

# Marrickville Peace Group

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## Media Release

### Cut military ties with Israel

Peace Groups and human rights activists demand the Australian government to cut military ties with Israel following reports of the death of a Palestinian child from arson and the threat of demolition of a village supported by Australian aid.

"Demolition of the Palestinian village, Susiya, which Australian government aid has supported over the past decade, must surely cause the Australian government to question its ties to the Israeli government" said Nick Deane, convenor of the Marrickville Peace Group, and well known local peace activist.

"Just in the past week the appalling act of arson by militant Israeli settlers which killed an eighteen month old Palestinian child and severely burnt his mother illustrates the lawlessness of the Israeli occupation of the West Bank. This is not a state which the Australian government should be selling arms to", he said.

The Marrickville Peace Group has campaigned for years for the cutting of military ties with states with records of egregious and systematic violations of human rights. "Israeli governments of the past decade despite the Oslo Peace Accords have failed to progress the peace negotiations in good faith" Nick said.

"They have invaded the Gaza Strip on three occasions and obliterated hospitals, clinics, schools, businesses as well as housing and killed thousands of civilians including children. And Gaza remains under siege and unable to rebuild because the Israeli government refuses to allow materials to be brought into the territory."

In the West Bank new illegal Israeli settlements are approved and built with impunity while Palestinian villages like Susiya are refused planning permission to build houses and put in water supplies. Daily life for Palestinians is constrained by the endless surveillance, movement controls and harassment of the Israeli Defence Force (IDF) but deaths of Palestinians are seldom reported in the press here.

The IDF is one of the largest and most heavily armed in the world. It buys arms from Australia and sells military technology and weapons back to the ADF. One example is the "Heron" drone. This weapon, used in the most recent Talisman Sabre military exercise with the U.S. Military, was developed by the Israeli arms industry and has been purchased from Israel by the ADF.<sup>1</sup>

"This is not a state we should be doing business with, least of all in the arms trade" said Nick. "So we welcome the initiative of the NSW Greens for Palestine to launch a campaign to cut Australian military ties with Israel."

<http://www.endmilitarytieswithisrael.com/>

The campaign will be launched in Sydney in late August. Peace organisations and Palestinian support organisations will be invited to sign on to the campaign with a view to taking the matter into the federal election.

**Contact:** Nick Deane on 0420 526 929

4<sup>th</sup> August 2015

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<sup>1</sup> <http://www.abc.net.au/news/2015-06-24/raaf-unmanned-heron-aircraft-talisman-sabre/6569900>