



לשכת היועץ המדיני לראש הממשלה  
Foreign Policy Department

August 9, 2007

כ"ה אב תשס"ז

Mr. Zachary Lockman, President  
Middle East Studies Association of North America, Inc.  
1219 N Santa Rita Ave.  
The University of Arizona  
Tucson, AZ 85721  
USA

Dear Mr. Lockman,

On behalf of Prime Minister Ehud Olmert, we acknowledge receipt of your letter dated May 6, 2007, the contents of which have been noted.

The State of Israel, through the Coordinator of Government Activities in the Territories, makes every effort to allow Palestinian students in Judea & Samaria to study regularly and with no interruptions. To this end, the Civil Administration in Judea & Samaria employs a special coordinator whose exclusive task is to assist the Palestinians in maintaining a regular school routine, despite the harsh security reality in the area – a reality which compels the IDF to continue its security activity in Palestinian cities and establish checkpoints for the purpose of preventing terror attacks.

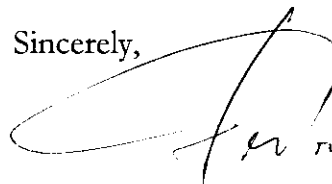
Israel provides freedom of movement for Palestinian teachers at checkpoints throughout Judea & Samaria, and continues to issue entry permits for Palestinian teachers working in Arab schools in east Jerusalem. During 2006 almost 6,600 free movement permits in Judea & Samaria were issued for teachers, inspectors, examiners, members of the Palestinian Ministry of Education and employees of the education system. Moreover, 98 special permits were issued recently for education personnel in east Jerusalem in order to allow them to arrive daily at the center for the evaluation of matriculation exams in the city of Bethlehem. Special representatives of the Civil Administration and the Coordination and Liaison Offices in Judea & Samaria were stationed at checkpoints in order to ensure regular freedom of movement for Palestinians in general, and teachers and students in particular. Israel also allowed for the regular transfer of textbooks and other teaching materials to all schools throughout Judea & Samaria. Operating on the principle that all human beings have the right to education, the State of Israel, through the education coordinator of the Civil Administration, even authorized the entry of textbooks for Palestinian prisoners held in Israeli jails.

Israel also ensured that matriculation and other exams in Judea and Samaria would take place on time, including in east Jerusalem and among Palestinian prisoners in Israeli jails. To this end, we made certain that the exam forms would be transferred unhindered through the checkpoints, along with thousands of inspectors, examiners and other employees of the Palestinian Education & Culture Ministry, and that the exam notebooks would be returned to the various examination centers in Judea and Samaria. Official data show that over 34,000 Palestinian students took their matriculation exams this year.

IDF forces in Judea & Samaria did not bomb or demolish a single school, university or educational institute. Apart from instances in which there is an urgent security need, they refrain from even entering Palestinian education institutes. It may be worth noting that this principle is upheld despite the fact that Palestinian education institutes are often cynically used by terrorist organizations for the spreading of hatred and incitement against Israel, the storage of weaponry and the launching of terrorist attacks against IDF soldiers and innocent Israelis.

The key to ensuring complete freedom of movement for Palestinians in general, and students in particular, lies in the hands of the Palestinians and their leaders. The IDF makes every effort to uphold freedom of education, but its primary responsibility is for the security and safety of the State of Israel and its citizens. Only when the Palestinian radicals place education above terrorism on their list of priorities will there be real change.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Einat', written in a cursive style.

(Ms.) Einat Gluska  
Assistant Foreign Policy Adviser  
to the Prime Minister