

by ANTONIETTA DEZIOVA

Combatants for peace — whose membership includes mainly men who were elite Israeli troops, and on the other side former Palestinian prisoners — faces a daunting task.

The NGO is operating amid the rise to power of Hamas in the Palestinian Authority. Hamas is widely considered to be a terrorist group, and it does not recognize the Israeli state.

There has been speculation this year of the launch of a possible third Intifadah, or violent uprising, against Israel. The first Intifadah came 1987-1993, and the second 2000-2005.

Repeated rocket attacks on nearby Jewish settlements launched from the Gaza Strip, which the Israeli government returned to Palestinians last year, have led to harsh reprisals by the Israeli military resulting in several Palestinian deaths.

The security barrier is meant to limit just such attacks. The barrier made up of concrete walls and chain-link fences dividing Jerusalem from the predominantly Palestinian West Bank is nearly complete.

But despite a climate of violence and despair, the peace group is determined to carry on.

"We are here, and we will not let these barriers stop us," former Israeli soldier Avichay Sharon told IPS. "This is

magnitude of the health worker drain" in Southern Africa. Across the region — the worst-affected by AIDS — South Africa, Namibia, Botswana, Swaziland and Mauritius are the only countries that do not face a critical shortage of health workers. (The Paris-based OECD researches economic and social issues.)

World Health Day is intended to draw attention to the lack of medics in South Africa and elsewhere. The theme, "Working together for health," is also aimed at stimulating debate about ensuring adequate staffing levels of doctors, nurses and other health professionals.

"The situation is not going to get better in the short term. Perhaps it will get worse," Tim Evans, WHO assistant director-general, said recently in South Africa's commercial hub of Johannesburg.

He was speaking at the unveiling of the "World Health Report 2006 - Working Together for Health." The document was made available in a number of cities ahead of World Health Day, when WHO Director-General Lee Jong-wook is officially launching it the Zambian capital, Lusaka.

In part, the migration of health workers is attributed to poor remuneration.

According to the report, the Americas — with 10 percent of the global disease burden — have 37 percent of the world's health workers, and account for more than 50 percent of health spending. Africa has 24 percent of the burden, but only 3 percent of the health workers and less than 1 percent of world health expenditures.

Evans said the aging populations of OECD states have also contributed to the demand in these nations for foreign health workers.

According to the WHO, 57 countries have critical shortages of medical staff; this amounts to a global deficit of 2.4 million doctors, nurses and midwives.

continuing erosion in popular support, even among Republicans.

The conviction that Rumsfeld made major strategic errors by insisting on invading Iraq with a relatively light force that proved incapable of imposing order on the country, let alone suppressing the insurgency that followed, has also taken hold, particularly after last month's publication by two New York Times reporters of an authoritative account of the war, "Cobra II: The Inside Story of the Invasion and Occupation of Iraq."

Based on extensive interviews with both retired and active-duty officers who took part in the war, the book found that Rumsfeld and his top aides believed that Washington could "oust a dictator, usher in a new era in Iraq, (and) shift the balance of power in the Middle East in the United States's favor" on the cheap and that the war "would suddenly be brought to an end when the regime's ministries were seized and its leader toppled."

The brass's unease with Rumsfeld's plans for going to war dated originally from his summary dismissal in early 2003 of then-Army Chief of Staff Gen. Eric Shinseki's testimony before Congress that the occupation of Iraq would require "several hundred thousand troops."

Shinseki's effective early retirement, apparently in retaliation for speaking out with such candor, was taken by most of the brass as a message from Rumsfeld that public disagreement with his views could have serious career consequences.

When, by early 2004, it had become clear that Washington had indeed not deployed sufficient troops to control Iraq, a number of retired generals began speaking out forcefully against Rumsfeld and his civilian advisers.

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BEIJING (IPS/GIN) — Western trade union groups are registering a multitude of accusations about unfair competition and exploitation of workers in China.

China was not obliged to undertake any labor reforms under the conditions of its acceptance into the World Trade Organization (WTO) at the end of 2001, leaving the issue of labor rights to be handled by the International Labor Organization (ILO).

Aware that it runs the risk of seeing its exported goods embargoed in the West since its WTO entry, China has engaged in discussions on embracing international labor standards and allowed international monitors to operate inside the country. But progress has been slow and the number of industrial disputes has multiplied.

Four years after China joined the global trade body, working conditions for the majority of Chinese laborers are extremely poor and exploitation is rampant, an international union group charged recently.

The International Confederation of Free Trade Unions (ICFTU) says around 700 million Chinese workers are paid less than US\$2 a day.

"China's competitiveness is based on the exploitative wages paid to its workers," the ICFTU said in a report.

The City of Madison, Dane County, and the Wisconsin Department of Transportation invite the public to attend a

## Transport 2020: Initial Public Meeting

Wednesday, April 26, 2006

Open House 5 p.m. to 8 p.m.

Presentation at 6 p.m.

Monona Terrace, 1 John Nolen Drive, Madison



Transport 2020, a study of transportation improvement alternatives for Dane County and the Greater Madison Metropolitan Area, has started a new phase to refine, evaluate and recommend an initial start-up transit system. For more information: [www.transport2020.net](http://www.transport2020.net)

Monona Terrace is accessible via several Madison Metro bus routes and the Lake Monona bike and pedestrian path, if you need an interpreter, materials in alternate formats, or other accommodations to access this public meeting, please contact the City of Madison, Department of Planning and Development at (608) 268-4635 / (608) 268-4747 (TTY). Please do so at least 48 hours prior to the meeting so proper arrangements can be made.

*La ciudad de Madison, el condado de Dane, y el  
Departamento de Transportes del Estado de Wisconsin  
Invitan a público que atienda a*

## **Transporte 2020: Primera Asamblea Pública**



**Miércoles, 26 de abril del 2006  
5PM a 8PM**

**La presentación a las 6PM**

**Monona Terrace, 1 John Nolen Drive, Madison**

Transporte 2020, un estudio de las alternativas de la mejora del transporte para el condado de Dane y el área metropolitana de Madison, ha comenzado una nueva fase para refinar, para evaluar y para recomendar un sistema de tránsito inicial. Para más información: [www.transport2020.net](http://www.transport2020.net)

Se pueda llegar a Monona Terrace usando las rutas de autobús de Madison Metro o el camino peatonal y de bicicletas del Lego Monona. Si necesita un intérprete (por ejemplo, en español), materiales en un formato diferente o cualquier otra adaptación para poder asistir a esta asamblea pública, por favor comuníquese con la Ciudad de Madison, Departamento de Planificación y Desarrollo al (608) 266-4635/ (608) 266-4747 (TTY).

Por favor llame por lo menos 48 antes de la asamblea para poder hacer los arreglos necesarios.