N° 4, november 2025

MULTI Letter FIMEM

International Federation
of the Modern
School Movements

Peace education in times of war

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NOTES FROM THE EDITORIAL TEAM

Communication Commission - FIMEM

The current global context invites us to reflect on how we are educating to build a firm and lasting PEACE, one that dwells in the hearts of every human being who passes through our classrooms, a PEACE that is strong and collective enough to confront the violent forces that are advancing with increasing intensity throughout the world.

We are convinced that the children of the world deserve to live in safe environments, where their dignity, regardless of their place of birth, is protected and respected by every adult around them.

Today, the rights of children and humanity are being undermined. It seems that, under any pretext, they can be violated without any consideration for the possible consequences. Part of humanity has become blind to its own pain, refusing to protect what does not suit the interests of the powerful.

As teachers, we have a responsibility to highlight inhumane acts, to demand dignified treatment and a genuine policy of PEACE in the face of the various conflicts and destruction afflicting our world.

Doing our part means helping children experience the reality of a world that is no longer seen through the lens of the media or adults, but experienced by other children. It means making this difficult-to-understand world less abstract, allowing children to think freely, communicate, and build their connection to the world in order to find meaning in it.

Peace education, in these times of war and chaos, is more necessary than ever!

Feel free to send your contributions to:
multilettre@ridef-fimem.com

Cooperatively
Editorial team

GREETINGS FROM THE BOARD OF DIRECTORS

Juan Fernández Platero - Spain
Karim Kaboré - Burkina Faso
Juan Carlos “Pato” Lira - Mexico
Cheikh Makhfousse - Senegal
Gabriella Varaldi - Uruguay

Dear colleagues

The FIMEM Board of Directors is pleased to announce the publication of the second issue of Multiletra for 2025, which is devoted to the rights of children and young people in general, and the right to peace in particular. It would like to highlight the professionalism of the editorial team, the determination of the members of Commission 1, and the commitment of all those who contributed to the writing of articles.

In this world increasingly marked by divisions, violence, injustice, inequality, and the deprivation of human rights, it is children and young people who pay the highest price.

FIMEM deeply regrets this situation and wishes to reiterate that education remains a powerful tool for building a peaceful society. The Freinet pedagogy, with its cooperative, emancipatory, and humanistic dimension, carries with it the conviction that every girl, boy, young person, educator, and community has a role to play in building a more just and supportive world, in which everyone can fully enjoy their rights.

The articles in this Multiletra contribute to keeping peace alive in everyday life, in classrooms, schools, and movements. In the same vein, the Administrative Council encourages Commission 14 “Education for Peace” and the MCE in Italy, which have decided to join forces to successfully carry out the initiative “LETTERS FOR PEACE FROM SCHOOLS AROUND THE WORLD.” The Board of Directors takes the opportunity offered by this Multiletra to invite all FIMEM movements to commit themselves to the success of the activity.

These collective efforts testify to the vitality of the federation and the commitment of each actor to convey the values of universal peace to the global community.

The FIMEM Board of Directors cannot conclude without expressing its sincere gratitude to all member movements, commissions, and partner organizations that, day after day, reflect and act in favor of the dissemination of popular education. Convinced that Multiletra is a privileged space for the dissemination of important information, it encourages all member movements to commit even more to its revitalization. “Together, let us continue to make our pedagogy an instrument of fraternity, freedom, and peace.”

“World peace begins in the heart of each individual“

Cooperatively

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CULTURE OF PEACE AND EVERYDAY LIFE IN THE CLASSROOM:

The class council as a space for democratic education

Lilia Hernández
MMEM
Mexico

In February 2025, by agreement with the school management, I joined the teaching staff midway through the school year, teaching Year 4B in primary school, where the situation was quite complex. Teaching this class was a challenge for any teacher.

I detected a dynamic of violence among the students: teasing, insults, aggressive physical contact between the children while playing, obscene language, and little attention to the teacher.

The mothers, fathers and/or guardians of each student frequently came to the school to express their dissatisfaction with the effects that their children had suffered due to the constant conflicts in the classroom.

The teacher on duty said he did not have the necessary teaching tools to deal with the situation. Thus began the task of investigating what was happening in the classroom.

When interacting with the students, I noticed the following situations: lack of communication, poor group control, neglect of the grade's content, and disinterest in following the teacher's instructions.

I intervened with a group assessment; the first step was to get to know the children to identify the priority issues to be addressed: conflicts that had been dragging on since the beginning of the school year and the urgent need to improve coexistence.

I made the most of my time to integrate myself and build trust between students and the teacher, with the aim of really understanding how they felt in the classroom. I paid particular attention to a child who was considered 'conflictive'; everyone pointed him out. He created tension and indiscipline in the classroom; his attitude was defiant and challenging, and he made comments that questioned the proposed activities in a mocking tone; but he was not the only one with such characteristics; there were a few others who giggled, whispered or were apathetic.

I started classes differently; the dialogue-based class allowed me to share my

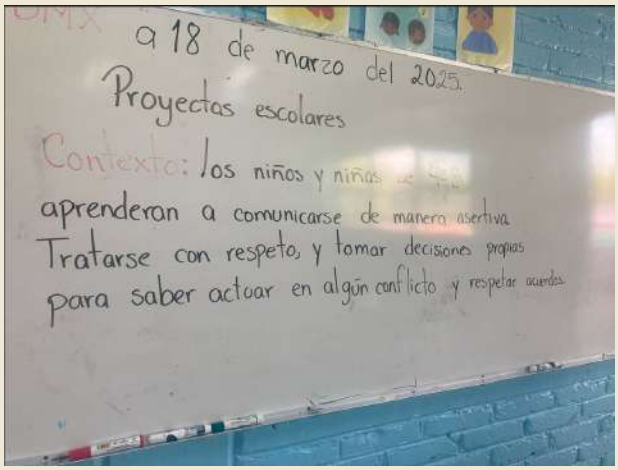
emotions with them and learn about their interests. It was very helpful that the students recognised me as an equal; thus, curiosity arose through questions such as: Do you like video games? What is your favourite music? Did you really play football, teacher?

Little by little, they began to share parts of their lives, preferences, unique family characteristics, and common experiences, and so the first few days passed.

I used oral communication to interact, as the children have few opportunities to spend time and talk with their mother, father, or guardian, who, in compensation for their abandonment, indulge their needs and whims (I want, give me, buy me), creating tyrannical children.

After breaking through the children's rigidity and indifference, I continued with an explanation of how we would work in the classroom. The next step was to draw up a schedule of the activities we would do during the day so that everyone would know the work plan.

They agreed, albeit a little confused. When I asked them if they agreed with the way I proposed working, I noticed a certain caution, they hesitated to answer, until one girl mentioned that they were never considered for such decisions.

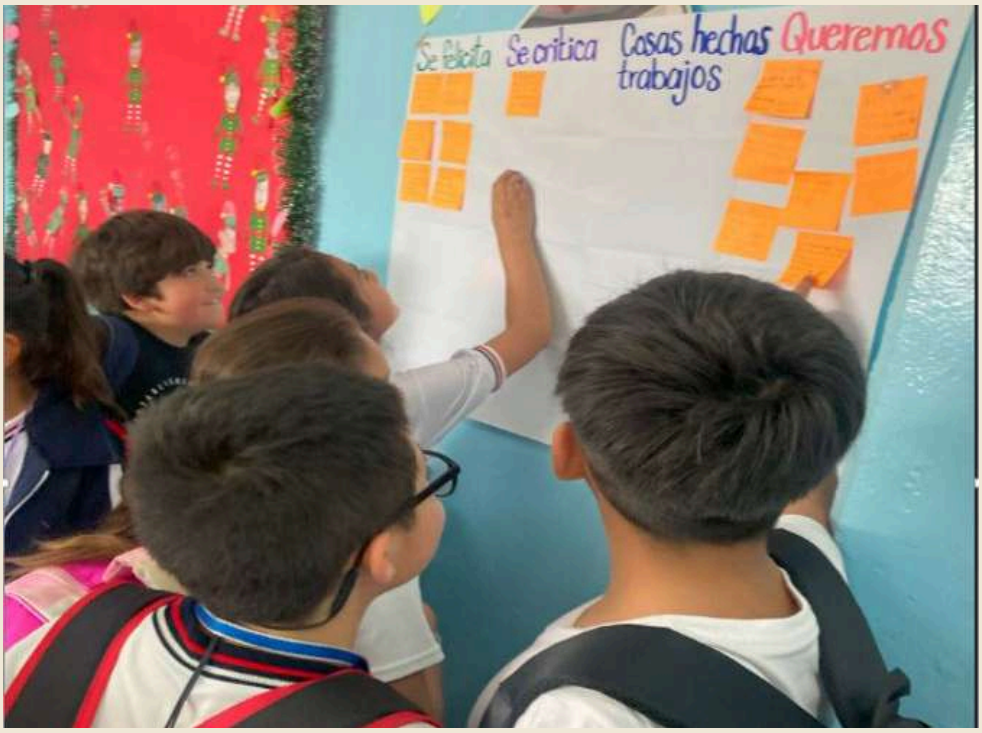


Creation of an experiential project

The issue of coexistence remained latent. In response to any provocation, the children reacted violently (verbally or physically), causing emotional harm to individuals and within the group.

Coexistence hindered the development of projects we planned to carry out. For example, when forming teams, they rejected certain members, were unable to agree, argued pointlessly, or simply did not know what to do.

Soon after, I took another big step: the class council. I shared with them the idea of organising a class council, where everyone could freely express the situations that made it difficult to get along in the classroom. I let them know that it would also be useful for organising our work with group proposals and agreements, so that we could express our thoughts, be heard, and make decisions to resolve any conflicts that might arise.



Assembly panel

Our first class council session was held with the same curiosity as that first class where we chatted to get to know each other.

I began by explaining the details of the council: electing a chairperson and a secretary to take notes of the council's agreements.

I read out the comments that each student had posted on our notice board a few days earlier with the statements proposed and agreed upon by mutual consent: congratulations, criticism, things done, wishes.

The first meeting lasted two and a half hours, with the break interrupting the sequence, but we managed to read all the comments, consider the points of view with respect and tolerance, and reach group agreements.

When the class council ended, I noticed that everyone was tired; however, there was a reflective atmosphere because the greatest achievement of this meeting was the introspection that each person did regarding their actions. When someone expressed their opinion and related directly to a classmate, the participation was measured and respectful.

I was criticised by Gael, who wrote: 'I hurt my finger, but the teacher ignored me.' When I read this comment, I realised that trust is a fundamental incentive for coexistence.

If there is trust, respect and listening, students express themselves with the conviction that they can change the direction of the classroom: listening to each other, taking opinions into account, highlighting injustices in school and revealing that unquestioning obedience limits awareness and creative and collective work.

The class councils continued every Friday and helped to mediate conflicts within the group, without ceasing to exist.

The violence that convulses society has a direct impact on our students' families; the role of the family is fundamental in shaping citizens who know how to listen, dialogue and reach agreements.

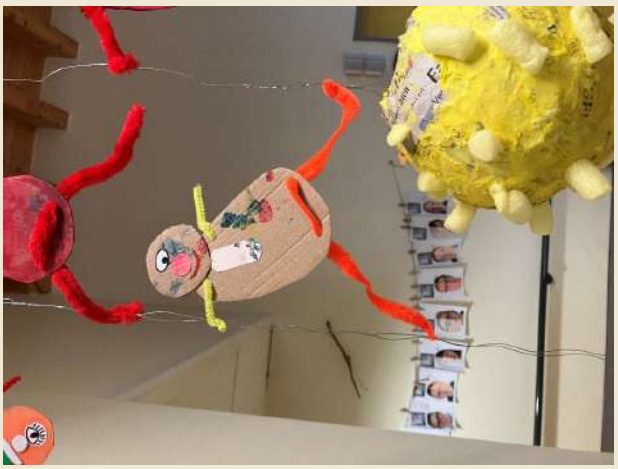
Although the social landscape is discouraging in the face of national and international wars, within families there is the possibility of showing children alternative forms of organisation and regulation that promote dignified treatment, cooperation and work for the collective good.

Practising democracy and collective decision-making through class councils from an early age allows us to rethink obsolete practices that do not bear fruit in the face of the demands of the new millennium and the need to imagine another possible world: one that is just and peaceful.

Cooperative work

PEACE EDUCATION IN TIMES OF WAR

Dörte Rieck
Germany



We are a school for pupils from 6 to 18 years with special mental needs in the middle of Germany. We live in a region with a lot of landscape. For our students their little world is fine. They live in nature and a peaceful area and don't know, that there are a bunch of wars in the world. On the other side they get news mostly from social media with words and pictures far away from their live.

Most of the learning groups in our school watch daily news for children on public television, presented in simple language. They speak about the topics, watch pictures and films. Sometimes they participate in actions of solidarity, they saw on TV. Or they are looking for pictures of the topics and take photos.

I'm a teacher for the youngest children in our school. We don't look at the news. We try to learn about responsibility for our nearest region, create learning rooms.

I think, only responsibility shows us, what is important in our life, what we want to preserve. The children in our class have a lot of ideas to design their surroundings and are careful with it. Now we have a little garden outside to learn, play and eat in it. Last year they wrote a letter to the school master and asked for a permission to plant an apple tree in this little garden. Now we are planning how to raise money for this. This working with little steps makes visible, what we must do for a good life. In times of war, we couldn't do this.

On the other hand, the educational and therapeutic staN at our school try to broaden our students' horizons.

Step by step, we explore the surrounding area, collect rubbish, visit institutions dedicated to environmental protection, democracy or peace education, attend theatre projects, or participate in interdisciplinary working groups within the school or friendly correspondence with classes elsewhere in Germany.

As often as possible we leave our school and see new horizons. We use public institutions to save forests, make films, experience life in big towns, create everyday life outside of the school. It is important to oNer all of this in a way that allows pupils as much self-determination as possible. All their senses should be involved. Active and visual experiences form the basis for participation in these activities.

Salzwedel, the town where our school is located, was an old Hanseatic city in the Middle Ages and is now a member of the modern Hanseatic League, which maintains partnerships throughout Europe. This year we want to start an Erasmus project, where we want to "tell" our story as a Hanseatic city and get to know other Hanseatic cities and experience connections and discover new things through similarities. This way we meet each other twice. Hopefully as friends the second time.

In our school we have a topic of the year. Last year it was „We in the world“. The students and we noticed that it was too big a topic.

We couldn't complet it in one school year. So we continue to work on it this year.

Last year, it was far too abstract for the young pupils, so we had to take a more gradual approach. We started with ourselves and our individuality, moved on to our families and places of residence, and ended last year with animals around the world.

This year we started a project in the subject ethical skills with a story: A UFO landed near us. The pupils created aliens and gave them names.

They love the aliens in our class. At the beginning they designed their home in the outer space.

This week the aliens go on a big trip. So far, we do not know the stops the aliens will make on their journey. But I think their bird's-eye view of the world opens opportunities for us to get to know different regions of the world. The pupils can contribute ideas for stops and we educators will do it too. We will also visit war-torn regions, see how people live in these situations and try to empathize with them. Through various learning opportunities, we will try to understand what it means to see one's home and loved ones endangered or lost. We will use various media to try and explore many aspects.

And we will also see friendly and exciting areas.

I am sure that the pupils in our learning group will empathize with the people in the places they get to know in this way. This goes hand in hand with the responsibility for safety and peace in their own neighborhoods, as far as we can help to shape this.

The Alien project is a project for all of us in our learning group and an attempt to look at the outside world. I am excited to see what we will explore during the school year.

THE WORD THAT BUILDS COMMUNITY:

The Right to Expression in Freinet Pedagogy Practices in a Public School Classroom in Montevideo

Silvia Barreiro
MEPFU
Uruguay

In November, when we commemorate the rights of children and adolescents, our classrooms fill with reflections on what it means to be able to speak, or "to have the word", to be heard, and to participate in the collective life of the group by contributing and making decisions. That is, to build the school day by day. Among those rights, freedom of expression, recognized in Article 13 of the Convention on the Rights of the Child (UN, 1989), is a starting point for thinking about school as a productive space where children's voices are not only allowed but necessary to build the present in every act.

Framed within the principles of a pedagogy that gives structure, form, and support, something deeply needed in a time when uncertainty is commonplace, children's expression is not a simple addition to teaching and daily practice, but rather their starting point.

Célestin Freinet understood that children learn by speaking, writing, discussing, and creating together. Taking this as a central axis, in a school in western Montevideo, the different techniques are recreated and reimagined every morning, inspired by Hannah Arendt's (2009) notion of granting the new generation the freedom to create while also safeguarding what has been handed down and is worth preserving — that is, the ever-renewed possibility of sustaining a common world.

Thus, in every attempt, in every encounter, we trace paths that make the word an act of freedom through free text, international correspondence, learning walks, "What's New?" and the class assembly. In each of these experiences, the right to express oneself becomes a daily, collective, challenging, and emancipatory practice.

The Word Born from Desire: Free Text

According to Freinet, education must emerge from life and ultimately return to it. In the free text, children write what they wish, what moves them, troubles them, or what they have learned and want to share: a story, an experience, an emotion, a dream, a fear, a poem, a piece of news, or a text inspired by a literary form explored in class.

It is not an exercise in form or style, but rather an affirmation of the value of words and of one's own creative voice, especially in times when artificial intelligence and its algorithms risk depriving us of the experience of authorship and the joy of creation. It is, above all, an opportunity to discover and be surprised by what one can achieve through self-expression, and to recognize that one's words can matter to others. In the classroom, the free text moment is lived with the excitement of someone opening a window to the World, it is the favorite activity in the weekly Work Plan. Some write about their families, others about their neighborhood, a football game, a magical story, jokes, or a dream. Then, in collective reading, some are democratically selected for publication, with cooperative correction, to read aloud to the younger students, digitize and upload to the CREA platform, and send to Chile as part of international correspondence.

In that gesture of sharing what has been written lies the democratic experience that Freinet defended, a pedagogy of communication and cooperation, understanding school as a working community in which free expression is a condition for learning and social life. The free text is, therefore, the first territory where the right to expression is practiced with responsibility and meaning.

CREA is a digital learning platform developed by Plan Ceibal, Uruguay's national initiative for educational innovation and digital inclusion. It provides public schools with a virtual environment where teachers and students can share resources, communicate, and manage learning activities.

The Word That Travels: International Correspondence

This year, we have been corresponding with a school in Santiago de Chile. Each exchange of letters, drawings, and photos is a celebration. The envelopes cross the Andes filled with curiosity, friendship, and questions: “What is your recess like?”, “What songs do you sing?”, “What do you like to eat?” Writing and waiting for a response teaches us the patience that good things require; it teaches us to read the world and our region, and to recognize ourselves in others. As Freinet stated, a letter only makes sense if we are compelled to use it to communicate beyond the reach of our voice.

Inter-school correspondence transcends the academic, it connects childhoods and builds fraternity among peoples, an education for peace and solidarity based on exchange and cooperation. In every letter lies an exercise in empathy, a way of learning geography, language, and culture through lived experience.

The Word That Observes: Learning Walks

Another technique that sustains our practice is the “learning walk,” those outings that transform the everyday environment into a source of knowledge. We walk through the neighborhood, the parks, the market, and other areas with notebooks and phone cameras. We observe, ask questions, and take notes. Then, in the classroom, we write texts, create reports, maps or drawings.

The learning walk renews the principle that school should not be separated from life, but open to it.

Children learn that knowledge is not only found in books but also in conversations with neighbors, in the sounds of the street, in the history of a park or a factory.

Observation joins expression, what is seen is told; what is told is shared and multiplied. And what is shared becomes common knowledge.

Freinet considered this practice part of rational discipline, an organization of work that does not impose obedience but creates meaning.

As Trilla (2001) notes, his pedagogy replaces external authority with shared responsibility. Thus, learning walks are also exercises in autonomy and mutual respect.

The Word That Organizes Group Life: The Assembly and What's New?

Every week, in our classrooms, the assembly becomes the heart of cooperative life. There, we plan tasks, resolve conflicts, and make proposals. It is not a symbolic instance, the decisions made in the assembly guide the group's life. Children learn that their voice has power, that words can transform coexistence.

The "What's New?" moment begins each day with the same logic, a brief space to share what is happening to us. Sometimes it's neighborhood news, a family story, or a concern. Other times, an idea to research or a project to share. In those minutes, the school becomes a living community. These practices realize Freinet's ideal of a democratic school, where every child exercises their right to express themselves but also learns to listen, to argue, and to reach agreements. As Freinet (1972) said, it is not about the teacher teaching freedom, but about living it.

The Right to Expression as an Act of Justice

Celebrating in November the International Day of the Rights of the Child is not just about remembering a date, but about renewing a pedagogical commitment. In public schools, this commitment is total, it translates into providing spaces where children can speak, write, decide, and create. Because freedom of expression is not taught in the abstract, it is built in the daily practice of a cooperative classroom. I understand pedagogy as profoundly political, which entails defending the dignity of childhood, the dignity of those who fill our schools each day. In Trilla's (2001) words, a "humanist school in the face of a materialist neoliberalism founded on universal exploitation" (p.40).

Today, in different contexts but with similar challenges, Freinet's techniques remain tools of emancipation that open long-term dialogue with those who came before and those who are just arriving. Through correspondence, free text, or assembly, each child learns that their words have value. And in that discovery lies more than writing or speaking, it is the right to be recognized, to participate, to build with others a fairer world.

A Pedagogy of Living Words

To speak, to write, to share, and to decide, four verbs in the infinitive, ready for action, summarize the spirit of Modern School pedagogy. In this experience in Montevideo, each applied technique has been an open door to the right to expression, but also a way to learn through cooperation, to think critically, and to care for words as tools for encounter and the construction of the common good and peace in a world that ignores the cries of peoples, peoples who unite to ask the tyrant to stop killing, to let life continue in peace.

If educating means giving the word to those who do not have it, that remains the task, to sustain classrooms where speech flows freely, where every voice finds an echo in the voices of others, where cooperation and autonomy are ways of exercising freedom. Thus, public schools pave the way toward spaces that, like laboratories, experiment with democratic life and the hope for true peace.

A HISTORIC DAY FOR OUR SCHOOL

Tere Garduño
MEPA
Mexico

On September 30, 2025, Nadya Rasheed, The Palestinian Ambassador of Mexico, visited the Paidós Community.

Counting the minutes until her arrival. Standing in a semicircle in the small entrance courtyard with large letters on our chests that declaimed together: Free Palestine! Arranging ourselves in the central courtyard to form a large choir of children's voices and being ready to sing with all our passion: "The girls and boys want peace." Joining together to fill the air of the school: "Our voice will reach across the land and the sea. I will be there, you will be there, and they will never silence us." "They will not take away our hope of living in a world without fear, where we can be happy." And finally, shouting: "Enough is enough."

Nadya Rasheed, the Palestinian ambassador, looked at them with profound tenderness, with profound affection, and the children continued to fill the airwaves of the school, insisting on paths of solidarity with the children of Gaza.

The "Enough is Enough" of the song is shouted out to the world, to the governments, to the oppressors, to the invaders, to the imperialists, to the genocidaires, like a cry that comes from those new hearts that know who is trying to destroy a nation. It's possible that Nadya's mind was filled with the thousands upon thousands of children who will no longer be able to sing, who will no longer be able to see the sun in the morning, or walk to school.

Writing names on the map.
Paidós 2025

Then came the instruments, primarily percussion instruments, which were strung together in the small hands of children to accompany "Free Palestine." And from the depths of their consciences, they sang: Long live Palestine, free Palestine! Noble as wheat! Strong as olive trees! It is our roots and our cultivation!

These voices echoed those of the September 20th march, in which four child representatives from Paidós carried the voice of free Palestine and sang at the Gate of Resistance and Life Anti-Monument, stirring the thousands of people who had gathered there with joy and song.

Then, during Nadya's visit, the school's older group, from the 6th grade, who have been given the role of "Guardians of Memory," extended the meaning of the phrase from the Palestinian song:

¡Let the whole world know our history!

Escribiendo nombres en el mapa.
Paidós 2025

¡Our souls are as strong as metal!

¡We fought to the end for our children!

A small group of 6th graders, Abril, Mila, Joa, Zac, Carlos, and Pat, presented to Nadya, the Ambassador, in a play they had written, the history of the Palestinian people, who have lived in these Arab lands for more than two thousand years, and that of the Jewish people, who began their migration, as a supposed return to their origins, almost in the middle of the 20th century. Giant maps were presented to the Paidós community to show how Palestine had been reduced from just under half of the territory under the UN mandate to 15% today, with every intention of erasing it. Nadya nodded in agreement at every moment of Zionist violence and pressure on the Palestinian people. They echoed the phrases of Free Palestine, which say:

¡Let the whole world know our wound!

¡For our history, for the future!

Then came drawings, flags, paintings, and letters that children spontaneously wrote to Nadya, expressing their solidarity with Gaza, their recognition of Palestine, and their protest against the Genocide.

A final message came from the land. The land that the Zionist State of Israel violates every day to continue leaving its mark on the Palestinian nation. A cactus, a zebra, and a dahlia were offered as the fruit of children's plantings to symbolize our strong hope that one day they will recover their lands, as the song says:

¡The land will be liberated without painful walls!

Many feelings crossed our hearts, and many ideas crossed our minds. The great emotions of the children, their families who accompanied us, and us: their teachers, filled us with a deep sense of humanity, justice, conscience, solidarity, dignity, and profound love for the children of Gaza, for the mothers and fathers who have suffered two years of extermination, and for the grandmothers and grandfathers who have seen their last days in total devastation.

At a march in the Zócalo, when we first saw Nadya Rasheed, the Ambassador, in front of the CNTE strike that filled the entire plaza, she said that Palestine would resist, that they would achieve victory. She added that when that happened, all of us who were at the march and there at the final rally would be by her side. Translated into Paidós, this community will be in her struggle, in her resistance, and in her victory. Long live free Palestine! And the whole world will be our witness!

Sewing a Palestinian flag
Paidós 2025

This is how Nadya Rasheed, the Palestinian ambassador, who carries so much pain from her people, the extermination imposed by Netanyahu and financed by Trump, brought us hope and a sense of struggle to keep shouting: "Long live free Palestine!" And the children, from as young as 3 to as old as 11, discovered that we all have a role to play in history and that it is essential to know which side of that history we stand on. Either we fight for justice, dignity, and human rights for all, which connects us with the rest of humanity, or we decide to look out only for our own interests and become part of the predators of humanity.

A great lesson has been learned in the teaching spirit of this meeting, which has rekindled the flame of political activism for the cause of the most vulnerable and defenseless, and is being communicated within the educational community.

And now it is very clear to us that children have the right to understand reality, to form their own judgment of this world controlled by adult, colonial, and power-driven visions. They have the right to express what they consider valid and what they consider not. It is there that no violence exercised against the innocent, defenseless, and defenseless is legitimized. It is there that nearly 80 years of violence and forced displacement against the Palestinian people is not self-defense; it is intentional genocide.

Children know this. And they say it in many ways, pointing out that no child should be a victim in a war, and their faces are overcome by the pain of their fellow Palestinian children.

Diálogo con Nadya Rasheed, Palestinian ambassador to Mexico. Paidós 2025

They know that nearly 65,000 dead, most likely half of whom are children, represents an enormous injustice and a horror that should not have happened.

They know that nearly 200,000 wounded or maimed represents extreme cruelty inflicted on innocent people. They know that starving people to death is a decision of extreme violence and profound hatred.

The children are not wrong; they know this is not the world they would like for the future, and they say with their eyes, drawings, songs, hugs, shouts, words, slogans, and gestures that we must stop the genocide, that we must guarantee food, shelter, medicine, and school for the children of Gaza and the Cisgiordania.

In this age of hyper-communication, where a click is enough to connect you to the other side of the world; where thousands of images parade before our eyes, it is no longer possible to hide the realities of this "inhuman humanity" that surrounds us.

Children and adolescents, exposed to multiple realities, require support from a perspective of rights, ethical principles, and a rejection of cruelty and the arrogance of power.

That is why, in the face of a world of war, in the face of a genocide that advances day by day, drying up children's bodies, in the face of the constant terror of being hit by a projectile while searching for a plate of food or a little water, in the face of the destruction of buildings, homes, hospitals, and schools, we need to condemn this violence because silence in the face of it is complicity.

And this complicity is learned by the new generations. Not referring to the genocide, not mentioning it, not expressing a clear position, means agreeing with those who have decided to look the other way to protect their positions, their capital, and their privileges.

In these times, realities force us to take positions. That is also learned. Children and adolescents learn by example, more than by words. It is a matter of ethical and educational coherence that should lead us to demonstrate our convictions.

Nadya Rasheed, Palestinian ambassador to Mexico
Paidós 2025

This school is 54 years old, and we have witnessed many conflicts around the world; but this intentional extermination has touched us to the depths of our core, because it is now visible minute by minute. Watching a UN and a Security Council chained to the US veto, with an inhuman Trump supporting a psychopath like Netanyahu, places us in a situation of great despair. This is not just the Gaza crisis, this is not just the climax of the 77-year-long permanent siege of Palestine by the Zionist state of Israel; it is the crisis of humanity. If we fail to confront and resolve these challenges, we will have set back more than 100 years.

Personally, I have experienced this school since its founding and through my childhood, two years prior to graduating from the Normal School. All my subsequent training inevitably brought me back to the same place: school. I returned to see, from an epistemological and affective perspective, how children integrated reality into their thoughts and emotions, establishing thought-feeling connections to their own versions of the world. I have heard their voices a thousand times; I have experienced their emotions, their frustrations, their desires. I have been involved, trying to put myself in the shoes of childhood and adolescence to construct narratives of the world. These journeys alongside them have allowed me to discover new paths so I can define a clear position on their education.

Today, I am absolutely convinced that children, adolescents, and young adults cannot be educated in the vacuum of reality, as I experienced it in my school days. The fundamental reason for my conviction is that the testimonies I have heard clearly demonstrate an analysis of reality beyond what adult society believes possible.

The testimonies, judgments, and interpretations I have gathered throughout my teaching experience indicate that, from a very young age, children have a sense of rights deeply integrated into the judgments they make about reality. They react to violence, abuse, arrogance, discrimination, and mistreatment, as long as the adult does not cast a veil of censorship over the natural feelings they spontaneously express. If adult society knows how to recognize these signs, education requires deeper critical processes, since an awareness of justice is generated at an early age that allows them to see others as subjects of rights.

I want to share that, since the beginning of the conflict, of this war that has become a genocide, my thoughts have been drawn to that shore of the Mediterranean. Every night, every morning, I scan the social media and newspapers to see if there's a sign of hope, and each time the horizon darkens, only to brighten with the crash of missiles, bullets, bombs, and explosions.

Wall newspaper, Paidós 2025

I can't help but feel the helplessness caused by the faces of mothers carrying the bodies of their sons and daughters; of others shattered by landslides or bullets, left without arms or legs; of children desperate for food and thirst; of those who are gradually disappearing due to the famine caused by the Zionist State of Israel.

For all the above reasons, the presence at Paidós School of Nadya Rasheed, the Palestinian Ambassador to Mexico, and her intention to visit the authors of the short letters of solidarity and affection

Wall newspaper, Paidós 2025

that our children sent to the children of Gaza, is a masterful lesson that no child in our school will forget. In these times of terror, Nadya's tenderness caresses us and moves us to continue fighting and singing in the streets and in the classrooms, wishing for justice and peace for Palestine.

Nadya sowed a climate of hope nourished by these children's minds and hearts who desire a just and peaceful world for all the children of the world. Her visit fulfilled the wish of Aura, a little girl in fifth grade, who said she was very excited about the visit, that she felt very nervous and at the same time very happy, and that she hoped all the children in the school would understand how important this historic visit to our small school was.

Nadya Rasheed, Palestinian ambassador to Mexico
Paidós 2025

Su visita hizo realidad el deseo de Aura, una pequeña de 5º que dijo que estaba muy emocionada por la visita, que se sentía muy nerviosa y a la vez muy feliz y que deseaba que todas las niñas y niños de la escuela comprendieran que era muy importante esta histórica visita a nuestra pequeña escuela.

For the visit from the Palestinian Embassy, for the letters, the songs, the support of families, the awareness of teachers, from the classroom we denounce and in the schoolyards we sing: "Long live free Palestine!" And we tell Nadya that she, her people, her women and men, but above all her girls and boys, are in our hearts.

¡Long live free Palestine!

POSTAL ART COMES TO SCHOOL

Postcards from around the world to educate about peace

Christiano Paganin
MCE
Italy

In an age where communication travels at the speed of a click, there is still a simple, concrete and poetic gesture: writing a postcard, slipping it into an envelope, choosing a stamp and sending it to someone far away.

It was from this ancient gesture that "Postal Art Enters the School" was born, an educational and artistic project that has crossed continents and generations, leading thousands of children to tell stories, express their feelings and share their thoughts with others. This ancient gesture gave rise to "L'art postal entre à l'école" (Postal Art Comes to School), an educational and artistic project that has spanned continents and generations, encouraging thousands of children to describe their region, their culture and their view of the world through images and words.

The project, which was recently the subject of an international meeting of teachers in Mexico, resulted in an evocative exhibition of postal art: a constellation of postcards from Italian schools and many countries around the world, accompanied by texts and drawings created by the pupils, sent and received as part of a great global dialogue. Each envelope bears a specific sender — a school, a class, a group of children — but its contents are a gift of beauty and meaning, a window onto a place and the people who live there.

Vue de l'exposition des cartes postales à la RIDEF de OAXACA, 2024

What strikes the viewer of the exhibition is not only the richness of the images, but also the diversity of the texts, which reflect the variety of cultures and perspectives; its contents are a gift of beauty and meaning, a window onto a place and the people who live there.

What strikes the viewer is not only the variety of artistic languages—collages, drawings, paintings, photographs, stamps, words—but the power of the collective message that emerges.

Each postcard tells the story of a territory: the sea that bathes the Italian coast, the mountains that protect the Andean villages, the Mexican deserts, the African forests, the Asian cities full of sounds and colours. But in each image, we sense the same tension: the desire to be heard, to share a piece of the world, to be part of a dialogue.

A journey that doesn't end with delivery

"Postal art comes to school" is not just about sending an envelope. Each item sent is the start of a journey: receipt, reply, collective reflection, exhibition. The thousands of envelopes that have crossed oceans and borders form a living network of educational relationships. Children learn that communication is not just about information, but also about relationships, listening and reciprocity.

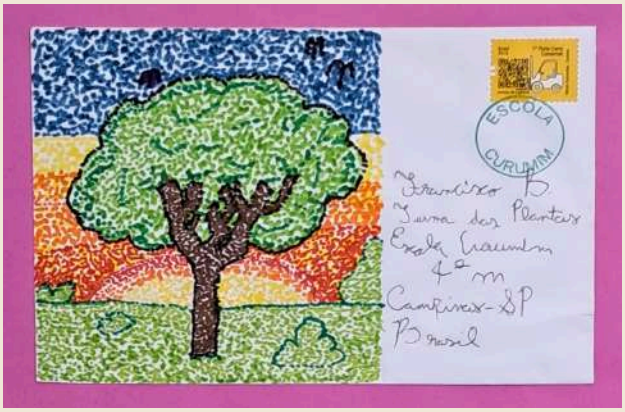
When an Italian school receives a postcard from a small community in Mexico or Poland, it receives not just a drawing, but a story, an emotion, a human geography. Children learn to look at the world with fresh eyes and, at the same time, to recognise their own cultural identity. Through colour, words and images, they discover that there are infinite forms of beauty, that no language is more important than another, that diversity does not divide but enriches. The project thus becomes a laboratory for peace education.

Peace, here, is not an abstract concept or a theme to be celebrated on a particular day, but a concrete, lived experience. It is a peace that arises from contact, from recognition of the other, from the understanding that each letter sent contains a fragment of trust. It is a path made up of small gestures, of hands that write, draw, seal and send.

A universal language

Mail art is a universal language. It emerged in the 1960s as an independent artistic practice and is based on the principle that art can be shared freely, without markets or museums, thanks to the postal system. Introducing it in schools means teaching young people that art is not just a question of technique or talent, but also of communication, empathy and responsibility.

As part of this project, each child becomes both an artist and a messenger. You don't need to be particularly talented to express yourself: you just need to want to communicate.



Mail art is therefore a very powerful educational tool, as it combines creativity with emotion, manual skills with reflection, and the individual with the community.

The thousands of postcards collected and exchanged show that, despite the distance, children recognise what unites them: a love of nature, a connection to their land, and the dream of a better future. Each image becomes a trace of memory and a promise of encounter.

Teaching brotherhood

At the heart of the project lies a profound message: each envelope has a sender, but we are all recipients.

In a world often marked by conflict and inequality, "Postal Art Goes to School" teaches us how to build brotherhood. Postcards travel not only through space, but also through time and the souls of those who receive them.

Teachers who have participated in the initiative describe how the project has transformed school life: lessons become moments of intercultural dialogue, subjects intertwine — geography, art, language, civic education — and each child finds their own way to participate. Some draw, others write, others lay out the pages, and still others tell the group what they have received.

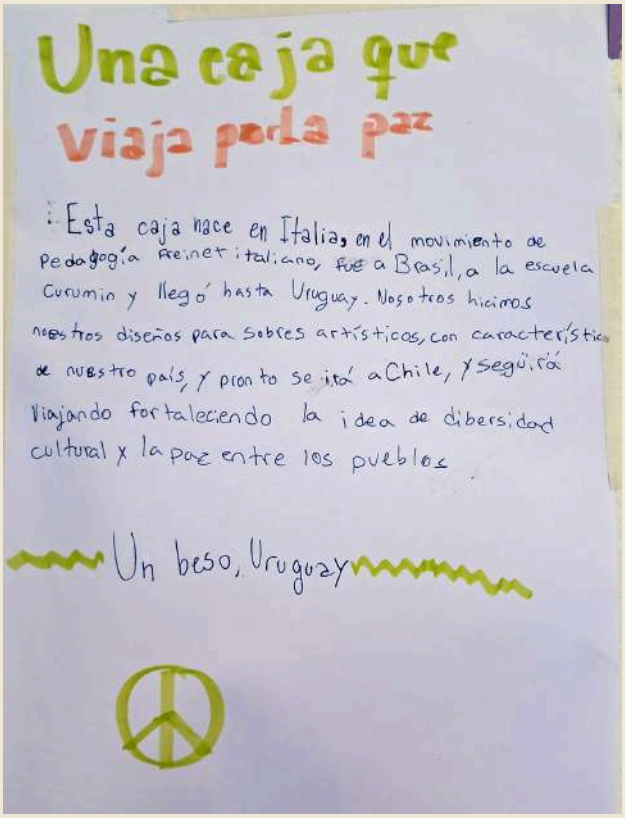
The class is transformed into a small creative community, where everyone contributes their perspective and voice. In this process, the values of peace and respect are not 'taught' as abstract concepts, but lived through the direct experience of encounter. The other is no longer a distant name, but a friendly face, a travelling companion.

An archive of humanity

The exhibition in Mexico brought together part of this extraordinary heritage. The walls were filled with colours and messages, signs and words from all corners of the globe. Walking among the envelopes is like browsing through a great atlas of hope: each work is a piece of a global mosaic that speaks of collaboration, creativity and shared dreams.

The project does not end there. Schools will continue to exchange postcards, creating a living archive of experiences and relationships.

An archive that does not belong to a museum, but to the international school community, and which continues to grow with each new mailing, with each child who puts their vision of the world down on paper.



translation:

A box that travels for peace

This box originated in Italy as part of the Italian Freinet educational movement, went to Brazil, to the Curumin school, and then arrived in Uruguay.

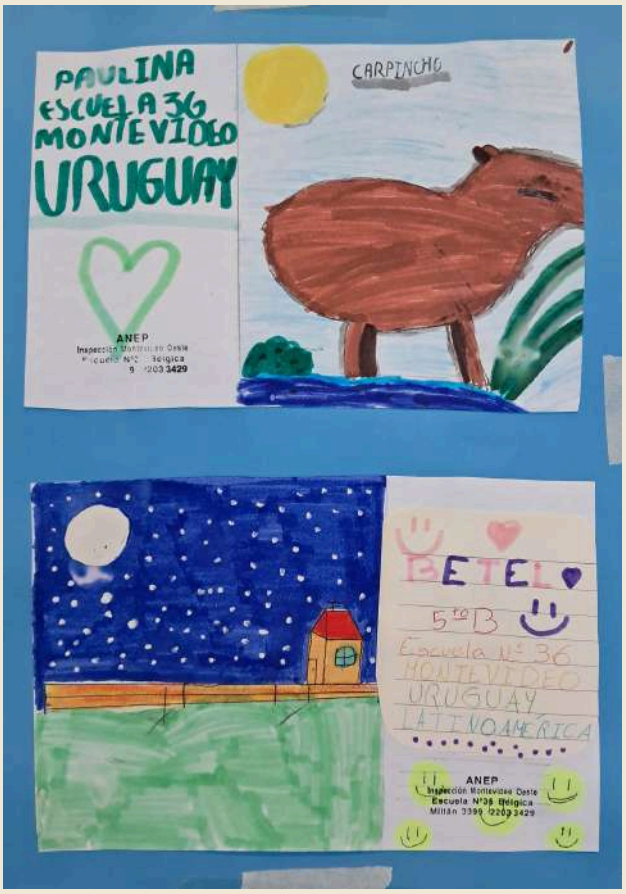
We created our own designs for artistic envelopes, featuring characteristics of our country, and soon it will go to Chile and continue traveling, strengthening the idea of cultural diversity and peace among peoples.

Kisses, Uruguay

Peace in an envelope

"Mail art comes to school" demonstrates that peace can travel on a sheet of paper. In an age dominated by instantaneity and digital communication, waiting for a letter, the surprise of a colourful envelope, the act of replying become educational acts of great value. Each envelope sent is a seed. It may seem small, but it contains the possibility of an encounter, a dialogue, a shared future. When these seeds multiply, as is the case today with the thousands of postcards circulating between Italian and international schools, the school is transformed into a laboratory of humanity, a place where one learns not only to read and write, but also to live together.

So, as the postcards continue to travel from one continent to another, we too can remember that every gesture of authentic communication is an act of peace. For peace, like mail, must be sent, received and preserved with care.



RIGHT TO PEACE FOR CHILDREN

Webinar summary 2023

Marie-Ève Collard T.
ICEM
France

The webinar RIGHT TO PEACE FOR CHILDREN took place on Friday 19 May at noon, European time. Organised by FIMEM and the FIMEM Peace Education Commission, on the initiative of the Italian MCE, which was responsible for the logistics.

It was a successful trial run, both in terms of technical aspects and content.

Many children and young people, educators and Freinet teachers from Africa, America and Europe communicated and shared their thoughts through drawings, poems, skits and reflections, as well as their proposals on children's rights to live in a world of peace.

It was an opportunity to attend three complementary presentations, remarkable in their content: Teresa Garduno Rubio's on a sociological and political approach, Francesco Tonucci's on a more psychological and social approach, and Antoinette Mengue Abesso's on a geopolitical and pedagogical approach.

This remains to be put into video format accessible to all FIMEM movements. Similarly, the writings of the classes and those of the three speakers should be promoted through their publication.

It was a wonderful and fruitful meeting for the international movements of FIMEM! It makes us want to see more.

A wonderful feeling of sharing! When the work of reflection, creation and questioning by the children in one class is confronted and compared with that of other classes, it is much more than just a spotlight. The right to peace for children is experienced differently elsewhere, and it is cooperation that teaches us this.

This is preliminary information. Technical limitations meant that the audio recordings did not come through well on YouTube. We will certainly receive further details from FIMEM. It will be difficult to wait!

To see the projects and interventions as a whole, you can watch the
2024 webinar: https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=kvaKOk3pzBE
2023 webinar: https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=98ChGuAZNaO

Border

I cross the river
Then the sea
I look behind
And I see the border
Then the sea
And finally the river
I arrive far away from hell
Here I will like it!
The earthquake is over!
The misery is over!
The war is over!

Fauriel Elementary School
Saint-Étienne, France
Marie-Ève COLLARD THIVILLIER's class

Friends

Dreaming

PAROLES D'EXILS

Diaporama Grandir- poème collectif

Marguerite Gómez
ICEM
France

Listen to the collective poem read by its creators:

http://accueilazun.com/admin/depot/pomecollectifgrandir2.mp4

Presentation of the GRANDIR slideshow during the Webinar for Peace, which showcases the work of young exiles who have recently arrived in France. During free writing workshops, they were able to express themselves, exchange ideas, listen to each other, and be heard.

Posters supporting their writings were painted by them during creative workshops. These are the images in the slideshow.

Four themes caught their interest:

Mother, Our Continent, Hope, I Would Like...

Growing up, growing up, growing up is my future.

Growing up isn't easy all the time.

Growing up, growing up, growing up is my future.
Growing up isn't easy all the time.
I'm small but I'd like to be great
When I grow up, I'll be strong and fair.
Being great isn't easy all the time.

I like to prove what I can do
I don't know what it's called
I don't know what time it is
I want to do everything I can
There's always a way out, always hope.

I look out of the window.
Far away towards the mountains, birds fly.
Words echo in the forest.
But what is that rustling in the leaves?
In the great forest
birds fly, birds sing.

Staying poor is difficult
Poverty... is not something you choose.
Once upon a time in Konakry
I was with my mother who was very beautiful
but she had no money to send her children to school.
I dreamt of going to school and she had the same dream as me.

I miss my mother... almost a year without seeing her
How I'd love to talk to her and embrace her!
I'm very happy and sad.
She will always be in my memory and in my heart.
The mother I miss... almost a year without seeing her
Sometimes I see you in my dreams.
I have a present for you.
How beautiful it will be!

It was our continent
in Africa...
there was slavery.
We'd like to cry, we'd like to shout.
We'd also like everything to become light,
and that everyone would thus be free to live as they please!

TO GO TO SCHOOL
We want to live in peace and joy
On our own continent.
On your continent.
On Earth.

I would have loved to be a fish
To swim
For the simple pleasure of travelling
I'd also like to fly
Like a bird
To see the world from the sky
I could reach the summits

FIMEM APPEAL

September 2025

- To FIMEM member movements
- To democratic teachers concerned about the fate of humanity

LETTERS FOR PEACE FROM SCHOOLS AROUND THE WORLD

To be sent to elected officials, to whom they must be accountable for their actions.

Since the end of World War II, this is the first time that wars have reached catastrophic proportions on a global scale, threatening the very existence of humanity in the event —unfortunately less remote than some time ago—of the use of nuclear weapons.

We usually only talk about a few wars, but there are currently 56 armed conflicts in the world (the highest number since World War II), involving 92 countries. The arms market has tripled in just a few years, reaching $2.5 trillion. Behind these wars lies the powerful arms market, which allows industries to enrich themselves and influence their political and governmental partners, who maintain and increase their power.

In this context, Israel's genocidal offensive against the Palestinian people constitutes an urgent call to humanity to defend life and rebel against it. Gaza is increasingly becoming a place of violent deprivation of the lives and peaceful social life of thousands of Palestinian boys and girls, as well as of deprivation of knowledge and denial of the right to education. Approximately 750,000 children and young people will be out of school for the third consecutive year.

The massacre of Palestinian children and the bombing of hospitals in Gaza constitute a grave humanitarian crisis. Reports from the Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Human Rights (OHCHR) paint a dire picture. Gaza's health system is on the verge of total collapse, with catastrophic consequences for Palestinians' access to medical care.

In Ukraine, an entire generation has been wiped out by war, and their energy and intelligence can no longer be harnessed to serve the nation, and we could go on. In Africa, centuries-old conflicts are on the agenda, exacerbated by multiple terrorist attacks that cause numerous human losses, including, sadly, children, even if Western society pretends to ignore it.

Around the world, schools, looking to the future, have a fundamental role to play in preparing for peace. Education today will bear fruit tomorrow. But it can and must make its voice heard today.

Education can help children understand that, as many of us as possible, we can be heard and influence decisions, those of elected officials, and hold those in power accountable, thus encouraging them to change the course of events.

So why not strive to ensure that schools around the world recognize themselves as a collective entity, a critical mass capable of mobilizing an immense energy potential capable of shaking consciences, through nonviolent action that actively involves students in the educational process, and ultimately building a culture of peace and nonviolence?

That is why the FIMEM PEACE EDUCATION Commission invites all members of the Freinet movement to set an example by building peace on a daily basis, starting with our schools and personal spaces, and to join the initiative encouraging all classes to write "Letters of Peace."

Check the terms and conditions for participation: CLICK HERE

THE VOICE OF CHILDREN

Mexico City

The children of Mexico call on the governments of the world to ensure that there will never be war again.

Yoltzin - Escuela Viva Texcaltetitla

Iztapalapa

Iztapalapa

NOTICE - COMMISSION 6

Permanent support for the RIDEF organization

Dear FIMEM members:

We are pleased to share with you that Commission 6 has recently elected a new coordinator. Our colleague Alfredo López, affectionately known as “Bux,” has enthusiastically accepted this role.

We know that he will carry it out with his characteristic commitment, joy, and dedication. Of course, he will have the support of the entire commission team: Glaucia, Simone, Tere, Ixchel, Giancarlo, and Karine, who continue to work together with the same collaborative spirit as always.

We will also have the support of CA representatives Juan Carlos “Pato” and Cheikh.

Congratulations, Bux! We are confident that this new phase will bring many projects and shared learning experiences.

Cooperatively: Commission 6

CALL FROM - COMMISSION 12

Rights and Gender Equality

To all FIMEM movements:

The issue of gender equality is a complex concern that affects us all, with significant differences in context leading to differences in priorities between continents and countries. But everywhere, we Freinet educators work on this issue on a daily basis, in our schools and in our classrooms.

To bring our reflections together, we propose a common working theme around Education for Emotional and Sexual Life. Our discussions have shown that in several countries, regulatory texts provide a framework for this education, but that its implementation poses many difficulties.

We believe it is useful and necessary to document this issue at the international level.

We call on our colleagues in every FIMEM country to send us your contributions:

- What regulations exist in your country?
- Do you have examples of Freinet classroom practices? (your teaching methods, your partners, student work)
- What difficulties do you encounter with students?
- What difficulties do you encounter with parents?

Your contributions will be part of an exhibition at the next RIDEF 2026 in Poland, where we will also hold a workshop to discuss our practices, common concerns, and differences on the subject.

Please let us know as soon as possible if you plan to participate by writing to the coordinators of our committee. Thank you for your cooperation!

catherine.hurtigdelattre@gmail.com
wandaott@yahoo.com

Cooperatively:
The 12th Commission

Comisión 12: Rights and gender equality

25N INTERNATIONAL DAY FOR THE ELIMINATION OF VIOLENCE AGAINST WOMEN

25 November, International Day for the Elimination of Violence against Women Violence against women and girls remains one of the most prevalent and pervasive human rights violations in the world.

IN 2023

AROUND

51,100

the cycle of gender-based violence ended with one final and brutal act—their murder by partners and family members

GLOBALLY

almost one in three women have been subjected to physical and/or sexual intimate partner violence, non-partner sexual violence, or both, at least once in their life.

That means a woman was killed every 10 minutes.

VIOLENCE AGAINST WOMEN AND GIRLS

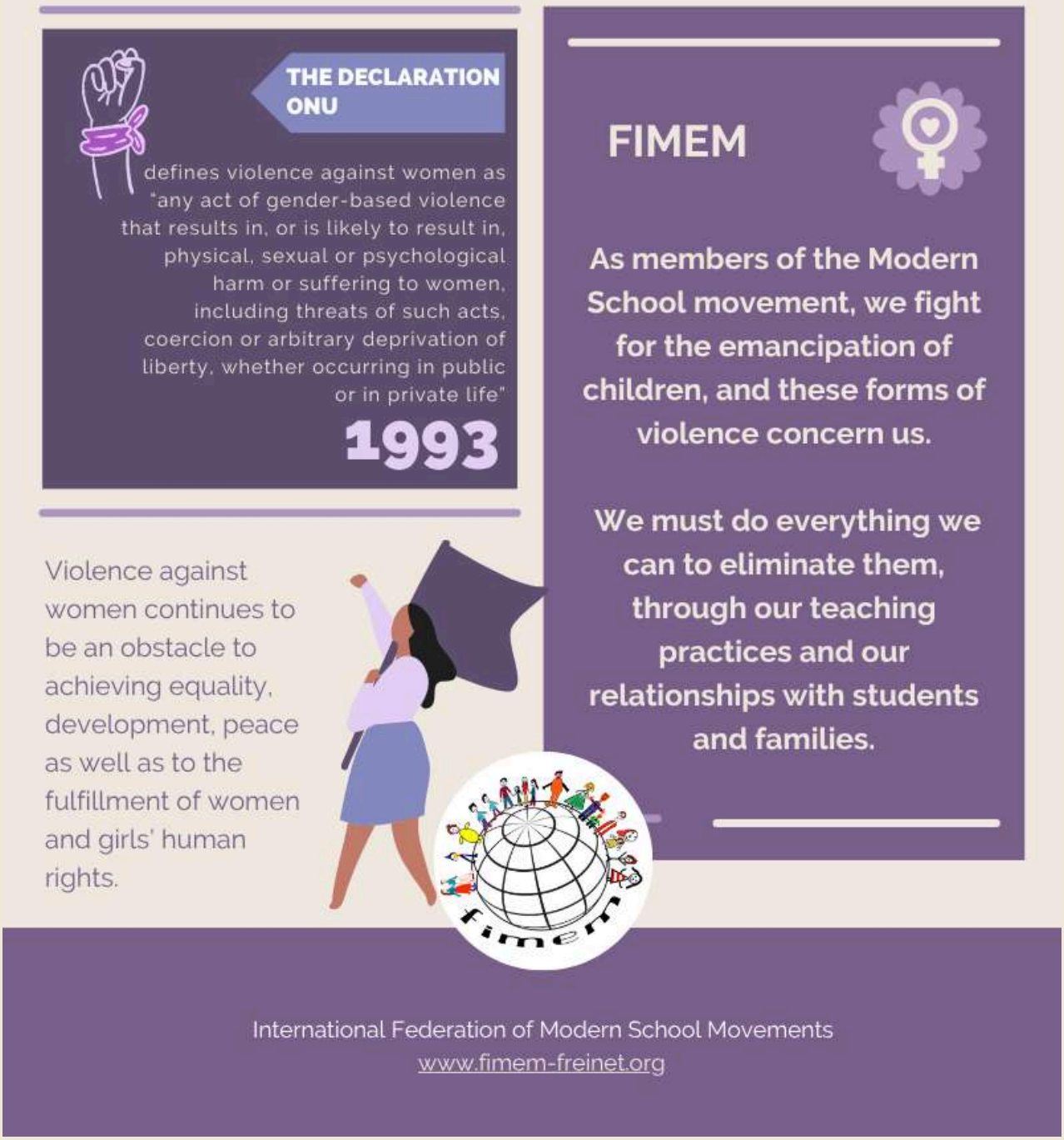
human trafficking (slavery, sexual exploitation)

intimate partner violence (battering, psychological abuse, marital rape, femicide)

child marriage

sexual violence and harassment (rape, forced sexual acts, unwanted sexual advances, child sexual abuse, forced marriage, street harassment, stalking, cyber- harassment)

female genital mutilation


THE DECLARATION ONU
defines violence against women as "any act of gender-based violence that results in, or is likely to result in, physical, sexual or psychological harm or suffering to women, including threats of such acts, coercion or arbitrary deprivation of liberty, whether occurring in public or in private life"
1993
FIMEM
As members of the Modern School movement, we fight for the emancipation of children, and these forms of violence concern us.
We must do everything we can to eliminate them, through our teaching practices and our relationships with students and families.
Violence against women continues to be an obstacle to achieving equality, development, peace as well as to the fulfillment of women and girls' human rights.
fimem
International Federation of Modern School Movements
www.fimem-freinet.org

AVISOS
RIDEF 2026

Libertad, solidaridad, democracia

Gniewino
Polonia

2026

31 de julio
9 de agosto

2026.ridef-fimem.com

Dear Colleagues,

RIDEF 2026 is approaching fast! The event will take place in Gniewino in the north of Poland, only 50 km from Gdańsk. Please mark the date in your calendars now, as we are eagerly awaiting your arrival. The congress will be held from July 31 to August 9, 2026.

The theme of our Congress:

"Solidarity, Freedom and Democracy in Education as a Force for Social Change in the Face of Global Challenges"

At RIDEF 2026, we want to emphasize that education based on Freinet's values is a real tool for social transformation. Solidarity, freedom, and democracy in education become the driving force through which schools can respond to global crises, build just and peaceful societies, and prepare learners to actively shape the world they live in. During the congress, we want to clearly express the importance of these values – together and in solidarity for freedom and democracy!

CONTINUE READING

NOTICES

Commission 1, “Communication,” reiterates its invitation to participate with your work for the next issue of the multiletra “Experiences of Working with School Conferences,” to be published in February. Files will be accepted from the publication of this issue until January 10, 2026.

From time to time, we have used the Deepl tool to share articles written in various languages. Therefore, it is possible that the results may sometimes be improved upon. We hope that authors and readers will forgive us.

We also hope that your language skills will soon strengthen the brave team responsible for the translations! For the recent issue, we would like to thank Marta Fontana and Andi Honegger for their valuable support.

Next Multilettre theme

Experiences working with School Conferences

We look forward to your many contributions in January 2026!
Send everything to the address multilettre@ridef-fimem.com