

## **12 requests on the current situation in the Middle East**

### **Why me?**

In my youth, I devoured the available literature about the Jewish people and their thousands of years of history. With Professor Weinreb from Basel, I learned the Kabbalah and the 72 Holy Names. During the wars of the twentieth century my generation was clearly on the side of the Jewish people. They should finally find a homeland. I can still see Golda Meir, the then Prime Minister of Israel, when she said on television – looking over her glasses: 'A country without people, for people without a country'.

In 2005 I went for the very first time to the lowest place on earth, the oldest city on the planet, deep into the Palestinian society. It is Jericho, the city of palms in the Jordan Valley, in one of the defined 'A-Zones' of the Palestinian territories. I knew neither the Palestinian society nor the Arab culture. In the last 18 years I have learned a lot.

I therefore offer my 12 requests with the heartfelt hope that this long conflict can be ended with the support of the people. We have the mental power to make it happen.

My first request goes to the **Jewish people who have settled in Israel-Palestine since 1882**. I can only try to feel what it means to be excluded in a society, scapegoated, expelled from one's own four walls, face one's own death or to mourn the death of loved ones.

To you, as the descendants of those who have lived through centuries of pain, I would like to call out: Be aware of what is happening in your country, feel the pain you know so well from your own history. Do not repeat imposing what has been done to you, on people who could be called your historical cousins. You have it in your hands to stop your government, to put an end to this madness and to open the door to peaceful coexistence. You are now the ones who decide whether the land of IS RA EL will come to life and become the promised reality.

### **The second request goes to the Palestinian people**

Few other peoples have suffered as much as you have in recent decades. You bear the decisions of the victorious powers of the Second World War on your shoulders. The people, who took over your country profited from the lie of the empty land, which was your land, not empty.

This clear mistake needs to be discussed on international conference tables. I ask your forgiveness in the name of world leaders right here.

'Be welcome', is a word you say to every stranger in your culture. You used to be friends with the early settlers and there are friendships now. Let this approach again be the hope for a common future.

### **My third request goes to the Hamas movement and the people of Ghaza.**

The visitors and friends who know the life quality you people bear in the secluded but overpopulated area, can understand that you were looking for a way out of this densely packed drama.

Trying to feel your pain, I ask you to stop violence anyway, as history proves that violence does not lead to peace and wealth. Let's all try to work on solutions so that this outbreak of violence is the last. I'm doing what I can, to make your situation seen and heard worldwide and that people all over the globe come to support your request for a free and prosperous life. May you change from martyrs to heroes with the next historical step.

### **My fourth request goes to the male and female reservists of the Israeli Army**

You are the ones who had to carry out the destruction orders of your commanders. You had to take the land and property of Palestinian families, put their fathers and children in prison. You had to work in situations with what you call 'terrorists' when all these people did was defend their own inherited property.

I met some of you, you are not monsters, you have feelings! I ask you to refrain from using unnecessary violence in the coming invasion. You could be the refuseniks needed to bring the crisis to a new level of respectful conversation. Try not to surpass this opportunity.

**My fifth request goes out to the demonstrators of the past months**

Some, if not many of you, will be drafted into military reserves. You will have to defend – with your own lives - the government that you tried to change with peaceful demonstrations over the past few months. I feel your strength, I have seen your will power. Do not stop now! Use your democratic skills to make sure that your government sits down at the conference table, instead of using the latest weapons on the Palestinians.

**My sixth request goes to the mourners on both sides of the conflict**

I extend to you my heartfelt sympathy. You are grieving the loss of a loved one, perhaps you are bleeding from bullet wounds. I am sorry that you have to experience all this. My fervent prayer is this: For the sake of all those who have not yet been wounded or killed, try to stop the violence. Enough blood has been shed in your country. Forgive the perpetrators, forgive those who have called for action, forgive your government, which has been unable to find a peaceful coexistence in the last decades. Try to forgive, not hate - try it in the name of your children and children's children. It is time to put an end to suffering. Show that you have the courage to be among the pioneers who make it possible.

**My seventh request goes to the Jewish and Palestinian Diaspora around the world**

I understand your love for the Holy Land, and I see why you are supporting the people who have suffered in the past to find a new home, a safe home. Perhaps you could consider what steps are needed to bring real peace? Would it not be more appropriate to address the traumas of the past by offering therapy, instead of funding new weapons, new borders, new prisons, and higher walls of separation? Please influence who you can, to make it happen.

**My eighth request goes to the settlers in the occupied territories.**

I am aware that you left your ancestral land because you were promised a new homeland in Israel. I have seen the advertisements that appear in American or Russian newspapers. You were promised paradise: a house, land, free school for your children, security and spiritual guidance. It all sounds wonderful. I would like you to think about who is being deprived of the land that you are receiving so easily. Please contemplate the farmers pain, the animals you took from his barn to make your own. He brought them into this world, he nurtured them and cared for them. Please open your senses, empathize with the situation, try to see your next door neighbor as a human being, not your enemy.

**My ninth request goes to the media all over the world**

I ask all journalists to learn and choose a language of de-escalation, instead of stirring up the people with bellicose expressions. You are the ones who can bring change with words. You yourself have the power to express compassion for all involved. You can bring into the discussion that there are sufferers on all sides. Not all Palestinians are terrorists, not all Jews behave like they are 'the chosen children of God'

**My tenth request goes to the tourists from all over the world.**

In my youth, it was trendy to travel the Holy Land and work in a Kibbutz. Many people have wonderful memories of these days. I ask you to use the memories of the past to send good vibes to the country now.

**My eleventh request goes out to political leaders around the world.**

'Israel has the right to defend itself'. This phrase is repeated these days, again and again. Every country has the right to defend itself! Just keep in mind that Palestine was a country, and that there is a population that wants to live in peace. I ask you to wisely decide on how to de-escalate the actual situation which was created by the leaders in Europe after World War II. The Palestinian people and the Israeli State need your support to resolve this unjust situation.

**My twelfth request goes to all young people in the world**

It is about your future, it is about saying: No, we don't want war anymore. We don't want the destruction of what has been built up with great effort before us. We want to respect each other for who we are: Human beings, children of all nations, trying to bring this earth into a livable future. We want a peaceful coexistence, worldwide.

The text was created in German, translated by DeepL and edited further by supporting friends.

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Please share these 12 requests with your loved ones, friends all over the planet.  
We, we all together, can now make a difference.