

Israeli Military Requests Extension

23 November 2009

Update on Berlanty Assam, Bethlehem University Student

27 days since she was blindfolded, handcuffed, and taken from Bethlehem to Gaza

1. Have you seen the 3 minute CNN video taped interview of Berlanty Azzam with Brother Robert Smith from Bethlehem University visiting at her in Gaza? Here is the URL:

<http://www.cnn.com/2009/WORLD/meast/10/31/west.bank.college.student/index.html>

2. So, what happened with the Israeli Courts yesterday concerning Berlanty?

This Israeli military was supposed to file with the Court a report on the Administrative Hearing it held with Berlanty on Nov 17th (after having taken her forcibly from Bethlehem on Oct 28th).

However, instead of filing a report, the Israeli military requested a two (2) day extension.

The Israeli High Court granted this extension until 11am on 24 November.

It is looking like we are in the final hours before a decision will be reached by the Israeli High Court. We can't give up now! A call to action – please!

Please, will you send ONE LAST email message to the following (and others you might think appropriate – such as your local newspaper editor, your elected representatives, etc)?

Mr. Daniel Rubinstein
US Counsel General in Jerusalem
UsConGenJerusalem@state.gov

Mr. Euhud Barak
Israeli Deputy Prime Minister and Minister of Defense:
pniot@mod.gov.il

Major General (Res.) Amos Gilad
Israeli Coordinator of Government Activities in the Territories (COGAT)
cogatspokesman@gmail.com

Mr. Netanyahu
Israeli Prime Minister
Prime.Minister'sOffice@it.pmo.gov.il

Israeli Minister of Education Gideon Sa'ar:
info@education.gov.il

Israeli Minister of Justice Yaakov Ne'eman:
mancal@justice.gov.il

Your own elected representatives in the USA, UK, Ireland, Spain, The Netherlands, Philippines, Spain, Denmark, Canada, Italy, France, Germany, etc.

Recommended or suggested wording is below and also attached as a word document:

I am writing concerning Berlanty Azzam who was forcibly removed by the Israeli military from Bethlehem on 28 October 2009 and brought to Gaza blindfolded and handcuffed.

I agree with what Israeli Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu said at his Cabinet meeting on Sunday, 22 November, in marking the International Day for the Elimination of Violence against Women being held in Israeli this week - and I ask that you request that he immediately apply this statement in the case of Berlanty Azzam. Prime Minister Netanyahu said, "The most important thing is to hold to a policy of zero-tolerance for violence in general and for violence against women in particular. I think that while this will resonate in Israeli society."

Berlanty is a 22 year old woman who has been enrolled at Bethlehem University without any incident or accusation of harm or injury to anyone since August 2005.

I respectfully request that on compassionate and humanitarian grounds you do all in your power to require Prime Minister Netanyahu and his government to immediately return Ms. Berlanty Azzam to Bethlehem University to complete her studies.

When Berlanty was taken away from Bethlehem on 28 October, she had just 2 months to go before completing her bachelors' degree at the Vatican-sponsored and De La Salle Christian Brother conducted Bethlehem University.

Each day that Berlanty is not allowed to return to classes at Bethlehem University, she is losing a valuable academic day towards the completion of her bachelors' degree.

I believe that education is a fundamental right and a force for moderation. As Secretary Clinton remarked in her speech at the Forum for the Future on November 3 in Morocco, the United States is actively committed to increasing educational opportunities for students. This applies to students such as Berlanty Azzam.

I hope to see Berlanty Azzam's case resolved in a positive manner immediately so that she can complete her degree and go on to realize her educational and professional aspirations.

I believe permitting her to return to Bethlehem to complete her degree also would be in the spirit of the "Agreement on Movement and Access" negotiated between the Palestinian Authority and Israel in 2005 – as well as in the spirit of other international agreements Israel has signed.

Thank you for your prompt attention to this request. I await your response.

Thank you so much for your support – you are making a real difference!

Blessings to you,