



January 1, 2011

Dear Member,

2010 has just ended and I am delighted to say that it has been one of the most challenging and inspiring years for both the International Association of Jewish Lawyers and Jurists ('IAJLJ') and for myself, on a personal level, as I shall further elaborate below.

I wish to highlight a number of activities and events in which the IAJLJ was involved during the course of 2010 and to provide you with a glimpse of some of the projects planned by the IAJLJ for 2011:

1. In March we held an evening seminar together with the Intelligence and Terrorism Information Center on '**Transitional Justice**'. The seminar was moderated by Adv. Sigall Horovitz and participants included Adv. Charles A. Caruso, a former Assistant US Attorney and Federal Prosecutor, who was involved in the Justice Sector Assistance Project led by the US State Department in the West Bank and Mr. Itai Anghel, a noted Israeli journalist, winner of the 'Sokolov Prize' and a recipient of the 'Cutting Edge Prize' in 2010 which was awarded to him at the Annual International Media Awards in London.
2. In May the IAJLJ sent a letter to the Egyptian President, Mr. Hosny Mubarak, concerning the Israeli citizen, Auda Sueliman Tarabin, who had been sentenced to 15 years' imprisonment for spying. The accusation and sentencing occurred *in absentia* more than ten years ago. The IAJLJ learnt from the Israeli Ministry of Foreign Affairs and from Tarabin's lawyer that despite their repeated requests, they have not been allowed to see the indictment, the protocol of the trial, the judgment nor the sentencing verdict. Absent these documents, not only is it impossible to hold a fair and honest trial, but it also deprives Mr. Tarabin of his minimal human rights. As one of the IAJLJ's principal objectives includes human rights issues, the IAJLJ steadfastly sent the aforementioned letter and will continue to pursue this matter which clearly constitutes a miscarriage of justice.
3. At the end of June the IAJLJ hosted an international conference in London themed '**Democratic and Legal Norms in the Age of Terror**'. The importance of this conference [(including the decision to hold it in London)] was twofold: (a) London was chosen due to: (i) the complexity of the universal jurisdictional approach it tends to adopt and the IAJLJ's desire to establish some form of debate between Israel and the UK on the subject; and (ii) it having been one of the instrumental cities that had initiated boycotts against Israeli academics and academic institutions (another legal aspect dealt with during the course of the



conference); and (b) since the IAJLJ aspired to ‘put its stamp’ where Israel is portrayed in a negative light, particularly where Israel is depicted in a way compelling it to prove its right to exist. The opening and formal event of the conference took place at the prestigious Gray’s Inn’s Halls where the Rt. Hon. Dr. Denis MacShane delivered the keynote presentation. The conference sessions were conducted at the SOAS Institute, part of the University of London. Well known professors such as the Rt. Hon. Lord Peter Goldsmith, QC, the Hon. Prof. Irwin Cotler (Canadian MP and former Minister of Justice), the Rt. Hon. Sir Martin Gilbert, Prof. Mordechai Kremnitzer and the respective Israeli Ambassadors to the UK and France, were presenters at this conference. More than 100 jurists from around the globe attended and actively participated in the legal discussions and exchange of opinions that were held after each session.

4. During August the IAJLJ sent a letter and a report to Prof. Christian Tomuschat, Chairman of the Committee appointed by the UN to investigate Operation ‘Cast Lead’. This Committee was established in order to ‘monitor and assess’ the investigations undertaken by both Israel and the Palestinians, ‘including the independence, effectiveness, genuineness of these investigations and their conformity with international standards’ *vis-à-vis* the ‘Gaza conflict’. In the light of this mandate, the IAJLJ sent a detailed report of a number of cases requiring assessment by the Committee. Naturally, the purpose of the IAJLJ’s report was to present Israel in a different light than that which has been presented to the world to date and to shed some light on several important events that had happened in Israel, such as, direct rocket attacks on the Israeli cities of Ashkelon, Ashdod and Be’er Sheva¹.
5. In mid-September and due to the attendance of the President of Iran—Mahmoud Ahmadinejad—at the United Nations General Assembly in New York, the IAJLJ addressed the Secretary of State—Ms. Hillary Clinton—requesting that she restrict Ahmadinejad’s freedom of movement solely to his appearance at the United Nations General Assembly (and within the confines of the UN building) as an apparent need had arisen to deny him any opportunity of spreading his hateful, racist messages. Ahmadinejad is on record for denying the Holocaust and his use of phrases about the Jewish people (such as ‘a black and filthy microbe called the Zionist regime’) constantly calls for racial incitement and genocide. In addition, the IAJLJ addressed Mr. Ban Ki-Moon—the UN Secretary-General—requesting that Ahmadinejad be denied use of the podium of the United Nations for the dissemination of such racial hatred, particularly since Ahmadinejad is in clear

¹ These attacks inflicted death, injury and extensive property damage, forced schools and businesses to close and terrorized tens of thousands of civilians into abandoning their homes.



violation of the provisions of the UN Charter, the 1948 Convention on the Prevention and Punishment of the Crime of Genocide as well as of the 1965 International Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Racial Discrimination.

6. In September the IAJLJ addressed the Prime Minister of the Hellenic Republic, Mr. George Papandreou, requesting that he withdraw the legal action that had been initiated against three members of the Greek organization, the Anti-Nazi Initiative, for speaking out against the Greek judicial system during the trial of Konstantinos Plevris, a known Holocaust denier, where the three members had been called in as witnesses and to give testimony against Plevris. The IAJLJ recently learnt that, thanks to this request, which was made in tandem with the protests of other prominent Jewish organizations, the IAJLJ succeeded in its goals and the three activists were acquitted.
7. On December 10th—the Universal Declaration Day for Human Rights—the IAJLJ organised, in 10 locations worldwide, various protest events in front of the offices of the International Committee of the Red Cross (**ICRC**) expressing its outcry at the manner in which the ICRC is dealing with Gilad Shalit's confinement and, in particular, its failure to condemn the ongoing violation of human rights that he has been subject to. Since Gilad Shalit is being deprived, on a regular and daily basis, of basic human rights, and as the ICRC has failed to deal with this delicate matter, the IAJLJ decided to take a stand and thus organized the different protest events in Tel-Aviv, Berlin, Milan, Vienna, Brussels, London, Santiago, Paris, New York, Zurich, Thessaloniki and Johannesburg. Our primary goal was to increase the pressure being placed on the ICRC in the public international arena and to hopefully, make a change. For more information about these events, including pictures and letters sent to the ICRC and the various speeches made, log on to www.intjewishlawyers.org.
8. This year, and thanks to the Nevzlin Family Foundation, the IAJLJ published two issues of *Justice* magazine (one of which is this issue). We hope, as always, that you enjoyed reading the publications and found the articles interesting and useful.

Plans for 2011

1. As you are by now already aware, at the beginning of February the IAJLJ will be holding its 14th International Congress in Jerusalem and the Dead-Sea themed **'Israel as a Jewish and Democratic State'**. Leading and well known figures from the academia will be attending the Congress, together with political figures. For the



הארגון הבינלאומי של עורכי-דין ומשפטנים יהודים
THE INTERNATIONAL ASSOCIATION OF JEWISH LAWYERS AND JURISTS

full program—log on to www.intjewishlawyers.org. I call upon you to register early for the Congress as the number of seats is limited.

2. During November, the IAJLJ plans to hold an international conference on the subject of **'Holocaust Denial and Freedom of Speech'**, in Berlin. Information will be provided in due course but, in the meantime, *save the date!*
3. We expect to publish two issues of *Justice* magazine during the course of 2011 that will deal with legal matters of interest to the IAJLJ and affecting the State of Israel and will also include items from the 14th Congress.

As usual, I call upon all members to renew their membership for 2011 and to encourage new members to join and become part of the IAJLJ. Needless to say, the relevancy of the issues being dealt with by the IAJLJ on an ongoing basis are matters that directly and indirectly affect the Jewish people world wide and the State of Israel and fortunately (or unfortunately) are constantly in the limelight, thereby enabling the IAJLJ to be in the forefront of activities and to put its name on the map time and time again.

Last but not least and on a personal note, as you are now probably aware, I will be stepping down in a month after serving two terms as President of the IAJLJ. These past seven years of my life have been extremely challenging and exciting for me and I thank you for your trust and confidence in allowing me to serve in this position. Moreover, I take this opportunity to extend my heartfelt thanks and gratitude to those dear and wonderful individuals who selflessly chaired with me and contributed their time, knowledge and goodwill to the IAJLJ and myself. These individuals include the members of the Executive Committee, my right hand—Adv. Irit Kohn, as well as Prof. Yaffa Zilbershats, Adv. Avi Doron, Adv. Haim Klugman, Prof. Stephen R. Greenwald, Judge Marcos Arnoldo Grabivker and the Late Daniel Lack.

I will always cherish the time that I spent in serving as President of the IAJLJ and will continue to serve as a member of the Board of Governors and to be involved in the IAJLJ's activities.

Finally, at the threshold of a new year, coupled with new leadership at the helm of the IAJLJ, I would like to wish you and your families a happy and peaceful new year and to my successors—much success!

Sincerely,

Alex Hertman, Adv.

President

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