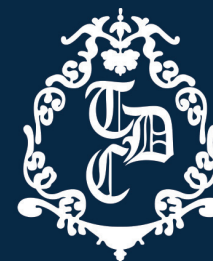


The Diplomatic Club

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2014



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Dear Friends

2013 was an eventful year , during which the Middle East was generated the hoped for peace. We wish the Middle East an active 2014 year, focused on peace and development, where hatred dissolves and harmony blooms.

MERRY CHRISTMAS!

According to Christian tradition, Bethlehem is the birthplace of Jesus of Nazareth and the town is inhabited by one of the oldest Christian communities in the world, though the size of the community has shrunk in recent years due to emigration. According to Biblical tradition, the city is also believed to be the birthplace of David and the location where he was crowned as the king of Israel.

HAPPY EID AL-ADHA!

As three million pilgrims completed the Hajj, the once in a lifetime Muslim pilgrimage to Mecca, Muslims around the world celebrated Eid Al-Adha on November. Eid Al-Adha is the religious festival of sacrifice commemorating the strong devotion to God Abraham proved through his willingness to sacrifice his son. After demonstrating his obedience, God gave him a sheep to sacrifice instead and ever since, Muslims have been sacrificing their best animals on Eid (in addition to praying, celebrating, feasting and shopping).

While home slaughtering is illegal in many countries due to health concerns, Muslims can still purchase animals sacrificed according to ritualistic requirements. In the West Bank where slaughtering is allowed however, families continue the tradition and top it off by leaving the streets filled with holy, cleansing and purifying sacrificial blood.

HAPPY HANUKKAH!

The first night of Hanukkah is the festival of lights. Let the fact that the busses were still running in Israel show that it really isn't that major of a celebration for the Jewish faith. However, it's still important in that it commemorates the Jewish reclamation and rededication of the Holy Temple in Jerusalem from the Greeks, and the small amount of olive oil they found to light the temple's menorah which miraculously lasted for eight days. Chanukah Sameah.

I just want to wish you all the best and of course health for the next year and I hope all your dreams and wishes comes true. I also hope that all the political and economic problems will solved as soon as possible. I wish that no more bombs are falling in the middle east and other parts on this planet!! But I am also sure, that some of these wishes are just dreams. But I am also sure, that sometimes dreams can get reality. So I don't stop to believe in it.

Remain courageous and once again **HAPPY NEW YEAR** and all the best and see you next year!

Happy Holidays

Julia Verdel
And the Editorial Team

Diplomatic Club-Palestine

النادي الدبلوماسي الفلسطيني



Majdi Khaldi

The Diplomatic Club



Julia Verdel

General Manager of the Diplomatic Club-Palestine, Diplomacy adviser to President Mahmoud Abbas Mr. Majdi Khaldi held telephone conversation with CEO & Managing Director of the Diplomatic Club, Israel Ms. Julia Verdel and decided to promote peace ties in the international community, posted in theycounties.



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STATE OF ISRAEL
MINISTRY OF FOREIGN AFFAIRS

On the occasion of the upcoming festivals of Chanukah and Christmas, as well as the advent of the New Year, I would like to wish all of you, your families and loved ones, happy holidays and may it be a joyful, peaceful and successful year ahead for all of us. As we celebrate our festivals and begin a new year, one is always conscious that this time of year symbolizes hope and renewal. With the New Year, comes a time of fresh beginnings, new resolutions and renewed hope.

According to the Jewish tradition, Chanukah is ripe with symbolism. As Jews we are called on, in the Book of Isaiah, to be a “Light unto the Nations”, and this is especially true as we light our nine-branched candelabrum in recognition of miracles in the past and the anticipation of a just and peaceful future for all.

It is also a celebration of the victory of “the few against the many”. As Jews, we have always been few in number, but even against incredible odds and seemingly insurmountable challenges, we always persevered and flourished.

We did so, thanks in part to the support and encouragement of our friends and allies around the world. As Minister of Foreign Affairs, it is my firm hope that the year which lies ahead will ensure even greater cooperation and collaboration with our friends and partners around the world for our mutual benefit.

Yours sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to be 'Avigdor Liberman', written over a white background.

Avigdor Liberman



NORWAY AND ISRAEL 20 YEARS LATER



By Eveline Erfolg

Norway has been forever linked to the peace process between Israel and Palestinians through the Oslo Accords in 1992. However, since the assassination of Yitzhak Rabin, a final agreement and a lasting peace treaty seem beyond reach.

The Diplomatic Club decided to interview Svein Sevje, Norway's ambassador to Israel, to ascertain his view on past and current negotiations, specific concerns in the region and what role Norway might play.

DC: After 20 years, are the Oslo Accords perceived as an achievement of the Norwegian government, and would Norway, in your opinion, make such a move today?

Ambassador Sevje: It's a hard question. I often heard that Oslo is dead. Well, Oslo is not dead. It is not. I think obviously this is not what we had hoped for, where we are today. It had a timeframe of five years and it was an interim agreement. In 1999 it was supposed to be completed and for reasons we don't have to go into that didn't happen. Then, of course, came the Second Intifada, and we have had very sad developments since then. However, Oslo is still a framework for how things are being discussed. Parts of it come up and are used as reference points, so it created a framework for further negotiations.

Would we have done the same?

I don't think we could have done anything else. We might have been more careful about certain elements of it, some elements of the wording. The developments made it possible for spoilers on both sides to not implement it, to prevent it from being implemented. We've had a few meetings or commemorations – we

definitely don't call them celebrations – to sum up where we are and where we can move from here. Not everybody's pessimistic, although it's a very guarded optimism, obviously.

DC: In your opinion, would someone be able to revive the notion of the Oslo Accords?

Ambassador Sevje: I think it would be very hard. This was a time when, officially, Israelis and Palestinians did not talk with each other. Well, this was an opening, but it was a time when they needed a mediator. Now they are sitting together, meeting each other, they know each other very well after twenty years of trying to make peace. The Norwegian role was one of a facilitator, we did not set the agenda and we did not negotiate.

I also remember the demonstrations by right-wing Israelis outside the embassy in Israel, and many Palestinians who had negotiated in Madrid and were disappointed with the agreement. There was a lot of criticism, but it really wasn't criticism against Norway. We were the facilitators; it was really up to the parties and it is still up to the parties.

DC: Oslo was a staunch supporter of the Jewish state in 1949. However, in the 1970s and 1980s, things changed: Israel captured and occupied the West Bank and, in 1978, invaded south Lebanon. Is occupation of the Palestinians the defining factor in the relationship between Norway and Israel today? Does Norway see both sides?

Ambassador Sevje: Let me say a little bit about the background. Norway was a staunch supporter of Israel. In fact, when I grew up there was only one narrative; it was the narrative of the Jews returning

back to their homeland. At school we heard very little about the Arabs. As for the Jews – there were never many of them in Norway. There were about 3000 and about two-thirds of them were helped to Sweden, about 800 were deported to the concentration camps and only a handful came back. It's a sad fact that the German occupation was helped by Norwegian policemen carrying out the deportation and there are many points that are problematic in the history of the Jews in Norway. That's the story that we learned about the Holocaust. I grew up when all the movies started coming out, all the documentaries. All the classes were sent to learn and see what had happened. In addition, there was probably also a kind of a common, although not too much of a comparison, but a common history in the sense that Norway was occupied by the Nazis for five years. So there was an understanding of the creation of Israel. There was also a close relationship between the Labor parties here and there.

The victory in the 1967 War created a new situation. I think the Palestinian narrative became more prominent, and with the occupation of Lebanon, even more so. About 30,000 Norwegian soldiers, young men and women, served in UNIFIL. They came from all parts of Norway and they went back to all parts of Norway, carrying a different narrative with them. The main point of this is we have a view of international law that is different from the Israeli on these issues, and as a small country, international law is very important for Norway, as well as human rights. We have a situation where we are criticizing Israel, not for being Israel, not for being here, but for the occupation of Palestinian land, as it is defined by international law.

DC: Oslo did not join the European chorus for labeling Israeli goods originating beyond the Green Line. What is the position of Norway today regarding the “territories”?

Ambassador Sevje: Again, we refer to international law. We are not members of the EU, but we cooperate very closely with it, particularly on economic issues. There's also a lot of coordination with them on many other issues. So the main line would be we're not members of the EU, but we follow EU policies very closely, particularly when it comes to economic issues.

The guidelines and the labeling are two separate issues. It needs to be seen what comes out of the negotiations going on today about the guidelines. We

hope it can be solved in a positive way. The labeling is a different issue. There is a discussion in Norway. The government does not boycott Israeli products. We don't like boycotts, but it's also clear that we do consider products made in the settlements not to have been made in Israel. We are waiting for the negotiations between the EU and Israel to develop on these two issues.

Svein Reidar Sevje is a Norwegian diplomat, particularly known for his work in the Middle East. He is a trained historian and graduated in 1977 from the Academic Society for Norwegian Industry, University of Oslo.

Working for the Norwegian Foreign Service for several years, Sevje advanced in 1992 to become Bureau Chief. He then headed the Foreign Ministry's Africa section 1993-94 and from 98-2002 became head of the Middle East section. He was stationed in Israel during the Norwegian role in subsequent deals regarding the



Oslo Accords known as Oslo 2, and earlier in 1995 was the first diplomatic representative of Norway to The Palestinian Authority. Sevje has since served as an ambassador in Syria and Lebanon 2006-8 and was Special Envoy to the Middle East. Sevje was ambassador in Damascus after the Norwegian Embassy was burned by protestors in February 2006, in response to the Jyllands-Posten Muhammad cartoons controversy.

From 2008, Sevje was ambassador to Sudan, and in Council on 9 April 2010, was appointed ambassador to Israel. In 2011 Sevje was involved in controversy when he compared and contrasted the 2011 Norway Attacks to the Israeli occupation of Gaza.

In 2009, Sevje was appointed a Knight of the 1st Class, and Commander of the Royal Norwegian Order of Merit H.M. for civil merit.

DC: How optimistic are you that the current peace process can yield results?

Ambassador Sevje: First of all, we are fully supporting US Secretary of State Kerry's initiative, the American initiative. However, we clearly see all the difficulties in reaching something. We hear the signals and demands coming from both sides that make it very difficult to make an agreement possible. I hear Israelis talk about an interim arrangement, which the Palestinians have so far rejected. So let's say we are hopeful, some are optimistic, but we see very big difficulties in this timeframe.

DC: Having served in a few countries in the region, do you see any cultural similarities or differences between these countries?

Ambassador Sevje: In my opinion there are many, many huge differences, but what's most striking is that everything is here. Israel has all these cultural differences; it is a microcosm of everything. So I would say Israel is probably the most fascinating country. Also you see the same with Syria, Lebanon and Sudan. They are so many-faceted. I can't compare them because they're all so complex, but Israel may be the most complex of them all. The countries of this region are all so different and complex within themselves.

DC: What is the state of the bilateral relationship between Norway and Israel today?

Ambassador Sevje: Given the history of Norway being very supportive of Israel, we stress again and again that Norway is a friend of Israel. We are critical on some issues, but we try to develop the bilateral relationship, and there is a huge investment from what we call our pension fund, which is actually income from the oil sector. Because we have a small economy it cannot be put into the budget, because that would cause inflation. So, we have an investment fund that is invested purely on economic terms – not political – and a lot of that money comes to Israel. It invests about 2,2 billion shekels in 60 companies. There is also cooperation in the petroleum sector. We are offering our knowledge from our development of oil and gas in the North Sea to the Israelis. In addition, we have a lot of cultural activities. We have a lot of people working with a very good budget to increase the cultural exchange. So there are lots of

activities going on.

DC: Where do you see possible areas of improvement in the relations between Israel and Norway?

Ambassador Sevje: Apart from all the agricultural products Israel exports, I think that we can have cooperation in the high-tech field and the petroleum sector with the natural gas, so economic development is one field we can improve. I also think we can improve on cultural exchange. We have no problems getting Norwegians to perform in Israel; we had a dance group in Jaffa a few weeks back. We've had young Israeli musicians taking courses in Norway and returning and playing concerts together. There are things happening.

DC: During your time in Israel, what in the Israeli culture makes the most impact on you?

Ambassador Sevje: Music, theater... The cultural scene is so rich when it comes to music, there are many orchestras. I went out to my old kibbutz; there was a wonderful concert at the local municipal hall! I also met with several writers. There's a tremendously rich cultural life here. Unfortunately, I don't have enough time to really enjoy it.

DC: Do you have your family with you here?

My wife is here, my children are all grown up, but they both studied here in the 1990s.

DC: What has your experience been like living in Israel?

Ambassador: It's been good. Don't forget, I came back. I liked it and it's a most fascinating place. Some of the developments here can be a little bit depressing, but my life here is fantastic!



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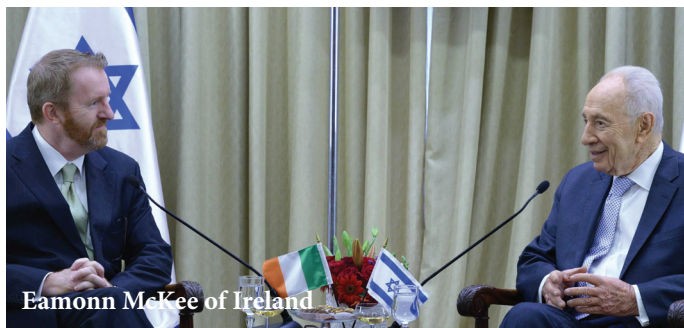


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PRESIDENT PERES ACCEPTED

THE CREDENTIALS OF FIVE NEW ENVOYS

President Shimon Peres on October 10 accepted the credentials of five new envoys: Eamonn McKee of Ireland; Patrick Maisonnave of France; Max Haber-Neumann of Paraguay; Henrique da Silveira Sardinha Pinto of Brazil; and Bulgaa Altangerel of Mongolia (non-resident).



Eamonn McKee of Ireland



Haber-Neumann of Paraguay



Bulgaa Altangerel of Mongolia



Henrique da Silveira Sardinha Pinto of Brazil



Patrick Maisonnave of France



Spanish Ambassador Fernando Carderera Soler hosted a National Day reception at his residence in Herzliya Pituah

On October 16 the Italian Embassy marked 70th anniversary to the deportation of Jews from Italy to Extermination Camps. The Ceremony was held at the Yad Vashem Auditorium and was in the presence of the Ambassador of Italy Francesco Maria Talo', and other distinguished representatives of Yad Vashem and of the Italian community in Israel

Flexibility has become the hallmark of "national day" celebrations, with many embassies this year rescheduling festivities either for the sake of convenience or because their national days clashed with the Sabbath or with Jewish holidays. This was especially the case with regard to national days that fell during Succot. Among the countries affected were the People's Republic of China, Cyprus and Nigeria, whose national day is October 1, Germany and Korea, whose national day is October 3 and Taiwan, officially known as the Republic of China, which has two national days, one on October 10 commemorating the Wuchang Uprising of 1911, and the other January 1, the date on which the Republic of China was established in 1912.



For the second consecutive year, German Ambassador Andreas Michaelis hosted the Day of German Unity at the Yitzhak Rabin Center in Tel Aviv instead of at his residence in Herzliya Pituah. Last



year he had an excuse because the residence was being renovated, but he may have discovered that it was a lot more convenient for his guests to come to Tel Aviv. He moved his function both geographically and chronologically, holding it on October 10.

Korean Ambassador Ilsoo Kim last night combined his country's national day reception at his residence in Rishpon with the celebration of the 50th anniversary of diplomatic relations between the Republic of Korea and the State of Israel.

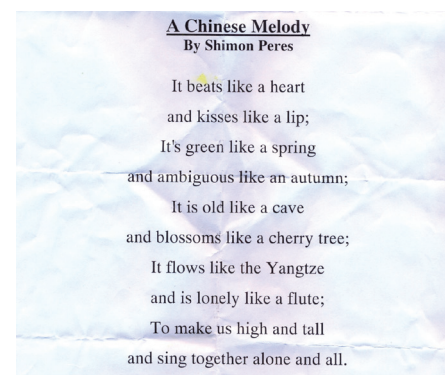
Nigerian Ambassador David Oladipo Obasa combined his country's national day with the celebration of the 20th anniversary of the resumption of diplomatic relations between his country and Israel at a festive gathering last Sunday at his residence in Kfar Shmaryahu, and Dimitris Hatzargyrou, the ambassador of Cyprus, is hosting his national day reception this evening. But the celebrations creating the most interest are those of the People's Republic of China and the Republic of China. Whether by accident or by design, PRC Ambassador Gao Yanping and ROC Ambassador Liang-Jen Chang who are politically at odds with each other, both opted to celebrate October 18.



H.E. Andor Nagy, Ambassador of Hungary with Tova Meir, alias Gizella Einhorn, Hungarian Freedom Fighter in 1956

Reception on 23rd of October 2013 at the Residency of Ambassador.

Chinese Ambassador Gao Yanping and Embassy of China in Israel hold National Day's Reception in Dan Tel Aviv on October 17. President of Israel, H.E. Mr Shimon Peres attended.



24/10/2013 Canada's charge d'affaires James Fox and his wife, Nurys Narda De Jesus Estrella Fox, hosted a dinner in honor of former Canadian prime minister Brian Mulroney and his wife, Mila, at the Canadian ambassador's residence

Ambassador Liang-jen Chang celebrated the National Day of the Republic of China (Taiwan) at Tel Aviv's Sheraton Hotel.

On October 21, the World Jewish Congress opened its annual conference in Jerusalem, moderated by Avi Primor, a

retired ambassador who is now president of the Israel Council on Foreign Relations and director of the Trilateral Center for European Studies at the Interdisciplinary Center Herzliya.

Panelists included WJC president Ronald S. Lauder, who is a former US ambassador to Austria; US Ambassador Dan Shapiro, who spoke about the view from Washington; Russian Ambassador Sergey Yakovlev, who discussed Moscow situation; and German Ambassador Andreas Michaelis, who covered Berlin.

Israeli Finance Minister Yair Lapid emphasized the importance of Jewish unity at the opening event of the World Jewish Congress' annual convention in Jerusalem.

Foreign Minister Avigdor Liberman, speaking at the opening event, sounded skeptical about Israeli-Palestinian peace talks.



Ambassador Dr. Franz Josef Kuglitsch and Deputy Finance Minister Mickey Levy



Ambassador Hatzargyrou and Minister Steinitz at the National Day Reception of the Embassy of Cyprus. 15 October.

Austrian Ambassador Franz Josef Kuglitsch hosted his country's National Day reception at his residence in Herzliya Pituah on October 24 since the national day was a Saturday (October 26)

Australian Embassy in conjunction with the Australian-headquartered Pratt Foundation and the Beersheba Municipality will on Thursday, October 31, hold the annual commemoration service to mark the 96th anniversary of the Battle of Beersheba. In this battle, Ottoman forces were defeated by members of the Australian and New Zealand Army Corps serving in the Light Horse Brigade, together with British troops.



Naftali Bennett Economy Minister and José João Manuel "Jota"

On November 11 The Ambassador and Mrs. Antonia F.C. Manuel celebrated the 38th Anniversary of the Independence of the Republic of Angola at Dan Hotel, Herzeliya Pituah.

Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu, on November 12 made the following remarks at the Bloomberg Fuel Choices Summit "Israel prefers the diplomatic option over any other option. But we want a genuine diplomatic solution that dismantles Iran's military nuclear capabilities. The proposal that was put on the table, the details of which we are familiar with, is a bad deal. It leaves Iran with nuclear capabilities for

military objectives, and provides it with a significant easing of sanctions. The additional danger is that it gives Iran legitimacy to be a nuclear threshold state. That goes against the interest of the international community."

On November 13 EU Ambassador-designate Lars Faaborg –Andersen visited the Ziv Medical Centre in Safed to observe at first hand the medical treatment being provided to civilians injured in the fighting in Syria. At the conclusion of the visit, Ambassador-designate Faaborg –Andersen said:

"I want to thank the Director of the Ziv Medical Centre, Dr. Oscar Embon for this opportunity to see with my own eyes the wonderful treatment the hospital is providing to injured Syrians. I was deeply impressed by the dedication of the medical staff that is sparing no effort to provide the injured patients, many of them children, with the best possible medical care.

This commitment to the welfare of other human beings, regardless of the fact that they belong to an enemy nation, should be a source of pride to all Israelis.

We have all been horrified by the scale and intensity of the fighting in Syria.

The European Union has also mobilized to deal with the terrible humanitarian effects of the crisis. Just two weeks ago the EU allocated €85m for Syrian refugees bringing our total humanitarian support so far to €400m. About half of this sum will be spent inside Syria to help civil society groups provide basic services while the other half will be used to help Jordan cope with the 500,000 Syrian refugees on its territory."

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EU- Israel Innovation Seminar, 18-19 November 2013

More than 70 European incubator managers and staff, start-up companies, policy makers and academics attended the third annual EU Israeli Innovation

Seminar which took place on 18-19 November in Tel Aviv. The

European participants came from 15 EU Member States - Cyprus, Denmark, Finland, Germany, Greece, Hungary, Ireland, Italy, Latvia, Lithuania, Malta, the

Netherlands, Poland, Portugal and Slovenia. They were joined by 30 of their Israeli counterparts as well as 30 representatives from EU Embassies.



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Who once have had some business with Israeli medical service providers will understand this article very quickly.

Yesterday I was waiting for the officer in one of the public Sick funds. I just wanted to pay and receive forms.

I spent 2 hours for this. What you can do? Nothing. Only this officer can receive your money, only this officer can give your permissions for the treatments, only this officer become a most important person in this medical center.

What can I say? The same situation with the insurance companies, with the medical centers. I remember, one of my friends, diplomat, asked me to found a gynecologist, who can do immediate US according to the list of the insurance company. If it wasn't me, fluent speaking Hebrew, I could not believe in this. It's took me a few hours to understand, that it is not any gynecologist with equipment for US on the list of this company. Under promising to leave this company, a mane coordinator made us a favor and found one.

I am not talking about not-updated web sites; about lines to laboratory and other. Same for Ambassador and same for the worker from Sudan. . Of course: this is a public medicine.

According to the National Health Insurance Law of 5751-1991 public medicine provider can not supply the better service then to citizen of Israel.

The shaming is that the private insurance company based on the services of public sick funds. All of them.

Do you want a good medicine - you need money. And, I don't need to tell you, when doctor hear that you are diplomat - price

jump up. How many times the representative of foreign insurance company suggested you a full service and could not provide it?! Good service for foreigners is not a very strong side of the medical service in Israel, Israelis know to handle it - they know this language.

During our long experience with the diplomatic insurance plans (since 1998), and, a newly with a public Sick funds, The Diplomatic Club suggested you as following:

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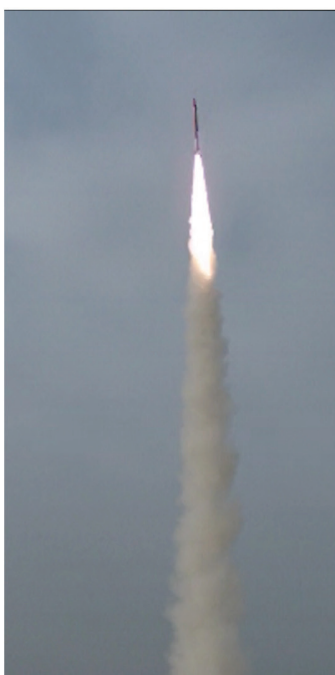
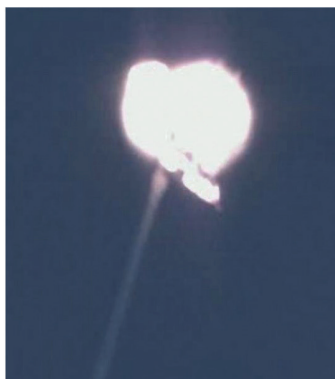
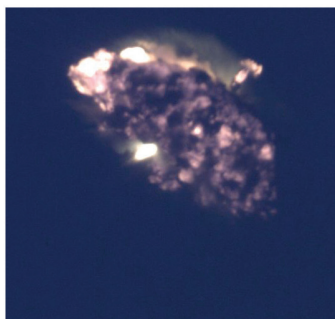
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JOINT U.S. - ISRAEL DAVID'S SLING SUCCESSFUL INTERCEPTION TEST

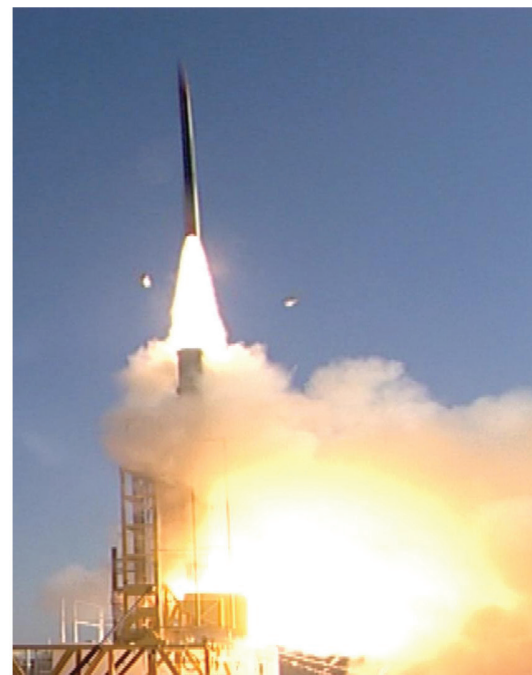
The Israel Missile Defense Organization (IMDO) and the U.S. Missile Defense Agency (MDA) completed a successful intercept test of the David's Sling Weapon System (DSWS) against a short range ballistic missile 20.11.2013.

This is the second intercept test of the Stunner interceptor for the DSWS. The intercept test was conducted at a test range in southern Israel.

At 7:30, the target missile was launched, the Multi Mission Radar (MMR) successfully detected and tracked the target and transferred target flight information to the battle management control system. The Stunner interceptor successfully performed its planned trajectory and destroyed the target missile.

The DSWS is designed as an additional layer of defense against ballistic missiles, to add interception opportunities to the joint U.S. - Israel Arrow Weapon System and to improve the active defense architecture of the State of Israel against missile threats.

The successful test is a major milestone in the development of the David's Sling Weapon System and provides confidence in future Israeli capabilities to defeat the developing ballistic missile threat.



The main contractor for the integration and the development of the David's Sling Weapon System is Rafael in conjunction with Raytheon . The MMR Radar is developed by ELTA Industries and the "Golden Almond" BMC is developed by Elisra- Elbit System .

ARMENIANS IN ISRAEL

The historic connection between the Armenian people and the Holy Land goes back to the days of Assyria and Babylon before the advent of Christianity. Even before the time of Armenian Kings, 3000 B.C from territory of Republic of Armenia has found many facts of trade relationship between Armenia and Mesopotamia And Armenian merchants had good friendship with Jewish merchants. At

one time, Armenia and Palestine were part of the same empire. According to recorded history, the Armenian King Tigran II (95 to 55 B.C.), The Great “King of Kings,” conquered most of the northern part of the Fertile Crescent including Syria and for a short time, extended his political influence over Israel which at the time was ruled by the Jewish Hasmonean kings. Armenian-Jewish relations date back to the time of Armenian emperor

Tigran the Great, who, retreating from Judaea, took 10,000 Jews with him on his return to the Kingdom of Armenia. Jews had helped to Great “King of Kings,” to build his new capital Tigranakert.

The Armenian presence in the Holy Land dates back to the earliest years of Christianity, even before the conversion of Armenian King Tirdat the Third on or about 301 A.D. There is recorded historical



evidence that as early as 254 A.D. bishops of the Armenian Church, in cooperation with bishops of the Greek Orthodox Churches in Jerusalem and Alexandria, Egypt, were actively engaged in the discovery and confirmation of Holy Places deemed to be related to the activities of Jesus Christ, and the construction of edifices for the preservation of these early Christian treasures.

Further, from the inception of

Christianity, Armenian pilgrims began trekking to the Holy Land on spiritual journeys in steady and continuous numbers, braving disruptive political upheavals and other hardships. A large number of them chose to remain in Jerusalem, and to take up residence in the proximity of the sanctuaries owned by the Patriarchate (the Armenian Convent), with the St. James Cathedral as its centerpiece. Eventually, these

areas near the Patriarchate, located in the southwestern corner of the Old City of Jerusalem, constituted the Armenian Quarter, which today takes up one-sixth of the geographic area within the walls of the Old City. The pilgrims also built houses, churches, and convents in other areas, some no longer standing, like the one at the Musrara Quarter, a stone's throw from the 15th Century walls of the Old City where, in 1991, archaeologists

uncovered an incomparable mosaic, laid down by an unknown Armenian priest, Eustadius, in the 7th century. At its peak, the Armenian presence in Jerusalem numbered 25,000.

From the 4th through the 8th century A.D., monasticism took strong root in the Christian world, from the mountains of Asia Minor through the Holy Land, the Sinai Peninsula and the deserts of Egypt. Considered to be an honorable profession in the service of God, it attracted scholars, educators and artisans of all kinds. With the influx of thousands of monks and pilgrims from Armenian cities, Armenian monasteries were established in the Holy Land, particularly in the hills outside Jerusalem, near the Dead Sea, and the Sinai Desert in the south.

Because of the Armenian Church's enhanced prestige, the leading bishop of the Church was elevated to the status of Patriarch sometime in the 5th century A.D. The first formally recorded Patriarch of Jerusalem was named Abraham who, in the middle of the 7th Century A.D., received a charter and official recognition from the Arab Caliph Omar Ibn-Il-Khattab of the Omayyad (Damascus) Dynasty. The charter enumerated the rights and privileges of the Armenian Church in the Holy Land, guaranteeing its

integrity and security.

On the back wall facing the main entrance to the St. James Convent there is an elaborately carved inscription in Arabic which, loosely translated, warns all intruders: `This decree from our Lord Sultan and King Al-Daher Abu Sayid Mohammed, cursed be to all those and their sons through generations, and may Almighty God curse whoever harms or inflicts any injustice to this Holy Place. Abu Kheyer Razan hereby guarantees this to the St. James Armenian Convent in Jerusalem. In the year of Mohammed 854 (1488 A.D.). This and previous protective edicts have helped strengthen and perpetuate the integrity of the Patriarchate and have provided a basis for succeeding conquerors to honor these pledges.

The final and most important pledge was made by the written declaration of the Turkish Sultan, Abdul Majid, in 1852. This declaration officially established the principle of "Status Quo" (i.e. existing "as is" condition) in the Holy Places, which defines, regulates and maintains, without change, the proprietary rights in the Holy Places granted exclusively to the three major Christian rites--Greek, Armenian and Latin Catholic--thus making the Armenian Church equal in stature to the Catholic and

Greek Orthodox Churches despite its relatively small size.

As a result of the "Status Quo", one interesting aspect unique to the Holy Places is the cadre of guards, caretakers, called "Kawasses" who were primarily Moslem, a choice seemingly inspired by logic. Not being Christian, they could impartially administer any Holy Place, thus eliminating points of contention between the three major Christian rites. Over the centuries, these functions were passed from father to son throughout succeeding generations. The Kawasses protecting the Armenian Patriarch have become such familiar figures over the past hundreds of years that the successive generations have learned Armenian and speak it fluently.

Throughout the ensuing decades the resident Armenian community continued to grow and prosper, yielding tradesmen and merchants who shared their prosperity with their Church by donating land and assisting in the construction of new churches, commercial buildings and housing. The need for printed materials in the Armenian language resulted in the establishment of the first printing press in Jerusalem in 1833 within the walls of the St. James Convent. The first issue of "SION", the official monthly publication of the Armenian



Patriarchate was first distributed to the public in 1866. In 1841 the first Armenian Theological Seminary was founded just north of Jerusalem, in the town of Ramle, and in 1845 that Seminary was physically moved to a newly-built complex within the confines of the Convent.

As World War I ended, and Palestine was liberated from the Ottoman Turks by the British, there was a large influx of Armenian refugees who were welcomed by the Patriarchate and settled in available facilities. With the increased population in and around the Patriarchate, children's education became a growing matter of concern. Fortunately, the Seminary afforded a ready-made system for the education of boys at the elementary level. This approach, by its nature, must have provided future candidates for the Seminary and subsequent ordination into the priesthood. However, without the inclusion of girls in the scheme, the endeavor was not deemed to be complete. Finally, in the 1860's, a small building was erected adjacent to the Seminary, thus creating the first girls' elementary school in Jerusalem. These schools continued to operate well into the early 1920's.

In 1925, through the efforts of the newly-elected Patriarch Yeghishe Tourian, a staunch believer in education, a unified elementary school came into existence. These organs of the Armenian Patriarchate of Jerusalem--the School, the St. James Cathedral, the Patriarchate, the Armenian Seminary, the Galouste Gulbenkian Library, and the Edward and Helen Mardigian Museum - together with its custodianships of the Holy Places - form the core of the Armenian presence in Jerusalem today.

1921, the National Assembly was abolished and the Jerusalem Patriarchate re-asserted its independence in the conduct of its internal affairs. However, it continued to rely on the canonical and organizational guidelines of the 1881 and 1888 documents pertaining to the operation of the St. James Brotherhood with some modifications. Recent efforts in preparing a modern



version of these documents have not come to fruition.

During Ottoman rule the election of the Patriarch of Jerusalem was subject to the final approval of the sultan. With the British in control, the process for government ratification fell on the shoulders of the British King and his cabinet. At first, they did not know how to handle this new responsibility. However in time, special procedures and protocols were promulgated through the Commissioner in Palestine, which lasted until May 14, 1948 when the responsibility fell to the King of Jordan who controlled the Old City until 1967.

From 1948, after the elections of Armenian Patriarch of Jerusalem by the principle of "Status Quo" all Armenian Patriarchs should be recognized by the leaders of 3 countries - Israel, Palestine and Kingdom of Jordan.

Now an Armenian Patriarch of Jerusalem from the 22th of March 1990 - is Archbishop Torgom Manukian.

During the 1948 Arab/Israeli war some members of the community took refuge within the walls of the St. James Convent. Many others left the country for the safety of countries around the world (Soviet Armenia, the U.S., South America, Europe, Australia etc.). Thus some of the residences were forced to remain vacant becoming victims of vandalism. The greatest damage was inflicted on the entire Quarter during the 1967 war between Israel and the Kingdom of Jordan.

Having been caught in the middle, the entire Quarter was the victim of bomb damage. The buildings housing the priests and the seminarians were

damaged by mortar shells lobbed by both combatants and had to be completely evacuated. The major part of the residential section was evacuated. Some were illegally appropriated by Jewish squatters. To this day the Patriarchate is attempting to throw them out to no avail. Some have been given long term leases since officially. Most of the residences belong to and are currently maintained by the Patriarchate. The Armenian Quarter is still on the maps; but its future seems to be bleak. The fact that it is adjacent to the Jewish Quarter in the east does not help much. It is feared that the Armenian Quarter is in danger of shrinking in the coming years. Armenians also lost a lot of their own land and in Israel and in Palestine. It was captured by the both sides. After wars and Continuously Palestine/Israeli conflicts and terror attacks - the situation in Armenian quarter is getting worse!

For example in 1948 the Armenian population in Jerusalem at its peak numbered more than 25,000. Currently, about one thousand five hundred Armenians live in the Armenian Quarter. The total number of Armenians in Israel, with Armenians from The Former Soviet Republics and Armenians from Republic of Armenia and with the West Bank - is estimated to be about seven thousand. But an old Armenians whom are the part of generation of Armenians from the first century B.C with the survived Armenians after the Genocide (1915-22) together in Jerusalem, Jaffa, Ramle and Haifa are only about two thousand five hundred people. The most of them are keeping the Jordanian citizenship and don't have Israeli one. Rest of them families from former Soviet Republics. They are living in the center of Israel and in the southern and northern parts of Israel. They have an NGO - Union of Armenians in Petah-Tiqwa, "Nairi".

The most important question for Armenian two thousand presence in Holy Land - is the status of Jerusalem and disport of Holy City. Under which country will be an Armenian quarter - that's an important question for Armenian nation.

H.E. Caspar Veldkamp
Ambassador of the Kingdom of the Netherlands
together with
The Israel Council on Foreign Relations
and the
European Studies Program of Tel Aviv University

are pleased to invite you to a lecture on

"Israel and the EU: Beyond the Horizon"

by

Frans Timmermans
Minister of Foreign Affairs of
the Kingdom of the Netherlands

Greetings:
Prof. Raanan Rein
Vice President, Tel Aviv University

Moderator:
Ambassador Avi Primor
President, Israel Council on Foreign Relations
Director, European Studies Program, Tel Aviv University

Monday, December 9, 2013 at 11:30
Beit Hatfutsot (Bnei Zion Auditorium)
Tel Aviv University Campus, Klausner Street

Light refreshments

Transportation to and from Jerusalem will be provided
Bus leaving from 9a Diskin Street (Wolfson Building) at 10:15

RSVP: 02-633-3003 or icfr@wjc.co.il

The ICFR operates under the auspices of:



THE LAW CORNER



Dotan Cohen

An interview with Dotan Cohen, attorney manager and owner of DC Law Offices

In today's globalized world the reasons for moving range from: business, housing, jobs, studying and many others. As a leading law firm specializing in Immigration & Relocation Law, can you recognize the shared principles in relocating to every country on the globe?

In today's era, immigration and relocation has become very common and takes place amongst families and individuals as well as in corporations. The basic principle is to attain a better quality of life. Over 66% of the people asked said they are looking for a better future for their family and about 25% said it is a professional step to advance in their careers. People will always consider the benefits of such a drastic move and the pros of the desired country in such aspects as opportunities and quality of life. People aim for the "American dream" which is based on living in a progressed, western, English speaking and considerably wealthy country. Consequently, the top four countries that employees would like to relocate to are: the US, the UK, Australia and Canada (in that order). Therefore, Dotan Cohen Law Offices has departments and representations in each of these countries.

Dotan Cohen Law Offices'-(DCLO's) diverse client base includes cutting edge hi-technology, traditional "bricks and mortar" entities, large NASDAQ listed companies', start-up ventures, as well as individual entrepreneurs and artisans. How does the immigration process in countries such as the USA, Australia, Canada and the UK compare to the process in Israel?

In most countries, and especially in the above mentioned countries and in Israel, acquiring a work visa begins with a sponsoring company / Employer. In addition, nowadays, with the economic recession still in effect, it is apparent that countries are seeking out English speakers (or speakers of the common language in that country), bright young people, university graduates, usually professionals from sectors of high demand such as IT, computer programming, medical fields, etc. Surprisingly, in Israel the immigration law is relatively liberal and provides an improved status to unmarried partners or work permits to foreign companies that are not registered in Israel. In general, the procedures for obtaining work visas in these countries begin with applying for a work permit on behalf of the employer and continue to consular processing. The attorneys at Dotan Cohen Law Offices always make sure that our clients understand that as part of the immigration procedures in these countries, the final decision and approval is at the immigration authority's discretion, and not simply based on valid documentation and qualifications. The immigration officer is authorized to review and deny applications by reviewing the overall profile and impression.

Immigration has been both a blessing and a curse for many countries. While on the one hand, the country has seen its rich culture and civilization influenced by talented, ambitious, and hard-working foreigners around the world, on the other hand, illegal actions, sometimes violence and other disruptive elements have endangered the national security and quality of life. What happened when legal met illegal?

All over the world, immigration and relocation is normally divided into legal / planned immigration, as opposed to illegal immigration (normally a result of poor standards of living in the country of origin). Legal immigration in most cases is not a burden on society, since there is a substantial amount of thought put into it. Normally, this is not the case in illegal immigration. Studies have shown that illegal immigration costs millions of dollars to the states where the people migrate to illegally, whereas an organized, well planned and liable state immigration system, can even maintain local work force while combining foreign work force. My belief is that every country should consider the outcome of ignoring or refusing to absorb illegal immigrants, especially when deportation is sometimes not feasible. Recently, Dotan Cohen Law Office assisted in refugee cases, pro bono, in hopes that the outcome will result in turning the illegal – legal.

What is important to know when you have to move to a foreign country? Your recommendations.

Relocation, as with any other change in life, takes a person out of their comfort zone, whether temporarily or indefinitely. When a person is considering relocation, especially in cases of individual relocation (as opposed to intra-company transit which is in most cases for a limited period of time), financial and career opportunities are of utmost importance. With that said, I personally think that in order to adapt more easily, one should give great thought and effort to make the transition easy on the social aspect as well. After all, our personal lives are at least as important as our careers. Also,

for persons relocating with their families, the children's adaptation to their new surroundings has been found critical to a successful relocation. In the cases that the transition is smooth for the family, there is a 70% success rate.

What are usually the elements that employees consider most when they move to another country?

Firstly, most employees who are considering relocating to another country would probably consider the security of their position upon completing the assignment abroad. In addition to their job security, most employees consider additional incentives offered as part of the relocation process. These include a promotion or a high salary, fully paid expenses, airfare travel at least once a year, language training at the company's

expense, immigration counsel and assistance for the spouse in order to allow them to work; school tuition at the company's expense, and assistance with their children etc. Most employees neglect to ensure that the above issues are in order and at times the result is the termination of the contract. Our office offers guidance and tips exactly on these issues to make sure all needed steps and possible issues are taken into consideration. In the end, it is the Employer's benefit that the relocation will succeed.

Today's markets of China, Thailand and others countries of the Far East are very interesting and attractive for many corporate clients. What is your input to your clients?

The Far East is an attractive location for many companies, mainly due to the low

costs of manpower and general costs. There is no doubt that many benefits arise from expanding to the Far East, yet the process is not easy and should be done with great care and thought. Please avoid using shortcuts, as they turn out to be costly in the long run. Such a transition should be done with the assistance of professionals and expert immigration attorneys. In addition, one should note the cultural differences which ultimately may be deal breakers. Studies have shown that relocation to countries with a major cultural difference, increase the possibility to a failed relocation. We strongly advise consulting with professionals prior to initiating the relocation process.



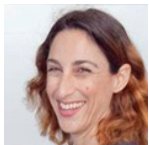
3 Hayetzira Street
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Ramat-Gan, 52521, Israel



Tel: +972-3-753-4000
Fax: +972-3-753-4001



www.Visa-Law.co.il
info@Visa-Law.co.il



Question:

How do I know where Parking is permitted in Tel Aviv-Yafo?

First and foremost we recommend walking or cycling for short distances, take advantage of the flat topography and great Tel Aviv sunshine. Any CC or CD plated car may park anywhere in Tel Aviv-Yafo where there is a blue white painted curb .This is the only place along the street where parking is permitted and free (but sometimes hard to come by).

Another option is to park in the city parking lots (Ahuzot HaHof parking lots) where if you have a Tel Aviv-Yafo parking sticker parking is free at night (19:00-8:00) and during the day you receive a 75% discount. A parking sticker is given to diplomats residing in the city.

You may use the Tel Aviv-Yafo GIS system to locate the Municipal parking lots closest to you. So drive safely and please follow the parking rules.

Always at your disposal,



Ms. Yael Enoch-Maoz
International Relations
Senior Project Manager
Tel Aviv-Yafo
Municipality



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/InternationalRelationsTelAvivYafo



/Int_TelAvivYafo

TASTE OF GALILEE FOOD FESTIVAL

The Taste of Galilee Food Festival is an annual food festival taking place during the Hanukkah holiday in the region around the Sea of Galilee and Jordan Valley in the north of Israel. Between the November 27 – December 7, 2013 restaurants, cafes and kibbutzim throughout the region will be serving additional themed dishes as well as hosting an array of food-related workshops and cultural musical performances. The aim of the Taste of the Galilee Food Festival is to bring awareness of the rich culture and culinary present in the north of Israel. And, the warm climate even during the ‘winter’ months makes this the perfect time of year to escape from the centre and explore this part of the country.

December 4, 5:30pm: The Kinneret College will be selling arts and crafts for Hanukkah and running magic workshops suitable for the whole family.

December 4, 8:00pm: Roberg Restaurant will be holding an appropriately-themed Greek Hanukkah party. The menu will include touches from authentic Greek and Galilean cuisines.

December, 5 19:30pm: A Knight’s Feast: Marinado Restaurant promises limitless amounts of meat prepared in a variety of ways – a perfect evening for meat lovers. Marinado Restaurant is located at Ein Gev.

December, 11:00am – 2:00pm: The Date Factory Store at Kibbutz Kinneret will be hosting a top chef from the Ohalo

Manor Hotel for his demonstration on how to cook with silan date syrup. There will also be the chance to taste the nine different kinds of dates cultivated on the kibbutz. Kibbutz Kinneret can be reached from Road 90.





Jacob's Ladder Festival

December 6-7, 2013

The Jacob's Ladder Festival is a twice a year folk music festival in Israel, held in Nof Ginosar on the shores of the Sea of Galilee in the north of Israel. The festival takes place in May (Spring) and December (Winter) and is a unique musical and social event for lovers of all aspects of folk music from Bluegrass to World music, Irish jigs to Country Rock, and Blues to Renaissance. The May festival is the larger of the two, with events taking place outdoors, while the December festival is more intimate, with an indoor series of events. The 2013 winter Jacob's Ladder Festival will take place on the weekend of December 6-7.

EXHIBITIONS

Butoh – Dance of the Soul

New Exhibition | 18.10 - 6.12.2013

Photos and videos of Butoh dance from Japan and Israel



Friday, 06/12/2013 at 11:00

Shir Meller Yamaguchi, Wilfrid Israel Museum
of Oriental Art & Studies:

Butoh in Israel -interviews Roth Eshel, Tamar Borer and Maya Dunsky, accompanied by video of Dance

The exhibition will feature the works of photographers from Israel and Japan:
Drora Spitz | Nourit Masson-Sekine | Akiko Miyake | Hiroko Komiya | Gen Fukuda

Videos and photos from Butoh performances of:
Kazuo Ono | Tatsumi Hijikata | Sankai Juku | Dairakudakan Atsushi Takenouchi | Maya Dunsky

A cooperation of the Embassy of Japan and the Wilfrid Israel Museum of Oriental Art and Studies,
Kibbutz Hazorea

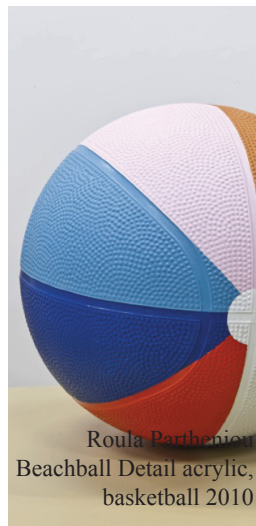
Opening Hours:
Mon. - Thu. 9:30 to 16:00 | Fri. 9:30 to 14:00

Embassy of Japan | Museum Tower, 19th Fl.
4 Berkowitz St., Tel Aviv

Information and Registration:
info@tl.mofa.go.jp



Christopher Chiappa Speed Stick
Courtesy of the artist and Kate Werble Gallery, New York



Roula Partheniou
Beachball Detail acrylic,
basketball 2010

The Mystery of Lost Time

Till 31/12/2013

The L.A. Mayer Museum for Islamic Art in Jerusalem presents

“The Mystery of Lost Time,” an exhibition of clocks and watches from the personal collection of Sir David Solomons, the husband of the museum’s founder. Many of the exquisite, venerable timepieces are the work of the brilliant Swiss horologist Abraham Louis Breguet, who revolutionized watch-making, essentially invented the wristwatch centuries before it became fashionable, and personally designed timepieces for Louis XVI and Marie-Antoinette.

The clocks and watches in the exhibition have a colorful history: in 1983, the whole collection was stolen right out of the museum by Israeli super-thief and watch aficionado Naaman Diller, who snuck alone into the museum one night and made off with the entire collection. The pieces were only recovered three years ago after a dying Diller, hiding in America, confessed to his wife where exactly their cache of exquisite vintage clocks had come from. Ninety percent of the collection was then restored to the museum.

Details:

Sunday, Monday, Thursday 10:00 to 15:00;
Tuesday, Thursday 10:00 to 19:00;
Friday 10:00 to 14:00; Saturday and
Holidays 10:00 to 14:00 HaPalmach St. 2
Rechavia 02-566-1291
<http://www.islamicart.co.il> Adults - 40 NIS
Students, police, soldiers - 30 NIS,
Children, teens, seniors - 20 NIS

MoBY – Museums of Bat Yam

MoBY is a museum just off the coast of the Mediterranean Sea, in the city of Bat Yam, part of the Tel Aviv-Jaffa metropolitan. It was established in 1961, as a museum of fine arts. In 2007, MoBY has expanded its activity by including international, contemporary art within its exhibitions.

MoBY operates from three buildings, each one possessing distinct architectural features, complimenting their various functions; contemporary art exhibitions, hosting the museum’s collection and facilitating extensive community and art education programs. Its location in a residential neighborhood with unique characteristics, inform the museum’s commitment for community programs, aiming to engage the general public with contemporary art.

As the role of contemporary art institutions in the twenty-first century evolves, MoBY’s activities address questions regarding the role of the museum, as one of the main institutions of the modern- democratic era. Its dynamic curatorial approach, which involves an open exchange between artists, writers, curators, critics, scholars and the public, has made MoBY a platform for discussing, producing and exhibiting contemporary art. MoBY’s curatorial mission includes activating exhibitions through various innovative programs, thus enabling new spectatorship possibilities; transforming MoBY into a polemic and ever-changing site.

Goods Group Exhibition

November 2013- February 2014

One hundred years after the display of the first Readymade, the exhibition and conference questions the underlining notions that brought about the Readymade, and looks for contemporary variations of display of found objects. With thingness we try to touch upon the presence and activity of things, with the most apparent manifestation of them being objects. With artworks, art exhibitions and the traditions of display (from museums to departments stores and online shopping outlets), we encounter the thing as part and a part from its exchange, use, sign and sentimental values. With the move of labor from production to consumption the object and its meaning change. Notions attached to the mass produced object (i.e. commodity), such as alienation, are now join by debt as an all-encompassing regime that defines meaning. This, in turn, notifies the practice of contemporary artists and art institutions.

Curators: Liz Hagag and Joshua Simon

Artists: Fahed Halabi, Eran Naveh, Harald Thys and Jos de Gruyter, Anne de Vries, Christopher Chiappa, B. Wurtz, Shay Lee Uziel, Efrat Kedem, Lahli Frieling, Assaf Gruber, Malki Tesler, Jennifer Absira, Hila Toony Navok and more.



Colors in Rifle Barrels

Exhibition of visual arts by Israel's soldiers

The Association for the Wellbeing of Israel's Soldiers (AWIS) proudly presents an exhibition of visual arts by Israel's soldiers, an initiation of the AWIS and together with the Avni Institute, the Israeli Education and Youth Corps and the Israel Border Police.

The exhibition will open in a festive event on Thursday, 12 December 2013 at 17:30 in Beit Hachayal (Soldier's Home) located on 60 Weizmann Street in Tel Aviv in the presence of the IDF Head of IDF Human Resources, Maj. Gen. Orna Barbibay, Education and Youth Officer, Brig. Gen. Avner Paz-Tzuk, Border Police Commander, Maj. Gen. Amos Yaakov, and AWIS Chairman and project initiator, Mr. Avigdor Kahalani.

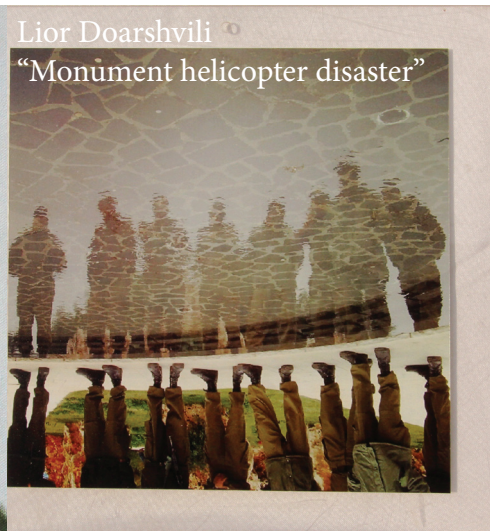
This is the only exhibition of its kind in both Israel and worldwide presenting an array of artwork including sculptures, paintings, photographs, digital media and drawings by IDF soldiers from various units.

A panel of judges, consisting of specialists in art from the Avni Institute and representatives from both the IDF and the AWIS have reviewed 210 submissions and selected a few dozen to be exhibited. The top five will receive a one year scholarship to the Avni Institute of Arts and Design. In addition, the "audience favorite" will be chosen amongst the artwork posted on the AWIS Facebook page.

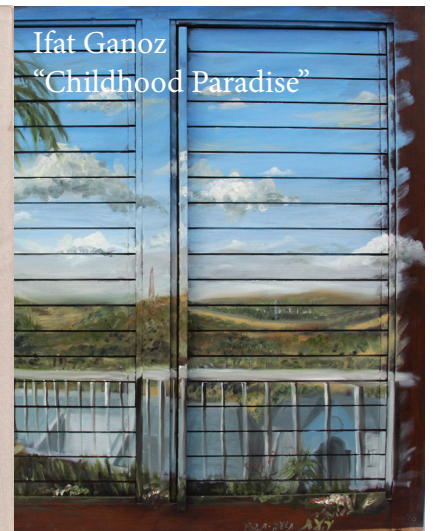
The works will be displayed free to the public at Beit Hachayal (Soldier's Home) on 60 Weizmann Street in Tel Aviv from the 12-19/12.13, Sunday-Thursday from 8:00-16:00.



Oria Shteren
"Bus stop"



Lior Doarshvili
"Monument helicopter disaster"



Ifat Ganoz
"Childhood Paradise"



Adam Telesky
"Hot Weapon"



CONCERTS

Cyndi Lauper in Tel Aviv, Israel. January 4, 2014

American singer-songwriter Cyndi Lauper will perform in Tel Aviv, Israel in January 2014. Lauper, whose hits include "Girls Just Want to Have Fun," "Time After Time," "She Bop," and "All Through the Night," has released over 40 singles and has sold more than 50 million records worldwide, winning Grammy, Emmy, Tony, MTV VMA, Billboard, and AMA awards along the way.

Cyndi Lauper will perform at Tel Aviv's Nokia Arena on January 4, 2014.

DJ Hardwell Plays in Tel Aviv, Israel. December 19, 2013.

DJ Hardwell, ranked the number 6 DJ in the world, in the DJ Mag Top 100, is coming to Tel Aviv in December 2013. Hardwell, whose full name is Robbert van de Corput has grown in a relatively short time seen major success, now hosting his own radio show which is broadcast on 25 international radio stations, a podcast which is consistently in the iTunes top 10 in 30 countries, and a number one Billboard Dance Chart success with his remix of The Wanted's "Chasing the Sun". DJ Hardwell will perform at Tel Aviv's Fairground, Hall 1 on December 19 2013. Tickets are on sale now.

DJ Hardwell has had additional successes. His track "Encoded" was a YouTube sensation, whilst "Zero 76" which he wrote in collaboration with Tiesto, topped the Beatport and US iTunes charts.

Tickets for Hardwell in Tel Aviv are on sale from NIS 260

10 Ridiculously Useful Parenting Tips for the Holidays

At this stressful time, we must remember the value of grandparents, Rob Ford and knocking yourself unconscious

1. Traveling with children can be a challenge, especially in this season of chilly weather and crowded airports. To make it easier, assemble an arts and crafts kit – crayons, paper, felt, markers, stickers, pipe cleaners, glitter-glue – in a sturdy box. Use the box to knock yourself unconscious.

2. Children crave routine, and find listening to the same stories over and over again soothing. If you've grown weary of the holiday books you've read your kid 7,883 times, try adding "dude" to the end of every line of dialogue.

3. Religious traditions are easy to lose sight of in today's marketing frenzy. Make sure you take time to gently usher your little ones into the rituals that have special meaning for you. In our household, we've made a point of teaching our daughter all the parts in our annual holiday pageant. There's nothing more heartwarming than watching your child chime in on time-honored favorites like "I'm Jewish Enough Not to Want a Fucking Christmas Tree, Victoria." "Talk to Me When You Own a Menorah that Isn't Made of Tinfoil" and "Can We at Least Call It a Holiday Bush or Something?"

4. If you love the idea of attributing all your hard work to some ruddy-faced, morbidly obese imp from an enchanted, snow-covered land, consider telling the children that their Christmas gifts were delivered by beleaguered Toronto Mayor Rob Ford.

5. For many families, gift-giving is a major source of stress – the relentless commercialism, the whining demands, the financial pressure. This year, simplify your holidays and create lasting family memories by taking a cue from our ancestors. With nothing more than a few dollars' worth of wood, glue and glitter, you can create a family's worth of festive billyclubs, beat your neighbors into submission, and abscond with their gifts.

6. Another fun low-cost gift idea is to exchange family coupons: Mom Does Your Chores, Breakfast In Bed, Stay Up Late One Weekend Night, Take a Bath Without

Complaining. And don't forget to add the fine print – Offer Expires 1/1/14, Good With Purchase Only, Entrée Not Included, Employees and Family Members Not Eligible.

7. Grandparents, as the old saying goes, are a mixed blessing. While they can be enthusiastic purveyors of cost-free child-care, they also have a tendency to ignore or even contradict the decisions we make about how to raise our children – inappropriately doling out sweets, or purchasing gifts that undercut our values, such as tutus, assault rifles and chewing tobacco. Unresolved issues can complicate your efforts to reason with your own parents, so consider avoiding a head-on confrontation and instead relying on simple reverse psychology. If grandma and grandpa insist on going against your wishes, lie about your wishes. Encourage them to shame and ridicule the children for any activity or sartorial decision that falls outside of strict gender stereotypes; suggest that an outing to the pachinko parlor would be great fun for everyone; remind them that kids don't really need to eat more than once a day and thrive on sugar, gluten and processed foods.

8. A holiday vacation can mean sampling all kinds of new cuisine – whether it's Uncle Joe's award-winning chili or the exotic flavors of Nepal. If your little ones are fussy, be sure to ease mealtime hassles by bringing along a supply of the familiar foods they're accustomed to rejecting at home.

9. A gaggle of different-aged cousins playing together all vacation long sounds great in theory, but to avoid chaos and hurt feelings, set some ground rules first. Try shaking up the power dynamics by putting the youngest kid in charge for the whole week, and making sure the older ones know they'll be punished severely if they don't obey his or her every command.

10. Above all, remember: The holidays, like childhood, are supposed to be fun – and they'll both be over before you know it! I mean that, of course, in the sense that you, personally, are likely to lapse into a lengthy coma.



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It's no surprise that Tel Aviv has evolved into a great food destination. This modern Middle Eastern city located on the Mediterranean shoreline is founded on immigration, and those immigrants have brought with them culinary influences from around the world. At the same time, well-travelled Israelis are keen to re-experience at home the exotic ingredients and dishes they sampled abroad. And nowhere is this proliferation of global foodstuffs and cuisines more in evidence than at Tel Aviv's vibrant food markets.

"I consider the markets to be the heartbeat of the city," says Inbal Baum of Delicious Israel (deliciousisrael.com), whose tours introduce visitors to the best market stalls, restaurants and food shops in Tel Aviv. "Walking by and seeing the fruits, spices, nuts and produces is wonderful for stimulating the senses, but delve a little deeper and you'll discover that each of the markets has their own unique story to tell, too."

Baum grew up with a first-hand understanding of the importance of shopping at the sharp end, rather than a supermarket, thanks to her Polish grandmother. "At 91, although she can barely walk, she still travels by two buses all the way from the suburbs to get by carp from the market to make gefilte fish."

The market to which Baum's grandmother goes is Shuk HaCarmel, a gigantic open-air bazaar in the centre of Tel Aviv, founded in the 1920s by Russian immigrants. It's a place where you can find everything from souvenirs to cigarettes, jewellery to leather goods, books and cosmetics. But it's the food that makes HaCarmel such a draw –



"Seeing the produce is wonderful for the senses, but delve a little deeper and you'll discover that each market its own story"

stalls of exotic spices in eye-popping colours, piles of sticky dates, imported cheeses, oversized fresh fruit and vegetables, rows of olive oil bottles and great hunks of meat. The Russians have long since been supplemented by other nationalities: the Yemenis have colonised the outskirts of the markets, while recent years have seen an influx of Chinese grocers as well as Ethiopian and Indian traders.

Back in 2007, chef Maoz Alonim, came up with the idea of opening a restaurant inside

HaCarmel, using only produce available from the stalls around him in his kitchen. Before opening his restaurant HaBasta (4 Hashomer Street), Alonim used to cook for private parties, while his partner Itai Hargil worked in a number restaurants, as well as the popular Yoezer wine bar. "The original idea was just to serve good wine at a good price," says Alonim, "but I was inspired by my travels in Europe to do more for a city where we had great produce." And so HaBasta, the Hebrew word for



PREVIOUS PAGE: STALL TRADER AT CARMEL MARKET AND HEAD CHEF AT HAHALUTZIM 3, EYTAN VANUNU. FAR LEFT: INBAL BAUM OF 'DELICIOUS ISRAEL'. LEFT: THE ORGANIC FARMER'S MARKET AT THE REGENERATED PORT. ABOVE: THE CHEF AT HABASTA. BOTTOM LEFT: OFFAL IS A SPECIALITY AT HABASTA.

market stall, was born. Easy to miss, its caff-like frontage has no sign above the door, and is marked only by plain tables and chairs outside. But the lack of frills belies the sophistication of chef Alonim's food, which many Tel Avivians consider to be some of the best in the city.

"I decided to open my restaurant in Carmel Market because, as far as I'm concerned, it's the only market in Tel Aviv where you can get absolutely everything," continues Alonim. "From fresh seafood caught the same day by fishermen in Jaffa to offal delivered twice a week direct from the slaughterhouse, it's all here." And offal is a speciality at HaBasta: this is the place to come for brains on toast, hearts, kidneys, sweetbreads or spleen, or a dish of veal tongue, testicles and tripe. "I stole the idea from St John," laughs Alonim, a self-confessed admirer of the famous London restaurant's nose-to-tail ethos. The squeamish can settle for the HaBasta's signature dish, which is, oddly, a pizza topped with goat's cheese, black truffles and a little asparagus in season.

Eytan Vanunu, a former film student, quit university to cook alongside Alonim in HaBasta's kitchen, where he worked for three years. Then, in 2012, he



RIGHT: INSIDE HAHALUTZIM 3 AT LEVINSKY MARKET.
 BELOW: TEL AVIV'S CHEFS HAVE FRESH FRUIT AND VEGETABLES RIGHT ON THEIR DOORSTEP.



“I find inspiration for what I'm going to cook in my restaurant just by walking to work”

decided to set up his own market restaurant, HaHalutzim 3 (3 *Hahalutzim Street*). The venue he chose was Levinsky Market in the slightly scruffy but raffish neighbourhood of Florentin. Although not quite as large as HaCarmel, Levinsky is every bit as diverse, populated by immigrants from Greece, Turkey, Iran and the Balkans selling nuts, spices, herbs, Turkish Delight in rainbow colours, aromatic teas and coffees.

“At HaBasta, for the first time I experienced the chance to buy a wide selection of fruit, vegetables, olive oil, fresh ground spices, eggs and fish all from

right here in the market,” says Vanunu. “I serve meat, and especially pork, because I want to serve what I like to eat. Pork is, in fact, surprisingly popular in Israel; it’s raised here.”

For Vanunu, one of the greatest things about having a restaurant inside a market is that he doesn’t have to go far to find inspiration for his dishes. “I can decide what I’m going to cook that day just walking by on my way to work.”

In 2010, Tel Aviv’s food lovers found a new place to go: that year an organic farmer’s market was set up in the regenerated port area. It wasn’t long before Alon Fridman, impressed by the variety of unusual produce on offer (think purple carrots, black potatoes, gigantic berries, as well as organic meat, fish, cheese and oils) decided to open up a restaurant. Kitchen Market (at Hangar 12) occupies an airy space above the market stalls, with a large room dominated by a huge counter and communal central table with views of the buzz below.



TEL AVIV

“My partner Asaf and I decided to situate our restaurant above the market because of the joy of the chef being able to just go and choose the best ingredients,” says owner Fridman. “As soon as the fabulous asparagus arrives at the market downstairs arrives, it comes straight upstairs to us,” says Fridman. Reserve ahead for lunch or dinner at the Kitchen Market – its light, delicious cuisine means that the restaurant is always fully booked. Inbal Baum even suggests that “maybe the wonderful fresh food of Kitchen Market is one reason that the Port Market has become Israel’s second biggest visitor attraction after the Western Wall in Jerusalem!”

Running a market-sourced restaurant where the fruit, vegetables, meat and spices are an arm’s length away isn’t difficult – what makes these venues so special is the quality of the produce, and how the chefs prepare it. “That’s the magic of Israeli food markets, the outstanding, locally-sourced products,” says Baum. “The beauty of the food that our talented chefs create is that they let the simplicity of the produce do all the talking. In these restaurants you’ll find only subtle sauces and gentle spicing. The intensity of the flavour comes from the market-fresh ingredients.”



ABOVE: THE FARMERS' MARKET AT THE PORT IS FAST BECOMING A TOURIST ATTRACTION IN ITS OWN RIGHT. **LEFT:** KITCHEN MARKET RESTAURANT CHAMPIONS ISRAEL'S WONDERFULLY FRESH PRODUCE.

TRY ONE OF THESE ISRAELI DISHES

- **Falafel** (chickpea balls) in pita with tahini and salad. Order them at Johnny Benin at 3 Tchernikovsky Street.
- **Shakshuka**, eggs baked in spicy tomato sauce, is a breakfast and lunchtime favourite. Dr. Shakshuka in Jaffa is the best-known, but Inbal Baum recommends Irit in the Yemenite Quarter at 13 HaCarmel Alley.
- **Israeli breakfasts** include cheeses and salads as well as eggs. Check out the sharing breakfast platters at Cafe Nimrod at Hangar 8, Tel Aviv Port.
- A bowl of **hummus** is the birthright of every Israeli, and some of the best is served at Abu Hassan on Dolphin Street in Jaffa.
- **Sabich** is Israel's favourite takeaway snack, a mix of fried aubergine, egg, salad and tahini topped with mango chutney and packed into a pita. Try Sabich Tchernikovsky on Tchernikovsky Street.

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CHRISTMAS CELEBRATIONS

During the holiday, the Ministry of Tourism will offer free transportation, helping pilgrims travelling between Jerusalem and Bethlehem. Buses will leave according to demand from Mar Elias Monastery to the Church of the Nativity in Bethlehem, and back again and will operate non-stop from noon on 24 December through to noon on 25 December. Representatives from the Ministry of Tourism will welcome tourists and pilgrims at Rachel's Crossing with a gift bag containing a set of coasters depicting scenes of Israel and chocolate in the spirit of the holiday.

1.85 million tourists have passed through the crossing to visit Bethlehem in the months Jan-Oct 2013. It is anticipated that about 2 million people will have visited Bethlehem in 2013 (almost double the 2012 figure of 1.18 million).

Since 2011, the Tourism Ministry has invested NIS 86 million in developing and maintaining the infrastructure of Christian sites, in order to enrich the pilgrim's spiritual experience. These sites include, among others, the baptism site at Qasr el Yahud near the Dead Sea, Mount Zion and Ein Karem in Jerusalem and the Gospel Trail in the Galilee. Other projects include, among others, the boardwalk from Tiberias to Capernaum, Korazim and Mount Precipice. Future infrastructure projects at Christian sites include, among others, Tel Megiddo, the Old City of Jerusalem, Sussita and other sites in the Tiberias and Galilee region.

As part of the ongoing activities to promote pilgrimage to the Holy Land, the Tourism Minister Dr. Uzi Landau and the representatives

of the Tourism Ministry in Israel and around the world meet regularly with Church leaders and communities. The Tourism Minister met recently with both His Beatitude, the Latin Patriarch of Jerusalem Fouad Tual and His Beatitude, the Greek Orthodox Patriarch Theophilos III in order to discuss matters important to the Church and future collaboration. Representatives in the Tourism Ministry are anticipating continued collaboration with the Church for the visit of Pope Francis, who is expected to visit the Holy Land in the first half of 2014. The Tourism Ministry invested over NIS3.5 million in infrastructure and marketing the recent International Day of Faith celebrations held at Mount Precipice in Nazareth (17.11.13), led by the Latin Patriarch and attended by about 7,000 Catholic faithful from the region and overseas.

Source: Tourism Ministry Inbound Tourism Survey and CBS

PRE-CHRISTMAS RECEPTIONS AND FESTIVITIES IN NAZARETH

11-15 December 2013, Nazareth

The Christmas festivities in Nazareth open on 11 December 2013 with the lighting of the Christmas tree and the traditional Christmas market, selling Christmas decorations and gifts, from 11-15 December.

22 December 2013, Nazareth

The Minister of Tourism Dr. Uzi Landau will host the traditional reception for Church leaders and representatives in Nazareth, on Sunday, 22.12.13 at 18:30 at the Golden Crown Hotel Nazareth. The reception, which will include the participation

of the Director-General of the Tourism Ministry Amir Halevi and the new Mayor of Nazareth Ali Salam, will include an artistic program with singer Maria Jubran.

23 December 2013, Jerusalem

Tourism Minister Dr. Uzi Landau will host the traditional pre-Christmas reception for leaders of the Christian communities and churches in Israel at the Shimshon Center, Beit Shmuel in Jerusalem on Monday, 23 December at 11:00. Also participating in the reception alongside the Christian leaders will be the Director-General of the Tourism Ministry Amir Halevi, and representatives of the Church, government and private bodies involved in promoting Christian tourism to the Holy Land. The minister will send season's greetings for Christmas to the Christian communities and invite the faithful around the world to make a pilgrimage to the Holy Land.

24 December 2013, Nazareth

On Christmas Eve, 24.12.13, the traditional parade of thousands of local youth, together with the leaders of the Christian communities, will pass through Nazareth from 15:00. The parade ends at the plaza in front of the Basilica with a firework display, sponsored by the Tourism Ministry, to announce the opening of the festive Christmas celebrations (17:30). Christmas Mass will be celebrated in the Basilica of the Annunciation at 19:00.

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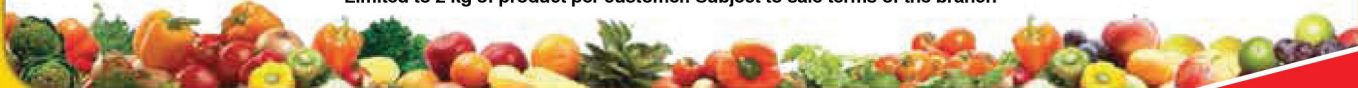
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