



World Union for Progressive Judaism International Assembly
11-December, 2019 – Chicago, USA

Dear International Assembly and Executive Board member:

In accordance with protocol, Carole Sterling as chair empaneled a resolutions committee to spearhead the process of requesting, formulating and editing possible resolutions to be introduced before the IA at the meeting on 11-December, 2019, at 11.00-noon, in Chicago.

The committee includes the following members:

Dr Philip Bliss OAM Chairman Australia

Steve Lurie South Africa

Rabbi Professor Walter Homolka PhD
Germany

Rabbi Danny Burkeman North America

Marie Sheinen Russia

Sharene Hambur Australia

Miriam Olchansky South America

Charles Rothschild North America

Rabbi Lea Muehlstein UK

and also includes:

Ambassador Rabbi David Saperstein WUPJ
President North America

Carole Sterling WUPJ Chair North America
Ziva Haller Rubenstein WUPJ Israel

Eyal Ronder WUPJ Israel

The committee reached out to all WUPJ regions requesting resolutions, and then held various meetings to arrive at a final set of suggestions.

These suggestions have also been reviewed by the WUPJ Management Committee.

Attached please find the set of suggested resolutions.

These will be presented for discussion and approval at the meeting, as detailed in the meeting agenda.

We look forward to seeing you in Chicago!

B'vracha,

Charlie

Charlie Rothschild
Secretary, WUPJ Executive Board



Resolutions for Consideration

1. Resolution on Antisemitism and Hate Speech

Whereas we have witnessed in recent years a shocking rise in anti-Semitic events including many acts of violence, including murder and physical injuries, and

Whereas acts of verbal antisemitism, racism and hate against numerous minority groups have become more common and spread more widely especially through social media, and

Whereas anti-Semitic and general hate speech including anti-Zionist rhetoric have become everyday events from numerous political leaders around the world, and

Whereas many Jews feel more threatened now than for many years

IT IS THEREFORE RESOLVED that this International Assembly of the World Union for Progressive Judaism calls on the governments of our affiliate regional bodies to both step up security at all Jewish community centres including synagogues and schools AND to introduce educational programs in all schools to fight any and all forms of Racism, hate speech and violence. We also call on the WUPJ to help develop these programs and work in partnership with all of our affiliates to use and distribute as an educational tool, to try and combat hate speech directed against Jews and any other minority groups.

2. Resolution on Antisemitism and Israel

Whereas with the rise of anti-Semitic incidents and statements across the world there has been concern to differentiate anti-Semitic activities from legitimate criticism of Israel, and

Whereas the International Holocaust Remembrance Alliance Working Definition of antisemitism states that manifestations of antisemitism include:

- Denying the Jewish people their right to self-determination, e.g., by claiming that the existence of a State of Israel is a racist endeavor.
- Applying double standards by requiring of Israel a behavior not expected or demanded of any other democratic nation.
- Using the symbols and images associated with classic antisemitism (e.g., claims of Jews killing Jesus or blood libel) to characterize Israel or Israelis
- Drawing comparisons of contemporary Israeli policy to that of the Nazis.
- Holding Jews collectively responsible for actions of the state of Israel.



And Whereas the Working Definition clearly identifies anti-Israel rhetoric which constitutes antisemitism

IT IS THEREFORE RESOLVED that the International Assembly of the World Union calls upon governments of our affiliate regional bodies to adopt the Working Definition as adopted by Holocaust Remembrance Alliance;

IT IS FURTHER RESOLVED that the International Assembly of the World Union call upon all institutions associated with the World Union to educate themselves and their members as to the Working Definition as adopted by Holocaust Remembrance Alliance so that they can identify anti-Semitic rhetoric

3. Resolution on Inclusion in Leadership

Whereas The Mission Statement of the World Union for Progressive Judaism states that “Progressive Judaism extends the scope of religious observance by granting full equality to all Jews, irrespective of gender and sexual orientation”, and

Whereas the Mission Statement further states the goal of the World Union “to ensure that all Jews have access to a vibrant and personally meaningful Jewish life that can best inspire them spiritually and ensure the future of the Jewish People”,

IT IS THEREFORE RESOLVED that the International Assembly of the World Union calls upon all institutions associated with the World Union to adopt specific policies regarding encouraging inclusion of all genders in their work including in the areas of:

- Board and management composition and recruitment;
- Representation on panels, and at events, conferences and workshop

4. Resolution on Climate Change

Whereas the concept of Tikkun Olam, of working as partners with God to heal the world, is rooted in the Torah, rabbinic, medieval and modern interpretations of our holy texts, and

Whereas our mission statement talks about Inspiring the Next Generation: Engaging youth and young adults, and anticipates a safe and positive future, and

Whereas the large majority of climate specialists worldwide say our world is heating alarmingly and the future of large numbers of people (particularly the poorer nations who are less able to mitigate changes and manage disasters), animals and habitats are under growing threat,



IT IS THEREFORE RESOLVED that we reassert that the modern Jewish concern for climate justice and the environment (in which many Progressive Jews across the globe are already engaged) is not only an authentic reading of our ancient sources but also urgent and essential, and that all our individual and organisational members should be urged to 'act and to learn' about the unfolding climate crisis. These commitments are ones that are essential to pass from generation to generation; as we aspire to pass on this world in good condition to those generations we will never know.

Practical Steps Might Include:

- Take responsibility for organisational and communal impacts and seek to minimise them.
- Use renewable energy, recycled products, manage buildings to minimise waste.
- Audit and publicise to set an example.
- Raise our concerns in public and political forums at every opportunity.
- Seek to develop effective 'virtual congregations' and 'virtual conferences' to reduce travel.
- Collect and/or produce and distribute education materials both general and with specific Jewish sources.
- Encourage members to take actions in their homes and lives as a matter of Jewish responsibility.
- Make Shabbat a day to remember and connect with creation, 'Zecher l'ma'asei v'reishit' and to minimise energy use by reducing travel, phone, computer and similar uses.
- Emphasise environmental connections with each festival, eg 'Birthday of the World', harvest festivals etc.