

On Tuesday, 15 July 2014 we held, as we do nearly every year since 2004, a dinner encounter of jointly breaking the Muslim Ramadan fast and the Jewish fast of 17



Tamuz. Dozens of people joined us – mostly Jews and Muslims but also Christian – in the beautiful restaurant in the village of Beit Safafa, overlooking the magnificent sight of Jerusalem at night.

This Iftar is always a great opportunity for people of different groups to meet together, catch up with old friends, get to know new ones and hold relaxed conversations over good food, celebrating the togetherness we already achieved.

This year we all felt that the Iftar had additional significance. It was held while war activities were going on around the country and it took determination to hold it in spite of the mere fear and the frustration due to the circumstances.

In this context, our getting together and the fact that so many people joined, carries a wider message. We state by it our commitment not to be influenced by present currents but continue working to reverse the current itself until it flows in the direction it should – until we all realize that we are brothers and that our well-beings depend on each other.



We delivered this strong message with hardly mentioning the "situation". We did not allow ourselves to be captive of the present but insisted on strengthening our seed of the better future. As we usually do.

We call upon you, who read this update, to join us. Wherever you may be – you can be an active part of the Interfaith Encounter Association and its work. Please contact us and we will gladly tell you how.



After we all ate, we gathered around a one big table with coffee and sweets and shared our personal experience of the fast. People shared social issues, such as strengthening family connections or experiencing poverty in order to care for the poor as well as personal issues, such as an opportunity to take a break of the regular life and reflect or being aware of the issues the fast commemorates (the start of the giving of the Quran in Islam and the destruction of the second Temple in Judaism). People also shared what they did that day:

some were totally immersed in the hardship of fasting, some were able to reflect, some fasted without noticing and some did not fast at all... And there was even one person who does not usually fast but fasted yesterday so that the experience of breaking the fast will be full...

We are very grateful to Ms. Yael Gianyan, Chair of IEA Board and Mr. Salah Aladdin, IEA's Assistant Director, for organizing this most meaningful and successful event.