

This has been a year of profound challenge, enduring resilience, and purposeful action.

Our community has continued to face challenges and anxiety.

We have seen a sickening rise in antisemitism after the attacks of 7th October 2023 and it has now been nearly two years that Jews have been subjected to increased levels of hate on our streets, online and in civil society.

Despite these challenges, I have seen extraordinary strength. From Manchester to Glasgow, Cardiff to London, I have spent time with proud and flourishing Jewish communities. We - the Jewish people - have resilience in our DNA.

Since my election as Board of Deputies President last year, we have identified five priorities for building a brighter future for our community and we have significant achievements in each area:

Fighting antisemitism

The *Commission on Antisemitism* – backed by the Prime Minister – is a review of anti-Jewish discrimination across public and professional life co-chaired by political heavyweights Lord John Mann and Dame Penny Mordaunt. They have produced a powerful report filled with practical recommendations. Our advocacy has led to a change in the law which will push protests away from our synagogues.

Standing up for peace and security in Israel and the Middle East

We have been campaigning tirelessly, for the hostages with weekly vigils in Westminster and Edinburgh, our *Adopt a Hostage* scheme, and campaigns at Sukkot, Chanukah and Pesach. We are working constantly to ensure our community's hopes for lasting peace and security for Israelis, Palestinians and the wider Middle East are heard by governments in the UK, Israel, the US, Arab states, and beyond.

Defending our religious freedoms

We are constantly working to ensure our religious freedoms are protected. Our revised *Employer's Guide to Judaism* is helping Jews in the workplace and we are working with other faith communities to have Judaism classified by government as an ethnicity as well as a religion, which will help ensure the protection of Jewish rights in all fields.

Making our community more united, inclusive, and outward-looking

Within weeks of my election, I launched with Muslim communities the *Optimistic Alliance* to tackle anti-Jewish and anti-Muslim hatred; challenge extremism; support mainstream voices; and to defend shared religious freedoms.

Celebrating our faith, heritage, and culture as British Jews

Next year we will have our first British *Jewish Culture Month* – an uplifting celebration of our history, arts, and contributions to society. It's an opportunity to demonstrate who we are, where we have come from and to share our unique heritage.

In short, we need Less Oy, and More Joy!

May the coming year bring peace to our people and our world.

Wishing you and your families a Shanah Tovah U'Metukah.



Phil Rosenberg
President

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