



RESOLUTION ON ANTI-SEMITISM

Adopted by the International Assembly of the World Union for Progressive Judaism
at its 34th international convention in Jerusalem, Israel
March 18, 2009

WHEREAS:

The International Assembly of the World Union for Progressive Judaism, representing 42 countries around the world, is deeply saddened and concerned by the rapid rise of overt anti-Semitism around the world; and

WHEREAS:

The steep increase in hate crimes, the acts of violence against Jews and willful damage wrought on Jewish centers and property has been given legitimacy by ill-informed articles in newspapers, biased reporting on television and regrettable use of the Internet; and

WHEREAS:

Much of this increased open hate speech, and acts of violence and vandalism against Jews and Judaism, are cloaked in anti-Zionist and anti-Israel sentiment to give it a false sense of acceptability; and

WHEREAS:

Schools, universities, workplaces and businesses have all experienced this racist speech and acts of violence;

BE IT RESOLVED THAT the World Union for Progressive Judaism:

1. Urges governments, legislators and activists to set policy that speaks out clearly against any and all incidents of anti-Semitism and discrimination of any kind;
2. Calls upon all religious leaders to unambiguously condemn hate speech and acts of racism whenever and wherever they occur;
3. Stresses that government and private media should proactively refrain from broadcasting or printing anti-Semitic content;
4. Proposes that the governments of our regional and country affiliates use their good offices to embark on educational programs that teach tolerance, respect

and dignity in order to combat the mindless anti-Semitism that is dividing society, hurting communities and endangering members of society;

5. Is willing and eager to work with our affiliate members and the relevant government departments to promote such educational programs to combat this festering hatred;
6. Supports the many recommendations of the recent "London Declaration on Antisemitism" (attached hereto as reference).



**RESOLUTION CALLING UPON THE GOVERNMENT OF ISRAEL
TO RECOGNIZE MIRI GOLD AND TO CEASE DISCRIMINATION
AGAINST NON-ORTHODOX JEWS**

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at its 34th international convention in Jerusalem, Israel
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BACKGROUND:

The World Union for Progressive Judaism has long been concerned with policies and practices of the government of Israel which discriminate against non-Orthodox branches of Judaism. The current controversy concerning Rabbi Miri Gold, a Reform woman rabbi holding the pulpit at Congregation Birkat Shalom in Kibbutz Gezer, is an all-too-vivid example of how such discriminatory practices impede the religious lives of many Israelis, prejudice non-Orthodox Jews (and some Orthodox Jews as well) both within and outside of Israel, and are unjustifiable under any principled standard.

Rabbi Gold is one of 16 rabbis serving the Gezer Region. Fifteen of these rabbis—all Orthodox men—are recognized by the government and receive a government salary. Only Rabbi Gold receives neither government recognition nor a government salary. Litigation advocating equal recognition of Rabbi Gold is pending in the Israel Supreme Court, but the State has managed to delay it for over three years, and there is still no decision on the merits. Therefore,

WHEREAS:

Rabbi Gold serves as the Rabbi to large numbers of Gezer residents; and

WHEREAS:

The Municipal Council of Gezer has acknowledged her as a rabbi in that region; and

WHEREAS:

The Israel Supreme Court has declared that all branches of Judaism should be accorded equal treatment by the Government; and

WHEREAS:

A state committee studying the issue of rabbinic posts in regional councils has acknowledged a state obligation to fund non-Orthodox religious services; and

WHEREAS:

Only a small minority of the Gezer residents are Orthodox; and

WHEREAS:

Aside from reciting fundamentalist dogma, not even the beneficiaries of the discrimination have attempted to justify it on any principled ground; and

WHEREAS:

We recognize that those members of the World Union residing outside of Israel cannot demand changes in Israeli law. Nevertheless, discrimination against non-Orthodox Jews and institutions in Israel affects Jews throughout the world and impedes Israel from becoming a true beacon to the nations;

BE IT RESOLVED THAT, while continuing to build and uphold the strongest possible affinity among Jews of all streams and the State of Israel, the World Union for Progressive Judaism:

1. Calls on the government of Israel to immediately recognize Miri Gold as an official rabbi of the Gezer Community;
2. Calls on the government of Israel to provide government funding to support the work of Rabbi Gold and her peers, and to provide equal support, including financial support, to all streams of Judaism in the spirit of *klal Yisrael*, thereby fulfilling the religious pluralism and freedom that should be the hallmarks of the only Jewish and democratic state;
3. Calls upon all members of the World Union and all Jews throughout the world, irrespective of denomination or nationality, to urge the government of Israel to:
 - a) Recognize Rabbi Gold as an official rabbi of the Gezer community; and
 - b) Support her in the same manner and to the same extent as it supports other rabbis in that community; and
 - c) Cease all discrimination against non-Orthodox branches of Judaism.