

## **40 YEARS AND 18,000 DEMOLISHED HOMES ARE ENOUGH!**

### **Announcing ICAHD's Campaign to Rebuild Every Palestinian Home Demolished Over the Next Year**

Dear Friends,

As we enter the 40<sup>th</sup> year of Israeli Occupation, a note of urgency has entered into our struggle to end it and, with that, to press on to a just peace between Palestinians and Israelis. ICAHD has long warned that Israel's unilateral expansionist policies spell the doom of the two-state solution. Given, however, the unwillingness of Israelis, the international community and, it must be said, most of the Palestinian public to entertain an alternative solution, we are lending our unqualified support, on this 40<sup>th</sup> year, to the global campaign to end the Occupation once and for all, totally and immediately. We fully join the worldwide chorus of voices in declaring: ENOUGH!

#### **The Campaign to Rebuild All Palestinian Homes Demolished Over the Next Year**

As part of its contribution to the global campaign against the Occupation, ICAHD is announcing the launch of a campaign, in partnership with ICAHD-USA and ICAHD-UK, to rebuild each and every Palestinian home demolished by Israel in the Occupied Territories in the coming year – about 300 homes, *batei sumud*, “houses of steadfastness” against policies of transfer and dispossession. With funding coming mainly from Jewish donors appalled by the Israeli government's house demolition policy, ICAHD is able to mount this major challenge to the legality, morality and even self-interest of the monstrosity that is the Israeli Occupation. This represents a timely and appropriate intensification of ICAHD's ten year struggle against the Occupation and its most cruel expression, the demolition of Palestinian homes – 18,000 since 1967.

#### **Returning to the Place Where the Occupation Began**

In fact, the very first act of the Israeli Occupation in 1967 was home demolitions. On June 11<sup>th</sup>, as the Six Day War was drawing to its close, more than 135 Palestinian families in the historic Muslim Mughrabi Quarter of Jerusalem's Old City – *the vast majority refugees from 1948* – were roused from their beds in the dead of night to watch in horror as Israeli bulldozers summarily destroyed their homes and the quarter's two mosques, all in order to create an open plaza in front of the Western (Wailing) Wall. It was an operation that had nothing to do with either the war or security, but to create the first of thousands of “facts on the ground” intended to make Israel's control of the Occupied Territories permanent. In the wanton and illegal razing of the Mughrabi Quarter, Hajja Rasmia Tabaki, an elderly Palestinian woman, was killed when her home was demolished on top of her. She became the Occupation's first victim.

This June 11<sup>th</sup>, ICAHD will return to this site where the Occupation began in order to announce its rebuilding campaign. Joining with the remnants of the Mughrabi Quarter's residents who remained scattered throughout the Old City, we will together remember the

tragic events of that night 40 years ago, an important gesture of Israelis taking responsibility for their government's actions. We will also sign a petition calling on the UN to implement Security Council Resolution 252, adopted in the wake of the quarter's demolition (termed "urban improvement" by Israel's UN Ambassador), which "Urgently calls upon Israel to rescind all such measures already taken and to desist forthwith from taking any further action which tends to change the status of Jerusalem." We will then walk from the Mughrabi Quarter to the site of a demolished home in the village of Silwan, where we will commence our building campaign.

### **We Need Your Help!**

Our campaign will succeed only if we can mobilize world public opinion. We need groups and individuals throughout the world to place ads in their local newspapers, even if it is in local religious or community publications. This can be done before or after June 11.

If you are willing to join our campaign, attached are two versions of the ICAHD ad that you are welcome to use – and translate if necessary. The shorter one is appropriate for smaller ads, the longer one for full-page ads or leaflets. We are also attaching a photo that may be used with the text. **Anyone wishing more information about ICAHD's work or ad, please contact ICAHD at <[info@icahd.org](mailto:info@icahd.org)> or call +9722-624-5560.**

ICAHD-USA is currently producing an ad for the New York Times which will be ready in the next week. If you would like to have a copy or would like more information regarding the campaign in the USA, please contact ICAHD-USA at <[outreach@icahdusa.org](mailto:outreach@icahdusa.org)>, or call 919-277-0632. ICAHD-UK is also producing an ad for the British paper The Guardian. For further information contact ICAHD-UK at <[info@icahduk.org](mailto:info@icahduk.org)> or call 020 7383 3893.

And, of course, we always need financial support, especially for ads and other materials necessary for keeping our campaign in the public eye as it develops.

ICAHD will launch the campaign with help from you, our supporters in Israel and abroad. But monitoring its progress is equally important. This opposition to Israeli government policy will not go unanswered. We will only succeed in challenging the Occupation if public attention is focused on our nonviolent resistance and, at every turn, our supporters throughout the world mobilize public opinion and their governments. Together we can cause the unjust structure of Occupation to collapse, thereby releasing the Israeli and Palestinian peoples to find a just and sustainable resolution to their more than century-old conflict – and the world as a whole to move on to address the grievances of the wider Middle East, thus bringing a measure of hope, stability and reconciliation.

In Solidarity,

Jeff Halper (ICAHD Coordinator) and Lucia Pizarro (International Coordinator)