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**Iraqi Woman Faiza Al-Araji
to Speak at 2006 Isla Vista Peace Festival on March 11th**

Santa Barbara, CA (March 9, 2006) – Iraqi woman, civil engineer, activist, and blogger Faiza Al-Araji will speak and lead a workshop at the first-ever Isla Vista Peace Festival – “celebrating resistance to war and visions of peace” – on Saturday, March 11, 2006 at Isla Vista Theater 1.

Al-Araji is a religious Shia with a Sunni husband and mother of three. After a son was recently held as a political prisoner by the Ministry of the Interior, her family fled to Jordan. She now posts regular news bulletins on the war at <http://afamilyinbaghdad.blogspot.com/>. She is currently touring the US with the grassroots non-profit organization Global Exchange to inform Americans about life in Iraq from the perspective of an Iraqi woman.

“After three years of evaluation, I think Iraqis have the right to talk about the war, not the American leaders, because we are suffering here – we Iraqis are the ones who are losing are loved ones in this war. We are the ones whose kids have been kidnapped,” Al-Araji said during an interview with Amy Goodman on the nationally-syndicated radio program Democracy Now! on Monday, March 6, 2006.

The Isla Vista Peace Festival is timed to coincide with the three year anniversary of the Iraq War, which began on March 19, 2003. In addition to its goal of educating attendees about the current status of that war, the potential for war in Iran, and other timely concerns, the event will shine a spotlight on the underlying causes of wars in general, as well as what ordinary citizens can do in

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their day-to-day lives to create a more peaceful future. The Festival will consist of a teach-in, entitled “Peace Now!” from 1 - 5:30 p.m. at Isla Vista Theater 1, as well as a concert at Anisq’ Oyo’ Park from 6 - 10 p.m.

Al-Araji’s workshop entitled “Myths & Realities of the Iraq War” will take at 3:25 p.m. at Isla Vista Theater 1. At 5 p.m., also in Isla Vista Theater 1, Al-Araji will deliver a speech.

“As an anti-war organizer, one of the main things you do is to ‘bring the war home’ to people who are otherwise removed from it – physically and emotionally,” said Will Parrish, Youth Outreach Coordinator at the Nuclear Age Peace Foundation. “Faiza Al-Araji has many direct experiences with the Iraq war’s horrible consequences; it’s hard to think of anyone more capable of bringing the war home more effectively, particularly given her ability to connect with people as a journalist and a powerful speaker.”

Jyotishree Amatya, an intern at the Nuclear Age Peace Foundation said, “It is a pleasure to bring Faiza Al-Araji to the Peace Fest. I am sure her visit will provide us with a unique opportunity to listen to the other side of the story right from the Iraqi woman herself.”

Faiza Al-Araji will be available for interviews immediately following the “Peace Now!” teach-in at the IV Peace Festival. To schedule an interview, please contact Will Parrish at (805) 965-3443 or by email at wparrish@napf.org.

The Nuclear Age Peace Foundation is a non-profit, non-partisan international organization with consultative status to the United Nations. For more than 20 years, the Foundation has been committed to advancing initiatives to eliminate the nuclear weapons threat to all life, to fostering the global rule of law, and to building an enduring legacy of peace through education and advocacy.

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