

'Israel Loves Iran' initiative takes off on Facebook

Online posters of love and peace draw support. Iranians send messages of thanks

By [Global Research](#)

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Online posters sending messages of love and peace draw widespread attention and support; Iranian citizens send messages of thanks and praise.

An online call for peace initiated by an Israeli couple has managed to achieve the support of 1,000 Israelis and Iranians. And it all began with two posters.

Ronny Edry and his wife Michal Tamir, together with "Pushpin Mehina", a small preparatory school for graphic design students, uploaded posters to Facebook depicting images of themselves with their children alongside the words, "Iranians, we will never bomb your country, we [heart] you."

Attached to each poster was the caption, "To the Iranian people, To all the fathers, mothers, children, brothers and sisters, For there to be a war between us, first we must be afraid of each other, we must hate. I'm not afraid of you, I don't hate you. I don't even know you. No Iranian ever did me no harm."

"I'm not an official representative of my country. I m [sic] a father and a teacher", wrote Edry, adding that he wishes to send a message on behalf of his neighbors, family, students and friends. "[W]e love you. We mean you no harm", he wrote. "On the contrary, we want to meet, have some coffee and talk about sports."

In a conversation with Haaretz, Edry explained that he hoped his initiative would reach the Iranian citizens, but admitted that he never believed it would gain so much momentum. "On my Facebook page I have left-wing friends who always speak of these things; they all agree with me. Every so often a right-winger answers me saying what we're on about is rubbish, but I've never spoken to an Iranian."

"I thought that when you're constantly surrounded by talk of threats and war, you are so stressed and afraid that you crawl into a sort of shell and think to yourself how lucky we are to also have bombs and how lucky we are that we'll clean them out first," he said. "So I thought, 'Why not try to reach the other side; to bypass the generals and see if they [Iranians] really hate me?'"

At first, the posters were castigated, said Edry. "After the first poster people started criticizing me, saying I'm an idiot, that I'm naïve. 'Why are you telling them you love them? Why are you giving up before the war has even started?'" But very quickly the posters became a hit: the first image gained hundreds of "Likes" and "Shares," and numerous

people asked to join the initiative.

It was not long before reactions from Iranians began trickling through. "I never imagined that within 48 hours I would be speaking to the other side," said Edry, who explained that most of the Iranians' messages had been coming through in private, but that there had been some who invited him to be their Facebook friend.

In a conversation that took place on Saturday evening, after a full day spent in front of the computer chatting to Israelis and Iranians, Edry was buzzing with excitement. "Something insane is going on here," said Edry. "I was just having a conversation with a few Iranians, trying to convince them to send me photos of themselves, and they told me that we [Israelis] might be able to publish photos, but they risk going to jail over such a thing." In the meanwhile, they conversed via private messages, with their identities concealed.

However, by Sunday morning, Edry began receiving the first signs of reactions from the other side.

"We also love you. Your words are reaching us despite the censorship," wrote one Facebook user from Iran. "The Iranian people, apart from the regime, do not hold a grudge nor animosity against anyone, especially not the Israelis... We never saw Israelis as our enemies. As such, the regime cannot gain public support for war."

"The hatred was invented by the propaganda of the regime, which will die soon", continued the Iranian Facebook user. "The ayatollah will die soon. [Iranian President Mahmoud] Ahmadinejad will disappear. He is nothing more than an opportunist, and more than anything – an idiot. Everyone hates him. We love you, love, peace. And thanks for your message."

By Sunday afternoon, faceless posters prepared by Iranians, sharing a similar message of thanks and love, were posted onto the Pushpin Mehina Facebook page and the "Israel Loves Iran" blog.

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