

Statement by Rabbi Stanley Davids, RRFEI Executive Committee:

1. This IS a compromise.
The Rabbanut has won full legal control over what the world normally considers to be the Western Wall and its plaza. In return, liberal forces have gained a promise and guarantee (for whatever that is worth) that within two years a large space next to that other side of the Western Wall will be fully open for pluralistic services with no control by or influence of the Rabbanut. The plaza will be available for national ceremonies which will permit women's voices and equality among the genders in such national events.
2. Those seeking the right of women to read Torah and wear Tallitot and Tefillin in the traditional area of the Western Wall have lost.
3. Those seeking to totally take the traditional area of the Western Wall out of the hands of the Rabbanut currently controlling them have lost.
4. The compromise does nothing to address the pursuit of marriage equality and true civil rights with an Israeli society.
5. But as with many compromises, there is much to celebrate here. Gilad Kariv struck a proper note indicating that we should celebrate for today and use the gains of this compromise, however limited, to re-energize our efforts to strengthen all of our liberal religious causes in Israel.
6. For whatever it is worth, this compromise points again to the importance of diaspora influence in the shaping of some aspects of decision-making in Israel. HIDDUSH should be able to pounce upon this fact in a drive to further strengthen its own significance within the North American community.