

4 Al Hekma students promote peace

FOUR senior students of Al-Hekma International School (AHIS) yesterday brought honour to the Kingdom of Bahrain and Middle East by promoting world peace during a live 90-minute web-based video conference programme 'Learning for Peace', writes Mandeep Singh.

The school was the only Arab and Islamic school involved in the programme organised by One Planet Education Network (OPEN), USA, which featured selected schools from different cities around the world.

Representing the school were Amal Abdulrahman Shafea, Hanan Mohammed Al Mawla, Abdullah Nizar Al Anni and Ehab Nihad, who joined other school students from Belgrade, Yugoslavia; Manchester and Liverpool, UK; Derby and Dublin, Ireland; and New York City,

USA. The event was hosted and moderated by OPEN President, George Newman.

The students presented works including stories, art, literature and music related to peace. Amal's essay was entitled 'Internal peace for external peace'. She said: "I totally believe that in order to live in what is called 'peace', we should have the stability and peace within our souls to be able to spread it in the environment around us."

Eighteen-year old Ehab who presented an oil painting entitled 'Peaceful Nature' said: "I expressed my feelings about peace and its importance in our lives as I view it in the peacefulness of nature presented in my oil painting. Greenery and nature provide us with positive and peaceful feelings and without these

two factors life will be rather difficult for our generation and the ones to follow."

Hanan, who graduates next month, presented an oil painting entitled 'Struggle for Peace' which represents the Palestinian view of life in which nothing can be called peace. "Our people are killed every day, every hour and every second. We all miss that white pigeon with the olive branch hovering in the blue sky of peace. I just dream and wish to see my people back again in their homeland 'Palestine' living the peaceful life they deserve," she said, speaking about her painting and world peace.

Eleventh grade student Abdullah, from Iraq, said: "My participation was with a musical piece entitled 'Foug Al-Nakhal' meaning 'Above the Palm Trees', which offers a taste of the Iraqi

culture. In Iraq we have more than 268 types of dates, which are of the finest in the world. So in other words being "above the palm trees" means living a life of luxury and comfort with peace and prosperity. More than 75 per cent of the Iraqi cultural and traditional folk songs are about peace."

The school recently launched a campaign to promote international peace and the video conference programme was the first in the series of events their students will be taking part in to encourage peace. "The programme also gave our students the opportunity to introduce Middle Eastern culture and share their thoughts and ideas on a wide range of subjects, which included cross-cultural exchange, peace and understanding," said Dr Mona Al Zayani, the School President.

Film/Video production crews and technology support teams present at the video conference programme have documented the event which will be used by OPEN to produce a video programme, which will be available worldwide for Webcast, television, cable and video release.

OPEN's mission is to accommodate diversity and cultural expression by providing international multimedia learning forums and educational outreach for students to share and communicate their interest with one another.

"Its goal is to use e-learning and distance education technology to provide quality learning opportunities," said Dr Al Zayani. A 'Learning for Peace' programme is the first in a multi-year series focusing on various issues or on particular countries or regions.