

For more information see: Al-amal Institute for Orphans: [http://www.vivapalestina.org/resources/Al\\_Amal-profile.pdf](http://www.vivapalestina.org/resources/Al_Amal-profile.pdf)  
We also got about a half hour tour of the school with information about the facility. We were also shown some disturbing footage of the Israeli attack, from the year before, and how many children were killed or became orphans as a result.

Some young girls with their female teacher at the Al-amal orphanage. (Al-amal means hope.)



A special highlight, on Friday afternoon, was a soccer game in Gaza City. The internationals were challenged to a soccer game by the local team, as they were all decked out in their yellow uniforms and spent hours practicing for the game. Of course, I played with the internationals and instructed my team not to beat them, as that would be humiliating to the local community. So we laid back and let them beat us 4 to 2 thus allowing them the glory of winning something---even if it was only a soccer game against a bunch of novices. (This is my bit of humor in an otherwise dismal situation.)



Yusif in the midst of the soccer game focused on scoring a goal. Player in yellow is from Gaza team, Al Jazera, and man in black is referee, January 1<sup>st</sup>.

Another major development in the soccer game was when they would not allow the women in our group to play. There was a major struggle on the field as we debated the issues about allowing the international women to participate. The Gaza team threatened to walk off the field and we did not want to make an international incident about it, thus embarrassing the local community. (Besides we were on their turf and we needed to respect their traditions even though it was contrary to our belief systems.) We finally reached a compromise in which it was agreed that, at the end of the formal game, the internationals could split into two teams, including the women and play each other. We ran out of time and that game never took place as we had to prepare for the evening events.

Friday night, January 1<sup>st</sup>, we had our farewell dinner in the hotel. After dinner we were treated to a PowerPoint presentation by the Palestine Human Rights organization where we got specific data about the carnage that resulted from the Israeli invasion. For accurate, reliable and shocking statistics of the carnage of that attack, I recommend you visit The Palestinian Centre for Human Rights: <http://www.pchrgaza.org/portal/en/>

Saturday morning, January 2<sup>nd</sup>, we gathered in the lobby at 9 am to board buses for the return trip. A major conflict developed as about 20 internationals wanted to stay behind to freely visit with families as we were originally told we could do. There were heated debates with Hamas security. Around 11:30 am, the two buses pulled out with some of the internationals having slipped away the night before. I was told, on the way back, that they were all rounded up and put on another bus out of Gaza.

Before leaving Gaza City, the two buses passed by the Gaza Freedom March mural this was the gift of the international community to the people of Gaza. The mural was the brain child of Kathleen Crocetti who spent some 600 hours, involving dozens of women back in Santa Cruz, California, in preparing this work of art. All this was coordinated (via e-mails) with women in Gaza to determine size and content. This master piece was then labeled, dismantled into 25 sections and carried to the site in Gaza. It was reassembled, one section at a time, as a permanent memorial to the suffering of the people. The crew that installed this work of art in Gaza, spent countless hours on the project. At one point, as they were running out of time, local community citizens, along with some of the Hamas security people, pitched in to ensure the 11<sup>th</sup> hour completion before we left Gaza. For Kathleen's report see: <http://communityartactivism.blogspot.com/>

Gaza Freedom March mural that was placed on the wall outside the Gaza U.N. Relief Agency and across the street from the Muslim University, by dedicated internationals.



**Back to Cairo**

The ride back was miserable as it was in an old bus with no restroom and we arrived in Cairo around midnight. Again, the Egyptian Security escorted the caravan all the way back to Cairo.

Back in Cairo, Sunday, January 3<sup>rd</sup>, I was glad to be re-united with my Michigan Peace Team mates and they were all happy to see me, as they plied me with questions and were eager to know about my experiences.

---

### **Some views as reported by those who were in Gaza with me:**

On Sunday my team mates and I attended a Code Pink de-briefing with many who were in Gaza with me. As we each took turns briefly outlining the highlights in Gaza, my team members took notes and outlined a report they sent to the Michigan Peace Team in Gaza blog: <http://mptinGaza.blogspot.com> (see below a few brief excerpts.)

---

#### **The Rafah Border Crossing:**

At the Rafah border crossing from Egypt to Gaza, Egyptian authorities appear to partner with Hamas in the management of the border crossing. GFM delegates said they received horrible treatment from Egyptian authorities at the border.

#### **The blockade, on-going occupation of Gaza, and the role of Israel, Egypt, USA:**

The GFM eyewitnesses who crossed the Egyptian border and traveled through Gaza confirm that Gaza is sealed by land, airspace, and sea. A small part of the delegation experienced artillery fire from the border into Gaza. Moreover, experiences of the GFM delegation leads them to conclude that Israel, Egypt, and the United States collaborate to maintain the blockade and siege.

#### **Tour of Horror:**

The GFM delegation viewed the horror of the devastation in Gaza resulting from the Israeli invasion and attack on Gaza during Operation Cast Lead, December 2008 to January 2009 and the assaults that have continued since that time. The delegation visited hospitals, agencies, schools, and humanitarian centers. Also they met with families still suffering from devastation and loss. Military action by Israel has had a terrible impact on the economy. People live in misery. Unemployment is skyrocketing. Because Israel refused to admit construction materials, a year after the bombing, Gaza still lays in waste. One GFM delegate said, "There is no way to live through the siege."

#### **Resilience:**

The GFM delegation learned about the incredible resilience of Gazans. Though the grip of the occupation and now the added blockade brings misery to the people of Gaza, their spirit is not crushed. Gazans rally together and care for one another. They are convinced that the blockade and the occupation will end, and until that time, they believe their spirit will prevail. Delegates also noted that hope filled signs of art, music, dance, and humor are evident and growing within the Gazan society.

#### **Views on Hamas:**

Most of the GFM delegation was surrounded by Hamas security throughout their time in Gaza. Some ingenious GFM members were able to slip away from Hamas security and freely visited Gazans from north to south. All were shocked to see that Hamas did not allow women to participate in the Gaza Freedom March. Most of the GFM delegates are shocked by the Hamas repression; some conclude Gaza has become a police state under Hamas rule; one member of the delegation understands Hamas actions, saying "Hamas has to do what they have to do in order to maintain order in the midst of chaos."

#### **Significance of the Tunnels:**

A GFM delegate said, "Every sip of soda, every bit of food, every piece of toilet paper used by the delegation had arrived to Gaza via the tunnels." She noted with irony that imports to Gaza via the tunnels are labeled "illegal" by Israel, Egypt, and the United States governments.

### **Presence of the Rabbis:**

Four Jewish Rabbis who have committed their lives trying to apply justice in Gaza, and Palestine joined the Gaza Freedom March delegation to Gaza. GFM delegates describe the presence of these Rabbis as a pure gift. Their presence, words, and actions brought hope to Gaza; their love and solidarity were treasured by Gazans.

### **Support the Jewish Community that Stands for Freedom:**

Yusif urged the Gaza Freedom March to support the courageous Jewish people who stand for justice and work to end the occupation both in Israel and around the world, at the risk of being ostracized from their community.

### **Gazan Message: Take Responsibility and Do Something!**

Gazans consistently related this message to the GFM delegation:

**We very much like having you in Gaza, but at the same time we do ask this: Don't only come and stand with us for a few hours. Please go home and do something about this unjust situation!**

### **Message of Hope:**

**When returning home, everyone was encouraged to work tirelessly to end the siege on Gaza. We hope you will be able to join us in finding ways "to do something about this unjust situation."**

### **Goodbye to Cairo**

Sunday evening, January 3<sup>rd</sup>, we had our last dinner together as we were joined by Ahmad before we left Cairo. Apparently, during the four days I was in Gaza, my MPT mates:

- 1) Attempted to get on a public bus, with intension of going to the Rafah border, hoping to gain entry into Gaza. Of course, the all-seeing eye of the Egyptian police, escorted them off the bus and back to their hotel.
- 2) Made use of some of their time (that was not spent in hunger strikes and in demonstrations) by being able to do some sightseeing. They communicated with my friend, Ahmad, who advised them on how to best get to the pyramids, museums, etc. So despite all the frustrations of not going to Gaza, and suffering with the Cairo police at demonstrations, they were able to get some value in seeing the wonders of the ancient civilization.

Monday afternoon, January 4<sup>th</sup>, I said goodbye to Cairo again and flew to Amman, Jordan to spend some quality time with some of my other cousins and their families. While in Amman, I used my cousin's lap top to finally communicate with family members and check my overflowing e-mails.

### **Next report**

The above report covers my time in Cairo and Gaza. I spent 27 days total in the Middle East and have yet much to report on my time in Amman, Jordan, Tel Aviv, Israel and Ramallah, West Bank. Since there is a lot to report from those visits I will post another report, with pictures, soon. I will outline problems, solutions and recommendations along with some conclusions and remarks.

### **Acknowledgements**

I want to also take the opportunity to thank my friend and administrative assistant, Kim Bergier, as without her, none of you would have gotten anything (including this report). She has been my support person back in Michigan, receiving and forwarding my reports, plus maintained my schedule and contact information. She has received my phone calls and followed my requests at all hours of the day and night and has called me to relay information and check on my well being.

Of myself, I can do little. I rely on the effort of so many people which help me accomplish my mission in life, of which I am so grateful! I am also grateful to Code Pink, my friends and team members from the Michigan Peace Team, my cousins in Cairo and Amman, my friends at "OneVoice", my friend Shai in Tel Aviv, my family and friends back home, especially my friend, Betty, along with a myriad of people who have lent support and encouragement during this trip! Last, but not least, I want to thank my long time friend and comrade, Paul R. Pearson, for the skillful and professional way he set up my web site and blog.

Please continue to scan my web site [www.yusif.org](http://www.yusif.org) for more reports and updates.