

26 June 2017

Jerusalem, Israel

We are profoundly disappointed in the decision of the Government of Israel to deny the Jewishness of Israeli citizens not converted under the authority of the chief rabbinate, and its refusal to honor its commitment to uphold the right of Jews to pray at the Kotel as they do in their own synagogues.

These decisions deliver a divisive and insulting blow to the millions of Jews who passionately believe in Jewish pluralism. By implementing its agreement, relations between Diaspora Jews and the State of Israel would have improved. Sadly, the Government violated the trust between us by changing the rules of conversion.

We are currently in Jerusalem attending the board meeting of the Jewish Agency for Israel (JAFI) as Progressive Judaism's international representatives. This morning, the board passed a [resolution](#) calling on Knesset members to reverse these decisions of the Cabinet. In protest, JAFI also cancelled our scheduled meeting with Prime Minister Netanyahu.

The sacred civil right "to live as free people in our land" has been sold to maintain a weak political coalition. The unity of the Jewish people, a central pillar of Zionism, has been seriously harmed by yesterday's decisions.

With our [movement partners in Israel](#), we must commit ourselves anew to defend religious rights in Israel. We urge you to contact your local Israel representatives, ambassadors or counsel general to express your outrage.

We will not allow others to tell us how to live as Jews.

Rabbi Daniel Freeland, President, WUPJ

Carole Sterling, Chair, WUPJ

Rabbi Lawrence Englander, Chairman, ARZENU