

# Vacation from War

## Steps toward the Concrete Utopia of a Peaceful World

### Letters to the benefactors Israeli Palestinian Seminars 2008

#### Palestinians

In the name of God, the Merciful.

I have learnt a lot about myself and about my society. I have come across many aspects and faces of the conflict for the first time here. I have learnt to listen, to dispute and to enter into a dialogue. You, Helga, donors, sponsors and members of all teams deserve more than a mere thank you, you deserve a medal! I thank every Jewish person who came here because of peace.

Assalam Aleikum and God's blessings.

Ibrahim

Dear Donor,

I would like to thank you for giving this seminar the chance to exist. Thank you for taking the chance in making a change in the world. Without your efforts we wouldn't have met, wouldn't have talked about the conflict and we wouldn't have tried to find a solution together. So thanks, and I hope, other young people will be able to join this seminar in the following years.

Mohammad

By The Name Of God

I know that my letter won't be the first nor the last one you receive as a thanks-letter, but I hope, it will express my feelings and how much I am thankful and grateful. Thank you so much for the time you spent thinking of us, thanks for your financial support, thanks to your commitment to this project, thanks for all you've done and are still doing.

I learnt a lot of things about myself and the others. Now I know more about myself and what I really want to, now I realize what is going on in the back of my mind.

I was talking to half of all members of the Palestinian group, they think also, that this opportunity we had by you is something very useful for all of us, which we will never forget. That's why we are praying God to help and bless you, to continue the good work you are doing to help other people by this project. Finally you should know that we will be more than happy to participate in such good activities again.

Best wishes for your good work!

Yours gratefully Imad

I want to thank everyone who supports this seminar. It was really nice and successful. Everything was good and you gave us the best situation to meet Israeli people and to talk to each other. I will go back to my country with a nice memory and in a different way of thinking. I hope, the committee will continue this project for Palestinians and Israeli. Only by talking we can find a solution of the conflict. Maybe one day we will have peace, you gave us hope. Thank you for your pleasant invitation. Thanks to all of you!

With my thank and love Haneen

First of all I want to thank the Germans for their pleasant invitation, and I want to thank everybody who was part of this program and supported it. You gave us the chance to talk to each other, Palestinians and Israeli, and to know both sides' suffering and way of thinking. I learnt that both sides want peace. That changed my way of thinking in a positive way. So thanks to everyone who works to assure the success of this project. Everything was prepared perfectly, we feel that you are doing your best to make us happy, thanks a lot. I hope, the committee will continue this work for the future generations. We all want to live in peace, and maybe with this invitation and the way we discussed our problems in the seminar our dream one day will become true and both sides will live in peace.

Dana

I'm from the Palestinian group. I want to thank all of you. I greatly appreciate all the help and hard work done by all sides to bring these two groups together, Israelis and Palestinians, in the common interest of peace. I hope this dialogue will further the dialogue between the two people and hopefully we will have peace some day and stop the conflict. I personally enjoyed the dialogue and made new friends from both groups.

Thanks again from the bottom of my heart!

Mohammad

I just want to say thanks to everyone who is engaged in this project. Thanks to the Israeli group showing us dignity and respect.

Be sure that I'll never forget you, because you changed a lot of things in my mind and in my personality.

Lama

### **Israelis**

Dear Benefactors,

I am a participant of the women's seminar 08/2008 near Darmstadt. I want to say thank you for giving me such an important opportunity to meet Palestinian people, to learn about their lives and about the occupation - not through the media. To understand that we are all people and people can solve this conflict even though it looks sometimes impossible.

After this seminar I feel that I can talk to Palestinians and that I want to. I believe that personal connections are necessary for the solution of this conflict and I hope to make friends from Palestine

Thank you, Ira

Hi,

Of course the main thing I want to tell you is a BIG THANK YOU! The last two weeks have been an amazing experience for me and an unique opportunity for everybody. It was interesting to get a lot of informations and knowledge I didn't have before. It was also an intense emotional experience to meet my neighbours for the first time, who unfortunately are sometimes my enemies. For the first time I could meet them as persons, hear their personal pain and sufferings.

I think we had an extremely important experience and I really, REALLY appreciate you for helping it to happen. I hope, most of our people could come and experience and feel what I am feeling. I'm sure it would help the world to be a better place for everyone. Contributing to this seminar is a great big thing, so once again thank you.

Thank you, Michal

Dear Benefactors,

It is very important for me to thank you for enabling me to participate in this interesting and important seminar.

I feel that the environment in which we were accommodated was comfortable and supporting, allowing me to fully take part in the political, personal and cultural process.

I sincerely hope and believe that this seminar is the starting point of a longer process of communication and change.

All this would not have been possible without your donation and help, so once again, THANK YOU! I hope you continue donating for this purpose: the more people experience direct communication between Palestinians and Israelis the more there will be cooperation in trying to change the current situation in a unique and deep way (in my opinion, of course).

Leam

Dear Donors,

I really want to THANK YOU! This seminar was so important for me because I never had the chance to meet the other side and now I truly had the time to talk and to think about the situation in my country. I felt that I can really identify and understand the girls and their stories and now I want to come back to Israel and DO something. I really believe I can.

So again – thank you! It's important to me that more people will have the chance to experience this seminar. It can bring something so good to our society: It's possible to communicate and understand the other side.

Lots of love Ayelet

Dear Donors,

I would like to thank you from the bottom of my heart for giving me the chance to see what T.V. and papers in Israel won't let us Israelis see.

I think if more awareness will develop in the Israeli society by things like this seminar (which include personal stories that you trust the people who tell it) the peace process will go forward.

I hope that every woman in Israel will see and hear what I did here. I think everybody deserves this chance.

Thank you very much for giving me this experience that let me feel how woman power can really change things.

Aya