

Executive Council of Australian Jewry Inc.

הוועד הכולל של
יהודי אוסטרליה

The Representative
Organisation of
Australian Jewry

2nd Floor
306 Hawthorn Road
Caulfield South Victoria
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Grahame J. Leonard
DEPUTY PRESIDENT
Rabbi John Levi AM DD
HON. TREASURER
Sam Salcman
HON. SECRETARY
Josie Lacey OAM
EXEC. DIRECTOR
Geoffrey Zygiere

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Anton Block (VIC)
David Knoll (NSW)
Keith Shilkin (WA)
David Paratz (QLD)
Norman Schueler (SA)
Daniel Albert (TAS)
Bill Arnold (ACT)

CONSTITUENTS

Jewish Community Council
of Victoria Inc
New South Wales Jewish
Board of Deputies
Jewish Community Council of
Western Australia Inc
Queensland Jewish Board of
Deputies
Jewish Community Council
of South Australia
Hobart Hebrew Congregation
ACT Jewish Community Inc

AFFILIATES

Australasian Union of Jewish
Students
Australian Federation of WIZO
Union for Progressive
Judaism - Australia
Federation of Australian
JewishCare
Maccabi Australia Inc
National Council of Jewish
Women of Australia

OBSERVERS

B'nai B'rith of Australia/ NZ
Council of Progressive Rabbis
Federation of Australian Jewish
Ex-Service Associations
Jewish National Fund
New Zealand Jewish Council
Zionist Federation of Australia



Ms Georgina Perry
Director and National President
Amnesty International Australia
Locked Bag 23
BROADWAY NSW 2007

23 August 2007

Dear Ms Perry

I write on behalf of the Australian Jewish community following reliable reports indicating that the 2009 UN World Conference against Racism will be hijacked, as in Durban in 2001, to again focus on vilification of Israel. I ask that Amnesty International Australia, in concert with your governing body and other NGOs worldwide, use its good offices to prevent this occurring.

The tragedy of what took place in Durban and threatens to reoccur in 2009 was not only the disproportionate and biased treatment of Israel. By focusing on Israel's alleged wrongdoings, conference participants were diverted from what are, in our opinion, considerably more pressing matters of concern.

The Preparatory Committee, which decides the modalities and objectives of the 2009 conference, is to have its first meeting August 27-31. The designated chair is Libya, a racist regime that gave its highest award in 2002 to convicted French Holocaust-denier Roger Garaudy, brutalises black African migrants, and tortures falsely imprisoned Bulgarian and Palestinian medics. Amongst other Committee members are serial offenders against human rights such as Cuba, Iran, Pakistan, Russia and South Africa. They were unsullied in Durban and largely remain so today.

If concern for human rights is to be anything more than a cliché, its purported defenders must be seen as apolitical, prepared to criticise without fear or favour. The time is long overdue for an equitable and principled stance to be taken. As Amnesty International Australia's mission is to "promote a culture where human rights are embraced, valued and protected", I humbly request your assistance in ensuring that this occurs.

Yours sincerely

Grahame J. Leonard
President

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Mr Robert McClelland MP
Member for Barton
PO Box 6022
House of Representatives
Parliament House
Canberra ACT 2600

28 August 2007

Dear Mr McClelland

I write on behalf of the Australian Jewish community following reliable reports that the 2009 UN World Conference against Racism will be hijacked, as in Durban in 2001, to again focus on vilification of Israel. I ask that the ALP, in concert with the Government and democratic states worldwide, use its good offices to do its utmost to prevent this occurring.

The tragedy of what took place in Durban and threatens to reoccur in 2009 was not only the disproportionate and biased treatment of Israel. By focusing on Israel's alleged wrongdoings, conference participants were diverted from what were, in our opinion, considerably more pressing matters of concern. This was recognised by Australia which noted the "hypocrisy" of participants.

The Preparatory Committee, which decides the modalities and objectives of the 2009 conference, is to have its first meeting this week. The designated chair is Libya, a regime that gave its highest award in 2002 to convicted French Holocaust-denier Roger Garaudy, brutalises black African migrants, and tortures falsely imprisoned Bulgarian and Palestinian medics. Amongst other Committee members are serial offenders against human rights such as Cuba, Iran, Pakistan, Russia and South Africa. They were unsullied in Durban and largely remain so today.

True proponents of human rights such as Australia and the US are sadly few and far between. If concern for human rights is to be anything more than a cliché, its purported defenders must be seen as apolitical, prepared to criticise without fear or favour. The time is long overdue for UN members and NGOs to take an equitable and principled stance and I humbly request your assistance in ensuring that this occurs. As part of this process, the ECAJ seeks to meet with you in order to further elaborate our concerns.

I look forward to your response.

Yours sincerely

Grahame J. Leonard
President

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The Hon Alexander Downer MP
PO Box 6022
House of Representatives
Parliament House
Canberra ACT 2600

28 August 2007

Dear Mr Downer

I write on behalf of the Australian Jewish community pursuant to reliable reports that the 2009 UN World Conference against Racism will be hijacked, as in Durban in 2001, to again focus on vilification of Israel. I ask that Australia, in concert with other democratic states, use its good offices as it did then, to do its utmost to prevent this occurring.

The tragedy of what took place in Durban and threatens to reoccur in 2009 was not only the disproportionate and biased treatment of Israel. By focusing on Israel's alleged wrongdoings, conference participants were diverted from what were, in our opinion, considerably more pressing matters of concern. Our community greatly appreciated Australia's moral efforts at that time, including its statement noting the "hypocrisy" of participants.

The Preparatory Committee, which decides the modalities and objectives of the 2009 conference, is to have its first meeting this week. The designated chair is Libya, a regime that gave its highest award in 2002 to convicted French Holocaust-denier Roger Garaudy, brutalises black African migrants, and tortures falsely imprisoned Bulgarian and Palestinian medics. Amongst other Committee members are serial offenders against human rights such as Cuba, Iran, Pakistan, Russia and South Africa. They were unsullied in Durban and largely remain so today.

True proponents of human rights such as Australia and the US are sadly few and far between. If concern for human rights is to be anything more than a cliché, its purported defenders must be seen as apolitical, prepared to criticise without fear or favour. The time is long overdue for UN members and NGOs to take an equitable and principled stance and I humbly request your assistance in ensuring that this occurs. As part of this process, the ECAJ seeks to meet with the Secretary of DFAT as a matter of urgency for briefing on this issue and to further elaborate our concerns.

I look forward to your response.

Yours sincerely

Grahame J. Leonard
President