

**GOOD EVENING, LADIES AND GENTLEMEN!**

**STAN, THANK YOU FOR THAT INTRODUCTION  
AND FOR YOUR OUTSTANDING WORK AS  
PRESIDENT OF THE A.J.C.**

**I'D ALSO LIKE TO THANK AND RECOGNIZE DAVID  
HARRIS AND ALL A.J.C. BOARD MEMBERS -- NOT  
ONLY FOR YOUR LEADERSHIP -- BUT ALSO FOR  
ALL THAT YOU'VE DONE TO BRING GREATER  
FREEDOM AND JUSTICE TO MIAMI-  
DADE'S JEWISH COMMUNITY.**

**ANDREW HALL AND BRIAN SIEGAL, THANK YOU  
FOR INVITING ME TO CELEBRATE WITH YOU  
TONIGHT. I'M HONORED THAT YOU SELECTED  
ME TO BE A SPEAKER AT THIS MEETING WITH  
TOP JEWISH LEADERS FROM MIAMI AND  
AROUND THE U.S.**

**IT'S GREAT TO SEE SO MANY LEADERS FROM  
AROUND THE WORLD GATHERED HERE TONIGHT  
AS WELL.**

**I'M ESPECIALLY HONORED TO SHARE THE FLOOR THIS EVENING WITH THE AMBASSADORS TO THE U.S. FROM THE REPUBLIC OF AZERBAIJAN, BULGARIA AND URUGUAY.**

**FOR THOSE OF YOU NOT FROM OUR COMMUNITY, WELCOME TO MIAMI-DADE COUNTY!**

**I ALSO APPRECIATE THE PRESENCE OF OUR LOCAL JEWISH COMMUNITY MEMBERS. MANY OF YOU HAVE BEEN GREAT FRIENDS AND PARTNERS AS WE COMBAT ANTI-SEMITISM AND INCREASE CULTURAL AND RELIGIOUS SENSITIVITY IN MIAMI-DADE AND BEYOND.**

**THANK YOU FOR ALL THAT YOU DO.**

**LADIES AND GENTLEMEN, TONIGHT IS A CAUSE FOR CELEBRATION, AS WE RECOGNIZE AND CONGRATULATE THE AMERICAN JEWISH COMMITTEE ON 110 YEARS OF GLOBAL JEWISH ADVOCACY.**

**FOR MORE THAN A CENTURY, NO OTHER ORGANIZATION HAS DONE MORE TO GIVE A VOICE TO THE JEWISH PEOPLE.**

**AND THAT DESERVES A ROUND OF APPLAUSE.**

**TO ALL OF THE A.J.C. LEADERS -- PAST AND PRESENT -- WHO HAVE BEEN CHAMPIONS FOR HUMAN RIGHTS ACROSS THE GLOBE, CONGRATULATIONS ON YOUR SUCCESSSES!**

**MAZEL TOV!**

**TONIGHT'S CELEBRATION IS ESPECIALLY IMPORTANT TO ME.**

**ALTHOUGH I'M NOT JEWISH, I AM CUBAN-AMERICAN AND I IDENTIFY VERY CLOSELY WITH THE JEWISH COMMUNITY AND ISRAEL, IN PARTICULAR.**

**CUBANS WHO HAVE MADE A HOME IN THE UNITED STATES KNOW WHAT IT'S LIKE, AT LEAST FOR SOME TIME, TO BASICALLY BE WITHOUT A COUNTRY.**

**IN THE WORDS OF CUBAN-AMERICAN POET RAFAEL CAMPO, WE ARE “PEOPLE, OF A SOLITARY STAR...WHO WANDER, SEARCHING FOR A HOME SOMEPLACE.”**

**WE, LIKE MANY IN THE JEWISH COMMUNITY, KNOW WHAT IT’S LIKE TO BE IN EXILE AND TO BE PERSECUTED FOR OUR BELIEFS.**

**AND THAT’S WHY, BESIDES BEING THE RIGHT THING TO DO, I SIGNED THE A.J.C.’S “MAYORS UNITED AGAINST ANTI-SEMITISM” PLEDGE LAST YEAR.**

**I STRONGLY BELIEVE THAT WE MUST CONTINUE TO ADVANCE RESPECTFUL COEXISTENCE AMONG ALL PEOPLE IN OUR COMMUNITY. AND WE MUST CONTINUE TO INCREASE UNDERSTANDING AMONG OUR GLOBAL COUNTERPARTS.**

**INCREASING UNDERSTANDING WAS ALSO MY MOTIVATION FOR TAKING PART IN THE A.J.C.’S PROJECT INTERCHANGE SEMINAR TO ISRAEL IN 2011.**

**IT WAS A GREAT EXPERIENCE THAT CONTINUES TO SERVE AS A REMINDER OF JUST HOW CONNECTED WE ARE AS A GLOBAL COMMUNITY.**

**WHILE I WAS IN ISRAEL, I HAD THE OPPORTUNITY TO MEET MY COUNTERPARTS IN THE ISRAELI GOVERNMENT.**

**I ALSO VISITED FORTIFIED BORDER TOWNS AND RECEIVED A GREATER UNDERSTANDING OF THE SECURITY SITUATION THAT OUR FRIENDS THERE LIVE WITH EVERY DAY.**

**I ALSO RECEIVED FIRSTHAND LESSONS ON ISRAEL'S COMPLEX, BUT VERY RICH HISTORY, ITS INCREDIBLE CULTURE, AND ITS RELIGIOUS DIVERSITY.**

**AND I LEARNED ABOUT ISRAEL'S FORWARD-THINKING ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT EFFORTS, WHICH SERVE AS A MODEL FOR OTHERS.**



**I'M GRATEFUL FOR THIS TRIP AND EXPERIENCE. AND I WOULD LIKE TO THANK THE A.J.C., ONCE AGAIN, FOR CONNECTING ME TO NEW PEOPLE AND PLACES IN A TRULY PROFOUND WAY.**

**THIS TRIP DEMONSTRATED THAT WHEN WE REACH OUT TO OTHERS...WHEN WE TAKE THE TIME TO VISIT AND LEARN FROM ONE ANOTHER...**

**WE REALLY CAN ACHIEVE GREATER COOPERATION.**

**I'M FORTUNATE TO COUNT MYSELF AMONG THE MANY MIAMI-DADE COUNTY RESIDENTS WHO HAVE BENEFITED FROM THE A.J.C.'S PRESENCE IN OUR COMMUNITY, AND WHO HAVE GAINED A BETTER UNDERSTANDING AND APPRECIATION FOR ISRAEL AND JUDAISM, ALIKE.**

**SINCE 1952, THE A.J.C.'S LOCAL CHAPTER HAS HELPED ADVANCE HUMAN RIGHTS FOR MILLIONS OF MIAMI-DADE RESIDENTS, AND I LOOK FORWARD TO OUR CONTINUED PARTNERSHIP.**

**I KNOW THAT INNOVATION IS THE THEME OF THE BOARD OF GOVERNORS INSTITUTE, AND THE A.J.C. HAS DEMONSTRATED GREAT INNOVATION IN BOTH LOOKING FORWARD AND MOVING THE JEWISH COMMUNITY FORWARD IN PACE WITH THE CHANGING TIMES.**

**YOU HAVE MANY FRIENDS AND SUPPORTERS IN MIAMI-DADE COUNTY. SO, LET'S KEEP MOVING FORWARD TOGETHER!**

**LADIES AND GENTLEMEN, THANK YOU AGAIN FOR INVITING ME TO CELEBRATE WITH YOU.**

**SHALOM ALEICHEM.**