(1) The second Abayudaya Youth Association Convention took place from January 12th to 16th in Nabugoye Hill, Uganda. The Abayudaya community follow Masorti Judaism, and this convention focused on empowering their youth and connecting them with the wider Jewish world.

(2) In December and January, nearly 2,000 Masorti youth participated in NOAM summer camps in Argentina. Pictured above is the madrichim (counselors) camp where programming and educational ideas were shared ahead of the summer camps.

(3) 50 young leaders from the Darkei NOAM Leadership course in Buenos Aires, Argentina came to Israel for a three-week leadership program in January. The 15 to 17 year olds’ program combined touring with a seminar about leadership and Masorti Jewish identity.

In January, Masorti kehillot around the world came together to celebrate Tu Bishvat in traditional and creative ways. Trees were planted, Tu Bishvat seders were held, and people learned about the significance of the festival.

Pictures from the following kehillot:
(4) Comunidad Hebreá de Guadalajara, Mexico
(5) & (8) Dor Chadash, Budapest, Hungary
(6) Kehillat Netzach Israel, Ashkelon, Israel
(7) Maayane Or, Nice, France
(9) Masorti Cheder, Bournemouth, UK
(10) Masorti Kindergarten, Berlin, Germany
There seems to be no limit to fun and exciting ways that Masorti kehillot around the world celebrated Purim in March. Kehillot celebrated with Megillah readings, costume parties and performances of all kinds sharing the spirit and joy of the festival with large numbers of community members and visitors. Pictures from the following kehillot:

(1) Adath Shalom, Paris, France
(2) Congregacion Bet El, Madrid, Spain
(3) MAROM Budapest & Dor Chadash, Budapest, Hungary
(4) NCI Montevideo, Uruguay
(5) Comunidad Bet El, Mexico City, Mexico
(6) Oranienburger Strasse Synagogue, Berlin, Germany
(7) Kehillat Nitzan, Melbourne, Australia
(8) Comunidad Israelita, Concepcion, Chile

In April, Masorti Olami and MERCAZ Olami published 4 Ways of Connecting Your Seder to Israel. Available online in English, Hebrew, French, Spanish and Portuguese, this publication gave Masorti/Conservative Jews around the world a direct way to add readings, poems and questions connected with Israel to their Seder. The publication was enjoyed in thousands of Seders at synagogues as well as at private homes. The first reading was a prayer for the safe return of the captured Israeli soldier Gilad Shalit. Thankfully our prayers were heard, and Gilad was returned during the festival of Sukkot.

Read the full publication at www.masortiwORLD.org/4ways
(1) & (2) The largest Masorti kehillah in Europe, New North London Synagogue in London, UK, opened its custom-built synagogue in May with several thousand people attending opening events during the first few weeks of the synagogues’ operation. Pictured are the two new sanctuaries.

(3) 16 leaders of NOAM from Argentina, Brazil and Chile took part in a NOAM AmLat Leadership seminar in Buenos Aires, Argentina in May. The seminar was successful in building future structure, purpose and means of collaboration for the NOAM movements in the region.

In June, more than 40 Masorti Olami and MERCAZ Olami delegates from seven different countries took part in the President’s Conference, the Va’ad HaPoel of the World Zionist Organization and the Jewish Agency Assembly. Our delegation was welcomed to Jerusalem on June 22nd in a program at Kehillat Shevet Achim in Gilo, Jerusalem (Picture 9). At this evening, Marty Davis and Marion Mayman were presented with the very first MERCAZ Olami awards for their dedication to Zionism in the Masorti world (Picture 4). Also pictured:

(5) Delegates voting at the Va’ad HaPoel.
(6) Shacharit services at the Va’ad HaPoel.
(7) Masorti Olami and MERCAZ Olami delegates with MK Ronnie Bar-On at the Va’ad HaPoel opening at the Knesset.
(8) MERCAZ Olami President, Dr Steve Wolnek, with MK Eli Effalo.
(10) MERCAZ Olami representative and World Zionist Organization Vice Chair, Dr David Breakstone, addresses the Va’ad HaPoel.
(1) In July, the Masorti kehillah MAROM Moscow held another of its picnics for families. The picnic in the Dedovsk area of Moscow included games for children and a lecture on Jewish history for adults.

(2) Carlos, Manuela and their son Rafael—members of Kehillat Beit Israel in Lisbon, Portugal—completed their conversion in July. Rabbi Jules Harlow (pictured with the family at their Beit Din session in London) and his wife Navah, have been working with the community of Bnei Anusim in Lisbon since 2005.

(3) In August, Rabbi Adam Stein was installed as the new Rabbi of Kehillat Nitzan in Melbourne Australia. Visiting from Israel, Rabbi Reuven Hammer conducted the ceremony. Rabbi Stein graduated from the Zeigler Rabbinical School in 2009 and comes to Australia from his previous post in Kansas City, Missouri.

(4) Comunidade Shalom in Sao Paulo, Brazil hosted an International Symposium on Masorti Judaism in August in their newly inaugurated synagogue. Guest speakers include Rabbi Elliot Dori, Rabbi Jill Jacobs and Rabbi Alfredo Borodowski.

(5) Congregation Israelita Paulista in Sao Paulo, Brazil celebrated its 75th anniversary in August with more than 1,400 people at the Teatro Bradesco.

(6) On August 1st, 16-17 year old NOAM members from Israel and the UK came together for a 1-day Yom NOAM. 80 of the participants were in Israel for NOAM UK’s annual 3-week educational tour, and the other 30 participants were all NOAM Israel junior madrichim (counselors).

(7) From August 1st to 7th, 30 young volunteers met for “Volunticipate!”, a project to build partnerships between the Roma (gypsy) and Jewish communities organized by MAROM, the Masorti young-adult organization. Volunticipate coincided with MAROM Budapest’s third annual Bánkitó Festival at Lake Bank, which brings together over 4,000 activists, artists, students, and anyone interested in social change. Bánkitó included a full schedule of activities with strong Jewish content, aimed at Jewish and non-Jewish participants.
(1) Children at the Masorti kindergarten in Berlin, Germany made Rosh Hashanah posters. The kindergarten teaches 75 children in bi-lingual German/Hebrew and German/English classes. Children and their families participate in Chagim celebrations throughout the year.

(2) In September, the first NOAM Olami Shabbaton for participants of Long-term programs was held at Kibbutz Almog near the Dead Sea in Israel. 65 young people, aged 18 and 19, from Argentina, Brazil, Canada, Israel, UK and USA came together for a weekend which looked at the similarities and differences between Masorti/Conservative Jews around the world.

(3) In September, Comunidad Israelita do Parana in Curitiba, Brazil inaugurated their new Bet Yaakov synagogue. Pictured are representatives of the local community blowing the shofar to signify the start of the new Jewish year and the new synagogue.

(4) In October, Gill Caplin completed her term as President of Masorti Europe. Pictured is Rabbi Joel Meyers presenting a plaque from Masorti Olami at a meeting in Madrid, Spain. Joanna Kubar from Nice, France has now taken the role as President of the region.

(5) One of two weddings that took place in September at Shalom Independent Masorti Congregation in Johannesburg, South Africa. The kehillah holds services every Shabbat evening and morning as well as on Chagim.

Masorti kehillot around the world celebrated the festival of Sukkot in October, some of them building their own Sukkah for the very first time. Pictures from: (6) & (7) Kehillat Beitz Israel, Lisbon, Portugal (8) & (11) Judaica Marseille, France (9) Chir Hadash, Brussels, Belgium (10) Maayane Or, Nice, France (12) Centro Israelita, Porto Alegre, Brazil.
Masorti Olami will honor the three worthy and outstanding Jewish leaders listed above at the annual **Evening of Tribute** on December 11th at JTS in New York City. This year’s honorees have helped raise the profile of the worldwide Masorti movement in their own communities, bringing in great support for our work. Mazal Tov to Rabbi Vernon Kurtz, Hazwan Alisa Pomerantz-Boro and Dr Marilyn Wind.

(1) The 4th Masorti AmLat meeting took place in Buenos Aires, Argentina from November 10th to 16th. 40 adult activists and 50 young people from Argentina, Brazil, Chile, Paraguay, Peru, and Uruguay participated along with guests from Israel and North America.

(2) MAROM AmLat held a leadership seminar in Sao Paulo, Brazil at the end of October for MAROM activists and coordinators from the region. Sessions focused on Dugma Ishit – Leading by example, as well as Masorti ideology and values, and strengthening bonds with Israel.

(3) & (4) The Or Israel kehilla in Buenos Aires, Argentina celebrated 100 years this year. On November 6th, they celebrated their Centenary and opening of the newly restored sanctuary with more than 250 people attending.

MERCAZ chapters around the world have worked hard throughout the year to promote Israel awareness and education in all our communities.

As part of this work, MERCAZ USA and MERCAZ Canada are jointly organizing the **first Israel Advocacy Training Seminar** for members of the Conservative movement. The seminar will be held in Baltimore on December 18th and 19th, and will train the volunteers who participate to organize and strengthen ongoing Israel advocacy in their synagogues and communities.
Masorti Olami & The Schechter Institute

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UKRAINE MISSION

July 11-17, 2012

Tours of Jewish Odessa and Kiev
20th anniversary celebration of Camp Ramah-Ukraine with Masorti families
Installation of Reuven Stamov, the first Masorti Rabbi in Ukraine

Full itinerary and registration form at
www.masortiworld.org/ukraine2012

Visit our website at www.masortiworld.org for information about Masorti kehillot around the world.

To help us continue our important work around the world, you can make a US tax-deductible donation to Masorti Olami at www.masortiworld.org/contribute or by sending a check to one of offices shown below.

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Masorti Olami acknowledges major support from the World Zionist Organization which allows us to strengthen the Zionist & Israel orientation of Masorti Judaism around the world.