

4 March 2010

To whom it may concern,

In my capacity as Special Adviser to the UN Secretary-General on Sport for Development and Peace, I am delighted to express my full support for the important work of the Sport Department of the Peres Center for Peace which is working, through the medium of sport, to achieve peacebuilding and coexistence objectives between Palestinian and Israeli youngsters.

With ten years of commitment and dedication to this goal through innovative, cross-border programmes, and in cooperation with its Palestinian partner the Al-Quds Association for Democracy and Dialogue, the Peres Center has established itself as an important actor in the realm of peacebuilding through various means, including sport.

I am happy to lend my support to the Peres Center. Through sport – with its values of teamwork and togetherness –, children and adults alike can achieve common goals, share both struggles and victories and transcend barriers, allowing them to experience a different outlook and approach the concept of peace with their counterparts.

Last June, I had the opportunity to witness the success of the ‘Twinned Peace Basketball Schools’ project at a special joint Palestinian-Israeli activity for girls which took place in Ein Rafa, near Jerusalem. It is more than evident that this project is fulfilling a gap that exists in both Israeli and Palestinian civil societies; it provides a safe space in which Israeli and Palestinian children can engage with one another in a constructive way and forge meaningful connections that they otherwise would not have the opportunity to make.

It is through commendable efforts such as the Peres Center for Peace’s and synergies with like-minded organisations that sustainable peace can eventually be achieved.

Yours sincerely,



Wilfried Lemke

Special Adviser to the Secretary-General
on Sport for Development and Peace