

Friday evening

Good evening ladies and gentlemen.

It gives me enormous pleasure to be back with you, after too long a gap, at the UpJ conference. I thank you for the invitation to join you.

Let me remind you that UpJ is a constituent of the European Union for Progressive Judaism, which I have the privilege to chair. At present there are 17 member countries in EUPJ, which is in turn one of seven regions of the World Union for Progressive Judaism. There are nearly 2 million members in more than 40 countries, and this means we are the largest Jewish religious organisation on the planet. It is important to remember that we are all part of something much bigger.

So much in the world has changed in the five years since I was last at a UpJ gathering. Governments have changed, Brexit has happened, Covid dominated our lives for about two years, and a war is raging in Europe not so far from us here in Bonn. You should know that there is a new Management Committee at EUPJ which reflects that we are no longer dominated by the United Kingdom. Yet much is the same. Chief among this is the commitment we all have to Progressive Judaism in Germany and beyond. That is why we are all here this weekend.

I wish you all a productive, enjoyable and successful conference, and most importantly, Shabbat shalom.