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Statement on Moshe Feiglin's Visit to Australia

OCTOBER 9, 2015 – Eleven Jewish and Zionist organisations in Australia from across the religious, political and social spectrum have come together to issue a statement regarding former Likud MK Moshe Feiglin's visit to Australia this month.

“Moshe Feiglin's views on women, homosexuality and Palestinian citizens of Israel are inconsistent with Jewish values. They have no place in a modern democracy such as Israel that was established on the principle of respecting the human rights of all its minorities.”

The following organisations have signed on to the statement:

- Aleph Melbourne
- Ameinu Australia
- Australian Reform Zionist Association
- Habonim Dror Australia
- Hashomer Hatzair Australia
- Hineni Australia
- Keshet Australia
- Netzer Australia
- New Israel Fund Australia
- Progressive Judaism Victoria
- Shira Hadasha Synagogue

In addition, a number of the organisations' leaders have commented:

Dr Ilana Snyder, President of New Israel Fund Australia, said: “The views of many people in the Australian Jewish community do not line up with Moshe Feiglin's which is why it is important to point out when such

anti-democratic values are being promoted. NIF is working hard in Israel to bring different sectors together, promote shared society and coexistence, and uphold the values of the Declaration of Independence.”

Johnny Baker, President of Ameinu Australia, said: “Whilst we respect the right of different voices to be heard in our community, we are equally concerned that the impending visit of Israeli extremist, Moishe Feiglin, will bring the Jewish community into disrepute and play into the hands of our adversaries.”

Daniel Stiglec, Meta’em (Vice President & Community Liason) of Hashomer Hatzair, said: “Hashomer Hatzair Australia believes Moshe Feiglin's views about minority groups in Israel are divisive and detrimental to the character of the Jewish State. Whilst he has the right to freedom of speech, we condemn his views and would like to highlight the fact that these are not the views of Australian Jewry and the larger Israeli mainstream society.”

Shira Appelboom, Federal Mazkira (Chairperson) of Netzer Australia, said: “Moshe Feiglin's disrespect for marginalised groups in Israel goes against Netzer Australia's fundamental beliefs in equality and respect for all human life. Though he is entitled to his views, we strongly believe they are an obstacle to the pursuit of peace and democracy in Israel.”

Brian Samuel, President of Progressive Judaism Victoria, said: “We are concerned about Mr Feiglin’s visit to Melbourne. He is a disruptive person in the Jewish world and shares few values with the Jewish community.”

Jonathan Barnett, President of Keshet Australia, said: “The board of Keshet Australia, wishes to express our concern regarding the proposed visit by Mr Feiglin to Australia. Keshet aspires to encourage and teach inclusivity. Mr Feiglin's philosophy is diametrically opposed to our core values. Mr Feiglin has expressed views which seek to oppose the inclusivity and rights of GLBT Jews. Keshet Australia believes his views are damaging and hurtful to people here and in Israel. We feel it is incumbent on us to highlight to the greater community that such views are not held or supported by most Jewish people in Australia or elsewhere.”

Barbara Ford, Acting President of the Australian Reform Zionist Association (ARZA), said: “ARZA Australia supports discussion about sensitive issues in Israel, including the treatment of minorities, the status of women and the issues of pluralism and sexual orientation. However, such discussions should be respectful and focussed on constructive dialogue. It is highly questionable if the views and presentation of Moshe Feiglin meet these basic criteria.”

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