

Medical Aid for Palestinians works for the health and dignity of Palestinians living under occupation and as refugees.

MAP
MEDICAL AID FOR PALESTINIANS

WITNESS

DISAPPEARING PALESTINE: 65 years after the Nakba



HODA'S STORY

Fleeing the violence in Syria – MAP's Director of Programmes in Lebanon tells one woman's story

THE NAKBA – 65 YEARS ON

Life in three Palestinian villages in the West Bank

PALESTINE 'QUESTION TIME'

MAP takes public discussions on Palestine to Oxford and London

INTERVIEW WITH ROGER WATERS

Pink Floyd's bassist talks about occupied Palestine



DEAR READER

Welcome to the autumn edition of Witness, MAP's biannual newsletter.

This is my first editorial for Witness, having taken over from Steven James as Chief Executive in April. I first encountered MAP when I was head of the World Health Organisation's office in occupied Palestine from 2008-13 and I was impressed by how a small organisation could achieve so much.

Since joining the team in the spring, I have learned much more about the scope of MAP's work. I have met with staff and board members and discovered the range of expertise MAP is able to draw on. I have visited some of our programmes in the refugee camps in Lebanon where conditions are probably worse than anything I saw in the West Bank and Gaza. And I have met with some of our supporters in the UK and been amazed by the strength and generosity of their support.

This year marks two significant anniversaries in Palestine. It was the 65th anniversary of the Nakba or 'catastrophe' on 15 May, when Palestinians mark the loss of their historic homeland in 1948. And 13 September will mark the 20th anniversary of the official signing of the Oslo Accords at the White House, which many had hoped would lead to a resolution of the conflict.

Those hopes have been repeatedly dashed. Today, the effects of 65 years of dispossession remain keenly felt by Palestinians, both living under occupation and as refugees. The ongoing construction of Israeli settlements, the destruction of Palestinian homes and infrastructure, the forced displacement of Palestinians in the West Bank and the strangulation of the economy in Gaza are matters of grave concern. In recent weeks, a number of senior Israeli figures have made it clear that they do not support the two-state solution between Israel and Palestine, and a growing chorus of global leaders, including the UN Secretary-General, are warning that time for achieving a two-state solution has almost run out.

Against this background, this edition of Witness focuses on the impact of the Israeli settlements on life in three Palestinian villages in the West Bank and the effects of the blockade on Gaza, which has now entered its 7th year.

We also feature an interview with Pink Floyd's Roger Waters on his activism for Palestinian rights, and the story of Hoda, one of over 63,000 Palestinians from Syria who are taking shelter in the Palestinian refugee camps of Lebanon.

I would like to thank MAP's many supporters and donors for their generosity and hard work. I also want to congratulate Ruth Wharton for her incredible 3,022 kilometre cycle ride to raise funds for MAP's work, from Andalucía in the southern-most tip of Spain to York in just six weeks.

TONY LAURANCE

Chief Executive

Medical Aid for Palestinians

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LEBANON

Clashes, rocket strikes and a car bomb

The conflict in Syria has stoked sectarian tensions in Lebanon.

Fighting in neighbourhoods in Tripoli has claimed the lives of tens of people, with hundreds injured. Several truces have broken down. In southern Beirut, Hezbollah neighbourhoods were shelled in late May as a warning from the Free Syrian Army to stay out of the conflict. On 9 July, a car bomb rocked a Shia suburb in Beirut, wounding 53 people.



Alice Watts

GAZA

Border closures

March – July: Tightened restrictions on Gaza.

Israel responded to rocket fire into southern Israel by shutting border crossings and re-restricting Gaza's maritime border from six to three nautical miles in an act of collective punishment. Throughout April, the Kerem Shalom crossing was closed for 17 out of 30 days, intensifying restrictions of basic foodstuffs and essential supplies. The Rafah border crossing between Egypt and Gaza was also closed from 16-22 May after seven Egyptian soldiers were taken hostage in northern Sinai. In July, officials announced that the Rafah crossing and the tunnels between Egypt and Gaza were closed following the ousting of President Morsi in Egypt.



William Parry

LEBANON

Palestinian refugees from Syria

The number of Palestinian refugees seeking safety in Lebanon from the conflict in Syria has risen to more than 63,000, putting further economic and political strain on the country, aid agencies and host Palestinian communities throughout Lebanon's 12 Palestinian refugee camps.

Lebanon, which has a population of about 4 million, is hosting over half a million registered refugees from Syria, of whom 63,000 are Palestinian. The Lebanese government estimates that an additional 500,000 have not registered and announced that it may place restrictions on the influx of refugees. In response to the situation, the UN issued an unprecedented appeal in April, calling on world leaders "to meet their responsibility to the people of Syria and to the future of the region" by using "their collective influence to insist on a political solution to this horrendous crisis".

OCCUPIED PALESTINE

Obama and Kerry visit Israel and the West Bank

20-22 March: US President Barak Obama's first presidential visit to Israel and Palestine prepared the way for Secretary of State John Kerry's subsequent diplomatic efforts to restart US-led peace negotiations.

Talks are focusing on a two-state solution based on the 2002 Arab Peace Initiative – 22 Arab states normalising ties with Israel, if Israel withdraws to the 1967 borders, with comparable and minor land exchanges. At the World Economic Forum in May, Kerry's announcement of a \$4bn plan to boost the Palestinian economy was met with scepticism by the Palestinian authorities in Gaza and the West Bank.

OCCUPIED PALESTINE

Israeli military violence on the rise

Palestinian casualties caused by the Israeli military have risen alarmingly this year compared with 2012 figures.

In the first six months of the year, the Israeli military killed 8 Palestinians, most of them by live fire. The number of Palestinians injured was 2,629, compared with 3,031 during the whole of 2012. Most of the injuries have been caused by rubber-coated steel bullets, tear gas inhalation and live ammunition. In addition to the weekly grassroots demonstrations against settlement expansion and the separation wall, there have been a large number of prisoner solidarity demonstrations throughout the West Bank and Gaza.

WEST BANK

Expansion of settlement building

June – Israel approved over 1,000 new housing units in Itamar and Bruchin settlements.

There was a marked increase in Israeli settlement activity during the first quarter of 2013. According to recent data from Israel's Central Bureau of Statistics, work on 865 new housing units was begun between January and March 2013 – nearly three times the number of construction projects started in the same quarter last year.



William Parry

HODA'S STORY

TOLD BY MARTA PETAGNA, MAP'S
DIRECTOR OF PROGRAMMES IN LEBANON

This is the story of Hoda, a woman in her early forties whom I met recently in the Shatila camp, on the outskirts of Beirut.

Hoda grew up in Lebanon, where she met her husband. Five years ago she moved to Deraa in Syria – her husband's hometown. Last summer, however, Hoda returned to Lebanon. She decided to leave Deraa when the situation there became too dangerous for her and her three children to stay.

Today, Hoda is one of over 63,000 Palestinians from Syria who are taking shelter in Lebanon. According to the Lebanese authorities, around 200 Palestinian refugees from Syria are crossing the border every day. Most of them (96%) were directly exposed to violence in Syria. More than half of them have had their homes destroyed; 21% have lost a family member or a close friend; 14% have had personal injuries and 14% have experienced a kidnapping. Many, especially the children, are traumatised and scared.

When they arrive in Lebanon, their most common destination is the refugee camps. These are very different from the camps in Syria. They are overcrowded urban slums, ghetto-like environments where sunlight and ventilation are luxuries that most families cannot afford.

During the past few months we have met and interviewed dozens of displaced people, and all of them have told us how shocked they are to see the conditions in Lebanon that Palestinian refugees live in. The hardship that the newly displaced Palestinians are now experiencing largely reflects the miserable conditions in which the local refugees have lived for decades.

Most of the displaced are jobless. Only 7% have been able to find employment of some sort – most of the time in occasional and underpaid jobs. The cost of living in Lebanon is very high, certainly much higher than in Syria.

This means that the refugees are spending all their savings on survival and they are sometimes forced to go back to a war zone when they can no longer afford to stay in the country.

The situation would be much worse without the generous hospitality of the Palestinians in Lebanon. Today, nearly half of the displaced live with host families in the refugee camps. With one local refugee out of two unemployed, and two out of three living below the poverty line, Palestinians in Lebanon are barely surviving – and yet so many of them haven't hesitated to welcome other families in need into their homes, and to share the meagre resources they have with them.

Hoda, for example, is being hosted by her sister in Shatila. Both women have children, so seven people are now living in the apartment: one tiny room and a bathroom. In Hoda's family, nobody is employed. Like most other refugees, Hoda's family is depending on aid to survive.

The United Nations High Commission for Refugees (UNHCR) is responsible for the safety and wellbeing of all refugees in the world except Palestinians in the Middle East. This anomaly limits the access to healthcare for Palestinians, because the agency responsible for them, UNRWA, is chronically underfunded by the international community – leading to severe rationing of its key health, education and housing services. So when Syrian and Palestinian refugees flee over the border from Syria to Lebanon, they don't receive the same support as each other.

UNRWA is offering those displaced the same basic services that are offered to local residents. International and local non-governmental organisations are offering cash and in kind support to displaced and host families.

MAP has identified a significant gap in the provision of advanced healthcare and we have set up a patient relief fund in partnership with UNRWA, through which we assist refugees who need



Children displaced from Syria participate in recreational and educational activities.

urgent and expensive medical care for life-threatening conditions such as cancer and heart disease. For these patients and their families, the cost of treatment would be unaffordable without MAP support. Most would be forced into debt or to beg, and some would simply forgo the treatment they need, and possibly die.



A MAP midwife provides a check-up as part of MAP's MCH programme



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educational activities while their mothers attend a psychosocial support programme, Ein el Helweh camp

We have also set up a psychosocial programme in partnership with Najdeh Association, through which we have supported hundreds of mothers and children so far, who are struggling to cope with the trauma of war and displacement.

At the same time, we are striving to maintain our regular programme, through which we are assisting both the displaced and those who are hosting them in the Palestinian camps, offering maternal and child health (MCH) care, reproductive health services, rehabilitation services, psychosocial and parenting support to hundreds of refugees every month.

However, we only have limited resources and it is becoming increasingly difficult to meet people's basic needs – particularly as the

STATISTICS: number of displaced people continues to increase, and the local community and the existing services are placed under considerable strain.

96%

of Palestinian refugees fleeing to Lebanon have been directly exposed to violence in Syria

21%

have lost a family member or close friend

Support is vital to both the local refugees and the families displaced from Syria, not least to mitigate the risk of conflicts that might eventually arise between the two groups, given the conditions of extreme hardship in which they both live. What both groups need, above all, is a fair solution to the Middle East conflict that does not ignore any of its victims.

Let me tell you one last word about Hoda. During our meeting, she told us how her family left Palestine at the time of the Nakba in 1948, and settled in the Beirut camp of Tel el Zaatar. This camp was destroyed, and its population decimated, during the Lebanese civil war. Hoda's brother was

APPEAL UPDATE

PALESTINIAN REFUGEES FLEE SYRIA.

MAP's Director of Programmes in Lebanon, Marta, wrote to many of you about the conflict in Syria and the plight of Palestinians fleeing the country. When she wrote in February 20,000 Palestinians had left Syria for Lebanon – by June that number had increased to over 63,000.

The refugee camps in Lebanon are now at breaking point. The cost of living is prohibitively expensive, including the cost of accessing Lebanon's private healthcare system. Thanks to your support, we have been able to extend our current programmes to the new wave of refugees. Your donations mean we are able to work with the chronically underfunded UN agency for Palestinians, UNRWA, to provide lifesaving tertiary care, like chemotherapy and heart surgery – giving a lifeline to those who have fled with nothing.

Your donation has meant that we have been able to save lives.

among the victims. Hoda then moved to Shatila with her sister. In 1982, they both survived the massacre there, but her brother-in-law disappeared, never to be seen again.

Today, once again, Hoda is fleeing a war zone and running for her life. Yet she looked at me with a smile last week, and told me, "Hamdulillah, Palestinians face hardship wherever they go. This is our destiny."

During the past 10 years I have met so many people like Hoda – people with tragic life stories, who still find a reason to carry on with their lives and to welcome and smile at strangers like myself.

Hoda and her children deserve a different future – a future in which their right to live in peace and dignity is fulfilled.



THE NAKBA: 65 YEARS ON

Families fleeing their homes during the Nakba

15 May marked the 65th anniversary of the Nakba or 'catastrophe', the day that for Palestinians represents the loss of 78 percent of their historic homeland and the displacement of around two-thirds of the population when the State of Israel was established in 1948.

A month before the anniversary, MAP accompanied four British MPs – Karen Buck MP, Jake Berry MP, Cathy Jamieson MP and Mark Pawsey MP – on a cross-party delegation to the West Bank, organised by the Council for Arab British Understanding. During their stay the delegation visited three Palestinian villages under threat of settlement expansion.

What they witnessed gives a sharp insight into life under Israeli occupation and highlights the extent to which the Nakba is an ongoing event.

BEIT SAFafa AND ROUTE 4

Beit Safafa is a Palestinian village in Jerusalem, located next to the Israeli settlement of Gilo. Gilo was constructed in 1971 on lands belonging to Beit Safafa and the neighbouring Palestinian village of Beit Jala. It is now one of the largest Israeli settlements in the West Bank.

In 1949, Beit Safafa was divided by the Armistice Line, which is now the Green Line between Israel and the occupied West Bank. Then, after the war of 1967, Israel unilaterally annexed the southern two-thirds of the village, which had been under Jordanian control since the end of the '48 war.

Today, Beit Safafa is home to nearly 10,000 Palestinians – some are originally from the village, others re-settled there from Jaffa, Nazareth, Haifa and other cities inside what is now Israel.

The village is currently under threat from an extension to the Begin highway, which the Israeli authorities have approved, and which will run straight through the village, splitting it in two. The road is part of a mission to consolidate 'Greater Jerusalem', and will link the large illegal Israeli settlement block of Gush Etzion with West Jerusalem, even though it is already serviced by fast settler bypass roads. We were told that once it has been completed, settlers will be able to travel directly to Tel Aviv without stopping at a single traffic light.

STATISTICS:

2.2m

cubic metres of raw sewage flows from illegal settlements in the West Bank into waterways or cesspits

176

percent spike in settlement starts during the first quarter of 2013 compared with same period last year

Ala' lives in a house that lies within metres of the highway. He told us that plans for the road had been presented in 1990. However, the scale of the enterprise and the fact that the residents of Beit Safafa wouldn't have access to the highway wasn't made clear, so they did not object at the time. Now they have been told it is too late to object to the road currently under construction, on the grounds that they did not do so in 1990.

The road, which runs as two-lanes until it reaches Beit Safafa, will stretch to six lanes wide, separating residents from the mosque, bakeries, hospitals and schools that are part of their daily lives. In order to cross the multi-lane highway, they will have to use overpasses, underpasses or make long detours to get from one side of the village to the other.

At the end of June, the Supreme Court ordered the Israeli government to resolve the dispute, but stopped short of ordering the government to cease construction.

In a wry act of resistance, Ala' has set up a pulley system between his home and that of his cousin across the way. When construction is completed, he jokes, they will be able to pass a lemon across the multi-lane highway if they run out of supplies to make a salad.



Omar, in front of his house, al Walajeh village

AL WALAJEH

Al Walajeh is another of the many Palestinian villages that have been drastically affected by Israeli policies and practices in the occupied West Bank. It is located 8.5 km southwest of Jerusalem and 4 km northwest of Bethlehem, next to the Israeli settlement of Har Gilo, which was established in 1972. Like Beit Safafa, the village was split by the Armistice Line in 1949. Most of the village's 1,600 residents were rendered refugees, with those owning property west of the Armistice Line unable to return to their land. The majority of the villagers left for other countries, but around 100 residents moved to the West Bank side of the line.

In 1967, after Israel's occupation of the West Bank, a section of the village was designated part of Jerusalem. The borders of the new municipality ran straight through the village and, as a result, different laws applied to different parts of the village. Residents, however, remained unaware of the change in status until 1985, when bulldozers came to demolish homes that had been built without permits from the Jerusalem municipality. The land had been annexed to Jerusalem, but Jerusalem residency rights were not extended to the villagers. Caught in a catch-22 situation, they couldn't apply for building permits without Jerusalem identity cards.

Since 1985, a further 50 homes have been demolished and the village is now almost completely surrounded by the separation wall. When the wall has been completed, the village will have a single entry point controlled by an Israeli checkpoint. Residents will only have access to their land through agricultural gates on specified dates for ploughing and the Israeli authorities are planning to

declare 67% of their land a nature park. All the land in Al Walajeh was registered during Ottoman rule or by Jordan. However, Jordan stopped the registration process just before the 1967 war, when the papers were still in process. As a result it is very difficult for the villagers to prove ownership.

We met Omar, whose home will be on the 'wrong' side of the wall, separated from other residents of Al Walajeh. The Israeli authorities have built a private tunnel for Omar and his family to access the rest of the village. They are also planning to construct an electric fence around the house. "Al Walajeh has faced a lot of catastrophes," he says, "but we are facing the most difficult one now."

The head of Al Walajeh's village council says the wall is affecting all aspects of life in the village. Residents used to be able to access medical care at St John's Hospital and Victoria Hospital in East Jerusalem, but this is no longer possible. There is no health centre and there is only one school in the village. "It feels like we're living in a prison," he says, "I'm afraid children will be frustrated and lose their trust in the future."

"Al Walajeh has faced a lot of catastrophes, but we are facing the most difficult one now."

Omar, al Walajeh village

WADI FUQIN

The Palestinian village of Wadi Fuqin has a population of around 1,200. It is located 9.4 km south-west of Bethlehem, next to the separation wall, and is overlooked by the Israeli settlement of Beitar Illit. The village is also bordered by the 1949 Armistice Line. It once claimed 12,000 dunams of land, but lost all except 3,000 dunams (about 750 acres) to Israel in 1948. The Israeli settlement of Beitar Illit was established in 1985 on the land of three Palestinian villages, including Wadi Fuqin. It has since mushroomed into a large city with a population of over 35,000 settlers – primarily Haredi orthodox Jewish families.

Today, Wadi Fuqin is mainly dependent on agriculture for food and income. However, the village's life-sustaining agricultural land is being damaged by the run off of raw sewage and construction debris from Beitar Illit. The sewage, which runs through specially-built pipelines that open on to the slopes leading to the village, accumulates on the Palestinian farmlands, poisoning crops, contaminating the water table and posing a serious health threat to villagers. The villagers have complained several times through Palestinian co-ordination and aid agencies, but sewage continues to be dumped on their land.

Like many other Palestinian towns and villages in the West Bank, Beit Safafa, Al Walajeh and Wadi Fuqin have been exposed to continuous violations of international law. Their situation has been well documented over the years, and the injustices they face are quite simply breathtaking. Yet they are still waiting for international governments to take action.



Construction of the highway through Beit Safafa

DISAPPEARING PALESTINE





William Parry

A child from Gaza's Beach Camp



William Parry

Queues to get clean water, Gaza

CUT OFF GAZA UNDER BLOCKADE

Now in its seventh year, the blockade of Gaza has become one of the longest closures in history. It has left 1.7 million Palestinians confined within an area smaller than the Isle of Wight and has invaded every level and aspect of people's lives – domestic, communal and environmental, as well as social, psychological and physical.

Israel's 'easing' of the blockade in 2010 has not been enough to resuscitate Gaza's withered economy and families are still vulnerable to poverty and food insecurity. Gaza remains at the mercy of restrictions on medical supplies and equipment as well as power and water shortages. Poor housing conditions, overcrowded schools and a heavily polluted environment are also exacting a high price on people's mental and physical health.

Last year at an event organised by the UN in Gaza City to mark the 5th anniversary of the blockade, local journalists demanded to know what action would be taken to finally bring the blockade to an end – voicing their fear that they would be invited to a similar event this year. It is a sad indictment

of the international community's indifference that no significant steps have been taken since then to lift the blockade in its entirety.

The slow suffocation and mounting frustrations of a growing population are making it increasingly difficult for Gaza's overburdened health system to cope. As a UN report highlighted last year, unless remedial action is taken at once, Gaza's water, electricity and health problems are only set to get worse over the coming years. There is a very real fear that Gaza will no longer be 'liveable' by 2020.

The lack of clean drinking water is the greatest immediate concern – 90% of the water supplied through Gaza's aquifer, the sole water source, does not meet the World Health Organization's safety standards and is unfit for drinking. Decades of over-pumping and heavy pollution from salts and waste water have left the aquifer highly degraded and in danger of irreparable damage. Unless abstraction is stopped immediately, the aquifer could become unusable as early as 2016, with the damage irreversible by 2020.

The compound problem of Gaza's depleted aquifer, a lack of proper sewage treatment and the difficulties

"The cumulative impact of Israel's restrictions, some of which have been in place for more than a decade, has devastated the livelihoods of families in Gaza."

James W. Rawley,
United Nations
Humanitarian
Coordinator,
July 2013

of providing adequate service-delivery has produced a grave environmental situation with significant health risks.

International aid is helping to reduce many of the symptoms of this crisis, but a solution demands political will. The blockade is harming civilians and constitutes a collective punishment, a clear violation of Israel's obligations under international humanitarian law.

There is now a generation of children growing up in Gaza who have only ever experienced life under blockade. World leaders must act now to bring the necessary political, diplomatic and economic pressures to bear to ensure the blockade is lifted in its entirety and that the crossings into Gaza are opened in accordance with international law.

As the UN Humanitarian Coordinator, James W Rawley, stated in July, "The cumulative impact of Israel's restrictions, some of which have been in place for more than a decade, has devastated the livelihoods of families in Gaza." MAP calls on the UK government to use its influence to end the collective punishment of Gaza and to ensure that the blockade is lifted in its entirety.

PALESTINE 'QUESTION TIME'



Peter Kosminsky speaking at the Oxford session of MAP's Palestine 'Question Time'



Tim Llewellyn at the London session

MAP hosted two lively Palestine 'Question Time' events in June – in Oxford and London – each with a distinguished panel of experts who answered questions from the public about the obstacles Palestinians face living under occupation and as refugees, as well as broader issues about the conflict.

The Oxford event opened with the problem of presenting a balanced perspective of the conflict. Peter Kosminsky, director of 'The Promise', said the four-part series "set out primarily to tell the stories of the British soldiers who served in Mandatory Palestine" but also "to help the British public understand that we have a very real involvement and, arguably, responsibility for the problems that have dogged that area for decades".

Dr Karma Nabulsi, Fellow in Politics at St Edmund Hall, Oxford, lecturer at the University of Oxford and former PLO representative, reiterated that from a personal perspective: "As a Palestinian I know more about British history than the young British people I teach at university here and that's part of the tragedy. The injustice that Palestinians are living now is because of that history."

Avi Shlaim, Emeritus Fellow of St Antony's College and Emeritus Professor of International Relations at the University of Oxford, said "As a historian of the Palestine-Israel conflict, I have found that the truth very often lies on the Palestinian side."

Former BBC Middle East journalist, Tim Llewellyn, described the BBC's coverage of the conflict as "at best misleading and at worst totally dishonest and deliberate". He said: "Each story has a context and if you omit that, you're not telling the story correctly, and the BBC is very much failing in its duty to represent the asymmetrical nature of the Palestinian-Israeli conflict."

Both events included questions on the relevance of Palestine's successful statehood bid last November and whether the two-state solution is dead.

Jeremy Corbyn MP, speaking at the London event, lambasted Britain's stance on the statehood bid, saying: "The idea that you can put preconditions is absolutely absurd, arrogant and fundamentally very colonialist."

Author and former associate foreign editor at the Guardian, Victoria Brittain, said she could never see Israel abandoning Zionism, thus killing the prospect of a one-state solution, and felt that the Oslo Accords meant there would never be a viable Palestinian state either. Disappointingly, Palestine's successful statehood bid had so far failed to utilise the international legal mechanisms to justice now open to it, she added.

Dr Ahmed Younis, Deputy Head of the School of Rehabilitation Sciences, Faculty of Health and Social Care Sciences, St. George's University of London and Kingston University, echoed the other speakers: "Whether Palestine was recognised or not internationally, this does not make any change on the ground for

"As a Palestinian I know more about British history than the young British people I teach at university here and that's part of the tragedy. The injustice that Palestinians are living now is because of that history."

Dr Karma Nabulsi

Palestinians. They still have movement restrictions and can't get from A to B."

Dr Dina Matar, author and senior lecturer and director of the Centre for Media and Film Studies, SOAS, agreed: "The two-state solution is a non-starter at the moment because Israeli settlements and settlement growth, and the way Palestinians have been treated, make it difficult as a viable solution. It also entrenches this unequal relationship [and] suggests you have two parties that are equal participants in the process."

We hope to organise more regional events. Transcripts of the full Oxford and London discussions are available at www.map-uk.org/news/media-room/transcripts.aspx.

APPEAL UPDATE

ACCESSING HEALTHCARE IN THE WEST BANK

In April, we launched an appeal to get healthcare to the remotest parts of the West Bank. The maze of checkpoints, the separation wall, road closures and no-go areas for Palestinians all mean that just physically getting to a hospital or a clinic can become a gigantic feat.

Thanks to your support we have been able to run our mobile clinic so it reaches some of the remotest parts of the Jordan Valley. Since April it has provided 3,000 consultations. We have been able to provide over 250 harsh environment first aid kits to families who struggle to get to hospital in an emergency. We couldn't have done this without you. Thank you.



INTERVIEW

ROGER WATERS

Roger Waters is a founding member of the legendary band, Pink Floyd. For several years he has been an outspoken advocate for the rights of Palestinians. He spoke to MAP from his home in New York City.

MAP INTERVIEW

What triggered your interest in the situation facing Palestinians?

I visited in 2007, the year after I did a show at the peace village Neve Shalom, also known as Wahat as-Salam, in Israel. I was desperate to see more of the reality of what was going on in Palestine, and the UN guided me around East Jerusalem and Bethlehem, and through the West Bank, on the settler by-pass roads that we took past Nablus and towards Jenin. I couldn't have been more gob-smacked by just how horrific the reality was. I can't imagine being denied access to schools, hospitals, water or one's land. Israel is trying to deny Palestinians access to everything that makes life possible in the hope that they'll eventually be persuaded to go and live anywhere but there. But this is an indigenous people who have lived on the land for thousands of years. They have ownership rights over it and it is being stolen from them by Israel, brick by brick, square yard by square yard, olive tree by olive tree, and well by well, as the years tick by.

In your opinion, what enables this situation, 65 years after the Nakba, to continue?

Obviously, the more than \$3 billion that the US gives to Israel every year

in military aid, and the US's veto in the Security Council, where it blocks every single resolution that demands that the Israeli government adhere to generally accepted tenets of international law.

The fact that Blair is the representative of this nonsensical body called The Quartet is ludicrous. This is the man who invaded Iraq on spurious grounds, claiming hundreds of thousands of lives, and then lied about his involvement. He is absolutely not qualified to be a peace envoy. In any event The Quartet has done nothing over the past 11 years but connive with Israel's colonisation and annexation of Palestinian land.

Many people are talking about the demise of the two-state solution. Have you started composing a two-state requiem?

The more I listen to my friends, the more I agree that Israel's policies of colonisation and annexation have probably made the two-state solution no longer viable. The Israeli government has shown that it has absolutely no interest in a two state solution. They want a one-state solution: Israel occupying the whole of the territory and, as far as they're concerned, the fewer Palestinians there are on that land, the better. Americans pretend to believe in democracy, they pretend to believe that all people are created equal, and they pretend to

believe in the division of religion and state. If Americans actually believe those three things, then the answer [for Israel-Palestine] is a democratic, secular, one-state solution, where everybody is a citizen, equal under the law, with religious freedom for all. Governments might do well to study Nelson Mandela's ideas on reconciliation and forgiveness, if successive generations of Israelis and Palestinians are to avoid having to live under the appalling conditions of enmity and brutality that pertain today.

You sprayed 'We don't need no thought control' on the separation wall in 2006. That can be read on several levels. How did you mean it?

The pro-Israel lobby in the US controls not just Congress but the Executive branch as well. If a politician, Republican or Democrat, says one word against Israel around Congress or in Washington, that is the end of their political career. This is not democracy and it is entirely counterproductive to the welfare and interests of American citizens.

The full interview is available on MAP's website.

www.map-uk.org

"Americans pretend to believe in democracy, they tend to believe that all people are created equal, and they pretend to believe in the division of religion and state. If Americans actually believe those three things, then the answer is a democratic, one-state solution, where everybody is a citizen, based on Mandela's ideas of reconciliation and forgiveness."

Roger Waters

APPEAL UPDATE

MALNUTRITION IN GAZA

In June, launched an appeal to help feed the children of Gaza whose health has suffered because of the blockade. The blockade has totally crippled the economy of Gaza, pushing families into poverty. Many families are now in a situation where they simply cannot

afford to feed their children the balanced healthy diet they need. Thanks to the generous donations of MAP supporters we have been able to feed some of these children. We are working with their families to come up with a long-term solution to improve their child's nutrition. We have been able to help children like Ragad, a 4-month old girl who suffers from severe malnutrition and anaemia. Since she began getting treatment in May – in conjunction with

meal-planning support for her mother – Ragad's condition has shown a steady improvement, though she remains in a critical condition.



Ragad, 4-month old girl

OUR SUPPORTERS

Thank you!

MAP supporters have again been doing some wonderful things to raise money for Palestinians living under occupation and as refugees. We want to say a huge thank you to them. Here are just a few of the things our great supporters have been up to.

- **Tala** and her sister, **Tanya**, climbed Mount Kilimanjaro, raising nearly £4,000 for MAP



- **Paul Tucker** did a sponsored diet
- **Ruth Wharton** cycled a staggering 3,000 miles from southern Spain to her home in York
- **Greg Dixon** organised a gig with singer/songwriter, David Rovics, in Cardiff to raise money for MAP
- **Stephanie Webb** took part in the Great North Swim
- **David Sharland** cycled from London to Paris
- **Geraldine** has been making and selling jewellery on e-bay for MAP
- Once again, we have had lots of runners over the last few months. **Milana Shapira** joined 40,000 in Paris in April to run the marathon, raising over £900 for MAP. **Jasmine Lail** completed the Reading half marathon, **Maya Solway** did the East London Half Marathon and **Bitten Bridges** finished the Copenhagen Marathon
- **Pamela Parson** raised over £200 by fasting for one day
- **Shagufta Nasreen** raised money at her children's primary school with a bake sale
- **Elspeth Sherwen** set herself a swimming challenge and raised over £600
- Finally, a massive thank you to all of the volunteers who have helped us at our events and in our office, and to all of our supporters who hold collections and promote MAP

MY FUNDRAISER

PEDAL FOR PALESTINE



Ruth Wharton

By Sophie Howard

I met Ruth Wharton in a cafe a couple of months ago. This was at the suggestion of her daughter, a friend of mine, who claimed that her mother was about to do something 'very interesting' which I would no doubt want to write about. As you can see, she was right.

Ruth, an artist aged 62, explained to me that she was about to embark on 'a very long bike ride'. 'Very long' seems something of an understatement; her 3,022 kilometre journey from Andalucía in the southern-most tip of Spain to York took six weeks. She did this alone, sleeping most of her nights in a small tent and not stopping long to enjoy the view.

Ruth's target was to raise £3000, around £1 for every mile she cycled, raising funds for MAP, which for the past 30 years has worked to provide emergency and primary medical aid to people affected by the war-torn region's ongoing conflict.

The charity aims to protect and aid those worst affected by occupation and displacement, with a particular emphasis on the region's children, whom it seems are bearing the brunt of this crisis. The statistics are sobering – nearly half of Palestinian children are refugees, many are denied the right to a basic education, a consistently safe water supply and adequate health care.

I was shocked by the literature, perhaps because the situation is under reported. With every fresh local and national disaster, continuing crises

such as this are pushed further into the background. "We assume the problem has gone away because we don't hear about it, but the situation is ongoing," Ruth explained.

MAP's work includes providing a mobile medical clinic and specialist burns units for civilians injured in the conflict, primary care for people suffering from chronic malnutrition and related illnesses, and therapy sessions as part of psychological intervention programmes. The work they do reaps very real rewards for those affected, reducing the number of preventable deaths by getting much-needed care to those in need.

Fundraisers like Ruth are crucial for MAP to continue its work. There are plenty of ways to help by making donations, starting your own fundraising project or volunteering, both here in the UK and in the Middle East.

It's impossible not to admire Ruth. She has taken on such a real and difficult challenge to help a cause she really believes in. Her passion is clear to see. "The more I read about it, the more I realise how dire the situation is," she stated. "It makes me feel very insignificant, but more determined than ever to do this trip."

You can donate to Ruth's bike ride at www.justgiving.com/pedal4palestine

Sophie Howard is a writer based in York. You can find out more about her work at www.wordsbysophie.co.uk.

YOUR DONATION:

£10

buys 15 meals for under-nourished children in Gaza

£50

provides a family in Gaza with a blanket and mattress if displaced during conflict

£160

pays a nurse's salary for a week so that they can care for Palestinians who are sick



MAP NEWS

■ PARLIAMENTARY DELEGATION

In April, MAP accompanied a cross-party delegation, organised by the Council for Arab British Understanding, to the West Bank. The delegation included Karen Buck MP, Jake Berry MP, Cathy Jamieson MP and Mark Pawsey MP. During their visit, the delegation spent the morning accompanying Medical Aid for Palestinians' mobile clinic on a trip to a Bedouin encampment in the Jordan Valley and saw firsthand some of the key obstacles to health for Palestinians living in isolated areas and under occupation.



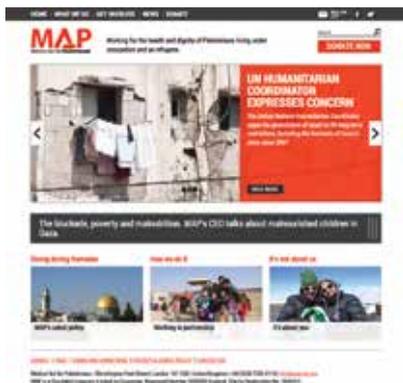
Abu Omar, Head of Al Walajah village council, with Karen Buck MP, Cathy Jamieson MP, Jake Berry MP and Mark Pawsey MP

■ ROUNDTABLE EVENT

In association with the New Statesman, MAP held a round-table discussion with leading commentators in the House of Commons on healthcare in occupied Palestine. The discussion explored a number of health and social care challenges, including a lack of safe water and sanitation, limited medical supplies and uncertain access to facilities and services. A supplement reporting on the round-table can be downloaded from www.newstatesman.com/supplements

■ MAP'S NEW WEBSITE

We are delighted to have launched our new website, featuring a broad array of content – from information on how to get more involved, to upcoming events and the very latest news from the field. Check it out at: www.map-uk.org



■ JOHN MCCARTHY IN CONVERSATION



Writer and broadcaster, John McCarthy CBE, took part in an informal event kindly hosted by a key MAP supporter on 27 June. Aimee Shalan, MAP's Director of Advocacy and Communications, talked with John about his experiences in the Middle East, based on his book, 'You Can't Hide the Sun: A Journey through Palestine'.

■ MAP TALK: THE RIGHT TO HEALTHCARE

On 11 June, Aimee Shalan, MAP's Director of Advocacy and Communications, gave a talk convened by the Newcastle Palestinian Solidarity Campaign and Newcastle Amnesty, on the health needs of Palestinians living under occupation and as refugees.

DIARY DATES

■ MAP AT THE LIBERAL DEMOCRATS PARTY CONFERENCE IN ASSOCIATION WITH THE NEW STATESMAN

Monday 16 September, 13.00-14.00
Glasgow Science Centre, Glasgow

Panel discussion, 'Can aid be effective without advocacy?' Speakers will include Rt. Hon Sir Menzies Campbell MP.

For more information email info@map-uk.org

■ MAP AT THE LABOUR PARTY CONFERENCE IN ASSOCIATION WITH THE NEW STATESMAN

Monday 23 September, 17.30-19.00
Wordsworth Room, Thistle Hotel, Brighton

Panel discussion, 'Can aid be effective without advocacy?' Speakers will include Cathy Jamieson MP, Shadow Economic Secretary to the Treasury.

For more information email info@map-uk.org

■ MAP AT THE CONSERVATIVE PARTY CONFERENCE IN ASSOCIATION WITH THE NEW STATESMAN

Monday 30 October, 17.30-19.00
Banqueting Room, Manchester Town Hall, Manchester

Panel discussion, 'Can aid be effective without advocacy?' Speakers will include Crispin Blunt MP and Mark Pawsey MP.

For more information email info@map-uk.org

■ MAP FILM SCREENED IN NEWCASTLE

MAP's film, 'The Silent War: Israel's blockade of Gaza', was screened by Medact's local Tyneside branch on 9 May. The film shows the effects of the Israeli embargo and bombings on the local population, and the screening was followed by a talk from a Palestinian who lived through the war on Gaza in 2009 and is currently studying in Britain.

■ PARLIAMENTARY RECEPTION

A parliamentary reception hosted by Jeremy Corbyn MP took place on 8 May at Westminster. Dr Majed Nassar (Director of Programmes in occupied Palestine/Israel) and Marta Petagna (Director of Programmes in Lebanon) spoke about MAP's work and partners in the field.

Donate online at

www.map-uk.org

Or call today on

020 7226 4114



Follow MAP on Twitter @MedicalAidPal and Facebook www.facebook.com/MedicalAidforPalestinians

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