



The 6th Bil'in Annual Conference on Popular Resistance

Program and Information Packet

In memory of Vittorio Arrigoni

NONVIOLENCE - CREATIVITY - JOINT STRUGGLE

WE REFUSE TO DIE IN SILENCE

This year, only days before the 6th Annual Bil'in Conference I write in deep sorrow over the loss of one of our own again. The loss of Vittorio Arrigoni reminds me of the loss of Bassem (Pheel) two years ago, just a few days before the 4th Conference in 2009. As I am now holding the last preparations for this year, I read through what I wrote about Bassem in April 2009.

While remembering Bassem I am hearing stories about Vittorio, and in many of the words I wrote about Bassem I see Vittorio, too. Bassem was one of the main characters in the struggle in Bil'in, just as Vittorio has been one of the outstanding international solidarity activists in the Palestinian struggle. Vittorio did not only spend the last decade of his life working for justice and freedom for the Palestinian people; he was also a vital part of the society in which he lived. Vittorio lived the life of the Palestinians in Gaza; he shared their suffering and pain as well as moments of joy. Like Bassem he was well known and loved by everyone that got to know him; like Bassem he had the ability to spread happiness and optimism to others.

In Bil'in, Bassem always seemed to be everywhere at once, and he was everyone's friend. His love for others was reflected in a big, warm smile constantly smeared on his face, just as the meaning of his name suggests. His smile and his way of life reminds me of Vittorio so much that when I see a picture of Bassem now, I see Vittorio in it. When I see Vittorio with his pipe, I see Bassem puffing on his hookah.

Bassem would wake up in the morning and go to see friends who were ill and in need of help. He would spend the day playing with children, visit the old ladies in the village and see if they needed anything. Every Friday he would go demonstrate against the theft of our lands and the Wall, but even in the moments before he was shot and killed by the army, Bassem stayed human - as Vittorio would have said.

In Gaza, Vittorio would wake up in the morning, and go together with the farmers who are frequently shot at by Israeli soldiers while working their land. Other days he would accompany Gaza's fishermen who suffer attacks from the Israeli Navy. Nothing could stop him from acting in solidarity and seeking justice for the people that he loved and lived with. Vittorio would spend his free time playing football with the children, visiting families; living with them, eating with them, listening to their stories and simply being there with them. He was there when Israel attacked, and he informed the world about the horrors that he witnessed.

Bassem and Vittorio are both heroes of the Palestinian struggle. They were martyred - Bassem by the Israeli Army, Vittorio by another extremist group. Vittorio was one of us; he was killed by enemies of the Palestinian struggle and we consider him a martyr. His smile, his love and the ability to inspire and spread optimism is what reminds me so strongly of Bassem. After Bassem was martyred his spirit remained with us in the struggle and we are strengthened by his memory. Vittorio will remain with us the same way, and we will remember his words even in the darkest of times: We will stay human.

Mohammed Khatib



CONFERENCE SCHEDULE

Wednesday, April 20th:

10:00-12:00 Opening Session

Palestinian National Anthem

Welcoming statement by Abdallah Abu Rahmah and Eyad Burnat

Presentation by grassroots organizers from across the Occupied Territories

Opening statement by Abbas Zacki on behalf of the Palestinian Liberation Organization (PLO)

Launch of the CPSGAZA Boat live from Gaza (www.cpsgaza.org)

Rachal Corrie's mother, Cindy Corrie

Opening statement by Palestinian Prime Minister Salam Fayyad

12:00-12:15 Break

12:15-14:15 Popular Struggle Panel

Building an effective peaceful movement Prominent Palestinian grassroots leaders and academics will discuss strategies for building a mass Palestinian nonviolent movement in the post Arab Spring.

Facilitated by: Dr. Rateb Abu Rahmah. **Speakers:** Jamal Juma' - Stop the Wall, Mohammed Nazzal – National Committee Against the Wall and Settlements, Mohammed Khatib – Popular Struggle Coordination Committee, Nariman Tamimi – Nabi Saleh Popular Committee, Halah Sho'eibi – youth activist.

14:15-15:30 Lunch

15:30-16:30 Lessons from the Egyptian Revolution

Video conference by satellite link with representatives of the youth movements who lead the Egyptian revolution.

Speakers: *Representatives of the youth movement*

16:30-16:45 Break

16:45-19:00 Palestinian Politics and the Popular Struggle

The panel will deal with the lack of a wider Palestinian popular uprising of the kind that have been recently sweeping through the Arab World and ways to circumvent the problems such an uprising faces in the Palestinian street. The panel will be participated by representatives of all the major Palestinian political factions.

Facilitated by: the journalist Qassem Khatib. **Speakers:** Fadel Hamdan, Representative of the Palestinian islamic legislators, Nabil Sha'ath – Fatah, Khaleda Jarrar – PFLP, Mustafa Barghouthi – Mubara, Abdallaherhim Malou - DFLP, Khaled Mansour - Palestinian People Party.

Thursday, April 21st:

9:30-10:00 Opening

Opening

10:00-11:45 Boycott Divestment and Sanctions

Promoting a Culture of Resistance Speakers:

Dr. Ahdaf Souief - the author of the bestselling *The Map of Love* (shortlisted for the Booker Prize in 1999 and translated into more than 20 languages), as well as the well-loved *In the Eye of the Sun* and the collection of short stories, *I Think of You*.

Dr. Karma Nabulsi - Professor at Oxford University, and until 1990 a representative in the PLO in Lebanon, Tunisia, and the United Kingdom.

Omar Barghouti - Founding Member of the BDS movement

12:00-14:30 On the Ground

Discussion on local examples of the Palestinian popular struggle in the South Hebron Hills, Hebron, alMa'asara, alWalaja, Nabi Saleh, Ni'ilin, the Jordan Valley and the villages affected by the still segregated Road 443

14:30-15:45 Lunch

16:00-19:00 Four Parallel Workshops

- 1) BDS
- 2) Strengthening the international support of the movement
- 3) The popular struggle inside 48'
- 4) Strengthening internal coordination. A closed workshop for members of the popular committees

Friday, April 22nd:

10:00-12:00 Annual Memorial for Bassem Abu Rahmah

Opening by *Ahmad Abu Rahmah* on behalf of Bassem's family

Luisa Morgantini – Former Vice President of the European Parliament and coordinator of the International Network in Support of the Palestinian Popular Struggle.

Khaleda Jarrar on behalf of the National and Islamic forces.

Message from *Marwan Barghouti*

12:00-13:30 Activist Training for the Weekly Demonstrations

13:30 Demonstration

Saturday, April 23rd:

All Day: Field trips

