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Regional, International and Committee
2006 Annual Reports
to the International Assembly

March 15, 2007
26 Adar 5767

Jerusalem, Israel





WORLD
UNION FOR
PROGRESSIVE
JUDAISM



האגודה
העולמית
ליהדות
מתקדמת

Regional Reports to the International Assembly

- Australia, Asia & New Zealand (UPJ)
- Europe (European Region)
- Former Soviet Union (FSU)
- Israel (IMPJ)
- Latin America & the Caribbean (UJCL)
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- South Africa (SAUPJ)

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Australia, Asia and New Zealand

Phyllis Dorey, President, UPJ

Janice P. Alper, Executive Director, UPJ

Introduction

The Union for Progressive Judaism is the roof-body that supports and develops Progressive Judaism throughout Australia, New Zealand and Asia so that our congregations and affiliates are best able to maintain and increase their strength and vitality.

Vision, direction and governance

The Executive Committee continues to provide strong leadership, transparency and accountability in terms of governance, management and operational matters.

Our major focus is on enhanced and timely communication; marketing – internal and external; skills development; Jewish learning and leadership development. We are implementing programs identified as priorities by the constituents as part of the strategic plan, and moving the organisation in new directions.

The Executive Committee met every six weeks utilising computer-based technology to link members around the region. The Executive Committee met twice with our constituents' Presidents - in May and November – to share our vision, work towards a better understanding of who we are, what we stand for, and what we can achieve as equal partners in all our endeavours. Members of the Moetzah (rabbinic council) met twice in 2006, in April and November (when they also met with the Progressive Jewish Professionals Network.)

Our executive director, Janice Alper, and I have visited and run programs for our constituents across the region. Janice has facilitated learning, development activities and service leadership, and run region wide programs, as well as enhancing networking and partnership opportunities.

Programming

There has been a consolidation of successful programs such as the UPJ *Zera'im* Leadership Institute; while new programs and models of delivery are constantly developed and refined in response to requests and feedback from constituents, and are offered in a number of different locations around the region and at different times throughout the year. These include, but are not limited to:

- Special interest seminars, such as our highly successful music seminar held in Adelaide with 20 participants;
- Skills and board development;
- Leadership training and development programs;
- Support for formal and informal learning opportunities and professional development;
- Regular regional conferences;
- Online access to timely and relevant news services and newsletters.

Marketing and Communications

A monthly online newsletter, *Kesher*, provides all constituents with committee minutes, regional news and notice of upcoming events. *ProjeNews*, the online subscriber newsletter,

is widely read throughout the region and abroad. There is also a weekly *drash* about the Torah portion written by one of the rabbis of the Moetzah or a member of the Progressive Jewish Professionals' Network. These *drashot* are intended to give a perspective of the Torah in our modern lives and serve as starting points for discussions on Shabbat or at key times in the Jewish calendar.

Throughout the year, the UPJ advertised in the regional Jewish press to showcase the principles and practices of Progressive Judaism in our region.

We continue to be represented on a number of important international World Union committees and working parties.

At Rosh Hashanah, the UPJ launched its new website: <http://www.upj.org.au>
We encourage you to visit this site and hope that you find it easy to navigate and that the material is useful and informative!

Israel

One of the main focuses for ARZA (the Australian Reform Zionist Organisation affiliated with the UPJ) in 2006 was the organisation of the registration and voting for the 35th World Zionist Congress, for the Progressive Jewish community in Australia. After a highly successful election campaign, due in no short measure to the efforts of Ian Samuel (VIC) and Rabbi Dick Lampert (NSW), five ARZA members were elected to represent the progressive community out of a total of 12 Australian delegates. Additionally, Philip Bliss, the World Union Vice Chair, represented us at the congress as part of the ARZENU delegation. Ian Samuel and Philip Bliss were elected to the Va'ad Ha'Poel of the Jewish Agency; Philip was elected to the Presidium of the World Zionist Organisation.

The UPJ actively supported the Australian Jewish community's emergency relief efforts during the Lebanon war. Our leaders encouraged members to financially support relief campaigns through the UIA and other agencies; we wrote letters, rang media outlets and ran hasbara forums; we provided regular online updates on the latest developments and circulated resources to help people counter public criticism of and attacks on Israel.

There was also an increase in support for refugee relief programs in Israel through the UIA/Progressive Trust campaign. Mike Nitzan was our campaign speaker and advocate. Rabbi Uri Regev, the President of the World Union, will officially launch the 2007 Progressive Trust campaign in February in Sydney and Melbourne. Our thanks go to Ian Samuel for his untiring coordination of our annual campaigns and for the ongoing support he receives from our communities around Australia, especially from the rabbis and lay leaders in Sydney; and to Philip Bliss, who prepares the campaign brochure and other materials.

The UPJ, in particular Penny Jakobovits and Janice Alper, has organised the first UPJ 'mission' to attend the 33rd WUPJ International Convention in March 2007, as well as participate in the pre and post convention tours. To date, this will be the largest contingent of representatives from our region attending a convention, which no doubt will ensure a greater shared understanding of the work of the WUPJ.

In addition, I would like to wish a hearty *mazal-tov* to the three successful candidates from this region who will be attending the Beutel Leadership Seminar and the convention, with UPJ and World Union support. They are: Kolya Miller (NSW), Janet Henrie (South Australia) and Joan Romick (Western Australia).

Personnel Changes

There are now 16 members of the Moetzah and this year we were thrilled to welcome three new rabbis and their families to our region: Rabbi Johanna Hershenson (Temple Sinai, Wellington, NZ); Rabbi Paul Jacobson (Temple Emanuel Woollahra, Sydney) and Rabbi Shoshana Kaminsky (Beit Shalom, Adelaide). Rabbis David and Patti Kopstein, who had previously served as rabbis of Beit Shalom Adelaide, have taken up positions in another one of our congregations – the United Jewish Community of Hong Kong.

Our Netzer *schlichim* – Yossi Cohen in Melbourne and Sharon Shteinbock in Sydney - have proved to be wonderful assets not just to Netzer, but also to the Progressive and wider Jewish communities throughout Australia and New Zealand.

Sadly, our executive director's contract period ends in July 2007. Janice Alper, the first full time professional leader employed by the UPJ, has indicated her intention to return to the U.S. to spend more time with her family. Her impact on our community has been immeasurable and we have grown and developed as a result of her work with and for us. An international recruitment process has been initiated to search for her replacement.

New Directions for 2007

This coming year will see a strengthening and consolidation of the directions set. In addition, there will an emphasis on:

- Broadening the participation of leaders and individual members of congregations and affiliates through special interest committees and projects;
- Increasing our visibility and branding in the wider Jewish community;
- Improving our avenues of communication at all levels;
- Professionalisation and consolidation of the office of UPJ



Europe

Gordon Smith, Chairman, ER
Leslie Bergman, Vice Chairman, ER
Linda Kann, Project Development Manager, ER

This has once again been a very active year for the European Region and its affiliate members.

Biennial conference

In March 2006, over 170 delegates and participants from 17 countries attended the ER Biennial Conference in Hannover, representing some 50 communities in mainland Europe. We were honoured to be present at the moving ceremony when Rabbi Michael Zedek and a delegation from Chicago's Temple Emmanuel presented a Torah Scroll honouring their Emeritus Rabbi, German-born Rabbi Herman Schaalman.

During the conference, new members welcomed to the European Region were Arzenu Europe and Netzer Europe together with the communities of Stockholm and Montpellier. During the year the Berlin community also joined as members of the European Region through their membership of the Union of Progressive Jews (the UPJ) in Germany

Recognition of Progressive communities

One of the most interesting developments is the increasing recognition of Progressive communities both by other Jewish organisations and by the non-Jewish world. Admittedly, this is a slow process, but there are small signs in several countries that progress is being made, and that continual pressure and hard work can produce results. The meetings in **Germany** of World Union and European Region representatives with Chancellor Angela Merkel and with the Zentralrat are perhaps the most significant events, but there are other examples. In **Italy**, the Progressive communities attended a conference of the Union of Italian Jewish Communities. In **Denmark**, the Ministry of the Churches has recognised Shir Hatzafon (Copenhagen) as a religious congregation, so that it can conduct life-cycle events which will be recognised under Danish law. In **Switzerland**, the voters of the Canton of Zurich have recognised Or Chadasch so that it will be eligible for assistance in providing accommodation for its religious school and will be consulted on cantonal matters.

Affiliation to cross-community bodies

The European Region itself is now represented on the Board of the European Council of Jewish Communities (ECJC) and the World Jewish Congress (WJC), both being important cross-community bodies where the Progressive point of view may be heard.

Community highlights

- **The Abraham Geiger College:** The first ordination of three students at the Abraham Geiger College took place in September. This was an unforgettable experience and a milestone in the recognition of Progressive Jewry in Germany, as it was the first ordination of any Progressive rabbis in Germany since the Holocaust. The event received worldwide publicity, even being reported in the Delhi Times and on Al-Jazeera television. The creation and progress of the College has been the goal of the tireless and

hardworking Rabbi Walter Homolka, and it was a pleasure to join with him at this wonderful event. During the year, Rabbi Homolka also received the Commander of Order of Merit in Austria, an honour he much deserves.

- **Germany:** Rabbi Dr. Tom Kucera, one of the recent graduates from Abraham Geiger College, was inducted as rabbi of Beth Shalom in Munich. The communities of Bielefeld, Hameln and Hannover are planning to build a new community centre. The federal Parliament and the Central Council for Jews have each pledged to give a quarter of the budget of the Abraham Geiger College, while a further substantial pledge has been made by the State of Brandenburg. The five communities in Schleswig-Holstein are building a handsome new Synagogue at Bad Segesberg.
- **Italy:** Shir Hadash in Florence has joined with Beth Shalom in Milan for the services of Rabbi Robert Rothman, with the help of financial contributions from the World Union and the European Region.
- **The Netherlands:** The Queen of The Netherlands attended a special service in Amsterdam to mark the 75th Anniversary of the Dutch Liberal Union.
- **Poland:** Beit Warszawa has appointed Rabbi Burt Schuman as its full-time rabbi and has seen a great increase in activities. These include outreach for emerging communities in other cities of Poland, and a regional seminar co-sponsored by the World Union's Saltz Center in Jerusalem and Arzenu, the World Reform Zionist movement.
- **Spain:** The Atid Community in Barcelona arranged a weekend seminar on Chevra Kadisha (end of life rituals), where the guest speakers were Rabbi David Soetendorp, past Rabbi of Bournemouth Reform Synagogue (UK), and his wife Ruth. This exemplified the best of international cooperation by using the knowledge and facilities available in different parts of ER.
- **Switzerland:** The communities of Geneva and Zurich have created a Platform for Liberal Judaism that will address public relations and political issues in cooperation with the Union of traditional Swiss communities.
- **United Kingdom:** The independent Belsize Square Synagogue welcomed 650 students from nine local high schools as part of its Holocaust Memorial Day Commemoration.
- **The Leo Baeck College** held a number of events to mark its 50th anniversary, culminating in a wonderful dinner at the Banqueting Rooms in Whitehall attended by over 400 guests.



Former Soviet Union

Alex Kagan, Director, FSU

This report lists a fraction of the religious, educational, twinning, youth and other activities that occurred last year in our FSU Progressive congregations in Russia, Ukraine and Belarus. They would not have been possible without the hard work of the entire staff and the continued support and caring of individuals and organizations that enable us to spread the message of Progressive Judaism throughout the FSU.

CONGREGATIONS & TWINNING PROGRAM

- Shaarei Shalom in St. Petersburg has acquired a building thanks to a generous donation. The congregation will move to its permanent home once renovations are complete. A dedication ceremony is planned in June 2007. Efforts continue to find suitable permanent premises in Moscow and Minsk.
- Irina Cherban, Director of MEOD (Moscow JCC where our OROSIR offices are currently located) has become the new leader of the Russian Reform movement. Irina replaces Zinovy Kogan who served in this position from the founding of the movement in Russia. Irina, a former refusnik, and very dedicated to the revival of Jewish life in the FSU, has much experience in the Jewish world in Moscow and is a great addition to our movement.
- Congregation Ha-Tikvah in Kiev celebrated its 15th year as a Progressive congregation in November 2006. Among guests attending the festivities were representatives from the Israeli Embassy and other Jewish organizations in the city.
- Emanu-El congregation in Odessa opened a kindergarten group in September 2006. This is a Progressive Jewish group for small children and receives funding from the municipality in the city. This was made possible through the support of the Klau family.
- In September members of the Atlanta Federation visited our Minsk congregations. The highlight of the visit was a Bat Mitzvah for Ilona Dlin, a Netzer *madricha* who at 19 became a Bat Mitzvah.
- In September, a group of 16 members from the Progressive congregation in Brooklyn Heights traveled to Lipetsk, Russia to donate a Torah scroll to the congregation.
- In August, Cantor Wally and Tammy Schachet-Briskin from Leo Baeck Congregation in Los Angeles joined local staff at the Netzer camp for students in Moscow. They gave participants an in-depth look into Jewish music and *nigunim*, teaching campers new and different melodies for Shabbat, festivals, as well as general Jewish and Israeli music.
- Netzer madrichot Ilona Dlin (Minsk) and Mariya Zarud (Odessa) attended the second session of the URJ Camp Kutz in August. This is the second year of this exchange program, enabling Netzer madrichim from the FSU to participate in a Reform camp program in North America. This initiative was sponsored by Temple Shalom of Naples Florida.

- In June, a dedication ceremony of the new Aron Ha-Kodesh and Torah scroll ceremony was conducted in the Progressive Congregation in Tver, Russia. The Ark and Torah Scroll were a generous donation from Huntington, West Virginia and were passed on to the World Union during the URJ Biennial in Houston, Texas in November 2005. The Tver Jewish community is currently restoring a 19th century historical synagogue building, shared by both Reform and Orthodox congregations.
- The Progressive congregation Nefesh in Brest, Belarus conducted its first Bar Mitzvah with its own Torah scroll donated by Har Shalom congregation in Springfield, New Jersey on May 5. This scroll was presented to Brest at the World Union's 32nd International Convention in Moscow in 2005 by Larry Lerner, a Har Shalom member who is deeply involved in various projects related to Russian Jewry. Larry Lerner himself visited Brest and participated in the Bar Mitzvah ceremony.
- Central Synagogue continues to provide support and interest in the Minsk congregation, enabling a variety of activities to take place. In April, members of Netzer in Minsk visited Central Synagogue in New York City and secured a generous donation for the first Minsk pre-teen camp. This is the second visit between the two congregations; the first took place in Minsk in 2005 with a delegation led by Rabbi Peter Rubinstein.
- Evan Schultz and Michael Whitman, religious teachers from Central Synagogue in New York City, joined staff at a Netzer winter camp for teens (ages 14-17) in Minsk (January 2-8, 2007).
- Steve and Sandy Breslauer continue to assist in providing educational and rabbinic support to our Minsk congregation. They are an important partner in strengthening community life, assisting the congregation in meeting its most essential needs.
- Led by Rabbi Andrew Goldstein, 27 leaders and representatives of *North Wood & Pinner Liberal Synagogue*, London were present at the induction ceremony of Rabbi Michael Kapustin in Kharkov, Ukraine in April.
- In July, Rabbi Kapustin officiated at the first Progressive wedding in the city. Karina and Roman Pisminsky got married according to Jewish Progressive tradition. Karina sewed the chupah since the congregation did not have one. After the ceremony, the bride and groom donated this beautiful item to the community as a token of their appreciation.
- A delegation from *Liberal Synagogue Elstree, London* visited Lutzk in April. During their three-day visit, the delegation became acquainted with the work of the congregation and discussed ways of possibly establishing a twinning relationship.
- A Sefer Torah was donated to our Vitebsk Reform community Emuna by the Beth El congregation in New Jersey. Rabbi Arnie Gluck and Steve Weitz (past chairman and an active member of the congregation) were present at the dedication ceremony.
- In March, Cantorial student Sheyna Peavey of HUC-JIR Jerusalem campus visited Minsk and Lida. She gave a concert in the Jewish Community Center 'Emuna' in Minsk and participated in the Purim festival organized by the Minsk congregation, Simha. Sheyna also gave a concert with our "Shalom" musical group (Lida) for the Lida Reform congregation.

EDUCATION

- Congregation Simha in Minsk has received a grant from the Dutch Jewish Humanitarian Fund enabling the congregation to open a daily kindergarten for ages 3-6 in September 2007.

- Two education conferences were held this year (May in Kiev and September in Moscow). These education seminars bring together Progressive teachers and other pedagogic staff from all over the FSU.
- An educational manual, "*The Jewish Me and the World Around Me*," the first Progressive educational instructional program for children ages 3-6 in the FSU, was created by Olga Markus and Natalya Verzhbovska. A special music manual containing songs in Russian, Hebrew and English was also developed. The manual has been distributed to all the Progressive nursery schools in the FSU and is available upon request.
- Irina Belskaya, Education Coordinator for Belarus, created and published a manual with explanations about Jewish festivals. It was distributed to Progressive formal educators in the FSU.
- Alona Pismanaya, Education Coordinator for Ukraine, took on the role of publishing/releasing all Progressive musical materials (CDs, musical notes for prayers, etc.).

SEMINARS

- Thirty-three education seminars sponsored by the Avi Chai Foundation and the Blaustein Foundation, with assistance from HUC-JIR, were held for Netzer *madrichim*. This enabled the World Union to train more *madrichim* and increase the quality of their leadership skills. Cooperation between the World Union and these Jewish organizations will continue in 2007.
- A series of seminars entitled "Mother, Father and Me – the Jewish Family" for the family unit, especially those in the 35-40 age group and their children, was introduced this year in Moscow. The first seminar of this series took place in November and 10 families (parents and children, 37 in total) participated. The next seminar will take place in January 2007. These seminars were made possible thanks to the support of the New York Federation (through JDC).
- Cantor Vadim Tunitsky from Temple Emmanu El in Houston, Texas came to the FSU and conducted 2 cantorial seminars in Kharkov and Moscow. He provided staff with updated liturgical materials that they can use in their respective congregations. This visit was made possible thanks to the efforts of Rabbi Roy Walter and Dolores Wilkenfeld from Temple Emmanu El.
- Three music seminars for cantors and music teachers from throughout the FSU will be sponsored by the Banchik Family Foundation for three years. These seminars are aimed at enriching the knowledge of volunteer service leaders, Netzer song leaders and World Union community leaders and staff and creating a stronger Progressive musical/liturgical division in the FSU, which has developed significantly in the last year and a half. The first of these seminars took place in Moscow in January 2007. Cantor Evan Cohen from Har-El Congregation in Jerusalem conducted a number of special music workshops for service and song leaders in the FSU.

NETZER YOUTH PROGRAMS

Summer Camps

Netzer summer camps took place in Russia, Belarus, Ukraine, and for the first time Riga, Latvia.

- The overall number of participants attending Netzer camps during the summer months increased by 25% (see breakdown for exact numbers).

- The ICHIEC FUND chose our Progressive movement in St. Petersburg to run a camp (for children ages 11-17 from St. Petersburg and the surrounding region) that it sponsors in the city. This camp had previously been run by the Jewish Agency, Chabad and Adayin Lo (a local Jewish organization).
- The first summer camp was held in Riga, Latvia. All staff and participants came from the Baltic States.
- The first pre-teen camp (ages 11-13) was held in Minsk, Belarus with over 60 participants.
- The various camps used different themes to introduce participants to Progressive Judaism and encourage them to be more active in the communities after the camp. Campers participated in daily services, Kabbalat Shabbat and learned about the importance of Israel and Jewish tradition.
- During the camps many pictures were taken and short films depicting the camps were made. Participants shared their feelings and expressed their thanks to the Reform movement for providing them with this opportunity.
- A full report about all the camps was prepared and distributed along with a short clip of all camps.

The breakdown of participants in all summer camps is as follows:

	Number of participants	Type of camp	Place
1	80	Teenagers	St. Petersburg
2	50	Student	Riga
3	80	Children	Moscow
4	120	Teenagers	Moscow
5	143	Student	Moscow
6	62	Children	Minsk
7	150	Teenagers	Minsk
8	92	Teenagers	Kiev
9	94	Student	Kiev
10	30	Students (Avi Chai education seminar)	Siberia
11	50	Madrichim	Moscow
12	120	Teenagers	Siberia
Total: 1071			

In January 2007, three winter camps for youth (14-17) took place in Moscow, Kiev and Minsk (100 participants in each camp).

MACHON – INSTITUTE FOR MODERN JEWISH STUDIES

- There are currently 11 Machon first year students studying in Moscow.
- In 2005-2006, eight students participated in the MASA program. In 2006-2007, five are currently studying in Israel.

The Machon has undergone a review of its program and the following changes have been implemented:

- The first year study program has integrated Machon studies with those of a prestigious university in Moscow, Russian State University for the Humanities (RGGU).

- The program was lengthened to three years and includes a year at Machon in Moscow and RGGU; a five-month learning program (in cooperation with the MASA Program) in Israel + work in the communities, education seminars, and exams in Moscow.
- The process for locating and selecting candidates was changed to include early placement for students in congregations requiring community workers.
- A contract between the World Union and Machon students committing them to a minimum of two years community work after graduation was formulated.
- A document detailing procedures and criteria for selecting Machon students for rabbinic studies at Geiger College and Leo Baeck College is being prepared. This will be a standard procedure implemented by all institutions and will regulate relations between them and the Machon.
- Cooperation with HUC-JIR includes bringing HUC lecturers for short periods of time to lead seminars on special topics, as well as giving lectures during the MASA program in Israel and assistance in providing learning materials much needed by rabbinic and pedagogic staff. Professor Michael Meyer and Rabbi Alona Lisitsa were in Moscow during Channukah, giving a variety of lectures to Machon students and other Jewish organizations.

COMMUNITY WORKERS

- Olga Katznelson, a Machon graduate, is currently working in our Moscow office.
- Alla Mittelman, a Machon graduate, is currently working in Kishinev, Moldova in the Jewish community center (a JDC building) offering a variety of activities from our movement to the local Jewish community.
- Yevgeny Plyuchin will begin rabbinic studies at Abraham Geiger College in Germany in 2007.

FESTIVAL & HOLIDAY CELEBRATIONS AROUND THE FSU

- The annual "Channukah Film Festival," sponsored and run by the Jewish Agency, was held December 7-9. Twenty-two groups took part in the competition (four of which were represented by Netzer FSU: Moscow, St. Petersburg, Minsk and Kiev). The film made by Netzer Moscow was awarded "Film of the Year!" The director/screenwriter is Yevgeny Leshenko, Netzer Coordinator for Russia and the virtuoso behind all of the camp clips and the creator of new niggunim, the most famous being the reggae rendition of "Mode Ani" which he sang at the World Union Convention in Moscow (in 2005).
- The real meaning of the Simchat Torah – the Rejoicing of the Law – was brought alive at the Moscow Congregation for Progressive Judaism on October 15. In an extremely successful joint event, organized by the congregation, Moscow Jewish Community House and Project Keshet, a new Torah scroll was donated. This scroll was brought to Russia by the delegation of the friends of Project Keshet from United States. This is the first Torah for the Moscow Jewish Community House. The celebration was attended by over 150 people and was accompanied by the famous American Jewish singer and songwriter, Debbie Friedman. She gave a special feel to the ceremony, and the dancing with the new Torah scroll continued well unto the late evening.
- In St. Petersburg, 500 people participated in the Leil Tikkun Shavuot festivities (June 1) organized by Shaarei Shalom and took place in the Yesod Jewish community center building (a JDC building). Shahrut on Shavuot was marked by the Bat Mitzvah of Mira Vitman, a teacher at the largest Jewish school in St. Petersburg,

a teacher at the Shaarei Tfilla Sunday school, and an active member of the congregation.

Pesach

For the past three years, rabbinical, cantorial and educational students at HUC in Jerusalem have returned to the "land of their ancestors" – Russia, Ukraine and Belarus – to conduct Passover *sedarim* and teach about Pesach. For many of them, this is a first ever journey to the FSU and a life-changing experience. They see first-hand the revival of Jewish life and the restoration of the community activities in the FSU.

- In 2006, over 60 students visited over 40 communities. This also included fourth-year cantorial students who did not come to Israel as planned for their first year of studies due to the war in Iraq.
- Students also attended a cantorial music festival held on the Minsk Jewish campus and participated in a Bar-Mitzvah ceremony in Minsk.
- In Russia, *sedarim* were held in 20 communities; 21 HUC students participated and led 14 *sedarim*; 500 people attended the different seders led by Rabbi Nelly Shulman and Rabbi Alexander Lyskovoy in Moscow; 600 people attended a number of seders held by our movement in St. Petersburg; **A total of 3,300 people attended seders held throughout Russia.**
- Passover seders were held in 27 Progressive Ukrainian congregations; 18 HUC rabbinic students visited 19 of those congregations; 470 people attended seders in Kiev led by Rabbi Alex Dukhovny; 160 people attended seders led by Rabbi Michael Kapustin in Kharkov and other cities; 130 people attended seders led by Julia Grishenko in Odessa and neighboring Nikolaev; over 300 people participated in seders led by 3 HUC students in Crimea, including Simferopol, where 100 people attended. **A total 2600 people participated in seders throughout the Ukraine.**
- In Belarus, seders were held in over 10 communities and 14 HUC students helped lead them; a total of 450 people attended seders in Minsk led by Rabbi Grisha Abramovich and assisted by HUC rabbinic students. **A total of 1500 people attended the seders throughout Belarus.**
- **Over 7,450 people attended the different seders held in our Reform communities in the FSU.**

Purim

- Over 2000 members of Progressive congregations in the Ukraine attended services in Progressive congregations for Purim festival services March 12-14. In Kyiv, Kharkiv, Poltava and students from the Cantorial Program of HUC-JIR (Devora Avery and Ross Wolman) led services and sang the text of Megilat Esther.
- No Purim in the FSU is complete without the annual Purimshpiel. Contests are held in various congregations and the best plays are then presented at a regional competition. The winners are then invited to spend three unforgettable days in Vitebsk and take part in the main competition of the festival "Purimshpil in Vitebsk." Netzer groups from Belarus, Ukraine and Russia took part in the festivities and the competition. In the category for best play, the Netzer group from Moscow was awarded 3rd place.
- On February 12th, the Moscow Progressive Congregation participated in the first ever community charity fair that marked the New Year of trees – Tu b'Shvat. Over 500 people attended the fair, and \$2000 was raised to help needy families and chronically ill children. The congregation provided musical

entertainment and organizational help during the fair. Rabbis Sasha Lyskovoy and Nelly Shulman led Tu B'Shvat seders during the fair.

WEBSITE & PUBLICATIONS

- The website of the Reform movement in FSU, www.reform.org.ru is proving to be extremely popular among the members of the Reform congregations and other internet surfers interested in the Reform Judaism. It is currently undergoing changes to improve its look and accessibility to the Russian speaking population. A webmaster has been employed to improve the overall look and design of the Russian website.
- The Russian-language Reform quarterly magazine, "Rodnik" (The Source), has undergone a design, quality and content makeover. Portions of the last issue (63 – Summer 2006/5766) were summarized and translated into English.
- In 2007, the first official Progressive Haggadah in Russian will be printed and distributed to congregations in the FSU in time for the holiday. This was made possible through the support of Exodus 2000 and the personal dedication of Linda Kann.
- One of the primary goals for 2007 is to employ a professional in the PR field that will develop and increase the exposure of Progressive the movement in Russia in both the Jewish and Russian press (as well as be able to react to negative publicity).

PLAUT MODERN TORAH COMMENTARY

The Plaut commentaries continue to be added to the website. They are an invaluable tool in Torah study for Russian-speaking Jews.

Prior to putting the commentaries onto the website, there are two stages:

- Translation of the texts and the Plaut commentaries into Russian is being done by Naftali Itenberg who translates all publications into Russian for the World Union. Rabbi Gregory Kotlyar is responsible for the translation and editing of the essays and introductory explanations in the Plaut text.
- Plans are also underway for hard copy production.



Israel

Paula Edelstein, Chairperson
Iri Kassel, Executive Director

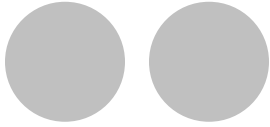
Since the last World Union convention, held in Moscow two years ago, the Israeli Movement for Progressive Judaism (IMPJ) has continued its wide-reaching work and has truly “progressed.”

In summarizing our activities, we bring before you a number of points of light in the life of the Movement:

- A new congregation, B'vat Ayin, began activities in Rosh Ha'Ayin, led by Rabbi Ayala Sha'ashua-Meron.
- Seven rabbis ordained in the past two years have been integrated into the Movement, its institutions and its congregations, truly strengthening the movement and providing a basis for important future development.
- A new center for Progressive Judaism was built in Jaffa – Mishkenot Ruth Daniel – which will soon begin its activities.
- The Mechina pre-army preparatory course in greater Jaffa has received official recognition by the Ministry of Defense. In the current class, there are 25 participants studying Judaism, preparing for their army service and working as volunteers for the welfare of the local residents.
- The Israel Religious Action Center has further strengthened the position of Progressive Judaism in Israeli society by advocating for the rights of Progressive Jews in public policy in order to create a more just and pluralistic society.
- The IMPJ has expanded its *tikkun olam* activities within the framework of *Keren B'Chavod* (Fund for Dignity) and the *Kehilat Tzedek* (Community of Justice) project that works in cooperation with other movements. The assistance includes delivering food and heating supplies for the needy as well as training social justice activists in congregations. It also includes litigation on behalf of the populations that do not receive equal treatment in basic rights from the government.
- A very extensive branding process was conducted at all levels of the Movement to clarify and specify the “product” that we want to bring to Israeli society. This involved asking questions about the position of the Movement in Israeli society, deciding its message and defining its vision.
- Some 1,400 people participated in the Movement's convention in May 2006 and experienced a moment of great energy and empowerment. During the convention, a new IMPJ Executive was elected with Professor Avraham Melamed at its head.

- The Movement expanded its activities in the areas of conversion, absorbing new immigrants and providing legal aid.
- Enrichment activities in Jewish education now take place in tens of public schools; over 60 classrooms participate in the Class Bat Mitzvah program; our youth movement is very active and has expanded into a number of new congregations. More than 600 children participated in our recent summer camp.
- Riding4Reform – the Movement's annual bike trek – has been a great success, bringing friends from all over Israel and the world and generous financial contributions. On Sunday, March 18, 2007, in the middle of the World Union convention, we will wish this year's group of riders well as they set out for the fourth annual journey. We are now busy organizing and recruiting friends and funds for Golfing Fore Reform, our golf tournament that will tee off in June 2007. All of our friends from Israel and abroad are invited.
- During the war last summer, the IMPJ proved its strength and its commitment to our values once more. All bodies of the Movement and our congregations worked to ease the suffering of residents in the north through home hospitality in the center of the country, providing supplies to the bomb shelters and organizing a wide range of support services. After the end of the war, the Movement continues its efforts to work for the spiritual and social rehabilitation of our congregations in the north and to assist all residents in areas that were affected. It is fitting at this time to thank the members of the Reform/Progressive Movement all around the world who again demonstrated their sense of responsibility and commitments and, through their contributions, enabled us to carry out this assistance.

The Movement now finds itself in the midst of a process of growth and strengthening. We know now, more than ever before, that **we are relevant** for the renewal of Jewish life in Israel, but **we must be more visible** and **more accessible** to the Israeli public. We place great hope in the Israel Development Commission (IDC) of the World Union, with Rabbi Harvey Fields and Stanley Gold at its head, to help us realize our vision and raise the funds needed to further develop the Israel Movement for Progressive Judaism and expands its influence in Israeli society.



Latin America & the Caribbean

Miriam Vasserman, Chairperson, South America
L. Jack Davidson, President, UJCL

Conference of Jewish Communities

On November 16-19, 2006, the World Union for Progressive Judaism and Masorti Olami held a landmark joint conference of Latin American Jewry – the first time that the Reform and Conservative movements co-sponsored an event of this magnitude. The Conference of the Jewish Communities in Latin America brought together nearly 250 lay leaders and clergy from practically all the countries of Latin America to address the challenges and opportunities facing Latin American Jews today.

The diverse program addressed major issues in Jewish life in Latin America such as preserving Jewish identity in societies where Jews are a small minority, reaching out to the unaffiliated, educating young people, meeting the needs of the growing number of Jewish families in Latin America facing economic difficulties, and promoting religious pluralism. The conference was a first step toward defining new directions for the activities of Progressive and Conservative congregations in the region and establishing an agenda on which the two movements can work together to address issues of common concern.

Young Adults Movement

Nearly 100 young people, aged 18 to 35 from around Latin America, Spain, the United States and Israel took part in the first Latin American Seminar of Tamar-Ofakim, the World Union's young adults movement, in Porto Alegre, Brazil in July. The young people addressed issues related to the continuity and future of Judaism, the responsibility of young people as future leaders of their communities and the importance of Israel to the Jewish people.

Arlene Fern Community School, Buenos Aires

The Arlene Fern Community School began a new phase of growth with the inauguration of a new building next to its present home. The plans for the new building had been made when the school, the only Progressive Jewish day school in Argentina, was established in 1995, but the economic crisis that hit Argentina in 2001 derailed them. The idea was brought back to life after the World Union, through its Yad B'Yad Task Force, began providing assistance to the school and helped it pay off its old debts. The new building is being named for Claudio Szuldiner z"l, a lay leader who passed away after a sudden illness at the beginning of 2006.

Publications

ARI (Associação Religiosa Israelita), the Progressive congregation in Rio de Janeiro, with assistance from the World Union, initiated publication of a new magazine of Jewish ideas, *Devarim*. The magazine aims to stimulate thought and discussion of contemporary Jewish issues of relevance to Brazilian Jews. Two issues of the magazine have been published to date.

CIM (Congregação Israelita Mineira) in Belo Horizonte is publishing a new liberal *siddur* for Shabbat and holidays, also with support from the World Union. The *siddur* is currently in the editing stages. Compiled by CIM's Rabbi Leonardo Alanati, the *siddur* includes a new translation into Portuguese of traditional and modern Hebrew prayers, modern reflections

about Shabbat and Jewish holidays, transliterations and prayers for the home. There is currently no liberal Jewish holiday prayer book available in Brazil.

Newly Affiliated Congregations

Two congregations are in the process of affiliating with the World Union: the Porto Alegre Jewish Center in the state of Rio Grande do Sul, Brazil, and Comunidad Sefaradí Max Nordau in Valparaiso, Chile. The former congregation was established in 1991, based on an institution founded by immigrants in 1917. The latter congregation was founded in 1916 by immigrants from Turkey and has functioned without a rabbi for 90 years. Recently Rabbi Roberto Feldmann of Yakar Congregation in Santiago (who was ordained by HUC-JIR Cincinnati in 1994) began providing rabbinic services to the congregation once a month.

Meetings and Forums

The World Union-Latin America region actively participated in a number of major forums. These included the 35th World Jewish Congress in Jerusalem, the 10th Latin American conference of the JDC, and the 7th Seminar of Small Communities of the Jewish Federation of São Paulo. Lay and rabbinic leaders of World Union congregations also took part in events commemorating the 40th anniversary of Nostra Aetate, the Vatican declaration that sought improved relations with the Jewish community. Six representatives from Latin America took part in the World Union's Beutel Leadership Seminar in Jerusalem.

Central America and the Caribbean

UJCL (Union of Jewish Congregations of Latin America & the Caribbean), which brings together Progressive and Conservative congregations in Central America and the Caribbean, marked 10 years of existence with a conference in Costa Rica on January 25-28, 2007. World Union President Rabbi Uri Regev was the featured guest speaker. The theme of the conference was How the Kehilah Can Enrich Our Lives. The UJCL currently has 13 affiliated congregations. The World Union has been providing UJCL with support for a staff position.



North America

Ron Cohen, Chairman, North American Council
Rabbi Eric Wittstein, Vice President, North America

During 2006, the World Union for Progressive Judaism continued to build on the previous year's progress, strengthening its organizational structure and fund-raising activities in North America as well as starting on its strategic plan for the future.

The North American Council continued to expand, both in membership as well as the scope of its operations. A number of new members were added to the Council enabling us to initiate several new projects.

Under the professional leadership of Susan Milamed, Vice-President for Development and Planning, Vera Hollander, Director of Marketing and Communications, and Rabbi Eric Wittstein, Vice President for North America who joined the staff in November, we embarked on a Strategic Planning process for North America,

The Strategic Planning Committee, co-chaired by Jim Heeger and Len Teitelbaum, presented their preliminary report at a meeting of the Executive Committee held in New York on March 5. Strategic objectives for the World Union – including the need to develop awareness within congregations along with the need to maintain a close working relationship with the URJ – were considered to be the key elements of the process.

This was followed by a conference call meeting of the Council on May 21 and the annual in-person meeting, held in Atlanta, Georgia on December 6. Approximately 40 members of the Council attended the Atlanta meeting, which focused on how best to advance the World Union's financial, educational and advocacy goals. To plan and facilitate the meeting, we retained the services of Dr. Rob Weinberg, a highly skilled strategic planner and facilitator who has worked on many Reform movement initiatives.

In Atlanta, we also had the opportunity of welcoming Rabbi Eric Wittstein to the World Union and introducing him to the members of the Council. Prior to leaving the staff of the World Union in November, Susan Milamed provided invaluable assistance to Rob Weinberg in planning the meeting with him.

Our meeting in Atlanta was also important as it was held immediately preceding the first formal meeting of the URJ's new World Jewry Committee. The purpose of this committee, appointed by Bob Heller, the current chair of the URJ, is to better support and implement the fourth goal of the URJ's Mission Statement: "To be supportive of the State of Israel and the Jewish people and foster the development of Liberal Judaism worldwide under the auspices of the World Union for Progressive Judaism."

Rabbi Eric Yoffie, president of the URJ, addressed the Council and Carole Sterling, vice chair of the World Jewry Committee, attended the meeting as an observer.

We feel that we must take advantage of this opportunity to improve our working relationship with the URJ. One of our immediate initiatives is the establishment of a new Missions Committee, to be chaired by Ina Rae Levy.

In addition to the ongoing activities and meetings of the North American Council, two successful International Humanitarian Awards Dinners were held in 2006.

The first of the two dinners, honoring Betty Golomb and Rabbi Jonathan Stein, took place at the Waldorf Astoria Hotel in New York on September 10.

The second dinner, the first ever held in northern California, honored Joanne Harrington, Lorry Lokey and Rabbi Roberto Graetz.

We will be holding the next meeting of the North American Council in Jerusalem with the members of the Council that will be attending CONNECTIONS 2007. We look forward to meeting our partners worldwide and working with them in fulfilling our vision for the future of the World Union.



South Africa

Steven Lurie, Chairman, SAUPJ

As Chairman of the South Africa Union for Progressive Judaism, I attend various regional conferences, and would like to highlight the following achievements of our national movement this past year.

The SAUPJ has signed a contract with the Rotary for the use of their Glencarin campsite, securing it for Netzer to use for the next 10 years. This campsite is exceptionally nice and a wonderful place to send our children on holiday, and Netzer held a very successful camp there.

We welcomed Rabbi Greg Alexander into our movement, and both he and Rabbi Malcolm Matitiani – newly ordained at the Abraham Geiger College – will be involved with the camp and our children. Netzer has a new *schliach* in DBN that they share with Habonim named Navot, and Cape Town's new *schliach* is Ishai. We welcome Vered back as *schliach* for Gauteng.

A hearty mazeltov goes to Rabbi Matitiani on receiving his *smicha* and the World Union for their wonderful coverage of this event.

The SAUPJ played an active role in making sure that there was a full compliment of rabbis for High Holy days in South Africa. We hosted a successful chairman's and rabbi's dinner in Gauteng. It was also nice to have Arona Weiler at this special dinner and, to date, we have received a lot of positive feedback from the visiting rabbis.

I met with Rabbi Goldstein (SA Chief Orthodox Rabbi) to discuss various issues regarding the Orthodox/Reform relationship; this meeting was very positive. Rabbi Goldstein has a very open door policy and expressed the need for us to make use of this.

We have planned a Progressive tour to Israel in conjunction with the World Union conference in March 2007, and we hope to get congregants enthusiastic enough so that we can bring a whole delegation over in Israel from South Africa. The SAUPJ has two delegates attending the conference: Professor Antony Arkin and Mr. Jeff Carel.

The SAUPJ biannual assembly conference was held on the weekend of the 21st to the 23rd of July at Temple Emanuel in conjunction with the 70th Anniversary celebrations of Temple Israel Hillbrow. It was wonderful to have representation from all over the country: Cape Town, Port Elizabeth, East London, Durban, Johannesburg and Pretoria. Rabbi Awraham Soetendorp was our outstanding guest speaker. Rabbi Soetendorp also met with members of the SAZF and SAJBOD and a luncheon was held for him at Beyachad. Rabbi Soetendorp gave an address at the opening of the SAUPJ conference straight from his heart that touched everyone in the room. It was wonderful to have Rabbi Soetendorp and his wife at our conference. Thank you to our own Rabbi Wallach for all the extra services that ran over the weekend. We also honoured Rabbi Hoffman for his 17 years of service to our movement in Cape Town and he was presented with a 'Plaut Torah.'

We are still in the process of upgrading the SAUPJ Web site and bringing it in line with the World Union Web site. Funds need to be raised to continue with this project but we do believe it is a worthwhile endeavour, as many people have complained that there are others on the web competing for potential members and international exposure.

SAUPJ, along with the S.A. Association of Progressive Rabbis, is involved in the National Religions Leaders Forum run by the S.A. Government and the S.A. Faith Communities Environment Institute, of which Rabbi Avidan is a committee member. As the need to tackle global warming grows, this will become ever more important.

As the chairman of the SAUPJ, I want once again to thank my fellow committee members, rabbis, secretary and all other staff involved for all their hard work for 2006.



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Reports to the International Assembly from the International Office in Jerusalem

- Anita Saltz International Education Center
- Mercaz Shimshon/Beit Shmuel

March 15, 2007
26 Adar 5767
Jerusalem, Israel





Anita Saltz International Education Center Rabbi Rich Kirschen, Director

I. Vision

After two years of consistent and active programming, the Anita Saltz International Education Center has been moving ahead both in terms of the numbers of participants and the frequency of its programs. Following a number of pilot programs and discussions with our constituency – Progressive Jewish communities from around the world – it has become clear that the goal of this center is to establish a home for vibrant Jewish learning and leadership. This goal for the Saltz Center also fits in with the broader plan of Mercaz Shimshon/Beit Shmuel, the headquarters of the World Union for Progressive Judaism, to establish itself as the international education center of Progressive Jewry as well as a major player in its own right within the world of Jewish study opportunities.

From Poland to Brazil, and from California to Michigan, numerous groups throughout the year have been studying or are now planning to study at Saltz seminars. The center's successes have sent a powerful message that there is and has been a strong desire for Progressive Jewish learning in Jerusalem, the heart of the Jewish people. Whether it is our day learning programs, congregational and community seminars, learning and lay leadership symposiums, college colloquiums, drop in courses in English or bringing seminars to Progressive Jewish communities outside of Israel, the Saltz International Education Center has begun to crystallize the vision for Progressive Jewish learning and leadership both in Jerusalem and around the world.

II. Positioning *A unique niche at a critical time*

There are numerous programs throughout Jerusalem that also offer compelling Jewish learning opportunities in a variety of settings and frameworks. However the Saltz Center is unique, not only because we are the only educational center where the public culture is Progressive Judaism, but because we are the only program that is dedicated to training professionals and lay leaders who are coming from Progressive Jewish communities from around the world. This is a niche that reaches out to 42 countries and is growing.

One example is the seminar that was run by the Saltz Center this past November in Warsaw for Progressive Jews from around Central Europe. With over 30 people in attendance from the Ukraine to Hungary to Bosnia, we learned about the importance of reaching out to this population. We often hear about "Jews by choice" but here we encountered many "Jews by surprise." There were countless stories related by these people about how their families were closet Jews living in Central European countries under Communism and just now are coming to terms with their Jewishness. These people want to reclaim the Jewishness. This is part of our job at Saltz, to give them the skills they need to build and rebuild their Jewish communities while educating them about Judaism, Israel and the Jewish people. Many of these people want to build Jewish communities that reflect who they are and often that means a liberal or Progressive approach to being Jewish.

III. Marketing

Two years is not a long time for an educational center; and as a result marketing ourselves has been crucial both in terms of broadcasting our vision as well as recruiting clients and supporters for the center. The first marketing material was put out at the Biennial of the Union of Reform Judaism in Houston, Texas. The brochure was a four-colored glossy promotion piece that introduced the vision of the Saltz Center along with program highlights and possibilities. The next brochure was introduced last spring and was intended mainly for decision makers who would decide whether or not to send participants on a Saltz seminar as well as for major donors and foundations who would decide whether or not to fund the work that we do. The brochure is an 11.5"x 8" full color impressive "case statement" along with a list of courses taught by the center. This has been universally well received by all groups and has succeeded in sending the message that this is a first rate program. The "case statement" meets both the client's expectations and accurately articulates the vision for the center's supporters. Finally, by having a website that is interactive, visually compelling and easy to navigate, we are able to send the Saltz Center's message to anyone around the world. The site also is invaluable for giving out dates and schedules for seminars as well as for participants who need to download materials. Please visit the site at saltz-center.org

IV. Programs

Program highlights for 2006

January 5-15, 2006 - Beutel Seminar for Progressive Jewish Leadership. For two years, the Beutel Leadership Seminar has invited outstanding Progressive lay leaders from around the world to participate in intensive leadership development and Jewish study. Fellowship support was vital to attendance. Targeted outreach by the Saltz Center resulted in a strong delegation last year of 25 highly motivated leaders from 15 countries. Participants came from India to Brazil and from New York to Barcelona. The seminar created a strong cadre of leaders who developed new personal relationships and created an international support network with contemporaries in other countries.

January 7, 2006 - Birthright Program with 200 Keshet Students

This was an evening of learning with 200 students visiting Israel from multiple universities. Cosponsorship was with Keshet – the URJ college movement. The Saltz Center sent out an evaluation form for the evening program to all students and agencies involved. The positive responses all pointed to the need and importance for deep Jewish learning within a Reform context. The center was encouraged both from our strategic partners and attending students to run more intensive learning programs for Reform Jewish College students visiting from North America and Progressive Jewish students from around the Jewish world.

January 14, 2006 - Rabbi Don Goor, Temple Judea, Tarzana, CA

This program helped us establish models for Shabbat learning programs, including Shabbat lunch, Poetry Walking Tour of Jerusalem, *seudat shlishit* and text study. The program combined a walking tour of Jerusalem through the lens of the Psalms as well as text study exploring the nature of war within rabbinic literature. The program was very successful, and Rabbi Goor has endorsed Saltz programs to other rabbis in writing.

January 16, 2006 - Seminar for HUC-JIR - New York School of Education

Students with Jo Kay, director of the New York HUC-JIR school of Education, and Dr. Lisa Grant developed this program on "Religious Diversity" in collaboration with Saltz and the

Lokey Center in Haifa, with Saltz educators teaching about models of religious diversity in Israel. The Lokey Center is an important strategic partner for Saltz.

March 12, 2006 - Keshet ARZA Group - "Understanding Israel on the College Campus"

This program was designed to train Reform college students visiting in Jerusalem about Israel on the college campus. Discussion and texts were used for formulating strategies both to build interest in Israel within the Jewish community and to build models to combat anti-Israel voices on the college campus.

March 25-26, 2006 - Rabbi Janet Marder, Temple Beth Am, Palo Alto, CA

This program was a learning and walking tour in the Old City with a Beit Midrash session on Jerusalem and the Bible at Mercas Shimshon. Rabbi Marder wrote a testimonial that is now being used in the Saltz Center's brochure and website.

March 9, 2006 - URJ Board Mission

The Saltz Center held a program on the Israeli elections with Professor Paul Liptz in Tel Aviv. Saltz connected with the URJ leadership: Rabbi Elliot Kleinman, director of programming at the URJ, Rabbi Danny Freelander vice president of the URJ, and Rabbi Lenny Thal, senior Vice President of the URJ, all who were positive about the role Saltz can play for Reform leadership seminars.

March 17-18, 2006 - Saltz-Hebrew Union College Shabbaton

This pilot Shabbaton, "Israel, Democracy and the Role of Progressive Judaism," was built for Reform college students in Israel on study-abroad programs. A total of 60 students came from Ben Gurion University, Tel Aviv University, Haifa University and Hebrew University. Saltz and HUC contacted and secured cooperation and full support from Hillel directors at these Israeli universities. Saltz is now building a data base from attending students and will share this with Hillel International in order to reconnect students' with their Hillels in the States. These databases will allow Saltz to connect with students when we are offering our college seminars over their winter break. The HUC board is very enthusiastic about this program.

April 5-7, 2006 - Netzer Germany Young Leadership

This was a three-day intensive seminar with Progressive Jewish educational components for 20 young German students, ages 18-20. Last year, Netzer Germany piloted this program through the Jewish Agency's "Israel Experience;" however, it lacked a Progressive Jewish framework and approach. As a result, Netzer requested Saltz to run this program and is now requesting that the center run more programs like this in the future.

April 10, 2006 - Carmel Students

This was a seminar on the current political state i.e. peace process, lack of borders, conflicts, and possible resolutions. This program focused on the implications of the "newly formed" government and on the prospects for a peace process ahead.

April 28-29, 2006 - Saltz-HUC Shabbaton

"Halacha and Reform Judaism" was designed for 54 Reform college students in Israel on study-abroad programs at Ben-Gurion University, Tel Aviv University, Haifa University and Hebrew University.

May 7, 2006 - Delegation from Brazil- CIP

This short program was a walking tour of Yemin Moshe and discussions for future programming for the Progressive Jewish community in Brazil.

June 30, 2006 - Liberal Judaism Great Britain - Youth Movement

This program was called "Boundaries, Dreams and Realities: When Judaism Meets the Modern Jewish State." It was Jewish anthropology and sociology with the critical eye and explored early Zionists, secular Jews, and the modern state combined with the impact of the earlier ultra-Orthodox communities in the four Holy Cities. The program also touched on the new arrivals from North Africa and the Middle East.

July 1, 2006 - (Shabbat) Rabbi Dan Moskovitz Temple Judea, Tarzana, CA

A walking tour around Rechavia that explored the pre-State issues and the development of Jerusalem in the last few decades.

July 1, 2006 - Shabbat Cantorial Mission

Saltz ran this successful walking tour and study session for a group of cantors visiting Israel, followed by *seudah shlisheet*, text study and closing with Havdalah.

July 12-July 15, 2006 – MJLF (Mouvement Juif Liberal de France) - Young People's Study Program

This is Saltz's second year of this intensive four-day seminar, with a group of young people and with educator Ori Reshef, director of youth at the Mouvement Juif Liberal de France (one of Paris's largest progressive Jewish congregations). Once again the MJLF group was delighted by the Saltz experience and has decided that this is a program they would like to continue next year.

August 21, 2006 - Hebrew Union College

Seminar with first-year rabbinic students at Hebrew Union College-Jewish Institute of Religion on Jewish responses to power and powerlessness.

August 22, 2006 - Netzer: The Reform Zionist Youth Movement

"Perpetual Dilemma" – a seminar with Netzer Olami participants on Judaism and the Jewish state.

September 11, 2006 - ARZA Canada

Walking tour with Joan Garson, ARZA Canada's president.

September 12, 2006 - Hebrew University

Reform Jewish Students on the Hebrew University campus for a Lunch and Learn: "Judaism and the Jewish State: Responses to Power and Powerlessness."

September 12, 2006 - Netzer Olami (Reform Zionist Youth Movement)

Professor Paul Liptz – lecture on the history of Zionism

September 21-28, 2006

This leadership and learning seminar in Prague was designed to connect with the new developing Progressive Jewish community in the Czech Republic. Topics included studying Jewish history, Progressive Jewish theology, Israel and the Jewish people today. A group of 35 people attended.

November 9-20 - 2006 Saltz Seminars in Canada

The Saltz Center taught Reform Jewish communities throughout Canada from November 9-20, 2006. The staff visited communities in Toronto, Mississauga, London, Montreal, Edmonton and Calgary and held meetings with both lay leaders and professional educators. Lectures and study sessions included a political and sociological analysis of Israel after the second Lebanon war, the roots of Reform Judaism in Israel, the role of Jerusalem in sacred spiritual texts, Judaism on war and peace.

November 8, 2006 - Netzer Olami The Reform Zionist Youth Movement

Lecture on the history of Zionism

November 12, 2006 - Esiendrath International Exchange

The EIE program was for 100 high school students who came to Israel from North America for six months to study about Judaism and Zionism. Saltz educators gave a workshop on "Public Jewish Culture."

November 12, 2006 - Leo Baeck

Lecture on Reform Judaism

November 30-December 7, 2006 - Saltz Seminars in Poland

The Saltz Center taught for nine days in Warsaw, Krakow, Lublin and Katowice. These programs were a combination of lectures on Israel, traditional text study and symposiums on Progressive Judaism. Beit Warszawa, the progressive Jewish congregation in Warsaw, assisted us in arranging this program. Progressive Jews attended the seminar coming from different regions in Poland, Hungary, Italy, France, Ukraine, England, Belgium, Russia, Netherlands and Belarus. It was an absolutely amazing experience. These progressive Jews from around Europe (specifically Central Europe) were starving for Israel and Jewish education and the opportunity to connect with each other.

One direct result of the seminar is that there is now a program being developed by the participant from the MJLF Progressive Jewish community in France. He is now bringing his teenage youth group from Paris to meet with Progressive Jewish teens in Warsaw. There was also an expressed desire on the part of the participants that these types of seminars should take place at least three times a year in different host countries.

V. Governance

The Saltz Center has developed its governance structure so that locally in Israel there is a steering committee made up of lay people, rabbis and Jewish professionals. The Steering committee includes Ruth Cohen, Dr. Michael Marmur, Rabbi Joel Oseran, Lesley Sachs, Todd Warnik, Paula Edelstein, Rabbi Rachel Sabath, Iri Kassel and Danny Chinn.

More significantly, the center has begun to build its international board. At this point the board is composed of: Rabbi Tony Bayfield (England), Rabbi Norman J. Cohen (U.S.), Rabbi Walter Homolka (Germany), Sara S. Lee (U.S.), Rabbi John Levi (Australia), Rabbi David Lilienthal (The Netherlands), Dr. Helena Miller (England), Rabbi Danny Rich (England), Rabbi Marc Saperstein (England), Rabbi Michael Shire (England), Ruth Cohen (Israel), Ron Saltz (U.S.), Arthur and Betty Roswell (U.S.). In the next few months the center will need to focus on increasing the number of lay leaders who will join the international board along with those who are professional educators in the Progressive Jewish world.

VI. Staffing

In addition to our director of education, Paul Liptz, and our administrator, Dalya Levy, we have hired Stacey Blank as our new rabbinic intern. Stacey is a fifth-year student at HUC and will be ordained this May. She comes to us with a strong background in education as well as working with the international Jewish community. Together with Paul Liptz and Dalya Levy, Stacey is an important addition to our educational team. It is important to note that all staff members, except for the director, are half-time.

VII. Fund-raising

Perhaps the most critical issue facing the Saltz Center is the need to start developing a funding cycle. Possibly the best model for the Saltz Center is the "the Conservative Yeshiva," run by the movement for Conservative Judaism in Jerusalem. The Conservative Yeshiva budget shows that it needs to raise \$400,000 a year for subsidies and scholarships to make this learning center a reality. Most students at the yeshiva do not pay. This is also similar to the situation of the "Pardes Institute for Jewish Studies," which is a modern Orthodox learning center, as well as Aish haTorah, which is an ultra-Orthodox learning center. If we want to build a learning center in Jerusalem that will transform Reform and Progressive Jews and connect them with the Torah of Israel, the People of Israel and the State of Israel, it is a significant, but ultimately an invaluable investment in the Jewish people.

In 2006, the center raised \$100,000 from the Roger Tilles Family Foundation and a commitment of \$100,000 each year for the next three years from Arthur and Betty Roswell. With the necessary staff, program and marketing in place, the foundation looks to double this in '07.



Mercaz Shimshon / Beit Shmuel

Mercaz Shimshon/Beit Shmuel, the World Union for Progressive Judaism's cultural and educational center in Jerusalem, experienced continued growth in the past year. A number of new programs were added, and previously established programs were continued and, in many cases, expanded.

Israel Crisis Response

Having established itself as a major institution in the capital, the Mercaz Shimshon/Beit Shmuel was well placed to respond to the effects of the rocket attacks on Israel's north in July and August. The center opened its guest rooms to Israelis fleeing the north at half its usual rate. The center also organized special activities free of charge for displaced people from the north, both those staying at the guest house and those temporarily residing elsewhere.

New Programs

Joint Program with Border Patrol

MS/BS initiated an innovative program jointly with the Border Patrol (*Mishmar Hag'vu*) to increase these special police officers' understanding of religious and cultural diversity. The daylong program, on the theme Jerusalem of Three Religions, includes a walking tour of sites holy to Jews, Muslims and Christians, followed by a discussion at the center of how the awareness of religious sensibilities can inform the Border Patrol's daily work.

The Border Patrol plans for all of its members around the country to take part in the program. The center is now extending this program to officers of the Israel Defense Force.

Children Create Shabbat

In this new program, children use arts and crafts – and their imagination – to create items related to the weekly Torah reading or to the time of year. As parents in Jerusalem have few cultural activities available for their children on Saturdays, this affordable program (the fee for each workshop is about \$5.50) is filling a major gap in family life in the capital.

Joint Program with the Hillel Organization

Mercaz Shimshon/Beit Shmuel also entered a cooperative relationship with Hillel, a voluntary organization that serves individuals who have left the Haredi (ultra-Orthodox) community. (This organization has no connection with Hillel: The Foundation for Jewish Campus Life.)

Cut off from their families and uncertain of their place in the wider society, the people who turn to the Hillel organization find themselves isolated. To help ease this isolation, Hillel and Mercaz Shimshon/Beit Shmuel have begun to organize twice monthly Erev Shabbat dinners for about 50 people each time, utilizing the catering facilities of the guest house. The center also provides Hillel members with tickets to cultural events there.

Continuing Programs

In addition to its new programs, the MS/BS continued to operate a wide range of ongoing programs. Some 600 people took part in 23 courses there last year. The Beit Midrash had 70 students – a significant increase from the 31 in the previous year.

Over 30,000 people attended more than 100 performances at MS/BS. It continued its cooperative venture with the Jerusalem Khan Theatre, provided a venue for small theatre groups such as the Comma Theatre and the Jerusalem Theatre Group, and hosted the Jerusalem Film Festival.

Mercaz Shimshon/Beit Shmuel continued to provide one of the few cultural options available to Jerusalem families on Saturdays. Its series of plays for children on Saturday mornings have been especially popular.

The center celebrated holidays and special days with programs that brought a new perspective to these occasions. Among the highlights:

- During the week of Sukkot, MS/BS sponsored *Sukkat Tzedek* (Sukkah of Justice), a social justice festival with films, discussions and study held in a giant Sukkah.
- On Purim, MS/BS sponsored its fifth annual happening for Jerusalem children. The event included plays featuring Israeli and Arab actors, clowns, giant puppets, craft corners with holiday-related activities, music and other attractions.
- Israel's independence day, Yom Ha'atzmaut, was celebrated with prayer, study, craft activities for children, Israeli satirical films, stories about Israel's early years, singing, dancing and other activities. Some 600 people attended the day's events.
- MS/BS's all-night Shavuot event, *Tikkun Leil Shavuot*, took place for the seventh consecutive year and attracted more than 1,000 participants.



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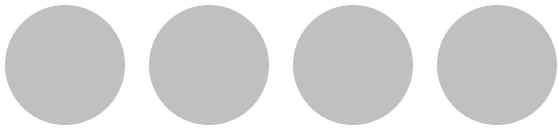
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Committee and Task Force Reports to the International Assembly

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- NGO Representatives to the U.N.
- Strategic Planning Project
- U.N. Commission on Human Rights
- U.N. Convention on the Rights & Dignity of Persons with Disabilities
- *Yad B'Yad*
- Youth and Young Adults / Youth Integration / Youth

March 15, 2007
26 Adar 5767
Jerusalem, Israel





2006 Budget

Todd Warnick, Chief Financial Officer

The World Union for Progressive Judaism completed its 2006 budget year with another record amount of income of \$7.68 million, almost 15% higher than the budgeted amount of \$6.7 million. Of this total, \$5.29 million was designated income, including a record \$1.98 million for activities related to the former Soviet Union (FSU), and \$2.38 million was general/undesignated income.

Expenditures for the year, including one-time expenditures for previous liabilities totaling \$122,000, were \$7.55 million, resulting in a budget surplus of about \$126,641. In some cases, designated expenditure – based on related income – significantly differed from budget. While \$1.36m in designated monies was budgeted for activities in Israel, actual expenditure was \$1.78 million; in the case of FSU, programs - particularly summer camps - were expanded by over \$400,000 based on designated income received. Depreciation of the dollar against the Israeli Shekel and Russian Ruble (in both cases about 9% over the year) affected spending levels, as did inflation in the Russian Federation, which for 2006 was 9.8%.

Israel

About \$2.0 million (including administrative fees – about \$1.78m net) in income was raised for Progressive Movement activities in Israel, including directly for programs of the Israel Movement for Progressive Judaism (IMPJ), Israel Religious Action Center, congregations in Israel and the IMPJ's very important summer camp and youth programs. Significant gifts were also raised for the IMPJ's Mechina pre-army leadership program, in which graduates of the IMPJ's youth movement, *Noar Telem*, delay army service for one year to participate in an intensive Jewish studies program while providing volunteer work with youth in the city of Jaffa. An additional \$313,000 was also provided for rabbinic salaries in Israel.

The World Union also plays an important role in obtaining funding for the IMPJ from Jewish federations in the U.S. totaling about \$300,000 – these monies were transferred directly to the IMPJ through the Jewish Agency.

FSU

For the first time, the World Union passed the \$2.0 million mark (\$2.06m) in expenditures for the FSU, including summer camps and seminars for more than 3,000 participants. Our camp programs have now about 1,100 young people and cooperative and funding relationships have been fully established with many U.S. federations and foundations.

An additional highlight of our activities this past year was the purchase of a synagogue and community center in St. Petersburg, Russia, with generous funds received from members of the West London Synagogue, who continue to contribute to the building's renovation. A very exciting dedication with the donors' participation will be taking place in St. Petersburg at the beginning of June. Intensive searches also continue for appropriate facilities in Moscow and Minsk.

Our paraprofessional program for Jewish studies, the Machon, continues to allow us to provide Progressive religious, education, cultural and youth services throughout the FSU. The program was upgraded considerably this past year, as an agreement was reached with

the Moscow University for the Humanities (RGGU), whereby our students will take some of their classes within the framework of their Jewish Studies program and receive a certificate upon completion.

Around the Globe

More than \$500,000 was raised and transferred through the World Union for other congregations around the world, for programs in Argentina, Brazil and other locations in South and Central America, as well as for congregations throughout Europe, Hong Kong, South Africa and others.

The Anita Saltz Educational Center, based at Mercaz Shimshon/Beit Shmuel, completed its first full year of activities, and also raised an additional \$305,000.

Netzer Olami

Netzer Olami – “Noar Tzioni Reformi” - the worldwide Reform Zionist youth movement, registered \$612,000 in income vs. expenditure of \$590,000. Participation in its “Shnat” leadership program returned to pre-Intifada levels and increased funds were also received from the Jewish Agency’s “Masa” organization, which provides subsidies for long-term programs in Israel. In order to receive funds from the World Zionist Organization, and to be eligible for Israeli government funding, Netzer Olami was established as a separate non-profit organization (“amuta”) beginning in March, 2006.

Fund-raising

North American fund-raising – including individual, federation and foundation donations – totaled almost \$3.2m. Australia continued to play a very important role in our fund-raising, as it provided about A\$816,000 (US\$640,000). A portion of those funds was earmarked for IMPJ camp programs as well as IRAC social welfare activities.

A number of members of the World Union board also continue to play a leadership role in terms of donations, providing significant impetus for others to contribute to our activities.

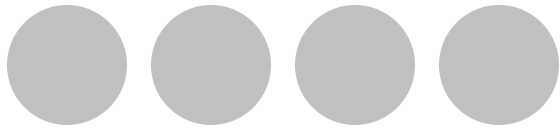
Mercaz Shimshon/Beit Shmuel

After a significant operating profit at Mercaz Shimshon/Beit Shmuel in 2005, we will have a loss of close to \$100,000 in 2006. Continuing increases in income from our catering and hotel operations were offset by increased utility costs, some decreases in activity due to the past summer’s war and a third straight year of decreases in allocations from the Jewish Agency for our cultural activities. We are also working closely with consultants to reduce our infrastructure and maintenance costs, and some of their recommendations have begun to be put into place already.

An agreement with the City of Jerusalem regarding a long-time property tax dispute that went back to 1992 was recently reached.

Summary

In general, the World Union’s main financial challenge remains cash flow, as well as the challenge of raising undesignated funds at a time when more and more donors prefer to designate their contributions for specific programs.



Assets

Daniel Chinn, Chairman
Todd Warnick, Chief Financial Officer

Mandate: The Assets Committee is an advisory committee that provides recommendations to the appropriate World Union bodies or executive staff concerning the purchase, sale, rental or lease of real estate, as well as the ongoing operations, maintenance and utilization of these properties. When relevant, the committee works to maximize income while considering both the purpose for which the property was built and the mission of the organization.

Major activities of the committee since March 2006 include:

Former Soviet Union: The World Union completed the purchase of space in a building in St. Petersburg, Russia for a synagogue/community center, with funds received from donors at West London Synagogue. Donors from this synagogue also continue to be involved in the renovation of the property and a dedication ceremony is scheduled for early June 2007. Efforts continue to locate and purchase properties in Moscow and in Minsk, with funds designated for this purpose.

Shmuel Hanagid: In 1997, the World Union signed a development contract with an Israeli contractor, whereby the contractor would build apartments on two adjacent plots owned by the World Union in the Rechavia neighborhood of Jerusalem on Shmuel Hanagid Street 16-18. This project was never consummated and the World Union has been negotiating a termination agreement with the contractor for some time. A draft contract is being discussed between the two parties and it is expected that agreement will be reached shortly. Following the signing of the termination agreement, the property will be clear for disposal. Simultaneously, an agreement is in the process of being reached between the World Union and Jerusalem's oldest Progressive synagogue, Kehilat Har-el, which sits on 16 Shmuel Hanagid Street, whereby agreement will be made for expanding the synagogue's facilities and for the World Union to realize additional building rights on the property. In addition, the World Union will begin shortly the process of entertaining offers for the purpose of selling the building and plot of land next door to the synagogue at 18 Shmuel Hanagid Street.

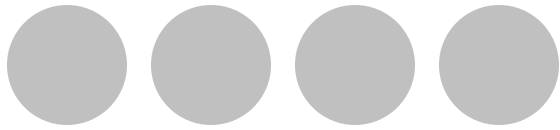
Willsboro Point: Property on Lake Champlain in New York State was sold during 2006 and the proceeds divided between the World Union, Hebrew Union College and the Union for Reform Judaism. At the bequest of the donors, half of the total proceeds of about \$300,000 received by the World Union were divided equally with the Mishkenot Ruth project in Jaffa.

Mercaz Shimshon/Beit Shmuel: Staff reorganization has recently taken place and a new director for the facility has been appointed. A new director for the cultural department was also appointed during the past year. A new, more profitable contract for catering services, which is also designed to reduce previous operational burdens, was also signed. We are also working closely with a consultant to reduce operational costs, including maintenance and other infrastructure costs, and it is expected that many of these measures will begin to be implemented shortly.

An agreement with the City of Jerusalem regarding a long-time dispute over municipal rates ("Arnona") for Mercaz Shimshon and Beit Shmuel was signed on February 27th and has been

resolved in our favor. This was the last in a long line of legal issues that had plagued us for a number of years and that have now all been resolved, including the total cancellation in 2005 of a \$3.5m claim against the World Union by Value Added Tax authorities relating to the building of Mercaz Shimshon.

Dr. Michael Hoffman was for a number of years until recently the chairman of the Assets Committee. Daniel Chinn has now been appointed to this position, while Dr. Hoffman continues to be actively involved with the committee.



Finance

Gordon Smith,
World Union Vice Chairman, Finance

VICTIMS OR VICTORS OF OUR OWN SUCCESS?

At the time of preparing this report, the Chief Financial Officer (CFO), Todd Warnick, is preparing his report on the management accounts for the year ended December 31, 2006 as well as making the final adjustments to the proposed World Union budget for 2007.

In my report, I therefore will not deal in detail with the 2006 results but review the overall financial successes/failures of the World Union over the past few years in achieving its aims and goals, as well as in looking at future demands and pressures which the World Union may be facing in financial terms.

Myths

When looking at some of these financial pressures which we have been facing and are continuing to face, a number of myths have arisen which may have blurred the realities of our financial successes.

In particular, while some have criticized the management of the World Union on its financial supervision of our income and expenditure, claiming that donors are being asked to "bail out" past mistakes, a simple review of the actual results of the World Union over the past number of years may throw some light on the reality.

Realities

I list below the details of the income raised by the World Union and the surplus/deficit arising as disclosed in the management accounts each year since 2002. These may speak for themselves:-

Year ended December 31	Income	Surplus/(Deficit)
	\$	\$
2002	2.406m	(-296k)
2003	3.756m	+433k
2004	6.133m	(-109k)
2005	6.652m	(-101k)
2006	<u>7.677m</u>	<u>+127k</u>
Total 2002-2006	<u>\$26.624m</u>	<u>\$54k</u>

Controls

As will be noted, over the five years ended December 31 2006, the overall income of the World Union amounted to \$26.624m on which a net surplus of \$54k was achieved resulting in a positive budget variance of some 0.2% over this five year period.

I do not know of any other organisation (either commercial or nonprofit) which has had as close and accurate overall result over five years, especially in view of the increasing financial demands being made on such organisation. However, apart from highlighting the tremendous work which has been carried out by our CFO, Todd Warnick, in recent years as

well as the checks and balances which have been instituted by the Management Committee, what is also clearly apparent is that the much used and abused phrase "victims of our own success" clearly applies to the World Union.

Demands

As you can see, the overall financial requirements of the World Union have increased from some \$2.406m in 2002 to \$7.677m in 2006, reflecting a near 3.2 fold increase in our fund-raising requirements. Again, very few other organisations could have managed such a major growth in their achievements. I hasten to add that annually, Todd spends an inordinate amount of time meeting with, talking to and consulting with all the programme and regional leaders, task forces and working parties in order to carefully prepare their budgets based on their increasing requirements and reflecting the phenomenal success that the World Union has enjoyed in expanding its activities in the various regions and in particular in Israel and the FSU. Here again, we are victims of our own success, and if I may take the FSU as an example, I can only repeat some of my comments to the Management Committee, in that the success of the FSU programme over the past few years has been amazing and we should be grateful to Alex Kagan and all those involved in making our hopes, wishes and efforts a reality.

Pressures

Many of us still bask in the glow of the fantastic youth presentation at the 2005 Moscow conference which proves how far we have come in such a short time. However, this success has, literally, a price and if I may, again use the FSU as an example, the actual expenditure on the FSU has been as follows:

2002	\$722k
2003	\$967k
2004	\$1,351k
2005	\$1,737k
2006	\$2,060k

Again, in four short years, the requirements of the FSU have risen from \$722k to \$2,060k, nearly a three-fold increase.

Matching Funding

Although much of the funding for the FSU has come from supportive outside organisations and donors, for which we are all grateful, one of the conditions imposed by many of them is that this subsidy should only represent 50 percent and that the World Union commit to provide the remaining matching 50 percent. To a great extent, this is the key to some of our financial problems. Success breeds success and the expansion of activities requires substantial more funding. Virtually every outside body supporting our FSU programmes demands matching funding from the World Union, which is not unreasonable, but this puts an ever increasing financial burden on the World Union.

Financial Controls

As can be seen, the controls imposed by Todd Warnick and the management committee are effective and we have always spent within our means. But, as can also be seen, our requirements are ever increasing due to our success and expansion.

I am delighted that the recent Strategy Task Force has recommended enhanced financial reporting and even more stringent controls which will continue to ensure that every dollar

received and spent is fully accounted for and utilised to its maximum potential, but emphasis was also made on the need for long-term financial planning. Any organisation spending some \$7m a year would normally require working capital of at least three or four months, i.e. in the region of \$2m in the bank at any one time. The World Union has not got the benefit of such luxury, and until and unless a capital fund can be established to support the World Union, we are constantly working from hand to mouth.

Options

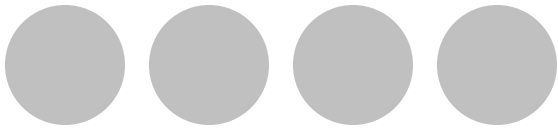
Until now we have always depended on comparatively few major donors, but the burdens and pressures being put on them is unrelenting. Understandably, some are requesting that we widen our field of donors and ensure that the renewed and focused mission statement of the World Union filters down to every individual of every constituent member of the World Union so that the pool of donors can be substantially increased.

There are a number of possible options open to the World Union to meet this challenge:

1. Severely reduce the budget and curtail many successful programmes in order to reduce the financial burden on the World Union.
2. Substantially expand fundraising from existing/additional donors worldwide.
3. Focus on the "emerging" regions and obtain new funding from wealthy donors in those regions, such as the FSU and Israel.
4. Publicise the mission statement to all individual members to ensure that all constituents fully understand their responsibilities for supporting the World Union and agree to a voluntary subscription of, say, \$10 per member worldwide.

The final option is controversial but I believe that until every member of the World Union makes an individual contribution, however small or large, we will not have the bedrock of annual funding on which we can launch our fund-raising requirements from our major donors and supporting institutions.

I would very much like to turn what some perceive as being "victims of our own success" to what we truly are and must continue to be: "victors of our own success."



Global Social Action and Advocacy Network (GSAN)

Dr. Philip Bliss, Chairman

The idea for the Global Social Action and Advocacy Network began when Rabbi Uri Regev first took over as World Union executive director several years ago. Unfortunately, while the ideas expressed in the paper at that time were generally welcomed, the concept never got off the ground. Early last year, consultants were engaged to develop the philosophy of social action and advocacy within the World Union and over 100 people throughout our organization world were interviewed. A paper was submitted and a committee was set up to look at feasibility, timing and budget.

The concept was accepted by the World Union executive as long as it did not encroach on World Union finances or personnel. The working committee members were all keen to continue to develop the program and since late last year have been discussing the various areas within which the GSAN can operate.

The three main areas in which GSAN will be active are:

- Advocacy for Progressive Judaism in communities who require support.
- Developing activities, resources and coordination for social action around the world.
- Developing leadership programs in advocacy to encourage young potential leaders within the Progressive movement.

In other words, when a Jewish statement or action is required in response to matters of concern, then the voice should be that of the World Union.

To date, no funding has been promised but several applications for such funding have been made. In the meantime, GSAN has been developing useful background resources with respect to work within the United Nations and related NGO activities, and discussing in which areas of social action the World Union should become involved.

It is clear that some regions within our movement will be more stimulated to address certain issues than other regions, and consensus will be required to agree on these world topics. We hope, eventually, to build up a resource bank of background information and data that will be available for all of our members. This will allow members to make informed decisions on issues of importance and, hopefully, enable them to make a Jewish response.

We also hope to be a clearing house where communities can access GSAN data on how other congregations and regions have responded to social issues in the past.

All in all, this year should be one of great activity as long as we can secure some seed funding to allow us to establish our credentials.



PROPOSALS FOR CHANGES TO THE CONSTITUTION IN REGARD TO THE INTERNATIONAL ASSEMBLY.

Since the last constitutional changes that were approved in Moscow in June 2005, a number of situations have arisen that were not addressed either then or in previous editions of the World Union constitution.

There has been a number of new countries that have affiliated with the World Union but are not represented on the International Assembly. Due to the constitutional limit of 99 places on the IA, there were no further vacancies for new representation.

PROPOSED CHANGE is to increase the number of places in the International Assembly from 99 to 180.

Some countries do not have a properly constituted organisation with regular elections of office bearers and a proper constitution.

PROPOSED CHANGE is to allow representation on the IA once a country has at least one congregation that conforms to the purposes within the constitution of the World Union. This representation will be for a probationary two-year period, within which time the new affiliate will provide a valid constitution approved by the World Union, and will hold proper elections for officers.

The World Union shall assist all new or existing member affiliates who do not have a proper constitution or who do not hold proper regular elections for office bearers.

There is no place in the constitution for the replacement of IA members who may cease to be members of the affiliate.

PROPOSED CHANGE is that, should a member of the IA cease to be a member of the member affiliate, for whatever reason, then the affiliate member officers shall propose a new member from their membership to fill the vacancy until the next World Union convention. The office of the World Union must be informed of any such change.



Human Resources

Félix Mosbacher, Chairman

During the year 2006, our committee was consulted on several critical issues concerning staffing at the top (professional) management level.

This was the case when significant changes in job definition or incumbent happened, such as for the North American office and the FSU.

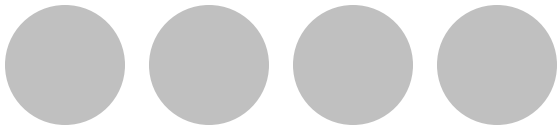
A sub-group of our committee dealt with a review of job-descriptions of senior managers, and led also to recommendations concerning the structure at the top.

On the subject of priorities for each position, we maintained our strong recommendation for fund-raising being the top priority for everyone.

We continued to encourage a systematic process of formal, yearly individual performance reviews, followed by participatory objective setting. This drive is still far from being completed.

The committee also monitors the distribution/use of two main funds : the Racky Newman professional enrichment fund, and a revolving loan fund. We made sure that due processes secure transparency and fairness.

In 2007, we should help in reorganising top management jobs and missions once a COO starts operating. We should also propose a series of policies in Personnel matters, Pension schemes (a recent experience showed how much thought-through procedures are needed), Bonus matters and more. The expected workload of the committee will require some re-staffing.



International Interfaith

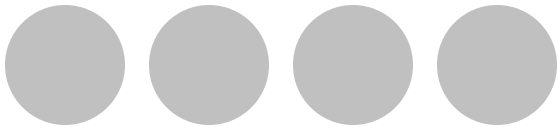
Rabbi Mark Winer, Chairman

In 2006 the International Interfaith Task Force began assembling a database of interfaith programmes, worked with three local communities to develop interfaith centres, co-sponsored an international theological conference and continued its work in curriculum for interfaith education. Underwritten by money raised outside of the World Union budget, the task force engaged a full-time project director to assemble a database of interfaith programmes. Dr. Cathy Lasser was hired to gather material from around the world which could be accessed on the World Union's website for use by local synagogues and institutions in developing interfaith programmes. Dr. Lasser holds two Ph.D.s, one in Educational Psychology and the other in Jewish Philosophy (JTS). She has been involved in Jewish education and community work for thirty years. It is anticipated that the material will be ready for the World Union's Web site by summer 2007.

Using the material from the survey of interfaith programmes, the task force is assisting three local communities to plan interfaith centres: Florida, Haifa and London. The interfaith centre is an idea whose time has come in the world after 9/11. Based in a synagogue, church or other communal institution, the local interfaith centre serves as a catalyst for teaching mutual respect and celebrating difference, which are the essence of contemporary interfaith activity. From a progressive Jewish perspective, the interfaith centre expresses both Jewish Mission and *Tikkun Olam*. It is hoped that local interfaith centres will network with each other, share in training and cross-pollinate programme ideas.

In October 2006, the International Interfaith Task Force collaborated with the Abraham Geiger College to sponsor an international theological conference on Jewish Law and Canon Law. Held at the Gregorian University in Rome, the conference brought together scholars, rabbis, bishops and priests from many parts of the world. Attendees met with the Israeli ambassador to the Vatican and with ambassadors from other countries, and participated in an audience with Pope Benedict. The anticipated partnership with the Vatican in developing educational material about each other has not progressed as had been hoped, although the Vatican is encouraging other theological conferences.

Nonetheless, the task force hopes to develop curriculum, course material and a textbook on the world religions, which will be of particular interest to progressive Jews and our synagogues. Whatever we do in the future depends on our continued ability to raise financial support outside of the World Union budget. We welcome suggestions and involvement in our developing programme for the future.



Marketing & Communications

Judy Smith, Chair

Over the past year the Marketing & Communications Task Force (MCTF) has consolidated its work and its structure.

The first priority was to ensure a consistency of branding across the World Union, including such basic things as all regions using the same World Union logo. Vera Hollander, Director of Communications, produced an invaluable CD which was widely distributed. This provided many resources, such as graphics and text messages.

The Steering Committee of Judy Smith, Vera Hollander, Joel Oseran and Lesley Sachs has been expanded to include regional representatives from Israel, Europe, the FSU, South America, Latin America and the Caribbean, Australasia, South Africa and North America. We have held two full task force meetings during the year using Interwise.

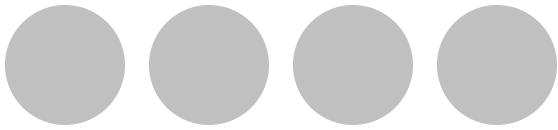
Subdivisions of the Task Force have also been set up to cover Branding & Marketing, Media Publicity, the Web Site, Publications, Photography and the 2007 Connections convention.

The main work of the MCTF during the past year was to act as a resource and a sounding board in the production of the Annual Report and in the building of the content of the new Web Site. The MCTF also acts as a support for Vera Hollander in many aspects of her work, such as the archiving of photographs, worldwide media publicity liaison and much else. An illustration of the success of this collaborative effort was the major international media publicity achieved for the first ordination of rabbis at the Abraham Geiger College in Germany.

During the year much time was taken up with the development of the new Web Site. This work was spearheaded by Vera Hollander and it was agreed that the IT Task Force would be disbanded and responsibility for this area would fall within the remit of the MCTF.

At the initiative of Penny Jacobovits (Australia) we have also introduced the practice of sending e-mail bulletins to members of the International Assembly, distributing articles and reports of interest which show the international and dynamic aspects of the work of the World Union.

It is proposed that the Marketing and Communication Task Force becomes a standing committee of the World Union with representation on the Executive.



Nominations

Ruth Cohen, Chair

Members of Committee:

Ruth Cohen, Israel, Chair
Austin Beutel, Canada
Ron Cohen, USA
Rabbi Stanley Davids, USA
Rabbi Andrew Goldstein, UK
Penny Jakobovits, Australia
Felix Mosbacher, France
Tamara Schagas, Israel
Rabbi Lenny Thal, USA

The Committee was formed in early October 2006 and carried out its deliberations by e-mail with one conference call and many one-to-one telephone conversations.

As is inevitable, there were some painful decisions to make in order to create a new and, we believe, vibrant Executive Committee. We suffered some anguish, not only because we had to leave out existing members, but also because of the need to set aside promising potential new members in order to stay within the required number. We believe we have achieved a broad representation and introduced some "new blood." All those listed have agreed to be nominated.

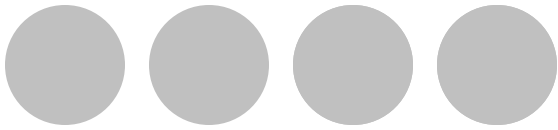
The unanimous recommended slate of the Nominations Committee is:

Officers: Steve Bauman, USA, Chairman
Leslie Bergman, UK, Senior Vice-Chairman
Gordon Smith, UK, Vice-Chairman, Finance
Steve Breslauer, USA, Secretary

Vice Chairmen: Dr. Philip Bliss, Australia
Ron Cohen, USA
Geoffrey Chinn, USA per FSU
Professor Avraham Melamed, Israel
Rabbi Mark Winer, UK

Mark Anshan, Canada
Stanley Davids, USA
Alex Dembitz, Switzerland (and Budapest)
Mike Grabiner, UK
James Heeger, USA
Rabbi Walter Homolka, Germany
Penny Jakobovits, Australia
Jonathan Livny, Israel
Steve Lurie, South Africa

Anne Molloy, USA
Diane Marcus, USA
Felix Mosbacher, France
Lea Muehlstein, Germany (Youth representative)
Judy Smith, UK
Leonard Teitelbaum, USA
Miriam Vasserman, South America
Helene Waranch, USA



Non-Governmental Organization (NGO) Representatives to the U.N.

Norma Levitt
Judith Hertz
Betty Golomb
Janet Stovin, Alternate

The World Union has continued to be represented in the Jewish Non-Governmental Organization (NGO) Caucus by Norma Levitt, Betty Golomb, Judith Hertz and Janet Stovin.

From Judith Hertz:

This past year the United Nations Department of Public Information (DPI) held a number of special briefings for representatives of Non-Governmental Organizations regarding U.N. reform and management issues. I attended many of these briefings as well as the regular briefings on human rights issues, anti-Semitism, women's rights and freedom of religion. I serve as chair of the New York Bureau on Freedom of Religion, which regularly connects with a similar group based in Geneva.

In January 2007, the U.N. Non-Governmental Liaison Service (NGLS) issued a new publication "Debating NGO Accountability." Concerns about the accountability of NGOs have been voiced. A number of U.N. member states see NGOs as more of a nuisance than an asset, and some question the effectiveness of NGO work as well as the legitimacy of their advocacy. Some believe reaccreditation of NGOs (approximately every five years) may be more complex and difficult in the future.

The U.N. as a secular organization of governments does not engage directly with organized religion. Nonetheless, numerous U.N. agencies (UNICEF, UNESCO, UNDP, etc.) recognize the need and importance of religious communities' humanitarian aid in numerous areas, their work in caring for children and their special strength when disaster strikes.

In 2006, the U.N. established January 27 (the anniversary of the liberation of Auschwitz) as an annual International Day of Commemoration in memory of the victims of the Holocaust. This year January 27 fell on Shabbat, and therefore the day was observed at United Nations offices worldwide on Monday, January 29. Israeli Ambassador Dan Gillerman noted, "The resolution on Holocaust remembrance reflects the understanding of this Assembly that the lessons of the Holocaust are universal."

Also of note, on January 26, 2007, the United Nations passed a resolution condemning Holocaust denial.

From Janet Stovin:

Some of the speakers we have heard have been Jan Eliasson, president of the 60th session of the General Assembly; Sheikha Haya Rashed Al Khalifa, president of the 61st session of the General Assembly; Mark Malloch Brown; Ambassador John Bolton; Ilan Fluss from the Israeli Mission and a representative from Department of Public Information (DPI) Department of Holocaust Remembrance. The Caucus was instrumental in getting the date of

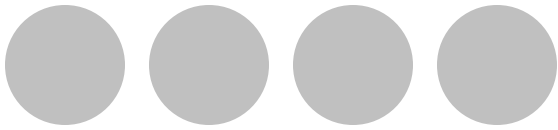
the commemorative ceremony moved from Saturday, January 27 (the actual anniversary) to Monday, January 29, 2007.

Our efforts were also successful in having World Union president, Rabbi Uri Regev, as a participant on a panel discussing "Promoting Respect for Cultural Diversity in Conflict Resolution," which was very successful.

I continue to stand in for Norma Leavitt on the NGO Committee on UNIFEM. UNIFEM Executive Director, Noeleen Heyzer, gave a rousing and informative talk on her facilitating meetings between 20 high-level Palestinian women and 20 high-level Israeli women, discussing how to bridge the divide between the two peoples.

I also represented the World Union at a farewell reception for the Annans before the Secretary General's term ended, and will represent the World Union at the upcoming commission on the Status of Women meeting, February 26 to March 9, during which the emphasis will be on the girl child.

The next event is a discussion with Ruth Halperin Haddari, Israeli expert on the Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination against Women (CEDAW), on January 18, 2007 at the U.N.



Strategic Planning Project

Leslie Bergman, Jim Heeger, Co-Chairs

In the fall of 2006, the Executive Board appointed Leslie Bergman (UK) and Jim Heeger (USA) as joint project leaders to head a strategic review of the priorities of the World Union. The objective of this effort is to enhance the execution of the World Union's activities by focusing its priorities and resources.

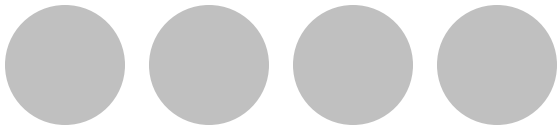
The project was initiated with a bottoms-up review of nine different issue areas for the World Union. Each set of issues was assigned to a sub-committee consisting of between 6 and 8 individuals designed to represent different geographies and to bring differing levels of experience to the World Union. Each sub-committee had a chairperson and was supported by a member of the WU professional staff. The sub-committees reported back to the Project Leaders in January. The results are being reviewed and discussed with the Executive Board and the Management Committee at the World Union convention in Jerusalem. Conclusions and next steps from those discussions will lead to a final report that will follow this spring.

For each of the nine key issue areas, several questions or concerns were identified in a briefing paper that was provided to each committee. A synopsis of the issues is provided below:

Mission	Is the wording succinct enough? Do we need further clarity? Are/should we be combining the mission with our values? Should the role of youth be called out separately?
Geography	How do we decide how to invest in specific regions/countries? Are there specific goals for investment? What advocacy roles should we play in developing countries?
Israel	What is the World Union's relationship to the IMPJ? What are the relative roles in Israel and in the Diaspora?
FSU	Needs dwarf investment level. How to focus limited resources? Should we focus on the largest communities only for maximum impact? What are the consequences?
Finance	Need to develop long-term, multi-year financial planning. How do we deal with the impact of designated funds on budget priorities? Is structure/reporting adequate?
Organization	Definition and role of Affiliates worldwide? What should we be doing in developing leadership – particularly younger people? Do we have the correct professional and lay leadership structures in place?
Fund-raising	What is the North American role in fund-raising? What is our overall capacity? How should we be planning for/thinking about the Israel Development Commission? How do we fund new initiatives, e.g. Global Social Action Network?
North America	How do we increase fund-raising capacity/effectiveness? How do we capitalize on the URJ/World Jewry Committee relationship? How do we increase congregational involvement?

Rabbinic Needs	Quantify demand for rabbis by region and establish goals for WU support. Identify other models for seeding new communities. Exploit technology to support study, prayer WW.
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Comments, questions or suggestion on the strategic planning efforts may be directed to Leslie Bergman (leslie.bergman@accenture.com) or Jim Heeger (Jim@HeegerAssociates.com).



U.N. Commission on Human Rights

Rabbi Francois Garai (Main Representative)
David G. Littman (Spokesman at UNCHR)
Eliel Masson

Following is a list of the oral statements, with themes highlighted, that were presented by the representative of the World Union for Progressive Judaism (five of which were jointly with the Association for World Education [AWE]) at sessions in 2006 of the U.N. Council on Human Rights, its Sub-Commission, and the Convention on the Elimination of Racial Discrimination (CERD). They were prepared and delivered by David G. Littman; contacts were Rabbis Uri Regev and François Garai.

Relevant World Union (and joint) written statements attached to oral statements.

26 June 2006 (Human Rights Council: First Session – 19-30 June 2006)

Joint oral statement with the Association for World Education (rep. also DGL)

- Condemn any call for violence, terror, or killing in the name of any religion, or of God
 - Hamas as PA Government has a Charter forbidding “Initiatives, and peaceful solutions”
 - Darfur Abuja Peace Accords: 23 May letter to HCHR from 43 NGOs for Council to act
 - Appeal to Israel to free 220 Sudanese refugees (Christians/Muslims) who crossed Sinai
- Written statement (AWE): E/CN.4/2006/NGO/231: Calls to kill in name of God or Religion

5 July 2006 (Human Rights Council: Special Session (Occupied Palestinian territory)

Oral statement could not be made but became a joint AWE/WUPJ written statement

(6 July: A/HRC/S-1/NGO/4: Binding Charter of the Current Government of the Palestinian Authority Islamic Resistance Movement–Hamas. (1500 word text with many quotations)

3 August 2006 (CERD/Committee for the Elimination of Racial Discrimination)

Written paper circulated to all members: Special Session, CERD (‘situation in Lebanon’)

Re: article 4 of the International Convention on the Elimination of Racial Discrimination

11 August 2006: Human Rights Council: 2nd Special Session (Situation in Lebanon)

- Hezbollah’s call (and its Iranian backers) for Israel’s destruction must be condemned
 - Genocide Convention, art 3 (c) “incitement to genocide”, punishable under article 4
- Written Statement: A/HRC/S-2/NGO/3: Root causes of ongoing death, destruction and desolation in Lebanon are Hezbollah

14 August 2006: Sub-Commission: Human Rights, 58th session (7-25 August 2006)

- Similar call for condemnation of Hezbollah’s ‘political’ calls for Israel’s destruction
 - End quote, Lord Byron: “For they appeal from tyranny to God.” (‘Sonnet on Chillon’)
- Written Statement: A/HRC/S-2/NGO/3: Root causes of ongoing death, destruction and...

21 September 2006 (Joint with AWE) HRC: 2nd Session (18 Sept. – Oct. 2006)

- Appeal Special Rapporteurs: Freedom Religion (Ms. Jahangir); Expression (Mr. Ligabo)
- The Pope: “Violence is incompatible with the nature of God & the nature of the soul.”

– Call to OIC “to issue an unambiguous condemnation at Council of all those who kill or call to kill, terrorize, or use violence in the name of God or religion – of any religion!”

Written statements: E/CN.4/2004/NGO/88 (WUPJ) and E/CN.4/2006/NGO/231 (AWE)

22 September 2006 (Joint with AWE) **HRC: 2nd Session** (18 Sept. – 6 Oct. 2006)

– Reiterated Appeal to SR Jahangir and Ligabo, extended to SR Doudou Diène (Racism)

– Pres. Ahmadinejad: “direct and public incitement to commit genocide.” (article III (c))

Written statement (AWE): E/CN.4/2006/NGO/2: UN Charter / the Genocide Convention

4 October 2006 (Joint with AWE) **HRC: 2nd Session** (18 Sept. – 6 October 2006)

– Recalling Pope’s reference to “jihad” and “holy war” and calls to kill in God’s name, and our two appeals on 21 and 22 September for a firm condemnation in resolution on Combating Defamation of Religion. Otherwise, risk: that silence here on this major issue might be construed by some as acquiescence and might provoke more ‘Islamophobia’”

– Darfur: “the role of the new HRC will be, in part, tested by the way Darfur is faced.”

– Iranian President Ahmadinejad’s continued appeal for Israel to be “wiped off the map”

– Silence: “...is there not a risk that the Council might out-Commission the Commission?”

Written statement (AWE): E/CN.4/2006/NGO/3 Urgent Appeal to Stop Crimes in Darfur

15 November 2006: Human Rights Council: 3rd Special Session (Northern Gaza)

– Mesopotamian monstrosities should be the subject of a Special Session; also Darfur

– Quotes from art. 13, Hamas Charter against any negotiations, and stressing Jihad

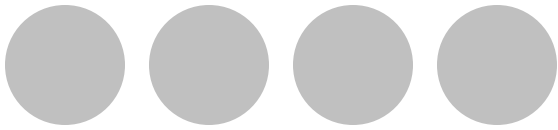
– PA Foreign Minister (on 13 Nov.): “We do not accept anything that recognizes Israel.”

– If the Council will not act, it will become a “Disneyland” (like Neuschwanstein castle)

29 November 2006 (Joint with AWE) **HRC: 3rd Session** (20 Nov.– 8 Dec. 2006)

– Reiteration on the grave situation in Darfur and on “killing in the name of God,” which is a “defamation of Islam” that might provoke more manifestations of ‘Islamophobia’

– “To every thing there is a season, and a time to every purpose under heaven, a time to keep silence, and a time to speak; a time of war, and a time of peace.” May it soon be a “time of peace” and of dialogue between Palestinians and Israelis.



U.N. Convention on the Rights and Dignity of Persons With Disabilities

Dr. Maya Sabatello, J.D.,
World Union Representative

In December 2006, the U.N. General Assembly adopted by consensus the International Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities. It is the first international human rights treaty adopted, and the first human rights treaty signed by the European Union as a legal entity. It will be open for States' signature and ratification in March 2007.

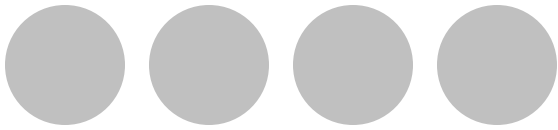
The resolution followed heated debates that had taken place since August 2006 with regard to the omission of the footnote that was added to Article 12 of the Convention on legal capacity. The International Disability Caucus (IDC) exerted great lobbying and advocacy efforts in the past few months to convince states' delegations that the footnote undermines much of what had been agreed throughout the sessions of the Ad-Hoc Committee, and that its implications in terms of the human rights of persons with disabilities worldwide are tremendous.

With the support of some leading states (including Mexico, the EU, New Zealand, Canada, and others), the footnote was eventually deleted in a meeting convened by the Ad-Hoc Committee. According to international law, states retained the option of submitting statements and declarations expressing their stance on the issue both before and after the General Assembly resolution to adopt the Convention - an option that some states indeed used at the General Assembly meeting.

In an untypical instance, the IDC, an umbrella body representing over 70 international, regional and national NGOs, was also given permission to address the GA in an informal session following the governments' statements. The statements on behalf of the IDC were delivered by Tina Minkowitz and Maria Veronica Reina (from the World Network of Users and Survivors of Psychiatry (WNUSP) and from Disabled Peoples' International (DPI), respectively).

The Convention is the most rapidly negotiated human treaty in the history of international law. It is a revolutionary instrument, reflecting a paradigm shift in the approach taken to disabilities, from a medical to a socio-cultural perspective. The contribution and involvement of NGOs in the process exceeded all previous forms of participation of civil society in U.N. proceedings, and has set a new model in terms of states-civil society relations at the U.N. Continuing participation of persons with disabilities, NGOs and civil society in general in the monitoring and the implementation of the Convention is also guaranteed in an array of the Convention's provisions.

It is not an every-day opportunity for an NGO to take a part in such an historical moment, and I thank you again for the great honor to represent the World Union in this process.

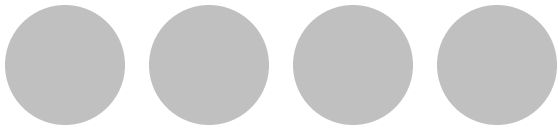


Yad B'Yad
Jerry Tanenbaum, Chairman

The *Yad B'Yad* Task Force has continued to support Progressive Jewish communities in need of assistance throughout Latin America. A *Yad B'Yad* delegation played an active role in the 2nd Conference of the Jewish Communities in Latin America, which took place in Uruguay in November 2006. Immediately prior to the Conference, a *Yad B'Yad* mission visited Progressive communities in Argentina and Chile, building relationships between these communities and North American Reform Jews. Particularly notable was the visit to the Comunidad Sefardí in Valparaíso, Chile, a historic 90-year-old community that has become one of the newest members of the Progressive family.

Rabbi Uri Regev was the keynote speaker at the annual conference of the Union of Jewish Congregations of Latin America and the Caribbean (UJCL) in Costa Rica in January 2007. The UJCL encompasses both Progressive and Conservative congregations in Central America and the Caribbean. The World Union's vice president for international development, Rabbi Joel Oseran, and *Yad B'Yad* Chairman Jerry Tanenbaum also attended the conference. The World Union has been working increasingly closely with the UJCL, particularly in the development of youth programming.

We have also expanded our support for youth programming elsewhere in Latin America, and have been working with both the Netzer Olami (youth) and TaMaR (young adult) movements.



Youth and Young Adult

Mark S. Anshan, Chairman

As noted in the last World Union report, this task force was established following the 2003 Union for Reform Judaism (URJ) Biennial, when professionals and lay leaders met to discuss how best to collaborate on the promotion of Israel-based programs among the young constituents of the URJ, World Union, Netzer Olami, NFTY, TaMaR and Keshet. The task force has provided a forum for these leaders to jointly achieve this goal on behalf of high school and college students around the world.

The task force has continued to meet in Jerusalem about twice a year at the time of the Jewish Agency for Israel (JAFI) Board of Governors meetings. At these meetings, Netzer Olami, TaMaR, Keshet and NFTY delegates deliver reports on the programs being offered and developed, decide how to promote these programs and consider new ones. The task force works closely with new and existing programs, including those of Carmel, Shnat Netzer and NFTY's EIE.

During the past year, the Task Force has focused its work on MASA – the long term programs in Israel being promoted by the Jewish Agency, including those of the Reform and Progressive movements. The deliberations have been directed towards marketing and development of new long term programs for our youth participating in Netzer Olami, NFTY and Keshet-sponsored programs in collaboration with the World Union and the Union for Reform Judaism.

Youth Integration

Mark S. Anshan, Chairman

Youth

Tamara Schagas, Chair

The World Union's chairman, Steve Bauman, asked Mark S. Anshan to lead a task force (following the World Union conference in Moscow) to examine and report back on the strategic question of how to engage with youth and young adults and find means of entry for them into the leadership and governance of World Union.

The Youth Integration Task Force conducted its work electronically and produced a report for the World Union Executive Board that listed a series of recommendations to achieve the objective. The Executive Board adopted the report and implemented the first recommendation: the creation of a Youth Committee. That Committee has been formed under the chairmanship of Tamara Schagas. It has begun its work and is analyzing the Task Force Report in order to establish the priorities to be implemented from the report. With the adoption of the report and the creation of the Youth Committee, the Task Force has completed its work.