



אגודת המפגש הבין דתי (ע"ר)    جمعية اللقاء بين الديانات  
INTERFAITH ENCOUNTER ASSOCIATION

# 2006 ANNUAL REPORT

## A Letter from the Executive Director

2006 was another year of growth for IEA. We continued to launch new groups and develop new and innovative models for cross-cultural encounters, and we continued as well to initiate partnerships across the Holy Land, the Middle East and the world.

During the year 2006, we successfully organized **120 programs** that included more than **3,000 participants**, from all social sectors. We established and maintained two new ongoing groups in Tel Aviv-Jaffa and in Carmel City. We also started the process for the creation of five additional groups that were launched in 2007. By the end of 2006 we had **17 ongoing groups** across the country, most of them maintaining regular activities that contribute to building real and sustainable coexistence.

In addition to these ongoing groups, we managed to organize two Israeli-Palestinian interfaith encounter retreats, a special weekend retreat with home hospitality for members of all our groups, two special retreats of meeting and training for coordinators and a series of "Friends of IEA" encounters.

Our programs are growing islands of respectful and friendly inter-communal relations between the various communities of the Holy Land, bringing together a very wide spectrum of participants, most of whom encounter 'the other' for the first time through our programs. We expect a continued growth in the quantity and quality of our programs, and in the diversity of the processes we employ to create sustainable dialog and trust across religious and cultural boundaries.

cont. on p. 2

## Programmatic Report:

### Intra-Israeli Activities

During the year 2006, our intra-Israeli activities continued to grow. We held a total of 114 programs comprised of 77 inter-religious study sessions in the general program, 29 in the Women's Program, and 8 in the Young Adults program.

#### General Program

Seven of the inter-religious encounters were organized by IEA's ongoing group in the southern city of Eilat, focusing on such themes as: "Jewish Prayers of Rosh

---

**The IEA held more than 120 programs in 2006—developing new group models, and launching new encounter groups.**

---



cont. on p. 2

LETTER, cont. from p. 1

A very special moment was when the IEA and its director were awarded the "Prize for Humanity" by the Immortal Chaplains Foundation, after being nominated by Dr. Jane Goodall.

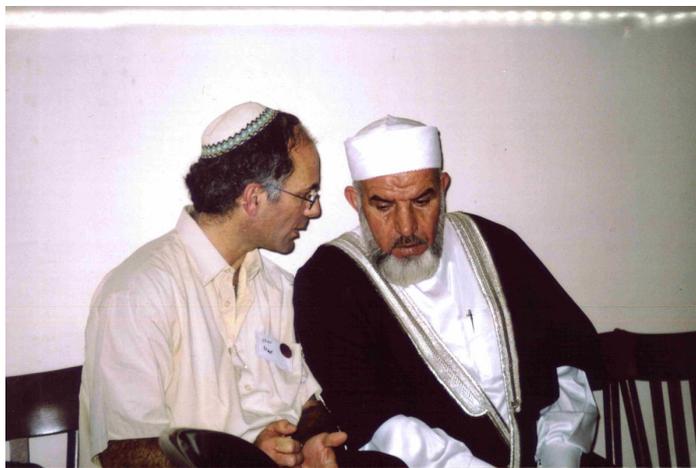
During 2006 we continued to be funded solely by individuals, like yourself. It was only in 2007 that these challenges became much smaller and less demanding of my time, allowing for more investment in the actual work on the ground. It is anticipated that during 2007 and 2008 additional sources of funding, such as private foundations and government programs, will enable us to continue to grow.

We continue to work with a devoted group in the United States on the development of a U.S. based Friends of IEA, which is already incorporated and awaiting its 501(c)(3) status. We also plan to hold major fundraising events whenever possible. If you are willing to help you are welcome, with our gratitude, to contact the point person of this wonderful group, Bob Halim Johnson, at: [hermes4halim@yahoo.com](mailto:hermes4halim@yahoo.com)

You are welcome to maintain ongoing contact with us as we continue these activities in the coming year. You will find our contact information on the end page.

Yours,

Yehuda Stolov, Ph.D.  
Executive Director



PROGRAMMATIC REPORT, cont. from p. 1

Hashana (New Year)" "Truth," and caricatures in the media which dishonor Islam.

Twenty-two more encounters were organized by the Karmiel-Majd el-Krum Interfaith Encounter group in the Galilee. Centered around the two main schools, this group brings together educators, children and parents of the two neighboring towns, who otherwise have very little interaction.

The group in M'ghar had fifteen encounters on themes such as: "Common Ground between Religions", "Happiness" and "Eid el-Adha – in the Muslim and Druze traditions". This group is also organized many social activities in M'ghar: visits to Christian and Druze places of worship; distributing food products to needy families of all communities on the eve of religious holidays, and organizing community happenings for the whole of M'ghar. As the war with Hezbollah broke out during the summer, this group – together with its sister women's group – assumed responsibility for the children of the town: organizing activities for them at the Community Center, which is equipped with an appropriate security zone, and outside the town.

---

**Each program demonstrated how easy it is for Israelis and Palestinians, from many walks of life and of different religious and political convictions, to connect together, overcome prejudices and develop trust and friendship.**

---

Other groups, across the country, joined forces to support the M'ghar groups by sending toys and other needed equipment needed for their activities with the children.

A newly established group in Tel Aviv-Jaffa held two encounters on "Identity" and "The One God – in Judaism and Islam".

Other encounters took place in Carmel City, within the framework of the Arabic-speaking group and in the Study and Dialogue group in Jerusalem. We also held a special encounter with all our Jerusalem groups on the International Day of Peace, and two training meetings for the groups' coordinators. A very special event was the special weekend retreat in the spring, where people of all IEA groups across the country gathered for two days in M'ghar, hosted by local families.

cont. on p. 3

---

PROGRAMMATIC REPORT, cont. from p. 2

**Women's Interfaith Encounter (WIE)**

In 2006, IEA's women program organized 15 inter-religious programs in Jerusalem and 14 additional programs of the "Shibolot" group in M'ghar. Themes ranged from "Tolerance" to "Christmas" to "Dietary laws", and included candle-lighting ceremonies, joint meals, holiday celebrations – like joint Iftar during Ramadan or a Chanukah party – and celebrating Mother and Family Day and the International Womens Day.

**Youth Interfaith Encounter (YIE)**

In 2006, the YIE held six interfaith encounters in the Jerusalem group and two encounters in the Tel-Aviv group. Encounters dealt with themes such as: "Revelation", "Charity to members of other religions" and "Treatment of war captives in Judaism and Islam"



cont. on p. 4

**Support**

The IEA would not have been able to achieve such progress in 2006 were it not for the generous financial support and gifts-in-kind of many friends around the world. We are deeply grateful to those friends for their contributions, no matter how large or small. It is this ongoing support which enables us to build upon and expand our activities as we dedicate ourselves and our work to peace, justice, and harmony in the Holy Land and the Middle East. We hope to widen this circle of friends and supporters and thereby expand the scope and reach of our programs and efforts. Every donation makes a difference and we wish to thank every single one of our friends and supporters—past, present and future—around the world. In particular we wish to thank:

**Our Donors (\$500+)**

- European Union
- David Scheim
- Global Ministries, Protestant Church of the Netherlands
- US Embassy to Israel
- Diane & Morton Goldin Foundation
- Lester and Edna Shapiro Family foundation (Nathan Shapiro)
- Len & Libby Traubman
- Sara A. Gottesman
- Randall Paul – Foundation for Interreligious Diplomacy
- Dr. Jodi Prinzivalli

- Middle East Peace Dialogue Network
- Dr. Anthony L. Klug - The Ploughshares Trust
- Mr. Karl Price - Community 2000
- Educational Encounters International
- Barbara J. Meislin
- Islamic Dialog and Information Center
- City Council of Hasselt
- Ben N. Teitel Charitable Trust - Gerald Cook Esq
- Kathryn Goetz Wolf
- Rotary Club of Geneva

**Our Sponsors (\$150 - \$499)**

- Bev Fox
- Beverly & Samuel Fox
- Rabbi Steven B. Jacobs
- Avi Handelsman and David Bier
- John Kador & Anna B. Payne
- Abdul Kabir & Rahma Krambo
- Ronit Roth
- Joanne Kalnitz
- Ruth Mason
- Rebecca Tobias
- Michael Tobocman
- Sabata Domenech Rosalia
- Myra Rapoport
- John Regider
- Anthony Ward
- Dr. Michael Wildt
- Sandra Collins

**Gifts-in-Kind**

- The Swedish Theological Institute
- Dr. Jodi Prinzivalli
- The Austrian Hospice
- Bob Halim Johnson
- Karin Klein

**ACTIVITY REPORT, cont. from p. 3**

(when the war broke out). The Jerusalem group also held again a joint breaking of the fasts of Ramadan and Gedaliah and special initiative to collect leavened products from observant Jews before Pesach and distribute them to needy Muslims – including random visits of joint Jewish-Muslim teams to the neighborhood of Nahalaot in the center of Jerusalem. Despite the fact that, as one participant noted, "We did not look for those who are already convinced but went from door to door, without skipping anyone, willing to encounter any type of response" the volunteers concluded: "We were filled with hope for reconciliation and understanding when we saw that contrary to what we expected, most people agreed to donate for people of the neighboring nation, despite the on-going state of war".



## Israeli-Palestinian Activities

Two Israeli-Palestinian programs were held in 2006. The IEA, in conjunction with the Hope Flowers School, managed to organize two Israeli-Palestinian interfaith encounter retreats, continuing the momentum established during the previous 14 retreats. The 2006 retreats focused on the themes of "Forgiveness" and "Reward". Both programs took place at the school campus, on the edge of Bethlehem. Each program demonstrated how easy it is for Israelis and Palestinians, from a variety of walks of life and of different religious and political convictions, to connect together, overcome prejudices and suspicions and develop friendship and trust. It looks so natural when we get together, that it is easy to forget how unique such encounters really are.



### IEA Board

Ms. Rafiqah Othman (Chair)  
Sr. Karmela Farrugia  
Rabbi Dr. Dov Maimon  
Mr. Adnan Trabsha  
Mr. Dotan Arad  
Ms. Saheer Siam  
Ms. Nada Abu Zaidan

### IEA Staff

Dr. Yehuda Stolov, Executive Director  
Ms. Fathiey Jaber, Office Manager  
Mr. Salah Alladin, Bookkeeper  
Ms. Mariam Hussein, Administrative Assistant  
Rabbi Bob Carroll, Director of Development

### Contact Us

**Interfaith Encounter Association**  
12/34 Ha'arazim Street, P.O.Box 3814  
Jerusalem 91037, Israel

Phone: 972-2-6510520  
Fax: 972-2-6510557

Email: [office@interfaith-encounter.org](mailto:office@interfaith-encounter.org)  
Website: [www.interfaith-encounter.org](http://www.interfaith-encounter.org)