

A Delegation of „Young Königswinter Alumni“ on a visit in the Occupied Palestinian Territories



Richard E. Makepeace, British Consul General, and Dr. Klaus Burkhardt, Head of the German Representative Office of the Federal Republik of Germany, during a joint briefing with the Delegation in the Ambassador Hotel in Jerusalem

Photo: FES Jerusalem

The Middle East conflict is a complex state of affairs. In order to have a better understanding of it, one also needs to have seen the Palestinian Territories. This is the reason why a delegation of 45 German and British people visited the Friedrich Ebert Stiftung in East Jerusalem and Ramallah on May 2.

The members of the delegation were participants in the annual conference of the Young Königswinter Alumni, who are past participants of the Young Königswinter Conference, an association set up after World War II to foster dialogue between Germany and Great Britain. At their conferences they discuss

major social and political problems of the present. This year the topic was “Identities – Perceptions in the 21st Century.” As their venue, the participants chose Israel and the Palestinian Territories – a region which has very marked contrasts and where identities have major political significance.

In the first days of the conference, the participants discussed the current political situation, the perception of the conflict, and prospects for peace with important decision-makers in Israel. They then spent a day in the Palestinian Territories. A political tour of Jerusalem’s Old City, organized by FES Jerusalem, enabled them to gain information about the issue of the settlements and their impact on the social and political fabric in this part of the world. As part of a joint briefing session with the British Consul General, Richard E. Makepeace, and the head of the German Representative Office in Ramallah, Dr. Klaus Burkhardt, they then discussed the possibilities and tasks of European players vis-à-vis solving the Israeli-Palestinian conflict.



Dr. Michael Bröning, Director of the FES Jerusalem welcomes the Delegation at arrival in East Jerusalem

Photo: FES Jerusalem



The Delegation of the „Young Königswinter Alumni“ in the garden of the Friedrich Ebert Stiftung in East Jerusalem

Photo: FES Jerusalem

Lastly, a lively panel discussion in Ramallah with young Palestinian activists from the worlds of politics and civil society gave the delegation's members an impression of a Palestinian's daily life in the West Bank. The participants were particularly interested in what young Palestinians think about prospects for a political solution of the Middle East conflict. The reason behind this – as was the generally shared opinion after an intensive day in the Palestinian Territories – was that a change in the situation through political means must be reached quickly, in order to make it possible for Israel and a Palestinian State to have a common future.



The Delegation at a panel discussion with young Palestinian political activists in Ramallah

Photo: FES Jerusalem



The „Young Königswinter Alumni“ at the Palestinian Authority Presidential Compound on a visitation of the Mausoleum of Yassir Arafat.

Photo: FES Jerusalem