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**International & Multiracial Gathering Celebrates
Ethnic Diversity of Jewish Community**

San Francisco, CA (February 9, 2006) – On **February 17-20, 2006** the Be'chol Lashon International Think Tank will bring together Jewish community leaders from Africa, Asia, Latin America, Australia, Europe, Israel, and the United States to celebrate the ethnic and racial diversity of the Jewish community. (Be'chol Lashon is Hebrew for "In Every Tongue.")

The four-day gathering in the San Francisco Bay Area will build from the analysis and conclusions of noted scholar Gary A. Tobin, and co-authors Diane Tobin and Scott Rubin, who documented in the acclaimed book, *In Every Tongue: The Racial and Ethnic Diversity of the Jewish People*, that Jews are far more diverse than commonly believed.

Of the roughly 6 million Jews in the United States, 1.2 million, or 20 percent, are ethnically and racially diverse. American Jews are African-American, Asian-American, Latino, Sephardic (of Spanish and Portuguese descent), Middle Eastern, and mixed-race, the authors found.

The 4th Annual Think Tank will take place at the Claremont Hotel in Berkeley and is open to the press (RSVP requested). Other attendees by invitation only.

Over a four-day period, participants will hold discussion groups and exchange valuable information about economic, institutional, and communal development, as well as issues facing diverse Jews regarding race and anti-Semitism.

Workshops will address external threats to the Jewish people, including aggressive proselytizing, as well as internal threats, including denominational battles and demographic decline. The conference is the only known meeting focused specifically on the interests and concerns of racially and ethnically diverse Jews, who often stand on the periphery of what is perceived to be a homogeneous religious group.

"This important conference gives diverse Jews from around the world a chance to celebrate their ties to the Jewish people and Jewish faith," said Gary Tobin, president of the Institute for Jewish & Community Research and a demographer who has studied trends of Jewish diversity. "We will offer a visual rebuttal to common stereotypes and an opportunity to celebrate strength through diversity – an ideal that has relevance to all Americans."

The Be'chol Lashon International Think Tank is sponsored by the Institute for Jewish & Community Research, an independent, non-partisan public policy institute dedicated to the growth of the Jewish community.

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