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Contact:

In New York

Erin Pineda
+1 212 897 3985 x123
erin@onevoicemovement.org

In Ramallah

Nisreen Shaheen
+972 (0)2 295 4051
nisreen@onevoice.ps

In Tel Aviv

Gil Shamy
+972 (0)3 516 8005
gils@onevoice.org.il

**IMAGINE 2018:
Parallel Essay Contests Bring Culture of Peace, Two State Solution
into Schools in Palestine and Israel**

Winning Essayists to be Honored at National Awards Ceremonies

New York / August 4, 2008 / The OneVoice Movement today officially announced winners of the **Imagine: 2018** contest (www.imagine2018.org), parallel essay contests being administered throughout schools in Israel and in Palestine. The essay contests, which were open to students aged 13-17, asked youth to visualize what the region would look like in 10 years if a peace agreement were to be signed in 2008.

OneVoice – a youth-led collective of Palestinians, Israelis, Americans, Europeans, and Arabs using civic engagement to push for a two-state agreement that would guarantee an end to occupation and all kinds of violence, and the establishment of an independent, viable Palestinian state at peace with Israel – conceived of the contest to enable people to envision some of the tangible benefits that would come from a peace agreement.

OneVoice's Israeli and Palestinian branches worked separately but in parallel to bring the 2018 Essay Contest before students aged 13-17 across all districts in Palestine and Israel.

In Palestine, OneVoice partnered with Palestinian Ministry of Education to facilitate this contest in all public, private, and UNRWA schools throughout the West Bank, and worked with local teachers to bring the contest to Gazan schools. In parallel, OneVoice's Israeli branch collaborated with the Israeli Ministry of Education, various municipalities, youth movements, and an internet forum called Tapuz (www.tapuz.co.il) to administer the contest throughout Israel.

School and regional administrators as well as OneVoice staff collected submissions, ensuring broad representation from all districts. Approximately 2,000 essays were submitted for the Palestinian contest. The

Israeli contest, which launched later in the spring, received over 600 submissions. Fifty winners have now been selected on each side. The list of [Palestinian winners can be found here](#), including a sampling of the winning essays. The [Israeli winners can be found here](#).

Winners' submissions on each side are being published in local newspapers. Their essays will also be compiled in booklets to be delivered in Israel to Prime Minister Ehud Olmert, and in Palestine to President Mahmoud Abbas, as well as other top officials from each government. In partnership with the Palestinian Ministry of Education, an award ceremony honoring the Palestinian winners will take place on in mid August at the Ministry's hall, attended by distinguished guests from the Education and Cultural Ministries. The Israeli awards ceremony will be held later, in September, in partnership with Cinemathique.

Said Darya Shaikh, Executive Director for OneVoice in the US, "OneVoice is about motivating ordinary citizens to take action – to get involved in the process and push their leaders for progress. But it is hard to motivate people toward a goal that they cannot visualize, or do not think is achievable. Imagine: 2018 is designed to enable people to conceive of a two state agreement as something attainable, something that would better everyday lives."

The next phase of the contest will see directors from Israel, Palestine, Hollywood, and the international community bringing these visions to life – turning the ten most compelling of the winning submissions into short films. Nina Jacobson, Executive Producer at DreamWorks Studios, has signed on as Lead Producer for the project, and will facilitate outreach to international and Hollywood directors, as well as coordination between them.

About the OneVoice Movement:

The OneVoice Movement is an international mainstream grassroots movement with over 600,000 signatories in roughly equal numbers both in Israel and in Palestine, and 3,000 youth activists. It aims to amplify the voice of the overwhelming but heretofore silent majority of moderates who wish for peace and prosperity, empowering them to demand accountability from elected representatives and work toward a two-state solution guaranteeing and end to occupation and a viable, independent Palestinian state at peace with Israel. OneVoice counts on its Board over 60 foremost dignitaries and business leaders across a wide spectrum of politics and beliefs, joining as OneVoice for conflict resolution. www.OneVoiceMovement.org.

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