



Milwaukee Jewish Council for Community Relations

Milwaukee Jewish Council for Community Relations Position Statement on Kosovo

April 14, 1999: Approved by Executive Committee

April 21, 1999: Approved by Board of Directors

The Milwaukee Jewish Council for Community Relations deplores all policies and practices of ethnic cleansing and genocide, particularly those that are government sponsored and sanctioned. Recent events in Kosovo prompt the Jewish community to speak out against acts of mass deportation and other aggressive action aimed at eliminating an Albanian presence in Kosovo.

The Council offers its strong support of the U.S. and NATO military operation in Kosovo and Serbia. We have been horrified by the atrocities – including mass murder, systematic rape and widespread expulsion – committed by Serb forces against the civilian population of Kosovo. We support the use of those methods deemed necessary by the U.S. and NATO coalition to end "ethnic cleansing" and restore stability to that area.

The Council also supports the efforts of the international war crimes tribunal in The Hague. Those individuals who have ordered or committed war crimes or crimes against humanity must be brought to justice.

We are deeply concerned about the plight of the hundreds of thousands of refugees. Their fate remains of utmost concern. The Council urges individuals to support all humanitarian aid efforts; particularly those sponsored by Jewish organizations. Assistance must be given to all those who are suffering due to repugnant policies. We commend those nations, social service and religious organizations that are actively providing assistance to victims. The rapid response of the international community to meet the needs of this population is heartening.

We wish to draw particular attention to the humanitarian aid provided by Israel. The Jewish Agency for Israel has sent over 100 tons of humanitarian aid and supplies on a series of chartered flights. In addition, Israel has sponsored the arrival in Israel of over 100 refugees. We are particularly proud of the role Israeli doctors have played in providing vital medical assistance. Clearly, the Jewish people, both in Israel and locally, understand the urgency of the situation and the moral responsibility to respond.

The Milwaukee Jewish Council for Community Relations will continue to work for the intensification and expansion of the humanitarian effort.