



בית הספר לשלום, נווה שלום  
مدرسة السلام، واحة السلام  
The School for Peace

# ANNUAL REPORT 2023



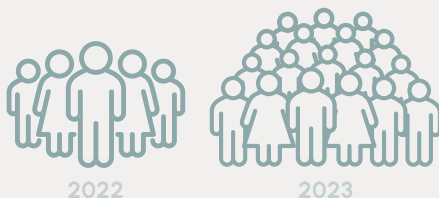
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# 2023 in numbers in the School for Peace

**1344** ↑60%  
increase  
Participants in all activities



**609** ↑30%  
increase  
Total hours of all activities

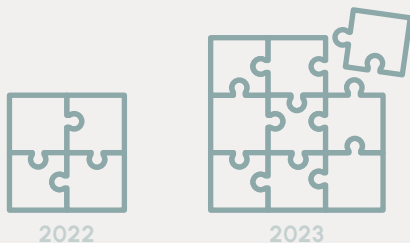


**71** lectures ↑115%  
increase



Collaborations with  
**27**  
organizations

↑80%  
increase



# OUR COMMUNITY

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**3** Agents of Change courses



Climatic & Environmental Justice



Mixed Cities



Group Facilitators

**4** graduates received a special grant



Environmental education



Participatory place-making in a Palestinian village



Political art performance based on archive documents



Documentary film about a political vision

**6** active graduate forums



Lawyers



Mixed Cities



City Planners & Architects



Mental Health Professionals



Cinema & Performing Arts



Facilitators



Politicians

# EMERGENCY ACTIVITIES DURING WARTIME

Emergency response to

total of

**13**

partner organizations



**9**

groups from our immediate community



**70**

dialogue sessions



**800**

participants



# LETTER FROM THE DIRECTOR

**We are living through the most challenging period ever for peacebuilding activists in the region. The combination of the judicial coup and the war that broke out on October 7 have created an intense schism in present-day Israel.** In the final analysis, we believe that this schism has made all efforts to change policy under the existing regime impractical, shifting most of our attention to changing the prevailing order to achieve a more equal reality, to secure Palestinian' rights, and a better future for all.

Recent events have made it glaringly obvious that the backdrop of collective relations between Jews and Palestinians will always outweigh any local cooperation. **It is paramount that we accept the unsettling fact that, under this regime, the vision of a shared society based on shared interests grounded in concrete, local challenges is not sustainable for the long term.** At the SFP, we resist satisfaction with isolated gestures of goodwill, as we know that complacency can lead to the normalization of Palestinian oppression and acceptance of the bloody status quo. **Moreover, experience has shown us that Jewish-Palestinian relations must be conceived holistically, acknowledging that the Palestinian people are one, and not fragmented islands (Gaza, the West Bank, Palestinian citizens of Israel, the Palestinian refugees).** Our work is not a band-aid, but a catalyst for overhauling political reality.

**This year, we emphasized the expansion of our sphere of influence through cooperation with like-minded educational-political organizations both in and outside Israel.** These partnerships allow us to reach a wider audience and shape public opinion, adopt new perspectives and tools, and improve our activities.

**This past year was characterized by crises.** The judicial coup and the war have dredged up the demons lurking under our collective consciousness, and the SFP took a lead role in addressing them. The activities detailed below demonstrate our ability to navigate turbulent events in real time with ingenuity and creativity. **Our fortitude stems from our approach to dialogue: we put things sincerely, without normalizing them or diminishing the influence of oppression . In this manner, we avoid indulging in illusions, take in the complexity of events as they unfold, understand their underlying causes, and retain our trust in the "other." This way we find a path forward in extreme and uncertain times.**

In this context, we are especially proud of our graduates for continuing to push for change by developing and executing projects (see examples in the highlight sections below) in the face of overwhelming odds, silencing and even persecution of the state and society. **We are proud of the community of practice we have developed and will continue to support and guide them through these troubled times – for their sake, and that of our society at large.**

Dr. Roi Silberberg, Director of the SFP





# AGENTS OF CHANGE COURSES

**These months-long courses form the core of SFP activities as a political education organization.** In them, political activists experience our unique dialogue method, provide them with practical advice in planning and executing reality changing initiatives, and educate them in relevant aspects of the Palestinian-Israeli conflict. In 2023, we continued to design and develop programs for various professional fields with the aim of influencing policy makers within established institutions, as well as through grassroots political activism. **Today, we have bespoke courses for leaders in mixed cities, mental health professionals, environmentalists, city planners and architects, lawyers as well as for those looking to become facilitators of Palestinian-Jewish dialogue groups, among many others.**

**Our courses explore three aspects of peacebuilding: conducting genuine egalitarian dialogue, accumulating knowledge, and developing and executing initiatives.** Thought-provoking lectures and excursions illuminate the sociological, educational, economic, and legal realities that affect life in the region. Uni-national and bi-national discussions shed light on unequal power relations, participants' personal and national identities and roles in the conflict, as well as hone critical thinking skills. And, finally, participants develop their own initiatives with the assistance of our team.



# Facilitators Training Course

## in Collaboration with Sadaqa-Reut



In this special edition of our training course for facilitators of Palestinian-Jewish dialogue groups, we collaborated with Sadaqa-Reut, a bi-national political and social education organization for students and youth motivated by social change. **As Rahada Shbeita Arafat, Co-director at Sadaka-Reut, said** *"We share the SFP's principles, intentions, beliefs, and approach to conflict facilitation, and consider it a qualified source of knowledge and prolific collaboration. We both believe that an egalitarian society requires mutual accountability and critical acknowledgment of the oppressive mechanisms that prevent them, and that dialogue can go a long way in bringing this about."*



Facilitators Training Course graduation, July 2023

Most course participants had experience in bi-national organizations, and the course itself was made up of three modules: study of socio-psychological theories and SFP's unique dialogue method; practical experience in uni- and bi-national discussion; and hands-on training in facilitating dialogue groups. We discussed the role of language in oppression and communication, the interplay of gender and nationality, the bi-national subterfuge of the conflict, and more.

**According to SFP facilitator, Tal Kulka,** *"many Jewish participants [initially] rejected the idea that honest conversation necessitates acknowledging the uneven power relation, thus alienating many Palestinians, but by the end of the course, most of the former owned up to their privilege, and most of the latter felt greater agency."*



Climatic & Environmental Justice Course excursion to Jisr az-Zarqa, July 2023



## Climatic & Environmental Justice Course in Collaboration with Citizens For the Environment (CFE)

**The assumption that our relationship to the environment is informed by politics sits at the heart of environmental peacebuilding as we conceive it. It is a way to harness shared climatic concerns for peace, and apply critical thinking to resource allocation.** The latest edition of our environmental justice course (June 2023-March 2024) was done in collaboration with Citizens For the Environment (CFE), a non-profit organization dedicated to representing the environmental needs and challenges of the Palestinian community in Israel. The excellent cooperation with CFE allowed us to better instruct participants on the varied ways in which they can simultaneously create a more egalitarian, and environmentally sound society through dialogue, hands-on practice in creating environmental initiatives, and educational excursions.

**But the war complicated our task. Grief and terror make environmental concerns seem remote, as well as weigh heavily on already tense bi-national relations.** Nevertheless, we continued our meetings, and as Maytal Strul, the Jewish facilitator, pointed out, "We realized the immense importance of maintaining connection in such times." One Palestinian participant said that the "course provides a safe space from the violence outside." **Instead of retreating from our concerns with the environment, we found ways to incorporate the war into our curriculum by discussing**

**the immense environmental toll that the war is inflicting on us - a message that is conspicuously absent from politically uncritical environmental circles in Israel.**

Despite the hardship, we pursued our participants' budding environmental initiatives with individual consultations, resulting in promising projects. **One especially notable example was a meeting request sent to the Director General of the Life and Environment Organization, in which two course participants called a meeting with the organization, and called upon it "to take a decisive step in promoting an end to the war, while proposing an alternative plan of action," on several grounds of Israeli harm to the environment and the people of Gaza, including "the targeting of water treatment facilities and sewage lines," and "an increase in heavy metals in the soil."**

## **Leaders in Mixed Cities Course** in Collaboration with Sikkuy-Aufoq



**Now at its seventh consecutive year, the 2023-4 agents of change course for leaders in mixed cities has never been more relevant, as even at the best of times bi-national relations in Israel are fragile. The specter of May 2021 eruption of violence in the mixed cities, and the daunting terror of the current war loom large, threatening to throw things again into chaos. This course aims to encourage deep understanding between the national groups that share cities and promote equality for disenfranchised**



First session of the Leaders in Mixed Cities Course, November 2023



Leaders in Mixed Cities Course graduation, March 2024

communities therein as a basis for a better reality for Jews and Palestinians alike.

**We collaborated with Sikkuy-Aufoq, a bi-national Jewish-Palestinian nonprofit established in 1991, that specializes in changing policies to promote equality. Ya'ala Mazor, Co-Director of the Sikkuy-Aufoq Shared Society Department explained the cooperation:**

*"We will certainly benefit from the SFP's years of experience in promoting Palestinian-Jewish dialogue and peer-community creation. These skills will allow us to better inculcate our shared core values of cooperation and equality in day-to-day life, and empower participants with practical capabilities that will allow them to extend support-circles, and serve as leaders of effective systemic change."*

**We recruited 20 activists (18 of them women) from mixed cities in influential positions, including community organizers, municipal administrators and educational leaders.** At first, we were concerned that participants might opt-out of the course due to the war, but it turned out that they were galvanized by the urgency to affect reality for the better against all odds.

In bi-national dialogue sessions, participants examined how terminology can betray hidden ideologies, as with the term "terrorist" or "freedom fighter."

**One Palestinian participant said that** *"terminology shapes power relations, and I am using this space, and this group, to try to offer an alternative way of phrasing things."*

**The course was prolific, with graduates devising many reality-changing projects.** These include a growing study group on climate and social justice dedicated to disseminating critical knowledge; an online database of Palestinian residents of Jaffa facing eviction; two identity workshops for Jewish and Palestinian teens; and an educational Jerusalem tour that shows both its Jewish and Palestinian sides. **One participant said that the course helped her:** *"Open her eyes, and see reality clearly."*



# Abraham AlterNarrative Tours

## Kholoud Abu Ahmad

The Abraham Alternative sustainable tours are the brainchild of activist and SFP Leadership in Mixed Cities Course graduate, Kholoud Abu Ahmad, in collaboration with her Jewish partner, Maoz Ynon. In these tours, participants hear the stories of mixed cities from local perspectives, facilitating understanding, strengthening local economies, and promoting involvement by uncovering the repressed narratives of Palestinians.



Kholoud Abu Ahmad giving a tour in Haifa

For example, one of Abu Ahmad's favorite landmarks in the Nazareth tour is the "Nakba Wall": a wall at the entrance to the Old City on which younger people habitually spray paint graffiti telling the story of the Nakba, despite being repeatedly painted over by the city. In May 2022, a portrait of Palestinian journalist, Shireen Abu Akleh, who was shot dead by Israeli soldiers, appeared on the wall, only to be effaced after the war broke. **There, Abu Ahmad told us that** *"We can't share this land until we learn to listen to all the national stories in this space, since the key to cooperation is recognition. Hence, I insist on telling my own and my people's story, just like the persistent, brave young people who resist the censorship of the authorities by repainting this wall."*

Abu Ahmad says that her SFP experience helped her *"understand aspects of mixed cities that are actively occluded, and the special challenges they face,"* and that it gave her *"tools to act more comprehensively in the community."*

The SFP team next to the Nakba Wall, Nazareth, November 2022



The Nakba Wall effaced, Nazareth, November 2023



# SFP GRADUATES' NETWORK

In the past few years, we have invested in cultivating strong relationships with our course graduates through graduates' forums, tailor-made activities, newsletters and advanced programs, that include our annual graduates' conference. **Today, we have a graduates' community that supports its members morally, emotionally, practically, and intellectually, as we push towards changing the status quo to achieve a more just society.** In 2023, our graduates' network has maintained, and continues to reaffirm our shared commitment to forging a better future despite the delegitimization of critical voices in times of divisive political turmoil and war. The following are samples of the activities performed in this context:

## **Advanced Issues** in Group Facilitation

**The ever-expanding trauma inflicted by the war and the conflict makes dialogue between Jews and Palestinians more fraught than ever.** Responding to a growing need in our graduates and facilitators, we decided to start an advanced facilitators course aimed at sharing and analyzing dialogue facilitators' experiences to develop tools that will allow them to continue their work of transformative dialogue work, inspiring participants to act for change.

**The first edition ended (Apr 2023-Jan 2024) with remarkable results. Graduates heard fascinating lectures by psychologists, academics and**

**activists who promote binational dialogue, explaining the conceptual and emotional tools they've developed to cope and progress, which led to productive discussion between the participants about their own experiences.**

Discussions included a wide range of topics: promoting equality within unequal power disparities; language and hegemony; managing emotional involvement; demarcating realistic aims without compromising ideals; the role of gender equality in national conflict, and much more.

## **Politicians Forum**

**Last September, we held the first meeting of our Politicians Forum featuring Jewish and Palestinian graduates of our former change agent courses for future politicians.** The recent judicial coup by right-wing politicians, and the rise in dehumanizing political rhetoric in Israel, made us realize that we must develop a bi-national perspective within institutional halls and the public political discourse.

Prof. Ariella Friedman giving a talk in an Advanced Issues in Group Facilitation session, May 2023





Topics included the decreasing concern with equality in the younger Jewish population; the need to incorporate Palestinians in activism; the desperate state of organized crime in Palestinian communities, and much more. Participants listened to an illuminating lecture and discussed future plans, such as bolstering justice-centered discourse, providing moral support to avoid social isolation and examining right-wing modes of operation.

**We hope that this forum will continue to evolve and prepare a new generation of influential politicians on both sides of the national divide who can begin to sow the seeds of collaboration through mutual accountability. In spite of, and in response to the current state of hellish war.**

## **Second Annual SFP Graduates' Conference**

**2023 was exceptionally challenging for our graduates, even before the terrible war, as the far-right took hold of the government and parliament, and undermined the supreme court's power to check government abuse of power. Our graduates suffered from increased silencing due to their critical views. This is why we thought it crucial to gather our graduates in a conference and remind them that they are members of a supportive community.**

SFP facilitators in the conference



Noam Shuster-Eliassi, a political comedian and activist, who was born and raised in WASNS, giving a bi-lingual stand up comedy in the conference



**The conference (17-18 March 2023) revolved around the theme of dialogue and activism in the midst of a crisis.** About 120 graduates of different SFP courses throughout the years gathered in Wahat al Salam-Neve Shalom (henceforth, WASNS) for a weekend of lectures by leading academics and political leaders, uni- and bi-national dialogue sessions, and social activities. **According to one Jewish participant, the conference "aroused many thoughts and feelings," and taught her "of the important role of political imagination as a vehicle of change and honest dialogue."**

The conference was completely bilingual, and included simultaneous translation services to allow all participants to express themselves on



Participants in the conference

equal footing and in their native languages. Throughout the weekend, participants shared insights, found inspiration in each other's initiatives, collaborated on new projects, and reaffirmed their sense of community. **One Jewish participant said that** *"it was moving to see so many good people trying to cultivate a just society in our region."*

**We closed the conference by shedding a spotlight on the exceptional and varied projects that won the SFP-Nava Sonnenschein grants for that year.** They included an architectural project to transform a dilapidated parking lot into an inviting and historically informative park; a documentary on a bi-national peace initiative; an educational program to teach children how to transform construction waste into gardening tools; and a performance art piece that utilizes archival material on the Jewish-Palestinian conflict ("Dogma 4.8"). **Graduates have reported that the opportunity to convene with like-minded peers, and present and receive recognition for their work, was invaluable to them, as peacebuilding in Israel can be a very lonesome and thankless task.**

From left to right: Avraham Burg, Dr. Roi Silberberg, Dr. Nava Sonnenschein and Dr. Nasreen Hadad Haj Yahya, in the main panel in the conference



## Dogma 4.8 Einat Weizmann

*"Art changes perspectives by appealing directly to hearts and minds, subverting the mundane, and questioning what media and politics often occlude. It can open a window to places we tend to ignore and to places no one else enters."* Einat Weizmann

Dogma 4.8 is a unique art-documentary project consisting of 8 short pieces by Jewish and Palestinian artists inspired by archival state documents, that started showing in May 2023. It was curated and created by veteran director, actor, and SFP graduate, Einat Weizmann. The aim was to create a live

performative archive that exposes the obfuscated Israeli policies across the decades, showing how past decisions inform present actions. Each artist incorporates an old and a contemporary archival document in their work. *"Israel is like a haunted house," says Weizmann, "we must revisit suppressed events, or continue to face specters."*

Every piece is 8 minutes and 40 seconds long, alluding to 1948, or the "year of primal sin," as Weizmann calls it. 'Dogma' refers to Dogme 95, the 90s Danish cinema movement, that pushed the medium to redefine its role, inspiring Weizmann to use theater to address oppression, and as



An invitation in Hebrew to Dogma 4.8

a catalyst for political action and critical thinking. Featured artists explore subjects like censorship, institutional violence, political prisons, and many others.



Einat Weizmann presenting her project in the annual graduates' conference



# ACTIVITIES WITH OUR HOME COMMUNITIES

**The society of Wahat-al-Salam-Neve Shalom (WASNS) forms the SFP's immediate community.** In fact, the SFP was established by the village's founders to conduct political education courses for the wider public beyond the village boundaries. But our task is also internal to WASNS, and we have always been active in furthering dialogue between village residents and staff. **Since the start of the war, we have been promoting dialogue through times of darkness to residents, teachers, parents and more.**

## **Dialogue Sessions for Residents of Wahat al-Salam - Neve Shalom**

**The people of WASNS are not detached from reality. Quite the contrary: they are forced to confront the conflict all the more vividly, as they cannot avoid their political "other."** The war has strained Palestinian-Jewish relations, which is why the SFP found it imperative to extend an open invitation to WASNS residents to participate in a dialogue.

In six sessions, two uni-national and four bi-national, residents shared their emotions and expectations of one another, and tried to empathize with radically opposed perspectives precisely when it is most tempting to



Village residents in a dialogue session, October 2023

shut out the complexity of reality. **In the end, their trust in, and empathy towards one another grew, and they were convinced of their ability to find common ground and mutual understanding despite the obstacles.**

## **Dialogue Sessions for Teachers and Parents at Wahat al-Salam - Neve Shalom Elementary School**



### **Teachers Dialogue Sessions**

**The teachers at the WASNS bi-lingual, bi-national elementary school carry the burden of exemplifying the village's ideals of coexistence to the next generation even in times of war.** To help, we have conducted a 3-session seminar for the school's teachers, in which they regained their sense of agency and opened lines of communication, assuaging their concerns about potential political silencing, and reaffirming their shared educational and social values.

## Parents Dialogue Session

**Only nine days after the war broke out, we were summoned to the elementary school to assist the parents' community in facing their ambivalence.** On the one hand, they are wholehearted in their wish for cooperation, but on the other, they can't ignore the challenges of bi-nationalism during war. In the first session of an ongoing planned series, we broached the subjects of nationalism, quietism, divergent loyalties, generational injustice, and the cycle of violence and retribution, subjects which we will continue to pursue in the next dialogue sessions.



Elementary School Teachers in a weekend seminar, February 2024

## Visiting a Palestinian Art Exhibition



IN COLLABORATION WITH THE VILLAGE ART GALLERY

**Art is part of a nation's identity, and is thus political. In Israel, Palestinian political expression through art is stifled, as it doesn't receive any funding or platforms.** Recently, the Mishkan Ein-Harod Art Museum has produced a precedent-setting exhibition, called "Spirit of Man, Spirit of Place" consisting entirely of works by 5 Palestinian artists from the Abu-Shakra Family. SFP graduate Michal Modrik, an associate curator of the





Village residents and SFP graduates in the Exhibition.

exhibition, collaborated with SFP staff and the WASNS gallery led by Dyana Shaloufi-Rizek, in organizing a visit by SFP graduates and WASNS residents. **This cooperation proved fruitful as the visitors found the art brimming with intent and expression and felt the visit was inspiring and thought-provoking.**



Village residents and SFP graduates in the Exhibition. 1st on the right: artist Farid Abu Shakra; 3rd on the right: artist and Umm el-Fahem Art Gallery owner, Said Abu Shakra

# ACTIVITIES FOR YOUNG ADULTS AND STUDENTS

Today's young adults are tomorrow's decision-makers. Unfortunately, we see a troubling rise in extreme right-wing politics and Jewish nationalism among the young. The following activities were tailor-made to bolster critical thinking from a bi-national perspective in the younger generation, so that they appreciate the complexity of our political reality, and as a means of keeping our finger on the pulse. Events included an introduction to the state of political inequality and oppression and how it translates into bi-national dialogue, and a tour of WASNS and its political education institutions (the bi-national school, the village's spiritual center, art gallery, etc.). These activities supplement our work in university campuses highlighted below (see: Dialogue in the Dark) as a means of promoting peace in the present with an eye to the future.

## Dialogue Weekend Seminar

In this two-day weekend seminar (28-29 July), we invited students and young adults to deepen their understanding of the conflict and its oppressive realities, and experience open political discourse. We combined conversations with lectures to support and challenge



participants in what was for many of them the first time breaching difficult issues, such as attitudes towards Hamas, the IDF's moral standing, and militaristic national narratives. One Jewish participant raised the pivotal question of "whether maintaining the occupation justifies the existence of the military?"

The seminar also included a tour of WASNS as an example of a community dedicated to ideals of equality and mutual respect, and a visit to the village's collaborative art gallery. The seminar sent participants back into the world more informed and motivated agents of change.

## Dialogue Workshop for "Heart-to-Heart" Youth Group in Collaboration with Givat Haviva



**Givat Haviva is one of the biggest social change organizations in Israel. We hosted one of their youth programs called Heart-to-Heart for a two-day dialogue seminar.** Usually, their participants speak English in bi-national dialogue, but trained SFP simultaneous translators allowed them

to speak in their native language, which - according to program leaders - led to more open and empathetic dialogue.



A tour of the village for participants of the "Heart-to-Heart" youth group, January 2023

## AJEEC Gap-Year Groups Tour



AJEEC is an Arab-Jewish organization that conducts unique gap-year programs in which young Palestinian and Jewish men and women spend a year after matriculating from high-school volunteering in various social initiatives and engage in critical dialogue. **The SFP hosted two of AJEEC's gap-year groups for a tour of WASNS to demonstrate a real-life example of a truly bi-national community that manifests ideals of mutual respect and equality. In addition, we held a bi-national dialogue session, in which participants discussed their experience of the tour, and of our bifurcated political reality.**

## Critical Thinking Session for the Israeli Policy Forum (IPF)



The IPF is an American Jewish organization, mostly consisting of young professionals, promoting the negotiation of a two-state solution to the Israeli-Palestinian conflict. Upon their request, Dr. Roi Silberberg held a lecture for their members on applying critical thinking to the analysis of the conflict.



## Desert Stars Activities



Desert Stars is an organization dedicated to fostering a new generation of Bedouin leaders to promote the interests of the community in Israel. Early in 2023, we gave lectures and discussion sessions to three of their groups, including lectures by lead academic Dr. Maram Masarwi on philosopher and educator Paulo Freire's critical pedagogy approach, and by Dr. Roi Silberberg, SFP Director, on critical thinking in the context of bi-national relations in Israel.

## Lavi Teachers Workshop



In this workshop, we discussed questions faced by teachers in East Jerusalem working in a segregated educational system, such as whether Arabic-speaking teachers should teach Hebrew to their students: on the one hand, doing so could benefit students in finding employment, but on the other, it can feel like capitulating to the oppressor.

## International Students Internship Program

**In this new program, international students from academic institutions in Israel and abroad come to the SFP to learn about our dialogue method and the roots and realities of the conflict, and apply these lessons to their studies and research.** Participants attend lectures, dialogue sessions and excursions, and experience a truly bi-national environment while gaining hand-on experience by assisting with tasks (writing social media and web page posts, chronicling activity logs, coordinating collaborations, and conducting research projects). After their internship, students return to their universities and native lands as SFP ambassadors, disseminating the knowledge and experiences they have accumulated to an international audience. We are deeply grateful to our interns - some of whom we introduce below - for their excellent work, and are delighted to continue this mutually beneficial relationship in the future.



## DIEGO N. AUSTIN

Originally from Miami Florida, USA, Diego is fluent in English and Spanish. His SFP internship took place between February-July 2023, as part of an annual Undergraduate Exchange Program in Islamic and Middle Eastern Studies at the Rothberg International School at the Hebrew University of Jerusalem. He is currently in his 4th and final year studying for a Bachelor of Arts in International Affairs at the George Washington University in Washington, DC.



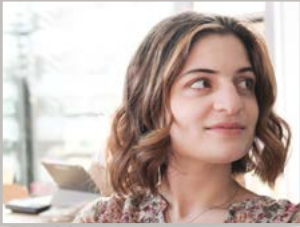
*"My time at the SFP perfectly complimented my research into conflict resolution in Israel-Palestine, improving my research capabilities and expanding my understanding of the conflict and its human impact. My internship at the SFP has taught me that although Israeli and Palestinian communities are usually separated by profound obstacles, the two groups can come together in pursuit of peace. This experience has greatly contributed to my belief in a peaceful future that must be pursued, even in the most difficult times."*

## LINNÉA RUBIN

Linnéa from Sweden is in her third year of study for her bachelor's degree at Lunds University. Her SFP internship in June 2023 was funded by a scholarship from the Swedish Friends Association of WASNS in cooperation with the university. She hopes to incorporate her experiences into her final bachelor's paper focusing on the SFP's work.



*"My SFP experience was impactful, as I got to see the impression that the activities, held in the WASNS "peace bubble", have on participants. This made me realize how important it is to support organizations like the SFP, as they can really alter people's lives by showing that peace is a viable goal that can and should be experienced on an individual level."*



## ELENA NINI

Elena from Bologna, Italy received a bachelor's in anthropology, religion and oriental civilization from the University of Bologna, and is currently studying for her master's in educational intervention in cases of social distress. Her SFP internship took place between September-October 2023 as part of the research process for her thesis, titled "Nonviolent Methods and Peace Pedagogy: Paths of peace in Israel and Palestine."

*"The SFP staff is so knowledgeable and professional, constantly researching innovative methods and improving their programs. Above all, they are committed to everyone in Israel-Palestine living a better life. They taught me so much - not only about peace, but about what it means to truly dedicate yourself to a cause."*



## GRACE GREGORY

Grace is a native English speaker who is fluent in German from Bristol, UK. Her SFP internship, between March-June 2023, was part of an annual Graduate Exchange Program in Islamic and Middle Eastern Studies at the Rothberg International School at the Hebrew University of Jerusalem. She is currently studying for a master's degree in liberal arts (majoring in history) at the University of Bristol.

*"Witnessing the school's dialogue facilitation method, and its perspective-altering effects on participants, inspired me to write a paper on the SFP's approach to Jewish-Palestinian relations, which my professor considered novel. In addition, it was incredibly moving to see Palestinians and Jews working together in the office, speaking their mother languages. This motivated me to share WASNS's peace model with as many people as possible."*



# RESISTING THE 2023 JUDICIAL COUP

**The SFP combats the inequality, oppression and discrimination suffered by Palestinians under the occupation, while also struggling against Israel's democratic deficiencies inside the borders drawn in 1967.**

Given its already compromised nature, the recent right-wing government attempts to erode the fabric of Israeli democracy in the guise of a "judicial reform," confronted us with many questions. The nature of the existing protest movement was discouraging, as it contented itself with a mere return to the



Demonstration against the judicial reform, Tel Aviv 2023. Photo by Tally Melamed, Shatil Stock

status quo of equality for Jews alone, alienating Palestinian citizens of Israel. **But since the judicial coup was a tangible threat that would lead to an even less democratic Israel and more acute harm to Palestinians and Jews critical of Jewish nationalism, we decided that it is our duty to join the resistance, while continuing to push for a more genuine democracy and substantive equality. The following showcases the results of this decision.**

## **Advanced Human Rights Training Program for Lawyers**

**This has been a terrible year for human rights in Israel, as governmental decisions, and the ongoing war, deepen harm to, and discrimination against the Palestinian population in Israel and the occupied territories.** So, we decided to start an advanced human rights training program for lawyers (May 2023-July 2023). Michael Sfar, one of Israel's leading human rights lawyers and SFP facilitation course graduate and Lawyers' Forum member, spearheaded curriculum and instruction.

Over six sessions, 16 participants discussed the moral and strategic dilemmas facing human rights lawyers in Israel by examining relevant texts, court cases and personal experiences. Topics included practicing law with a public agenda; the confluence and tension between moral ideals and the law; the interplay of identity and law; and much more. One graduate said that "the course showcased an excellent balance of learning through foreign and local precedents. **Our goal is to equip lawyers with the knowledge they need to get involved in the crucial field of human rights law to safeguard the rights of all communities and individuals. As one course graduate put it: "Discussions throughout the course helped me develop a broader perspective than I was used to, and to adopt different measures for success as a human rights lawyer."**

## **SFP Lawyers' Forum**

In June 2021, we founded the SFP Jewish-Palestinian Lawyers' Forum, consisting of graduates of our former agents of change courses for lawyers. Today, it functions as a community of practice on legal political



Attorney Michael Sfar and participants of the Advanced Human Rights Training Program for Lawyers

activism, dedicated to using expertise to promote a more egalitarian reality. The forum meets four times a year to discuss issues on the forefront of politics and law, hear lecturers from experts in various legal fields and set activist goals. **Due to the current actions of far-right legislators, this work is more urgent than ever.**

**The forum’s first project was to influence the election for the Israel Bar Association Chairman by encouraging Palestinian lawyers, who usually abstain, to vote.** After an impressive public campaign, with the humble backing of the SFP, Amit Bachar, who is aligned with resistance to the judicial coup, was named Chairman. In September 2023, the forum met with Bachar to present their aims as Bar members who support cooperation and justice, and listened to a lecture by Prof. Michael Karayanni of the Hebrew University of Jerusalem, a world-renowned expert in private international law, who advised them on future strategies.

## Seminar on the Judicial Coup: BRAK German Bar Association

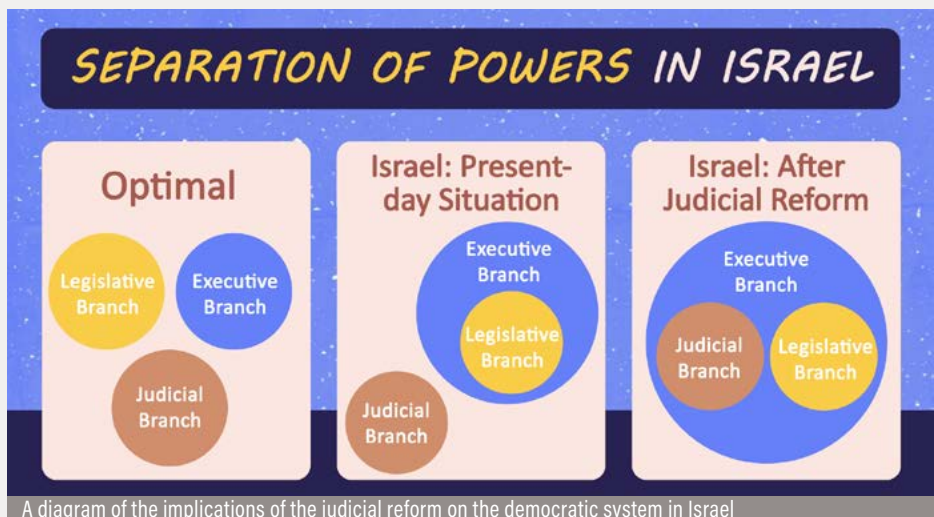


**Delegates from the SFP Lawyers’ Forum were invited to meet online with “BRAK,” the German Federal Bar Association, and explain the ramifications of the proposed judicial coup.** Dr. Manal Totry-Jubran, senior lecturer at the Bar-Ilan University Faculty of Law and veteran SFP lecturer,

presented the consequences of the judicial coup for Palestinian citizens of Israel; and attorney Michael Sfard talked about the practice of human rights law in the occupied territories, and the segregated legal structure at play: a civil system for Israeli-Jewish citizens and a military one for Palestinian inhabitants of the West Bank.

## Dialogue between Leaders of Judicial Coup Opposition and Leaders of the Palestinian Citizens of Israel

On the face of it, Palestinian citizens of Israel and pro-democracy Jews seem like natural political allies. But in reality, their cooperation is fraught with obstacles and friction. In the summer of 2023, at the height of the protests against the judicial coup, we invited the leaders of the protests and prominent leaders of the Palestinians in Israel to a series of meetings to explore and address these obstacles through dialogue. **As the war broke out, this line of communication seemed more crucial than ever to combat the growing division between Jews and Palestinians in Israel. Political leaders are the key to great influence, and we hope that our initiative will lay the foundations for these groups' leaders to bridge some of the gaps, yielding robust political cooperation.**



# DIALOGUE IN THE DARK: EMERGENCY ACTIVITIES IN TIMES OF WAR

We are living through traumatic times of unfolding war. Grief strikes at the heart as we process the atrocities committed by Hamas, and the lethal and vengeful Israeli response in Gaza which has caused countless civilian



casualties and a catastrophic humanitarian crisis. The Palestinian citizens of Israel are massively silenced and persecuted, and army-backed violence by Jewish settlers is rising in the West Bank.

**Under such stress, it is tempting to keep silent and wait for events to unfold. But we see it as our responsibility to facilitate honest and difficult reflection and dialogue through this cataclysmic disaster.** In fact, we have received many requests for consultation, especially by bodies with bi-national staff. Since the start of the war, we have taken several actions to support our graduates, the people of WASNS, and external organizations. **Although we may be just a drop in a turbulent sea, we continue to strive for an egalitarian, just and democratic society, relying on tools we have developed over years and the hard-won trust between the SFP and its Palestinian and Jewish graduates.**

## **SFP Graduates' Forums** Wartime Dialogue Sessions

**Since the start of the war, we have held dialogue meetings for 5 different SFP Graduates' forums to reflect on the war and its effects: Leaders in Nationally Mixed Cities, Stage Performers, Dialogue Facilitators, Mental Health Professionals, and Architects & Planners.** Throughout these sessions, the profound message echoed that, in today's Israel, it is illegitimate to expound the humane view that we should prioritize stopping the suffering of people on both sides. This seemingly simple stand is systematically swept under the rug, and considered divergent and dangerous.

**Another common theme was the difficulty of empathizing with others' grief in light of one's own, and the struggle against the tendency to surrender to despair. This sentiment is reflected in both national groups, but only ever expressed and explored in such forums - which underlines their importance.** In addition, Palestinian graduates grappled with their disappointment with some of their Jewish counterparts who felt the need to align with some of the IDF's military actions, and Jews struggled with their lost sense of security following the attack, while both Palestinian and Jews shared their anxiety over being silenced by a public militaristic stand. **One**

Palestinian participant summed up his experience by saying that “The session gave participants a platform to express their feelings without judgment or fear, and in times of such exhaustive dread in daily life, this can be quite a lot, I really needed this.”

## Dialogue Workshop - The Fund for Innovative Education



The Fund for Innovative Education is a body dedicated to improving Israel's education system from the ground-up. Fund executives asked us for guidance, but were worried that broaching the subject might lead to distress and disintegration. Luckily, this anxiety was replaced by understanding in the workshop we held, as it became clear that, for all their disagreement, the fund's staff had a strong sense of belonging to the organization. Many participants reported feeling relief after they learned the limits of dialogue, and a heightened sense of freedom to engage one another within these limits.

## University Activities

University campuses provide Jews and Palestinians a rare chance to interact with one another on seemingly equal footing. Unfortunately, the interaction is often superficial and tends to reinforce disparities and biases, which the war has fanned into unrest that threatens to upend relations. **Our university activities offer a different path, granting staff and students the opportunity to share their side of the problematic reality; conduct honest conversations about social, psychological and political barriers; and explore ways to address these issues - reaffirming the university's role as a bastion of free thinking.**

### Emergency Dialogue Sessions for Tel-Aviv University (TAU) Psychology Students



As the war tore through TAU's student body, the Psychology department called us to conduct two dialogue sessions. Palestinian participants shared their alienation from Israeli society as the war reinforced Palestinian denialism, and Jews shared their sense of violation. Together, we lifted the veil of repression from our collective, fragmented social consciousness, to



gain a sober view of our reality, allowing expression to different points of view while ensuring mutual respect.

## Be'er-Sheva University Staff Workshop



**The staff of Be'er-Sheva University were dreading the political turmoil they were likely to face when students returned to the nationally mixed campus.** Teachers expressed concerns about balancing the desire to focus on study and allowing political self-expression, and acted out possible triggering scenarios. We analyzed and challenged their worries, and the pitfalls of reducing one another to stereotypes. In particular, we challenged the idea that Palestinian political identity is inherently obtrusive, and the inclination to erase it. **In the end, teachers left the session more aware of the political tension that accompanies students into the classroom and better equipped to perform their work as educators.**



Tel-Aviv University Psychology students, December 2023

## Sharing our Message: SFP Media Appearances

The ongoing war has thrust the Israeli-Palestinian conflict into the global spotlight. This presents a unique opportunity to shape international public opinion, influence perceptions of the conflict, and propose what might be the most effective approach to its resolution. We have been disseminating three core messages in various languages (including English, Arabic, Hebrew, German, Swedish, Finnish, French and Dutch): (i) **The Palestinian people are united**, as is evident from the collective pain of Palestinians in Gaza, the West Bank, Israel, and the Palestinian diaspora; (ii) **Military approaches to the problem** are ineffective and exacerbate the problem, and so we demand an immediate ceasefire, the end of the occupation and all manner of forceful domination and a diplomatic resolution to the conflict; (iii) **Persecution and thought suppression against anyone is unacceptable, and we are dedicated to fostering spaces conducive to safe and free dialogue for both Palestinians and Jews**. We hope that our involvement with global media can motivate public opinion and influential institutions to take a stand for peace. **Please follow the QR code for links to some of the interviews**



## Empowering our Community with Knowledge: Wartime Lectures

The war has introduced new challenges to the public sphere, and we have assumed a critical role in identifying trends, learning from experts and contemplating coping strategies. The following are examples of lectures we have coordinated for our community.

The following are examples of lectures we have coordinated for our community. Follow QR codes for a summary of each lecture

**The first lecture by Hassan Jabareen, CEO of the Adalah Legal Center for Arab Minority Rights in Israel,** shed light on the political and public aspects of the recent alarming trend of institutional persecution of Palestinian citizens of Israel, ranging from students to public figures. Since the start of the war, this has been demonstrated by false accusations, lack of due process, and even banishment.



**The second lecture, given by Ofer Dagan, Co-CEO of Sikkyu-Aufoq,** offered a genealogy of the decades-long economic and tactical policies that cultivated discriminatory practices and societal gaps, leading to impoverished health and social services for Palestinians, as well as the current attempts to usher in policies that can change this situation.



**The third lecture, delivered by Umar al-Ghubari,** an expert in Nakba and Return from Zochrot organization, retold the story of Israel's so-called "mixed cities" through the prism of the Nakba, showing that they are actually the results of traumatic and cruel ethnic cleansing campaigns dating back to before Israel's founding.



**Another noteworthy lecture, given by Jameela Hardal, CEO of Citizens for the Environment,** introduced the Environmental Impact of the War, revealing the crucial yet often overlooked topic of the severe environmental toll inflicted by the war.



Umar al-Ghubari giving a lecture in the Leaders in Mixed Cities Course, December 2023

# DIALOGUE IN TIMES OF WAR

## An Analysis of SFP Wartime Dialogue Sessions

October to December 2023

Written by Noor Abo Ras - SFP's University Courses Coordinator  
and Project Manager

Since its establishment in the late 1970s, the School for Peace has supported its community members through many periods of crisis. It consistently maintains a platform from which participants can build an egalitarian and just political alternative. **Between October 7th and December 2023, amidst trauma, despair, and silencing, we continued our crucial dialogue work, holding meetings attended by approximately 800 participants from various institutions.**

**Dialogue between occupier and occupied raises many questions. In particular, one wonders whether dialogue might end up normalizing inequality?** This question is all-the-more concerning when asymmetrical power relations are especially acute, thwarting the possibility of a safe space for all sides. As one Jewish facilitator put it: "How can we have genuine dialogue when organizations silence Palestinian employees?"

The feeling of censorship was expressed by a Palestinian facilitator who said that they “were initially afraid to highlight the oppression exerted by Jewish participants on Palestinians in dialogue,” and this led them to feel “incompetent as they didn’t protect Palestinian participants.” In our work during the war, we tried to address such challenges.

## Why Keep Going? What’s the Role of Dialogue in Times of Crisis?

**In moments of crisis, when safety is compromised, restoring a sense of security can allow people to extricate themselves from survival mode, and act in a balanced and compassionate way. Our analysis shows that a safe space can only emerge in the full presence of the “other,” since danger is rooted in the traumatic relationship *with* the “other”.**

Winnicott’s psychoanalytic concept of “Potential Space” (Winnicott, 1971) is useful here, as it instructs us not to distinguish external from internal sources, but to notice that the two interact in a way that allows people to discover something new (Jemstedt, 2000). This mental space, halfway between objective reality and subjective experience, grounds our ability to expand our experience (Winnicott, 1971).

**Participants enter the potential space with initial fantasies of having their personal needs met by the “other.”** In our sessions since October





7th, Jews often demand the Palestinians condemn Hamas's actions. One facilitator said that "When %80 of the group condemned Hamas's actions, Jewish members were fixated on the remaining %20." We believe that the Jewish demand for condemnation is grounded in an attempt to regain a sense of control that was undermined on October 7th, manifesting a fantasy of controlling Palestinians and what they say. Of course, getting what they wish in this case provides only a temporary respite from anxiety. In contrast, the Palestinian group's fantasy was that the "other" would take responsibility by equalizing power relations within the group and creating a safe space. **One Palestinian participant said that they "Came to lay everything on the table. Not to create a partnership, just to talk," which was a clear example of a process of recalibrating expectations, leading to a shared goal of having a genuine, safe discussion.**

Despite the shared desire to create a safe space, both groups left feeling stifled. As one Jewish facilitator said, "It's probably a fantasy that cannot be realized... Jewish participants are filtering their emotions to avoid hurting the other side... Both sides want to be heard..." **It is precisely when reality collapses, and criticism becomes illicit, that the potential space of opinions and feelings triggered by encounters in dialogue is most crucial, as it allows exploration, and restores a sense of agency.**

## **The Role of Uni-national Dialogue within a Bi-national Space during Crisis**

The demand for uni-national sessions - a regular part of the bi-national process - has intensified since the start of the war, as it serves as a unique safe space for Palestinians to share their grief. As one Palestinian facilitator put it, Palestinian woe is "deemed unacceptable," and is effectively banned from the Israeli public sphere, under penalty of persecution by the state and private citizens. This violates the basic need to feel sadness and anger, leading to an oppressive split between people's emotions and physical sensations. **One Palestinian participant said that because she is essentially "not allowed to feel helplessness**

and despair," she ends up feeling that her identity "is worthless and has no right to exist."

**Jewish uni-national dialogue enabled in-depth exploration of the group's concept of change, the extent of their commitment to change, and their expectations of the Palestinian group.** A Jewish facilitator shared that the uni-national sessions provided them with "a way to talk about oppression and accountability," and to "authentically connect with Israeli pain" because it freed them" from political exploitation of grief as a pretext for war." **Being in a space that lets participants experiment with removing their masks allowed both groups to lay themselves bare and connect with authentic feelings of pain.**

**In our harsh reality, we managed to create a space for experimentation and restore participants' sense of agency.** Thus, we believe that we should keep asking hard political questions about our work, but also remember that dialogue is truly significant in this moment. It's our responsibility to foster the remnants of Palestinian-Jewish relations, maintain the hope of improvement, and strive to learn and develop.



# ACTIVITIES OVERSEAS

As was already mentioned, we believe that international public opinion matters, as it can change local policy. Therefore, in addition to our media appearances in the last year, we have been engaging regularly with audiences outside of Israel. In what follows, we offer a sampling of some of our global outreach endeavors.

## Bosch Foundation Study Tour



In February 2023, two of our representatives joined an interdisciplinary study tour in Berlin and Stuttgart produced by the Bosch Foundation. There, the Fund's partners (ACAP, Citizens for the Environment and the SFP) exchanged insights on the subject of environmental planning and peacebuilding through municipal work and civil society. All in all, the tour was highly prolific, and we expect it to generate artnerships and collaborations for years to come.



Participants in the Bosch Foundation Study Tour, February 2023. Credit: RBSG

# Training for the New Israel fund Germany

The New Israel Fund is dedicated to promoting liberal democracy in Israel. Its German branch asked us to assist in



training two Berlin-based groups: (i) teachers and education professionals seeking to facilitate dialogue on the conflict among students, and (ii) a group of women dialogue facilitators. The teachers group heard a talk by Roi Silberberg, head of the SFP, on our methodology and life in a community based on equality, and **attended a hands-on training session with veteran SFP facilitator Rose Amar, who spoke of the implications of using different terms to describe Jewish-Palestinian relations (conflict, occupation, discrimination, colonization, apartheid), and the possible stereotypes and misconceptions that school-age students might bring into discussion.** The group of women facilitators also benefited from Rose's experience, as she shared insights from years of facilitating dialogue, including the unavoidable effects of asymmetrical power relations.

# SFP Delegation to Sweden & Consulting Fryshuset Youth Organization

In May 2023, two SFP representatives visited Stockholm, Sweden to bolster ties with our Swedish Friends Association. There, they gave a talk to a large crowd of academics from the Polytechnic university on the conflict; conducted an interview with a journalist of the most widely read newspaper in Sweden; and answered questions by the



staff of Fryshuset, the largest youth center in Sweden, on tension mitigation strategies, which continued when Fryshuset delegates visited the SFP in Israel in August 2023.

SFP team meets Fryshuset Youth Organization, May 2023

## Dialogue for Israelis and Palestinians Living in Europe

In October, we launched a novel online dialogue group for Israelis and Palestinians living in Europe, guided by a Palestinian and a Jewish facilitator, both of whom live abroad. Over several online sessions, the group explored the experience of having national ties to a conflict zone while living outside of it, the dynamics between the national groups abroad, and options for reality-changing action.

The first meeting was scheduled for October 8 - a day after the war broke out. While in Israel and Palestine, all bi-national meetings were on hold, this group was galvanized to meet. Despite many disagreements, the conversation was characterized by mutual respect and understanding, with participants reporting that it helped alleviate their loneliness, and provided a welcome escape from the polarized public space, where one can be either pro-Palestinian or pro-Israeli and nothing in between. This success has led the group to plan a weekend encounter face-to-face in Berlin in 2024.

Weekend dialogue seminar for Israelis and Palestinians Living in Europe, Berlin, March 2024





# Sanitary Services for Displaced Gazans

## Seba Abu Daqa and Tom Kellner

Seba, a Gazan Palestinian, and Tom an Israeli Jew, both live in Germany. **They met at the SFP dialogue program for Palestinians and Israelis in Europe, which started a day after the Hamas attack on October 7. There, they devised the Clean Shelter Project providing sanitary services to displaced Gazans.**



**Seba's mother is living in a makeshift Internally Displaced Persons (IDP) camp in Gaza experiencing an extreme shortage of clean facilities.** This not only poses higher risk of disease transmission, but deprives people of their dignity. Seba and Tom decided to address this issue.

**As self-described people of action, Seba and Tom were originally skeptical about the dialogue program, but ended up going through a meaningful experience, meeting accountable and empathetic people, and learning that the insights born of dialogue can lead to tangible results. This is especially true for Seba, whose family in Gaza is subject to the horrors of the ongoing war.**

Tom and Seba connected during a tense group discussion about the use of the word "terrorist." Seba rebuffed another participant's suggestion of symmetry between occupied and occupier, which Tom appreciated. They quickly developed trust as they collaborated on their initiative, which they ascribe to their shared background of feminist and intellectual commitments.

The project started with a call for donations in December 2023, that quickly exceeded the limit of donations allowed in Germany for non-organizations, so



Clean Shelter project in the making, Gaza, December 2023

they are currently registering as such. **They have already built dozens of toilets, and delivered many tents and mattresses to Gazan IDPs. As the refugee count increases daily, resources are continually dwindling, making this a crucial endeavor. Follow the QR code for more information and donation.**



# OUR COLLABORATIONS

As is evident from the above, the SFP collaborates with many institutions and organizations. In this section, we would like to highlight our special collaboration with Carmel Medical Center.



# Medical Staff Workshop at Carmel Medical Center



The medical field in Israel is especially bi-national, with Palestinians prominently represented in the workforce relative to their share in the population. **Officials at the Carmel Medical Center in Haifa have come to realize that ignoring politics is an untenable strategy for achieving a cooperative and inclusive work environment. So, they contacted us with a request to conduct a workshop to teach influential members of the medical staff how to productively and critically address incendiary political topics.** With the help of the Israel Medical Association (IMA), we have conducted a series of four dialogue workshops for sixteen medical staff members, many of whom hold managerial positions, in which we trained them in SFP dialogue methods and educated them about the conflict. Discussions were prolific, and participants were energized and invigorated in finally getting a chance to discuss the "elephant in the room."

**The hospital vice president, Dr. Shani Brosh, said that they've *"realized how important the issue is,"* and how surprised she was to see *"so much courage in discussing what is considered taboo."* The participating group has been converted into an advisory committee for Jewish-Palestinian relations, and its members act as ambassadors hosting cultural events, facilitating political discussions and advising hospital leadership on issues of national diversity. The committee has since published a convention charting guidelines that will assure an egalitarian and respectful work and treatment environment during these difficult times.** We are monitoring the developments at the Carmel Medical Center as a potential pilot for other medical institutions and organizations with bi-national workforces.



Carmel Medical Center workshop, June 2023

# HOMECOMING: THE SFP RETURNS TO A REBUILT CAMPUS

We are delighted to return to the School for Peace building, which burned down in an arson attack in 2020. The building has been rebuilt, refurbished and furnished with the generous help of our backers: the Harrison-Frank Family Foundation, the Tolkien Foundation, Fondazione SanZeno, several private foundations in Switzerland and Lichtenstein, and the Swiss, American, British, German, Austrian, Italian and Swedish SFP Friends Associations, among others - 19 in all. We wish to extend our heartfelt gratitude to all of them. This historically significant building, that served as the training ground for peace activists for nearly 40 years, has now been



redesigned and rebuilt to serve as an even better base of operations for our activities, meeting all our activity and staff's needs. It will continue to be the site for hosting new and continuing courses that produce new generations of peace makers.

# SUMMARY

**As a political-educational organization, 2023 was an especially challenging year – to say the least.** But it is precisely in these dark times that political change organizations should double-down on their efforts, as our role in the conflict as dialogue facilitators and fair-minded critics is more essential than ever. Indeed, we are committed to providing consistent support to our graduates' networks and forums, creating new programs, and cultivating domestic and international outreach activities and collaborations. **It is our duty to continue to push Israel and the region to a more human, just and equal reality, and we will never give up on the vision of a better future.**

בית הספר לשלום, נווה שלום  
مدرسة السلام، واحة السلام  
The School for Peace



Support us in achieving a just, equal and peaceful society, through training Palestinians and Jews to be agents of change. **Contributions to the School for Peace are much appreciated and can be transferred to:**

**Bank Hapoalim #12/690, King George 16, Jerusalem**

Account Name: **The School for Peace,**

**Amutat Yedide Hamosadot Hachinuchiim**

Account # 694344 Swift:

POALILIT | IBAN: IL64-0126-9000-0000-0694-344



אני גארת משה סיון  
 יקוא ומסכסוך הלה יפלה  
 וניהיה בשנים ללא לינה  
 ושנאה הלוואי וכל הטוב  
 שכלולם יקוד ללא אנכי יום  
 אחרי באהבה והבנה צחוקי  
 שמי לפי שיצ רק טובי

לאני עליה היקרים  
 אני לא מבין וכנראה לצולק  
 לא אכין אתי הסכל שאתם  
 צורקים  
 אני מאכן שכם ולכל בן אנכי  
 שצולק לא יחווה צבר כלה  
 אני גארת מקווה מכל הלב  
 שהיה לכם רק טובי  
 אני כל  
 אכיל אני בצלם אשתה אם  
 שאתים וקיים טובי

In the photo: A participant in one of our ongoing programs shared that his 13 years old kid is asking a lot of questions about the situation, and among them he expressed his concerns about the children in Gaza.

His father suggested he write a letter to the children of Gaza, and so he did.

The letter reads: *"Dear people of Gaza, I cannot, and probably will never, understand the suffering that you go through. I wish you, and anyone in the world, had never experienced this.*

*I really wish you from the bottom of my heart only the best. I would be very happy to know one day, if possible, that you are happy and living a good life. I really believe that one day this conflict will end and we shall live in peace without resentment and hatred. I wish all the best things in the world would get to all human beings. With love and with deep understanding that you too deserve only good."*



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