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next paper is on  
April 17.

# South african Jewish Report

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## United we stand, proudly wearing our kippot!

Last Saturday night, hundreds of community members, and wellwishers from Christian groups, gathered at The Zone in Rosebank, Johannesburg in support of the SA Jewish Board's '#KippasAgainstHate' initiative. As requested, all the men wore yarmulkes. The initiative followed an incident of blatant anti-Semitism at the same venue the week before, when kippah-wearing youngsters were physically and verbally abused by three men. Although some worried about the security risks, the aim was to send out a message that South African Jewry would not be intimidated by the actions of a few thugs, and would continue to proudly identify as Jews, always. The event was a great success. See page 3

Photo by Ilan Ossendryver

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and Kosher Pesach**

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# Be quiet!



Parshat

Rabbi Matthew Liebenberg  
Claremont Wynberg Shul

Prior to the dramatic splitting of the Red Sea that took place after the Exodus, the Israelites found themselves between a rock and a hard place. The Egyptian chariots were closing in from behind and the sea was in front. Some of the people panicked and complained; others held fast and prayed; some were prepared to go to war.

“Moses said to the people: ‘Do not fear! Stand fast and see the salvation of Hashem that He will perform for you today; for as you have seen Egypt today, you shall not see them ever again! Hashem shall make war for you, and you shall remain silent.’” What does this phrase mean?

Rabbeinu Bachya views it not as a rebuke against their grumbling but as an inspiring message: “Hashem will fight on your behalf because since the Egyptians saw that it was none other than Hashem Himself who slew their firstborn and yet they still pursued you, it is clear that their fight is not against you but against Hashem. Because this is so, the war is His to wage and not yours and therefore you must remain silent.”

Rabbi Meir Simcha of Dvinsk explains, based on a Midrash, that the phrase may be read as applying also to future generations.

However, there is a difference between the Exodus and future generations. At the Exodus the Israelites had a justifiable claim against Hashem - why had He taken them out of Egypt only to die soon thereafter?

Thus He was compelled by all that is right and fair, to fight on their behalf. However, times would come when Jews would not have

a justifiable complaint against G-d or a good reason to ask for His assistance.

Nevertheless, He promised them that even at such times He will fight on their behalf: “Hashem will fight on your behalf” even at a time “when you shall remain silent” out of a sense of shame with no adequate claim for help.

There is a Chassidic interpretation of this verse. The word *yelachem*, normally translated as “He will fight” is related to the word *lechem*, meaning “bread”.

Furthermore, the word *tacharishun*, “You shall remain silent” is related to the verb *char-ash*, meaning “plow”. Hence the verse would read: “Hashem shall provide bread for you, provided that you plow.” This reflects a basic Jewish belief that G-d will assist man only if man himself begins the process.

We must first work the land and then G-d will produce the result. This is, of course, opposite to the actual context in which the

phrase appears where G-d tells the Jewish people to do nothing at all and He will fight on their behalf.

Another original explanation has been put forward. A venerable rabbi was visiting a city on Shabbat Shirah, when the tale of the splitting of the sea is read. He noticed that the congregants were very talkative.

In his sermon he explained that we must seek relevance to current events in the weekly parsha. How do we apply the phrase “Hashem will fight for you and you shall remain silent?”

The rabbi continued: “Hashem will fight for you against the schemes of the evil inclination, but that is provided you fulfil the condition in the verse, “and you shall remain silent.

“If you restrain yourselves from speaking about worldly matters in shul, then you will merit His assistance.” I imagine that you could hear a pin drop from that point on in the service!

## KASHRUT ALERT

### KOSHER FOR PASSOVER SHELVES

The kashrut division of the Union of Orthodox Synagogues advises that the “Pesach section” in retail stores is not under Beth Din supervision. Beth Din certification extends only to the products, and the Beth Din has no control over how independent retailers pack their shelves.

The Beth Din urges the community to “please check the labels very carefully to ensure that the products are properly certified for Pesach”.

KosherWorld is certified by the kashrut division and the Pesach shelves have been checked at this store.

The Beth Din Pesach Guide is now available on the website <http://www.uos.co.za/kashrut/pesach.asp>. The actual hard copy of the guide will be made available in selected Pick n Pay stores.

In “Kosher for Pesach” local products, the actual ingredients conform to the kashrut division’s Pesach regulations, irrespective of what appears on the packaging.

“The selling of the chametz should ideally be done personally through your local rabbi. One can download a sale of chametz form directly from the website or submit the online sale of chametz electronically.”

The kashrut division advises that some imported products, especially from Israel, carry a valid Pesach hechsher but contain kitniyot or kitniyot derivatives.

“Chametz is only created by the fermentation of flour of one of the five major grains through the medium of water. Fermentation in the presence of all other liquids - such as fruit juices, wine or eggs - do not create chametz.

“The mixture commonly known as ‘egg matzah’ (although it is usually made today with apple or grape juice) may therefore be eaten during Pesach without any concerns of chametz as long as no water is added to the mixture. If even a drop of water is added to the mixture or to any of its ingredients, the mixture may become chametz almost immediately.

“Because of the concern that water may have been added, the custom among Ashkenazim is to refrain from using egg matzah during Pesach, unless it is absolutely necessary for children or the elderly

who would have difficulty eating regular matzah; and even then they may not fulfil the mitzvah of eating matzah at the seder with egg matzah

“The custom among Ashkenazim is not to consume kitniyot. There are different opinions regarding kitniyot derivatives. Please check labels carefully and make your purchases in accordance with your customs. Products bearing the OU or Star-K hechsher which are kosher for Pesach, will have the letter ‘P’ adjacent to the logo. The ‘P’ is for Pesach, not Parev.”

Preferably one should use baby formula that is “Kosher for Pesach”. If the above is not available then the following, although containing kitniyot, may be used. However they should be used in separate vessels with separate utensils and washing-up facilities (that will not be used with “Kosher for Pesach” food items and utensils).

infacare® Gold Soya1 (parev); Infacare® Gold Soya2 (parev); Infacare® Gold Soya3 (parev); Infacare® Soya1 (parev); Infacare® Soya2 (parev); Lactogen 2 (milchik); Nan1 (milchik); Nan2 (milchik); Nan3 (milchik).

There is no “Kosher for Pesach” baby formula locally produced.

The Hulett’s sugar 2,5 kg 2015 “Kosher for Passover” sugar was produced in January 2015 and the 2014 packaging was used in error.

**Update to certified products for Pesach**

Ceres Juices did not manufacture for Pesach 2015.

SAD and Safari – plain apples, apricots (excluding Turkish apricots), peaches, pears are “Kosher for Pesach” even without a “Kosher for Pesach” sticker.

SAD and Safari – prunes and raisins (sunflower oil) are “Kosher for Pesach” even without a “Kosher for Pesach” sticker.

Bon Appetit Original Salad Dressing; Cape Aqua (still, sparkling and flavoured water); Debra’s (Schmaltz and Vinegar); Delicious-2-Go Frozen Potato Chips; Fresh ‘n Krispy - Salted Crisps (Palm Oil); Goldbees Schmaltz; Milly’s Smoked Trout Fillets; Mooz Dairy (milk, cheese, fresh cream and yoghurt); Selwyn Segal Salted Crisps (Sunflower Oil); Sunset Design (Chocolates); Tiberius Fish Emporium.

# Rabbi Binyomin Moskovits visits Johannesburg

The South African Friends and Alumni of Midrash Shmuel, hosted the rosh yeshiva, Rabbi Binyomin Moskovits, on his brief visit to Johannesburg for the wedding of a talmid, Aron Sofer.

Midrash Shmuel said in a media release that one of the highlights of the visit was the alumni gathering hosted by Rabbi Danny and Rebbetzen Sackstein on Sunday evening. The reunion afforded talmidim the opportunity to reconnect as well as to benefit from the rosh yeshiva’s guidance and advice.

Midrash Shmuel is proud of its distinguished alumni who continue to enrich Jewish communities around the world, particularly within South Africa.

Rabbi Moskovits was impressed with the communities’ wonderful atmosphere and dedication to Torah and Avodas Hashem.



## Shabbat and Yomtov Times

First Night Pesach April 3 / 14 Nisan April 4 / 15 Nisan			April 9 / 20 Nisan April 10 / 21 Nisan		
Candle-lighting			Eruv Tavshillin Light Yartzeit candle Candle-lighting		
17:46	18:34	Johannesburg	17:40	17:39	Johannesburg
18:15	19:11	Cape Town	18:13	18:12	Cape Town
17:33	18:22	Durban	17:26	17:25	Durban
17:52	18:41	Bloemfontein	17:46	17:44	Bloemfontein
17:53	18:43	Port Elizabeth	17:45	17:43	Port Elizabeth
17:44	18:33	East London	17:36	17:35	East London
Yomtov ends			Yomtov ends		
18:33		Johannesburg	18:27		Johannesburg
19:10		Cape Town	19:02		Cape Town
18:21		Durban	18:14		Durban
18:40		Bloemfontein	18:33		Bloemfontein
18:41		Port Elizabeth	18:34		Port Elizabeth
18:32		East London	18:25		East London



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# SA Jews will not be cowed by anti-Semitic thugs

DAVID SAKS

It began as an ugly instance of anti-Semitic assault, but culminated in an inspirational demonstration of Jewish assertiveness and communal solidarity.

Last Saturday night, hundreds of community members, together with representatives of Christian organisations and other well-wishers, flocked to The Zone in Rosebank in Johannesburg to participate in the SAJBD’s ‘#KippasAgainstHate’ initiative. As requested, all men wore yarmulkes.

The initiative was organised in response to the previous week’s unprovoked attack on three kippah-wearing teenage boys at the same venue, which from comments made by the three assailants, appear to have been clearly anti-Semiticly motivated.

Among the remarks reportedly made were: “Your [expletive] people are killing our innocent children.” The attackers were variously described as being “of Indian descent” or “Muslims”.

Charges of assault were laid at the Rosebank police station shortly after the attack. Since then, the SAJBD has been working closely with the police to assist in their investigation, including going through the surveillance footage with The Zone security.

Part of the incident was captured by CCTV cameras and the footage is currently being examined with a view to identifying the perpetrators. However, the SAJBD felt that a broader response was required. What was particularly noteworthy about the incident was that it was the first recorded anti-Semitic attack involving physical violence to have been recorded in South Africa in more than three years.

While some might see this as showing how



Jews and non-Jews alike, last Saturday night at The Zone in Rosebank, took a stand against anti-semitism – by all wearing kippot.

relatively better off South African Jewry were compared with what confronted their counterparts elsewhere in the world, a more disturbing possibility was that rather than being an aberration, the attack signalled the beginning of a dangerous new trend.

According to SAJBD National Director Wendy Kahn, the decision to organise the ‘#KippasAgainstHate’ demonstration was to send out a forthright message that South African Jewry would not be intimidated by the actions of a few thugs, but would continue to proudly identify as Jews wherever they went.

The initiative was largely inspired by the August 2012 “Kippah Walk” in Stockholm, Sweden, in which Jews and non-Jews took to the streets wearing yarmulkes to protest against the rise of anti-Semitism in the country.

guaranteed by our Constitution,” the statement concluded.

In this regard, SAJBD Chairman Mary Kluk also stressed how crucial it was to deal decisively with incidents of this nature from the very outset, rather than doing so only when they had become a regular occurrence.

Kahn described the event as “a resounding success” and “a wonderful morale booster” for the community. While certain people had been sceptical about the initiative, the overall response from the Jewish public had been overwhelmingly supportive.

In addition to the many personal responses received by herself and other Board members, this was attested to by the scores of favourable comments left on the SAJBD’s Facebook site. The tenor of these responses was well summed up by a community member who wrote: “We (Jews/gentiles) proved tonight that South Africa is the most amazing country - that despite the effort of a few thugs, people of all creeds can and do socialise together. We proved that the ugly incident at The Zone last week was in vain, as 99 per cent of our people - South Africans - can and do live together, despite not always agreeing on everything (hey, who does?).”

A former South African now living in San Francisco commented on how much she missed the “togetherness” of South African Jews, and how important this was in ensuring peace and living in harmony with the greater society.

According to Kahn, not only local community members, but even a few expatriates living abroad had responded to the Board’s call by making a point of wearing kippot when going out on Saturday night.

## This year’s Yom Hashoah commemoration coming up



The South African Jewish Board of Deputies will once again be holding its annual Day of Remembrance ceremony in memory of the Six Million Jewish Martyrs who perished at the hands of the Nazis during the Second World War.

The Board said in a media release the ceremony would again take place at the Martyrs’ Monument in the Jewish section of West Park Cemetery in Johannesburg, on Thursday April 16, at 12:30.

The keynote speaker, Hugo Marom, born Meisl, now 86, was born in Brno, Czechoslovakia. He and his brother Ruby were among the Jewish children saved by Sir Nicolas Winton.

Hugo was transported on the Kindertransport to London and he spent the war in England. His parents died in a concentration camp.

In 1944 he joined the RAF to become a fighter pilot and was then sent back to Prague with his brother to join the Czech Air Force. They were sent to Israel to fly Spitfires and Messerschmitts.

Hugo originally planned to return to Czechoslovakia after the Israeli War of Independence, but due to the 1948 Czechoslovak communist coup, all 22 Czech-Jewish pilots never returned to Czechoslovakia.

In 1953 he was asked to form the 110th night fighter squadrons and six years later he led the development of centres at Israel Aircraft Industries. In 1964 he left the army and founded a company for the construction and design of airports, which leads to the present day. In 2011, Hugo received the Gratias Agit award for promoting the Czech Republic’s good name abroad.


Hugo married Martha, a survivor of six concentration camps and had a daughter. Hugo and his brother only had daughters, his grandson Jonathan Pollig added the name Meisl to ensure continuity of the old Czech-Jewish Meisl “clan”.

Doris Krinsky, daughter of Marsha Schaimberg, an Auschwitz survivor, will be talking on her experiences with her mother at the 70th Anniversary Commemoration of the Liberation of Auschwitz in Poland in February this year.

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# Paula Slier tells firsthand of IS horrors

OWN CORRESPONDENT

“Islamic State did not come out of nowhere and it’s time the world woke up,” warned South African-born international war correspondent Paula Slier, on a recent visit to Johannesburg. Slier has just returned from Iraq and Syria where she reported on Islamic State and spent time on the frontline with Kurdish fighters.

“We travelled to Rabia, a town on the Iraqi-Syrian border that just three days earlier had been evacuated by Islamic State (IS). It was too dangerous to enter the deserted houses lining the sandy roads, as most had been booby-trapped by the jihadists when they were forced to retreat.

“At the hospital, which had served as their headquarters, the sight of corpses rotting in the corridors was an almost grim defining trademark. One of the fighters warned me that some IS jihadists were still hiding and that two had been forced out the day before - they came out firing in all directions.”

An offshoot of Al Qaida in Iraq, Slier explained how the group garnered support from Sunni Muslims in Iraq after America invaded

that country in 2003.

The chaos of the Arab Spring and in particular the Syrian Revolution in 2011, paved the way for their growth across the border until some fighters broke away and declared a new group - the Islamic State of Iraq and the Levant. Its goal is a greater Muslim state – a caliphate based on sharia law.

Today, IS is the richest terrorist organisation ever, operating on two-to-three billion dollars a year, receiving its funds from oil reserves that fell in its hands and money from sponsors who allegedly include, albeit unofficially, Saudi Arabia, Qatar, Turkey and the United Arab Emirates.

“It is heartbreaking to go to the refugee camps in northern Iraq that are full of mostly Yazidis, an ancient Kurdish minority, that have fled their homes. People told me horror stories of what is happening.

“A young woman wept throughout our interview as she spoke about her 27-year-old sister who is in the hands of the jihadists. She said her sister had managed to phone her once and terrifyingly told her that she and other women were being used as sex slaves.

“The woman I interviewed told her sister to try and kill herself, and then looked me straight in the eye, horrified, and asked what kind of sister tells her sister to do that?”

A 12-year-old boy told me the only thing he’d managed to rescue from his home when IS came, was his school bag. Every night he sits outside his tent and re-does homework from a year ago. From the camp he can see his house which now has an IS flag waving on the roof. Once his dream was to become a doctor, but now he picks cotton for 18 hours a day so his family can survive on the three dollars he gets for it.”

Slier was told that the selling of women and children at local markets for prices that range from a hundred to four hundred dollars, is happening all the time.

“IS is systematically exterminating who they call infidels - minorities like the Yazidis, Assyrians, Turkmen and others. It’s difficult to say what the international community should do.

“Since June 2014 there have been more than 1 000 airstrikes at a cost of more than a billion dollars and yet the group today controls more territory than it did a year ago - roughly

the size of the UK.

“Pilots are afraid to fly after seeing the footage of the Jordanian pilot who was burned alive after IS captured him when his plane went down. And yet the alternative - putting boots on the ground - also doesn’t seem a viable option. Can you see any American mother supporting her son going back into Iraq?”

Slier said journalists were struggling over how to report on the group. The IS beheadings of over a dozen reporters and foreign workers so far, has made travelling into their territory extremely dangerous, while reporting from the other side of the border - from among the Kurds fighting them - was also challenging.

“Knowing who to trust is the most difficult. You never know which Kurd for example has a family member in the hands of IS and who would hand you over for their freedom, or for money.

“IS has a sophisticated propaganda campaign; the group operates several television stations, Twitter and Facebook accounts, and extreme websites and forums; they know what they are doing.”



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## World News in Brief

### US may allow Iran to keep nuclear centrifuges in an underground site

WASHINGTON - The US is considering allowing Iran to retain its nuclear centrifuges at the Islamic Republic’s once-secretive Fordo fortified underground military site, officials involved in the Iran nuclear negotiations told the Associated Press.

The report said that in exchange for being allowed to keep the several hundred centrifuges at Fordo, Iran would not be able to do work there that would allow it to develop a nuclear weapon, and the site would be subject to international inspections.

At the same time, Iran would also be required to scale back the number of centrifuges at other nuclear sites such as Natanz.

The officials said that instead of enriching uranium at Fordo, the centrifuges could be used for separating out isotopes from elements such as zinc, xenon, and germanium, which are used in medicine, industry, and science.

Critics contend that allowing Iran to keep the Fordo site intact could allow the country to quickly repurpose it for uranium enrichment for a nuclear weapon. (JNS.org)

### Cool rhetoric against Bibi, Democrats tell Obama

WASHINGTON - Some Jewish House Democrats have called on President Barack Obama to tamp down the rhetoric against Israeli Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu.

The Congress members issued the demand last week at a meeting with deputy national security adviser Ben Rhodes, Politico reported last week Sunday. The meeting was the latest in a series of regular briefings that Rhodes has been holding with Jewish members of Congress about the Iran nuclear negotiations. Among the lawmakers at the meeting were Representatives Ted Deutch and Debbie Wasserman Schultz of Florida; Jerry Nadler and Nita Lowey of New York; Adam Schiff and Brad Sherman of California; Jan Schakowsky of Illinois; and Sander Levin of Michigan.

Rhodes declined comment to Politico on the meeting but reportedly left agreeing to relay the lawmakers’ message on the rhetoric.

The House members told Rhodes that they were as upset as the Obama administration about remarks Netanyahu made in the hours before Israelis went to the polls earlier this month in which he ruled out the creation of a Palestinian state, but that Obama needed to stop harping on the issue, Politico reported.

“Obama and his aides, they said, had to stop acting as if the Israeli prime minister’s comments are the only thing holding up a peace process that’s been abandoned for a year while not expressing a word of disappointment about Palestinian President Mahmoud Abbas - and openly toying with allowing the Palestinians their provocative recognition bid at the United Nations. The swipes at Netanyahu felt vindictive and gratuitous,” according to Politico.

Obama and his aides believe it is now up to Netanyahu to repair a rift that they stress is only about the peace process, not the larger commitment to Israel, according to Politico.

“We’ve made our point. The message has clearly been received,” a White House official told Politico. “The next move is theirs, presumably after the new government has been formed.” (JTA)




The official Launch of

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south african  
Jewish Report

You have to change  
what you look for to  
change what you see

Two weeks ago, in a much publicised incident, Jewish teenagers wearing yarmulkes were assaulted by three unidentified men, apparently of Muslim origin, at The Zone in Rosebank. While one of the Jewish students was being hit, another assailant swore at him, saying: “You f\*\*\*ing Jew” and “Your f\*\*\*ing people are killing our innocent children”.

This marks the first physically violent incident recorded against Jews in three years in South Africa, but local community leaders are concerned we may be confronting a new, more violent era.

It is not surprising then that South African Jewry are feeling slightly under threat. With anti-Semitic incidents on the rise in the United States and Europe, our community is ultra-sensitive and why shouldn’t we be? Last year 172 anti-Semitic incidents were recorded in South Africa, compared to 52 the previous year.

A further sign of this unease was last week’s letter from the CSO which asked all shul-goers to be extremely vigilant over Pesach and requested that they consider volunteering for the CSO. Beyond this, many of our Jewish day schools have increased their budget for security and the increased manpower at the school gates is evident.

And what are the rising figures globally on anti-Semitism?

In the US, anti-Semitic incidents rose by 21 per cent last year from the previous year, according to the Anti-Defamation League’s annual audit of anti-Semitism.

According to an Israeli government report released in January, there was a 400 per cent increase worldwide in anti-Semitic incidents during July and August of 2014 - likely due to Israel’s war in Gaza last summer - from the same time period in 2013.

About 1 000 incidents took place in 2014, mostly in Western Europe, including dozens of violent attacks: beatings, assaults with weapons, and some Molotov cocktails were thrown at synagogues and Jewish businesses.

And not surprisingly, most of the incidents were perpetrated by Muslims, and primarily in countries with large Muslim communities. In fact “Islamic anti-Semitism” has become the leading type of anti-Semitism in the Western world.

When I flew back from Johannesburg to Cape Town last week, I sat next to a Muslim man. He was reading Islamic text (I am sure it was the Qur’an) on an iPad and I was reviewing copies of the Jewish Report.

Here we were, sitting so close together, probably thinking about the same issues but with narratives so far apart. We looked at each other briefly with tense smiles. While we did not say a word to each other, it spurred a need to know more and I began to do some research.

It is interesting that Muslims, the biggest threat to Jews worldwide, are themselves under duress. In France, for example, a popularly held sentiment among the French is that their beloved country is being overrun by Muslims. The French also assume that about a third of their own population is now Muslim, but actually only eight per cent of French residents identify as such.

This French Muslim population has seen the French government ban head scarves and other religious symbols from public schools in 2004 and then ban burqas and face-covering niqabs in 2014.

For Muslim women who obey this tradition in the same way that Orthodox Jews obey the mitzvah of wearing a yarmulke, it is tantamount to pushing religious Orthodox women from public life. One can only imagine the outcry if Jews were forbidden from wearing yarmulkes in public.

In the UK, following the Charlie Hebdo magazine massacre that occurred in neighbouring France in January, Muslim pupils in British schools are reporting a radical increase in Islamophobia. Tell MAMA, which monitors anti-Muslim hate crime in Britain, said it had logged 112 reports of physical and verbal violence in the wake of the attack at the Paris-based magazine in January.

Anti-racism groups in the UK are increasingly being approached by parents whose children have been targeted by fellow pupils, particularly after discussions were held in class about the Charlie Hebdo killings. They say there is little guidance from the schools about how to handle this and the general population is increasingly viewing all Britain’s Muslims as part of the same evil, terrorist inclined group.

So I found it noteworthy that moderate Muslims, painted with the same brush as their extremist brothers, are confronting Islamophobia, just as Jews, particularly in the Diaspora, are confronting anti-Semitism because of the Israeli-Palestinian issue.

While I do not, for a minute, equate the actions of Muslim extremists in the name of Islam with the actions taken by Israel’s army in its quest to protect its borders, the extreme irony is that, in many ways, Jews and Muslims find themselves in the same uneasy predicament.

Perhaps my fellow traveller and I should have had that conversation.

*We would like to wish all our readers a Chag Sameach. Please note this week is a shorter issue after last week’s special Pesach edition.*

– Vanessa Valkin, Editor



US-Israel crisis: Speed bump or  
sign of long-term conflict?

RON KAMPEAS  
WASHINGTON

President Barack Obama’s refusal to accept Israeli Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu’s ostensible recommitment to a two-state solution to the Palestinian-Israeli conflict has watchers of the US-Israel relationship wondering if the recent crisis is a mere speed bump or a sign of a deeper shift in ties between the countries.

Netanyahu moved quickly last week to emphasise that his statement on the eve of his re-election that no Palestinian state would be established on his watch did not represent a policy shift away from a two-state solution. But Obama administration officials were unwilling to accept that clarification, a point the president emphasised in a media conference on Tuesday when he said that differences with Israel were “substantive” and not easily papered over.

“The central question is whether this is a temporary blip on the radar screen or whether there’s something deeper and more structural going on,” said David Harris, the American Jewish Committee’s executive director. “We have to know the answer to that in order to know whether we can put the US-Israel train back on track, as we all would like.”

Along with other Jewish organisational leaders and pro-Israel lawmakers, Harris has been urging the White House to tone down its rhetoric in recent days, but Obama’s comments on Tuesday - his most detailed on the rift since the Israeli election - suggest the administration is not heeding those warnings.

“I have conveyed to the White House that it’s time to cool it,” Representative Nita Lowey (Democrat New York), the top Democrat on the House Appropriations Committee, told JTA. “The US-Israel relationship is based on shared values and an unbreakable bond, not on personalities.”

Last Friday, Israel agreed to release tax revenues to the Palestinian Authority, a step several insiders had hoped to see as a goodwill gesture to help repair the rift with Washington. The State Department opposed Netanyahu’s decision in January to suspend the transfers, a response to the Palestinian Authority’s decision to join the International Criminal Court, which in turn opened the door to an examination of whether Israel has committed war crimes against the Palestinians.

Yet with Obama saying that a re-evaluation of US policy is in the works, it’s unclear whether such a gesture will be sufficient.

“I’m worried things get worse before they get better,” said David Makovsky, until last year a member of Obama’s Middle East negotiating team and now an analyst at the Washington Institute for Near East Policy.

The crisis comes as another major bone of contention between Washington and Jerusalem, negotiations over Iran’s nuclear programme, nears a crucial threshold: the March 31 deadline for a framework agreement between Iran and the major powers.

Netanyahu’s deep scepticism of those talks - particularly his fears of a so-called sunset clause that would limit the duration of restrictions on Iranian nuclear activity - led to his controversial speech before Congress earlier this month,

which infuriated the White House.

“If the administration doesn’t engage Israel over some of his concerns, Netanyahu will go the congressional route,” Makovsky said.

It is the Palestinian issue, though, that now has Obama’s attention. In a media conference this week, the president made clear that while security and intelligence co-operation between the countries would not be affected, he isn’t about to let go of Netanyahu’s pre-election rejection of a Palestinian state arising on his watch.

“This can’t be reduced to a matter of somehow let’s all hold hands and sing Kumbaya,” Obama said.

“I am required to evaluate honestly how we manage Israeli-Palestinian relations over the next several years,” the president said. “Because up until this point, the premise has been both under Republican and Democratic administrations that as difficult as it was, as challenging as it was, the possibility of two states living side by side in peace and security could marginalise more extreme elements, bring together folks at the centre with some common sense and we could resolve what has been a vexing issue and one that is ultimately a threat to Israel as well. And that possibility seems very dim.”

What the evaluation means precisely is not entirely clear. But the president would not count out a shift in diplomacy in international arenas, including possibly backing recognition of Palestinian statehood at the UN Security Council.

That would represent a major policy shift that has pro-Israel lawmakers worried. Last week Wednesday, Representatives. Ed Royce (Republican California) and Eliot Engel (Democrat New York), respectively the top Republican and Democrat on the House Foreign Affairs Committee, wrote to Samantha Power, the US envoy to the United Nations, seeking assurances that the United States would continue to block resolutions critical of Israel.

“Only a solution negotiated directly between the Israelis and Palestinians can result in a lasting peace,” the letter said. “We are seeking an assurance from you that the United States will veto resolutions at the United Nations that are biased and one-sided against Israel.”

In an interview with JTA, Engel said it was critical to get beyond the current crisis.

“We need to move on,” Engel said. “We need to emphasise the many close ties we have with Israel, we need to end re-criminations and finger pointing.”

Abraham Foxman, the Anti-Defamation League’s national director, said Netanyahu’s walk-back should be enough to move forward.

“The U.S. now has to climb off, climb down, tone down and find an opportunity to say something positive,” Foxman said in an interview.

But Makovsky said the forthcoming trip to Israel by Republican House Speaker Representative John Boehner (Republican Ohio), who helped organise Netanyahu’s speech to Congress without informing the White House, could further inflame tensions.

“Boehner’s visit to Israel is going to reframe this issue in partisan terms, when really, there should be a substantive critique of the Iran talks,” Makovsky said. (JTA)



# New SAZF executive building bridges of co-operation

**ANT KATZ**

Newly-elected national chairman of the SA Zionist Federation, Ben Swartz, says “things are changing fast” at the Fed.

“We have a much younger and very dynamic executive,” he said about the new national executive committee that was elected earlier this month.

“That is the key driver in allowing us to make the Fed more relevant,” he added.

With an older guard largely having stood aside for a younger team, it had allowed the executive to immediately institute “a number of initiatives and projects,” which are already up and running and involved dynamic young community members and Israel supporters of other faiths, he told Jewish Report.

Swartz had served as a vice chairman for four years under long-standing chairman Avrom Krengel, who remains on the national execu-

tive as president.

“There are dynamics in our community that are changing things big time,” said Swartz.

The new executive, according to him, would be employing all the new ways of looking at supporting Israel.

He referred to the initiatives he had introduced with huge success over the past four years, such as having befriended hundreds of thousands (if not millions) in other-faith communities and becoming extremely proactive in all forms of social media.

Swartz was the main speaker at a Sunday morning celebration by Likud-SA, after Likud’s success in the March 17 Israeli election.

Swartz told the gathering he had been in Israel at the time of the election. Being at the voting station had really brought home to him how democratic Israel is. “You see Muslims, Jews and Christians voting.”

On congratulating Benjamin

Netanyahu’s Likud party, he said: “A week before [the election] the polls gave Likud 20 seats; the day before they said 24, yet, on the day, Likud won 30 [out of the Knesset’s 120] seats.”

On Likud-SA national chairman, Leon Reich, Swartz said: “I have come to know Leon and his associates over the last four years. They do good work. And, what is most important is that they take action.”

Swartz said the Fed would in future also become more action-orientated. The organisation did a great deal of work which people didn’t realise, he said. He sees the SAZF primarily as being about “a federation of alliances and partners”.

His primary goals for the Fed going forward, are:

- Strengthening the Zionist culture in South Africa - working with organisations like Likud, the Israel Centre and all other members and affiliates, and their parent, the Jewish Agency;

- Having made incredible friends over the years both inside and outside the Jewish community, the Fed would now partner with them in new initiatives aimed at promoting Israel;
- Transforming Zionist organisations. He singled out Magen David Adom South Africa’s chairman, Mark Hyman, now a Fed vice-chairman. “Mark has transformed MDA over the past few years” and been involved in the launch of several other organisations, Swartz said, giving an example of how he sees the Fed going forward; and
- To strengthen the relationship of South African Jewry with Israel and vice versa.

Until 2011 the Jewish community had in many respects been working in isolation, he posited. “Now we are breaking down those insular walls

and making friends with people outside. Initially, we weren’t sure if anyone wanted to be our friends; we have found that there are a lot of people who love Israel, and we have built on those relationships.”

Swartz said the Fed had been “moving out of the shtetl-mentality through partnerships and relationships to the mutual benefit of South Africa and Israel”.

He concluded: “The world is our oyster; there is so much Israel, through the Fed, can do to help South Africa.”

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# JJMC supports refugee kids in Swazi Learning Academy, through song



**DAVID SAKS**

Last Sunday, members of the Johannesburg Jewish Male Choir (JJMC) were the guest artists at a concert held in Ezulwini, Swaziland, on behalf of 17 refugee children attending the Kobe-Ramokgadi Advanced Learning Academy.

The evening, which took place at the Royal Swazi Convention Centre, was hosted by the school’s founder, local philanthropist and Jewish communal leader Geoff Ramokgadi. The JJMC rendered its services for free in order to help raise funds for the refugee children, including towards school fees, uniforms and stationery.

Rabbi Moshe Silberhaft, CEO and spiritual leader to the African Jewish Congress (AJC), acted as MC. He introduced each individual item on the concert programme and explained its significance.

In his message of welcome, he paid tribute to Ramokgadi for all he had done and continued to do, not just on behalf of the local Jewish community, but for the betterment of the wider society.

One of his initiatives had been to establish the Kobe-Ramokgadi Academy, an institution that, in addition to the high level of education it provided, instilled the values of love, compassion, integrity, humility and commitment to serving humankind in its learners.

In her welcome message, school principal Thuli Makgatho likewise paid tribute to “Bra

Geoff” and also to Rabbi Silberhaft, for his “generosity, love and commitment... shown towards our Swazi children”.

In 2011, the AJC, in partnership with the organisation, Australian Books for Children in Africa, established a library for the school, named the Rabbi Moshe Silberhaft Library. The school officially opened its doors the following year.

The concert programme was an entertaining mix of liturgical melodies, musical arrangements of passages from Tehillim and other Biblical passages and Israeli songs, with variety added by an African and a traditional Russian folk song (sung, respectively, in Zulu and Russian).

Veteran local musician Evelyn Green, JJMC’s musical director, was accompanist and conductor. The evening concluded with some of the schoolchildren, Rabbi Silberhaft and Ramokgadi joining the choir on stage in a rousing rendition of Shosholoz.

During the interval, Rabbi Silberhaft read messages of support from AJC Acting President Ann Harris and Israeli Ambassador to South Africa Arthur Lenk. Chris Eden, director of the Christian Zionist organisation Bridges for Peace, delivered a message on modern-day Israel from a Biblical perspective.

Other distinguished guests included religious and business leaders, among them Father Malaza from the Anglican Church and Pastor Msane from the Evangelical Church.


“Shosholoz!” Geoff Ramokgadi; Rabbi Moshe Silberhaft; and JJMC Chairman Professor Russell Lurie.

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# HUGO MAROM CZECH AIR FORCE PILOT IN ISRAELI WAR OF INDEPENDENCE



Thursday  
16th April 2015  
12h30  
West Park Cemetery

The South African Jewish Board of Deputies will once again be holding its annual Day of Remembrance for the six million Jewish Martyrs who perished at the hands of the Nazis.

Hugo Marom, saved by the Kindertransport, Czech air force pilot in the Israeli war of Independence will be our keynote speaker.

70 years since the Liberation of Auschwitz : 70 years since the End of WWII. The Anguish of Liberation and the Return to Life.

Doris Krinsky daughter of Marsha Schaimberg, an Auschwitz survivor, will be talking on her experience with her mother at the 70th Anniversary Commemoration of the Liberation of Auschwitz in Poland in February 2015.

Disclaimer

The letters page is intended to provide opportunity for a range of views on any given topic to be expressed. Opinions articulated in the letters are those of the writers and do not necessarily reflect the views of the editor, staff or directors of the Jewish Report.

The Editor, PO Box 84650, Greenside, 2034 email: [sharon@sajewishreport.co.za](mailto:sharon@sajewishreport.co.za)

Guidelines for letters

Letters up to 400 words get preference. Provide your full name, place of residence, and daytime contact phone number. We do not publish letters under noms de plume. Letters should preferably be e-mailed. Letters may be edited or shortened.

JEWS DON'T LOOK AFTER THEIR OWN IN MOTHER CITY

Jews in Cape Town who are not wealthy, are discriminated against in many ways:

- 1) At least 90 per cent of small, medium, large Jewish-owned enterprises only employ non-Jews.
- 2) At least 90 per cent of Jewish doctors and specialists only employ non-Jews.
- 3) At least 90 per cent of Jewish organisations have over the years employed (and sometimes trained) non-Jews and continue to do so, when there are capable unemployed Jewish people.
- 4) At least 90 per cent of NGO (funded by Jewish donors) programmes, training, mentorships and support (including food schemes) systems are for the non-Jewish community.
- 5) Unemployed Jewish people are expected to live on less than the government pension and

still find money for phone calls, Internet and transport, to job hunt.

I have further observed that only wealthy Jewish people who have publicised photos taken with rabbis, are allowed on organisational committees, are invited to functions and meetings, are allowed jobs at organisations.

The Muslims only employ Muslims.

At the close of Shabbos, Jewish people ask G-d to increase their wealth and their children. The Rebbe and his wife were not given even one child by G-d. The Rebbe was not shunned by the Jewish community, so why does the Jewish community in Cape Town shun Jewish people who are not given wealth by G-d?

Katherine Lan, Cape Town

SIFRIN'S TAKE AND BIAS ON NETANYAHU'S PRONOUNCEMENTS, FLAWED

Once again I wish to take serious issue with Geoff Sifrin's column, Taking Issue, in last week's issue of your newspaper. Does Sifrin really believe that the Prime Minister of Israel, whom he openly disapproves of, cares one iota about the effect his and his government's actions will have on South African Jewry?

I refer to Sifrin's comment that South African Jewish leaders will struggle to have credibility when their declared two-state approach flies in the face of Israel's leader. Sifrin goes on to say that there is an even hotter potato for South African Jewish leaders. He maintains that Benjamin Netanyahu in his last-minute election campaign, used "racist comments" when telling the Israeli public that the Arab voters are moving in droves towards the polling stations.

Sifrin insists that Netanyahu should never have used such a tactic and that South African Jewish leaders will have added difficulty in maintaining their stance of Israel being a non-racist state.

I want to ask Sifrin if he's really more afraid of the methods and rhetoric used by Netanyahu and their effect on South African Jewry, or the constant anti-Israel/Semitic bombardment by local NGOs, academic institutions, and even

individual government officials.

How does Sifrin think South African Jewish leadership can continue to "hide" from Israel's critics far worse "racism" than that in the recent Israeli elections? Two fundamental "racial" issues stand out: 1) Israel does not allow intermarriage between Jew and non-Jew. Civil marriage is forbidden. 2) The Law of Return is strictly confined to the solid proof of Jewishness of an applicant. The above two laws would be classified as "racist" in every democracy in the world.

Would Sifrin suggest that Israel rescind these laws so as to protect South African Jewry from the wrath of the anti-Israel/Semitic population? I suggest that Sifrin should refrain from suggesting any linkage of the policies of Netanyahu and/or the elected government of Israel with possible repercussions to South African Jewry and confine his activities to "defend" his fellow Jews in the "captivity" of exile.

With all of its "faults", Israel is the only country where Jews can live a safe and secure life with their own government and army to defend them.

Choni Davidowitz  
Golden Acres, Johannesburg

PROBE INTO HIGH PRICE OF KOSHER MEAT IN SA IS LONG OVERDUE

Dr Bryna Lewis suggests that the answer to healthy eating is to go vegetarian (SA Jewish Report, March 13).

She was responding to Bev Goldman's letter about expensive, "clean, healthy hygienic" kosher chickens. Dr Lewis is half right but I think she is missing the point. For many years now we have heard that there will be an investigation into the high price of kosher meat but nothing ever seems to happen - or I may have missed the outcome.

Recently the SA Jewish Report carried an advert from a butcher offering brisket at R280 a kg; at the same time a Cape Town supermarket was advertising bone-in brisket for R49,95. How can anyone justify that kind of price difference?

Non-kosher chickens are at least R15 cheaper than kosher ones. Another ad in SAJR showed kosher chickens selling for R39,99 a kg. Next time you buy kosher sausages in Cape Town or

Johannesburg, don't just look at the price per kg. See how much one sausage costs. It's quite easy to work out and you might just get a bigger shock.

Jewish Press, an American publication, has hundreds of ads for kosher foods and the prices appear to be much lower than in South Africa. For example in the March 20 issue rib eye steak was selling for \$6,99 a pound; brisket for \$9,99 a pound, so it seems that kosher meat is somewhat cheaper there.

I am sure the Americans have the same high standard of kashrut as South Africans. They also have to pay the mashgiachs for the hechsher and for the regular cleaning of the machines.

The probe into the high prices of kosher foods in this country is long overdue, even though going vegetarian is an option.

Brian Josselowitz, Milnerton

It is Rabbi Yonatan Landau and not Lau

The name of the rabbi who wrote our parshat portion in last week's Pesach edition, is Rabbi Yonatan Landau from Ohr Somayach Savoy and not Rabbi Yonatan Lau as it appeared. We regret the error.

World News in Brief

Israel's unemployment rate hits record low of 5.3%

JERUSALEM - The Israeli unemployment rate dropped by 0,3 percentage points in February, hitting a record low of 5,3 per cent, compared to 5,6 per cent in January, the country's Central Bureau of Statistics (CBS) said last week Thursday.

Israel's unemployment figures are now among the lowest jobless rates recorded among the member nations of the Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development. The data show a drop in unemployment even though the number of job-seekers rose from 203 000 in January to 214 500 in February.

According to the CBS, unemployment in Israel has dropped by 2,6 percentage points since 2009. (JNS.org)



# Chief Rabbi Goldstein affirms ‘zero tolerance’ for abuse in any guise

SUZANNE BELLING

There was a veil of secrecy regarding domestic abuse in the South African Jewish community. But 20 years ago Ronit Lev Ari came from Israel and broke the silence, letting South Africans know that not only was this taboo subject talked about in Israel, it existed on a large scale both in Israel and the Diaspora, including South Africa.

Lev Ari’s visit prompted the Co-ordinating Council of National Jewish Women’s Organisations of South Africa and the Judith Harrisberg Memorial Fund, to set up Shalom Bayit, followed by Koleinu (Our Voice), with Wendy Hendler and Rozanne Sack, and Kidsafe, established by Robyn Goldstein.

This brought about a new awareness when victims of abuse began to be believed and, apart from these organisations, the Chevrah Kadisha Community Services became involved in helping abused women, legally and financially.

“The prize was belief,” Brenda Solarsh, Abuse Project developer, told a symposium on domestic violence at Sydenham-Highlands North Hebrew Congregation last week. Chairing the gathering, Solarsh said there needed to be new initiatives - not only looking at partner abuse.

Yael Band, “representing every survivor of abuse”, told her poignant story, followed by one woman who admitted that three of her daughters had been raped over a long period by their father, her former husband.

From the age of five, Yael, now 38, was sexually abused for several years by a man living in her complex. This only stopped when her family moved away.

“Then, the first time I fell in love in my



Speakers at the symposium on abuse: Yael Band; Chief Rabbi Warren Goldstein; Lisa Vetten; Brenda Solarsh; and Brenda Lasersohn.

teens, my boyfriend abused me.

“My mother had told me not to have sexual relations before marriage and when I turned him down, he became physically violent. He made me feel ugly and fat and not worthy, even though I was head girl of my school. He appeared to be a perfect Jewish boy whom any Jewish mother would have wanted for her daughter.”

In her 20s Yael landed up in a psychiatric ward and later in rehabilitation for drugs, “a shande”.

Referring to her relationship with her boyfriend, she said: “I was so in love with him, I was scared he would dump me. Just for a few moments I was prepared to take it [the abuse] for love.

“Abuse changes your life forever and although I have made a miraculous recovery, I cannot be called a survivor, I’ve just learnt to

live with it. It is always there.”

Lisa Vetten, a gender specialist, said that one in four women experienced abuse and half of this statistic was emotional abuse.

According to a joint study of the University of Cape Town and Johns Hopkins University in America, domestic violence was the greatest form of violence.

Referring to legal changes, Vetten said that in 1999 half of women murdered had been killed by their partners.

The 1993 Domestic Violence Act recognised marital rape. Abuse could be physical, emotional, sexual or economic.

One of the problems regarding conceptions of abuse was that men were regarded as the heads of households and protectors, while women were viewed as fragile.

Psychologist Brenda Lasersohn debunked the myth that the Jewish community was

exempt from domestic violence. “The Jewish community mimics figures in the general population,” she said.

Mythology had it that women were the only victims and men were supposed to be big and strong. Women, too, could be abusive psychologically, verbally, economically and religiously. Abuse was not only confined to couples. Children were often abusive towards parents, especially if they were elderly or ill. They tried to exert power and control.

There was also the phenomenon of sibling abuse. “Many silences need to be broken,” Lasersohn said.

“To save a life is to save the world,” said Chief Rabbi Warren Goldstein, referring to a Talmudic precept. The question of abuse had to be viewed holistically and strategically, with the presence of key elements needed to succeed. Tackling the problem of abuse “really is about saving lives.

“The Jewish community must promote values which are antidotes to abuse.”

These included transparency and openness, ethics and respect for every human being and ethics and respect within a marriage.

“My policy is zero tolerance [to abuse],” he said.

He stressed the availability of organisations to help where abuse existed - Koleinu, Kidsafe, Shalom Bayit and also ORT-Jet, which gave economic empowerment to women, enabling them to leave an abusive relationship.

Rabbi Goldstein praised these organisations as well as Community Active Protection (CAP), which were there in emergencies.

Both rabbis and rebbetzins were training people in community activism.

Marcia Parness, a foundation member of Shalom Bayit, thanked members of the panel.



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# KDHVP opens its heart for Chev’s Pesach Appeal

TAL KATTAN

King David High School Victory Park learners participated in the Chevrah Kadisha’s drive to ensure that every Jewish family in the community will have a seder this Pesach.

The learners donated generously to this amazing cause and the school is very proud of them.



Photo: Yael Gordon

# Mosaic hopscotch course for Sandton Sinai kids

AMY JAFFE, PARENT

Sandton Sinai Primary School recently held a “Mosaic Evening” for parents, teachers and kids. A beautiful hopscotch course was designed and tiled for the children to enjoy in the playground while the adults created mosaics. The grade ones also participated by grouting the finished products at school afterwards. It was a fun-filled evening for everyone who attended.



Pictured are Erez Hadar; Josh Serman; Jesse Bregman; Georgia Ross; Amber Ross; Sara Orkin; Natasha Scher; Saul Ephron; Noa Jaffe; Jaden Cohen; Ariel Margalit; Adina Geer; Melinda Chazen; Kami Lowenstein; and Keira Sorour, all busy grouting

# Crawford La Lucia hosts its inaugural seder

OWN CORRESPONDENT

Helene Cohen, Hebrew teacher at Crawford La Lucia and Talmud Torah, hosted the first-ever seder at Crawford Preparatory School this year.

Welcoming children from her Hebrew class, as well as other Jewish children from within the Crawford community, Cohen ensured all those present participated enthusiastically.

The excitement was palpable as the children entered the classroom and saw the beautiful seder table. Reading from the Haggadah, the children recited the story of the four sons, sang the four questions and enjoyed the different symbolic foods on their own seder plates as they re-enacted the drama of slavery and liberation.

The afternoon was rounded off with the children’s joyous singing of “Dayenu”.

Deputy Principal Anne Heath, attended the ceremony and was moved by the traditions, knowledge and enthusiasm of the children, as well as the love of Judaism that Cohen encourages in her pupils.



Joshua Calo (grade 5); Daniel Heilbron (grade 7); Daniel Cohen (grade 7); Arielle Berger (grade 4); Gabriella Berger (grade 0); Kaylyn Lourens (grade 7); Talya Calo (grade 7); Tyra Nackan (grade 7)’ and Helene Cohen.



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Tuesday (April 7)

• JHGC and partners host the 21st commemoration of the genocide that targeted the Tutsi in Rwanda. Screening of the documentary “Infore” (2014). Venue: Redhill School Auditorium  
Time: 19:30. Admission free. RSVP: shirley@jhbholocaust.co.za or (01) 640-3100/2148.

• Shalom Masorti is hosting a Pesach seder. Venue: 6 Elray Street, Raedene. Time: After Shabbat service. Cost per person, R200 and R100 for children under 13. Enquiries: Esther Alper (011) 485-5619.

Sunday (April 12)

• Big Band Music Appreciation Society meets at St John's College Auditorium, Houghton. Time: 14:15 sharp. There will be a short DVD on Big Band Performances. An audio programme by Shirley Markowitz, “Shirley's Choice - Number 2” will follow. After interval a DVD will be screened. “Robbie Williams in Concert Sings The Songs of the Rat Pack”. Enquiries: Marilyn, 072-243-7436 or Jack, 082-450-7622.

Tuesday (April 14)

• WIZO Forum presents “Yom Hashoah with Candle-Lighting and Haskarah”. The wives of two Holocaust survivors share their insights. Venue: Beyachad. Time 9:30am . Admission free. Booking: Nadine (011) 645-2515.

Wednesday (April 15)

• RCHCC, to mark Yom Hashoah, screens a documentary, “Hidden Children & their Rescuers During World War”. Venue: Clive M Beck Auditorium. Time: 19:30. Donation: R70 (incl refreshments). Booking: Hazel or René (011) 728-8088/8378, a/h (011) 728-8378, or e-mail: rchcc@telkomsa.net or rene.s@telkomsa.net or www.greatpark.co.za

Community Columns

A column of the SA Jewish Board of Deputies

Deal with anti-Semitism decisively

Pesach is not only about commemorating our ancestors’ liberation from slavery and emergence as a free nation. It is also about celebrating our freedom to live as Jews wherever we are.

At one point in the seder, we open the front door of our homes. We thereby demonstrate our trust in G-d’s enduring protection and our own commitment to fulfilling our Jewish destiny regardless of what might be happening in the world outside.

During the past week, our community was called upon to take a stand against those who would seek to deny its members their right to publicly identify with their Judaism.

Following on the previous week’s attack on three kippah-wearing Jewish teenagers at The Zone in Rosebank, the Board issued a call to all South Africans to attend a movie the following Saturday wearing a kippah or hat in order to demonstrate their “commitment to fight against any form of prejudice and intimidation” and to assert the Constitutionally guaranteed rights of all South African citizens to freedom of religion and association.

We were thrilled with the response. On Saturday night after Shabbat, hundreds of members of our community, along with many non-Jewish supporters, arrived to participate in the SAJBD’s #KippotAgainstHate initiative. The event was a heartening assertion of communal solidarity and pride in our Jewish heritage.

Some have asked me whether the initiative did not amount to overkill on our part. After all, this was the first recorded case in three years of an anti-Semitic attack involving physical violence in South Africa, one, moreover, in which none of the victims were seriously hurt.

It is precisely at this time, when such inci-

dents are still a rarity that we need to take a strong, public stand. It would be short-sighted in the extreme to wait until acts of violent anti-Semitism have become commonplace before doing so.

Rather, we need to deal decisively with such acts from the very outset with a view to preventing further such incidents in the future. Once a trend has set in, it is that much harder to eradicate it.

The targeting of people visibly identified as Jewish in public spaces, is something that many Jewish communities around the world, especially in Europe, are now struggling to deal with.

In certain countries, even rabbis are advising people not to wear yarmulkes in public, or if they do so, to at least disguise them with other head coverings. For example, sometimes religious Jews - in the UK, France and elsewhere - wear baseball caps over their kippot.

It would be a sad day were such a situation to develop in South Africa, and we will do everything we can to ensure that such a day never comes.

In closing, I wish everyone a Chag Pesach Kasher v’Sameach. May we all enjoy the wonderful experience of being with family and friends at a time when we rejoice in our Jewish heritage and pass those precious values and traditions over to the next generation.

• Listen to Charisse Zeifert on Jewish Board Talk, 101.9 ChaiFM every Friday 12:00-13:00.

This column paid for by the SA Jewish Board of Deputies



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What's on  
your plate this  
Passover?



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World News in Brief

France to push for UN peace resolution

PARIS - France is planning to launch a push for a UN Security Council resolution that will lay out the parameters for ending the Israeli-Palestinian conflict. “Obviously the two parties have to discuss this, but the discussion will be accompanied by an international effort,” French Foreign Minister Laurent Fabius said last Friday. France, along with the UK and Germany, drafted a Security Council resolution late last year calling for Israeli withdrawal from the disputed territories by 2017. But those countries decided to table the resolution until after the recent Israeli election. The US voted against the Palestinian-initiated resolution, but President Barack Obama has indicated that the US may “reassess” its options regarding Israel in the UN. (JNS.org)



# Samuel Eto'o awarded for his stand on racism

JACK MILNER

Cameroon-born soccer star Samuel Eto'o first experienced racism when he went to buy a watch at a fashionable jeweller in London. He chose the watch he wanted, but when the saleslady took his credit card, she came back and told him that it was declined.

A security guard from Senegal kept trying to justify what the lady said, so Eto'o asked him where he was from. "When he told me, I said, 'Ah, if I gave you my name, you will recognise who I am?'"

"He shrugged and I said: 'I'm Eto'o.' He went: 'Nooooo! Just yesterday, my wife and I were

talking about you! Can I take a picture with you and send it to my wife?'"

Since then Eto'o has been a strong spokesman against racism - and anti-Semitism - in football.

Earlier this month Eto'o, who is now a Spanish citizen, was honoured by the European Council on Tolerance and Reconciliation (ECTR), and received their European Medal of Tolerance at a ceremony in London's Kensington Palace.

The ECTR is a non-government organisation comprising former world leaders and other senior public figures. Dr Moshe Kantor, president of the ECTR, said the award was to honour and reward the promotion of tolerance

and reconciliation.

"Football symbolises the co-operation of individuals towards one goal, with respect to the opponents, and with respect to the laws and rules of the game. Tolerance is based on competition but also co-operation, on trust, but also rules and regulations," Kantor said during the presentation.

"Samuel is a worthy recipient. Throughout his career he has taken a firm stance against racism and bigotry, refusing to hide in the shadows, and as a consequence has raised awareness of racism in football and society."

The award ceremony took place amid a time of rising racism, xenophobia and anti-Semitism, both in general and in football.

Kantor added that football should be "a unifier rather than a divider. We should have a strong stand against hate, anti-Semitism and racism as people involved in the world of football," he concluded.



Dr Moshe Kantor, president of the European Council on Tolerance and Reconciliation, presents Cameroon-born soccer player Samuel Eto'o with the European Medal of Tolerance at a function at Kensington Palace.



Chag Sameach

Wishing you a happy Passover

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Community

Ellaine's artworks help fight breast cancer scourge

Ellaine Hirshowitz (artist); Nicole Brower; Daniel Ross; Casey Sher; Terri Fleishman; and Michelle Goodman.

TERRI FLEISHMAN

Ellaine Hirshowitz, a psychoanalytic therapist and artist - and herself a survivor of breast cancer - donated a series of her artworks to DL Link, an organisation for guiding and helping people on their breast cancer journey. DL Link provides emotional, psychological and lifestyle support to patients and their families while the patients are treated.

The works were auctioned last Sunday in Norwood, Johannesburg. The exhibition was opened by guest speaker Dr Carol Benn.

Hirshowitz believes that art mobilises powerful unconscious memories which can transfigure suffering and provide insight and healing. Her work reflects the importance of the body and particularly the female form as inspiration.

Her images communicate her subjective emotions and are a culmination of her life experiences. They reflect her joy of beauty, symmetry and balance over depression, confusion and catastrophe.

Dr Benn said: "Going through the diagnosis of breast cancer is hard, going through the treatment after [the diagnosis] may be even harder. Going through chemotherapy is sometimes like climbing Mount Everest.

"All they [the patients] need is support and help, and a lot of my patients have received support and help from this wonderful organisation. We want people to realise it's not the diagnosis, it's the aftercare down the line, it's walking the road with a friend and someone to hold their hand."

• DL Link may be contacted at (011) 485-3269 or at [info@dlink.co.za](mailto:info@dlink.co.za)

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