

WORLD
UNION FOR
PROGRESSIVE
JUDAISM



האיגוד
העולמי
ליהדות
מתקדמת

April 19, 2007 / 1 Iyyar 5767

Dear Prime Minister Olmert,

On behalf of the entire leadership of the World Union for Progressive Judaism, and all members of the international movement of Reform/Progressive Judaism, we are compelled to express our shock at the recent outrageous comments of Rabbi Mordechai Eliyahu on Israeli radio to the effect that the Holocaust was caused by, and was punishment for, Reform Judaism.

Many leaders of our movements throughout the world - including the Union for Reform Judaism, the Association of Reform Zionists of America, the Hebrew Union College, the Central Conference of American Rabbis, Women of Reform Judaism and many others - were astounded that such statements can still be made by people who claim to represent the message of Judaism, and expect you to respond to this highly disturbing fundamentalist prejudice and incitement.

We urge that you speak up on this issue, loudly and clearly, in the spirit of our meeting last month during the World Union's international convention in Jerusalem, and that you work together with the Reform movement to promote mutual respect and Jewish solidarity. You can do this by issuing an immediate and unequivocal statement repudiating Eliyahu's comments as being antithetical to the founding moral and social tenets of the state of Israel, alien to the spirit of Judaism, whose "ways are ways of pleasantness and all its paths are peace," and a threat to the fabric of the Jewish community.

While it is not necessary to demonstrate to you the fallacy and offense of his remarks, we are obliged to inform you of the urgency with which global Reform leaders are looking to you to take a public stand and provide an example to the rest of the world's religious and political leaders. Such bigotry, hatred and intolerance must not go unchallenged or quietly condoned - especially when it arises from within our own people. Rather, we must work diligently to advance the principles of mutual respect and cooperation so that civil and peaceful society may prevail, and the rich diversity of the Jewish people be celebrated and validated.

Sincerely,

Steven M. Bauman
Chairman

Rabbi Uri Regev
President

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