



לשכת יו"ר ההסתדרות הציונית העולמית
Office of the Chairman

BH, 10 Heshvan, 5781
28 October, 2020

Dear friends,

In 1897 a scattered people gathered together in what seemed almost surreal. For the first time in nearly 2,000 years, Jewish representatives from dozens of communities around the world assembled to discuss the return to their homeland.

There in Basel, Switzerland, they began discussing how to turn an old dream into an achievable reality, paving a path of hope out of despair, envisioning renewal from where there was once destruction and pursuing unity from the fragments of separation.

At that groundbreaking event, for the first time in history, our prayer books filled with verses of longing for a return to Zion and Jerusalem saw a glimmer of hope in the first steps toward fulfilling the dream.

Theodor Herzl, the Visionary of the State and the other early leaders saw Zionism as the fulfillment of the natural and historic right of our people and instilled within the delegates of the Zionist Congress a sense of unity.

The World Zionist Organization is the organization that brought about the rebirth of the State of Israel. It serves as the government of the Jewish people, which gathers and unites under its wings various opinions, views, denominations and challenges faced by the Jewish people, both in the Diaspora and in Israel.

When Menachem Begin was elected prime minister in 1977, he was asked in what style he would run the government. He replied, "in a good Jewish style."

Inspired by this great leader, I strive to manage this important organization in a good Jewish, Zionist, ethical style, working together with the members of the Zionist Executive in Israel and in the Diaspora.

Today I take on the important role of leading the Zionist movement. I do this out of humble reverence and the realization of the eternal values of our people -- values of freedom, mutual respect, identity and tradition.

My dear friends, members of the organization, representatives of the Jewish communities, those from different denominations with various views, we all share one goal with one vision reserved uniquely for our people.



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Our nation is thousands of years old, a people which proudly carried on its shoulders the eternal Book of Books that has imparted it to the world.

We are a people who have gone through hardships, persecutions, humiliations and murders. We are a nation whose homeland was taken from us, not once but twice but never gave up on the dream of returning to it.

We are a nation that has revived its language and preserved its culture.

We are the most persecuted people in the history of the human race.

However, we are a nation that arose from the ashes of oppression and exile, a people that tore off their shackles and returned to the Land of Israel, its historic homeland.

Among all the differences of our people, we acknowledge our common challenges. Some of us live in the Diaspora, but all of us see the Land of Israel as the home of every Jew. We stand together to face the innumerable challenges before our people.

Our shared values include strengthening Jewish and Zionist identity, the struggle against Antisemitism and boycott movements, education, the importance of settling the land, strengthening the centrality of Jerusalem as our eternal and historic capital, aliyah-immigration to Israel, tradition, and the Hebrew language that has accompanied us for generations.

Over the years, the National Institutions have redeemed lands, raised funds and donations, fought for our right to exist and to immigrate and settle the land.

Today, carrying our eternal heritage since the days of Mount Sinai,

From Mount Sinai, to the Biblical Prophets, to the fathers of modern Zionism, we continue our obligation to labor for the people of Israel and the Land of Israel.

In this capacity, I would like to thank first and foremost the Creator of the world and ask for His strength and guidance in the various challenges that still lie ahead of us. And to you dear Zionist activists from Israel and the Diaspora, and all those among whom the spark of hope and vision of Zionism beats in their hearts, I thank you.



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I look forward to working together for the continued fulfillment of our vision.

"Behold, a people that rises like a lioness and raises itself up like a lion." Numbers 23:24

"Turned a rag into a flag, and a miserable rabble into a people, gathered upright around that flag." Theodor Herzl, 1901

With the love of the people of Israel and the Land of Israel,

Sincerely,

Yaakov Hagoel
Chairman of the Zionist Executive