



From: Stanley K. Plotnick, President UIA Federations Canada

To: UIAFC Executive Committee, Federation Presidents and Chief Executives

Canadian Emergency Funding Reaches Children and Families of Battle Fronts

Just 48 hours after the Conference Call in which Federation Presidents and Executives approved immediate emergency support for Israeli northern communities, funds have already reached the besieged children and families; this is in addition to emergency funds for southern communities. We are expediting these emergency programs on behalf of Canadian Federations together with the Jewish Agency for Israel, the Sacta Rashi Foundation and other partners, in coordination with local regional municipalities and councils. Because of our long-term relationship with the Galilee Panhandle, which is twinned with the *Coast-to-Coast communities in Partnership 2000*, UIA Federations Canada is also helping to create new partnerships in this particularly critical time.



Evacuated children from the north enjoying their time spent at Ben-Yakir youth village.

Northern Israel

The **Canadian Israel Crisis Relief Fund** is already helping with three specific programs:

1. *Moving Our Children to Safety - Summer Camps* (in partnership with JAFI)

A total of 3,245 children and youth have already been evacuated from the north to safer regions to enjoy summer camps: 418 new immigrants from Absorption Centres (in the Upper Galilee, Safed, Kiryat Yam, Haifa, Nahariya and Tiberias) to camps at 3 Youth Aliya Villages; and 2,827 youngsters from 20 northern communities under attack, who are participating in 9 different summer camps in safer regions.

2. *Respite Retreat* (in partnership with Sacta Rashi)

Ongoing attacks have forced thousands of residents to spend days and nights in cramped bomb shelters. Canadian funding is enabling these families to enjoy a few days of fun, rest, relaxation and organized activities retreats far from the missiles and rockets, giving them pleasure while providing them with renewed strength.





3. *Bomb Shelter Upgrades - Entertainment and Equipment*
(in partnership with Sacta Rashi and UJIA Britain)

Canadian funding is offering a solution to help those individuals who for various reasons cannot leave the safety of the bomb shelters, by providing entertainment and educational activities; 150 kits with 12 different games for children aged 3-15 have been delivered to bomb shelters. Since businesses in the region are closed due to the warfare, in a special move, Toys"R"Us transported the kits all the way from warehouses in central Israel to the Confrontation Line.

Additional items currently being provided for larger group activities include Lego for the younger children, as well as PlayStations, foosball, and air-hockey for teenagers.

Sderot - Southern Israel

Ongoing and intensified attacks in Sderot and neighbourhoods surrounding the Gaza Strip have time and time again forced thousands of residents to rush to the 'safety' of secure rooms, seeking refuge from barrages of Kassam rockets. Two specific programs to benefit from Canadian emergency funding are:

1. *Safe Summer Camps for Sderot Children* (in partnership with JAFI)

Summer came early to the children of this besieged region when schools closed due to a rocket attack. Special camps have been activated in safe areas, including at JAFI Youth Aliya Villages, so that the youngsters can benefit from enjoyable activities in secure surroundings.

2. *Respite and Retreat for Sderot Residents* (in partnership with Sacta Rashi)

Canadian funding will help the Kassam-inundated residents of Sderot to benefit from a bit of respite from the ongoing battles of day-to-day life; through day-excursions or more extended retreats. Residents will enjoy entertainment and relaxation, giving them pleasure and renewed strength. The danger in northern and southern Israel is real and the situation is acute. The Canadian Federations mobilized with record speed, and funds have already reached those with the most urgent needs. Kol Kovod to all our Federations, communities and especially our team in Israel that are making sure that what is needed is happening....quickly!

Together, we can help the residents of Israel to win this war!

Sad News - Birthright Mifgash

Two more Special Forces soldiers were killed in action in Lebanon early Wednesday morning while preventing Hezbollah guerrillas from crossing the border into Moshav Avvim. Our hearts go out to the families of these very fine young men.





Our CIE office in Israel was extremely saddened and upset to inform us that **Staff Sergeant Yonatan Hadasi z"l**, was one of the soldiers. Yonatan, 21, was from Kibbutz Merhavia and was a *Taglit birthright israel - CIE Mifgash* participant on the February National 3, 2006 trip.



Staff Sergeant Yonatan Hadasi z"l, a birthright israel Mifgash was killed in action yesterday in Lebanon.

The Taglit birthright israel family and the Canadian Jewish community mourn the loss of one of our dear IDF Mifgashim participants and we extend our heartfelt condolences to the Hadasi family.

May his memory be for a blessing.

UIAC Staff Visit the Bomb Shelters

While visiting the communities of Israel's northern border, Yossi and Victor commented on the eerie feeling of passing through ghost towns. The highway heading north was empty, aside from a convoy of IDF trucks and a few cars. Most residents have left the north and are in bomb shells or visiting family and friends in the safer areas of Israel. Stores in the north are closed and supplies including natural gas are running low.



A colourful mural 'welcomes' newly arrived Ethiopian immigrants after their absorption centre was hit by missiles.



Yossi Tanuri meeting with a woman in a bomb shelter

Many people have not left the bomb shelter in days. Yet they are strong and speak to a general consensus that Israel's military should not stop until their job is done.

Meanwhile UIAC, our office in Israel has created a fascinating blog that can be accessed by going to: **www.magbitcanada.org/update**. The photographs and reports from our staff in Israel brings us a clearer perception of life during the crisis.





Canadian Philanthropy...

The UIAFC Executive has authorized an immediate cash advance of \$400,000 that has already been sent to Israel. We have already received from **UJA Federation of Greater Toronto** \$400,000; **FEDERATION CJA Montreal** \$125,000; \$36,000 from **Edmonton Jewish Federation**; \$25,000 from each of the **Jewish Federation of Winnipeg** and the **Jewish Federation of Greater Vancouver**, and \$20,000 from the **Jewish Federation of Ottawa**. The next update will contain further information on additional funds received from federations.

Once again, Canadian Jewry is making a clear statement of our commitment to Israel and is receiving a high profile from Israeli citizens and their government. Canadian philanthropist **Gerry Schwartz** expressed a strong desire to help with Israel's immediate needs and learnt of the congested bomb shelters that lack air conditioning units. As a result, Mr. Schwartz immediately donated \$50,000 toward the purchase of portable air conditioning units for the bomb shelters, some units have already been delivered.

A co-ordinated campaign is being examined by communities from coast to coast which will address the long-term needs that will certainly be needed to help rebuild the communities, the industries, economies and lives that have been so badly affected. Our Efforts are truly appreciated...by those receiving the help and Israeli Leadership.

Israeli Philanthropy...

Israeli corporations and businesses are also stepping in to help, such as Bank Hapoalim, which has donated televisions and DVDs for bomb shelters, and many others. In addition, through a new partnership between UIA of Canada, IGT travel agencies and the Jerusalem Regency Hotel, 20 luxury hotel rooms on a half-board basis will be provided to new immigrants from the north for four days, including transportation, tours, and entrance costs. This is specifically for new immigrants as they encounter even more difficulties than veteran Israeli families; they generally have extremely limited economic means, do not have relatives or close friends in other regions, and have not yet become incorporated in a social network, and thus had no alternative other than remaining in the besieged confrontation zone.

Actions Across Canada

As part of the CIJA family of agencies, the Canada Israel Committee has taken a pro-active stance on our behalf to the media and general Canadian public. Yesterday's CIJA conference call highlighted the activities of CIC in promoting Israel's position in the current crisis. Among the topics discussed, CIC offered their support to the communities across Canada in developing concrete plans if and when anti-Israel and/or negative op-eds appear in our communities. Other topics included briefings for our regional communities, teleconferencing with expert speakers and the importance of outreach to the non-Jewish influencers. An excellent source of information and Talking Points is available on the CIC website (www.cicweb.ca).





And here is a brief synopsis of related events taking place across Canada....

Montreal FEDERATION CJA had a very successful Town Hall Meeting this past Tuesday. More than 1,000 supporters showed up to express their solidarity with Israel. One thousand postcards were also distributed at the rally, to encourage participants to commend the Canadian government for its support of Israel. A bulletin is being emailed today to over 10,000 members of the Montreal Jewish community and is being posted on their website, summarizing the actions they are asking people to take immediately in the current crisis. Montreal also has a Rabbinic



Richard Vineberg, President of Montreal's FEDERATION CJA addresses over 1,000 attendees at the Town Hall Meeting.

delegation arriving in Israel today for a solidarity Shabbat... **UJA Federation of Toronto** is planning a major rally for Wednesday, July 26, 7:30 p.m. at the Toronto Theatre of the Arts. As well, a comprehensive Israel crisis section has been added to their Web site, weekly conference call briefings are planned for donors and frequent e-blasts are being sent to over 20,000 from their database... **Jewish Federation of Ottawa** has set up a call for the Israel Crisis Relief Fund on their website and raised \$ 20,000 at their golf tournament live auction... **The Jewish Federation of Greater Vancouver** held a community gathering featuring Israel's **Ambassador Alan Baker**... The **Atlantic Jewish Council** held a successful community rally featuring **Eric Malloy**, representative of *Bridges for Peace* and **Scott Brison** (MP and candidate for Liberal Party leadership), to a packed audience. A personal letter to the community from the Honorable Peter MacKay, Minister of Foreign Affairs was read to the gathering... **The Windsor Jewish Federation** is committed to developing a community response to demonstrate solidarity with Israel and our partner Federations across Canada....**The UJA Federation of Hamilton** is organizing a rally in support of Israel.



Zeev Bielski speaks with children and counsellors at one of JAFI's summer camps.

Israelis are Appreciating Canadian Show of Solidarity

Early this morning I received a call from **Zeev Bielski**, Chair of the Jewish Agency and World Zionist Organization. Zeev called to express his personal thanks and appreciation of the JAFI leadership for the front and centre role the Canadian Jewish community has taken under the UIAFC banner.

The quick response of UIAFC, through Yossi Tanuri and our staff





in Israel, and the flow of funds from our federations signify the continued family bond of *Am Yisrael* between *Medinat Yisrael* and Canadian Jewry. Zeev ended the call by asking me to tell UIAFC leadership – “*Todah and Am Yisrael Chai!*”

Other Notes of Appreciation...

Dear Stanley,

The Canadian Campaign serves as an example of quick and efficient mobilization. We are all very impressed by the depth and the scope of the activities of the UIAC. You provide magnificent leadership and we wish you much success .

*Kindest Regards, **Avi Pazner**, (World Chairman of Keren Hayesod-UIA)*

Kol HaKavod for the wonderful work the Canadians are doing for Israel.

*Warm regards, **Mark Leibler**, (Chair, Keren Hayesod-UIA)*

A half page ad was placed in Israel's Ma'ariv newspaper on Tuesday which was signed by the Presidents and Executive Directors across Canada. The ad was a Hebrew translation of an open letter sent to **Prime Minister Ehud Olmert** and the people of Israel, expressing Canada's support and solidarity. Copies of the newspaper ad were found throughout bomb shelter in the northern communities, and were presented to the Prime Minister himself. Our office in Israel has received many calls commending us for our initiative and support. Even I have had calls from friends from Israel. Perhaps the impact is best expressed in a note that was received by **Bernard Pinsky**, President of the **Jewish Federation of Greater Vancouver** from an Israeli who saw our ad in the newspaper:



Israelis living in bomb shelters were happy to see an ad in the Ma'ariv newspaper expressing the support of Canadian Jewry.

"I saw yesterday in the newspaper your advertisement and I was really surprised and excited as well. It's like a big hug for us during these hard days and we need it. I think it's the first time since the six days war that the world is behind Israel, supports our fight and finally understands we are doing the fight for all of the world and it's not our own war. We also get here at work support mails from our suppliers in the States and Europe and it gives us strength to go on."

My personal thanks to each of you...you are the driving forces behind our response. I am deeply proud to be associated with the incredible Canadian leadership team.

Shalom al Yisrael.....Together let us pray for peace for all of Israel

