



American-Arab Anti-Discrimination Committee
1732 Wisconsin Ave., NW | Washington, DC 20007 | www.adc.org
Tel: 202-244-2990 | Fax: 202-244-7968 | Email: adc@adc.org

Board of Directors

Safa Rifka, MD, Chair
George Gorayeb, Treasurer
Ashley Mammo, Esq., Secretary
Asli U. Bali, Esq.
Cheryl J. Faris, Esq.
Thomas Tony George
Assad Jebara
Albert Mokhiber, Esq.
Merrie Najimy
Dick Shadyac, Esq.
Jamilah Shami
Naseem Tuffaha

Hon. Mary Rose Oakar, President
Kareem Shora, Esq., National
Executive Director
Hon. James Abourezk, Esq.,
Founder

Advisory Committee

Assad Jebara, Chairman

Honorary Co-Chairs

HE Clovis Maksoud, PhD
Musa Y. Nasir, MD
Her Majesty Queen Noor
The Most. Rev. Metropolitan PHILIP
Ahmad Sbaiti, PhD

Regional Co-Chairs

Hani Findakly, PhD
Y.M. Basha, MD
Sam Hawatmeh, MD
Mohannad Malas

Advisory Committee Members

Fakhri Al-Barzinji
Mokhless Al-Hariri, PhD
Khalid Ataya, MD
Tawfiq Barqawi
Rafic Bizri
Don Bustany
Marilyn Harris Dabaghi
Leila Deeb
Hassan Essayli
Haifa Fakhouri, PhD
Joseph Haiek
Badr Jebara
Elizabeth Jebara
Casey Kasem
Samer Khanachet, PhD
Layla Khouri
Radwan Khoury, PhD
Wael Khoury, MD
Adel B. Korkor, MD
Adnan E. Mourany, MD
Farah Munayyer
Wafa Nasr
Denyse Sabagh, Esq.
Anthony Saidy, MD
Harold Samhat
Anthony Shaker
Jack Shaheen, PhD
Yasir A. Shallal
Norman Tanber
Omar Turbi

In Memoriam

Hala Salaam Maksoud, PhD
(1943-2002)
Alex Odeh
(1944-1985)

March 20, 2008

The Honorable Condoleezza Rice
Secretary of State
U.S. Department of State
2201 C Street NW
Washington, DC 20520

Dear Secretary Rice:

The American-Arab Anti-Discrimination (ADC) is deeply concerned about the ongoing pattern of discriminatory practice engaged by the State of Israel against U.S. citizens of mainly Palestinian or Arab descent by denying them entry or re-entry into Israel and the Occupied Palestinian Territories (OPT). The most recent incident took place about a week ago, when two U.S. citizens of Palestinian descent, a brother and a sister from Chicago, were denied entry.

As you know, since October 2006, ADC has compiled forms of denied entries of U.S. citizens into Israel and the OPT. The forms can be found online by accessing ADC's website through the following link: <http://www.adc.org/index.php?id=2980>. ADC collected information on this troubling practice from first hand accounts in an effort to document and demonstrate the discriminatory nature of the practice.

The reasons of denial provided to these first hand accounts by the Israeli authorities and immigration officers at the airport and border were arbitrary and capricious on their face, and clearly indicated that no clear policy or rule is in place as when to deny someone entry into Israel and the OPT. Some U.S. citizens were not even provided with a reason as to why they were denied entry.

Below is a sample of responses given by the Israeli immigration officers to these US citizens. This was compiled from the 41 examples attached to this letter:

- 1- Not having an Palestinian ID
- 2- Having a Palestinian ID—in contrast to the first reason
- 3- Affiliation with activist groups
- 4- The need of a permit to enter
- 5- For 'security' purposes
- 6- Visiting Israel too often
- 7- The need of a visa to enter Israel
- 8- A new law taking effect and thus allegedly resulting in a denial of entry
- 9- The need of a work permit
- 10- One individual was denied entry because one of his parents had overstayed their visa in Israel
- 11- No tourism is allowed
- 12- Can not keep renewing visa
- 13- Have to use the Allenby Bridge instead.

This ongoing discriminatory practice has affected two groups of individuals. The first group includes U.S. citizens -either short or long term visitors wishing to visit family or conduct business- who do not hold an Israeli-issued Palestinian ID entry into or residence in the OPT. The second group comprises of individuals who have applied for family unification, as per Israeli-defined regulations, and have been unable to gain permanent residency. The majority of individuals composing the latter group are Palestinian ID holders petitioning for their spouse or children to become residents in the West Bank or Gaza.

Madame Secretary, you have personally raised and addressed that issue in front of Palestinian-



American-Arab Anti-Discrimination Committee
1732 Wisconsin Ave., NW | Washington, DC 20007 | www.adc.org
Tel: 202-244-2990 | Fax: 202-244-7968 | Email: adc@adc.org

Americans on October 11 2006, during the American Task Force on Palestine Inaugural Gala, where you said: “I realize that the continuing problems of security are [...] a great challenge for [...] many of you who travel there often, who work for greater tolerance and understanding, and who invest your time, and your knowledge, and indeed your capital in the Palestinian territories. People like you have a vital role to play in the Middle East, and I will continue to do everything in my power to support your good work, and to ensure that *all American travelers receive fair and equal treatment.*” <http://www.state.gov/secretary/rm/2006/73895.htm>.

ADC then welcomed your statement, and is appreciative of the work that has since been done by the State Department to solve the matter. Unfortunately, the realities on the ground have not changed, and the pattern of denying U.S. Citizens of Palestinian or Arab descent is still a recurring one. Furthermore, this denial hinders the positive elements Palestinians-Americans would bring to the OPT, such as their knowledge and capital, as highlighted in your statement.

Our attorneys have vetted through the forms we have thus far received. Attached please find 41 examples of US Citizens who have contacted ADC and provided their information seeking the support and aid of the State Department. ADC looks forward to finding a lasting solution to this practice in order for all U.S. citizens to receive fair and equal treatment. Please accept our sincere thanks for your time and consideration to this issue.

Sincerely,

Kareem Shora, JD, LL.M.
National Executive Director

Attachment: Israel Entry Denial Cases (122 pages)

Cc: Janice Jacobs
Acting Assistant Secretary
Bureau of Consular Affairs
U.S. Department of State

C. David Welch
Assistant Secretary
Bureau of Near Eastern Affairs
U.S. Department of State

Michele T. Bond
Deputy Assistant Secretary
Office of Overseas Citizens Services
U.S. Department of State

Michelle Bernier-Toth
Managing Director
Office of Overseas Citizens Services
U.S. Department of State

Thomas H. Goldberger
Director
Office of Israel and Palestinian Affairs
Bureau of Near Eastern Affairs
U.S. Department of State