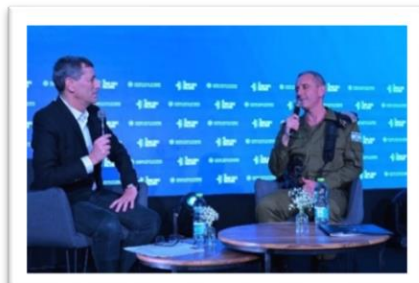




הסתדרות הציונית העולמית
World Zionist Organization

World Zionist Organization Activity Report Update for 19 February 2024 - 11 March 2024

- ❖ **World Zionist Organization Jewish People Challenges Conference** – The conference was attended by 500 Jewish leaders from 38 countries and its distinguished guests, led by the President of the State of Israel, Mr. Isaac Herzog, World Zionist Organization Chairman, Mr. Yaakov Hagoel, Vice-Chairmen Dr. Yizhar Hess and Mr. Gael Grunewald, the organization’s president, Ms. Tova Dorfman, The Jewish Agency Executive Chairman Doron Almog and The Jewish Agency Chairman of the Board of Governors Mark Wilf. Other key figures included the IDF Spokesperson, a number of field leaders in Hasbara (Public Diplomacy), as well as military and security experts. The special conference convened at Binyanei Hauma (Jerusalem Convention Center.) On the first day, participants engaged in in-depth discussions on combating Antisemitism and the future of the Diaspora Jewish world. The second day was devoted to fact-finding tours of Jerusalem and southern Israel. The first group opened their program at the National Memorial Center on Mount Herzl, continuing with a visit to the new Rehabilitation Center at Hadassah Hospital on Mount Scopus. The second group visited Kibbutz Nir Oz and Kibbutz Beeri in the Gaza border region, where they were joined by kibbutz residents for an explanatory tour and experienced hands-on exposure to the events and horrific scenarios of the black Shabbat of October 7. The day closed with an emotional, close-up dialogue with survivors from the Nova Music Festival.





הסתדרות הציונית העולמית
World Zionist Organization



❖ **Symposium on the College Campus Situation** - An encounter was organized at the National Institutions building with Professor Leonard Saxe, Director of the Cohen Center for Modern Jewish Studies at Brandeis University, a senior scholar whose recent research includes the impact of October 7 on students on college campuses. His presentation included a panel of speakers from various campuses.

❖ **One-Day Seminar Marking International Holocaust Memorial Day** – For the first time, International Holocaust Memorial Day has been commemorated through an inter-organizational seminar focusing on discourse about the Shoah (Holocaust) within Special Education. This landmark event was organized jointly by Yad Vashem and the Jezreel Valley Regional Council’s Education Department, bringing together educational teams from across the formal education system, including Special Ed. teams, parent association leadership, Shoah education teams and other bodies. Honored guests were the President of the World Zionist Organization, Tova Dorfman, social entrepreneur, Adi Altschuler, and Jezreel Valley Regional Council Head, Eyal Betzer.



❖ **“Zikaron BaSalon” (Shoah Memorial in the Living Room) Seminar** – In preparation for Holocaust Martyrs and Heroes Memorial Day in May, a two-day preparatory seminar for 200 volunteers from around Israel was held, with a focus on inspirational and reflective materials. Participants heard presentations by specialists in this field of study as well as from Shoah survivors and then elaborated ideas on how we can best build hope through the format of close encounters in private homes around Israel, given the setting and complexities of the present year.





ההסתדרות הציונית העולמית
World Zionist Organization

- ❖ **Cycling Centers for Teenagers** – As part of a joint initiative, developed by the World Zionist Organization in conjunction with the “Bartali – Youth in Movement” Foundation, it has been possible to enable the continuation of the community cycling clubs on a regular basis for teenagers evacuated from Kibbutz Beeri and Kibbutz Nahal Oz.



- ❖ **“Bring Them Home” Display** – The artistic exhibit at Hostages’ Square in Tel Aviv has been reproduced and transferred for display at significant sites in London. The mobile display has been exhibited at major venues, such as Trafalgar Square, Oxford Road, opposite the British Houses of Parliament, etc. It has been given major media exposure and the overwhelming response it has received from the wider public has been one of interest and admiration. However, it has also met with some blatant and vocal opposition to the exhibit and expressions of anti-Israel sentiment. The display at London venues was made possible by The Department for Israel and Holocaust Commemoration and the assistance of the World Zionist Organization Representative of the Executive in London and the full cooperation of the Israeli and Jewish communities and their respective volunteers.



- ❖ **Lectures** – The Vice-Chairman and Acting Chairman of the World Zionist Organization continues his series of encounters and lectures on Zionism and Jewish Peoplehood. Most recently, these have included encounters with the female faculty at the Tzahali Pre-military Academy for Religious Women and teachers at the “Hayovel” Elementary School in Modiin, which is part of the ENTER ‘Jewish Peoplehood Alliance’ framework’s program for schools that aims to inculcate Jewish peoplehood as a core value in formal education.





- ❖ **Israel's Border Regions: Conference for Israeli Community Leadership Cadres in North America** – This conference took place in Miami and brought together dozens of leaders from across the US and Canada in an encounter of a special kind, focusing on the key role of Israeli leaders and communities following the 'quake' experienced after the October 2023 events. The conference was planned and led by the Head of the Department for Irgun, together with the Executive Director, the Head of the North American Desk and the Director of Programs for North America; the program and sessions were facilitated by veteran social entrepreneur and strategic advisor, Gilad Babchuk. During the sessions, participants explored DIY leadership in times of crisis, strengths, peer learning, and worked on development of meaningful programs for their return to the community, as well as addressing how best to link up to the Jewish community and Next Gen. An Israeli Kabbalat Shabbat program included a service led by Cantor Galit Dadon-Cohen. The leadership group were introduced to new research conducted among Israelis in the Diaspora following the October atrocities as well as the publication of a comprehensive survey in Israel on attitudes towards Israelis living in the Diaspora; they also engaged in dialogue and brainstorming break-outs about the research findings.



- ❖ **'Women on the Frontline'** – The "Women's Forum" and the Israeli Division of the Greater Miami Region Federation hosted the Head of the Department for Irgun and Israelis Abroad for a keynote talk and public dialogue about the role of women on the Israeli frontline in the wake of the October 2023 atrocities.





❖ **Solidarity Missions to Israel** - The World Zionist Organization continues to welcome solidarity delegations arriving in Israel to express their identification with and support for the State of Israel. Below is a list of the visiting missions initiated by or scheduled in conjunction with the World Zionist Organization, over the course of the past few weeks:

- ImpactIL solidarity mission from Latin America. The 20 young leaders engaged in voluntary work, brainstorming activities, and explored projects to implement on their return home to their respective communities. The group comprised members from different countries in Latin America: Argentina, Chile, Colombia, Mexico, Peru and Uruguay, and the delegation was sponsored jointly by 'Taglit' (Israel Experience) and ONWARD Israel, together with local Latin American Jewish organizations.
- A solidarity mission from the United States, comprising community leadership figures. Members of the delegation went on fact-finding tours of Jerusalem and southern Israel to study the challenges and difficulties in the wake of the October atrocities, with a view to assessing the capacity, impact and contribution by Diaspora communities and their connection to Israel. The mission's goal was to connect to local communities and foster their own connection to Israel in complicated times, as currently experienced by Jews around the world and Israelis, alike.
- "Hineni" mission – A solidarity mission under the aegis of the World Zionist Organization in conjunction with the ECJC, and with JDC sponsorship. The delegation comprised 33 leaders from formal and informal education in nine European countries: Austria, Bulgaria, Estonia, France, Germany, Greece, Hungary, Italy and Great Britain. Mission members engaged in a series of meetings, visited the Israel Ministry of Foreign Affairs, and traveled South to Kibbutz Kfar Aza and Re'im, where they heard first-person accounts about the events from survivors. They then visited the voluntary project providing meals and music for soldiers at Gilat Junction, which impressed them profoundly in terms of volunteerism and civilian mobilization on behalf of Israel's serving soldiers. They also met with evacuees from Israel's southern and northern border regions, visited the Forum and Hostages Square and met with representatives of the hostages' families. Far more than simply a solidarity mission, "Hineni" (Here I am) is a mission with an unequivocal, winning position, that states: "We, and everything we embody, with all that we are and what we are capable of becoming" (929 / Tanakh B'Yachad website) .

Video with English subtitles:

<https://www.facebook.com/zionistenterprises/videos/1372782996554442>





הסתדרות הציונית העולמית
World Zionist Organization

- All-female delegation of women from Manhattan JCC (one of the leading Jewish institutions in New York) led by CEO Rabbi Joanna Samuels, arrived in Israel on a solidarity mission – during which they toured Ofakim, the site of the Nova Festival massacre at Re'im, where they held a memorial ceremony, as well as visiting Netivot and Kibbutz Nir Oz.
- A mission of senior directors of communities in the Conservative movement across North America visited Israel. The delegation was accompanied by the Vice Chairman and Acting Chair of the World Zionist Organization.
- Two mission from "Temple Beth Shalom", one group from outside Boston, and a second group from outside Philadelphia. Communities with a deep, enduring connection with Israel.
- A "Leading Tikkun Olam – Supporting Israel" Mission – This delegation unites diverse opinion leaders from around the world on a journey to Israel. The schedule included fact-finding tours, and mission members met with a wide range of people and entities, with a major focus on the situation in Israel and activism in civil society that has been ongoing since the outbreak of the "Iron Swords" war. The outcome of the mission's program has been to connect them directly to what is happening in Israel, as well as creating links to enable joint future programming. It has bridged them directly and experientially into the situation in Israel, enabling them to share personal sights and sensations with members of their communities on their return home and talk about what has happened to our people from firsthand accounts and information that they have accumulated. The itinerary included a visit to the National Institutions building and to the Herzl Education Center, as well as to kibbutzim in both southern and northern Israel. The delegation also traveled to Tel Aviv to the Forum and Hostages Square; members met with both evacuee communities and educational teams working with those communities on a voluntary basis; they met, too, with Dror Morag, Head of the Department for Social Activism and Tikkun Olam.

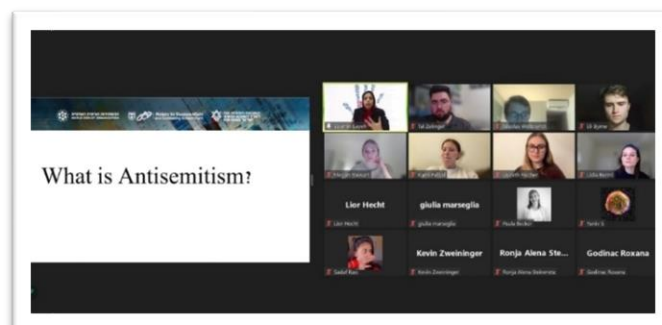




- ❖ **B'nai B'rith International Activity Programs** – The B'nai B'rith World Center in Jerusalem concluded a visit to Israel by 11 journalists from six Latin American countries — Argentina, Brazil, Chile, Costa Rica, Ecuador and Uruguay. Their program of meetings and site visits focused on the Oct. 7 terror rampage and the ensuing war with Hamas. The group held meetings with a range of government figures, ministers, Members of Knesset, diplomats, security specialists and other key figures. They also met with survivors of the Nova Music Festival, relatives of the hostages being held in Gaza, and evacuees from Israel's northern border. The group traveled South to see the city of Ofakim and Kibbutz Nir Oz firsthand as well as the Nova Festival site and the memorial monuments at Re'im and Tekumah. In Jerusalem, the journalists toured the newly-opened Rehabilitation Center at Hadassah Hospital, visited Yad Vashem, Magen David Adom headquarters; hands-on visits also took place to other key locations in Israel.



- ❖ **Lecture to Non-Jewish Students about Aliyah and Antisemitism** – On February 19, in conjunction with the IDI (Israel Democracy Institute), an online lecture was organized via Zoom on the state of Antisemitism around the world, with a view to providing university students both the knowledge and a platform to promote public diplomacy in countries around the world. Dozens of students attended from many countries and data sets were presented about Antisemitism and its dramatic upsurge in the recent period. Among the numerous questions answered were: “How does one define Antisemitism?”, “How is the boycott of Israeli products antisemitic?”, and “Why is the call ‘from the river to the sea’ antisemitic?” The event proved an important opportunity to create a direct connection with young students around the world.





הסתדרות הציונית העולמית
World Zionist Organization



❖ Activity Programs in Latin America

- Radio broadcasts of the show, “On the Side of Good” are continuing on Freedom FM radio. The show has been running fortnightly since the outbreak of the “Iron Swords” war and reaches tens of thousands of listeners across North America. The show is hosted by media figure and winner of the “Golden Gola” award, Galina Goldberg, together with the World Zionist Organization Aliyah Promotion Department’s New York staff member, Eugene Lekach.
- A Shabbaton was organized in New York for students in the Hillel organization, which serves Jewish students, with the participation of a professional team from the World Zionist Organization Aliyah Promotion Department.

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❖ Activity Programs in Europe

- A series of four “Lekh-Lekha” encounters were held in France with Freddo Pachter and Chaim Berkowitz in Saint-Brice, Creteil, Marseilles, and Fontenay-sous-Bois.
- The World Zionist Organization in France is also currently active in promoting Aliyah in medical milieux. An Aliyah Fair is being planned for the near future targeting the medical professions and work is under way to open an Ulpan for medical doctors.
- In France, a range of enrichment programs were recently held for Ulpan students on topics including: Poetics now, Israeli music, trailblazing singers, and other areas of contemporary artistic development.
- The World Zionist Organization and the Jewish Agency for Israel are preparing an in-person Aliyah Fair for this month, to take place in London.
- World Zionist Organization Aliyah Promotion Department Representatives in the UK visited schools that are involved in the Hasbara (Israel Diplomacy) program in conjunction with the Middle East Forum Education Fund.





הסתדרות הציונית העולמית
World Zionist Organization

- ❖ **Heroes - First Testimony – “In Their Own Words”** – The WZO continues to send October 7 survivors from the South and the Nova Music Festival to relate their personal accounts of events to Jewish communities around the world. Over the past month, delegations of survivors have participated in educational activities in Germany; toured university campuses in the UK; spoken at a pro-Israel rally in London, at the BBYO Convention in Orlando, in various communities in Miami, the Mid-West and Canada - to name but some of the events. There is a tremendous response and interest in meeting and supporting the survivors from within Jewish communities and organizations and most of the events have been packed to capacity. Further survivor delegations will soon leave for France, Barcelona, Ohio, Texas, California, and other destinations.

For further information, please contact yahalp@wzo.org.il . Video clip from a speaker event: <https://www.facebook.com/JCCChicago/videos/1129822161365007>



- ❖ **BBYO International Convention 2024** – The international BBYO youth movement marked its centenary this month at its annual international convention in Orlando, Florida – a century of activity and growth. The event was attended by over 5,000 teenagers and alumni from 60 different countries. Silvio Joskowicz, Head of the Department for Zionist Enterprises, was among the guest speakers. The range of encounters enabled participants to engage in an in-depth, frank dialogue about the challenges confronting the world in which we live, while also serving as a space for mutual support and allowing them to build inter-personal connections. Other keynote participants were Dan Tessler, a survivor of the Nova Music Festival and Yaheli Yakubovitz from Kibbutz Zikim, who was involved in combat from October 7: both gave personal accounts as part of the “First Testimony – In Their Own Words” project.





ההסתדרות הציונית העולמית
World Zionist Organization

❖ **Annual JCC Association Encounter** – Representatives of the World Zionist Organization Department for Zionist Enterprises participated at the professional conference for 170 JCC directors from across North America, where participants engaged on the challenge of being Jewish in today's free world. One of the program high points was the performance and encounter with the members of the Shufuni Band, which was formed by four musicians from Sderot, Beerli and Miflasim in the wake of October 7. The quartet relate personal accounts but mostly sing about their experiences. The band also made another seven appearances in Baltimore and Denver, reaching a total audience of over 3,000. This tour was also part of the "First Testimony – In Their Own Words" project, in cooperation with the JCCA and the Ministry for Diaspora Affairs' partnership in the 'Mithabrim' project.



❖ **2024 Jewish Holiday Calendar**– The annual magnetic calendar for Jewish Festivals has been published in conjunction with the Chagim Institute and the English digital version may now be downloaded via this link:
<https://www.wzo.org.il/department/enterprises/1200/en>.



❖ **Geula (Redemption) Project** – A worldwide call has been issued to young women who might be interested in attending a two-week seminar under the auspices of the "Geula" project. The first seminar intake was in December 2022, with a participation of 18 young women from Europe and America. The program's target population was young women, who were selected by a public committee for a leadership program in the field of Aliyah Promotion. The seminar was conducted in conjunction with a leading university, with a view to training and developing young women's leadership skills within the Jewish world; to reinforce connections and cooperation between young Diaspora and Israeli female leadership cadres; to promote Aliyah and foster development of innovative initiatives led by women. Seminar alumni actively assist the World Zionist Organization in creating Aliyah promotion programs within their communities and two of the graduates have even made Aliyah. Read more about the Call for Participants for a second intake on this page: <https://domoi.org/en/geula/>





הסתדרות הציונית העולמית
World Zionist Organization

❖ **Zionism Quiz** – The Zionist Council in Israel has officially launched the 2024 Zionism Quiz. This represents a unique opportunity to learn about our shared experiences in a different and far more interesting manner. This year, the Quiz will be dedicated to the IDF, the Israel security forces and the communities in Israel’s border regions. Local Quiz heats were held recently across dozens of schools and youth movement clubs around Israel. Successful contestants will continue to the regional tier and from there to the Finals, which will be televised on Keshet Channel 12 TV, with moderator Niv Raskin, on Yom Ha’atzma’ut, Israel Independence Day 2024.



❖ **Covenant of Life** – Under the auspices of the Zionist Council in Israel’s “Covenant of Life” project, Druze and Jewish students were able to meet up this week. Students from Herzliya’s ‘Harishonim’ High School hosted students from Bet Jann Comprehensive for an engaging encounter that included dialogue groups, an artistic program and a competitive sport contest in mixed groups. The levels of in-depth dialogue reached by students from both schools was awesome and truly impressive.



❖ **Zionism Seminar** – The Zionist Council in Israel’s “Retamim” (“Reins”) leadership program for Negev teenagers departed on weekend retreat last week, with a seminar focusing on Zionism, the pioneering spirit and love of the Land of Israel. The co-ed participants gained insights into the stories of the early pioneer men and women from the twentieth century and encountered the stories of contemporary pioneers. They closed the circle by addressing their own Zionist identity and its relevance in the present era.



❖ **‘Women Leaders in Israeli Society – Building a Society of Excellence’** – The returning delegation from the overseas Hasbara (Israeli Diplomacy) mission, a project under the auspices of the World Zionist Organization, met at Mount Herzl for its wrap-up session. As part of the program, they followed the Zionist Women Leaders’ trail on Mount Herzl of figures who led change in Israeli society. They also visited the Herzl Museum and processed their experiences and insights from the mission (and its initial concluding encounter) together. This opened the way to an exploration of options for continued cooperation into the future - mission members are presently considering how best to further projects and reinforce their internal networking connections with each other and they remain in active contact and collaboration with the various bodies they met through the project.





ההסתדרות הציונית העולמית
World Zionist Organization

- ❖ **Garin Tzabar at the Herzl Center** – Garin Tzabar (a core cohort comprising alumni from the Israel Scouts movement in the Diaspora), a group of young people who made Aliyah and enlisted in the IDF, were recently hosted at the Herzl Center. The day opened with a memorial ceremony for Border Police Officer and Garin alumna, Sgt. Elisheva Rose Ida Lubin z"l, who fell in line of duty last November in the Old City of Jerusalem. The program continued with a tour of the Museum and Mount Herzl Park with the National Service and Voluntary Service Year team. The young people heard presentations and engaged on the subjects of the Israeli dream and leadership; the day concluded with a visit to the National Memorial Hall for Israel's Fallen.



- ❖ **Recognized In-Service Training Towards Counselor Certification** – The Herzl Center conducts recognized in-service training for informal education counselors as part of the program for renewal of their Ministry of Education certification. The subject of the day-long seminar is "From a historic visit to a journey that created a vision of Utopia." This seminar day is recognized by all campus authorities. Registration is available via the following link:

<https://forms.gle/wk12ALo9w4X9Qvru5>.



- ❖ **Settlement Division**

- **In the South** – The Division continues its activity toward the rehabilitation and renovation of the affected communities. At this point in time, the Division is focusing on the establishment of temporary accommodation at seven sites for residents of southern Israel whose homes were destroyed. These will include 196 units for residents of Kibbutz Beeri, who will temporarily relocate to Kibbutz Hazerim, whereas new temporary homes at Omer will be provided for inhabitants from Kibbutz Kissufim and additional communities. The Division also continues to provide ongoing trauma counselling for the communities concerned as well as the villages and local councils, in order to ensure community rehabilitation in all localities.
- **In the North** – The Division is working on rehabilitation and renovation programs for the rural sector of northern Israel. Five-year projects have been submitted on infrastructure renovation, the expansion of various communities, and financial assistance to support projects and private enterprise.

