



The Most Rev. Desmond M. Tutu
Patron, Sabeel International

The Rev. Canon Naim Ateek
President/Director Sabeel Ecumenical
Liberation Theology Center, Jerusalem

FOSNA Board of Trustees

Rt. Rev. Edmond Browning
President, FOSNA Board of Trustees
Former Presiding Bishop, Episcopal Church USA

John H. Erickson
Chair of the FOSNA Board of Trustees
Attorney (retired)

Rev. Fahed Abu-Akel
Moderator, 214th General Assembly
PCUSA, 2002-2003

Tarek Abuata
Christian Peacemaker Teams

Rev. David W. Good
Tree of Life Educational Fund

Ann E. Hafften
Ecumenical Accompaniment Programme
in Palestine and Israel - USA, National Coordinator

George Adib Khoury
Engineer (retired)

Joy Lapp
Iowa Wesleyan College

Rev. Darrel Meyers
Middle East Fellowship of Southern California

Catherine Nichols
Global Ministries, United Church of Christ
and Christian Church (Disciples of Christ)

Rosemary Radford Ruether
Claremont School of Theology and
Graduate University

Grace Said
Episcopal Peace Fellowship
Palestine Israel Network, Steering Committee

Rev. Canon Richard K. Toll
Episcopal Priest (retired)

Andrea Whitmore
United Methodist Kairos Response,
Steering Committee; U.S. Campaign to End
the Israeli Occupation, Steering Committee

Wini Wolff
International Economic Development Consultant

FOSNA Staff

Rev. Dr. Donald E. Wagner
National Program Director

Sr. Elaine Kelley
Development and Administrative Coordinator

FOSNA Advisory Board

Lalla Al-Marayati
KinderUSA

Mubarak Awad
Nonviolence International

Kathy Bergen
Friends International Center, Ramallah

Mark Braverman
Israeli Committee Against House Demolitions

Thomas Getman
Consultant on International Affairs

Rt. Rev. Thomas Gumbleton
Catholic Diocese of Detroit

Gabriel Habib
Middle East Fellowship

Yvonne Haddad
Georgetown University

Zaha Hassan
Attorney at Law

Rashid Khalidi
Middle East Institute, Columbia University

Michael Lynk
University of Western Ontario (London) Canada

Clovis Maksoud
American University

Afif Saleh
Former Head of PLO Mission to the USA

John Salzberg
Sandy Springs Friends Meeting

Dorothy Jean Weaver
Eastern Mennonite Seminary

Cornel West
Princeton University

January 15, 2015

The Honorable Judge Gershwin Drain
Theodore Levin U.S. Courthouse
231 W. Lafayette Blvd. Room 123
Detroit, MI 48226

Dear Judge Drain:

I write to you on this birthday of the Rev. Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr., having just seen the remarkable film "Selma." This powerful film brought back memories of the brutality African Americans endured as they struggled against the ugly specter of racism and denial of their full human and civil rights. It also evoked deep emotional responses in my soul as I remembered my first church assignment after finishing seminary, an African-American congregation on the Newark-East Orange, New Jersey border. The manner in which that congregation accepted me, a young white clergyman, instilled in me a commitment to struggle for justice and human rights for the rest of my life. I'm sure we share similar values and commitments despite the different trajectories of our career paths.

It was a natural progression for me to take on the challenge of Palestinian human rights shortly after my ministry in Newark and East Orange. It is from this perspective, the parallels between the civil rights struggle in the United States and the Palestinian's quest for justice and human rights, that I am writing on behalf of my fellow Chicagoan, Rasmea Odeh.

At the outset, I would like to thank you for permitting Rasmea to be released from the St. Clare County Jail so she could spend several weeks with her family and community. I was thrilled to see the joy on her face at a community event in December, give her a hug, and share in a welcome home celebration with several hundred of her friends (Christian, Muslim, Jewish, secular, African American, Latino, Asian). I sincerely hope the Chicago community will have a larger celebration once the highly questionable charges against her are dropped on March 10th.

Rasmea is a woman of deep compassion and sacrificial service among predominantly poor refugee women on the southwest side of Chicago. I first met her approximately ten years ago when I brought one of my university classes to meet Rasmea and other staff at the Arab American Action Network. My class was studying peace and conflict transformation and the AAAN has been a model of peacebuilding in Chicago for several decades. My students were touched by Rasmea's work with women and heard similar stories from other staff. Since that initial meeting I have met Rasmea on several occasions and can testify that her reputation is legendary. I join Rasmea's community in asking you to allow her to continue this vocation of healing that she performs so well.

Having devoted most of my career to education and the struggle for human rights

Non-profit 501(c)(3) Tax-Exempt Org.
ID# 38-3419440

Friends of Sabeel-North America
PO Box 9186, Portland, Oregon 97207 (503) 653-6625 friends@fosna.org www.fosna.org

DEFENDANT'S
EXHIBIT
C-8

For the past two years my organization, Friends of Sabeel-North America, has been working to end Israel's current practice of imprisoning and detaining an average of two children every day. Most of the children are taken from their homes in terrifying night raids. Many of these children are abused and some are tortured. At the end of the ordeal they are forced to sign confessions in Hebrew (a language they neither read or write) stating they are guilty of crimes they never committed. These coercive practices have been documented by UNICEF, the preeminent Israeli human rights organization B'Tselem, Defense of Children International, and other respected international organizations. These are the same practices that Rasmea endured in prison several decades ago, only her experience was worse. We know that she was tortured and raped before being forced to sign the confession in Hebrew, a language that is completely foreign to her. Evidence extracted under these conditions should never be admissible in any court of law, particularly in the United States.

I am profoundly troubled that an order of deportation would condemn Rasmea to a living hell as she could face comparable abuse. She has already suffered unspeakable trauma at the hands of the Israeli army and, on humanitarian grounds alone, I plead with you to spare her that ordeal. Instead, I urge you to return Rasmea to her community and the work she loves and does so well.

Your decision will impact not only Rasmea, but a whole community and thousands across the nation who are watching this case with great interest. A decision for justice and freedom for Rasmea will be a sign that Palestinians and Muslims can indeed attain justice in the U.S. courts and are not subject to the pressures, myths, and injustices that in many ways parallel what African-Americans faced for generations. While Palestinians cannot attain justice in Israeli military courts, we have an opportunity with this case, to demonstrate that the United States has a single standard of justice, and our legal system can rise above those forces that would undermine truth and justice.

May God grant you wisdom and discernment in your decision on March 10th.

Respectfully yours,



Rev. Dr. Donald E. Wagner
National Program Director
Friends of Sabeel—North America

