

## Rally for peace



**Students march:** Michigan State University students Tomer Laks (left) and Jason Miller carry an Israeli flag as they march

ROD SANFORD/Lansing State Journal

Tuesday for peace in the Middle East. The event was organized by the pro-Israel student group SpartiPAC.

# MSU rally decries Mideast deaths

### Jewish student group calls for peace among Israelis, Palestinians

By Jodi Upton  
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Allsa Flatow was just trying to get to an Israeli resort for her Passover vacation.

But last week the 20-year-old was caught in the crossfire of the Middle East when a Palestinian drove a truck full of explosives into the bus she was in on the Gaza highway. The Brandeis University junior from West Orange, N.J., and seven soldiers on the bus were killed.

That's the type of tragedy SpartiPAC, a pro-Israel student group at Michigan State University, is trying to stop, said Jason Miller, a

19-year-old international relations student.

He and about nine other members of the group braved Tuesday's chilly rain and rallied on the steps of MSU's Administration Building to protest the deaths in the Middle East.

"Even if we have just one person holding the Jewish flag . . . it says we're not going to stand for the killings," Miller said.

"The peace process has not remained peaceful. This is the Jewish homeland. Students should be able to go there and feel safe," said Miller, who knew a friend of Flatow and was in Israel last year.

Others offered support to the students.

"We're just hoping for a better future," said Riva Ben Chaim, an Israeli woman.

While the rally centered on the most recent tragedy, SpartiPAC (Spartan political affairs committee) is primarily a lobbying and education group.

"A group of us decided last summer that there should be a campus group to educate people on Israel and the Mideast and the important relationship between the U.S. and Israel," said Tomer Laks, a founding member of SpartiPAC.

"There should be a voice at MSU, in the Lansing area and in the state that voices our concerns on what happens with legislative, economic, military and political issues," he said.

Miller said SpartiPAC wants the terrorist groups to be held accountable for the deaths but has no problem with Palestinian groups who want peace.

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**Jason Miller**  
MSU student

On that, MSU's Palestinian Student Association agrees.

"Nobody is an advocate for violence or death," said Michael Khoury of PSA. "We as an organization hope for peace but peace with justice, and we believe in working toward that."