

## **Holding On to Faith in Humanity**

**Statement of the staff of the Center for Humanistic Education / December 2008**

On this very month of December, we celebrated with light and hope the holidays of the three religions coexisting in this part of the world. We also joined the international community in marking the 60<sup>th</sup> anniversary of the Universal Declaration of Human Rights, which was signed in the aftermath of the most horrific war humankind has ever brought on itself.

The first section of the declaration and its moral cornerstone still beats along with the hearts of humanists from all nations, religions and cultures: "All human beings are born free and equal in dignity and rights. They are endowed with reason and conscience and should act towards one another in a spirit of brotherhood."

While witnessing how the way of force and violence brings about death, misery and destruction to people on either side of the border we, at the Center for Humanistic Education, have no doubts about the only way which can bring change into our lives: the way of wisdom and mutual respect – the way of peace.

**We believe** in the equal right of children from Gaza and Sderot, Han-Yunis and Ashkelon – to a life of freedom, dignity and growth.

**We believe** that all conflicts, bitter as they may be, can be truly resolved only on the basis of unequivocal acceptance of the value of human equality.

**We believe** that violence distorts and violates the humanity in humans.

**We believe** that it is not our fate to be imprisoned in a cycle of pain and suffering, that we possess the power to build – not only to destroy.

**We believe** that the life of each and every human person is valuable, and that the loss of one life is the loss of a whole world.

**We hear** joy over the dead "on the other side" and remember what we have learned here how easily individuality can be lost in a crowd.

**We believe**, amidst these dark days of hatred and despair, in the good within humans and its capacity to overcome the evil inside.

We call upon all our partners who share these beliefs to raise a loud and clear voice together: for talking instead of fighting, against war, in favor of humans and humanity!