



Camden Abu Dis Friendship Association

جمعية صداقة
كامدن أبوديس

*Promoting human rights and respect for
international humanitarian law*

Trustees' Annual Report 2011-2012



Contents

Camden Abu Dis Friendship Association (CADFA) in 2011-12

Human rights context 2011-12

Main CADFA projects 2011-12

Camden teachers' visit to Abu Dis, April 2011

Kids 4 the Planet – Palestinian children's visit to London, June 2011

Look at our Lives – Students' visit to London, November 2011

Old Skills, New Skills – Young Women's visit to Britain, March 2012

Camden Abu Dis Twinning Volunteers – Started September 2011

CADFA's on-going work

Visits and Volunteers to Palestine

Developments at Dar Assadaqa

Developments in Camden

Campaigns

Supporting other twinning links to Palestine

Financial report 2011-12

Reviewing the year

Looking ahead

Thank you for your help

Appendices

CADFA

CADFA's objects

Trustees 2011-12

Organisations that supported CADFA in 2011-12

Main events 2011-12

CADFA annual accounts 2011-12

Camden Abu Dis Friendship Association (CADFA) in 2011-12

During this year, CADFA continued to develop and strengthen its model of human rights education work, developing creative projects that allow people in Britain and Palestine to meet and that give people in Britain a chance to hear the stories of life in Palestine. This has interested an increasing number of people in the human rights situation in Palestine. [CADFA's objects are in the appendix]

We continue to work closely with our partner Dar Assadaqa in the following areas:

- Information: public meetings, publications and the website
- Encouraging friendship links and joint projects between Camden/ Britain and Abu Dis/ Palestine
- Visits and volunteers
- Campaign work including urgent actions
- Working to support and encourage other groups interested in twinning with Palestine to promote human rights

Partly thanks to the support from Youth in Action for a number of exciting projects, we are particularly pleased that this year our education and youth links expanded and our 'year of the student' saw a widening pool of interest among young people.

CADFA continues to be extremely active for a small organisation. Despite an on-going financial struggle, we have grown this year in terms of activities, areas of work, numbers of members and experience. We have worked increasingly to support other groups making links with Palestine. We hope that this report gives an indication of the variety and focus of our activities.

The human rights situation in Palestine remains very poor. For this reason, CADFA believes the work that it is doing remains important. We would like to thank all our members, supporters and the many helpers who have made this year an exciting one, and hope that together we will rise to the challenge and do even better next year.

Human rights context 2011-12

Life in Abu Dis is coloured by what is called the Israeli military occupation. However the word 'occupation' does not sum up the experience of Palestinians at the hands of Israel, as they are not only under the military control of another country, but suffering the aggressive determination of the Israelis to take the land over, settle their own people in more and more parts of it and limit the opportunities of the Palestinians. This affects the whole of their life and even the geography of their country and makes human rights violations part of the texture of ordinary life at every turn.

For nearly ten years now, Abu Dis has been dominated by the Israeli Separation Wall on its west, cutting Abu Dis away from Jerusalem, which was the centre of everyone's life and can be seen from all parts of the town still but which for most people is impossible to reach owing to the huge

military terminals and the Israeli system of ID passes. From everywhere in the town, the growing settlements of Maale Adumim and Qidar can be seen, and if anyone ventures from Abu Dis it has to be south via the military checkpoint known as 'Container' or east and then west in order to go north, via the roads that the Palestinians are allowed to use through the developing maze of road construction which is clearly preparing for the E1 project (below).

SEPARATION

We continued to collect information on the most dramatic human rights violations in our human rights reports which can be seen on our website at www.camdenabudis.net/humanrights.html - but the reader should be aware that this does not tell of the daily pain that people suffer when they cannot visit family now cut off by the Wall, cannot be visited by family living in Jordan since 1967 and refused the right to return. A major part of current Palestinian life under occupation is separation, the denied right to travel, disruptions to family life. Our website, leaflets and books of people's stories contain further information on this.

JERUSALEM

Cut off from the centre of the city by the Wall, people in Abu Dis are still proud to be from Jerusalem and the pressures in the middle of the city affect the people of Abu Dis. Several times during this year, militant settlers attempt to enter the Al Aqsa Mosque and the consequent sounds of shooting reached Abu Dis (a kilometre or two away). Often, and unpredictably, there are 'closures' which mean that even the minority of Abu Dis people who still manage to work, study or go to hospitals in the city centre are prevented from going there.

During this year the pressures on the Palestinians of Jerusalem intensified. The Israelis are working to take over the city completely and to link it to the Israeli settlements while they cut it off from the Palestinian areas. This year saw the opening of an Israeli tram system between the city and the settlements while further Palestinians were deprived of the Jerusalem ID that allows them to stay in the city, and pushed out behind the huge Separation Wall. Israeli settlers seized more houses making people homeless and kidnapped and exiled from Jerusalem Palestinian MPs who had taken refuge in the Red Cross offices. In Silwan, children were arrested and some of them were also exiled, freed only on condition they were sent from their families to live in the West Bank.

The Palestinians who live in Jerusalem are being further separated from their families in the West Bank by an attack on the Palestinian school curriculum. This year, large chunks of history and cultural references in those books were blacked out by Israel in an attempt to stop the children learning them; they then reprinted the textbooks with many pages blank.

E1 PROJECT, EVICTION OF BEDOUIN, SEIZING MORE LAND

The E1 project refers to the Israeli plan to connect the settlements on the east of Abu Dis to Jerusalem through a vast expansion of settlement building. All of the Israeli settlement building defies international humanitarian law but E1 has to date been blocked by a lack of American support, as its enormous spread to the east of Jerusalem will divide the north of the West Bank from the south and has been particularly internationally contentious.

It is clear however that the Israelis are intending to go ahead with it, placing strategic buildings on the hills (police station) and building the roads across the hills to be ready for further building to follow. This year saw further pressures on the Bedouin who – already pushed from their traditional grazing lands in the Negev – have been living on areas that the Israelis want to build

on. The Israelis issued orders to close Bedouin schools in Al Khan al-Ahmar and Wadi Abu Hindi as part of their attempt to make the people move away, and planned for thousands of Bedouin to move into an area on the east of Abu Dis, which would vastly increase the pressure on the people in that confined area.

MASS IMPRISONMENT

A major policy of the Israelis in relation to the Palestinians under occupation appears to be mass imprisonment, including imprisonment without trial, serious mistreatment and imprisonment of children. The Palestinians experience this as a policy of collective punishment. This year began with about six thousand Palestinians in Israeli jails and several hundred children. From Abu Dis there were around 50 people in prison at the beginning of the year including in addition to about 70 students from the Al Quds University in Abu Dis. There were a number of children in jail and eight more children were arrested in April alone.

The issue of child prisoners and their mistreatment continued to be very important and CADFA were particularly concerned about Walid Sharaf who was not well on arrest.

The issue of prisoners and their treatment was raised strongly this year by a series of hunger strikes among prisoners in Israeli jails. During the year, the Israelis announced increasing restrictions on the rights of prisoners, including (in July) refusing to let them study in jail. In October 2011 a hunger strike started, widespread among prisoners in different jails, demanding the restoration of these rights and the end of practices such as isolation. This was interrupted by the first part of the Gilad Shalit prisoner exchange deal (one Israeli prisoner was to be exchanged for just over 1000 Palestinians). There were no prisoners from Abu Dis released at this point.

The second part of the prisoner exchange at the end of December 2011 included 28 prisoners from Abu Dis, among them all of the children. Walid Sharaf stayed in jail (by now over 18)

A series of very long hunger strikes by prisoners on 'administrative detention' raised the issue of imprisonment without trial to a new public level. Khader Adnan went on hunger strike in December and was on hunger strike for 66 days to the end of February. Hana Shalabi then began a lengthy strike (44 days) and was still on strike at the end of March.

ARMY VIOLENCE.

In Abu Dis, there were many assaults on people by soldiers in the streets during the year – people now see this as 'something normal.'

THE KILLING OF MOTASSEM ODWAN

On 1st August 2011, the first day of Ramadan, Motassem Odwan, aged 22, a student of media studies at the Al Quds University in Abu Dis, was out with hundreds of others near their houses in Qalandia Refugee Camp, celebrating the evening on the first of Ramadan. The Israeli army invaded the refugee camp and shot live ammunition with no warning in a context where there was no resistance. Motassem was near his home when he was shot dead by Israeli soldiers from a distance of 20 metres.

Main CADFA projects 2011-12

Camden teachers' visit to Abu Dis, April 2011

CADFA organised a visit of nine teachers from schools in Camden – each one of them linked to an Abu Dis school – to Abu Dis in April. The visit culminated in a workshop when teachers made action plans to keep the links active.

Kids 4 the Planet – Palestinian children's visit to London, June 2011

Our sixth annual children's visit this year had an environmental theme. We brought eight children from Abu Dis and two from Jenin with four leaders to join children from Camden in a camp in Wiltshire followed by an action-packed week in London. The children explored environmental issues and their connection issues of human rights. Following the visit, a calendar of photographs was made and distributed and a DVD including interviews with the children and animated film they made is still available.

Look at our Lives – Students' visit to London, November 2011 This year for the first time we brought a group of ten students with a leader to meet students in London, compare their lives and prepare a photographic exhibition to contrast student life in the two countries. Many London universities were visited, new twinning links were started, and there was an energetic workshop on ways student twinning can help focus on human rights issues in Palestine. Following the visit, photos taken by the students were put together into a book.

Old Skills, New Skills – Young Women's visit to Britain, March 2012.

This was the sixth year running that we had organised a women's visit from Palestine in March, and this year our visit enabled young women from Palestine and Britain to meet. The visit began with a residential in the New Forest to enable the young women to focus on skills old and new as a way of comparing their lives. On return to London, they visited women's centres, students' unions and schools, shared a huge number of skills and learned others, as well as learning a lot about each other's lives. The picture is of the final workshop. Photographs and writings from the visit will shortly be available on the web.

Camden Abu Dis Twinning Volunteers – Started September 2011

One of the most exciting new developments during this year has been the concept of 'twinning volunteers' and a new EVS (European Voluntary Service) project that has allowed us each three months to take four young people at a time to Palestine to work with Dar Assadaqa. Once there, they work with the local schools and university to improve the communication with their twinned organisations in Camden or with our partner organisations.

CADFA's on-going work

Visits+ volunteers to Palestine

We have continued to run tours of the West Bank based in Abu Dis. We organised group visits in April and July and the team in Abu Dis welcomed individuals including a journalist and a human rights lawyer and several groups on shorter visits. We arranged placements for several volunteers apart from the EVS project discussed above.

Developments at Dar Assadaqa

This year has seen a number of improvements at Dar Assadaqa, the community centre we support in Abu Dis and a main partner in our projects. Two new spaces there have been turned into useable rooms, one for the Shehadeh Mohsen Clinic that treats diabetic patients, and another into an office, freeing up a larger room as an extra space for activities. A wall has been built around the biggest part of the garden space to encourage the environment club and other users of Dar Assadaqa to develop a pleasant play space. There are now two project workers (Najah and Mousa) working with Dar Assadaqa projects and with the volunteers, as well as a number of sessional staff. This has all brought new energy and activities to Dar Assadaqa. Special events were celebrated on Human Rights Day in December and for Women's Day in March.

Developments in Camden

CADFA took its first step into an office outside members' houses this year, and for a few months had a room in Kentish Town Community Centre in Kentish Town. This was a good temporary arrangement for us and we made arrangements to move just after the end of the 2012-3 year into a room in the building of Voluntary Action Camden, also in Kentish Town.

We said goodbye to Mercedes in May and Shuma took her place for a few months as a temporary admin worker for CADFA. Both moved on to full-time jobs though remaining CADFA members. At the beginning of March we were pleased to welcome Lena and Caitlin to our team.

Campaign work

This year we continued to gather information on human rights violations in our human rights reports, and took action on these issues:

Child prisoners

Administrative detention and the hunger strike

Our Council's involvement with Veolia - a company involved in the Israeli tram line to the settlements

Education in Jerusalem and the changes to the curriculum

The E1 settlement expansion project

The closure of Bedouin schools.

Our methods included

- *Writing letters to policy makers and concerned organisations including the Red Cross*
- *Making legal representations to our council on the issue of Veolia*
- *Collecting paper petitions to our government and the EU*
- *Small demos including 'prisoner marches' to bring issues to the attention of our local community*
- *Pickets around the issue of administrative detention and the prisoners' hunger strikes*
- *Public meetings*
- *Issuing and distributing leaflets*

In addition, we concentrated on communication using the internet, sending our monthly Updates via email lists and Facebook and for the first time using electronic petitions in order to inform people as well as to add weight to letters we sent to policy-makers.

Our local MPs and MEPs appear to be receptive to the information we are sending to them. Frank Dobson and Glenda Jackson met us with Khalil, one of our child visitors who has suffered imprisonment and Jean Lambert MEP also received over 1000 letters on the subject of child imprisonment that he presented to her, and took them to the EU.

Supporting other twinning links to Palestine

This year we made a special partnership with two new groups, Hackney-Beit Sourik (a village north-west of Jerusalem) and Newham –Jenin (with a special relation to Jenin refugee camp). We supported the development of their links during the students' visit, by bringing a main person from each of their partner places for a strategy meeting and the twinning conference in November and during the women's visit, bringing visitors from each of their partner places and taking them and other visitors to schools, colleges and public meetings in Hackney and Newham.

We remained a central part of the Britain Palestine Twinning Network and worked to support the November conference in Britain and the April conferences in Palestine (Ramallah April 2011 and Jenin April 2012).

We put a section on student twinning with Palestine into the 'Look at our Lives' book that followed the student visit, and passed on our experience to others through contributions to the Britain Palestine twinning conference and support for other groups.

Financial report 2011-12

This very hard work led to a solid growth in CADFA's financial base with the turnover of CADFA rising by a third and for the first time reaching over £100K. The dramatic growth of CADFA is shown by its income over the years, as below:

2003/4	3.5 K
2004/5	7.5 K
2005/6	19.5 K
2007/8	44,218
2008/9	83,375
2009/10	78,566
2010/11	83,430
2011/12	121,673

This year our income rose by nearly 46% above our income from last. Our overheads have risen this year as we have moved into an office and employed more people, but are still low for the amount of work going on. This large growth is based on the hard work of very few staff and the help of a lot of volunteers.

We still have not found a source of secure funding for the core of our activities. Although we are building an excellent track record and are therefore being given project funding, this is achieved one project at a time. It is administratively-heavy and we cannot afford to be completely dependent on it. We very much need to increase our income from standing orders, direct donations and income we can generate ourselves.

Income was raised through memberships, standing orders, appeals, sales, fundraising events of many kinds, while the single biggest source of income was fundraising through project bids. Our biggest donor this year was Youth in Action (European Union) which is based at the British Council. We would like to make a special thank you to a number of friends who have run half-marathons, endured triathlons, run special events or in other ways helped to raise funding for CADFA projects.

Our money is soundly managed. This year, the British Council sent us auditors on spot-checks to look at our financial systems in relation to our summer youth project and the new volunteer project. Their reports on our systems were good.

Reviewing the year

This year, we did very well against the following objectives that we set ourselves last year:

- ✓ Bring another group of young people to Camden in June 2011
- ✓ Strengthen women's and student links through further visits
- ✓ Support school twinning links between Camden and Abu Dis
- ✓ Work to strengthen the Twinning with Palestine movement nationally
- ✓ Keep raising the profile of the Child Prisoner Campaign
- ✓ Support youth, community, women's, education and health projects in Abu Dis to at least the level of this year
- ✓ Maintain at least the staffing level of 2009-10 and start a small office in Camden.

We did not produce an introductory book on twinning with Palestine to promote human rights but we have included a section on this subject in the book 'Look at our Lives: student twinning with Palestine' and continued to support other twinning initiatives (see above).

Defying the economic climate and growing has been difficult and so for CADFA, this has been a time of serious reflection and review. Are we doing the right things? Are they having the right outcomes? And can we sustain them? The end of this year saw a sober reflection on the part of Trustees about whether we should cut the number of activities that CADFA is involved in as there is no core funding for our work and to continue is an ongoing struggle.

We noted though that CADFA is continuing to grow solidly and to reach hundreds of new people. There has been a steady increase in interest in our work not only in both Camden and Abu Dis but more widely in Britain and Palestine. People in Britain report that our work is making a difference to their understanding of the human rights situation in Palestine and their wish to do something about it. People in Palestine close to our work encourage us to keep going.

We are working with great focus to build a model we are proud of, making progress with our way of twinning and in particular our work with schools, colleges and young people. In the light of this, therefore, we decided that we must continue the path we have taken and develop our area of work. We have decided therefore to put more money into staffing in order to sustain the work and enable the fundraising that then allows the activities.

Looking ahead

We have set the following objectives for 2012-13

- Strengthen links between schools:
- Keep EVS project in Palestine going well
- Bring at least one volunteer from Palestine and increase our work with the schools in Britain
- Strengthen our work with students on both sides
- Get our new website up and running
- Keep prisoner campaign and the E1 campaign high on our agenda

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contact@camdenabudis.net www.camdenabudis.net

Charity number 1112717

- Launch CD for Stories from our Mothers
- Run at least one group visit in each direction
- Obtain support from Camden Council for Camden - Abu Dis links/

Thank you for your help

The Trustees extend their thanks to the staff of CADFA: Nandita Dowson, Director, Abdul Wahab Sabbah, Abu Dis Co-ordinator, project workers Najah Ayyad and Mousa Afaneh from Abu Dis, admin staff Mercedes Malcomson, Shuma Begum, Lena Bheeroo and Caitlin Procter from Camden; to the organisations listed below that have helped with our work during this year and also to the very many volunteers, helpers and supporters who have helped to make this work possible.

Appendices

CADFA

Camden Abu Dis Friendship Association is a Camden organisation dedicated to promoting human rights in Abu Dis, a Palestinian town in the East Jerusalem suburb that is currently divided from Jerusalem by the Separation Wall, and in Palestine more generally.

Along with others in Palestine, people in Abu Dis suffer many violations of human rights as a result of the illegal Israeli occupation and its practices. We work to make links between organisations and groups in Camden and Abu Dis and help people to work on positive projects together, because we believe this is an effective way to draw the human rights situation in Abu Dis to the attention of people in Camden and to work with others locally to do something about it.

CADFA came into being during 2004, was constituted as a charity in June 2005 and gained recognition as a charity in January 2006. There is more information about CADFA and our activities on our website, www.camdenabudis.net

CADFA's objects

CADFA's objects are to promote human rights (as set out in the Universal Declaration of Human Rights and subsequent United Nations conventions and declarations) and respect for international humanitarian law in the area of Abu Dis, a region of Palestine, by all or any of the following means:

- Raising awareness of human rights and humanitarian issues relevant to the Israeli-

Palestinian conflict in general and to the situation of Abu Dis in particular;

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Charity number 1112717

- Researching and monitoring abuses of human rights and infringements of humanitarian law in Abu Dis;
 - Educating the public about human rights and humanitarian law;
 - Promoting public support for human rights and the observance of humanitarian law;
 - Working to eliminate abuses of human rights and infringements of humanitarian law in Abu Dis;
 - Working to obtain and promote redress for the victims of human rights abuses and infringements of humanitarian law in Abu Dis and their families;
 - Providing support to and relieving need among the victims of human rights abuses and infringements of humanitarian law and their families, in Abu Dis.
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CADFA's trustees 2010-11 (AGM was on 24th July 2010)

Munir Nuseibeh, Chair
Luca Salice, Vice-Chair
Cristina Piccoli, Secretary
Annika Miller-Jones, Treasurer
Mike Fletcher, Trustee
Shereen Pandit, Trustee

Organisations that supported CADFA in 2010-11

Abu Dis Boys' School
Abu Dis Elementary School
Abu Dis Girls' School
Acland Burghley School
Al Quds University Palestine
Arab Institute, Abu Dis
British Council, London and Ramallah
BSix College, Hackney
Calthorpe Project, Gray's Inn Rd WC1
Camden School for Girls
Camley Street Nature Park
Edith Neville Primary School
Global Generation
Gospel Oak Primary School
Hampstead School
Haverstock School
Insaan Centre, Al Quds University
Kentish Town Community Centre
La Sainte Union School
Many twinning groups across Britain and Palestine have shared in our work this year.
Maria Fidelis Convent School
National Union of Teachers, Camden
New Generation School Abu Dis
Oxford Ramallah Friendship Association
Palestinian Ministry of Education
Palestinian Mission, London
Saraya Centre, Jerusalem
South Camden City Learning Centre
South Camden Community School
Students' unions and societies at UCL, SOAS, Middlesex University
Torriano Meeting House NW5
UNRWA School Abu Dis
Youth in Action (European Union)

Main events 2011-12

April 11	2nd April: CADFA CONFERENCE 9th April: Camden teachers' visit to Abu Dis 25th April: Twinning Conference in AI
May 11	18th May: Gala Meal fundraising for CADFA at House of Lords
June 11	Palestinian youth visit 2011: KIDS 4 THE PLANET 21 June, 7.30-9pm: Child prisoners in Israeli jails 24 June, 5pm: Refugee Week concert. South Camden Community Schoo 25 June, 10am-4pm: Environment + human rights day 25 June, 4pm onwards: Barbecue with live music from Nizar Al-Issa. 23 June, 7-9pm: Kalimero - fundraising concert with SOAS
July 11	7 July pm: CHILD PRISONER CAMPAIGN PUBLIC MEETING with speakers from CADFA and Addameer 15 July, 7pm: CADFA SUMMER CONCERT. 26 July, 7pm: CADFA AGM
September 11	20 September: OPEN MEETING. In memory of Mutassim Anwar
October 11	18 October, 7.30 for 8pm: CADFA BIRTHDAY MEAL
November 11	11-21 November: LOOK AT OUR LIVES: Meetings of British + Palestinian students. 24 November, 5-6.30pm: LAUNCH OF THE KIDS 4 THE PLANET DVD
December 11	3 December: BOOK & CAKE SALE in aid of Shehadeh Mohsen Diabetic Clinic. 20 December, 7.15 for 7.30: CADFA Human Rights Day
February 12	4 February, 7.30-11pm: INTERNATIONAL FOOD EVENING
March 12	20 March, 7-10pm: WOMEN OF PALESTINE: 24 March, 11am-9.30pm: INTERNATIONAL WOMEN'S DAY. Palestinian women guests

CADFA accounts 2011-12

**RECEIPTS &
PAYMENTS**

	2010 / 11	2011 / 12
Balances Brought Forward	3,079	545
RECEIPTS	£	£
Fundraising, Donations & Memberships	66,331	114,146
Gift Aid Received	2,205	0
Bank Interest Received	45	7
Travellers to Palestine	14,849	7,143
	<u>83,430</u>	<u>121,295</u>

PAYMENTS

	£	£
Visits to & from Palestine	28,237	56,911
Projects & Events	9,423	10,874
Publications & Printing	2,746	218
Advertising	690	888
Purchases for resale	3,586	3,024
Bank Charges & Exchange (Gains) / Losses	-380	375
Other Running Costs	1,298	3,947
Staff costs	40,364	41,386
	<u>85,964</u>	<u>117,623</u>

Surplus / Deficit for Year / Period	<u>-2,534</u>	<u>3,673</u>
Surplus Carried Forward	<u>£545</u>	<u>£4,218</u>