

# Rebuilding Alliance



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## **Rebuilding Alliance Leadership Learning Mission about Gaza, the West Bank, and Jerusalem**

**Goals of the Trip:** To provide participants with an understanding of the history of the Israeli-Palestinian conflict with a focus on how the 70 years of occupation have affected Palestinians and Israelis, and led to current conditions. Particular attention will be given to the rights of Palestinian children and families to a home especially in the 62% of the West Bank under Israeli control, to food and economic security, to education, to safety, to legal rights, and to a future. The program will include discussion of how the peaceful aspirations of all can be furthered when Palestinians and Israelis both enjoy the benefits of basic human rights. This is an accompaniment tour in which Congressional staff are joined by constituents. Green Olive Collective is the tour operator selected by Rebuilding Alliance to present the following agenda.

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### **Detailed Agenda for the Leadership Learning Mission departing Friday, April 27th and returning Saturday May 5th, 2018** Accommodations: Crown Plaza Hotel in Jerusalem

#### **April 27th, Friday – Departure from Reagan International Airport DCA (most staff)**

#### **April 28th, Saturday - Arrival at Ben Gurion Airport, TLV**

- **15:00** Arrival at Ben Gurion Airport, Tel Aviv
- **16:00** Transit to Jerusalem, Crown Plaza Hotel, Check In
- **19:30-21:00** Welcome quiet dinner with Rebuilding Alliance trip overview welcome introduction by Donna Baranski-Walker, and Itamar Shapira, Green Olive Partners. Also, discussion of rules and guidelines of the trip, discussion of expectations of the participants.
- *Overnight, Crown Plaza Hotel in Jerusalem*

#### **April 29th, Sunday – Jerusalem**

- **7:30-08:30** Breakfast at hotel with Rabbi Arik Ascherman, Torat Tzedek
- **08:30-10:00** Briefing by Gerard Horton, Military Court Watch
- **10:00-10:30** Transit to Ofer Military Prison and Court

- **10:30-12:30** Ofer Military Court: observing the court proceedings for cases of Palestinian child prisoners. A key goal of our Leadership Learning Mission is to promote the rights of Palestinian children. Military Court Watch (MCW)'s work is guided by the basic principle that children detained by the Israeli military authorities are entitled to all the rights and protections guaranteed under international law. Further, and in accordance with the principle that no State is permitted to discriminate between those over whom it exercises penal jurisdiction, there is no legal justification for treating Palestinian and Israeli children differently under Israel's military and civilian legal systems. In accordance with these principles, MCW advocates, and where appropriate, litigates, to ensure that all children that come in contact with the military legal system are treated with equality and in accordance with the law.
- **12:30-13:00** Transit to Ein Karem
- **13:00-14:30** Lunch at Ein Karem
  - This was a Palestinian Arab village in the Mandatory Palestine's Jerusalem subdistrict, until on July 16, 1948 during the 1948 War of Partition. Ein Kerem was one of the few depopulated Arab villages which survived the war with most of the buildings intact. The abandoned homes were resettled with new immigrants. For Palestinians, this is called a Nakba village and it is a village to which the former residents hope to someday return. We'll discuss the long-term implications of forced relocation and the possibility of return.
- **14:30-14:40** pick up from Ein Karem to Old City of Jerusalem
- **14:40-17:30** Guided walking tour of Old City, Jerusalem facilitated by Itamar Shapira, Green Olive Cooperative
  - This will include an overlook of the Wailing Wall, the Dome of the Rock and Al Aqsa Mosque, the Holy Sepulcher Church, and other significant religious, historical, and cultural sites and neighborhoods to help Congressional staffers and constituents begin to understand the varied aspirations of Palestinians and Israelis and provide a better understanding of what the New York Times calls, "a distinctly 20th-century story, with roots in colonialism, nationalism, and anti-Semitism."
- **17:30-18:15** Walk through West Jerusalem back to hotel

**18:30-21:00** Supper at the hotel

*Overnight, Crown Plaza Hotel in Jerusalem*

### **April 30th, Monday - Greater Jerusalem and West Bank near Jerusalem**

- **08:00-9:00** Breakfast
- **9:00-12:00** Yahav Zohar, senior guide at GOT, tour of Greater Jerusalem, possibly drive through the settlement of Maale Adumim, and possible visit with settlers.
  - This tour will describe annexation, settlements, walls, municipal reality and political implications.
- **12:00-13:30** Rabbi Jeremy Milgrom is one of the early members of Rabbis for Human Rights and has been a good friend of the Bedouin who live in this area. He will offer

insight and introductions about both societies and describe efforts underway to in support of the petitions filed by the village of Khan al Ahmar to save their village and their school.

- **13:00-14:30** Lunch for all, prepared by the women of Khan al Ahmar
  - Discussion with the Village Council and with Khan Al Ahmar Women's Association about their plans following their hearing on April 25<sup>th</sup> before the High Court of Israel.
- **14:30-15:30**
  - Discussion their Attorney Shlomo Lecker, who presented the village's petitions to Israel's High Court on April 25, 2018 to (1) to stop the forced relocation of the Khan al Ahmar community and (2) on behalf of the other four communities who reside in the area and use the school, to prevent demolition of the school because they will have no alternative for the education of their 140 children. A decision by the High Court is due on May 1<sup>st</sup> or 2<sup>nd</sup>. Angela Godfrey Goldstein of the group, Jahalin Solidarity, will also join the discussion.
- **15:30-16:00** Travel back to the hotel through A Zaim checkpoint
- **18:30-19:30** Supper at hotel
- **20:00-22:00** Evening meeting with Rami Elhanan and Bassam Aramin of the Parents Circle; Jewish Israeli & Palestinian grieving parents.
  - We will hear their stories and explore the implications on 'recognition of the other' in a recent decision by the Israeli High Court to grant request of a group of Palestinian grieving parents to attend the Alternative Memorial Day commemoration, and discuss how that memorial proceeded.

*Overnight, Crown Plaza Hotel in Jerusalem*

### **May 1st, Tuesday - Al Aqaba Village, Jaba' Village, and Ramallah**

- **8:00-9:00 \*Tentative Hold\*** Breakfast Meeting with American Consul General Jerusalem Staff. This meeting will include a discussion with Consulate staff about the State Department's role in Jerusalem, the West Bank, and Gaza. Congressional staff will have the opportunity to ask questions about the "on the ground" operating environment. Topics of special interest to the delegation include: Palestinian Area C planning issues, human rights, child detentions, Gaza aid efforts, and the value of citizen diplomacy. Israeli Atty. Netta Amar will join us for this meeting. Atty. Netta Amar is an expert in human rights law and she represents Al Aqaba Village and many Palestinian villages facing Israeli demolition orders.
- **9:30-11:30** Travel to Al Aqaba Village
- **11:30-13:00** Meeting with Mayor Haj Sami Sadeq, tour of the village that shows what peace can look like.
  - In 2004, the Israeli Army issued demolition orders against all the homes in Al Aqaba Village and also against the medical clinic, the mosque, and the kindergarten that was built from contributions by hundreds of Americans. In 2008,

the Israeli High Court ruled in favor of the village stating that ‘for the time-being, the center of the village will remain standing.’ In addition to the kindergarten and conference center, the village is home to the Ibn Rush’d Library, a mosque with double minarets in the shape of a peace sign, a tea factory, a cheese factory, and most recently, many new homes built with village-issued building permits, the first in Area C. All guests who come in peace are welcome.

- **13:00-15:00** Lunch prepared by Al Aqaba Rural Women’s Association and discussion with the Women’s Association
- **15:00-16:30** Transit to Jaba’ Village
- **16:30-18:00** Visit Jaba’ Village escorted by Architect Renad Shqeirat of RIWAQ, the Palestinian organization that is a center for the preservation of architectural heritage on the West Bank of Palestine.
  - This tour will show an antiquities restoration project, also show what happened when the Separation Wall was installed, separating the village from Jerusalem
- **18:30-19:00** Transit to Darna Restaurant
- **19:00-21:00** Dinner at Darna Restaurant, Ramallah, hosted by the Rotary Club of Ramallah and the Palestine Business Committee.
  - The Mapathon volunteers from the Geography Department at Birzeit University will join us for dinner. They are using OpenStreetMap to put Palestinian villages on the map and show shops and places of interest, because being on the map assures existence. This is especially important because local online maps such as Waze map the Israeli settlements but not the villages next door. Google Maps recently added the names of Palestinian villages in so-called Area C but detail is still lacking. Our speakers will explain the use of OpenStreetMap mapathons to help villagers add local locations names while inviting Americans to assist by mapping the roads and buildings visible via satellite.
- **21:00-21:30** Return to Hotel  
*Overnight, Crown Plaza Hotel in Jerusalem*

## **May 2nd, Wednesday – Bethlehem and Susiya**

- **07:30-8:30** Breakfast at hotel
- **8:30-9:15** Transit to Bethlehem
- **9:15-11:15** Visit to UN Relief and Works Agency for Palestinian Refugee (UNRWA)’s AIDA Refugee Camp in Bethlehem and to the UNRWA school, with presentation by UNRWA by Scott Anderson, Director UNRWA Operations in the West Bank.
  - Here we hear about the scope and scale of UNRWA food, education, and emergency operations in the West Bank, Jordan, Lebanon, Syria, Israel, and Gaza and learn about the refugee crisis as a whole and discuss the consequences of President Trump’s decision to cut over \$300Mil from the US budget provided UNRWA.

- Here is the detailed agenda for the visit to AIDA camp:

| Time  | Duration | Activity                                                                                          | Location                    | Lead                                                                                                                                                             |
|-------|----------|---------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|-----------------------------|------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| 09:15 | 10 min   | Welcome and brief layout of UNRWA West Bank operations                                            | Aida Boys' School (rooftop) | Meg Audette, Deputy Director of UNRWA West Bank Operations                                                                                                       |
| 09:25 | 10 min   | Overview of Aida camp                                                                             | Aida Boys' School (rooftop) | Amjad Abu Laban, Chief Area Officer<br>Ibrahim Abu Srou, Camp Services Officer                                                                                   |
| 09:35 | 20 min   | Briefing on life under occupation (incl. protection issues in for children in and out of schools) | Aida Boys School (rooftop)  | Allegra Pacheco, Senior Team Leader Protection & Neutrality                                                                                                      |
| 09:55 | 25 min   | Meeting with the School Parliament (in groups if possible)                                        | Aida Boys School            | Amjad Abu Laban, Chief Area Officer<br>Ibrahim Abu Srou, Camp Services Officer                                                                                   |
| 10:20 | 20 min   | Walking tour in the camp ending at football pitch                                                 | Aida Camp                   | Amjad Abu Laban, Chief Area Officer<br>Ibrahim Abu Srou, Camp Services Officer                                                                                   |
| 10:40 | 20 min   | Timeline and consequences of US policy change for UNRWA engagement                                | Football pitch              | Meg Audette, Deputy Director of UNRWA West Bank Operations                                                                                                       |
| 11:00 | 15 min   | Questions and answers                                                                             | Football pitch              | Meg Audette, Deputy Director of UNRWA West Bank Operations<br>Allegra Pacheco, Senior Team Leader Protection & Neutrality<br>Amjad Abu Laban, Chief Area Officer |
| 11:15 |          | End of programme                                                                                  |                             |                                                                                                                                                                  |

- **11:30-13:00** Visit the Church of Nativity in Bethlehem
  - Discussion will provide valuable historical and cultural context.
- **13:00-14:00** Travel to Palestinian Susiya, Palestinian Susiya, southern Hebron Hills

- The Israel High Court decided that the Palestinian Village of Susiya can be demolished before its case is even heard. We'll hear their story and learn of their aspirations to recognize their master plan, to live without fear of demolition.
- **14:00-15:30** Lunch in the village, presentation by Fatma or Nasser Nawaja and Israeli Atty. Qamar Misriqi of Haqel who represents Susiya in its petitions before the Israeli High Court. Visit with Susiya villagers and friends of Susiya including the EAPPI Ecumenical Accompaniment Team, Villages Group, Operation Dove, Ta'ayush, Torat Tzedek, and COMET-ME.
- **16:00-17:00** Visit Al Tawane with Fatma Nawaja, a social worker employed by Rebuilding Alliance
  - On March 25<sup>th</sup> and 30<sup>th</sup>, settlers attacked first an agricultural worker and then students on their way to school accompanied by internationals who sought to assure the safety of the children. In both cases, the settlers sent the victim to the hospital with badly broken legs. We will discuss what happened and explore the rule of law.
- **17:00-18:00** Return to Jerusalem
- **19:00-21:00** Supper at Hotel followed by discussion with Alon Cohen Lifschitz, Area C Coordinator with Israeli human rights group Bimkom: Planners for Planning Rights, about the 12,500 demolition orders pending against Palestinian homes, schools, barns, and water cisterns in so-called Area C. Alon will also provide an analysis of trends in Israeli law and the implications of recent changes in land law.

### **May 3rd, Thursday – Meet speakers from Gaza either in Gaza, in Israel, or via teleconference**

Our goal overall is to explore how the peaceful aspirations of all can be furthered when Palestinians and Israelis both enjoy the benefits of basic human rights. Because the World Bank is reporting that the Gaza economy is close to collapse, we want our delegates to hear directly from Non-Governmental Organizations (NGOs) in Gaza and the UN to learn exactly what “close to collapse means” and to explore what action to take to ameliorate the starvation that will set in by July unless something changes. Rebuilding Alliance has worked with NGOs’ in Gaza since 2003, many of which are affiliated with the UN Relief and Works Agency for Palestinian Refugees and Palestinian Non-Governmental Organizations. Rebuilding Alliance is currently working with five Palestinian NGOs in our program to send solar-powered lanterns to Gaza’s children, and we’ve precleared and sent 27,000 lanterns through the blockade so far. We want to speak directly with people who live in Gaza. At present, US Government employees are prohibited from travelling to Gaza. So we are planning as follows:

- Plan 1: Jerusalem. We have applied to bring our 13 speakers out of Gaza to meet with the team in Jerusalem and the UN team will also join us. Here is our list of NGO and UN speakers:
  1. Dr. Yasser abu-Jamei, Exec. Director, Gaza Community Mental Health Programme
  2. Dr. Sami Owaida, Child Psychiatrist, Gaza Community Mental Health Programme
  3. Najah Ayash, Exec. Director, Women's Project Center – Rafah

4. Eid Shaqura, Exec. Director, Al Basma Club for the Disabled
5. Iyad al-Igel, Exec. Director, Youth Vision Society
6. Ziyad al-Abed, Exec. Director, El-Amal Rehabilitation Society
7. Neveen abu-Naser, coordinator, Rebuilding Alliance
8. Kareem Nasrallah, coordinator, Rebuilding Alliance
9. Mohammed Mansour, photographer, Rebuilding Alliance
10. Ali al-Shekh, writer, We Are Not Numbers
11. Anas Jnena, coordinator and writer, We Are Not Numbers
12. Ghada Ahmed, writer, We Are Not Numbers
13. Mohammed Arafat, writer, We Are Not Numbers
14. Tarneem Form, writer, We Are Not Numbers
15. Murad Matar, associate, Youth Vision Society
16. Matthias Schmale, UNRWA Gaza Operations Director

UNRWA submitted these applications to the Israeli Government on April 11th however because Israel's review process currently takes 55 days, diplomatic assistance is required to allow their permit to be reviewed in time to allow for their meeting with our delegation. As such, we have a back-up plan to bring our group to Ashkelon.

- Plan 2: Teleconference with the Gaza speakers from Palestinian NGOs if they are denied permits to enter Israel
- Plan 3: Visits in person and by teleconference  
Bring the UN staff and the few or only Gaza speaker(s) who receive exit permits to meet with us at a conference room at our hotel (Crown Plaza) in Jerusalem, and also have a teleconference with those who are not granted transit permits.

Here is the detailed agenda for the day:

- **8:00-9:00** Breakfast
- **9:00-10:30** Teleconference at our hotel in Jerusalem.
- **11:00-12:00** Meeting in-person with UNRWA Gaza Operations Director Matthias Schmale and the Gaza NGO speakers who were granted day permits.
- **12:00-13:30** bag lunches on the bus, travel to Ashkelon
- **13:30-15:00** Meeting with a spokesperson of the Regional Council of Israel's Shaar Ha Negev area, – but not within the Regional Council area so to remain in accordance with US State Dept. guidelines which state, "U.S. government employees must observe additional security requirements if traveling for any reason to ... within 7 miles of the Gaza demarcation line."
- **16:00-17:30** Meeting with Nomika Esior of Other Voice Sderot
- **18:00-19:30** Transit back to hotel
- **19:30** Dinner at the hotel
- **20:30** Debriefing at the hotel
- *Overnight, Crown Plaza Hotel in Jerusalem*

## May 4th, Friday — About children's rights and the military justice system

- **07:00-08:00** Check-out
- **08:00-09:00** Breakfast
- **9:00-10:00** meeting overview with Ivan Karakashian, Defense of Children International. A key goal of our Leadership Learning Mission is to promote the rights of Palestinian children. Defense of Children Int'l provides legal support for Palestinian children and documents violations of international law.
- **10:00-11:15** Departure for Hebron
- **11:15-12:00** Christian Peacemakers Teams (CPT)- Our goal is to explore how the peaceful aspirations of all can be furthered when Palestinians and Israelis both enjoy the benefits of basic human rights. We chose to hear from CPT because CPT places teams at the invitation of local peacemaking communities that are confronting situations of lethal conflict. Their mission is *"to follow God's Spirit as it works through local peacemakers who risk injury and death by waging nonviolent direct action to confront systems of violence and oppression."* Itamar Shapira of Green Olive Cooperative will be assisting by conducting our tour in Jewish-only areas.
- **12:00-14:30** Tour of Hebron by Hisham Sharabati from Al Haq, in their office and rooftop view of Hebron Al Haq is an independent, Palestinian Non-Governmental human rights organization based in Ramallah, established to protect and promote human rights and the rule of law in the occupied Palestinian territories. Al Haq has special consultative status with the UN Economic and Social Council.
  - The issue of Palestinian homes being taken over by Israeli settlers is prevalent in Hebron. An understanding of the city will help the delegation to understand why this is occurring.
- **14:30-15:30** Visit with one or two families whose children are in Israeli military jails to hear their experiences first hand;
- **15:30-16:30** Transit to Jaffa;
- **17:00-18:00** Meet with Member of the Knesset Ayman Ouda, Head of Arab Joint Lists to discuss his experience as an Arab member of the Israeli Knesset.
- **18:00-18:30** Walking through Jaffa.
- **18:30** Farewell dinner. Danny Seidemann may join us. Atty. Seidemann is a leading Israeli expert on the politics of Jerusalem and how the city will fit into a two-state resolution. In the wake of the President's decision to move the US Embassy to Jerusalem, Atty. Seidemann's insights will be useful.
- **20:00** Depart for airport and midnight departure to U.S.A.