

Dear Prof. Dr. Murat Tuncer,

allow me to send you a few reflections of mine after a week at Hacettepe University in Istanbul.

It has been a pleasure, as well as a great honor, to teach at the newly established MA Program in Peace and Conflict Studies.

From the first invitation to the arrangements in class, and all practicalities with travel and lodging I have got the best possible service from all the staff at the program. Nothing more to wish in that respect.

After lecturing at more than fifty universities on all five continents for the last twenty-five years I have to say that few, if any, programs in peace studies have impressed me more. The fascinating list of excellent invited teachers, interesting topics, great students, a very professional administration, and a dynamic region of the world will for sure make this a unique and fruitful oasis in the academic world. It is a genius decision to set up the MA program just outside Istanbul city center. To be at the bridge between Asia and Europe will attract students as well as researchers when the plans for an Institute is realized in the years to come.

Turkey is going through a challenging development for the moment. So far the country has acted carefully and wisely in relations to the radical changes in Northern Africa, the civil war in Syria, Israeli occupation of Palestine, and a growing hostility towards Iran. For students of Peace Studies to live in the midst of this is a learning process in itself. The possibilities to do case studies for the MA thesis is just lining up around them. Many of the teachers will have relevant material in the daily news to illustrate the theories and means used in conflicts of all kinds.

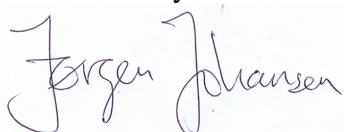
This first class had an impressive combination of clever, bright, and curious students from many different backgrounds. Our discussions in class proved to be seminars at a very advanced level. The combination of experiences from Central Asia, Africa, Arab countries, USA, Turkey, and the Balkans gave energy, perspective, and very essential input to our dialogs on topics like "democracy", identity, terrorism, nonviolence, and gender issues.

When the plans to develop this into an Institute can come true this will for sure be a very important center for the academic field of Peace Studies and an important resource for research on some of the most challenging topics in this century; peaceful developments of our societies. The students that get their MA in Peace and Conflict Studies from Hacettepe University will be an important resource where-ever they start practicing their theories and skills and they will be attractive at the international job-market.

I wish the university all good luck in the years to come and I hope to be asked whenever the staff think I can be of any help.

Congratulation with an excellent start and I hope to visit soon again.

Yours sincerely

A handwritten signature in blue ink that reads "Jørgen Johansen". The signature is written in a cursive, flowing style.

Jørgen Johansen,

Sweden 2012-10-15