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אמיס - בית הספר הבינלאומי - 90290					

The International School of Peace

140 teens from around the world

By INNA EIZENBERG



We've lately learned of an amazing project taking place right in the center of Israel, and of course we wanted to share it with you.

Eastern Mediterranean International School (EMIS) was opened two years ago at Hakfar Hayarok (Ramat Sharon). It's an international high school for 11th–12th grades. The program focuses on peace, initiative and environment in the Middle East (המזרח"ת), and the studies there are in English.

This year, there are 140 students from 40 countries (!) studying at EMIS, of which 20% are Israelis and 80% are from around the world. How cool is that?!

The idea is for students from all over the world to come and study in Israel. The 140 teens in the school now are from Yemen, Morocco, Egypt, Bosnia, Thailand, France, Afghanistan, Brazil, Canada, Germany, Russia, South America, Macedonia and South Sudan.

Many of these countries have no diplomatic relations with Israel, which means these teens couldn't have visited Israel if they weren't studying here, and would have had little chance of schooling back home because their families couldn't pay for it.

Here are some of the amazing stories of the students in EMIS:

Mohammed travelled to Israel all the way from Sanaa (Yemen), because he believes in peace. He said: "I believe that to bring peace to our area we must break down the stigmas, know and learn about all the different people living here and accept one another. I, too, come from a country with violence, and I know there is no room for violence between us."

Mohammed has not seen his family for two years. "It is too difficult to go to Yemen and come back to Israel," he said.

When the wave of terrorism began in Israel at the beginning of the school year, Mohammed, together with his friend, the student Martina from Albania, organized a march for peace and against violence. They led the march with songs and candles.

This is the atmosphere of the International School, that teaches its students tolerance between people and countries.





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Naka (17) has a special story. She comes from South Sudan, but Israel is no stranger to her. Naka was born in Egypt. Her parents were refugees who had run away from South Sudan to Egypt, met there, fell in love, married and had Naka and her brother. After the birth of her brother, Naka's parents divorced; she, her mother, brother and an uncle had to run away from Egypt because of violence against them. They came to Israel through Sinai as refugees. Naka was then 9 years old. Naka and her family lived in Nahariya, where her mother worked and Naka felt Israeli. Hebrew was her language, and she was even going to go to the army. Six years later, in 2006, when the war in South Sudan ended, Naka was forced to go back home with her family. As soon as she could, she came back as a student of EMIS. At the end of two years, she will go back to Sudan.

"I am interested in business, and would like to help my country," Naka said.

John (18) came all the way to Israel from Afghanistan (with which we have no diplomatic relations), through different countries. He is happy here at EMIS. "Classes start at 8 a.m., but because there is so much to learn, studies continue till after midnight," he said with a smile.

José came from Quito in Ecuador. His family is poor, and in his home country he had no chance of finishing school. He was given a scholarship from money donated to the school by charities around the world. What he wants most, he says, is to better know the Israelis and Israel, and this has driven him to study Hebrew online. José writes poetry and wants to study international business.

What a great place EMIS is!

Dictionary

מילון קאמוס

Accept

לקבל יפולון

Tolerance

סובלנות תסאח

Donated

נתרם תמ תירעה

Initiative

יזומה מبادרה

Violence

אלימות ענף

Refugees

פליטים לאגנאן

Charities

ארגוני צדקה جمعيات خيرية

Environment

סביבה בינה

Organized

ארגן נזמא

Divorced

התגרשו תטאלقا

Poetry

שירה شعر

Relations

יחסים עלאקאט

March

צעדה מסירה

Scholarship

מלגה מנחה دراسية