

**Agents of Change: Conflict Management  
Training for Leaders of  
Israeli and Palestinian Civil Society**

**Conducted by the School for Peace at  
Neve Shalom/Wahat Al-Salam  
in cooperation with  
Hewar Center for Peace and Democracy**

**REF Number: DFD-G-00-05-00141-00**

**March 27, 2007**

**Evaluation and Final Report submitted by:**

**American Friends of Neve Shalom/Wahat Al-Salam  
12925 Riverside Drive, 3<sup>rd</sup> Floor  
Sherman Oaks, CA 91423  
Tel: 818-325-8884 Fax: 818-325-8983  
Contact: Deanna Armbruster, Executive Director  
Email: [Deanna@oasisofpeace.org](mailto:Deanna@oasisofpeace.org) and [scnswas@aol.com](mailto:scnswas@aol.com)**

**Evaluation Report**  
**Agents of Change: Conflict Management Training for**  
**Leaders of Israeli and Palestinian Civil Society**

I. Executive Summary

**Agents of Change: Conflict Management Training for Leaders of Israeli and Palestinian Civil Society**, brought together members of four important target sectors: health professionals and students in the field of healthcare, journalists and students of communications, civic leaders and government students, and educators and students of education; and, thus, create a cadre of committed leaders equipped with knowledge and tools to address issues related to the Arab-Israeli conflict and to diffuse tense situations.

The program addressed many of the toughest issues of the conflict: language, land, rights, racism, superiority, inferiority, and privilege. Participants gained a better understanding of the sources of conflict, and the ability to analyze more realistically factors that escalate conflict. The goals of the project included: training and empowering social change agents; contributing, through these agents, to “Track 2” meetings between members of both societies; building a culture of non-violence, moderation, respectful understanding and dialogue; promoting values that lead to equality, reconciliation and forgiveness inside and between Israeli and Palestinian communities; and documenting self-reported changes among the graduates through in-depth interviews and evaluations in order to create a booklet that others can reference in their conflict resolution efforts.

II. Scope of Work

A. Program evaluated

The pilot program, “Agents of Change: Conflict Management Training for Leaders of Israeli and Palestinian Civil Society,” implemented by the School for Peace at Neve Shalom/Wahat al-Salam in partnership with the Hewan Center for Peace and Democracy with financial oversight conducted by the American Friends of Neve Shalom/Wahat al-Salam.

B. Provide a brief background/context regarding implementation/program

The “Agents of Change” program took place during a tumultuous and challenging time in Israel and the Palestinian Territories. The first workshops were held in February of 2006 with the program drawing to a conclusion in December 2006. Hamas won a majority in the Palestinian elections of January 2006, the following summer involved violence in Southern Lebanon, Northern Israel and Gaza and the period of the program, in general, was one that put a great deal of strain on Jewish-Arab relations in Israel as well as increased tension between Israelis and Palestinians across the green line.

Both the School for Peace and Hewart noted that despite the polarization and continued violence in Israel and the Palestinian Territories, there were still individuals from both sides that were eager to participate in binational workshops. The solid reputations, experience and good standing of the School for Peace and Hewart allowed the 200 course hours required for the “Agents of Change” program to be completed in the entirety by the large majority (98%) of participants with course meetings occurring as scheduled by the School for Peace and Hewart. Binational sessions did occur outside of Israel in Jordan or Turkey to allow for the full involvement of both Jewish and Palestinian participants. Additionally, many participants initiated activities in response to the surrounding environment. Some examples include:

1. One of our course participants, the principal of a Jewish school attended by some Arab children, subsequently turned to NSWAS/Hewart for help and advice in making changes he would like to see at his school. He wanted to create an environment that was more inclusive of the Arab narrative rather than exclusively presenting the Jewish narrative.
2. A Jewish homeroom and core studies teacher, who participated in the course, teaches at a Jewish school where there are also Arab students. She came to consult about how to deal better with the dilemmas that come up around the integration of the Arab students into the school.
3. A Palestinian teacher requested a book about the Holocaust so he could teach it to his students.
4. Two principals (one Jewish and one Arab) and two homeroom teachers (one Jewish and one Arab), initiated a program aimed at teaching the history of the ‘other.’”
5. A woman wrote two articles after the course. One article was for Maariv online, in which she criticized the decision of the National Association of Israeli Journalists to withdraw from the International Federation of Journalists after the secretary-general denounced the IDF bombardment of the Hezbollah television station Al Manar.
6. A veteran radio host and editor at a popular, prime time Israeli radio station devoted one entire program to describing the SFP/Hewart workshop and interviewed Israeli and Palestinian participants for material; the program lasted nearly a full hour.
7. Two journalists, a Jew and an Arab, that work at an Israeli television station presented their TV station with a proposal for a new program that would focus on Jewish-Arab relations in this country – relations now in crisis. They want to expose the viewer to the main issues.
8. The healthcare professionals group ran a medical services day in Jayyous. Five doctors from the Palestinian group and seven medical professionals from the Israeli group, including Jews and Arabs, participated. In addition, the group from Israel brought two additional professionals who had not been in the course with them – for a total of 14 people in total. A total of 66 patients benefited.

9. A Jewish woman doctor gave a lecture on research in which she participated while working on her doctoral degree at the Weizmann Institute, concerning development of a medicine for glaucoma. The lecture was given at the Al Zahrawy Center in Kufr Qar'e.

10. A dietician expressed his efforts to promote Jewish-Arab interactions. There is a Palestinian doctor, a citizen of Israel that is working to develop printed information in Arabic about proper nutrition.

11. A Jewish participant is promoting Arabic language for employees at her workplace, since her hospital (in Israel) treats both Jewish and Arab patients.

12. A Jewish doctor, a man, reported that in his work at the hospital, he now had a lot more empathy for the needs of Arab patients and for consulting with Arab colleagues

13. A Palestinian cardiologist from Israel said that the course pushed him to organize the first professional conference for pediatric cardiologists in which 30 cardiologists from each side would participate.

14. A Jewish woman participant is working on a project to place Arab professionals in high tech companies in Israel. She has a lot of professional placement experience and is using it to promote the integration of Palestinian citizens of Israel in these enterprises.

15. Jewish and Arab participants from the group recruited additional participants for the course the SFP was running for mental health professionals.

16. Participants of the "Agents of Change" course visited the village of Qadum to aid the villagers with problems arising from settler abuse and from the Israeli army's acting at the behest of settlers – closing the road from Qadum to Nablus and the refusal to connect the village to the electricity supply.

17. A Jewish man is organizing, in cooperation with the Machsom Watch (Checkpoint Watch) organization, tours for mental health professionals in occupied areas. A tour includes a visit to a Palestinian mental health clinic, listening to a lecture from a Palestinian professional about therapy under occupation and the associated challenges for the treatment professionals.

#### C. Identify performance indicators

The primary sources of information for this evaluation include: observations of trainers/facilitators and course directors, which were noted throughout the program, and post-course questionnaires and interviews.

One key performance indicator, as set forth in the Monitoring Plan Matrix, included was the number of 1<sup>st</sup> level change agents participating in the course (144 was the target number of 1<sup>st</sup> level change agents), the number of 2<sup>nd</sup> level change agents reached through the 1<sup>st</sup> level change agents who would be trained and empowered to become a cadre of leaders exerting a significant influence in their professional fields (healthcare, journalism, civic leadership and education). The target number of 2<sup>nd</sup>

level change agents by the end of project was 1000-1600 (250-400 in each sector), though these numbers are more difficult to quantify.

The second key performance indicator set forth in the Monitoring Plan Matrix was the documentation of changes in the 144 participants and the publication and distribution of a booklet or pamphlet that set forth these changes or the impact of the program (a target was for 2000 pamphlets to be produced by the end of the program).

#### D. Purpose of Evaluation

The purpose of this evaluation is to analyze the “Agents of Change” program in order to identify and assess its impact, success and validity and to present recommendations for future programs and present lessons learned from this program.

### III. Methodology

#### A. What is the evaluation method? What type of data collection and analysis are used? And who is doing the evaluation?

The participants, following each workshop, completed an evaluation questionnaire, and Dr. Rabah Halabi of the Research Center at the School for Peace wrote a report summarizing the results of these questionnaires. Dr. Halabi received his PhD at Hebrew University where he lectures and has extensive experience in quantitative and qualitative research and evaluation methods and practices.

The results from the questionnaires informed the implementation of subsequent workshops during the project and are being used to plan forthcoming courses of the School for Peace. In addition, Dr. Halabi interviewed both Jewish Palestinian participants from Israel and participants from Palestine, to get a full picture of the processes that took place and of their evaluation of the program. There was a concluding session on a weekend in December 2006 attended by all the facilitators who worked on the project, the project coordinators, the translators, and representatives from the management staffs of Hewar and the School for Peace. At this meeting, data from the questionnaires and the interviews were presented, and staff presented their concluding assessments of the project. Another such wrap-up session is planned for both organizations’ management staffs.

#### B. Put forth and identify any key terms

**Change Agents:** The program’s ultimate goal is to impact individuals in a way that supports institutional change by targeting key civil society actors and providing them with tools to become change agents and advocates regarding the conflict. As change agents, they engage in actions aimed at changing their workplaces and communities. The “Agents of Change” Program is to develop the awareness of the participants regarding both the conflict and their role in it, as well as to enable them to explore their own identity through interaction with the other.

The methodology being utilized is based on an approach that views the conflict as being between Palestinians and Israelis - two peoples with two national identities - as opposed to simply between individuals. Hence, the program orchestrated its sessions at the inter-group

level. The goal of a successful program is best achieved by sharpening these identities, and by facing the reality of the conflict between the two peoples as it is reflected in the two groups engaging in the encounter.

Civil society: Civil society (or civil institutions) is often defined as key societal organizations, such as charities, development non-governmental organizations (NGOs), community groups, women's organizations, faith-based organizations, professional and business associations, trade unions, self-help groups, coalitions, and advocacy groups (London School for Economics Center for Civil Society). Civil society actors often have a significant impact at the grassroots level, as well as increased access at the leadership level and can connect the two. Targeting these individuals becomes particularly important in protracted conflicts where civil society can serve as either a bridge between conflicting parties or as a body that reinforces existing divisions that exacerbate the conflict.

C. What assumptions or hypotheses were present in the program and its evaluation?

The program's design was based on the assumption that grassroots, track 2 dialogue and encounters can have a significant impact on society as a whole and can contribute to the creation of an atmosphere that allows for dialogue, mutual respect and understanding – all of which are necessary to the process of peace-building.

The 4 target professional groups (healthcare professionals, journalists, educators and local civic leaders) of the program were selected based on an assumption that they could collectively have a significant extended impact on society as a whole. For each of these groups, it was felt that a “window of opportunity” existed for them to bolster binational dialogue and understanding.

It should be emphasized that, although the interactions and the processes we are investigating in the meeting are at the group level, the changes in the end are individual, and happen to individuals within the group as a result of the processes that occur in the group and between the groups. While a variety of interpersonal programs exist in the region, few, if any, provide professionals and students in the proposed target sectors with the skills necessary to address the difficult issues of the Israeli-Palestinian conflict. The goal of the Agents of Change Program for targeted groups of professionals and students, is to create an infrastructure for peace and democracy between Palestinians and Israelis on the community level.

#### IV. Important Findings

A. What problem did the project address?

The “Agents of change” program was created to address an increasing problem as the Israeli-Palestinian conflict has escalated of a lack of open spaces and opportunities for binational dialogue and discussion, which is critical if there is to be a viable peace process. Opportunities for conflict management and mutual understanding between Jews and Arabs had been facing significant challenges in the years prior to the program, with these challenges only increasing in the period in which the program was conducted. Israeli and Palestinian societies are suffering from the impacts of a conflict that involves,

among other things, human rights issues, threats to democratic values, institutional inequality, security concerns, and an entrenched practice of resorting to violence as a means of resolving disputes. This reality made mutual tolerance, understanding, and respect critical; the “Agents of Change” program was designed to address this need through creating a cadre of committed leaders that would have the knowledge and tools to address difficult issues brought on by the conflict and to diffuse tense situations growing out of the conflict.

Through the “Agents of Change” program, participants learn how to address many of the toughest issues of the conflict such as language, land, rights, racism, superiority, inferiority, and privilege in their respective sectors of employment, as well as in their daily lives, and would gain a different view of the conflict, a better understanding of the sources of conflict, and the ability to analyze more realistically the factors that escalate conflict. The Agents of Change Program sought to:

- Develop an awareness of one’s own role in the Israeli-Palestinian conflict
- Explore the role of identity in the conflict through interaction with the other side
- Investigate and break away from embedded patterns of current bi-national relationships
- Acquire conflict management tools that rely on dialogue
- Acquire tools to analyze situations in one’s own environment and institutions
- Acquire tools to understand situations of asymmetry in power relations
- Acquire tools that can be applied to help bring about greater equality in their institutions
- Become more active advocates for peace and justice

B. Has the primary objective been achieved?

The overarching goal of the “Agents of Change” program was to develop the awareness of the participants regarding both the conflict and their role in it, as well as to enable them to explore their own identity through interaction with the other.

Its seven primary quantifiable objectives reflect this primarily goal:

1. To train and empower approximately 144 social change agents from four major civil society groups in Israel and the West Bank.

2. To create a cadre of leaders who will contribute directly or indirectly to “Track 2” meetings between influential sectors of both societies
3. To equip participants with the knowledge, skills and professionalism necessary to interact in a polarized society at a time of conflict
4. To equip participants with the ability to understand and analyze the dynamics occurring between Israelis and Palestinians
5. To build a culture of non-violence, moderation, respectful understanding and dialogue
6. To promote values that lead to equality, reconciliation and forgiveness inside and between Israeli and Palestinian communities
7. To document and support self-reported changes among the graduates through in-depth interviews and evaluations and create a booklet documenting these changes

C. Have other key objectives been achieved?

Participants in the “Agents of Change” course gained a profound understanding of the impact of the conflict on the “other” side and an appreciation for the human impact of the suffering.

D. Who benefited from the program?

The participants in the “Agents of Change” course, those who attended conferences and programs organized by the participants; those who are connected to the participants through second level contact via family, friends, work associates and recipients of support; and third level contacts. In principle, those who benefited most greatly are from the four target sectors indicated.

## V. Conclusions & Outcomes

A. How effective was the program?

Program directors and staff did feel that the program was effective in developing an awareness among participants of the role regarding the conflict and in providing them with tools and skills needed to address the conflict constructively and to be agents of change in their respective work and home environments. The careful choice of selecting these specific target groups (healthcare professionals, civic leaders, educators and journalists) allowed for increased effectiveness as each of these professional groups has a unique capacity to influence a broad cross-section of both Israeli and Palestinian societies. One particularly powerful example of the effectiveness of the program came at the end of one of the workshops for journalists. On the third day of this particular workshop, the Ghalia family in Gaza was killed in an Israeli military attack, while having a picnic on the beach.

At the end of the workshop, a Palestinian participant from Israel proposed that the group write a letter of condolence to the Ghalia family to be signed by all the members of the group. After the

workshop, a Palestinian participant from Israel composed the letter, translated it to Hebrew, and sent it to all the members of the group, both from Israel and from Palestine. There ensued a prolonged discussion via email about the content of the letter and in particular about the use of the word *shahid*. [martyr]. Some of the Jews objected, claiming that use of this word would preclude their signing the letter. A different Palestinian participant from Israel sent the Jewish participants an email explaining that this word is the Arabic counterpart to the Hebrew term used to designate “one who fell for the sake of his homeland” (“halal” in Hebrew) and that it has the same meaning. This discussion via email between Jews and Palestinians from the Israeli group, during the interlude between the first and second workshops, was significant. It was a continuation of the dialogue process the group during the workshops. Eventually, a majority of the members of the group (Jewish and Palestinian) signed the letter, including some who had initially been opposed to signing it, and it was sent to the Ghalia family.

B. How efficient was the program?

The program was efficient. The course directors needed to move quickly to identify the participants and organize the program. In the future, it would be wise to allow a few more months for both identification of participants and program implementation. The largest sums for the program included travel expenses, which were necessary given the restrictions in the region.

C. How sustainable is the program? Has the groundwork been laid for future success?

The dedication of the School for Peace, Hewart and of the participants has demonstrated that the program and its impact are sustainable, given the examples and data available at this time. Both partner organizations maintain contact with the participants and plan to continue to do so. Given the nature of the program and its emphasis on become “change agents” and engage in projects and activities that have an impact on the surrounding reality, the program’s sustainability is significant.

The psychologists set up an activist group called Psychoactive during their participation in our course; this group grew and got stronger as the course went on. They are now considering registering it as an amutah (nonprofit) in Israel. The organization’s aim would be to combat racism and to work against the occupation, as mental health professionals. This group’s continued activism demonstrates the program’s ability to lay the groundwork for future success. We also saw participants recruit peers for participation in other Jewish-Arab workshops at the School for Peace or in activities they were implementing.

Another example of the program’s sustained impact is a series of seminars organized by Israeli and Palestinian graduates of the “Agents of Change” program. These seminars focus checkpoints in the West Bank. The first seminar was held at Neve Shalom/Wahat al Salam with approximately 200 mental health professionals in attendance. In coordination with Machsom Watch (<http://www.machsomwatch.org/>), the seminars are continuing and include a series of study tours to the checkpoints. After one of the study tours, a participant wrote an article for the papers about the experience. The checkpoint seminar series and Psychoactive group demonstrate the sustained impact of the program on the psychologists and social workers that participated in the program. Their enthusiasm and commitment is impressive. Their sustained activism will hopefully, over a number of years, led to a mental health professional community in Israel and the Palestinian Territories that is more aware and committed to peace and equality between Israelis and Palestinians.

While the psychologists and social workers were more politically inclined than the other groups (healthcare workers, educators and journalists), the other participants also initiated impact-oriented activities as a result of the program. Educators typically chose exert influence within the schools where they work through developing new curriculum and articulating the narrative of the other. One group of teachers is designing a program in northern Israel on teaching the narrative of the other. They are hoping their program will be adopted and will run for many years at a pair of schools (one Arab, one Jewish). They plan to make their materials available to other schools as well. Healthcare workers (primarily doctors and nurses) organized free ad hoc clinics in the Palestinian Territories, as well as professional conferences, lectures and in-service training. Within this group, there were marked differences in impact actions between Israelis and Palestinians. The Palestinian participants saw these clinics as paternalistic and preferred to focus their efforts on conferences, lectures and training, including programs that were binational. Healthcare workers came to see themselves as “ambassadors” in their respective workplaces, shedding light on important Jewish-Palestinian issues. The sustained impact on journalists came through in their work as many produced articles, films, television and radio programs reflecting the issues and experiences of the program. For example, two graduates of the program are engaged in an ongoing effort to produce a program about Jewish-Palestinian relations in Israel for Educational TV. The hope is that the program will continue to run for several years. Many journalists noted that the terminology with which they spoke or wrote, professionally, about the conflict change significantly as a result of the course.

D. Were the results typical? Can they be replicated?

We believe the results of this program are typical and can be replicated because previous training programs conducted by the School for Peace (for educators and lawyers) have boasted similar results. Past graduates of School for Peace training programs can be found working for Adallah, an Israeli human rights organizations, Haaretz, CNN (Israel), in humanitarian law, etc.

Palestinian man:

*“Speaking in my own name I chose to come out of recognition of each side's existence. The Jews do not know how much Palestinian society suffers from them.” He went on to say that up until that point he had chosen not to share with the group the details of the pain that he suffered at the hands of the Jews, because he did not want to feel weak. “As the threshold of pain rises, we feel it less. But it is important to state here that there is a victim and a perpetrator.” He said that he came because he is sitting down to speak with people, and that he does not want to deny the reality and humanity in the other.*

Jewish man:

*The course was very significant for me. It's hard for me to imagine how I was before the course, in the sense that being involved in these things is a really important part of what I do now, and gets a lot of my attention and is a big part of what I actually do. Before, it wasn't that significant in my life. I see this area as part of my professional work, and the academic aspects also had a big influence because generally, in psychology the social part is neglected. In the trainees' group at Tel Hashomer [Hospital], I give out material on the Israeli-Palestinian thing and it gets onto the agenda.*

Palestinian woman:

*...I discovered that by giving our support and condolence to Huda Ghalyeh from Gaza, it was like evidence that the Israelis or the Jews understand our [Palestinian] cases. I still think that people can develop positively but not as a part from the official side. The NGOs should take a real part to develop more understanding and to try to bridge gaps between the local people, and inside the*

*two societies...Finally, after this project I want to say that I can understand myself, my needs, and the role I want to play and implement more than before the workshops in the society on the social and personal level.*

A radio journalist on Voice of Israel in Russian:

*The impact of the course is mainly in the choice of words I use in my work. When information comes that's not from the primary source that the IDF has killed a Palestinian youth, and it turns out that he was 12 years old, I say "child" and not "youth." Before I used the term "IDF" without noticing. After the course, I noticed that in Russian, I have the privilege of saying the Israeli army and not the Israel Defense Forces and that's what I do. I feel more inner legitimacy in doing less interviewing of the extreme right wing. These days, I have a lot more curiosity about uncovering their [Palestinian] narrative. Before, the Arab voice sounded more homogeneous and now I can see the diversity of opinions.*

#### E. What was the impact of the program?

Educators from two schools in north Israel who participated in our course – two principals, one Jewish and one Arab, and two homeroom teachers, one Arab and one Jewish – initiated a program aiming to teach the history of the other to each of their respective sides. The homeroom teachers are meeting for a series of working session to construct the program. The idea for this initiative came up during the workshop session in Istanbul. Below is a description of this educational initiative thus far, as the members of the team have presented it.

The idea originated in an understanding that the Shoah (Holocaust) for the Jews and the Nakba (Catastrophe) for the Palestinians are historical events located at the focal point of the national pain of the respective sides. The memory of the Shoah and of extermination, for the Jews, and the memory of being uprooted and taking flight as refugees, for the Palestinians, are an emotional, cultural and conceptual obstacle that stands in the way of the two sides' understanding, accepting, and reconciling with one another. We want to create a study group that will serve as a way to overcoming this obstacle so as to create a new perspective, accepting, understanding and enabling. The intention is not to compare the two events or place them together for the purpose of historical examination. Nor is the intent to look at these events themselves as justification for any political direction or as events that necessarily teach a diplomatic or political lesson of some kind. We want to learn the ethical lessons from these events, and even more, to understand how they influence the feelings, outlook and attitudes of today's students, without judging and without a new debate.

We hope that study and understanding will bring the participants in the program to an ability to accept the feelings of the other, to a different discourse than the one we have today between Jewish and Arab youth, to a sense that "there is someone to talk to," that we can know the other, individually, up close, and understand his or her hidden feelings.

The goal is to learn about the other's history, about the central historical event that defines the source of the other's sense of national, social and cultural suffering and to feel empathy for that suffering. We believe that this kind of learning can also bring a stronger individual and group identity for each person on both sides without this being at the other's expense.

The other side will write the learning content of each of the groups. I.e., the Jewish side will suggest a list of contents that, in its opinion, the Palestinian side should know about in order to

understand the difficulties and the national-cultural pain of the Jewish people. The same thing will be done by the Palestinian side vis-à-vis the content it deems important. Each of the sides will then make an effort to find materials and sources that will help convey the material, so as to best present the other narrative.

The group will comprise an equal number of Jewish and Palestinian young people and will be led by two facilitators, a Jew and a Palestinian. The participants will decide the language of the meeting. Currently the program is for one class from Sakhnin High School and a group of an equal size with students from Einot Yarden High School.

The study group will run for two years. During the first year, there will be binational meetings, but most of the learning will be done in a unicultural framework. The study will include, among other things, creative work by the young people themselves. The intent is that some of the learning process will require the students to do creative work so that they will not simply be passive listeners.

Students who are beginning their second year with the group will be among those who present part of the material to the students just entering their first year of the program.

#### VI. Recommendations - proposed actions for future programs based on conclusions

The course name – “change agents”: This name is more relevant for participants from Israel, and less relevant for participants from Palestine, because of the asymmetrical reality of occupied and occupier. The Israeli participants have much more opportunity to actualize their aspiration to be influential in their professional milieu and elsewhere in their environment; and the bigger change must take place on the Israeli side in terms of ending the occupation. For the Palestinian side, we must find a title that will not create impossible expectations. More clarification is needed to find a term better suited to the Palestinian reality and beyond that to agree on a term that works for participants from both peoples.

Several questions arose concerning recruitment of the participants, such as: Was it wise to recruit a mixed group comprising both doctors and nurses? Would it be better to recruit only doctors, given the difference in status? And what about professional specialties? Since medicine is such a diverse field, would it be useful to recruit an equal number from each people in a given series of specialties – e.g., five Jewish pediatricians and five Palestinian pediatricians, and likewise with respect to orthopedists, etc. At any rate, it would appear that we need more coordination during the recruitment of participants.

Part Three of the course seems to us in need of improvement, given the conclusions from the first year of the project. The practical training should be broadened in terms of how the participants will subsequently have an impact at their workplace and with more politically oriented activism. We need to define more clearly the tools that these activists will need in order to be successful. The supervision and advising provided them for their activism projects must be improved. There must be proper budgeting for the fieldwork projects relating to the participants' activism. And there should be a more creative approach to integration among the various courses and participants in Part Three.

#### VII. Lessons Learned – from this program, what are the implications for future programs? What are the implications for others implementing similar programs?

The entire subject of the participation of Palestinians who are citizens of Israel demands more thought. In the interviews that were held with Palestinian participants from Israel, we found that

they don't feel as though they belong with the Israelis, nor with the Palestinians. Although most of the time they joined the Palestinians for the unational sessions, they felt that the '67 Palestinians did not accept them fully and that they reject them in some sense. They had to expend a lot of energy proving their Palestinian-ness by being more Catholic than the Pope. The discourse among the Palestinians from Israel suggests that they feel like present absentees. They don't speak out with full freedom, at least partly because they feel that their suffering in Israel is not proportional to the suffering of the Palestinians in the occupied territories. We decided that there will be a discussion among the Palestinian staff from Israel and Palestine, and an internal discussion among the Palestinian staff from Israel, and then we will formulate some guidelines to be utilized in the forthcoming courses, in terms of their organization and design.

**Course Booklet**  
**Agents of Change: Conflict Management Training for Leaders of Israeli and  
Palestinian Civil Society**

**Table of Contents**

<b>Introduction</b>	<b>Page 2</b>
<b>Group One: Teachers</b>	<b>Page 3</b>
<b>Context Surrounding the Course</b>	<b>Page 3</b>
<b>Section 1: Dialogue, terminology and reality</b>	<b>Page 3</b>
<b>Section 2: Nationality and Professionalism</b>	<b>Page 6</b>
<b>Section 3: Participant Impact and Initiatives</b>	<b>Page 7</b>
<b>Group Two: Journalists</b>	
<b>Context Surrounding the Course</b>	<b>Page 10</b>
<b>Section 1: Dialogue, terminology and reality</b>	<b>Page 10</b>
<b>Section 2: Nationality and Professionalism</b>	<b>Page 12</b>
<b>Section 3: Participant Impact and Initiatives</b>	<b>Page 14</b>
<b>Group Three: Healthcare</b>	
<b>Context Surrounding the Course</b>	<b>Page 17</b>
<b>Section 1: Dialogue, terminology and reality</b>	<b>Page 17</b>
<b>Section 2: Nationality and Professionalism</b>	<b>Page 18</b>
<b>Section 3: Participant Impact and Initiatives</b>	<b>Page 19</b>
<b>Group Four: Psychologists and Social Workers</b>	
<b>Context Surrounding the Course</b>	<b>Page 22</b>
<b>Section 1: Dialogue, terminology and reality</b>	<b>Page 22</b>
<b>Section 2: Nationality and Professionalism</b>	<b>Page 25</b>
<b>Section 3: Participant Impact and Initiatives</b>	<b>Page 27</b>
<b>Appendix A: Program of Pediatric Cardiology Conference</b>	<b>Page 31</b>
<b>Appendix B: Training Seminar Invitation – Mental Health Professionals for Human Rights</b>	<b>Page 34</b>
<b>Appendix C: Assistance at Kufr Qadum</b>	<b>Page 42</b>
<b>Appendix D: The Olive Harvest at Kufr Qadum</b>	<b>Page 48</b>

**Appendix E: Psychological Barriers (checkpoints) to Peace**      **Page 50**

**Appendix F: Additional Participant Testimonials**      **Page 52**

## **Introduction**

This is a report of the “Agents of Change: Conflict Management Training for Leaders of Israeli and Palestinian Civil Society” course conducted by the School for Peace at Neve Shalom/Wahat Al-Salam in partnership with the Hewan Center for Peace in Democracy in Jayyous, Palestine. The goal of the “Agents of Change” course was to train participants to be change agents in their respective fields and in the larger society. The program sought to impact educators, journalists, healthcare workers and civil leaders. All told, 126 Jews and Palestinians participated in the program. More than 200 people attended the concluding conference. They came from four fields: education, journalism, healthcare, psychology and social work. In recruiting participants and preparing for the program, it became clear that there is a major need in the psychology and social work fields for this type of training and dialogue. As such, these professionals made up the majority of the civil leaders group. Through the “Agents of Change” program, participants were able to address issues regarding their national identities, the Israeli-Palestinian conflict and the professional challenges they face in their respective fields because of the surrounding reality. They learned to breakthrough the barriers separating them and developed projects and initiatives that built bridges between the two national groups.

The impact of the program on each group was unique and significant. Their experiences and resulting actions offer much for others living and working in conflict-settings to learn from. The models, examples and findings presented herein offer insight and present opportunities for other organizations and individuals.

## **GROUP ONE: EDUCATORS**

Participants in this group were teachers and principals. To accommodate the many obligations and time limitations that characterize the life of an educator, the group attended one longer session rather than two shorter ones. The course took place in Istanbul from July 21<sup>st</sup> to the 27<sup>th</sup>, 2006; it began only eleven days after the outbreak of war between Israel and Lebanon. Due to the war, some Jewish participants were unable to leave the country. In the end, 12 participants from Israel (8 Jewish and 4 Palestinian citizens of Israel) and 14 Palestinians from the West Bank attended the course. Among these 26 participants, 6 were principals, 19 were teachers and one was an administrator.

The program of the course included three sections. The first, experiential, segment was dedicated essentially to open dialogue between the participants. The second segment dealt with professional identity in relation to national identity. The third segment of the course was the applied part, with personal guidance and consultation and a meeting with the group within Israel that dealt with theory and practice at the participants' schools. The training included issues such as:

- Militarism in the educational system
- Nationally significant days as represented in the classroom – searching for alternative approaches for these commemorations
- Paulo Freire's theories
- Racism in the classroom

### **Context Surrounding the Course: War and occupation in the background**

The fact that the course took place in the midst of the Israel-Lebanon War of 2006 bears witness to the dedication of the participants to undertake dialogue with the other side. The Israeli participants arrived to Istanbul in spite of the enormous difficulty of leaving ones home and family during the time of war. Five of the participants were even residents of the North, where missiles were landing daily.

The Palestinian participants also came during a period of increased violence of the Israeli armed forces in the Occupied Territories. Everyday, more Palestinians were killed and the usual constraints and suffering of the occupation were growing even more intense. The Palestinians, though, deal regularly with the difficulty of leaving their home and family in a situation that is dangerous and unstable.

### **Section 1: Dialogue, terminology, and reality**

The first section began with a workshop in which the group was divided into two binational groups. In this activity, a Palestinian participant expressed opposition to sitting in a group with another participant, a woman from Israel, who lived in the Golan Heights, who he considered a settler.<sup>1</sup> Another Palestinian participant offered to replace him in the group and in that way the conflict was solved temporarily. Naturally, the subject arose again in the separate dialogue groups. An impassioned discussion

---

<sup>1</sup> The Golan Heights were captured by Israel from Syria in the War of 1967 and remain disputed territory to this day.

developed on the different views on this particular area, especially in the realm of terminology and proprietorship. While the Palestinians view the Golan Heights as occupied territory, the Israelis make a distinction between the Occupied Territories of Palestine (the West Bank and Gaza, in their view) and the conquered territory of the Golan Heights. The discussion led to the question of why and how these different perspectives prevail and why the subject elicited such intensity of emotion.

For the rest of the workshop, the two groups came together and conversed on a broad range of topics relating to the Israeli-Palestinian conflict. During this exchange, the dialogue largely revolved around the present situation in the Territories, in particular the hardships that the Palestinian participants face in the educational system. At the time of the course, because of the crisis of funding since the rise of Hamas to the government, employees of the Palestinian educational system had not been paid in half a year. The teachers told about the hopelessness of this situation. It is impossible, they explained, to provide for their families without searching for additional work, which in turn subtracted from the time and energy they could put into their work at the schools.

Another issue that was raised by the Palestinians was the effect the separation wall and the checkpoints have on the daily life of inhabitants of the Territories. The Palestinian participants recounted stories of students who had trouble arriving on time for their graduation exams because of problems created by the checkpoints, the separation wall, and the destruction of school buildings. They also told about the disruption of their classrooms through the absence or trauma of students who were left in critical condition after violent encounters with the Israeli army.

The discussion touched on wider political issues as well. For example, Palestinian participants brought up the issue of the refugees. They spoke about the centrality of the issue and about the Nakba, and they described the situation of the refugees today. For the Palestinian participants, it was indispensable that any proposed solution to the conflict takes the problem of the refugees into account. They offered several options for solutions to the problem. The Jewish participants responded with some degree of agreement. Though they recognized that the problem was very difficult, they added that the return of the Palestinian refugees to Israeli territory would annul the existence of Israel as a Jewish state. Rather, they suggested, the majority of the refugees should settle in the Palestinian state that will be founded in the presently occupied territory of the West Bank and Gaza.

The subject of the war that was taking place at the time of the workshop was broached mainly in the unicultural context amongst the Jews. They expressed reluctance and discomfort in bringing the subject forward for binational discussion. Up until that point, the conversation had focused on the frustration, anger, and despair on the part of the Palestinian participants due to the protracted occupation and the worsening situation of poverty and instability in the Territories. The Jewish participants didn't feel it was the place to bring up the damage or losses they were experiencing due to the war, or the fear it generated for them. They felt that the same workshop could not contain both the Palestinians' situation under occupation and their own distress arising from the recent war, hence they avoided bringing the issue forward in the binational discussion group.

### **The Israeli-Palestinian conflict in Israeli and Palestinian schools**

The next activity took place the following morning. It was devoted to the dilemmas raised by the conflict in the educational context. First the issue was discussed in uninational groups and then it was presented in the binational group. There were four presentations: Palestinian educators from East Jerusalem; Jewish educators from Israel; Palestinian educators from the Territories; and Palestinian educators from Israeli schools.

The Palestinians from East Jerusalem spoke about the unique problems that plague the school system there. According to their description, the educational system in East Jerusalem suffers from oppression and limitations similar to what was common in the Arabic school system in Israel in the first decade of the state. The checkpoints and separation wall prevent students and teachers from arriving to school on time.<sup>2</sup> The teachers are allowed to teach Palestinian curriculum but Palestinian textbooks that are more national in perspective are forbidden. It is prohibited to observe Palestinian national holidays such as the Memorial Day in remembrance of the Nakba. Additionally, if the Israeli army kills a Palestinian, it is forbidden to observe a day of mourning or to speak to the children on the subject in the classroom. Sometimes the teacher's main dilemma is that, on the one hand, he wants to nurture the students' Palestinian identity and their parents share that interest, but on the other hand, Israeli officials bring a lot of pressure to bear to keep this kind of material out of the classrooms.

The Jewish group presented dilemmas that dealt with the clash between civil and military society. For example, there are certain school programs that are connected to Ganda, the youth corps of the military. These programs teach students Arabic and encourage them to go into army intelligence. The army has enormous weight in the economic and educational systems of the country. As educators, they felt a dilemma in how much to emphasize the civil aspect of the state over the military aspect. On the one hand, the Jewish educators asserted that they want to minimize the weight of the army in the school's curriculum and culture, but on the other hand they feared that it was impossible to diminish its prominence. The group also raised questions regarding how to deal with racism in the classroom and how to integrate the narrative of the other into the curriculum.

The Palestinians from the West Bank spoke about the psychological effects on their students of the occupation, especially checkpoints and ongoing damage to school buildings. Palestinian teachers face the difficult question of how to address this horrible reality. If they organize a day of mourning or a work stoppage in protest, it is with the knowledge that the children will pay an additional price of missing school and being vulnerable to violence by the Israeli army by being on the street.

The Palestinians from Israel had formed into their own separate group in the preparation for the binational discussion. They spoke about the prohibition against teaching national poets such as Mahmoud Darwish. A school principal presented one particular dilemma that involved a sporting event in which the top female volleyball players of the school

---

<sup>2</sup> Every teacher that wants to teach in East Jerusalem must undergo a thorough security check by the Shabach (the General Security Services, responsible for administering security and intelligence in the Territories)

were chosen to play in a national tournament. They subsequently won the tournament. At the beginning of the game, when the Israeli anthem was played, a small group of Arab students that were watching the game had refused to stand. While the principal understood their stance, he felt pressured to convince them to stand. On the one hand, he didn't think that he should obligate the students to do something that they were ideologically opposed to. More than that, he respected their bravery for standing up for what they believed in. On the other hand, word came down to the principal that the volleyball players, who had worked so hard to win the tournament, might be disqualified because of the incident. The principal was even called to the Ministry of Education to explain himself, and there was a threat to throw the group out of the tournament and nullify its championship. As a condition of the team's continued participation, the Ministry of Education demanded that the school conduct an educational program to reinforce loyalty to the symbols of the state.

## **Section 2: Nationality and Professionalism**

The second part of the course dealt with issues at the intersection of nationality and profession dealing with teaching the narrative of the other. One day was devoted to the question of how to teach the War of 1948 and the Nakba. The group split into unination groups to prepare a class lesson. When the group reconvened, the Jews presented their class lesson first, followed by Palestinians. In each presentation, the unination group simulated a classroom with a teacher and "students."

The Israeli lesson was characteristic of the classic Zionist pedagogy. Some of the "students" tried to stress Jewish victimhood at the hands of the world and at the hands of the Arabs. Teaching the series of events leading up to 1948 took up nearly all the time allotted for the class so that there was no time left to describe the events of 1948. Perhaps this came out of reticence to deal with these issues directly in a binational group.

It is interesting to note that the Palestinian group chose a Palestinian from Israel to teach the class lesson. As expected, their lesson opened with a mirror image of the first lesson, a long introduction that described the build up to war in 1948 and the subsequent Palestinian victimhood born out of the Zionist movement and British governance in Palestine. The point of view of the Jewish population within the Land of Israel was also included within the lesson. The present condition of Palestinians was brought up indirectly: for example, the "teacher" arrived late for the lesson after being held up at a checkpoint.

In the discussion that took place after the lesson, the participants responded to the national aspects of the presentations, mostly through the questions of the "students." Palestinian participants reacted to the fact that the Israeli-Jewish group didn't even reach the events of 1948 and their consequences. Afterwards, there was an in-depth analysis of the differences of the two presentations.

The Israeli group was surprised that the Palestinian teacher also presented the Zionist point of view, which contradicted their image of how history is taught in Palestine.

On another day, time was devoted to teaching a literary text as a possible way of

generating identification with the narrative of the other. The Palestinian group chose a poem by the Hebrew poet Dalia Ravikovitch, "B'tsafon kof'im" (*They are freezing in the north*). This choice was evidently linked to the war taking place at that time. The lesson featured a lot of involvement on the part of the "students," and focused on the writer's criticism of the first Lebanon war. The Jewish group chose a story by Ghassan Kanafani, "Land of the Sad Oranges." Literary themes were discussed and the refugee issue raised by the story was gradually introduced into the lesson.

Both groups invested heavily in preparing for these lessons. In the discussion afterwards, several topics came up. The Jews identified strongly with the refugee situation and Kanafani's story. The participants thought that the method of gradually approaching this sensitive subject had helped in forging empathy among the "students." The Jewish group that observed the Palestinian lesson on Ravikovitch's poetry talked about a sense of ownership of the creative product, as if the others could not fully understand it. This proprietary attitude toward the creative assets prevented some of the participants from seeing the strong points of the lesson the Palestinians presented. During the concluding discussion, participants said that they see literature as an important tool for accessing the other's narrative and that they would try to use it more in the schools where they teach.

### **Section 3: Participant Impact and Initiatives**

**An example of change:** One of our course participants, the principal of a Jewish school attended by some Arab children, subsequently turned to us for help and advice in making changes he would like to see at his school. He wanted to create an environment that was more inclusive of the Arab narrative rather than exclusively presenting the Jewish narrative. This principal had included the Muslim calendar of holidays on the school's holiday calendar. He also wanted to include the study of the famous short story by renowned author Ghassan Kanafani, "Jaffa: Land of Oranges," prior to Nakba Day at his school. Before the fiftieth anniversary of the massacre at Kufr Kassem, the principal invited a staff member from the School for Peace to prepare the teachers for dealing with this event with the students.

During the preparatory stage, sections were read from testimonies about what happened in Kufr Kassem and the teachers were asked to work on their own responses to the segments and the events, before working on how to approach the subject in the classroom. There were strong feelings and a lot of resistance among the teachers in response to the material, and a discussion ensued that helped them to understand the source of this resistance and how to cope when students displayed it. In conclusion, they agreed that such meetings should continue.

**A second example:** A Jewish homeroom and core studies teacher, who participated in the course, teaches at a Jewish school where there are also Arab students. She came to consult with us about how to deal better with the dilemmas that come up around the integration of the Arab students into the school. At this meeting, we dealt with various issues, including:

- Taking a critical look at the school policy toward Arab students; in many cases, the assumption is that if the students chose to come to a Jewish school, they should accept its Jewish character, as is.

- Discussing ways to promote an approach at the school that takes into account the national and cultural identity of the Arab students studying there. Many events take place without any attention from the institution as such being given to the Arab students, their identity or their needs. Many events sponsored by the Israeli army take place at school. Formulating methods to help Arab students in these very complicated situations is important. Key questions that were raised included: Should a unicultural forum be created in which the Arab students can receive support for coping with these things? What about the language question? How can the school enable the Arab students to study and learn Arabic at a higher level?

This teacher is working to implement changes in school's policies and practices toward the Arab students studying there.

**A third example:** A Palestinian teacher requested a book about the Holocaust so he could teach it to his students.

**A fourth example:** Four educators from two schools in northern Israel who participated in the course, two principals (one Jewish and one Arab) and two homeroom teachers (one Jewish and one Arab), initiated a program aimed at teaching the history of the 'other.' The homeroom teachers are meeting for a series of working sessions to construct the program. The idea for this initiative came up during the workshop session in Istanbul. Below is a description of this ongoing educational initiative thus far, as the members of their team have presented it:

*The idea originated through an understanding that the Shoah (Holocaust) for the Jews and the Nakba (Catastrophe) for the Palestinians are historical events located at the focal point of the national pain of each group. The memory of the Shoah and of extermination, for the Jews, and the memory of being uprooted and taking flight as refugees, for the Palestinians, serve as emotional, cultural and conceptual obstacles that stand in the way of the ability for the two groups to understand, accept and reconcile with one another. We want to create a study group that will serve as a way to overcome these obstacles so as to create a new perspective of accepting, understanding and enabling. The intention is not to compare the two events or place them together for the purpose of historical examination, or is it to look at these events themselves as justifications for political decisions or events. Rather, we want to explore the ethical lessons present in these events and to promote understanding of how these events influence the feelings, outlook and attitudes of today's students.*

*We hope that through study and understanding students will be able to begin to accept the feelings of the other and to participate in a different discourse. We hope that they realize that there is someone to talk to and that you can know the other and understand his or her hidden feelings.*

*The goal is to learn about the other's history, about the central historical event that defines the source of the other's sense of national,*

*social and cultural suffering and to feel empathy for that suffering. We believe that this kind of learning can also bring a stronger sense of individual and group identity that does not come at the expense of the other.*

*The other side will write the learning content of each of the groups. For example, the Jewish side will suggest a list of contents that, in its opinion, the Palestinian side should know about in order to understand the difficulties and the national-cultural pain of the Jewish people. The same thing will be done by the Palestinian side vis-à-vis the content it deems important. Each of the sides will then make an effort to find materials and sources that will help convey the materials, so as to best present their narrative to the other.*

*The group will comprise an equal number of Jewish and Palestinian young people and will be led by two facilitators, one Palestinian and one Jewish. The participants will decide upon the language of the meeting, with a translator available. Currently the program is for one class from Sakhnin High School and a group of equal size with students from Einot Yarden High School.*

*The study group will run for two years. During the first year, there will be binational meetings, but most of the learning will be done in a uninational framework. The study will include, among other things, creative work by the young people themselves. The intent is that some of the learning process will require the students to be hands-on, not passive. When one group of students starts their second year of the program, they will present part of the material to students entering the first year of the program.*

# # #

## **GROUP TWO: JOURNALISTS**

Participants in this course were media professionals. All told, 30 participated: 18 were from Israel (4 Palestinian and 14 Jewish citizens of Israel) and 12 Palestinians from the West Bank. The participants came from different media fields: print journalism, digital media, television, and radio.

### **Context Surrounding the Course: War and occupation in the background**

The first part of the course took place from the 7<sup>th</sup> to the 10<sup>th</sup> of June, 2006, during the period when there were many attacks by the IDF on Gaza. In one extremely shocking episode, the army killed nearly all of one family, the Ghalia family, while they were sitting on the beach. The second part of the course took place after the Israeli-Lebanese war in the summer of 2006. These violent events had an influence on the course and on the processes that occurred in it.

### **Section 1: Dialogue, terminology, and reality**

The first part of the course was essentially dialogue about the conflict. The Palestinian participants from the West Bank talked about the restrictions on their freedom of movement and the injuries the IDF inflicted on Palestinian journalists during the course of their work. Journalists have no defense against the army and work in continual fear of injury, or worse, given past incidents of injury and death to Palestinian media professionals at the hands of the Israeli armed forces. The groups spoke about the general situation in the Occupied Territories, the hardships wrought by the checkpoints and the security barrier, the continual violence and daily humiliation that Palestinians suffer from.

The Jewish group was divided. Some spoke about feelings of guilt and of the importance of listening to Palestinians; others had become hard-hearted and said they had trouble listening repeatedly to descriptions of suffering by the Palestinians. Sometimes frustration is manifested through resisting the facilitation method until participants realize why they were upset. At the same time, the Palestinians shared their frustration regarding Israeli opposition to the method of facilitation. Although the binational discussions were difficult, there was a lot of interaction among the participants during breaks in the meetings and in the evenings. The schedule gave people as much free time as possible to talk informally in small groups, sitting around the table over a cup of a coffee. These ad hoc, information interactions are important for building a group dynamic that can support difficult discussions.

In a plenary session, participants presented the realities of their respective workplaces. These presentations mirrored those of other groups and programs as they highlighted the pronounced gap between the conditions under which the respective groups do their work. The Israeli journalists felt that the Palestinians had limited journalistic freedom and were of the opinion that the Palestinian journalists would not challenge the authorities. The Palestinian journalists described the situation facing them in West Bank, gave examples in which they had critiqued the authorities, and expressed criticism of the Israeli media.

### **Terrible news arrives**

On day three of the workshop, the groups were asked to sit in unilingual groups and to prepare case studies of dilemmas illustrating the conflict between loyalty to one's profession and loyalty to one's nation. These cases were to be presented in the plenary. That same morning, reports began arriving about the deaths of seven members of the Ghalia family in Gaza, and the atmosphere grew very sad and tense. In the plenary, the Palestinians brought up the dilemma of participating in a workshop with Jewish Israelis while the Israeli army was murdering seven members of a family vacationing at the seashore. The notion that this constituted a "professional dilemma" to be raised in the meeting angered the Jewish participants. They felt uncertain about presenting their dilemmas dealing with the rift between loyalty to the profession and loyalty to the nation, while the Palestinians were not raising parallel professional dilemmas. They also felt that the dilemmas they had prepared for presentation seemed minor in comparison to recent events. Claiming that the Palestinians were breaking the rules, the Jewish journalists also said that it still wasn't clear under what circumstances the family had been killed.

The Palestinian journalists from Israel, meanwhile, brought up situations involving the majority and the minority within the country. The Jewish group found this stressful; the discussion induced a feeling of moral inferiority and severely challenged their pretensions of a liberal identity. They resolved their discomfort by taking refuge in their professionalism which they felt afforded them a degree of superiority. With all these complicated interactions, the atmosphere was heavy and not conducive to a productive discourse in the plenary; we decided to continue the discussion in small groups instead. Talking in the smaller forums, the Jews were able to listen as the Palestinians expressed their pain and regret for the deaths of the Ghalia family.

### **Condolences, expressed jointly**

At the end of the workshop, a Palestinian participant from Israel proposed that the group write a letter of condolence to the Ghalia family to be signed by all the members of the group. After the workshop, a Palestinian participant from Israel composed the letter, translated it to Hebrew, and sent it to all the members of the group, both from Israel and from Palestine. There ensued a prolonged discussion via email about the content of the letter and in particular about the use of the word *shahid* [martyr]. Some of the Jews objected, claiming that use of this word would preclude their signing the letter. A different Palestinian participant from Israel sent the Jewish participants an email explaining that this word is the Arabic counterpart to the Hebrew term used to designate "one who fell for the sake of his homeland" ("hatal" in Hebrew) and that it has the same meaning. This discussion via email between Jews and Palestinians from the Israeli group, during the interlude between the first and second workshops, was significant. It was a continuation of the dialogue that the group went through. Eventually, the majority of the members of the group from both sides signed the letter, including some who had initially been opposed to signing it, and it was sent to the Ghalia family.

A Palestinian female participant shared her feelings about this action:

*...I discovered that by giving our support and condolence to Huda Ghalyeh from Gaza, it was like evidence that the Israelis or the Jews understand our [Palestinian] cases. I still think that people can develop positively but not as a part from the official side. The NGOs should take a real part to develop more understanding and to try to bridge gaps between the local people, and inside the two societies...Finally, after this project I want to say that I can understand myself, my needs, and the role I want to play and implement more than before the workshops in the society on the social and personal level.*

## **Section 2: Nationality and Professionalism**

In July, war broke out between Israel and Lebanon. We decided we ought to check with the participants to see how they felt about continuing with the second workshop. With the exception of two participants from each side, everyone thought it was not only necessary, but also even crucial to go forward with the second part of the program as planned, rather than postpone or cancel it. Hence the second part took place as planned from September 7<sup>th</sup> to 11<sup>th</sup>, 2006, in Istanbul. This segment focused on dual loyalty – national vs. professional – in media-related professions.

The workshop goals were:

- To acquire critical perspectives about the nature of journalism in the context of the Israeli-Palestinian conflict
- To become acquainted with the theoretical literature relating to the media and the Israeli-Palestinian conflict
- To examine the dilemmas raised for media professionals by a dual loyalty to the nation and the profession
- To share professional experience, while reaching a consensus on ways to act as change agents in their professional capacity vis-à-vis the conflict

The workshop opened with a general update on people's experiences during the interval since the prior workshop. They talked about the war in Lebanon. The respective groups – the Jewish participants on the one hand, and the Palestinians from Israel and Palestine on the other – used very different terminology to describe the actions of Hezbollah and the actions of the IDF. The disagreement was vociferous, with the Palestinians from Israel challenging the Jewish group's narrative. Afterwards, the Palestinians from Palestine told of the deteriorating situation in the Occupied Territories and recounted how, during the war in Lebanon, the IDF was also attacking and killing many Palestinians in the Territories.

### **Simulating the headlines**

In a simulated editing room scenario, the participants were asked to split up into three groups (simulating a Palestinian newspaper, an Israeli newspaper, and a mixed

newspaper) and to select the front-page content for their (imaginary) newspaper, drawing on a pool of about forty headlines taken from actual Palestinian and Israeli newspaper stories. The results of this exercise were not dissimilar to the real thing. Interestingly enough, participants chose to stick close to the known, familiar product in spite of the novel opportunity to create something new. Commercial considerations in many cases trumped social issues of significance. At one point, Palestinians from Israel wanted to insert an article reporting on discrimination against Palestinian citizens of Israel in the assistance given to people injured in the war with Lebanon; the article exposed racism in Israel, they said. Some Jews in the group protested that the article was not reliable and, in the end, it was not selected.

The front-page discussions were very revealing. One argument was about emphasizing that the IDF had killed Palestinians, rather than reverting to the passive voice (“Palestinians were killed...”), a technique often found in the Israeli newspaper reports. A few participants voiced a desire to include articles that incorporated the narrative of the other. In the mixed group, substantial effort was invested in achieving consensus, sometimes driven by the occasional “odd man (or woman) out” who was unable to compromise on some cherished principle. An interesting similarity eventually prevailed between the Israeli and the Palestinian editions. Also of interest was the treatment in all three papers of the death of the Egyptian Nobel Laureate in Literature, Naguib Mahfouz.

The program for that day ended with a lecture by Dr. Motti Neiger of Natanya College in which he talked about journalists in crisis, mutually contradictory values, and dual loyalty. This presentation drew on examples from what the group had been doing in the workshops earlier to illumine the relevant theoretical literature. Both the Jewish and the Palestinian participants found the lecture interesting.

On the following day, a panel discussion addressed instances of dual loyalty and self-censorship. One case aroused much interest in the group. A Palestinian journalist from Israel recounted how, after an interview with a Jewish Israeli colleague during which she had spoken out against the war in Lebanon, she was severely rebuked by her editorial and management superiors at the channel where she works. She felt ostracized. It was a heavy price to pay for having voiced her opinion forthrightly.

The issue of solidarity during wartime or conflict, when people generally rally round the flag, is problematic in Israel. At a time like that, if a journalist comes out against the consensus, his colleagues have a hard time supporting him. Jewish Israelis in some sense enjoy more legitimacy when they criticize government policy than do Palestinian citizens of Israel; most Israeli Jews expect the latter to be loyal to the government and even to declare it publicly.

### **Videos and cartoons**

Participants presented material during the morning of the fourth day of the workshop to the presentation of material. People brought video clips and written work. The video clips

were presented and discussed. Unfortunately, there was not enough time to delve into the written material.

The first work shown was a series of six cartoons by a Palestinian cartoonist addressing the consequences of the separation wall. The cartoons portrayed different aspects of the occupation, ongoing oppression, and the separation wall in a very powerful manner. In the discussions that followed, the Jewish participants focused on one cartoon that depicted the separation wall in the shape of a swastika. They expressed their feelings that all of the horrible things the Israelis were doing to the Palestinians did not come close to what the Nazis did to the Jews, opposing the comparison. After a heated discussion, the presenter explained that his essential message was not that the Jews of Israel were Nazis, but was to question how a people that went through the Shoah could do such terrible things (such as the separation wall) to another group of people.

The second work presented was a Jewish participant's film about the children of Palestinian political prisoners. Sometimes children as young as five or six travel alone to visit their fathers or brothers in an Israeli prison because their mother or other adult relatives did not receive permits to enter Israel. The group viewed a short, powerful clip from the film and the filmmaker explained the process of producing it. The Palestinian participants were moved to see that films of this kind were being made on the Israeli side. In their experience, few movies on the Israeli side deal with the suffering of their people.

Next came a film by a Palestinian participant that described the wounding of Palestinian journalists by the army, along with various other hardships confronting Palestinian reporters under the occupation and within Palestinian society. In the movie there were a few shocking pictures of wounding and even killing of Palestinian media professionals by the army.

Both workshops confronted the Jewish group with the necessity to come to grips with very difficult issues. This task was hard, and at times it was very painful, as various assumptions about ethics and Jewish Israeli identity were called into question. The timing of this workshop, immediately following the war in Lebanon, may have exacerbated the difficulty of reconciling these different perspectives. One of the participants said outright that she felt she hadn't yet digested fully the effect the war had on her and that it left little psychological room to take in the things that the Palestinians were saying. Also, in certain situations in the workshop, some of the Jewish participants seemed to be competing over victim-hood and seeking to establish symmetry with the Palestinians' suffers.

### **Section 3: Participant Impact & Initiatives**

In their own words, participants talk candidly about how the course impacted them and the changes they have initiated in their workplaces and communities:

*I am in this conflict as a soldier, as the son of leftists, and in a professional role. I never touched as emotional a place as I did in this course. The course brought the asymmetry into very sharp focus. Today I understand very well.... I understand better and more deeply how things look to Palestinians. I profoundly understand their very deep anger, which*

*I should already have understood, but you don't really understand until you see the expression in their eyes, until you talk with people and not at some checkpoint, or at a prison or on television – then you understand. You understand that they are very, very angry with you and not prepared to hear anything you say, unless you do everything you can to stop this occupation and on that score they are in despair. I thought that if I came as an Israeli Jewish leftist who goes to Palestinian demonstrations, they would think I am okay and that I'd already done my part, and it turns out that it's not so, because they say you also do reserve duty and it's in the territories and if you weren't in the territories you're still contemptible because you are part of the Israelis who are continuing the occupation. And this understanding that it doesn't matter what I do, they are going to be angry with us – this understanding is very strong now and has a big influence. It jabs me in the head all the time. The truth is that there is no way to get to a place where I will ever be able to see things the way they see them, and I won't be able to force my opinion on them, and I won't be able to force my solution on them, and it has to really be something that everyone can accept.*

*In my daily work as a journalist (as an editor at a major Israeli daily newspaper), this has greatly influenced my terminology -- the whole matter of passivity: were arrested, were killed, and were wounded – very, very strongly (choosing active terminology instead: the IDF killed, not they were killed) – this is now very strong for me. I do this gladly and I know that it's not enough. This week, there was the story on Beit Hanoun. I wasn't working at the paper that day, but I imagined a column heading, "The massacre at Beit Hanoun." If it were a paper I owned, it would have gone to press that way, but at the paper where I work, it would not have.*

**- A Jewish Israeli (male) journalist**

*It seems to me that more than anything else, the course has made me broaden the angle through which I look at or describe reality, and has raised the bar on my skepticism and the need to check what is presented as facts.*

**- Jewish Israeli (female) author and journalist**

This woman wrote two articles after the course. One article was for Maariv online, in which she criticized the decision of the National Association of Israeli Journalists to withdraw from the International Federation of Journalists after the secretary-general denounced the IDF bombardment of the Hezbollah television station Al Manar. The second article was for the web site of Yediot Ahronot, criticizing the Israeli government's policy not to engage in negotiations with the Palestinians for the release of Gilad Shalit.

*Since the course, I am little more polished, and I work from a more solid place, I am more daring. I give more conspicuous coverage to the matter of the Palestinian Arab citizens of Israel on the news that I edit. I interviewed representatives from Mossawa, which works to advance equality between Jews and Arabs in Israel and against racism, and from Adallah, which promotes human rights for Palestinian citizens of Israel.*

*At every opportunity, when I could, I brought in a Palestinian Arab interviewee from Israel. The course also influenced the terminology I use in reports and interviews.*

**- A Jewish editor and presenter on cable TV**

*The impact of the course is mainly in the choice of words I use in my work. When information comes that's not from the primary source that the IDF has killed a Palestinian youth, and it turns out that he was 12 years old, I say "child" and not "youth." Before I used the term "IDF" without noticing. After the course, I noticed that in Russian, I have the privilege of saying the Israeli army and not the Israel Defense Forces and that's what I do. I feel more inner legitimacy in doing less interviewing of the extreme right wing. These days, I have a lot more curiosity about uncovering their [Palestinian] narrative. Before, the Arab voice sounded more homogeneous and now I can see the diversity of opinions.*

**- A radio journalist on Voice of Israel in Russian**

**Other examples.**

A veteran radio host and editor at a popular, prime time Israeli radio station. He devoted one entire program to describing the SFP/Hewar workshop and interviewed Israeli and Palestinian participants for material; the program lasted nearly a full hour.

Two journalists, a Jew and an Arab, that work at an Israeli television station presented their TV station with a proposal for a new program that would focus on Jewish-Arab relations in this country – relations now in crisis. They want to expose the viewer to the main issues.

# # #

## **GROUP THREE: HEALTHCARE PROFESSIONALS**

Participants in this group were healthcare professionals. In the end, 17 participants from Israel (12 Jewish and 5 Palestinian citizens of Israel) and 18 Palestinians from the West Bank attended the course. Among these 35 participants, 16 were Israeli and Palestinian doctors and 20 were nurses. The group included 19 men and 16 women. The majority of the Israelis were women, and the majority of Palestinians were men.

### **Context Surrounding the Course: War and occupation in the background**

The program was divided into three parts. The first part of the program took place in Aqaba, Jordan in March of 2006; the second part took place in May of 2006. While the surrounding context was one of tension and difficulty because of the continued occupation and sporadic violence, unlike other groups, these binational sessions were not held with the backdrop of a war, like it was for the groups meeting in the summer months. The third part of the program, however, did take place in September, presenting challenges for the group as both sides struggled to cope and rebuild (physically and emotionally) after such intense violence.

### **Section 1: Dialogue, terminology, and reality**

After the participants had spent some time getting acquainted, the people from Hewar and the School for Peace made presentations about their work. Later each national group prepared a presentation as well, on the medical profession in its society. The gap in resources, access to professional training, working conditions, and facilities between the two health systems, and the difficulty of working under occupation, were vividly obvious.

The dialogue in the groups was very honest and powerful. The Palestinians showed the other side the suffering under occupation. They presented appalling medical cases, including what happens when the checkpoints prevent them from doing their work properly; the shortage of medicines; the fact that salaries are not being paid. The Israelis mentioned suicide bombings. The Palestinians tried to convey to the Israelis the reality in which they live and work, stressing hardships encountered by medical professionals. They told a great many stories about sick people denied medical care because of checkpoints; patients who died as a result of this; and doctors wounded, even killed, while attempting to provide medical care to patients.

In uninational meetings, the Israelis talked about how hard it was to hear about such awful cases and take in what was being said. They talked about shame and impotence; about the assault on their group's image, which was considerable; about how hard it is to be blamed all the time. The Israelis found it very hard indeed to listen to these stories and they frequently responded by bringing up the issue of the suicide bombings. The Israelis wanted very much for the Palestinians to listen to them, too and to understand their side, their distress, and their insecurities. As the workshop progressed, the Israelis increasingly realized that the situation is not symmetrical and there is no similarity between their sense of insecurity and their situation, and the situation of the Palestinians.

Some in the Israeli group spoke of their desire that the state keep its present definition as a Jewish state, a desire fueled by their fear of losing their Jewish identity. At this time, the Palestinian citizens of Israel raised their voice, bringing their dilemmas into the group. Some spoke of their multiple identities as Palestinians and Israelis, and their attempts to integrate their professional identity into their other identities.

Leaving the workshop and heading home is very difficult for the Palestinian group especially. While the Israeli participants feel that they've undergone inner changes, the Palestinians feel that in another few hours, despite the egalitarian dialogue just experienced in the workshop, they will be back in the humiliating reality of checkpoints and occupation, beginning with the Allenby crossing from Jordan into Israel and on to the first of many checkpoints. The contrast, the gap between what can be attained in the workshop and the ever-deteriorating reality waiting at home, is terribly frustrating and painful for the Palestinian group.

## **Section 2: Nationality and Professionalism**

The goal for this segment was to address the dilemmas of dual loyalty to nationality and to one's profession in medicine. Discussions and lectures focused on:

- Identity and the conflict
- Human rights issues
- Sharing each other's professional experiences in the context of identity dilemmas
- Theoretical knowledge pertinent to cooperation between Israelis and Palestinians in medicine

After the members of the group had shared what had been happening to them since the previous workshop, Dr. Abdallah Hewari, a surgeon from Al Mokassad Hospital and a lecturer at Al Quds University School of Medicine presented an overview of the Palestinian Health System. Additionally, a panel of four participants share their experiences. The panelists were Dr. Ali Husseini, Dr. Nazih Asali, Dr. Ophir Bar On, and Dr. Eiman Aniyye. Their comments will be useful in planning future cooperative programs.

### **Dual loyalty dilemmas**

The next morning, Dr. Abdallah Hewari gave another talk, this one about the complicated dilemmas and situations that the Palestinian doctor encounters in the context of the occupation. After that, there was a workshop led by Ms. Hadas Ziv, Director of Physicians for Human Rights-Israel, and Dr. Ze'ev Weiner of that group. The workshop opened with Dr. Weiner's talk on dual loyalty in the medical professions and the relationship between dual loyalty, bio-ethics and human rights. Thereafter, the group discussed cases presented by the lecturers and by the participants.

### **Joint actions plans**

Participants were broken into small groups where they discussed the various ways they could impact their profession. These ideas included:

- Raising public awareness in Israel about the situation facing medical professionals in the Occupied Territories and recruiting human and financial resources.
- Building a team of experts from the two sides that can lead training and evaluation projects, such as: (1) a training session for public health professionals in the Qalqiliya area so that they in turn can provide training to others locally; the training will include treatment of smoking; exercise and walking; correct nutrition; stress management, etc.; and (2) empowering women in the Qalqiliya area.
- Organizing medical cooperation. Specific goals included: (1) treatment days in the West Bank; and (2) mobile clinics.

### **Section 3: Participant Impact & Initiatives**

In their own words, participants talk candidly about how the course impacted them and the changes they have initiated in their workplaces and communities:

*Since the day I was born, I never thought of one reason that I could use to justify loving Jews. I never thought I had a reason to love anyone from this people. Sometimes I thought that I really didn't care what happened to them. And these inner things, these feelings, that I am talking about, they are contrary to the education I received from my parents, to love others. Inwardly, I am happy and it does me good that this stone I had inside me about the Jews has started to melt away. That doesn't mean that I have no anger about what the Jews are doing to us as a people, but everywhere in the world there are people whom it is possible to love.*

**-A Palestinian participant**

*(Regarding the impact of the workshop on her) And then when I sat with my close friends, I felt that I could talk about the Palestinians, explain why suicide bombings happen, what brings people to that. Not that I justify it, and I am horrified, but immediately after a bombing, I could sit down with friends and present the Palestinian side.*

**- A Jewish (female) participant**

*From my standpoint, [it was] the strongest meeting at which I encountered people who said a lot of things that usually aren't said; it was a very powerful experience that influenced my way of seeing their situation and the way they are conducting their struggle. That influenced my views toward how I relate to their struggle; I began identifying more. I understood that Israeli terrorism and Palestinian terrorism both are something that has to change, on both sides. Before, I only related to their terrorism.*

**- A Jewish (female) participant**

*I am a person who understand politic well beside my own work as a doctor... I would like here to mention a very important issue that the workshop succeeded in...It gave us the time for the follow-up for our group. We are still in contact with*

*them, organizing voluntary medical open days and contacting other people under the title of working together as Palestinians and Israelis. Once there was someone saying to me: the things you are doing were more complicated and impossible for leaders to do... It is impossible for wars to create understanding or to bring people to be more together. I am here asking you to keep on the same way by bridging gaps between people.*

**-A Palestinian participant**

Hewar summarized the feedback of their Palestinian participants in this way:

*Before we came here to meet the Israelis we felt that we will never reach anywhere with them and will not agree on any point... We felt hopeless. So at the beginning it was about our curiosity, but after we met them we discovered that to sit with the other side helps to feel less scared. We started building good relations based on human issues between the participants. During that we find that we could also work together equally, at least on the professional level. We have done some activities together, and our successes are by being satisfied. We believe that we can develop good personal and professional relations which can help us to spread our ideas to more people in our communities and to help them understand ways to help to solve the conflict, especially when the Israelis understand, through such meetings, our needs and legal rights and that the occupation cause harm and suffering to the Palestinian people.*

### **Other examples**

#### First medical services day in Jayyous, June 16, 2006.

On June 16, 2006, the group ran a medical services day in Jayyous. This activity grew out of the previous workshops. Five doctors from the Palestinian group and seven medical professionals from the Israeli group, including Jews and Arabs, participated. In addition, the group from Israel brought two additional professionals who had not been in the course with them – for a total of 14 people in total. The Neve Shalom / Wahat al-Salam Humanitarian Aid Project was a partner in the program for the day, and funded the medicines purchased at local pharmacies. The medical services day was held at a school building in Jayyous. Children's desks became examining tables. About 6 patients came with cardiac problems, diabetes and high blood pressure. Some were referred for follow-up to the cardiology center in Ramallah or to the hospital in Tulkarm. There was one neurological case, 39 orthopedic cases, and 11 ophthalmology cases. There were also cases of infants with weight problems, eating problems and skin problems; there was a total of 66 patients. A follow-up notebook was created and various doctors took responsibility for monitoring the cases requiring further, more complex treatment at specialty clinics or hospitals. The patients came from the Jayyous area, Qalqilya and other surrounding villages. It was especially important to the participants that they set up follow-up appointments with patients that needed ongoing care.

#### Organizing lectures.

On Saturday, May 29, 2006, a Jewish woman doctor gave a lecture on research in which she participated while working on her doctoral degree at the Weizmann Institute,

concerning development of a medicine for glaucoma. The lecture was given at the Al Zahrawy Center in Kufr Qar'e. Eight members of our Israeli group came to hear it, as did other doctors from the Triangle region. The lecture was instructive and new professional ties were formed. One participant from the group, a Palestinian doctor from Israel, organized this event. A Jewish doctor also gave a lecture entitled "Gourmet cooking as a medical intervention tool." This lecture was given as part of an in-service training program on nutrition in the Arab community, and was delivered at a research and development center in the Triangle region. A few hundred Arab women participated, all of who are patients of a dietician in the Triangle. The same Palestinian physician from Israel organized this lecture, too.

#### Changes at participants' places of work

A dietician expressed his efforts to promote Jewish-Arab interactions. There is a Palestinian doctor, a citizen of Israel that is working to develop printed information in Arabic about proper nutrition.

A Jewish participant is promoting an Arabic language for employees at her workplace, since her hospital (in Israel) treats both Jewish and Arab patients.

A Jewish doctor, a man, reported that in his work at the hospital, he now had a lot more empathy for the needs of Arab patients and for consulting with Arab colleagues: *A few days earlier [he said], when I was doing a rotation in a pediatric ward, an Arab doctor called from Augusta Victoria Hospital (in East Jerusalem) and wanted to consult about dialysis for children. I called some more experts and we talked a long time on the phone. I wanted to do the maximum I could and not just refer him on to someone else.*

A Palestinian cardiologist from Israel, Dr. Nazih Asali, has been very active for many years in a lot of volunteer work, caring for Palestinian patients both in Palestine and in the hospital where he works, and via referrals of Palestinian patients to other hospitals abroad, and in innumerable other voluntary efforts. Dr. Asali said that the course pushed him to organize the first professional conference for pediatric cardiologists in which 30 cardiologists from each side would participate. The conference was scheduled for December 14-15 at the French Hospital in Nazareth. See Appendix A for a complete schedule of events. The conference exceeded expectations. There were about 60 participants from each side. There were also pediatric cardiologists from Gaza. The professional panels that were on a very high professional level included presenters from Israel, Palestine and Europe. A network for phone consultants was created.

###

## **PART FOUR: PSYCHOLOGISTS AND SOCIAL WORKERS**

Participants were psychologists and social workers. In total, 18 Israeli citizens (4 Palestinian citizens and 14 Jewish citizens of Israel) and 17 Palestinians from the West Bank participated in the course.

### **Context Surrounding the Course: War and occupation in the background**

The program had three parts to it. The first part of the program took place in Aqaba, Jordan in February of 2006; the second part took place in April of 2006. While the surrounding context was one of tension and difficulty because of the continued occupation and sporadic violence, unlike other groups, these binational sessions were not held with the backdrop of a war, like it was for the groups meeting in the summer months. The third part of the program, however, did take place in June-December 2006, presenting challenges for the group as both sides struggled to cope and rebuild (physically and emotionally) after such intense violence.

### **Section 1: Dialogue, terminology, and reality**

At the beginning of the meeting the Palestinian and Israeli participants conducted dialogue in small mixed groups. The dialogue in each group underwent a similar and familiar process. Palestinian participants wanted to make their voices heard and to deliver a message to the Israelis about the oppression that they endure under occupation. Some of the Palestinian participants wanted to improve the image that the Israelis had of them and to become familiar with aspects of the Israelis that they do not have a chance to see under other circumstances. The Palestinians expect the encounter to lead to significant activity that can help end the occupation. The Jewish Israelis spoke of their desire to hear the Palestinians and to gain an understanding of the situation. They wanted to know about life under occupation and to conduct joint activities that could impact that reality and that would help them deal with their feelings of guilt and despair. They also expressed interest in meeting their peers on a professional level. The Jewish participants spoke about wanting to get closer to Arab culture, but they did not want the meeting to hide the difficulties and make life easy for them. They sought recognition from the Palestinians for being on the good side and did not want to be identified with the occupation. They also wanted the Palestinians to acknowledge the threat that the Israelis feel from terrorism.

The first signs of tension appeared after the Jewish and Palestinian participants establish an initial acquaintance with each other. The ability to trust each other was questioned in different ways. The Palestinians did not allow the Jewish participants to separate themselves from the occupiers. The Jews were told that they strengthen and support Israel as an occupying power regardless of their declared opinions, and that it is the Palestinians who are the victims of the situation. The Israeli Jews responded by asking why the Palestinians elected Hamas, pointing out their responsibility for terrorist attacks. The Palestinians replied by putting these attacks in perspective, saying that the Israelis are occasionally struck at places of entertainment, while they, the Palestinians have forgotten what entertainment is. The Palestinians went on to speak of the on-going collective punishment that they suffer and their fear of drawing open the curtains in their

living rooms. One participant spoke of a tank that intentionally squashed his car and another spoke of his pupils who were murdered. A Jewish participant asked the Palestinians if they are happy when a shahid is sent to Israel. The Palestinian response continued to lay out the details of the humiliation they suffer at the military checkpoints, their inability to conduct a normal working day, and the indiscriminate arrests of relatives while the soldiers go unpunished for their killing. The pattern of mutual accusations at this stage of the encounter is common to all binational encounters as each side tries to lay all of the responsibility for the conflict on the other.

Tensions reached their climax as the participants define terror, arguing over differences between terror that comes from a struggle for liberation as opposed to terror from an occupying army. One Jewish participant expressed mixed emotions that arose from the discussion saying that she did not want to use the security consideration to justify everything Israelis do, nor does she want to bow down and apologize to the Palestinian people. She said that the Israeli struggle is just as legitimate as the Palestinian one, and while she does not justify or take responsibility for soldiers' abuses at the military checkpoints, she is relieved every time she hears about their success in catching a shahid. Another Jewish participant claimed that the situation at the military checkpoints is symmetrical despite attempts to present it otherwise. The Palestinians responded assertively to this claim stating that there is no room to compare the force of the soldiers at the checkpoints to the fate of the simple people who are at their mercy with no control over the situation and no ability to express an opinion about it. They expressed their feelings that there is no place for Israeli soldiers in Jenin and Nablus. A Jewish participant stated that the soldiers did not choose to go there. The Palestinians continue to list examples of the routine suffering caused by the military presence: one participant's mother who almost died on her way to the hospital because she was held back at the checkpoint, a twelve-year old girl who was shot and killed by the soldiers, the inability to acquire higher education because students cannot count on being able to get to their university. The Palestinians described attacks on Jews as the weapon of the weak. There are Palestinians who are prepared to give up their lives for the struggle because they have nothing left. One Palestinian spoke of her work as a social worker in a situation in which the villages have been cut off from each other by Jewish settlements that continue to expropriate Palestinian land. Eighty percent of the Palestinians in her region live below the poverty line.

A particularly dramatic moment was reached when a Jewish participant asked an Israeli Palestinian why she joined the Palestinian group when the participants were divided for uninational discussion. She answered by describing her feelings as a Palestinian in Israel, and the discrimination and racism that she experiences. The other Palestinians said that they will not abandon their Palestinian brothers and sisters in Israel and they spoke of the day when Acre and Jaffa will return to a united Palestine. This shocked the Israeli Jewish group into silence. Finally, a Jewish participant said that if Nazareth is Palestine then there is nothing to talk about. While she was prepared to return to the pre-'67 borders, she felt that if the Palestinians wanted everything, then there is no reason to continue the discussion. The Palestinians responded by making a distinction between principles, dreams and reality. They spoke of the importance of the right of return to all of the land that was taken from them, including land within Israel. Many expressed the desire for a single state solution. When the Jews asked about their place in the picture, the

Palestinians explained that they can recognize the difference between their dream and the reality. Having made the distinction between dreams and expectations, a Jewish participant said that she was now capable of listening to the Palestinians' aspirations without fear. At this point the discussion entered a new stage. It became a more relaxed environment with participants engaging in genuine attempts to communicate with each other.

A Jewish participant asked the Palestinian group if, in their eyes, she has a right to live in her home after returning occupied land to the Palestinians. The Palestinians answered that if they were in control, the Jews would not suffer discrimination; their rights would be respected. One Palestinian said that he did not just come to Aqaba to meet Jews. "Speaking in my own name I chose to come out of recognition of each side's existence. The Jews do not know how much Palestinian society suffers from them." He went on to say that up until that point he had chosen not to share with the group the details of the pain that he suffered at the hands of the Jews because he did not want to feel weak. "As the threshold of pain rises we feel it less. But it is important to state here that there is a victim and a perpetrator." He said that he came because he is sitting down to speak with people, and that he does not want to deny the reality and humanity in the other.

The Palestinians said that the Jews, the side with the power, constantly call upon the Palestinians to recognize the Jews' moral right to a Jewish state, while the Palestinians are in the midst of a daily struggle to maintain their physical existence. Such analyses seemed to advance the group towards change, as a Jewish participant responded expressing her shame for Israel's treatment of the Palestinians. She said that she initially thought that it was naïve on her part to expect the Palestinians to recognize them under any conditions. The Palestinians told her that the Jews are a part of their reality that they cannot deny.

The participants in this encounter tried to preserve their respective groups while broaching the most difficult and sensitive issues of the conflict. The Jews sought recognition of their national existence. When that recognition does not come in the particular way that they want to hear it, they work hard to understand this. On several occasions it was the Palestinians within the Israeli group who helped the other participants to understand that each group was in fact receiving the kind of recognition that they sought. The Palestinians sought recognition for the asymmetry of the political situation, injustice and for their suffering. Once there were sufficient indications of acknowledgment, it was possible to satisfy the mutual demands of the participants and move the dialogue a step further. However, throughout the process the Palestinian group continued to present a serious challenge for the Jewish Israeli group.

In the next stage of the encounter each side presented professional questions that preoccupy them in their work as psychologists and social workers in Israel or Palestine. These presentations were made in the plenary forum. The differences were enormous in every respect. Resources and training available to Palestinian and Israeli mental health services were incomparable. The Palestinians from Palestine presented a relatively new system, under-staffed, and overwhelmed by problems that stem from the Palestinians' day to day struggle for existence. The Palestinians from Israel discussed issues that they face in their work in East Jerusalem: the Palestinians' difficulty of reaching the clinics,

problems of racism, their difficulty in receiving services in Arabic, and even cases in which they were forbidden to speak to their patients in Arabic. The Jewish participants presented a mental health system with long-term training courses and a variety of branches specializing in different problems. They spoke about the legal standing of the profession and patients rights. They spoke about work with holocaust survivors, victims of terror, soldiers suffering from shell-shock and other conflict-related issues. The Israelis asked the Palestinians about their training frameworks. The gap was a particularly painful subject leading two Palestinians to leave the room.

At the end of the meeting the Palestinians said that they had a need to speak, as if it was an opportunity to face a soldier and get what they had to say off of their chests. It was an opportunity to dream and speak out loud, even if they knew that the dream would disappear in the morning. They wanted to know what change the other side underwent and what could be done in reality.

The Jewish participants said that the encounter diminished their suspicions and that they discovered people who they would want to have as partners in peace. Several participants mentioned their concern about returning to the reality outside and about their concern for the Palestinians' well being. They spoke about the difficulty of processing the experience. One participant expressed how moved she was by hearing the others' personal experiences first-hand and that she was now thinking about how she can pass her experience on to others.

The Palestinian group ended the encounter feeling strengthened in several ways. The opportunity to articulate their moral claims in front of the Jewish group and the realization that the Jewish group seeks their recognition were very empowering experiences. The fact that the location of the encounter was in an Arab country, and that the Palestinians (including the four from Israel) outnumbered the Jews may have contributed to their empowerment. It created conditions that were the reverse of those to which the Jews and Palestinians typically experience. It appeared to be a difficult experience for the Jews to be outnumbered and to have the moral values of their group identity questioned. The groups underwent an intensive and painful process that brought them from mutual accusations to mutual trust – a trust that was built on a better understanding of each other's needs.

## **Section 2: Nationality and Professionalism**

The second meeting opened with participants discussing what they underwent over the two months since they had parted. The Jewish participants said that their new awareness of the situation of the Palestinians made them more attentive to events in the Territories and concerned about the well-being of their new friends. They also spoke of confronting other Jews with issues that they learned about the occupation. Several said that their new awareness had made them feel more isolated from their peers and from their surrounding environment, but they felt that they would be betraying the Palestinians if they did not do everything they could to pass on the messages that they heard in the first encounter. They also felt a responsibility to do more than talk, saying that they must find more effective ways to raise awareness of the situation.

The Palestinians expressed despair with the deteriorating situation. Since the victory of the Hamas they had felt that the whole world was against them. They explained that there were no salaries and that there was increasing hunger and a lack of hope. They spoke about the destruction caused by Israeli bulldozers and the humiliating Israeli invasion of the Jericho prison. Palestinians from Israel also spoke of their feelings of helplessness. During the morning of the second day the participants analyzed the processes that they had undergone since the beginning of the course. They prepared analyses on both the group and individual levels and presented them in the plenary forum.

During the course of the second workshop, participants took turns facilitating six 45-minute units of the discussion. They received feedback from their peers and from the SFP and Hewart facilitators. The issues addressed in these units were issues that arose out of the process that the group had already been undergoing. The participants addressed their expectations for common action, their fears that violence would jeopardize their cooperation and spoke about issues of mutual trust. The Palestinians spoke about peace activists who were wounded by soldiers while demonstrating against the wall, and they asked to what extent the Israelis are really prepared to take risks involved in political activity against the occupation. They expressed doubts about the ability of such activity to end the circle of violence. The Israelis confirmed that the fear to go out and demonstrate against the wall has become a factor in keeping them away.

These peer-facilitating sessions were followed by a panel in which four participants presented dilemmas connected to the Palestinian – Israeli conflict that appear in their professional work. The panel consisted of two Palestinians from the Palestinian Authority, one Israeli Jew and one Israeli Palestinian. The panel discussion was interesting in that each participant was very critical about the issues that they presented. One Palestinian spoke about dealing with murder within Palestinian society over questions of family honor. Another Palestinian connected the rising level of violence within Palestinian society and family to the rising level of Israeli military violence against Palestinians under occupation. The Israeli Jewish and Israeli Palestinian panelists spoke about obstacles that majority – minority group relations present in their treatment of individuals.

This component also includes two lectures. The director of Hewart, Abd al-Karim Shamsaneh, spoke about the historical and religious roots of the conflict. Nava Sonnenschein and Muhammed Joudeh gave the second lecture on facilitation in the uninational forum.

On the last day of the workshop the participants tried to identify areas and ways in which they might cooperate. The participants divided into three groups: Palestinians from the Palestinian Authority, Palestinians from Israel and Jewish Israelis. Each group chose a chairperson and brainstormed that interested them and expectations that they have from the other groups. The Palestinians from the PA repeated their doubts about whether the Israelis were really prepared to do what it takes to end the occupation. They commented that if the Israelis were prepared to take a stand like Rachel Corrie then they could talk

about cooperation.<sup>3</sup> The Palestinians were disappointed by the Israeli Left in general which they felt was not doing enough to change the situation, and they were skeptical about the chances of cooperation. A number of them rejected every suggestion made by the Jewish participants. The Jews, on their part, said that they are prepared to do many things, but not to risk their lives. The negotiations were exhausting. The chairpersons finally pushed the participants to reach agreement on a number of projects:

- In-service training courses for Palestinian mental health workers on the treatment of trauma. (See Appendix B)
- Aid in opening an access road to Kufar Qadum that had been blocked by Israeli settlers and Olive Harvests at Kufr Qadum. (See Appendix C and D)
- Study days for Palestinians and Israelis in the mental health services in which the effects of the occupation on Palestinians' physical and mental health would be examined. These activities would take place at military checkpoints. The organizers would seek press coverage and other means to raise Israeli public awareness of the problem. (See Appendix E)
- The creation of a website in Arabic and Hebrew for Palestinian and Israeli mental health workers.
- The organization of further dialogue groups.
- Aid in acquiring permits for Palestinians to enter Israel.

The group from Israel met four times after the second workshop in Aqaba. The participants received lectures on post-colonialist theory and theories of identity and of conflict. One of the meetings took place during the war in Lebanon. In these meetings the participants discussed the content of the lectures, the influence of events going on around them, and their progress in the activities that they took upon themselves in the framework of the course. Those meetings were 6 hours each, once in every two months. In between every month there was an activity -- some separately and some jointly with the Palestinians participants.

### **Section 3: Participant Impact & Initiatives**

In their own words, participants talk candidly about how the course impacted them and the changes they have initiated in their workplaces and communities:

Many participants said that they have acquired a leadership role with respect to Arab-Jewish, Israeli-Palestinian issues at their places of employment. They raise challenging questions in an attempt to combat inequality or racism. They organize special training for co-workers. In short, they are functioning as agents of change.

*In professional clinical training for psychologists, the question of national identity is absent. This was an opportunity to introduce the matter of national identity at my workplace and to give it more space. I am the director of a clinic for educational psychological services in my city. I have begun making change at the clinic and in the entire psychological services organization. The group was a model for a direction that it was*

---

<sup>3</sup> Corrie gave her life demonstrating against the occupation by standing in front of an Israeli bulldozer which proceeded to run her over.

*important to change, with all the limitations that need to be addressed. I raise the subject at management meetings of the service in the city where I work. There are 7 clinics and about 150 psychologists, and I'm starting to get things moving. For instance, by putting on the agenda for management meetings the idea of a course about this. It's not easy; I am the only Arab in management, and I have to deal with people's opposition.*

*It is hard for people to put this subject on the table and they try to use euphemisms, calling it cross-cultural treatment, but I insist that we call it the Jewish-Arab question. For example, in the advisers' forum, when a Jew is advising an Arab, this question comes up and we deal with it. All of this relates very closely to what we learned here about identity. For instance, when the Arab trainee is not particularly aware of his national identity, when he is still at an early stage of developing it, he will uncritically internalize whatever the Jewish adviser tells him. Or when the adviser himself has only begun to develop his identity as a member of the majority, he will try to impose a certain Western worldview on the Arab trainee. This process is very limiting. Making people more aware of their national identity and providing training could enrich the work of the psychologist.*

**- Palestinian (male) citizen from Israel**

*I teach at a college in northern Israel where both Jews and Arabs study. I took away something very special from the theoretical perspective of the School for Peace, which I have brought to places where I work and where there are both Arabs and Jews. This is a new paradigm we have learned here, to address the inter-group dimension, the social dimension, and the connection to reality; because in the community of psychology generally the approach is different, focusing on individual suffering and ignoring the social dimension of identities in the conflict. Among the students I taught at the college was one young Arab woman; she came to me at the end of the course and said, "I want to thank you for letting me be Arab."*

**- Jewish participant**

*This course was a kind of refueling on the personal, professional, and social level in terms of identity. I left feeling stronger, more able to believe in what I do on a daily basis about Jewish-Palestinian relations here. If I am able to open a window to change someone's opinion, that is significant to me. During the [Lebanon] war, all the activities I am involved in between Jews and Arabs were put on hold. No one wanted to go back to talking. It was trauma that one has to get over, and it took a long time, but it didn't affect my energies. I started planning to work with local leaders who have influence, and I chose the City of Tiberias and the Reina local council. I'm also a member of the management of Galil L'yad, a young leadership group in the Galilee, from the whole social spectrum. Another example is that, after I participated in a conference of the Israeli Association for Group Facilitation and Group Intervention last summer, I saw that we are only four Arab facilitators among 150 Jewish facilitators. I got into the association among other reasons in order to expand the*

*number of Arab facilitators there. This course gave me the impetus for all of that.*

**- Palestinian (female) citizen of Israel**

*Together with a Jewish woman from the group, we are participating in an ongoing Jewish-Arab group in the north [of Israel]. [This was a] group of professionals. After the war, we undertook to provide the group facilitating and, thanks to the [SFP/Hewar] course, we were able to lead the group. The program for the future is to launch more dialogue groups of Jews and Arabs in the north. During the war, when we met and talked candidly about the war, it helped me to facilitate encounters with social workers from an organization called "Osim Shalom" [Making Peace]; it helped me to deal with this difficult situation.*

**- Palestinian (male) citizen from Israel**

## **Examples**

A Jewish woman participant is working on a project to place Arab professionals in high tech companies in Israel. She has a lot of professional placement experience and is using it to promote the integration of Palestinian citizens of Israel in these enterprises.

Jewish and Arab participants from the group recruited additional participants for the course the SFP was running for mental health professionals.

Members of the group visited the village of Qadum to aid the villagers with problems arising from settler abuse and from the Israeli army's acting at the behest of settlers – closing the road from Qadum to Nablus and the refusal to connect the village to the electricity supply. Subsequently, Member of Knesset Haim Oron sent three letters to the Defense Minister; in response to the third letter, there was a meeting with the village council and they were promised if they build another room they will be connected to the electricity grid in Israel. The deputy mayor of the village, Mr. Saker Abu Musaad, formed the impression that this time it was going to happen. In the meeting there were representatives of the Ministry of Defense (the Civil Administration) and the Israel Electric Corp. The group, and MK Oron, are going to follow up on this. Members of the group also came to help villagers with their olive harvest on land adjacent to the Kedumim settlement. For more detail, see attachments.

A Jewish (man) participant is organizing, in cooperation with the Mahsom Watch (Checkpoint Watch) organization, tours for mental health professionals in occupied areas. A tour includes a visit to a Palestinian mental health clinic, listening to a lecture from a Palestinian professional about therapy under occupation and the associated challenges for the treatment professionals. Next comes a visit to an actual checkpoint and observation of what goes on there. The first tour took place in November 2006, a second tour took place in February 2007. Additional tours are planned.

See Appendix B for an article from the newspapers about the first such tour, by one of the course participants. This article was published in Haaretz news paper and in Al Quds, a Palestinian newspaper and in Ynet web news of Yediot Aharonot daily news paper.

Another group with people from this course, from Israel and Palestine, is working on setting up in-service training seminars alongside checkpoints and the Separation Barrier. Thus far, Palestinian and Israeli members of the group have met twice at Al-Ram checkpoint to plan this project. Now the group is working on a proposal to raise money for the project and is planning the first in-service training, scheduled for January.

A theme that came up repeatedly during the concluding session of this course for psychologists and social workers is that the Israeli-Palestinian question had become central to their lives. The issue had become part of the professional working lives, or a central part of their activities outside the workplace, or sometimes both.

An addition theme was the support that our participants received from their colleagues at sessions of the SFP course, which helped them cope with the political isolation they experienced on the outside.

###

## APPENDIX A

Program of the Pediatric Cardiology Conference, Dec. 14-15, 2006 – Nazareth.



Saving Children – Medicine in the Service of  
Pediatric Cardiology Conference  
St. Vincent De Paul French Hospital,  
Nazareth, 14-15 December 2006

Peace

المستشفى الفرنسي  
ببيت لحم

### PROGRAM

#### Thursday December 14, 2006

08:00-09:00 Registration and room allocation

#### 09:00-09:30 Welcome and greetings

Dr. Salim Nakhle, Director, St. Vincent De Paul French Hospital  
Prof. Anwar Dudin, Dean, Al-Quds University Medical School  
Mr. Massimo Toschi, Minister for International Cooperation Toscana, Italy  
Dr. Franco Riboldi, Director General, Bologna Health Authority, Italy  
Dr. Ron Pundak, Director General, The Peres Center for Peace  
Dr. Matityahu Avraham, Chairman, Israeli pediatric cardiology board

09:30-11:30 **First Session - Prenatal diagnosis**  
**Chairmen: Prof. Anwar Dudin . Dr Michael Berant**

09:30-10:00 Prenatal detection of Congenital Heart disease improves post natal survival  
**Prof. Laurent Fermont, Paris Institute of Perinatology**

- 10:00-10:30** Peri operative cardiac imaging – state of the art  
**Dr Enat Birk – Schneider Medical Center**
- 10:30-11:00** Fetal Hypoplastic Left Heart – predictors for post natal severity  
**Dr. Nazih Asleh, Saint Vincent French Hospital**
- 11:00-11:30** Kinetocardiogram Diagnosis of First Degree Atrioventricular Block in  
 Fetuses exposed to Maternal Autoantibodies. Successful Treatment with  
 Dexamethasone - **Dr. Sagui Gavri, Hadassah Medical Center**
- 11:30-11:45** **Coffee Break**
- 11:45-13:45** **Second Session – Heart failure**  
**Chairmen: Dr. Mahmoud Nashashibi Dr Shukry Attallah**
- 11:45-12:45** Biochemical markers in the diagnosis and treatment of infants with heart  
 failure & update on the treatment of congestive heart failure in children  
**Dr. Amiram Nir, Sha'arei Zedek Hospital**
- 12:45-13:15** Arrhythmia in children – Update.  
**Dr. Rami Fogelman Schneider Medical Center**
- 13:15-13:45** Indication of M.R.I. in the diagnosis of congenital heart disease.  
**Dr. Eli Konen – Sheba Medical Center, Tel Aviv**
- 13:45-15:00** **Lunch**
- 15:00- 16:30** **Third Session – Cardiology services in developing countries**  
**Chairmen: Dr. Amin Thalji – Prof. Leonardo Bleiden**
- 15:00-15:30** Congenital cardiac abnormalities in Palestine – the state of affairs  
**Dr. Mahmoud Nashashibi, Makassed Hospital**
- 15:30-16:00** The training program for Cardiac Center in developing countries  
**Prof. Daniel Sidi, Necker Hospital of Sick Children, Paris**
- 16:00-16:30** Pediatric cardiology in developing countries  
**Akiva Tamir , Wolfsohn Hospital**
- 16:30-16:45** **Coffee Break**
- 16:45-18:15** **Fourth Session – Pediatric cardiac surgery**  
**Chairmen: Dr. Eli Milgalter – Dr Geries Jamallieh**
- 16:45-17:15** The Ross Operation  
**Prof. Bernardo Vidne, Rabin Medical Center**
- 17:15–17:45** Tetralogy of Fallot – a case report - clinical and surgical management  
**Dr. Basheer Abu Jarrad Affaneh, Al-Nasser Children Hospital, Gaza**  
**& Dr. David Mishali, Sheba Medical Center, Tel Hashomer**

**17:45-18:15** Single Ventricle with Azygous vein to S.V.C. persistent chylo-thorax post Glenn-Case report by **Dr. Bisher Marzouka, Hadassah Medical Center.**

**18:15-18:30** Coffee Break

**18:30-19:30** Special Palestinian-Israeli session on "Saving Children" priorities  
Chairmen: **Prof. Anwar Dudin . Dr. Dan Shanit**

**20:00-22:30** Cocktail, festive dinner and folkloric event

**Friday December 15, 2006**

**09:00-11:00** Fifth Session: Interventional & General Cardiology  
Chairmen: **Dr. Sami Abu Dalfa - Dr. Avraham Matityaho**

**09:00-09:30** PDA device closure, the Palestinian experience  
**Dr. Shakaliya Fayez, Al-Dora Children Hospital, Gaza**

**09:30-10:00** Trans-catheter ASD closure  
**Dr. Avraham Lorber, Meyer Children Hospital, Haifa.**

**10:00-10:30** Clinical evaluation of the cardiovascular system: Is it still relevant?  
**Dr. Dani Fink – Emek Medical Center, Afula**

**11:00-13:00** Guided tour of the old city of Nazareth

**13:15-14:30** Lunch at the hotel.

**14:30-15:00** Closing session

## APPENDIX B

### TRAINING SEMINAR INVITATION

פסיכואקטיב-אנשי בריאות הנפש למען זכויות אדם  
בשיתוף אוניברסיטת אל-קודס וביה"ס לשלום בנווה שלום/וואחאת אל סלאם



سايكو اکتيف  
פסיכואקטיב  
Psychoactive



### MENTAL HEALTH PROFESSIONALS FOR HUMAN RIGHTS with Al Quds University & Neve Shalom / Wahat al-Salam

is pleased to invite you to a training seminar on

#### **Psychological Barriers to Peace: Dismantling the “checkpoints” between us and within us**

to be held on Thursday, January 4, 2007 from 9:00 AM to 4:30 PM  
at the **School for Peace at Neve Shalom / Wahat al-Salam**

This is the first in a series of training seminars on *Psychological Barriers to Peace*. During these seminars, we will examine the mental health implications of the occupation and the conflict, on Palestinian society and Israeli society. At the first program, we will investigate how inner and external barriers are created and look at ways to remove them.

All lectures will be given in English. Facilitators will be Ahmad Amarna and Nissim Avisar.

<i>From</i>	<i>To</i>	<i>Activity</i>	<i>Lecturers / Topics</i>
9:00	9:30	Registration	
9:30	10:00	Welcome	Representative from Psychoactive Representative from Al Quds University Representative from the School for Peace
10:00	11:30	Lecture	Prof. Jessica Benjamin, Senior Psychoanalyst and adviser, IARPP, on “Mutual Injury and Mutual Acknowledgment.” Responding: Dr. Yousef Nashef and Maya Moucamel
11:30	12:00	Coffee break	
12:00	13:00	Lecture	Dr. Eyad Khelak, Director, Trauma Studies Center, Al Quds University, on “The Effect

			of the military Checkpoints on the Psychosocial Aspects of the Palestinians.”
13:00	13:30	Lecture	Dr. Sayeed Zaydani, Al Quds University: “The Palestinian Perspective on the Checkpoints.”
13:30	14:30	Lunch	
14:30	15:30	Lecture	Prof. Dan Baron, Department of Behavioral Sciences, Ben-Gurion University of the Negev, “From Jews and Germans, Israelis and Palestinians to the ‘Tense Trinagle; between Germans, Israeli Jews and Palestinians”
15:30	16:30	Concluding panel discussion	Prof. Jessica Benjamin, Dr. Eyad Khelak, Dr. Sayeed Zaydani, Prof. Dan Baron, Ahmad Amarna, Nissim Avisar

Cost of the seminar (including lunch): NIS 100.

Places are limited. Registrations will be accepted through December 30, 2006, by email to [psychobarriers@walla.com](mailto:psychobarriers@walla.com) . For further information: Tirza Bar-Khenin, 054 6682288; Dorit Gorni, 054 7991345; Yoav Lurie, 052 8610123.

We will be pleased to see you at this seminar.

Directions to Neve Shalom / Wahat al-Salam:

**From Tel Aviv or the Ben Gurion Airport:**

1. Take the Tel Aviv - Jerusalem Highway (No. 1) in the direction of Jerusalem.
2. At the Latrun Interchange, come off the highway. Turn right in direction of Beer Sheba.
3. Continue straight for about 3 kilometers to the "Nachshon / Newe Shalom" exit. Follow the exit road, then turn left and follow signs to "Newe Shalom"(about 4 kilometers).

**From Jerusalem:**

- ▶ Take the Tel Aviv - Jerusalem Highway (No. 1) in the direction of Tel Aviv and exit (from the right) at the **Latrun** Interchange. From the exit road turn left in direction of Beer Sheba, and then proceed as described in point 3 above.

"سايكو أكتيف"، مهنيو صحة نفسية من أجل حقوق الإنسان  
بالتعاون مع جامعة القدس ومدرسة السلام - واحة السلام



"سايكو أكتيف"  
"פסיכואקטיב"  
"Psychoactive"

ن ليوم دراسي في موضوع: /يسرنا دعوتكم

حواجز نفسية للسلام:  
كيف نزيل الحواجز التي ما بيننا وفي داخلنا

وذلك يوم الخميس، 2007 /1/4، من الساعة 9:30 وحتى الساعة 16:30  
في مدرسة السلام في واحة السلام.  
وهو اليوم الأول في سلسلة أيام دراسية بعنوان: "حواجز نفسية للسلام".  
تتناول الأيام الدراسية الإسقاطات النفسية للاحتلال والنزاع على المجتمع الفلسطيني والمجتمع الإسرائيلي. سنتناول خلال هذا اليوم  
الدراسي أشكال تكون هذه الحواجز وسبل إزالتها.

عرافة: إحمد عمارنة، نيسيم أقيسار

لغة المحاضرات: الإنجليزية

المحاضرات/أسماء المحاضرين	الموضوع	حتى الساعة	من الساعة
	تجمع وتسجيل	9:30	9:00
ممثلة "سايكو أكتيف" - مهنيو صحة نفسية من أجل حقوق الإنسان ممثلة جامعة "القدس" ممثلة مدرسة السلام ممثلة مركز "حوار" للتنمية والسلام	كلمات ترحيب	10:00	9:30
IARPP بروفيسور جيسكا بنجامين، محللة نفسية مشرفة، "Mutual Injury and Mutual Acknowledgment" د. شفيق مصالحة، جامعة تل أبيب مايا موكمال	محاضرة	11:30	10:00
	استراحة قهوة	12:00	11:30
د. إيباد حلاق، رئيس مركز دراسة الصدمات، جامعة القدس "The Effect of the Military Checkpoints on the Psychosocial Aspects of the Palestinians"	محاضرة	13:00	12:00
د. سعيد زيداني، جامعة القدس "The Palestinian Perspective of the Checkpoints"	محاضرة	13:30	13:00
	وجبة غداء	14:30	13:30
بروفيسور دان بار أون، جامعة بنر السبع "From Jews and Germans, Israelis and Palestinians to the 'Tense Triangle' between Germans, Israelis-Jews and Palestinians"	محاضرة	15:30	14:30
بروفيسور جيسكا بنجامين، د. إيباد حلاق، د. سعيد زيداني، بروفيسور دان بار أون، إحمد عمارنة، نيسيم أقيسار.	ندوة تخصيصة	16:30	15:30

رسوم التسجيل (يشمل وجبة غداء): 100 ش.ج.

عدد الأماكن محدود. آخر موعد للتسجيل 2006-12-31 بواسطة البريد الإلكتروني: [psycho\\_barriers@walla.com](mailto:psycho_barriers@walla.com)

للاستفسار: تيرتسا بار- حنين 0546-682288، دوريت چورني 991345-0547، يوآف لوريا 610123-0528

ن / يسرنا أن حضوركم

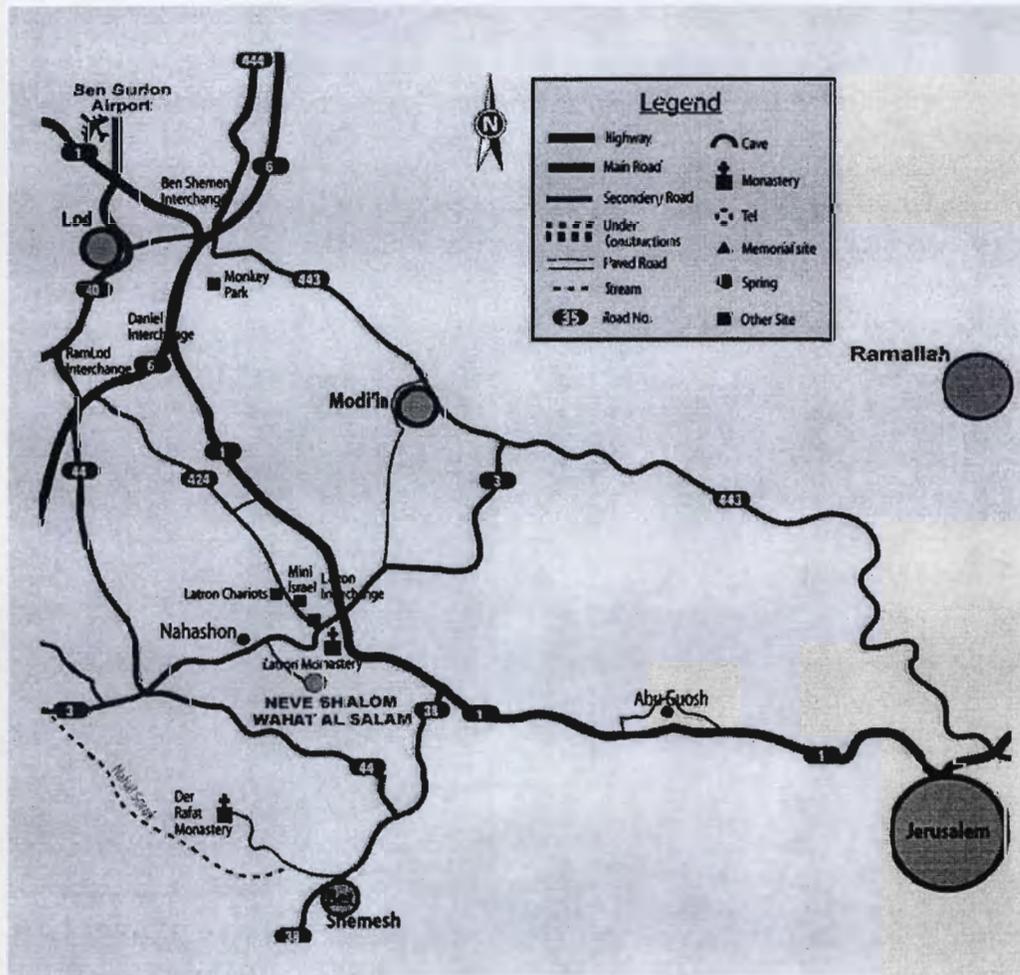
إرشاد لكيفية الوصول إلى واحة السلام:

للقادمين من تل أبيب:

- 1- سافروا في شارع تل أبيب - القدس باتجاه القدس (شارع 1).
- 2- اتجهوا يمينا في مفرق لطرون باتجاه بئر السبع.
- 3- واصلوا السفر مسافة 3 كيلومترات إلى الأمام حتى مفرق "ناحشون/ واحة السلام". تابعوا السفر، ثم اتجهوا يساراً (ممر من تحت جسر) وسيروا حسب اللافتات.

للقادمين من القدس:

- 1- سافروا في شارع تل أبيب - القدس باتجاه تل - أبيب (شارع 1).
- 2- في مفرق لطرون اتجهوا يمينا بطريق الخروج، ثم اتجهوا يساراً باتجاه بئر السبع.
- 3- واصلوا السفر مسافة 3 كيلومترات إلى الأمام حتى مفرق "ناحشون/ واحة السلام". تابعوا السفر، ثم اتجهوا يساراً (ممر من تحت جسر) وسيروا حسب اللافتات.



## APPENDIX B

### Checkpoints – A Psychological View from the Israeli Side and the Palestinian Side

The term "Machsom - Checkpoint" has penetrated Israeli awareness as an abstract – an entity functioning somewhere remote from our daily existence, yet at the same time guaranteeing the residents of Israel defense against the terror strikes. Like "the Wall" – a "protective wall" – the checkpoints are meant to shield Israel from Palestinian violence.

A few weeks ago, mental health personnel visited a treatment centre in the Territories, followed by a tour of checkpoints surrounding the city of Nablus. The tour was organized by "**PsychoActive – Mental Health Professionals for Human Rights** and "MachsomWatch." The objective was to get to know, from close up, the physical and spiritual reality of the checkpoints, and to learn the mental health setup in the Territories and the Occupation's influence on mental health.

The stories that we heard, the sights that we saw – persist in bothering us. They are worrisome in their extensive implications for life in the Palestinian Authority, and in Israel.

There are those who "know and believe" that it is right to behave this way, and with them the dialogue is necessarily separate, albeit important. However, presumably there are many among us who, if they really knew what happens there, behind the checkpoint – they would be deeply shocked.

A few facts:

Presently in Judea and Samaria there are some 600 permanent and "rolling" (random) checkpoints, manned and unmanned roadblocks of rocks and concrete – all preventing free flow of vehicles on the roads. In many places there is separation between roads for the holders of blue (Israeli) identity cards and the mostly uneven and rutted local roads, largely dirt tracks, which the Palestinian traveler can often find blocked by the army or settlers. Most Palestinians are forbidden to travel in their own vehicles, compelled to use public transport, excepting the few who have permits – and even they are delayed for long hours at checkpoints as the documents are inspected time and again.

These facts translate into constant severe disruption of daily life. The checkpoints build the many branched and methodical control over the whole fabric of Palestinian physical and spiritual life.

The daily meeting with checkpoints impairs mobility, infuses a permanent component of uncertainty, and prevents a regular and sane daily routine. Thus, for example, the director of the treatment centre described how he is unable to plan sessions with patients, since it is never possible to know when they will arrive – if at all. A person leaving home in the morning, on the way to work, studies, medical treatment, does not know when he or she will reach their desired destination, and what checkpoints and obstacles will be in the way. A journey of ten minutes lasts two hours or more.

Regular contacts – family, professional, commercial (not to speak of cultural) – are prevented. People describe their nostalgic longing for relatives and friends who cannot be visited. They tell of the stifling feeling of severed connections and of closure in their villages or towns, without the ability to visit shopping centers or educational institutions freely. They speak of the sense of humiliation, pain and anger that grows as they are crowded into long lines, in the heat, rain, suffocating dust, while awaiting the soldiers, inspection. They describe the fear that arises each time that the soldier will order them out of line, to wait hours without explanation, for the permission to pass. In quite a few cases, the despairing wait ends in detention – not for security reasons, but because of bureaucracy and error.

In this reality, severe damage is done to the possibility of earning a living, and the burden of unemployment bears down. Many have already given up, surrendered to helplessness, huddling in their villages, not venturing out, worn down by the intolerable procedures of the checkpoints.

Among the scores of people crowded in and moving around the checkpoint, the cars, the soldiers, the dusty and tense turmoil, my eye alighted on one figure: an elderly man, in a shiny and ironed blue galabiyeh, moving heavily and with difficulty, supported by a younger man. Every step was clearly agonizing. A distance of hundreds of meters from one side of the checkpoint, where he had most probably been dropped by a taxi, to the other side where he would enter another taxi to go on his way. I do not know where he was going: to a doctor? A family visit? The old man made his way laboriously down the humanitarian lane – the one intended for the elderly and sick, the one that permits Israel to take pride in its humane behavior in the Territories.

Consider him, the fact that he must alight and board taxis, and who knows how many checkpoints there will be on his way, where he must walk hundreds of meters from taxi to taxi. Think of the young man escorting him, or of others crammed into the ordinary lane – students, parents with young children in arms, people hurrying to work – watching that same old man with difficulty dragging his feet along the dusty path. Think on the humiliation, frustration and hostility dripping within them. How many of them decide, alongside that checkpoint, out of a sense of hopelessness, to arise and do something?

In practice, the checkpoints almost certainly lessen the number of strikes in Israel and the territories, and thereby achieve a certain calm. But this is an illusionary, short termed calm. The checkpoint policy deepens the total control over the Palestinian nation, and the negation of its freedom. In the long term it creates deep-seated feelings of hostility, degradation and frustration upon which to build the infrastructure and motivation of terror and continued cycles of violence. And this poses the question: do the checkpoints ensure our security, or are they propelling our region toward growing extremism?

As the providers of treatment, we can imagine the harsh mental implications of life in the shadow of checkpoints, the accumulating dread, the frustration, the helplessness emanating from the daily encounter with the powerful elements that assert control over the most routine of daily activities.

We can guess at the family price of prolonged unemployment, of the tensions that ensue within marriages, of the parental agony at the sight of children who cannot be given what the heart would desire, and of the despair from the destruction of ability to earn. We heard the terrible price paid by the children – children who live for long years in an atmosphere of threat, violence and absence of hope, severe deprivation – children who develop deep anxiety symptoms.

It is possible to indicate the central defense mechanisms, which we Israelis employ to manage our routine of existence, when not far from us, sometimes only half an hour away, and a terrible parallel reality prevails.

Firstly, the denial and disconnected emotion – disassociation which helps us not to know, or to know exactly, to draw down a screen of fog over awareness to prevent facts from penetrating our cognitive and emotional selves. Rationalization justifies any action, and the mantra “for security reasons” closes mouths and deadens the voice of protest, so questions are not asked and the breadth of thought narrows. There must be a mechanism of separation, a mechanism that organizes life into “good” and “bad,” white or black. And so we have come to see in the Palestinians the source of all evil and distress in our arena, and ourselves as the sole holders of the scales of justice and morality. Thus flourishes the illusion that, if we erect a wall, checkpoints, fences, between them and us, we will succeed in eradicating the evil from our midst. We are accustomed to see ourselves as the victim, and the Arabs as the aggressors, while in reality there are endless rings of aggression and victimization. All of us as a nation, and many of the individuals among us, bear the generations old experiences of terror, persecution and extermination, from a Jewish history steeped in suffering. There is a fear that if we take upon ourselves the responsibility for the suffering that we cause, we will necessarily forego our own suffering. A not-at-all simple process is demanded of us, buy which we preserve our history and, simultaneously, make room also for the suffering we create.

And finally, it is not possible to maintain the many branched and methodical control over the physical and spiritual fabric of life, that the State of Israel upholds in the Territories, without a component of de-humanization which puts the “other” in a more inferior place: the vision of all the residents of the Territories as one entity, with no distinction between individuals; the collective punishment in a place where there is no room for the individual and his existential suffering.

Defense plays an important role in protecting the ability to function and exist in an anxiety prone reality. And our life in Israel is undoubtedly accompanied by constant existential dread. But it is in the nature of defenses that they sometimes soar into an internal wall and block against the truth, or against the ability to see the correct reality. A meeting with reality, as it persists in the Territories, could likely threaten our moral value as human beings and as a nation, could arouse anxiety and bring us to meet the bitter truth that the checkpoints do not really promise security and the tranquility for which we all yearn. The internal blocks are likely to lead to imperviousness before suffering and violence in general, spreading throughout Israeli society – and there is much evidence in the Israeli reality of recent years: from indifference to expressions of violence and racism towards weakened groups.

The knowledge might place upon us a heavy burden of responsibility for happenings in the Territories on behalf and in the name of the State of Israel. The knowledge might, on the other hand, lead to a different behavior, might push the policy makers into a political solution for the Occupation. To this end, it is important that as many people as possible will go to the checkpoints, will accompany for a day the women of MachsomWatch and will see with their own eyes that which no story or article can succeed in transmitting by mere words.

And then, in the course of time, we will not be able to say ourselves or to our children “we did not know, did not hear, and did not see.”

Tova Buksbaum

Clinical Psychologist

**PsychoActive** – Mental Health Professionals for Human Rights.

## APPENDIX C

### Assistance at Kufr Qadum (Qadum Village): Our visit – before, during, after.

June 22, 2006

Unilateral disengagement at Kufr Qadum

In recent years, hundreds of roads in the West Bank have become Jews-only roads. Access to these roads from the Palestinian villages around the countryside has been blocked, ostensibly for security reasons, to minimize “friction” between Jews and Palestinians, whether as a planned policy of the Israeli army or by private initiative of the residents of nearby settlements who treat the area as their own. A group of Israeli and Palestinian peace activists wanted to learn at first hand about this phenomenon and about the implications for the Palestinian residents. During a visit to Kufr Qadum, near Nablus, the group learned about this disconnection from the roads, from the electricity grid, from a normal place in the normal human community.

#### **No exit**

Twenty-two Israeli and Palestinian activists, among them former cabinet minister Yair Tzaban, on Friday, June 16, 2006 visited the Palestinian village of Qadum, west of Nablus. They toured the Qadum-Nablus road, which settlers from Kedumim had closed to residents of the Palestinian village. The Qadum-Nablus road is 12 km long and has served, since Ottoman times, as the major artery linking Qadum to the outside world. The adjacent settlement of Kedumim, founded in 1974 on the lands of Kufr Qadum, spread northward during the 1990s with new outposts/neighborhoods, especially Givat Shalem and Kedumim Tzafon, on both sides of this road.

Today, there are some 3,000 people living in the settlement of Kedumim and its extensions; Kufr Qadum has about 4,000 residents (fewer than before, since the road was closed off, but we will get to that shortly). In the year 2000, the settlers from Kedumim began intermittently blocking off the road, claiming that it endangered their security, and allowing access to Jews only. What began as an independent settler initiative gradually gathered steam and, with army backing, turned into a set policy so that, by 2002, the village’s access to the road was completely cut off. The settlers set up an iron barrier at the point where the road leaving Qadum connects with the main road to Nablus, and alongside that they set up a checkpoint with a small observation post.

With the road blocked, the 4,000 residents of the village now had to create a dirt road for themselves, by their own efforts – a “Burma Road” – that would connect them with Nablus, the nearest city center. An improved dirt road, a winding and muddy 27 kilometers in length, was finally created; it is more than twice as long as the main road. Being cut off from the main road, being forced to use this alternate dirt road, had far-reaching ramifications for the lives of the villagers. Here is a little of what lies behind one more laconic report of access to a road denied to Palestinians for “security reasons”:

- **Delayed access to lifesaving medical care.** Village residents rely on medical care provided by the hospital in nearby Nablus. Since the access to the main road was

blocked, there have been at least 5 known cases in which village residents lost their lives as a result of delays en route to the city and the use of the longer, substandard alternate dirt road. For example, a few months ago a resident of Qadum, Fahmi Mahmoud Aqel, 53, suffered a heart attack, but his transport to the hospital in Nablus was delayed because of the roadblock, and he died. In the winter of 2004, a six-year-old child, Ahmad, son of Abdelkarim Mahmoud Shatawi, died under similar circumstances.

- **Shifting of commerce outside the city.** Trucks carrying heavy equipment cannot navigate the alternate road to the village and a whole series of small businesses (garages, carpentry shops, olive presses) that relied on supplies brought by truck were obliged to move their businesses elsewhere, or they went bankrupt.
- **Harm to farming and farmers.** The end to use of the main road prevented some of the village's farmers from getting to their land to cultivate it.
- **Damage to education.** The route from the village to institutions of higher learning in nearby Nablus has been made long and costly, and no one setting out can know whether they will be able to get there and back. AS a result, students who can afford it must rent flats in Nablus for the duration of their studies, or quit school.
- **Increased expenses.** The roadblock has led to a rise in prices for the journey to Nablus (NIS 24, instead of NIS 6), in the cost of apartment rentals due to increased demand, the cost of transport, and other price increases.
- **Emigration from the village.** The decline in living conditions and all the hardships have led some 80 families (about 500 people) to emigrate recently. The mayor, Muhammad Abu-Nimr, estimates that the financial damage from the ramifications of the closure of the road are around NIS 200,000 a month.

Just recently, in March of 2006, an alternate road to Nablus was paved, with funding from USAID. But this road does not return life to what it was: The road is 30 km long and instead of going straight east to Nablus (12 km) on the blocked-off road, residents traveling on the new alternate route must go south to Funduk and from there northeast to Nablus. Village leaders went to the Palestinian Authority for help in opening the road and even retained an Israeli lawyer, but thus far all the efforts to open this road have been to no avail.

### **Stronger than the Israel Electric Corporation**

The visit by the group of activists included a meeting with village leaders and several residents, in the local council building in the village, during which representatives from the village talked about the concerns of the residents. Afterwards the visiting group toured the area to see the problems at first hand. During the tour, residents presented additional problems unrelated to the closure of the road – foremost among which is the ongoing saga involving attempts to get the village connected to the national electricity grid.

**Twelve years and counting...** Since 1994, the Qadum local council has been in contact with the Israel Electric Corporation about connecting the village to the electricity supply. This project will cost some \$270,000, with NIS 240,000 of it born by the Electric Corporation. Residents of the village obtained the sum required, with a contribution from Belgium; they stayed in contact with the Electric Corporation and did what was asked of them. The Electric Corporation instructed the residents to put up a room for a transformer from high voltage to low (called a *mazleg*, or “fork,” in Hebrew, as one of the Palestinian residents explained in Hebrew to the visiting group – a term with which the Israelis were probably unfamiliar, demonstrating more than anything else the different reality in which the two sides live). Engineers from the Electric Corporation came from Haifa to Qadum with instructions on the precise placement of the room, in the middle of an olive grove near the blocked-off main road, between Qadum and Kedumim. Since the location of this room is on land belonging to a resident of the village, Bilal Jema’a, the local council requested an alternative site that would not oblige it to purchase the land from its owner. Bilal himself met with the engineers and tried at least to have the location moved a few meters to one that would not harm the olive trees on the site. These requests were rejected. The council had to purchase land from Bilal (incurring additional costs for the project), and in 2004 the council completed construction of the room and brought an underground electric cable to within 5 meters of the building.

But the story did not end there. The settlers of Kedumim, who learned of the village’s attempts to have the village connected to the electricity grid, and saw the transformer room in the olive grove, hurriedly objected to the structure on the excuse that it was located in Area C, which is under Israeli control and hence the Palestinians are not permitted to build there. The Civil Administration in Beit El forbid the connection from the transformer room to the electricity supply due to “opposition” to the location of the structure, and even issued a decree to stop building and another to demolish the building. Thus the settlers in Kedumim were able to chalk up a victory against the residents of the village and the Israeli Electric Corporation, one of the most powerful entities in the country. Even the claim that on the site only workers from the IEC would be present, for the purpose of maintenance and operation, did not help the villagers to change the decision. Recognizing the *de facto* reality that Kedumim mayor Daniela Weiss outranks the Civil Administration, the Qadum local council is now completely at a loss as to what they ought to do to prevent this major investment from going to waste, and thereby generating the need to go in search of new funding. In this connection we should note that NIS 24,000 as an advance payment of 10% has already been paid to the Electric Corporation and remains in its hands, although the project is going nowhere. Meanwhile, 4,000 residents of the village must rely on generators for their household electricity.

**And here comes The Wall...** Aside from all the foregoing, the village of Qadum is under threat of the planned construction of the Separation Wall which is slated to encircle the village on three sides. Village leaders receive a revised map every week or so. Nor have we yet talked about the abuse and intimidation by settlers from Kedumim who have damaged villagers’ cars and detained their children working in the fields. Then there is the new “Har Hemed” settlement set up on a hill visible from the village council building, with 4 stories, whence settlers fire their rifles night and day to instill fear and wake the villagers up while they are asleep.

### *About the activist group*

The tour was conducted at the initiative of the Israeli group comprising mainly mental health professionals and educators who had taken part in the "Change Agents" course held recently in Aqaba and Istanbul by the School for Peace at Neve Shalom / Wahat al-Salam, and Hewar, a Palestinian peace organization based in Jayyous in the Qalqilya area. The group was joined by very senior activists headed by Yair Tzaban, as part of a trend to try to raise public awareness of the "banal" injustice being perpetrated and attempts to right the wrongs. By prearrangement and in great goodwill, the group was received by the Qadum mayor Muhammad Nimr (Abu Nimr), his deputy Sakr Obeid (Abu Mas'ad), and other activists from the village. The tour was organized by Issa Ashtawi, a resident of Qadum who took part in the Change Agents course.

Through the activist group, MK Oron of Meretz sent a letter to the Minister of Defense on the subject, but to our regret the reply was very disappointing. A letter was also sent to the IEC and they replied that the matter is to be decided by the Ministry of Defense and is out of their hands.

The activists are committed to working to open the blockaded road, which is the essential lifeline of this village, and also to get the village connected to the electricity grid. One way we intend to act is by disseminating this story through the media, and well as by approaching decision-makers and the courts, until the injustice is corrected. We have the telephone numbers of residents of the village with whom one may arrange a tour of the village and who can provide additional details. The following pages provide photos taken during the visit. We also have all the contact information for the Israel Electric Corporation.



הכביש החסום היוצא מן הכפר ונעצר למרגלות קדומים  
עלית



פריחתו: חדר "המזלג" שהקימו תושבי כפר קדום בהנחיית חברת החשמל C-ב-



בית בשולי כפר קדום, ובמעלה הגבעה ההתנחלות החדשה "הר חמד". משם יורית רלילות ורימיה



מוחמד נימר, ראש מועצת כפר קדום, בתצפית מגג בנין המועצה

*BEST AVAILABLE COPY*



על אף מספר ביקורים וסיורים לכפר שלא הובילו לשום מקום, תושבי הכפר עוד לא איבדו את תקוותם שהמפגשים יובילו להקלה במצוקותיהם

## APPENDIX D

### The Olive Harvest at Kufr Qadum

*By Howard Shippin*

Imagine training groups of concerned doctors, teachers, psychologists, social workers and journalists to become active advocates for conflict transformation at the workplace, at home – and in every other possible forum. This is what the School for Peace in cooperation with the Hewar peace center from Palestine has been doing this past year, with four USAID-funded courses for Israeli and Palestinian professionals in 2006.

One of the participants in one of these courses, a Palestinian psychologist, is from the West Bank village of Kufr Qadum – a village that has been jousting with the powers-that-be for quite some time now. In deciding on their fieldwork projects as a group, the professionals from the psychologists' course felt it was only reasonable that they focus one project on assisting Kufr Qadum. They wanted to create projects that would let them take concrete steps to counter the occupation. They adopted the Kufr Qadum struggle as their own.

**One small, isolated village.** The little village (pop. 4,000, and declining) of Kufr Qadum suffers from various problems arising from its isolated location, the antagonism of residents of nearby Jewish settlements, and the monumental indifference of the occupation authorities. Harvesting their olives this year, residents said, would be problematical due to harassment by residents of the neighboring Kedumim settlement. Given the severe provocations and vandalism by settlers during recent olive harvests, the army promised to provide protected access for the farmers to their land; only limited protection was forthcoming, however.

Among the membership of Psychoactive (social activists, mainly from mental health professions) are several participants in School for Peace/Hewar courses. Since Psychoactive had also decided to help Palestinian farmers during the olive harvest, our participants coordinated an activity together with that organization. Aside from the practical benefit of lending a hand with the olive harvest and establishing a protective Jewish civilian presence in case of troubles with the settlers or the army, the activists wanted to demonstrate to the villagers that there are people in Israel who care and are committed to active intervention on their behalf.

**Saturday in the olive groves.** An action was scheduled for Saturday, October 4th. In addition to the course participants, activists from other organizations and members of Neve Shalom/Wahat al-Salam were invited to take part, and a number of them joined.

We went via the Jewish town of Kfar Saba (north of Tel Aviv) to Kufr Qadum, where we were greeted by the deputy mayor, Saker Abu Mussaab, and proceeded on to olive groves near the Kedumim settlement. A nearby vineyard belonging to a Qadum village resident was appropriated earlier by a settler, who harasses the farmers every time they attempt to harvest their olives.

A volunteer with our group also volunteers with the Rabbis for Human Rights organization. While we were there in Kufr Qadum, he received information that a clash with settlers had arisen during another olive harvest nearby, so we went on to there, where we found ourselves in a face-off with settlers. Machine-gun-toting bullies came and scattered all the olives that the Palestinians had harvested. We collected all those olives into baskets again. Soon, the army intervened and declared the area a "closed military zone," making it off limits to the farmers, the settlers and us.

After helping the farmers with the harvest, we went to Kufr Qadum and received an update on the village's quest for human dignity and basic civil rights. One of their ongoing challenges: Despite years of effort, the residents have been unable to get their community connected to any electricity grid. They managed to obtain funding from Europe for the necessary transformer, but when this was almost ready, Kedumim managed to obtain an injunction against its operation. Now, after intervention by Member of Knesset Haim Oron, the mayor of Kadoum has met with representatives of the Ministry of Defense and the Israel Electric Corporation. The defense ministry people promised that the village will be connected to the electricity grid if the villagers agree to rebuild the transformer room they have already constructed, mostly at their own expense and mainly with donations from abroad, in another location in Qadum. Stay tuned.

*On all sides, Qadum is closed in and cut off by settlements and roadblocks. Direct access to Nablus, the village's urban hub, is impeded by roadblocks. Some 500 of Kadoum's 4,000 residents have already left to live and work in other cities (generally in Nablus) since there is no employment for the village residents nearby. "Transfer," or ethnic cleansing, proceeds apace. Only our active and engaged opposition can provide hope for a different outcome.*

## APPENDIX E

### "Psychological barriers (checkpoints) to peace"

#### Description:

This is planned as a series of academic seminars for Israeli and Palestinian mental health professionals. The main goal is to make a professional statement regarding the damages of the occupation and psychological repercussions of the Israeli-Palestinian conflict in general. The title proposed is "Psychological barriers (checkpoints) for Peace." Each seminar of four to six hours will be held at an actual checkpoint. The program will include a gathering at the checkpoint by participants, with a local Palestinian representative providing information about the specific checkpoint and the consequences it has on the daily living of the people in the area. Later on, the participants will adjourn to a nearby hall (or possibly a large tent), where presentations will be made by Israeli and Palestinian professionals, followed by an open discussion. This provides an excellent opportunity for an encounter between Israeli and Palestinian professionals and for learning and thinking together. The planners envision the project as ongoing, with a seminar every second month. The subsequent conferences will each feature a specific central issue or theme, e.g., women, children, education, trauma, poverty and so forth, to be deliberated from a psychological standpoint. All speakers will be professionals; a high academic standard will be maintained. Depending on the success of the project we will consider publishing an annual journal incorporating the transcripts of the year's presentations. The first seminar is planned to take place at Al-Quds University in early January.

#### Background:

This project was initiated by a group of therapists (psychologists, social workers etc.) – Israeli and Palestinians – working together to promote dialogue and to denounce violence. Everyone involved was a participant in an "Agents of change" course, a joint project of the School for Peace at Neve Shalom/Wahat al-Salam and the Hewart center in Jayyous, Palestine. Various projects were initiated as adjuncts to that course, including the one just described. Checkpoints provide the most salient expression of the daily hardship caused by the ongoing occupation, hence the decision to hold seminars there. The on-site location is the unique aspect of this initiative; planners hope thereby to attract media attention and help raise the degree of public awareness of and concern about the checkpoints and the occupation in general.

#### Objectives:

- 1) Increasing public awareness of and concern about the damages of the Israeli occupation and its mental repercussions.
- 2) Encouraging relevant research and academic writing by mental health professionals.
- 3) Enabling encounters and cooperation between Israeli and Palestinian mental health professionals.
- 4) Protesting against the ongoing occupation in the West Bank and in Gaza.

Target population:

1. Mental health professionals – from Israel, Palestine and internationals.
2. Journalists, TV reporters and other Media professionals.
3. All seminars will be opened to the public.

Total number of expected participants – approximately 150 in each seminar; + 4 guided tours for 20 participants each = 80; total of 230 direct participants per seminar held.

Activities incorporated in the program:

1. Pro-seminar is planned to be held at Al-Quds University in early January 2007, with Prof. Jessica Benjamin as keynote speaker.
2. An opening seminar at Al-Quds University as described above is planned to be held in April 2007.
3. Four "guided tours" to specific check points designated for mental health professionals. Each tour will include a visit to a mental health center in the Palestinian Authority.
4. Three additional seminars as described above. Location and dates are yet to be determined.

Funding:

4. Since all involved professionals, organizers and lecturers alike work voluntarily, we are seeking funding for administrative and operational expenses only.

Steering committee – to include representatives from:

School for Peace at Neve Shalom/ Wahat al-Salam  
Hewar Center  
FFIPP  
Al Quds University

## APPENDIX F

### ADDITIONAL PARTICIPANT TESTIMONIALS

*The encounter with the group was very significant and instructive. [My] learning about the subject began in recent years. Earlier, I belonged to Bnei Akiva; I thought the settlements were something good. Then later, I changed. The course helped me to learn more about the change [in me] that had already happened. Maybe in future I will want to get to a politically influential place or will join a nonprofit group that does something in this direction.*

**- Jewish woman**

*The process placed this matter unequivocally at the center of my life. It hasn't stopped preoccupying me; that's where my vision is, I see things there that I dream about. Then later it is like a filling (petrol) station, because each person feels kind of alone, wherever he is, and so the support is important.*

**- Jewish woman**

*The first time I attended the meeting in Aqaba, my friends and neighbors were asking me, "Where you going?" I said, "I am going to attend a training course for my work." I was really shy to mention that I am going to meet with Jewish, but after I came back I felt proud of what I have done during the workshop, and then told the people around me about the workshop and how I, and we, needed these kinds of workshops. I was telling them everything about it. I was trying to protect these kinds of workshops from any negative comment. I felt I needed to know more about conflict analyses and tools to understand more about myself and about the conflict itself. After the 2<sup>nd</sup> meeting and the uninational meeting in Ramallah, I asked the Hewar Center and the facilitators to open these workshops for more people to attend... My needs before the project were more personal, but now I am more open to work and to helping make an impact locally.*

**- Palestinian woman**

*The course was very significant for me. It's hard for me to imagine how I was before the course, in the sense that being involved in these things is a really important part of what I do now, and gets a lot of my attention and is a big part of what I actually do. Before, it wasn't that significant in my life. I see this area as part of my professional work, and the academic aspects also had a big influence because generally, in psychology the social part is neglected. In the trainees' group at Tel Hashomer [Hospital], I give out material on the Israeli-Palestinian thing and it gets onto the agenda.*

**- Jewish man**

*I feel that I need more efforts and more workshops, especially since I come from Jenin, and this area in north of the west-bank, as other areas, needs more help to create a better cultural, social, economic development. It has been devastated because of the occupation.*

**- Palestinian man**

*I want to talk about my experience of broadening, and also contracting, following this course. As far as broadening, I learned a lot this year, I opened up to a new field of knowledge. I read a lot this year, really thanks to you. For example, reading Fanon in the context of our reality. The course even influenced which stories I look at in the newspaper. The course greatly influenced my Israeli identity. I apologize less to right-*

*wing people. I respond on the Hebrew Psychology [Association] web site. The course helped me make myself heard as an Israeli and to not let other people co-opt ownership of Israeliness. I got a lot smaller in the realm of hope. I am very worried and can't disconnect. Sometimes I think, I fantasize about our setting up a group of psychoanalysts to work with politicians like Ophir Pines, for instance. We have so many concepts and knowledge that maybe could be influential. I'm more isolated in my environment. Although my husband is a covert agent for you, but on the other hand, there are friends who are really fed up. The social sphere also comes in more with supervision I do and in my clinical work.*

**- Jewish woman**

*I spent many years thinking about this subject. I've known of Neve Shalom for about 20 years, but I never did anything much. I began studying Arabic so that I'd have the language for this meeting. Since Aqaba, I find myself doing a lot of things. The Jewish-Arab, Israeli-Palestinian question is a very significant part of my life. Sometimes other people can't stand it or there's no one around me who doesn't know about it. The course was also important in pushing [me] into action and for reading a lot. My professional library has a whole [new] section. I see this group as a kind of gift. We meet to do our activities almost every Shabbat. Despite all the doubts and reservations, in general I am fine with this process on all levels.*

**- Jewish woman**

*It was important to me to get things together in my head, to understand things. This is a painful process, when you get more thin-skinned and it's hard not to look and to see things. When we came back from Aqaba and we saw how everyone wants acknowledgment, it was much more insufferable to see the price people are paying, how much people's lives have been halted. As for the activities... because we understand, we want to scream our understanding and to scream, open your eyes, and the despair is because it doesn't always happen. Sometimes activity is a kind of manic defense, otherwise I'd be in despair.*

**- Jewish woman**

*The workshop was really short for me. At the same time it should not be far or disconnected from the Palestinian educational and cultural ways and systems, which are based on national resistance against the occupation...Palestinians need to understand the joint workshops very well between Palestinians and Israelis. They should be based on achieving justice, which is part of the Palestinian national right and this is also part of the Palestinian resistance against the occupation by giving the true picture of the occupation to the Israeli. At the same time, the mission is really hard on the Palestinian NGOs on the high level. I felt the need to meet with my Palestinian colleagues in Ramallah at the uninational meeting...to know our needs as Palestinians after the previous workshop. From here I think that the Palestinian NGOs should take a more active part and role in this kind of work. I would like to thank Hewar Center and SFP for giving us this opportunity to meet.*

**- Palestinian woman**

*I was at Neve Shalom 20 years ago on weekends for youth that took place here. At the end of high school, I went into a very long sleep, it was comfortable, and there was this feeling of emotional death in the political sense. A kind of hibernation, and the course for me was a platform for getting back to action. It influences what I do on Saturday*

*mornings, and I decided that through action I would know how close or far away I am from something more correct. This was a period that really changed my daily routine.*

**- Jewish man**

*For me it was an education. As someone "elderly," the question of what I am doing with the remainder of my life became concrete. The mirror that the group held up to me is a very strong light there in front of me. About identity, the more I see the importance of nationality in our daily lives, I go through a process of detaching and disengaging from my Israeliness. Maybe that's the despair. My son was discharged from the army with a [very low] profile of 21. Twenty years ago, I would have buried myself alive; now, I feel differently. Here [in the group] I got permission for a different language, I got an official okay for a different language.*

**- Jewish man**

*I have never been used to such a workshop like that one in my area, especially after Hamas won the elections. These kinds of workshops reduced, and people might be prevented from doing or attending these workshops. What the Hewan Center has done by making these workshops...[allows us to] see some acceptable issues and points that have been agreed upon inside the workshop between the Palestinians and the Israelis...Some changes had happen in the group and that was better than nothing.*

**- Palestinian man (from Northern West Bank)**

*There was some question about whether I would take the course, because I'd already done a facilitators course in Israel. That was a different experience in my development in this direction. A different experience because the encounter with Palestinians from Israel is a powerful experience and the theoretical part is stronger, but sometimes there was humor and laughter. With the Palestinians [the time], it hurt worse, something about not being able to run away from being the cause of injustice committed toward someone else. On the personal level, how you cope with being the bad side, the guilty. How you live with this emotionally, it's very hard. And having to learn how to live with the knowledge of the injustice and how not to be judgmental toward people who aren't in the same place you are, otherwise I make myself hateful to others, and isolated. I am looking for activism. I had a dream that there would be a nonprofit organization of therapists around the Jewish-Palestinian matter and something like that is actually happening now.*

**- Jewish woman**

*[The] meetings in Aqaba and Istanbul gave us the face to face direct meeting [with Israelis] without any pressure from our organizations, so I would like here to thank Hewan Center and SFP for giving us the opportunity to meet and talk freely about so many different issues that we never had the chance to discuss before. We have never been allowed to (since we are part of our journalists organizations). Most of our feelings and cases became clearer when we met in the uninational meeting, and I think the change we were looking for in the Israeli side started here. At the same time, I think there are lots of things to say and share. I hope I get a chance again to do that. I would like to say that this project positively affected us when we went back to our own jobs we felt the changes.*

**- Palestinian woman**