

קואליציית נשים לשלום تحالف النساء للسلام

Coalition of women for Peace



Dec 31, 2007

Dear Susan Sarandon,

The Coalition of Women for Peace is a coalition of 10 different women's peace organizations in Israel and independent Jewish and Palestinian women activists, working relentlessly to end the occupation and ensure peace, safety and socio-economic equality for all residents of Israel and the region.

We follow with admiration your engagement in struggles for human rights. We are familiar with your committed activism for immigrants' rights, for the recognition and visibility of LGBT communities, and your inspiringly outspoken resistance to the war in Iraq.

It is extremely difficult to resist a war waged in one's name, and we admire your courage and your tenacity. As you protested the war in Iraq, we endorsed this protest in the streets of Tel Aviv. As we demonstrated against the war in Lebanon, peace activists in U.S.A joined us in demanding a peaceful, violence-free life for the people of Middle East. We are proud to be a part of the same global movement for peace and justice. Our support and solidarity across national borders empowers us and strengthens our voice for peace, in Israel/Palestine and the USA alike.

We are writing to you following the appeal of USA-based peace organizations to withdraw from supporting Lev Leviev's businesses due to his direct involvement in the construction of Israeli settlements in the occupied West Bank, in violation of international law. Your assistant Mr. Mark Edlitz responded in a December 7 email to Adalah-NY that, *"We received the information you sent. Ms. Sarandon will do her own exploration on this topic before drawing any conclusions."*

Ms. Sarandon, we would like to take the liberty of extending our support and encouragement to you in this exploration.

In our work as Israeli activists, we have taken upon ourselves to investigate the corporate - commercial interests invested in maintaining the occupation. Lev Leviev is the co-owner of Leader Management and Development, formerly Leader Company. This company has built the illegal settlement Zufin on the lands of the Palestinian village Ja'ayous. Another company in his control, Danya Cebus, has been constructing housing projects in various West Bank Israeli settlements. One such project is in Har Homa, the Israeli settlement whose further extension was recently blocked by Condoleezza Rice and described by her as "unhelpful to the peace process".

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Another construction project is in the neighborhood Matityahu East of the settlement Modi'in Illit, which appropriates lands from the neighboring Palestinian village Bil'in.

We would like to draw your attention to the fact that in both Bil'in and Jayyous, these new Israeli housing developments have extended the infamous Israeli Separation Wall up to the Palestinian villages, thus separating the villagers from their fields and livelihood. Even the Israeli High Court of Justice has ruled in favor of moving the route of the Wall near Bil'in.

We trust that you are aware of the illegality of all those settlements on occupied land by international law. Moreover, these housing developments are specifically designed to prevent the contiguity of Palestinian territory (as in Har Homa) and to push Palestinian residents into small enclaves (as in Mod'in Illit and Zufin).

We are inspired by the courage of the people of Ja'ayous and Bil'in who have led a nonviolent struggle against this construction for the last several years, inviting Israelis and internationals to join them, and suffering through extensive punishments from the Israeli army. As Israelis who work against the occupation, we admire their persistent vision of a just peace for us all.

Developers and investors who take part in maintaining the occupation and the settlement industry must be made publicly accountable for their actions. We ask you to join us in publicly disavowing Lev Leviev's businesses until he withdraws his involvement in any such projects.

In solidarity,

Dalit Baum and Inna Michaeli
On behalf of the Coalition of Women for Peace

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