UK Friends of the Bereaved Families Forum (FBFF)

Newsletter 33 August 2013

ISRAELI PALESTINIAN BEREAVED FAMILIES FOR PEACE

Dear Friends,

We are heartened that once again peace between Palestinians and Israelis is on the agenda. At this sensitive and important time the work of the forum is more important than ever. The more Israelis and Palestinians believe that peace and reconciliation is not only desirable but perfectly possible, the more likely it is to happen.

The renewed political activity has increased media interest in the forum's work. See our links corner on page 3 for information about an article in the *Guardian,* a photo essay in the *New York Times,* a Sky TV interview with our Hon. Secretary, Chani Smith, and a podcast from BICOM.

A fundraising concert featuring Israeli and Palestinian musicians united for peace takes place in west London on International Peace Day – Saturday 21st September. We are planning a week of activities to mark the visit of forum members Bassam Aramin and Robi Damelin, in November. Please join us if you can for our fundraising dinner on Sunday 10th November.

Meanwhile, enjoy the rest of the summer.

Diane Taylor

TOP CHEF TO CATER FOR FBFF FUNDRAISING DINNER IN NOVEMBER

A primary focus of the work of the UK Friends of the Bereaved Families Forum is fundraising to support the important work on the ground carried out by Israelis and Palestinians who have been bereaved by the conflict.

We hope that our fundraising dinner, on Sunday 10th November at the Liberal Jewish Synagogue in St John's Wood, will raise significant funds to support this work.

We are thrilled that top chef, Mark Jankel, joint founder of Street Kitchen, with his cooking partner, Jun Tanaka, has agreed to cater the event for us.

Mark is renowned for cooking with the freshest, locally sourced, seasonal ingredients.

As chef at the Notting Hill Brasserie he was awarded three rosettes by the AA. *The Observer* newspaper described him as 'one of those unsung heroes. He always gets good reviews but doesn't hog the limelight.'

One reviewer described his food as 'miles above the usual offerings' while another said his cooking 'met if not surpassed all my rather high expectations.'

Mark will be creating a menu of Palestinian and Israeli-themed food for our November dinner.

We are looking forward to a wonderful evening with marvellous company, magnificent food and beautiful music. Forum members Bassam Aramin and Robi Damelin will be our special

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ISRAELI AND PALESTINIAN MUSICIANS UNITE FOR PEACE IN THE MIDDLE EAST

Tally Koren (left) and Nizar Al-Issa will combine forces to sing for peace on 21st September

Israeli singer-songwriter Tally Koren and Palestinian singer Nizar Al-Issa are uniting in west London for an evening of music for peace in the Middle East.

It is fitting that the event takes place on the International Day of Peace – Saturday 21st September. The event, organised by the Peace Federation UK, is a fundraiser for the Parents Circle Families Forum – Palestinians and Israelis bereaved by the conflict who work together for peace and reconciliation.

Initiatives such as this one are particularly important at a time when moves towards peace have been rekindled.

Tally's latest single – Hallelujah: 72 Names – has been translated into Arabic specially for this event and will be sung in Hebrew, Arabic and English.

> ***'I believe in peace and in the humanity of both sides.'***

A new interpretation of the classic hymn, Jerusalem, will be sung by Israelis and Palestinians together, looking to a new future for this historic city, that can be enjoyed by Israelis and Palestinians.

Tally Koren said: 'I believe strongly that music is a common language that can bridge the divide and lead the way to a better future for us all.'

Nizar Al-Issa said: 'I am taking part in this concert because I believe in peace and in the humanity of both sides.'

The event takes place at St Peter's Church on Kensington Park Road, London W11. Doors open at 7.30pm and the performance starts at 8pm. Tickets cost £13.00 from *http://musicforpeaceinthemiddleeast.eventbrite.co.uk* or £15.00 at the door.

Nizar Al-Issa is a singer with extraordinary range and control as well as a virtuoso on the oud (a cousin of the lute). He draws on traditional Middle Eastern music but is not afraid to upset the purists by mixing things up a little – a habit he puts down to his refugee background.

Tally Koren is a BBC Radio 2 playlist artist and the Fringe Award Winner for best singer/songwriter. Her music has been played by Chris Evans, Graham Norton, Janice Long and Steve Wright, the Aled Jones Good Morning Sunday Show and was featured on the Virgin Media TV playlist and 100 other UK radio stations.

For further information please contact Robin Marsh on 07956 210768.

PLANS FOR NOVEMBER DINNER

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guests and we are hoping that one of our patrons, actress Juliet Stevenson, will also be attending.

There's still time to book your tickets. Tickets cost £100 per person. There will be a fundraising appeal. Please email *info@familiesforum.co.uk* for more details.

PALESTINIAN AND ISRAELI FLAGS FLY AT HISTORIC KNESSET MEETING

A historic meeting took place in Jerusalem recently, organised by the peace NGO, OneVoice Israel.

For the first time ever, Members of the Knesset (MKs) met with Palestinian officials in the Israeli parliament in Jerusalem. Nearly one-third of the Knesset – 35 MKs – took part, along with several prominent Palestinian businessmen, politicians, and experts from academia, including members of the Palestinian Legislative Council (PLC) and PLO members of the Civil Dialogue Committee. The Israeli and Palestinian flags were proudly displayed together on stage.

DIRECT NEGOTIATION

The event, organised by OneVoice in partnership with the Knesset's Caucus for Ending the Israeli-Arab Conflict and the Negev Institute, is part of OneVoice Israel's efforts to support a sustained and successful direct negotiation process during the coming months.

The Palestinian party met with Caucus Chair MK Hilik Bar, Israeli opposition chair MK Shelly Yechimovich, and MKs Yaakov Perry, Dr Ronen Hoffman, Zehava Galon, Isawi Fri, Benjamin Ben-Eliezer, Meir Sheetrit, Afou Agbaria, Muhammad Baraka, Hana Sweid, Miki Rosenthal, and many others. Ministers Yael German and Amir Peretz, and Deputy Minister Mickey Levy also participated.

OneVoice Palestine's youth leaders in the West Bank are working in parallel to support the renewed negotiations. In Nablus, Palestinian families were brought together with OneVoice activists to discuss the negotiations and were encouraged to lend support to Palestinian leadership in their efforts to end the occupation; while the focus in Bethlehem was on a demand for a freeze on settlement activities.

The audiences were divided on the negotiations, but all agreed that negotiations should be based on the 1967 borders and UN resolutions within a limited time frame.

QUIZ EACH OTHER

Several 'Ramadan Nights roundtables' have been taking place across the West Bank giving Palestinians an opportunity to break their fasts with local leaders and quiz each other on the state of the peace process and what it means for a future independent state.

◆ *http://tinyurl.com/l4vljua*

LINKS CORNER

A moving photo exhibition portraying members of the Bereaved Families Forum in the New York Times:

http://tinyurl.com/pojwszu

A Sky News report including the Hon. Secretary of FBFF, Dr Chani Smith:

http://tinyurl.com/lzqhwmx

A feature in *The Guardian* about forum members Rami Elhanan and Bassam Aramin:

http://tinyurl.com/kmr9q8o

A BICOM podcast featuring forum members Robi Damelin and Bassam Aramin:

www.bicom.org.uk/podcast/15812/

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ISRAELI PALESTINIAN
BEREAVED FAMILIES FOR PEACE

UK Friends of the Bereaved Families Forum (FBFF)

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