



# Rachel Corrie

## Foundation for Peace & Justice

### *Celebrate 10 years of the Gaza Ramadan Football Tournament & the Inaugural Youth Tournament with us!*

Congratulations to the more than 500 players and coaches who participated in the Gaza Ramadan Football Tournaments! The Rachel Corrie Gaza Sport Initiative is an annual project, consisting of the **Rachel Corrie Ramadan Football Tournaments (Young Men and Juniors)** and the **Rachel Corrie Tournament for Athletes with Disabilities**. These events provide a safe space for sports enthusiasts to gather through athletic events and friendly competition. They encourage a level of normalcy as a reprieve from the persistent violence of military occupation and closure imposed on the Gaza Strip by Israel.

Ramadan 2017 marked the tenth year of the Football Tournament for Young Men (May 27 – June 14) and the inaugural Juniors Tournament (June 12 – 17). The events took place as a historic hunger strike by Palestinian political prisoners was underway. The hunger strike ended on the first day of the tournament when Israel agreed to meet some of the prisoners' demands for better treatment. Local tournament organizers selected the theme "water and salt," which is what many of the prisoners survived on during their 40-day strike.

**320 athletes and 32 coaches** participated in the **Gaza Ramadan Tournament** representing young men's teams from across the Gaza Strip. Watch the opening ceremony and Dabke and the closing ceremony on our website. **Congratulations and alf mabrouk to Team Al-Shaboura** for winning the 10th annual Rachel Corrie Ramadan Football Tournament after beating Team Cameroon 3 to 1!

With our Gaza-based organizers and participants, we are proud to share that the pilot **Juniors Tournament**, was a huge success! **16 coaches and 160 Gazan youth**, 17 and younger, participated. Check our website to watch daily recaps of the event along with the closing ceremony. **Congratulations and alf mabrouk to Team Etihad Al-Zo'rob** for winning the inaugural Rachel Corrie Ramadan Football Tournament for Juniors in a close victory, 2 to 1, against Shabab Al-Horiyya!

Both tournaments took place at a soccer pitch in the Tel al-Sultan neighborhood of Rafah, Gaza. Our Gaza partners uploaded a collection of photos and videos of the games, the audience, and ceremonies that included song, dabke, and speeches by community members. Find all of these on our "Gaza Projects" page at [rachelcorriefoundation.org](http://rachelcorriefoundation.org).

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#### A BRIEF HISTORY OF THE RACHEL CORRIE GAZA SPORT INITIATIVE:

### RAMADAN FOOTBALL TOURNAMENT

#### Resisting Occupation, Strengthening Community through Athleticism and Sportsmanship

- 2008**  
Khaled Nasrallah & Adnan Abu Al Sa'ud organized the first Men's Tournament during the Holy Month of Ramadan with the support of the Olympia-Rafah Sister City Project (ORSCP).
- 2009**  
ORSCP turned the project over to the Rachel Corrie Foundation. While on a delegation with Code Pink, **Cindy and Craig Corrie** attended a special Eid ceremony after the end of the Tournament.
- 2011**  
The Tournament was held at the **Block O Soccer Fields**. The first year we partnered with **Al Basma Club for Disabled**.
- 2013**  
Each team adopted the name of a village or town in Historic Palestine destroyed by Israel in 1948: "a point of convergence between Rachel Corrie as a human rights defender and Gazan refugees' legacy of resisting injustice," said organizer Abu Sa'ud.
- 2015**  
The first year we partnered with the **Women's Program Center-Rafah**.
- 2017**  
Launch of a pilot project, the **Juniors Tournament: "Towards A Promising Future"** with 160 young athletes (age 17 and younger) and 16 coaches, all from Rafah.
- 2010**  
The Tournament was held in the **Yibna Neighborhood**. RCF raised \$12,000 for the Tournament, the most of any RCF tournament to date.
- 2012**  
Gazan Soccer star **Mahmoud Sarsak** joined the Tournament as an honorary guest. The games were hosted at **Jama'i Rafah Soccer Field**.
- 2014**  
The Tournament was **delayed for 10 weeks due to the Israeli war on Gaza**. In the face of adversity, athletes came together as a community and continued playing.
- 2016**  
The Tournament gained recognition by top officials: Legislative Council Member, **Deputy Ashraf Gom'a** and President of the Rafah Service Club, **Kareem Al Attar**, were both in attendance.
- 2018**  
RCF will host the **Inaugural Ramadan Football Tournament in Olympia** to show solidarity and help raise funds for the tournament and our friends in Gaza.



## *The Rachel Corrie Tournament for Athletes with Disabilities – coming in Winter 2017!*

The Rachel Corrie Tournament for Athletes with Disabilities connects the disabled with broader Palestinian society, affirms their place in Gaza, provides an avenue of accomplishment and fun in the sphere of athletics, and provides an opportunity for female athletes to participate in a public forum.

Coinciding with the International Day of Persons with Disabilities, the annual tournament in December is in partnership with Al-Basma Club for the Disabled. Since its inauguration in 2014, the event has highlighted issues of equality, access, and opportunity for persons with disabilities and helped connect Gaza's disabled population to those in other parts of the world. In 2016, 172 disabled athletes, including 55 women, competed in football, wheelchair basketball, table tennis and goal ball (the most popular sport for the blind in Palestine). The tournament provides a sport venue to showcase the skills of athletes who are deaf, amputees, paraplegics, or have suffered from polio.



**Team Etihad Al-Zo'rob** - Winner of the Inaugural Rachel Corrie Ramadan Football Tournament for Juniors

## *RCF Letter to FIFA on Israeli Settlement Soccer Teams*

Our two Gaza Ramadan Tournaments began shortly after the international soccer organization (FIFA) failed to address violations of FIFA regulations by Israeli soccer teams based in or playing in Israeli settlements in the occupied West Bank.

*Read the letter sent to FIFA President, Gianni Infantino, on June 28th, 2017 by clicking on the photo.*



## *Support the Three Tournaments!*

The annual Tournament for Athletes with Disabilities and Ramadan Football Tournaments are three of RCF's largest Gaza efforts. They are not possible without your generous support. Thank you!

By donating today, you will help implement this winter's 2017 Rachel Corrie Tournament for Athletes with Disabilities and to replenish funds that support our other Gaza events in the year ahead. **Your donation is essential to these efforts and makes a huge difference!**

RCF funding provides for the basics that make these tournaments extra special to the community: preparations, stadium rental, supplies, new footballs, small prizes, and a community iftar (breaking fast during Ramadan).

Tournaments are planned and run by organizers in Gaza. On-the-ground project ownership empowers our partners to develop excellent leadership, communications, and organizing skills and provides economic opportunity for local workers and vendors.

To learn more, see photos and videos of the tournaments, and to make a tax-deductible contribution, please visit us at [rachelcorriefoundation.org](http://rachelcorriefoundation.org).



## Gaza Situation Update

As the two Rachel Corrie Ramadan tournaments were underway, geopolitical changes severely worsened conditions for the people of Gaza. In anticipation of electricity cuts, tournament organizers accelerated the schedule of games to avoid holding them when access to electricity would be even more severely restricted. As of July, the average Gazan's access to daily electricity dropped from four to six, to as little as two to three hours a day.

Electricity blackouts have been a chronic problem in the Gaza Strip for the past decade. Unlike other contexts, these blackouts in Gaza are explicitly political rather than a product of mismanagement or natural disaster. Since its pullout in 2005, Israel continues to be the Occupying Power in the Gaza Strip and deploys restrictions on access to electricity as a collective punishment on the whole Gaza population out of an inhumane and colonial logic of domination and control.

Most recently, Gaza's only power plant ran out of fuel in April 2017 after emergency funds from Qatar and Turkey were exhausted. It is now completely dependent on Israeli and Egyptian power plants and diesel shipments for energy. Between April and June, Israel supplied about a quarter of Gaza's electricity needs resulting in a ration of four to five hours of electricity per day per household.

The occupation of the Gaza Strip is particularly harsh. Economic, political and humanitarian conditions are already stifling and freedom of movement is largely absent. Ability to travel is often restricted even to those requiring emergency medical treatment. Under such conditions, life in Gaza is already precarious, especially when another war could mean aerial bombardment upon a captive population in one of the most densely populated places in the world. In 2007, Israel imposed a military siege on the Strip following election of the Hamas political party. In recent years, the Palestinian Authority – a Fatah party dominated organization established during the Oslo Accords of the mid-1990s as the administrative apparatus for Palestinians living under Israeli occupation – has demonstrated an increasing willingness to collaborate with Israel to put pressure on Hamas by worsening conditions for the Palestinian people living under its control in Gaza.

In May 2017, Palestinian Authority President Mahmoud Abbas asked Israel to cut electricity to the Strip in order to exert further pressure on Hamas. Israel accepted Abbas' request and reduced the electricity delivered to the Strip by 30 percent.

The impact of these political maneuvers rests on the vast majority of Palestinians living in the Gaza Strip and particularly the poorest and most marginalized. Indeed, this is what Israel and the Palestinian Authority have hoped will result in public outcry aimed at the Hamas leadership. Further aggravating conditions, the recent power cuts were implemented during the holy month of Ramadan and as intense summer heat waves began.

Nearly two million people live in the Gaza Strip. Of those, 1,300,000 are refugees, making Gaza home to the most densely confined refugee population in the world. World Refugee Day 2017, commemorated June 20th, was a shocking reminder of the dire state of international influence and responsibility for Palestinian refugees, which is also the most protracted refugee situation in the world. Tens of thousands of Palestinian refugees from the 1948 Nakba were displaced to the Gaza Strip. Today, they and their descendants make up a majority of the population. For 69 years, Israel has denied this refugee population the right of return, which is a cornerstone of international humanitarian and human rights law. As of June 2017, Israel has illegally occupied Gaza and maintained ten years of a military siege on the Strip. On June 20th, the people of Gaza were living on 2.5 hours of electricity per day.

Despite living under inhumane conditions and sustaining repeated tragedies, the people of Gaza demonstrate an astonishing level of steadfastness, ingenuity and compassion. Nonetheless, the summer heat has compounded the tight restrictions on access to electricity. Critical facilities providing health, water and sanitation, and solid waste collection services are fueled by emergency fuel delivered by the United Nations. The reserves are only expected to last until October 2017. 108 million litres of mostly untreated sewage are discharged into the Mediterranean every day as a result of electricity and fuel shortages. Most families in Gaza receive running water for only 6 to 8 hours, once every four days, due to insufficient power supplies.

For more information and overview on Gaza's history, heritage and people, visit the RCF Gaza Resource Page under the Gaza Projects tab on our website.



Letter from the Palestinian Authority to the Israeli Minister of Finance requesting they reduce electricity delivered to the Gaza Strip by 30 percent. The letter was sent on 15 May 2017, the annual commemoration of Nakba Day.

## ***RCF is hiring an Executive Director!***

The Rachel Corrie Foundation for Peace and Justice is excited to announce that after nearly 15 years of work in Olympia, Gaza and around the world, we are in the process of hiring our first full-time Executive Director.

Over the past decade and a half, the Foundation has been led by Cindy and Craig Corrie whose roles have adapted over the years. While the Corries will continue to play a crucial role as founders and visionaries, this moment marks significant growth in the organization's capacity to fulfill its mission of continuing the work that Rachel Corrie began. Cindy Corrie stated, "Craig and I look forward to continuing our volunteer work with the foundation in new and creative ways, but also to spending more days with our children and grandchildren, traveling and serving all of our communities. With help from our supporters, we are heartened to see the Rachel Corrie Foundation take this essential step toward the future and toward sustainability."

## ***2017 Rachel Corrie Memorial Scholarship Awarded***



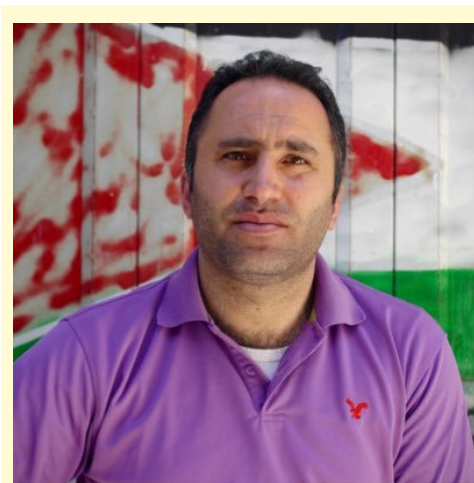
### **Congratulations to Joshua Pollock who is the 2017 Rachel Corrie Memorial Scholarship recipient!**

Joshua is a writer and translator living in Olympia, Washington. As a student at The Evergreen State College, his scholarly foci are international politics, writing, and research. Joshua's practice seeks to examine and subvert dominant socio-political discursive formations and institutions through research-based literature and creative nonfiction. He has translated the Mexican poet José Vicente Anaya and is currently working on a poetic project titled "Persistent Stare," which interrogates subjectification in the belly of empire, considering the long reach of America's everywhere war, from Iraq and Afghanistan to Gaza to our own homes. In addition to his translation and poetic work, Joshua has studied the politics and history of the Middle East and written about the Kurdish region in Northern Syria. After graduating from Evergreen, he plans to pursue graduate studies and expand his writing practice.

Issa Amro, a Palestinian human rights defender and founder of Youth Against Settlements in Hebron in the south West Bank, now faces 18 charges in Israeli military court that date as far back as 2010. Youth Against Settlements employs activism and direct action to challenge Israeli settler colonies in Hebron (illegal under international law) and to resist severe restrictions on movement imposed by the Israeli military on Palestinians who live in the city. The charges against Amro are clearly an attempt to stifle his influential rights-based work. The U.S. State Department, UN Office of the High Commissioner on Human Rights and Amnesty International have all voiced strong concern about his case. Amnesty International called the charges against Amro "baseless" and "politically motivated." Israeli court prosecutions of Palestinians typically result in years of imprisonment based on 'confidential' evidence, which even defense's lawyers may not see.

Cindy and Craig Corrie have visited Hebron and met members of Youth Against Settlements on two occasions. They met Issa Amro at a conference and Capitol Hill hearing in Washington, DC in 2016 and again in October 2016 in Hebron where he led their Interfaith Peace Builders' delegation tour of the area. The Corries have also visited an Israeli military court like the one in which Amro is to be tried. In November 2011, the Israeli newspaper Ha'aretz reported that "Virtually all - 99.74 percent, to be exact - of cases heard by the military courts in the territories end in a conviction, according to data in the military courts' annual report."

## ***Human rights defender, Issa Amro, facing Israeli military court***





## *Interview with Basel El Maqosui, Gazan artist featured in Olympia Spring Arts Walk*



**Basel El Maqosui** is one of seven artists from Gaza who contributed leaves to the Olympia-Rafah Solidarity Mural Project. His photography was featured in this year's Olympia Spring Arts Walk. Basel is also a painter and video artist. We asked him to tell us about his process and projects. His responses are presented below.

### **What inspires you to keep creating? What do you hope your artwork will inspire?**

*Gaza is my first source of inspiration: the lives of people, the suffering we are experiencing from the siege and the closure of travel terminals. "Love life, appreciate death, but make beauty out of both of them,"— this is a lesson I learned from Syrian/German Professor Marwan Qassab Bashi who I met with in Amman, Jordan, in 2000-2003 at several contemporary art workshops. My message was, is, and always will be to value life, live and be happy, and share positive messages.*

### **What does Gaza mean to you?**

*Gaza, for many people, is always a question mark, even for me. Whenever I see Gaza in the media, I do not recognize it. It is so different from what I know and what I live through.*

*In the media, Gaza is the siege, shelling, explosions, rockets, violence, and the struggle, terrorism, and resistance.*

*For me, Gaza is my coffee in the morning, children walking to school, the sea breeze on my face, the shadow of the sun on a blooming flower, a little girl selling chewing gum and fine papers at the traffic light, the doodles of young boys on a wall, the little fear on my 9-year-old's face when the power goes out, and his shy smile when I put on the lamp or candle.*

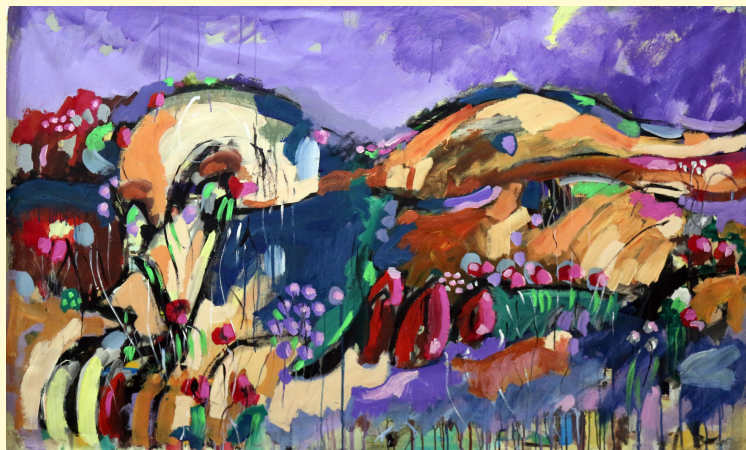
*Gaza is the restricted access areas, and lights sparkling on the surface of the sea, closed borders, and laughing with my friends smoking shisha while watching the sunset, the farmer staring at his land, and a teacher lady, angry drivers, and welcoming shopkeepers.*

*The Gaza I know is not the one in the media. The Gaza I know is full of life, life with all that it can contain: pain, happiness, success, failure, despair, hope, darkness and light.*

*Gaza is not black and white. In Gaza, there are all the colors of the rainbow.*

### **What motivates you to do your artwork?**

*The space around us is limited but the ideas inside us are unlimited. As a group of young artists, we come together to think about how we can break out from here and reach the outside, and how we can open small windows and breathe fresh air. We deeply believe in a collective co-operation and try to develop together the creative aspects in our own art movement in this restricted and cramped space – Gaza. We express ourselves through our culture and artistic language. A language, that is part of us. Gaza is rich in details. That is why I try to illustrate using new, descriptive colors.*



Colors of Love – Love Flowers, 2006 – 2015



# SAVE *the* DATE



**Vancouver Peace & Justice Fair**

Esther Short Park - Vancouver, WA



**PEACEWORKS**

**From Marches to Movements**

Kenneth J. Minnaert Theater @ SPSCC



**Rachel Corrie Memorial  
Lecture**

South Puget Sound Community  
College



**Human Rights Day Celebration**

Abigail Stuart House



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Foundation for Peace & Justice

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