HASSENFELD, SYLVIA

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HASSENFELD, SYLVIA K. (KAY)

93, international leader, human rights activist, and philanthropist, died August 15, 2014. She was the wife of the late Merrill L. Hassenfeld. Born in Pennsylvania, the daughter of Joseph and Sophie (Flieglman) Kay, she was a resident of Palm Beach, Florida.

Mrs. Hassenfeld has been described as "one of the most significant leaders in the American Jewish community of the twentieth century." In her over 50 years of national and international humanitarian leadership, she served as the first woman president of the American Jewish Joint Distribution Committee (JDC). As president of the JDC, Mrs. Hassenfeld initiated the International Development Program (IDP), which provides non-sectarian aid in times of crisis. Begun in response to the needs engendered by the Armenian earthquake, the IDP

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the Board of the United Israel Appeal, and the Board of Governors of the Jewish Agency.

Board Member Emeritus of Hasbro, Inc., Mrs. Hassenfeld served as a Director on the company's board for over 20 years. As a leader in academia, she served as Vice Chair of the Board at Brandeis University and on the Advisory Committee of the Hopkins-Nanjing Center, a program jointly administered by Johns Hopkins University and Nanjing University in Nanjing, China. She received an Honorary Doctorate in Humane Letters from Brandeis University in 1998.

Mrs. Hassenfeld has been recognized internationally by numerous educational, cultural, and civic organizations for her diplomatic skills and her role in protecting human rights, promoting religious freedom, influencing social policy and assuring services to children in need. Among her many honors and awards, she was made an Honorary Citizen of Jerusalem in recognition for her life-long efforts on behalf of Jerusalem and its citizens. She was also made a presidential appointee to the United States Holocaust Memorial Council under three different presidents, awarded the Emma Lazarus Statue of Liberty Award by the American Jewish Historical Society for "contributions to