

**“You shall not have in your house differing weights,
a large and a small.”
(Deuteronomy 25:14)**

In recent months, we have witnessed a dramatic escalation in the infringement of free speech—particularly targeting critics of the government and those calling for its replacement. This includes threats against organizers of events deemed objectionable by others, acts of violence against participants in such events (as seen in the violent attack on the Reform community in Ra’anana), and aggression toward protesters, including families of hostages.

This troubling trend follows a prolonged period of harsh repression against expressions by Arab citizens of Israel, creating an atmosphere of censorship and intimidation that prevents many from voicing their grief over the loss of family members in Gaza.

In this context, the conduct of law enforcement authorities—especially the Israel Police — is deeply concerning. Law enforcement appears to be applied selectively: government supporters who engage in violent acts (such as in Sde Teman or Ra’anana) are neither detained nor investigated, while individuals expressing non-violent criticism of the government (such as at the protest outside Metzudat Ze’ev) — including hostage families — are often met with violent treatment and even unwarranted arrests.

Even in times of war, the principle of equality before the law must be upheld. It is unacceptable that those who commit acts of violence face no consequences, while those exercising their democratic right to peaceful protest are thrown into jail cells.

We call upon law enforcement agencies to operate with zero tolerance for violence on the one hand, and full respect for the right to non-violent protest on the other. We must remember that Jewish tradition encourages us not to remain silent in the face of wrongdoing, but rather to speak out: **“Rebuke your neighbor frankly,”** (Leviticus 19:17).

We will continue to act for a Jewish and democratic State of Israel, to pray for the safety and swift return of the hostages, for the safe return of our soldiers, and for days of peace.