

**THE RABBINICAL COUNCIL OF AMERICA  
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[www.rabbis.org](http://www.rabbis.org)

**Rabbinical Council of America and Chief Rabbinate of Israel  
to Announce  
Historic Agreement on Conversions to Judaism in North America**

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The Rabbinical Council of America (RCA), the largest Orthodox rabbinic group in the world, will hold a press conference at its forthcoming Annual Convention, to be held at the Museum of Jewish Heritage, at 36 Battery Place, Manhattan, on Monday April 30<sup>th</sup>, 2007, at 2.30pm, at which time it will officially announce a formal agreement entered into by the RCA (together with its associated Beth Din – the Beth Din of America,) and the Chief Rabbinate of the State of Israel, that will formalize in detail mutual recognition of Orthodox conversions to Judaism.

The agreement is the product of a year long process. It involves the automatic recognition in Israel of conversions performed by any one of the participating Batei Din (rabbinical courts) which will be part of the soon to-be-established network of Regional Batei Din for Geirus (Conversion.) All participating Batei Din will work closely with the Beth Din of America, and its director Rabbi Yonah Reiss, in implementing the agreement. Some of the Batei Din are of long-standing duration, while others will be established in the months and years ahead, but all of them will follow the strict standards, policies, and procedures, that have been agreed upon. These will include standardized procedures at every step of the conversion process, as well as standardized requirements, documentation, qualifications for batei din dayyanim (judges), conversion of

minors, and resulting certificates of conversion. A central office will maintain comprehensive database information to ensure proper registration and sharing of information among participating batei din and the Chief Rabbinate in Israel and others around the world, in the present and for future generations.

An inaugural conference of first stage participating batei din was held several months ago in Chicago. At each stage of implementation process others will be added.

Rabbi Barry Freundel, Chairman of the joint Geirut Policies and Standards (GPS) Committee issued the following statement: “This historic and long-overdue agreement is a major milestone – not just for future converts to Judaism and their descendants, but for the entire Jewish people, in North America, Israel, and around the world. By thus standardizing conversions procedures and standards, many individuals, families, rabbis and Jewish communities will be able to avoid many of the problems heretofore experienced. The RCA is proud to have worked with the Israel Chief Rabbinate in bringing about a truly beneficial agreement, now and for the future.”

And the Chief of Rabbi Shlomo Amar, Sefardic Chief Rabbi of Israel, who is also the President of the State of Israel’s Rabbinical Courts, said “I am most pleased by this agreement between the Chief Rabbinate, its rabbinical courts, and the Rabbinical Council of America, one which I fully anticipate will be a model for Jewish communities all over the world.”

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About the RCA:

The Rabbinical Council of America, with national headquarters in New York City, is a professional organization serving nearly 1000 Orthodox Rabbis in the United States of America, Canada, Israel, and around the world. Membership is comprised of duly ordained Orthodox Rabbis who serve in positions of the congregational Rabbinate, Jewish education, chaplaincies, and other allied fields of Jewish communal work.