

## **Resolution EC 170910 -1**

### **Shechita**

**The Executive Committee of the World Jewish Congress, meeting in London on September 11, 2017,**

**NOTES** that the rules mandated by Jewish religious law for the humane slaughter of animals [shechita] is an ancient religious practice dating back thousands of years, and have been an integral part of Jewish life for 3,000 years, and that shechita has for centuries been accepted in civilized societies as a humane way of slaughtering such animals for consumption;

**NOTES** that Jewish law requires that:

- the slaughter be performed with a completely smooth blade sharpened on a whetstone that has been inspected carefully for proper sharpness, before each and every kill;
- the knife must be long enough to fully span the neck of the animal;
- the slightest nick renders the knife unfit for Shechita, and its use is prohibited;
- the cut must take place quickly, with a swift movement of the knife, without any sign of distress from the animal, so that the animal feels little or no pain in the process;
- prior to being slaughtered, the animal must be healthy and uninjured or unimpaired in any way.

**NOTES** that the common practice of stunning an animal by using electricity, or a blow to the head with a stun gun prior to slaughter, inflicts a prior injury on the animal and renders the animal unfit for kosher slaughter or consumption;

**NOTES WITH CONCERN** that of late, an increasing number of European governments and parliaments have introduced legislation and regulations limiting the religious slaughter of animals, which is performed by Muslims and Jews;

**NOTES WITH CONCERN** the recent moves in the regional parliaments of Flanders and Wallonia in Belgium to ban religious slaughter without prior stunning;

**COMMENDS** the Dutch Minister of Agriculture for signing an agreement with NIK, the Organization of Jewish Communities in the Netherlands, and with representatives of the slaughter industry and the Muslim community, which will guarantee the right to continue the religious slaughter of animals in that country;

**CALLS UPON** governments to reject all proposals to ban Shechita, as these would constitute an infringement of the basic human right of freedom of religion and belief;

**CALLS UPON** all WJC-affiliated communities to help one another fight attempts to ban religious slaughter and other similar initiatives.

ADOPTED BY THE WJC EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE, MEETING IN LONDON ON 11 SEPTEMBER 2017