



Advocacy Update

Sent December 21, 2011

WRJ RESPONDS TO CURRENT CONCERNS REGARDING ISRAEL

The WRJ Executive Committee issued the following statement on December 15, 2011, during the Israel plenary of WRJ's 48th Assembly.

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May the One who makes peace in the high heavens, make peace for us, all Israel, and all who inhabit the earth. Amen. (Mishkan T'filah: A Reform Siddur)

Recent developments both in Israel and abroad call for Women of Reform Judaism to reaffirm its ongoing support of the State of Israel and her people.

Challenges continue to arise on the world stage, as well as within Israel itself. The global rise of the Boycott, Divestment, and Sanctions movement against Israel (BDS), appropriately causes great concern. WRJ stands with the Reform Movement and with coalitions of other Jewish communal organizations in opposition to these efforts.

The unilateral Palestinian bid for statehood through the United Nations and the recent acceptance of "Palestine" as a member of UNESCO present a serious challenge to a negotiated settlement of the differences between Israel and the Palestinian people. The Reform Movement is clearly on record supporting a two-state solution (Israel and a Palestinian state) achieved through direct negotiations between Israelis and Palestinians.

In August, hundreds of thousands of Israeli citizens held peaceful demonstrations, calling for affordable housing, fair prices for food and gas, and social justice. In response, the Israeli government established the Trajtenberg Committee to develop recommendations for resolving these issues. The Israel Movement for Progressive Judaism (IMPJ), working through the Israel Religious Action Center, submitted testimony outlining the Reform Movement's views on poverty, equality, and justice. WRJ applauds the Israeli government for its desire to find fair and equitable solutions to these serious problems and looks forward to the committee's report.

The Israeli government once again affirmed its support and concern for those serving in Israel's military with the negotiated release of Gilad Shalit, the IDF soldier held for five years by the Palestinian group Hamas. Amid the great rejoicing at Gilad's homecoming, concerns over the enormous price that Israel paid remain in the thoughts of many.

As stated in the WRJ resolution of 2003, WRJ urges our local sisterhoods to strengthen their relationship to Israel and to instill a love of Zion, through, for example, education, travel, and support of Israeli institutions and businesses. WRJ is proud to work with the World Union for Progressive Judaism (WUPJ), the Association of Reform Zionists of America (ARZA), the IMPJ, and WRJ Israel as partners in building an ever more democratic and inclusive Israel.

Women of Reform Judaism reaffirms Israel's right to exist as a Jewish State within peaceful and secure borders and supports a two-state solution (Israel and a Palestinian state) as a way to establish lasting peace in the Middle East.

For more information on WRJ and Social Justice, visit www.wrj.org/social-justice-home

Share this statement with your sisterhood members.