

Message from the Rabbi



Earlier this month, I had the privilege of traveling to Israel to participate in the meeting of the 37th World Zionist Congress. To join together with Jews from all over the world, to be part of the process of determining the agenda and setting priorities for the World Zionist Organization (WZO) was a transformative experience. In addition to voting on resolutions, we were addressed by Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu, the leader of the opposition, Yitzhak Herzog, the Minister of Defense, Moshe Yaalon, the Mayor of Jerusalem, Nir Barkat and the Chairman of the Jewish Agency, Natan Sharansky. In addition to attending the meetings of the Congress, I had the opportunity to Celebrate Shabbat in Jerusalem, pray at the Western Wall and experience the vibrancy of life in Israel during a time that was marred with violent attacks by young Palestinians wielding knives. We walked the streets of Jerusalem, dined in restaurants and cafes, shopped in beautiful stores, listened to live music in a bar called Blaze, visited Neve Chanah, a home for children from dysfunctional families, and we let our Israeli brothers and sisters know that they are not alone.

When Prime Minister Netanyahu spoke to us, he shared with us ten lies that are being perpetrated all over the world. He called upon us to allow the truth to be told. I would like to share with you this list of lies and urge you to seek the truth and not be led astray by those who wish to blame Israel for causing the current surge of violence that has claimed the lives of innocent civilians.

A List of Lies

Israel is trying to change the status quo on the Temple Mount.

Israel is seeking to destroy the Al Aksa Mosque.

The surge of violence is directly related to a surge in the building of settlements.

Israel is executing Palestinians.

Israel is using excessive force in defending against terror attacks.

The stagnation in the Peace Process is causing the violence out of frustration.

Mahmoud Abbas is a moderate.

Only International observers will be able to stem the violence.

The violence is occurring because there is no Palestinian state.

The core of the conflict in the Middle East is the Israeli-Palestinian conflict.

When reading and hearing news about Israel, I urge you to consider the sources of the media and research the facts. And, most importantly, if you can, make plans for your next visit to Israel. Do not allow the terrorists to frighten you and keep you away from our own home.

Rabbi Gordon Yaffe