

On April 9, Paul Rehm wrote:

Are you aware of the Israeli army's attempt to close three schools and two orphanages here in Hebron? If you are, could you share what AFSC's response has been? If you're not aware, please allow me to offer a little background.

On the 26th of February, the Israeli military raided buildings of the Islamic Charitable Society in Hebron, handing over orders of closure and confiscation for two bakeries, administrative and commercial facilities, three schools, two orphanages and the warehouse serving the schools and orphanages. The army claims the ICS is "connected to" Hamas. The ICS, which was established in 1962, maintains that some of its 800 employees may well be members of Hamas, but that political party does not control the Society. The ICS says their books are open and they welcome any investigation of the society's operations.

On the 6th of March, the Israeli military raided and gutted the central warehouse, confiscating three busses, clothing, food, stationery and other supplies intended for the children and their families. The estimated value of the goods taken is \$300,000.

The schools and orphanages affected are:
Al-Shari'yah Girls' School -- 645 students
Al-Shari'yah Boys' School -- 420 students
Al-Rahma Elementary Boys' School -- 420 students
Hebron Orphanage for Girls -- 110 children
Hebron Orphanage for Boys -- 130 children

Christian Peacemaker Teams has been working with the Popular Committee for Supporting the Orphans in their attempts to help save the children's schools and orphanage homes. The children, the teachers and CPT would welcome your help. If you're not already working on this, will you?

Salam/Shalom,
Paul Rehm
Christian Peacemaker Teams
Office: 011-972-2-222-8485
Mobile: 054- 432-8529

NOTE: *Paul Rehm is a member of New York Yearly Meeting. He spends time every year with Christian Peacemaker Teams (CPT) in Hebron. He alerted many about the situation in Hebron and worked during his time in Hebron to stop this injustice.*

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

10 May 2008

From: Christian Peacemaker Teams -- Hebron

Phone: 972 (0)2 222 8485

International NGO's Rally to Rescue Hebron Orphans

Representatives from Christian Peacemaker Teams, UNICEF, UNOCHA, Save the Children UK, Defense for Children International, the YMCA, Relief International and other human rights organizations met in Hebron on 8 May to help Hebron's orphans and students who live with the fear that the Israeli military will close their homes and schools. The representatives selected a core group of Palestinian and International NGO's to halt the Israeli attack against Islamic Charitable Society orphanages and schools. The core group will also develop programs to ease the anxiety that's been part of the children's lives from the day the army first began its crusade.

Since issuing closure and confiscation orders against the ICS on 26 February, the Israeli army raided the central warehouse taking away school busses, clothing, food, stationery, equipment and other supplies intended to fill the needs of the children and their families. Soldiers have welded shut the gates of the nearly completed \$2,000,000 Al-Huda girls' school, raided and looted bakeries that provided bread to the orphanages and on the 30th of

April, raided the sewing workshop in the girls' orphanage, carting away sewing and processing machines, fabric, finished garments and office equipment...all of which they brought to the city dump.

Responding to an appeal filed by Jawad Boulos, attorney for the ICS, the army's commanding general said that in regard to the schools, orphanages and kindergartens, he "gives himself the complete right to take all necessary measures...if they (ICS) continue to work in these facilities".