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THE TIMES OF ISRAEL

Pfizer CEO, son of Holocaust survivors, joins Israeli embassy Hanukkah lighting

Albert Bourla says just as holiday is story of 'impossible becoming possible,' world now celebrating ability of scientists to defy odds in developing vaccine so quickly

By JACOB MAGID

17 December 2020, 1:39 am



Pfizer CEO Albert Bourla lights the Hanukkah candles at a virtual ceremony organized by the Israeli embassy in Washington, on December 16, 2020. (Screen capture/Israeli Embassy in DC)

Pfizer CEO Albert Bourla lit the Hanukkah candles at a virtual ceremony organized by the Israeli embassy in Washington on Wednesday evening, just days after his pharmaceutical corporation received the final go-ahead to distribute its coronavirus vaccine across the US.

Introducing Bourla, Ambassador Ron Dermer pointed out that the business executive is also the son of Holocaust survivors, as his parents were among the few Jews from Thessaloniki, Greece to survive the horrors perpetrated by the Nazis.

“Seventy-five years after the Nazis murdered millions, Dr. Bourla is today leading the race to save millions,” Dermer said, lauding Pfizer for being the first corporation to develop a COVID-19 vaccine, which will be distributed to countries around the world, including Israel.

In brief remarks before lighting the candles, Bourla noted that Hanukkah is “the story of great determination in face of adversity,” and also “the story of the possible becoming possible.”

@IsraelinUSA

Happy 7th night of #Hanukkah!
Thanks to @Pfizer & CEO Dr. @AlbertBourla, the end of the #COVID19 pandemic is in sight as #vaccines roll out globally.

We owe Dr. Bourla & Pfizer a debt of gratitude, and are honored to have him light tonight's candles.

Watch on Twitter

<https://twitter.com/i/status/1339354917979492352>

6:41 PM · Dec 16, 2020



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“This Hanukkah, as this extremely difficult year comes to a close, and we look to a new beginning, we are celebrating both the incredible human spirit and determination it took to create the COVID-19 vaccine and how these efforts made the impossible — developing a vaccine so quickly — possible,” he added.

The embassy has invited a series of prominent figures to lead the mission's candle-lighting on each night of the holiday, including Washington Wizards 2020 first-round draft pick Deni Avdija; the Emirati and Bahraini ambassadors to the US Yousef al-Otaiba and Abdulla R. Al-Khalifa; US Ambassador to Israel David Friedman; Democratic Congresswoman Nita Lowey; Gila Sacks, the daughter of the late chief rabbi of England, Lord Jonathan Sacks; and Rabbi Meni Israel, the son of the late Talmud scholar Rabbi Adin Steinsaltz.