



# MEND UK

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## GAZA SPECIAL!

### Promoting nonviolence in Gaza - an appeal

Dear friends,

I am sure you have been saddened by the recent violence in the Gaza strip. We are grateful that the killing has stopped, at least for now.

Amidst the turmoil, MEND maintains a centre of its Active Nonviolence Network in the heart of Gaza City, coordinated by Dr Salman Jadallah. In the light of the recent tragedies in the strip, the need for all Palestinians to reject the vicious cycle of killing and revenge has never been greater, neither has the challenge been more daunting.

However, we sense that in the weariness of the current hiatus, we have a unique opportunity. Violence has begotten violence, and people are hungry for another way.

**MEND would like to give you the opportunity to donate towards promoting the way of nonviolence in Gaza. We are aiming to raise at least \$15,000 by the end of July 2007.**

We are very proud of our staff and volunteers in Gaza and have confidence that they can make a huge difference. However, at this crucial time, they lack the resources to do this. Dr. Jadallah (Abu Selim) and his hardworking team in Gaza say they need three things:

- A phone line + communications costs
- Visibility, particularly posters and promotional literature.
- A paid secretary to help with organising activities in the strip.

Beyond these urgent needs, there is great potential for development of the network in Gaza. If you can help with a donation of any size, please complete the attached form, or log on to [www.mendonline.org](http://www.mendonline.org) and click on the 'Make a Donation' tab, on the right of your screen. The smallest donations are greatly appreciated, but please be as generous as you are able to be.

Thank you for partnering with us in this work.

Yours faithfully,

Lucy Nusseibeh,  
Director, MEND

### Promoting Nonviolence in the West Bank and Gaza...

#### Mend Nonviolence Bulletin...

Mend has created a nonviolence bulletin **The Phoenix** listing the nonviolent activities being organized by NGOs in Jerusalem, Ramallah, Nablus, Hebron, Tul Karem, Qalqilya, Jenin and Gaza. The bulletin displays the growing Palestinian nonviolent movement in the Middle East.

#### Children's Newsletter

Mend are planning to publish a new Palestinian nonviolence newsletter - for kids! It will be available in shops in Jerusalem and online. Al-Quds have offered to produce and distribute it, while Mend are actively seeking funding

## "Media, Nonviolence and Human Security" Conference, 30<sup>th</sup> May, 2007.

Mend's "Media, Nonviolence and Human Security" Conference was a great success. Everyone contributed, the speakers were both eloquent enthusiastic, and the audience delightful. Speakers included: **John Kjaar**, European Representative to the West Bank and Gaza; **Nabil Amro**, Palestinian legislative council member and the former Minister of Information; and **Mutawakei Taha**, Deputy Minister of Information, poet and author.

The conference was borne out of, and focused on, the following premises:

In this time of crisis in Palestine, it is of the utmost importance to organise and cooperate as much as possible at every level in order to counteract the escalating violence and minimize its effects. One of the key influences in this respect is the media, both as constantly reinforcing the image of the "violent Palestinian", and as, at least superficially, lending legitimacy to all the violence that does take place. We hope that this conference will lead to a strong movement of National Coordination for Nonviolence.

"Human security means protecting vital freedoms. It means protecting people from critical and pervasive threats and situations, building on their strengths and aspirations. It also means creating systems that give people the building blocks of survival, dignity and livelihood. To do this, it offers two general strategies: protection and empowerment. Protection shields people from dangers. Empowerment enables people to develop their potential and become full participants in decision-making." UNDP 2003

Human security can be opposed to military security. Military security is the understanding that security of the individual and of the state is best assured by sophisticated military technology, and a strong and well-disciplined army protecting state borders. Human security is the view that real security has to be undertaken at the level of individuals, and how they can live their daily lives. It works from the premise that people are the most important concern in any conflict and that their protection from all kinds of violence is paramount.

Military security has been proved over and over again in the Middle East conflict as in the world, to be an illusion that in fact exacerbates the conflict and feeds the cycle of violence. It has even been described as "obsolete". The human security approach can not only lead to the urgently needed protection of Palestinians, but can accompany the state-building process and the general development of potential.

It is time the human security approach is brought to the forefront of the conflict here. This conference explored ways to harness some of the extraordinary power of the media to create a shift in the paradigm of security from military to human.

- What can we do to protect people now?
- Is there a way to protect via nonviolence or to make it so visible that it can deter military attacks?
- Can we start to forge alliances between the government and civil society so that for instance there can be a "Ministry of Nonviolence" or a national service requirement for youth for "Nonviolent Defense"?

## A short story: Ali and Ahmad on roller-skates by Troels Gausla Engell, for Mend.

Ali and Ahmad live in a small town in Palestine. Like children all over the world, they spend their free time playing with their friends and are especially fond of roller-skating. It actually looks rather dangerous as they speed down the many steps of their town. Of course, like other children, they also have to go to school.

Ali and Ahmad's situation is unlike that of others however, as Palestine is occupied by another country, Israel. The occupation has lasted 40 years, and this means that many things are not as we are used to in Europe. There is even an eight-metre high wall running through parts of Palestine. And unfortunately for Ali and Ahmad, the wall has been built between their homes and their school, so even though the school is less than one kilometre away, it can easily take them more than an hour to get there because they have to take a detour.

When they finally reach a place where they can get through the wall, they have to show their papers to some soldiers. Sometimes there is a long line of people who want to get through. Then Ali and Ahmad have to wait, and that is really boring.

All of this is because the Israelis and the Palestinians cannot agree to live peacefully together. They fight over where the border should be, and over who gets to live where. In this fight they often shoot at each other, and the Israelis say they have to build the wall to protect themselves. Though the wall is illegal, people with guns don't always think they need to follow the law.

The adults are fighting, and Ali and Ahmad are already paying the price.