



B'NAI B'RITH WORLD CENTER - JERUSALEM

Now as then, anti-Semites seek first to break the Jewish spirit to prepare the way for breaking their bodies, Bennett said, referring to the decade of Nazi rule in Germany prior to the Holocaust during which the Germans tried to break the Jewish spirit before commencing with wholesale genocide. Bennett added that Jews were deluding themselves if they believed that any change of their behavior would result in a change of attitude towards the Jewish people. Rather, hatred of Jews is a problem that afflicts the anti-Semites and is not dependent on the actions of Jews – such as the statement made by PA Chairman Mahmud Abbas after the current peace talks commenced that "not one Israeli" would be allowed to remain in the future Palestinian state under a final agreement. Bennett declared that today the State of Israel is strong and has a responsibility to protect Jews around the world. Chairman of the Knesset Foreign Affairs and Defense Committee Avigdor Lieberman (Likud Yisrael Beitenu) noted that while the classical forms of antisemitism should still be of concern – such as the recent shooting of a Chabad emissary in Dagestan – what should concern us most is the new antisemitism in the form of delegitimization of Israel in which some Jews participate. Lieberman noted with concern the use of antisemitism in the recent presidential election in Venezuela and warned that what starts out as Jew-hatred many times develops into hatred of all minorities. Jewish Agency Chairman Natan Sharansky rejected notion that antisemitism was good for aliya. In fact, for each Jew who might make aliya because of antisemitism, ten will simply leave the fold out of fear. The delegitimization of Israel turns many Jews off to Israel and Judaism. "Antisemitism is Israel's #1 enemy", Sharansky declared. Other speakers at the lobby's inaugural meeting were Minister of Tourism Uzi Landau, MKs Moshe Feiglin, Nachman Shai, Hamad Amar and Penina Tamanu-Shat, WZO Antisemitism department head Yaakov Haguel, and professors Gerald Steinberg, Mordechai Kedar and Dina Porat.