

## Historic Mission to the *Kever* of the Tosfos Yom Tov

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Rabbanim from the United States and Israel recently led a trip to Poland, highlighted by a *kinus tefillah v'hisorerus* at the *kever* of the Tosfos Yom Tov, *zt"l*, marking his *yahrtzeit* on 6 Elul. The trip, a project of the Stop the Talking in Shul Movement, was a whirlwind of *tefillah* and *bakashos* for all of *Klal Yisrael*.

Over the past few years, the movement has motivated over 1,200 shuls across the United States and around the world to commit to "No Talking During *Davening*." The momentum continues to build, as seen in the highly successful "Quiet Across America" Shabbos, held in conjunction with the trip, when hundreds of shuls and thousands of *mispallelim* made the commitment for quiet in shul — for that Shabbos and, hopefully, for a lifetime.

The trip participants began at the Old Cemetery in Cracow, where they *davened* at the *kevarim* of the Rema, the Bach, the Megaleh Amukos, and the Rebbe Reb Heschel. Harav Eliezer Dovid Rapaport, the trip leader, enthralled the group with



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Harav Eliezer Dovid Rapaport at the *kever* of the Tosfos Yom Tov.

words of inspiration and historical context at these *kevarim* and throughout the journey. After a moving *Minchah* in the famed Rema shul, they proceeded to the New Cemetery to visit the *kevarim* of the Me'or V'shomesh and Harav Shimon Sofer. In the evening they were inspired by a *Parashah shiur* that included insights from the Tosfos Yom Tov, at whose *kever* they would visit the next day.

The evening ended with an emotional *kumtitz* in the courtyard of the Rema shul.

The second day was the highlight of the trip: to beseech

Hashem on behalf of *Klal Yisrael* at the Tosfos Yom Tov's *kever* on his *yahrtzeit*. It was an electrifying experience, with an intense *ruach* of *kedushah* and *bakashah*. In addition to reciting the entire *sefer Tehillim*, thousands of names were read and placed at the *kever* — names submitted by Yidden around the world who had *bakashos* to ask of Hashem and who had made the commitment to stop talking during *davening*.

Rav Rapaport concluded with the *Shelosh Esrei Middos* and *Zichronos* for all the *Kedoshim* killed in and around Cracow. *Kel*



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Trip participants at the Rema shul.

*Maleh Rachamim* was movingly recited by Chazzan Tzvi Weiss of Yerushalayim.

An uplifting and unforgettable Shabbos was spent at a retreat in Zakapone, with breathtaking views of the Polish Alps. The lofty *divrei Torah* and heartfelt *zemiros* were enhanced by the *nifla'os haBorei* that surrounded the hotel. A Shabbos filled with *shiurim* culminated in a musical *Havdalah*, followed by a *melaveh malkah* whose spirit echoed off the mountains.

On the final day of the trip, the participants were *zocheh* to visit the faraway *kevarim* of the

Radomsker and Lelover Rebbes, *zt"l*, where the *kedushah* clearly had an effect on all those present. There, participants poured out their hearts and then joined in heartfelt singing and dancing — calling out to Hashem for themselves, their families, and all of *Klal Yisrael*.

The trip was enhanced by a remarkable mix of *achdus* and *ruach*, creating memories that will surely last a lifetime. In the *zechus* of their mission, and *Klal Yisrael's* commitment to proper *tefillah*, may we be *zocheh* for Hashem to hasten the coming of Moshiach, speedily in our times.

## Delegation to Gather on Capitol Hill to Urge Congress to Combat the BDS Movement

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After months of advocacy, a delegation of American-Jewish communal and business leaders who comprise the United States-Israel Security Alliance, an initiative dedicated to strengthening the U.S.-Israeli relationship, will convene on Capitol Hill to urge leading and influential members of both the Senate and the House to support legislation to combat the Boycott, Divestment, and Sanctions (BDS) movement and thank those who have sponsored legislation to this effect.

In the guise of promoting human rights and equality, the BDS movement seeks to delegitimize Israel by calling on the international community to implement boycott and divestment initiatives against corporations which profit from business in Israel, attempting to suffocate the State of Israel economically. A political, economic, cultural, and ideological global campaign, the BDS movement has become a giant that vigorously attempts to denigrate the State of Israel by falsely stigmatizing the Jewish State as a 21st century apartheid regime.

This mission comes at a critical time, when the BDS movement has been increasing economic and political pressure to force Israel to submit to its demands, which includes boycotts and divestment from certain Israeli products, as well as resolutions for universities to divest from Israeli companies. The anti-Israel BDS sentiment is also seeping into corporate boardrooms and trade unions, with a growing trend in Europe to ban or label products made in Israeli factories over the green line. Due to this movement, there have been disruptions of Israeli cultural events, pressure to cancel events with cultural figures in Israel, as well as strong efforts to gain support for BDS



L-R: Mr. Ezra Friedlander, U.S. Senator Ben Cardin.

from important religious institutions. The BDS movement, while claiming peace, will not stop until Israel is on her knees.

In 2015, President Obama signed into law the Trade Promotion Authority Act, which included an amendment to "discourage actions by potential trading partners that discourage commercial activity solely between the United States and Israel." This amendment incorporated language from the United States-Israel Trade and Commercial Enhancement Act, which was sponsored by Representatives Peter Roskam (R-IL) and Juan Vargas (D-CA). A similar bill, known as the United States-Israel Trade Enhancement Act of 2015, was sponsored in the Senate by Senators Cardin and Portman. The Combating BDS Act of 2016, an additional legislative effort to combat BDS, was introduced on February 10, 2016 by Senators Kirk and Manchin in the Senate, and Representatives

Robert Dold (R-IL) and Juan Vargas (D-CA) in the House.

The delegation and its co-chairs: Mr. Ken Abramowitz; Mr. Mark Meyer Appel; Mr. Andrew Friedman, Esq; Mr. Nathan Herzog; Dr. Alan Kadish; Mr. Joseph B. Stamm and Mr. Stanley Treitel will be meeting with these members as well as many others.

Recently, the states of New Jersey and California (pending Governor Brown's signature) have passed legislation mandating state divestment from companies that boycott Israel. Other states, including New York, issued similar policies. In all, about half of the state legislatures are considering or have adopted resolutions which condemn boycotts against Israel or defund universities that participate in such boycotts.

Members of the delegation will convey appreciation to members of Congress for preventing politically motivated sanctions against Israel and protecting the right of both state and local governments to disassociate contracts from entities that engage in boycotting Israel, and will encourage further legislative efforts both on the federal and state level.

Mr. Ezra Friedlander, CEO of The Friedlander Group, who is organizing the mission, summed up the objective of the mission by stating, "By introducing and supporting anti-BDS legislation, members of Congress are continuing their legislative efforts to thwart the BDS movement, standing against the radical campaign to cripple Israel socially, economically, politically, and ideologically. Legislative efforts to support the anti-BDS campaign send a message against groups that force radical agendas in the name of peace."

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