

# Executive Council of Australian Jewry Inc.

**The Representative  
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Australian Jewry**



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## **ECAJ rejoins World Jewish Congress**

The ECAJ has restored its membership of the World Jewish Congress following discussions in New York last weekend between ECAJ President Grahame Leonard and newly elected interim WJC President Ronald Lauder.

Leonard represented the ECAJ at the WJC Governing Board meeting in New York on the afternoon of Sunday 10 June 2007. At that meeting Ronald Lauder was elected President to succeed Edgar Bronfman. The vote was 59 to 17 with Lauder receiving close to 80% of the vote of those present and eligible to vote. Vladimir Herzberg who was not present did not receive any votes and Ms. Eniat Wilf withdrew her candidacy after an impressive address. She is clearly a future leader. Matthew Bronfman, son of Edgar, was elected unopposed as Chairman; Lauder and Bronfman ran a joint ticket and their terms will expire in about eighteen months when the four year cycle between Plenums concludes.

The meeting was chaired by WJC treasurer Dr. Eduardo Elstztain, ran for just under two hours and was conducted in an open and transparent manner with the proceedings videotaped and available on the WJC website. Observers, the general public and media attended and all voting was open. The ballot for President was conducted by a roll call of each delegate. The Executive Committee meeting which preceded the Governing Board had recommended Ronald Lauder's election by a margin of 11 to 4 over Mendel Kaplan.

Despite the recommendation from the Executive that the voting be open, some delegates demanded a vote on this issue. Delegates voted overwhelmingly for an open ballot. Prior to the election Edgar Bronfman delivered a strong speech in which he expressed support for the Lauder/Bronfman ticket and the belief that the President must be an American. Kaplan and Lauder delivered brief addresses prior to the election.

Hopefully the outcome of this Governing Board meeting will be a new beginning for the WJC and provide the Jewish world with the leadership and direction so desperately needed.

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