



the masorti (conservative) movement in israel

**Promoting religious pluralism and building community
through inclusive, traditional, egalitarian Judaism**

Dear Friends,

The Conversion Bill

This is an update, and a thank you.

As a result of the strong feelings expressed by so many, including many of you, the bill in the Knesset which would have affected conversion and the Law of Return has been sidetracked, at least for now.

Our Masorti/Conservative community, along with our colleagues in the Reform movement, took the lead in identifying the problems, and then the Jewish Federations of North America, the American Jewish Committee and others weighed in very forcefully. Credit goes to all, though it is a pity we even have to wage such battles.

MK Rotem has stated the bill will not be acted upon this week before the Knesset recesses for several weeks. He also said that on any issues involving conversion or the Law of Return, there would be consultation with Diaspora Jewry.

While the most objectionable provisions of the proposed legislation, which treat converts differently from those born as Jews, may be dead, we still need to be alert to provisions that would further enhance the power of the State Rabbinat. Our colleagues in Israel believe this fight is very far from over.

I particularly want to thank the leadership of the Rabbinical Assembly for efforts both visible and behind the scenes. It shows what we can achieve when we work together.

Rosh Hodesh at the Kotel

This morning was Rosh Hodesh Nisan. Once again the Women of the Wall stayed at the rear of the Women's Section and were as non-provocative as possible while still expressing their right to daven freely. The haredi men, alas, went beyond shouting and literally starting throwing chairs across the mechitza. See the video clip at this link:

<http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=xrvxaT6QIw0>

The Future

We will continue working with the Rabbinical Assembly, our colleagues in the Reform movement and believers in the vital importance of pluralism in Israel.

I wish none of these reports had to include a request for funds, but the simple fact is we need resources to fight these battles. Please contribute online at www.masorti.org or write to us at The Masorti Foundation, 475 Riverside Drive, Suite 832, New York, NY 10115. Residents of Canada, please contact the Canadian Foundation for Masorti Judaism at Canada@masorti.org.

Thank you, and an early Hag Sameach.

David Lissy
Executive Director & CEO
Masorti Foundation for Conservative Judaism in Israel

To learn more, please contact:
Masorti Foundation for Conservative Judaism in Israel
475 Riverside Drive, Suite 832
New York, NY 10115-0068
(212) 870-2216; 1-877-287-7414
<http://www.masorti.org/>; info@masorti.org