

Peace in the Middle East - 1993

And they shall beat their swords into ploughshares, And their spears into pruninghooks; Nation shall not lift up sword against nation, Neither shall they learn war anymore.

(Isaiah 2:6)

Issue

To acknowledge with hope the historic opportunity for lasting peace in the Middle East.

Background

The establishment of the State of Israel in 1948 fulfilled the age-old dream of a national homeland for the Jews, not only where the displaced and the persecuted could find refuge but also for all who desired to make aliyah. There the vision of a land of justice and mercy could be achieved for the good of all humankind.

Yet there was no peace for Israel. From the beginning of her existence war, terrorism and violence prevailed as Arab neighbors sought to push Israel into the sea and Palestinians laid claim to the land. In 1979 Israel and Egypt took a first step toward peace in the region with the signing of the Camp David Accords.

But not until the stunning announcement in September 1993, that representatives of Israel and the Palestine Liberation Organization had drafted an accord was there any hope for real peace. In signing the document they recognized each other's legitimacy and initiated a process which has the potential for bringing Israel and the Palestinians as well as, ultimately, Arab countries together in a comprehensive peace.

Resolution

In recognition of the historic opportunity that the signing of a Declaration of Principles between Israel and the Palestine Liberation Organization presents for peaceful resolution of the age-old conflict in the Middle East, the Women of Reform Judaism:

1. Express gratitude to all those who worked to bring about this bold step toward peace and pray that this process will continue to full peace treaties between Israel and the Arab states without violence or political anarchy.
2. Call upon Sisterhoods to encourage support in their congregations and communities for this agreement and for all efforts by the parties to move forward to a lasting peace.
3. Call on our respective governments to use their powers of persuasion to urge the Vatican and other states to grant diplomatic recognition of Israel as she embarks on a difficult road to peace.
4. Call upon the United States administration and the Congress to help assure the success of this agreement by
 1. monitoring compliance and working with all parties to bring about agreements with other Arab states and
 2. monitoring the flow of funds of global economic assistance to help make the Palestinian entity a viable one without sacrificing any part of Israel's foreign aid package.
5. Call on all interested parties to support the economic development of the region by ending the Arab boycott of Israel, by encouraging private investment, by promoting tourism and by assuring that women share in the development process.

For more information on WRJ and Social Justice, visit www.wrj.org/social-justice-home