

## U.S. EMBASSY TO HOST PROFESSIONALS IN COMMUNITY COALITION BUILDING

Two community coalition-building professionals will be in Israel the first week of March to conduct workshops and training sessions with community leaders in several mixed towns. The U.S. Embassy is hosting Rabbi Robert Kaplan, the director of CAUSE-NY, and Mr. Mohammad Razvi, the executive director of the Council of Peoples Organization. The two will lead sessions in community coalition building, youth leadership and community relations. They were among the leaders who helped their community – Brooklyn – following violent social unrest in Crown Heights in the 1990s.

Rabbi Kaplan and Mr. Razvi will draw on their experience in working with community leaders and educators in sessions in Akko, Jerusalem, Ramle, Lod and Yaffo. They will present strategies for addressing the differences that create tension between Jewish and Arab residents in “mixed cities.”

**Rabbi Kaplan** is the Director of CAUSE-NY, Jewish Community Relations Council, N.Y., the central coordinating and resource body for 62 major Jewish organizations in the metropolitan New York area. He also co-directs the New York –Jerusalem Experts Exchange, a joint project of the JCRC and the Jerusalem Intercultural Center. Mr. Kaplan is involved in a variety of issues including coalition building, conflict resolution, ethnic media, interracial/inter-religious relationships, combating hate crimes, and community building. Mr. Kaplan acts as an organizational consultant to many community-based organizations -- Jewish and non-Jewish -- on the issue of intergroup relations and capacity building. As part of a U.S. State Department sponsored program, he traveled with a team of community and policing experts to Belfast, Northern Ireland to train and teach local community leaders and police officials. He has lectured for the Jamaican Foreign Ministry, the European Union, the U.S. Department of State and the Israeli Foreign Ministry on issues of diversity, ethnic media, coalition and community building, social change and responsibility in the media and community organizing.

**Mohammad Razvi** is the Executive Director of the Council of Peoples Organization (COPO). Born in Pakistan, he immigrated to the U.S. with his family in the 1980s. For his relentless service to the immigrant community, Razvi was elected as a Board member of the New York Immigration Coalition. He has received many awards from Congressmen, State senators, Assemblyman, and the Brooklyn Borough President, recognizing his efforts to unite the immigrant communities of New York. Razvi is a co-founder of We Are All Brooklyn (WAAB) coalition and the Muslims Consultant Network. He serves on the board of CAUSE NY, Youth Bridge, Midwood Development Corp, FBI Citizens Academy New York Division, the Center for the Study of Brooklyn at Brooklyn College, Brooklyn Borough President’s Task Force for New Diversity and the Greater Brooklyn Heath Coalition.

