

Press Release

Supreme Court clears police obstruction of Tel Aviv anti-war procession

Thousands of Jews and Arabs to take part in Tel Aviv march

Protest against the Gaza War

"Stop the killing! Stop the siege!"

Saturday night, January 3, 2009 at 6.30 pm

The march will set out from Tel Aviv's Rabin Square (at the corner of Frishman St. and Chen .Boulevard) and will culminate at the Tel Aviv Cinemateque

Following an urgent proceeding at the Supreme Court on Friday morning, the way was cleared to holding an mass anti-war march in Tel-Aviv, with judges instructing the police to grant a permit to the demonstration and not to interfere with the political message expressed in it. Specifically, the police had to give up its demand that no Palestinian flags be raised during the procession, should some of the participants wish to do so. There is no law forbidding the raising of Palestinian flags in Israel, and indeed on some occasions such flags were displayed during official ceremonies at the Prime Minister's Residence in Jerusalem. The judges ruled that the fact that raising Palestinian flags might anger some people is no reason to forbid flying them; rather, the police is obliged to protect the demonstrators' freedom of speech and prevent any act of violence against them.

Thousands of demonstrators, among them Jewish and Arab Knesset Members and public figures, are expected to take part in the march and call for a cease-fire, for the sake of the inhabitants on both sides of the border, and for immediate removal of the Gaza siege. **Marcel Abarjil, a peace activist from Ashdod whose home is within range of the missiles shot from the Gaza Strip, is also joining the demonstration and will address the rally at its end, so as to help disprove the assertion made in the media that all inhabitants of southern Israel are in support of the war and the bombing of Gaza.** There will also be read out a special message from Dr. Eyad Sarraj, Palestinian peace activist and head of the Gaza Community Mental Health Programme.

We are going out on the streets in these dark days in order to reiterate together: Jews and Arabs refuse to be enemies! We demand ceasefire and the immediate removal of the Gaza siege. Hundreds were killed and thousands wounded in Gaza, and the bombings continue to sow fear and destruction. The siege on Gaza continues – a lack of vital goods, of medicines, and of fuel harms gravely all inhabitants of the Strip. The government of Israel and the heads of the army threaten to invade the Strip and perpetrate even more destruction, while ignoring all the calls for a cease-fire.

We call upon all peace-seekers in Israel to join us for a mass demonstration against the war!

The coalition of anti-war groups and organizations:

Ahoti, Alternative Information Center (AIC), Anarchists against the Fence, Balad, Banki, Bat Shalom, Coalition of Women for Peace, Combatants for Peace, Committee Against House Demolitions (ICAHAD), Da'am – Workers' Party, Gush Shalom, Hadash, Hithabrut – Tarabut, Indymedia, Israeli Communist Party (Maki), New Profile, Public Committee Against Torture (PCATI), Ra'am – Ta'al, Sadaka-Re'ut, Social TV, Student Coalition – Tel Aviv University, Ta'ayush, Tandit (Democratic Women), The Campus is Not Silent, The Shministim (Highschool Seniors') Letter, Women in Black, Yesh Gvul, Zochrot,

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