



Media Release

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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

Hugging and Wrestling the Zionist way

Over 120 participants, bringing together people from a diverse range of political and religious backgrounds and across the generations, “hugged and wrestled” at the Zionist Federation of Australia’s Plenary Conference in Sydney last Sunday.

Jonny Ariel, the Director of the Jewish Agency for Israel’s *Makom* education and engagement unit, facilitated a fascinating series of discussions and explorations about how we engage with Israel in Australia in 2011. In preparation for the plenary, Jonny conducted a series of focus groups within the community to gain perspectives of how Australian Jews engage with Israel currently. They also covered topics around how to engage the younger generation. The focus groups included key educators, philanthropists, communal and youth leadership, and other people from key segments of the community.

At the plenary, lively discussions occurred on “roundtables”, and we emerged with a series of ideas and initiatives which the ZFA and its affiliates will now pursue for implementation in the coming months.

“The feedback after the plenary has been overwhelmingly positive” said ZFA President, Philip Chester. “We were delighted that over 40% of the participants were in the youth/ young adult age bracket, and they were particularly involved in framing ideas for engaging their own demographics” he continued.

The ZFA was also delighted to welcome Dr Uzi Landau MK, Minister for National Infrastructures, who delivered a most interesting and wide ranging lunchtime address, covering issues of the current Israeli situation, the proposal for the declaration at the UN of a Palestinian state as well as interesting issues around energy and infrastructure and Israel’s cooperation with Australia in this field.

Photo attached

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