

**Joining Hands for Justice
in Israel and Palestine**



596 Kenilworth Circle
Stone Mountain, GA 30083

February 2, 2015

Honorable Judge Gershwin Drain

Dear Judge Drain:

I am writing to request leniency from you in the March 12 sentencing of Rasmea Odeh, who I know as a community leader in the Chicago Palestinian-American Community.

I am Chair of Joining Hands for Justice in Israel & Palestine (JHJIP), a Partnership of the Greater Atlanta Presbytery. JHJIP is comprised of member Presbyterian congregations of the Greater Atlanta Presbytery. We have been involved in speaking out to support a just decision in Rasmea Odeh's case since October 2014, when we learned that she would have a hearing on immigration fraud, and the circumstances which led to her initial arrest.

Rasmea Odeh was convicted in a federal court in November on one count of immigration fraud based on her failure to indicate on her naturalization application that she had been arrested, charged and convicted by an Israeli military court of a crime she maintains she didn't commit. She was severely tortured into signing a confession, and spent 10 years in an Israeli prison. She nor her attorney were allowed to share details of this conviction experience during her trial.

Rasmea came to the U. S. in 1995, and has worked for social and economic justice for those in her community, serving as Associate Director of the Arab American Action Network. She received the Mosaid Award for outstanding community service from the Chicago Cultural alliance, which speaks further to her great work in the community.

This forty year old incident has greatly affected her life, but should not control what happens to her going forward. I ask that you consider the person she is today.

Sincerely,

Mary H Smarr, Chair

