



# SEEDS of PEACE

Promoting peace in Afghanistan, India, and Pakistan



# Seeds of Peace International Camp

Each summer, a select group of young leaders and educators from India, Pakistan, and Afghanistan have the rare opportunity to spend three weeks living together at the Seeds of Peace International Camp in Maine. These youth and educators are members of official delegations selected by their schools and community leaders on the basis of their leadership potential and community involvement. Each aspect of the program is designed to challenge assumptions, develop mutual trust and respect, and open young minds to the possibility of a new reality. Daily dialogue

sessions, professionally facilitated by older Seeds of Peace graduates, enable youth to tackle the most painful and divisive issues that define the conflict in South Asia by sharing their personal experiences, comparing historical narratives, and challenging each others' inherited prejudices.

Through dialogue, campers gain insights into the dynamics that perpetuate their conflict, and lay the groundwork necessary for exploring and addressing those dynamics through Seeds of Peace regional programs once they return home.



South Asian Seeds at the International Camp

# Seeds of Peace in South Asia

We are the only organization that combines personal transformation with year-round practical training on local, cross-border, regional and global levels. Our model, which continues to engage these young leaders through their adult years, has earned high levels of support and recognition from world leaders and other practitioners.

## South Asia Programming

Through its regional programming, Seeds of Peace builds on the transformative experience that occurs at its International Camp, strengthens the leadership skills of its Seeds, and enables them to engage and influence their schools, communities, and extended networks. Over time, and with the continued support of Seeds of Peace, these young leaders will become decision-makers across a variety of professional sectors and will

stand up as a consistent voice for peace and agents of change in their home communities.

Now, more than 10 years into expanding our Seeds of Peace network in South Asia, over 320 young leaders (or “Seeds”) and 50 educators have graduated from the Seeds of Peace Camp. As those numbers grow with each passing summer, Seeds of Peace is committed to ensuring they have an opportunity to grow and thrive as leaders within their communities.



Shyam remains involved in regional Seeds of Peace activities and incorporates lessons learned at Camp, since attending in 2001, into his daily life. As a lawyer at Clifford Chance LLP, a law firm in London, Shyam is able to integrate important skills learned at Camp into his profession. “I was interested in public policy and Seeds of Peace encouraged that greatly. It has made me question and analyze situations far more intelligently and take into account any other perspectives.”

Shyam stays connected to fellow Seeds by participating in both regional and international programs. Shyam served as an editor for Sulah Aman Shanti, the South Asian Seeds magazine, and since moving to London has become involved in UK programs as well.

**Shyam, India**



**South Asian Seeds wear traditional clothes at the International Camp**

# Local and Cross-Border Initiatives

## Local Programming

In addition to the regional programming initiatives, Seeds and staff in India, Pakistan, and Afghanistan create programs that meet their local environment and needs. Activities include hosting a Mock Parliament in which Seeds from one country emulate another country's parliament as a way to better understand the political process at the local and regional level. Other programming includes regular monthly meetings focused on current affairs, skill-building, social development projects, and a local speaker series that connects youth to community leaders.

## Pakistan Flood Relief

In 2010, after severe storms in Pakistan resulted in catastrophic flooding that destroyed local areas, Seeds in Pakistan launched a global fundraising effort that raised \$18,857 and sent vital relief goods to flood affected areas. A team of 25 Pakistani Seeds worked together to mobilize their fellow seeds from 27 countries around the world in this effort.

All funds raised were utilized toward the reconstruction of 20 houses in the city of Kot Addu, and the reconstruction of two schools where eventually



*Seeds visiting the site of the reconstructed school*

70 boys and girls ages 5-7 have been able to continue their education. The reconstruction activities took place in partnership with KAWISH, a local Pakistani welfare trust developed to promote a literate, healthy, and more independent society.

## Seed Ventures

Seeds of Peace has partnered with Ashoka's Youth Venture to train Indian, Pakistani and Afghan Seeds with the tools needed to develop innovative, effective approaches to issues of concern within their communities and, in so doing,



An avid writer, Tooba understands the complexities of politics and people, and feels that Seeds of Peace has stopped her from including bias in her writing. "Seeds of Peace introduced me to new ideas, to the opposite side, to the workings of history and subjectivity and the complexities of relations between cultures, countries, religions, and people. It has taught me about respect and tolerance."

Above all else, Seeds of Peace exposed Tooba to the concept of social responsibility since attending Camp in 2006. "I am a part of the community I live in," she says, "and as such I am responsible for responding to the intolerance, the lack of respect, the violence and problems that exist in my country and the world over."

Tooba currently works as the Director of Academics at Rabtt, an NGO founded by a Pakistani Seed to encourage independent and thinking amongst the youth of Pakistan. "Seed of Peace has made me feel empowered. I may not be making a huge difference (yet), but I am making a difference, I am capable of making a difference."

**Tooba, Pakistan**

demonstrate the power of youth leadership and cross-border cooperation.

Through a series of local workshops, Seeds gained skills in leadership, project management, and every phase of venture development and implementation. They conducted needs assessments, designed projects and created innovative solutions that were funded through small grants.

Social impact projects led by youth have included a free medical camp in Lahore, the creation of a school library in Kabul, and stories published in braille for blind youth in India. Throughout their work, Seeds shared their lessons and successes through social media and video-conferencing.

In addition, a small grants competition for Graduate Seeds (alumni aged 22 and older) was launched as a way for them to impact political and social issues on a larger scale within their communities. Two Seeds received funding to launch the History Project designed to better understanding and reconcile the differing historical narratives taught in schools. As part of the project, Indian and Pakistani Seeds, through a cross-border trip to Lahore, worked together to identify and address bias in their historical narratives and texts. In addition, another Graduate Seed received support for his vision of countering

Pakistan's reliance on narrow curriculum creating two camp opportunities in Lahore to teach students the skills often left out of the classroom, including critical thinking, leadership, and responsibility.



*Seeds at the History Project workshop in Lahore*

## Seeds Leadership Council

Seeds Leadership Councils empower alumni to take ownership of and direct their local programming. The Council consists of several Seeds, selected through a competitive application process, who serve as alumni representatives. These Seeds meet regularly with local staff and members of the local Seeds of Peace Boards throughout the year to guide, plan, and implement local programming for their communities.



If not for Seeds of Peace, Spruha believes she “would still be reading news of the latest Bollywood movies and cursing the politics of the world in ignorance.” After attending Camp in 2006, Spruha’s activities evolved to include helping out with homestays, Milaap, Mock Parliament, Mumbai Project, a photography workshop, and a Seeds Movie Project. The active and empathetic listening skills she learned at Camp are put to use as head of the Student Council at S P Jain Center of Management, Singapore, where “it is like conflict resolution every day.”

Spruha keeps in touch with Seeds through phone calls and email chains, and emphasizes the importance of maintaining a network of Seeds. “Seeds is indeed an eternal part of my life; wherever I go, I manage to find a seed in some corner of the world.” As a graduate, regional programming has offered Spruha a chance to connect with her fellow Seeds, as well as “a constant reminder to keep working for what you really believe in.”

**Spruha, India**

# Profiles of Seeds



After attending Camp in 2010, Noor vowed to take the Seeds of Peace example home to Pakistan. "I promised myself at Camp that I would give back to this organization in every way possible when I got back home," she says. "Our regional programming has helped me understand our responsibilities as privileged citizens of our country."

In 2010, Noor worked as a campaign coordinator for Seeds of Peace in order to raise funds for those affected by flooding in Pakistan. "The Indian Seeds collecting funds for our flood victims was truly moving for me," says Noor. "I had never deemed such a thing to be possible before. If anyone needs help in understanding what Seeds of Peace's mission is, they could not find a better example. Teenagers who were supposedly our worst enemies were working day and night to help our country in its time of turmoil. This is what Seeds of Peace is. In a nutshell, it's humanity."

Noor studied at a Christian school in Pakistan, which exposed her to the plight of minorities in Pakistan. She hopes to be able to continue to work for this cause.

Noor believes that the most important thing she learned at Camp is that change is possible. Some people I encountered criticized Camp, saying that it would make you less patriotic. I made it clear that this is not the case; in fact it helps you to find your identity even more. It makes you more attached to your country because it makes you a leader. A leader with open eyes and an open mind."

**Noor, Pakistan**



Jawed studies at THINK Global School (TGS), one of the most diverse high schools in the world. TGS brings together students from around the world and spends the school year traveling to three international cities. Similar to Seeds of Peace, TGS teaches students how to coexist with those around them and promote peace.

Though he travels with his school to various countries throughout the year, Jawed keeps in touch with Seeds from his own delegation from 2010, as well as those from other countries. Jawed was excited to participate in the Voice of People Conference held in Mumbai, India in 2011, and he is currently discussing opportunities for even more involvement with other Seeds.

Jawed appreciates that Seeds helped him adopt "a much wider perspective of the world", and to "consider a lot of values in my life." He credits Seeds of Peace with helping him find the opportunity for which he has been searching his entire life, and for showing him it in "this beautiful and this bright way."

**Jawed, Afghanistan**



Fahad has turned the confidence he gained through his experience at the Seeds of Peace International Camp in 2002 into a platform to promote change in Pakistan. "I realized that for a peaceful world, harmonious co-existence amongst people with different ideologies is of critical significance," he says.

Fahad studied Management at Punjab University and has worked as a news anchor at Pakistan Television Corporation. Currently, Fahad is a journalist at Express News. As correspondent and associate producer of a popular news show, Fahad uses the media to "challenge common perceptions and offer newer, fresher perspectives" to his audience. Guests on his TV show, who come from diverse backgrounds, are given a platform to express their unique opinions, an idea sparked by his time at Camp. "Before Camp, I used to be a very 'one-sided' person, with little ability to appreciate different opinions. Camp allowed me for the very first time to appreciate contrasting points of view."

**Fahad, Pakistan**

# Profiles of Seeds



Jehan, who is proud to say that Seeds of Peace “made me everything I am today,” cherishes the friendships he formed at Camp in 2008 and 2011, which he knows “will last a lifetime.”

In order to help non-Seeds find the same bonds across borders, Jehan launched a Seed Ventures project, with the assistance from Seeds in Mumbai as well as Lahore and supported with funds from Seeds of Peace, entitled “Aamney-Samney”, meaning “Face-to-Face” in Hindi and Urdu. The project’s aim is to facilitate interaction between Indian and Pakistani students, led by Seeds, using a safe, safe, private online Blog and Skype technologies.

Jehan, himself, is still very connected to the Seeds community. He attends regional meetings, and enjoys being actively involved with Seeds of Peace at home in Mumbai. He believes that using the skills he learned at Camp is essential. “Remember,” Jehan says, “We are a part of something bigger.”

**Jehan, India**



Aneeq has made it his obligation to connect with and assist Seeds in the South Asia region. “Going to Camp and sitting through the dialogue sessions was a lot about ‘representing Pakistan’ for me. Though I’m still characteristically patriotic, I now realize why Seeds of Peace opted for the word ‘seed’ for the choice of its name; it’s a slow gradual process of humanizing the world beyond each participant’s borders.”

After returning from Camp in 2003, Aneeq founded the Crescent Think Tank at his high school, Lahore Grammar School, where motivated 10th grade students spent recess in the school’s mosque discussing contemporary issues that affect society. In 2005, Aneeq organized a dialogue on Indo-Pakistani conflict in his high school, and concurrently ignited the Earthquake Relief Effort by Seeds. Aneeq returned to Camp as a Peer Support in 2006, and has since remained involved Seeds through conferences and regional planning activities.

Aneeq has applied the lessons of tolerance and peace-building learned at Seeds of Peace to his professional ventures as well. Aneeq specializes in non-profit management at the Punjab Skills Development Fund. He also co-founded Rabtt, a volunteer-based organization that seeks to redress deficiencies in the Pakistani public education system through educational camps and the promotion of critical thinking. He is a graduate of Lahore University of Management Sciences having majored in Economics and Politics

**Aneeq, Pakistan**



Mujib is a journalist at Al Jazeera English who has used his Seeds of Peace connection to give others a voice. “A relative peace can only be built if the oppressed feel they have a say in the process of building that peace,” Mujib says. “That is what I strive to do in my journalistic work, to voice differences through words.”

According to Mujib, Seeds of Peace helped him to develop the skill of “hearing the opposite side and not ruling it out before trying to understand it.” The concepts of listening and tolerance developed at Seeds of Peace have enabled Mujib to present the complete picture in his articles.

Mujib attended Camp in 2002, and has kept in close contact with several Seeds and participates in follow-up programs in Washington, DC, New York, and Kabul. Before becoming a journalist for Al Jazeera English, Mujib reported locally for the New York Times and volunteered regularly with local NGOs in Afghanistan, including Aschiana and Amnesty International. In May 2011, Mujib graduated from Columbia University with a Bachelor’s degree in History.

**Mujib, Afghanistan**

# Cross-Border Initiatives

## Voices of the People

There is an essential need for understanding and communication on the most critical issues underlying conflict and preventing reconciliation within communities and across borders in India, Pakistan, and Afghanistan. Voices of the People is a multi-media online site that showcases stories, photographs, and videos created by teams of Indians, Pakistanis, and Afghans. The site demonstrates the power of youth to lead efforts that can bring people together and significantly contribute to peace in the region. Two of the most popular stories produced include Coming Together with Cricket, and Bonding over Biryani which highlight common ground between countries caught in conflict.

Training for the program included an eight-day homestay in Mumbai for 32 Seeds and eight educators from Afghanistan, India and Pakistan. Given the challenges of travel between India and Pakistan, the homestay provided a unique opportunity for these students to come together and experience daily life in each other's cities

While together, the group gained skills in various media and developed content for the site in a three-person tri-national teams. Since its launch, the VOP website has already begun to provide an accessible platform for peer-to-peer and peer-to-community sharing and dialogue. To experience these and other projects please go to [www.seedsofpeace.org/vop](http://www.seedsofpeace.org/vop).

## Digital Video Conferencing

After Camp, Seeds continue to have dialogue with each other across borders through digital video conferences (DVC). These conferences provide opportunities to re-connect, discuss current events, and work together on cross-border cooperative projects. Through DVC calls, Seeds had facilitated dialogue on major political events that this technology enables. In addition, as part of the Seed Ventures program, Seeds from all three countries connected in order to share with one another the issues, and solutions to those issues, affecting their local communities.



Since attending Camp in 2001, staying connected to fellow Seeds is of utmost importance to Qasim. "I know every Seed from Pakistan from all 10 delegations and around 8 delegations of Indian Seeds - not to mention, they know me as 'Qasim bhai'." As a Peer Support, counselor, and active participant in Seeds of Peace regional workshops, Qasim maintains an important network of support and inspiration. By connecting with many fellow Seeds from Camp and a variety of other global youth leadership networks, Qasim learned that "there is always another equally convincing side to every story" and that it is "necessary to question the generally accepted."

Qasim attended Lahore University of Management and Sciences and graduated in 2008 with a degree in Computer Science. Qasim is a serial entrepreneur and started his first business at the age of 21. Outside of his professional life, Qasim remains active in Seeds of Peace activities and has volunteered for the Jimmy & Rosalynn Carter Work Project in Lonavala, India, where a handful of Pakistanis traveled to help build homes for the impoverished. Additionally, he attended UNESCO's conference on 'Looking Beyond Disasters' and is currently working on a centralized portal to standardize natural disaster response protocol.

In the future, Qasim plans to involve the tight knit network of Seeds in regional projects aimed at developing peaceful and stable societies in South Asia. His goal is to set up a school for underprivileged children that "employs innovative learning techniques to introduce children to a diverse set of career options and helps them discover and pursue their passions." Qasim believes that if he can set up a system where education is widespread, "we'd see a surge in the general tolerance levels in our society."

**Qasim, Pakistan**

# Programming Impact

## Impact

In 2010, Seeds of Peace launched a partnership with behavioral science researchers at the University of Chicago Booth School of Business to monitor and evaluate our South Asia program.

Surveys of campers found that their Camp experience created opportunities for positive interaction otherwise impossible at home. Ninety percent of Indians, Pakistanis, and Afghans, reported having little to no contact with the “other side” before Camp. Only a fraction of those who did have contact described their encounters as positive. By the end of Camp, Seeds from all delegations said they felt closer to the friends they made at Seeds of Peace than they to their friends from home.

We sought to measure the degree to which campers were gaining the relationships, understanding, and skills needed to be effective leaders for peace. It was clear that when young people caught in conflict have the opportunity to meet face-to-face and engage in open and honest dialogue, the results are extraordinary. When asked to rank the importance of their experiences at Camp, Seeds from South Asia overwhelmingly listed the opportunity to learn more about people from the “other side.”

Further, the delegation increased their trust in and positive feelings toward the “other side,” demonstrated an understanding of each other’s viewpoints and needs, and expressed a greater belief

that their societies can create a just and lasting peace.

By the end of Camp, Seeds from South Asia agreed that two leadership skills stood out as particularly important for peace-building: the ability to listen and understand different viewpoints, and the ability to build relationships with the “other side” in order to work for a common goal.



In a zone of intense conflict, partisan thinking often trumps listening. Seeds’ valuing this capability to understand and work cooperatively with others represents a profound transformation. In light of the extremely limited pre-Camp cross-conflict contact, this response affirms the most important achievement of the summer program and tells us we are returning Seeds to home communities capable of sharing a bold new perspective.

Seeds’ belief that attending Camp and making friends with the “other side” makes one a better member of one’s own community also increased—emphasizing that a strong national identity is not mutually exclusive with the pursuit of peace.



After attending Camp in 2001, Aneeta was motivated to dig deeper into the roots of conflict. “I learned not to accept everything at face value,” Aneeta says. “Seeds of Peace made me fully grasp the benefits of healthy dialogue and communication.” It was because of her experience at Seeds of Peace that Aneeta went on to major in Political Science at Manhattanville College. “Political science helped me understand conflicts better, which in turn helped me understand solutions as well.”

While attending college in New York, Aneeta stayed regularly involved in Seeds of Peace events such as international conferences, fundraisers, and homestays. Additionally, Aneeta took on the vital roles of Vice President of the Manhattanville Seeds of Peace club and President of the Muslim Students Association.

Upon returning to Pakistan, Aneeta joined Newsweek, where she began researching and writing. “It gave me the change to voice my opinions on paper, and I began training myself seriously to change people through my words.”

**Aneeta, Pakistan**

In 2010 we measured more deliberately what we have known: at Camp, our Seeds begin to gain and value the skills that are necessary in promoting peace across lines of conflict. Perhaps even more importantly, their commitment to working towards peaceful coexistence in their regions increased over the course of the session.

One hundred percent of Indian, Pakistani, and Afghan Seeds expressed a desire to stay involved in peace-related activities upon their return home, primarily by being active in Seeds of Peace regional programs and spreading the ideas they learned at Camp to their schools and communities.

Seeds of Peace will continue to survey participants to understand changes in attitudes and abilities over time.

## About Seeds of Peace

Treaties are negotiated by governments; peace is made by people. Since 1993, Seeds of Peace has set the standard in international peace-building by providing exceptional young people and educators from regions of conflict—primarily the Middle East, South Asia, and the United States—with an otherwise impossible opportunity to meet their historic enemies face-to-face at our International Camp in Maine.

Seeds of Peace builds on their new relationships and perspectives through year-round local programs which focus on the core leadership capacities needed to advance peace. There are now over 5,000 Seeds and Educators from 27 countries who prove that solutions exist, peace is possible, and there is reason to have hope for a better future.



For Parnian, Seeds of Peace was a life-changing experience. “Seeds of Peace made me more ambitious,” she says. “I came out of Camp believing that I can change the world.” And she is well on her way to doing just that. Right after Camp, she received a full scholarship to attend Phillips Exeter Academy, where she soon became Co-President of the Middle Eastern Society. Influenced by the issues she was exposed to at Camp in 2003 and then again 2004, Parnian graduated from Wellesley College in 2010 where she double majored in Middle East Studies and South Asian Studies concentrating on history and politics of the regions while learning Arabic, Hindi, and Urdu.

Parnian serves as a Special Advisor to the President of the newly established Paula Loyd Foundation, providing scholarships for Afghan women to attend college in Kabul or the United States. At the invitation of President Hamid Karzai’s Security Council Office, she joined a group of fourteen senior level Afghan and international officials to draft policy recommendations for the Afghan Government to tackle issues of radicalization in Afghan society. She is closely engaged in issues of political settlement, regional cooperation, educational policy, and the role of the UN in Afghanistan as a Program Officer at NYU’s Center on International Cooperation. “It is like an adult version of the co-existence sessions I experienced as a teen at Seeds of Peace. The Seeds of Peace experience has been invaluable and long-lasting for me.

Parnian, Afghanistan

Pakistani Seeds perform on Culture Day at the International Camp

# What People are Saying

## What world leaders are saying

“Seeds of Peace is certainly an example of the world the UN is working for—bringing together young people who have seen the ravages of war to learn the art of peace.”

**Kofi Annan**, Secretary General of the United Nations

“Seeds of Peace, you are no longer a miracle in the Maine woods. You have found your way into the larger world in so many different ways, and you are forging your own path to peace.”

**Her Majesty Queen Noor of Jordan**

“What you are doing is an extraordinary act of courage, bridging historical divides, and learning to live in peace. Children are our best ambassadors. They are our Seeds of Peace.”

U.S. Secretary of State **Hillary Rodham Clinton**

“I welcome the efforts of Seeds of Peace. Such exposure at an early age to a divergence of views plays a crucial part in laying the foundations for tolerance and understanding.”

**Tony Blair**, Former Prime Minister of Great Britain and Northern Ireland

## What our seeds are saying

“Before coming to Camp, I was over-patriotic. I would never digress from my views of the other side. Despite my will to stick to my views, I was compelled—not by any individual, not by the Camp—but by the experience. I had to look at the bigger picture.”

**Zain**, Pakistani Seed

“I am so happy at Seeds of Peace. I have met so many people here and they're from many cultures. And, when I go back to my country, I want to teach the peace.”

**Roman**, Afghan Seed

“What is unique and special about this particular camp is that people never discriminate on the basis of caste, creed, religion or nationality. There is a safe and secure environment where every Seed is able to express their honest views.”

**Humaira**, Indian Seed



## Ways to Get Involved with Seeds of Peace

We encourage you to connect with us or online through our website, facebook, twitter, YouTube, and flickr by visiting the following links:

### Online

[www.seedsofpeace.org](http://www.seedsofpeace.org)

[www.seedsofpeace.org/southasia](http://www.seedsofpeace.org/southasia)

### Voices of the People

[www.seedsofpeace.org/vop](http://www.seedsofpeace.org/vop)



**Facebook**

[www.facebook.com/seedsofpeace](http://www.facebook.com/seedsofpeace)



**Twitter**

[www.twitter.com/seedsofpeace](http://www.twitter.com/seedsofpeace)



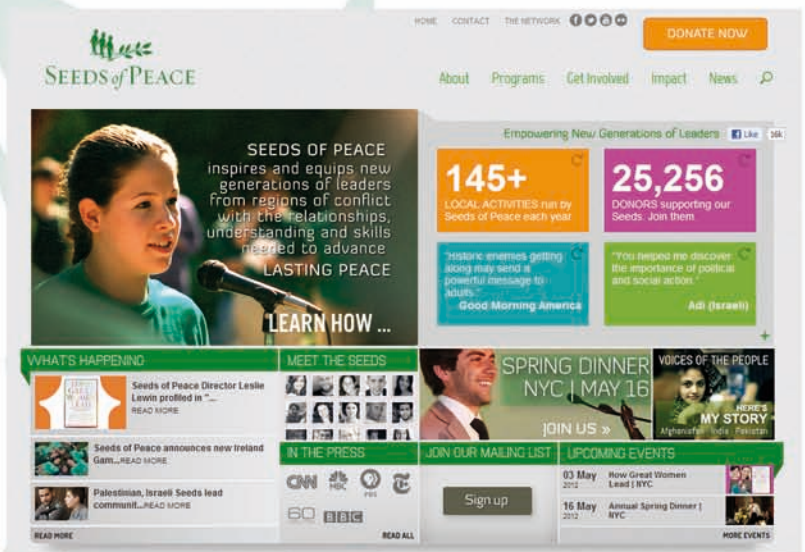
**YouTube**

[www.youtube.com/seedsofpeaceintl](http://www.youtube.com/seedsofpeaceintl)



**Flickr**

[www.flickr.com/photos/seedsofpeaceofficialsite](http://www.flickr.com/photos/seedsofpeaceofficialsite)



### Olive Branch

Since 1996, Seeds of Peace has been producing The Olive Branch magazine as a means for Seeds alumni to sustain communication and share experiences with each other and their communities throughout the school year.

[www.seedsofpeace.org/olivebranch](http://www.seedsofpeace.org/olivebranch)

For more information, please contact Seeds of Peace at:

#### New York

Seeds of Peace Headquarter  
370 Lexington Avenue, Suite 1201  
New York, NY 10017  
Phone: +1 212 573 8040  
Fax: +1 212 573 8047  
[info@seedsofpeace.org](mailto:info@seedsofpeace.org)