

UPDATE ON TRISTAN ANDERSON'S SITUATION
April 11, 2009

On Saturday, April 11, I and two others from Ramallah went to Tel HaShomer Hospital in Tel Aviv to visit Tristan's parents, Nancy and Mike Anderson. Nancy and Mike were most gracious in briefing us on the changes in Tristan's situation since we last visited them a few weeks ago.

Tristan remains in the hospital in Tel Aviv. He has been taken out of intensive care and is termed to be in "serious" rather than in "critical" condition. Only family are allowed in his room.

Mike and Nancy told us that Tristan is improving slowly. Everyday they see new signs of this. For example he responds to questions by moving one or two fingers and the doctors said he will be able to see with one eye instead of not recovering any sight. Since we last saw them, he has had two more operations and a few procedures, including a tracheotomy. At one point he had pneumonia, but has overcome that. He is still on oxygen. The doctors hope that Tristan will begin physiotherapy in a few days.

Nancy and Mike told us the doctors have been terrific and they feel Tristan is getting the best possible care in the hospital. They were told that it will take 6-18 months before Tristan will be able to travel back to the US.

Mike and Nancy have appreciated the regular contact from Tristan's elected representative, Congresswoman Barbara Lee. They also appreciated the visit of US Ambassador to Israel and other US Embassy staff. Someone from the US Embassy in Tel Aviv keeps in touch on a regular basis by visiting and assisting in many ways such as providing much needed information for them.

Since Nancy and Mike arrived from the US, they have been allowed to stay in a room on the hospital grounds in order to be close to Tristan. These rooms are meant for short-term stays only, however, they have been allowed to stay there for a month, longer than normally allowed. A woman who lives close to the hospital and whose son had a similar experience has invited Nancy and Mike to stay with her. They may move into her place soon. The activists have been organizing for someone to provide dinner for Mike and Nancy every evening.

Nancy and Mike were advised to ask for a "thorough and fair investigation" rather than for an "independent investigation". This investigation has already been started by the Israeli police. Their hope is that Congresswoman, Barbara Lee will keep perusing the investigation and ensure that it is brought to a conclusion and that Israelis will follow their own laws. In their own words Mike and Nancy "are hopeful that what happened to Tristan will make a small difference in how Israelis and Palestinians interact". They would like to see a just solution to the Israeli-Palestinian conflict.

In conclusion, they emphasized that they have appreciated the professional care Tristan is getting in the hospital, the assistance of the US Embassy staff, and the care Barbara Lee has shown and what she is doing.

Kathy Bergen