

## **WE REFUSE TO BE ENEMIES**

### **Statement of the 50 participants of the Vision Camp for Israel-Palestine**

**July 26th, 2014**

As peaceworkers from Israel, Palestine and various other parts of the world, we have been holding a peace vigil in the middle of a war in the West Bank over the last several days. We are gathering here under very simple conditions, creating community life, sharing from our hearts, in silence and in tears, in the midst of shootings and bombings. We are bearing witness and trying to stay in Grace. We have been faced with this senseless killing every day. There have been more than 1000 human victims during the last three weeks. In the last days three Palestinians were shot in the village near the place where we are staying. In these days, we have been faced with untold pain, suffering, desperation and speechlessness; we are also coming face to face with many different opinions and inner and outer struggles.

What we all agree on is: Enough! Stop this killing. No solution can come from war! Each innocent victim of this war is one too many! We refuse to be enemies. We are calling out to all parties: Stop this war! Our feelings are beyond words, but we can no longer be silent. The civil population is being lied to on both sides, and the world is mostly silent and misled by the media. It does not take much political education to recognise the injustice of this war. Many countries are delivering weapons and enriching themselves through the war. But who sits next to the beds of the injured children and crying mothers? Who feels empathy with their bleak destiny? Who heals the wounds, dries the tears and eases the pain of all those who have lost family members or beloved friends?

We, as members of humanity during this vision camp in the midst of the war zone, are striving to convert trust, peace, justice and compassion into realities rather than mere words. This makes us feel like new children from a new earth where war does not exist.

One of our Palestinian participants said, „In 2001, I decided to stop being a victim. We are not two sides; we are one side. We have one common enemy: hatred." How many more innocent people have to be killed, how many more generations will have to carry guns so their people can feel safe? Are we aware that every killing creates new hatred, new fear and more revenge?

We have decided not to stay silent! We have decided to step out of powerlessness. We have decided to step out of the hypnosis of fear and raise our voices. We have decided to step out of our personal identification and look beyond all the different worldviews towards the fundamental healing of trauma. Compassion is not a question of worldview! Compassion is the emergency call of planet earth and the heart of humanity.

Together, we wish to create a clear and resonant voice, a voice for transformation! Killing cannot lead us to a free or protected land. We are shedding our tears and transforming our pain into a powerful NO! NO to this killing – no tolerance for the violation of human rights, regardless of its source. Israelis will never feel safe, and Palestinians will never be free, unless they begin building mutual relationships of trust and respect. And this land will never be holy while we keep watering it with blood.

Thousands of people are already taking to the streets and demonstrating that they, “refuse to be enemies.” May we grow in numbers and presence! The global system of domination thrives through our powerlessness. We can change this feeling of desperation and powerlessness into readiness for transformation. A true nonviolent revolution starts within ourselves.

We envision breaking the cycle of victimisation, occupation, hatred and revenge. We envision the awakening of the humane heart. We envision millions of people, all over the world, who no longer allow the economically motivated globalisation of war to be carried out on the backs of uncounted innocent women, men and children.

Now, it is our task to demonstrate credible alternatives: stepping out of the system of complicity and stepping into a network of solidarity and compassion. For years now, many of us have been working on new models for living. We are aware that those who are against war need a vision for peace.

This peace vigil is only the beginning. We are committing ourselves. We will dedicate our lives to finding solutions wherever we are.

We love our countries, our homes, and this earth. We declare ourselves to be global citizens for peace! Let us raise our voices: Another life is possible.

We are calling out to specialists from all areas – doctors, water experts, ecologists, technologists, peace activists, decision-makers, spiritual leaders, peace journalists, film-makers, politicians and each and everyone of you: Let us come together and put our wisdom to work! Let us overcome the walls of separation. Together, we will create completely new ways of sharing this planet.

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