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ICCI INSIGHTS & INFORMATION

June 3, 2010 | 21 Sivan, 5770 | 27 Jumada Al-'Akhira, 1431

Dear friends,

These are difficult times for Israel and Palestine and for the frozen peace process. The incident with the flotilla of boats from Turkey that tried to break the Israeli blockade on Gaza a few days ago represents another set-back for Israel and for our region.



As usual, there are at least two narratives to explain what happened, which is typical of the Palestinian-Israeli Conflict (and other conflicts around the world). It was clear that the boats were not only filled with peace activists, but also with mercenaries and terrorists who sought to use force against the Israel Defense Forces and provoked them to respond in kind. On the other hand, one wonders whether the use of force to stop this flotilla was the most effective measure. It is unfair to blame just one side in this mess.

How do we respond to yet another set-back to the peace process? Some people throw up their hands and say that peace is impossible and that nothing can be done. They let despair and pessimism set in.

We at ICCI take another view. Our message is peace and our method is dialogue. In our opinion, this is the time to rededicate ourselves to efforts towards sustainable reconciliation, now and for the future. This is why we are currently laying the groundwork for improving and expanding our dialogue and action programs for next year and for the years ahead. To keep hope alive. To resist despair.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Ronald Kronish".

Dr. Ron Kronish, rabbi
Director, ICCI
rkronish@icci.org.il

Note: for more information about effective and sustainable reconciliation, see my last blog posting on our new ICCI blog, <http://icci blog.wordpress.com>

UPCOMING EVENTS

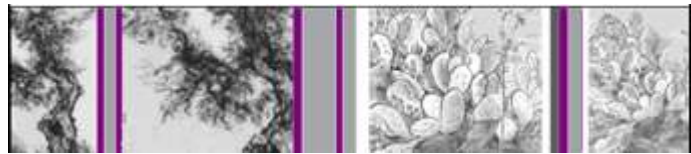
ICCI's Annual General Meeting Announcement

The 19th **Annual General Meeting** of the ICCI will take place on June 10th, 2010, at the courtyard of the **Swedish Theological Institute** in Jerusalem (58 HaNevi'im St.), with the reception at 16:00, the program at 17:00 and the business meeting at 18:15-19:15. The speaker at the program portion of the meeting will be **Deputy Mayor of Jerusalem, Naomi Tzur** (right), who will talk about "Heavenly Jerusalem and Earthly Jerusalem". To RSVP, please contact rkronish@icci.org.il.



Exhibition: "Encounter: Israeli-Palestinian Dialogue"

ICCI's **Between Memory and Reconciliation** program participants invite the public to the opening night of their new art exhibition, to be held at 18:30, on June 10, 2010. The exhibition will be displayed at the **Jerusalem Inter-Cultural Center**, Har Tzion., Jerusalem. For more information, please contact Hanin: haneen285@yahoo.com or 052-4389759.



SPECIAL EVENTS

ICCI Library Lecture: Abraham Joshua Heschel and Interreligious Dialogue, May 12, 2010



Prof. Harold Kasimow (left), the George Drake Professor of Religious Studies Emeritus at **Grinnell College** in Iowa, gave a library lecture at ICCI on the topic of "**Abraham Joshua Heschel and Interreligious Dialogue**" on May 12, 2010. Prof. Kasimow studied with Rabbi Heschel at the **Jewish Theological Seminary** in New York and has published numerous articles about Heschel and interreligious dialogue. He is co-editor, with Byron Sherwin, of "No Religion Is an Island: Abraham Joshua Heschel and Interreligious Dialogue".

ICCI/JCJCR/Kahillat Yedidya: Study tour of the Old City, May 14, 2010

A second study tour of the Armenian and Christian Quarters of Jerusalem's Old City was held on May 14, 2010, along similar lines to the highly successful April 30th "**Get to Know Your Christian Neighbors and the Problems They Face**". The program, like the previous tour and a recent study evening on a related topic, was jointly sponsored by **ICCI**, the **Jerusalem Center for Jewish-Christian Relations (JCJCR)** and **Kehillat Yedidya**. The tour was led by **Daniel Rossing, Director of JCJCR**, and the program included visits to a variety of Christian institutions and meetings with Church leaders, notably the **Archbishop Aristarchos, the Chief Secretary of the Greek Orthodox Patriarchate of Jerusalem**, and **Archbishop Aris Shirvanian of the Armenian Patriarchate**.

ONGOING PROGRAMS

The Jerusalem Interreligious Young Adult Forum (JIYAF)

During the month of May, the **JIYAF** participants met to organize their joint project and to continue discussing significant dates in the Palestinian and Jewish national calendars.

On Thursday night, May 27, 2010, they gave their friends, family, and other community members a taste of their experiences over the past eight months taking part in interreligious dialogue in Jerusalem through the JIYAF program. At their final group presentation entitled "Opening a Window," they exhibited the photography project that they have been working on all semester and engaged the audience in the types of activities that they did in their meetings. Following these "ice breaking" activities, the JIYAF participants reflected on their experiences from the past eight months. They had all joined the group hoping to deepen their understanding of one another and of the situation. Indeed, before the program, most of them had never spoken to anyone from "the other side." Despite all of the difficulties they encountered over the past year, every JIYAF participant said that the experience was "completely worth it." Images from the event can be found at <http://icci.org.il/jiyaf20100507.html>.



ICCI thanks the staff of the **Redeemer Church**, an Evangelical Lutheran Church in Jerusalem located on the Via Dolorosa, for hosting the event.

The JIYAF program is currently funded by grants from the **World Conference of Religions for Peace**, the **Pontifical Mission** and the **Embassies of the U.S.A. and the Netherlands**.

Between Memory and Reconciliation

The **Between Memory and Reconciliation** program, funded by the **Rissho Kosei-Kai** organization of Japan, brings together Jewish and Palestinian young adults—all Israeli citizens—for dialogue and action, including seminars with Japanese Buddhist students, in Israel and in Japan.

The program participants have been meeting throughout the month of May to plan their final group exhibition, entitled "Mifgash" or "Encounter." The exhibition, which will be held in Jerusalem on June 10, 2010, will feature original works of art that focus on each participant's personal encounter with the "other" during the year-long dialogue program.

Special course about the relations between Jews and Poles

ICCI's special course about "**Encountering Poland: Relations between Jews and Poles – Religious, Historical and Social Dimensions**", a collaboration between ICCI and the **Polish Institute**, with added support from **Ms. Luna Kaufman** of New York, has been ongoing since October 2009. The speakers in the bi-weekly meetings are alternately guest lecturers from Poland and Israeli experts. In recent meetings, **Prof. Pawel Spiewak** of **Warsaw University**, spoke about how it's "in" to study Jewish issues in Poland; **Prof. Jan Grabowski** of the **Polish Academy of Science** and **Ottawa University**, Canada, lectured about Anti Semitic Nazi propaganda in Poland; **Ms. Leah Balint**, a holocaust survivor and historian told the group about locating "hidden Jews"; **Dr. Ewa Gawron** of the **Jagiellonian University**, Krakow, discussed creating new relations between Poles and Jews.

ICCI ABROAD

ICCI Director in the U.K. in May 2010

ICCI Director Rabbi Dr. Ron Kronish participated in a 3 day consultation at **St. George's House** on the grounds of **Windsor Castle** in England, one hour from London, on the weekend of May 21-13, 2010,

on the theme of "Effective and Sustainable Reconciliation" with scholars and practitioners from England, Northern Ireland, Sierra Leone, and Sri Lanka. The consultation was a partnership between St. George's House and the **Winchester Centre for Peace and Reconciliation** of the **University of Winchester** and the **St. Ethelburga's Centre for Peace and Reconciliation** in London, with which ICCI has been partnering for the past two years. For more about this event, please see Dr. Kronish's blog post at <http://icciblog.wordpress.com/2010/06/03/reflections-on-the-consultation-at-st-george%e2%80%99s-house-on-effective-and-sustainable-reconciliation-may-21-23-2010>.

In addition, Dr. Kronish gave a briefing in "the tent" at the St. Ethelburga's Centre for Peace and Reconciliation in London on May 20th on "New Developments in Interreligious Dialogue in Israel."

Furthermore, Dr. Kronish also met with friends and colleagues of ICCI in London:

- **Rabbi Mark Winer**, Senior Rabbi, **West London Synagogue**
- **Robbie Rayne**, the **Rayne Trust**
- **Sir Sigmund Sternberg**, founding patron of ICCI
- **James Kidner**, the **Coexist Foundation**
- **Simon Keyes**, Director, **Justine Huxley**, Interfaith Projects Coordinator, and **Helen Gilbert**, Reconciliation Projects Coordinator, all of the St. Ethelburga's Center for Peace and Reconciliation
- **Susan McEwen**, Irish Peace Centres Coordinator, **Corrymeela Community**

ANNOUNCEMENTS

IN MEMORIAM

ICCI mourns the passing of **Sheikh Abdul Aziz Bukhari**, Sheikh of the Naqshabandian Religious Method, Head of the Uzbeke Community of Jerusalem, and co-director of **Jerusalem PeaceMakers**, who passed away on May 31, 2010. We extend heartfelt condolences to his friends, family, all those who were affected by his kind personality and peaceful teachings.



ICCI blog updates

The following is a list of recent updates to the ICCI blog (<http://icciblog.wordpress.com>):

- [Rabbis for Human Rights](#) - by Jason Kaufman
- [Zuza Radzik](#) - by Jason Kaufman
- [Reflections on the consultation at St. George's House on Effective and Sustainable Reconciliation, May 21-23, 2010](#) - by Ron Kronish

We welcome your comments to postings on our blog, now and in the future.

In addition, ICCI's Face to Face/Faith to Faith program was blogged about by a student at Pardes, who recently met with Avigail Moshe, ICCI's director of youth and young adult programs:

- <http://ramarder-peaceplayers.blogspot.com/2010/05/interreligious-coordinating-council-in.html>
- <http://ramarder-peaceplayers.blogspot.com/2010/05/professional-advice.html>

Support ICCI via PEF/NIF:
<http://icci.org.il/support.html>



or online, via JGOODERS:
ICCI's L'Chaim Campaign
<http://www.jgooders.com//ProjectCard.asp?ProjectID=613>