

**AMERICAN JEWS FOR A JUST PEACE:
RE-CLAIMING OUR COMMUNITY'S PRINCIPLES
APRIL 26-29, 2002
WASHINGTON, DC**

Including Saturday evening Gala Dinner with featured speakers:
Shulamit Aloni, 30-year Israeli Member of Knesset, founder of the Meretz party and **B.Z. Goldberg**, director of the Academy award nominated film *Promises*.

To register, go to www.jpji.org/conference_registration.html

At this time of terrible crisis in the Middle East, with lives and hope being destroyed every minute, it is time to raise the voices of American Jews who support the thousands of Israelis daily demonstrating under the slogans, "The Occupation Is Killing Us All" and "We Refuse to Be Enemies." Large numbers of American Jews who identify with the terrors and struggles of our people in Israel believe the best way to support peace for Israel is to do all we can to bring an immediate and complete end to the Occupation, resulting in a viable Palestinian state based on the '67 borders, with Jerusalem as the capital of both states and a just resolution of the status Palestinian refugees.

Organizing Committee (in formation):

David Albert (Austin, TX)
Aliza Becker (Chicago, IL)
Minnie Berman (New York, NY)
Rabbi Lewis Bogage (Indianapolis, IN)
Cherie Brown (Washington, DC)
Steven Feuerstein (Chicago, IL)
Neal Gosman (St. Paul, MN)
Ira Grupper (Louisville, KY)
Yossi Khen (Los Angeles, CA)
Clare Kinberg (Eugene, OR)
Irena Klepfisz (Brooklyn, NY)
Lois Levine (St. Louis, MO)
Rabbi Rebecca Lillian (Chicago, IL)
Steve Masters (Philadelphia, PA)
Frank Rosenthal (West Lafayette, IN)
Penny Rosenwasser (Oakland, CA)
Richard Rubin (Chicago, IL)
Josh Ruebner (Washington, DC)
Rabbi David Seidenberg (Seattle, WA)
Nicole Dannenberg Sorger (Washington, DC)
Donna Spiegelman (Boston, MA)

Advisory Committee (in formation):

Rabbi Rebecca Alpert (Philadelphia, PA) Temple University

Shulamit Aloni (Tel Aviv) 30-year Member of Knesset, former Meretz Chair, former Israeli Minister of Education
Chana Bloch (Berkeley, CA) poet and translator
Ruth El Raz (Jerusalem) Bat Shalom, Counseling Center for Women
Marcia Freedman (San Francisco, CA and Jerusalem)
Nan Fink Gefen (Berkeley, CA) writer and co-director, Kochmat HaLev
Rabbi Lynn Gottlieb (Albuquerque, NM) Congregation Nahalat Shalom and Jewish Peace Fellowship
Rabbi Mordechai Leibling (Philadelphia, PA) Shefa Fund, Break the Silence
Rabbi Ellen Lippman (Brooklyn, NY) Congregation Kolot Chayeinu
Rabbi Robert Marx, (Glencoe, IL) Congregation Hakafa
Rabbi Jeremy Milgrom (Jerusalem) Rabbis for Human Rights
Grace Paley (Thetford, VT) novelist
Adrienne Rich (San Francisco, CA) poet
Cantor David Shneyer (Washington, DC) Congregation Am Kolel
Mitchell Silver (Boston, MA) Educational Director, Boston District Workmen's Circle/Arbeter Ring, and author
Nurit Steinfeld (Jerusalem) Bat Shalom and Coalition of Women for Just Peace
Gloria Steinem, (New York, NY) founder and editor, *Ms. Magazine*
Gila Svirsky (Jerusalem) Coalition of Women for a Just Peace and Women in Black
Rabbi Brian Walt (Philadelphia, PA)
Rabbi Arthur Waskow (Philadelphia, PA) Shalom Center
Ira Weiss (Washington, DC)

We are convening this Urgent Conference to form Brit Tzedek v'Shalom: Jewish Alliance for Justice and Peace, a new national Jewish peace organization, dedicated to organizing in the American Jewish community for Israel's future. We base our efforts on an understanding of the compelling need, for the sake of all, to end the Israeli occupation of the West Bank, Gaza Strip and East Jerusalem and the need to support the establishment of a viable Palestinian state alongside Israel. We will work to strengthen the growing network of American Jews working for a just, comprehensive, and lasting peace in Israel and Palestine, and thereby catalyze a nationally coordinated grassroots movement among Jews who envision a future of justice and peace for Israel and her neighbors in the Middle East. Together we will promote our vision of a peaceful Middle East where Jews and Arabs live in dignity and freedom.

Brit Tzedek V'Shalom Founding Principles

As a Jewish organization, Brit Tzedek v'Shalom is deeply committed to the well-being of Israel and all of its neighbors. We are guided by the mitzvah,

or obligation, to pursue peace and justice that is rooted in both secular and religious Jewish traditions. Our educational, cultural and political projects are based upon our love for the Jewish people and our concern for the long-term interests of the State of Israel. We are also deeply committed to the values of human rights and international law which reflect our love and concern for the well-being of all humanity. Brit Tzedek v'Shalom supports the work of Israeli and Palestinian organizations which share our principles.

We believe that the following principles and action are required in order to resolve the Israeli-Palestinian conflict in an equitable and nonviolent way:

1. A complete end to the Israeli military occupation of the territories occupied since 1967 in the West Bank, Gaza Strip and East Jerusalem with border adjustments agreeable to both parties.
 2. The establishment of a viable Palestinian state based on the pre-1967 borders alongside Israel. Both Israel and a the Palestinian state should thus be able to guarantee the ability to maintain secure and recognized boundaries free from threats or acts of force.
 3. Jerusalem will be the capitol of both states. Unfettered access to all religious sites in Israel and in the future Palestine will be ensured to all Jews, Muslims and Christians, regardless of nationality or sovereignty of the sites.
 4. A just resolution of the Palestinian refugee problem that takes into account the needs and aspirations of both peoples is crucial to a just peace. Such a resolution should acknowledge Israel's share of responsibility for the plight of Palestinian refugees while respecting the special relationship between the State of Israel and the Jewish people.
 5. We strongly urge the termination of both state-initiated violence and terrorism for achieving political goals. This applies to violence against all individuals with special care being taken to avoid harm to civilians. We work towards a future in which peoples use non-violent means to resolve social and political inequities.
 6. Israeli settlements in the Occupied Territories are a major obstacle to peace, a tremendous financial burden to Israel and do little, if anything, to enhance Israel's security. These settlements constantly expose to danger the settlers themselves and the Israeli soldiers sent to defend them, in addition to bringing grave harm to the Palestinians living under Occupation. We call for bringing safely home to Israel the settlers from all existing settlements except in those areas that will be included as part of a negotiated and mutually agreed upon exchange of territories between Israel and Palestine in

determining the final borders of both states.

7. As U.S. Jews, we are dedicated to the implementation of the above-stated principles. As U.S. citizens, we have a special responsibility to ensure that our government pursues policies that are consistent with the requirements of a just peace for Israel and the Palestinian people.

Conference Mission Statement

In addition to the founding of Brit Tzedek v'Shalom, the conference will be designed:

1. To educate, empower and energize Jewish activists working on promoting a two-state solution for Israel and Palestine.
2. To provide an opportunity for Jewish activists from around the United States to network and get to know one another as a community.
3. To engage in direct action and demonstrations in Washington, DC in order to influence U.S. policy toward the Middle East.
4. To attract media attention to American Jewish and Israeli voices that advocate our approach to Middle East peace.
5. To provide training in effective lobbying, including a day of meetings with congressional representatives on Capitol Hill.

To register for the conference:

http://www.jpji.org/conference_registration.html

Why a national Jewish organization for a just peace between Israel and the Palestinian people, and why now?

At this time of terrible crisis in the Middle East, with lives and hope being destroyed on a daily basis, it is imperative that a well-organized, unified American Jewish voice call out for peace, justice and a reasoned response to the crisis guaranteed to produce satisfactory results for both sides. The United States government needs to know that vast numbers of American Jews assert that the best way to support peace for Israel is to work for an immediate and complete end to the Occupation, resulting in a viable Palestinian state based on the '67 borders, with Jerusalem as the capital of both states, and with compensation, resettlement and limited return for the Palestinian refugees. The United States government needs to know that LARGE NUMBERS of American Jews realize that this is the ONLY path to peace, and that we will do all that we can to work for this path alongside our Palestinian and Israeli partners. The United States government needs to know that the moral and physical survival of the Jewish people depends on the clear and unambiguous pursuit of this path to peace, through

justice, and that to join us in the pursuit of this path is the way to be the strongest and best ally of the Jewish people.

Terrorism declines with hope and progress – this has been seen again and again. Our way is only way to end terrorist attacks on the Jewish people. Should negotiations resume immediately, beginning from where we left off in Taba, heading towards the fair and comprehensive settlement outlined by the recent Saudi/Arab League peace initiative, we would see an immediate, dramatic drop in terrorist attacks. We are a Jewish group that cares deeply about Israel, and understands that Israel will survive only by taking on just policies vis-à-vis the Palestinian people.

Brit Tzedek v'Shalom will tirelessly advocate for the goals outlined above, on a local national and international level. Outside of Israel and the Palestinians themselves, the United States is the major international power for influencing the course of events in the Middle East. The American Jewish community plays a central role, in determining U.S. foreign policy in the region. Therefore, our voices, the voices of American Jews for peace through justice must be heard, strongly and in a unified, politically effective manner. We believe that we are the majority. Polls repeatedly confirm this. Now let's prove it!

In conjunction with the many local grass-roots and Jewish communal organizations already working on these issues, we will sponsor lobbying, organize political message campaigns for mass rapid response on timely themes, support and organize national direct actions, support Israeli and Palestinian groups and individuals working for the same goals, develop culturally appropriate educational materials on the topics of Jerusalem, the Palestinian refugees, the settlements, and the Occupation, and organize rabbis, Jewish community leaders, the affiliated and unaffiliated, the young and the old, religious and secular, women and men, lesbian, gay and straight, from New York, Boston, Los Angeles, Chicago, Seattle, all over the United States – all members of our community, for a true peace and justice.