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GREEK PROMOTION

## Potential enemies cross Sahara together to 'break the ice'

March 10, 2006

**NICOSIA --** In 2004 the international nonprofit organization Breaking the Ice was thrust into the media spotlight when it took four Palestinians and four Israelis to Antarctica to see if they could find a common understanding. This year the group is going even further.

On Monday 10 men and women, all victims of extreme conflicts between Islam and the West, began a month-long journey from Jerusalem to Tripoli. The point? To see if they can break the ice.



**BREAKING THE ICE:** Victims of conflict spend a month together crossing the Sahara and trying to find common ground.

The team includes a New York firefighter who lost 343 of his comrades in 9/11, an Israeli woman who lost her mother to a Palestinian suicide bomber, and the man who was once Uday Hussein's body double. All are potential enemies.

Throughout this month, the group of Christians, Muslims and Jews from Afghanistan, Iraq, Iran, Israel, the Palestinian Authority, the former Soviet Union and the USA will work together to overcome their differences, while mastering the extreme challenges of the Sahara Desert, according to a statement issued by Breaking the Ice on Friday.

Making their 5,500-kilometer journey on an old fire truck, they will only survive if they can learn to trust each other, the statement said. It will be the first time that Israeli citizens will cross Libya's borders, it added.

"The participants hope that this unique and challenging journey will open the hearts and minds of people around the world, laying the foundation for renewed dialogue and understanding among all people and nations," said Breaking the Ice founder Heskell Nathaniel.

Breaking the Ice is an international nonprofit organization based in Berlin, Germany. Founded in 2004 by Heskell Nathaniel, it brings people with conflicting backgrounds together to help them overcome their differences and break the ice, transforming conflicts into trust and mutual respect.

World opinion leaders endorsing this global mission include Jordan's King Abdullah II, Israel's former prime minister Shimon Peres, Palestinian President Mahmoud Abbas, His Holiness the 14th Dalai Lama, US Senator Hillary Rodham Clinton and Mayor Michael Bloomberg of New York City.


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