The Zionist Organization of the Conservative Movement

מרכז MERCAZ USA

הקונגרס הציוני הל"ט
THE 39TH ZIONIST CONGRESS

ההסתדרות הציונית העולמית
WORLD ZIONIST ORGANIZATION

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Some good news before Shabbat: A World Zionist Congress Update

As we enter Shabbat, we are so excited to share with you these successes that have come from the agreement reached in the aftermath of the World Zionist Congress! Thanks to your help and your votes, the Conservative/Masorti Movement will benefit greatly from increased funding and influence within the National Institutions.

Our work continues together and may we go from strength to strength!

Shabbat Shalom,

Rabbi Hillel Skolnik, *President, MERCAZ USA*
Sarrae Crane, *Executive Director, MERCAZ USA*

After a long two weeks of intensive political work at and following the Zionist Congress, a final agreement has been signed that will divide up positions and responsibilities as well as anchor funding and policy commitments from the national institutions over the next five years: at WZO, KKL/JNF, the Jewish Agency, and Keren HaYesod. MERCAZ's representatives and their teams played not just a leading role, but perhaps the central role in securing a broad agreement that unifies the Jewish people and enables these institutions to advance their important work at this pivotal moment for Israel and the Jewish people.

In the framework of this agreement, we have delivered on our core promises to you - MERCAZ supporters around the world - which we laid out during our election campaigns in over a dozen countries worldwide.

• A 50% increase in funding allocation to streams including Conservative and Reform institutions and their programs that will benefit our communities. Both in Israel and worldwide.

• Increased funding for MERCAZ's Zionist and Israel education programming.

• Expanded Conservative/Masorti representation on various boards and decisionmaking bodies that will make funding allocation and policy decisions over the next five years – a result of our 15% increase in representation in the Congress.

• Relative to the previous term, MERCAZ and our pluralistic and liberal partners now hold more of the seniormost positions at the national institutions. In the last term, both top positions (KKL Chair and WZO Chair) were held by the right-wing/ultra-Orthodox bloc. In this term, the pluralistic/liberal bloc will hold half. Yair Netanyahu will NOT hold any position that requires political approval of any kind at the national institutions.

• Extremist allies of Itamar Ben Gvir are not included in the agreement and have been marginalized at the national institutions.

• Expanded authority for the WZO Vice Chair (MERCAZ's senior position in the institutions) and his office, enabling our team to further advance our work and values in the institutions.

• Passed resolutions by wide margins putting the Jewish people on record in favor of an equal draft law in Israel, the formation of an apolitical and impartial State Commission of Inquiry into October 7th, and equal treatment and infrastructure at the Egalitarian Kotel.

The very first thing we must say after listing these significant accomplishments is this: Thank you. These achievements simply would not have been possible without your hard work and support for MERCAZ during the recent election campaign. But what we've gotten done over this past month is just the beginning. We look forward to continuing our work over the coming five year term, and together, continuing to deliver for Masorti/Conservative values and interests. We look forward to sharing more updates in the weeks and months to come, including on our **upcoming post-Congress Zoom briefing on November 23rd**.

Best,

Rabbi Debra Newman Kamin, *President of MERCAZ Olami*
Rabbi Mauricio Balter, *Executive Director of MERCAZ Olami and Masorti Olami*

Dr. Yizhar Hess, *Vice Chairman of the WZO and senior representative of MERCAZ at the National Institutions*