



Tenth Anniversary Event of The Peres Center for Peace

Executive Summary



From 26th to 28th October 2008, the Peres Center for Peace held its Tenth Anniversary Event in Tel Aviv-Jaffa. Following ten years of peacebuilding activities for Arabs and Israelis, this significant occasion reflected on the Peres Center's past achievements, present undertakings and future endeavors, and lent momentum to a second decade of cross-border initiatives.

Some **2,000 guests** from all walks of life participated in the special occasion:

- **Over 400 international guests**, including partners of the Peres Center, leading figures from diverse fields, government officials, renowned artists and more;
- **Over 1,500 Israeli and 150 Palestinian and Arab guests**, including project participants, new and existing partners, representatives from the grassroots populations and the political sphere.

Over the three-day event, **multiple working meetings and plenary sessions** were held. Highlights included:

- The **fifth meeting of the International Board of Governors of the Peres Center**, attended by many esteemed International Board members. The Peres Center's leadership reported on activities and accomplishments, statistics about the Peres Center's reach, the working methodology and financial breakdown and more. Furthermore, Israeli and Palestinian project participants presented their personal experiences, sharing the impact that such projects have had on their lives.
- **A number of panels**, gathering international and regional experts to address the Peres Center's mission in relation to its project fields. These panels shed light on:
 - International cooperation to better utilize the world's **agricultural resources** in order to respond to the world food crisis and maintain environmentally-friendly practices;
 - Methods in which **culture and media** can advance dialogue and reconciliation and combat stereotypes, through its wide reach;
 - The **power of sport** to encourage interaction and teamwork among people of different backgrounds, disseminate positive messages and address pressing social challenges;
 - The importance that **IT tools** assume in regions of conflict, in connecting populations that are separated by physical barriers;
 - The inter-dependency of the **Israeli and Palestinian economies**, and the subsequent need to empower the Palestinian private sector in order to establish a thriving, independent Palestinian economy;
 - The need for bold moves by the Israeli and Palestinian political establishments in order to **advance the peace process**, and the complementary efforts required by the international community to bolster reconciliation through diplomatic channels;
 - The complex road to peacebuilding in different regions, and the numerous elements required in order to **build social foundations for peace**.

- **A special event entitled “Believe”** featuring international performers who came together to pay tribute to the Peres Center’s innovative peacebuilding programs. The event concluded with the performance of an original song with lyrics by H.E. President Peres.
- The **inauguration of the Peres Peace House in Jaffa**, through a special event which allowed guests to tour the site, hear from the architect, and learn about the multi-faceted use of the Peres Center’s future home.
- A number of **working sessions**, focusing on the following Peres Center initiatives:
 - **“Israeli-Palestinian Young Political Leaders”**;
 - **“Wo.Me.N – Israeli-Palestinian Women’s Media Network”**;
 - **ZOORA Launch** – A joint Palestinian-Israeli film and television initiative.
- **Site visits** to various initiatives of the Peres Center, including:
 - The **“Frames of Reality”** exhibition, featuring fascinating and moving photos from Palestinian and Israeli photojournalists;
 - The **“Twinned Peace Sport Schools”** program, where Palestinian and Israeli youngsters meet regularly for sport and Peace Education activities;
 - The **Pediatric Hemato-Oncology Center** at Augusta Victoria Hospital, newly completed through Israeli-Palestinian cooperation;
 - Additionally, guests were invited to meet Palestinian business leaders in Ramallah.
- A meeting for members of the Peres Center’s eight international **Friends Associations**, whereby new channels of communication and methods for outreach were discussed.

The event attracted **local, regional and international media coverage**, including written and broadcast features. Through the media’s wide reach, the message of the importance of civil society cooperation in peacebuilding efforts was disseminated to a diverse and far-reaching audience worldwide.

The successful event boasts numerous important and ground-breaking outcomes:

- **New partnerships** formed between the Peres Center and Palestinian / Arab organizations as well as international bodies;
- **Multiple commitments** to support the Peres Center’s cross-border projects;
- **Dozens of meetings** to develop projects as well as **concrete plans** for new initiatives;
- Establishment of **new platforms** for regional cooperation;
- Recruitment of **“Ambassadors for Peace”** who span numerous countries and play a vital role in garnering support and promoting peacebuilding;
- **Increased awareness of the Peres Center’s mission and activities.**

The Tenth Anniversary Event of the Peres Center for Peace was instrumental in stirring enthusiasm and generating momentum for peacebuilding projects targeted at the grassroots populations. The Peres Center is proud to be at the forefront of implementing this vision, and is excited to continue in its important mission with the invaluable support of the extended Peres Center family.