



20.5.15

To whom it may concern,

8000 Paperclips is a project that revolves around an artistic encounter between the Israeli artist Raffael Lomas and South Sudanese refugees in Uganda.

In summer 2014, Raffael flew to Uganda to meet and work with a group of refugees that consisted of kids and youth who left Israel to South Sudan in 2012. These refugees were then matched with individual Israeli sponsors who managed to send them to a boarding school in Uganda, in order to avoid the turmoil in South Sudan.

Raffael collaborated with this group and together they built a statue that was then flown back to Israel and installed in the Tel Aviv central bus station. The group was able to attend the installation of the statue in Tel Aviv via Skype, and witnessed their old friends and teachers appreciate their work. It was an exciting event.

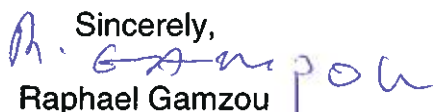
Following this installation an official exhibition was opened in Tel Aviv (March 2015), showcasing the sculpture and a short documentary film. Many people attended the opening, including H.E. Hanan Goder, Israel's Ambassador to South Sudan, and H.E. Ruben Benjamin, South Sudan's Ambassador to Israel.

In order to complete the project Lomas contacted the UNHCR in Geneva, hoping to showcase the statue in their headquarters, as a tribute and reminder of refugees' rights to creative expression and growth.

I've known Raffael Lomas for many years. In 2001, when I was posted in the U.S. we even collaborated on a project involving the Guggenheim Museum, NY.

Lomas's works have been showcased around the world and have won recognition. He is the only Israeli artist, to win the prestigious TED fellowship (2010)

I commend Lomas in his efforts to connect between creative and humanitarian work, and encourage him to continue his important mission to which he deserves any support.

Sincerely,

Raphael Gamzou
Ambassador
Deputy Director General
Head of the Division for cultural
and Scientific Affairs