

## EUROPEAN UNION FOR PROGRESSIVE JUDAISM

**Minutes of the Annual General Meeting of the European Assembly of the European Union for Progressive Judaism (EUPJ)** held electronically via Zoom on **Sunday 28 July 2024** at 17.00 BST.

**Present:** EUPJ Chair, Rabbi Lea Mühlstein, and the other Honorary Officers and representatives of various constituent members and associate members of EUPJ, as well as invitees as follows: Rabbi Nathan Alfred (EUPJ European Rabbinic Association) Switzerland, Jai Anguita (Comunitat Jueva Bet Shalom, Barcelona) Spain, Rabbi Charley Baginsky (Liberal Judaism), United Kingdom, Leslie Bergman (EUPJ) United Kingdom, Jonathan Eaton (EUPJ) The Netherlands, Pierre Elkaim (Kehilat Gesher/EUPJ) France, Andre Falcao (Hehaver - Synagogue Ohel Jacob, Lisbon) Portugal, Fabio Benjamin Fantini (Federazione Italiana Ebraismo Progressivo - FIEP) Italy, Dr František Fendrych (Jewish Liberal Union in the Czech Republic ( ZLU ), Czech Republic, Mikael Garellick (International Jewish Centre) Belgium, Rabbi Dr Andrew Goldstein (Liberal Judaism), United Kingdom, Paul Gompes (Netherlands Verbond voor Progressief Jodendom (NVPJ) The Netherlands, Deborah Grabiner (EUPJ) London, Rabbi Etienne Kerber (CJL Paris/ FJL Fédération du Judaïsme Libéral) France, Miriam Kramer (EUPJ) United Kingdom, Ian Lancaster (Reform Judaism/EUPJ) United Kingdom, Veronika Lederman (IJC and Beth Hillel) Belgium, Rabbi David Maxa (Ec chajim - The Progressive Jewish Community of Prague / Central European Beit Din) Czech Republic, Irith Michelsohn (Union progressiver Juden in Deutschland) Germany, Jan Miklas-Frankowski (Beit Polska) Poland, Carlo Riva (Federazione Italiana Ebraismo Progressivo - FIEP) Italy, Brigitta Rotach (Jüdische Liberale Gemeinde Or Chadasch Zürich (JLG)/Platform of Liberal Jews (PLJS), Switzerland, Ekaterina Solodkaia (Union progressiver Juden in Deutschland) Germany, Andrew Solomon (Or Chadasch, Vienna) Austria, Piotr Stasiak (Beit Polska, Union of Progressive Jewish Communities) Poland, Judit Szabados (Sim Shalom Progressive Jewish Congregation) Hungary, James Traeger (Leo Baeck College) United Kingdom, Golan Tscaff (International Jewish Center) Belgium, Muriel Wahl (Or 'Ammim/(Federazione Italiana Ebraismo Progressivo - FIEP) Italy, Ari Warshawsky (Liberal Jewish Community of Luxembourg), Luxembourg.

### 1. Welcome and Apologies for Absence

The Chair advised that a quorum was present and welcomed everyone to the 2024 European Assembly Meeting. She emphasised the need for the Annual meeting as per UK law. The meeting noted that apologies had been received from Rabbi Menno ten Brink, Rabbi Alexander Grodensky, Rabbi Josh Levy and David Weis,

The Chair then introduced Rabbi Charley Baginsky (CB), Co-Chief Executive Officer of Progressive Judaism in the UK and CEO of Liberal Judaism, who delivered the opening prayer. CB discussed the challenges of living in times of uncertainty. CB also expressed her belief in the potential for the organisation to make a difference and build a better world and underscored the leadership's potential to make a significant impact.

### 2. Approval of Minutes of the 2023 meeting of the European Assembly held via Zoom

The Chair advised that the minutes of the European Assembly held online via Zoom on 31 August 2023 were included in the EUPJ Annual Report for 2023 ("the 2023 Report") available on the EUPJ website before the meeting. In response to her request, the Chair did not receive any comments or suggestions for changes to the Minutes, which were duly accepted with a majority as a correct record of the meeting and were then signed by the Chair.

### **3. Welcome by WUPJ (World Union of Progressive Judaism) President and Chair**

The absence of Rabbi Sergio Bergman was noted but the greeting from the World Union for Progressive Judaism was referenced in the Annual Report.

### **4. Chair's Report**

The Chair referred the meeting to the Chair's Report included in the 2023 Report on pages 5-7. The Chair's report was presented and accepted. Rabb Lea Mühlstein outlined the organisation's priorities for the coming year, emphasising the importance of congregational development, strengthening established congregations, and investing in the next generation. She stressed the need for enhancing governance procedures, improving internal and external communication, and building capacity, both in terms of volunteer and professional resources, to deliver activities and programs more effectively.

The Chair also raised one more resolution not included in the Notice to keep it discreet until the meeting. The resolution to appoint Rabbi Dr Jackie Tabick as an honorary life president of the European Union Progressive Judaism was proposed by the Chair, and seconded by Pierre Elkaim, which was approved by the majority.

The Chair concluded her report and announced an upcoming in-person Shabbaton and Executive Board meeting in Vienna from November 29th to December 1st, 2024. The meeting was reminded that Constituent Members were invited to attend but priority would be given to the Executive Board. The details and application had been shared separately.

The Chair invited Jonathan Eaton, Vice-Chair, Governance, to report on the progress of various governance initiatives, including the EUPJ Foundation, Networks Overcoming Antisemitism project, and the Kantor antisemitism survey. JE acknowledged Paul Gompes and Pierre Elkaim's significant contributions in resolving liabilities and recovering funds. Lastly, he announced the successful completion of the final project, the Pan-European antisemitism project, Neighbours, and confirmed the organisation's compliance with UK charity laws and personal information security.

### **5. Annual Accounts for 2023**

The Chair confirmed that the Finance Report was included with the Annual Report, starting on page 8 together with the 2023 Examined Annual Accounts, which had been made available in a separate document.

Pierre Elkaim (PE) presented the financial status of the EUPJ for the year 2023, He explained the split between restricted and unrestricted funds, with the latter showing a significant increase due to income received and expenses paid out. For unrestricted funds, the major income came from membership and grants, while expenses were primarily administration and activity-based costs. For restricted funds, the main income was the Roswell Fund, and the expenditures included support for a rabbinic student and the Ukraine appeal. EUPJ's main donation activities included supporting various funds such as the Rabbinical Training Fund, and the EUPJ Foundation.

The Chair further discussed the 2023 financial accounts, noting a net surplus due to new leadership and changes in rabbinical support funds. She also led discussions on improving support for rabbinic training across different seminaries.

As there were no questions, the Chair invited the meeting to approve the Accounts, which were approved by a majority. The chair thanked Pierre Elkaim for his work and looked forward to working with him this year.

### **6. Appointment of Examiner**

The Chair reminded the European Assembly 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. The 2023 accounts have been

examined by accounting firm Grant Harrod Lerman Davis LLP. The Independent Examiner's Report is on page 4 of the Certified Accounts. The report shows no criticism of the accounts and that they comply with the UK's Charity Commission rules. The EUPJ Management Committee and Executive Board appreciated the services provided by Grant Harrod Lerman Davis LLP and wished to appoint them to examine the 2024 Accounts.

The Chair invited the meeting to approve the resolution to ratify the appointment of Grant Harrod Lerman Davis LLP as Independent Examiners of the annual accounts for 2024, which were approved by a majority vote.

**7. Resolution to ratify the admission of Shir Jadash, Comunidad Judia Reformista Valenciana**

The Chair led discussions on the admission of new congregations and the upgrade of existing ones. The meeting thanked Rabbi Alona Lisitsa for her continued work and contribution to Progressive Judaism in Iberia. The meeting resolved the decision by the Executive Board on 10 June to appoint Shir Jadash, the reform congregation of Valencia, as an Associate Member of the EUPJ with effect from that date, in terms of Section 4 of the Constitution, in terms of the provision to Section 4.2 of the Constitution. The resolution was proposed by Ian Lancaster and seconded by Veronika Lederman and was approved by a majority.

**8. Resolution to ratify the admission of Or Hatzafon Finland**

The meeting resolved the decision by the Executive Board on 10 June to appoint Or Hatzafon Finland, based in Helsinki, as an Associate member of the EUPJ with effect from that date, in terms of Section 4 of the Constitution, in terms of the provision to Section 4.2 of the Constitution. The resolution was proposed by Miriam Kramer and seconded by Benjamin Fantini and was approved by a majority.

**9. Resolution to ratify the upgrade of the community of Hehaver Ohel Jacob, Portugal**

The meeting resolved the decisions by the Executive Board on 10 June 2024 to appoint the community of Hehaver Ohel Jacob, Lisbon, Portugal as a Full member of the EUPJ with effect from that date, in terms of Section 4 of the Constitution, in terms provision to Section 4.2 of the Constitution. The resolution was proposed by Ian Lancaster and Paul Gompes and was approved by a majority. It was noted that the Executive Board had approved a proposal that as of 28 July 2024 at 4pm CET Portugal would be granted one seat at the European Assembly of the EUPJ. Andre Falcao shall be appointed as the European Assembly delegate for Portugal until the 2026 European Assembly, at which point he shall be eligible for re-election.

**10. Resolution to ratify the Appointment to the EUPJ Executive Board**

Most of these appointments can be made by the Constituent Members at any time in the year and some appointments which the Executive Board must approve. A list of The Executive Board had been circulated and posted on EUPJ's website. Only the changes in red required approval. Subsequently, we have been advised of one further change after this meeting's notice period, but it does not make any difference to the composition of the board. Katherine Gundolf, representing Austria has stood down for personal reasons and the community have nominated Andrew Solomon. He will be able to take up his position on the Executive Board immediately and will be ratified later. Similarly, there are several vacancies which will be filled in the future and will be ratified later. The Chair thanked the Board for their sacred work on the Board, many of whom were on the list. The list was ratified.

**11. Discussion of Annual Report**

The Chair invited the meeting to advise that no other reports had been received. Ian Lancaster commended the report and was proud that he was part of the movement. He recommended that the copy was printed, and the hard copy distributed and translated into several languages. No formal resolution was made due to potential cost concerns. Hard

copies of the current Annual Report can be made available on request. The Chair asked for volunteers to translate the document. Deborah and Dominika are reviewing the communication strategy and can add this request to their recommendations.

In conclusion to the meeting, the Chair thanked Deborah Grabiner for her effort in producing the Annual Report and for her continued work across the movement's activities. Miriam Kramer was thanked for her tireless effort, not only as President, but for her proof reading and any mistakes are entirely down to Deborah and the Chair.

The Chair reminded the meeting about the Shabbaton in Vienna. Andrew Solomon, representative from Austria, echoed the Chair's words and welcomed members of the Executive Board to the Shabbaton being planned in Vienna. The Chair invited Rabbi Dr Andrew Goldstein, Honorary Life President to say a few words. He thanked the Chair and the EUPJ for their work and felt the movement was developing and being renewed with lots of new members of the European Assembly involved.

The Chair thanked the President and Honorary Life Presidents who have remained loyal to EUPJ but also to Gordon Smith, who has held several senior posts over many years, also worked very hard to help the EUPJ and to David Pollak, an ex-Treasurer, who has patiently worked with Pierre and herself to make somethings more understandable and accessible from the details they had inherited. An extended thank you was given to the Management Committee who have worked hard and regularly attend meetings.

One final point before closing the meeting, the Chair reminded the meeting that the High Holidays were fast approaching and if any community required rabbinical support during this time, that they should let EUPJ know by writing to the administrator or herself, with your requirements.

The Chair thanked the delegates and looked forward to seeing as many of you as possible in Vienna.

The meeting closed at 18.24.

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Chair of the European Assembly Meeting