



To Friends everywhere

Friends in Ramallah have been celebrating the 100th anniversary of the dedication of their meetinghouse, with the participation of Friends from Norway, Palestine, Sweden, the UK and the US. This was followed by a consultation on the work of the future direction of the Friends International Center in Ramallah. We, the group that has taken part, are deeply grateful for the opportunity to meet for worship in a meetinghouse filled with people from Ramallah, el-Bireh, Jerusalem, and neighboring communities, and filled with the spirit of thanksgiving for the Meeting's witness in the past through the longstanding work of the Friends Schools, Amari Play School and the American Friends Service Committee.

We were moved in Meeting for Worship to see young Friends enact an episode from the life of John Woolman, in which Woolman, though thirsty, hungry and tired refuses to take drink, eat food or sleep in a bed prepared by a slave. Woolman's example spoke to the condition of all present, mindful of the painful realities of life under occupation and caught up in conflict.

Woolman's example continued to speak to us as we met in consultation to discern how to sustain and develop the work of the Friends International Center in Ramallah in partnership with the Ramallah Friends Meeting.

We heard from Palestinians who are struggling to further democracy and seek consensus among themselves in the face of forces that would divide and disenfranchise them.

We heard now and earlier from Israelis who are struggling to tell the truth about the occupation to their fellow citizens and the world.

We heard from Palestinians and Israelis who are working together to end the occupation, lift the siege on Gaza and restore their human and civil rights by nonviolent means. We have heard in particular calls to international solidarity with these efforts through a nonviolent programme of boycott, divestment and sanctions.

We are filled with gratitude and hope by the witness of these Palestinians and Israelis and are resolved to do our utmost to further the witness and work of Friends in relation to Ramallah, Palestine and Israel and the wider region.

As Woolman was resolved not to acquiesce to slavery, we are resolved not to be complicit to the many evils of the military occupation. **We call on Friends everywhere to uphold and pray for the ongoing witness of the Ramallah Friends Meeting, and to join us in this witness. We ask Friends to discern what, in their own circumstances, they can best do to support those working to end this conflict and bring peace and justice to this troubled region. We ask Friends to consider adopting boycott, divestment and sanctions as we may be led to do, individually or corporately.**

Ramallah, 10th March 2010