

**Event at the President of Israel's Residence**

**Sunday, October 7, 2018**

**Good evening, everyone. Thank you so much Miri for your warm introduction. It is really wonderful to be here in Israel!**

**I am deeply honored to be present at the spectacular Beit HaNassi Residence of the esteemed President of Israel. My sincere appreciation goes to His Excellency President Rivlin and First Lady Nechama Rivlin for this special invitation and for giving me the opportunity to share some remarks about the progress being made today against cancer.**

**First, I want to express my sincere and heartfelt appreciation to my dear colleague and friend, Miri Ziv, who has served with distinction for several decades as the Director General of the Israel Cancer Association and who is one of the most influential ambassadors against cancer in the world.**

**Miri was lauded in 2015 for her amazing work with the American Association for Cancer Research Award for Distinguished Public Service and Global Impact in Cancer Advocacy. Because of her sustained, passionate commitment and contributions to international cancer research and advocacy since she assumed her important role at the Israel Cancer Association, she has saved an incalculable number of lives in Israel and, indeed, all over the world.**

**And even when she experienced the personal devastation caused by cancer—that is, of losing her 21-year-old son to melanoma and her brother to hepatocellular carcinoma—she continued forcefully to further the goal of markedly reducing cancer incidence and mortality through cancer research, early detection, and prevention. The world is indebted to Miri Ziv for her extraordinary leadership!**

**My organization, the AACR, having been launched in 1907, is the first and largest professional society in the world dedicated to making rapid progress against all cancers. There are now more than 40,000 members residing in the United States and 119 other countries, Israel being among them. Our membership encompasses the greatest minds in cancer research, treatment, prevention, and patient advocacy, and these experts have been at the forefront of every major breakthrough against cancer.**

**The incredible advances being made in this era of remarkable science and new technologies are powerfully illustrated by the fact that today, there are more survivors from cancer and more people surviving longer after a cancer diagnosis. This is providing new hope and promise against cancer for people around the globe. In fact, in both the United States and Israel, the number of cancer survivors has reached a record high!**

**One of these long-time survivors is my own sister, who is alive today after having received a diagnosis of late-stage ovarian cancer 20 years ago. She is now enjoying the eight grandchildren whom she would never have even met, thanks to the novel treatment that she received at the time from an investigational clinical trial. These cures are now happening everywhere because of cancer research.**

**However, despite the significant progress made to date, a report that was just published last month reminds us that there is still much more work to be done, for it estimates that in this year alone, there will be 18.1 million new cancer cases diagnosed worldwide and 9.6 million cancer deaths.**

**These statistics are not just numbers on a page. They represent our mothers, fathers, daughters, sons, grandparents, and dear friends, and probably people known to some of you here today, because cancer touches us all, either directly or indirectly.**

**This human loss is unacceptable, and we can and must change this picture going forward.**

**The commitment of scientists, physicians, and other healthcare providers in all the important sectors of the cancer field—academia, industry, government, and non-profit and patient advocacy organizations like the Israel Cancer Association--as well as the staunch support of the public in our countries, holds enormous promise for altering the trajectory of this devastating group of diseases we call “cancer.”**

**Clearly, by working together, we are made stronger against this foe that is still taking so many of our loved ones. Global collaborations that include the sage recommendations of experts in Israel and the support of the public are helping to make faster progress against cancer.**

**The scientific meeting being held here in Jerusalem this coming week, in partnership with the European Association for Cancer Research and the Israel Society for Cancer Research, is an example of the global collaboration that is moving cancer science and medicine forward rapidly and leading to meaningful advances.**

**This meeting is bringing together world leaders in a wide array of research disciplines who will present the latest research findings, including how laboratory research into the complexities of cancer biology is revolutionizing cancer treatment and harnessing the power of our own immune system to conquer the disease. Scientists have long hoped for such success in immunotherapy, and it is now happening every day in the clinic.**

**It is thrilling that because of cancer research, the collaborations between our two countries and the generosity of the public in support of efforts against cancer, there are now unprecedented opportunities to fundamentally change the face of cancer, once and for all!**

**In closing, I want to thank you for your kind attention and to again extend my profound appreciation to His Excellency and the First Lady for their invitation to be here today at this beautiful residence. It is truly a special honor for me! Thanks again!**