

With the closure continuing indefinitely, HaMoked decided to both initiate activity to protest this action, and to investigate further measures to increase access to HaMoked's services for the vast majority of its clients who are prohibited from traveling to East Jerusalem.

HaMoked initiated a meeting between 28 Israeli and Palestinian human rights groups resulting in an April 21 joint press conference and statement to protest the closure and the subsequent denial of human rights, including the right to work, and the blocking of access to basic needs and services which East Jerusalem provides for most Palestinians from the territories. The closure has served not only to cut off Palestinians in the territories from East Jerusalem and Israel, but also to separate the Palestinians of the northern West Bank from those in the southern West Bank, as the only road connecting these two areas goes through Jerusalem. The further deterioration of economic, social and medical conditions, in addition to the basic rights to work and travel, motivated HaMoked to initiate this protest.

In May, HaMoked petitioned the High Court on behalf of a Gazan doctor prevented by the closure from traveling to Jerusalem where his wife and child live. In 1993, HaMoked has obtained entry permits into Israel for work, medical treatment, and studies for 36 of its clients and is presently processing 38 other requests.

HaMoked continues to receive complaints from outreach workers in the territories as part of the ongoing program with Defense of Children International, and a HaMoked attorney travels weekly throughout the West Bank to proceed with cases. HaMoked is exploring methods to increase outreach and views it as its task to reach this population and process all cases of abuse.

#### December 1992 Deportations

The December 1992 deportations of over 400 Palestinians accused of membership in Hamas and the Islamic Jihad were permitted by the Israeli High Court of Justice as they lifted the interim injunction which HaMoked and other human rights advocates had received from the court. After the deportation, HaMoked participated in several additional High Court petitions during the first months of 1993 which concerned notification of the deportees' families; the welfare of the deportees; and the right to appeal.

On January 28, 1993, the High Court ruled on the legality of the deportation. The ruling states that the general deportation order, which does not allow an appeal before deportation, is illegal and cannot be used in the future. Yet the High Court ruled the individual deportation orders valid, and did not require the deportees' return. The accumulative pressure from this advocacy contributed to the gesture by the Israeli authorities to bring back the deportees who returned in two groups, one in June 1993 and the second in December 1993. Several deportees who chose not to return remain in Lebanon.

#### Family Reunification

Due to the harsh regulations concerning legal residency in the West Bank, many spouses (usually wives) and children of Palestinians who were not here during the 1967 census or were born outside the

territories are not considered legal residents. Instead they are only allowed to "visit" their husbands and families on short term visitors' permits issued by the Civil Administration. When these permits expire, visitors are required to exit the territories before requesting another permit.

In 1990, the Association for Civil Rights in Israel reached an agreement with the State's Attorney whereby first degree relatives of Palestinians who entered the territories before June 5, 1990, were entitled to long term visitor's permits, renewable without exiting the territories. In 1992, HaMoked succeeded in extending this agreement to August 31, 1992, thereby allowing thousands of families to remain together without fear of expulsion. The success was the result of HaMoked's aggressive legal advocacy with 56 petitions to the Israeli High Court on behalf of over 350 Palestinian families - as well as the ground breaking coalition with a broad spectrum of Palestinian and Israeli human rights organizations (The Association for Civil Rights in Israel, Al-Haq, B'Tselem, PHRIC (the Palestinian Human Rights Information Center), the Women's Human Rights Project, the Israel Section of Defense of Children International, and the Quakers).

In 1993, HaMoked, supported by the coalition, continued to petition the High Court (16 cases) on behalf of Palestinians not included in the 1992 agreement, and who have been threatened with deportation, and these 16 petitions remain pending. This resulted from meetings with army senior officials where an understanding was reached that the military would not deport those on expired permits if HaMoked would no longer bring High Court petitions. Thus, HaMoked and the coalition brought only emergency petitions where deportation was threatened.

In June 1993, HaMoked succeeded in obtaining the cancellation of a newly imposed 1,000 shekel cash deposit required for visitors' permits for the summer of 1993 (to be returned 21 days after the visitor exits). Up until now, there has been a requirement to sign a guarantee of 5,000 shekels collected if the visitor does not leave at the end of the period. After this new procedure was published in May, HaMoked immediately lodged a protest with the authorities as the burden of a cash deposit would prevent many family visits. The authorities promptly responded with a decision to cancel this requirement.

On August 22, 1993, in a State's Attorney announcement to the High Court to the pending HaMoked petitions, the authorities have offered permanent residency to all those nuclear families covered by the 1992 agreement, with a promise of 2,000 applications granted annually. As important, marriage is now a criterion for granting family reunification, whereas before this announcement the criteria were governmental interest and an undefined humanitarian category. The quota of 2,000 is approximately a doubling of the previous quota, and HaMoked continues to clarify points of this announcement, and is soon expecting official confirmation of the agreement extended to include all those who entered from September 1, 1992 to August 31, 1993. HaMoked continues its advocacy for extension of this period and on behalf of all those family members, nuclear and extended, who are not covered by this agreement. HaMoked initiated a legal document prepared by the coalition regarding the definition of the

family with anthropological background on the concept of the "extended" family in Palestinian society - as distinguished from the Western concept of "nuclear" family - to be included in the criteria for family reunification. This document was submitted to the Israeli and Palestinian delegations to the multilateral peace talks with the recommendation not to define the criteria for the quota of families being granted family reunification by nuclear family standards.

HaMoked is in the process of preparing a comprehensive report on family reunification and visitors' permits. It will continue its advocacy on behalf of residency issues to ensure that all Palestinians are able to conduct a normal family life without fear of separation.

#### Exit Permits

HaMoked's 1992 report on travel restrictions had found strong indications that permits are denied to punish family members or residents of an area where people have been charged with security offenses, and has been successful in obtaining permits for a majority of clients who have been denied exit, as discussed above.

An unpublished directive has required all West Bank and East Jerusalem young men from age 16 to 35 to remain abroad for at least nine months, regardless of their security record. In 1992, HaMoked petitioned the High Court on this issue, and as a result, the order has been made public for the first time. The Coordinator of Activities in the territories announced and later confirmed in a June 1993 letter to HaMoked, that starting July 18, 1993 "residents of the areas over the age of 25 will be allowed to go abroad without having to obtain a special permit to return to the areas before the end of nine months." Following this partial victory, HaMoked continues its advocacy on behalf of 16-24 year-old males who must still wait nine months before return - and freedom of movement in general for all Palestinians from the territories.

#### ORGANIZATIONAL STRUCTURE

HaMoked began 1993 with two coordinators, an administrative assistant, secretary, part-time fundraiser, and a part-time attorney. In May of 1993, HaMoked expanded its office staff: the part-time attorney took on a full-time position; and a new part-time attorney was hired. This increase of legal staff, while maintaining the use of its consulting attorney for certain cases, was needed to fill the growing need for legal advocacy by HaMoked on behalf of its clients. With the leaving of its part-time fundraiser, HaMoked hired a new fundraiser in June and added the task of report writing to constitute one three-quarter time position. This enables HaMoked to expand its writing of reports on a more professional level. Thus, HaMoked now has seven staff members.

#### New Office

HaMoked moved into its new office in May 1993 located at 4 Abu Obeidah Street in East Jerusalem on the same street as the previous office. As HaMoked expanded its work, the old storefront office space became increasingly inadequate. HaMoked renovated the new office, bought office furniture and equipment, and has been able to expand its staff, work area and record keeping, and, consequently, can serve the growing number of clients.