



### **Pesach Message from Calgary United with Israel Founder**

With Pesach quickly approaching, I wanted to wish Pesach Sameach - a Happy Passover - on behalf of Calgary United with Israel (CUWI) and myself, to everyone. The Passover holiday has four names in Hebrew: the holiday of 1) Passover 2) Unleavened Bread (Matzot) 3) Spring and 4) Freedom. I wish everyone, and indeed the world, the opportunity for true freedom: one of the basic premises of our humanity. All humans deserve to live in peace, freedom from imminent harm, health, good will, community and to have the opportunity for progress. This week marked the 20th year since the Rwandan genocide. In about two weeks we will commemorate Holocaust Remembrance Day. The world has seen atrocities and we globally declare "Never Again". But the horror in Syria of the last period shows us that we as a global community do not have the luxury of leaning back and going on with our regular lives, simply hoping and assuming that "never again". Developments in life often happen via the path of least resistance. Each one of us can, with pro-activism, play his/her part in creating resistance. We must see to it that "never again" - because the path of least resistance is, G-d forbid, "again".

Israel, and Jews globally, are under a very real existential threat. Iran is slowly and quietly gaining speed. Rockets are regularly being launched into Israel. There was a bombing at a Hebrew University pub this week in Jerusalem. America has blamed us for failed peace talks. The "Boycott, Sanction, Divest (BDS)" movement is gaining traction. Students on university campuses need to think twice before proudly displaying Jewish symbols. There have been Jewish [hate crimes](#) on campus. Anti-Israel and Jewish sentiments are penetrating into academia via [textbooks](#) and [public talks](#). [Arab Zionists](#) and other important [allies](#) are being threatened into silenced. Our treasured democracies are being leveraged to discredit and delegitimize us via claims of free speech and through lawfare.

The state of affairs for Jews and for Israel is said to be a litmus test for the global state of affairs of humanity. The state of affairs of humanity right now is very compromised. This year's Pew Research Centre [report](#) found that global religious hostilities have reached a six-year high, including religion related terrorism, abuse of religious minorities and harassment of women over religious garb.

Therefore, let us leverage the energy of this Passover holiday to remind ourselves that freedom is not to be taken for granted, but it must be preserved, guarded and ever-nurtured. Every religion, every gender, every human has the right to freedom and well-being. Please use the energy inherent to spring, a time for "rebirth", to focus together, united, on bettering the world with tangible steps. Some tangible steps include:



- Stay informed about policy developments and global trends; do this through reading the news, your twitter feed and/or Facebook
- Stay abreast of [legal developments](#) in combatting unjust disharmony in the world; consider donating to these critical legal initiatives
- Write letters to the newspaper and government officials making the voice of justice, modernity, moderatism and freedom for all known
- If you are a strong writer, consider submitting OpEds to the newspaper on this topic
- Be on the look out for actions that compromise safety and wellness, and be sure to report them to an organization of your choice for guidance
- If you are on campus, advocate for justice in its varying forms by initiating an event, joining a club or starting a club
- "Help host/plan an event using your business, academic, or other contacts" (as stated by [AIFD](#))
- Join a community of like-minded people and work together to affect change
- Encourage your children to run for leadership positions in school and editor of the campus newspaper; if you are a student - go for it.
- Discuss advocacy with your high school students pre-university so that political campus life is not a shock to them. Help empower them with tools, the right attitude and contacts.
- Send your kids to Israel for organized trips!
- Share your love of Israel with others in conversation, emails and social media. Spread [inspirational positive developments](#)
- Make donations to an organization of your choice with thorough awareness of how those funds will be used
- Most importantly: be aware, care, [be proud](#), don't fear difficult conversations and scenarios, speak out, take action

Together, with the right intention, action and through global synergy we CAN affect positive change in the world - as it pertains to Israel and the Jews, the Middle East broadly, our local community, Canada and the USA, and the entire world. Thank you to everyone for all your contributions, in any measure and form, towards this goal.

Wishing you and your family peace, good health, joy, success and inspiration for this Passover holiday, Easter holiday and Spring season -

Sarah B. and the CUWI Team

<http://www.cuwi.ca>