

YMCA Spain

International Seminar Education on Peace

A Policy Report

Madrid, Toledo, April 2009

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Chapter 1

Framework

On the 21st of April 2009, 18 participants arrived in Madrid, Spain to participate in the 6th annual Seminar for the Education of Peace. Arriving as strangers a week ago, we now leave as a family that is united across seas.

We are active and committed YMCA volunteers and staff ages 21-26 representing Bosnia, Ukraine, Senegal, the Netherlands, Brazil, Argentina, Kosovo, Egypt, Lebanon, Palestine, Spain, Malta, and the United States. Our dedication to the YMCA mission and our desire to connect the human race as one has brought us together.

The theme of the seminar is *'from diversity to integration'*.

Time was spent in each session sharing our local conflicts and varying points of view. Ideas were exchanged on possibilities for positive change and growth within each others communities. Specific topics we have discussed

are: immigration, peace, diversity, integration (models), cultural differences, the analysis of current situations in countries, acceptance, effects of financial crisis on communities, effects that governments have on the beliefs and perspectives of society and their views on the rest of the world. In this opportunity we have opened each other up to a better understanding of the world. As a group we were able to find ways and solutions to reach out and educate our communities on cultural diversity, tolerance, and current international conflicts. It is our ambition to inspire others to spread awareness and be active with their obligation as people to coexist peacefully and with an understanding of others differences.

1.1 Breaking Cultural Barriers

The YMCA is dedicated to help people realize their fullest potential mentally, physically and spiritually, and to uniting people, as is shortly expressed by the slogan: building strong kids, strong families, and strong communities. We strive to increase active participation, especially with youth, in building community bonds, in demanding equality, and in stimulating peace.

The YMCA is a vehicle for spreading cultural awareness and breaking cultural barriers. The YMCAs commitment to strengthening mind, body, and spirit encourages inner peace, the essential tool needed to transform

people, and mend crisis. Some Western countries are known for their wealth and being lands of opportunity.

1.2 Proposals

1.2.1 Immigration as an opportunity

By building future leaders around the world, opportunity can in this way become global. Through programs that teach micro financing, vocational training, cultural awareness and acceptance, and immigration laws, for example, we can make a significant impact on the development of countries, for example Senegal.

The YMCA encourages people to see immigration as an opportunity and not a threat. Although we have many differences, there is much we can learn from each other and we should not close our eyes to this reality.

1.2.2 Spreading Cultural Awareness

We leave this seminar with solutions for positive change and promoting peace in our communities back home. Having gained a more genuine knowledge of the world through a lot of intimate stories we have shared and learned, our voices on peace education have become authentic. As advocates for peace,

our goal is spread cultural awareness and tolerance and to inspire others in our community to do the same.

Chapter 2

Policy Recommendations

Written recommendations in the fields that we have been approaching during the seminar.

2.1 On International Level

1. Organize more international meetings for the YMCA so people would be able to share their experiences and the actions they are actually developing.
2. Work together in order to motivate different countries to prepare peace seminars or other international events.
3. Take more time to present and to share our different cultures.

4. Take time to share more reflections with everyone else instead of waiting for the reflections of our guides. (take more initiatives)
5. Work on finding tools which help to keep connecting after after the seminar.

2.2 On Local Level

1. Share with our local YMCAs (leaders, staff, volunteers,...) all what was discussed in the seminar.
2. Motivate youth volunteers to publish or to produce their concrete ideas.
3. We should be more active in our local YMCAs to create activities on the topics and the issues we worked on in this seminar, and propose that these topics are included in the regular local, regional, or national projects.
4. We also propose special efforts on searching resources to fund such activities on the different levels involving volunteers, staff, and (board)members with a special focus on youth.

2.3 General YMCA Mission

1. Keep constantly promoting for the mission and the general philosophy of the YMCA.
2. To create more time in future seminars to share our mutual current situations which are useful to propose better recommendations for the future.

Chapter 3

Declaration

3.1 Declaration of Madrid

We, the participants of the sixth annual seminar on Education for Peace, held in Madrid and Toledo, Spain, from April 20th to April 27th 2009, declare:

3.1.1 Focus on diversity and integration

That as young leaders, staff, and volunteers representing twelve countries from Europe, Africa, North America, Latin America, and the Middle East, we uphold the YMCA values in striving for better communities and strengthening peace.

Our focus is on diversity and integration in the context of multiculturalism

3.1.2 Strengthening Human Rights

We believe that the YMCA values, such as respect, caring, honesty, responsibility, faith, love, and freedom, contribute to the strengthening of Human Rights

3.1.3 Acceptance of Differences

We emphasize the importance of acceptance of the differences in a multicultural world, through the transfer of knowledge and shared experiences.

3.1.4 Using YMCA Structures

We will accomplish these initiatives through teamwork and communication using the support the YMCA structures locally, regionally, nationally, and globally.

Madrid, April 27th

Chapter 4

Summary of the Program

4.1 Schedule

Monday, April 20th

- Arrivals in Madrid
- Welcome dinner

Tuesday, April 21st

- Official opening of the Seminar. Ministerio de Igualdad
- Mr. Gabriel Alconchel, General Director INJUVE (Spanish Youth Institute)
- Presentation of participants and YMCAs represented

Wednesday, April 22nd

- Workshop on multiculturality. Mr. Raul Martinez, facilitator

Thursday, April 23rd

- Consejeria de Inmigracion y Cooperacion Gobierno de Madrid
- Mr. Javier Fernandez/Lasquetty, Minister (Consejero)
- YMCA of Madrid (Carabanchel). Multicultural activities with immigrant children, volunteers and staff of the Madrid YMCA
- Message from Mr. Jose Antonio Corrales, President of YMCA of Spain

Friday, April 24th

- Departure to Toledo.

Saturday, April 25th

- Specific workshop on police recommendations, general framework and concrete projects
- Written declaration from the group of participants

Sunday, April 26th

- Finalizing report of the Seminar and written declaration
- Evaluation
- Closing

4.2 Daily activities

- Morning reflections
- Workshops and plenary group discussions
- Special lectures (European cooperation)
- Plenary discussions
- Activities in the cities of Madrid and Toledo

Chapter 5

List of Participants

Dorothy Refalo	Malta
Ermalinda Mamo	Malta
Jean Pierre Diassy	Senegal
Madelaine Sarr	Senegal
Macelle Amelie Thiar	Senegal
Paula Dini	Argentina
Brooke Inman	United States
Hilary Mayhew	United States
Ramy Basem Yousef Basily	Egypt
Dora Abou Mitri	Lebanon
Manar Shomaly	Palestine

Gerard Tosserams	The Netherlands
Leticia Regina Vaccaro	Brazil
Sabri Dragusha	Kosovo
Edvard Bajrami	Kosovo
Azra Bogucanin	Bosnia
Ania Momotiyk	Ukraine
Svitlana Momotyuk	Ukraine
Tom Cusens	Malta (facilitator)
Cees Bremmer	The Netherlands (facilitator)
Juan Simoes	Spain (facilitator)