



# Al Aqsa

## Newsletter

[www.aqsa.org.uk](http://www.aqsa.org.uk)

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## Shin Bet on High alert amid warnings of attack on Masjid Al-Aqsa

The Shin Bet security service has raised the level of alert in Jerusalem amid indications that extremist Jews are planning to carry out an attack on the mosques of the Temple Mount, and on the basis of new intelligence has beefed up police and security around the site in the heart of the Old City. According to a report in Haaretz on 7 April 2005.

The Islamic Movement within Israel has urgently called upon Muslims to converge on Masjid Al-Aqsa and protect it against the Jewish extremists.

Haaretz further reported, Israeli Police on Wednesday announced plans to close the Temple Mount compound to Jews on Sunday, when a right-wing extremist group called Revava was planning to hold a mass rally there. Police fear the activists could clash with Muslim worshippers.

The secret service created a ranking from 1-10 with 10 being the highest security risk. Three months ago, the Shin Bet was ranking the security threat at 7, meaning that "there are signs of planning for an attack," and that there are activists "talking about what to do and as soon as possible." Now, however, the ranking has moved to an 8 – and it is based on much more solid information.

Security sources confirmed that there is information about several groups of extremists, though it is not certain to what extent they are in contact with one another. Lately there has been some progress made in the inquiry, but a gag order has been slapped on its details.

Friends of Al-Aqsa calls upon all Muslims to the following:

- 1] Those who are able to travel there, must undertake a journey to protect Masjid Al-Aqsa.
- 2] Send assistance to the Palestinians against Jewish extremists.
- 3] Lobby your local MPs and government to raise the issue in the Parliament.

FoA considers this danger to be real and immediate steps must be taken to halt the march of Jewish extremists.

## FoA Meets Abbas at the London's Palestine Conference

Br Ismail Patel with a delegation of a dozen-strong met with Mr Abbas in London before his Conference with Mr Blair.

Since Mahmud Abbas' clearly predictable election victory, he has been hosted across the world as the new face that will bring peace in the Middle East. Many fear that this peace, if it materializes, will be on Israeli terms.

Tony Blair held what should have been an historic conference in London towards a lasting peace for the Middle East. It was instead used as a ground to endorse changes on the Palestinian side, with Israel not even making a show.

Despite its failings, on the positive side, the conference attracted representatives from over 20 countries and the world's media. Kofi Annan and U.S. Secretary of State Condoleezza Rice were both amongst the delegates, and the message echoed seemed to be that the prospects for peace between Israeli and the Palestinians are the best that they have been in many years.

Ironically, no mention was made of the continued Israeli atrocities against Palestinian civilians, homes and infrastructure, which occurred even as the conference was under way. The imbalance of pressure from the international community on the Palestinian and Israeli sides will no doubt lead to more failed attempts to reach peace. Until that balance is redressed, peace efforts cannot be taken seriously.

# Occupation soldiers kill 14 year old boy

*From the testimony of Tawfiq Abu Muhsan, 14:*

"Around 8:30 A.M. [on 20 January 2005], my friend Salah a-Din came over to play with me on the street near my house, where most kids our age play. We played the role of Arabs and our friends pretended to be the Israeli army.

Two army jeeps were parked around 150 meters away... I saw one of the soldiers stick his head out through the roof of the first jeep and aim his weapon at us. I heard one shot and then another two or three shots. I saw Salah a-Din fall to the ground without making a sound. His chest was bleeding. I tried to pick him up, but I couldn't...

My father told me later that Salah a-Din was taken to hospital in Jenin. An hour and a half later, I heard on the loudspeaker that he was dead... I felt terrible. He was my friend, and we studied together. We were playing together, and we were far away from the soldiers. Nothing happened to cause the soldiers to fire. At night, my father came home and broke the pistol that I bought that morning. He told me that that was the reason that Salah a-Din had died, because he, too, played with a plastic rifle."

In the past four and a half years, Israeli security forces have killed at least 1,705 Palestinians who did not take part in the fighting, including 551 minors. The number of indictments filed against soldiers for gunfire-related offences stands at only twenty-eight, according to the Judge Advocate Generals office. Only two soldiers have been convicted of causing the death of Palestinians.

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## UNRWA Condemns Killing of School Children

Palestinian children have never been safe from Israeli bullets, and the most appalling crimes against children are being perpetrated by the occupation forces in school classrooms and playgrounds. In January 2005, 10 year old Noran Iyad Deeb, a pupil at the Rafah Elementary Co-Ed School run by UN, was shot and killed while lining up in the school yard for afternoon assembly. A second child, Aysha Isam El-Khatib was injured in the hand by a second bullet fired at the same time.

In a UN press release, witnesses stated that: 'At the time of the incident, firing had been heard from the direction of the Israeli-controlled border area. The school's teaching staff were attempting to clear the children from the school yard when Noran was hit with a bullet in the face'.

This was the fifth incident in the last two years in which children have been killed or seriously injured inside UN run school premises in the Gaza Strip. Two girls were killed in separate incidents in Rafah and Khan Younis in 2004 and a little girl was permanently blinded in Khan Younis in March 2003.

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## National demonstration Saturday March 19th 2005

As the 2nd anniversary of the invasion of Iraq approached, demonstrators rallied all over the world to protest against all occupations including that in Palestine. Saturday March 19th saw Trafalgar Square in London once again awash with the colours of the Palestine flag.

As the speakers took the stage, every time Palestine was mentioned, the mood in the crowd was strongly audible and the feelings clear as the cheers erupted with the words 'free Palestine' again and again. This was real evidence that the British public opinion is very much on the side of peace with justice for Palestinians.

An estimated 150,000 people took part in London's demonstration, marching from Hyde Park and symbolically laying a black coffin outside the US Embassy to mark the deaths of over 100,000 Iraqi civilians since the invasion took place.

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## Walsall FoA Hold a Successful Event

The Walsall Friends of Al-Aqsa held an event for sisters on Sunday 13 March, titled, 'Suffering of the Mothers of Palestine'. The event proved highly successful with full capacity audience. The sisters gathering was enlightened with speeches from Sister Yvonne Ridley and others.

### Mailing List

FoA send out daily updates on the events occurring in Palestine. To join the mailing list, please visit [www.aqsa.org.uk](http://www.aqsa.org.uk) and subscribe your email to the mailing list.

## FoA in Malaysia & Sri Lanka

Br Ismail Patel represented FoA at an International Conference on Palestine held in Kuala Lumpur, Malaysia between 28-30 March. The three-day event on the theme, 'Peace in Palestine' was attended by over 500 people covering 34 countries. The Prime Minister of Malaysia Abdullah Badawi and the Foreign Secretary Mr Hamid Albar hosted a lunch and dinner respectively.

Br Ismail Patel then proceeded to Sri Lanka and briefed the Prime Minister Mr Singh on the issue of Palestine. Public events and over half a dozen meetings with Ministers, religious leaders and civic activists were held in Sri Lanka.

### **Palestinians Outnumber Israeli Jews**

The U.S. State Department's annual Country Reports on Human Rights Practices for 2004 revealed that the combined Palestinian population living in Israel and the occupied Gaza Strip, East Jerusalem and West Bank, now exceeds the number of Jews living in Israel. 5.3 million Palestinians now live in these territories, as compared with 5.2 million Israeli Jews.

The new demographic reality is that the Israeli Jewish minority now rules over a larger number of Palestinians living between the Mediterranean Sea and the Jordan River, and with Israel's track record of discrimination against the Arabs, this gives validity to arguments of Israel's position as an apartheid state.

Some Israeli laws differentiate between people based on their race and religion, and Arabs are widely treated as second class citizens within the state's borders. Land policies are especially discriminatory and the state approved Jewish National Fund, which holds 12.5% of all Israeli land, has a constitution stating no land may be sold or leased to non-Jews.

The actual population of Israel is 6.8 million which includes all the illegal settlers, of whom 5.2 million are Jews, 1.3 million are Arabs and other groups constitute 290,000. The 1.3 million Arabs descend from the 150,000 Palestinians that managed to remain in their homeland when Israel fought a war against the Palestinians to form the state of Israel in 1948.

1.4 million Palestinians live in the Gaza Strip, the most densely populated land on earth. The West Bank houses approximately 2.4 million Palestinians, with the remaining 240,000 Palestinians living in Occupied East Jerusalem.

Israel has feared this demographic threat for many years, and even they were powerless to stop their sponsor state, the USA from making these figures public. Israel's claims of being a 'true democracy in the Middle East' will be severely tested with each year that passes with the growth of the Palestinian population.

### **Friends of Al-Aqsa Bradford Setup**

People in Bradford have set up a branch of Friends of Al-Aqsa to cater for the Yorkshire region and the first event took place on Sunday 10 April. The gathering of hundreds was addressed by Shaykh Riad ul Haq, Shaykh Ahmad Ali and Br Ismail.

Shaykh Ahmad Ali in a marathon session spoke for over an hour and informed the gathering of the history and the importance of Masjid Al-Aqsa. He elaborated on the sacrifices the companions of the Prophet (saas) made to liberate Jerusalem. The centrality of Masjid Al-Aqsa was further elaborated based on sources from the ahadith and the Holy Qur'an. Shaykh Riad Ul Haq pointed out the dangers facing Masjid Al-Aqsa in the light of recent warnings of Israeli secret services and the open declaration made by Jewish fundamentalist groups to blow up the Masjid.

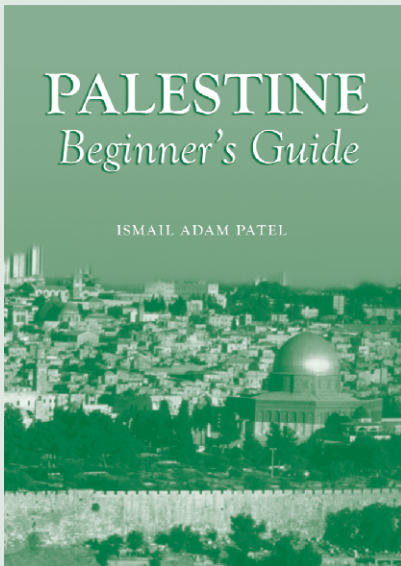
FoA Chairman, Br Ismail appealed for assistance from the local people to assist and encourage the local branch. He requested they remained steadfast on ensuring to highlight not only the plight of the Masjid Al-Aqsa but of the Palestinian people as well, who are in the forefront of defending the Masjid Al-Aqsa. He also appealed to people from other cities to follow the example of Walsall and Bradford and work towards opening branches in their respective areas.

### **05:05:05**

With the General Election around the corner FoA calls upon its supporters to exercise their right to vote. As always we advise you to take into account the track record of the prospective individual before you cast your vote.

A checklist of the individuals local, national and international activities must be ascertained before you decide your vote.

Remember there are good candidates in all the parties and it is your individual responsibility to find out what the candidates view points are in your area.



## ***Palestine – Beginner's Guide***

Has been prepared in a simple format to aide understanding of the Holy Land's history and to grasp why this once pluralist land is now the capital of faith-based sectarianism.

- traces chronologically the events in Palestine from 6,000 BC to 2004;
- offers a wealth of information and facts;
- counters the myths that have been spun around the issue of Palestine;
- is beautifully laid-out and easy to understand;
- is an invaluable aide to understand the crisis in Palestine; and
- is a must for all concerned with the Middle East and world peace.

**234 pages**

**Over 100 images**

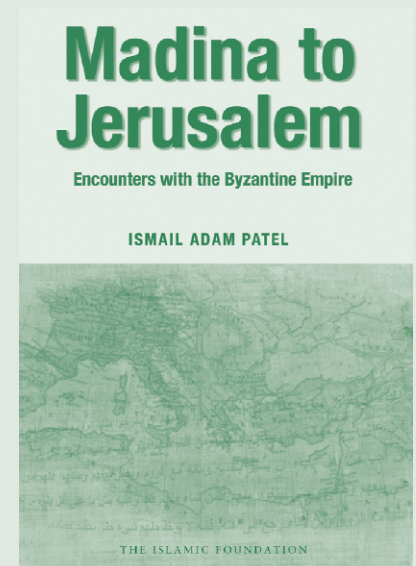
**Over 50 maps**

### ***Madina to Jerusalem: Encounters with the Byzantine Empire***

- traces one of the most energetic and dynamic episodes in the history of Islam;
- charts the course of Muslim history from 8AH/629CE to 15AH/637CE;
- attempts to recount the military battles that led to the Muslims liberating Jerusalem from the Byzantines and also to understand the reasons why the Byzantine confederates of al-Sham abandoned their former masters for Islam; and
- addresses the Islamic expansion from a wider perspective with both the Muslim and non-Muslim readers in mind.

**168 Pages**

*Ismail Adam Patel* by profession is an Optometrist, who graduated from University of Manchester Institute of Science and Technology (UMIST) in 1985. He regularly contributes to discussions, debates and articles in the media and international forums regarding issues affecting Muslims and the Middle East. He has published several other books, including: *Islam the Choice of Thinking Women*. He is also the editor of *Al-Aqsa* journal.



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