

Monmouth University

**Office of the Associate Vice President for
Academic Program Initiatives**

**Directory* of Arab-Jewish/
Israeli-Palestinian Groups for
Dialogue and Peaceful Coexistence****

**Developed by
The Monmouth Dialogue Project**

**For more information, please contact
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***This directory will be modified and updated on a regular basis.
Please e-mail any additions and corrections to the address above.**

****Heartfelt thanks are extended to
Danielle Diodato and Alexander Keller,
Monmouth University Political Science majors,
for their research assistance on this project.**

Jewish-Palestinian Living Room Dialogue Group

Len and Libby Traubman

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Mission:

We are 30 Jews, Palestinians, and supportive others dedicated to meeting monthly in each other's living rooms, hearing one another's stories, practicing compassionate listening, and envisioning our shared future. In Dialogue, we seek to promote a model for healing, creativity, and cooperation for Palestinians and Jews in Israel and Palestine, and for other peoples worldwide.

Objectives and Vision:

- Palestinians and Israelis live side by side in cooperation and friendship, in an ever-improving Middle East and at the heart of a growing partnership between Jews and Palestinians worldwide.
- All of our stories and experiences are valid and valued.
- An enemy is someone whose story we have not heard.
- The vast majority of Palestinian and Jews want a peaceful resolution of the conflict between them.
- Jews and Palestinians are cousins, sharing ancestry, values, and a common future.
- We continue to work for healing and collaboration among our peoples by conducting Dialogue and building relationships with each other. Dialogue is neither discussion nor debate. It begins with hearing each other's stories in an atmosphere of respect and compassion.
- Palestinians and Israelis have a right to equal dignity, self-determination, peace, and security. Two side-by-side, safe, autonomous, cooperating states are a key to this goal.
- Blame, hatred, and violence perpetuate themselves and do not lead to peace.
- Relationship-building leads to lasting peace.
- The methods our political leaders have undertaken to address our conflict are, by themselves, failing to lead us to peace.
- Agreements between nations, made without the support of citizens, have never been successful. Therefore, citizens must be included in the creation of any such agreement, and the agreement must reflect and respect the will of each nation's citizens as well as that of each nation's political leaders.
- We look to the U.N., U.S., and other nations to put forth their full efforts to encourage, compel, and assist in a successful public peace process that engages ordinary citizens in constructive Dialogue and leads to the fulfillment of our vision.
- We look to our fellow Jews, Palestinians, and supportive others to become peacemakers, engage in compassionate, constructive Dialogue, and work toward the fulfillment of our vision.

The Dialogue Project

123 Seventh Ave. #234

Brooklyn, NY 11215

Phone: (718) 768-2175

Fax: (718) 768-2094

Web: info@thedialogueproject.org

Background:

The Dialogue Project has been creating personal and community connections through dialogue since 2001. Participants are regular folks from every walk of life, a restaurant owner, student, social worker, clerk, teacher, and grandfather. Our board and program planning committees are comprised of a variety of local organizations and individual dialoguers representing a range of communities that are new to the dialogue process.

Mission:

The Dialogue Project's mission is to build trust, compassion, and partnerships among people who experience bias, hostility, and tension relating to the conflict in the Middle East. We work in communities where Palestinians (Muslim and Christian), Israelis and Jewish Americans, other Arabs and Muslim citizens and new immigrants live and work alongside long-time residents of all other ethnicities. Here in New York, unlike the Middle East, we have no barriers to dialogue except the barriers we hold within ourselves. Our ultimate goal is to move from personal empowerment to community empowerment, by enabling people to use dialogue skills to address areas of inter-group conflict.

Activities:

What we do is simple and creates a space for non-violent alternatives to conflict. We establish guidelines for hearing and conversation. Through tools including "mirroring" exercises, speaking from the "I", role-play, and Playback Theatre (a vehicle used worldwide in areas of conflict), we learn the art of reflective listening, a way to exchange ideas and experiences while suspending prejudices and judgment. Despite holding opposing views, we are developing trust and deep affection for each other every day, as we learn to humanize the "other". We also challenge deeply held assumptions (our own and others), and develop skills that allow us to be agents for positive social change on our block, at the workplace, and in our communities. We do not debate or negotiate settlements, though we do examine our different ideas about how to resolve the Palestinian-Israeli conflict.

Our three main program areas include:

- Middle East Dialogues
- Public Educational Forums and Interfaith Teach Ins.
- Speaking across Differences

Jewish Arab Dialogues in Atlanta

Web: jadatlanta@mac.com

Mission:

Through discussion and discourse there will be understanding and peace. The conflict in the Middle East is disturbing and evokes emotional responses from Jews and Palestinians alike. We feel that one of the best things we can do here in the U.S. is to hold dialogue between the two groups, but it must be structured in such a way that tempers do not flare, and people on both sides want to return to future meetings. In essence, there must be political content in the interactions, but participants must be willing to listen to views they do not agree with for the purposes of learning about the other side.

Activities:

- Hike: Find a local trail to do this. A 10-12 hour hike is probably sufficient. This provides a low key atmosphere for those who want to use the time to walk and discuss politics or an opportunity to just enjoy the trail for those who do not.
- Book club: Parts of books related to the conflict would be discussed. Some suggestions: *The Iron Wall* (Avi Shlaim); *From Beirut to Jerusalem* (Thomas Friedman); *One Palestine* (Tom Segev). We will start with *The Iron Wall* and discuss parts of it TBD in the future.
- Include youth-oriented stuff.
- Humanitarian efforts: e.g. Arabs and Jews feed the homeless or do some other joint charity work aimed at building relationships.
- Tell our stories: Groups in San Francisco have had success building trust and relationships by giving each person a chance to tell their story in 10-15 minutes to the group, with minimal interruption. These sessions usually happen first in the sequence. These include events, opinions, things in your past related to the conflict. This activity could use up many sessions, but if all involved come in with the attitude that they want to listen and learn from others, these sessions can prove valuable in strengthening the relationships within the group and pave the way for more candid political discussions.
- Activities that reinforce what we have in common.
- Poetry/Storytellers: Audrey Galex and BJ Abraham are two local storytellers who have focused on the conflict.
- Partner presentations (prepare in advance, then present to the group)
- “Delta meetings” (suggested by Jason Carter)
- Movies: *Promises*, *The Fifty Years War*, *Beyond the Walls*, *Gaza*, *Gaza Strip*
- Guest lecturers: These can help bring about structured discussions.

American Alliance of Arabs and Jews,

American Friends of Neve Shalom/Wahat Al-Salam

Deanna Ambruster

12925 Riverside Drive, 3rd Floor, Sherman Oaks, CA 91423

Phone: (818) 325-8884

Fax: (818) 325-8983

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Web: www.oasisofpeace.org

Mission:

The American Friends of Neve Shalom/Wahat al-Salam is dedicated to dialogue, cooperation and a genuine and durable peace between Arabs and Jews, Palestinians and Israelis by encouraging, supporting and publicizing the projects of Neve Shalom/Wahat al-Salam, the “Oasis of Peace.” For more than twenty-five years, Jewish and Palestinian citizens of Israel have lived and worked together as equals in this community. The community teaches tolerance, understanding and mutual respect well beyond its own borders by being a model for peace and by reaching out through its educational institutions. Its bilingual, bicultural Primary School serves the village and the surrounding communities. Encounter workshops conducted by the School for Peace, both in the community and beyond, have reached tens of thousands Jewish and Palestinian youth and adults.

Activities:

- AFNSWAS has produced a 4-part curriculum targeting high school students that utilizes the methods and experience of residents at the “Oasis of Peace” and high school participants of School for Peace workshops to explore issues of stereotypes, bias (personal and in the media), identity, and conflict resolution.
- The American Friends of NSWAS is a member of the Alliance for Middle East Peace (ALLMEP). ALLMEP is a coalition of NGOs that run people-to-people programs for coexistence and reconciliation between Arabs and Jews, Israelis and Palestinians in the Middle East. In February 2004, ALLMEP engaged in its first major advocacy initiative on Capitol Hill. In March 2008, building on four years of success, ALLMEP will hold its fifth initiative on Capitol Hill and continued its outreach efforts with 44 members strong.
- Over 300 children attend the Primary School of Neve Shalom/Wahat al-Salam. Due to the costs to run the School, parents must pay yearly tuition. You can partner with the Primary School to help some of those families afford tuition that might otherwise be unable to attend. Join the Primary School Partnership Program today!
- If you are looking for a tax write-off for that vehicle you no longer want to own, donate it to the American Friends of Neve Shalom/Wahat al-Salam through Car Program, a charity-friendly organization designed to facilitate such donations with ease. All you have to do is contact us. We will help you fill out a form to turn into Car Program, which will then take care of all towing, title processing, reconditioning, sale, and distribution of proceeds. Due to shifts in the Israeli government, the Primary School has several challenges related to funding the transportation for its students who travel from outside the village. The American Friends is working with contacts to persuade the Ministry of Education of Israel to reinstate transportation funding. We need your help in this effort.

- Part of our mission as the American Friends is to cultivate contacts with the media so that people in a variety of communities can hear the message of respect, understanding, and coexistence from the residents of the "Oasis of Peace." If you have access to media contacts, please let us know.

Cousins Club of Orange County

Ruth and Ted Shapin

P.O. Box 5891, Orange, CA 92813

Email: ssattorney@aol.com

Web: www.cousinscluboc.org

Mission and Background:

The Cousins Club of Orange County was formed in 1988 by Orange County residents, Jews and Palestinians, who are concerned about Israel-Palestinian problems. Everyone who has an interest in peace in the Middle East is invited to join us. We meet monthly to educate ourselves, sponsor public educational meetings, counter clichés and misinformation in local newspapers, and to give our legislators a reasoned view of Middle Eastern affairs.

Activities:

The following Points of Agreement form a basis for our activities:

We, the members of the Cousins Club of Orange County, believing that war is not an acceptable solution to the Israeli-Palestinian conflict, adopted the following seven "Points of Agreement" at a meeting held on October 23, 2000:

- We continue to favor a two-state solution: a viable Palestinian state with peace and security for both Israel and Palestine.
- The two-state solution can only be implemented by ending the occupation of the West Bank and Gaza, including East Jerusalem.
- There can be no peace without justice for the Palestinians. This includes the right of return or a just compensation.
- Israeli settlers on the West Bank may choose to live under Palestinian rule or return to Israel with fair compensation.
- Encourage Israel to end its internal discrimination policies against the Arab Israeli minority.
- The United States should be evenhanded when mediating between Israel and Palestine. This includes comparable economic aid and the protection of human rights.
- Holy sites should be accessible to all.

Eugene Middle East Peace Net

P.O. Box 11313, Eugene OR 97440

Phone: (541) 343-7970

email: emepg@mideastpeace.net

Web: <http://www.mideastpeace.net>

Mission:

We are an interfaith group: Jews, Christians, Muslims, and other faiths, including Israelis and Palestinians. We all share a deep concern for our families and other people caught in the ongoing conflict between Israel and Palestine.

We gather regularly in Eugene, Oregon for dialogue and discussion, celebrations, and events to educate ourselves and stimulate public involvement. We see that hatred stems from ignorance. We recognize that Peace begins in our own hearts. Our shared belief is that what we do together in this group can make a difference here, and eventually, make an impact in the Middle East. Peace can't only be made between governments, but to be sustainable, has to be made on a person-to-person basis, with all voices included.

We build trust and understanding by helping each other see our commonalities as bonds and our differences as symbols of our strength in diversity: hearing each other's pain, fears, and wishes learning the riches of our traditions. We are making friends. If Palestinians and Israelis could see each other through "mutual eyes" or "humane eyes" rather than "enemy eyes", the result would be vastly different from the current situation. We hope we can be a part of facilitating such a change in vision. Our wish is that, as we change our own hearts and minds, we bring light to this challenging time. We wish to acknowledge that we are children of God, and all life is sacred. Killing must be halted.

Our group is open to all who wish to join us in this spirit.

Activities:

Monthly Potluck: Usually 1st Sunday of every month. The potluck location is diverse, abilities-accessible, and child friendly in an effort for our group to continue to be more inclusive. Please bring a potluck dish to share, and a plate, cup and utensils (to reduce the use of paper product waste). The meetings include information about upcoming events, how you can get more involved, and important decisions recently decided by the steering committee.

Seeds of Peace

NEW YORK OFFICE (Headquarters)

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New York, NY 10017

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SEEDS OF PEACE INTERNATIONAL CAMP (Summer Months Only)

183 Powhatan Road

Otisfield, Maine 04270

Phone: 207-627-7202

Fax: 207-627-3121

camp@seedsofpeace.org

Mission and Background:

Founded in 1993, Seeds of Peace is dedicated to empowering young leaders from regions of conflict with the leadership skills required to advance reconciliation and coexistence.

Over the last decade, Seeds of Peace has intensified its impact, dramatically increasing the number of participants, represented nations and programs.

From forty-six Israeli, Palestinian, and Egyptian teenagers in 1993, the organization still focuses on the Middle East but has expanded its programming to include young leaders from South Asia, Cyprus, and the Balkans. Its leadership network now encompasses over 3,500 young people from several conflict regions.

The Seeds of Peace internationally recognized program model begins at the International Camp in Maine and continues through follow-up programming with international youth conferences, regional workshops, educational and professional opportunities, and an adult educator program. This comprehensive system allows participants to develop empathy, respect, and confidence as well as leadership, communication and negotiation skills — all critical components that will facilitate peaceful coexistence for the next generation.

Activities:

Seeds of Peace has focused primarily on bringing Arab and Israeli teenagers together before fear, mistrust, and prejudice blind them from seeing the human face of their enemy. Seeds of Peace goes beyond international agreements and treaties. It reverses the legacy of hatred by nurturing lasting friendships that become the basis for mutual understanding and respect. By training these young leaders in conflict resolution skills, Seeds of Peace helps them become the seeds from which an enduring peace will grow.

Each year more than 300 outstanding Egyptian, Israeli, Jordanian, Palestinian, and other Middle Eastern teenagers are chosen from more than 2,000 applicants to participate in the program. Selected by their respective governments without regard to economic or social background, and based solely on academic performance and leadership ability, these young people are destined to become tomorrow's leaders.

Due to its proven impact and success in the Middle East, Seeds of Peace has earned international recognition as an effective model for resolving conflict worldwide.

Due to its success, in 1998, Seeds of Peace started branching out to other conflict regions. Seeds of Peace now hosts a Greek Cypriot and Turkish Cypriot delegation each summer as well as participants from Albania, Bosnia-Herzegovina, Bulgaria, Croatia, Macedonia, the former Yugoslavia (including Montenegro, Serbia and Kosovo) and Romania.

In 2001, Seeds of Peace began its South Asia program with Indian and Pakistani youth and in 2002, Seeds of Peace expanded welcoming an Afghan delegation to the Seeds of Peace International Camp.

Seeds of Peace also runs a domestic program called "Maine Seeds" to address ethnic and racial tensions between the diverse communities that have settled in the camp's home state of Maine. In addition, in 2004, Seeds of Peace launched "Beyond Borders" which brings teens from additional Middle East countries including Iraq, Saudi Arabia, and Kuwait to participate in a cultural exchange program between American and Arab youth.

Since 1993, over 3,500 teens from twenty-five nations have graduated from Seeds of Peace.

Zeitouna Arab and Jewish Women Working for Peace and Justice

322 E. Washington St.

Ann Arbor, MI 48104

Web: <http://www.zeitouna.org/index.html>

Mission and Background:

Zeitouna's mission is to embody and promote the peaceful and just coexistence of the Arab and Jewish peoples through connection, trust, empathy, and actions focused on supporting a sustainable future for Palestine and Israel.

Zeitouna ("olive tree" in Arabic) is a dialogue group in Ann Arbor, Michigan that was formed in 2002. Six of the Zeitouna women are of Arab descent and six are of Jewish descent. Some are native born and some are immigrants. What they all have in common is their humanity and their desire to bridge the gulf that has developed between their two communities. They chose the Israeli-Palestinian conflict as the focus of the group and use the dialogue process as a means of personal transformation leading to socio-political transformation.

Activities:

The Zeitouna Movie Project: The movie profiles the twelve women of an Ann Arbor dialogue group called Zeitouna ("olive tree" in Arabic) and documents their developing relationship over a four-year period. Six of the Zeitouna women are of Arab descent and six are of Jewish descent. Some are native born and some are immigrants. What they all have in common is their humanity and their desire to bridge the gulf that has developed between their two communities. They chose the Israeli-Palestinian conflict as the focus of the group and use the dialogue process as a means of personal transformation leading to socio-political transformation.

- ***Personal transformation:*** Through sharing personal narratives, reading articles and books together, traveling as a group to Israel/Palestine.
- ***Education of others:*** Through presentations, dialogue demonstrations, seminars, panel discussions, reading circles.
- ***Expansion of political discourse:*** By sponsoring and participating in political activities consistent with our mission and objectives and grounded in the principles of dialogue.

Brit Tzedek: Jewish Alliance for Justice and Peace

11 E. Adams, Suite 707

Chicago, IL 60603

Phone: (312) 341-1205

Fax: (312) 341-1206

Email: info@btvshalom.org

Web: <http://www.btvshalom.org>

Mission:

The mission of **Brit Tzedek v'Shalom**, the Jewish Alliance for Justice and Peace is to educate and mobilize American Jews in support of a negotiated two-state resolution of the Israeli-Palestinian conflict.

Activities:

- Conferences
- Tours
- Combatants for Peace, January-February 2007
- Brit Tzedek v'Shalom CEO, Diane Balsler, November 2005
- Former IDF combat soldiers, Noam Chayut and Avichay Sharon, October 2005
- Israeli Journalist and Filmmaker and Creator of the Documentary Series, Chaim Yavin, September, October 2005
- Chairman of the Meretz-Yahad party, Former Member of Knesset and principal Israeli architect of the Geneva Accords, Yossi Beilin, October 2005
- Brit Tzedek board member and co-founder and CEO of the Aquaya Institute, Jeff Albert, September, October 2005
- Brit Tzedek President and former Member of Knesset, Marcia Freedman, September 2005
- Tour with Daniel Levy and Rafi Dajani, April 2005
- Israeli Air Force Pilot Refuser Yonatan Shapira, 2005
- Former MK and Peace Activist Naomi Chazan, Fall 2004
- Member of Knesset Amram Mitzna, Fall 2004
- Brit Tzedek President and Former MK Marcia Freedman, Fall 2004
- Brit Tzedek Advocacy and Public Policy Chair Steve Masters, Summer-Fall 2004
- Israeli Air Force (res.) Refuser, Captain Yonatan Shapira, Summer 2004
- Townhall Meetings
- Advocacy
- Brit Tzedek Online News

Arab-Jewish Dialogue in Santa Clara

Email: fcohen@pushtotest.com

Web: <http://www.ajdialogue.org>

Mission and Background:

We are caring Americans from a diverse background with common interest, who live in the Greater San Jose area. The Group includes members of the Jewish, Christian, and Muslim faiths, born in this country as well as in the Middle East, Asia, Africa and Europe. We greatly care about events in the Middle East. Our attention is focused on improving the understanding and co-existence between Israelis and Palestinians.

Committed as we are to a peaceful settlement to the Israeli Palestinian conflict and in recognition of the national aspirations of both communities, we, members of the Arab-Jewish Dialogue Group in Santa Clara County, California, would like to issue the following statements regarding the Israeli-Palestinian conflict. We call upon

- Israel to immediately declare its intent to withdraw, in a period not to exceed two years, from the West Bank and the Gaza Strip areas, to approximately its 1967 borders. Upon cessation of the violence by both sides, Israel shall withdraw to the pre-September 2000 positions and freeze activities on all new settlements and all expansions on existing settlements, including "natural growth" expansions.
- The Palestinian leadership and public, and the Israeli government and public to stop all acts of violence against any and all people and property, and to stop all actions that may hinder the ability of all people to continue their everyday lives in peace.
- An international "Peacekeeping Force", acceptable to both parties, to be put into place to help prevent violence and to help all residents to live in peace. Both Israel and Palestine shall actively cooperate with this "Peacekeeping Force" that will mediate local disputes. At a mutually agreed time, these activities will transition to local policing authorities.
- The Israeli people and the Palestinian people to respect the lives and properties of each other, and to develop exchanges and relationships on all levels, from the political to the personal, towards the goal of increasing understanding and becoming good neighbors and future economic partners. The success of this process depends upon the peaceful and sustained exchanges and relationships between the two peoples.

Activities:

The Arab Jewish Dialogue Group meets monthly to discuss and educate ourselves about issues regarding a personal level—their culture, their way of thinking, and their points of view. Our motto is: “An enemy is one whose story you haven’t heard”. We are engaged in activities that, in a very modest way, have a positive impact on resolving the conflict in the Middle East.

The Dialogue Group developed a [Joint Declaration](#) on how to end the conflict between the Palestinians and the Israelis. The Group meets with local, state and national politicians to promote an active role by the US government toward resolving the conflict. We make presentations to various organizations about co-existence between Palestinians and Jews.

Arab Jewish Student Dialogue

International Center for Ethics, Justice and Public Life

Brandeis University

MS 086

Waltham, MA 02454-9110

Phone: (781) 736-8577

Fax: (781) 736-8561

Email: ethics@brandeis.edu

Web: <http://www.brandeis.edu/ethics>

Mission:

The mission of the International Center for Ethics, Justice and Public Life is to develop effective responses to conflict and injustice by offering innovative approaches to coexistence, strengthening the work of international courts, and encouraging ethical practice in civic and professional life. Students focus on dialogue and public engagement in retreat on Middle East.

Activity:

Students participate in a retreat, which includes key elements:

- A greater degree of candor among participants about differences of opinion on key issues such as the identity of Israel and the “right of return” of Palestinians;
- The development of a shared conviction that more honesty about small differences would, paradoxically, strengthen their ability to work together towards the larger goal of peace and coexistence in the Middle East;
- The strengthening of personal relationships between Arab and Jewish students;
- Improved public presentation skills after feedback from retreat leaders and their peers;
- The creation of an innovative mode of public presentation on Middle East issues that involves students playing roles of their counterparts on different sides of the conflict.

American Diaspora Alliance Israeli-Palestinian Peace

Co-Chairs: Ron Goodman and Samuel A. Halaby, Jr.

9 Waterhouse Street

Cambridge, MA 02138

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Fax: (781) 551-0156

Email: info@adaipp.org

Web: <http://www.adaipp.org/about.htm>

Mission:

We—Jewish Americans and Arab Americans (both Muslim and Christian)—commit to doing all within our power to promote peace, justice, and the prospects of a better life for the Israeli and Palestinian peoples. We accordingly establish this Committee in the firm belief that many Arab, Jewish, and other Americans share this commitment and seek a platform from which to be heard.

Recognizing the profound and continuing losses suffered by both peoples over the millennia—a tragic history pervaded by recurring expropriation, exile, and death - yet cognizant of the peaceful and fruitful coexistence between Arabs and Jews during many centuries in many countries - we believe that an abundant and life-affirming future will follow the resolution of current conflict through creative compromise and the rebirth of mutual respect.

- A firm, long-term international commitment, with substantial American participation
 1. To interpose a peacekeeping mission between the conflicting parties
 2. To minimize and suppress violence by either party, even-handedly
 3. To create an environment for de-escalation and for the resumption of negotiation
- Full and explicit recognition by both peoples of each other's right to live permanently within their respective states, each of whose boundaries will be based on the pre-1967 borders, with equitable adjustments to be negotiated by the parties directly, or through international mediation acceptable to both sides.
- Establishment of a viable democratic Palestinian state, alongside the State of Israel, with both states guaranteed and guaranteeing secure, defensible, and permanent borders free from threats and acts of force.
- A just resolution of the Palestinian refugee problem that takes into account the needs and aspirations of both peoples.
- Settlement of all legitimate claims by Jews and Arabs displaced by decades of conflict, according to international law.
- Jerusalem shared as the political capital of both states.
- Free and open access for all people to all religious sites throughout the region
 1. Agreed by all peoples of the region
 2. Enforced by a joint Arab-Jewish police force
 3. Guaranteed by the international peace-keeping mission
- Establishment of legal structures and processes for dispute resolution
 1. Acceptable to both peoples
 2. Guaranteed by the international community
 3. Concurrent with the renunciation by both peoples of the use of force to settle disagreements
- Following the establishment of a durable peace, American, international, and regional commitment to preservation of peace through the provision of major resources for:

1. Reparation
2. Rebuilding
3. Economic development of the entire region

Objectives and Activity:

The main objective of the Diaspora Alliance is to create a political climate through which the United States government can initiate a process leading to an equitable peace. To create such an environment both in this country and in the region, the group advocates four basic principles that it believes need to be implemented in order for a lasting peace to endure.

- A practical negotiating framework accounting for the basic human rights and dignity of both peoples and representative of the aspirations of the majority of both peoples, through which a settlement can arise.
- Immediate United States involvement and full use of all means of influence, including diplomacy or economic resources.
- Introduction of an international peacekeeping force (IPKF), composed of forces from the Quartet, with Israeli and Palestinian participation, to stabilize the area and to achieve a hospitable negotiating environment.
- Conflict management structure in the nature of meaningful mediation/arbitration, with a negotiating process to include impartial international expert panels to resolve working through issues where the parties cannot achieve bilateral agreement, in order to guarantee conclusive results in reaching a peace agreement.

We believe there is a "silent majority" in this country of individuals thinking practically and methodically towards the conflict, yet who do not have a forum to express such views. We are seeking as many people as possible to further our cause so as to create a legitimate and effective constituency, able to urge United States decision-makers to take a strong and fair stance. Our public outreach will include information sessions, public awareness events, and social events.

The Compassionate Listening Project

P.O. Box 17, Indianola, WA 98342 USA

Phone: (360) 297-2280

Fax: (360) 297-6563

Web: <http://www.compassionatelistening.org/index.html>

Mission and Background:

The Compassionate Listening Project (TCLP) teaches powerful skills for peacemaking in our families, communities, on the job, and in social change work locally and globally.

The Compassionate Listening Project began in 1990 as "Mid East Citizen Diplomacy," a project of The Earthstewards Network in Bainbridge Island, Washington. Danaan Parry (of blessed memory), co-founder of Earthstewards, had been an early pioneer in the citizen diplomacy movement, taking U.S. citizens to the former Soviet Union and creating many exchanges and projects. After the fall of the Soviet Union, Danaan turned his attention to the Middle East, planning the first Earthstewards' citizen delegation to Israel and Palestine in November, 1990. Danaan asked Leah Green to manage the trip itinerary for the organization because of Leah's unique passion for relationship-building with Israelis and Palestinians. At the conclusion of the first trip, Danaan asked Leah to direct the program, and she continued to lead Earthstewards delegations to Israel, Palestine and Jordan for the following seven years.

As an American-Jewish woman who had lived in Israel and worked in the West Bank, with great love for both Israeli Jews and Palestinians, Leah's original vision was to strengthen U.S. support for Middle East peace by connecting Americans to Israeli and Palestinian reconciliation leaders and providing them with a firsthand experience of the complexities on the ground.

After five years and nine delegations, Leah wanted to move beyond conventional peace efforts—the principle that one side is "right" and all others are "wrong" - and play a greater role in Israeli-Palestinian reconciliation and healing. In 1996, inspired by the work of another mentor, Gene Knudsen Hoffman, she adopted "Compassionate Listening" as an overarching framework for the delegations. Compassionate Listening calls for peacemakers to initiate humanizing contact and cultivate compassion for those on all sides of a conflict. In 1997, after experiencing the powerful nature of this work, and with the encouragement of Israeli and Palestinian NGO's, Leah established The Compassionate Listening Project (TCLP) as a non-profit organization.

Activities:

Compassionate Listening Delegations:

- TCLP has guided over 450 American citizens to Israel and Palestine to listen to the grievances, hopes, and dreams of people on all sides of the conflict, including religious, political, and grassroots leaders, settlers, refugees, peace activists, citizens, soldiers, and extremists. With the guidance of our professional trainers and Israeli and Palestinian colleagues, we have built trusting relationships across political, religious, and social divides throughout Israel and Palestine. We also bring Israelis and Palestinians together for Compassionate Listening trainings and events. TCLP offers a powerful conflict resolution model and concrete skill building for our participants. We have visited Jordan on three delegations, and in 2002 we expanded our regional involvement with a highly successful delegation to Syria and Lebanon.

- TCLP has earned respect as one of the oldest established NGOs working in Israel and Palestine in the field of Track II (Citizen) Diplomacy. Our delegations have resulted in an extensive network of informed leaders across the U.S. who stands for both peoples as a result of their transformative experiences in the field. Our impressive alumni play a positive role in peace-making efforts: educating in their home communities and inviting others to support reconciliation leaders in Israel and Palestine. Many of our alumni have created successful Middle East peace programs that promote cross-cultural and interfaith understanding. Their leadership and efforts within the U.S. are crucial as the conflict in the Middle East continues to create harsh divisions among religious and political groups, on college campuses and within the peace movement.
- TCLP's advisory board, comprised of Israeli and Palestinian leaders in the conflict resolution, is instrumental in the creation of our programs in Israel and Palestine. Our delegations and trainings in the Middle East are co-led by Jewish and Palestinian teams.

Compassionate Listening Training:

- "This was the most transformative, essential workshop I have experienced." - Meg, Vancouver, British Columbia
- "Compassionate Listening is vital in every situation I find myself in. At work, home, out on the street and with friends, family and broken relationships..." - Steve, Boulder, Colorado
- As the training delegations continued and the project received local and national publicity, the demand for Compassionate Listening training in the U.S. increased. In response, Training Director Carol Hwoschinsky and Director Leah Green distilled the essence of the process used in the Middle East, and designed and adapted training curricula for teaching Compassionate Listening in the U.S. in academic, public and private settings.
- Although we draw on examples from our work in the field in the Middle East, our trainings focus on Compassionate Listening skill-building for use in everyday life - at the personal, professional, and community level. In addition to training thousands of people in the United States, we have also held trainings in Israel, Palestine, Canada, Germany, Bosnia, and Croatia. In 2007, we will begin our trainings for Israeli and Palestinian facilitators.
- Various organizations have successfully integrated the Compassionate Listening model into their work. We are especially pleased with the numbers of groups and leaders in the peace and social justice movements who have participated in our trainings, shifted their paradigm of conflict transformation, and adopted the Compassionate Listening practice of initiating humanizing contact with their adversaries.

Advanced Training and Certification:

- Training Director Carol Hwoschinsky designed advanced curriculum and began teaching advanced trainings in 2001. Our advanced students - already trainers in their own work, began bringing Compassionate Listening into communities for introductions, practice groups, and short trainings. Carol then designed a one-year training program to prepare our skilled facilitators for certification. TCLP currently has 15 certified Compassionate Listening facilitators, offering programs locally and globally. We now offer Advanced Training for all who have participated in our weekend intensive or a training delegation. Our next Advanced Training series is being offering over two weekends in January and May, 2007. (Please see our "workshop" page for more information.

Jewish-German Compassionate Listening Project:

- "This experience has exceeded in depth anything I could have known I wished for. I will carry this experience in my heart forever." - German participant
- "I recommend making this project a global 'must'!" - German participant

- "This was the most wonderful, loving, important project I have ever been a part of. I feel proud to be a part of the human race!" - Jewish participant
- Our international work moved beyond the Middle East for the first time in 2002 when Leah Green co-founded the German-Jewish Project with her colleague Beate Ronnefeldt, a German trainer of Non-Violent Communication. This program brings together Jewish and (non-Jewish) German participants, and others affected by WWII for Compassionate Listening skill-building and healing retreats. Participants use the skills to listen to each other's experience, as well as to "witnesses" ranging from victim to perpetrator during WWII. This deeply moving program continues as a powerful reconciliation model, now under the leadership of Andrea Cohen and Brian and Lisa Berman, certified facilitators with TCLP.
- Two German participants produced a film about the project in 2004 called "Embracing Story" which is screening widely in Germany and the U.S. - bringing this work to a much larger audience. (Embracing Story is available in our online store)

Educational Video Productions:

- TCLP has produced two beautiful and inspiring documentaries profiling our work on the ground in the Middle East: "Children of Abraham" (1998) and "Crossing the Lines: Palestinians and Israelis Speak with the Compassionate Listening Project" (2002). These videos are used in Universities, high schools and religious institutes throughout the world and still screen widely in film festivals and public and private showings. The videos are available to 80,000 public high school students in major cities across the country through contracts with educational television companies
- Len and Libby Traubman, co-founders of the Jewish-Palestinian Living Room Dialogue Group and mentors for many of the Middle East dialogue groups across N. America recently wrote: "Crossing the Lines is one of the best films there is to help people begin to listen to both peoples, and to truly understand both narratives equally - the beginning of the end of war."

Compassionate Listening Guidebook:

- In 2001 we published our guidebook for Compassionate Listening, "Listening with the Heart," written by Carol Hwoschinsky. Now in its third edition, it was recently translated into German and will soon be published in Germany. This book has spawned Compassionate Listening Practice Groups throughout the world as a grassroots movement.

Annual Summer Gathering

- Each year, our Annual Summer Gathering brings Compassionate Listeners old and new together for three inspiring days of community, spirit and renewal at a beautiful retreat center outside of Seattle, Washington. If you have not participated in any of our programs, the Gathering is a perfect place to start. We welcome your participation!

Givat Haviva

Givat Haviva Educational Foundation

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Mission and Background:

Givat Haviva Educational Foundation (GHEF) in New York City is the American arm representing and supporting Givat Haviva Institute. The Foundation comprises a community of supporters and activists who work to increase awareness of Givat Haviva Institute's role in advancing Jewish-Arab relations in Israel.

Founded in 1949 by the Kibbutz Artzi Movement, a federation of eighty-three kibbutzim throughout Israel, Givat Haviva Institute has been educating for peace, democracy, coexistence, and social solidarity for half a century.

Givat Haviva conducts a broad range of formal and informal programs that resist all forms of racism and discrimination, bridge the gaps in the fields of Jewish-Arab relations and promote greater understanding between different groups in Israeli society. Only in this manner can the moral foundation for achieving peace with the Palestinians and the Arab states be achieved.

Programs include academic and professional courses; empowerment seminars for Jewish and Arab women and for municipal leaders; dialogue and encounter groups; inter-organizational partnerships; educational curricula and research; joint Jewish-Arab athletic and arts programs for youth (soccer camps, sailing teams, photography project).

Givat Haviva also promotes the study and professional teaching of the Holocaust, and has established a leading research institute and resource center to that effect.

Activities and Programs:

Among the programs at Givat Haviva Institute:

- **Professional courses** for community workers, civil servants, women, and young adults in the Arab sector strengthen the foundations of democracy and facilitate social change in Israeli Arab villages and cities.
- **Jewish-Arab youth programs** bring together some 25,000 Jewish and Arab youth every year, in the framework of student councils, sports and arts programs, summer peace camps, and Face-to-Face encounter groups.
- Jewish and Arab school-age children are paired through the **Children Teaching Children** program, examining their differences and commonalities separately and then together in intimate seminars.
- **Radio All for Peace**, operated jointly by Israelis and Palestinians, has been broadcasting in Arabic, Hebrew, and English for two years, with a message of peace, mutual understanding and cooperation for all its listeners.

IFLAC: International Forum for the Literature and Culture of Peace

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Mission and Purpose:

- To strive toward the promotion of peace and mutual respect between people and nations.
- To promote social, cultural and religious tolerance between people.
- To eliminate violence in all its forms.
- To organize peace culture researchers, writers, intellectuals and friends of literature.
- To encourage creativity that promotes culture and peace.

We believe that culture and literature can promote peace, freedom, and the enrichment of the quality of life. On the threshold of the twenty first century, we shall endeavor to pave the way towards the fulfillment of our main ideal "one world and one humanity, all living in peace". Our goal is to help build a Middle East and a world beyond war in the 21st century, by means of literature, culture and art. This endeavor is in harmony with the Universal Declaration of Human Rights embodied in the Charter of the United Nations.

We strive for freedom of speech and expression, and for freedom from hostile and oppressive violence, whether it is war, or gender, physical, mental, or moral oppression. We believe in the right of people everywhere to live in peace, and in their rights to pursue their various cultures, as well as human endeavors, and to obtain equal civil justice.

Activities:

Toward these ends, we organize "International Conferences on Conflict Resolution Through Culture and Literature," first in Shavei Zion, Galilee, in June 1999, the Second Iflac Conference, in Sydney in 2001, the third Iflac Conference was held in London in 2002, the fourth one was held in Bursa, Turkey, in October 2003, The fifth was in L.A in 2005. Peace Poetry Festival in Paris 2007. "IFLAC", under its former name: "The Friends of Literature Association", was founded in 1985 in Haifa Israel, and was registered as a Voluntary Association in 1987. In 1999 it was registered under its present name: IFLAC. There are ten international branches, actively and harmoniously working together. We hold literary and cultural meetings including: Lectures, Poetry Reading, Story-Telling, New Books celebrations, Interviews, Literary Weekend Seminars, Cultural Festivals, Symposiums, Congresses and Workshops. In 1996, the TENT OF PEACE was set up in the Druze village of Ussfiya, in which dialogue encounters, inter-cultural meetings and happenings are held.

Interfaith Encounter Association

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Mission and Background:

The Interfaith Encounter Association is dedicated to promoting peace in the Middle East through interfaith dialogue and cross-cultural study. We believe that, rather than being a cause of the problem, religion can and should be a source of the solution for conflicts that exist in the region and beyond.

Interfaith dialogue was established in Israel in the late 1950s by a small group of visionaries, including Martin Buber and others. Despite decades of commendable interfaith activities in the country, to date only an extremely limited circle of individuals has recognized that religious faith and commitment without dialogue threatens the stability of society, and thus seriously engages in dialogue. There is an urgent need to supplement existing interfaith efforts, both through new strategies to draw ever larger numbers of individuals into the circle of interfaith dialogue, and through the development of interactive models for encounter that can effect true and lasting change in the outlook and attitude of participants.

In light of the above, a group of concerned longtime interfaith activists has recently formed the Interfaith Encounter Association (IEA). Our vision is a society in which the otherness of the other is not only accepted, but truly understood and respected. We wish to make a significant contribution to the fulfillment of this vision through the Interfaith Encounter Association, which will be guided by the following basic principles and goals:

- Equal representation of all faiths in the Association
- Equality of the genders in the decision making processes and activities of the Association
- Outreach to individuals from all faiths, age groups, walks of life, and levels of society
- Outreach to individuals across the religious-secular and political spectrums
- Continual recruitment through committed activists on the local and regional levels
- Implementation of interactive programs that effectively change outlooks and attitudes, such as extended weekend seminars and ongoing study groups
- Continual development of new interactive models for effective encounter
- Ongoing evaluation of all strategies and programs

The Interfaith Encounter Association (IEA) is dedicated to promoting coexistence in the Middle East through cross-cultural study and inter-religious dialogue. We believe that, rather than being the cause of the problem, religion can and should be a source of solution for the conflicts that exist in the region and beyond. We do not believe in the blending of all traditions into one undifferentiated group, but in providing a table where all can come and sit in safety and ease, while being fully individual in their respective religions.

In the years since its inception, the IEA has been successful at staying true to its principles while beginning to realize a part of the society it hopes to create. In acknowledgement of the IEA's work,

UNESCO has recognized the IEA as an organization that is contributing to the culture of peace and as an actor of the global movement for a culture of peace, a United Nations initiative.

The IEA also maintains connections and relationships with many international interfaith organizations and networks. The IEA serves as a Multiple Cooperation Circle (MCC) of the United Religions Initiative (URI) and each encounter group of the IEA functions as a Cooperation Circle (CC) of that organization as well. The IEA is a Member Group of the International Association for Religious Freedom (IARF) and attends its international Congresses and an Affiliate Member of the Council of Centers on Jewish-Christian Relations. The Jerusalem programs of the IEA also function as part of the Partner Cities Network of the Council for a Parliament of the World's Religions (CPWR).

Activities:

We form and maintain, across the country, on-going interfaith encounter groups, or centers, that bring together neighboring communities. Each center is led by an interfaith coordinating team with one person for each community in the area and develops into a "mini-community" that exemplifies the desired relations of mutual respect and friendship while respecting and even reinforcing the unique identity of each community. These groups then act as models for the surrounding community of how multiple faiths can live side by side in peace, as well as growing islands of actual coexistence communities. The backbone of the groups' process is the monthly session of joint study. Dedicated to one theme each time, these sessions usually open with a short presentation followed by joint study and discussion of the beliefs, practices, and sacred texts of the respective traditions.

Some of our community projects are (from north to south):

- School Coexistence Project: Karmiel-Majd el-Krum
- Acre
- M'ghar
- Shibolot
- Sawa Rabina
- Bridging
- Lana
- Carmel City
- Chayim Beyachad
- Netania-Qalansawa
- Tel Aviv-Jaffa
- Reut-Sadaqa-Friendship - Jerusalem General Group
- Study & Dialogue Group
- Arabic Speaking Group
- Hefapii (Health Equality for All People in Israel)
- Jewish-Christian Study Group
- Future - Mothers and Daughters Group
- Eilat

WOMEN'S INTERFAITH ENCOUNTER (WIE)

Muslim, Christian, Druze and Jewish women study together topics of relevance to women from the perspective of the different religions. Interfaith study is used as a vehicle not only for understanding, acceptance and respect for the other, but as a way to deepen awareness of one's own religion. The encounter is a source of strength and empowerment for women to recognize their shared values and struggles. Through monthly meetings and shared religious celebrations and conferences, WIE creates a sacred space of trust, harmony, and support during difficult times.

YOUTH INTERFAITH ENCOUNTER (YIE)

The YIE is a special place for young adults to have interfaith encounter with young adults of other faiths, to jointly discuss issues of mutual concern for young adults and to run the encounter with the special dynamics of young adults. Similar to the general groups and the WIE groups, the YIE groups also develop into "mini-communities" that induce the desired change in the larger society. The YIE also acts as a gateway for young adults to join the interfaith encounter process.

There are 3 sub-groups of the YIE:

- Jerusalem YIE
- Students Environmental Group
- Tel Aviv YIE

RETREATS AND CONFERENCES

Some eighty participants, across the variety of religious contexts, gather on Thursday or Friday, early afternoon for two to three days of intensive and intimate encounter with each other. They spend most of the time in small groups, where each of them has an opportunity to express their views and hear the perspective of others - avoiding as much as possible divisive political debates. They also have the opportunity to witness the prayers of 'the other' and to celebrate their encounter in a social evening. Through this intensive and intimate interaction, they meet each other in a very deep sense, thus learning to understand and respect the 'otherness' of the other while remaining true to their own faith.

ISRAELI-PALESTINIAN DIALOGUE

We hold regular interfaith meetings and conferences in cooperation with Palestinian organizations, with the objective of building peace between the two nations on a people-to-people level. Because we take an inter-religious, non-political, approach we are able to engage in the process people from all parts of the political spectrum in their respective societies. Even as the violence continues, these meetings are carried on cautiously, in carefully selected locations.

THE MIDDLE EAST ABRAHAMIC FORUM

An annual conference of people of the Abrahamic traditions held in the Middle East to support cross-cultural understanding and mutual respect as a powerful tool for peace building in the Middle East. A group of Jews, Christians, and Muslims meets to discuss how they can work together in supporting acceptance and coexistence in and between their local communities and to plan and promote further regional programs. Currently, these activities take place under the banner of the Middle East and North Africa Region of the United Religions Initiative with partner groups from Egypt, Iran, Jordan, the Palestinian Authority and Turkey.

CROSS-CULTURAL STUDY VISITS

This program sponsors field trips to various sacred locations and archeological sites with the objective of educating the public about the meaning and significance of the land, and its value to each of the monotheistic traditions.

Middleway

David Lisbona

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Mission and Background:

Middleway is a non-profit, non-political grassroots organization, which grew from the longing felt by thousand of Jewish and Arab Israelis and Palestinians in Israel to find novel ways to put an end to the circle of violence, hatred and fear, and to live in peace on the same land.

Middleway began its activities in April 2002, in the days of the escalating Intifada, with an eight day silent peace walk from Jaffa to Jerusalem, in which hundreds of people participated, aiming for a deep change of heart in individuals and in society, and wishing to create a culture of peace and reconciliation. Since then, many peace walks have taken place all over Israel and also in the Palestinian Territories, and a wealth of activities have stemmed from the initial authentic wish to find a different solution.

Middleway is among the few organizations in Israel who advocate completely non-violent protest and who combine spirituality with peace activism. We advance a profound vision for change founded on a fundamental shift in attitude.

Middleway's path to reconciliation for all sides includes the following activities:

- Silent peace walks are held monthly, bringing together hundreds of Jews, Arabs, and people from other faiths to spread the message of non-violence. The walks are a living testimony that peace, reconciliation, and co-existence are possible.
- Following each walk, dialogues are held in small circles in which the participants listen to one another with compassion and respect, and practice and learn peace-making.
- " Once a year there is an extended walk for several days which is intended to strengthen the group and the connection to the communities which host the walkers. This is an opportunity for engaging in more in-depth dialogue, resolution of pain and compassionate listening.
- In partnership with local people, Middleway has carried out a number of distinct humanitarian activities in the West Bank including organizing Israeli doctors and alternative practitioners to volunteer in Palestinian hospitals, organizing teachers to visit schools, renovating a kindergarten and hosting Palestinian kindergarten teachers in a Jewish/Arab Kindergarten in the Galilee. Among other activities included the providing of school bags for Palestinian schoolchildren, and facilitating the donation of thousands of olive trees. Humanitarian activities of this nature continue on an ad hoc basis.
- There has been ongoing dialogue activity with Israeli settlers in the Gaza Strip. The dismantlement of settlements in the Occupied Territories has caused great anguish amongst the settlers and the more right-wing and religious sectors of the Israeli public. The fear of a "War between brothers" continues to be a major concern in Jewish Israeli society. Middleway had launched a program of encounters with settlers, to help bridge the rift, defuse the anger and mistrust and promote understanding and friendship.
- Middleway has chosen to focus some of its activities in the year 2006 in the village of East Barta'a, located in Wadi Ara, on the border between Israel and Palestine. Its inhabitants are not

Israeli citizens and cannot travel to the western side of the village (Israeli territory). They are now also unable to travel freely to the Palestinian territories on the Eastern side, because they are in a no-man's land between Israel and The Wall. They live in a closed ghetto, surrounded by police and soldiers, forbidden to cultivate their land, cut off from medical and education and municipal services of their own local and national government and many families are divided in half and have lived separately from their dear ones for years. The activities of Middleway in Barta'a, include:

- Dialogue circles between Israeli Jews and Barta'a people: a positive exposure to the Israeli Jewish world, such that both sides will get a glimpse into the complexity of each other's lives.
- Activities with Barta'a children: promoting peaceful and non-violent culture.
- A community clinic staffed by volunteer conventional and alternative medical professionals, to fill the void in medical services and bring healing to individuals and the community.
- Supporting improving connection with the authorities, including a continual contact with the military and police in the region, to help creating mutual understanding between Barta'a residents and the soldiers.

Activities:

- **Peace Walks** Silent peace walks are held monthly, bringing together hundreds of Jews, Arabs and people from other faiths to spread the message of non-violence. The walks emanate steadiness, peacefulness, and friendliness, and are a living testimony that peace, reconciliation, and co-existence are possible. Once a year, there is an extended walk for several days which is intended to strengthen the group and the connection to the communities which host the walkers.
- **Dialogue and Conflict Resolution** Often in association with peace walks, and at other gatherings and workshops, dialogues are held between participants, often Jews and Arabs, Palestinians and Israelis, in small circles in which the participants learn to listen to one another with compassion and respect, undo stereotypes, heal conflict and practice peace-making. There has also been ongoing dialogue activity with Israeli settlers in and from the Gaza Strip. Middleway had launched a program of encounters with settlers, to help bridge the rift, defuse the anger and mistrust and promote understanding and friendship.
- **Humanitarian Activities** In partnership with local people, Middleway has carried out a number of distinct humanitarian activities in the West Bank including organizing Israeli doctors and alternative practitioners to volunteer in Palestinian hospitals, organizing teachers to visit schools, renovating a kindergarten and hosting Palestinian kindergarten teachers in a Jewish/Arab Kindergarten in the Galilee. Among other activities included the providing of school bags for Palestinian schoolchildren, and facilitating the donation of thousands of olive trees. Humanitarian activities of this nature continue on an ad hoc basis.

Peace Child Israel

Public Relations & Director: Melisse Lewine-Boskovich

Operations Manager: Maha Alnakib

Pedagogical Director: Khalil Sbeit

Theatrical Consultant: Shai Schwartz

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Mission and Background:

Peace Child Israel was co-founded in 1988 by David Gordon and Yael Drouyannoff to teach coexistence using theater and the arts. We educate for democratic values, tolerance, and mutual respect. Arab and Jewish teens work with counterparts from around the country to create original dramas about coexistence. The plays, in Arabic and Hebrew, are performed for family, friends and the public at-large.

Peace Child Israel was founded and operates to promote peace and equality between Arab and Jewish citizens in Israel, using theatre to promote coexistence among young people. Our program aims to achieve the following objectives:

- Creating acquaintances, friendly relations with, and mutual respect for, the youth of the other people;
- Education towards democracy as a way of life for all citizens of the country, encouragement and strengthening of the willingness to accept the views of the other, and to respect them, even in disagreement. Development of tolerance and empathy towards the other;
- Education towards equal rights for both peoples, while maintaining the unique identity of both;
- Educations towards changing reality through peaceful means
- Involvement, as much as possible, of the parents and community at-large in the process and in adoption of the organization's objectives.

Activities:

Process-

Peace Child Israel works nationwide. Each workshop site is comprised of 20-30 teenagers from the 9th and 10th grades from neighboring Arab and Jewish schools. Each group is co-facilitated by two professionals, Arab and Jew, one with a background in theatre and the other in group-facilitation and social work. Preparation for the multi-cultural encounter is facilitated by 4 unilateral meetings with each partnering group of teenagers. A team-building seminar of three days is provided after the first bi-national meeting. Peace Child Israel evaluates its curriculum annually and promises the highest level of field work, delivery, and standards maintenance, which are supported by a full-time operations manager, pedagogical director, and theatre consultants. Binational meetings taking place in both the Arab and the Jewish school continue weekly until the playwriting and rehearsal begins.

Workshop participants are treated to the visits of guest artists in the field of pantomime, vocal production, circus and juggling games, dance and movement. Their communication skills, as they develop in the teen years, are greatly influenced by participation in the program. Also included are two national field-trips

where the teenagers get to meet their counterparts from around the country and feel that they are part of a movement for peace-building.

Play & Performance-

Each workshop develops an original bi-lingual play based on the teens' experiences during the eight months of meetings. It is performed first at a noon-time dress-rehearsal for students from the two participating schools and then at an evening "gala" performance for family, friends and the community at-large, usually addressed by members of the pairing municipalities and regional councils and school principals. An after-show celebration, to which families bring authentic foods, salutes the teenagers in their efforts. In the second year, these "Leadership Troupes" continue their activity by performing their plays for student audiences once a month, reaching thousands of junior high school students around the country. Productions at schools include a post-performance discussion with the audience designed by the actors themselves. Their group process also continues with a Second Year Curriculum.

Parents and Professors-

To broaden our scope of activity and achieve optimum outreach, Peace Child Israel has invited parents into the "circle" with three meetings per year since 2001. A 60-hour curriculum for teachers from partnering schools is being developed for piloting in September 2007.

Building Bridges for Peace: Seeking Common Ground

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Mission and Background:

Seeking Common Ground strives to empower individuals to change the world by creating peaceful communities through integration, socialization, communication, and leadership development.

Established in 1994, Seeking Common Ground (SCG) received its non-profit status in 1997. Melodye Feldman co-founded the organization and is its current Executive Director.

Seeking Common Ground operates from these guiding principles:

- Prejudice can be transformed into understanding by confronting fears of the unknown and breaking down stereotypes;
- Communication is a learned skill, and is integral to understanding other perspectives;• Meaningful encounters with diverse groups of people decrease stereotyping of those groups;
- In order to approach conflict effectively, the parties involved must build relationships;
- Young women need access to programs that enable them to become leaders in their communities;
- Every individual has the power to effect positive change in her own life and the lives of those around them.
- The diversity of Seeking Common Ground's community offers our participants unique learning opportunities. SCG welcomes people from diverse religious, cultural, social, and ethnic backgrounds. Our participant populations also include people with disabilities, alternative sexual orientations, and individuals with diverse political views.

Activities:

Program personnel rely on on-going evaluations both written and verbal sent to staff and participants. Program evaluations allow for dynamic, not static programming changes on a yearly basis to update and facilitate fresh ideas.

The following outcomes remain consistent throughout our programs:

- Participants learn communication tools that enable them to listen to the 'other', especially when hearing a dissenting point of view;
- Participants note a decrease in their likelihood to stereotype, prejudge, or generalize to specific groups;
- Participants come to understand that a person's background and history inform their perspectives. They also express an understanding that sharing diverse perspectives enhances rather than limits their own understanding of the world;
- Participants report a greater sense of self-esteem. After completing the program they tend to take on leadership roles within their respective schools and youth organizations.

Seeking Common Ground is committed to creating inclusive communities while maintaining the integrity of the group and/or individuals represented. We are interested in providing young people the skills to learn to live together with their differences and to address the difficult issues that face us all sharing this planet. The participants develop relationships that transcend race, nationality, religion, and other differences, and are a source of strength and commitment to working towards peace.

Hands of Peace

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Mission:

The mission of Hands of Peace is to foster long term peaceful coexistence among Jewish-Israelis, Arab-Israelis, and West Bank Palestinians by bringing young people from the Middle East together with American teens in an interfaith setting.

We strive to promote this mission by creating opportunities for the participants—young people from the Middle East, local teens, host families, staff, and volunteers—to seek the mutual understanding that comes from face to face encounters by:

- Exposing teens and host communities to cultures other than their own for the purpose of recognizing our common humanity.
- Promoting the ability of participants to give and receive differing perspectives in a respectful manner.
- Developing a personal commitment to promote intercultural relationships.
- Educating home communities about the need for continuing dialogues to foster peaceful coexistence.

Activities and Programs:

I.

A. Dialogue Sessions

1. Provide an opportunity for Israeli and Palestinian teens to have honest, powerful connections in ways not possible for them at home, and to open their hearts and minds and challenge them to consider the world in ways they haven't before.
2. Introduce American teens to the Middle East conflict by hearing the experiences of their Israeli and Palestinian peers. Encourage American teens to expand their knowledge of Israeli and Palestinian history and current relations.
3. Encourage participants to listen and respectfully speak about their experiences and perspectives on the current conflict and the potential for peaceful coexistence in the region.
4. Strive for a balance of strength and a range of voices from both sides of the conflict.
5. Recognize that both sides in the conflict have deep, long-standing and legitimate grievances.

B. Education of Teens and Adults

1. Help the participants understand that violence, regardless of who perpetrates it, does not further either side's process of establishing peace and security, and ask participants to examine acts of aggression that both Israelis and Palestinians have committed against each other and listen openly to their impact.
2. Encourage American teen participants and their families to further investigate the history and current issues of the conflict and to explore other cultures to become better informed citizens.
3. Move those participants who see others as the "enemy" away from that perception and toward seeing them as real human beings who want to live in peace, security and prosperity.

4. Recognize and respect the right of both Palestinians and Israelis to live in safety, security and peace.

C. Leadership Skills

1. Provide leadership opportunities and training to an ever increasing number of participants who will work for peaceful coexistence, defense of human rights, and justice for all.
2. Encourage the teen participants, as they become adults, to exercise leadership in their communities so that a critical mass of Israelis, Palestinians, and Americans will be promoting peace in their roles as parents, teachers, public and private sector workers, citizens, etc.

II. The Follow-Up Program

A. Participants

1. Provide follow up programs in the United States and Middle East that encourage all participants to continue the work begun during the summer program.
2. Empower all participants to return home feeling supported as they integrate new and evolving beliefs, behaviors and social connections into their existing environments.
3. Encourage participants to keep in touch with their new friends in order to sustain and deepen the relationships that began during the program.
4. When a peace agreement is achieved in the Middle East, prepare the Hands to help transform what could be a cold peace into a warm peace by reaching out to the friends they made through this program.
5. Support participants in activities designed to improve their environment by working for peaceful coexistence, justice, and human rights for all.

B. Families

1. Provide opportunities during the summer program and beyond that encourage participants, staff, and families to build friendships and increase empathy for one another.

C. Community

1. Serve as a beacon to the local and international communities, showing that Christians, Muslims, and Jews can work together for positive change.
2. Engage in activities and programs that promote human rights, peace, and justice, and improve people's lives.
3. Form connections with other organizations that share similar interests and visions.

Coalition of Women for Peace

Rima Abboud

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Mission and Background:

The Coalition of Women for Peace has become one of the leading voices in Israel advocating for a just and viable peace between Israel and Palestine ever since its founding in November 2000, just six weeks after the current Intifada began.

The Coalition brings together independent women and nine women's peace organizations, some newly formed and others promoting coexistence since the founding of the state of Israel. We are a mix of Jewish and Palestinian women (all citizens of Israel), and we take action to amplify the voices of women calling for peace and justice for all inhabitants of the region.

The Coalition of Women for Peace seeks to mobilize women in support of human rights and a just peace between Israel and its Arab neighbors, as we work to strengthen democracy within Israel.

Our principles:

- An end to the occupation.
- The full involvement of women in negotiations for peace.
- Establishment of the state of Palestine side-by-side with the state of Israel based on the 1967 borders.
- Recognition of Jerusalem as the shared capital of two states.
- Israel must recognize its share of responsibility for the results of the 1948 war, and cooperate in finding a just solution for the Palestinian refugees.
- Opposition to the militarism that permeates Israeli society.
- Equality, inclusion and justice for Palestinian citizens of Israel.
- Equal rights for women and all residents of Israel.
- Social and economic justice for Israel's citizens, and integration in the region.

Activities:

In addition to supporting the work of its member organizations, the Coalition carries out mass rallies, human rights campaigns, outreach, and advocacy activity.

Twice a year, the Coalition holds mass rallies calling for an end to the occupation. In one, thousands of Israeli and Palestinian women marched through the streets under the banner "We Refuse to be Enemies". We held a Concert for Peace, with Israeli and Palestinian performers. In May 2003, one thousand Coalition women dressed in black lay down in a large public plaza of Tel Aviv under the banner, 'The Occupation is Killing Us All'. We have also mobilized women in 150 locations on five continents to hold solidarity vigils during these major events.

The Coalition has provided emergency supplies to women and children in refugee camps, and school supplies to thousands of Palestinian children. Together with Palestinian women, we recently completed

the International Human Rights March of Women, marching for 3 weeks in Israel and Palestine and calling for an end to the occupation and creation of a just peace between our peoples.

With the escalation of violence over recent years, it has become harder and harder for peace movements in Israel to rally public support. Nevertheless, the Coalition has persisted, both independently and in collaboration with others, and believes that peace is possible and that women have a key role in making it happen.

Middle East Abrahamic Forum

Web: MiddleEastAbrahamicForum@groups.msn.com

Mission:

Welcome to our community, which is devoted to interfaith dialogue between Judaism, Christianity & Islam - three faiths that all claim and value Abrahamic roots in their own unique ways.

Here, we honor this common spiritual heritage by seeking increased understanding and peaceful co-existence between the three faiths. We look to alleviate misunderstandings, learn about each other's faith traditions, and share spiritually inspiring material.

We also attempt to promote peace in the Middle East by examining religious/political conflicts in the region through the lens of our faiths' best practices - drawing on both classic and modern interpretations and insights to build trust, and foster win-win solutions for all the peoples of the region.

Activities:

Interfaith forum.

Windows

P.O. Box 56096

Tel Aviv 61560

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Email: winpeace@win-peace.org

Web: <http://www.win-peace.org/join.php>

Mission and Background:

“Windows” is a joint organization of Jews and Palestinians from both sides of the Green Line. It was established in 1991 with the aim to promote acquaintance, understanding and conciliation between people from both nations, through educational and cultural programs, media and art. We believe that in order to reach a just and lasting peace, and to advance the process of conciliation in our region, it is important to understand and internalize democratic values and human rights, and to deepen mutual knowledge of the other. In this way we can learn to cope together with the present reality that we, Palestinians and Jews, share.

The organization is not affiliated with any political party and we do not offer political solutions.

The belief that serves as a base to all Windows' work is that both the Palestinians and the Jews have the right to live between the Jordan River and the Mediterranean Sea as equals with their Human Rights kept.

Among ‘Windows’ members there are people who support a 2 states solutions and others that would prefer to live in one state. There are Zionists and anti Zionist, supporters and objectors to the right of return etc. Windows is not about reaching an agreement – it’s about an active listening to each other and a real attempt to understand.

Activities/Programs:

Palestinian Israeli Friendship Center

Windows members live in many towns, villages and refugee camps all over Israel and the Palestinian Territories as well as in many cities around the world. We see great importance in enabling our members to meet each other in a friendly and supportive atmosphere - our friendship centers. Our goal is to offer to each community a special program that will give an answer to their specific needs and interests. The courage to listen to the other is common to all our communities. Connections are encouraged between the communities through phone, emails, and where ever possible through meeting too.

In most places our members meet in private homes or public places. We wish to open centers, even if small ones, that will serve as a meeting place for the members and activists, and as a space for cultural and educational programs that will be offered to the general public in each community, inviting them to join the growing circle of people that find the courage to listen to each other and choose the road to peace.

Don’t be mistaken, the good atmosphere does not mean that we ran away from the problems. On the contrary - it is our goal to open the wounds and put everything on the table. As we said before, we have the courage to do so.

Tel-Aviv Friendship Center

Our first friendship center is located in the heart of Tel Aviv and since 1999 has offered a wide range of activities, including lectures, meetings, films, tours, spoken Arabic courses and more, to a wide audience from both nations and all ages. The program is designed to give expression to voices seldom heard in the Israeli public discourse and to explore the complex history and reality of the region. The open atmosphere enables people to share experiences, opinions and emotions.

Tul Karem Friendship Center

A new Friendship center was opened in May 2003 in the city of Tul Karem (West Bank). The center hosts the activities of Windows' junior correspondents and serves as a meeting place for Windows' activists in the area. The new center will focus mainly on youth: summer day camps, youth parliament, leadership courses and more. In all those activities there is an emphasis on democracy, human rights and non-violence.

Jewish Palestinian Encounter

Email: hchahine@magic.fr, myk@mad.servicom.es, xenoret@aol.com

Web Dialogue Group: <http://www.salam-shalom.net/>

Mission:

Our purpose is to provide different venues for dialogue and increased understanding; to create on-the-ground projects in troubled regions as a way to improve economic and social conditions and to build a sense of common purpose.

Activities:

Computer-Based:

- We are teaching programming via database and computer animation and graphics with the intent of providing our students with income-generating computer-related skills.
- We do this training via Oracle in 5 to 8 weeks courses, 6 hours/day, 5 days/week, depending on the previous computer training of the beneficiaries and the funds available.
- We train in Web designing, animation and graphics by computer. We have the human means, as we have teachers who are natives of Arabic and Hebrew for such projects in the Middle East..
- We also train teachers as they are in a position to transmit the knowledge further and we teach.
- We provide the computers and the training. Even in a difficult political situations, well trained persons with a computer at home can earn a good living independently of their location or the surrounding socio-political-economic conditions; the Internet has no limits.
- We provide practical programming classes. We provide contacts with possible employing firms.

Washington D.C.: On Jan 31, 1999, "Super Bowl Sunday", the Jewish-Palestinian Encounter project held the first of an international series of kick-off conferences to foster the creation of interconnected communities dedicated to peace in the Middle East. The all day assembly at American University in Washington D.C. featured talks from religious leaders and conflict resolution experts, face to face dialogue, and workshops. One of the workshops was held by D.C. Arabs and Jews interested in continuing to meet on a regular basis. The Washington Area Jewish-Palestinian Encounter was born on that day. We meet the first Sunday evening of each month, usually at 7:00 P.M. Our regular meeting place for our first year has been the Marvin Center of George Washington University, but from time to time we chose to meet at other locations. We have met at Congregation Har Shalom, at the homes of participants, at the Arab American Institute and at the George Washington University Hillel Society building. We are still new and we are still trying to figure out how to fulfill our triple mission:

1. To provide a place where Arabs and Jews can socialize, and through dialogue learn about one another's' hopes and fears and learn more about how each of us perceives the conflict in Palestine and Israel, and what we see as just resolutions.
2. To participate in and provide support for International Encounter and other on-the-ground peace and aid projects in Palestine and Israel.
3. To provide a forum for planning educational and political efforts in the United States to foster peace in Israel/Palestine.

Our mission statement points us towards certain paths. The fuel that propels us along those paths seems to be the friendships and networks that are developing among our Jewish and Arab members and serendipity. Two of our members recently decided to put together a joint Palestinian-Israeli performing folk dance troupe. The group is forming now, and as far as we know will be the first such group

anywhere. Others are planning assemble as Arab-Jewish pairs of speakers and go out into the Arab and Jewish communities, to serve as educators for peaceful coexistence. More social events like the barbecue we held last summer are being planned.

Open House

P.O. Box 26187, Jerusalem 91261, Israel

Email: dalialandau@hotmail.com

Email: finemj@gmail.com

Web: <http://www.openhouse.org.il/>

Mission and Background:

OPEN HOUSE Center at 1 Klausner Street in Ramle was founded in 1991 to further peace and coexistence among Israeli Arabs and Jews in this mixed city of 65,000 residents. The ratio of 53,000 Jews to 12,000 Arabs parallels the Jewish-Arab ratio in the State of Israel generally, making Ramle a microcosm of the country. The house on Klausner Street is an even smaller microcosm, for the two families who have lived there before and after 1948 represent the two nations laying claim to the land of Israel/Palestine.

OPEN HOUSE has two inter-related goals: to provide educational and social opportunities to Arab children and their families through our Center for the Development of the Arab Child; and to be a place of encounter and cooperation between Jews and Arabs in the Ramle-Lod area through our Center for Jewish-Arab Coexistence.

Activities:

Following a short break following our very successful Summer Peace Camps, OPEN HOUSE moved into its year-long activities program in the fall. Racheli Zini was named Director of Open House in early 2004. She is joined by Khader Al-Kalak, Director of Administration and Finance.

A major gathering for all OPEN HOUSES' teenage participants, past and present has been planned. Festivities will include a karaoke evening with Hebrew, Arabic and English songs, followed by a Middle-Eastern style coffee house with carpeting, low tables and candle light.

The Center for the Development of the Arab Child, which includes our head start Arabic speaking Nursery School, is full with 35 toddlers who have finally learned to say goodbye to their mothers in the morning and enjoy their day full of activities. They have new toys and books this year. We bought some new furniture and new kitchen cabinets are promised.

The teachers have a long wish list:

- a teacher for dance or creative movement designed especially for toddlers, or a music teacher once a week to teach rhythm and singing
- a modest budget to take the children on day trips with their mothers
- a monthly professionally facilitated parents group to discuss early childhood educational and behavioral issues
- sponsorship of continuing education courses for the four nursery school teachers
- financial aid for needy parents that would allow OPEN HOUSE to accept and subsidize more low-income families

Creating an extended program many afternoons a week for mothers who work late.

Friends of Open House

Yehezkel Landau

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Web: <http://www.friendsofopenhouse.org/contactus.cfm>

Mission and Background:

Friends of OPEN HOUSE is a new organization founded in January, 2001 to forge links among and expand our North American supporters of OPEN HOUSE, a Jewish - Arab community center in Ramle, Israel. OPEN HOUSE was established in 1991 to strengthen relationships between the Jewish and Arab citizens of this mixed city (located outside of Tel Aviv), whose demographics reflect the population of Israel as a whole.

In its 13 years of operation, based in what was originally an Arab home, OPEN HOUSE has developed, through its "Center for Jewish - Arab Co-existence," mixed Jewish-Arab youth activities, including ongoing dialogue groups, summer peace camps, and leadership training in inter-ethnic relations and reconciliation for older teenage members. OPEN HOUSE has sponsored groups for Jewish and Arab parents and seminars for educators and social service professionals "The Center for the Development of the Arab Child" at OPEN HOUSE operates an Arabic-speaking nursery school, the first in Ramle, where working parents can send their young children to receive a top quality "Head Start" education. OPEN HOUSE also serves as a community voice, advocating for equality of public services provided to the Jewish and Arab sectors of Ramle.

Over the years, the social interaction made possible by OPEN HOUSE among Jewish, Arab Muslim and Arab Christian families has fostered a deep understanding of how reconciliation can be achieved and a profound practical knowledge of how co-existence can work. This unique "community-based" co-existence project, which originally brought together a Jewish, Muslim and Christian family around one symbolic household, holds the promise of making a positive impact on Arab-Jewish relations far beyond Ramle.

A Brief History of OPEN HOUSE

[Dalia Landau](#), grew up in this home, not knowing who the Arab owners had been, and believing they had simply fled during the 1948 War. Dalia's parents, as Jewish refugees from Bulgaria, had been given the "empty" house by the Israeli government in 1948 when Dalia was only one year old. (The family later purchased the home from the State.)

In 1967 Dalia and her parents met the Palestinian family who had previously owned the house and learned how they (along with many other Arab families in Ramle) had been forcibly evacuated from their homes during the course of the 1948 War. This began a long relationship between the families. In 1991, after Dalia inherited the home from her parents, the house was transformed from a family residence to a community center with the participation of the original Palestinian Muslim owners (now living in the West Bank) and a Palestinian Christian family in Ramle.

OPEN HOUSE was founded to create community among Israeli Arabs and Jews in this mixed city of 65,000 residents. The full human story behind its founding has inspired people throughout the world.

The Friends of OPEN HOUSE

Friends of OPEN HOUSE welcomes you to join us in support of this beacon of hope--a micro-laboratory of human relations that offers all of us the opportunity to learn from and be nurtured by its daily victories of the human spirit. We look forward to the continued growth of our North American network committed to:

- supporting the programs of OPEN HOUSE in Israel
- establishing people-to-people links between the young and adult participants in the programs in Ramle and communities in North America,
- facilitating interfaith dialogue in North America that explores ways to better understand the history, current reality and possibilities for peace and reconciliation in the Middle East and throughout the world.

The Friends of OPEN HOUSE has formal organized chapters in Cincinnati, Ohio and Boston, Massachusetts and a Friends group is active in the Netherlands. Please let us know if you would like to connect to other supporters in your community and/or help to organize a formal chapter to help raise support for OPEN HOUSE, foster programmatic links between OPEN HOUSE and your community, and develop a local interfaith network for dialogue and relationship building in your community.

Activities:

During the summer, over 100 Jewish and Arab young people participated in the 13th annual OPEN HOUSE Summer Peace Camp. 60 youngsters, ages 8-12 attended the three-week camp held at Kibbutz Gezer in July. This was followed by the Teen Travel Camp for 50 teens that traveled throughout northern Israel for two weeks. All the children expressed the desire to return next year.

The camp programs were sponsored in part, by Stichting Het Solidariteitsfonds in the Netherlands, the George Waechter Memorial Foundation, and the Fohs Foundation.

(After-school continuation programs will be organized once again for groups of the younger children throughout the fall and spring. Various programs for teens also will take place as described below.)

Delegations of Jewish and Arab teens had the opportunity to travel to Italy and Holland to meet and work alongside their European peers. Our friends in Italy, Confronti, arranged an invitation from the Adventist Church, which sponsors multi-cultural educational experiences. A delegation of Palestinian teens from Jenin (West Bank) also participated. In Holland, OPEN HOUSE teens were hosted by families who have had long standing friendships with OPEN HOUSE. Ten 18-19 year olds renovated an old synagogue in the beautiful seaside town of Brielle. In their free time, they were inundated with questions about the conflict, and they realized the importance of their message of co-existence and friendship.

FALL 2004

Arabic Speaking Nursery School

35 toddlers have settled in to another year of successful high quality childcare. The program runs five days a week staffed by four experienced Palestinian childcare professionals (three Christian and one Muslim). The center provides a stimulating educational and social environment for these children, some

of whose families are very poor. In addition, the daycare facility enables the mothers to pursue their professional interests and earn additional income for their families.

Young Leadership Training Program

A new group of fifteen teens, ages 14-16, committed to coexistence education will be trained to facilitate mixed Arab and Jewish groups. These teenagers will assist in OPEN HOUSE programs and thereby enable us to increase our programming and offer more activities to the Arab and Jewish population of Ramle. *This program is sponsored by the SC Ministry Foundation.*

Last year, fifteen veteran OPEN HOUSE teens acquired leadership and facilitation skills and learned the art of documentary filmmaking with film director, Kamal Abu Sharav. The personal family stories of each of the participants were explored and documentary films were made of three of them. The documentary preparation required that the teens and their families contend with often difficult family history. Through the interviews they attempted to learn about their own pasts, the history of Ramle, and the relationships between Jews and Arabs during the past fifty years. This fall, participants will make presentations and lead discussions of the video-films in local high schools. *The Abraham Fund Initiatives sponsored the original course last year.*

Public Mural Project

Beginning last fall, twenty participants, ages 12-15, attended an after-school "continuation of camp" program devoted to learning art techniques and developing a joint project to paint on a wall in Ramle. The ideas behind the wall art included beautifying Ramle and taking our co-existence work beyond the four walls of OPEN Houses'. The city provided a wall in central Ramle. The group decided on the Garden of Eden theme and completed a sketch last spring. This fall, the group will begin to assemble the sculpture on the wall and complete a 6 meter ceramic mural. The sponsors of this program include OPEN HOUSE, the city of Ramle, and an NGO of the Orthodox Church. The program facilitators are Nihad Davit, a well-known artist, and Eve Dadon, and artist and the group's social facilitator

Peace and the Environment Project

Fifteen teens, ages 15-16, will learn about the environment and environmental protection with emphasis on the issues in the Ramle area and the similarities/differences in the Jewish and Arab neighborhoods. Thereafter the group will set up a weekly informative, educational stand in the Ramle market attended to by 4 participants to inform and educate passersby about the environmental issues facing the Ramle community and how they are of equal concern to Jewish and Arab residents. The participants will use conversation, fliers, brochures, posters and street theatre to present their message. They will also make presentations in local schools. *This program is funded by The Abraham Fund Initiatives.*

Interfaith Study Group

Building on a very successful pilot program last year, a new group of 20 adult Jews, Christians and Muslims from the Ramle / Lod area will engage in an interfaith dialogue, studying texts and ideas taken from various spiritual sources and cultural traditions. The selections address the complexity of the conflict and the human condition. The study process allows participants to delve deeply into their own inner responses to the conflict and their responses to it. *The course, conducted together with Neve Shalom/Wahat al Salaam and Collot baNegev, is sponsored by EPER Swiss Interchurch Aid.*

Creativity for Peace

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Mission and Background:

Vision

Creativity for Peace is committed to a time of peace when people and nations coexist by understanding and respecting each other. Toward that end, our focus is on developing the next generation of female leaders and peacemakers in Israel and Palestine. We nurture understanding and leadership in Palestinian and Israeli adolescent girls and women so that they aspire to and take on significant roles in their families, communities, and countries that advance peaceful coexistence.

Creativity for Peace is a year-round program that brings adolescent girls from Palestine and Israel out of the violence and conflict of their communities into the safe New Mexico countryside for a three-week summer program that teaches leadership and communication skills and promotes understanding, trust and reconciliation.

Upon their return home, the girls continue to strengthen coexistence through regularly organized meetings, email, and telephone conferencing. The friendships continue to thrive and grow as they create new relationships that cross religious and cultural boundaries. The girls bring the power of their experiences and fresh perspective into the lives of their families and friends.

Our program results in the development of deep friendships, which lead to reconciliation and a true desire for social justice and peaceful coexistence not only among participants but also throughout the communities to which they return.

Activities:

Strategies

- Summer peace camp in New Mexico
- Home country gatherings
- Young leader training
- Scholarships

Staff

Trained dialogue and reconciliation facilitators, professional counselors, art therapists, and professional artists staff the program. The Executive Director has 35 years experience in nonprofit management, communications, and the arts. All staff is interviewed and come highly recommended by other professionals. An extensive network of volunteers supplements and enriches the staff while minimizing expenses.

Funding

Creativity for Peace is a 501 c (3) non-profit. We are supported completely by contributions from private foundations and individuals.

Accomplishments

We have had five successful summers of camp with 98 girls participating and have evolved into a year-long program in which friendships thrive as participants create new relationships that cross religious and cultural boundaries. Nineteen past campers participate in the young leaders program, further developing their leadership skills and acting as junior counselors at Creativity for Peace's summer camp.

Jacobs International Teen Leadership Institute

Web: <http://jitli.org/program2.html>

Mission and Background:

- To engage equally represented groups of Jewish American, Jewish Israeli, Arab Israeli, and Palestinian high school students, who are entering their senior year, in a series of multicultural seminars, dialogues, simulation games, performances, presentations, and encounters with experts in relevant fields.
- To develop leadership and communication skills among participants.
- To enrich these dialogues while traveling through San Diego, CA, home of the Jewish Americans, Spain, a neutral country of historic importance to both Jews and Muslims, and Israel, visiting and exploring sites significant to all groups.
- To provide opportunities for maintaining relationships and continuing dialogue between the participants after the trip.
- To encourage participants to share their experiences and knowledge at community events and public forums.
- To allow participants to confront contemporary and historical issues facing Jews, Muslims, and Christians, in an environment that acknowledges similarities and differences, and which promotes recognition and acceptance of their cultures.
- To build long term connections and relationships between the participants themselves, their families, and their communities.
- To promote coexistence and understanding between individuals of different backgrounds, cultures, and religions.

In 1998 a partnership between the region of Ibim and San Diego was established with the support of the United Jewish Federation. Many projects became part of this partnership, which include missions to Israel, teacher exchange programs, and communication between elementary school students. At the time, Gary Jacobs served as one of the members of the committee of this partnership. As different members of the committee thought and came up with different connections and projects for the new sister regions, Jacobs and Yaacov Schneider, who was then the Israeli shaliach to San Diego, worked as a team to look for an original and unique project.

First, the creation of a building with different recreational facilities to be built in the Negev was considered, but Jacobs was not satisfied. Always being interested in the education as well as the growth and development of the young people in his community, he was determined to create a program that would provide committed individuals with the necessary opportunities to become leaders within their communities. In search for a project that would satisfy his desire to have a positive effect in the leaders of tomorrow, Jacobs and Schneider traveled the entire State of Israel, covering the North and South in one day. After this long day journey, they had spotted the perfect candidate. As they came to the region of Sha'ar Hanegev, a city very close to the partner region of Ibim, these two philanthropists met with the principal of the Sha'ar Hanegev regional school, Arale Rochstein, and with the mayor of the city, Shai Hermesh- now treasurer of the United Jewish Agency and a member of Knesset. The team came up with a project to bring young individuals from the two different

regions together, and include teenagers from neighboring Arab regions as well. This was the birth of the JITLI program.

The original idea was to include these 4 different groups: American Jews, Israeli Jews, Israeli Arabs, and Palestinians. The group would visit Spain, as a neutral ground with significantly peaceful historical relations between Jews and Arabs, and various parts of Israel, including the Israeli and Palestinian homes. Another characteristic of the program was that every group would consist of 5 girls and 5 boys, and they would be guided by young and adult, counselors from every region. Although not every year could incorporate all four groups, each year has been a success in its own way. The trip now includes a San Diego portion to start it off which lets the American groups also show their home.

Activities:

One of the important concepts of the JITLI program is that it consists of much more than the traveling period during the summer. Before and after the trip, participants are required to attend a number of meetings that include educational and personal enrichment activities, phone and video-conferencing between all groups, joint social action projects, and involvement in each of the participant's respective community by taking part in events, speaking at schools, and traveling throughout the county giving presentations to various community groups. As previously discussed, graduates also serve as the primary recruiters for future participants and take part in the application and interview process.

Kids4Peace Atlanta

St. Anne's Episcopal Church

3098 St. Anne's Lane

Atlanta, GA 30327

Email: postmaster@kids4peaceatlanta.org

Web: <http://kids4peaceatlanta.org/>

Mission and Background:

Imagine a place in the Middle East, in the midst of daily violence and fear, where the children of Israel and Palestine, the kids of the Holy Land, can feel safe.

Imagine an open place, where Christian, Jewish and Muslim children can speak from their hearts and tell their stories. A place where their faces may be seen and their voices may be heard.

Imagine a place where the children of the United States can discover the common heritage they share with the children of the Middle East. Imagine a place in which children learn respect, tolerance and understanding.

Imagine a world in which these children become the leaders of the future. *Imagine Peace.*

WHAT: Kids4Peace Atlanta is a year long cultural exchange sponsored by the Episcopal Dioceses of Atlanta and Jerusalem, in which children from the United States and the Middle East share their stories, hopes and dreams and discover their common heritage. By celebrating the differences and similarities between their cultures and faiths these children are taking a step toward global understanding and peace.

WHO: Twelve children from Israel and Palestine (Christian, Jewish and Muslim) and twelve children from the Episcopal Diocese of Atlanta.

Activities:

HOW: Utilizing the World Wide Web and the Internet, the children communicate throughout the year. They learn about each others' lives, faith traditions and cultures. A highlight of the exchange occurs during the summer when the children come together for a 10-day summer camp experience in the mountains of North Georgia. Through storytelling, art, music, dance, food and games, the children weave together the tapestry which makes up their common story. After their return to the Holy Land, the Palestinian and Israeli kids continue with meetings and activities to strengthen their friendships and deepen their understanding of each other. The American kids also continue to meet and develop interfaith dialogue with other children in Atlanta. The two groups use the Internet to continue the relationships they make during the summer. It is hoped that lasting friendships will develop to the benefit of all.

Middle East Peace Camp for Children

Email: info@middleeastpeacecamp.org

Web: <http://www.middleeastpeacecamp.org/>

Mission and Background:

Building a community of Arab, Jews and our friends based on peace, justice and compassion through recreation, education and leadership development.

Vision: It is our belief that when people meet and get to know each other at the human level, many of the barriers that divide us will dissipate. By creating a space where Arab, Jewish and other interested children and young adults can learn about each other and build friendships, understanding, and compassion in a relaxed and fun environment, we encourage partnerships that will foster the social and political change needed to achieve peace between the Arab and Jewish people.

Activities:

Cooperative Venture with: Arab Center of Washington, Kadima Reconstructionist Congregation, and Kay Bullitt.

Who We Serve: Each year, the MEPC engages 40-60 children ages 6-12 and 15-20 teenage counselors in an activity-filled week long summer camp. Our constituency is Arab, Jewish and other interested children and families.

What We Offer: The MEPC takes a multi-faceted approach to teaching the values of a peacemaker through a focus on conflict resolution and human rights using creative art, science, music, dance, sports, and language activities. We plant seeds of friendship and fun while learning creative problem-solving. We emphasize our commonalities and celebrate our diversity and teach leadership skills, and group dynamics.

Teenage counselors participate in mandatory training prior to the camp to learn leadership and integrated team building skills that they then implement during the camp.

Programs are also provided throughout the year for campers, counselors, adults, and community leaders. These events include speakers, films, arts projects, workshops and social events.

The creators and teachers of the MEPC bring a wealth of talent, knowledge, and understanding that make this experience an important one for the children and for peace. In addition, local Arab and Jewish community leaders, clergy, representatives from other peace and justice organizations, and talented volunteers participate in the camp in a variety of ways. Many engage the children in discussions, singing, and sharing their stories with them. In this way, the message of peace among diverse groups is reinforced.

Camp Highlights:

Each year, MEPC offers art, music, dance, sports, henna designs, cooking, games, and an end of camp presentation, as well as afternoon training programs for the counselors.

Camp 2007—Theme: Merging cultures Emerging future: Joining Hearts and Hands

For six incredible years, MEPCers have come together in peace and justice. This year, we want to look at our own traditions and really move to the next level and create our own culture—which can be a culmination of Arab, Christian, Jewish, Muslim and peace and justice traditions. Everyday, we will learn about each of our cultures and by Friday, we will be able to create our own MEPC customs. What will the customs be? A special handshake? MEPC fusion food? Songs, art, or sports produced with a unique MEPC twist? What will emerge will come from our campers and counselors. At our traditional Family evening on Friday night, the new customs of our MEPC Village will be revealed!

Programs over the years, during the year

- Mayor Nickels declared October 23, 2003 Children's Peace Day with the dedication of the peace sculpture at the Peace Garden of the Seattle Center.
- Waging Peace Festival: campers and staff performed the MEPC Peace Play
- September 11th interfaith event: Campers sang our MEPC song, and staff gave presentations
- Children's Gathering for Peace, Hiroshima for Hope.
- Interfaith Annual Meeting: Presentation
- MEPC Annual Reunion
- Participation in an international retreat for Peace Camps focusing on Middle East issues.
- Hosted film and presentation about Oasis of Peace, a village in Israel where Palestinian and Jews live together. Followed by guest speakers Adi and Laila. Jewish and Palestinian young women who grew up together as best friends in the Oasis of Peace village.
- The Middle East Peace Camp for Children sponsored a Vigil for Peace on August 3, 2006 at Seattle's Peace Garden, next to our Peace Sculpture. Our candle lighting vigil included singing with Mary K. McNeill, counselors speaking for peace, writing messages for peace as we faced the tragedies between Israel and Lebanon.
- Co-sponsorship of local community and arts events, films and speakers related to shared values and issues.
- Stand Up for Peace Comedians, Dean Obeidallah and Scott Blakeman MEPC Benefit Show
- Local, national and international outreach and support to other organizations and projects with a similar mission

Peace Camp Canada

Email: peacecampcanada@hotmail.com

Web: <http://www.peacecampcanada.org/>

Mission and Background:

Camp Objective

Peace Camp Canada (PCC) works to bring together exceptional Palestinian, Israeli and Canadian youth (aged 16-18), for two weeks of intensive dialogue, leadership building and personal development on the grounds of Ashbury College in Ottawa. Founded by Michelle Divon, a former student of Ashbury College, Peace Camp Canada is a youth for youth initiative that prides itself on the quality and scope of its facilitation, on its balanced leadership and governance structures, and on the Canadian moral and civic values it seeks to instill in its campers.

The Goals of Peace Camp Canada shall be three fold:

1. To create, build and sustain lasting friendships and bonds between Palestinians and Israelis; relationships that are built upon mutual understanding, respect and trust.
2. To inspire, build and empower the next generation of leadership in the Middle-East by instilling the value of personal responsibility within our campers; this as we strongly believe that social change begins with individual action.
3. To illuminate what has long been forgotten; namely that the similarities between Palestinians and Israelis, indeed between Muslims, Christians and Jews, by far exceeds the imagined and often exaggerated differences.

Activities:

1. We produce real results. Given the relatively small number of campers selected to participate in our program and the quality and scope of our dialogue facilitation, we are able to create a safe environment that engenders real transformation, growth, and development on the part of our Palestinian and Israeli youth. Thus, instead of conducting a 'regular camp' experience consisting mainly of sports and recreational activities, we have designed a unique program that pushes our campers towards mutual understanding, trust, friendship, and the re-evaluation of their stereotypes and preconceptions vis-à-vis the other.

2. Indeed, we look to pre-select campers that are not necessarily inclined towards a peaceful two state solution, and have found that it is precisely these campers (those who are the most extreme in their views) who become the most ardent proponents of peace and co-existence following their camp experience.

3. Unlike many other peace initiatives, we work hard on sustaining the dialogue and friendships we begin in Canada back in the region. We therefore strive to conduct 2-3 annual reunions with our campers and camper alumni, and have partnered with the 'Golda Meir Training Facility in Haifa, as well as the Jerusalem Foundation in order to do so. Our last reunion and regional follow up program took place February 8th 2007 at the Jerusalem Foundation.

4. Given the success of our work in recent years, the government of Canada has been openly supportive and interested in our initiative. Indeed, former Foreign Minister Pierre Pettigrew visited our camp in 2005, while Bill Graham met with our camp leadership in 2004. Minister MacKay has also expressed great interest and support for the camp.

5. The work and vision of Peace Camp Canada has been openly endorsed by the Israeli and Canadian governments, as well as by the Palestinian authority. (Official letters of endorsement can be viewed on our website).
6. The National War Museum in Ottawa is interested in showcasing the work of Peace Camp Canada and its campers, in an exhibition scheduled for 2008.
7. The work of Peace Camp Canada is nationally recognized, and has been featured in news paper and media publications such as The Globe and Mail, Toronto Star and Ottawa Citizen, as well as CTV, CBC, and local Ottawa television channels.
8. Peace Camp Canada has developed a very successful camp model which has been replicated and used successfully by other in Vancouver, Boston and Nova Scotia.
9. Peace Camp Canada graduated its 60th camper at the closing ceremonies August 2007. Ashbury College and the City of Ottawa combined to create a truly unique Canadian experience for young peacemakers. Peace Camp Canada serves as an inspiration and platform for all Canadians to engage in dialogue and seek understanding to create more compassionate and peaceful communities.
10. Peace Camp Canada is not affiliated with any group, organization, ideology or political party. We simply believe in the need for open dialogue between Palestinians and Israelis, Muslim and Jews, and hope to cultivate a new generation of leaders in the Middle East that can succeed where our own generation and those that came before us have not. We want to create a path towards peace by walking it, one step at a time.

Peace it Together

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Israel and Palestine

Amber Houssian

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Mission and Background:

Peace it Together Society

Empowering youth to promote peace through dialogue, filmmaking, and multimedia.

Our Vision

Our vision is to build a culture of creative leaders inspiring and educating others to work toward peace. It is unreasonable to expect youth to come to a peaceful resolution to a regional conflict if they are growing up in an environment of fear, anger, and alienation. Our programs are designed specifically to overcome these hurdles, while at the same time giving youth educational tools to disseminate to wider audiences, and facilitating their transition to community leaders.

We are currently focusing on the Palestinian-Israeli conflict. As our organization grows we will expand our work to address the needs of other domestic and international clashes and tensions.

Why Films?

In order to create films together, youth have to make deep inquiries about what is important to each other and give up some of their own ideas. Here is what past participants has said about the filmmaking process:

- *"It forces everyone to work together because the end result is in everyone's best interest."*
- *"We had to make real choices that everyone had to agree on."*
- *"We had to confront real life implications and issues."*

Activities:

Peace it Together Program: Peace it Together is a year-long curriculum for Palestinian, Israeli, and Canadian youth that begins with an intensive residential program on Canada's West Coast. Our vision is to create a movement of youth inspiring and educating other youth to work towards peace. We do this by teaching creative and practical conflict resolution skills to youth as they work in teams to create short films related to the conflict.

Public Education Program: One of the strengths of our Peace it Together program is that it produces youth-made films that are both entertaining and educational. We are developing an educational DVD targeted at high schools and post-secondary institutions around the world.

Film Distribution: Getting the word out through our films.

Syracuse Area Middle East Dialogue Group

Web: <http://www.samed-svr.org/>

Mission:

We, the Syracuse Area Middle East Dialogue Group, are 21 U.S. citizens of Christian, Jewish, and Palestinian (Christian and Muslim) background. We see the continuing stalemate between Israel and the Palestinian people as a central factor in growing extremism; in acts of terrorism by Palestinians, Israelis and others; in heightened political instability in the area; and in the threat of war which could escalate into superpower confrontation.

Our Group believes that a negotiated settlement of the conflict is critical for the survival and dignity of Palestinians and Israelis alike. We believe that successful negotiations between Israelis and Palestinians are the essential first step toward the achievement of peace between Israel and its Arab neighbors.

Hence, the Syracuse Area Middle East Dialogue Group urges that:

1. the Palestinians, the Israelis, and the neighboring Arab countries mutually and simultaneously accept the legitimacy of the State of Israel and the legitimacy of self-determination for Palestinians including the option of an independent Palestinian state in the West Bank and Gaza Strip;
2. the Palestinians and Israelis suspend military operations against one another;
3. all acts of violence against innocent civilians cease, whether by Palestinians, by Israelis, or by others in the area;
4. the Israeli government freeze all settlements on occupied territories;
5. the representatives of the Palestinians and the Israelis, presently the Palestinian Liberation Organization and the government of Israel, recognize each other explicitly and simultaneously and then undertake mutual negotiations toward a just and lasting peace.

In order to obtain such a negotiated settlement, we urge all involved parties -- including the President of the United States, the Congress, opinion makers, and U.S. organizations involved in the Middle East -- to help create the conditions necessary for these events to occur.

Activities:

The Syracuse Area Middle East Dialogue Group was formed over twenty years ago by seven representatives of each of three communities: Palestinians, Jews, and concerned "others." Over those twenty years, we have worked locally, nationally and internationally to promote a peaceful solution to the conflict in the Middle East. We have found this process invigorating, enlightening, challenging, and worthwhile.

Within the last year, circumstances have motivated us to re-invigorate our membership and our efforts. This website is one way in which we hope to share what we have learned, and what we hope for, with others.

Middle Peace

Pittsburgh, PA

Email: Middlepeace@gmail.com

Web: <http://middlepeace.googlepages.com/>

Mission and Background:

Middle Peace is a group of students of all backgrounds that is committed to encouraging our community to learn about the multiple perspectives of the Israeli-Palestinian conflict and to promoting respectful dialogue between both sides.

Goals and Activities:

- The creation of an environment of mutual understanding and respect where opposing views about the conflict can be shared without fear of retribution, in order to engage in productive discussion and dialogue.
- The presentation of a broad and inclusive set of views that span the spectrum of possible perspectives to this conflict, both from the Israeli side as well as from the Palestinian side, with the intent of remaining neutral in our support of a particular perspective in order to encourage individuals to form their own well-informed opinions.
- The presentation of the human dimension of the conflict, as reflected by the personal stories and backgrounds of group members and invited speakers and guests.

The group strongly believes that progress in our community with regards to this conflict can only be achieved through the creation of a forum where people are exposed to opinions differing from their own, and by extension, aspires to become a bridge between different individuals and organizations interested in the conflict, in the hopes of achieving nonviolent solution to the conflict.

The Begin-Sadat Center for Strategic Studies

Email:

besa.center@mail.biu.ac.il

Phone:

Tel: 972-3-535-9198 972-3-531-8959

Fax:

972-3-535-9195

Mailing Address:

Begin-Sadat (BESA) Center for Strategic Studies

Bar-Ilan University

Ramat Gan 52900

Israel

North American Address:

BESA Center

5485 Pare Street

Montreal Quebec H4P-1P7

Canada

Tel: (514) 735-1155

Fax: (514) 735-3361

Mission and Background:

The Begin-Sadat (BESA) Center for Strategic Studies seeks to contribute to the advancement of Middle East peace and security by conducting policy-relevant research on strategic subjects, particularly as they relate to the national security and foreign policy of Israel.

Affiliation:

The BESA Center is a non-partisan and independent institute, affiliated with the political science department at Bar-Ilan University in Israel.

History:

The Center was founded in 1993 by Thomas O. Hecht, a prominent Canadian Jewish community leader. A long-time leader of the Canadian pro-Israel lobby and former president of Israel Bonds and the United Israel Appeal, Hecht also was a close associate for thirty years of the late Israeli prime minister Menachem Begin. Dr. Hecht dedicated the center to the memory of Begin and the late Egyptian president Anwar Sadat -- who together concluded the first Arab-Israeli peace treaty.

Activities:

The BESA Center organizes lectures, symposia and international conferences, with the aim of presenting interesting and timely information on a variety of topics related to peace and security. The events are open to the general public.

The Palestinian Center for Peace and Democracy

Phone: 00972 02 2965981

Fax: 00972 02 2965983

Email: info@pcpd.org

Web: <http://www.pcpd.org/>

Mission and Background:

The **Palestinian Centre for Peace and Democracy** is a non-governmental, non-profit organization inspired by the principle that the future of Palestine lies in an independent democratic state in which there is full respect for human rights, acknowledgement of the importance of freedom of expression and assembly, recognition of every human's innate right to participate in governance and a vibrant civil society as stipulated in the Palestinian Declaration of Independence of 1988.

PCPD works towards this by providing a podium for free, uncensored dialogue; initiating debate and discussion; promoting the values of democracy, social justice and genuine peace; defending public freedoms; empowering society's marginalized groups; providing training and capacity-building to strengthen civil society organizations; creating alliances within civil society; and alert Palestinians of their rights and opportunities as equal citizens who may actively participate in the creation of the environment in which they live.

Respect for human rights, tolerance towards each other, participation by all, accountability and the rule of law are the pillars upon which our Centre's work is founded.

Activities:

In 2006 PCPD implemented almost all of its programs successfully. Although the some of our projects ended in June, donors agreed to extend their projects in order for us to successfully continue delivering on our promise. Only 3 activities in the strategic peace project had to be delayed until 2007 due to late payment by the donor. In total PCPD activities had 13,217 participants, of which 6913 were female (52 %). The total number of beneficiaries is estimated at 250,000.

Program 1: the Civil Society and Democracy Program

The Civil Society and Democracy program aims at spreading the principles of democracy and the implementation of these in and by Palestinian civil society. The PCPD views the internal use of democracy and transparency in Civil Society Organisations (CSOs) as a prerequisite for a wider respect of democracy and increasing the success and trustworthiness of CSOs in Palestine. Free discussion, participatory decision-making, accountability and respect for each other's opinion are the goal of this program which consists of three projects.

- Empowerment of civil society and Community Based Organisations
- PCPDs annual conference: "Participatory Democracy
- Opening of regional offices – "Bridges to Palestinian Youth"

Americans for Peace Now

APN National Headquarters
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Web: <http://www.peacenow.org/>

Mission and Background:

Americans for Peace Now [APN] was founded in 1981 to support the activities of Shalom Achshav (Peace Now in Israel). APN is the leading United States advocate for peace in the Middle East. APN's mission is to help Israel and the Shalom Achshav movement to achieve a comprehensive political settlement of the Arab-Israeli conflict consistent with Israel's long-term security needs and its Jewish and democratic values.

APN strives to meet the following goals in order to fulfill its mission:

1. An American Jewish community and general American public educated about the strategic and economic benefits of security through peace in the Middle East.
2. Active White House and State Department engagement in the peace process, especially Administration efforts to broker a new interim understanding between Israelis and Palestinians, facilitate final status arrangements that reconcile Israeli security with Palestinian statehood, and encourage negotiations between Israel, Syria, and Lebanon.
3. Congressional support for the peace process through continued aid to Israel, Egypt, Jordan, and the Palestinians.
4. Broad awareness in the United States of the benefits of Shalom Achshav programs in Israel.
5. A firm financial base for Shalom Achshav and APN activities.

Activities:

APN has a wide array of [educational programs](#) that reach out to communities around the country, and is a powerful force for mobilizing grassroots support among U.S. citizens. By demonstrating this support, and by working directly with decision makers and government officials, APN promotes U.S. policies that further the peace process. Finally, APN provides critical financial support to the work of Shalom Achshav in Israel.

The Bridge: Jewish and Arab Women for Peace in the Middle East

Ada Aharoni(Ph.D), THE BRIDGE - Coordinator

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Homepage: <http://tx.technion.ac.il/~ada/home.html>

Mission and Background:

In 1975, two years after the Yom Kippur War, together with the late Ruth Lys, Violet Khouri, Ruth Dayan, Yardena Cohen, Eugenie Khlef, and other Israeli and Arab/Palestinian women, we founded in Haifa, Israel, a Voluntary Association: THE BRIDGE: JEWISH AND ARAB WOMEN FOR THE PROMOTION OF WOMEN AND PEACE. This was the first association of its kind in Israel that dared to gather Jewish and Arab women in the same organization, to promote the status of women, and peace in the Middle East. We met with much criticism and resistance, sometimes violent, in both sectors. However, we knew we were promoting a just cause which required courage and perseverance, and it gave us strength to act and struggle to promote our goals. To this day, twenty three years later, we are still working hard but quietly, to promote women and peace in the Middle East, and in our entire global village.

Activities:

1. Monthly lectures, presentations and discussions.
2. Meetings in Jewish, Arab and Druze towns and villages, for the building of "Bridges" of culture and understanding with the local women.
3. Exchange visits of Israeli and Arab pupils in schools.
4. Group dynamics: the Jews act the roles of Arab/ Palestinians, and the Arabs the roles of Jews.
5. Radio and television programs on The Bridge in Arabic, Hebrew, English and French.
6. Arabic (for the Jews), and Hebrew language courses for the Arab women.
7. Picnics, outings, weekends with the families.
8. Seminars, Common Feasts and Happenings, and International Conferences.

Hope Flowers School

POB 732 Bethlehem

Palestine, Israel

Web: <http://www.mideastweb.org/hopeflowers/index.html>

Mission and Background:

Hope Flowers School is a Palestinian school in El Khader, in the south Bethlehem area of the West Bank (Palestine), dedicated to education for coexistence, peace, non-violence and democracy, We want you to know about Hope Flowers, because it really does represent a flowering of hope for peaceful relations between Palestinians and Israelis.

Hope Flowers staff and students visit Jewish schools inside Israel. Hope Flowers has a program of Jewish volunteers teaching students arts, computers, and Hebrew. The school also sponsors a series of peace education workshops for Palestinian and Israeli educators.

Activities:

Unique among West Bank elementary schools, this is Al Amal's declared educational philosophy. It is expressed throughout most of the school's activities (see below), but explicitly integrated into the class curriculum of all grade levels, currently 1 through 6. Each week every classroom has the equivalent of one lesson on the topic, appropriate to their level of understanding, from practicing kindness to animals, to basic ideas about the negatives of stereotyping.

Center for Peace & Democracy Activities

Both leading and responding to the emerging concerns of the Palestinian people, Al Amal initiates and hosts programs for the adult community of the Al Khader and south Bethlehem area. These include regularly scheduled parents' meetings to hear community concerns, re: children's education and more broadly; meetings for all interested adults on the topic of democratic elections, with a professional facilitator; meetings about other common concerns, like health practices, in order to empower local people with information to take action on their own behalf.

Community Outreach

The most long-standing expression of Al Amal's educational philosophy, building bridges for peace and justice with Jewish people in Israel, has been integral to the school's approach since its beginning 11 years ago. Field trips for children and their mothers take them into safe, open contact situations at places in Israel that support such attempts to increase knowledge and reduce fear between the peoples - places like the School for Peace at Neve Shalom/Wahat As-Salaam and the Open House in Ramle. In 1995 a sister school relationship was formed with a school in Israel, the Democratic School of Hadera, on the basis of mutual visits by the staff in the spring. Ongoing contacts will bring sharing of the cultures, attitudes on democracy, and practices in democratic education (like student election to membership on operating committees, now in both schools). Hope Flowers / Al-Amal has cultivated a warm relationship with the Adam School in Jerusalem and has organized numerous meetings with Israeli schools with the gracious support of the Peres Peace Center and other groups.

Larger Community

Al Amal has attracted the attention and spiritual and material support of friends from Israel and very far abroad, people who believe in the school's relational approach to peace and justice. Rabbis and other Jewish educators from Jerusalem visit the school for talks about Judaism. Peace activists and educators from Holland, the UK, Sweden, Germany, the US—Christians, Jews, Muslims—visit and encourage and stimulate development of this educational way.

Bereaved Families Supporting Peace

Mr. Khaled Abu Awwad, General Manager

US Office:

Parents Circle - Families Forum

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Suite 1000

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E-mail: americanfriends@parentscircle.org

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UK Office:

Friends of the Bereaved Families Forum

31 Coleridge Walk

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E-mail: www.FamiliesForum.co.uk

Palestinian Office:

Parents Circle - Families Forum

Jerusalem - Al-Ram

Jamal Abed Al-Nasser St. # 13

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Israeli Office:

Parents Circle - Families Forum

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Email: contact@theparentscircle.org

Mission and Background:

- Prevent further bereavement, in the absence of peace
- Influence the public and the policy makers – to prefer the way of peace on the way of war
- Educate for peace and reconciliation
- Promote the cessation of acts of hostility and the achievement of a political agreement
- Prevent the usage of bereavement as a means of expanding enmity between our peoples
- Uphold mutual support between our members

We strive to offer a breakthrough in people's frame of mind, to allow a change of perception, a chance to re-consider one's views and attitudes towards the conflict and the other side.

The Forum activities are a unique phenomenon, in that they continue during all political circumstances and in spite of all tensions and violence in our region.

Our members initiate and lead projects throughout the Israeli and Palestinian communities.

Activities:

Face-to Face Reconciliation Programs - Dialogue Meetings for youth and adults, Youth Leadership Seminars, Internet Reconciliation Program, "Messengers of Reconciliation" activity.

Public And Media Activities - "Opening Hearts" TV drama series (in preparation), "Offering Reconciliation" art exhibition, "Hello Shalom/Salaam" free Israeli/Palestinian phone chat system, Weekly radio program on the "All for Peace" radio, Overseas lecture delegations, Internet website, newsletters.

Member Activities - Member Seminars and workshops, Professional training for activists, lecturers, spokespeople, Children and youth meetings and summer camps.

The Abraham Fund

The Abraham Fund Initiatives

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Tel: 212-661-7770
Fax: 212-935-1834
E-mail:
info@abrahamfund.org**

**The Abraham Fund Initiatives
G.G. Communications Center Neve Ilan
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Tel: 972-2-534-9300
Fax: 972-2-534-9301
E-mail: info@abrahamfund.org.il**

Web: <http://www.abrahamfund.org/main/siteNew/>

Mission and Background:

The Abraham Fund Initiatives, based in Jerusalem and New York, is a not for profit, non-partisan organization. A pioneer in the field of Jewish-Arab relations, the organization was founded in 1989 by Alan B. Slifka and the late Dr. Eugene Weiner and named for the common ancestor of both Jews and Arabs.

The Abraham Fund Initiatives works to advance coexistence, equality and cooperation among Israel's Jewish and Arab citizens by creating and operating large-scale initiatives, cultivating strategic grassroots projects and conducting public education and advocacy that promote its vision of shared citizenship and opportunity for all of Israel's citizens.

Our Vision:

The Abraham Fund Initiatives views coexistence as the ability of people of different backgrounds and beliefs to live side-by-side in mutual respect. Coexistence is not assimilation. Rather, its objective is to enable individuals and communities to live cooperatively while maintaining their own unique cultural identities. The Abraham Fund Initiatives sees civic equality for Israel's Jewish and Arab citizens as a moral and pragmatic imperative, whereby individual rights and the political, cultural and religious character of the Arab minority must be clearly and unambiguously recognized and respected.

Activities:

- Believes that the enhancement of Jewish/Arab coexistence and equality in Israel is vital to the future of the State of Israel, its security and stability, and the welfare of its Jewish and Arab citizens.
- Believes that coexistence and equality do not happen unless there are institutionalized efforts to develop policies and programs accepted in all segments of society.

- Affirms the commitment to Israel's Declaration of Independence to full social and political equality for all Israeli citizens, Jews and Arabs.
- Promotes tolerance, mutual understanding, and trust between groups;
- Achieves an environment of social and political equality for all citizens of Israel;
- Nurturing respect for the differences of Israel's ethnically mixed society and leveraging this diversity as a strategic asset.

A Simple Peace

24 East Avenue

P.O. Box 105

New Canaan, CT 06840

E-mail: asimplepeace@aol.com

Web: <http://www.asimplepeace.org/>

Mission and Background:

To make the world a safer place by helping to eliminate terrorist violence and human rights violations, defuse political and religious tensions, and co-opt radical fanaticism with realistic solutions based on truth and mutual benefit for all concerned. To put all people on an equal footing in the eyes of their fellow man, as they are in the eyes of God. Not for or against any nation, people or religion. Simply pro-peace.

Activities and Purpose:

A Simple Peace is a not-for-profit organization that was created out of a need to do something to staunch the flow of hate-tainted blood that is flooding the earth. We are Jews, Christians, Muslims, Hindus and even atheists who have come together for the purpose of "thinking outside the box" for a solution to the radicalism and fanaticism that is being ingrained into the psyches and souls of a large percentage of the world's population; especially the children who will grow to be tomorrow's terrorists. We see the primary requirement for peace to be the ability to defuse or neutralize the fanatic hate groups that use the Israeli-Palestinian conflict as their *raison d'être*. We invite you to join our effort.

Visions of Peace with Justice in Israel/Palestine

P.O. Box 400479

Cambridge, MA 02140

Phone: 617.984.0532

Web: <http://www.vopj.org/>

Mission and Background:

Visions of Peace with Justice in Israel/Palestine (VOPJ) is an association of Jews in Greater Boston working to promote a lasting peace between Israelis and Palestinians based on mutual respect, justice, and equality. *VOPJ* is an independent Jewish voice which represents a variety of alternative perspectives on the Israeli/Palestinian conflict. We embody a cross-section of the Jewish community, united by a commitment to Jewish values and a desire to see an end to the suffering on all sides. We condemn all killings of civilians, in Israel and the Occupied Territories, whether committed by members of the Israeli army or members of armed Palestinian groups.

Activities:

VOPJ is an alternative voice *within* the Jewish community and to the non-Jewish community, on issues of peace and justice in Israel and Palestine. In order to advance our objectives and principles, we offer a variety of educational programs, public actions, and resources. These activities include:

Ongoing educational meetings on a variety of topics, exploring the origins and consequences of the conflict from the perspectives of Israelis, Palestinians, and U.S. citizens.

Community forums and special programs designed to bring public dialogue and conversation to the Jewish and general communities.

A rapid Response Network to alert *VOPJ* members to situations and events that call for action.
Lobbying within the Jewish and broader communities, and with government figures and policy-makers.
Participation in actions, demonstrations, and vigils with like-minded organizations and individuals.

Brit Shalom

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Mevasseret-Zion

90805, ISRAEL

Phone: 972-2-5341729

E-mail: [info @ britshalom.org](mailto:info@britshalom.org)

Web: <http://www.britshalom.org/>

Mission and Background:

Whether Palestine should be governed by majority rule or by a multi-cultural framework was a question that was much debated by the members of Brit Shalom. They concluded that having a dominant people decide the terms of the dominated would lead to friction of such a magnitude that it would eventually lead to war. Instead they proposed a solution built on the principle of parity, by which they meant that the different nationalities would coexist side by side. This for them meant a bi-national state, or at least that was the program espoused by Magnes, the undisputed leader of the organization. Now Magnes was fully aware of the concessions involved in achieving that aim. For the Jews it meant the concession that there would not be erected an independent, sovereign Jewish state. The Palestinians, similarly, would have to concede their ambition for self rule after the inevitable demise of the British.

Despite these concessions, Brit Shalom continued to propound their ideas throughout the twenties and thirties. In 1942, they founded a small political party, called the Ihud (Union) Association of Palestine, and continued to lobby mostly the international for support and recognition for their ideas. However, the Jewish Agency and the political leadership of the Yishuv all but ignored them. The Ihud party's biggest victory was undoubtedly the fact that they were able to present their ideas at length first to the Anglo-American Committee of Inquiry in 1946 and then to the United Nations Special Committee on Palestine in 1947. The Anglo-American Committee voted largely in favor of the proposals of Ihud, recommending an Economical Union in Palestine. In both these cases, Ihud proposed the creation of joint organs of government, and a division of the country into districts based on a communal basis. Although there would inevitably have been differences of opinion among the Jews and the Arabs, Ihud stated that there would also be a great degree of cooperation. On issues such as economic development, social security, standards of life, trade, agriculture, industry, labor, commerce, etc, would, in their opinion draw the Jews and Arabs together.

Activities and Purpose:

'Pursuers of peace' - your voices are needed now, more than ever! Now is the time to attain full and equal rights for the Arab citizens of Israel, to respect the values and sensitivities of all sides, to do everything to prevent violence, to renew direct dialogue at all levels, to bring peace closer for the whole region, first of all between Israel and the Palestinian people.

Just now - when the voices calling for vengeance are louder than the voices calling for reconciliation - we, members and volunteers of Brit Shalom/Tahalof Essalam - the Jewish-Palestinian Peace Alliance: an organization by Jews and Palestinians, undertake to contribute energy, time and funds towards systematic, informed, serious, persistent and efficient activity for peace.

We invite all who want to make a difference, to tell us about their own assessments and conclusions about the current situation; to teach and to learn in depth, to define goals, coordinate activities - and to act.

Wi'am

Dr. Gemnier St. (SOS) Al Karkafeh Build. # 231

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Tel & Fax: +972(0)2-2770513 /+972(0)2-2777333

E-mail: zoughbi@alaslal.org

Web page: www.alaslal.org

Mission and Background:

Wi'am as a grassroots organization that strives, alongside other democratic forces present in the larger Palestine community, to build a democratic and just society. The Center aims to improve the quality of relationships by: addressing injustices rather than avenging them; dignifying persons on both sides of the conflict; promoting human rights and advocating for peace among all people.

As a grassroots organization established in Bethlehem in 1995, *Wi'am* ("Cordial Relationships" in Arabic) aims to improve the quality of relationships and promote peace and reconciliation in the community. It strives alongside other forces present in the community to build a society based on democratic norms and values.

Principles of Wi'am

Wi'am provides individual families, groups, and neighborhoods with peaceful alternatives to conflict by:

- Addressing and confronting injustices rather than avenging them
- Dignifying persons on both sides of the conflict
- Promoting meaningful and healthy relationships
- Promoting dialogue at the inter- and intra-community levels
- Promoting greater joint mobilization around the values of peace, democracy, and human rights
- Contributing to the reduction of violence and promulgating a culture of non-violence

Wi'am integrates traditional Arabic reconciliation-Sulha, with contemporary Western mediation techniques.

Challenges and Sources of Conflict

Since opening its doors, *Wi'am* mediators have been proud to have intervened in thousands of individual and community conflicts. These conflicts have all stemmed from the same root causes: the continued Israeli occupation, the deterioration of both economic and political prospects, and the flagrant violations of human rights of the Palestinian people. All of these influence the types of conflicts we deal with and the approaches we employ to mediate any case of conflict. The only certainty in our own context is uncertainty.

Repercussions of the Occupation on Palestinians:

- Economic: absence of tourism, closures of territories, high rates of unemployment, poverty, and the difficulty of meeting basic needs
- Cross-Cultural: deterioration of religious tolerance, lack of understanding, misperceptions of the "Other," and lack of information about the situation at the international level due to media bias
- Environmental: deforestation, confiscation of fertile agricultural land for the sake of building the Separation Wall, dumping of waste material, land rights and water rights

- Social: Domestic violence: delinquency, lack of spontaneity, depression and stress-related symptoms

Domestic Challenges

- General Demoralization: emigration trends, depression and trauma, lack of political direction, hopelessness, shaken self-esteem, polarization
- Domestic: abuse, inheritance, tenants, domestic violence
- Youth: delinquency, theft, drug abuse, trauma experiences, lack of opportunities

Activities and Purpose:

As the challenges to building a progressive civil society mounts, and as we are becoming increasingly cut off from our neighbors in the region due to political climate and the construction of the Separation Wall, the need for conflict resolution, mediation and civic education has increased more than ever before. In an effort to respond to the needs of the community, we are looking towards the activation of more programs, activities, and fostering an already established network of peace-advocating organizations. This entails:

1. Empowerment of Women: The contributions of Palestinian women to their community's development are inestimable. In an effort to boost the vast potential of women, Wi'am seeks to hire a coordinator who will help in developing a program that empowers women in their roles of family (community) building, children education, and leadership

2. Community Centers for Youth groups: Young people in the Bethlehem area have few options for releasing and developing their hidden potential. They face problems with securing places that can provide a safe-haven for their meetings, discussions of community issues, and activities. Long-term goals include the construction of a multi-purpose community center that can host youth groups in an atmosphere of sharing and diversity of thought.

We have the following tasks:

- Train community members, particularly the youth and women from all walks of life on effective conflict mediation and reconciliation techniques and methods
- Strengthen the involvement of women in formal leadership roles
- Coordinate networks of Palestinian conflict resolution centers throughout the Occupied Territories
- Expand Wi'am center capacity, including additional administrative staff, office space, equipment and training of staff.

The Jerusalem Mediation and Arbitration Center **The International Peace and Cooperation Center**

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Mission and Background:

THE JERUSALEM MEDIATION AND ARBITRATION CENTER was established in 1996. It is run jointly by *The International Peace and Co-operation Center* and *The Jerusalem Institute for Israel Studies*. We provide dispute resolution services in the form of mediation and arbitration for Jews and Arabs, Palestinians and Israelis in the Jerusalem region. Our services are designed for both individuals and institutions and the disputes we work with are both social and commercial in nature. Current mechanisms for resolving conflict in the area are not sufficiently sensitive to the cultural backgrounds and languages the parties bring to the table. Often conflicts are complicated by religious and ethnic differences between the parties. Our diverse and skilled group of Palestinian and Israeli conflict resolution specialists is sensitive to the unique cultures, religions, backgrounds and languages of the parties.

Activities:

The Center works in a number of areas. Joint teams of Palestinians and Israelis mediate and arbitrate a variety of relevant disputes. Additionally, we provide our mediators and other interested parties with advanced training in the form of lectures and workshops. Training courses are conducted for new and established mediators. We help neighborhoods on the seam develop dispute resolution mechanisms between them. Lastly, we are initiating academic research on our unique method of intercultural dispute resolution.

Peace Now

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Mission and Background:

Peace Now is the largest extra-parliamentary movement in Israel, the country's oldest peace movement and the only peace group to have a broad public base.

The movement was founded in 1978 during the Israeli-Egyptian peace talks. At a moment when these talks appeared to be collapsing, a group of 348 reserve officers and soldiers from Israeli army combat units published [an open letter to the Prime Minister of Israel](#) calling upon the government to make sure this opportunity for peace was not lost. Tens of thousands of Israelis sent in support for the letter, and the movement was born.

The basic principles of the movement from the outset were the right of Israel to live within secure borders and the right of our neighbors to do the same, including the right of Palestinians to self-determination. In time the movement became convinced the only viable solution to the conflict was the creation of a Palestinian state in the territories adjacent to Israel, which were occupied as a result of the 1967 war. In 1988, upon PLO acceptance of UNSC resolution 242 and the principle of the two-state solution, Peace Now led a massive demonstration of 100,000 persons calling on the government to negotiate with the PLO. Fully supporting the break-through represented by the 1993 Oslo Accord, Peace Now has consistently supported any and all steps promising to promote a resolution to the conflict, in addition to pressing all Israeli parties in power to initiate steps to bring about an end to the occupation and negotiations for peace.

The activities of Peace Now are partially sponsored by SHA'AL Educational Projects, a registered NGO, which, among other things, implements educational activity for promotion of peace by publicizing informational materials, organizing informational gatherings, etc.

Peace Now operates through public campaigns, advertisements, petitions, distribution of educational materials, conferences and lectures, surveys, dialogue groups, street activities, vigils, and demonstrations. The movement organized the largest demonstration ever held in Israel, some 400,000 people from a population of 5 ½ million in 1982, calling for a commission of inquiry into the Sabra and Chatilla massacre. The commission that was established recommended the removal of Ariel Sharon as Defense Minister.

A particularly important ongoing project of Peace Now is its [Settlement Watch](#), which monitors – and protests, the building of settlements, including housing tenders, expropriation of lands, budget allocations, and the like, along with studying [settlers attitudes](#) regarding possible evacuation (and compensation) in the West Bank and East Jerusalem. Known for their credibility and reliability, the data and [maps](#) produced in the framework of this project have raised public awareness of the terrible price Israel is paying for these obstacles to peace. Indeed one of the objectives of Peace Now is to convey the sense of the harm incurred to Israel not only by the economic and political aspects of continued occupation, but also the moral damage done to the values and fabric of Israeli society – in addition to the untold hardship incurred on another people, the Palestinians.

While Peace Now is an Israeli movement, working primarily amongst the Israeli public, it also has been engaged over the years in dialogue and joint activities with Palestinians in the occupied territories. The largest such joint activity was a massive Hands around Jerusalem in 1989 in which some 15,000 Israelis and 15,000 Palestinians called for peace. Shortly after the beginning of the al-Aksa Intifada, the movement was instrumental in the creation of the Israeli Peace Coalition, which evolved into the Israeli-Palestinian Peace Coalition, composed of political and public figures as well as grass-roots activists from both the Israeli and Palestinian mainstream. The movement also conducts joint activities and statements with the Palestinian Peoples Campaign.

Activities:

Peace Now – Leading Israel towards Peace for 30 Years

It was 30 years ago that the '[Officer's Letter](#)' was composed, which led to the establishment of the largest Zionist Peace Movement in Israel's History.

Since that historic time, peace has been achieved with Egypt and Jordan. There remain no settlements in the Gaza Strip and the concept of Two States for Two Peoples has become accepted as the only Zionist political solution for the conflict. With all this in mind, we still have a long road ahead – and we never give up hope! We must continue in our struggle for peace! To reach agreements with our neighbors including Syria and Lebanon! Serious peace negotiations must be held with Abu Mazen, settlements in the West Bank must also be removed and a final agreement has to be made with the Palestinians!

The Israeli-Palestinian Confederation

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Mission and Background:

On any given day, in almost any newspaper, on many TV news programs, or on the talk radio circuit, the Israeli-Palestinian conflict is fodder for the media. The news is rarely good. At worst there are killings, at best there is a stalemate. There is always tension. The plain truth is the wheels of progress are not turning, and no one seems able or willing to fix them. Getting unstuck and moving forward takes real initiative and a concerted will on both sides to make something work.

Like many others, we have closely followed developments in that region for many years. We are saddened by the inescapable conclusion that both the Israelis and the Palestinians are shadow boxing with each other, stubbornly bent on ignoring reality. History lessons and debates have proven unproductive. Many possible solutions to the problem have been bandied about, but they have been limited in scope and invariably unacceptable to one side or the other. However, after much thought devoted to the subject, we have come up with a plan we believe is novel, unique and workable. And while some people might dismiss it as naïve or idealistic, we contend that it is even more naïve to think the current state of affairs can continue indefinitely without a major conflagration. Our purpose is to attempt to create a dialogue and engagement between the Israelis and Palestinian in the United States in order to educate the public about alternative methods to resolve the conflict. We hope to have numerous symposiums, debates, and newsletters to create joint Educational Task Force, Common Emergency Task Force, and Common Hardship Reduction Task Force. We also believe that through education and dialogue we can create a joint economic cooperation.

Our confederation proposal is based upon the way things are—not the way everyone wishes they would be. It does not even call for a one-state or two-state solution. Instead, our idea engages the status quo and builds upon what already exists. Even if the current deadlock continues or complete separation between the Israelis and Palestinians ultimately occurs, our plan would still improve relations between the two parties.

The fact of the matter is that Israelis and Palestinians have not been able to extricate themselves from each other's lives for more than fifty years. Millions of Palestinians on the West Bank and Gaza Strip are enmeshed with millions of Israelis daily. They share the same economy, currency, roads, utility grid and infrastructure. The Palestinians need the State of Israel to support their labor force, and the Israelis historically have employed Palestinian laborers by the thousands.

The land comprising Israel, the West Bank and Gaza is so small, the resources so limited, and the interdependency between Israelis and Palestinians so great that even if a separate Palestinian state were to emerge, the two countries would still need to cooperate with each other indefinitely to provide acceptable living conditions for their people. The Gaza Strip, where more than 1.1 million Palestinians reside, is physically cut off from the West Bank, with Israel forming a land bridge between the two. Even geographically, the idea that Israelis and Palestinians could remain completely isolated from each other is nothing but a pipe dream.

We propose an Israeli-Palestinian Confederation structured in such a way that the Israelis would be able to maintain a Jewish state in perpetuity--even if demographics should render them a minority in the future. The Palestinians, in turn, would maintain their separate identity under a Palestinian government. Our plan accommodates the needs of both peoples.

Activities and Purpose:

The Israeli-Palestinian Confederation Committee is a group of volunteers who joined together to educate the public through symposiums, debates, dialogue and cultural exchanges about a possible mechanism for peace between the Israelis and the Palestinians.

Our members include Muslims, Jews and Christians from all walks of life.

We do not aim to benefit one side over the other. We have a comprehensive plan to improve relations between Israelis and Palestinians through education, engagement and dialogue. We believe that both the Israelis and the Palestinians in the United States can reduce tension and achieve more understanding through engagement.