Eric Holder, Attorney General United States of America  
Gary Shapiro, Acting U.S. Attorney Northern District of Illinois  

September 20th, 2012  

Dear Sirs,  

We, the undersigned, are a group of elected officials, educators, and labor, community and religious activists. Each, in our own way, have been involved for many years in the fight for human rights and equality for people of the United States and throughout the world.  

We write to you to request that your continuing criminal investigation, now going on for over two years, into the First Amendment protected activities of anti-war and international solidarity activists be terminated and that your office make a formal announcement of this determination.  

As you are aware, the homes of nine activists were raided by the FBI in September of 2010, and their personal property was seized, including thousands of books, pamphlets, photographs and other materials, all protected by the First Amendment. The search warrants authorizing these raids falsely alleged that the families targeted were involved in providing material support for terrorism.  

Over the course of the next several months, twenty three teachers, students and supporters of justice for the people of Palestine and Colombia, including the nine whose homes were raided, were subpoenaed to appear before a federal grand jury impaneled in the Northern District of Illinois. Each of the people subpoenaed refused to testify, asserting their constitutional rights and stating that they believed that the government was using the grand jury to chill the exercise of their political right to question U.S. foreign policy.  

Two years have passed, ample time for the government to fully investigate any allegations of criminal conduct by any of the people targeted, yet the investigation and chilling effect on political freedom continues. The people subpoenaed suffer under a cloud of unresolved government accusations and fear of criminal charges, which unjustly impairs their right to be politically active and criticize government policy.  

It’s well past time for this investigation to end. Several months ago, your office announced that Goldman Sachs would not be indicted as a result of your investigation into their conduct, and last month you also announced that no-one would be indicted for the torture of captured Afghan militants. It would behoove you, under any standard of fairness, to now announce the end of your investigation of the people whose homes were raided two years ago and who were subpoenaed to your grand jury.  

Respectfully,
(Organizations are listed for identification purposes only)

Ali Abunimah, author and journalist, Chicago

Suzanne Adely, Legal Fellow, United Auto Workers, NY

Beena Ahmad, Deborah Diamant, Gabriela Lopez, Scott Paltrowitz, Lorna Peterson, Eileen Weitzman, National Lawyers Guild - Muslim Defense Project

Bina Ahmad, NYC Chapter of the National Lawyers Guild

Fahd Ahmed, Legal and Policy Director, Desis Rising Up and Moving (DRUM), Queens, NY

Rev. Luis Alvarenga, Chicago

Dale Asis, Community Organizer, Chicago

Abed A. Ayoub, Esq., Legal Director, American-Arab Anti-Discrimination Committee (ADC), Washington DC

Dr. Ghassan Barakat, Chairman, Humanitarian Relief Foundation, Bridgeview IL

Dr. Hatem Bazian, Chair, American Muslims for Palestine; Lecturer, UC Berkeley; Co-Founder, Zaytuna College

Jennifer Bing, National Coordinator, Middle East Peacebuilding Program, American Friends Service Committee (AFSC), Chicago

Christine Boardman, President, Service Employees International Union (SEIU) Local 73, Chicago

Fr. Robert Bossie, Priests of the Sacred Heart – USA, Chicago

Matt Brandon, Secretary-Treasurer, Service Employees International Union (SEIU) Local 73, Chicago

Colette Burke, activist, Chicago

Jerry Clarito, Executive Director, Alliance of Filipinos for Immigrant Rights and Empowerment (AFIRE), Chicago

Cindy Cohn, Legal Director, Electronic Frontier Foundation, San Francisco

Reverend Dan Dale, Pastor, Wellington Ave. United Church of Christ, Chicago
Professor Seif Dana, WI

Warren David, President, American-Arab Anti-Discrimination Committee (ADC), Washington DC

Sr. Kathleen Desautels, SP-Justice Promoter for the Sisters' of Providence of St. Mary-of-the-Woods, IN at the 8th Day Center for Justice

Professor Bernardine Dohrn, Chicago

Anam El-Jabali, human rights activist, IL

Nina Farnia, Board of Directors, National Lawyers Guild, San Francisco/Bay Area

Jesus “Chuy” Garcia, 7th District Commissioner, Cook County of Illinois

Abder R. Ghouleh, President, American-Arab Anti-Discrimination Committee (ADC), Chicago Chapter

Amani Ghouleh, Journalist, Oak Lawn IL

Matt Ginsberg-Jaeckle, Southside Together Organizing for Power (STOP), Chicago

Angelique Gonzáles, Executive Director, SOUL School of Unity & Liberation

Ann Halloway, community activist, IL

Abdel Hamayel, community activist, IL

Awad Hamdan, National Programs Director, American Muslims for Palestine, Bridgeview IL

Lily Haskell, former Director, Arab Resource and Organizing Center, San Francisco

Sonia Hassan, community activist, Chicago

Ian Head, National Lawyers Guild

Cherrenne Horazuk, President, AFSCME Local 3800, Minneapolis MN

Joshua Hoyt, Chief Strategy Executive, Illinois Coalition for Immigrant and Refugee Rights (ICIRR), Chicago

Rafeeq Jaber, Midwest Coordinator, Muslim Legal Fund of America (MLFA), Bridgeview IL

Michael James, 49th Ward Democratic Party President, City of Chicago
Ricardo Jimenez, Alejandro Luis Molina, Michelle Morales, National Boricua Human Rights Network
Charlotte Kates, Samidoun Palestinian Prisoner Solidarity Network; National Lawyers Guild
Nada Khader, Executive Director, WESPAC Foundation
Lara Kiswani, Executive Director, Arab Resource and Organizing Center, San Francisco
Jeanne Kracher, Executive Director, Crossroads Fund, Chicago
Jeremy Lahoud, Community Organizer, CA
Cristina Lee, National Lawyers Guild
Doris Lewis, African Americans Against the War in Iraq, Chicago
Monami Maulik, Executive Director, Desis Rising Up and Moving (DRUM), Queens, NY
Rev. Michael McConnell, Regional Director, American Friends Service Committee (AFSC), Chicago
Rev. Loren McGrail, Chicago
Jeanne Mirer, International Association of Democratic Lawyers
Joe Moore, 49th Ward Alderman, Chicago City Council
Zakiyyah S. Muhammad, African Americans Against the War in Iraq, Chicago
Imam Abdul Malik Mujahid, Board Chair, Parliament of World Religions
Jumana Musa, Human Rights Attorney and Deputy Director of the Rights Working Group (RWG), Washington DC
Rev. Errol Narain, Pastor, Trinity Episcopal Church
Prexy Nesbitt, Adjunct Professor, History Department, Columbia College, Chicago
Camille Odeh, past Executive Director, Southwest Youth Collaborative, Chicago
David Orr, Clerk, Cook County of Illinois
Jackson Potter, Staff Coordinator, Chicago Teachers Union (CTU)
Professor Barbara Ransby, Chicago

Carl Rosen, President, Western Region of the United Electrical, Radio & Machine Workers of America (UE), Chicago

Rebeccah Sanders, Executive Director, Chicago Cultural Alliance (CCA)

Azadeh Shahshahani, President-Elect, National Lawyers Guild, Atlanta GA

Dick Simpson, former Alderman, Chicago City Council

Newland Smith, Episcopal Peace Fellowship-Chicago Chapter

Kristin Szremski, Director of Media and Communications, American Muslims for Palestine, Bridgeview IL

Ayoub Talhami, Professional Engineer, Evanston IL

Ghada Talhami, Professor Emerita, Lake Forest College, Lake Forest IL

Edward E. Thompson, Ph.D., Chicago Faith Coalition on Middle East Policy

Rev Robert V Thompson, Atlanta GA

Paul H. Verduin, Co-Chair, Sabeel DC Metro, Washington DC

Rev. Dr. Donald E. Wagner, National Director, Friends of Sabeel: North America, Chicago

Garrett Wright, President, NYC Chapter of the National Lawyers Guild

John W. Zeigler, Director, Msgr. John Egan Urban Center, DePaul University