

## COMITEE FOR BASIC RIGHTS AND DEMOCRACY

Frankfurt

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# Vacations from war

The *Vacation from the War* campaign, summer 2003  
Steps toward the concrete utopia of a peaceful world  
on the example of the Middle East and the Balkan wars.

Dear benefactors and friends,

30<sup>th</sup> Novembre 2003

Again last summer more than 1500 children and young people from the Balkan conflict-zones came together in twelve summer-camps. They ate as much as they could, each slept in a single bed, used a warm shower but first played together, learned how to swim and how to speak about their fate, and they mourned together.

This still is an unique experience.



*A group with children from the three parts of Bosnia*

Dear Donors,

my name is Petar Tesanovic, I live in Sebrenica and finished the fourth grade of the primary school. I live with my father and my brother, my mother was killed during the war. Here is everything super.

I want to thank you for making possible for me to come to the seaside.

Petar Tesanovic ( a Serbian boy )

Dear Donors,

my name is Nihada Ibric, I am 10 years old and have finished the fourth grade. I live in an orphanage in Tuzla. This is my first time at the seaside and I wish I could come again. Thank you very much for making possible for me these holidays.

I love you,

Nihada. Ibric ( a muslim girl )

I also thank all of you Helga Dieter (Koordinator)



*We want to build bridges not walls*



*Four strong young women from Israel and Palestine – Who comes from where?*

Dear donors,

30<sup>th</sup> of August 2003

On behalf of all 90 participants who took part in three separate Israeli-Palestinian dialogue seminars this summer, we would like to thank you and express our deep gratitude to you who generously provided funding for this project. Your support really helps us in paving the way to a real peace and a lasting coexistence between the two peoples.

This seminar was a unique experience. What is seldom possible for us under our daily circumstances was granted here: we shared with each other our thoughts, our points of view and daily lives with great sincerity, even though almost all of us were born and raised in Israel/Palestine. For many this meeting was the first opportunity to have met a flesh-and-blood person of the other side. The atmosphere in the seminar was one of mutual respect, understanding, and a sense of equality....

The Israelis listened to the suffering of the Palestinian people since the 1948 Nakba and the painful and persisting conditions of the refugees, their daily fears of military attacks and the reality of being kept prisoners under curfew and closures.

The Palestinians listened to the suffering of the Israeli people in the holocaust and their everyday fears of suicide-bombers on a bus or in public places...

We also had a lot of fun dancing, singing, sharing in each other's cultures and having excursions together.

We feel inspired and motivated by each other's real desire for peace and reconciliation, and plan to keep working both in collaboration, and each in his own community, when we are back home in order to continue what we have started here in Germany. This was a real „Vacation from War“, and time to reflect on our group and individual efforts in the future.

Finally we thank you again... Yours sincerely,

Initiative „Breaking Barriers“ Israel and Palestine, Youth Federation Nablus  
Peace School „Neve Shalom / Wahat al Salam“