



CHAIRPERSON'S REPORT 2024

BY: ADRIENNE JACOBSON

WITH SUPPORT FROM

Daniel Bloch, Josh Friedman and Mika Abramowitz-Visagie

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By Adrienne Jacobson, Chairperson 2022-2025



It has been an extraordinary year—one marked by significant political shifts, both internationally and locally, and a rapidly changing global landscape. As we stand at the intersection of unprecedented global challenges, from shifting political alliances to the ongoing conflict in Gaza, it has never been more critical for us to assert our values and fight for our rights as a community.

The rise of antisemitism globally has been both alarming and deeply painful. Yet, in the face of this growing threat, our commitment to standing united has never wavered. We have fought, and will continue to fight, to protect our community from hatred, discrimination, and marginalisation. The fight for justice and security is ongoing, and we remain vigilant in ensuring that our voices are heard on both national and international stages.

Locally, the political environment has presented its own set of challenges. Our community has faced moments of uncertainty, but through it all, we have remained steadfast in our mission to uphold the principles of democracy, justice, and equality. This resolve has been critical in maintaining our rights and ensuring that our community continues to flourish. We remain optimistic with the heralding of the Government of National Unity and will continue to lobby and advocate for our community's welfare.

I am immensely grateful to our Board for their unwavering dedication and leadership during these trying times. Your commitment to the Cape SAJBD's mission has been a source of strength, and I am deeply appreciative of your guidance, insight, and the collective wisdom you have brought to the table. The challenges we have navigated would have been far more difficult without the steadfast support of this incredible team. A special thank you is owed to our professional team, whose tireless efforts behind the scenes have been nothing short of exemplary.

As we look ahead, we know there will be more hurdles to overcome. But we face them with a strong, united front, and a commitment to ensuring that our community continues to thrive in a world that is ever-changing. I am encouraged by the fantastic work conducted by the Board, which you will see detailed below.

The Cape South African Jewish Board of Deputies (“Cape SAJBD”)

is the representative body of the Western Cape Jewish community committed to:

- Safeguarding the religious and civil rights and status and welfare of the Western Cape Jewish community,
- Acting on behalf of this community in all matters affecting its relationship with Government and other relevant authorities.
- Promoting harmonious relationships between the Western Cape Jewish community and the larger South African population.
- Enhancing the quality of Jewish life in South Africa.
- Taking any lawful action, it may deem necessary in all matters affecting this community.

The vision of the Cape SAJBD is to ensure the continuity, protection and resilience of a proud Western Cape Jewish Community in an inclusive and just society, and to build coalitions between the community and external allies to address common issues and problems.

The Board works towards this vision by educating the greater public about Judaism with a focus on its history, religion and culture; robustly challenging all manifestations of antisemitism and related discrimination; and lawfully defending our community where necessary.

The Board seeks to promote unity and pride and promotes an inclusive Western Cape Jewish community who respect, support and protect one another.

To achieve these objectives, we apply the following strategy.

Our Strategy: Engage Educate Empower

Three key words imbedded in our logo epitomises our strategy moving forward. The Board aims to engage and partner with organisations to fight antisemitism. We will educate the Western Cape community as to the history and contribution of the Jewish community to the Western Cape and ultimately, we seek to empower our community to stand up to those who seek to prevent us from practicing our Judaism in a free and safe environment.



Fighting antisemitism – Educate non-Jewish communities and Empower our own community.

The Cape Board has a zero-tolerance approach to any attack on its community or contravention of our Constitutional rights. A comprehensive monitoring programme for incidents, statements and events featuring Antisemitism remains in place. Print and digital media are monitored and research efforts to identify new areas of concern continue on a daily basis. We have strong partnerships with various organisations – in particular with the CSO and our National body.

We will combat the culture of prejudice that allows for Antisemitism. Together with diverse partners, we will support programmes centred upon public education. For further information continue reading under the Antisemitism & Legal subcommittee section.

Engage: Coalitions, Alliances, Advocacy

Our advocacy programme is focused on the building of reciprocally respectful and harmonious relationships and continue to cultivate existing relationships with government, civil society, religious communities and thought leaders.

In order to achieve this goal, we continue to follow the strategy which has worked well over the years.

1. Playing an effective role in the Anti-Hate Solidarity Networks
2. Participation at Civil Society events and discussions
3. Hosting our own events
4. Working with Provincial Government
5. Working with Educational Institutions



Our Political Context

On October 7th, the entire Jewish world was rocked and almost a year later, we are still trying to pick up the pieces and move on. On 29 December, the South African Jewish community experienced further anguish, when our government, launched the case of genocide against Israel at the International Court of Justice. As South Africans and as Jews, we felt betrayed that our government not only neglected to condemn the horrific events of October 7th but refused to offer any condolences to our community.

Since then, the ANC launched a vicious anti-Israel campaign in conjunction with organisations like the BDS movement and the Palestinian Solidarity Campaign. The ANC's stance against Israel, emboldened the anti-Israel activists to target the Jewish community by protesting outside our schools, shuls, businesses, community centers and outside our homes. Social media in particular became a cesspool of hatred as individuals, organisations and Jewish businesses were doxed (a form of online targeting) by anti-Israel activists.

Between October 2023 and May 2024, antisemitism increased by more than 600% with majority of the rhetoric taking place on social media. Whilst Cape Town has born the brunt of the protests and various incidents of graffiti, we have had very few physical altercations with the majority taking place in Johannesburg. Due to this increase in antisemitism, we have had to work closely with local security clusters. We have formed strong working relationships with Law Enforcement as well as the South African Police Services and we are in continuously engaging with them, exchanging information where necessary. Both the Board and the Security clusters are committed to protecting our community.

In May 2024, South Africans took to the polls and voted for change. South African citizens did not buy into the ANC's anti-Israel election campaign and the ruling party recorded its worst elections in 30 years. We now have a Government of National Unity which is committed to South Africa and this has certainly given us a new hope for a brighter future. The ANC seems to have also toned down their anti-Israel narrative and have even stopped wearing Keffiyehs and flags to parliament.

The Board continues to encourage our community to be practitioners of careful, thoughtful and deliberate positive communication. We have seen the dangers of misinformation and miscommunication which is why we always investigate matters thoroughly before issuing any responses publically. Much of our work is done behind the scenes and our advocacy work is extremely important in ensuring that our Jewish way of life and our rights to live as Jews, are protected at all times.

We continue to pray for the safe return of all the hostages and for an end to this war which has claimed the lives of thousands of innocent civilians. Regardless of one's beliefs or opinions, we believe there is "No Place for Hate" in our society and that "Words Matter".

Involvement with Communal Organisations

NATIONAL

Our relationship has been strengthened over the past year following the horrors of October 7th. Whilst the entire Jewish community has come under attack, both our National office together with the regional Boards, have worked closely together to ensure our way of life is protected and continues.

The entire Cape Executive committee has travelled regularly to Johannesburg for various strategic meetings with our National colleagues whilst the National President, National Chairperson, National Director and the National Associate Director, have all joined us in the Cape for important strategic meetings with government, political leaders and media. Throughout the past year we have collaborated on a number of National initiatives related to October 7th. All in a bid to educate the general public and create awareness towards the rise of antisemitism. We have jointly hosted a variety of international speakers including Miriam Gvaram, former Israeli Ambassador Daniel Taub, Nova Festival survivors Millet Ben Haim and Mazal Tazazo and more recently, international antisemitism expert, David Hirsh.

Thanks to the work with our National Board, South Africa continues to boast one of the lowest rates of antisemitism anywhere in the world whilst our Jewish way of life, continues to thrive.

SAUJS

Universities around the world experienced a surge in anti-Israel and antisemitic rhetoric. In the US in particular, there were several encampments and Jewish students were barred from entering campuses. South African universities were not immune to this rhetoric, fortunately, UCT and Stellenbosch, did not experience the same vitriol as we saw internationally. Make no mistake though, Jewish students did encounter protests, small encampments and online verbal abuse. Campus life has not been easy and at times, it has been extremely uncomfortable being Jewish – despite this, Jewish students still feel safe on campus. Our students are resilient and with the help of the Board, SAUJS, Chabad on Campus and other partners, we were able to navigate through these challenging times.

Israel Apartheid Week was extremely difficult. Both the Board and SAUJS met with UCT leadership and were successful in getting UCT to increase security and re-evaluate the format and the rules of engagement for IAW. On the day though, 40 brave Jewish students led by SAUJS and Chabad on Campus, stood up to 500 rabid anti-Israel students and many non-students. They sang Israeli and Jewish songs and drowned out the fierce hatred. For more information on IAW, read further under Antisemitism and Legal.

We continue to work closely with SAUJS and provide support to their entire committee. This empowers SAUJS to continue their work on and off campus, growing their network, engaging and educating non-Jewish students and proudly representing the young Jewish voice on campuses.

OUR AFFILIATES


One of our pillars at the Board, is to enhance our Jewish way of life within our community. In order to achieve some of our objectives, it is important to partner with our affiliate organisations. For this reason, the Board engaged with many of affiliates to understand their needs and the support required from the Board. The support offered by the Board includes marketing support for projects and initiatives, financial support to cover basic costs associated with projects, attending affiliate events, connections with government officials, improving interfaith relationships and more. Over the past year, myself and members of the Council attended many affiliate functions and partnered. Most of these would have been shared on social media as well as articles within the Cape Jewish Chronicle. We have also updated our website with several of these events. We partnered with organisations like the South African Zionist Federation, Union of Jewish Women, United Herzlia Schools, SAUJS, Eliot Osrin Leadership Institute, Chabad on Campus, Maccabi, United Jewish Campaign, Chabad Synagogue, the South African Jewish Museum, the Holocaust & Genocide Centre, the Jacob Gitlin Library, Mensch, Plettenberg Bay Synagogue and others. For a full list of events, please read further under Board Projects and the subcommittees. We will continue to work with and support our affiliates and look forward to a year of simcha and celebration.

INTERNATIONAL JEWISH ORGANISATIONS

Throughout 2024, the Cape Board has been in communication with organisations across the globe sharing knowledge and best practice. We have engaged with a host of international organisations including the Anti-Defamation League (US), Mitzvah Day (UK), the American Jewish Committee, the Joint Distribution Committee (Israel), Bnei Brit Canada, the New South Wales Board of Deputies, British Board of Deputies for Jews, United State Holocaust Museum, Leeds Jewish Representative Council, Simon Wiesenthal Centre USA, Hillel International, Nahum Goldmann Fellowship and various other institutions from around the world.

In January, we hosted members from the UJA New York (United Jewish Appeal). They attended a networking lunch and a Q&A session where we discussed the situation in South Africa. A few months, later, myself and our National Chairperson, Professor Karen Milner, briefed a large group of US Congressmen who were in South Africa to meet with President Cyril Ramaphosa as they were concerned by South Africa's recent ICJ case and the verbal attacks on the US. We gave the congressmen and women a high-level overview of the situation in the Country as well as how our community remains resilient despite the current situation.

In June 2024, myself and our Executive Director, attended the American Jewish Committee's annual Global Forum in Washington. We joined our National Chair, Professor Karen Milner and a delegation of South African Jewish leaders including the SAUJS Western Cape Chair. More than 2000 Jewish leaders, philanthropists, students, universities and government officials, gathered at the Marriot Hotel to discuss the rise in antisemitism, the ICJ case, the anti-Israel rhetoric and what solutions there are to protecting our way of life. We had important meetings with US decision makers and funders who were keen to understand the political climate in South Africa and were impressed by the resilience of our Jewish community.



What is the importance of these international trips? South Africa is one of the safest places for Jews to live with one of the lowest rates of antisemitism anywhere in the world. We have also validated the work of the Board and realise whilst there is always room for improvement, we are doing things well and will continue to protect our community.

Our Messaging

Community Cares

The Board will continue to mobilise our Jewish community and others in the pursuit of building a more inclusive society, encouraging networking, volunteering, advocacy and philanthropic opportunities in the work we do. We believe the long-term prosperity and continuation of our community depends on those currently in the community showing they care, through outreach and upliftment. This messaging (**#CommunityCares**) has been used to underpin the various campaigns we have run throughout the year.

Know Your Rights


We created our Know Your Rights campaign to begin unpacking Chapter 2 of the Constitution into practical and comprehensive points for our community. In the past we have partnered with Herzlia to address the older grades who will be embarking on their journey into university life. We will continue to do this. Before Israel Apartheid Week, we partnered with CSO, SAUJS and Chabad on Campus to host a “Know your Rights on Campus” session for students at UCT and Stellenbosch University. This messaging (**#KnowYourRights**) will also continue to be used extensively in our social media marketing to unpack the educational content into smaller bits for the broader community to engage with.

Words Matter

The right to freedom of expression is fundamental to our democracy and allows us to engage in healthy debates on issues of community importance, exchange ideas and information and promote tolerance for one another. However, this right is not absolute and must be balanced against the other fundamental human rights — our right to human dignity, to equality, to freedom of religion, belief and opinion, to name a few. “Free speech” cannot and should not be a license to use derogatory or hateful words (and in some cases, where it incites harm and propagates hatred, constituting hate speech). We are simply saying that **#WordsMatter**.

No Place for Hate

In support of the existing and powerful educational campaign run by the Anti-Defamation League (ADL) in the US and globally which calls on students, educators and family members to play their role in “combating bias and bullying as a means to stop the escalation of hate”, we have used this messaging to speak out against discrimination and hatred, particularly when it comes to antisemitism. This messaging appraises our most current marketing collateral used at events.





Antisemitism & Legal Subcommittee - *Simone Sulcas (Chairperson)*

We believe the best way to promote harmonious relations between the Jewish community and all sections of the population in the Western Cape, is through education which builds understanding and commonalities in spite of differences. The effectiveness of work through diplomatic and legal channels has been proven time and again. In addition to our monitoring programme, we will continue to address antisemitism through an aggressive engagement strategy with government, media, academia and civil society to strengthen relations and understanding.

Between October 2023 and April 2024, antisemitism in South Africa increased by 600%. Most of the incidents were recorded on social media. Whilst Cape Town only recorded a handful of physical incidents and a few issues related to graffiti, we did experience a high rate of protests and motorcades, especially between October and December 2023. Fortunately, there have been very few protests in 2024 however as long as the war in Israel continues, we can expect to see more protests towards the end of this year.


Below are some of the key incidents which the Board dealt with.

Non-Jewish Schools

Since October 7th, we have seen an increased rate in both antisemitic and anti-Israel rhetoric at non-Jewish schools. Fortunately, these incidents have been limited to messages on Whats App and inappropriate comments made by teachers and principals. In some instances, the Board had to step in, in order to resolve the situation and the schools did their part to rectify the issues. Most of the affected schools, have taken appropriate disciplinary action, communicated with parents and students and defended the rights of those students who were discriminated against. If your children attend a non-Jewish school and you would like more information or guidance as to how the Cape SAJBD can assist, please contact us.

Israel Apartheid Week (IAW) and UCT

The Cape SAJBD together with SAUJS have had regular meetings with UCT leadership, especially around IAW. For the event this year, UCT took note of our concerns, especially related to security. Before IAW, the Board addressed groups of UCT and Stellenbosch students, preparing them for the event, educating them about their rights on campus and ensuring they know what to expect on the day. For the actual IAW event, security on campus was increased however on the day, the campus security could not prevent the 500 large anti-Israel crowd from swarming the SAUJS stand. Despite the large crowd (which only invaded the SAUJS space towards the end of the day), the Jewish students stood tall and proud singing loudly and drowning out the hate. We are in continuous communication with UCT and will be discussing the 2025 IAW and what lessons we have learnt from this year's event.



In March this year, the UCT Senate tried to impose a full academic boycott on Israel. The BOD together with our partners, worked tirelessly behind the scenes to successfully have this motion dismissed. However, two months later, first Senate and then Council, approved a revamped academic boycott on Israel aimed at member serving in the IDF. We have met with the new Vice Chancellor to share our concerns whilst the SAZF and UCT academics, have launched legal action against UCT, pertaining to the invalid process in which UCT Council approved the boycott.

Social Media


A new phenomenon called Doxxing, has taken social media by storm and not in a good way. Doxxing is a form of cyber bullying with the aim of the perpetrator to intimidate, emotionally manipulate, coerce and ruin the reputation of the targeted person. Unfortunately, the anti-Israel activists identify random persons who have either shown support for Israel, or in some cases remain silent, and then target these individuals. Doxxing can lead to anti-Israel activists boycotting businesses, calling for boycotts or spreading misinformation about individuals. After consulting with various legal experts, the Board created a “Doxxing 101” document containing information about the legal aspects of doxxing, how to protect yourself from doxxing and what to do if you are the victim. This document was shared on social media and sent to members of the community. It is available on request as well.

Herzlia

Since October 7th, the school continued to be a target for the anti-Israel activists, who called once again for the school to be closed down. Despite these absurd calls and thanks to the work of the Board, this was suitably dismissed and the future of the school looks bright. For most of 2024, the focus has not been on the school however we have seen sporadic comments made online. We will continue monitoring things and are continuously in communication with the school leadership.

Protests

Between October and December, there were a number of protests both outside the Jewish Community Centre in Gardens as well as along the Sea Point promenade. There have also been several motorcades driving from the suburbs to the Atlantic Seaboard. In November, our Christian Zionist friends attempted to host a Peace Rally in Sea Point. Unfortunately, they were unable to even get to the venue as several hundred anti-Israel protestors over-ran the stage area and SAPS were forced to use water guns and stun grenades to disperse the crowd. Several arrests were made and there were a few reported incidents of physical altercations. In 2024, we have seen a drastic drop in any form of protest however as we approach the one-year anniversary of October 7th, we do expect protestors to re-emerge. We are in constant contact with both the City of Cape Town and SAPS and are committed to protecting our way of life and the lives of our community.





Community Engagement - Dawn Nathan-Jones (Chairperson)

Within the Cape Board's ambit of community engagement, it is necessary for it to continue connecting our community to the greater South African one, showing that we are a driving force for transformation within the country at large. We aim to keep our Cape Town Jewish community connected and engaged with issues affecting South Africa as a whole. Myself, the Executive Director and members of our Council, continuously meet with community leaders both external and internal. The purpose of these meetings is to remain plugged into the community, share information and form relationships which will benefit our community.

Embassies & Consulates

We continue with our strategy to build and maintain relationships with the various Consul Generals in the Western Cape. This year we have engaged the Consul Generals from the following countries: United States of America, France, Hungary, Germany, Greece, Japan, China, United Kingdom and Holland. In March this year, the Greek Community and Greek Consul General honoured the Cape SAJBD as their distinguished guests of honour at the Greek Independence Day celebration held at the Hellenic Club. The Consul Generals attend many of our events throughout the year most notably the annual Yom Hashoah ceremony. We have also engaged in discussions with several of the Consulates with regards to the Academic Boycott at UCT. Countries like the US and Germany, give funding to UCT and this boycott could impede that funding.

Government

Throughout the year, we have engaged with the Mayor of Cape Town, the Premier of the Western Cape, Ward Councillors as well as SAPS and City of Cape Town Law Enforcement to discuss matters pertaining to the Jewish community. The primary concern of all parties involved is that of safety. We have hosted a variety of initiatives in 2023 where by members of the above mentioned organisations have attended. We have also attended a number of government-organised events and initiative in order to ensure the Jewish community has a voice. During the month of October, we had several meetings and phone calls with the Mayor, Premier, SAPS, Law Enforcement and City officials in relation to protests, antisemitic graffiti and other issues resulting from the Hamas terror attacks.

Media

It is important for the Board not only to respond to antisemitic and social justice related issues in the media, but also use the platforms to showcase the work done by the Jewish community. The relationships formed with the various media organisations is important and allow us to remain connected to what is happening around the Province. We have excellent relationships with several journalists, editors and producers from major media platforms. These include SABC, eNCA, Daily Maverick, Business Day, Cape Talk, News 24, INL

and others. We have also given comment in International media, extending the reach of the Cape community abroad. Since October 7th, the Cape Board has featured in a variety of local and international media focuses on the rise of antisemitism, various antisemitic incidents, the ICJ case and more. Please see our communications section further down for links to articles and interviews.

Political Parties

We have maintained good relationships with all the political parties, meeting and engaging with them on regular occasions. We have had enormous support in particular from both the ACDP and the Freedom Front Plus, especially in parliament where there were calls to de-register Herzlia.

We have hosted a number of international speakers and were grateful to have representation at our events from the ACDP, FF Plus, BOSA, Good Party, EFF, DA, Action SA and others. In May this year we hosted the eNCA Elections Debate on live television. The debate was hosted at the SA Jewish Museum and featured the Premier candidates from the top parties in the Western Cape. Whilst the DA, ACDP, Good and Freedom Front Plus attended, the ANC Western Cape withdrew on the day citing the venue as a concern as well as the hosts of the debate being the Board. With the Government of National Unity making headway, we will attempt to engage with the ANC as we believe that a united community is a powerful one and the ANC will have a role to play in the Western Cape.



Country Communities - David King (Chairperson)

The Cape SAJBD, has a responsibility to protect the civil rights of all Jews living in the Western Cape which is why we connect not only with our community in Cape Town, but those communities which are considered to be more upcountry. Of concern is the ever-increasing financial burden of cemeteries of country communities. As more and more municipalities and local councils' budgets tighten, the responsibility falls on the community to ensure these spaces are maintained. The Cape Board has made provision to maintain some of these cemeteries and work closely with the active Jewish Country Communities as well as the surrounding communities. In 2024, we contributed to the upgrade of the Plettenberg Bay cemetery and this project is currently underway. The Cape Board was also mentioned extensively in Cedric Nainkin's book about the history of the Riversdale community – the Board currently works with the Riversdale community in maintaining the Jewish cemetery.



Generation Next

The Cape Board and its Generation Next portfolio is there to assist all communal organisations to reach young adults. We are there to encourage collaboration, interaction, and participation with all organizations to create engagement and awareness of the Jewish community for our young Jewish community. Throughout the year, we engage with each of the Jewish schools as well as many of the non-Jewish schools where there is a concentration of Jewish students. Aside from assisting parents and students with antisemitic incidents on school campuses (covered under antisemitism), we have also hosted events in an attempt to connect these communities.

We once again partnered with Herzlia and EOLI for the Matric Community Day which was a huge success – the Matrics on the tour even managed to have a photo with the Mayor of Cape Town. In an effort to engage more with families at non-Jewish schools, we supported a “siddur project” initiated by Rabbi Levi Popack of Chabad. Rabbi Popack visits more than 200 Jewish children across several non-Jewish schools in the Western Cape trying to bring a little Yiddishkeit to the students. The Board will continue to support Rabbi Popack and Chabad’s efforts to connect with these families. For Youth Day, we once again partnered with the SAZF, UJW, Maccabi and the UJC to host an intercultural Youth Day Sports event at Herzlia. This involved Jewish youth playing alongside the Silverstar Netball and Friends Football clubs arranged by the Noluntu Soup Project in Khayelitsha.

The Young Adults Jewish Network, is an exciting new initiative involving all the young Jewish organisations: Herzlia, Cape Town Torah High, Netzer, Bnei Akiva, Habonim, SAUJS, Chabad on Campus, Orhsom Student, Diller, BBYO and Moishe House. The Board and the SAZF hosted 25 young leaders from these organisations with hopes of potential creating a Young Jewish Leadership group – one to represent young Jewish voices both within our community and externally. We hosted two initial focus groups which were facilitated by EOLI where we identified what this young group of leaders needs, challenges and hopes are for the community. This culminated in a third session where the group had its first attempt and formalizing the organisation, creating a name, identifying its mission, vision and purpose and ultimately how they could move forward in representing the youth. We are still in the early stages of formalizing this group however the young leaders are excited and enthusiastic about moving forward. We will continue the discussions and hopefully in 2025, this group will be able to move forward with one purpose.



Interfaith & Intercommunity - *Tzvi Brivik (Chairperson)*

Over the past year, we have had mixed experiences with our interfaith and intercommunity partners. We have received support from our Christian Zionist friends like Bridges for Peace, International Christian Embassy Jerusalem, the Congolese community, the Rwandan community, the First Nation and more. However, our relationship with other partners have been strained due to the ongoing war in Israel. In November 2023, we were scheduled to partner on a beach clean up to celebrate Mitzvah Day. Unfortunately, our partner, SAFCEI, withdrew citing security concerns and the beach clean-up was cancelled. In February 2024, we tried to partner with the Cape Town Interfaith Initiative (CTII) to host the UN World Harmony Week – an initiative which we had previously partnered on. Again, we were told that this initiative would not work due to the ongoing war. Since then, we have met several times with the CTII and are confident of repairing this relationship.

In November 2023, our Executive Director attended an Interfaith gathering hosted by the Mayor of Cape Town. However in 2024, the SAJBD was excluded from various Interfaith initiatives hosted by the ANC or the National government – hosted in Cape Town. We have taken this up with both organisations who are investigating how we could have been “left off the list”. The elections in May was a turning point and once again the Cape Board was invited to represent the Jewish Community at the opening of parliament – our Immediate past chair, Tzvi Brivik attending the ceremony on behalf of the Board.



Social Justice

The Board continues to be active in a variety of social justice initiatives. We often partner with organisations which fight against a variety of social justice issues. Over the past year we have engaged with the Congolese Civil Society, Rwandan Community and the Burundi Western Cape Community, the Angel Network, One-to-One, Mensch, Mitzvah Day UK and others.

We once again supported the Mensch Mandela Day Cook-a-thon hosted at the Gardens Jewish Community Centre where we were able to feed several thousand hungry children. This year we supported the Love in a Bowl group who are doing some incredible work in Hout Bay. The Board supported the Angel Network and their efforts to raise funds for those affected by the Cape Storms.

Bursaries

The Cape BOD Bursary Foundation has once again played an integral role in assisting our Jewish community members and their goals for tertiary education. In 2024 we saw 31 students' bursary applications accepted of 42 applications. A total of 35 applicants bursaries were approved, however, due to a variety of reasons, four of these students retracted their bursary awards. A combined total of R1,172,500.00 was awarded and disbursed to the successful applicants. This will assist them with their studies and ultimately their careers.

Board Hosted Events

The Board has hosted a number of networking, information sharing and social justice initiatives throughout the year. Many have been mentioned throughout the report and for a full list either visit our website or our Facebook and Instagram pages.


In particular between October and May this year, we hosted a number of international speakers on a variety of topics related to the October 7th events. The Board continued with its important work advocating on behalf of the Jewish community and much of our networking is done at our events where we invite representatives from government, political parties, media, interfaith, intercommunity and members of our community. We will continue to host these important networking initiatives.

Yom HaShoah

The annual Yom Hashoah Memorial Service was held on Monday 6th May 2024 attended by more than 600 members of our community including Holocaust survivors, 2nd/3rd/4th generation survivors, religious leaders, community leaders, political parties, consulates, school students and more. This solemn event, where we came together to honour the memory of the six million Jews who perished during the Holocaust, was held at the Pinelands Jewish Cemetery 2, featuring a diverse programme of messages, prayers, poems, and songs.

This year marked the 80th anniversary of the deportation of the 1 900 Jews from Rhodes as well as 44 000 Jews from Hungary. The keynote speaker, Isaac Habib, a second-generation survivor, provided a poignant account and testimony of his late mother, Lucia Capelluto's survival from Rhodes who is buried at the Pinelands Jewish Cemetery. Isaac read out a testimony written by his mother to her mentor a few years after the Holocaust about her deportation and survival from Auschwitz and Bergen Belsen and her eventual move to South Africa. This narrative offered a deeply personal and moving perspective on those tragic events.

Adrienne Jacobson, Chair of the Cape South African Jewish Board of Deputies, delivered a powerful opening address, setting the tone for remembrance and reflection. Ethan Werb, Head Student of Herzlia High,



emphasised the involvement of younger generations in preserving the memory of the Holocaust and educating future generations on the consequences of hatred and indifference.

A particularly touching moment occurred when the Holocaust survivors, supported by their families, lit candles in memory of the victims. This symbolic act of remembrance underscored the resilience and strength of those who endured the horrors of the Holocaust.

Israeli Ambassador Eli Belotserkovsky contributed to the ceremony through a video message, highlighting the global significance of remembering the Holocaust and its lessons for humanity.

Music played a vital role in the ceremony, with singer Dani Bitton and the Herzlia Vocal Ensemble delivering moving performances. The Gardens Shul Choir, along with Chazzan Choni Goldman, added solemnity to the event with traditional prayers and the rousing Partisan Song.

The Chief Rabbi led prayers for both the State of Israel and the IDF, emphasising the ongoing connection between the Jewish people and their homeland, as well as the importance of never forgetting the atrocities of the past. Wreaths were laid by Current and Ex-Servicemen, adding dignity to the memorial.


Move Down to Cape Town

We had grand plans to launch an exciting marketing campaign aimed at welcoming people to Cape Town. This was due to launch in October and was postponed due to the horrific events of October 7th. Then in the beginning of the year, the anti-Israel activists targeted this initiative citing Zionists enclaves which were taking over the Western Cape. We took a decision not to actively promote this initiative. However, our aim now for the end of 2024 moving into 2025, is to restructure this project and re-launch it. Watch this space for more information.

Entrepreneurs Network

The Entrepreneurs' Network Cape Town (EN) has gained significant momentum in 2024. This network aims to bring budding entrepreneurs from diverse communities and businesses together to learn from their shared experiences and create opportunities amongst one another. This year, an Advisory Board was established, comprising partners from its Founder organisations including four members of the Board, with Dawn Nathan-Jones as Chair, Justin Asher, David King, and Joshua Friedman. Lisa Sandler joined as the part-time Programme Manager. Additional members include Samkelo Blom, Matsi Kolobe, Lesley Waterkeyn, and Nicole Friend.

A new CRM software was implemented to enhance onboarding of new members and operations. Fundraising and sponsorship efforts have been ongoing, with EN attracting keen interest from top-tier corporates and individual donors. However, more sponsorship is needed to support the network's expansion. 78 entrepreneurs have come through the programme in 8 forums, benefiting from mutual support, training, learning and mentorship. In the current year, we have onboarded 18 new entrepreneurs. Three major events were held this year, with over 80 cohort entrepreneurs participating. These included a



panel discussion on "The Future of Leadership: Innovating for Tomorrow's Challenges," moderated by Dawn Nathan-Jones, a fun inter-forum quiz night and networking, and an event featuring Alderman James Vos and industry leaders discussing "Access to Market: Empowering Small Businesses to Scale."

By the end of the year we project to have 10 forums and in 2025 we are looking to expand to Johannesburg. EN looks forward to continuing to create impactful opportunities for local entrepreneurs with our partners.

Communications

Our 2023/2024 communications and marketing strategy focused on maximising our reach through our digital platforms (currently comprising our website, [Facebook](#) page, [Instagram](#) page, and YouTube channel). We continuously share information related to our community and the work of the Board. We also feature every month in the Cape Jewish Chronicle where both myself and the Executive Director write columns and share information from the past month.

Following the October 7th attacks, our media and online engagement has increased significantly. We have written countless statements in response to issues affecting our community, antisemitic incidents, protests and more. We have also appeared on TV as well as radio for live and pre-recorded interviews. See below for more details. We also launched our Cape SAJBD Info Hub Whats App line where we share information on a daily basis – real time. We also launched our Community Wellness Helpline for members of our community seeking to speak to a trained professional.

Some of the key articles/statements/interviews:

- 28 June 2024 – Cape SAJBD is appalled by UCT Israel Academic Boycott - <https://www.facebook.com/share/p/ZHr9K5EttPHY2KUg/>
- 21 May 2024 - Chai FM Interview – ANC withdraws from eNCA elections debate. https://www.chaifm.com/podcast/2024-05-21-what-is-the-reaction-of-the-cape-town-jewish-board-of-deputies-to-the-decision-by-the-anc-to-pull-out-of-the-election-debate-because-of-the-venue-daniel-bloch-executive-director-cape-s/?fbclid=IwY2xjawFGgUtleHRuA2FlbQIxMQABHVTDNWHGVpuo4pjoYRN96OJGNx7CyLtmYP--ShYGr83M9MxSLGRUyr5oFw_aem_McADQjI4MAWqNA88wwUiBQ
- 21 May 2024 - SAJBD slams ANC for snub of election debate https://www.iol.co.za/capeargus/news/sajbd-slams-anc-for-snub-of-election-debate-venue-4958ea5c-eb50-45dc-86f0-26df88ae2d8d?fbclid=IwY2xjawFGGeD9leHRuA2FlbQIxMQABHTCIIJs5IXkXTYBhbTNPMOb3K3WCQ_vuFfkMU1w8TghEVW-ATfrbUasucg_aem_q847j_7cuv_R6Lg0eZS8Zw
- 20 May 2024 - Jewish community offended - ANC withdraws from eNCA elections debate <https://www.facebook.com/share/p/rxRsqaoqWHqsFXf1/>
- 03 April 2024 – Oped by Daniel Bloch - Values shamefully trampled on by rabidly anti-Israel protestors on UCT campus.

- <https://www.iol.co.za/capeargus/opinion/values-shamefully-trampled-on-by-rabidly-anti-israel-protesters-on-uct-campus-efae2bb2-cb55-42db-96a1-98576f733f12>
- 20th Dec 2023 - Daniel Bloch - Op Ed in the Argus
https://www.iol.co.za/capeargus/opinion/holding-a-sign-of-a-swastika-and-proudly-spewing-hate-speech-is-unimaginable-1ceebed9-6412-46d9-89e7-6523cc808fdb?fbclid=IwY2xjawFGVeNleHRuA2FlbQixMQABHUJ7AVKLbaYpL0gNUYYiONY8sAtzpaBZb_EDnjKQZjx_Jw0Ni-E070Epw_aem_3kXEYBXD-LG33eJc0z9yRA
- 01 Dec 2023 - Cape South African Jewish Board of Deputies dismayed by the ANC Western Cape's hosting of Hamas representatives.
<https://www.facebook.com/share/p/d1Gog3mcRur21frA/>
- 13 November 2023 - Daniel Bloch was interviewed on Chai FM in relation to Herzlia:
<https://www.chaifm.com/podcast/2023-11-13-daniel-bloch-executive-director-of-the-cape-south-african-jewish-board-of-deputies-cape-sajbd-unpacking-the-cape-town-protest-and-its-demonstration-of-antisemitism/>
- 13 November 2023 - Daniel Bloch was interviewed on Cape Talk (Africa Melane) -
<https://omny.fm/shows/early-breakfast-talk/cape-south-african-jewish-board-of-deputies-outrag>
- 9th November 2023 - Cape Board unbowed by threats against Herzlia https://www.sajr.co.za/cape-board-unbowed-by-threats-against-herzlia/?utm_medium=email&utm_campaign=SAJR%20November%202023&utm_content=SAJR%20November%202023+CID_469e189e02a1c4994989d2e5068caf12&utm_source=Firemailer%20sajr&utm_term=demanding%20to%20close%20Herzlia%20schools%20down

OPERATIONS

Our Professional Team

For the past year, our professional team of Josh Friedman and Mika Abramowitz Visagie, led by our Executive Director, Daniel Bloch, have worked around the clock. Since October 7th, the Board has hosted numerous events and initiatives creating awareness and educating both our community and our non-Jewish partners, about the situation in Israel as well as the impact on antisemitism in our community. The professional team have not only conceptualised these initiatives but organised from start to finish – on many occasions partnering with our affiliates. They have also managed and overseen our various communication hotlines including the Antisemitism Hotline, the Community Wellness Help Line and the Cape Board Info Hub. The purpose of these initiatives is to enable effective communication between the Board and our community.

Budget

I would like to thank my treasurer, Lester Hoffman who is always available to advise and assist us. He and Mr Bloch met with auditors. Apart from the affiliation fees which we receive from our affiliates and a few small donations, we are totally dependent on our budget from the UJC and the Allocations Committee. I must express our thanks to them for always being appreciative of our work and for providing us with the financial support necessary to look after our community. We would also like to offer our thanks to Mr Ronnie Stein who has chaired the Allocations Committee for many years. Ronnie is stepping down and passing the torch on. We appreciate all the work Ronnie has done for our community and wish him well in his future endeavours.

Executive Committee

This past year and has quite possibly, the most challenging time in my tenure as Chairperson of the Cape SAJBD. Our community has come under pressure due to the rise in antisemitism and the anti-Israel rhetoric broadcast by our government. The Board in particular has been under immense pressure to safeguard our community, combat the antisemitism and more importantly, advocate on behalf of the Jewish community – including countless meetings with government officials, security clusters, academics and more.

I am fortunate that I have not been alone in fighting these battles and my gratitude goes to my incredibly committed and supportive Executive Committee. Our two Vice-Chairpersons Glen Heneck and Simone Sulcas, Treasurer Lester Hoffman, past Chairs Tzvi Brivik and Rael Kaimowitz and our Executive Director, Daniel Bloch, have all been part of a truly inspirational team. Their calmness under pressure, wisdom and experience, has given me the confidence to lead this organisation through these incredibly challenging times.

Due to the current climate, we have taken a decision to extend the term of office of the Board by a further year. During a special general meeting called in May this year, our affiliates voted unanimously in favour of extending this term of office, understanding the importance of having stable leadership structures during a crisis – this is not the first time this has been done with COVID being the most recent instance. I not only thank my Executive committee for committing to another year, but our entire Council for agreeing to as well.

Please G-d, the war in Israel will come to an end, the remaining hostages will return safely to their families and we will know peace once more.

Yours faithfully,
Adrienne Jacobson, Chairperson (2022-2025)