



## **STATEMENT ON GILAD SHALIT**

12 October 2011

The NSW Jewish Board of Deputies welcomes the news that a prisoner-swap deal with Hamas appears to have been reached that will result in the release of kidnapped Israeli soldier Gilad Shalit. Board President Yair Miller stated that “this is welcome news, not only for the Shalit family, who have suffered with the grief of having a loved-one held in terrorist captivity for five years and have tirelessly campaigned for his release, but for all the people and organisations who have lent their moral and political support to this effort. Their courage and steadfastness in this situation should be commended.” He continued: “This would have been an extremely difficult decision and process for the Israeli Government and we acknowledge the complexity of such a resolution”

Gilad Shalit was captured from inside Israeli territory in June 2006 when Hamas gunmen tunneled under the Gaza border near the Kerem Shalom Crossing during an early morning raid. He has been held captive for over five years in contravention to international humanitarian law, having been denied visits by the International Red Cross and other NGOs.

“We wish the Government of Israel well in the implementation of the prisoner swap and wish the Shalit family strength over the next few days until Gilad is home with them again. We hope that Gilad recovers speedily from this horrific ordeal”.

**For official comments, please contact the office on 9360 1600**