



## **CONFERENCE OF PRESIDENTS**

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### **of Major American Jewish Organizations**

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## **National Rabbinic & Synagogal bodies join Conference of Presidents in designating May 9<sup>th</sup>-11<sup>th</sup> 2008 as “Shabbat Israel” in celebration of Israel’s 60<sup>th</sup> Anniversary**

*New York, January 28, 2008...* Major national rabbinic and synagogal organizations joined The Conference of Presidents and its National Committee for Israel’s 60<sup>th</sup> anniversary in declaring the weekend of May 9<sup>th</sup>-11<sup>th</sup> 2008 as “Shabbat Israel” (Israel Sabbath) as part of the launch of the year long celebration of Israel 60. Joining Chairperson June Walker and Executive Vice Chairmen Malcolm Hoenlein in the announcement were:

Rabbi Andrew Davids, Executive Director, American Reform Zionist Association  
Rabbi Jerome Epstein, Executive Director, United Synagogue of Conservative Judaism  
Rabbi Basil Herring, Executive Director, Rabbinical Council of America  
Rabbi Pesach Lerner, Executive Director, National Council of Young Israel  
Rabbi Joel Meyers, Executive Director, Rabbinical Assembly  
Dr. Carl Sheingold, Executive Director, Jewish Reconstructionist Federation  
Rabbi Tzvi Hersch Weinreb, Executive Director, Union of Orthodox Jewish Congregations of America

Congregations will be urged to develop synagogue-based programs to commemorate this historic milestone in Israel’s history which will be celebrated on May 8<sup>th</sup>, 2008. Sermonic materials, programmatic aids, as well as speakers and other support services will be available to assist them.

“We believe that this is a cornerstone program for the commemoration of this historic occasion in the United States. That all of the major rabbinic synagogal groups together have joined to endorse this program underscores the importance of Israel as a unifying force in American Jewish life. In addition to the Shabbat Israel many of the groups have undertaken extensive programs which are described on their individual websites including missions, educational and cultural programs, and other celebratory events. We anticipate that the Shabbat Israel programs will also involve younger members as well as communities where synagogues are located. We anticipate hundreds of thousands across

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the country and even greater numbers as this program spreads around the world,” said Walker and Hoenlein.

The National Committee for Israel 60 is headed by Honorary Chairmen former Presidents George H.W. Bush and William J. Clinton and includes leaders from every sector of American society.

Those undertaking events or wishing further information can go to the website, [www.israel60.org](http://www.israel60.org)

*The Conference of Presidents is the central coordinating body representing 50 national Jewish organizations on issues of national and international concern.*