

Hadassah / Tampa Ameet – JULY 8, 2016

Policy Statements to be voted and adopted at the 2016 Hadassah Convention.

The following are draft proposals for adoption at Hadassah's National Convention in July. If you have any thoughts, please let our Tampa Ameet Delegates know: Andrea Holper, Sharon Cross, Anita Greenberg, ETTY Segal, Jane Strom and Iris Sandow, as well as our Florida Central Region President, Susan Lafer.

#1 – ZIONIST AFFAIRS / UNITED NATIONS REFORM

#2 – ZIONIST AFFAIRS / POLICY STATEMENT ON ZIONISM

**#3 – AMERICAN AFFAIRS / LESBIAN, GAY, BISEXUAL, AND
TRANSGENDER EQUALITY**

#4 – AMERICAN AFFAIRS / CAREGIVING

#1 – UNITED NATIONS REFORM

Hadassah, the Women’s Zionist Organization of America, Inc., reaffirms its commitment to upholding the founding principles of the United Nations and is proud to be a non-governmental organization (NGO) in special consultative status with the U.N. Economic and Social Council (ECOSOC).

Hadassah remains deeply concerned that the U.N.’s integrity and effectiveness have been compromised. While recognizing some recent strides toward Israel’s acceptance at the U.N.—such as the recent election of Israeli Ambassador Danny Danon to Chair the Sixth Committee, and recognition of Yom Kippur as an official United Nations holiday—Hadassah is outraged by the bias against Israel that continues to pervade the institution.

In 2006, Hadassah welcomed an initiative for U.N. reform and in 2014 reaffirmed calls for significant reforms that will lead to a more productive U.N., where bias against any state, and against Israel in particular, does not occur.

In 2012, 138 member nations of the United Nations General Assembly approved Palestinian non-member observer state status— using the opportunity to demean and delegitimize Israel while enabling Palestinians to circumvent international pressure for direct bilateral negotiations. The United Nations Human Rights Council has become a mockery of its intended goals. The council includes, and frequently appoints to leadership roles, the very nations who have the worst human rights records, such as Saudi Arabia, Iran, China, Cuba, and Sudan. Since its founding eleven year ago, the Council has passed 73 resolutions against Israel—over one-third of all country-specific resolutions—and Israel is the only country singled out on the Council’s permanent agenda.

As a member organization of the Conference of Presidents of Major American Jewish Organizations, Hadassah supports their recent campaign to unite the Jewish community and friends of Israel in response to the intensifying anti-Israel activity at the U.N. with the obsessive bashing of Israel. Hadassah reaffirms and expands its U.N. Reform Policy Statement to support the Conference of Presidents' Declaration Opposing Discrimination Against Israel at the United Nations.

Hadassah urges the U.N. to implement broad and substantive changes to its institutions and bodies, specifically:

- to eliminate redundant and anachronistic resolutions and committees, specifically the four committees on Palestinian affairs that have only served to exacerbate the Israeli–Palestinian conflict, and waste the time and resources of the General Assembly;
- to implement clear conditions for membership and leadership positions within the Human Rights Commission that require countries to abide by the highest standards of human rights, and cooperate fully with the Commission and its mechanisms;
- to evaluate and increase transparency in the nomination, selection, and appointment process of United Nations Special Rapporteurs and other mandate holders;
- to establish a permanent mechanism within the Secretariat to develop objective criteria for assessing the fairness of the resolution processes throughout the various UN bodies and to monitor, evaluate and report annually on the results of the application of those criteria;
- to adopt a clear and comprehensive definition of terrorism that condemns it in absolute terms.

Additionally, Hadassah calls upon the United Nations Secretary General, President of the General Assembly, and High Commissioner for Human Rights to condemn any remarks by international leaders, U.N. officials or independent consultants that include false statements, anti-Semitism or delegitimize Israel.

Finally, Hadassah urges the U.S. to continue its strong and vocal support for Israel at the United Nations and lobbying for broad and significant U.N. reforms. As a signatory of the Declaration Against U.N. Anti-Israel Bias, we look forward to working with the Jewish Community and the United States government, as it leads an intensive effort within the United Nations to achieve the goals of this campaign and finally end the injustices, indignities, and discrimination towards Israel.

#2 – POLICY STATEMENT ON ZIONISM

Hadassah, The Women’s Zionist Organization of America, Inc., reaffirms its steadfast dedication to Zionism and firm commitment to the *Jerusalem Program*, the official platform of the World Zionist Organization and the international Zionist movement. The *Jerusalem Program* proclaims Zionism as the national liberation movement of the Jewish people, which brought about the establishment of the State of Israel, and views a Jewish, Zionist, democratic and secure State of Israel to be the expression of the common responsibility of the Jewish people for its continuity and future. Furthermore, we feel it is especially relevant in light of worldwide increased anti-Zionism, often masking anti-Semitism, to reaffirm our commitment to Zionism.

Hadassah believes it is our responsibility to help ensure the continuity of the Jewish people both in Israel and the Diaspora, and contribute to the betterment of the world through life-saving medical care, research in service to humanity, and other acts of *tikkun olam*. As Hadassah members, Associates, and supporters, we express our practical Zionism by supporting the Hadassah Medical Organization and other Hadassah projects in Israel, and by promoting and engaging in Zionist education and advocacy in the United States and worldwide.

Hadassah’s foundation is rooted in practical Zionism, and it is imperative to our mission and guiding principles to advocate and nurture what the *Jerusalem Program* refers to as “mutual Jewish responsibility to defending the rights of Jews as individuals and as a nation, to represent the national Zionist interests of the Jewish people and struggle against all manifestations of anti-Zionism.” Hadassah reaffirms its condemnation of any linkage between Zionism and racism, its long-

standing policy against all forms of organized boycotts, and denounces the systematic global campaign to delegitimize the State of Israel.

Hadassah is committed to addressing and changing the current negative connotations of Zionism in an increasingly anti-Zionist world. Through renewed and strengthened education, advocacy and discourse we are committed to proudly declaring our Zionism and in doing so to create a safe space to interact with and educate the wider public. Hadassah recognizes that many in our community are passionate when we discuss Israel and are deeply committed to individual ideas for how best to support and defend the Jewish homeland. In order to ensure that there is room for all members of the Jewish community to join the discussion, we must listen and respect those who share opinions that differ from our own and emphasize what unites us— shared identity, love of Israel, and commitment to Jewish traditions and values—not what divides us.

#3 – LESBIAN, GAY, BISEXUAL, AND TRANSGENDER EQUALITY

Hadassah, the Women’s Zionist Organization of America, reaffirms its support for equality and equal protections under the law for lesbian, gay, bisexual and transgender (LGBT) persons in the United States.

Hadassah proudly advocated for the Matthew Shepard and James Byrd Jr. Hate Crimes Prevention Act and signed amicus curiae briefs for *United States v. Windsor* and *Obergefell v. Hodges*—Supreme Court rulings which extended federal rights and benefits to same-sex couples.

Despite this progress, LGBT Americans continue to face numerous forms of discrimination, harassment, and violence in this country—as employees, students, parents and families, customers, patients, and in all roles as citizens.

Mandates on the use of facilities based on assigned sex at birth, regardless of gender identity; overly broad Religious Freedom Restoration Acts and other religious exemption policies are used to justify discrimination against transgender persons and same-sex couples. While Hadassah remains deeply committed to the American ideal of religious liberty, it also reaffirms that the protection of individual civil rights—regardless of sex, race, creed, sexual orientation and gender identity—may take precedence over personal religious beliefs.

Hadassah strongly opposes all efforts—whether through legislation, referendum or constitutional amendment—that would selectively limit or deny civil rights to LGBT Americans. To further ensure equality for LGBT Americans, Hadassah also calls upon at federal, state, and municipal governments to enact new public accommodation and non-discrimination measures—especially in the areas of employment, education, housing, and health.

#4 – CAREGIVING

Hadassah, the Women's Zionist Organization of America, Inc., deeply committed to the health and economic equity of American women, reaffirms and expands its support for women as caregivers—for their own families and for others.

Women are often the primary caregivers for their families, sometimes juggling the responsibilities of both children and aging parents. Approximately 40 million Americans, three-fifths of whom are women, provide unpaid care for an adult friend or relative—taking a professional, financial, emotional, and physical toll on caregivers and families.

Over half of employed caregivers report reducing work hours or leaving the workforce in order to accommodate the added responsibilities. Employees who remain in the workforce, may jeopardize their career advancement due to missed time or face financial hardships if they lack access to adequate paid family and sick leave options. Female caregivers are more likely to experience stress, depression, and chronic health problems, and also report forgoing their own preventive health care and prescriptions due to lack of time and cost.

Paid care workers—about 90 percent of whom are women—provide an essential life-line for their patients and patients' families. It is essential that families have access to quality and affordable in-home care services, while also ensuring that care workers are afforded the necessary compensation and benefits for their own economic security.

Therefore, Hadassah, the Women's Zionist Organization of America, Inc.:

- Encourages the medical community to recognize and value the integral role of caregivers—paid and unpaid—in supporting the health and dignity of America’s aging and disabled population.
- Supports efforts within the medical community and by government to ensure that unpaid caregivers are provided with adequate information, training, counseling, support, quality and affordable supplemental services, and further assessments of caregiver needs.
- Reaffirms its support for paid sick leave, paid family and medical leave, and flexible workplace policies to support unpaid caregivers;
- Welcomes the implementation of the Department of Labor Home Care Rule to extend minimum wage and overtime protections to paid home care workers, and encourages the extension of other economic equity policies and investment in training to the home care industry.