EUROPEAN UNION FOR PROGRESSIVE JUDAISM

Minutes of the Annual Assembly of the European Union for Progressive Judaism (EUPJ) held at the Prague Marriott Hotel, V Celnici 8, Prague 110 00, Czech Republic on Sunday 29 April 2018 at 11.45 am.

Present: Chairman of EUPJ Miriam Kramer and the other Honorary Officers and representatives of various Constituent Members of EUPJ, as well as invitees, as follows: Isak Aasvestad (Abraham Geiger Kolleg) Germany, Paul Yuval Adam (Arzenu - Bund progressiver Zionisten in Deutschland) Germany, Jai Anguita (Bet Shalom) Spain, Lior Argaman (WUPJ) Israel, Rabbi Ruven Bar Ephraim (EUPJ / ERA) Switzerland, Stéphane Beder (AJL) France, Michel Benveniste (Communauté Juive Libérale de Genève) Switzerland, Leslie Bergman (EUPJ) United Kingdom, Rabbi Stephen Berkowitz (Bet Shalom/ Comunidad Reformista de Madrid) Spain, Carey Bernitz (Beth Shalom) Italy, Joyce Bigio (FIEP) Italy, Sophie Bigot-Goldblum (MJLF) France, Deborah Blausten (Alyth Synagogue/Leo Baeck College) United Kingdom, Mark Bloustein (Beit Shalom) Australia, Hartmut Bomhoff (Abraham Geiger Kolleg) Germany, Jean-Paul Borgerhoff (Beth Hillel) Belgium, Steven Brummel (IJC) Belgium, Arthur Buchman (Shir Hatzafon) Denmark, Ilana Bule (Reform Jewish Community of Madrid) Spain, Rabbi Steve Burnstein (WUPJ) Israel, Graham Carpenter (Liberal Judaism) United Kingdom, Joan Carretero Grau (Beth Shalom) Spain, Rabbi Haim Casas (Keren Or/ GIL) France/Switzerland, Mac Michael Chao (Beth Hillel Rome) Taiwan, John Clark (Or Chadasch) Austria, Yael Cobano (Reform Jewish Community of Madrid) Spain, Franca Coen (FIEP) Italy, Giorgio Coen (FIEP) Italy, Danielle Cohen (MJLF) France, John Cohen (EUPJ) United Kingdom, Noeleen Cohen (Alyth Synagogue) United Kingdom, Tamar Cohen (ULIF) France, Rabbi Tom Cohen (Kehillat Gesher) France, Rosalind Copisarow (West London Synagogue) United Kingdom, Professor Vincent Darley (Kingston Liberal Synagogue) United Kingdom, Rabbi Janet Darley (Kingston Liberal Synagogue/Liberal Judaism) United Kingdom, Elie David (Union Juive Libérale de Strasbourg) France, Karolina David (Union Juive Libérale de Strasbourg) France, Rabbi Kathleen de Magtige-Middleton (Mosaic Reform Synagogue) United Kingdom, Alexander Dembitz (Communauté Juive Libérale de Genève) Switzerland, Kati Dembitz (Communauté Juive Libérale de Genève) Switzerland, Adele Donnarumma (Bet Shalom) Spain, Phyllis Dorey (WUPJ) Australia, Jane Drapkin (NPLS) United Kingdom, Helen Dubovie Brown (Gloucester Liberal Jewish Community) United Kingdom, Darryl Egnal (EUPJ) Israel, Lionel Errera (ULIF Copernic) France, Barbara Etkind (Temple Beth Ami) United States, Ladislav Faigl, Czech Republic, Rabbi Gabriel Farhi (AJTM) France, Peter Forrai (Szim Salom) Hungary, Sergio Fraile Saiz (Comunidad Judia de Valencia Bnei Sefarad) Spain, Jeromé Freedman (Liberal Judaism) United Kingdom, Louise Freedman (Liberal Judaism) United Kingdom, Rabbi François Garaï (Communauté Juive Libérale de Genève) Switzerland, Stephanie Garry (Plaza Jewish Community Chapel) United States, Boaz Gasto (AJLT) France, Amanda Gipson (Bet Januka) Spain, Margarita Gokun Silver (Reform Jewish Community of Madrid) United States, Rabbi Ira Goldberg (EUO) Netherlands, Robyn Goldhar (Holy Blossom Temple) United Kingdom, Rabbi Aaron Goldstein (LJ & NPLS) United Kingdom, Rabbi Dr Andrew Goldstein (Liberal Judaism & NPLS) United Kingdom, Deborah Grabiner (EUPJ) United Kingdom, Jane Grabiner (Finchley Reform Synagogue) United Kingdom, Michael Grabiner (Finchley Reform Synagogue) United Kingdom, Janeen Graver (Aleph) United States, Dr Tamás Gróf (Bet Orim) Hungary, Cornelia Haberlandt-Krüger (Egalitarian Jewish Community Gescher Freiburg) Germany, Aleksandr Haydar (RUPJ) Ukraine, Yuval Hed (Abraham Geiger Kolleg) Germany, Marlon Herrmann (Gescher LaMassoret Community) Germany, David Holinstat (IRGW Stuttgart) Germany, Rabbi Dr Walter Homolka (Union progressiver Juden in Deutschland) Germany, Miguel Itoiz Echarri (Bet Shalom) Spain, Danny Jaffe (WUPJ) Israel, Monica Jankel (West London Synagogue) United Kingdom, Rabbi Laura Janner-Klausner (Reform Judaism) United Kingdom, Marek Jeżowski (Beit Polska & Beit Warszawa) Poland, Lili Jendroska (Union progressiver Juden in
1. **Apologies for Absence**

The Chairman reported apologies received from Ruth Cohen and Jeffery Rose, Honorary Life Presidents, as well as from Michael Reik, Rabbi Alexander Grodensky and Rabbi Dr Deborah Kahn-Harris.

2. **Approval of Minutes of 2017 European Assembly Meeting**

The Chairman advised that the minutes of the European Assembly Meeting held in Jerusalem on 19 May 2017 were included in the EUPJ Annual Report booklet for 2017 ("the Booklet") which had been circulated and which was also made available on the EUPJ website before the meeting. In response to her request, the Chairman
received no comments or suggestions for changes to the Minutes, which were duly accepted as a correct record of the meeting and were then signed by the Chairman.

3. **Welcome by WUPJ Chair**
The Chairman introduced Carole Sterling, the chair of the WUPJ, to the meeting, who expressed her pleasure in attending the meeting and conference and in representing WUPJ at EUPJ Management Committee and Executive Board meetings. She also extended greetings on behalf of Rabbi Daniel Freelander, WUPJ President. Mrs Sterling referred to her report in the Booklet and confirmed that the WUPJ, and especially she and Rabbi Freelander, were working hard to involve European communities in the work of the WUPJ. She expressed the thanks of WUPJ to Miriam Kramer who was stepping down as EUPJ Chairman, and made a presentation to her.

4. **Chairman's Report**
The Chairman referred the meeting to the Chairman's Report included in the Booklet which had been circulated, which was read and noted. The Chairman added the following items – (a) Rabbi Ruven Bar Ephraim was stepping down as Chair of the European Rabbinic Assembly (ERA) and the Chairman thanked him for all he had done in nurturing this organisation and on behalf of EUPJ expressed her gratitude to him. She wished strength to Rabbi Dr René Pfertzel who was the new ERA Chair. (b) She thanked the team which had organised the conference and thanked Jonathan Wootliff for being responsible for arrangements in Prague. The Chairman thanked David Pollak for chairing the conference so professionally and for his six years’ service as EUPJ Treasurer and made a presentation to him.

5. **Annual Accounts for 2017**
The Chairman introduced the Honorary Treasurer David Pollak who referred to the Accounts, Independent Examiner’s Report and his own Treasurer’s report included in the Booklet, which he summarised for the meeting with detailed slides. The Treasurer supplemented his report with the following – (a) In response to requests received at the previous European Assembly, affiliation fees, which had not been increased for 10 years, would be increased in 2018 by 20%, which would increase total annual subscriptions from £72K to £86K, and he thanked all communities for accepting this increase. (b) The accounts showed increased expenditure during the year, which was primarily on building the new website, expanding the activities of Community Connections, setting up the EU Office and employing Darryl Egnal as editor of the newsletter. (c) The Treasurer gave special thanks to Betty and Arthur Roswell for providing the funds to support so many activities in certain EUPJ countries and looked forward to many years of support from the Roswell Fund. The Roswell Fund had also enabled close to 100 young adults to attend a leadership seminar and the conference in Prague. The Treasurer opened the meeting to questions, but none were forthcoming.

The Treasurer thanked the outside accounting firm Grant Harrod Lerman Davis LLP and its partner Jeremy Harrod for providing the statutory examination of the 2017 Accounts without charge and also thanked his fellow Officers and the EUPJ Administrator Deborah Grabiner for their support during the year.

The Chairman thanked the Treasurer for his work and invited the meeting to approve the Accounts. The proposal to do so was made by Rabbi Danny Rich and seconded by Joyce Bigio and, on a show of hands, the Accounts were approved without objection.

6. **Appointment of Examiner**
The Chairman reminded the meeting that as EUPJ is a UK registered charity, the UK Charity Commission requires its annual accounts to be examined by an independent
qualified accountant who issues a report. Accounting firm Grant Harrod Lerman Davis LLP had provided a clear report, included in the Booklet. Jesse Weil seconded by Jan Muehlstein proposed the resolution to ratify the appointment of Grant Harrod Lerman Davis LLP as Independent Examiners of the annual accounts for 2017 and to re-appoint them as Independent Examiners for EUPJ’s accounts for 2018. On a show of hands the resolution was approved without objection.

7. Proposal to admit Comunidad Judía Progresista de Andalucía Beit Rambam to Associate Membership.

The Chairman referred to the proposed resolution in the Booklet and advised the meeting that last year the EUPJ received an application from Comunidad Judía Progresista de Andalucía Beit Rambam, the Jewish Congregation Beit Rambam of Andalusia, Seville, Spain (and known as Beit RamBam) requesting to be admitted as a Member of the EUPJ. The EUPJ Management Committee (ManCom) sent its members responsible for Iberia to visit and assess this community, consulted with representatives of the Spanish Progressive Jewish communities and obtained rabbinic reports on this community. The EUPJ was also provided with all the documentation and information which EUPJ normally requires from prospective members.

The Chairman advised the meeting that the EUPJ Executive Board (Board) and ManCom consider and recommend that at this stage Beit RamBam should be admitted as an Associate Member of the EUPJ and not as a full Constituent Member. The Chairman invited the meeting to approve the resolution and the proposal to do so was made by Jai Anguita and seconded by Deborah Rios. On a show of hands the resolution to admit Beit RamBam as an Associate Member of the EUPJ with effect from the close of the meeting was approved without objection and with no abstentions. The Chairman introduced Jorge Gershom and Rabbi Haim Casas to the meeting and the new community was warmly welcomed.

Two questions were put to the meeting at this stage – (a) Joyce Bigio congratulated Beit RamBam but asked why they were joining EUPJ directly and not the recently formed Spanish Federation. The Chairman replied that this federation was not an EUPJ member and had not applied for membership. In addition, it also did not yet represent all Spanish Progressive communities. (b) Rabbi Jeffrey Newman referred to the reports by each EUPJ member contained in the Booklet and asked that each report contain a name and contact information so that people reading these excellent reports can make contact with particular communities. This would be taken into consideration for future years.

8. Resolution to Amend the Constitution

The Chairman stated that at the European Assembly Meeting in Jerusalem in 2013 a new Constitution was adopted as a result of a governance review, and some minor amendments to that constitution were adopted at the 2014 and 2017 European Assemblies. The Chairman advised the meeting that the EUPJ ManCom reviewed the Constitution in 2017 and considered that it should be comprehensively revised to take account of proposed structural changes and other related matters. An Explanatory Memorandum setting out these reasons and proposals was attached to the Notice convening the meeting, as was a draft of the proposed new Constitution and were also contained in the Booklet. In addition a copy of the proposed new Constitution marked up to show the changes from the existing constitution was made available on the EUPJ website.
The Chairman advised the meeting that the Board and ManCom had unanimously accepted the proposed new Constitution and that no questions (written or verbal) had been received by EUPJ in relation thereto.

Rabbi Dr Walter Rothschild proposed the resolution that the Constitution of the EUPJ be amended by replacing it with the new Constitution contained in the Notice convening the meeting, and Robert Weiner seconded the proposal. The resolution was put to the meeting and, on a show of hands, was passed unanimously, there being no objections or abstentions. Jesse Weil pointed out that in Section 7.2.3.1 of the new Constitution the word “appointment” should be “appointed”. This was noted and the document to be registered with the UK Charities Commission would contain the correction.

9. EUPJ Officers and Board Members

The Chairman advised that there were a number of appointments to approve or ratify and some departures to announce and handed over to EUPJ President, Gordon Smith, to chair the meeting from this point.

The President announced that he would deal with elections and appointments in the order set out in the Notice of Meeting, but first expressed his thanks and appreciation to Stéphane Beder, whose 2nd term as a Vice-Chairman ended at the meeting, and to Rabbi Dr Walter Homolka and Alex Dembitz, each of whose 2nd term as Vice-President ended at the meeting. Rabbi Dr Deborah Kahn Harris’s 2nd term as Vice-President also ended at the meeting but she would be continuing on the Board as the representative of Leo Baeck College. The President also thanked Rabbi Ruven Bar Ephraim for his commitment to the EUPJ, after stepping down as Chairman of ERA.

(a) Chairman – The President stated that he had the honour to make a presentation to Miriam Kramer, who was stepping down as Chairman after six years in the role. He thanked her for her service to the EUPJ, and to other Jewish communal organisations, and stated that she had been a caring, considerate, generous, hard-working, committed and diplomatic chairman and a great ambassador for the EUPJ. He then made a presentation to Miriam Kramer on behalf of EUPJ.

The President then welcomed Sonja Guentner, who was being proposed as Miriam Kramer’s successor. He advised that nominations for this role were requested and by the date of the Notice of the meeting the only nomination received was for Sonja Guentner, who allowed her name to go forward and whose nomination was unanimously approved by ManCom and the Board. The President stated that, as this was an unopposed election, rather than asking for a formal vote, the election be made by acclamation. On the basis of the acclamation received, the President declared Sonja Guentner duly elected as EUPJ Chairman.

(b) Vice-Chairmen - The President advised that David Pollak, whose 2nd term as EUPJ Treasurer ended at the meeting, is standing for election to the newly created position of Vice-Chairman Finance, and John Cohen, who is currently the EUPJ Secretary, is standing for the newly created position of Vice-Chairman Governance, but for a period of one year only. The President stated that rather than asking for a formal vote, these appointments be dealt with by acclamation. On the basis of the acclamations received, the President declared David and John duly elected as EUPJ Vice-Chairmen.

(c) Ratification of Appointments to the Executive Board - The President welcomed appointments to the Board and advised that he would deal with all
these appointments together. He pointed out that some of these appointments were mentioned at the previous European Assembly Meeting but the formal nominations were received too late for inclusion in the Notice calling that meeting, and some were only received just before the Notice calling this meeting. The President suggested that he call out the name of each nominee, that the nominee then stand when called and that all those in favour say “Aye” on each occasion. The nominees to the Executive Board were -

- Representing the Netherlands – Ron van der Wieken
- Also Representing the Netherlands – Hannah Verhulst
- Representing Switzerland – Peter Jossi
- Also Representing Switzerland – David Bernstein
- Representing Italy – Joyce Bigio
- Representing Germany – Dan Rattan
- Representing the Abraham Geiger College – Rabbi Dr Edward van Voolen
- Representing the Leo Baeck College – Rabbi Dr Deborah Kahn-Harris
- Representing Poland – Marek Jezowski

On the basis of the acclamations received, the President declared the appointment of nominees to the EUPJ Executive Board duly ratified.

The President congratulated all those who had been elected to serve the EUPJ for the next term in whichever capacity, and raised two matters before relinquishing the microphone.

Firstly, he stated that serving on the EUPJ ManCom as well as in other positions is a very committed, highly activist but also very rewarding role, and advised that the EUPJ is always seeking new members to serve both on the ManCom as well as the Board and also as Vice Presidents. EUPJ was currently in discussions with a number of individuals who have offered to serve the EUPJ and will continue both these discussions and its search. The President was very hopeful that one of the first tasks of the incoming ManCom will be to consider and strengthen the management capacity of the EUPJ by co-opting active individuals to the EUPJ team. He said that EUPJ intends to conclude discussions and put forward a proposed list of names for the Board meeting to be held on 12 July 2018. If these appointments are approved at the Board, then EUPJ will call a special European Assembly meeting to be held on the same date as the following Board meeting, which will be in Brussels on 11 November 2018.

Secondly, the President mentioned Gilbert Lederman who was working with EUPJ to create a memorable weekend in Brussels from Friday 9 to Sunday 11 November. He pointed out that the 11th hour of the 11th day of the 11th month is ingrained in our hearts as the end of the First World War in Europe, and that many believe that the creation of the European Union has contributed to the ongoing peace on the continent. So Brussels was a very fitting city to host the EUPJ Executive Board meeting on that special day as well as the special European Assembly.

The President then handed over to Sonja Guentner to take the chair. The new Chair thanked the European Assembly for electing her to her office and was proud to be the first person from the continent of Europe to chair the EUPJ.

10. **EUPJ Brussels Office**

The next item was the EUPJ Brussels Office and the Chair asked Leslie Bergman (LB) to address the meeting. LB stated that for some time he had felt the need to establish the presence of Progressive Judaism with the EU in Brussels, because the
Brussels Jewish space is owned by Chabad. So an office is being opened in Brussels, currently based in Beth Hillel/IJC and we plan to have an opening event in November. The Office will move quickly to make our presence felt and one example is Emunah, which teaches religious leaders in an interfaith setting. This was developed in France and we are applying for funding to extend this to Belgium, the Netherlands and Italy. One of the functions of the Office will be to apply to the EU for grants and, to ensure that the centre of this activity is moved away from London, the EUPJ has established a Foundation in the Netherlands. LB stated that this move marks the future of our Movement in Europe.

11. **Any Other Business**
The Chairman advised that the Honorary Secretary had not been notified by any Member within the relevant time period of any matter or issue to put before the European Assembly but that the following items would be included.

11.1. **Next Generation Leadership Group** - Tzvi Tosetti from Milan addressed the meeting on behalf of the Next Generation Leadership group who had attended the seminar prior to the conference and many of whom had stayed on for the Conference. He stated that - “As a result of the Next Generation Leadership Seminar, we commit to proactively work with the EUPJ to further develop and network a new generation of communal leadership. We would like this European Assembly to commit to being partners with us in this work”. The Chair thanked the Group and asked the meeting to raise their hands if they supported this proposal. The meeting showed overwhelming support with no objections or abstentions.

11.2. **ERA** - Rabbi Ruven Bar Ephraim advised the meeting that he and 43 other rabbis attended an ERA meeting prior to the conference. The new board of ERA would consist of the following rabbis – René Pfertzel (chair), Menno ten Brink (Secretary), Marc Neiger (Treasurer), Ruven Bar Ephraim, Pauline Bebe, Colin Eimer, Jackie Tabick (EBD) and Ira Goldberg (EU Office). A number of important topics had been discussed, including the problem of the recognition of boundaries of rabbinic and bet din jurisdiction; as well as the recognition of ALEPH ordinands. These were topics which ERA would treat as a priority.

11.3. **GDPR** – John Cohen advised that all communities and people on the EUPJ mailing list would be receiving a communication from EUPJ requesting that they opt-in to continue receiving electronic communications from the EUPJ. He urged all to action this and to opt in.

The Chair then thanked David Pollak, John Cohen and Deborah Grabiner (the EUPJ Administrator) for all their work. She also urged anyone with any questions or queries to contact the EUPJ Management Committee. The Chair thanked all present for attending the 2018 European Assembly meeting and declared the meeting closed at 1:05 pm.

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Chairman of meeting