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**Interview with Attorney Tal Sahar of the organization "Hakol Chai":
Special Campaign for Horses and Donkeys**

Michal Caspi: We're here now with a new and interesting project by the organization "Hakol Chai," born from the concern for the state of cart-pulling horses and donkeys, a phenomenon that has existed for many years and hasn't left us. We're saying hello to Attorney Tal Sahar, the manager of "Hakol Chai." Hello Tal.

Tal Sahar: Hello Michal.

Michal Caspi: How are you?

Tal Sahar: I'm fine, and you?

Michal Caspi: Fine. Before we talk about the project, tell us a little bit about your organization.

Tal Sahar: We're an organization focusing on education and on helping animals, and we often focus on the horse and donkey populations in Israel. These animals are often pushed aside, away from the spotlight, and in Israel they don't receive the minimal protection necessary for the basic welfare of horses and donkeys.

Michal Caspi: Okay, and it's very important that someone does take care of them. And in the last few days, you have launched a campaign through your Facebook page for the horses and donkeys pulling carts.

Tal Sahar: Correct. We launched this project, called the "Witness Campaign," in order to see how big this phenomenon was, on the verge of 2012. We asked people to use their mobile phones to take pictures of cart-pulling horses, and we were surprised to receive tens of pictures from big cities, most of them from Tel Aviv, and also from Ramat Gan, Givatayim, Kfar Saba, and Netanya; so this phenomenon is definitely still with us.

Michal Caspi: What do we actually see in these pictures? What pictures did you receive?

Tal Sahar: I want to emphasize to our audience that cart-pulling horses are not some nostalgic and romantic sight, harmless for the animals, and that is shown in the photos.

Michal Caspi: No, it's not at all.

Tal Sahar: In actuality, it's a clear case of abuse, in broad daylight, and nobody is doing anything to stop it. These horses are usually rented out to the merchants, so that means the merchant is usually not the owner of the horse; he's renting the horse.

Michal Caspi: Who's renting them out?

Tal Sahar: Horse owners who have a few horses lend them to merchants, who pay them a very small sum for each day he's using the horse. This is actually cheaper for him, compared to the maintenance of a car, driving through the city, paying for gas, wear and tear, the

licensing test, and so on. To further save on money, the owners don't get the necessary medical care for these animals, not even a rabies shot that's supposed to protect us humans. The horses are fed leftover junk, dry bread and such, instead of hay, and they don't have appropriate places to live in.

Michal Caspi: You've appealed to the Interior Ministry on this issue, and I wanted to know if you've received any answer from the Ministry.

Tal Sahar: Correct, we've contacted one place that can help the cart-pulling horses. We see the municipal authorities as capable of efficiently enforcing such a ban and others, all kinds of laws that are related to this issue, so that it doesn't stay like this, in no man's land. The Interior Ministry and the Minister himself, as responsible for the municipal authorities in Israel, can write an exemplary bylaw, a bylaw that completely bans the entering of carts pulled by horses into the city. The mere presence of these animals inside the city, on jammed roads, between cars, between pedestrians, in the noise, and so on, is already abuse. Veterinarians define as stress the mental pressure the horse is under in these situations. So we really think it's a matter of pure policy; it's a bill that has nothing to do with budgets or resources.

Michal Caspi: Okay, we just don't have that much time left. We heard that someone was given a fine of 25 thousand shekels, and 6 months on parole. It means that there is some activity going on, but you're saying it's not enough.

Tal Sahar: This specific case is a person from Netivot. Charges were pressed against him for abusing a horse in violation of the law against cruelty to animals, and he was indeed charged, convicted, and sentenced to time on parole and a fine of 25 thousand shekels. Unfortunately, the horse did not survive the abuse by this person, and he died, but this is a particular case of abusing a specific horse. The global aspect isn't being addressed when it comes to the cart-pulling horses in the cities, and it seems absurd to us. It seems absurd that if you park your car on the blue-white marks, without the right parking region sticker on your car...

Michal Caspi: Then I'd get a ticket, whereas if I abuse animals, I wouldn't.

Tal Sahar: Definitely.

Michal Caspi: Before we say goodbye—the people who are taking such pictures, where should they send them?

Tal Sahar: We invite anyone who sees a cart-pulling horse to take a picture with their mobile phones, and upload it to our Facebook page. It's "Hakol Chai" in Hebrew. And they are also invited to call the municipal hotline at 106 and report it, because it's important for the municipal authority to know that these things are happening on its grounds, and maybe it would start doing something about it.

Michal Caspi: I very much hope so, and when we have another chance in a different forum, I'll tell you what I wish for these people. Attorney Tal Sahar, manager of the organization "Hakol Chai," thank you very much.

Tal Sahar: Thank you.

Michal Caspi: Please stop abusing animals; they feel it, and they are not objects. If you're looking for a place to take out your aggression, buy a car and smash its window.