

International Conference at Sapir College:

Gaza – Sderot

Moving from Crisis to Sustainability

February 14 - 17, 2011

The Gaza-Sderot region has known violence, war, and tensions for the past 10 years. This region has known Israeli military incursions and a blockade on the Gaza Strip, rocket attacks from Gaza on civilian populations in Sderot and the ever-expanding surrounding Gaza region, economic and humanitarian crisis in the Gaza Strip, underemployment and unemployment, damage to physical and psychological health, insecurity for all peoples of the region.

Following "Cast Lead" Operation/War and the Gaza Flotilla, the crisis in the region has drawn international attention; however, no serious work has been done to look deeper into the reality of the region and to offer sustainable solutions. In order to address these issues, and to promote sustainable and healthy alternatives to the ongoing political-social-economic crisis characteristic of our region, we will hold a three day international conference that will bring together scholars, experts, and residents from The Gaza Strip, Israel, the West Bank and from the international community, to meet, discuss, and plan first steps toward achievement of this sustainable human future.

The topics to be covered in this conference include:

- The role of civil society (NGOs and grassroots initiatives) in the creation of a sustainable future
- Community resilience and empowerment – including leadership development
- Environment and ecology
- Psychological and physical health
- Political obstacles to creating a sustainable future and ways to address them
- Economic development – including employment & elimination of poverty
- Human and civil rights
- Conflict transformation and post-conflict stabilization
- Education – formal and informal, from childhood to adult education
- Homeland security issues

This conference will be the first coordinated step toward building a sustainable and healthier future for citizens of the region. The envisioned outcomes of the conference include:

- The establishment of working groups that will address specific issues connected to creating a sustainable future and the creation of a network of professionals who will continue to help co-create this future
- Publication(s) that combine research findings, and expert knowledge from the field with concrete recommendations, for organizations and people living and working in the region, and for governmental leaders and decision makers

The conference is a combined initiative of Other Voice Association and Sapir College in partnership with several NGOs in Israel as well as individual Palestinian experts.

For more information on how you can help support this conference, please feel free to contact:

Mr. Eric Yellin – Other Voice email: eric@othervoice.org +972-54-468-001

Dr. Julia Chaitin – Sapir College email: jchaitin@yahoo.com +972-54-797-6090

