

A MESSAGE FROM CEO STACEY LEAVITT-WRIGHT

October 7 will forever be etched in my brain. It is the 'where were you moment' of our time, referred to by many as the Israeli 9-11. As we move from shock to grief to rage and back again, one thing is clear: 'Never Again' is now. 'Never Again' means that we do not stand silent while the world blames the Jews and blames Israel for an unprovoked, heinous terror attack.

'Never Again' means that we continue to tell the horrific stories to our community as details emerge, which also includes our non-Jewish friends, colleagues and elected officials. 'Never Again' means that we are here to ensure that Israel – our ancestral homeland – be supported and strengthened as it emerges from this nightmare. And, 'Never Again' means that we unite as a community and support one another as we move forward here in Edmonton.

In addition to our UJA campaign to support our local community, we have an Israel Emergency Fund that will be pooled with funds collected by Federations across Canada. While ensuring that immediate trauma needs are addressed, our partners in Israel are able to determine where funds are most needed, without duplicating efforts.

Jewish Federation has been the convenor for many events and programs. I am heartened as we witness people at all ages and stages lean into community. You are joining our programs and efforts, uniting across ages and denominations. You are stepping up to our advocacy

efforts, lending your voices and expertise. I hope this only continues.

It has been said that timing is everything. I want to thank the Board and the Facilities and Space Committee for their hard work, and for taking a courageous step of making an offer on a building, subject to numerous conditions, one of which is the approval of our membership. A community town hall will take place on November 14th with more information, and the purchase will only be finalized pending a UJA member vote at our AGM on December 6th, 2023. While it may seem out of place to discuss exciting news, perhaps it is the beacon of hope that our community needs.

