

## PRESS RELEASE

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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

### **Press Conference and Rally to Support Aid Convoy to Gaza Tuesday, July 14, 4:30 p.m., Park Street Station Plaza**

BOSTON — There will be a press conference and rally to support the Viva Palestina convoy, which is attempting to deliver \$1 million of humanitarian aid to the people of Gaza, at 4:30 p.m. on Tuesday July 14 at Park Street Station. Four Boston area activists are on the convoy, which has encountered problems with the Egyptian government in its attempt to proceed into Gaza.

The event is sponsored by the International Socialist Organization (ISO), the Smedley D. Butler Brigade of Veterans For Peace (VFP), and Dorchester People for Peace (DPP). Convoy members include ISO members Khury Peterson-Smith and Tom Arabia, Smedley VFP member Gerard Hosman, and DPP member Jeff Klein.

“We want to bring this convoy to the attention of the American people, and pressure both the U.S. and Egyptian governments to allow the convoy entrance into Gaza”, said Alpana Mehta of ISO. The Viva Palestina U.S. convoy is a follow on to British M.P. George Galloway’s original Viva Palestina convoy, which drove from London to Gaza in order to break the siege in March. Galloway and Vietnam veteran Ron Kovic (author of *Born on the Fourth of July*) are the leaders of this convoy, which departed from New York on July 4th. The convoy consists of a group of about 200 individuals from all over the world representing a spectrum of races, religions, ages and ethnicities.

Viva Palestina USA seeks to provide humanitarian aid to the suffering people of Gaza, who have been under siege, in direct contravention to international laws that prohibit collective punishment. At present, the Food and Agriculture Organization deemed two-thirds of Gaza’s population, of which half are children, to be “food insecure.” In January, UNICEF said over 10% of Gaza’s children had stunted growth due to malnutrition. Yet, in an ironic and illogical perversion of policy given the self-evident relationship between nutrition and health, Egyptian authorities have refused to allow the Viva Palestina medical aid caravan to transport food into Gaza.

On June 4 at Cairo University President Obama said: “The Palestinian people -- Muslims and Christians -- have suffered in pursuit of a homeland. For more than 60 years they've endured the pain of dislocation. Many wait in refugee camps in the West Bank, Gaza, and neighboring lands for a life of peace and security that they have never been able to lead. They endure the daily humiliations -- large and small -- that come with occupation. So let there be no doubt: The situation for the Palestinian people is intolerable. And America will not turn our backs.”

“Since President Obama spoke of the suffering of the Palestinian people, we now call on him to ask the government of Egypt to allow this and other convoys with humanitarian aid passage into Gaza through Egypt since the government of Israel allows very little aid to get in, which is a violation of international law,” said Nate Goldshlag of Veterans For Peace.

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Web site of Viva Palestina US: <http://www.vivapalestina-us.org/>

Contact information for a phone interview with a Viva Palestina delegate in Egypt available upon request.