



JUNE 2019 - NORTH AMERICA TOUR

Friends of Mossawa (FoM) and the Mossawa Center recently returned from a two-week outreach program in the United States and Canada. The tour, which was led and organized by Friends of Mossawa, included meetings and events in Washington, D.C, Toronto, Ottawa, New York, and New Jersey.

Throughout the tour, Friends of Mossawa Coordinator, Suha Salman-Mousa, and the Director of the Mossawa Center, Jafar Farah, sought to promote the voices of Arab Palestinian citizens of Israel among the public and policy-makers, bringing attention to the ramifications of the Trump administration's peace plan, raising concerns regarding Israel's identification as a Jewish nation-state, and sharing the Mossawa Center's vision for solidarity between marginalized communities in Israel. Additionally, the delegation called on North Americans to emphasize social justice, self-determination and civil rights in discussions surrounding Israel and Palestine.

With the backing of a large cadre of dedicated supporters, the delegation was able to meet with over eight-hundred individuals and twenty-four political offices over the course of two weeks.

We would like to thank our members and supporters for making this tour a successful one. Thank you for your hard work, commitment, hospitality and dedication to Palestinian rights. To become a member of Friends of Mossawa, please contact our Coordinator, Suha Salman-Mousa, at usa-mossawa@mossawa.org.

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Reception at the Galilee House - Virginia



Our tour began with a warm reception organized by Saba Shami, the Chair of the New Dominion PAC. The reception, which took place at Nada and Nazeeh Kiblawi's Galilee House, included a discussion on the implications of Israel's April elections and the upcoming snap elections, which are set to take place in September. Prior to the reception, the delegation joined Nada and Nazeeh Kiblawi at their fundraiser for UNRWA alongside other Palestinian refugees who have experienced first-hand the crucial impact of the organization, which has come under attack by the Trump administration. These included Ghassan Salameh, Khaled Saffuri, and Rawan Damen, who supported Friends of Mossawa throughout the remainder of the tour.

Meetings on Capitol Hill - Washington, D.C.

Farah and Salman-Mousa held meetings throughout the week with policy-makers and members of Congress. Notably, they had the pleasure of meeting Rep. Don Beyer of Virginia and staffers from the offices of Rep. Alma Adams, presidential candidate Sen. Bernie Sanders, and Sen. Chuck Schumer. Sen. Tim Kaine's office hosted a congressional briefing for Friends of Mossawa to educate staffers from both houses of Congress, including from the offices of presidential candidate Sen. Elizabeth Warren and Sen. Diane Feinstein, on topics relevant to Palestinian Arab citizens of Israel and the Trump administration's proposed peace plan.



Friends of Mossawa, the Arab American Institute, and the Foundation for Middle East Peace co-host a public event

Friends of Mossawa's first public event, 'The Deal of the Century: What about Palestinian citizens of Israel?', was opened by FoM Coordinator, Suha Salman-Mousa. Panelists included Mossawa Center Director Jafar Farah, Dr. Shibley Telhami of the University of Maryland, Arab American Institute Executive Director Maya Berry, and J Street President Jeremy Ben-Ami. The panel was moderated by Lara Friedman, the President of the Foundation for Middle East Peace. The discussion addressed Israel's recent and upcoming elections, the Jewish Nation-State Law, and the "Deal of the Century," and was attended by over 120 people.



Watch the entire discussion [here!](#)

Public Event at the National Interest Foundation - Washington, D.C.

Friends of Mossawa was invited by the Director of the National Interest Foundation, Khaled Saffuri, to speak at a public event in Washington, D.C. At the event, which was moderated by Khaled Elgindy, the Director of the Mossawa Center, Jafar Farah, emphasized that the Arab Palestinian minority is essential to the achievement of a just and sustainable peace. Panelists also discussed the shared struggle for equality facing ethnic minorities in Israel.



Watch the entire discussion [here!](#)

Friends of Mossawa has reached Canada! We would like to thank our dedicated supporters for making our first visit to Canada as rich and successful as it was. Special thanks to Youssef Abed Alnour, Shawki Fahel, Munder Jubran, Samia and Samir Jubran, Siham Abo Sitta, Dr. Samir Jabour, Dr. Atef Kubrosy, Iyad Gharbieh, and Farah Farah.



Discussion at the Palestine House - Toronto

At the Palestine House in Toronto, the delegation met with leaders of the Palestinian Canadian community who are active in promoting Palestinian rights in Canada. Led by Dr. Nazeeh Khatatbeh and Dr. Ahmad Qais, the discussion focused on strengthening Palestinian networks, as well as the importance of Palestinian unity. Farah spoke about the "Deal of the Century" and its implications for the region, the work of the Mossawa Center, and the need for truth and reconciliation in building peace. During the event, FoM presented products from the Jisr az-Zarqa Women's Empowerment Project.



Meetings with Canadian MPs, the Palestinian Ambassador to Canada, and the Canadian Global Affairs Department - Ottawa

The delegation met with members of the Canadian Parliament from the Liberal Party and the New Democratic Party at the initiative of MP Marwan Tabbara and the Palestinian Ambassador to Canada, Nabil Maarouf. Several of the MPs noted that although they have visited the region, this was the first time that they were able to hear from Palestinian citizens of Israel themselves. The delegation also met with representatives of the Canadian Global Affairs Department, discussing the status of the Arab Palestinian minority in light of the passage of the Jewish Nation-State Law, as well as the Mossawa Center's analysis of the recent and upcoming elections in Israel and their implications for the region



Meeting with the Ambassador of the Palestinian Mission to the UN- New York



The delegation met with Riyadh Mansour, the Ambassador of the Palestinian Mission to the UN, to discuss recent political developments in the region, involvement of the Arab Palestinian minority in the peace process, and strengthening the relationship between the Arab Palestinian minority in Israel and the Palestinian community in North America. Mansour also presented the work of the delegation, which is heading the G77.

Public Event at Darna Restaurant with the Arab Community - New Jersey

At the invitation of Maher Abd El-Qader, Dr. Mahmoud Aqel, Dr. Saif Titi, and the Arab American Leadership Council, over one-hundred Palestinians gathered at Darna Restaurant in Paterson, New Jersey, to listen to Farah and Salman-Mousa speak about the Mossawa Center and its work, its vision for peace, and the role of the Arab Palestinian minority in the peace process. The community leaders expressed their interest in promoting and supporting FoM's mission and objectives in the United States.



Roundtable with civil society organisations active in the UN - New York

During a roundtable discussion organized by the Church Center of the United Nations with the Israel Palestine Civil Society Working Group, the Mossawa Center called upon civil society organizations active in the UN to promote minority rights protection in any future peace talks. Farah discussed the implications of American foreign policy on Arab Palestinian citizens of Israel, who constitute 22% of the population. He also highlighted the importance of civil society in promoting peace, human rights, and equality.



Connecting with the Jewish community in New Rochelle - New York



During an event hosted at Temple Israel of New Rochelle, important questions were raised about peace and reconciliation. Farah called upon the audience to reject the State of Israel's insistence on second-class citizenship for the Arab Palestinian minority, and to join the effort to promote the civil rights of Arab Palestinian citizens of Israel. The event was moderated by Howard Horowitz who emphasized the importance of exploring alternative narratives and experiences in order to better understand the realities in Palestine and Israel.

Meeting at 92nd Street Y - New York

Friends of Mossawa met with Rabbi Rubenstein, the Director of 92nd Street Y, the largest Jewish community center in New York. During the meeting, the delegation discussed future cooperation, such as joint educational programs and organizing future public events about peace in the region. The center previously hosted a public event on the Jewish Nation-State Law.

We would like to thank our members and supporters once again for making the tour a success. As a result, Friends of Mossawa has strengthened its network and raised awareness of the challenges facing Arab Palestinian citizens of Israel.

Stay tuned for more information on our upcoming fall delegation. We invite you to take part and support us so that we can continue our important work.