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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

AMERICAN DOCTORS ENTER GAZA ON SECOND ATTEMPT

Rafah, Gaza (January 25, 2009)- A group of American doctors on a humanitarian mission to the Gaza Strip successfully entered the war-torn territory early Saturday morning. American physicians from across the United States traveled to Gaza armed with medical supplies to treat the 5300 Palestinian civilians, including 795 women and 1855 children, wounded by Israeli attacks. The team is en-route to Gaza City to where hospitals are in desperate need of assistance from medical professionals.

President Obama stressed the need for the Gaza-Egypt border to allow the flow of humanitarian aid, "Gaza's border crossings should be open to allow the flow of aid and commerce." Meanwhile, Doctors for Human Rights, an Arab-Israeli medical team in Gaza, reported that many in Gaza's hospitals are in critical condition with untreated wounds and inadequate medical resources. The American team was unable enter Gaza yesterday due to logistical issues. The second attempt for entry early Saturday morning proved to be successful.

As the team begins work immediately, some of the doctors, like Baltimore radiologist Dr. Labib Syed, are brushing up on general medicine and preparing to operate outside of their normal specialties. Salt Lake City plastic surgeon Dr. Irfan Galaria will be one of the doctors whose specialty is in heavy demand. All, including Galaria, understand the mission's unique difficulties. "It's going to be a struggle, it's going to be a challenge, but we're certainly prepared and willing to make the sacrifices we need to [in order] to help people out."

American-Egyptian freelance journalist Aya Batrawy is with the group in Gaza. Based in Cairo, Batrawy has filed stories for National Public Radio, BBC America, Voice of America and Pacifica radio. She has also worked closely with McClatchy Newspapers.

The team of American volunteers is led by Dr. Ismail Mehr, an anesthesiologist from Hornell, NY, and includes Dr. Rick Colwell, an emergency room doctor from Sioux City, Iowa, Dr. Kanwal Shazia Chaudhry, a pediatric emergency specialist from New York City, Dr. Shariq Sayeed, a vascular surgeon from Atlanta, Dr. Imran Qureshi, an interventional radiologist from Naperville, Illinois, and Dr. Labiq Syed, a research fellow at Johns Hopkins. Ahmed Kasem, an attorney with the California firm, Kasem, Ko & Ahmed, has volunteered to assist with logistics

For more information or to schedule an interview, please contact Dr. Omar Qureshi, Press Liaison, at oq16@yahoo.com or (585) 820 6002. And visit: <http://www.ammgaza.com>