



**From Rabbi
Nancy Wechsler**



Only time will tell.

Union for Reform Judaism President Rabbi Rick Jacobs' released a statement Wednesday expressing concern about US President Donald Trump's expected announcement regarding Jerusalem.

The White House announced that President Trump will make a statement recognizing Jerusalem as Israel's capital, with caveats including that the US Embassy remain in Tel Aviv and not be moved to Jerusalem for at least the next six months. However, President Trump has stated repeatedly in the recent past that he intends on beginning the process.

Rabbi Rick Jacobs statement on the White House declaration:

"While we share the President's belief that the US Embassy should... be moved from Tel Aviv to Jerusalem, we cannot support his decision to begin preparing that move now, absent a comprehensive plan for a peace process,"
"We urge the President to do everything in his power to move forward with efforts to bring true peace to the region and take no unilateral steps."

How Jews understand the physical location of Israel's capital has always been the most delicate issue in every discussion about peace. For this reason we

are very concerned that the announcement will either delay or undermine the crucial resuming of a serious peace process.

If you are worried, you are in excellent company. Pope Francis, the United Nations secretary general, the European Union, Britain, France, Germany and Italy all declared it a mistake. Secretary General Antonio Guterres expressed alarm that the announcement would provoke new tensions in the Holy City.

While Jerusalem is certainly the spiritual heart of Israel for 3,000 years, it is also sacred to Christians and to Muslims, and for centuries, any attempt by any side to take exclusive control has brought trouble. While we spiritually recognize Jerusalem as the capital of Israel, we understand that such a declaration from the United States bluntly shifts the image of our being a mediator between Israelis and Palestinians. These nations underscore that Jerusalem is holy, unique and that its future will be defined within the framework of a peace process based on the two states, Israel and Palestine.

We are Jews, specifically we are Reform Jews and we are a resilient people. Chanukah, our festival of increasing light into the world is but around the corner. As Rabbi Rick Jacobs concluded his remarks today, "Only time will tell."

Shalom,

Rabbi Nancy Wechsler