

Newsletter - Special Edition

25 YEARS WORLDWIDE ❖ 10 YEARS IN PALESTINE  
**SERVICE TO HUMANITY**



# Good Morning Gaza

Islamic Relief Response



MAY 2009





جائزة فلسطين الدولية للتميز والإبداع  
Palestine International Award for Excellence and Creativity

Winner of first prize

"After 25 years working in disaster-hit and poverty stricken areas worldwide and 10 years in the Palestinian territories, Islamic Relief is doubling its efforts of relief and development in Gaza and West Bank. The recent war proved big challenge, but we have served the people of Gaza before, during and after this exhausting war."

**Dr. Mohammed Alsousi**  
**Islamic Relief Head of Mission - Palestine**



# contents

- 02 Islamic Relief Response
- 04 Supporting Health Sector
- 05 Aid in three months
- 06 Traumatized girl speaks out
- 07 DFID & ECHO Funded Projects
- 08 Celebrating Childhood  
Empowering Women
- 09 Artificial Limbs Centre
- 10 Demolition Waste Removal  
Supporting Water Sector
- 11 Aid Worker Diary





# Gaza Humanitarian Crisis

Months after the war, the Gaza Strip remains a disaster zone. Families are in despair, as hundreds of them had their homes totally destroyed and do not have proper shelter to endure Gaza's conditions.

Gazans also continue to face difficulty obtaining food due to shortages and widespread poverty. The health situation has shown no big improvement either, as lack of supplies and medicines continue to plague the coastal strip.

Islamic Relief's Gaza office has identified the inflow of aid and building supplies as the chief priority in reconstructing and rehabilitating Gaza's ailing population. Priorities include: spare parts and fuel for the power plant, supplies for hospitals and vital materials for water and sewage treatment facilities.



Despite the ceasefire which came into effect on January 18 after three weeks of non-stop conflict, Gaza's population continues to be in tremendous need of humanitarian aid.

Islamic Relief has been distributing food parcels, hygiene kits, kitchen sets and blankets to hundreds of families on a daily basis.

Thousands of Palestinian children and families have benefited from much-needed psychosocial counseling projects.



*Gaza Crisis*



## Islamic Relief Response

- In spite of the volatile situation in Gaza, IR staff members in the Gaza Strip continued to work. An emergency team was formed immediately to assess the needs and respond to them.
- IR has procured and distributed over \$6 million of medical, food and other aid, delivered to the IDPs (Internal Displaced People) and providing the hospitals with the necessary medical supplies.
- IR has delivered 20,000 liters of fuel to water wells to provide running water in some neighborhoods.  
Four ambulances and 48 tons of powdered milk were received at Rafah crossing between Egypt and Gaza. The ambulances were given to hospitals and the milk was given to school children.
- Till May, 32,000 food parcels were distributed.
- Crisis Psychosocial Intervention Group Project has been helping thousands of Palestinian children in Gaza who were affected by the recent war. Psychologists highlight disorders among many of the children. Activities such as storytelling, drawing, role playing and recreational activities are designed to help children deal with post-war trauma.



- Demolition Waste Removal Project in the Gaza Strip was launched. The project worked on removing demolition waste and rubble to a defined area to help in the clean up efforts to start the rebuilding process.





# Special concern

## for the declined health sector in Gaza Strip

From the day the war was launched on Gaza, Islamic Relief Palestine (IR-Pal) rushed to the main hospital in Gaza and delivered urgent medical supplies. Everyday during the war, IR-Pal emergency teams were on the ground facing dangers, but continued to work in these conditions to alleviate the suffering of the people of Gaza. IR-Pal provided assistances in many sectors: food, non-food, shelter and more importantly health.

## Health

- Provision of vast amounts of medical equipments included: DC shock, trolleys, ECGs, infusion pumps, patient monitors for ICU and anesthesia machines, ventilators and monitors for operations rooms, medical spare parts and others.
- Providing hospitals with seven new ambulances including one ICU and one mobile hospital.
- Delivering medical machines and equipments to hospitals and clinics such as Alawda hospital, northern Gaza Strip; the Palestinian Medical Relief Society, the Patient Friends Benevolent and the Palestinian Red Crescent.
- Providing the Pediatric hospital with 1400 nappies for babies.



Since the beginning of the recent crisis, the value of medical assistance provided by IR-Pal up to March 2009 is valued over 2,300,000 euros, as follows:

- Machines and equipments .....	1,051,000
- Medical disposables and lab equipments .....	814,048
- Medicines .....	356,664
- Spare parts for medical machines .....	138,721



# In three months: €4m worth aid for Gaza

Three months on from the conflict in Gaza, aid agency Islamic Relief has distributed €4 million worth of emergency medical and food aid to the desperate people of Gaza.

Islamic Relief began its emergency operation in Gaza just hours after the first bombs dropped on 27th December 2008. Islamic Relief's aid teams continued to deliver aid even during the height of the conflict.

The International agency has distributed food to hundreds of thousands of people €1 million through many food distribution rounds. Distributions also included kitchen sets, blankets, hygiene kits and tents for the displaced people who still do not have proper homes to live in.

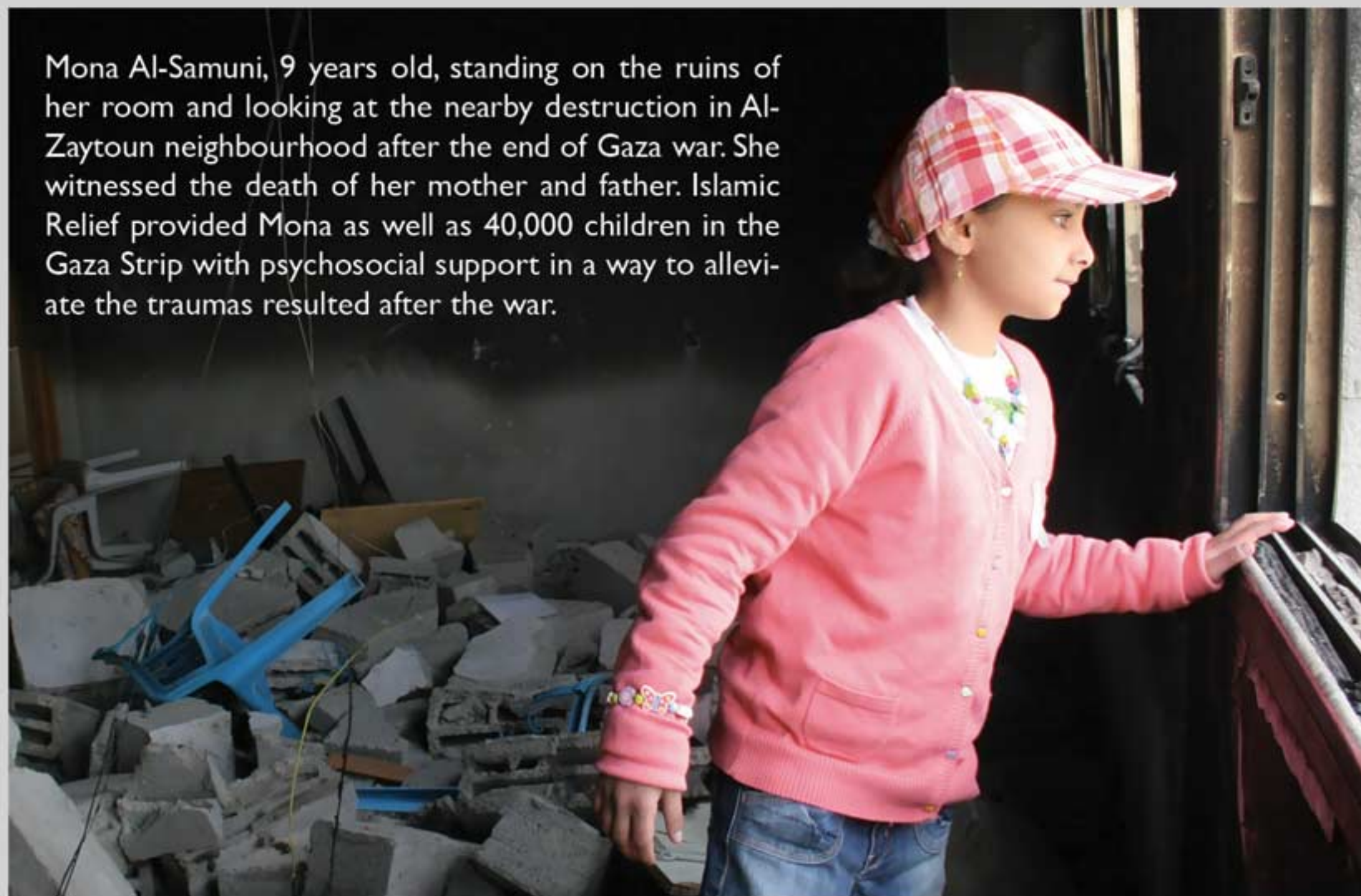
IR emergency projects are continuing and the work is increasing. At the moment IR are providing clean water for 70 schools as well as rehabilitating water wells and renovating damaged schools and houses. IR is also supporting the only artificial limbs centre in Gaza. Nearly 1000 people lost limbs as a result of the war. Other projects have already started including cash-for-work and soft loans scheme for people to start-up and develop their small projects.





## Traumatized Mona speaks out

Mona Al-Samuni, 9 years old, standing on the ruins of her room and looking at the nearby destruction in Al-Zaytoun neighbourhood after the end of Gaza war. She witnessed the death of her mother and father. Islamic Relief provided Mona as well as 40,000 children in the Gaza Strip with psychosocial support in a way to alleviate the traumas resulted after the war.



### In her own words:

#### Before the war:

"My father was a farmer and he used to sell fruit to earn a living". "I remember when my brothers and I used to sit around my mother when she was baking cakes and bread. I was very happy then."

"The happiest moments for me were when my mother and father used to take me shopping, and when I would spend time drawing flowers, houses and trees,"

#### After the war:

Since the death of her parents Mona has been living with her 25-year-old brother Helmi and her four other brothers and three sisters.

She said. "I get up every morning and ask myself who will comb my hair. Who will hug me and care for me? I am no longer afraid of death and I expect to see more of it in the future. But when I am older I hope to study medicine and become a doctor so that I can save more lives."



## Repairing houses, rebuilding schools



DFID, the Department for International Development in the UK donated \$1m for Gaza to implement urgent projects and to provide assistance to the people after the deterioration of the humanitarian situation in Gaza.

The project will see the repair of 200 houses, the rebuilding of 20 schools, the provision of non-food items to 500 families for six months and psychosocial support sessions for affected people.

## Distributing non-food items

Islamic Relief has implemented an aid distribution project "Emergency Intervention in Gaza Strip" funded by the European Commission of Humanitarian Aid (ECHO) during and after the recent war. The project provided kitchen tool sets, hygiene kits and blankets for the most affected displaced families.

Through the ECHO-funded project, thousands of people have benefited from different areas of the Gaza Strip in the north, the south, the middle area and Gaza through central distribution points in each area.





## Festival for Childhood & Education

Under the auspices of Islamic Relief (IR), children in Gaza Strip enjoyed the Palestine Festival for Childhood and Education which is an annual series of educational and recreational activities implemented by University College of Applied Sciences.



The activities included various shows, plays, games, painting, singing, competitions and experiments done by children themselves who gathered from the local community, kindergartens and primary schools. The event is sponsored by IR for the third consecutive year.



## Empowering women in the community

Islamic Relief inaugurated a computer laboratory at the Female Graduates Association in the presence of IR-Pal representatives, the association staff and a number of female graduates. By equipping of the computer lab, IR-Pal aims to develop the human resources among females especially the new graduates.

The provision of equipments included a server, 15 desktop computers, one laptop, network accessories including cables, USB, printer, scanner, whiteboard and a package of stationery.

The project which is funded by Islamic Relief Italy includes coverage of expenses for four training courses for 100 graduates.





## Milk for thousands of Gazan schoolchildren



IR-Pal has finished distributing thousands of fortified milk packs to primary school students in the private and governmental schools in the most needed areas in the Gaza Strip to improve their nutritional status.

In the first stage, 5,000 students were provided with milk in many schools such as Ibad AlRahman School, Rosary Sisters School and Latin Monastery School and in some associations like the Right to Live association, Shams Center for Disabled and Alamal institute.

## Artificial limbs for over 1000 Gazan amputees

IR-Pal started supporting the only Artificial Limbs Centre in the Gaza Strip. This centre targets hundreds of amputees who lost their limbs whether due to the recent war on Gaza or not, including children and women.

The project idea is a response to the aftermath of war. The Islamic Relief office in Switzerland donated 330,000 euro for the whole project and so far, IR-Pal has started working with 35 cases as a first step in implementing this project.





## Demolition Waste Removal



Funded by the Scottish Government, IR-Pal implements a demolition waste removal project. It has been designed to clear rubble debris post-war to enable the movement of citizens in streets and public utilities and pave the way for the reconstruction process..

In cooperation with the relevant municipalities, IR-Pal implemented the project in the northern areas of the Gaza Strip; Jabalia, Beit Lahia and Beit Hanoon. IR-Pal paid for the cost of trucks, fuel that was needed for the bulldozers as well as the payment for tens of workers and supervisors to run the project which successfully ended in April this year.

## Accessing water for population in the south



IR-Pal continues supporting the water sector in the Gaza Strip through constructing water networks in Rafah and digging new water wells in Khan Younis. The projects aim at accessing clean water for thousands of Palestinian families in southern Gaza Strip.

The first project in Rafah serves about 19,000 people through connecting the water network at Brazil/Salam area where people suffer from the lack of clean water. The project improves the water distribution network system in the targeted area.

IR-Pal's second water project serves 14,000 people at Almawasi area, western Khan Younis providing them with access for clean healthy water through digging new water wells.





## Diary from the heart of Gaza

Hatem Shurrab from IR-Pal lives in Gaza. During the days of the war, he wrote diaries on the [BBC website](#) describing the humanitarian situation and IR-Pal's response. After three months after the end of the war, he writes a new diary below:

After the war the days seemed to go so fast. I think this is down to the intensity of the workload and all the horrors that we had witnessed.

People had a strange mix of feelings. There was sadness yet also pride. Gaza is awash with sad stories. But there is also pride – pride at the way people came to each others aid and the amount of solidarity that was shown.

Many families preferred to stay near the ruins of their destroyed homes – they don't have the money to rebuild them or to find anywhere else. The crossings are open but only for basic things like food and medical supplies. Crucially however no construction material is coming in – how are families to rebuild their homes?

Despite all the destruction and sadness I am optimistic. This is because I can see the difference the work Islamic Relief and other NGO's are doing can make in peoples lives.

We have been able to secure food for thousands of affected families, especially for those who lost their homes. We are still distributing food, such is the need. We are working on trying to remove the painful memories of 40,000 children in Gaza through our psychosocial programme.

These are early days in the reconstruction and rehabilitation of Gaza.

Our projects are continuing and the work is increasing. At the moment we are providing clean water for 70 schools as well as rehabilitating water wells and renovating damaged schools. Islamic Relief is also supporting the only artificial limbs centre in Gaza. Nearly 1000 people lost limbs as a result of the war.

The work has only just begun and many challenges lie ahead, first of all the siege of Gaza must be lifted so that everything that is needed to rebuild Gaza can get it.

This is the first major challenge.

Sometimes I still can't believe what happened in this small strip of land over those few weeks. It is also easy to forget that Gaza was bleeding before the recent war – due to the siege. Gazans are tough people, as I meet people everyday through my work I find them resilient and patient.

This gives me pride and honour to be working amongst such people.

Islamic Relief is putting forward proposals for projects worth millions of dollars. These are projects that will make a real difference to people's lives. Over the coming months we will continue and increase our work. In January Gaza was constantly in the news as the bombs dropped. We may not be on the front pages but the tragedy of Gaza continues.



# Recent Visits



From right: Mr. Richard Makepeace, the British Consul, Dr. Mohammed Alsousi, IR-Pal HoM, MPs Sir John Stanley, Mr. Paul Keetch, Rami Mahani, IR-Pal emergency manager, MP Ms. Sandra Osborne and MP Mr. Fabian Hamilton.



IR-Pal HoM describing to a delegation from the British Department for International Development (DFID) the repair process of a classroom in northern Gaza Strip. Through DFID funds, 20 schools which were damaged during the recent war will be renovated.



From left: Hatem Shurrab, Media & PR Coordinator, Dr. Mohammed Alsousi, IR-Pal HoM, Mr. Herve Caiveau, Directorate General for Humanitarian Aid – ECHO (West Bank and Gaza) and Saber Ashoor also from EC Gaza office.



Mr. Tage Zeineldin, Programme Officer at Humanitarian team of Swedish International Development Agency (Sida) during his visit to IR office in Gaza. Sida is funding two projects: cash-for-work and food aid projects.



Dr. Khaled Al-Azrak, Head of the Royal Moroccan Medical Mission, receiving honouring shield from IR-Pal HoM, Dr. Mohammed Alsousi, during the mission's visit to IR-Pal's offices in Gaza.



From right: IR-Pal Development Projects Manager, Salah Tayeh, IR-Pal Emergency Manager, Rami Mahani, Regional Director of Organization of Islamic Conference (OIC), Dr. Ahmed Husain, IR-Pal HoM, Dr. Mohammed Alsousi and Child Welfare Manager Mahmoud Abu Draz, during a visit OIC visit to Gaza.



# Gaza Crisis Appeal

*Funded by*



EUROPEAN COMMISSION



Humanitarian Aid



United Nations  
OCHA

**DFID**

Department for  
International  
Development



**Sida**  
[www.sida.gov.se](http://www.sida.gov.se)



REACH OUT TO ASIA



الأساسية  
Qatar Foundation



**CAFOD**  
just one world

## Islamic Relief Fundraising Partners

 IR USA

 IR Bosnia

 IR Canada

 IR UK

 IR Germany

 IR Sweden

 IR Switzerland

 IR Holland

 IR South Africa





#### **Islamic Relief Headquarters (IR)**

19 Rea Street South, Birmingham, B5 6LB, UK  
Tel: +44 121 605 5555 Fax: +44 121 622 5003  
E-mail: [hq@islamic-relief.org.uk](mailto:hq@islamic-relief.org.uk)

#### **Islamic Relief Palestine (IR-Pal)**

##### **Gaza**

Ahmed Abdulaziz St., Al Remal, Gaza City, Palestine  
Tel: +970 (8) 2833343/2862228 Fax: +970 (8) 2844606

##### **West Bank**

Bitunia Road, Next to Abu Rayya Rehab Centre, Ramallah, Palestine.  
Tel: +970 (2) 2974643, +970 (2) 2975105 Fax: +970 (2) 2974643

E-mail: [info@irpal.org.ps](mailto:info@irpal.org.ps) [www.irpal.ps](http://www.irpal.ps)

Published in 2009