



August 19th, 2014

"All Jews are responsible for one another"

I approach you towards what is hopefully the aftermath of Operation Protective Edge, another one of the many battles Israel has had to wage since its establishment 66 years ago. As in the past, Jews around the world met the challenge and offered true and honest support, moral and material, to help Israel gain the upper hand in its struggle against Hamas.

Once again, you proved that a united Jewish people is a force to be reckoned with, and for that we are truly grateful. This sense of unity and solidarity is exactly what we are striving to foster through the Government of Israel-World Jewry Initiative, with the ultimate aim of securing a vibrant future for the entire Jewish people.

Following the conflict, our attention returns to supporting Jewish communities from around the world which are suffering from an anti-Semitic backlash. At the same time, the Jewish community in Ukraine stands before a humanitarian crisis which we are all united to help solve. This is our common challenge and I am confident that if we work together, we will emerge even stronger.

It has been two months since the government passed a resolution ratifying the establishment of the Government of Israel-World Jewry Joint Initiative and the allocation of significant resources towards implementing the Initiative's vision. I would like to use this opportunity to update you on where things currently stand.

First, I'd like to be clear – on the Israeli side and throughout this start-up period, the Government through the Ministry for Jerusalem and Diaspora Affairs is overseeing the establishment of the Initiative and is currently serving as the convener for the Initiative. Our partners in the Diaspora are many – representatives of the organized Jewish world, foundations and many different philanthropists.



Through dozens of engagements with Jewish organizations, philanthropists and professionals, we, in the government, have spent the past two months sharpening our view of the right way to establish the governance and strategic framework for the Initiative.

The Joint Initiative rests on two key principles:

- 1) It is a demonstration of a true collaboration and partnership between the Jewish people and the State of Israel.
- 2) The Initiative will look strategically and globally at the needs of young Jews from ages 12 to 35 with the aim of establishing and organizing relevant programming.

By the end of the year we plan to complete three tasks and then in the beginning of 2015 to start launching a few pilots.

We perceive three main challenges:

- 1) Planning: The planning process is based on the work that was done at the joint conference in Jerusalem in November and the working groups that followed which outlined the areas of interest for the Initiative, a process which many of you took part in. Since then, we have met with a wide variety of representatives of the Jewish People from federations, organizations, private funds and philanthropists. We plan to continue holding these discussions in the coming weeks as work on the strategic plan continues.
- 2) Resource Building: The Government of Israel passed a resolution committing the allocation of new funds for the Initiative. Additional funds will come from partners throughout the Jewish World and will mostly go towards the projects themselves. In addition, a steering committee will be established which will include partners who wish to be part of the initiative decision-making team on a "pay to play" basis. The aim is for this steering committee to consist of representatives of the Israeli government, the organized Jewish World and philanthropists.
- 3) Operations: after close examination of the different options for operating the Initiative and in order to maintain its strategic management capabilities as well as to guarantee the deep and true cooperation between the government and world Jewry, we have decided to establish a



new entity that will house the Initiative. The new entity will be small, thin and effective and will allow any player, whether a philanthropist, a foundation or a part of the organized Jewish world, to forge a direct partnership without middlemen.

The new entity will be manned by top professionals and will be overseen by the Initiative's Steering Committee. Together, they will oversee all aspects of the Initiative - the establishment of programs, the content, measures and targets, digital platforms and more. This entity will be as clean as possible of politics and free of unnecessary bureaucracy. It will allow the fulfillment of the main objective of the initiative – true and full cooperation in designing, financing and implementing the plan to secure a thriving future for the Jewish people.

We wish to thank all our partners, the philanthropists, the foundations, the federations, World Zionist Organization, *Keren Hayesod* and other Jewish organizations for their passion and enthusiasm in paving our joint road.

We also thank the Jewish Agency for working with us on this process. We are continuing our dialogue with the Agency with the aim of finding the best way for it to fit into a role within the Initiative. Like with all our potential partners, we will work with the Jewish Agency to create a formidable and long-lasting partnership within the Initiative.

As this is a joint initiative between the Government and the Jewish People, we will continue to engage with each and every one of you throughout this process.

Please know that our door is always open to ideas and feedback from each and every one of you - our true partners in this journey.

I look forward to continue working together with you all.

Sincerely,

Dvir Kahana

Dvir Kahana

Director General

Ministry for Jerusalem and Diaspora Affairs