THE JEWISH AGENCY FOR ISRAEL

Board of Governors

November 7, 2022

**Unity of the Jewish People Committee**

Committee Chair and Chairman of the Executive: Doron Almog

Deputy Chairman of the Executive: Martine Fleishman

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**Agenda**

1. Greetings and minutes of the previous meeting: Major General (Res.) Doron Almog, Chairperson of the Executive Committee and of the UJP Committee; Martine Fleishman, Deputy Chairperson of the UJP Committee.
2. A presentation by the JPPI
3. Open discussion

**Summary of Meeting**

**Opening Remarks**

Doron Almog welcomed the committee members and participants and thanked JPPI members Professor Yedida Stern and Shmuel Rosner for their participation and presentation of the Institute's research.

Martine noted that there was an excellent meeting last time and welcomed Prof. Yedida Stern and Shmuel Rosner and invited them to present their research and discuss the findings. She also noted that this is a table for the Jewish people and if there are other topics to talk about, this is the time to do so.

**Presentation by the JPPI**

The research was presented by Prof. Yedida Stern and Shmuel Rosner, following copies sent earlier by email.

The presentation included highlights from two of their recent reports: "Annual Assessment: The Situation and Dynamics of the Jewish People, 2022", as well as "2021 - Jewish People Dialogue".

*The Annual Assessment* undertakes to determine whether the past year’s developments have affected Israel and the Jewish world and is also submitted to the Government of Israel, a condensed, policy-oriented overview of trends and recommendations in five different dimensions of Jewish well-being:geopolitics, community bonds, resources ,identity and identification, and demography.

JPPI’s 2021 Jewish World Dialogue Displays the outcomes of the dialogue that John Ruskey and Shlomo fisher from JPPI conducted with 300 people from around the Jewish world on how basic law “Israel – The Nation-State of the Jewish People” should be actualized.

**Discussion**

A discussion was held on the meaning of AmiUnity in Israeli society, and specifically on the topic of Jewish pluralism and its perception in Israel.

* Rabbi Rick Jacobs praised AmiUnity and stressed the importance of delivering the message of pluralism loud and clear.
* Yaron Shavit discussed the issue of Israel as the national home of the Jewish people and said the Jewish Agency's programs must deliver this message.
* Dr. David Breakstone said we need to maintain a dialogue despite the disagreements. The dialogue itself keeps us united. The Jewish Agency needs to step up, become more active in current affairs and be the central body for embracing Jews who are not formally recognized by the government as such (in terms of Giur, marriage etc.).
* Rabbi Gilad Kariv referred to the Nation State Bill and its impact on Israel and World Jewry's relationship. He added that there is a battle over the narrative. We must respond and impact upon to the active measures taken by the Israeli government to mold the Jewish story into the shape it prefers. One of our goals should be making the Jewish Agency a leading actor and a partner of the government in creating this narrative. He mentioned the Nissim Report and the upcoming Bagatz on conversion as a challenge.
* Norman Goldstein commended the chairman's willingness to open a dialogue with people of all streams.
* Michael Siegal discussed the positive changes in the Jewish Agency during the last 3 months, including the election of Isaac Herzog as Chairman which he defined as a political earthquake in Israel. He added that we forward to a renewed affirmation of the Jewish Agency as the most prominent political body of the Jewish people worldwide. He concluded by discussing the importance of marketing for the fulfillment of our goals.
* Rabbi Steven Warnick praised AmiUnity and Dr. Greenfield for the project's achievements. He asked about the initiative's resources and share in the budget considering its significance and about the challenges it is now facing in terms of content.
* Heschel Raskas said the task of uniting our people is ours and not just the Jewish Agency's and it is something we all need to take into consideration.
* Jerry Silverman reviewed the JFNA’s General Assembly which was held earlier in the week and discussed its positive outcomes. He added that the Jewish Agency must work harder to influence Israeli legislation that has impact on Jewish diaspora.
* David Barish thanked Israeli donations to Jewish communities in USA, which are not mentioned often enough and spoke about Jewish youth which visit Israel and return more Zionist.
* Mark Wilf spoke on behalf of the JNFA and expressed its commitment to the initiative, while assuring it will be embraced and supported.

**Chairman's Conclusion**

* The goal of this discussion was to debate and examine different ideas on the issues of unity and pluralism of the Jewish people.
* AmiUnity is one of our people’s most vital projects. It has the potential to unite us and prevent us from splitting into different religions or groups. The issue of reuniting the people was one of the most important issues for me when I assumed the position of Jewish Agency Chair, as I explained to politicians, organizations and congregations from all over the world.
* It appears that more than ever before, today there is much more openness towards different streams in Israel. Israeli people are more open to pluralism in Judaism and we need to translate these positions into actions.
* Our story goes beyond present-day politics. However, government relations are better today, we are finding more positive dialogue with the Ministry of Education and Diaspora Affairs and Prime Minister Binyamin Netanyahu's speech in the GA seemed to me as an attempt to extend a hand to Diaspora Jews.
* The committee will approach the Ministry of Diaspora and invite them to present their projects (Mosaic in particular).