

2 February 2010

The Hon Stephen Smith MP
Minister for Foreign Affairs
Parliament House
Canberra ACT 2600

Dear Minister

Re: Admission of Israel into JUSCANZ grouping at UN

I write to convey to you and the Federal government the sincere appreciation of the Australian Jewish community for the valuable and constructive role played by Australia in facilitating Israel's recent admission into the JUSCANZ grouping at the UN, a sub-group of the UN regional Western Europe and Others Group.

Thanks to this initiative, Israel will now have an opportunity to become a member of the UN Human Rights Council and to vote at its meetings. This is a development that should be welcomed by all fair-minded people. It will correct the anomaly and injustice that has hitherto excluded only one Member State of the UN, namely Israel, from full representation upon, and participation in the work of, the Human Rights Council. It will thereby also go some way towards improving the reputation and integrity of that body.

I sincerely hope that this change presages an overall improvement in the relations between Israel and the Human Rights Council that will help to advance the cause of human rights.

Yours sincerely

**Robert Goot AM SC
President**