



ההסתדרות הציונית העולמית
World Zionist Organization



ISRAEL ADVOCACY TRAINING SEMINAR

PRESS RELEASE

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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FROM: MERCAZ

CONTACT: Rabbi Robert Golub, MERCAZ
(212) 533-2061
rgolub@mercazusa.org

TOPIC: Israel Advocacy Training Seminar

"We're in an information war, but it's an information war we can win," says Gary Acheatel, founder and president of Advocates for Israel.

This was just one of the encouraging messages that nearly 60 representatives from Conservative synagogues across North America heard during a two-day training seminar on Israel Advocacy, a first-ever Conservative Movement-wide event on how to use public diplomacy effectively to defend Israel.

The two-day event, held on Sunday and Monday, December 18 and 19 at the Pearlstone Conference Center in Reisterstown, MD, was organized by **MERCAZ**, the Zionist Organization of the Conservative Movement, in consultation with **Advocates for Israel**.

Both the **Israel Ministry of Foreign Affairs** and the **World Zionist Organization** were partners in supporting the Seminar.

Featured speakers included **Noam Katz, Minister of Public Diplomacy of the Embassy of Israel**, and **Gerald M. Ostrov, Director of the Strategic Communications Center**. Others taking part in the Seminar included **Marty Davis, Senior Advisor to the Vice Chairman of the World Zionist Organization**, and **Rabbi Stuart Weinblatt, Director of Israel Policy and Advocacy for the Rabbinical Assembly**.

Among the topics discussed in workshops was "Talking Civilly Even with Those with Whom We Disagree" and "Building Effective Synagogue Committees." Workshop leaders included representatives from Stand With US, CAMERA, The Israel Project, the American Zionist Movement and Friends of Israel.

Michael Perloff, Chairman of the Holy Land Peace Project, and **Janet Tobin, President of MERCAZ USA**, were the Co-Chairs for the Seminar. Representatives of the Federation of Jewish Men's Clubs, MERCAZ Canada, MERCAZ USA, Rabbinical Assembly, United



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Synagogue of Conservative Judaism and Women's League for Conservative Judaism served on the organizing committee.

"Israel's moral, legal and political legitimacy have been challenged militarily and politically by her neighbors and others since the birth of the Jewish state. But never before have these challenges been heard with such vigor in the West or given so much credence. And never before has this propaganda represented such a real threat to Israel's very existence. As these challenges move forward, the Conservative Movement feels it is time to take more action to defend Israel against her detractors," says Janet Tobin.

The Israel Advocacy Training Seminar represents the first step by MERCAZ (www.mercazusa.org) to train a core group of Israel Advocates throughout the United States and Canada who will mobilize their synagogue communities. Plans are already underway to hold a similar two-day training seminar in the spring. We anticipate the MERCAZ advocacy initiative will reach hundreds of thousands of Conservative synagogue members in North America, with a goal to educate millions of our fellow Jewish and non-Jewish citizens to promote support of Israel.

MERCAZ represents Conservative Judaism within the World Zionist Organization (WZO), the Jewish Agency for Israel, the American Zionist Movement, the Canadian Zionist Federation, and the Jewish National Fund.

To learn more about MERCAZ plans for Israel Advocacy and to inquire about future seminars, contact Rabbi Robert R. Golub, Executive Director, MERCAZ USA at 212-533-2061 or info@mercuzusa.org.

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