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בנימין זאב הרצל - בהקשר לציונות - 80790					

Gearing up for the World Zionist Congress 2025 Elections

How to Establish a State in a Few Simple Steps: The Vision of Zionism

In the late 19th century, a young Jewish journalist posed a bold question: "How do I establish a state?" This visionary was none other than Theodor Herzl, the father of modern Zionism. His answer was clear – a state needs a people, land, and resources. While the Jewish people existed, they lacked both territory and funds. However, Herzl, ever the optimist, believed that with enough faith in the idea, anything was possible.

Herzl's first step? Uniting the Jewish people behind a common cause. He envisioned the First Zionist Congress, a groundbreaking event that brought together Jewish representatives from all corners of the world. In 1897, 208 delegates from 16 countries gathered in Basel, Switzerland, igniting a flame of hope and national revival. The Congress marked a crucial moment in Jewish history, as the dream of establishing a Jewish homeland in Israel began to take shape.

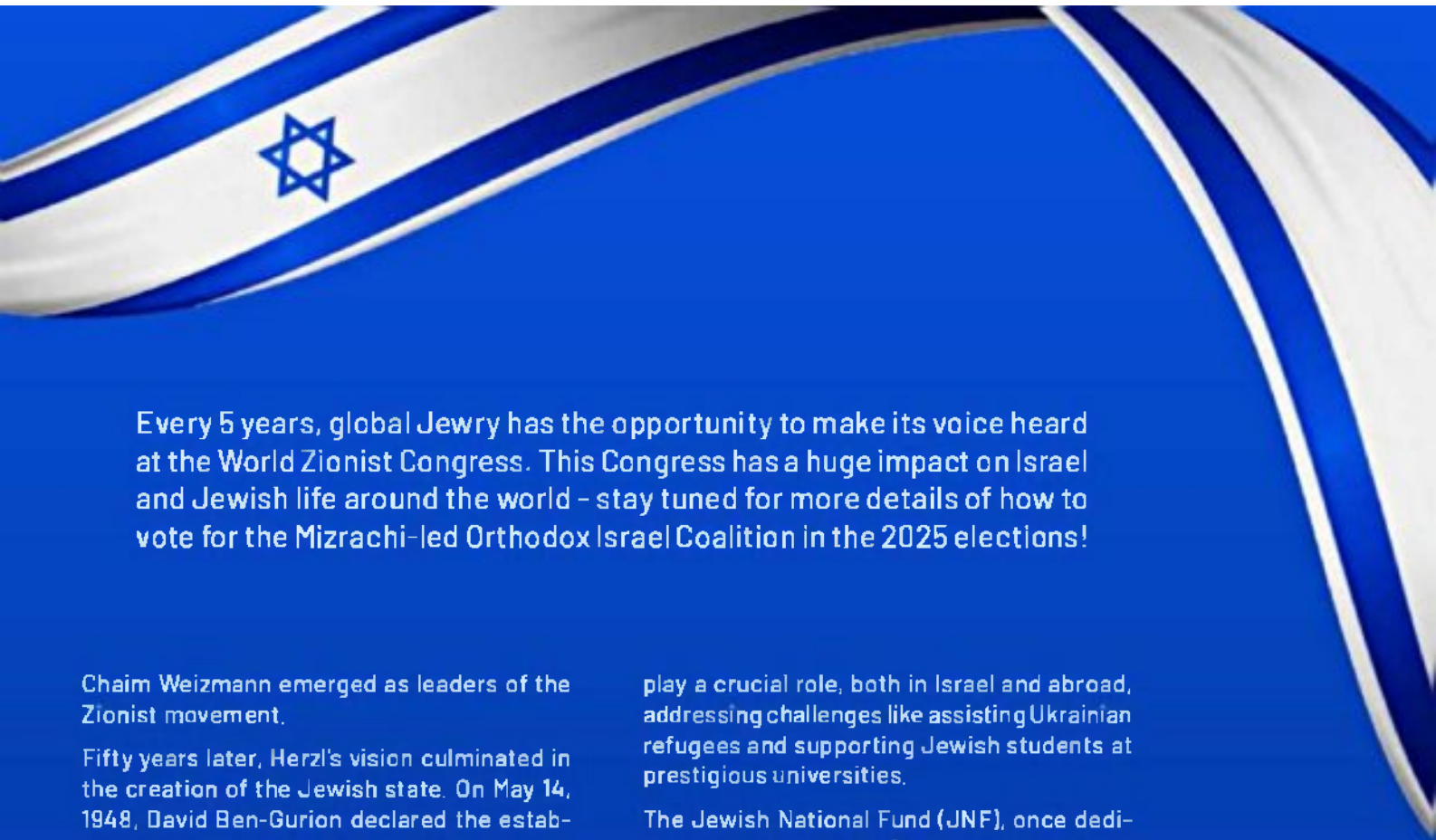
But discussing ideas wasn't enough; Herzl understood that action was needed. The Congress established the World Zionist Organization, tasked with executing its decisions. Three key institutions soon followed: Keren Hayesod, which focused on raising funds; the Jewish National Fund (JNF), responsible for purchasing land in Israel; and the Jewish Agency, which took charge of immigration, settlement, and education.

Over the years, the Zionist Congress met regularly to address pivotal questions such as the choice between settling in the Land of Israel or Uganda, and the struggle for independence from the British. These discussions shaped the future of the Jewish people, and figures like Berl Katznelson, David Ben-Gurion, and





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Every 5 years, global Jewry has the opportunity to make its voice heard at the World Zionist Congress. This Congress has a huge impact on Israel and Jewish life around the world – stay tuned for more details of how to vote for the Mizrahi-led Orthodox Israel Coalition in the 2025 elections!

Chaim Weizmann emerged as leaders of the Zionist movement.

Fifty years later, Herzl's vision culminated in the creation of the Jewish state. On May 14, 1948, David Ben-Gurion declared the establishment of the State of Israel. But even as the fledgling nation was born, the connection between Israel and the Jewish Diaspora remained vital. The Zionist Congress continued to serve as a bridge between Jews in Israel and those around the world.

Today, over 120 years after the First Zionist Congress, elections for the Congress still take place every five years. The Congress now includes 525 representatives, with 200 from Israel, 153 from the U.S., and 172 from other countries. Each community's representation is based on the size of its Zionist population.

The Congress elections differ from traditional political races. Instead of a winner-takes-all approach, the outcome is a broad-based coalition. The roles each party assumes are distributed based on election results, ensuring a wide range of voices and perspectives are heard. For instance, in the most recent Congress, the right-wing faction secured key positions, enabling them to implement policies related to settlement and religious affairs.

In the early 2000s, a major shift occurred. Israel had become the largest Jewish community in the world, transforming from a state in need of support to one capable of offering aid. Israel now extends a helping hand to Jewish communities worldwide, from combating antisemitism to fostering Jewish identity and supporting those in need. The institutions founded by the Zionist movement continue to

play a crucial role, both in Israel and abroad, addressing challenges like assisting Ukrainian refugees and supporting Jewish students at prestigious universities.

The Jewish National Fund (JNF), once dedicated solely to purchasing land, now manages a budget in the billions. Its funds are directed toward projects benefiting Israel and the Diaspora alike. Those who participate in Zionist Congress elections help determine how these resources are allocated, influencing the future of Jewish communities globally.

For Jews around the world, participating in Zionist activities means choosing a party that reflects their beliefs. Reform Jews might vote for the Reform list, while Zionist Orthodox Jews would likely support the Mizrahi list. The Reform and Conservative movements have long recognized the importance of these elections, resulting in their large representation in the Congress. However, the Mizrahi movement has also gained strength due to its active role in Jewish communities worldwide.

To ensure the continued influence of Zionist Orthodox Jews, it's essential to mobilize as many voters as possible. Supporting the Mizrahi list helps safeguard the Jewish character of the State of Israel and ensures the continuity of the Jewish people.

Herzl's dream may have been realized with the founding of Israel, but the Zionist movement's work is far from over. Today, as ever, the connection between Israel and the Jewish Diaspora remains a cornerstone of Jewish identity and survival.