

The Diplomatic Club

SEPTEMBER 2013



PEOPLE

INTERVIEW WITH THE
CYPRIOT AMBASSADOR
TO ISRAEL



EVENT

TRIP TO JUDEA & SAMARIA



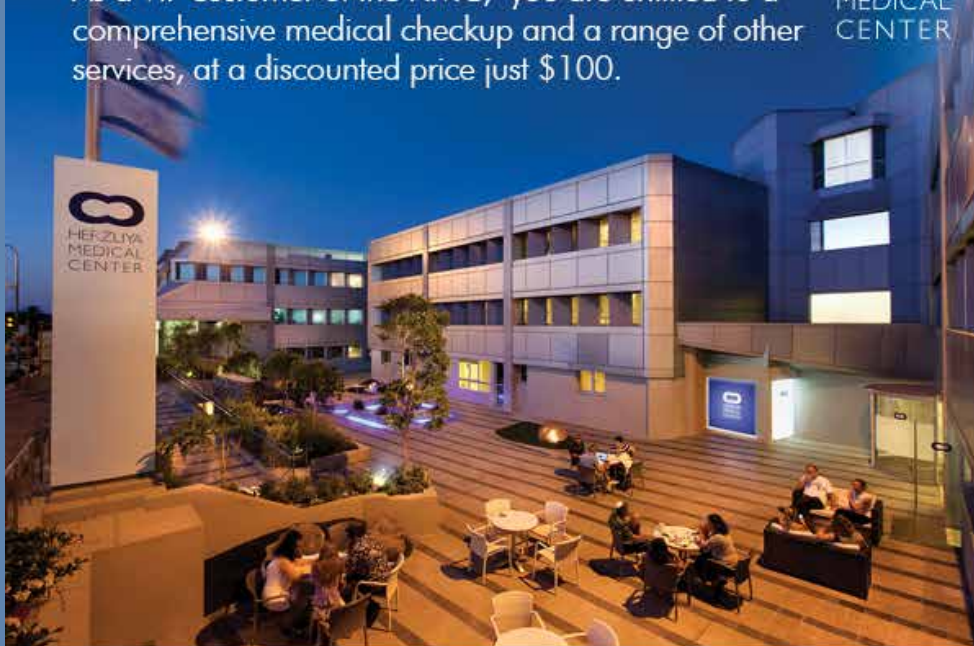
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Dear Friends,

Like every year in the diplomatic community, summer is a time of changes. So, we are happy to welcome all the new diplomatic staff to Israel. As well, we'd like to wish our veteran diplomats a fruitful year starting straight after the summer break.

This issue was composed close to the Jewish High Holidays: Rosh HaShana (the Jewish New Years), Yom Kippur (The Day of Atonement) and Sukkot (the Feast of the Tabernacles).

So, I am taking this opportunity to wish all of you good health and prosperity during the year 5774 on the Hebrew calendar.

More than three thousand years ago, the descendants of the Twelve Tribes of Israel, united under the leadership of Saul, David and Solomon, the first three Kings of Israel. These people with their own unique religion joined to become one nation with a Temple and a capitol in Jerusalem which formed the foundation of what is called the "Old City" today.

We can learn from this that people of different tribes and cultures can unite under a common purpose and when doing so can accomplish great feats together.

Let hope, that lesson will be carry throughout the region.

In August, The Diplomatic Club celebrated its 15 year birthday.

As I look back, it is like a 15 year old adolescent, not fully mature, but not an infant either. We have been over the same stages: the challenges of birth, the pain of teething, the broken voice of puberty and developing our own personality.

Now, we can say with some confidence that we have learned a lot (but are still learning) and have done a lot (but still have much more we want to accomplish) and we are definitely mature enough to say:

The Diplomatic Club in Israel is proud about its activity over the last 15 years and looking forward to what we can accomplish together with our readers in the future.

Here, in Israel, at the crossing of three major monotheistic religions and three continents was born the idea of people reaching out to another as diplomats to provide links between different countries, their people and their leaders. An open mind and "togetherness" - this has been the philosophy of the Diplomatic Club since 1998.

On the occasion of Israel's 65 Years of Independence and the International Friendship Day the Diplomatic club initiated a photo competition "Israel through Foreign Lenses".

Diplomats from over the world, foreign journalists, representatives of foreign religions and UN staff have been exhibiting their photographs of how they view Israel according to several categories:

1) Family 2) Nature & Environment 3) Daily Life 4) Fine Art 5) Religion.

All of the pictures submitted were appreciated and opened a lot of eyes to how Israel and Israelis are seen by visitors.

The Diplomatic Club is particularly proud of the participation of the young photographers Charlotte Veldkamp and Luka Tomic and hope that their participation and other young photographers becomes a tradition.

We hope, this exciting experience will be something that you will never forget – a present for a lifetime!

Shana Tova/ a Sweet New Years.

Sincerely,

Julia Verdel

Publisher

And the Editorial Team



A GOOD NEIGHBOR SEES BRIGHTER DAYS AHEAD: AN INTERVIEW OF AMBASSADOR DIMITRIS HATZIARGYROU OF CYPRUS

By David Rhodes

Cyprus has been in the international news recently for its economic challenges and its dramatic bailout by international organizations. Looking back, how could it have been avoided on Cyprus's part and what steps is Cyprus taking to make sure it doesn't happen again?

The problem faced by Cyprus is something that other countries have faced over the years. It concerns primarily irresponsible policies of expansion pursued by the two major banks of our country which landed them in financial trouble. As a result of their behavior Cyprus faced successive downgrades by the major credit rating houses and as a result of that for the last two years we could not secure refinancing of the national debt. This was the reason why we had to apply to the European Stability Mechanism for a bailout.

How much was what happened to Cyprus self-afflicted and how much part of being part of the European Union? Did the collapse of Greek economy play a crucial role in dragging down the Cypriot economy?

The over-expansion of the banks cannot be said to be necessarily a bad development. Unfortunately in the case of Cyprus, this over-expansion was followed by irresponsible policies by the banks which created a lot of problems. The fact that Cyprus was a member of the Eurozone did not of itself cause the problems. The lack of proper oversight on the other hand did its part in bringing the banks down and led the country, which had to bail them out, into dire financial straits.

The problems of the Cyprus banks began when the Greek economy collapsed and had to apply for a bailout. And as the

Greek debt was unsustainable the decision to proceed with a PSI (haircut) of the Greek debt caused massive losses in the neighborhood of 4.5 billion euros, a quarter of Cyprus' GNP, to the Cypriot banks which had earlier purchased Greek bonds at very attractive rates. As the banks had to be bailed out by the state, the national debt of Cyprus, which up until then was manageable, reached unsustainable levels. Then the downgrades of the country's credit worthiness began which meant that we could no longer turn to the international markets to refinance our debt (as all countries do).

As part of an 18 billion Euro bailout Cyprus is expected to come up with about 7 billion Euro of its own. Is that realistic? Much of it is targeting large depositors in your banks. How much is that from foreign depositors and how will

that affect Cyprus as center for offshore banking center in the future?

Actually this is the first case in the Eurozone of a case of "bail in". This means that to recapitalize the banks which is a necessary condition for any economy to jump start, these huge amounts were decided by the Eurogroup decision of 15 March and subsequently of the following decision of 25 March, that they would have to be raised by Cyprus, something that would make the debt of the state unsustainable pushing the country into default. That is how the decision was taken to proceed with the haircut of deposits. Cyprus thus became a guinea pig on how banks that run into trouble in the future will be dealt with. That is, other than the 100,000 euros of depositors, which are insured, the banks themselves, their stock holders, the holders of their bonds



Ambassador Dimitris Hatziargyrou

and the rest of the depositors will have to contribute for the recapitalization of the banks. A considerable amount of these deposits come from foreign depositors although Cypriots (and by that I mean, individuals as well as institutions) were the bigger losers. This development will certainly affect Cyprus as an international banking center but it does not mean that it will cease to exist. The international banking sector will shrink and we hope with proper oversight it will be able to bounce back in due time. There are already many companies with operations in Cyprus which have announced that they will be staying in Cyprus and continue to benefit from its low corporate tax rate and high levels of professional services.

How are Cypriots reacting to the economic crisis? How is it playing out as far as cutting government programs? Are business's closing? Homes being foreclosed? Are prices skyrocketing or is inflation staying stable? Are loans for businesses and mortgages frozen? Is new construction dormant until this all plays out?

The result of this unprecedented decision by the Eurogroup has pushed the country into recession. The strings attached, as one

would expect, for the provision of the 10 billion euro bailout, aim at achieving fiscal consolidation so that the country can face the immediate challenges and move ahead out of this crisis. As in previous bailouts in Eurozone countries (and not only) the exit from the crisis requires policies that reduce expenses and increase government revenues. This, in almost all cases, requires sacrifices by everyone.

The initial reaction by the average Cypriot at the decision of 15 March was one of shock and apprehension. Cypriots did not go out into the street to protest against the government. There was, naturally, disappointment at the way that Cyprus became a guinea pig of its European partners and at the lack of solidarity displayed. And let us not forget the role of certain circles in Europe which, using the too-eager press, particularly in one member state, undertook a fierce campaign to portray our country as a haven of dirty Russian money. The recent results of a committee to investigate that claim, in which Moneyval and DeLoitte were involved, proved that this was highly exaggerated.

My government took a series of substantial measures to limit the fiscal deficit. These

included raising taxes, substantial cutbacks in salaries and reduction of spending. The result of this was a reduction in economic activity with all that that entails. One particular negative development was an increase in unemployment, particularly among the young. Our GNP is expected to shrink for the next couple of years which will impact negatively on many, mostly small and medium size companies. And this will increase unemployment. A lot of people and real estate companies are facing problems paying their mortgages but we have not yet seen massive foreclosures. The government is taking measures to avoid this scenario which we have witnessed in other countries by, for example, reaching agreements with the banks, to lengthen repayment periods.

Prices are not skyrocketing; on the contrary we have seen a reduction as people are more cautious with their money. Inflation is stable. Construction has practically come to a standstill, even though this was a sector of the economy which had experienced a slowdown 18 months or so before the crisis; but, nonetheless, there is a glut of properties on the market at very competitive prices. This was because there was a huge boom in construction after 2004 when we acceded to the EU and



buyers were flooding the market. As these properties are being sold and the banking sector is stabilized and recapitalized we expect that the construction sector will start to move again. 2013 and 2014 will be tough years but we hope that by 2015 the economy's engines will start to rev up again.

Other than all the international bodies that have stepped in, have neighboring countries been able to offer any assistance? Has it affected the relationship between Israel and Cyprus?

Cyprus enjoys good relations with all its neighbors (except of course Turkey which continues to occupy 37% of its territory). We have not requested assistance from our neighbors but we feel that the prospects are there for mutually beneficial cooperation. There are many opportunities for investment in Cyprus and our country has a lot to offer. The stability of EU membership, an investment friendly environment, a highly educated workforce and competitive investment opportunities. Our tourism sector will continue to grow, a decision was taken to proceed with the development of casinos in the island, the maritime sector seems to be unaffected by the crisis and our offshore sector and even the banking sector will rebound.

Cyprus and Israel have had traditionally good relations. Over the last 3 years, way before the crisis, the relationship qualitatively expanded. We have seen an increase in Israeli tourists and investors in Cyprus and we have concluded an array of bilateral agreements which create the legal institutional framework for expanding cooperation in many areas and of course there are the prospects of cooperation in the energy sector where both our countries have been blessed with substantial amounts of natural gas. This last development is another area from which we hope to benefit from in coming out of the current economic doldrums.

What is the current political situation like in Cyprus? It's a divided isle with 1/3 Turkish/Muslim Cypriots in the north and mostly Greek Christians in the south, how do the two parts of the island get along? Do people travel to the other sides? Is there trade between the two sides? Is there much violence? Is the relationship of Greek and Turkish Cypriots reflective of relationship between Greece and Turkey and how are these two countries getting along? What are the long term prospects for a more unified Cyprus and better relations between Greece and Turkey?

In Cyprus we view the current division not in terms of religion – pitting Christians against Moslems but rather in terms of an invasion and illegal occupation of a sovereign country, in violation of international law by one of its neighbors. The relationship between Greek Cypriots and Turkish Cypriots is not one of deep hatred. Let us not forget that in Cyprus we have had a clash of imported nationalisms which led to the Turkish invasion of our country in 1974. That invasion is the cause of the division of the island, and it is being perpetuated by the presence of a large, heavily armed, Turkish occupying force which has isolated the Turkish Cypriot community. Greek Cypriots and Turkish Cypriots lived peacefully on the island for centuries and they proved that they can do so again when in 2003 the Turkish occupying army allowed people to cross the dividing line. This is testified by the fact that since 2003 with millions of crossings taking place there have been no major incidents, and certainly absolutely no violence, between the two Cypriot communities.

The big challenge before us now and for the last 39 years is how we secure a solution that will reunify the island and will allow all Cypriots to live in the land of their ancestors without foreign interference. That is the crux of the problem. The international community via the Good Offices of the Secretary General of the United Nations has invested heavily in attempting to arrive at a solution of the Cyprus Problem. The problem, despite often verbal declarations in support for a solution emanating from Ankara, is Turkish policy on Cyprus. A policy that wants to maintain control by using the Turkish Cypriot community in Cyprus, as a tool in achieving its aims in the area. The government of Cyprus and the recently elected President Anastasiades are determined to pursue a just and viable solution to this anachronism that would guarantee the reunification of the island with full rights and protections for all its citizens. We hope that by this Fall the discussions will begin again for yet another



effort at tackling the problem. Greece does not interfere in the decisions of the government of Cyprus and steadfastly supports the efforts of the United Nations in this respect. It fully respects the fact that Cyprus is an independent country, a member of the UN and the EU, and will determine its own future. I wish I could say the same for Turkey.

How do you think Cyprus unresolved divided nature compares to Israel's unresolved borders? Also Israel is sort of an "island in the sand" with its neighbors being destinations Israeli citizens can't (Syria and Lebanon) or generally don't (Egypt and Jordan) travel to. So do you see similarities here to life in Israel to that in Cyprus?

Cyprus is a clear case of invasion and foreign occupation of an independent and sovereign member of the United Nations Organization perpetrated by another country also a member of the UN. There are many UNGA and UNSC resolutions calling on Turkey to withdraw its troops from Cyprus. Turkey refuses to do that. In the case of Israel, although there are also UN resolutions concerning the case, the situation is not as clear cut as in Cyprus. In Cyprus the UN calls for the reunification of the territory while in the MEPP the

international community supports a two-state solution.

Cyprus is one country with no borders and movement within it should be free. Cyprus is a geographical island. Israel on the other hand has defined borders and it is more of a question of its relationship with its neighbors that gives the impression of "an island in the sand".

I imagine Cyprus considers itself part of the Eastern Mediterranean region rather than part of the Middle East (although it is greatly affected by events nearby). Many Israelis are trying to rebrand Israel as part of the Eastern Med rather than part of the Middle East since the whole country is within 1 1/2 hours drive of the Mediterranean and culturally we have more in common with countries like Greece and Cyprus than Israel does with Iraq, Iran and Saudi Arabia. Having lived in Cyprus and Israel, do you see a lot of similarities in the cultures and how?

Yes I do see similarities between the two Mediterranean peoples. I do not feel out of place when I walk down Rothschild Blvd or down Makariou Street in Nicosia. Cyprus feels European and at the same time part of the Eastern Mediterranean. I imagine that the average Israeli feels an

affinity with western culture while at the same time being cognizant of his or her Mediterranean identity.

What's the short history of the relationship between Israel and Cyprus and where is it today and how do you see it evolving?

The history of the region that both people live in is a very turbulent one. Cypriots and Jews have interacted throughout history. In the First Century A.D. the island hosted a great number of Jews. During Roman rule in the Second Century the Romans wiped out the Jewish population of the island in their effort to maintain their control on the island. Since then there was only limited presence of Jews on Cyprus. In more recent times, in the 1930's and 40's a number of Jews moved to the island in order to escape the rise of Nazism in Europe. They set up businesses there and did well. My own grandfather worked for a Jewish man who had set up a workshop in my hometown of Larnaka and made dentures. After the Second World War, Cyprus was used as a stepping stone for Jews moving to Palestine. Most of the Cypriot Jews moved to Israel after its establishment. More than 50,000 European Jews trying to reach Israel in the years 1946 – 1949 were interned on the island by the British who



held Cyprus as a colony. 2,000 children were born in these internment camps. The Cypriot population at the time provided help, on a human level, to these people and assisted a small number of them to escape and reach Palestine.

Following the establishment of the independent Republic of Cyprus in 1960, the two countries established diplomatic relations immediately. Since then the relations have been friendly. In more recent years, as I mentioned before, the relationship between Cyprus and Israel has progressed rapidly. In 1995 the first synagogue was established in Larnaka to cater to the more than 300 Israelis who now live or have holiday homes on the island. There is a wide array of cooperation on many levels. Tourism is increasing steadily while many Cypriot doctors come to Israel to specialize in many fields of medicine. A Cypriot university, a British University and Tel Aviv University are cooperating to set up a medical school in Cyprus. In short, the omens are good for expanding these relations.

What kind of commerce and assistance exists between the two countries? We know there is a mostly Christian



*Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu with
Ambassador Dimitris Hatzigiorgou*

population, do they travel much to Israel as pilgrims or for recreation? Is a visa required? How many Israelis visit Cyprus? It is often stated that some Israelis travel to Cyprus for civil unions that aren't accessible in Israel. What else is attracting Israelis to Cyprus?

Trade between the two countries stands at 700 million euros annually. Israelis go to Cyprus for tourism and many Cypriot pilgrims come to Israel to visit the Holy Land. The number of Israeli tourists to Cyprus stands at about 90,000 annually while about 15,000 Cypriots visit Israel. A visa is not required for Cypriot and Israeli passport holders. A good number of weddings take place in Cyprus, from our records, about 600 last year alone.

What attracts Israelis to Cyprus is the easy going way of life on the island coupled with the beauty of the country and its beautiful climate and particularly its great beaches. The same can be said for the more than 3 million other tourists that flock to our country every year. Proximity is also another factor. It takes 36 minutes for the flight to Cyprus and we would like to see more Israelis spend their weekends there.

Do you have family with you in Israel? What kind of activities do you enjoy together or separately? What have some of your favorite places to visit in Israel?

I am here in Israel with my wife Elpida. I have a son who is currently attending university in the United States. I am an avid lover of the sea (being a Mediterranean) and thus I adore swimming and snorkeling. Of course, my interests include reading, primarily history, archaeology and literature. I play chess and love to travel. I have visited Israel north to south and east to west. My favorite place to visit is the Old City of Jerusalem. One of the greatest experiences that I have had was going on a private tour underneath Jerusalem and exploring the tunnels and the City of David. As I have a passion for archaeology and history (one of the Ambassador's diplomas is in Modern Greek & Byzantine studies) this was a

truly exceptional experience.

Are there anything you especially miss from Cyprus? It's not that far away how often do you travel back and forth?

Of course I miss Cyprus, family and friends as well as watching my favorite football team and but as it is so close (36 minutes flying time) I visit there very often (every couple of months).

What vision do Cypriot officials have for a future Cyprus and Israel together and separately?

The job of every ambassador is to see the relations of the country he represents to grow during his tenure in the country that hosts him. My experience here over the last two years is that there is tremendous political will on both sides to further enhance our relationship. We are working hard, on both sides, to achieve that. This is testified by the many official visits including that of former President Christofias in March of 2011, President Peres to Cyprus in November of the same year, the first ever visit by an Israeli Prime Minister when PM Netanyahu visited Cyprus in February of last year and the newly elected President Anastasiades in May of this year. Not to mention the many Ministerial and Senior Officials visits to both countries.

We are neighbors and as such we are destined to cooperate. So we are constantly looking for opportunities to cooperate. There is very good will on both sides. After all we are friendly neighbors with no divisive issues between us. Our hope, as Cyprus, is to see all the countries in our region cooperate for the common good. The beautiful Mediterranean Sea is our backyard. Let us work together to make it truly a Sea of Peace.

Ambassador Hatzigiorgou is a career diplomat with the Ministry of Foreign Affairs of the Republic of Cyprus and has been serving as Ambassador to Israel since March 2011.

DEEP ROOTS AND HIGH HOPES: THE DIPLOMATIC CLUB VISITED JUDEA & SAMARIA

By David Rhodes

On a Sunday morning, June 9th, 2013, the Diplomatic Club left Tel Aviv by bus to tour Judea and Samaria (also known as the West Bank). Along for the tour were diplomats, representatives from NGO's and graduate students from Austria, Denmark, India and Kenya and the Ukraine. Of special note was the presence of the Ambassador of Costa Rica Rodrigo Carreras, who is serving his second term in that role after a stint in the 1980's and whose father, Benjamin Nunez, also had been the Ambassador some four decades ago. As a group we were cordially hosted by the Binyamin Tourism Council. The Binyamin region is located just north of Jerusalem leading up Route 6 which follows a historic path dating back thousands of years that has both Jewish and Arab towns on either side along its length often dotted by olive trees belonging to residents of nearby Arab villages or

vineyards belonging to Jewish families.

Our first stop traveling north was at the Binyamin Tourism Visitor Center which is a short ride north of Jerusalem and also hosts the Psagot Winery, the southern most winery on what some have called the Biblical Wine Route. We were treated to a satiating breakfast and a taste of the 2010 Psagot Merlot but we weren't just along for a whimsical romp. Settler movement representative Danny Dayan met with us and gave us his perspective on chances for peace in the region. He wasn't overly optimistic on the chances of peace coming from a two state solution and believed that instead of focusing on peace in the region, international players should focus on justice for all parties including Palestinian refugees still living in camps who he claimed are there only to be used as pawns by their leaders.

Our second stop was the site of the ancient town of Shiloh which had been the capitol of the Twelve Tribes of Israel for 369 years before eventually moving to Jerusalem and its role in history and its location are mentioned in the Old Testament's Book of Judges. Excavations have unearthed antiquities and ruins dating back over 3000 years and a modern village of Shiloh was built nearby in 1978.

After a short walking tour of the ruins (we had a packed schedule) we were fortunate enough to be some of the first guests to experience a unique new theatrical presentation in a state of the art facility that projected a film onto a screen of twelve pains of glass (symbolizing the aforementioned Twelves Tribes) which as windows overlook the valley where the Tabernacle housing the Ark of the Covenant once stood. The experience serves as an effective way of connecting the viewer with the area as its portrayed in the film.

Additionally, recently found burnt raisins that date back thousands of years at the site of Ancient Shiloh give hope that a mystery of what wine grapes were native to the period may be answered. A nearby winemaker aspires to being able to recreate wine from that era once he knows which grapes were used in that era. It remains to be seen if wine made to be authentic to that era which may have been watered down, flavored and preserved with additives like pine resin, herbs and date honey would be very palatable to connoisseurs today or if the winemaker would go to those extremes in his attempt to make the wine authentic.

We would break for lunch nearby at the Tura Winery, a small family run operation with a charming visitor center. With a long tasting table that can accommodate dozens of guests for a tasting of any of Tura's eight wines or a feast of various meats, an array

The Diplomatic Club Magazine 9



Meeting between the President of Ariel University and the Diplomatic Club Mission

of salads, roasted vegetables and fresh fruit; our day's bounty continued as we enjoyed both a small feast and two of Tura's awarding winning red wines which were underscored by the hospitality of our hosts.

At these first three stops we were visiting with people who settled the area who had a passion to live in an area that had huge religious and cultural significance for them as Jews returning to part of their ancestral homeland even though it was not within Israel's border's after its War of Independence in 1948 (or was the Western Wall and Temple Mount in the Old City for that matter, the holiest site in Judaism). Although the future sovereignty of this land is in question, there's no doubt these people have a connection to where they live and a sincere desire to preserve it as place of significance of Jewish and even Christian heritage. In fact, hundreds of Christians from around the world volunteer to harvest grapes at various wineries in the region.

It was another short ride, this time west along Route 5 before we reached Ariel University, the only Israeli university in the region. The university just went through the lengthy process of obtaining its accreditation recently transitioning from being a college. It's expanding faculty, the amount of world renown research, its offering of graduate and doctoral programs all played a part in it not only becoming a local hub for students in the region but drawing students from all over Israel and starting to attract students from overseas including a special track for MBA students from Russia. The President of the University, Dr. Yehuda Danon, is also the former Surgeon General of Israel. He asserted that the university has had no problem attracting quality faculty to instruct its expanding student body of close to 15,000 students, 2,000 of whom live on campus in dorms. With its new and expanding programs, Dr. Danon believes aspiring academics have a greater probability of quicker career opportunities than they might at older universities with more entrenched professors. The university has only touched on its potential

to be a multi-cultural beacon for the region as it has only 500 Arab students currently attending but Danon is proud that those students are allowed to attend without having to make any lifestyle changes they would need to make attending other Israeli universities and the campus makes whatever accommodations necessary for the students to fit in and hopes more Arab students would attend in the future.

One point of frustration for the Ariel's administration is their difficulty obtaining grants from the European Union and from the United States for being located "behind the 1967 green line." Even for research that would benefit Arabs in the area, the university faces an uphill battle finding funding and must often find a research partner outside of the territories on many projects to access grants. Two projects show that the AU is trying to be a good neighbor to all of the region's residents. With a very low life expectancy in the northern Shomron, due to the cancer causing fumes that are a by product of the dominant charcoal industry, the university has been developing new charcoal processing procedures to protect Arab workers and residents from fumes that lower the life expectancy for those in

that area by decades. Another project is to recycle wastewater in the area so that it can be reused for agricultural purposes for everyone in the region: Jew, Muslim or Christian. It's sadly ironic that the blanketing boycott of assistance that Ariel University endures includes even programs that are meant to assist the people the boycott is meant to help.

Our last stop before heading back to Tel Aviv, was at a plastics factory further west in the industrial park in Barkan. We were guided through the facility by Yehuda Cohen who oversees the operation. This one factory employed an almost equal mix of 90 Jews and Arabs who made plastic parts for plumbing as well as consumer products most of which were sold to customers in Israel. A recent boycott from Palestinians has hurt business tremendously but seems counter intuitive since many of the companies employ Arabs at far higher salaries than they can find in their own towns. Discussion from Palestinian authorities to have Arab workers quit their job never went anywhere as they provide some of the best opportunities for thousands of Palestinians who get along quite well with the Jewish co-workers who both get paid the same for the same jobs and there are Arabs who are even managers overseeing both Arab and Jewish workers. Employees also socialize together at company outings and politics seem to stay outside the workplace even during tense times such as the recent Pillars of Defense conflict with Gaza.

This kind of economic cooperation is seen by some as one ray of hope how the region may evolve into a perceived place of peaceful coexistence and even symbiotic synergy and not the depository of despair that is portrayed often by people who never set foot in the area to talk to its residents.



Meeting between the President of Ariel University and the Diplomatic Club Mission

"Ideals are like stars; you will not succeed in touching them with your hands. But like the seafaring man on the desert of waters, you choose them as your guides, and following them you will reach your destiny."- Carl Schurz, 1859.

JAMES BOND CAR AND BATMOBILE ARRIVE IN TEL AVIV

Israelis are getting a little taste of Hollywood right in their backyard, according to a statement released by “AutoMotor”.

The “AutoMotor” exhibition, which opened in Tel Aviv on July, offers Israelis and tourists, a close look at 14 vehicles and motorcycles that starred in highly popular Hollywood movies over the years. The main attraction of the exhibition of course, is the legendary Batmobile.

However, the vehicle through which Batman saved Gotham City, did not come to Israel alone. The car that starred on the Dark Knight movie series, came to visit along with James Bond’s Land Rover and even the motorcycle from the Harry Potter series.

Due to the high cost of the insurance, \$1 million, spectators can only look and not sit in the seat where Batman sat. Exhibition organizers promise that some of the vehicles can drive really fast, but due to the high cost, the vehicles will remain stationary, so there is no chance that Israelis will see the Batmobile stuck in traffic on the Ayalon highway.



DIPLOMATIC EVENTS

U.S. EMBASSY INDEPENDENCE DAY



The U.S. Embassy held a celebration in honor of July 4th, United States Independence Day.



Fireworks marking the occasion

SLOVENIAN FILM IN HOLON

The Haifa Film Festival at Haifa Cinematheque will be screening the Slovene film “Dance in the Rain” by Boštjan Hladnik.

The festival will take place 18-29 September, 2013.

For more information, please visit: <http://www.haifaff.co.il>

Also coming up: “Opening of the exhibition Other people’s problems: Conflicts and Paradoxes” at the Herzliya Museum of Contemporary Art.

The installation “Corpse of Art” by Slovene artist collective IRWIN will be presented at the exhibition, opening on September 7, 2013.



Slovene film “Dance in the Rain”

UKRANIAN EMBASSY CELEBRATION

The Ukrainian Embassy held a reception in honor of its National day, celebrating 22 years of independence.

Ambassador Hennadii Nadolenko and Mrs. Nadolenko, received each guest personally with a warm handshake.

Among the distinguished guests were Israel’s Minister of Immigration Absorption, Sofa Landver, Deputy Foreign Minister MK Zeev Elkin, members of the diplomatic staff of the foreign embassies in Israel and Israeli executives.



FRENCH NATIONAL DAY

The French Consulate General in Jerusalem celebrated French National Day in the Old City of Jerusalem. It commemorates the 1790 Fête de la Fédération, held on the first anniversary of the storming of the Bastille on 14 July 1789.

The celebration was held with the participation of a group of Palestinian government ministers, clerics and figures of the Palestinian private sector and the French and foreigners.

The French representative thanked the French Consul General Frederic Desagneux, in his speech on this occasion, the participation of the audience from the Palestinian government and politicians.



MOVIE FESTIVAL



STATES OF MINDS: AMERICAN INDEPENDENT FILM FESTIVAL



States of Minds is an incorporated non-profit organization based in Washington D.C.

In collaboration with leading diplomatic, cultural, and educational institutions in the United States and abroad, the goal of States of Minds is to facilitate a “meeting of minds” between the United States and other countries.



By engaging both the public and private sector, States of Minds seeks to foster and promote positive social impact and a greater

understanding of diverse societies among countries of cultural similarities and differences.

Through States of Minds media (film, television, and social media), technology and educational programs, assumptions about other cultures will be challenged, perceptions confronted, and country-to-country relationships furthered.

This year States of Minds aims to promote cultural exchange, understanding, and cooperation between the United States and Israel through an American Film Festival in Tel Aviv.

Tickets are on sale through the Lev Cinema website.

PRESIDENT PERES RECEIVES NEW AMBASSADORS



President Peres welcomed several new ambassadors to Israel recently, including Mr. Devanand (Dave) Noel Sharma of Australia, Mr. Jesper Vahr of Denmark, and Ms. Winnie Anna Kiap of Papua New Guinea.

Photo credit to Mark Neiman.



Ms. Winnie Anna Kiap of Papua New Guinea



Mr. Jesper Vahr of Denmark



Mr. Devanand (Dave) Noel Sharma of Australia



Mr. Jesper Vahr of Denmark



WELCOMING THE JEWISH NEW YEAR

President Shimon Peres, at his Jerusalem residence, hosted a reception and toast for the Jewish New Year with the foreign ambassadors in Israel. The President delivered remarks in which he addressed the tension in Syria, the Israeli-Palestinian peace negotiations and other major diplomatic issues while stressing again that Israel has no part in the Syrian conflict but would defend itself if attacked, “If Syria attacks us we will overcome them and that is why I believe it won’t happen. We have enough of a deterrent, enough strength and defense. We have one of the best security infrastructures and one of the best militaries in the modern world.”

President Peres addressed the killing in Syria and said, “Assad has lost the right to be a leader by killing a hundred thousand people. He caused it. He wasn’t elected properly, it was never a real democracy but even in a democracy you don’t have the right to kill your own people. Assad will disappear one way or the other.”

On President Obama’s decision regarding an American attack on Syria, President Peres said, “War is a very serious business and I would suggest to every leader to think as much as they can before rather than afterwards. I admire President Obama’s attempt to examine every possibility to bring this horrible situation to an end. None of us can ignore it; we do not have

the right to. I believe it will reach an end because moral borders are not less important than physical borders. Physical borders can be crossed by missiles, moral ones cannot be crossed. You are either wrong or right.”

Addressing the resumption of peace talks between Israel and the Palestinians President Peres said, “We begin this year with good news and bad news. The good news is that the peace process has been renewed. It wasn’t simple for the Prime Minister of Israel, who had to overcome serious problems, who has had to take a risk and to embark upon the desired but also the unknown. He did it, he did it rightly and I think he, and his government, deserves our appreciation. Abu Mazen continues to be against terror, he continues to strive for peace and I think he has shown courage by saying that though he’s from Safed he won’t return there which is a meaningful declaration. Before the start of negotiations there was a great deal of doubt but the fact that the two parties are talking is a victory for reason, I hope we shall continue.”

“We used to live in a world where children buried their fathers who fought in war but to see babies being killed by their own ruler, I do not believe that any human being can pass over it without considering it as the worst demonstration of evil. The peace process has been given nine months so at least we have nine months of optimism.”



Photo credit: Mark Neiman

DURING THE LAST 65 YEARS

Technology

- Israel has designed the first flight system to protect passenger and freighter aircraft against missile attack.
- Israel produces more scientific papers per capita than any other nation by a large margin – 109 per 10,000 people – as well as one of the highest per capita rates of patents filed.
- In proportion to its population, Israel has the largest number of startup companies in the world. In absolute terms, Israel has the largest number of startup companies than any other country in the world, except the US (3,500 companies mostly in hi-tech).
- Israel is ranked #2 in the world for venture capital funds right behind the US.
- According to industry officials, Israel designed the airline industry's most impenetrable flight security. U.S. officials now look to Israel for advice on how to handle airborne security threats.
- Israel has the highest percentage in the world of home computers per capita.
- Israel leads the world in the number of scientists and technicians in the workforce, with 145 per 10,000, as opposed to 85 in the U.S., over 70 in Japan, and less than 60 in Germany. With over 25% of its work force employed in technical professions. Israel places first in this category as well.
- The first PC anti-virus software was developed in Israel in 1979.
- AirTrain JFK – the 8.1-mile light rail labyrinth that connects JFK Airport to New York City's mass transit – is protected by the Israeli-developed Nextiva surveillance system.
- An Israeli company M-Systems was the first to patent and introduce the disk on key.
- A team of Israeli and US researchers has designed a watermelon-picking robot endowed with artificial vision to do the

job of harvesting.

- A small Israel company called Lenslet has developed a revolutionary electro-optic processor which operates one thousand times faster than any known Digital Signal Processor.
- An Israeli-developed algorithm enabled NASA to transmit images from Mars.
- Israel hosts IBM's largest R&D facilities outside the United States.
- Israeli researchers have developed an engineless, nano-RPV (remote piloted vehicle).
- The U.S. Marines in Iraq are using an Israel-developed hand-held computer for communication purposes.
- Israel engineers are behind the development of the largest communications router in the world, launched by Cisco.
- Israeli air force pilot technology is being used to train American college basketball and hockey players.
- An Israeli physicist-turned-inventor has developed the world's first air-conditioned motorcycle.
- Millions of American youngsters will soon be able to surf safely in Internet chat rooms thanks to Israeli technology.
- Jerusalem-based SnapKeys is bringing smart phone users a whole new way to type ñ with an invisible keyboard.
- A new Israeli iPhone and iPad app called GroupShot flawlessly cobbles together the best images from a variety of group shots where somebody's blinking, yawning or clowning.
- A winning proposal by Israel's Technion Institute of Technology and Cornell University will form the basis of the future NYTechinstitute in the Big Apple.
- An Israeli smart phone app already in use worldwide enables drivers to avoid jams, and navigate their way through crowded city streets, using data from their phone's

GPS.

- The new American state-of-the-art F-35 Joint Strike Fighter aircraft will be equipped with Israeli-developed mounted display systems in their helmets which incorporate and display all vital flight data.
- Israeli mini-unmanned aerial vehicles are being used by US forces in Iraq and Afghanistan.
- Intel has sold more than \$5 billion worth of the Israeli-developed Centrino chipsets since they were introduced in March 2003.
- An Israeli company has developed the world's first video ringtones for cell phones – the Vringo.
- Voice over internet protocol (VoIP) technology was pioneered in Israel.
- Bill Gates called Israel a major player in the high tech world.
- Intel's new multi-core processor was completely developed at its facilities in Israel.
- Motorola has its largest R&D center outside of the US in Israel.
- Most of the Windows NT operating system was developed by Microsoft-Israel.
- The Pentium MMX Chip technology was designed in Israel at Intel.
- Voice mail technology was developed in Israel.
- Both Microsoft and Cisco built their only R&D facilities outside the US in Israel.
- The technology for AOL Instant Messenger was developed in 1996 by four young Israelis.
- With more than 3,000 high-tech companies and start-ups, Israel has the highest concentration of high-tech companies in the world (apart from the Silicon Valley).
- Prof. Robert Aumann is the fourth Israeli in the last four years to win a Nobel Prize.
- Israeli technology is behind the successful

testing of in-flight cell phone use.

Health

• Israeli scientists developed the first fully computerized, no-radiation, diagnostic instrumentation for breast cancer.

• An Israeli company developed a computerized system for ensuring proper administration of medications, thus removing human error from medical treatment.

Every year in U.S. hospitals 7,000 patients die from treatment mistakes.

• Israel's Given Imaging developed the first ingestible video camera, so small it fits inside a pill.

The camera, which views the small intestine from the inside, helps doctors diagnose cancer and digestive disorders.

• Researchers in Israel developed a new device that directly helps the heart pump blood, an innovation with the potential to save lives among those with congestive heart failure. The new device is synchronized with the heart's mechanical operations through a sophisticated system of sensors.

• A new acne treatment developed in Israel, the ClearLight device, produces a high-intensity, ultraviolet-light-free, narrow-band blue light that causes acne bacteria to self-destruct – all without damaging surrounding skin or tissue.

• Christopher Reeve called Israel the “world center” for research on paralysis treatment.

• Israeli research has shown that dancers display consistent differences from the general population in two key genes.

• Israeli researchers are playing an important role in identifying a defective gene that causes a rare and usually fatal disease in Arab infants.

• An Israeli company has been given a U.S. grant to develop an anti-smallpox first aid treatment kit.

• Israeli microbiologists have developed the first passive vaccine against the mosquito-borne West Nile virus.

• Israeli researchers are using video games to investigate future treatments for memory disorders such as Alzheimer's disease.

• An Israeli company has developed sensors that pick up signs of stress in plants.

• Israeli medical researchers have shown that lycopene – the red pigment found in tomatoes – lowers blood pressure.

• Israeli stem-cell technology is being used in the U.S. to regenerate heart tissue.

• An Israeli company has developed a device that could enable millions of American diabetics to painlessly inject themselves with insulin.

• Scientists in Israel have used strands of DNA to create tiny transistors that can literally build themselves.

• Israeli research shows that a tonsillectomy could be the key to solving sleep apnea in children.

• An Israeli company has developed a new device for monitoring coronary disease that will be integrated into future generations of cell phones.

• An Israeli has invented a ‘bone glue’ that will reduce the need for bone transplants and heal bone defects caused by cancer.

• Israeli researchers have found a connection between sleep apnea and

impotence.

• The founder of the Cancer Prevention and Wellness Program at New York's prestigious Memorial Sloan-Kettering Cancer Center is Israeli.

• Between 150 to 200 multinational clinical trials are regularly taking place in Israel.

• An Israeli company is the world's leading sleep disorder sensors manufacturer.

• Israeli scientists have created a DNA nano-computer that not only detects cancer, but also releases drugs to treat the disease.

• An Israeli doctor claims that he has succeeded in developing a female equivalent to Viagra called Sheagra.

• A newly developed Israeli cooking oil is capable of breaking up blood fats such as cholesterol.

• Israeli scientists have alleviated Parkinson's-like symptoms in rats.

• Israeli scientists are developing a nose drop that will provide a five-year flu vaccine.

• Israeli researchers are successfully using magnets to treat post-traumatic stress disorder.

• An Israeli vaccine for West Nile virus is being tested in the U.S.

• Israeli scientists have discovered how to



Photo by Renoir Gaither

turn mismatched cells into cancer fighters.

- An Israeli-developed device can painlessly administer medications through microscopic pores in the skin.
- Israeli researchers have shown that a daily dosage of Vitamin E is effective in helping to regain hearing loss.
- Israeli researchers have created a 'biological pacemaker' which corrects faulty heart rhythms when injected into the failing hearts of pigs.
- Two Israelis have won the 2004 Nobel Prize for Chemistry for their groundbreaking work in cancer research.
- An Israeli-developed elderberry extract is one of America's best-selling flu prevention medicines.
- An Israeli computer program has been clinically proven to accurately provide a prognosis of how effective chemotherapy will be for breast cancer patients.
- Israeli medical teams are training Ethiopian doctors to fight AIDS.
- An Israeli team has made medical history with its ability to transform skin stem cells from heart-disease patients into healthy heart tissue.
- An Israeli biotech company can generate healthy new bone using stem cells

harvested from the patients own fat.

- Israel has one of the most progressive medical marijuana programs in the world. For thousands of Israelis suffering cancer, MS, Crohn's and chronic pain, pot provides vital relief.
- A 91-year-old scientist has developed a simple bedside test that can detect killer superbugs in minutes, rather than days, providing one of the most potent weapons against hospital-borne infections to date.
- An Israeli pharma company is testing an advanced weapon against pancreatic and prostate cancer.
- An Israeli 'super-sensor' has been installed in Sealy mattresses to control snoring problems.
- An Israeli discovery of a gene that could cure a blinding eye disease has been licensed by pharmaceutical giant Pfizer.
- The success of GlaxoSmithKline's once-a-day breast cancer pill Tykerb – which has won approval by the FDA for use by women with metastatic or advanced breast cancer – is thanks in part to clinical trials conducted by Israeli researchers.
- An Israeli innovation could make many diagnostic catheterizations for clogged arteries unnecessary.

- In a breakthrough in male infertility, Israeli researchers have developed an artificial testis to produce sperm.
- Israeli scientists have developed a genetically engineered cleaning solution that makes today's deadly new strains of superbugs resistant to antibiotics. Superbugs are now the leading cause of preventable death in the developed world.
- Israeli research has found that citrus oils may hold the key for asthma treatment.
- An Israeli study has shown that anger may trigger strokes.
- An Israeli study has shown that people who suffer from job burnout may be prone to developing type 2 diabetes.
- An Israeli scientific team from the Technion has succeeded in creating in the laboratory beating heart tissue from human embryonic stem cells
- Israeli infectious disease experts have been recruited by the World Health Organization to help prevent the spread of avian flu.
- Israeli scientists have found that a drug once used to treat vertigo can now help people lose weight.
- Israeli laser technology is powering the latest hair removal devices on the American market.
- A team of Israeli genetic researchers has identified a genetic defect that causes a severe neurodegenerative disease in Bedouin children resulting in premature death.
- A team from the Weizmann Institute has demonstrated for the first time how tissues transplanted from pig embryos might, in the future, be able to induce the human body to produce blood-clotting proteins for hemophilia patients.
- Israeli researchers have discovered a new way to create effective substitutes for antibiotics based on a combination of amino acids and fatty acids.
- An artificial pancreas developed in Israel could revolutionize diabetic care by monitoring blood sugar levels and delivering insulin automatically, even at



Elderberries, photo by Oilbac



Photo by Ricketyus

night.

- An Israeli system to help dyslexic readers is being used throughout the US and Europe.
- An Israeli company has developed a device that helps nurses locate hard-to-find veins.
- A portable electrocardiograph machine developed by Israeli company SHL can transmit highly detailed data on heart activity to physicians by mobile phone.
- Israeli startup Audiodent has developed an innovative hearing aid that clips easily inside the mouth, using the teeth and jawbone to transmit sound to the brain.
- Israeli researchers are developing the second generation of drugs to treat diseases like Alzheimer's and Parkinson's Disease.
- Israeli company Ultrashape has developed a safe replacement for liposuction – a unique new body-contouring device that “blasts” unwanted fat from the body.
- Israeli research has shown that dancers display consistent differences from the general population in two key genes.
- An Israeli-initiated project is drastically

lowering the mortality rate of Ethiopian children infected with the AIDS/HIV virus.

- Israeli companies are going to require models in their advertisements to take tests to insure that they have a normal BMI (Body mass index).
- An Israeli company has developed a simple blood test that distinguishes between mild and more severe cases of MS.
- Israeli scientists have discovered the cause of chronic bad breath and a painless solution.
- Hawaiian singer Don Ho underwent an Israeli-developed stem cell treatment to strengthen his heart.
- An Israeli company has unveiled a blood test that can diagnose heart attacks via the telephone.
- The Israeli-developed Ex-Press shunt is providing relief for American glaucoma sufferers.
- An Israeli research team has found that the combination of electrical stimulation and chemotherapy makes cancerous metastases disappear.

- The Weizmann Institute of Science has been voted the best university in the world for life scientists to conduct research.
- On a per capita basis, Israel has the largest number of biotech start-ups.
- An Israeli doctor headed the Merck team that developed a vaccine against cervical cancer.

Environment

- An Israeli inventor has developed the world's first cardboard bicycle from recycled materials. The bike is resistant to rain and sun, and costs around \$9 each.
- Israel has the largest raptor migration in the world, with hundreds of thousands of African birds of prey crossing as they fan out into Asia.
- Israeli engineers and agriculturalists developed a revolutionary drip irrigation system to minimize the amount of water used to grow crops.
- An Israeli company was the first to develop and install a large-scale solar-powered and fully functional electricity generating plant, in southern California's Mojave Desert.
- An Israeli company is providing the technology behind an American all-electric bus for urban use.
- Some 500 million birds representing 300 species migrate across Israel's skies twice a year in the autumn and spring along the Great Valley Rift.
- Israeli biologists have successfully managed, for the first time, to prepare the flowering of the “Madonna Lily” – a rare white Easter lily – in time for Easter.
- An Israeli company – Evogene – is developing cotton plants that are resistant to adverse salinity conditions and drought.
- An Israeli company has developed the world's first jellyfish repellent.
- An Israeli two-flush system is saving Americans billions of gallons of water a year.
- Drinking water for visitors to India's Taj Mahal has just got a great deal safer thanks

to Israelis Aqwise, which will be purifying 150,000 cubes of water daily from the city's nearby Yamuna River.

- A new IBM-Israel partnership is helping toward a goal of reducing California water usage by 20 percent by the year 2020.
- Israel's Univerve is breeding a strain of algae to fuel your car.
- Israel's Etenergy can get 40 percent more power from the sun with lightweight solar energy trackers based on the principles of kite surfing.
- For many years, conservationists believed Israel's Hula painted frog was extinct after its swampy habitat was drained in the 1950s. Now, the frog has been found alive and jumping in the Hula valley after massive conservation efforts.
- Israel is one of the leading countries in providing ornamental fish to aquariums around the world.
- NASA is interested in knowing what Israeli researchers can learn about conditions on Mars by studying the Negev desert.
- Israel is the only country in the world that entered the 21st century with a net gain in its number of trees.
- An Israeli company has developed a nano-lubricant that one day could mean

the end of changing your car oil.

Culture

- Israel has the highest ratio of university degrees to the population in the world.
- Israel has the highest average living standards in the Middle East. The per capita income in 2000 was over \$17,500, exceeding that of the UK.
- Israel's \$100 billion economy is larger than all of its immediate neighbors combined.
- Twenty-four percent of Israel's workforce holds university degrees – ranking third in the industrialized world, after the United States and Holland – and 12 percent hold advanced degrees.
- Israel has the third highest rate of entrepreneurship – and the highest rate among women and among people over 55 – in the world.
- Over 50 million Israeli flowers were sent to Europe for sale on Valentine's Day.
- Tel Aviv has been named a UNESCO World Heritage Site.
- Laplanders from Norway turned to the Hebrew University of Jerusalem to learn how to revitalize their traditional language.
- Israeli artists have developed new bus stop libraries available free of charge to

commuters and travelers across the country.

- Israel annually exports more than 1.5 billion flowers to the US and Europe.
- The Israeli film 'Sweet Mud' won the jury prize for world cinema at the 2007 Sundance Film Festival.
- Mighty Morphin' Power Rangers was produced by Haim Saban, an Israeli whose family fled persecution in Egypt.
- Israel has the world's second highest per capita of new books.
- Israel has more museums per capita than any other country.
- Israel has two official languages: Hebrew and Arabic.

Travel

- The Waldorf-Astoria luxury hotel in Jerusalem hired eco-builders from a tiny kibbutz in Israel's Negev Desert to provide the interior touches.

People

- A group of 40 American sheriffs were in Israel last week to learn about Israeli counter-terrorism techniques.
 - A 26-year-old Israeli was named entrepreneur of the year by an international organization for his program to nurture future engineers using advanced Lego building skills.
 - Israeli basketball star Shay Doron helped the University of Maryland win the women's college basketball championship.
 - An Israeli strategist has guided numerous UK sporting organizations to new heights with his 'Winning Formula'.
 - An Israeli ornithologist is utilizing barn owls to rid large cities of rodent problems.
- ### Social Action
- Israel is the only liberal democracy in the Middle East.
 - In 1984 and 1991, Israel airlifted a total of 22,000 Ethiopian Jews at risk in Ethiopia to safety in Israel.
 - When Gold Meir was elected Prime



Negev, photo by Chalky Lives



Minister of Israel in 1969, she became the world's second elected female leader in modern times.

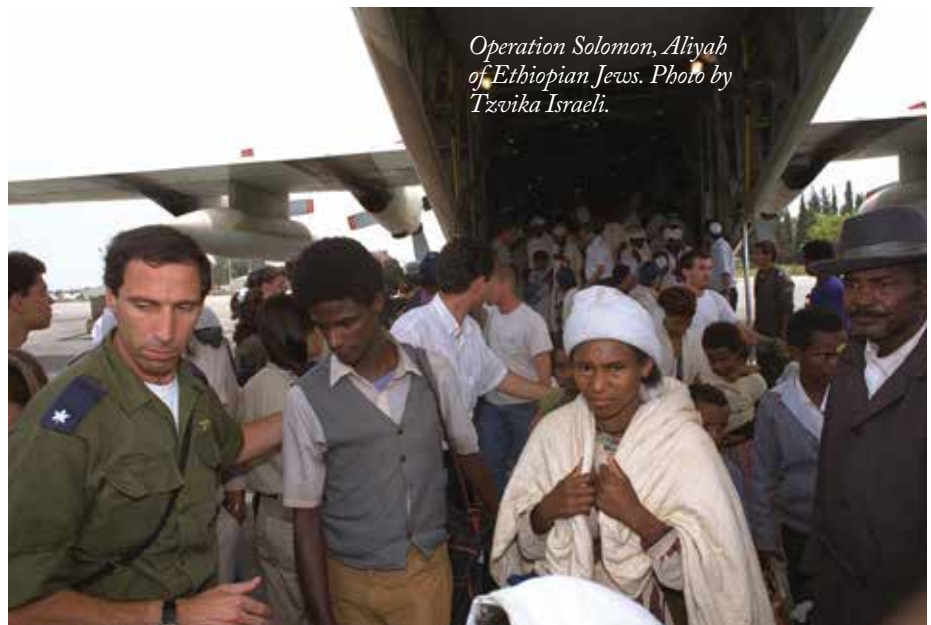
- Relative to its population, Israel is the largest immigrant-absorbing nation on earth. Immigrants come in search of democracy, religious freedom, and economic opportunity.
- Israel was the first nation in the world to adopt the Kimberly process, an international standard that certifies diamonds as “conflict free.”
- Israel is becoming integrally involved in helping to reshape the post-war Iraqi landscape?
- An Israeli medical delegation from the ‘Save a Child’s Heart’ project recently spent two weeks in China performing open heart surgery on children.
- Israeli-developed security precautions have been adopted in Maryland and Washington.
- A week-old Iraqi infant underwent an emergency operation in Israel to correct a congenital heart defect.
- A new generation of “Sesame Street”

programs aimed at teaching tolerance is being produced and broadcast in Israel, Jordan, and in the Palestinian Authority.

- A joint Israeli-Palestinian expedition recently scaled a peak in Antarctica in the name of coexistence.
- Israel has helped farmers in Niger

develop a horticultural production system called the African Market Garden (AMG).

- Israeli researchers have solved the mystery of Lenin’s death.
 - Over 20 Israeli companies provided security and services for the 2004 Olympic games in Athens.
 - Children injured in the school siege in Beslan, Russia in 2004 were able to convalesce at an Israeli coastal resort in Ashkelon – at the invitation of that city’s mayor.
 - Israel has one of the world’s only playgrounds totally suitable for special needs children.
 - A 100-member Israeli delegation flew to Kenya to rescue survivors of a building collapse.
 - When the U.S. Embassy in Nairobi, Kenya was bombed in 1998, Israeli rescue teams were on the scene within a day – and saved three victims from the rubble.
 - An Israeli company – Patus Ltd. – has donated thousands of its OdorScreen olfactory gel product to counter the crippling odors faced by on-scene Tsunami disaster workers.
- Some facts that made us proud of Israel, brought together by ISRAEL21c .



SKYTRAN: TEL AVIV BUILDS THE LEVITATING PUBLIC TRANSIT OF THE FUTURE

Tel Aviv is set to become the world's first city with the magnetically levitating Skytran system of mass transit, described by its developers as 'the jetsons made into real life'. designed to reduce urban traffic congestion, skytran would provide a greener, less expensive, faster, and more comfortable alternative to cars and bus lines through the use of personal two-seater pods in a point-to-point service which travelers can use to reach specific destinations. A vehicle is requested via website or mobile app and arrives almost instantly. The traveler boards, having already entered the desired stop, and the pod glides there directly. In this way, Skytran also provides a possible solution to the last mile problem encountered in most public transit networks.

The system was co-developed by engineers from NASA and the private company skytran, based at NASA's ames research center in California, where a full-scale working Skytran is currently under construction. Tel Aviv, the first city to begin implementing the Maglev system, has just appointed US consultancy Jenkins Gales & Martinez to oversee the introduction of



the revolutionary technology.

Whereas creating or expanding underground metro systems is disruptive and expensive, the Skytran pods move on a guideway suspended 20 feet above ground, making use of untouched vertical real estate. modular construction methods means that the actual installation of a Skytran system greatly reduces both cost and time compared to the construction of

other kinds of public transport. Stations for the systems, comprising simply a staircase and platform, are spaced so that the average distance from a hub to any point in the covered area will be within about one quarter mile, although larger hubs could provide service in major existing metropolitan centers. When boarding and discharging passengers, pods utilize a side 'acceleration line' track so as not to block up traffic.

The pods are built of composite materials to be lightweight and thus easily supportable. Like a tram, the vehicles are powered via electric current running from above; Jerry Sanders, CEO of Skytran, says that these guideways will eventually be outfitted with solar panels, making Skytran a nearly energy net neutral system of public transit. Magnetic levitation, enabled by the presence of a magnet in each pod and an induction coil within the Skyway, minimizes the effects of friction for a quiet and smooth ride, and while the cars can run at speeds up to 150mph (241km/hr), their actual speed will be considerably less than that in urban environments and as travelers become accustomed to the system.

Skytran's CEO Jerry Sanders estimates that while the cost of a Skytran trip would be slightly more expensive than a bus because of its more private enclosure, it would remain less than a comparable trip in a taxi, in addition to being faster. Alongside Tel Aviv, other cities in Israel, as well as in India, Indonesia, Malaysia, and the USA have all expressed interest in installing Skytran networks.

Skytran runs on no set schedule; travelers request a pod by specifying their desired starting and ending locations via app.



*All images courtesy of Skytran:
<http://www.skytran.net/overview.html>*

Excellence starts with E

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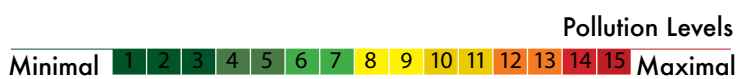
The new line of changes in the E-class model have caused a shockwave among technological experts. But first and foremost, the E-Class promises you, the driver, a more comfortable and safer ride. The Attention Assist system that can detect when drivers start to become drowsy and prompt them to take a break before it's too late. The CPA is designed to help drivers avoid or mitigate longitudinal accidents, and in the event of an unavoidable crash, the PRE-SAFE system reduces the severity of the crash. Additionally, the LED lighting and reverse camera come as standard. You are invited to view this technological marvel in person.



For further details, call *9996 | www.mercedes-benz.co.il



Prices are for the E200 Elegance model. Price is for cash payment only, does not include licensing payment, location system, picture is for illustrative purposes only. Errors are not the responsibility of the dealership.



*Manufacturer's statistics, according to lab test. Standard EEC/80/1268
 **Level is calculation according to "Clean Air" standards (disclosure of air statistics of vehicles in advertising), 2009.

Pollution Levels	Gas consumption in Liters per 100km				Model
9	5.8-6.1	Extra Urban	7.5-7.7	Urban	E200
8	5.8-6.1	Extra Urban	7.5-7.7	Urban	E250
7	6.8-7.0	Extra Urban	9.5	Urban	E300
14	7.5-7.9	Extra Urban	10.4-10.8	Urban	E400

THE ROYAL BEACH TEL AVIV, PART OF THE ISROTEL EXCLUSIVE COLLECTION

The Royal Beach Tel Aviv opened its doors to eager guests this summer. Ideally located on Herbert Samuel St. by the famous beachfront promenade, it's just a leisurely stroll from the city's major entertainment and dining destinations.

Tel Aviv was recently praised by the 2012 Lonely Planet guide as "one of the world's most vibrant cities... San Francisco in the Middle East", and the city itself does more than live up to those words. This cosmopolitan city offers visitors a full spectrum of cultural, entertainment, artistic, dining, and shopping options in addition to the opportunity to marvel at the stunningly beautiful Mediterranean shoreline.

The Royal Beach Tel Aviv is a particularly significant addition to Isrotel's range of hotels throughout Israel and the Isrotel chain feels immensely privileged to have this opportunity to host its guests in the

utmost luxury within this incredible "city that never sleeps".

On its opening, the hotel was admitted to the prestigious Isrotel Exclusive Collection, joining the chain's other luxury hotels: the impressive Royal Beach Eilat, the pampering Carmel Forest Spa Resort, the spectacular Beresheet on the edge of the Ramon Crater, and the new Cramim spa hotel in the Jerusalem hills, which will also open this summer.

As it towers to a height of 23 stories, the hotel dominates the Tel Aviv shoreline and the surrounding landscape. Its rooms offer views of the turquoise Mediterranean Sea and the beautiful urban cityscape of Tel Aviv. The promenade and beach are just a minute from the hotel.

The hotel's 230 lavish suites and rooms are the creations of master international hotel designer Harald Klein, who has left his distinctive mark on urban hotels

worldwide. Klein's cutting-edge hotel concepts draw together the delights of contemporary, advanced design techniques and the desire to provide guests with the ultimate sensation of relaxation and pampering. In a Klein design, even the smallest details are given full consideration, which naturally makes all the difference.

This unique hotel's wide variety of rooms and suites appeals to every visitor to the big city – businesspeople, honeymooning couples, and vacationing families, all of whom will arrive to find precisely the hospitality style that suits them perfectly. Ranging from 26m² to 95m² in size, the spacious rooms and suites all overlook the sea, and most also include an attractive balcony. Each balcony features comfortable furnishings that tempt every guest to surrender to complete enjoyment of the blue sea, impressive views of Tel Aviv, and the captivating golden sunsets every



evening.

In addition to its rooms, the hotel excels in its public areas. The large, impressive lobby can be found on the entrance level. In this remarkable 4-story lobby you will find a range of comfortable seating corners, with the crown jewel the large and stylish bar designed according to the finest traditions of the grandest city hotel bars worldwide.

This splendid entrance level also boasts an extremely lavish, spacious restaurant including a terrace (stretching over an overall area of 700m²) that looks out over the sea and beach. Here, guests will be served kosher meals throughout the day and evening, enjoying a delightfully varied breakfast and elegant brunch, as well as particularly excellent lunch and dinner menus that will delight connoisseurs in line with the outstanding culinary tradition practiced at Isrotel hotels throughout Israel.

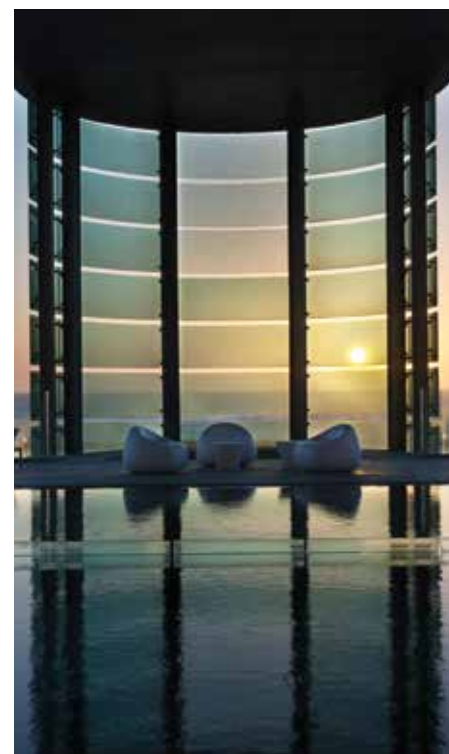
On the entrance level of the hotel, guests will also benefit from two events halls with an overall area of 460m² (the halls can be divided). Outfitted with the most sophisticated, up-to-date audiovisual



equipment, these halls are suitable for small and medium-sized conferences as well as brainstorming meetings, board meetings, and more.



Royal Beach Tel Aviv
Isrotel Exclusive Collection



(Adler Chomski & Warchawsky)

A moment of LUXURY

Royal Beach Tel Aviv, May. 27, 2013

The New Royal Beach Tel Aviv Joining the Isrotel Exclusive Collection

The Royal Beach Tel Aviv is where Mediterranean serenity meets the cosmopolitan Tel Aviv beachfront. Just a stroll from a whole world of stylish shopping, dining, and entertainment options. Combining outstanding service standards with a modern, extraordinary design in the rooms, VIP area and executive floors. Offering a world class wellness center and glorious sunsets from your seaview balcony.

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“ISRAEL THROUGH FOREIGN LENSES”

A MESSAGE FROM THE CHIEF OF STATE PROTOCOL

Jerusalem, 5 August 2013

I was very pleased to have been closely involved with the photo exhibition project “Israel Through Foreign Lenses”.

In my position as Chief of State Protocol, I am in cordial and ongoing contact with foreign Ambassadors - from the time of their arrival in Israel, through their period of service on behalf of their countries and especially during the visits of their high-level officials to Israel, and to the conclusion of their tour of duty.

The Heads of the Diplomatic Missions in Israel and their diplomatic teams are honored guests here for a lengthy period of time. On the one hand, they are certainly not tourists and they are well immersed in the history, culture and mentality of Israel as well as being well acquainted with the challenges and problems facing the country and the people of Israel. On the other hand, they have the perspective of viewing the situation from the side.

The fascinating project “Israel Through Foreign Lenses” succeeded in presenting these aspects. The foreign diplomats and members of their families gave superb expression through their photos to the way in which they view Israel – our people and our scenery. I was very impressed with the photos and liked them very much.

I wish to take this opportunity to thank all those who were involved in the project, especially Julia Verdel, the CEO and General Manager of the Diplomatic Club in Israel which was so centrally involved in organizing the photo exhibition project. I also wish to thank my colleague from the Protocol Department, Yuval Fischer, who devoted much time and energy to the success of the project.

With warm appreciation,

Talya Lador-Fresher

Chief of State Protocol



WORDS OF WELCOME

I am pleased to be here this evening to congratulate you on this interesting initiative of the Diplomatic Club to stage an exhibition entitled Israel Through Foreign Lenses in honor of the 65th anniversary of Israel’s Independence Day and International Friendship Day.

Each of us has his own take on Israel and this exhibition gives us an insight into the individual view of Israel according to the perspective of the foreign diplomats stationed here. Through the images we see on the walls around us, we can better understand how they experience Israel from a visual perspective.

If I may be so bold as to suggest that you are indeed privileged to serve in such an interesting, complex and stunning country,

a country that has so many breathtaking landscapes and sites. Despite Israel’s relatively small size, the country has three distinct climate zones, from the deserts of the south to the flowering nature in the north, beaches that win international competitions, antiquities, holy sites, cities buzzing with non-stop energy and entertainment and sky-scraping commercial buildings. It is this rich diversity that Israel has to offer that attracts millions of tourists every year and the numbers just keep rising.

We invite you to explore Israel’s treasures, to enjoy its landscapes and to continue taking such excellent photos of its unique beauty.

Sincerely,

Tourism Ministry Director-General
Amir Halevi



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AN INTRODUCTION THE PROCESS OF CREATING THE “ISRAEL THROUGH FOREIGN LENSES” EXHIBITION

By Eveline Erfolg

On the occasion of the 65th anniversary of Israel's independence and International Friendship Day, The Diplomatic Club magazine launched the diplomatic photo exhibition “Israel through foreign lenses”. This extraordinary new exhibition displayed for the first time how foreign diplomats and journalists see Israel of the 21st century through the camera lens.

Hundreds of diplomats and foreign journalists from 40 countries uploaded more than 450 photos via the Israeli Diplomatic Club website, through a special interface created specifically for the exhibition. The top 50 photographs were selected and displayed at the Beit Hatfutsot Museum of the Jewish Diaspora in August, and out of them the best three were chosen.

This special project was initiated and implemented by the Israeli Diplomatic Club magazine Chief Editor Mrs. Julia Verdel, and in full cooperation with the Ministry of Foreign Affairs' Protocol and Official Guests Bureau, headed by Mrs. Talia Lador-Fresher. Assistance was also provided by the Ministry of Tourism and the Government Press Office, which together presented, for the first time, a foreign perspective in the museum.

The best 50 pictures were chosen by a professional committee of 10 judges, including professional photographers, such as commercial photographer Yoram Aschheim, photojournalists Eddie Gerald, Oded Balilty and Ziv Koren, Minister of Tourism Uzi Landau, Chief of State Protocol Talya Lador-Fresher, the museum's Chief Curator Ms. Orit Shaham Gover, the First Secretary of the Protocol and Official Guests Bureau Mr. Yuval Fischer, the Director of Government Press Office Mr. Nitzan Chen, and, of course, the CEO & Publisher of The Diplomatic Club magazine Mrs. Julia Verdel. The chosen photographs were divided into categories:

Family, Nature & Environment, Daily Life, Fine Art, and Religion & Spirituality – all captured through foreign lenses.

Many diplomats and their friends and family took part in the competition. One of the contestants was the teenage daughter of the Netherlands Ambassador, Charlotte Veldkamp. The talented Charlotte started photography a few years ago, her pictures ‘In the Heart of Tel Aviv’ and ‘Tel Aviv Thoughts’ captured the attention of the panel of experts, especially the picture ‘Tel Aviv Thoughts,’ which was praised by the competition committee. The photo was taken using a technique called “double exposure” and depicts her two year old cousin. Charlotte was one of the youngest contestants. Three of the six photographs made by her were shown at the exhibition. Her photos were rewarded with a third place, shared with Mr. Jonathan Goff (USA) – CBN's Jerusalem News Bureau production manager and lead videographer/editor – and his photo of a snowy Jaffa street. The second place was awarded to Mr. Carlos Berruezo from the Spanish embassy with his picture ‘Blue Balcony’.

First place went to the First Secretary of the Embassy of the Republic of Poland – Mr. Jacek Olejnik for his photograph ‘Roofs of Tel Aviv’, which depicts roofs laden with solar water heaters, a view so typical of an Israeli city. After winning Olejnik said that “Israel is a special place for me, I was interested the Middle East and Israel for 15 years, I worked at the Israeli embassy in Warsaw and promoted Israel, and now I promote Poland through the Polish Embassy in Israel. My perception of Israel is different from that of the Israelis, and it is interesting.”

One of the most intriguing photos in the exhibition, which is mostly comprised of depictions of daily life in Israel with familiar elements such as the Jaffa minaret,

the Western Wall, summer beaches and street theaters, is the picture by Mr. Sandor Pamuk – First Consul at the Embassy of Hungary in Israel. His photo depicts the seconds of the alarm that sounded in Tel Aviv during a rocket attack on November 2012, during operation Pillar of Defense.

Mr. Pamuk said that he took the picture while he was with his family at the Tachana compound in the Neveh Zedek neighborhood. “I was sitting on a chair when everyone started to run for a shelter. I wanted to capture the moment. Photography is a battle with time; a battle to seize the moment that will not come back. This picture expresses the fear that Israelis experience, and perhaps now, with peace talks, there is hope that this horror will not come back. This is my contribution to peace in the Middle East.”

Mr. Sandor Pamuk has been living in Israel for two years, “I love this country,” he says, “I was always interested in Israel and it is no coincidence that I came to serve here. I love it very much and it is good for photographers. Photography has been a passion of mine for eight years and every weekend I try to commemorate various moments.” Twelve of the fifty photographs chosen for the exhibition belong to Pamuk, and though the judging committee did not give him a prize, The Diplomatic Club magazine decided to give him a special recognition award.

So what do we see through the eyes of foreign diplomats? It seems that they no longer see Israel as just desert and camels, but also traffic jams and unusual parking arrangements, roofs laden with solar water heaters and various oriental views that one can see probably only from the outside. In any case, the answer is not unequivocal in their view, and for them Israel is a kicking and young land, innovative and unparalleled.

WINNERS

First Place: Jacek Olejnik, Poland, Roof of Tel Aviv; Second Place: Ms. Carlos Berruezo, Spain, Blue Balcony

FIRST
PLACE



SECOND
PLACE



WINNERS

Third Place: Jonathan Goff, USA, Snow Jaffa St, Jerusalem; Charlotte Veldkamp, The Netherlands, In the heart of Tel Aviv



**THIRD
PLACE**
PART 1

**THIRD
PLACE**
PART 2



EXHIBITION PICKS

Clockwise from top right: Two, Nida Degutiene, Lithuania; Bird on the rosemary, Nida Degutiene, Lithuania; Some Bridges Are Broken, Carlos Berruezo, Spain; The Female Side of the Wall, Jacek Olejnik, Poland; Waiting for your words, Jeshima KY, India



Clockwise from top right: Dead Sea Storm, Jonathan Goff, USA; Beach of Tel Aviv, Pavlina Schultz, Czech Republic; Equilibrium, Carlos Berruezo, Spain



EXHIBITION PICKS

Clockwise from top right: Tel Aviv Thoughts, Charlotte Veldkamp, The Netherlands; Beacuse Why Not To Take Your Parrot To a Bar?, Jacek Olejnik, Poland; Sunset, Luka Tomic, Bosnia and Herzegovina; The Forces of the Nature, Sandor Pamuk, Hungary; Over the Top, Jacek Olejnik, Poland



Clockwise from top right: Walking in the shadow, Mikel Marin, Spain; Israel, Sandor Pamuk, Hungary; Iron Park, Jacek Olejnik, Poland; Chords Bridge, Jerusalem, Sandor Pamuk, Hungary



EXHIBITION PICKS

Clockwise from top right: Shuk HaCarmel - Carmel Market, Sandor Pamuk,Hungary; Don't worry! Sandor Pamuk, Hungary; The Red and the Black, Sandor Pamuk,Hungary



Clockwise from top right: Jewish Prayer Books, Jonathan Goff, USA; Promise of the Holyland, Carlos Berruezo, Spain; The Red and the White, Sandor Pamuk, Hungary; Yad Vashem, Sandor Pamuk, Hungary



EXHIBITION PICKS

Clockwise from top right: Parking, Niclas Maabari Skovbjerg, Denmark; Impressionism near Netanya, Sándor Pamuk, Hungary; Loann in the Desert, Olga Novytska, Russia; Couples, Sandor Pamuk, Hungary; Solitude of the Sea, Jacek Olejnik

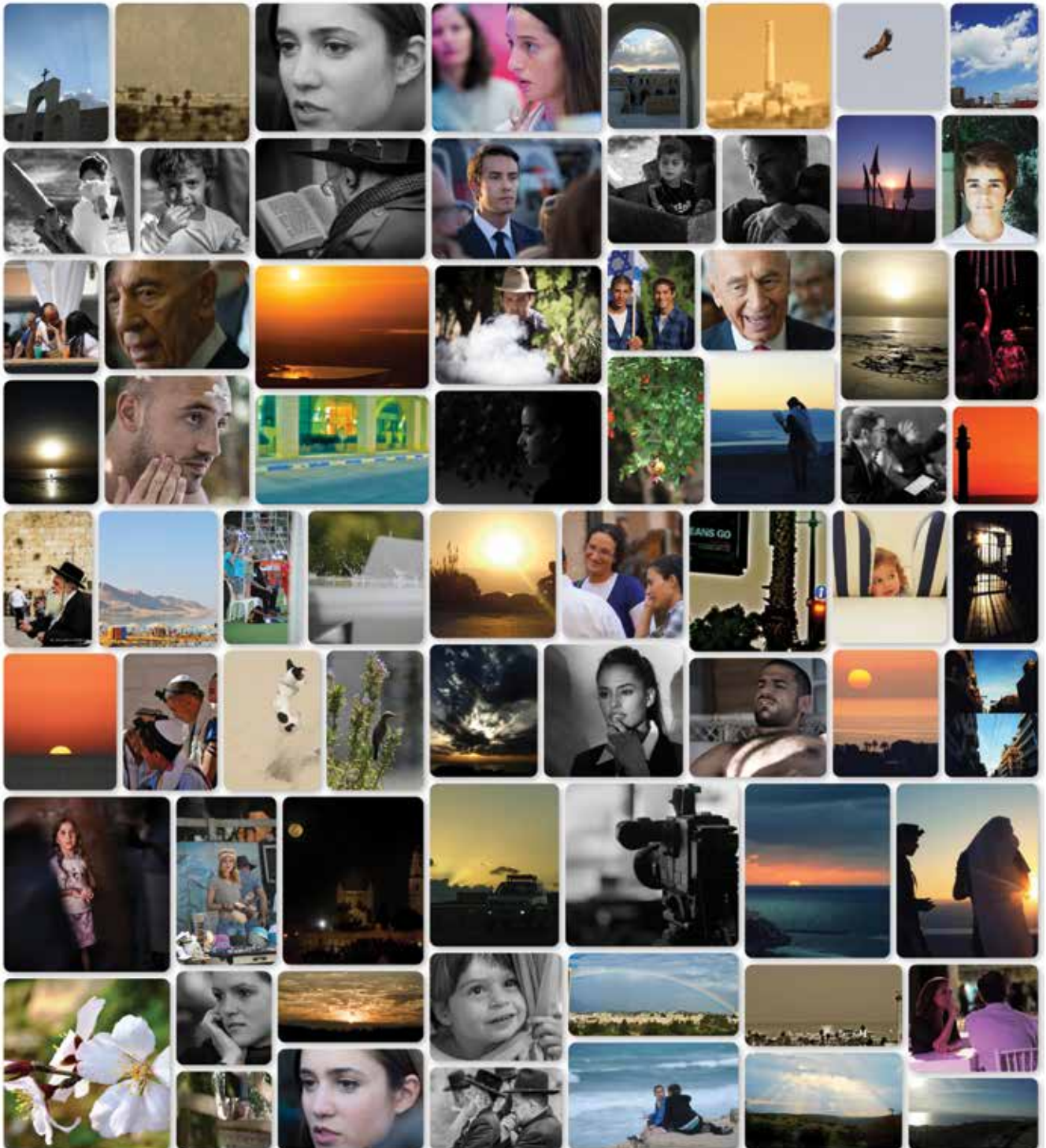


Clockwise from top: Missile Attack against Tel Aviv, Sandor Pamuk, Hungary; Hebron Yeshiva, Sandor Pamuk, Hungary; Here. Noah Smith, USA



HONORABLE MENTION PHOTOS

Many thanks to our wonderful photography contest participants: Ms. Pavlina Schultz - Czech Republic, Mr. Niclas Maabari Skovbjerg - Denmark, Mr. Dev Sharan Sams - India, Mr. Sandor Pamuk - Hungary, Mr. Sachin Kumar Srivastava - India, Ms. Yumi Ishido - Japan, Mr. Luka Tomic - Bosnia and Herzegovina, Ms. Nida Degutiene - Lithuania, Mr. E. Siva Subramaniam Iyer - India, Mr. Carlos Berruezo - Spain, Ms. Charlotte Veldkamp - The Netherlands, Mr. Jacek Olejnik - Poland, Jeshima KY - India, Mr. Yoonsang Lee - Republic of Korea, Mr. Mikel Marin - Spain, Ms. Olga Novytska - Ukraine, Mr. Jonathan Goff - USA, Ms. Noah Smith - USA



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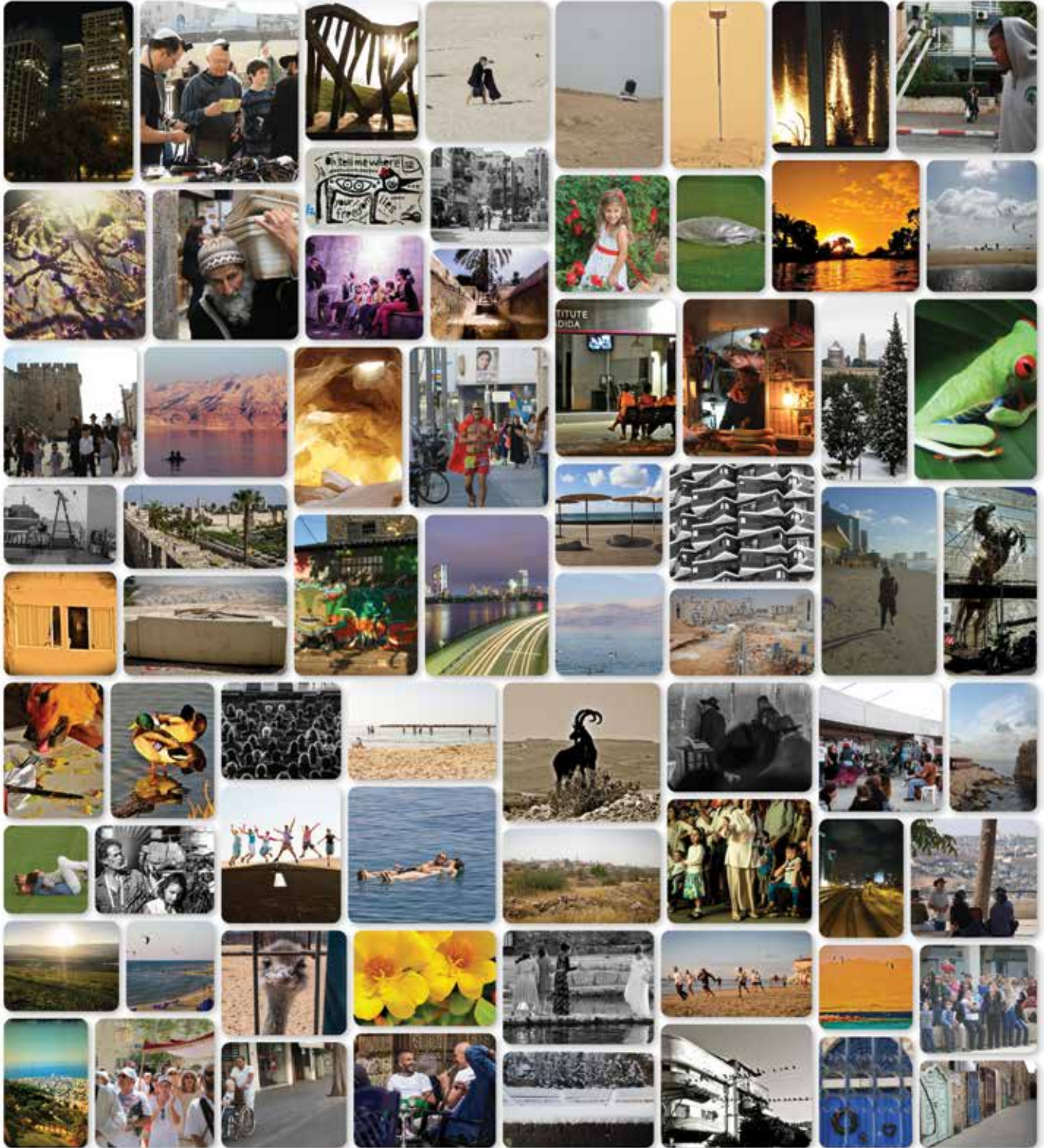
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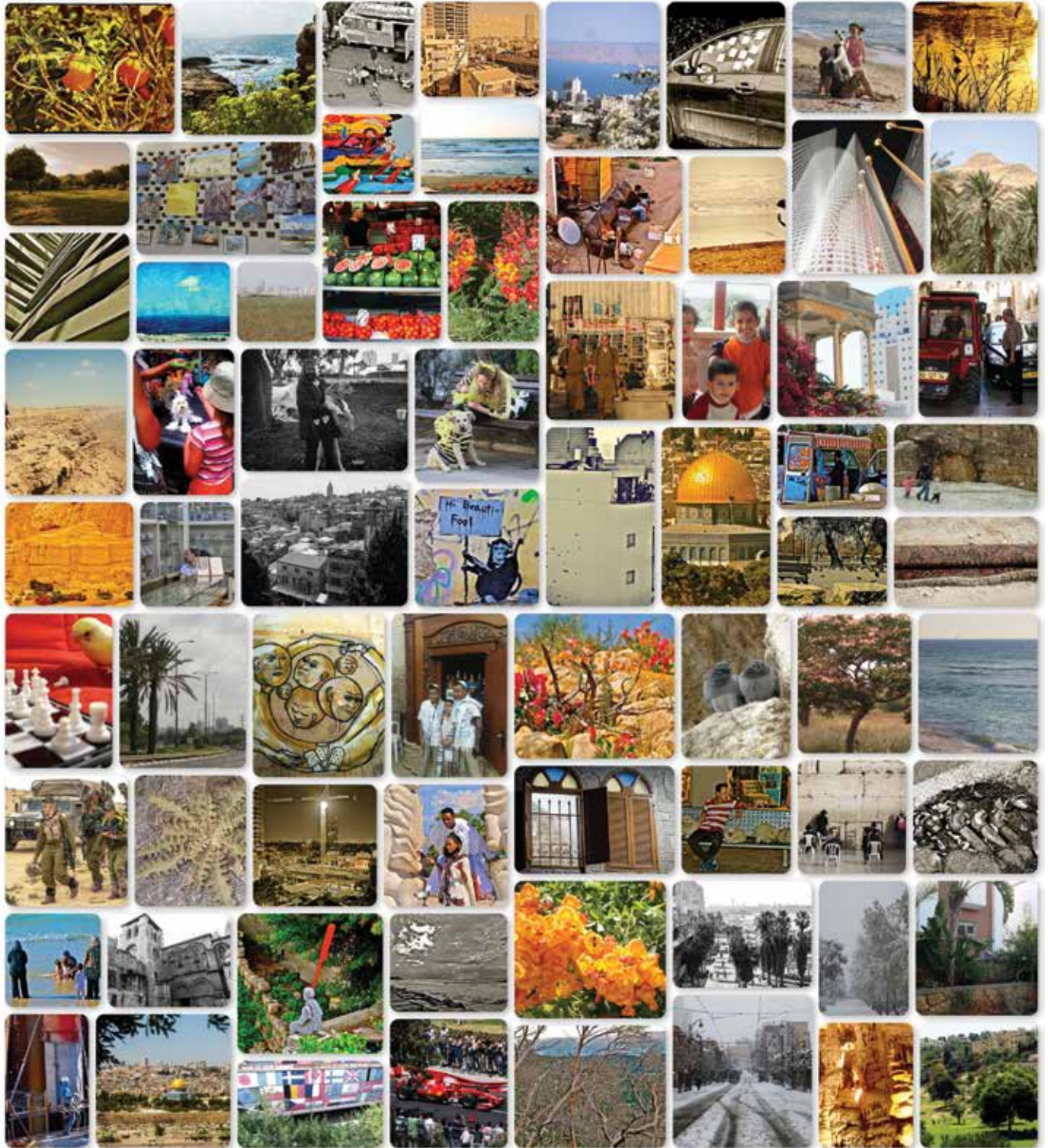


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