



Summary of WJDC Activities since April 2009

April 20–24, 2009: Durban Review Conference

After extensive planning, preparation and active involvement in the process leading up to the Durban Review Conference, the World Jewish Diplomatic Corps sent a well-trained delegation to the conference that took place in Geneva, Switzerland from April 20th-24th.

The WJDC delegation consisted of WJDC Chairman Adam H. Koffler, Head of the WJDC DRC Task-Force JD Lior Herman (UK), WJDC Coordinator Ariel Rodal, and JDs Maureen Meyer (Switzerland/Israel), Yoav Sivan (Israel), Andrei Schwartz (Romania), Peter Gyori (Czech Republic), Eli Novershtern (Israel), Jake Bennett (U.S.), Marc Pozniak (South Africa), and Deborah Munzer (France).

The WJDC delegation worked in coordination with the WJC senior delegation and with the International Jewish Caucus to lobby governments and NGO representatives, and to monitor, respond to and report on both the official and unofficial sessions and deliberations.

The website www.drc2009.org, developed by the WJDC, served over 300 people as an online resource center for NGOs, groups and individuals involved in the planning process leading up to the Durban Review Conference. This web platform helped to coordinate the activities of these parties, to facilitate the timely flow of relevant and pressing information, and to mobilize concerned parties.

The Task Force had identified the following four strategic goals to be pursued in the Durban Review Process:

- To impact the DRC preparations and outcomes
- To promote human rights
- To promote young Jewish leadership
- To build alliances with NGOs and civil society

In the period prior to the conference, Task Force members operated individually in their respective communities and in international forums to achieve these goals. In addition, the Task Force utilised the WJDC web platform (www.jewishdiplomats.org) for online discussion, communication, sharing of resources and more. During the conference, the Task Force was structured into three operative clusters: Policy and Diplomacy, Media and Communications, and Student and Youth Groups. While JDs usually operated within more than one cluster at the same time, the cluster division facilitated focused work in advancing the strategic goals. Furthermore, JDs acted as an integral part of the International Jewish Caucus and significantly contributed to its work.

For the most part, the DRC was a success for the Jewish world with regards to minimising the attempts to demonise Israel or to degrade and erode the Shoah and the problem of anti-Semitism. While the inclusion of the original DDPA is still problematic, no new hostile reference was added to the DRC outcome declaration. References to anti-Semitism are minimal, though in accordance with the treatment of like racisms and discriminations. Despite this success, it should be noted that much of the favorable attitude towards Israel and Jews is to be attributed to the animosity created towards Iran's President, Mahmoud Ahmadinejad, whose visit and speech at the Assembly hijacked the campaign of the Palestinian NGOs.

JDs were influential in lobbying governments and NGOs, mainly in Africa and Europe. JDs played an important role in meeting ambassadors and representatives during the negotiations conducted during the PrepComm and Inter-Sessional Working Group, as

well as at the DRC itself. JDs also gathered key intelligence, which at times was channeled to relevant governments, thus positioning the WJDC as a reliable source and conduit. The Task Force also made official statements, including textual proposals with regards to the draft declaration.

JDs extensively briefed journalists and other stakeholders. The Task Force was active in addressing and actively participating in numerous side events held in the Palais de Nations during the conference. Specific official interventions with regards to the rights of the Roma, Bahai and LGBT took place in the PrepComm, ISWG, and the DRC. Collaboration and exchange of opinions and thoughts as well as joint statements were carried out with a wide range of local and international NGOs dealing with human rights. The Task Force also played a leading role in the creation of the International Jewish Caucus and the shaping of its agenda. Bringing together over 30 Jewish organisations, the Caucus collectively lobbied for a proactive human rights approach addressing anti-racism measures, while highlighting the Jewish contribution towards this aim.

JDs were involved in impacting the media in the lead-up to the conference, identifying key journalists and media channels and providing preparatory briefings regarding the DRC agenda and WJDC approach, as well as publishing op-eds and writing on blogs. The main media effort was conducted during the DRC, where all Task Force members contributed written op-eds and blog entries and gave interviews to a wide range of international television and radio channels on a daily basis.

The WJDC's active participation in the International Jewish Caucus as well as the tireless individual and group effort made by the JDs throughout the conference was a testament to the value of the WJDC. The JDs interfaced with Jewish and non-Jewish interest groups, actively participated in various side events, talked with the international media, wrote op-eds, reported on the ground, debriefed all the issues at the beginning and end of each day, and generally contributed their skills and expertise when and where needed.

The JDs left Geneva empowered by their experience and satisfied that their skills were employed meaningfully. A [comprehensive report](#) of the JDs' experiences in Geneva and their recommendations can be found [here](#).

May 20, 2009: JD Alan Naccache (Italy), along with senior WJC leadership, attended meetings in Rome with Vatican Cardinal Secretary of State, Tarcisio Bertone, and with Italian Prime Minister Silvio Berlusconi, during which the Middle East peace process, the Iranian nuclear program, and rising extremism and anti-Semitism in Europe were discussed. Alan's report can be found [here](#).

June 1-3, 2009: OAS General Assembly in Honduras: JD Sebastian Azerrad (Argentina) participated in the OAS conference's official portion and in the meeting with members of civil society, during which he delivered a statement on behalf of the WJC. Sebastian's report is available [here](#).

June 21-25, 2009: Inter-religious Dialogue Conference for Young Professionals in Castel Gandolfo, Italy: This conference brought together approximately 25 young Jews and 25 young Catholics to engage in dialogue for a week under the auspices of the ILC (the International Inter-religious Liaison Committee). The JDs attending this event were Inbal Freund (Israel), Jay Shultz (Israel), Svetlana Jebrak (Germany), and Tobia Zevi (Italy), along with WJDC Director Peleg Reshef. This conference for emerging leaders followed one held in Budapest in November 2008. The JDs moderated sessions and spoke as well as engaged in dialogue with their Catholic counterparts. To read the JDs' [detailed reports](#) on the conference.

July 26- 28, 2009: Together with Latin American Jewish Congress President Jack Terpins and Director of the Latin American Branch of the WJC Claudio Epelman, JD Alejandro Resnik (Argentina) visited Venezuela, with the purpose of increasing the

dialogue between the Jewish community and the Government of Venezuela. To read the report of this meeting, click [here](#).

July 31, 2009: Israeli Foreign Minister Lieberman's

Visit to Argentina Around 30 JDs from Latin America gathered at the Alvear Hotel to participate in a one-hour meeting with FM Lieberman, who during the discussion was informed of the activities of the WJDC. JDs from Argentina, Chile, Uruguay and Paraguay attended the meeting. Also participating were MK Danny Danon and Israeli Ambassador to Argentina Daniel Gazit.

August 9–13, 2009: 39th Plenary Assembly of the World Federation of United Nations Associations (WFUNA) Seoul, Republic of Korea

As part of the UNA-Israel delegation to the conference, WJDC Director Peleg Reshef and JD Elinadav Heymann (Israel) observed and learned the WFUNA structure (mainly the WFUNA global operations, WFUNA-Youth and the UNA-Israel) while evaluating potential ways for the WJDC to make an impact. The theme of the conference was "Global Citizens for the United Nations". The WFUNA-youth Plenary Meeting was held at the same time. The conference was addressed by Dr. Hans Blix, the outgoing President of WFUNA, Dr. Han Seung Soo, Prime Minister of the Republic of Korea, UN Secretary-General Ban Ki Moon, and others. To read Elinadav's [full report](#), please visit the web platform.

August 29–30: National SAJBOD and African Jewish Congress Conferences

South African JDs Marc Pozniak and Dalia Lichtenstein attended the conferences, and Dalia was officially appointed to the committee of the African Jewish Congress.

August–September 2009: Iran's Universal Periodic Review (UPR)

The UPR, created in 2006, is the first ever UN mechanism to look systematically at the human rights records of all 192 UN Member States once every four years. Iran will be reviewed in the 7th UPR session in February 2010. As an accredited NGO, the WJC has the right to submit information and have it included in Iran's review.

On September 1, the WJDC submitted on behalf of the WJC a list of Iran's human rights violations in various categories over the past several years to the UN High Commissioner for Human Rights, Ms. Navanethem Pillay.

This effort was led by the WJDC's Iran Task Force, headed by Ariel Rodal, WJDC Coordinator. The JDs involved took responsibility for sections of the report, which were then compiled and edited by Ariel.

The JDs who were involved in the process were:

Nuno Martins (Portugal –Freedom of Expression

Meital Nir (Israel) - Religious Freedoms and Minority Rights

Ariel Rodal- LGBT Rights

Laura Kwiatowski (France) – Women's Rights

Ami Wise (Canada) – Children's Rights

Andrei Schwartz (Romania) – Education

September 9–11, 2009: 62nd DPI/NGO Conference in Mexico City

This conference will be attended by JD Daniel Speckman (Mexico). The Conference aims to highlight effective ways in which civil society, in partnership with other actors, can contribute to the advancement of disarmament and peace, and as a result to promote sustainable development.