

Christians, Jews Affirm Alliance at CUFI Summit

With swelling member rolls, momentum from an enthusiastic crowd and upcoming key initiatives for Israel advocacy, Christians United for Israel (CUFI) recently completed a strong, eighth annual summit in Washington, D.C.

During a stirring afternoon speech, British Col. Richard Kemp, commander of British forces in Afghanistan, called the summit “a remarkable event.”

An energized Victor Styrsky, eastern regional director of CUFI, enthused about the passion present, said, “We took Capitol Hill by storm today! People were saying, ‘Who are all these people?’”

CUFI’s attendees met with congressional representatives at a time when several issues related to Israel and American foreign policy and security are swirling. Those attending the conference were given their marching orders by a glittering list of speakers, including Glenn Beck, Sen. Ted Cruz, Malcolm Hoenlein, and CUFI founder John Hagee.

Hagee electrified the crowd early in the week when he leaned into the microphone and said, “The Holocaust ended with statehood!”

The thunderous applause let Jewish leaders in Israel and America know the Jewish state is far from alone. Via satellite, Israeli Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu confirmed the special relationship Israelis feel with their pro-Israel Christian friends.

“What an achievement; I salute you!” said Netanyahu, who is beloved among evangelicals supportive of Israel. “Iran is working tirelessly, aggressively ... but Israel is strong. We

will guard our country!”

Speaking after Netanyahu, Israeli Tourism Minister Uzi Landau chuckled about the famous Israeli stoicism but informed the crowd that the feeling Christians have for Israel is mutual.

“We value your commitment and your love,” he said.

Elliot Chodoff, a major in the Israel Defense Forces reserves, delivered some strategic clarity concerning one of Israel’s staunchest enemies, Hezbollah.

“Everybody on the other side knows we are at war—not everyone on this side knows,” Chodoff said. “To talk about Hezbollah’s ‘political wing’ is like talking about the criminal wing of the mob. With Hezbollah, the wing is the whole bird.”

Malcolm Hoenlein, executive vice chairman of the Conference of Presidents of Major American Jewish Organizations, invoked the Bible when speaking about Christians’ support for Israel.

“The prophets were not prophets of doom but prophets of hope; you just have to read it right,” he said. “Here’s my advice: Don’t bet against the Jews. And the ‘Jewish lobby’ is a myth, but it’s our job to make it a legend.”

Besides the speeches, summit attendees were treated to a breathtaking round of displays and events. Gathered at the Wall of Remembrance, which profiles the 1,000 Israeli victims of terror since 2000, many Jews and Christians embraced and wept.

CUFI also provided tours of a two-room exhibit used on college campuses. The display included many examples of media bias used not only in secular circles, but also in Christian channels, where a growing anti-Israel movement is targeting the very heart of the evangelical world.

CUFI campus directors Josh Ahrens, David Walker and John Winchester were upbeat about the future, since CUFI plans to

add another 100 campus advocacy chapters in the next year.

On Sunday afternoon, hundreds of campus students were briefed by Western Regional Director Randy Neal, who outlined some of the arguments being used by Israel's detractors.

Styrsky delivered an emotional appeal for Israeli support, citing God's provision for Israel.

"Keep your eyes on that, because on our darkest days, it gives us hope," he said.