

## Malcolm Hoenlein

It is a pleasure to be here. First, I think that the more the world puts up barriers against Israel and the Jewish people, the more we have an obligation to tear down the barriers between us. I think that the one lesson that Jewish history teaches us is that there has always been one important precondition to every great thing that has happened to Jewish people throughout our history and that precondition was – is – that when Jews stood together, we could overcome any challenge. When the Jews were divided, every challenge was too great.

When we stood together as one people, one heart, God said we were ready to get the Torah, to rescue Russian Jews and Ethiopian Jews and Syrian Jews. We can only meet the challenges we confront today when we stay united. And the issues that we confront today, all of us, are no longer geographically specific, or sector-specific. With globalization of economies we also had a globalization of politics.

And issues have become universal issues, those that affect the United States and Europe, Africa, Australia, Canada - are today all the same. So I think that what Michael Schneider had alluded to is the need for us to come together and especially, giving the economic crisis, the need to maximize resources. No one organization, no one country or community can meet the challenges alone anymore. We need to share expertise, resources and we need to come together in order to confront the challenges through common efforts, sharing and working together.

We saw in Geneva this year, during the Durban II Conference, that the ability of all of us to work together and to mobilize enabled us to make sure that what happened at Durban I did not re-occur. The fact that we took the streets and were able to have the dominant presence was only because of the cooperative effort. Michael and I have agreed that there is no institutional interest that overrides the common obligation that we to enhance all of our efforts.

And when you look at our agenda now – whether it is Iran or the Goldstone report or the boycotts or Turkey or the security issues where we cooperate, we see that these are issues require all of us – the Jewish community in United States, the Jewish communities in other countries, and Israel – to work together, both in public campaigns and in private efforts.

One of the issues in regard to the Goldstone report, and one of the lessons that we learnt last week as we tried to mobilize in the last minute, is the need to create our global contact network, which will require all of us that we have to try and create a list, so in the future we can respond immediately and effectively, knowing who the contact is in Japan or in any other country, or in any African country. As we scrambled working throughout the nights this week trying to find some contact beyond the governmental ones.

I can tell you that many times the Presidency of US has asked us where are the Jewish communities in other countries when raising issues, when we ask them to intervene. I honestly believe that we will be held to account by future generations for what we do and for what we fail to do and we will not have the excuse to say: "Well, we did not have this interest or we had not have this particular interest". And if you don't have a look at this at border times and what we have in common, then we would have failed our responsibilities.

We will read soon what Jacob said to his children: “All of these are tribes of Israel”. You are representing the tribes of the world Jewish community, and we pledge to work together with you to ensure that all tribes of Israel will be safe and secure in the future.