

## **My lessons in Israel**

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An eight-day study trip to Israel was an extraordinary journey, I met people of various religions and ethnic backgrounds. The theme of this study trip is “Embracing Diversity”, while we were experiencing the diverse cultures and religions in Israel, we learned how these contributed to the development of the country.

### Fostering Harmony in Education

Hand-In-Hand, a Centre for Jewish-Arab Education in Israel, managed several integrated schools for Jewish and Arabs. They tried to form a social network of children and parents of Arabs and Jewish in an attempt to build a diverse community. The founder of the centre started the first school with doubts and people thought it was a crazy idea. Finally, he made it and more parents accepted the idea and sent their children to the integrated school of Jews and Arabs. I appreciate his courage to start building a platform for people with different cultures to meet and communicate with each other. By doing so, intercultural understanding could be promoted. Mutual understanding is the first step of embracing diversity and harmony.

### Learning from History

The visit of Yad Vashem, which presented the history of the Holocaust, was a meaningful experience. I was deeply moved by our tour guide’s sharing and from him, I saw that Jews took the sorrowful history in their hearts without hatred, but they kept reminding themselves that they could never let it happen again. The most unforgettable part was the Children’s Memorial. Inside a dark room, a few memorial candles were reflected in mirrors. I heard the names and ages of the children who died in the Holocaust reading out solemnly in the room. The Holocaust was a grave tragedy stemmed from discrimination and hatred towards people based on ethnicities. It taught me the importance of embracing diversity.

As a university student, I think it is important to find meanings in my life. The exploration in Israel has inspired me to start thinking about what I should do for the society and what value I should uphold when I become a leader in the future. I think respecting ethnic and cultural diversity is a core value that I have gained from Israel. I would continue to devote myself to understand different people in the world and embrace their cultures.