

Reconstructionist Rabbinical Association
RESOLUTION
BETA ISRAEL REMAINING IN ADDIS ABABA
1992

Whereas, at the time of Operation Solomon (May 24-25, 1991), members of the Beta Israel community were left behind due to doubts about the sincerity of their return to Judaism and desire to rejoin the Jewish people; and

Whereas, since that time the 3,800 men, women and children in Addis Ababa, who are of recent Jewish ancestry, now lead Jewishly committed lives, are committed to the Zionist dream and the Jewish people, celebrate the Shabbat and festivals, maintain a synagogue and a mikvah and adhere to no other faith; and

Whereas, the 1,700 members of this community who now live in Israel continue to live Jewishly committed lives and are citizens of the State of Israel; and

Whereas, we believe that when anyone of clear Jewish ancestry who has, for whatever reason, remained apart from the community and that person chooses of his/her own free will to return to the Jewish people and Jewish practice with a full heart and declares their intention to live their lives as Jews and to raise any children as Jews, this suffices to recognize the person or community as Jewish without the need of further ritual; and

Whereas, the Beta Israel in Addis Ababa live in extreme poverty, illness, isolation and separation from close family members now living in the State of Israel;

Now, therefore, be it resolved that the Reconstructionist Rabbinical Association, as rabbis committed the concept of *klal yisrael* and Jewish pluralism, calls upon the American Jewish Joint Distribution Committee (JDC) and the North American Conference of Ethiopian Jewry (NACOEJ) who have for six years provided the only assistance the community in Addis Ababa has received, to continue and enhance such assistance to the maximum extent possible and further urges other Jewish organizations to come to the aid of the beleaguered Jewish community; and

Be it further resolved the Reconstructionist Rabbinical Association calls upon its affiliated rabbis to support the work of these organizations in Ethiopia and to educate their constituents on this issue with the help of resources provided by the NACOEJ, JDC and other organizations, so they too can help in the struggle; and

Be it further resolved that the Reconstructionist Rabbinical Association calls upon the State of Israel to recognize the Beta Israel remaining in Addis Ababa as a Jewish community all of whose individual members are entitled to emigrate to their homeland under the Law of Return, with the goal of bringing all 3,800 men, women and children to Israel as quickly as possible.