

# Fifth Ave. Turns Blue & White for Israel Parade

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Fifth Avenue was sparkling in blue and white on Sunday, May 22nd, for the Celebrate Israel Parade, the world’s largest demonstration of support for the Jewish state. The event was produced by UJA-Federation of New York, the Jewish Community Relations Council (JCRC) of New York and the Consulate General of Israel in New York.

This year’s parade featured the theme “Together Again - Kulanu B’Yachad” (in Hebrew: we’re all together) celebrating the parade’s return following a two-year hiatus due to the pandemic.

“We are delighted to be able to come together once again in what is the largest public demonstration of support for Israel in the world. Particularly now - with rising antisemitism and anti-Zionism in our backyard, and an alarming recent

increase in terror attacks in Israel - it is more important than ever to show our proud and public support for the state of Israel,” said Eric S. Goldstein, CEO of UJA-Federation of New York.

The Celebrate Israel Parade typically draws hundreds of thousands of people to cheer marchers, bands and floats proceeding up Fifth Avenue from 57th to 74th streets. It ran from 11:30 am to 4 pm (EST).

Expected New York dignitaries included Governor Kathy Hochul, Mayor Eric Adams, NYS Attorney General Letitia James, Rep. Jerrold Nadler (D-NY), Rep. Lee Zeldin (R-NY), Rep. Yvette Clark (D-NY), Rep. Carolyn Maloney (D-NY), Rep. Tom Suozzi (D-NY), Rep. A. Espaillat (D-NY) and Rep. Ritchie Torres (D-NY).

Expected Israeli dignitaries include Defense Minister Benny Gantz, Diaspora Affairs Minister Nachman Shai, Aliyah and Minister of Immigrant Absorption Af fairs Pnina Tamano-Shata, Knesset members Ofir Akunis, Gilad Kariv and Gila Gamliel, United Nations Ambassador Gilad Erdan and Consul General Asaf

Zamir.

The Celebrate Israel Parade (previously known as the Youth Salute to Israel Parade and, later, the Salute to Israel Parade) had been held annually on Fifth Avenue since 1964 before the pandemic struck.

Gideon Taylor, executive vice president and CEO of the JCRC-NY said, “Sunday’s JCRC-NY Celebrate Israel Parade was an incredible gathering! It showcased the beauty and joy of the Jewish people, our fellow New Yorkers, and what a true sense of community can feel like.

“I had the honor of going up Fifth Avenue with dozens of marching groups, public officials, bands, and entertainers. I watched as they danced, cheered, and lit up the street in blue and white. I’m so glad that we were all able to be there as one community.

“I’m proud to say that this was the most diverse Celebrate Israel Parade ever.”

In a world so often fractured and divided, synagogues, organizations, and schools from across the spectrum of Jewish life came to Fifth Avenue to celebrate Israel together. This year

they had over 150 participating organizations that represented the Jewish world from A to Z.

Leading Jewish organizations and politicians were joined by a number of Ambassadors from the United Nations as well as bands and performers representing the multicultural diversity of New York.

There were well over 40,000 marchers this year, and enthusiastic crowds lining Fifth Avenue for hours. There was also huge viewership of the TV coverage in New York on Fox’s My9, Israel’s i24, and webcasts broadcast around the world.

The Celebrate Israel Parade has always served as a unique bridge between New York and Israel. This year, as a visible demonstration of that connection, our parade was featured in dozens of media outlets in English and Hebrew, for example Channel 7 News, Ynet, and The Times of Israel.

In honor of the Parade, Governor Hochul ordered that major New York State landmarks be lit up in blue.

JCRC-NY expressed their support from their partners UJA-Federation of New York and the State of Israel, the Grand Marshal Harley Lippman.



Top left: (from left) State of Israel Minister of Defense, *Benny Gantz*, State of Israel Minister of Diaspora Affairs, *Nachman Shai*. Top center: (from left) JCRC-NY Exec. VP and CEO, *Gideon Taylor*, with NYC Mayor, *Eric Adams*. Top right: (from left) US Rep. *Jerrold Nadler*; NYS Attorney General, *Letita James*; JCRC-NY CIP Grand Marshall, *Harley Lippman*; NYS Governor *Kathy Hochul*; US Rep. *Carolyn Maloney*; JCRC-NY Exec. VP and CEO, *Gideon Taylor*; JCRC-NY Past President, *Janice Shorenstein*. Bottom left: Israel Parade banner by JCRC-NY. Bottom right: Consul General of Israel in New York, *Asaf Zamir* (center), with fans. Photos: Shulamit Seidler-Feller, courtesy of UJA-Federation of NY.