

Final narrative report

Youth dialogue project “We and the other: the absent relation”

Youth-exchange project between Palestinian students and Cypriot students in Palestine

1.1

Beneficiary of grant contract: Human Rights and Democracy Media Center “**SHAMS**”

Cypriot foundation: Youth Power

1.2

Contact person: Omar Rahhal

1.3

Youth power

1.4

Palestine, Ramallah, Almassyoun, Louis Favre streets, Sindyan 3 Building.

1.5

Contract no:

1.6

Starting date of activities:

Ending date of activities:

1.7

Targeted group: youth aged 18-14 years old from Palestinian and Cypriot universities.

1.8

Targeted group: 20 young females and males.

1.9

The country in which the activities take place: Palestine.

2.1

1- The opening:

The project was conceived by the staff of Human Rights and Democracy Media Center “SHAMS”. Participants were kindly welcomed, and they identified the final plan (program) and discussed it together. They also talked about the project and its desired objectives, and some ice-breaking activities were conducted to familiarize the participants with each other, and many questions were raised as well.

2- Dabka:

It is known that Folklore has a key role in forming connections between peoples and the Palestinian Dabka is considered to be one of the remarkable public aspects of nations. For this purpose, Kafr Aldeek band for Dabka and public arts presented an existing show which was very well received. The band’s members were dressed in Palestinian traditional uniform and they presented a set of Palestinian folk dances. Many Palestinian participants joined the band and danced with them as well as some of the Cypriot students who didn’t hesitate to share the experience with their counterparts happily and cheerfully. Some Cypriot participants wore the Palestinian traditional uniform. Dabka was very important not only in creating a joyful environment for the participants, but also in embodying the culture, heritage and folklore of the Palestinian people as a part of their national identity.

3- Visiting Jericho city:

It was very important for participants to visit Jericho city due to its heritage, historical and touristic significance. It is home to the Dead Sea and the Jumeiza tree that shaded Jesus Christ, in addition to Deir Qruntol which is carved in rocks. It is the oldest city in the world, and it is the lowest city below sea level. Participant liked Jericho city as well as its warm weather and the historical sites they visited and learned about.

4- Visiting the Prime Minister:

When the date of the Cypriot delegation’s visit was specified, the program coordinated with Prime Minister Dr. Salam Fayyad in order to meet with the youth. He and met with the delegation for 40 minutes. At the beginning of the meeting both the Palestinian and Cypriot presented him with flowers on the occasion of his recovery from an illness, and the representatives of the Palestinian and Cypriot delegations provided a description of the project and its importance. During the meeting, the Cypriot delegation was made aware of the Palestinian conditions, and they were acquainted with the latest political developments in the

Palestinian arena as well as the Israeli violations against the Palestinian people and their national rights. Dr. Fayyad emphasized that the international community should meet its legal and moral responsibilities and pressure Israel to stop these dangerous policies and practices and be committed to the rules of the international law. He also stated that the international community should be concerned with international legitimacy, and empower the Palestinian people so as to be able to specify their determination and to establish an independent Palestinian state on the borders of 1967 with Eastern Jerusalem as its capital. He then paid tribute to the Cyprus position and the role of Cypriot youth and people in their solidarity with the Palestinian people and supporting their rights, and then he encouraged them to keep working so as to develop mutual relations and friendship between the two countries.

5- Visiting the governor of Ramallah and Albireh:

The young students also met Dr. Layla Ghannam the governor Ramallah and Albireh. During her reception to the delegation, she said that we are looking forward to having the support of youth for our issues all over the world, and she informed the delegation about the situation in Palestine in general and about Ramallah and Albireh in particular, and she requested a future supporting position for our people. She also tackled the pioneering role of young people in all levels, drawing the attention to Palestinian Youth Week, which is held annually in order to enroot the values of volunteerism, belonging to the land and our maxims that martyrs and detainees have scarified for.

She also emphasized the significance of the international support for releasing the prisoners and detainees in the Israeli jails, indicating that some of them spent more than 25 years in prison for defending their land from occupation.

6- Visiting Jerusalem:

It should be noted that only the Cypriot students visited Jerusalem city since the majority of Palestinian students are prohibited from entering Jerusalem without permission. The Cypriot students' visit to Jerusalem explained to them the kind of Palestinians' suffering because of Israeli obstacles and their violations via preventing Palestinians from moving freely and going to holy places for prayers. They also saw the check points as well as the apartheid wall. They spent a whole day in Jerusalem and they saw the most remarkable touristic, religious and archeological sites, and they visited the churches and mosques. They were obviously affected by this visit to Jerusalem, since they witnessed the Palestinian suffering due to the Israeli occupation.

7- Meeting the Minister of Detainees:

Youth also met with the minister of detainees Mr. Issa Qaraq'e and he provided a detailed explanation of the reality of detainees in the Israeli prisons, and the Israeli violations against international human law in dealing with detainees. The detainees are dehumanized in terms of medical neglect, torture, administrative detention, arresting children, banning visits to detainees in addition to cruel assault. Mr. Qaraq'e asked the delegation to be ambassadors of Palestinian people's freedom as well as victors of human justice against the continuous Israeli occupation, excessiveness and discrimination against the Palestinian right of self-determination. He emphasized that the issues of detainees are the issues of humanity as well as the international community and its capacity to urge Israel to respect Geneva conventions and human rights principles in treating detainees, in addition to setting a restriction against Israeli continuing to act as a state above the law. Mr. Qaraq'e also requested all the world's countries to review its commercial, economic and cultural agreements with the occupation's country in light of its continuation in violating Palestinian human rights. He answered the questions of the students who are in solidarity with Palestinians during the meeting.

8- Meeting the Secretary General of Palestinian People Party and the member of Palestinian Legislative Council:

The delegation also met Mr. Bassam Alsalhi the Secretary General of Palestinian People Party and a member of the Palestinian Legislative Council. He said "that our message is to enhance the public resistance and set it to a united front that represents all Palestinian people". He emphasized that the Israeli occupation's authorities try to discourage citizens in peaceful demonstrations and public resistance against the apartheid wall by arresting them. He referred to the importance of unifying the public peaceful movement, and also mentioned that the development of public resistance against the occupation requires a political incubator which is represented in having a national strategy based on many steps, such as approaching the International Security Council, establishing a unified front for public resistance and reviewing the Palestinian Authority's liabilities toward Israel in addition to activating contact with the international community either with systems or with peoples. In this case, the peaceful public resistance against the occupation will transform into a systemized movement, he added that the problem is not only in the occupation, but also in the manners of resistance and its political administration, and the most important thing is to keep it as peaceful public resistance.

9- Meeting with Dr. Sha'awan Jabareen the Director of Alhaq Organization:

The Cypriot delegation also met Mr. Sha'awan Jabareen the director of Alhaq organization who spoke about Israeli violations against Palestinian citizens. He explained that the absent submission to the international law has led to the set of problems which have reflected negatively on the Palestinian issue as well as the legislative rights for the Palestinian people and to retrogression in the United Nations' interest in the Palestinian issue. In addition to turn the international community's eyes away for the occupation's crimes and requesting both sides to self-control and moving towards negotiations instead of prosecution for these crimes.

During the meeting, Mr. Jabareen emphasized the importance of not restricting the Palestinian issue's internationalism on the level of United Nations concerning the state's membership, but to submit all the basic subjects including Jerusalem settlements, detainees, water and refugees to the passages of United Nations to issue new supporting decisions to these subjects. He also urged the international community to raise the subject of the legal opinion of the Supreme Court regarding the wall which issued by the court in July 2004 on the General Assembly of United Nations to change it from an advisory opinion to decisions and work's mechanisms, emphasizing that the legal opinion should include a large set of principles and orientations that international community including the United Nations should take into consideration to enforce and activate the international law to face Israeli measures and violations. He reiterated the importance of asking the Geneva Convention to conduct its conference regarding ways to obligate Israel to apply the Fourth GENEVA Convention on the level of the occupied Palestinian territories, and to coordinate with supporters of Palestinian to play their roles in conducting the conference and not leaving this thing under the approval of other European countries or the USA, as was the case in the previous period. He also emphasized the significance for Palestinians to open legal fights on the level of specialized agencies affiliated with the United Nations via submitting applications to join these agencies, which will improve the Palestinian legal status.

10- Visiting universities:

Visiting An-najah national University:

The delegation visited An-najah national University, and Dr. Samer Aqrouq provided a sufficient explanation of the university its faculties, sections and scientific centers. The young people made an introductory visit in the university's campus and buildings.

Visiting Birzeit University:

The delegation also visited Birzeit University, where they were received by Dr. Ayman Abdul Majeed a researcher and coordinator in the development studies' institution. The delegation was kindly welcomed, and told about the history of Birzeit University since its establishment and the dates of its faculties. In addition, they were informed about the current political

situation, and how Palestine was before 1948 and what it witnessed in terms of destruction, displacement and lands confiscation after 1948 and 1976. A discussion was opened subsequently.

11- Visiting the Grave of Yasser Arafat:

The delegation visited the grave of the president Yasser Arafat, where they placed flowers. They talked about the hard days he lived under siege inside the province, and how this siege led to deterioration of his health and, consequently, his death. After that, they visited the museum of Martyr Yasser Arafat which is modest and which is linked with his grave. It includes many of his personal items, photos, displays and templates that represent the life of Yasser Arafat and which are connected with main stages in the history of the Palestinian people due to the whole relation of his life to the issue of his people. It also includes a library, a hall for archive, shows and seminars as well as special souvenirs.

12- Visiting the museum of Mahmoud Darwish:

The delegation visited the museum of the Palestinian poet Mahmoud Darwish which is considered to be one of Palestine's greatest cultural sites. A biography about the poet was provided by the director of the museum in addition to the role of Darwish in the national struggle.

13- Visiting Jenin city:

The delegation also visited Jenin city and they visited Haddad village's museum and Bruqin Church, the third oldest church in the world, which became the connection between Christian pilgrims from Nazareth to Bethlehem in the beginning of the Fourth century. The museum of Haddad village reflect stages of Palestinians' life in terms of clothes and heritage as well as the old Bedouin home and the way of Bedouin trails previously by the tribe's Sheikh in addition to many things that reflect our heritage in terms of rural Bedouin accent, mud homes, Liwan, collectors and council of Sheikhs and aged people.

14- Visiting Nablus city:

The young people visited Nablus and they had a saw its markets and historical and archeological sites, they also visited some traditional industries like soap.

15- Visiting the cities of Bethlehem and Hebron:

The delegation also visited Bethlehem and Hebron and they went to markets there, the Cave of Patriarchs and the old city. They learned of the Palestinians' suffering in the old city due to settlers' assaults against them and they also visited many facilities in the city. On their way back, they went to Bethlehem and Church of Nativity, they identified the apartheid wall as well as the obstacles which face Palestinians who want to go to Alaqsa Mosque and Church of the Holy Sepulchre.

16- Visiting a domestic Café:

Within project's activities the delegation visited a domestic café in Ramallah, and they played games like Chess, Backgammon and playing cards. Inside the café a discussion was opened between the youth and the café visitors in many fields.

17- The closing ceremony:

Human Rights and Democracy Media Center "**SHAMS**" center arranged a closing ceremony for the guest delegation in the presence of Osama Abu Kirsh, Fadi Arouri and Yara Daik from Euromed foundation, as well as Bashar Aldeek, Amal Alfaqih from SHAMS center. In his speech, Mr. Bashar said that we are looking forward to developing the relations with our colleagues and youth in Cyprus and encouraging them to keep in contact. He also emphasized the significance of youth-exchange in order to identify the cultures of the two nations through mutual visit. These young delegations as well create a ground for supporting Palestinian people on all levels, indicating that Palestinian people reflects its originality on visitors and the justice of the Palestinian issue is enrooted inside the minds of guests. This will contribute to youth active understanding to the justice of Palestinian issue and rights. Certificates and souvenirs were also delivered to participating students.

Journalistic coverage:

The visit of the Cypriot delegation to Palestine was covered in mass media via Palestinian news agencies as well as Palestine TV in addition to many pictures and videos within their visit. Human Rights and Democracy Media Center "**SHAMS**" center reported on the harmony and interaction among participants in joint activities, and having a clear image about the Palestinian culture by observing traditions, norms and culture, which is somewhat similar to Cypriot culture

#	Date	Day	Page	Newspaper/agency	News title
1	2012/11/6	Tuesday	Internet	SAFA Agency	Fayyad receives a Cypriot youth delegation
2	2012/11/6	Tuesday	Internet	Maan agency	Fayyad receives a Cypriot youth delegation
3	2012/11/6	Tuesday	Internet	WAFa Agency	Fayyad receives a Cypriot youth delegation
4	2012/11/6	Tuesday		Palestine TV	a report about Dr. Salam Fayyad reception to the Cypriot delegation
5	2012/11/6	Tuesday	Internet	your post to Palestine network	Fayyad receives a Cypriot youth delegation and acquaints them about last political developments and Israeli violations
6	2012/11/6	Tuesday	Internet	Dehketna network	Fayyad receives a Cypriot youth delegation and acquaints them about last political developments and Israeli violations
7	2012/11/6	Tuesday	Internet	Maan agency	Fayyad receives a Cypriot youth delegation
8	2012/11/7	Wednesday	7	Alayyam	Fayyad receives a Cypriot youth delegation
9	2012/11/7	Wednesday	6	Alhayat	Fayyad receives a Cypriot youth delegation
10	2012/11/7	Wednesday	Internet	Alwatanvoice	Dr. Ghannam: we are looking forward to a youth position to be supporting to our issue all over the world
11	2012/11/7	Wednesday	Internet	WAFa Agency	Dr. Ghannam deals with a Cypriot youth delegations the manners of supporting the Palestinian issue.

12	2012/11/7	Wednesday	Internet	Maan agency	Dr. Ghannam: we are looking forward to a youth position to be supporting to our issue all over the world
13	2012/11/8	Thursday	12	Alhayat	Met in solidarity students from Cypriot universities, Qaraq'e discuss with the Red Cross the conditions of striking and sick detainees.
14	2012/11/8	Thursday	14	Alayyam	Met in solidarity students from Cypriot universities, Qaraq'e discuss with the Red Cross the conditions of striking and sick detainees.
15	2012/11/8	Thursday	13	Alhayat	During her reception to a Cypriot youth delegation in the venue of the governorate, Dr. Ghannam: we are looking forward to a youth position to be supporting to our issue all over the world
16	2012/11/17	Saturday	8	Alquds	A Cypriot youth delegations ends its visit to the Palestinian territories
17	2012/11/18	Sunday	14	Alayyam	A Cypriot youth delegations ends its round in the Palestinian territories within the project of cultural youth-exchange

2.2

During the visit of the Cypriot delegation to Palestine, Human Rights and Democracy Media Center “**SHAMS**” implemented a complete program according to the project’s objectives. On the level of visiting the different governorates, the delegation visited governorates of Jenin, Jericho, Jerusalem, Hebron, Bethlehem and Nablus; they also visited both Birzeit University and An-najah University, in addition to the grave of Yasser Arafat, the old city, the museum of Mahmoud Darwish and the Dead Sea. Many artistic, cultural and entertaining activities were implemented during the project’s period, and these activities attained the desired objectives of the project. Through breaking the ice as well as building relations of friendship and

colleagueship among participants, they were also acquainted with the conditions of Palestinians' life in all its forms, besides highlighting the values of coexistence, equality, freedom, tolerance and cultural dialogue. It should be noted that the team and the individuals collaborated successfully and represent a complete circle of success.

In addition there has been continuous communication between the Cypriot and the Palestinian students, and each Palestinian student was informing other students including the Cypriot about the suffering of the Palestinian people's suffering, and the right of the Palestinian people to have a good life and to enjoy all rights. The Palestinian-Israeli conflict issues developments on a daily basis in terms of detainees, injured, martyrs and assaults against innocent people. Through their visits to the Palestinian governorates, the Cypriot delegation witnessed many indicators that prove the speeches of their Palestinian counterparts like check points, inspection, the apartheid wall and Palestinians' incapacity to practice their religious rites in Jerusalem.

Through their visits to the Palestinian governorates, students were able to notice the style of life that Palestinians live, the traditions and norms in each area and the advantages of governorate from the other, public food for each area, the Palestinian markets, rural life in addition to touristic, archeological, religious, economic and public sites in each governorate.

At the end of each day there was an evaluation among both the Palestinian students as well as the Cypriot students, and the evaluation covered all aspects of the projects including individuals, trainers, places and any comments from the Cypriot delegation in general.

It is obvious that the delegation has established positive relationships between students, and there were many questions from participants about the culture of each area, and the delegation has a positive opinion of young Palestinians who are ambitious with strong personalities and determination, particularly females. While males who differ in their masculinity and who burden the responsibility since their tender youth, and who has shown also a positive image expressing the spirit of belonging as well as collaboration, and reflecting the values of equality, dialogue, communication and tolerance with others. It should be noted that the Palestinian students included Muslims and Christians, which represented the coexistence in the Palestinian community within difficult circumstances which affect not only one religion but everybody.

2.3

Activities that haven't take place:

The activity of olives harvesting as it was decided that the delegation will spend a voluntary day with some farmers to harvest olives and see the lives of Palestinian farmers, but the period of the delegation's visit was after the end of the harvest season then the activity was replaced by visiting Jerusalem.

2.4

Regarding the donor (Euromed), they attended the opening and closing ceremonies and they were informed of all activities. The Euromed team was highly collaborative, and they told us that they are ready to provide what is required in terms of assistance and advice if needed.

Concerning the outcomes on the level of the project, there was an attainment of the outcomes through interaction between the young students with each others, and there was a clear harmony between them by cooperation in order to accomplish activities, mutual dialogue and promoting the values of human rights.

Impact: there has been continual communication within the youth themselves as well as regular correspondences between Human Rights and Democracy Media Center “**SHAMS**” and the Cypriot foundation. Some participants (Palestinian youth) are in constant touch with the center, and some of them became volunteers in the center. We also received some contacts from those who participated as guests or speakers and from people whom we are linked with, and they pointed to the subject’s importance and success.

The only risk we were expecting is the fear from any Israeli obstacle or difficulty for the entrance of our Cypriot colleagues near Alkaramh cross on the Jordanian borders, and this what actually happened since there was a problem and it delayed the arrival of the Cypriot delegation one day to enter the Palestinian territories.

Regarding unexpected positive outcomes, there was special media coverage for project’s activities, and there was a pictured reportage which is achieved by Human Rights and Democracy Media Center “**SHAMS**” to document the project.

2.5

Outcomes weren’t different on the two countries but there were according to the planned expected outcomes in the project in enhancing and fostering the relations between youth.

2.6

Attachments: pictures, journalistic news and the contract.

2.7

All activities and their financial attachments.

2.8

It would be our pleasure to keep cooperation and continuity with the European Union as it is highly regarded and has a great reputation within civil society organizations.

2.9

Within the project's activities, there was a promotion for human rights' concepts via discussion, dialogues and free expression of perceptions. One of the activities was related to human rights and the international human law, and there was equality in participation between young females and males during activities' implementation as they were all involved in progress.

2.10

The project coordinator was permanently present in all activities, and the center's volunteers and employees also played a role, while participant supplied with the feedback in terms of points of view as well as outcomes.

2.11

There were things related to dialogue, tolerance and work with the team spirit, work's pressure and things related to the stereotypical images of Palestine and Palestinians. All of this emphasized that they had participations in the activities besides transferring the real image they noticed in the country.

3.1

The relationship between the Cypriot foundation and Human Rights and Democracy Media Center "**SHAMS**" is a positive one, and together we are looking forward to building future partnerships as we recognize a new partner and youth foundation in addition to benefitting from their experience in this regard.

3.2

The partnership between the Cypriot foundation and **SHAMS** will definitely continue by participating in activities. The partner foundation has agreed to involve us in future activities that either organization implements.

3.3

The relation with Palestinian political system's organizations is positive based on cooperation and mutual respect, and this was clear in the speech of Dr. Salam Fayyad as he emphasized the significance of fostering and developing relations between the two friend countries and peoples. This was also stressed by Dr. Layla Ghannam and her emphasis that youth play a key

role in developing relations between the two peoples and the importance of improving political relations between Cyprus and Palestine.

3.4

من أمل

3.5

رابط الفيس بوك ... من عدلي

3.6

SHAMS didn't receive any previous grants from the European Union.

3.7

The contracting authority "European Union" is an efficient group that seeks to develop cultural exchange as well as promote and disseminate the culture of human rights in all reachable ares, and it is successful in achieving the objectives of such projects and this is approved by civil society organizations, and the conditions it stipulates can be attained.

4.

None.

Name of the contact person for the Action:

Signature:Location:

Date report due:Date report sent: