

September 2017

**THE AMERICAN ZIONIST MOVEMENT
REPORT OF ACTIVITIES AND ACHIEVEMENTS**

March – September 2017

This report is a compilation prepared by the President of AZM, Richard D. Heideman; Chair of the AZM National Board, Francine Stein; AZM Executive Director, Herbert Block; AZM Program Director, Alicia Post; and the AZM Leadership Cabinet.

AZM BIENNIAL ASSEMBLY & LEADERSHIP: At the AZM Biennial Assembly on March 5-6, 2017 in NYC, with 175 participants, new leadership for AZM was elected, including the following officers: Richard D. Heideman, President, Francine Stein, Chair of the AZM National Board; Marlene Post (VP for Fundraising Development), Paul Golomb (VP for Programs), Marilyn Wind (VP for Inter-Organizational Affairs) and Alan Silberman (VP for WZO Relations). Each is in the process of building out their portfolios, including working with various Committees that have been or are in the process of being established.

AZM Executive Director, Herbert Block began in his role in March 2017, succeeding Karen Rubinstein, who was named Executive Director Emerita upon her retirement. Alicia Post was named AZM Program Director in April 2017.

A [video of Richard's acceptance speech](#) and [written remarks](#) as incoming President are available online. [Click here](#) for selected press links.

AZM Treasurer Jim Schiller has revamped our fiscal accounting and reporting functions and will be preparing an initial 2018 budget draft for early review by the AZM National Board at its November, 2017 meeting.

AZM Secretary, Shelley Sherman, has prepared extensive minutes of all the meetings of both the AZM National Board and the AZM Leadership Cabinet.

AZM LEADERSHIP CABINET: The AZM Leadership Cabinet has met March 30, May 17, June 20, July 11 and is convening on September 14.

AZM NATIONAL BOARD: The AZM National Board met on March 6, June 5 and will next convene on September 14.

AZM PRESIDENTS & EXECUTIVE DIRECTORS: We have convened meetings of the AZM Presidents & Executive Directors of the various member/affiliate/youth organizations. This new forum, convened on June 5, July 11 and September 12, has proven valuable in exchanging ideas and in expanding the thinking on issues as we strive to address concerns of the various organizations within the spectrum of AZM.

PROGRAMS: AZM has sponsored or participated in the following programs during the past six months;

- Herzl in the Park, celebrating the 120th anniversary of the first Zionist Congress (8/28) <https://www.azm.org/press-release-8-28-2017>
- Celebrate Israel Parade - Zionist contingent float (6/4) <https://www.azm.org/celebrate-israel-parade-ny-2017>

Co-sponsored:

- Yom Yerushalayim commemoration - MD (5/23)
- Anniversary of Reunification of Jerusalem - Capitol Hill (5/17)
- Yom Hazikaron & Yom Ha'atzmaut Flag Raising Ceremony - Bowling Green, NY (5/1/17)
- Ambassadors Against BDS - UN (3/29)

YEAR OF ZIONIST ANNIVERSARIES: AZM has announced and is pursuing activities in 2017-18 under the banner of the “Year of Zionist Anniversaries”, including the following. The program announcements can be found here: <https://www.azm.org/biltmore>

- 75 years since the convening of the Biltmore Conference in NY in May 1942;
- 50 years since the reunification of Jerusalem, following the Six Day War, in June 1967;
- 70 years since the journey of the Exodus refugee ship in August 1947;
- 120 years since Theodor Herzl convened the First Zionist Congress in Basel, Switzerland in August 1897;
- 100 years since the Balfour Declaration was issued in November 1917 by the British Foreign Secretary;
- 70 years since adoption of the United Nations Partition Resolution in November 1947;
- 70 years since the founding of the State of Israel in May 1948

AZM WASHINGTON NATIONAL CONFERENCE: AZM has announced its Washington National Conference, November 15-16-17, 2017, Zionism Forward in the Spirit of Balfour, which will be held in partnership with the Department for Diaspora Activities of the World Zionist Organization (WZO) and the Balfour Initiative of the Israel Forever Foundation (IFF). www.azm.org/azm-national-conference

AZM and WZO: AZM is working closely with the WZO on multiple activities and recently hosted Avraham Duvdevani, Chairman of the WZO as guest speaker at the AZM National Board Meeting; Esther Serok, WZO US Representative at the Herzl in the Park program; and Gusti Yehoshua Braverman, Chair of the Department of Diaspora Affairs of the WZO, at a special meeting of AZM Presidents, Executive Directors and Leadership.

AMERICAN ZIONIST SHABBAT: AZM has announced the dates of October 28-December 2, 2017 for communities to hold an American Zionist Shabbat program, providing resource materials to Rabbis, AZM organizations, synagogues, schools and communal leaders so they can speak about Zionism during this period.

AZM COMMITTEES/TASK FORCES/WORKING GROUPS/INITIATIVES: AZM has created, or is in the process of appointing, leaders to participate in various AZM Task Forces, Working Groups and Initiatives. Interested leaders can self-nominate, or recommend others, to join the following groups being considered by the AZM Leadership Cabinet:

- Communications and Website
- Constitution (WZO and AZM)
- Fundraising & Resource Development
- Israel 70th Anniversary
- Membership Outreach (organizational and individual)
- Policy Review & Issues
- Programs and Events
- Strategic Planning Implementation
- Washington National Conference Planning
- Youth Development, Young Leadership and Education
- Zionist Shabbat Planning

AZM FUNDRAISING DEVELOPMENT: For AZM to succeed, we must group our fundraising and development resources. That means contributions, grants, bequests. Please make your own contribution and solicit others. <https://www.azm.org/donate>

AZM STRATEGIC PLANNING: AZM adopted in September 2016 a new Strategic Plan. AZM is following the plan in all respects and is updating the Strategic Plan as a working tool to guide our growth. <https://www.azm.org/wp-content/uploads/2017/03/STRATEGIC-PLAN-email-version.pdf>

WZO RELATIONS: Under the leadership of the VP for WZO Relations AZM has been actively involved in discussions on possible revisions to the WZO Constitution and Regulations and has presented many items to the WZO for its consideration. AZM has also been preparing for the upcoming Zionist General Council (Vaad HaPoel) meeting in Israel at the end of October in consultation with our organizations and others.

COMMUNAL ORGANIZATIONAL INVOLVEMENT: AZM leadership has participated in meetings of the following organizations of which it is a member: Conference of Presidents of Major American Jewish Organizations; AIPAC National Council; National Coalition Supporting Eurasian Jewry; and, the Conference on Jewish Material Claims Against Germany.

MEETINGS and OUTREACH: The new staff of AZM have been meeting individually with each of the 25 AZM constituent organizations in order to learn more about their work and how they can best be connected to programs and mission of AZM. Staff have also met with many other national Jewish and pro-Israel organizations in order to brief them about AZM and connect our activities. Staff have also begun to develop connections with colleagues at Zionist federations in countries across the world.

HELYN B. REICH Memorial SCHOLARSHIP FUND: Reich scholarships are awarded each fall and spring to a limited number of American students who choose to study at one of several designated Israeli universities or attend post-college long-term programs. The scholarship seeks to recognize candidates who have demonstrated academic excellence, pro-Israel activity in their personal lives, and a dedicated commitment to future involvement with the Jewish and Zionist community in the United States. *The latest class of award recipients was announced in September 2017. Read more at: <https://www.azm.org/category/scholarship-winners>*

AMERICAN ZIONIST YOUTH COUNCIL (AZYC): This initiative, funded by WZO and operated through AZM, brings together the leadership of the Zionist youth movements and other national Jewish youth organizations in America, for coordination of activities and joint programs. You can read more on AZYC March Shabbaton [here](#).

AZM LEADERSHIP MEMORANDA: AZM has issued the following Leadership Memoranda to a broad list of AZM leaders from its Board, Zionist and Jewish organizations and other communal leaders:

- July 31, 2017: <http://americanzionistmovement.org/15TF-52I7V-32/sv.aspx>
- Apr 21, 2017: <http://americanzionistmovement.org/15TF-4W5PY-32/sv.aspx>
- Mar 15, 2017: <http://americanzionistmovement.org/15TF-4TJ4L-32/sv.aspx>

PUBLIC STATEMENTS: AZM has released various public statements on selected issues, including:

- With Zionism Under Assault American Jewish and Israeli Dignitaries gathered in NYC to Celebrate the Birth of the Movement August 28, 2017 | [Read Full Text](#)
- AZM Denounces Richard Spencer Calling Himself a “White Zionist” August 17, 2017 | [Read Full Text](#)
- 75 Years after Historic Biltmore Conference, AZM Launches “Year of Zionist Anniversaries” May 11, 2017 | [Read Full Text](#)

KOTEL ISSUE:

On June 29th AZM sent a letter to Prime Minister Netanyahu regarding the controversy concerning the Kotel. The letter can be seen here; <https://www.azm.org/kotel-letter-7-29-17>

PRESS INTERVIEWS AND COVERAGE: We have had numerous press articles, listed here:

AZM in the News

- Celebrating the First Zionist Congress (Queens Chronicle) August 31, 2017 | [Read Full Text](#)
- In KGH, Jewish Community Leaders Celebrate Herzl, 120th Anniversary Of First Zionist Congress (Queens Jewish Link) August 30, 2017 | [Read Full Text](#) | [Click for Community Snapshots](#)
- Zionism Under Assault (New York Jewish Life) August 30, 2017 – Leaders Gather in NYC to mark the birth of a movement | [Read Full Text](#)
- US Jewish leaders from right to left back metal detectors on Temple Mount (JNS.org) July 21, 2017 | [Read Full Text](#)
- Moving Zionism Forward: A Conversation with the President of the American Zionist Movement (Patheos) June 15, 2017 | [Read Full Text](#)
- Jewish Survival Through Jewish Unity, Theme of New AZM President (JewishPress) May 17, 2017 – Heideman’s task will be to fashion unity from a widely-disparate consortium of Zionists | [Read Full Text](#)
- Zionism Forward (JPost) April 25, 2017 – Why are American Jews so fazed by the question- Are you a Zionist? | [Read Full Text](#)
- New AZM President (LIJW) March 31-April 6, 2017 | [Read Full Text](#)
- Four Questions: Herbert Block (New York Jewish Life) March 21, 2017 | [Read Full Text](#)
- Ex-Louisvillian elected president of AZM (Jewish Louisville) March 17, 2017 | [Read Full Text](#)
- ‘News and analysis’ (The Chronicle of Philanthropy) March 10, 2017 – Grist and American Zionist Movement Name New Top Executives | [Read Full Text](#)
- ‘Impact of BDS is worse than most people Realize’ (JPost) February 26, 2017 – Richard D. Heideman, one of the foremost legal experts on fighting the BDS movement, seeks to repair the tarnished name of Zionism | [Read Full Text](#)

EMAIL NOTICES

The following additional announcements were sent by email to AZM’s contact list:

August 15 2017: Join us 8/28: Celebrate 120 years since Herzl’s Zionist Congress: <http://americanzionistmovement.org/15TF-53Q6Y-32/sv.aspx>

July 18 2017: 70 Years Ago Today: Exodus Commemoration: <http://ourmailer.com/15TF-51Z1K-32/sv.aspx>

June 20 2017: Moving Zionism Forward: <http://americanzionistmovement.org/15TF-506DT-32/sv.aspx>

June 2 2017: Celebrate Israel with AZM - Sunday, June 4th: <http://americanzionistmovement.org/15TF-4YVDH-32/sv.aspx>

May 19 2017: Celebrate Jerusalem Day in Potomac, MD - May 23rd: <http://americanzionistmovement.org/15TF-4Y4A1-32/sv.aspx>

Apr 27 2017: NY area Yom Hazikron & Yom Ha'atzmaut Events: <http://americanzionistmovement.org/15TF-4WL49-32/sv.aspx>

Apr 26 2017: Zionism Forward, Today's Jerusalem Post: <http://americanzionistmovement.org/15TF-4WL3B-32/sv.aspx>

Apr 06 2017: Passover Greetings, Zionism Forward: <http://americanzionistmovement.org/15TF-4UHAO-32/sv.aspx>

Mar 23 2017: Join AZM at the UN on 3/29, Ambassadors Against BDS: <http://americanzionistmovement.org/15TF-4U25L-32/sv.aspx>
