



# IFAIR

Young Initiative on Foreign Affairs  
and International Relations e.V.



## **Report – Work Shadowings**

*Tatevik Tatulyan (Armenia), Dalia Grinfeld (Germany), Eyal David (Israel)*

*Project name: “Genocide is Genocide” (temporary name)*

*Israel & Armenia, July-August 2017*

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**Young Initiative on Foreign Affairs and International Relations (IFAIR) e.V.**

District Court Charlottenburg Berlin, Registry Number: VR 30447 B

Executive Board: Johannes Klein, Dr. Kilian Spandler, Lukas Rudolph, Steffen Murau, Theresa Lieb

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## GENERAL INFORMATION: WHO ARE YOU? WHO ARE YOU WORKING FOR?

### **Tatevik Tatulyan**

I have more than 7 years of work experience in youth organizations with a focus on human rights, women empowerment and peace-building. I have started my human rights advocacy path at Women's Resource Center in 2010. I have been involved in projects which made the role of young women better in fighting against violence, discrimination and inequality.

Currently I am the President of "Human Rights Common Platform" NGO. The main goal of the organization is to create a collaborative platform for individuals, initiative groups and organizations to encourage democratic participation, to promote human rights and to reach peace, equality and social justice for all.

### **Dalia Grinfeld**

My name is Dalia Grinfeld and I am the elected President and founding member of the Jewish Student Union Germany (JSUD). JSUD is the national representation of around 20.000 Jewish students and young adults, ages 18-35, in Germany. JSUD is organized as an independent institution within the Council of Jews in Germany (Zentralrat der Juden in Deutschland K.d.ö.R). The main goal of the union is the joint political work and representation of interests towards the Jewish communities in Germany and the non-Jewish public. JSUD provides an active, lasting and diverse life for the Jewish community in Germany with a strong contribution of young Jewish people. It follows the idea of Tikkun Olam (improvement and responsibility of the World) by advocating democratic values, youth rights and human rights of the Jewish community and all.

### **Eyal David**

I am a peace activist from Israel. I am affiliated with an Israeli NGO called the School for Peace (SFP) at Neve Shalom. The SFP promotes broad scale change towards peace and more humane, egalitarian, and just relations between Palestinians and Jews through workshops, training programs and special projects. I am currently participating in the school's change-agents project for Jewish and Palestinian up-and-coming politicians. Besides my involvement in the SFP, I am currently managing a leadership project for youth. I am in charge of educating a group of 35 talented high-school children (aged 16-18) about international affairs topics, Israel advocacy, and leadership.

## PROJECT TEAM: WHY DID YOU CHOOSE TO WORK TOGETHER?

During the first “Common Remembrance; Future Relations” seminar in Armenia, we realized two main points.

Firstly, there are many similarities between the Armenian and Jewish history, culture and communities, especially connected to the topic of the genocides these communities have suffered. Secondly, there is lack of communication and cooperation between these two communities. That is why we have decided to address those challenges through an international project that will bring together 10 young people living in Armenia (5 Armenians and 5 Jews), 10 young people living in Israel (5 Armenians and 5 Jews) and 10 young people living in Germany (5 Armenians and 5 Jews).

## PROJECT IDEA: WHAT IS YOUR JOINT PROJECT ABOUT? (CONTENT, GOALS, TARGET GROUP, ACTIVITY PLAN, PROJECT/FUNDING PARTNERS)

The purpose of the project is to connect youth of Jewish and Armenian communities living both in Armenia and Israel and in the Diaspora in order to learn about one another, acquire knowledge on the shared past, develop solidarity and break stereotypes. We see this most effective as international meetings where people can have a possibility of direct communication, cultural exchange and sharing experiences. Learning about one another, developing sympathy and awareness will help the targeted young people to establish various forms of minority coalitions for each other's causes. Also, we expect the participants to multiply their knowledge back to their communities after the meetings.

The Armenian and Jewish community youth organizations and NGO's rarely cooperate and there are no common projects. This project will fill the existing gap.

The project consists of two separate seminars, each four full days. The focus group for the first seminar is youth/ young activists, ages 18-30. The second seminar targets young professionals/ community impactors, ages 25-35.

Regarding the funding of the project, we are working on an application for the Erasmus+ fund from the European Union, which will cover the costs.

The partners for this project will be JSUD (Jewish Student Union Germany), Armenian Progressive Youth (APY), Human Rights Common Platform NGO, and a suitable Israeli NGO, possibly the Israeli Union of Jewish Students.

## ACTIVITY PLAN: WHAT WAS THE PROGRAM/WHAT DID YOU PLAN TO DO DURING THESE DAYS?

ISRAEL, 02. - 06. JULY 2017

1. Discussion and working on project
2. Meetings with Armenians living in Israel - both Jews and Christians.
3. Visit to Jaffa, a bi-national city and meeting with colleagues at Sadaka Reut, an Arab Jewish Youth Partnership, learning about their peace building and reconciliation programs.
4. Visit to Yad Va'Shem - The World Holocaust Remembrance Center in Jerusalem.
5. Meetings at the Israeli parliament and the Israeli Ministry of Foreign Affairs.
6. Visit to Beit Terezin, a museum remembering the Jewish Martyrs of Ghetto Theresienstadt, and meeting with its CEO Tami Kinberg.
7. Visit to the Old City of Jerusalem and the Armenian quarter.
8. Meeting with Rev. Fr. Koryoun Baghdasaryan, the chancellor of the Armenian Patriarchate of Jerusalem.
9. Cultural evening: getting to know Israeli folklore dancing and music.



ARMENIA, 10. - 17. AUGUST 2017

1. Visit to the synagogue of Yerevan.
2. Meeting with Rabbi Gershon Meir Burshtein, the chief Rabbi of Armenia.
3. Meeting with the leader of the Jewish community, Mrs. Rimma Varzhapetyan.
4. Meeting at the office of the Honorary Consul of Israel.
5. Meeting with officials from the Ministry of Foreign Affairs.
6. Visit to the History Museum of Armenia
7. Meetings with colleagues in the following NGOs: APY - Armenian Progressive Youth and HRCP - Human Rights Common Platform.
8. Visit to the Sergei Parajanov museum.
9. Meeting with Dr. Kachatur Kobelyan and other researchers who deal with Armenian and Jewish history.
10. Visit to several historical sites such as the Tatev Monastery, the Etchmiadzin Cathedral and Khor Virap.
11. Meeting with Keren Mooradian, founder of the Israeli Armenian Solidarity movement.
12. Visit to the new memorial site for the Armenian Genocide and the Jewish Holocaust.
13. Working on the project proposal.



## WORK SHADOWING:

### WHAT WERE THE GOALS FOR THE WORK SHADOWING SESSIONS?

1. Getting to know the Israeli/Armenian culture and history better.
2. Meeting important figures in the Jewish/Armenian community and introducing to them our project.
3. Learning more about the Holocaust (in Israel) and about the Armenian Genocide (in Armenia).
4. Meeting Armenians/Jews in their diaspora.
5. Trying to interest relevant people/organizations in our project.

### WERE YOU ABLE TO STICK TO YOUR PLAN? DID YOU SUCCEED TO MEET YOUR GOALS?

All in all, we succeeded to meet our goals:

- We widened our knowledge on the Armenian and Jewish/Israeli history and culture.
- We presented our project and ideas to potential future partners who showed interest in our project and expressed their will to get involved and help when time comes.

We stuck to our plans but sometimes there were last-minute changes which we handled well. Whenever there was a cancellation of a meeting we found another meeting instead. The fact that we stayed a week in each country (more than the original 5 days) helped us to be more flexible with our plans and meetings.

### WHAT DID YOU LEARN FROM THE OTHER ORGANIZATION?

We met representatives of organizations who have experience in working with the Armenian and the Jewish communities. They shared valuable information with us as well as their experience in fundraising which can benefit our project.

**HOW WAS THE WORK IN THE TEAM? WHAT WENT WELL/NOT SO WELL/ARE THERE WAYS TO IMPROVE YOUR TEAM WORK?**

The work in the team was quite productive, we met our goals.

It was not easy to plan the work shadowings and to coordinate everything since we are located in 3 different countries (Israel, Armenia and Germany) and each one of us is very busy in his own life and ordinary work.

We should understand that if we want this project to succeed we have to dedicate some time for it, and show the other colleagues our will and care for the success of it.

**PERSPECTIVES: WHAT IS THE STATUS OF YOUR PROJECT? (CONTENT, ORGANIZATION, FUNDING) WHAT IS YOUR SCHEDULE FOR THE UPCOMING WEEKS/MONTHS?**

As previously mentioned, we are currently working on the Erasmus+ application, which is due on October 1st. We also have an intensive work shadowing and project development to do when we meet in Berlin in September. In the upcoming weeks we will work on the details of the project, e.g. specify the goals of each session for both seminars, and finish the application.

GERMANY, 05-07. SEPTEMBER 2017

1. Visit to the Otto-Weidt-Museum in Berlin
2. Attendance of the film and light show about the parliamentary history of Germany
3. Work shadowing of the Jewish Student Union Germany in their office, Berlin
4. Meeting with the referee for Youth Activities of the Central Council of Jews in Germany, Marat Schlafstein
5. Walk through the Jewish remembrance sites in the Berlin-city-center
6. Tour on memorial stumbling blocks
7. Visit of the regular exhibition at the Jewish Museum Berlin
8. Attendance of the proud2bejewish-parade at the Brandenburger Tor in Mitte
9. Meeting with two Holocaust survivors



## WORK SHADOWING:

### WHAT WERE THE GOALS FOR THE WORK SHADOWING SESSIONS?

1. Getting to know the specific German Jewish remembrance and commemoration culture and policy.
2. Meeting important figures in the Jewish community and significant places in Berlin.
3. Learning more about the Holocaust (in Germany) and relate it to the Armenian Genocide.
4. Take a look at the commemoration culture as practiced in German museums and memorial places.
5. Trying to interest relevant people/organizations in our project.

### WERE YOU ABLE TO STICK TO YOUR PLAN? DID YOU SUCCEED TO MEET YOUR GOALS?

All in all, we succeeded to meet our goals:

- We got insights into the specific German-Jewish relations and the situation of the Jewish diaspora in Germany
- We learned about the public and Jewish approach on Jewish history in Germany, especially the Shoah
- We met with local Jewish activists and collected useful information on their activities and goals in terms of remembrance politics

We managed to proceed through the entire program and stick to our planned schedule. There has been even some spare time for spontaneous excursions, for example through some Jewish sites in Berlin-Mitte.

### WHAT DID YOU LEARN FROM THE OTHER ORGANIZATION?

We met representatives of organizations who are responsible for the political assertion of Jewish remembrance culture. They taught us about the challenges they face, for example getting official acknowledgement for their historical narrative, and also about their goals.

HOW WAS THE WORK IN THE TEAM? WHAT WENT WELL/NOT SO WELL/ARE THERE WAYS TO IMPROVE YOUR TEAM WORK?

The work within the team was productive, we met our goals in Berlin.

**PERSPECTIVES: WHAT IS THE STATUS OF YOUR PROJECT? (CONTENT, ORGANIZATION, FUNDING) WHAT IS YOUR SCHEDULE FOR THE UPCOMING WEEKS/MONTHS?**

The work shadowing phase came to an end. The step is going to be an analysis of the collected data and further adjust.