

Happy Passover

ZU·LAT
Equality and Human Rights



Dear Friend,

I am writing to you during a challenging period in Israel and in the world. We'll be celebrating Passover, the Festival of Freedom, after severe terrorist attacks in Tel Aviv and elsewhere around the country that exacted a bloody fatality toll, and amid the shocking sights coming from Ukraine, fighting for its freedom in the face of a barbaric assault by Russia's army. Yet, we will not let any of this to break our spirit: We will continue to promote equality and protect human rights to the best of our ability.

In addition, we have been going through a political crisis that is hampering the functioning of the government. Our occasional criticism notwithstanding, we must not go back to a situation where a vengeful Netanyahu returns to the prime minister's seat. The thought that he could very well appoint Bezalel Smotrich (who would turn the Hill Youth militias into an official force) as defense minister and Itamar Ben-Gvir (who would persecute the Arab citizens of Israel and stick a finger in the eye of the Democratic administration in the United States) as interior minister, keeps us awake at night.

Against this background, Zulat has pursued its activities with all its might. We published reports and position papers that were submitted to ministers and Knesset members and we conducted successful struggles in Knesset committees to promote the people's right to know, the protection of refugees, equality for the Arab citizens of Israel, a free media, gender equality, and the preservation of freedom of expression and protest.

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The Seder meal to which we will sit with our loved ones is meant to make us remember freedom, but also the enslavement that preceded it. However, remembering alone does not really mean much. If we talk about the Exodus from Egypt and not about the settlers' violence against Palestinians in the territories, then at the Seder table we will not be celebrating freedom but denial, and every time we say "free" as we read the Hagaddah the word will be clouded by a shadow. For no nation can be free when it holds another people in bondage, and no slave master can ever be free.

These are not simple times, but we cannot afford to despair. We are about

to publish a new report that was worked on by experts from various fields and that will probably provoke an extensive public discussion about the situation of the regime in Israel. There is still a lot of work ahead of us, and we will continue to do it.

I urge you to go on supporting us, so that we may continue to protect the human rights of all human beings, and promote the values of equality that are so dear to your heart.

Wishing Ramadan Karim and a happy Passover Festival to all.

Yours,

**Zehava Galon
Zulat President**

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