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For Immediate Release



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Jewish Groups Seek “Ethical” Hotels

New service facilitates moral spending; Jewish organizations embrace opportunity to engage in “kosher consumerism”

NEW YORK, NY – Spearheaded by Jewish Funds for Justice (JFSJ) and the Progressive Jewish Alliance (PJA), nine Jewish organizations have joined the newly launched Informed Meetings Exchange (INMEX), a service of the labor union UNITE-HERE that researches and disseminates information on the global hotel industry.

The Jewish organizations participating in the coalition include the Union for Reform Judaism (URJ), the United Synagogue of Conservative Judaism (USCJ), and the Jewish Reconstructionist Federation (JRF), which together represent the vast majority of affiliated American Jews. By providing news of labor disputes at hotels and offering meeting service support, INMEX enables member organizations to make informed decisions about how their meeting and convention dollars are spent.

“INMEX is valuable because it fulfills a practical need for many organizations concerned about ethical labor practices,” said JFSJ President Simon Greer. “I’m encouraged that the Jewish community is taking this opportunity to join with other organizations in considering the moral implications of our consumer decisions.”

“We joined INMEX because it allows organizations to expand their definition of kosher to include fair labor practices when choosing a hotel,” said PJA Executive Director Daniel Sokatch. “In tracking labor disputes INMEX provides a *heksher* (a symbol to signify kosher items) on hotels. Jewish organizations thus fulfill a moral responsibility by ensuring that the means by which their food is prepared and their beds are made is fair and ethical.”

“The Reform Movement has long been committed to Deuteronomy’s mandate to treat the worker justly.” said Rabbi Elliott Kleinman, Director of Programs for the URJ “As we plan future gatherings, we will look to INMEX’s resources to help us live our values and make informed choices.”

Other Jewish groups in the coalition include the Jewish Council on Urban Affairs (JCUA), Panim: The Institute for Jewish Leadership and Values, Hebrew Union College – Los Angeles, and Workmen’s Circle/Arbeter Ring. Hundreds of non-Jewish organizations have joined INMEX, including the National Organization of Women, the NAACP, and the AFL-CIO.

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