

COUNTDOWN TO ISRAEL 60

INSIDER'S NEWSLETTER

Preparations for Israel's historic sixtieth anniversary are well under way at the Conference of Presidents' National Committee for Israel 60. On May 8th, 2008 the celebrations will be officially launched in Israel and worldwide. The Committee is working with communities across the country to undertake events and to foster participation. It is also soliciting and compiling information on planned events and programs, as well as resources.

Top U.S. Leaders join National Committee for Israel 60

Top leaders from all segments of American society are being invited to join the National Committee for Israel 60, which is led by former Presidents George H.W. Bush and William J. Clinton who are serving as Honorary Co-Chairmen.

Working directly with the member organizations of the Conference, especially representatives at the UJC and JCPA, forms have been distributed to facilitate nominations of governmental, public, and religious leaders as well as prominent personalities. Nominees for the National Committee should be submitted via email to chloe@conferenceofpresidents.org or via fax to 212-644-4135 and must include the name of the person submitting the name(s). The form for submitting nominations is attached.

Olmert and Peres respond to Honorary Co-Chairmen

In response to the former Presidents chairmanship, Prime Minister Ehud Olmert remarked, "The 60th Anniversary of Israel's independence provides an auspicious backdrop to showcase the remarkable achievements of the Jewish state. Though young in years, the State of Israel has harnessed the pioneering spirit of its founders, distinguishing itself as a world leader in diverse fields from science and technology to culture and the arts. Drawing upon the ingenuity of its people, Israel has fashioned an advanced Western economy, absorbed millions of immigrants and made the desert bloom-literally. I salute the National Committee for Israel 60, under the esteemed co-chairmanship of former Presidents George H.W. Bush and William J. Clinton, as it partners with us to celebrate this historic occasion. The involvement of these two great Americans in commemorating this milestone gives testimony to the special relationship between our two nations and underscores the profound friendship which will accompany us far into the future."

President Shimon Peres said the following, "I would like to thank President George Bush and President William Jefferson Clinton for assuming responsibility as the honorary co-chairmen for the U.S. National Committee for Israel's 60th Anniversary.

Their presence gives added significance to the celebrations in the U.S. and underscores the special relationship between the two countries and their peoples.

This special anniversary is also an opportunity to express gratitude for the friendship and support demonstrated by the U.S. since the establishment of the State of Israel.”

Vice Presidents to serve as Vice Chairs of National Committee for Israel 60

The roster of prominent national figures on the National Committee has grown significantly. We are pleased that former Vice Presidents of the U.S. Walter Mondale and Dan Quayle have joined as Vice Chairs.

All former Secretaries of State join as Vice Chairs also

In what may be the first time, all the past living Secretaries of State: Madeleine Albright, James Baker, Warren Christopher, Lawrence Eagleburger, Alexander Haig, Henry Kissinger, Colin Powell, and George Shultz, have also joined as Vice Chairs of the nationwide group that will oversee the celebration of Israel’s historic sixtieth birthday in the U.S.

Senators Clinton, McCain and Obama agree on at least one thing- Israel 60!

The three presidential candidates, Senators Hillary R. Clinton, John McCain, and Barack H. Obama have also signed on as Vice Chairs underscoring the universal support for the National Committee. Many members of Congress, governors, mayors, and religious and ethnic leaders have also been nominated and their names will be released soon.

Israel 60 Resolution

Attached is the suggested text for a resolution in support of Israel’s 60th anniversary. The National Committee is working with members of Congress to introduce the resolution. Governors, mayors, city council members, as well as state and local legislatures should be urged to adopt the resolution. Please inform the National Committee if and when it has been adopted.

National Committee for Israel 60 logo

A signature logo has been developed for the National Committee for Israel 60 that can be used only with explicit permission from the National Committee. Events of major significance and selected materials and products will be allowed use of the logo.



Official National Committee for Israel 60 website launched

The National Committee has launched a comprehensive website, to facilitate participation in the 60th anniversary and to provide information about events nationwide. Please visit, www.israel60.org. The site includes a national calendar of events, as well as interactive aspects and links to organizational websites dealing with the 60th anniversary. The website will give users the chance to watch video clips and will send email updates for Israel 60 events. It will also contain resources for those looking for ideas on how to celebrate Israel’s historic anniversary. We are grateful for Mark B. Pearlman and his company 4wall Media who oversaw creation and development of the website, as well as a special thanks to The Israel Forever Foundation for providing the URL. Additionally,

we are pleased to be partnering on the website with Consul Arie Sommer, Tourism Commissioner for North and South America and his colleagues at the Israel Ministry of Tourism in New York.

“Shabbat Israel” to be Celebrated Across the U.S. (May 9-11)

The major national rabbinic and synagogal organizations have joined in declaring the weekend of May 9- 11 as “Shabbat Israel.” Congregations are being urged to develop synagogue-based programs to commemorate this significant milestone in Israel’s history. Sermonic materials, programmatic aids, as well as speakers and other support services will be available to assist them. Joining in the call were Rabbi Andrew Davids, Executive Director of the American Reform Zionist Association, Rabbi Jerome Epstein, Executive Director of the United Synagogue of Conservative Judaism, Rabbi Basil Herring, Executive Director of the Rabbinical Council of America, Rabbi Pesach Lerner, Executive Director of the National Council of Young Israel, Rabbi Joel Meyers, Executive Director of the Rabbinical Assembly, Dr. Carl Sheingold, Executive Director of the Jewish Reconstructionist Federation, Rabbi Tzvi Hersch Weinreb, Executive Director of the Union of Orthodox Jewish Congregations of America

Israel 60 Working Group

Representatives of the many organizations have joined to share information and collaborate for Israel 60 in the Israel 60 Working Group. The next meeting will convene on April 14th at 12:30pm at the Conference of Presidents. Please rsvp to: rsvp@conferenceofpresidents.org

Israel 60 Award Created

The special Israel 60 award will be given out to those who have made a singular contribution in strengthening the U.S.-Israel relationship. The award is pictured at right.

Events Across the Country

Virtually every city across the country has informed the Committee of their plans to have a central event. In addition to hundreds of special programs. For instance in June there will be; the Salute to Israel Parade in New York City on June 1st, the celebration on the National Mall in Washington D.C., as well as marches in over 90 cities here and abroad coordinated by The Afikim Foundation and KKL. In addition, there are scores of Israel 60 missions organized throughout the year. Please continue to send information on the events you are scheduling. The form is attached in this email.



Collectibles for Israel 60

An array of very attractive Israel 60 collectible items displaying the U.S. Israel 60 logo are available for purchase, including lapel pins, t-shirts, mugs and baseball caps. Be among the first to place an order for your school, congregation, family, organization or events to demonstrate your enthusiasm for Israel 60. Below is a photo of the t-shirt, the pin, and the mug:



For inquiries on placing orders please contact Israel 60 coordinator, Chloe Markowitz via email at chloe@conferenceofpresidents.org or by phone at 212-318-6111.

We look forward to hearing about your organization's celebrations and events. We need to celebrate Israel more than ever!