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*American Embassy*

*Tel Aviv*

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

# *Press Release*

**AMERICAN NOT-FOR-PROFIT ORGANIZATION IIE  
TO AWARD PRIZE TO MEMBERS OF PARENTS CIRCLE FAMILY FORUM**

***Fourth Annual Goldberg IIE Prize Recognizes Aziz Abu Sarah and Lily Yaffe as an  
Innovative Palestinian-Israeli Team Working Together  
To Advance Peace in the Middle East***

**WHEN:** **Tuesday, 24 June, 2008**  
2:00 – 4:00 p.m. Reception and Prize Ceremony

**WHERE:** **The American Center**  
19 Keren Hayesod Street, Jerusalem

**WHO:** **Speakers will include:**  
Luis G. Moreno U.S. Embassy Deputy Chief of Mission  
Thomas M. Duffy U.S. Consulate General Deputy Principal Officer  
Victor J. Goldberg Trustee, Institute of International Education  
Peggy Blumenthal Chief Operating Officer, Institute of International Education

**WHAT:** **Presentation of Victor J. Goldberg IIE Prize for Peace in the Middle East**

Aziz Abu Sarah and Lily Yaffe will receive the Goldberg IIE Prize for their work with The Parents Circle Family Forum, conducting educational activities that draw on their own very moving personal stories and the experiences of hundreds of Palestinian and Israeli bereaved families, who have lost immediate family members due to the violence in the region. Mr. Abu Sarah and Mrs. Yaffe reach out to young people in Israeli and Palestinian high schools, youth movements and community groups. By describing their own deeply personal loss and their unwillingness to avenge, they encourage the students to begin transforming their own feelings of suspicion and fear toward the other side. The award recognizes their success in promoting reconciliation as an alternative to hatred and revenge. For more information, visit [www.theparentscircle.com](http://www.theparentscircle.com)

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**WHY:** The Institute of International  
Education (IIE), a New York-based non-profit

organization founded in 1919, created the Goldberg IIE Prize with an endowment from IIE's Executive Committee member and former vice chairman Victor J. Goldberg, a retired senior executive of IBM and a member of the National Council of the American Jewish Committee. The Prize recognizes outstanding work being conducted jointly by two individuals, one Arab and one Israeli, in order to recognize innovation and reward those who are courageous and committed enough to work together to overcome the religious, cultural, ethnic, and political issues which divide the Middle East. For further information on the Goldberg IIE Prize and past winners, visit [www.iie.org/goldbergprize](http://www.iie.org/goldbergprize).

## **BACKGROUND: 2008 Victor J. Goldberg IIE Prize for Peace in the Middle East**

### **Parents Circle Families Forum:**

*Bereaved Families Supporting Peace, Reconciliation and Tolerance*

[www.theparentscircle.com](http://www.theparentscircle.com)

The Parents Circle Family Forum conducts more than 1,000 lectures and dialogues each year with Israeli and Palestinian audiences. Many Israelis and Palestinians who participate hear and are willing to listen to a message of reconciliation not only from their own side, but also from that of the other. The activities promote understanding between victims of the violence. They come to appreciate the meaning of bereavement on both sides, and understand that hope can grow out of despair and that Israelis and Palestinians can work together toward peace, even if the "other side" was responsible for the death of their child, sibling or parent.

For most of the participants it is their first opportunity to meet a representative from "the other side" who does not fit existing stereotypes such as a soldier or a settler or a terrorist. By describing their own personal loss and their decision to opt for non-violence, the group's members, all representing bereaved families, prove to be the most effective promoters of peace and reconciliation. The stereotypes are overcome by the recognition of the pain and suffering of the other, the reminder of the human being on the other side, and the inspiration of hope that many young people have lost.

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