



Wahat al-Salam  
Neve Shalom

واحة السلام  
נווה שלום

# Multiyear policy plan Dutch Friends association of Wahat al-Salam / Neve Shalom

*Period 2021-2025*

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## Board members:

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Otto Hospes – Secretary

Caecilia van Peski – member

Ronald Hazelzet – member

Linda Rose Smit – member

Adam Uriel Huff - member

## 1. Vision and goals

In this policy plan you will find the vision and goals of the Dutch Friends association of Wahat al-Salam Neve Shalom (WaSNS NL), followed by the challenges that we see and our ambitions for the period 2021-2025.

## **Vision**

The vision of WaSNS NL consists of three sections. Firstly, the friends association (FA) believes in the importance of the example that the village Wahat al-Salam ~ Neve Shalom (WaSNS) sets, as a place where Jews and Palestinians live together peacefully and equally, to show an example of how and that this is possible. In addition the FA believes in the importance and impact of peace education; reducing black-and-white thinking and the image of 'the other' being the enemy through direct contact and conversation; leading to mutual understanding and reforming ideas and images of 'the other'. Finally, the FA also believes in the importance of sharing the philosophy and methodology of peace education in the village to a broader and increasing audience outside of Israel and Palestine.

## **Goals**

Based on this vision, we support the objectives of the village WaSNS: building a community where Palestinian and Jewish citizens treat each other with mutual respect, live together in a democratic society and work together for justice, peace and equality in the countries and the region.

The FA WaSNS NL was established in 18-05-1990 with as goal: Supporting the realisation of the objectives of the village Wahat al-Salam/Neve Shalom in Israel through material and immaterial support of the educational activities in the village.

## **The next five years**

For the period 2021-2025 the FA will continue to work on the original goal of the association, as well as refocus on the aspects. Firstly, the boards wants to focus more on supporting the School for Peace. Secondly, in this new policy plan, the board wants to focus more on being an ambassador of the village in the Netherlands and beyond. The board feels more strongly than ever that WaSNS is showing a way of living that should be amplified in the middle east and beyond. The philosophy of the village (especially how this translates to the peace education methodology) opens ways to a more sustainable living together of people and provides an alternative to the continues peace talks that happen on higher political levels. Positive experiences in Rwanda, Bosnia and Northern Ireland where the same peace education method has been used, are convincing proof of this.

## **2. Challenges**

WaSNS in Israel as a community has about 70 households, which will double in the upcoming years to about 150 households. The village has moved beyond the building phase long ago in terms of living, recreation and meeting place. There is a kindergarten and a primary school. Both schools receive support of other FA. The primary school in addition receives money from the

Israeli government but requires more support due to the bilingual school system. The potential of a high school is being researched.

As WaSNS NL we want to focus on supporting the School for Peace. This school had in the last 40 years developed and refined a peace education methodology. Partly due to the support of WaSNS NL they have trained over 60.000 people to become a 'change agent'. Unfortunately this did not have a substantial impact on the heavily polarised national and international discourse. A decline in donation made it more difficult to realize the goals and planned activities of the School for Peace. In addition, the school was targeted twice through arson in September 2020. The work is continued with the necessary adjustments. In order to rebuild the School for Peace and continue the work, extra funding will be necessary.

WaSNS NL sees the declining funding and arson attacks as challenges for the School for Peace that nonetheless continues with impressive efforts and results. This is for WaSNS NL a major reason to focus on the School for Peace.

WaSNS NL also sees several 'internal' challenges. The group of monthly donors in the Netherlands is aging and declining and are hard to reach through digital communication. This means donations drop as well as less knowledge about the FA and more importantly the work of the School for Peace.

### **3. Ambitions for 2021-2025**

In addition to the general goal and vision, WaSNS NL sets itself the following ambitions for the period 2021-2025:

1. Professionalize, modernize and broaden our communication efforts
2. Increase visibility of the idea, results and know-how of the School for Peace in the Netherlands
3. Increasing the group of monthly donors and increase, broaden and rejuvenate the constituency of supporters in the Netherlands
4. Stabilize and possibly increase the yearly donations to WaSNS NL and WaSNS and more specifically the School for Peace.

These ambitions will be translated in yearly plans.