

In a dramatic mission Waldorf helpers are saved from Lebanon

Three youths from Germany who has been doing their voluntary services in Beirut and has been working on a social therapeutic farm in Baalbek, in a dramatic mission were flown out of Lebanon because of the continuing hostilities.

Marie Pfister, Tabea von Verschuer und Matthias Galle were brought to different places of safety in Lebanon after the start of the hostilities. After the bombardment of a summer camp village in the vicinity of the Rudolf-Steiner-School the Lebanese partner organisation of "The Friends of Waldorf Education", FISTA decided that the two voluntary workers stationed there had to be accommodated at the community centre in Beirut. From here they would be brought in a bus convoy, with the help of the German embassy to the airport in Damascus where tens of thousands of refugees of all nationalities are waiting on departure possibilities.

Another voluntary worker was also brought to Damascus along secret paths by a co-worker from FISTA after streets and buildings in the vicinity of Baalbek was bombarded and the danger existed that fleeing might no longer be possible.

The three youths were received by a team from "The Friends of Waldorf Education" after a 16 hour escape in Damascus and was then flown out to Stuttgart via Italy. Upon arrival they met under great media interest with a group of Lebanese pupils from the Rudolf-Steiner School Beirut, and who has been given shelter in the Karl-Schubert-School in Stuttgart since the end of the Unesco peace festival, as the return of these disabled pupils to Lebanon was at the time impossible due to security reasons.

The successful repatriation mission was planned and implemented by "The Friends of Waldorf Education", in co-operation with the foreign office, the German embassy in Beirut and Damascus and the Lebanese partner organisation FISTA. The 15 head emergency task force was available around the clock for about one week. At present there are about 400 youths doing voluntary services through "The Friends of Waldorf Education" in Anthroposophical institutions in more than 50 countries in the world.