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This was a very busy year for The School for Peace (SFP) with lots of activity despite, or maybe due to, the worsening political situation. Our dedicated staff worked continuously throughout the year to deliver another solid series of SFP programs, courses, conferences, workshops, publications, and more. These efforts are sustained by your support and our shared conviction that promoting peace and equality between Palestinians and Israelis, and ending the occupation through dialogue and activism, are more important now than ever.

Our work this year took place in the shadow of troubled times for Israeli-Palestinian relations. In Israel, democracy and equality took a hard hit when the nation-state bill was legislated, declaring Israel as the Nation-State of the Jewish People and ignoring the rights of over %20 of the populace who are not Jews. Almost daily, the Israeli government has been introducing laws that erode the legal infrastructure of democracy, while right wing parties are working to undermine the role of the Supreme Court, expand settlements and perpetuate the violent control of another nation. At the School for Peace, we meet these challenges with expanded programming and a greater sense of obligation and responsibility to work for change.

This year we ran seven change agent programs, a record number, with Palestinian and Israeli participants. Two were for mental health professionals, teaching them to become facilitators of groups in conflict and leaders of community-based change. These courses were created in partnership with Inmaa, a Palestinian NGO dedicated to peace and democracy, and were funded by USAID. We also completed our third and last program for Israeli and Palestinian
future politicians, under a 3 year grant program funded by the European Union. Within Israel we completed a program for Jewish and Palestinian environmentalists advancing environmental justice, and a course teaching Jewish and Arab women activists to utilize social media as a tool for social change. We also completed a program for engineers, city planners and architects, in conjunction with the Arab Center for Alternative Planning, and a program for leaders in Israel’s mixed cities – marking the fourth time we have run these two programs.

Our priority for the coming year is to continue to build a strong, engaged, and energized SFP graduate community. SFP staff are currently developing a formal long term strategy to leverage the synergy embodied in these efforts. We have already learned that the emergent SFP graduate networking allows us to advise and assist more effectively, while also enabling the graduates to better assist one another, as they advance their initiatives to bring change. One encouraging development this year was that many graduates of the future politicians course ran for public office in municipal elections, and several were elected to local councils while others were elected as mayors and deputy mayors.

This year was marked by the success of two significant conferences. The School for Peace Research Institute held a conference on possible alliances between the Jewish left and Arab leaders and political parties, especially pertinent now as elections in Israel are set for April 9th, 2019. The second conference was convened jointly by the Village and the SFP on the subject of nonviolent struggles.

The SFP also marked two publishing milestones. The first was the inaugural issue of the new journal Pulse – exploring, in Hebrew and Arabic, the topic of possible alliances between the Arab and the Jewish left. The second was a book, The Power of Dialogue between Israelis and Palestinians, published in English by Rutgers University Press and in German by Diak (translated by Ulla Philipps-Heck of our German Friends Association). This fascinating anthology of candid interviews with 25 SFP course graduates also includes a scholarly introduction by Prof. Tamar Saguy and my own critical analysis of the interview contents. To broaden the circles of people exposed to these positive stories of social change and transformation led by SFP graduates, please distribute the book widely in your communities and share your contact information for purchasing them on social media.

During this year, we held four semester-long courses at universities and colleges and had two successful youth workshops and a teachers’ seminar. We also held a colloquium for professionals and academics working in the field of Jewish-Arab encounters.

The SFP’s Jewish-Arab staff has continued to work tirelessly together to advance equality and shared society. They are a unique group of inspiring individuals who labor diligently during these difficult times. I thank them for their efforts, commitment, and dedication.

We also thank you and all of our friends for the support you have given. We could not have carried out such intense and important work without you. We look forward to your continued support and encouragement as we enter a new year.

With the best of wishes,

Dr. Nava Sonnenschein, Director
The School for Peace
2018 Change Agent Programs
2018 marked the final year of our European Union grant for the SFP change agent program for up-and-coming politicians from Israel and Palestine. This completes the course work with 120 young politicians, opening their eyes to the lives of the other and seeking common ground in building a vision of peace and a two state solution for the future of their countries. Three groups worked for over 18 months to evolve a more nuanced and in-depth understanding of the political situation from both sides, and to plan and initiate action projects to alleviate conflict and build bridges across the divides. Of the participants in this program, one was already elected Mayor and four (thus far) were elected to local government.

The issues of the continued occupation and struggle to bring about a two state solution and equality between Jews and Arabs in Israel have become a central concern for the participants in the program. Their positive experiences in working together and negotiating peace solutions during the simulation segments of the program showed them that agreement is possible and will impact on their work as they move ahead as leaders.

The program was sponsored by the EU Peacebuilding Initiative.
WE CONGRATULATE OUR NEWLY ELECTED GRADUATES AND THOSE WHO HAVE ENTERED POSITIONS OF INFLUENCE

Amir Kochavi—Mayor Hod Hasharon
Raja Za’atry—Haifa City Council Member
Eli Nacht—Deputy Mayor Ashdod
Maier Abargil—Ashdod City Council Member
Dr. Laura Wharton—Jerusalem City Council Member
Sami Ali—Ran for Mayor Jisr Al Zarka

Avi Dabush—Moving Up in the Meretz Party leading the periphery movement.
Shaqed Morag—Appointed Director of Peace Now
Samar Hawila—Advisor for Palestinian Affairs British Embassy
Rasul Saada—Director of Safe Cities - Abraham Initiatives.
Eyal David—Deputy Ambassador to Kenya.
This USAID funded program working with mental health professionals from Israel and Palestine is the School for Peace's second cross border program working with professionals from the Palestinian Authority. The first group of 40 mental health professionals began to meet in January 2018 and have been meeting and working together throughout the year. The first group consisted of 13 psychologists; 8 professionals in conflict resolution and peace work; 7 therapists; 6 social workers; and 6 individuals in other health related fields. The goal of the program is to reduce tension and violence in Israel and Palestine.

The second group of 40 mental health professionals began the program in October 2018. In December we were advised by USAID to cease program implementation by January 2019. Despite this, we are dedicated to raising the funds required to complete the training component of this program for the second group of participants, assist the first group to conduct their projects, and train the third group as planned.
of the participants said they had a better understanding of the other. 88%

were more positive towards the other. 80%

said they were willing to work with the other on shared interests. 90%
We began a new year-long program this year for 27 Jewish and Arab architects, civil engineers and urban planners. The program includes intensive dialogues and lectures by academics and professionals in the field, with an emphasis on how to impact planning for the benefit of all the residents in towns and cities. Dr. Enaya Banaa, a graduate of the planners program and chief engineer of the Wadi Ara Planning Committee, spoke about planning challenges in Arab towns; Jerusalem City Council member Meir Margalit spoke about planning issues in Jerusalem. Of particular note was Government Decision 922 on a more balanced allocation of funding for development in Arab localities. Local authorities can access funds but face a challenge in meeting the administrative requirements.
«The course provides a rare opportunity for two sides to meet who otherwise almost never meet. It gave me tools to cope with the situation in this country instead of remaining in denial. I find myself confronting history and differing narratives. I discovered that I was more tolerant of differences than I’d realized. My work with Bedouin communities now comes from a place of not being afraid to address difficult issues».—Jewish participant

“The program helps me contribute to the society we are creating in Haifa. We have a project there and I am bringing to it the knowledge that I gained”. Arab participant
NEW COURSE FOR WOMEN IN THE MEDIA

This year the SFP ran a course to strengthen the voice of young Arab and Jewish women activists in the media. The goal was to build the capacity and contribution of these women in all types of media. It ran from May to October 2018 and during that time as well as participants’ deepening their understanding social issues including identities, narratives and structures of power in Jewish and Arab societies, they learned about women’s roles in the media, how to make short videos, and how to maximize use of Facebook, twitter and other social media.

Some said that they will write position papers, other started to write to newspapers (Weis, Der Freitag), some write more on Facebook. They all said they have more courage to say what they think and they express themselves more in public spheres. Many of them have plans to write a book, some are already working on it. In addition, several participants got actively involved in the local elections, some as candidates and some as supporters. The empowerment experienced during the course had contributed to their public engagement.

The evaluation of the participants in the concluding session showed a major change. Many of them took part in a joint Jewish–Palestinian dialogue for the first time. They said that it gave them more courage to talk in public situations, it gave them hope to believe in the possibility of shared society. They reported that they received many tools in the field of social change, new media, social media and in the field of the conflict. Some said that it was the first time they understood the connections between Palestinians within Israel and the West Bank. Many reported that the course empowered them to do more in the field of the media.
This past year we ran our third change agent course for leaders in mixed towns and cities. Participants comprised 19 activists and officials from the mixed cities: 9 Jews and 10 Arabs, with women (12) outnumbering men (7) in the 2018 group. All participants are from the mixed cities, with 6 from Jaffa, 6 from Haifa, 2 from Lod, 2 from Nazareth Ilit, 2 from Carmiel, and 1 from Beersheba. The group met 11 times on a monthly basis: 7 dialogue meetings in NSWAS which included dialogue and lectures, 3 tours to the mixed cities (Jaffa, Haifa, and the south), and a social evening at the Ramadan market in Taybe.

Lectures: Dr. Marwan Darwish on the impact of dialogue programs; Shahira Shalabi on joint (Jewish-Palestinian) activism; Dr. Sami Abu Shehadeh on the Nakba in the mixed cities of Israel and its unique consequences to urban areas; Dr. Caitlin Donnelly (from Belfast University via Skype) on Belfast as a mixed city and the educational initiatives in the city following their peace process; Dr. Irit Keinan on her work in Jewish-Arab initiatives and innovative concepts of citizenship. Abeer Halabi, director of the Shared Society Department at Shatil, shared her story of development work toward a shared society and the challenges and dilemmas she has encountered. Hanaa Amouri of the Rosa Luxemburg Foundation and Udi Arnon of the New Israel Fund spoke on fundraising for shared society projects.

The tours were a very important part of the course. The tour to the Negev included visits to Al Araqib and Um al-Hiran, plus a lecture by Professor Oren Yiftachel focusing on land policy in the Naqab/Negev and on state attempts to confiscate land there. The trip to Jaffa included a tour of the old city and the port by Abed Abu-Shehade and a talk by Ami Katz, Director of Mishlama, a municipality framework for development in Jaffa. Katz presented an overview of Mishlama’s work and other projects including the bi-lingual school in Jaffa and the Bnei Brit youth center which serves Jaffa’s Jewish and Arab young people. The fascinating trip to Haifa included a meeting with Dr. Einat Kalish, subsequently elected mayor of Haifa, and a visit to the Al-Khashabi Theatre.
The environmental justice program which began in October 2017 continued into 2018 with 18 participants from all over the country. The group was diverse, with professionals who work on environmental issues as part of their job and other people involved in environmental action on a volunteer basis.

In addition to lectures and discussions on issues of environmental justice and the Jewish-Palestinian conflict, the group undertook several study tours. They visited the mixed Jewish-Palestinian City of Lod and its “unrecognized” Bedouin neighbourhood of Dahmash; the Wadi Attir Project of Bedouins in the Negev, which consists of a self-sustaining farm combining traditional Bedouin values, ecotourism and a laboratory for sustainable agriculture; the Bedouin town of Hura, touted as an example of successful planning; and Al-Sayyid, a formerly unrecognized village which recently was granted official recognition by the government. Members of the group subsequently visited with community leaders to explore how they could contribute to upgrading and advancing the development plan for the town.

Evaluations suggested that the course significantly influenced participants by broadening their understanding of environmental issues and their relationship to Jewish Arab relations. Awareness of discrimination and inequality increased, and participants became more motivated and more confident about working to promote change.
This fall the research center published its first work, “Obtainable Alliances: The Case of the Arab Palestinian Minority in Israel”. The publication, in Hebrew and Arabic consists of contributions of 18 prominent Jews and Arabs including political figures, professors, heads of human rights NGOs and intellectuals. Edited by the Research Center’s director, Amir Fachoury, it focuses on identifying and analysing possible goals and obtainable alliances between Israeli Palestinian and Jewish Zionist political parties from a political, sociological and historical perspective. The publication was presented at the School for Peace National Conference in September 2018, which brought together diverse and similar thoughts on the building of coalitions and alliances.

What stands out in the writings is agreement between the writers for the need for unprecedented pragmatic coordination and cooperation, and a coalition between the Jewish-Zionist parties and the Joint Arab Political Party. Within this there were those who emphasized the need for a longer term, deep rooted reform of the political culture and approach that focuses on a two-state solution, and those who believed in more pointed tactical processes of reaching acceptable compromises.
The publication of the journal was celebrated with a conference on September 17, 2018 featuring two panels and discussions:

**The first panel** with Knesset Member Ayman Odeh, head of the Joint List (a political alliance of four parties—Hadash, Balad, the United Arab List, and Ta’al); Ron Gerlitz, Co-Director of Sikkuy; Rami Hod, Director of Katznelson Educational Center; Dr. Mansor Abas; Avi Dabosh, Movement to Advance the Periphery and Meretz Party; and was mediated by Ms. Nasreen Hadad Haj-Yahya, Researcher and Co-Director of the Project for Jewish Arab Relations at the Israel Democracy Institute.

**The second panel** featured: Professor Yuval Yonay of the University of Haifa; Jafar Farah, Director of Mossawa: The Advocacy Center For Arab Citizens In Israel; Tomer Pines, Chair of the Labor Party’s Young Leadership Committee; and Dr. Nasreen Hadad Haj-Yahya from B’yachad. The panel was mediated by Dr. Roi Silberberg. The conference was attended by over 120 individuals from organizations throughout the country.

I’m not familiar with any conflict that has been resolved, not even the ANC in South Africa, without a joint struggle”.—MK Ayman Odeh

We are at a point where there is no choice but to build coalitions with as many participants as possible that bring together the Zionist and non-Zionist left and the Palestinian leadership in Israel.—Nava Sonnenschein
Now Released: The Power of Dialogue, explores the personal stories of School for Peace graduated and how the programs shaped their involvement and activism in building peace. This new publication consists of powerful personal interviews with 25 Palestinian and Jewish Israeli alumni of SFP courses.

The book describes the life altering experience, showing the process of change through dialogue in the context of the Israeli Palestinian conflict.

Available in English from the Friends Associations, the School for Peace, or from the publisher

And in German.

“My family thought the SFP course was like a disaster, but for me it was a kind of revelation, an epiphany. Wherever I am, whatever I’m doing in my work with the children at school, this is there. I have been changed forever. This is me, part of my identity, my agenda. It’s part of what I try to promote in the world I live in.” —Ayelet Roth
In the fall, Eva Romviel was a researcher in resident at the village working on her MSc thesis in International Development in the Netherlands. She studied how graduates of the School for Peace Change Agents program translated what they learned into activism and social change.

By interviewing several graduates about what they learned from participating in the programme, and how they were using this in their daily life, she learned more about the (daily) challenges they face and the knowledge and skills they gained. Using empowerment theories of social change and transformation, she is analyzing these interviews, to better understand the role of peace education and planned encounters in social activism and to help us learn from our work.

‘I look back on a very insightful and interesting time and am very grateful for the help and openness from the School for Peace employees and the graduates.

Working with Nava and Roi taught me a lot about Peace Education and Dialogue and the School for Peace method. Above all, it was inspiring to talk to graduates and learn about their work for peace between Israel and Palestine, between Jews and Palestinians.’
In October, the SFP ran its first international conference on nonviolent protest with 6 Israeli peace groups and over 100 participants from around the country. The keynote speaker, Dr. Stephen Zunes, came from the University of San Francisco to discuss “the power of nonviolent action in conflict zones”. Other presentations were given on “Palestinian Nonviolent Protest Against the Occupation” by Palestinian Youth and the Hebron Freedom Fund; and “Nonviolent Struggle in Israel and around the World, the Role of Jewish Youth” by Simone Zimmerman from the USA. The conference was accompanied by the opening of a special art exhibit “Nonviolence Action” at the Oasis Gallery with the exhibition of original art work by Jewish and Palestinian artists from the region.

Click picture below for videos from the conference:
Dr. Nava Sonnenschein and Harb Amara were awarded the 2018 Victor J. Goldberg Prize for Peace by the Institute of International Education. The prize is awarded each year to recognize outstanding work being conducted by one Arab and one Israeli, working together to advance the cause of peace in the Middle East. The winners are selected by a prestigious international selection committee.

The prize was for the School for Peace’s work in its Change Agents Programs which features courses designed to connect Palestinian and Israeli professionals to create dialogue and implement action around areas of need. Created by the SFP in 2006, Change Agents programs have engaged Palestinian and Israeli lawyers, mental health professionals, journalists, environmentalists, architects and planners, physicians, politicians and teachers.

“This program is creating leadership that advances peace, justice, equality and human rights in an era that it is the most needed in the Israeli and Palestinian societies,” Dr. Sonnenschein said.

Since the program’s inception, participants have gone on to pursue notable and important work bridging divisions across communities. Alumni have developed seed exchanges for Palestinian and Israeli farmers, and helped connect a Palestinian town to the national electric grid, among many other accomplishments.

The Goldberg IIE Prize will encourage some of the best and the brightest young professionals to contribute their valuable knowledge and experience to the cause of peace in the Middle East, and will reward them for their courage and conviction in doing so.”

—Allan Goodman, IIE President and CEO
Other Programs
The field of encounters between Jews and Palestinians is characterized by a great deal of decentralized activity, so that much of what happens remains unknown to others engaged in this field. Considerable research has also been conducted over the years in academia and elsewhere. It is a rich and fascinating field with a great diversity of perspectives and approaches that engages researchers, educators, public figures, intellectuals, and activists. Yet discussion around this subject has decreased in recent years – for many reasons, including declining interest among some of the relevant constituents, and problems with funding.

In 2018, the School for Peace established a forum of scholars and practitioners of Jewish-Palestinian encounter work led by Dr. Roi Silberberg. Members include researchers from the University of Haifa and the Hebrew University, and representatives of organizations like the New Israel Fund, ALLMEP, and the Forum of Bereaved Families. This group met twice during 2018.

During the two sessions, critical questions were voiced concerning the usefulness of such encounters, their political legitimacy, and the philosophies and ideologies behind them. There were also questions about the manner in which such encounters are conducted and their inherent potential. Some of these issues have been around since this kind of encounter was first conducted here – questions about the language in the room or the various approaches employed. Other questions emerged from the current social and political situation: How can we move from encounter to social action? How does a racist environment influence the dynamics of the encounter?

The new forum’s first session was devoted to a lecture by Professor Eran Halperin from the Interdisciplinary Center Herzliya, who spoke about group emotion in the context of the conflict. The discussion that followed focused on which issues the facilitators in Jewish – Arab encounters should seek to address to make the process most conducive to resolving the conflict. A group process began to coalesce, and the members spent some time on deciding on the format for subsequent meetings.

The group’s second meeting was with Professor Camelia Suleiman from Michigan State University, who spoke on the political importance of the Arabic language. This lecture was especially important following the recent legislative revocation of the official status of Arabic in Israel.
MEETINGS WITH THE FACILITATORS OF THE SFP

Facilitators are the backbone of School for Peace programming. In 2018 we recommenced periodic meetings with facilitators working in School for Peace programs. Participants included those facilitating the university courses we run in Tel Aviv, Ben Gurion and Haifa universities and the Rupin Academic Center, the programs for youth, and the programs for professionals as change agents.

The first meeting examined the role of the facilitator in simulated negotiation workshops – raising questions, advising, bridging between subjects, addressing disagreement, and helping put together the final negotiated document; the session also addressed how the SFP can support the facilitators work, professionally and politically. The second meeting focused on the dynamics of how facilitators relate to one another when they disagree – whether about political issues, division of tasks, dominating the group process, or their understanding of the needs of the group.
UNIVERSITY COURSES

In 2018 we conducted three university courses – at Ben Gurion, Haifa, and Tel Aviv – and one course at the Rupin Academic Center. Each course was one semester long and met for 3 hours once a week; each group had 20 Arab and Jewish students. This program reaches out to a new generation, making them aware of the need to build an inclusive society based on justice and equality. The program opens their eyes to the conflict and many participants decide to pursue further related study and work actively toward a resolution of the conflict. We at the SFP see this as a very valuable program that exposes Arab and Jewish students to a new level of meaningful dialogue on the core issues of the conflict.

YOUTH ENCOUNTERS

We continued our programming for youth this year, working with a total of 110 Jewish and Arab high school students. They came from the Givat Brenner (Jewish) High School and the Arab high school in Qalansaweh as well as with the Arab Galilee City High School in Nazareth and the Jewish Ohel Sham High School in Ramat Gan.

“It was the first time I felt I could speak my mind, to explain to Jewish friends what really bothers me. They didn’t accept everything, but I didn’t expect them to” (Arab participant).

“I never thought about things this way. I never learned that there were Arab refugees and that there are still refugees inside Israel. For me the term ‘Palestinian refugee’ was always connected to terrorists” (Jewish participant).

“I want to thank the Arab friends for making me understand things about the other side” (Jewish participant).

“The party at night was a great experience. It was so unusual, first to have discussions that I’ve never had before in my life, and then be friends at the party and drink coffee together during the breaks” (Arab participant).
High school students from Hagalil in Nazareth and Ohel Shem in Ramat Gan meet yearly for a youth encounter at the School for Peace. The teachers, long acquainted, sought a shared activity for the school staff. On April 23-24, 2018, they attended an encounter and training workshop together. The goal was to improve participants’ understanding of the Jewish-Palestinian conflict and address its impact on the lives of teachers and students. Senior teaching staff wanted help in coping better with ‘hot topics’ in the news and with racism in the classroom.

The workshop focused on the inter-group encounter and getting better acquainted. The principal tool was a dialogue between identities, to allow the development of critical thinking and provide exposure to the mechanisms of oppression that structure the society and reinforce the conflict, along with consideration of the power relations and unconscious processes involved in the Jewish Palestinian encounter.

The schools gave their teachers two full days away from the classroom to attend. The Ohel Shem principal noted that addressing the conflict is part of the school’s duty and that his teachers need tools and more experience to do the job properly.

In the getting-acquainted phase the teachers showed deep curiosity, a willingness to take risks, and intellectual integrity. Glimpses of disagreement over land expropriations, the Nakba, and the like seemed less like argu-
ments and more like questions for getting better acquainted. Teachers noted that their students had attended a workshop at Neve Shalom for many years while they only heard about it in class. The connection between what the students had undergone and the workshop for teachers deepened their motivation and amplified their curiosity to address the issues.

Late in the meeting, there was some discussion about the role of the Israeli army and its status in Israeli society. A heated discussion unfolded regarding the situation in Gaza and Israel’s responsibility for civilian casualties. The teachers later met in their own groups and the Palestinian teachers discussed their roles some believing that teacher should present Palestinian nationalism and the struggle for independence, and others argued that the risk to the teacher is too great and they should stick with preparing students for a vocation and for the job market. In the Jewish group, most of the discussion was about the role of the school in encouraging army service.

The orientation to Wahat al-Salam ~ Neve Shalom was very instructive and participants were interested in the decision-making processes in the village and how its educational institutions were established and what their roles are. Continuing discussions included they should teach history and languages, and what ceremonies ought to be at school. The group agreed that the Palestinian narrative should be taught alongside the Jewish narrative, but there was disagreement about the school's role in preparing students for military service.

In the concluding segment teachers said that teachers and students should undergo a dialogue process and that this should be done at all levels and between the two schools; including frequent encounters and reciprocal visits as an integral part of the school's educational programs.

«A good feeling, full of hope and optimism. Even if we are not running the country, we are an essential part of society; everything starts with education, with teachers like us. I hope that everyone will stay committed and do something, on the family level and educationally. We are experienced, and the future is in our hands.»—Nadera (Arab teacher)

«Let’s wish for us all that 70 years from now, our grandchildren and great grandchildren will be singing a shared [national] anthem.»—Abeer (Arab teacher)

«We were able to shed our conditioning and our fears. Listening to the other opens up a lot of options. You have to listen, understand, and identify even if you don’t agree; this is very valuable.»—Netanel (Jewish teacher)
Change Agents Taking Action
As an outgrowth of this program, a team of planners came together to promote renewal and urban planning in Arab towns and villages. The group looked at how growth needs in many Arab villages threatens historic “old town” sections. There were discussions about how development might be pursued equitably, without destroying old village centers. The team has met several times, studied the development in Kafr Qar‘e, and presented alternative plans. They also offered ideas to the Ministry of Housing which the ministry plans to use as a model.

This is SFP’s third program for planners and a fourth program began at the end of 2018. We have trained close to 100 Jewish and Arab planners who coordinate their efforts at work and as volunteers, to promote equality in planning in their communities and nationally.
The Jewish Arab Planners Forum developed by SFP, and managed by two program graduates, met several times this year to strategize and support efforts to bring about change through the planning process. In the last meeting in the summer of 2018 The Forum addressed two issues: expansion of the Jewish town of Harish into Arab towns in Wadi Ara, and the demolition order against Khan al Ahmar, a Bedouin village outside of Jerusalem. The Forum published 2 petitions protesting the Khan al Ahmar demolition and sent them to the Ministry of Internal Security; a third petition calls on the planning authorities to stop the undemocratic planning process for the expansion of Harish, which excludes representatives of the affected Arab towns while deciding the future of their open spaces.

ACTIVISM IN MIXED TOWNS

Some activities that have resulted in from the course for leaders in mixed towns include:

—Promoting shared life through municipal institutions in Lod; especially initiating a bi-lingual school.

—Starting an Arab-Jewish political party to run for the Carmiel City Council.

—Organizing a meditation course for Jewish and Arab residents of Jaffa.

—A tour for Naamat women from Nazareth Ilit to Nazareth during the Christmas holidays. Following this tour, a joint meeting was held for Naamat members from Nazareth Ilit and from Nazareth.

—Starting a steering committee in Jaffa to advise on shared society issues in the local community center. During the year, this participant started a program for teaching Arabic together with another participant in the group.
ACTIVISM CONTINUES

Nasreen Hadad Haj-Yahya is a doctoral candidate in history at Tel Aviv University and Director of the Arab-Jewish Relations Program at the Israel Democracy Institute, where she writes and publishes on equality, notably for Arab women and in mixed cities.

Haifa Asadi initiated a joint women’s empowerment course in Ramallah in the Palestinian Authority with a women’s non-profit, and a course to train professional managers.

Mousaab Dukhan was the Hadash candidate for mayor of Nazareth (unfortunately he did not win) and is on the city council leading the Dash party. The main issues he is working on now is widening the municipal boundaries of Nazareth to end the housing shortage for the city’s young couples and to critical transportation problems.

Eli Bitan was an editor of “In the Ultra-Orthodox Rooms” website and was fired for speaking out for two states at a 2017 Peace Now demonstration in Tel Aviv. Today he writes for «Local Call», the Hebrew sister site of +972 Magazine and co-anchors a Kan radio talk show on current affairs.

Avi Daboush works to advance the discourse of peace and equality in communities in the periphery and organizes events for that purpose, mainly in southern Israel. He established the «Periphery Bloc» in the Meretz political party to represent residents of Israel’s periphery.

Raja Zaatari was elected to a seat in the Haifa City Council from Hadash political party and is active politically in working for equality between Jews and Arabs in Haifa and nationally.

Gil Hillel coordinated a coalition of organizations working toward a political solution to the conflict as part of her job at SHATIL, and worked with colleagues to create a Hebrew and Arabic internet site to track all the events marking the 50th year of occupation.

Jamal al Karyani established and runs «New Dawn in the Negev», a center for Bedouin youth in the arts, and is working on encounters and a joint youth parliament for Jewish and Arab young people in southern Israel.

Rawan Bisharat and Dina Gradshkin are Co-CEOs of Sadaka Reut, an organization working on youth dialogue encounters.

Akram Sakala is a City Council member in Lod and was instrumental in bringing together all parties for a joint list in the 2018 municipal elections.
Lior Librovsky is a parliamentary adviser to MK Salah Saad of the Zionist Union, assisting with his opposition to the Nation State Law, including a petition to the High Court, as well as advising on media and messaging and working to oppose illegal activities by settlers in the occupied territories.

Dr. Laura Veerton is a Jerusalem City Council member for Meretz. She organized an initiative for empowering young Palestinian women, and was active in the effort to preserve the village of Lifta.

Nadia Hamdan engages her community in opposing the occupation and raises awareness of its costs. She has worked to train Palestinian women for roles in municipal elections and encouraged male politicians to include women in their candidate lists.

Hannah Beit Hallachmi writes on equality and peace for a Kfar Saba area paper, Tzomet Hasharon, and publicizes the work of Knesset members opposing the occupation and working toward equality.

Shaked Morag was named CEO of Peace Now. She fights against the creeping annexation policies of the present government.

Tali Tesler, while a parliamentary assistant to MK Tamar Zandberg of Meretz, organized a Jewish Arab conference on distributive justice with the Arab Center for Alternative Planning, to raise awareness among Members of Knesset and promote legislation for budgetary parity and equality in the allocation of land and taxable commercial property.

Enaya Jeries Bana is an engineer with the Planning and Building Committee in Wadi Ara and Nahal Iron, and a lecturer in urban studies at the Hebrew University. She works for equality in planning between Jews and Arabs.

Irit Sayeg Oryon directs the planning staff for Jaffa and the South in Tel Aviv City Government and works on equality for Arab and Jewish residents of Jaffa vis-a-vis planning and preservation issues.

Anat Verbin directs the Bnei Brit Youth Center in Jaffa serving both Jews and Arabs.

Nataly Kirshtein is director of operations for Meretz political party.

Dov Koler is the founder of the joint (Jewish and Arab) political list for the municipal election in Carmiel.
During 2015-2016, I signed up for the Change Agents Course for Up and Coming Politicians that was run by the School for Peace at Neve Shalom and Inmaa (which is in Palestine). During the course, I became acquainted with activists working on the «Two States, One Homeland» initiative which calls for creating a Palestinian Israeli confederation as a solution to the conflict. Today, about a year and a half later, I joined this initiative and became a principal activist, and I am now managing its external relations efforts.

The initiative is based on two principals: First, a separation between the concept of citizenship and residency and second, a distinction between political sovereignty and homeland. On this basis, we call for the establishment of two national sovereign states, with the «Green Line» (pre-1967 border) as the border between them, an open border or at least one that will gradually be open to allow for the deep bond of both peoples with all of the Palestinian Homeland / Land of Israel.

We are also in favor of Israelis being able to live in Palestine as residents, and likewise for Palestinians who choose to move to Israel. The country, then, will be open to all, with freedom to travel throughout, to live and do business without affecting the sovereignty or the national character of the respective states.

The two states, Palestinian and Israeli, will come together in shared institutions designed to regulate all joint matters arising from sharing the land, consistent with the logic of national sovereignty for each nation and each people; together, but separate and separate sovereignty without geographical separation. All this is to unfold gradually and on the basis of a historic rapprochement at the heart of which is mutual recognition of the affinity of both peoples for their homeland which has been the object of the dispute, and a recognition of the right of both peoples to political independence in the framework of sustainable sovereign states.

As part of my activity with this initiative I took a central part in its annual conference and I joined a delegation of members of the initiative in visiting the European Parliament in May of 2017 taking part in dozens of meetings.
with diplomats and politicians. My presentation of the principles of the initiative was met with attentive interest, encouragement and direct support. I also took part in academic discussions at research centers in Brussels where the delegation was a guest. Recently, I participated in a meeting with a delegation the incoming European Union Ambassador to Israel, Mr. Emanuele Giaufret. I also met recently with people at the British Embassy in Israel and presented the principles of the initiative, its importance and its potential for ending the Israeli occupation and the state of war between the two people.

During the activities I have described above, I made use of the tools and the extensive knowledge that I acquired in the SFP change agents course. Since I finished the course, I have had the honor to be named director of the Research Center at the School for Peace. In that role, I strive to create knowledge that can help advance a culture of peace in this country; advance political agreements between democratic political actors and institutions; and make knowledge accessible for decision makers.

Among the various research projects completed and planned for the near future, a study of a third possibility for ordering the constitutional relations between the Jewish majority in Israel and the Palestinian minority who are Israeli citizens. Another study I am conducting deals with examining the role of the Palestinian citizens of Israel in the conflict between their people and their state and with the political alliances that they might achieve.

I would like to thank the School for Peace for the many meaningful opportunities they have opened for me. Thanks also to the European Union for funding the wonderful course for future politicians.

Sincerely,
Ameer Fakhoury
LETTERS FROM OUR GRADUATES

The course gave me the opportunity for direct, ongoing and in-depth discussions with Palestinian partners. When the course ended, I decided to create more direct discussions between Israeli Jews (and Palestinians) and Palestinians from the occupied territories. I belong to a movement called “Standing Together,” a socialist movement in Israel, which is working to promote the end of the occupation, civil equality between Jewish and Arab citizens of Israel, and social justice.

Because of the experiences I was privileged to be a part of during the SFP course, I have undertaken to take charge of our activities with leaders in the occupied territories. Together we met with the Committee for Interaction with Israeli Society (part of the Palestinian Government and we created a work plan promoting interaction between Palestinian leaders and Israeli society. So far we have implemented two parts of this plan.

Working with Palestinians from the PLO, Palestinian of ‘48 and Standing Together, we finalized a PowerPoint presentation created by a member of the Committee for Interaction (Ziad Darwish), to make it more effective in promoting active listening in the meetings of the representatives of the PLO with Israelis.

We had a conference in Rahat, an Arab City in the Negev, on possible solutions to the occupation. A member of the Committee for Interaction, Ashraf Ajrami, a former Minister in the Palistinian Authority, was part of this conference. Ajrami presented the PA’s point of view on the end of the occupation and a two state solution. The others presented other options: Two States One Homeland, and a Federation. One of the presenters of the One Homeland organization was a co-participant in our Change agents course for Israeli & Palestinian up and coming politicians.

YEELA RAANAN
We intend to continue the joint activities with the Committee for Interaction with Israeli Society. Thank you very much for the workshop that made this part of my life.

Sincerely,  
Dr. Yeela Raanan
MEET THE STAFF

Dr. Nava Sonnenschein, SFP Director—born in Haifa, political activism was always part of her life. Nava completed her first degree in education and creative art, and her MA in the U.S. in Marriage, Family & Child Counseling. Her PhD. is from the Hebrew University. Nava is one of the four founding families of Neve Shalom-Wahat al Salam. She has trained thousands of Israeli and Palestinian participants in facilitating groups in conflict, and to become change agents and political activists in Israeli and Palestinian society through dialogue, both in university change agents courses.

Harb Amara, Projects Director—a social worker from the Nazareth area, who has worked for many years in family welfare and domestic violence prevention. Harb graduated from a School for Peace program in 2008. His experience in the program showed him involvement with the SFP is one of the best and only ways to really bring about change in this country. Born during the six day war, his father named him Harb (meaning war); he has been working for peace ever since.

Fatin Abu Gosh, Administrative Director—has been working at the School for Peace for the last 12 years and recently finished her B.A. degree in business administration and marketing. She has facilitated courses at the School for Peace and lives in Abu Gosh. Fatin has 4 daughters and her younger daughter began studying at the NSWAS primary school when Fatin started working at the School for Peace.

Bob Fenton, Development Coordinator—became familiar with NSWAS in the late 70’s when AbdaSalam and Nava were traveling through the U.S. talking about the village. When Bob moved to Israel in the early 80’s, he took a facilitators course run in conjunction with the SFP and became involved in various peace activities in the country. For the past 4 years Bob has worked with the SFP and C&D department.
**Dr. Roi Silberberg, Projects Director**—began university studying science. While at university he took an elective course on gender which was taught using the SFP method of working with groups in conflict. Fascinated with this approach, he began to enroll in various programs of the SFP. Realizing he had a responsibility to change what was happening around him, Roi changed his direction. He established a project named AMAL, which enables hundreds of Jewish kids in Tel Aviv to learn spoken Arabic. These Jewish children are taught by Arab university students. Roi recently completed his Phd. in the Philosophy of Peace Education.

**Adv. Ameer Fakhoury, Director of the Research Center**—is a lawyer and doctoral student in political sociology. Ameer was introduced to the School for Peace by his partner, an urban planner and doctoral student who participated in the planner’s programs. Ameer, curious about the School for Peace, joined the first program for Up and Coming Politicians in 2016-2017. Ameer describes himself as neither an optimist nor a pessimist. He says “these perspectives are luxuries reserved for outside onlookers. I simply work to change things because I can and because I must.” Today Ameer lives in Haifa with his partner and their two children.

There are 25 freelance facilitators who have been trained and work in the SFP youth encounter program, university programs, change agent programs and more.