

WZO/AZM Elections

I, like many progressive Jews, have made it a point all my life to avoid organizations like the Jewish Community Federations, the World Zionist Organization, the American Zionist Federation (now the American Zionist Movement or AZM), etc. etc., because I wanted to work on progressive Jewish causes for Israel and make a difference. However, as President of Partners for Progressive Israel, I've been learning that these organizations are indeed important in a number of ways.

Especially now, when many of us despairingly feel there is little we can do to influence the Israeli government or Israeli society, we who support both Israel *and* a progressive agenda have realized that it is essential for us to use our organizational clout and influence to get out a large vote for the Hatikvah slate in the upcoming elections for the World Zionist Organization (WZO). Confusingly, they're held by the AZM.

Hatikvah is a slate composed principally of Partners for Progressive Israel (affiliated with the WZO faction known as the World Union of Meretz) and Ameinu (affiliated with the World Labor Zionists), as well as Hashomer Hatza'ir (World Union of Meretz) and Habonim Dror (World Labor Zionists). **A vote for the Hatikvah Slate is a vote for the progressive faction of the WZO.**

The WZO controls a budget of approximately \$40 million (2015) and also exerts a significant role within the Jewish Agency For Israel (JAFI). JAFI has a budget of \$378 million (2016), which principally is for immigrant absorption and settlement activities. It is essential that the World Union of Meretz have as larger a say as possible over the activities of WZO and JAFI. The number of votes we get in the WZO elections, which are held every five years, determines the degree of that influence.

The size of our vote literally affects how many seats the World Union of Meretz gets at the table, what role they can play in the WZO leadership, and which one (or more) WZO departments will they be able to head.

Without a sizable progressive vote, the Right will dominate the WZO as they are dominating other Israeli institutions. The progressive wing is a barrier against the wasteful and oppressive use of the funds of the Jewish people in more building in the West Bank, discrimination within Israel, and continuation of current policies.

SLATES

Candidates for election as a delegate to the World Zionist Congress on the Hatikvah slate will include representatives from organizations as well as individuals who will work with us to get votes and may, if successful in the election, attend the WZO meeting in Israel. This list must be submitted to the AZM by October 1, 2019. **If you are interested in possibly being on the**

slate, contact us at the email or number below.

VOTING

Every adult Jew (above 18) in the United States, who did not vote (as an Israeli citizen) in the 2019 Israeli elections, is entitled to vote in the AZM election. To cover administrative costs, all potential voters must pay \$10 when they register. The election will take place between Jan. 21 and March 11, 2020. Partners for Progressive Israel, and Ameinu will have dedicated staff members and volunteers working on these elections from about August, 2019 until they are over, to help get out the progressive vote. If you are interested in joining the team, contact us.

In 2015, 56,717 votes were cast of which 3,448 were for Hatikvah that translated into 7 delegates. **That means only 500 votes would mean an extra delegate; 5000 means 10 more!** Those are reachable targets. Please contact Partners, or one of the other organizations mentioned above, to register to vote or help in the campaign. With your help, we can make a difference!

For information or to help in the campaign, contact Dinesh:
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