

WORLD JEWISH CONGRESS

RONALD S. LAUDER
PRESIDENT

August 6, 2018

Dear Friends,

It is with great pleasure that I welcome you to Chernivtsi for the International Commemorative Conference of Yiddish Culture and Language and Jewish Culture Days in Bukovyna, held 110 years after the first international conference in support of the Yiddish language in Chernivtsi.

The World Jewish Congress is extremely proud to be co-hosting this conference under the auspices of the WJC International Yiddish Center in Vilnius along with the Va'ad (Federation of Jewish Communities and Organizations of Ukraine), the Ukrainian Jewish Encounter, and other partners.

The World Jewish Congress views the revival of the Yiddish language and culture as instrumental in rejuvenating Jewish life in Europe after the tragedy of the Holocaust. It is also a tool for the consolidation of Jewish communities throughout the Diaspora and for individual Jews in Israel and around the world who recognize and appreciate the importance of keeping the Yiddish language, culture, and heritage of their ancestors alive.

The WJC Yiddish Center was established in Vilnius at the end of 2014 and is one of the only such institutions of its kind in the world, offering courses in the Yiddish language and culture that are held in various countries at universities and community centers. The WJC Yiddish Center seeks to systematically introduce knowledge of Yiddish language, culture and heritage in formal and informal education systems worldwide, preserving it for future generations. Since the Center's creation, more than **6,255 students** have attended over **110 seminars**, lectures and programs around the world.

I know many of you attending this important conference have taught or participated in these seminars. The WJC is grateful for your continued involvement in our Yiddish programs and appreciates your dedication to helping preserve a vital element of our collective history.

Unfortunately, I was unable to join you in Ukraine this week, but I have asked WJC Chief Executive Officer Robert Singer, a native son of Chernivtsi, to be with you and I look forward to reviewing the conference's final publications. These are indeed challenging times for Jews in many of our communities around the world and I encourage your sustained active participation in this event and others of its kind to nurture our people's shared revival.

Thank you for making the effort to travel to Chernivtsi this week.

With best wishes,

