



***The Rebuilding Alliance***

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July 3, 2008

Principal Basema Alkom  
Seir Girls School  
Seir Village, Palestine

Dear Principal Alkom,

Mr. Bassam Aramin and Mr. Zohar Shapira, co-founders of the Palestinian-Israeli organization Combatants for Peace, have asked me to write to you to formally invite the Seir Girls School to join us in a special project for children in memory of Abir Aramin. The project is called "Abir's Garden: a Safe Place to Grow." On behalf of the Rebuilding Alliance in partnership with Combatants for Peace, I invite the Seir Girls School to become the second school in the project allowing us to build a playground at your school in a process that brings people together to help.

The Rebuilding Alliance rebuilds communities in conflict zones and works to make them safe. We helped the village of Al Aqabah rebuild its kindergarten and through that, are working to save the whole village from demolition through the Israeli courts, meeting with embassies and U.S. Congress on their behalf, and bringing key people to the U.S. for speaking tours. We have completed projects with Palestinian families and communities in Gaza, in East Jerusalem, and in the West Bank, often bringing Israelis and Palestinians together in the rebuilding process. The story of each place and project draws thousands of small donations to make our work possible.

As you may know, Abir Aramin, 10 yrs old, was shot by Israeli border police as she left school on January 16, 2007. Soon after, we contacted the Aramin family who asked for nothing for themselves, but for a way to help Abir's friends in their loss. The first playground in the Abir's Garden Project was constructed at Abir's own school, the Anata School for Girls, by Combatants for Peace guided by professional contractors. We now invite your school to become the 2<sup>nd</sup> school in the project because Mr. Bassam Aramin grew-up in Seir and Abir, along with her brothers and sisters, loved to visit her grandparents and cousins there.

The Abir's Garden Project is more than a playground. It is about justice prevailing over violence, genuine partners for peace, and a precedent-setting legal case to make soldiers stop shooting at children. At its heart, these Combatants for Peace are working together to build a beautiful place where children can be children, where they can go to be safe, to step out of the Occupation into a world of play and creativity, and begin to heal.

If you will welcome the Abir's Garden Project to your school, please work with Mr. Aramin to set a date for a visit by representatives of Combatants for Peace, including the landscape architect team. In that first meeting they will describe a design process that will seek input from your staff, and the parents at your school build a playground in Abir Aramin's name that, with the help of donors worldwide, will provide the children of Seir a safe place to grow. I look forward to your reply.

Sincerely,

Donna Baranski-Walker  
Executive Director

CC: Regional Minister of Education

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