

**Al-Quds University**

Jerusalem

**President's Office**

**Sari Nusseibeh, Ph.D.**  
**Professor of Philosophy**



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أ.د. سري نسيبه

أستاذ الفلسفة

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**Secretary of State**

**Hilary Clinton**

**Via**

**HE the Consul-General**

**Of the United States of America**

**Dear Secretary of State,**

Had it not been for the direct intervention of then National Security Advisor, and later Secretary of State Condoleeza Rice in 2003, the main campus of the University of which I am President, al-Quds University, would have been cut in half through the building of Israel's security wall. Today, and after years of procedural and legal fighting over this issue – borne of the forced fact that our Palestinian institution lies partly within and partly outside the extended borderline of Jerusalem - I can safely say that if it does not come about through your own direct intervention, our academic degrees will continue to be denied accreditation by the Israeli authorities.

Besides this circumstance adversely affecting the daily lives and careers of Palestinian Jerusalemites, Israel's position is interpreted by Palestinians to mean that it is not serious about reaching a two-state compromise where East Jerusalem can serve as capital of the Palestinian State, and where Palestinian cultural and educational institutions can have their rightful place. Conversely, nothing could give more hope for a possible future settlement – not even, I dare say, the releasing of prisoners or allowing more ammunition to reach the PA - than having Israel declare its decision, as an exceptional political move of goodwill, to consider our university degrees to be accredited, on a par with all other Palestinian universities. (Paradoxically, Israel recognizes the degrees conferred even by the Hamas-

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influenced Gaza University). Not only could this be regarded as a fulfillment of the famous pledge made by Mr. Peres on the signing of the Oslo Accords to protect cultural Palestinian institutions in East Jerusalem: it would more importantly signal a real step forward in the dormant peace process.

In my humble view, such a gesture, offered to and through President Abbas, would greatly boost his standing among his people, as well as the standing of moderate voices in the region. But apart from anything else, your intervention in this specific area of cultural, educational and institutional autonomy on behalf of Jerusalem's disenfranchised Palestinian community would surely highlight the best of what America stands for.

Sincerely,

*Sari Nusseibeh*

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