

## CASE STUDY 5

### Huwaida

#### Nonviolent resister

Huwaida Arraf helped start the International Solidarity Movement (ISM), a nonviolent campaign to resist the Israeli occupation.

She was born in the United States of America in 1976. Her parents were Christian Palestinians from Galilee, but they moved to the USA because her father felt Arabs were second-class citizens in Israel.

From visiting Israel since she was a child, Huwaida learnt about Palestinian and Israeli life. When she was older she worked to help Palestinian and Israeli young people meet each other in peace.

Huwaida founded ISM in 2001 during the Second Intifada, the Palestinian uprising. ISM activists from around the world came to support Palestinian protests and resistance. Huwaida was arrested for taking food and medical help to Palestinians under siege in the Church of the Nativity in Bethlehem in 2002, but continued to campaign.

She says that Palestinians have the right to fight Israel's forces under international law, but nevertheless calls for people to choose nonviolent action:

**“What is needed is nonviolent direct action against the occupation. This includes roadblock removal, boycotts, refusing to obey curfew orders, blocking roads, refusing to show ID cards or even burning them. Yes, the Israeli army and settlers will use violence. Yes, people will get killed and injured. They are now, also. Hamas claims it has many men ready to be suicide bombers – we advocate that these men offer themselves as martyrs by standing on a settler road and blocking it from traffic [instead]. This is no less of a jihad. This is no less noble than carrying out a suicide operation.”**

Huwaida Arraf and Adam Shapiro (2002),  
quoted on [www.mondoweiss.net](http://www.mondoweiss.net)



**“It’s not that I didn’t believe in dialogue. But there was this desperate escalation and I thought people should take to the streets.”**

Quoted in *The Guardian* newspaper, 2002.

Since 2001 hundreds of ISM activists have campaigned in the West Bank and Gaza. Two have been killed by Israeli forces. Huwaida also helped organise ships trying to take aid supplies to Palestinians in Gaza, which was cut off by Israel.

Having worked as a lawyer in Palestine for years, Huwaida now lives in the USA with her husband Adam and their children.

**Hamas:** a Palestinian political and militant Islamic group that uses violence against Israel.

This case study was compiled using  
information from *The Guardian* newspaper.