



UNIVERSAL PEACE FEDERATION
INTERNATIONAL
UPF Israel
UPF San Marino
UPF Torino - APS



Women's Federation for World
Peace International
WFWP Italia - APS
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The Universal Peace Federation is an NGO in Special Consultative Status with the Economic and Social Council of the UN www.upf.org

The Women's Federation for World Peace is an NGO in General Consultative Status with the Economic and Social Council of the UN www.wfwp.org

FOOTBALL FOR PEACE

The conflict between Israel and Palestine influences not only the Middle East region but the entire world. Many initiatives have been undertaken during the years to bring peace, give hope and alleviate the suffering of the people in conflict zones. However, even if political solutions are important, they are not effective if there is not trust and reconciliation among the population. Sport is an extremely powerful element to bring young people together, to help them create harmony and bring down the barriers of diversity. This project wishes to be a support in creating the conditions necessary to constitute a platform of reconciliation and education towards young people through football.

The idea was born years ago, more precisely in 2008, following a meeting with the Palestinian Minister of Sport, Abu Daqqa and, successively with the Israeli Minister of Sport, Majadle. The suggestion was that an international NGO could create a meeting point in a neutral zone between Israel e Palestine. Proposals supporting this initiative also came from Jordan, in particular, to help in the training of Israeli and Palestinian referees. How can football contribute to the construction of peace?

- It educates about the real sense of sport – football helps young people to develop values of team work and fair-play. It promotes wellbeing – football promotes a healthy mind and body and helps to develop positive physical strength.
- It gives a positive direction to young people – football brings joy and inspiration and channels the energy of young people towards positive goals.
- It resolves conflicts and prevents violence – football gives young Israeli and Palestinians an opportunity to get to know each other as future leaders of their respective nations.

However, a favourable neutral environment is necessary in order that this very process of reconciliation through sport can begin. Italy is viewed both by Israel and Palestine as a favourable nation, a meeting ground without prejudices and non-partisan.

This project is inserted in the framework of peace initiatives in the Middle East and as such, will have great prominence in the scope of the Economic and Social Council of the United Nations.

Goals of the Project:

To bring mixed youth teams (Israeli-Palestinian) – starting with under-13, under-15 and under-17 – to play friendly football matches with their Italian counterparts.

To allow young people to meet each other and create team spirit and friendship in freedom (a very complex aspect to bring about today in Israel and Palestine).

To give young people a special occasion, an emotionally unique moment: a meeting with the great Italian football tradition and, compatibly with the sporting commitments, with important reference figures: football heroes of the past and present.

To continue visit and exchange projects between football teams and trainers supporting Football for Peace, as international support for the realization of a platform for peace in the Middle East through football:

- The diffusion of the project in football sports centres for young people of all the parties in conflict
- The support of their respective prerogatives
- The construction of an environment for the formation of a club composed of Israelis and Palestinians.

Messages from the children who visited the UN Campus in Turin

Abed Elmagid:

I was really grateful and astonished for being able to participate in this delegation. It gave me a feeling of joy and happiness, that I could meet some wonderful people from my neighbourhood, that I never had a chance to meet and become good friends with. I still keep close contact with them, this was all due to the delegation. I found the experience interesting and am so grateful for the chance to go abroad, it was my first experience out of the country.

Moemen:

The experience as a whole was like a beautiful dream. I had many fears and was anxious about the experience in the beginning, especially being away from home and in another country. But I came to really enjoy myself and loved my time spent in Italy.

Mahdi:

I was so happy to receive an invitation to participate in this once in a lifetime trip, I was so grateful to be able to travel with my parents abroad, but more grateful to be a part of this wonderful delegation. Had I not been there, I couldn't have met some wonderful new friends from the Jewish community of Affula, and I regularly keep contact with them.

Ahmad:

This experience abroad was so great I will remember for years to come. We played so much football I couldn't have been happier. The Italians really respected us all and it really left a feeling of acceptance and gratitude and I was so very impressed. We travelled the country, and visited many impressive and important places in Italy. The feeling I had, having the opportunity to participate in a football game with Juventus, was of overwhelming gratitude. Such an amazing experience! I try my best to stay in touch with the other children who participated from Affula.

Mohammad:

I really appreciate and thank all the people who could help in giving us and especially me the chance to participate in this life changing delegation. I feel the program as a whole was spectacular, and really hope that there will be many more opportunities to participate in activities like this in future, both for myself and many others.



Ward:

I really enjoyed my time spent with the wonderful people in this delegation, and made some wonderful new friends. We visited many places all across Italy that held great importance to all of us. I still stay in contact with the children in Affula and hold them in high regard.

Abdallah:

This delegation that I could be a part of was splendid. I am really so grateful to the organisers and those in positions of responsibility, for giving all of us this wonderful opportunity. I liked all the activities we could participate in, but I really enjoyed the time we could spend playing football. I really came to appreciate the children from Affula and keep in contact with them.

Din:

I really enjoyed spending time to play with all of the various groups across Italy. I found it exciting and enjoyable to visit the different places, particularly a museum for cars. I had the opportunity to learn a lot of new things, but above all about the organisation of UNICRI. It's an experience I will never forget.

Shahar:

What I liked most during this trip to Italy, were the wonderful sites we were able to visit, the buildings, the sculptures, I liked them so much. I really enjoyed the time spent with the children playing football. Playing with the Italians gave me a feeling of overwhelming joy. And to be together with the Jewish and Arab children was a very nice experience.

Menachem:

I am so eternally grateful to the organisers and to UNICRI for the wonderful opportunity to be able to participate in such an important delegation such as this one. Without these wonderful organisations I would never have been able to participate. It was such a wonderful experience to visit the places of Italy, particularly Juventus and Torino left me with a happy feeling. .

Minoy:

This experience I received was that of once in a lifetime. It was the very first time I had been offered to play on a real life football pitch, and was so grateful to be able to watch a professional game abroad and in the flesh. The time I got to spend together playing in Juventus and Torino was magnificent, and a time I will really never forget.

El Roei:

Like all my friends I enjoy watching top league football games. It was an experience of a once in a life time. I also enjoyed playing with the local Italian children from those games. I enjoy the art in the museums we visited. I would like to show my deep gratitude for all the people that help this deep experience happen. I personally feel honoured to participate in a delegation that only few people could have joined. Thank you!

Sahar:

I would like to show my gratitude for opening for us the door for such a special experience. I would like to thank all the people that made this happens, to all the people who donated their time, money, enthusiasm, determination and heart. I love Italy

