

Oct-Nov 2011



Dear Friends,

In the past year the State of Israel has passed, or is in the process of passing, laws that are meant to limit human rights and infringe on justice. These laws utilize scare tactics such as: silencing or limiting public criticism, weakening human rights organizations and repressing the national identity of Palestinians. We join the voices speaking out against these anti-democratic laws and invite you to take an active role in the struggle against them. Pass on information, send letters, sign petitions, join demonstrations, take part in conferences- we must not be silent! The weakening of Israeli democracy, among many other problems that it implies, will pull us further away from the possibility for a long-lasting just solution to the conflict. This will allow for the intensification of the occupation, oppression and discrimination. A wind of change blew in Israel last summer, and a new generation rose up which understands that each and every one of us needs to take personal responsibility to act. This is the time to go out into the streets and make a difference, before it is too late.

On Friday the 9th of December, Windows' staff accompanied by youth and volunteers, participated in the Human Rights March in Tel-Aviv. On Thursday, December 29th at 7:30 in the Window's office, we will host a film screening of the film, [The Law in These Parts](#). We hope you will join us for the opportunity to speak with the producer and see the film before it airs at the Sundance film festival.

In the upcoming year, we will continue working on both sides of the green line and make efforts to expand our presence in public discourse for human rights and justice. We remind you have a place here with us – for brainstorming, raising ideas and taking action. We hope to hear from you.

Yours,

The Windows staff



A new group in Balata Refugee Camp in Nablus, November, 2011. The youth groups will form a basis for working with the community.

A New Generation in Windows

In the past months, six new youth groups have been started. Starting January 2012, these groups will form our Young Journalists Editorial Board.

One "triangle" (three groups) works in the South – a group from **Beit Omar** near Hebron, a group from **Shkeb-A-Salaam** near Be'er-Sheva, and a group from **Tel-Aviv**.

The other "triangle" is comprised of groups from **Balata Refugee Camp** in Nablus, **Givat Olga**, near Hadera and **Jaffa**.

The groups are currently finishing the preparation for Windows Media Program, which includes: empowerment, verbal and written expression skills, critical thinking, creativity, conflict resolution skills and preparation for encountering "the other". About 35 youths will move on from the preparation stage to the Youth Editorial Board.



Despite the oppressive laws, we are witnessing a growing interest in our work.



Open house where we hosted people who are interested in learning more about Windows – October, 2011.

Towards the end of October, we hosted an **open house for new members to get to know Windows activities.** The gathering included a conversation with several youths from Jaffa, Tel-Aviv and Bethlehem, who participate in our program.

If you or one of your friends are interested to participate in such a gathering, please contact us: Melanie@win-peace.org



Participants from Windows Video Group talk about their group in the open gathering – October, 2011.

Our Circle of Volunteers is Expanding

Windows was founded 20 years ago, as a volunteer organization and in the first decade of our work, most activities were conducted by



Windows youth group in the Negev – November 2011: thinking, expression, writing and mapping are some of the skills that are gained during the program.



A new youth group in Tel-Aviv, one of six which have been started lately – November, 2011.

Italian High School Students Take an Interest

In October we were invited by our Italian friends in the Bagnai Eco-Village, near Sienna, Italy, to meet with high school student from cities nearby. Rawand Musalam (Windows Board member from Ramallah) and Rutie Atsmon, Windows' Director, joined Dr. Samira Elian and Professor Nurit Elhanan-Peled, who were talking to the students about their research, which focuses on Palestinian and Israeli text-books. The research demonstrates the way consciousness based on a one-dimensional perception of the conflict is formed. Windows' representatives showcased our alternative way of studying the past and getting to know "the other" – through a wide and complex perception, which facilitates deep understanding of what is happening in our region. This trip was an opportunity to present Italian history teachers with a special program we have

developed for Middle East Studies in European schools. A pilot of this program will begin soon.



Accordingly, even so, our volunteers continue to play a key role in our work. There are always at least 3-4 international volunteers who spend several months with us, usually as part of their studies. Furthermore, dozens of local Israeli and Palestinian volunteers assist us in various ways: photography, translations, editing, transportation, fundraising, administration, research and more.

In the past year, we have been joined by many volunteers who have taken part as youths in our programs and are now adults, returning to us to offer their help.

The volunteer team also includes a group of 10th graders from the Tel-Aviv region, who are organizing a series of long workshops for youth, which will focus on various aspects of the conflict. They do this as part of their schools' "Community Assistance" program, through which they gain credit on their high school diploma.



Volunteer encounter in Ramallah– October, 2011. This meeting between our Palestinian and international volunteers was a time to share what they have learned and experienced in Windows.

This newsletter is also available in Arabic and Hebrew.

In order to ensure that you receive our updates in your e-mail inbox, please add win-peace@itnewsletter.co.il to your safe address list.

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