

Peace Research Village

Middle East



“You never change things by fighting the existing reality. To change something, build a new model that makes the existing model obsolete.” Buckminster Fuller



Survival is not a private matter anymore

The systematic structures of violence that have been so present in our contemporary history have brought us to a state where we are witnessing the finite life of some of the world's natural resources, the instability of the global economic system and numerous global conflicts between civilizations, religions and social groups. Nearly all of the world's human inhabitants are experiencing violence and its effects on a daily basis. The immeasurable cruelty humankind brings upon most of the life on this planet demands a comprehensive response. The decisive point is whether we, as human beings, are determined to follow what we know in terms of structural violence, or if we are prepared to step into the unknown and rediscover, re-learn and act towards a deepening culture of true peace – one of trust, responsibility and truth.

Strategies

- » **Develop community and models of living together** that act as research tools for the study of peace.
- » **Build a core group of Israelis, Palestinians and internationals** to act as a leading group for the Peace Research Village Middle East.
- » **Initiate and support the development of prototype technology based on sustainability** by bringing together experts from all appropriate fields.
- » **Create effective levels of cooperation** within the Middle Eastern and international peace movements.
- » **Obtain the status of UN protectorate** for such a Peace Research Village in the Middle East.

Background

The vision of the Peace Research Village was born in the Tamera community in Portugal, an educational center for global peace work. The Peace Research Village benefits from more than thirty years of experience in social dynamics and community development.

The project began focusing on Israel-Palestine as a direct response to the start of the second Intifada in 2000. Since then many peace camps and workshops have been held in Tamera in which many Israelis and Palestinians gained knowledge and experience in outer and inner peace work and in the issue of building community.

The Peace Research Village Association was officially registered as a German NGO in 2005 and as an Israeli NGO in 2009. In 2005 and 2007 two peace pilgrimages were held in the land of Israel-Palestine, during which the project gained additional contacts, knowledge and experience of community life in a crisis area. The pilgrimages were led by Sabine Lichtenfels and Benjamin von Mendelssohn, who also led a political pilgrimage in Colombia in 2008.

Between 2006 and 2011, about 30 Israelis and Palestinians have been taking part in the Monte Cerro Peace Education program in Tamera in order to prepare themselves for future community life. A core group of peace activists has been established for studying and working towards the vision of the Peace Research Village in the Middle East (PRV-ME), and the circles of support from various people and groups in Israel-Palestine are expanding rapidly.



Criteria

There are five core principles that underpin the work of the PRV-ME:

Community

Learning to live together: re-integration of the human being into a system of trust, truth and transparency.

The project bases much of its community development work on the **Forum** methods designed during the last 30 years by Dieter Duhm and Sabine Lichtenfels. These allow the core group to develop a solid social foundation, knowing that social sustainability is the pre-condition for all other aspects of sustainability.



Healing

Healing work is central to peace work. The world is directed by the collective trauma of separation that has resulted in societies based upon fear. To establish a peaceful society, this wound needs to be treated carefully – individually, collectively and structurally. A balance between outer and inner peace work is crucial for this. The essence of healing is the regaining of trust, especially in the issue of love.

Spirituality

The trauma of separation is also deeply rooted in humanity's loss of its spiritual anchor. In the PRV-ME a universal spirituality beyond religion will be practiced. This can include elements from the universal core of existing religions but must be geared towards the general reconnection of the human being with creation.

Theory

Establishing a solid and informed theoretical basis for all political actions.

The PRV-ME draws upon a synergy of modern science (holography, chaos research, and theory of open systems), history, sociology and psychology as formulated in the **Political Theory** of Dieter Duhm. A solid theoretical basis is important for new models: "The thinking of the future has to make wars impossible" (Albert Einstein).

Complexity

The complex question of survival cannot be answered through a single-track-perspective, be it ecological, technological, social or political, as profound and sophisticated as that may be. For this reason the elements of sustainability knowledge in all areas of life must be put together in a comprehensive way and thus form a new holistic life system. Such a life system must be tested in reality to make "lived peace" visible and tangible.

Water Retention Landscapes

“Greening the desert”



With the help of the Austrian permaculture specialist Sepp Holzer, Tamera has created a model and an educational project for natural water management and a basis for forestation, horticulture and agriculture in regions threatened by desertification. It is a globally adaptable model which

can be applied in all regions in various appropriate forms. The core of the project is a water landscape with a system of interconnected rainwater retentions spaces that are built into the landscape in a harmonious way.

In the Middle East we can create oases in the desert by retaining rainwater and flash floods in the valleys, to stop and to reverse the desertification of the region. Knowing the crucial role of water scarcity in the Middle East's political conflict, the PRV-ME is seeking places in the region where this method can be introduced and developed as a model for the healing of nature.

Solar Village

Intelligent energy supply for the 21st century



A solar village is a working model for a future community. The model that has been planned by the solar technologist Jurgen Kleinwachter is a largely self-sufficient village for 50 people. It guarantees self-sufficiency in water supply, food production and energy supply.

A solar village can be established anywhere on Earth that has an adequate amount of sunshine. This kind of technology is well-suited to all sun-rich parts of the Earth, and makes it possible for regional development to be independent from globalization. The first prototype solar village is being created in Tamera, where two basic models of future existence have been brought together: a social and an ecological-technological model. Soon it will be ready to be duplicated to the Middle East and to be used by the PRV-ME.

Core Group Members



The PRV-ME core group is comprised of experienced peace workers from Palestine, Israel and Europe. They have all reached the conclusion that sustainable peace can be achieved only when it touches all aspects of life, including politics, spirituality, ecology and relationships. The creation of the PRV-ME as an ongoing community based on trust and truth is the courageous next step in their personal and global peace work.



Benjamin von Mendelssohn (Germany/Portugal)

After working on the establishment of a Peace University in Berlin and Potsdam in 1998, he joined the Mirja Peace School in Tamera and became Director of the Institute for Global Peacework. With his background as a direct descendant of the German-Jewish Mendelssohn family, Benjamin is highly motivated to support new peace initiatives in the Holy Land. As Director of the project, he focusses on developing the vision and building the group.



Aida Shibli (Palestine)

As a political activist since the first Intifada she was fighting against the Israeli occupation and for women's empowerment. After years of dedicated political work in several Israeli peace organizations, Aida discovered the essential need to include inner peace work and spirituality, and to discover the connection of the war and oppression between men and women to the war and oppression between nations.



Uri Ayalon (Israel)

Journalist, history teacher, activist in the anti-globalization movement, and one of the founders of the Israeli movement against the wall in the West Bank. In recent years Uri has focused on studying and practicing alternative models of living together and creating spaces of truth and trust.

Ring of Power and Cooperation Partners



Sabine Lichtenfels

Co-founder of the Tamera Peace Research Center in Portugal and author of several books about peace work between the genders. In 2005 she was nominated for the Nobel Peace Prize as one of 1000 Women for Peace.



Sami Awad

Founder and Executive Director of the Holy Land Trust, a Palestinian organization in Bethlehem for developing nonviolent methods. In 2006, he ran as an independent candidate for the Palestinian Parliament.

Dieter Duhm

Psychoanalyst, author and artist, co-founder of Tamera, Portugal

Jurgen Kleinwachter

Solar technology inventor, Germany

Sepp Holzer

“The Rebel Farmer”, Permaculture designer from Austria

Patch Adams

Clown doctor, founder of the Gesundheit Institute in the United States

David Lisbona

Co-founder of several Israeli reconciliation organizations

Rabbi Ohad Ezrahi

Spiritual teacher and founder of “The Tribe” community in Israel

Pia Gyger

Founder of Lassalle Institute – research center for global peace, Switzerland

Shmuel Shaul

A Hebrew shaman, nature and spiritual guide

Starhawk

Spiritual teacher and political activist, United States

Financial Support

The Peace Research Village Middle East is a non-profit organization relying on the generous financial contributions of its supporters. A significant element in creating a culture of peace is the redirection of money away from present structures of war and towards initiatives that support sustainable and long-term peace.

Bank account:

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More Information

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Peace
Research
Village
Association

Mission Statement

To support a positive global transition through the development of research centers and sustainable models of community in crisis areas. This refers to an outer crisis – political, economic and ecological, as well as inner crisis – emotional, mental and spiritual. In these centers both internationals and those native to the region will research truthful co-existence and develop new concepts and concrete solutions for the emergence of a peace culture in all critical areas of human life: community, spirituality, love and gender relations, child rearing, technology, ecology, arts and education.

The vision of the Peace Research Village Middle East (PRV-ME) is to establish such a model in the Middle East.

www.prvme.org