

SHABBAT *OF* UNITY

10.17.15

SHABBAT
PARASHAT NOACH

CONFERENCE OF PRESIDENTS CONDEMNS ESCALATING PALESTINIAN VIOLENCE AGAINST ISRAELI CIVILIANS DEMANDS INTERNATIONAL COMMUNITY DENOUNCE VIOLENCE AND HOLD PALESTINIAN LEADERSHIP ACCOUNTABLE

Statement from Stephen Greenberg, Chairman, and Malcolm Hoenlein, Executive Vice Chairman/CEO of the Conference of Presidents of Major American Jewish Organizations:

Wednesday, October 7, 2015, New York, NY... “The increasing number of violent and potentially lethal attacks against Israeli civilians as well as security personnel, must be condemned in the strongest possible terms. No society would or should have to tolerate such acts against woman, children, and men attacked while driving, visiting malls, attending religious services, or going about their daily lives. The government of Israel must do everything possible to apprehend those responsible and to prevent further incidents. Too often the media tends to minimize the nature of these assaults by describing ‘stone-throwing youths’. In fact, these are deadly boulders that have killed and maimed many. In addition, weapons taken from soldiers and knives have been used in recent attacks that took the lives and wounded many. At the same time, Israel's restrained response is often described in exaggerated terms, with the media equating those trying to uphold law and order with those engaged in terror and violence,” said the Conference of Presidents leaders.

The leadership of the Palestinian Authority, and in particular, President Abbas, must be held to account for their direct and indirect roles in inciting the populace, especially the frequent references to Al-Aqsa being “under siege” when they know that not to be the case. In fact, Israel restricts Jewish worshipers while allowing far greater freedom to Palestinians to pray at this holy site. When Abbas declares that the Temple Mount is “ours” and says the same of the Church of the Holy Sepulchre, he denies the existence of the two Temples and all the Judeo-Christian ties and heritage. Urging Palestinians to rise up to protect the Al-Aqsa Mosque leads to the inevitable consequence of confrontation and violence.

We call on the United States government which provides hundreds of millions of dollars of funding each year to the Palestinian Authority, to demand that Palestinian officials act decisively to curb the violence. We know that President Abbas can impact the “Palestinian street” when he wants to. His failure to do so should bring a cut in funding and the isolation of Abbas until he takes concrete steps.

While people have the right to defend themselves, we hope that they will not take the law into their own hands and allow Israeli security and police officials to act, hopefully with the cooperation of Palestinian security forces. The escalating situation serves the interests only of the extremist forces in the region who will exploit these tensions to the detriment of all.