

*Sallai Meridor*

To: Rabbi Stuart Weinblatt

From: Sallai Meridor

Dear Stuart,

Thank you for sharing with me your thoughts regarding the need for a constructive dialogue between leaders of American Jews and Jews of Israel.

I believe that keeping our people together is one of the most important challenges of our era, if not the most important one.

With the success of Zionism, the ingathering and the founding of Israel, the Jewish people in Israel and the diaspora now live in very different realities and mindsets. Israelis live within a Jewish majority society, organized by sovereignty, talking in their national language, living in their ancient homeland, serving in their army, protecting the Jewish nation, celebrating the Jewish particularism. Jews in the diaspora live as minorities, among a mostly welcoming non Jewish society ,organized within voluntary communities, investing their lives, mostly upstream, in keeping their Jewishness thriving, largely embracing Jewish-universal values. Additionally, the current relatively good physical conditions of most Jews, both in Israel and in the diaspora, may contribute to the weakening of our sense of need for each other. Even without the negative impact of politics and politicians, the challenge we are facing is immense, and our success in meeting it may be existential.

Thus, I deeply commend you and your colleagues for your efforts. We must learn more about each other, understand where we come from and where we wish to go, focus on, deepen and expand what we share, respect each other, even when we differ.

Keeping the Jewish people together around Zion is the challenge for our generations. Failing to address it could lead to a historic catastrophe. Meeting it would be the true victory of Zionism, the “insurance policy” for our future.

With my deepest appreciation and my warmest wishes,

Sallai

Chairman of the Jewish Agency for Israel and the World Zionist Organization, 1999–2005  
Ambassador of Israel to the United States, 2005–2009